

*The
Eynsham
Record*



Number 28

Note on abbreviations

Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
Chamb. 1936	Chambers, E.K. <i>Eynsham under the Monks</i> . Oxfordshire Record Society, vol.18, 1936.
Ox.Studies	Oxfordshire Studies, Central Library, Westgate, Oxford
EHG	Eynsham History Group
E.R.	<i>The Eynsham Record</i>
Eyn.Cart.	<i>Cartulary of the Abbey of Eynsham</i> . Salter, H.E. (Ed.), in 2 volumes, Oxford Historical Society, vol.49 (1907) & vol.51 (1908).
Eyn.Cens.	Eynsham census returns at 10 year intervals from 1841 to 1901, transcribed by members of the EHG.
Eyn. MIs	Monumental Inscriptions at St Leonard's, recorded by the Oxfordshire Family History Society, 2002.
Gordon, 1990	Gordon, Eric. <i>Eynsham Abbey: 1005-1228</i> , Phillimore, 1990.
O.S.	Ordnance Survey
O.R.O.	Oxfordshire Record Office (formerly Oxfordshire Archives)
P.R.O.	Public Record Office
V.C.H. Oxon.	<i>The Victoria History of the County of Oxford</i>

FRONT COVER: A broken column in the middle of a meadow on the Eynsham Hall estate. Explanations, please! Ed.

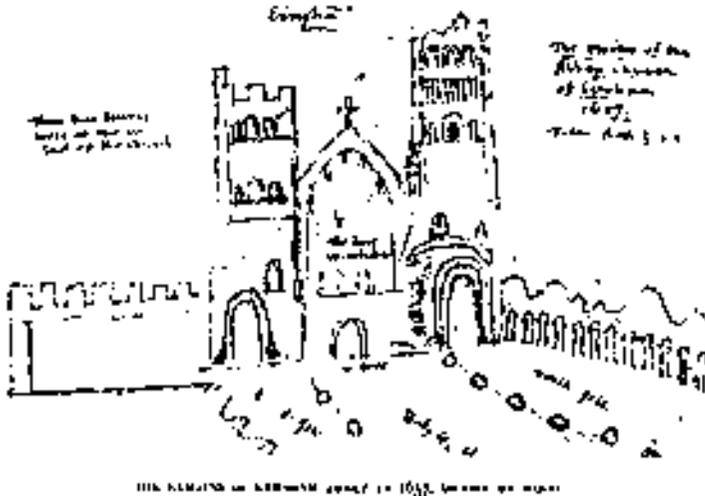
BACK COVER: Part of Chesney's, Newland St. From a painting of 1911 by Gladys Minnie Marshall who lived at Windrush Cottage (2 Cassington Rd). The artist's brother, Conrad Marshall (formerly Marshall-Schmidt) built or rebuilt Chesneys.

Information and image courtesy Nick Williams.

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EDITORIAL

There are some inadvertent, unplanned connections in several of the articles in this number. Tim Jordan writes about the barns and other farm buildings, including Blankstones Farm with a picture of one of its barns; while Michael Morley who lived there reminisces about his life and times; and Pamela Richards, in her article, mentions some of the early farmers and allied tradespeople in the village.

During the past year we have lost Francis Harris, our chairman's father (see obituary below), and two distinguished villagers who, although not our members, came to our meetings from time to time. I refer here to Dr Charles Caine who made many contributions to village life, including his chairmanship of the committee which raised £180,000 for the latest renovation of St Leonard's parish church (see his own account in E.R. no. 5, and his obituary notice in *Roundabout* no. 323) and Dr Tom Tinsley O.B.E., virologist after whom the Tinsley building, a research laboratory in Mansfield Road, Oxford is named.

Especial thanks to Bryan Duffield who came up with the earliest photograph in 25 years of THEN & NOW (see p. 20)..

Francis Harris, our chairman's father, died in September last year, He was a member in the 1990s of both the EHG and Cumnor & District History Society. His local reminiscenes are a great contribution to oral history. He assisted our chairman Martin with research into his grandfather's life, the Eynsham carrier, Ernest Edmund Harris (see E.R.no 12).

'PLYING THE OLD TRADES'

by Pamela Richards

I took my title from Sir Henry Newbolt's poem *Drake's Drum*. "*Where the old trades plyin' an' the old flag flying*" Of course the 'trades' referred to here were the trade winds, but I want to apply the phrase to the lawful employment of the townsfolk of Eynsham.

Once we get to the middle of the nineteenth century we can learn a lot from the census records, but before then we have to rely mainly on people's wills which mostly indicate the occupation of the testator.

From the probate records from 1516 to 1732 most of those making wills described themselves as 'yeoman' or 'husbandman'. 'Yeoman' generally refers to a freeholder farming his own land, normally worth more than 40/- a year. He was qualified to serve on juries and vote for shire representatives. 'Husbandman' usually referred to a tenant farmer. This certainly gives the impression that Eynsham was a **farming** community. Others making wills describe themselves as labourers or day labourers, no doubt working on the land as and when required. At the time there was no obligation to make a will if one's property was valued at less than £5. Two men described themselves as **shepherds**, and just one man is actually described as a farmer in 1708.

From the VCH we learn that in the 17th century there were 115 tenements in the village and that some workers were probably doing more than one job. In 1662 only 91 people were assessed for hearth tax on a total of 188 hearths, and from other statistics it seems probable that Eynsham had a population of no more than 500.

But what can we learn from copies of the wills that we do have? Let me start with what may be a very tenuous connection with the Ashmolean museum. A **mercier** named William Ashole died in 1588. Unfortunately, his son's name was not Elias. However, a mercier is generally thought to be one who traded in textiles, but the only merchandise mentioned in his will is 'wood', so presumably he was an example of the other meaning of the word 'mercier' - a small ware dealer.

With a surname somewhat like that of the previous testator, Thomas Ascoll or Astoll was a **glover** who died in 1621. In this case his inventory is more obviously in keeping with his trade. Items include 'coarse wool, and twenty-two sheep skins; 1 horse hide, 2 colte skins and six sheep pelts and half a hide of 'whittether' - which seems to be some kind of prepared leather; and as the horse hide, the colte skins and

sheep pelts are together valued at 3/- and this single item is valued at 2/- it would seem to be something quite expensive. His status in the town is probably underlined by the fact that his youngest daughter married into the Cracklow family who were yeomen. Looking forward we can see from the census returns of 1851, 61 and 71 gloving became an important home industry, but by 1881 Eynsham has only one glover although there are still seven living in Freeland which was part of the Eynsham parish. This became the sort of business where someone, probably a woman, would come round to the homes of the sewers and distribute materials, the end product being collected within a given time. In 1764 Mrs Francis Lord was buying gloves from a Mrs Fox of Oxford, 11 pairs of men's and 7 pairs of women's black lamb gloves for £1. 4. 0. We can safely assume that Mrs Lord was selling them on - she was a retailer,

There were five **tanners** in business during the period of the 17th to the early 18th centuries. The earliest inventory is dated 1611. Thomas Smith died possessed of 'six hides, two kippes (hides of young beasts), seven calf skins and 2 dozen sheep skins. The inventory of William Goodman dated 1644 includes a parcel of lime and 16 dickers of leather (a dicker being a parcel of ten items). In 1680 we have William Tredwell's inventory. The trade of tanning is obviously developing and we learn a little more of what is needed to pursue it.

Item: In the water limes & ground nooses eighty five hides

Item: in draught nooses sixty three hides

Item: in five layers without doors one hundred & fifteen hides

Item: in three layers within doors fifty hides

Item: in three layers within doors fifty-three hides

Item: eleven hides tanned and drying

Item: Thirty four dozen & one odd skin

Item: Eight kippes

Item: Eighteen loads of Barke

The value of these items is recorded in pounds sterling rather than shillings.

He was followed in the trade by his son Thomas who sadly lived for only 9 years after his father died. However, his inventory specifically lists what is 'in and about the Tanyard' and again we see values going up-

Item in the water & limes 73 kids

In the tan fats 409 kids

Item in the tan fats 53 calf skins and 12 kipps

Item in the tan yard 29 tanned kids, 7 dozen tanned calf skins and 12 hog skins

In bark in the barn to the value of 15 loads and 300 & half of tayles

*In barnes 2 beams to work at 3 shoots 5 beam knives 3 wooden horses and hayre
tann woofes*

woodworking tools & other fuel and lumber in the barne & about the tanyard.

And in 1703 we learn of a Thomas Hancock whose inventory is actually appraised by other tanners, one from Abingdon and one from Oxford. In the census of 1841 only one tanner is mentioned and in the 1851 census there are none. To understand the exact uses of some of the items mentioned would take more research although when we looked into tanning with the Junior History Group the children were particularly taken by the use of a product supplied by dogs!

In 1604 Adam Bladon, a sawyer, leaves to his son two saws as well as a wood pile and 3 hives of bees. At the beginning of the 18th century the Ayres family were **carpenters**. Carpentry is an occupation that appears in the census records right into the beginning of the 20th century, the word also including the trade of joinery.

In the middle of the 17th century there was one **cooper**, although there is nothing in his will or inventory that indicates his trade. However coopers do appear in the census records right up to 1901, Eynsham no doubt being in need of barrels for the brewery businesses.

In 1597 Walter Harwood, weaver, left to John Smith, son of his daughter Edie, one bastard loom with all the furniture to the same belonging. It has been suggested by Richard Martin of the Cotswold Woollen Weavers of Filkins that it was a loom that Walter Harwood himself may have set up in a DIY sort of way. At that time anything that was not quite perfect was described as bastard, although there was also a kind of cloth known as bastard. Harwood's widow is left 4 yards of new russet cloth among other things, and another grandchild gets 4 pounds of yarn.

In 1624 William Brush is described as a narrow weaver and his inventory includes 'geares' and looms with all belonging to them. Narrow weaving was exactly what could be done in the premises that would have been available; it was not until industrialisation that large looms could be set up.

The occupation of **cordwainer**, a repairer of footwear, is perhaps familiar because of 'cordonnier' which means the same in French. There is one mention of such a tradesman in Eynsham during the 18th century, John Mead who died in 1706, but none of the tools of his trade are itemised in his will or inventory. More cordwainers lived in Eynsham throughout most of the 19th century, although the word tends to change its meaning to **shoemaker** or **bootmaker**, for a man who not only repaired footwear but started from scratch. The Rose family were shoemakers at the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century but their wills are no more helpful than referring to '*all my working gear*'. Another shoemaker who 'hit the headlines', so to speak, was one Josiah Smith who was said to have been shot while carrying out a robbery in 1776. However, the people of Eynsham, including Thomas Turner, an **apothecary**, examined the body and testified that there were no marks of violence and that he had died of a putrid fever. Among the Wastie documents we have been given access to, I found a bill addressed to Peter Lord for various pairs of shoes and the mending of some dated 1774, two years before 'the incident'. On the back of this document is a receipt dated 1778 for the £2. 0. 2. owed and signed by Lydia Smith who was presumably the wife of the deceased. The receipt describes the money being received 'on demand', so perhaps Peter Lord thought he would not have to pay as the shoemaker was dead.

John Clarke is described as a **butcher** in his will of 1577. There is a fine list of items he is leaving to his children, but again nothing that relates to his trade. However, again among the Wastie papers, there is a badly damaged account dated 1764 for large quantities of meat including legs of '*lame*' [lamb], '*shin of beef*' and various types of offal. The thirty-eight items cost a total of £2. 17. 11.

The inventory of William Devell, **baker**, of 1637 is quite detailed but again it is difficult to associate the items with baking, although a number seem to have to do with **cheese-making**. However, that he was a man of business would seem to be confirmed by a very damaged, therefore difficult to read, Account Sheet. This unfortunately suggests that his monies were not in very good order when he died and caused some trouble to his widow. Which seems surprising when bread was surely a staple part of the diet?

In 1583 a John Launce is described as a **blacksmith** but once again the items listed do not help, nor do those of John Devall in 1686. A Smith family were also blacksmiths. The first Thomas Smith who died in 1586 is recorded as a blacksmith although this does not appear in his will. The second Thomas Smith whose will is dated 1608 is definitely a blacksmith but again nothing in his will or inventory

supports this. But we may get some idea of what his forge may have been like by a description in the time of the Civil War in the 1640s, from a passage in Lindsey Davies's book *Rebels & Traitors*.

The tools of his trade were cumbersome: the forge with its fuel buckets, riddles and rakes; the single horned anvil, set into a heavy oak stump at the right height for his knuckles, with its variously shaped elements for different tasks; the bicks, fullers and swages that were the anvil's moveable accessories; the quenching bath and the slack tub, where worked metal cooled ... his hammers. Especially the crowned peen hammers that he used most often with the slightly rounded edges that would not mark a blade as it was worked; he also had a great sledge hammer and other hammers with large flat heads. Beside the anvil stood the vice. Close to hand were tongs of various sizes, the chisels, punches, files, ... drills and presses.

Whether Thomas Smith did all the work or had a labourer to help him, it would indeed have been difficult and skilful work.

The census returns record the development of a more recent and well-known Eynsham family. In the 1841 return are two blacksmiths, James and Thomas Burden both living in Newland Street, and in 1851 they are still there although James is now described as a *Smith Farrier*. In 1861 they are still there (James is 62) with a live-in apprentice; Thomas (49) and his son John (16) are both blacksmiths, as is Edward Burden (39). The Burden blacksmith dynasty continued into the 20th century, and you can still visit their forge (no longer working) in Newland Street. In Victorian times the Burdens made the iron corset that supported the old market cross.

The James family were of great importance in their time for they were the **tallow chandlers**, and no-one could do without light. The James family lived over their shop and it can be seen from the inventory of William James (1698) that they were selling more than candles. This reminded me of Sawyers as they were also located in Newland Street. The business was carried on by his son, but with his will there is no inventory. In the 1841 census there is an oil man.

Innkeeping was also an important trade in Eynsham. The first date found for an innkeeper is 1587, Robert Browne, who died in 1604 being the landlord of the 'Sign of the Angel', now known as the Red Lion. A hundred years later in 1687, we have the inventory of Charles Greenaway, innkeeper. From work done by the Junior History Group in 1997 we worked out that the inn in question was most likely to be what is now known as the White Hart. The inventory includes '*the chequer chamber where there is one little table*'. Research suggested that a chequer chamber was a

treasure house or counting house. Also interesting is mention of a 'shuffleboard chamber'. A 'shuffleboard' is more correctly a shovel board as when you play a game you shove pieces up the board, as in 'shove ha'penny'. There was also an '*ingine*' in the cellar for pumping up the beer. For its time, this seems quite a 'modern' pub.

From other research we know the various **apprenticeships** Eynsham boys were entered for. During the period 1702-1833, among the usual occupations there was one going to Oxford to become a **brush maker**, others going to London to be a **carver** and **gilder**, a **brass founder**, a **cane chair maker** and a **coach harness maker**, while one went to Woodstock to become a **whitesmith** - a tin smith or someone who polished and finished metal goods.

Once we get to the middle of the 19th century it is easier to find out what people were working at. The census records give the occupation of everyone in the household. We can see that Eynsham was slowly growing. The Visitation returns of 1738 record 160 houses and 153 families. In 1801 the population is 1,166 and by 1901 when my survey more nor less ends it is 1,757.

There is no complete breakdown into age or sex, but from the work done by the Junior History Group a few years ago it was noted that there seemed to be more children than adults in 1851, and that 53 of these children between the ages of 8 and 14 were in jobs ranging from teenage girls listed as glovers to an 8 year old boy labouring at the **rope factory**. In 1891 there were over 250 schoolchildren listed as **scholars** so the lot of children was improving. In 1831 agricultural occupation supported 240 of the 366 families in Eynsham.

But to look more closely at the 1841 census, there were nearly 200 workers in occupations connected to **agriculture**, 20 in the **construction** trade, 19 involved in **selling food** and 25 concerned with **clothing and footwear**. There were 54 **in service** of one form or another and a brewer, a maltster, a cooper and 8 **publicans!** Other 'one offs' were a **coal dealer**, a **leach**, a **chemist**, a **barber**, a **boatman**, a **ginman** (one operating a gin or machine?), a **watchmaker** and a carrier.

Slipping back once more, in the 18th century the Meales family were **papermakers**. They had acquired the mill from George Haga, a London dyer who in 1682 had obtained a patent and set up a paper mill at Eynsham to make white paper for printed books. However by 1686 he was in trouble and the mill was sold to the Meales for over £1,500. They continued to make white paper which was used in Oxford for printed bibles. When Thomas, the son, died in 1723 the site included a corn mill and two others, one called the New Mill, both well stocked with rags. There

were separate moulding and drying houses. His inventory includes:-

*Item in the Corn Mill 9 bushells of wheat, 8 bushells of barley £2. 07. Od
Item in the first mill 8 tunn of linen rags with other lumber £80 Item
in the raghouse one tunn of rags with other utensils £10. 10. Item in
the new mill 12 tunn of rags with other utensils £121. 7. In the old stable
2 tunn of rags.*

In the workhouse 6 moulds 150 felts one chaldern of coles.

*In the siseing [a glutinous or viscid wash applied to paper, parchment etc. to provide
a suitable ground for gilding, painting or other work] house 2 sising tubs one brass
bason with other small things, in the soll [not sure if this means a solar] 80 ream of
paper 22 of sising peses;*

*Item in Dring [drying] loft 40 Ream of Paper 22 of sising pese 400 Rags wih other
lumber,*

In the Dring house 20 Reame of Paper with other lumber.

Edward Smith, another papermaker who died a year before Thomas Meales, unfortunately does not have an inventory. But it can be seen that paper making became an important 'industry' in Eynsham. The mill was bought by John Swann of Wolvercote for his brother James who pioneered mechanised paper making by installing a Fourdrinier machine. The Swanns supplied paper for the Clarendon Press and also produced 'tarred paper' which was a roofing material and an example can be seen at the Gables. By 1841 there are 9 workers involved in the papermaking business but in 1851 there are only 3, John Swann having been declared bankrupt in 1848.

But the trade picked up by 1861 with the number of people employed increasing, some coming from as far away as Scotland. But tragedy came just before Christmas in 1889 when the mill closed, the owners being deep in debt. On a prospectus produced one year before, it mentions that it was situated handily for both the railway and Eynsham Wharf, and claimed to be able to produce 25 tons of paper weekly. A fuller history of paper making in Eynsham was researched by the Junior History Group in 2003 with the help of George Basson, who now lives in St Neots but whose family once lived in Pug Lane and worked at the paper mill until its closure. The premises were taken over for **leather making** and over 40 people from Eynsham were employed. But again this venture did not last long.

The paper produced by George Hagar was for printed books, so we should not forget that we had two important **printers** who had their origins in Eynsham. One

was John Danter, who in the 16th century claimed that Eynsham was his birthplace and was involved with the printing of Shakespeare's work; and Michael Sparke who was also born in Eynsham at the end of the 16th century was known to be an important Puritan **publisher**. In the 20th century we also had Oscar Mellor and his Fantasy Press just across the river at Swinford.

The railway came in 1861 and provided a new type of employment. There are 34 employees described as **railway workers** in the 1861 census although the number reduced to 8 in 1881 once the railway was built and running. However there were still 292 occupied with agriculture. There were also 80 involved in the building and construction trades. But things were becoming more sophisticated. Eynsham had a **police constable**, a **Relieving officer**, an **Inland Revenue officer**, an **Agent for fire insurance**, as well as two **chemists**, a **doctor** and a **surgeon**, and a **clockmaker**.

In 1871 there were still 101 agricultural labourers as well as many others connected with the land; there were 11 **gardeners**. In 1887 there was a Horticultural Society and in 1890 the Eynsham Cottage Garden Society Annual Show was reported in the newspapers. There were over 100 in the building and construction trades and there were still around 60 involved with the making of clothes. It was not a time when you popped into Oxford to the shops. There was a **postman** and a **telegraph clerk**, and a **watchmaker/jeweller**.

In 1881 agriculture, construction and clothes-making still dominated the occupations and the rope works employed 11 including a **sailmaker**; and there were also two **photographers**, a **hairdresser**, a **debt collector** and a **bookbinder**.

In 1891 there were still well over 100 employed in agricultural or associated pursuits and in 1901 there were just about 100 with 13 farmers and 46 farm labourers. At least one farmer won prizes for his sheep, and **apples** from Eynsham were highly regarded. From both the 1891 and 1901 census returns we can note a greater diversity in occupations alongside those necessary for a community to survive; food, drink, clothes, construction. One interesting occupation noted in the 1901 census is that of **matchmaker**, but whether this implies the making of fire or the bringing together of couples I do not know.

Within living memory we had a **lamplighter**, a **seller of block salt**, and a **coalman**.

My feeling is that I have been looking at a community which throughout the ages has relied very much on its ties with the countryside. Its few sallies into industry have come and gone although it is true that its association with paper-making lasted

over 200 years. That business was not always easy can be seen by the number of those that failed financially. 1892 saw the downfall of George Shillingford who had been a master woolstapler, a merchant who bought wool from the producer, graded it and then sold it on to the manufacturer. He had lived at Newland House. Farming also had its dangers, including one in particular that resonates with us. In July 1886 a newspaper article stated "Swine fever is prevalent in the neighbourhood with some 10/12 persons having their premises declared infected and some 50 animals slaughtered. Persons having pigs suffering from this disease should at once acquaint police otherwise they would be liable to a penalty!"

What all my researches show is that Eynsham has always been an interesting place which has developed in its own good time, and I think that Egon who chose this place so long ago would be quite satisfied.

Sources.

Old Wills and Inventories

Census Returns

The Eynsham Record

Good History

Papers of the Wastie family

V.C.H. Oxon.

Witney Express and Gazette

Oxford Times

"Rebels and Traitors" by Lindsey Davis

A.J.Jepson was reputed to be the best cricketer Eynsham has produced. He was a schoolmaster and the only brother of Miss May Jepson who was a schoolmistress at Eynsham. He died in the worldwide influenza epidemic at the end of the 1914-18 war

WINNIE'S WAR

by Daisy Ainsley Grabsky

My sister Winifred was born in Eynsham in January 1918, the first of the Ainsley children to be born there. She was 23 when she got her calling up papers during WWII in November 1941. She had an interview in Oxford and stated her preference for the Women's Royal Navy. However, she was told that there were no vacancies in the Wrens so she opted for the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (the WAAFs). She asked what jobs were available and was told of several, none of which appealed. "Nothing else?" she asked. The reply was that there was a need for WAAFs to be trained as Barrage Balloon operators as the men were all being taken off the balloons for other military duties. Her eyes lit up, she volunteered immediately and her name was put down as a Barrage Balloon operator.

This was one of the most demanding wartime tasks undertaken by women. These women often had to live in primitive conditions and at regular intervals were exposed to real danger. In 1941 crews of ten airmen were being replaced on the balloons by teams of 16 airwomen. By the end of 1941, three RAF balloon sites a day were being handed over to WAAF personnel who eventually manned 1,029 sites all over Britain.

The following is Winifred's story,

On November 21st 1941 I left home to join the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (the WAAF). My mother came to see me off at Oxford station. I got on a train to Wolverhampton and there boarded an RAF bus which took me to Bridgenorth, Shropshire. I found that I was not the only one joining that day, as the bus was full of girls of all shapes and sizes. Eventually we were put into barracks and then taken to the Mess for a hot meal.

The next morning I was awakened by a strange noise. I thought whatever is going on. I jumped up and ran to the billet window. It was freezing cold (no central heating in those days). Outside the window was a sergeant blowing a bugle and the noise she was making I presumed was 'Reveille'.

This was followed by a corporal bursting into our room yelling "Time to get up! Time to get up!"

After queuing for breakfast, we were taken to another barrack room where we were fitted out with our uniform, which consisted of:

- 1)2 skirts and 2 jackets - Air Force blue.
- 2)2 pairs of black lisle stockings.
- 3)2 pairs of shoes. 2 pairs of woollen socks.
- 4)1 greatcoat.
- 5)6 shirts and 6 collars.
- 6)1 tie.
- 7)2 pairs men's blue and white striped pyjamas.
- 8)3 woollen vests & 3 cream woollen panties.
- 9)1 pair woollen gloves.
- 0)2 battledress overalls - Air Force blue.
- 1)3 bras and 3 corset belts.
- 0)1 long-sleeved woollen pullover - Air Force blue.
- 1)1 darning kit, clothes brush, boot brush, toothbrush & paste.
- 2)knife, fork, spoon, mug, and comb.
- 2)1 pair Wellington boots & 1 pair plimsolls.
- 3)1 gas mask.
- 3)2 kit bags.

That first morning we went out to the parade ground and were shouted orders from every direction. Not one of us had an inkling of what they were shouting about. Trying to get our feet and arms to work in unison was impossible. Day after day the constant drilling went on. We had to learn how to march, how to salute, how to drill, and how to take orders. We were made to feel the lowest of the low. During all this time the weather was absolutely terrible but it made no difference. We still had to slow march, quick march, right wheel, left wheel, *and* keep in a straight line.

Then one miraculous day we were all marching in step with our arms swinging at the correct height and each command being carried out perfectly. After two more weeks potential balloon operators were posted to Cardington Airbase in Bedfordshire where No.1 Balloon Training Unit had been formed on January 9, 1937. (Balloon Command was formed November 1, 1938 under the auspices of Fighter Command. When the Balloon Training Unit closed down in 1943 it had trained some 10,000 RAF and WAAF operators.)

Here we were to have a three-month training on how to handle a balloon. In the classroom we were taught different rope knots and their uses, and also how to splice wire. Then we were taught how to operate a winch and about the power track of a

winch. The winch always had to be in first-rate condition. We had to understand the internal combustion engine, transmission systems, electric magnetos, spark plugs and fuel systems. It all had to be comprehended -'as if our lives depended on it'.

We learnt how to do daily maintenance on the balloon and test its power pressure. *{Balloons when inflated measured 66 feet long and needed 20,000 cubic feet of hydrogen per fill. The gas inlet valve was situated at the rear of the upper stabilising fin. The three stabilising fins were inflated by air flowing in through scoops on the fins. A large valve on the left side of the balloon released hydrogen as it expanded in the rarefied air and a rip line pulled out a panel at the top rear of the balloon if it became unmanageable on the ground Manageability in the air was a different matter}*

The upper part of the balloon was filled with hydrogen, the lower part with oxygen, the two layers being separated by a diaphragm. Beneath the base of the balloon was a parachute fitted to a cable attachment. This was needed in the event of the balloon being damaged so that it had to be brought down. Leading from a group of wires was a thicker cable wound around a bollard on the side of the winch.

As the winch was driven it released the cable allowing the balloon to rise usually 60 feet but sometimes as high as 1,000 feet. The balloons were up during an air raid night and day, but were winched down during strong winds, and in any event once a day for a routine inspection. The winches also received routine daily maintenance. During the last two weeks of our training we were allowed to put a balloon up into the air on our own - though under supervision. At the end of the three-month training we took an examination and all of us passed.

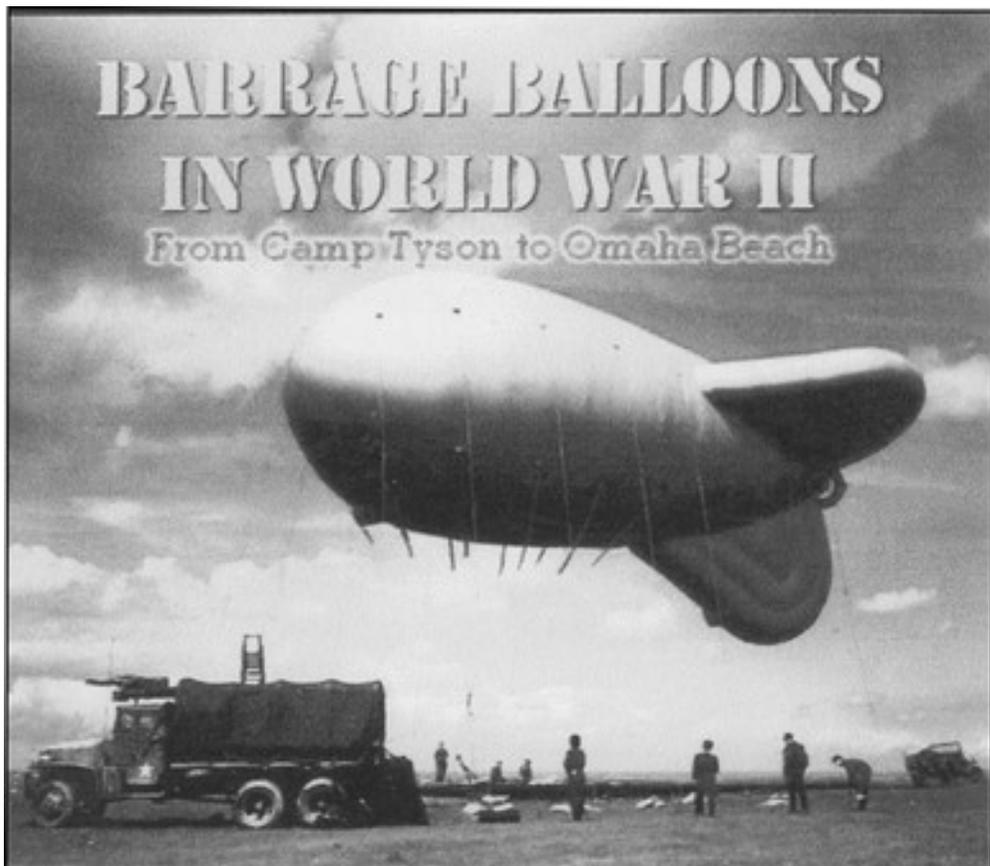
We were sent to Birmingham where they were having nightly bombing raids. Our station was in Castle Bromwich on a site on top of a hill in a field. We lived on site. There were no toilets, only three bucket-latrines and one cold water tap. This was at the end of February 1942 and it was still very cold. We all wore battle-dress with thick woollen trousers underneath. Wellingtons and seaboot stockings were also provided. For working in the rain we wore black souwesters and mackintoshes. We looked like deep-sea fishermen!

We were a crew of 16 girls. We took it in turns to cook the food which was delivered from Headquarters. The only men we saw were the men delivering the canisters of gas and the men delivering the food. Twice a day and once a night we were visited by an officer from Headquarters. Since most of the raids were at night, it meant we were up most nights working out in the open with only the balloons to

protect us. We had to fit our sleep in during the day whenever we could.

I stayed here for just under two years. At the beginning of 1944 the raids had stopped and the balloons were finally taken down, much to the dismay of the local inhabitants who had felt much much safer with the balloons above them. From there I went to Castle Bromwich aerodrome. Our camp was on one corner of the airport and our balloons were protecting a large Rolls Royce engine factory. In October 1944 we were sent to London which was experiencing the V-bombs. Our camps were set up on any green patch of land that could be found. I moved around to such places as Beckenham, Lewisham, Ladywell, Catford Bridge and Blythe Hill.

I came out of the WAAF with muscles like a prize-fighter and a different outlook on life. One thing I knew for sure was that I would never go back to work in a shop again. (And I never did. *I took up nursing instead*)



“WE DIDN'T MEAN TO GO TO SEA”
An Encounter with the Press Gang
by Donald S. Richards

The Eynsham History Group has recently been given access to a significant collection of old documents which concern a local family of long standing, the Wasties. They offer much that is of interest, but my attention was especially drawn to a handful of documents, dating from the end of the eighteenth century, which deal with efforts to free a young family member and his friend from enforced service in the Royal Navy, that is, impressment.

The family member in question was William Wastie, whom it is perhaps reasonable to identify with the son of William and Mary, who was baptised October 27th 1776 and died June 25th 1840. His father was probably the William Wastie who died June 3rd 1813 at the age of sixty-six. This would mean that William Wastie junior was twenty-one years of age when he was impressed in 1797. His companion in distress was possibly the Jeremiah Smith, son of Jeremiah and Lydia, who was also baptised at Eynsham, but on February 11th 1776.

The papers which deal with this case are not a complete archive, so full details and a satisfactory conclusion are lacking. A modern note written on a quite separate document gives the background as follows: “Jeremiah Smith and William Wastie were on holiday near the South Coast in 1797 when they were seized by Press Gang and put aboard H.M.S. Robust.” The Robust was a 74-gun ship of the line, launched in 1764. The statement that they “were on holiday” has a slightly anachronistic sound but presumably derives from family tradition.

Impressment, that is, forced service in the navy, supplied about half the manpower needed in the period from the middle of the seventeenth- to the beginning of the nineteenth- centuries and was feared for the arbitrary, corrupt and brutal methods used. Yet many published tracts and proposals recognized that the “press” was necessary. Typical comments are “The merchant will always offer more for seamen than government can” and, with a modern resonance, “It is also an expence to which no government is equal, to support, in time of peace, the same naval establishment it maintains in time of war” (Charles Butler, *An essay on the legality of impressing seamen*, London, 1777, p. 30). Certain limits to the activities of the press

gang were ignored, especially in wartime. For example, the lack of previous experience of the sea, a consideration stressed in one of the letters below, did not always protect “landsmen” from being seized.

Mr Wastie Senior sought help from various persons. A separate piece of paper appears to give a list of people to be contacted. It contains the following: Sir Peter Parker (1721-1811) “Commander of Fleet at Portsmouth”, a patron and friend of Nelson, who commanded at Portsmouth from 1793 until 1799 when he became Admiral of the Fleet; a Mr Monksfield; an unnamed “Admaral at the Secetery”; Capt. Peckmoor of the Royal William; Capt. Thornborough of the Robust, that is, Sir Edward Thornborough (1758- 1834), later Admiral of the White; and Mr Serrier (?), Lieutenant of the Press Gang at Fareham, Hants. This last entry may indicate where the two had been seized. Mr Wastie had also written to Lord Charles Spencer, who was the second son of the third Duke of Marlborough and at the time M.P. for Oxfordshire and a Junior Lord of the Admiralty. He received the following reply, addressed to “Mr Wastie, Mason, Eynsham, Oxfordshire” and dated October 22nd 1797 from Norwich. Note that in all cases I retain the original spelling and capital letters etc.

Mr Wastie,

The moment I recieved your letter I wrote to one of the Lords of the Admiralty, if you make no mistake in the statement of the case I have little doubt but the two young men will be discharged.

I am your etc. etc.

C Spencer

Two days later, on October 24th, a certain Marriott Martineau sent the following letter. He is clearly a friend but otherwise unidentified. The letter was written (one assumes, from London) at the King's Arms but unfortunately the name of the place is obscured. Jenny (his wife?) was notably active in approaches to the Admiralty.

Mr Wastie

I feel much for yours and Mrs Wasties affliction in respect to your Son but I hope and trust if it should be found impossible to get him his liberty your religious principles will reconcile you to the Event, being assured every thing is ordered for the best and that Mrs Wastie for the sake of the rest of her children will not suffer herself to be overpowered by this circumstance. Jenny recieved your Letter this

Morning and went immediately to the Admiralty to Mr Winchester who says if you cannot get your Sons liberty you may depend on it when he is removed to another Ship he will be in Heaven in comparison to what he now is. - he Recommends your not going to Portsmouth again as he says that can answer no end - he wishes you to get an affidavit made and signed by the principal People in Ensham, Church Wardens, and Overseers, who have known the young Men for some years back that they never were at Sea - and enclose it in a Petition to the Lords of the Admiralty and Commissioners praying their discharge as being of great help to their aged Parents in their Business etc. If you find[,] Mr Wastie[,] the People in your Parish are not inclined to speak for your Sons companion and that is likely to be any Bar to your Son getting his liberty you must consider yourself first. From what Jenny could learn your applications to Lord Spencer[,] the Duke of Marlborough etc. is most likely to be of more service than any thing else. She also finds that they had no right to Press them never having been at Sea - they say a Letter from Lord Spencer to the Admiralty Board would gain them liberty at once - but you had better get the Affidavit signed as soon as possible and send it to Jenny that she may get it presented at the Board by Mr Winchester.

Jenny got all the information she could at the Admiralty which was not much for one said one thing another said another and some said you will never get them at liberty without sending two others in their places which you will not get for less than sixty pounds each - and if they escape before you get them entered all the Money will be lost and to no purpose.

Jenny could not persuade Mr Winchester* to write to Captain Thornborough so I intend writing myself by this post for though it may do no good it will perhaps be a satisfaction to Mrs Wastie. Jennys neck we think is not worse and she continues taking the Medicines which we hope will in time disperse the swelling - be assured nothing shall be wanting that is likely to be of any service to her. I beg my best respect to your self and Wife and Daughter with many thanks for your kindness to our Children when in Oxfordshire who were also much benefitted by it. Jenny would have written herself but she was some time at the Admiralty and as it is of consequence this Letter getting to you by this post we thought I could do it quicker with best wishes I remain your sincere Friend

Marriott Martineau

Jenny desires her duty, Martineau

* There is a reference to "Mr Winchester from the Admiralty" in *Hibernian Magazine*, July 1781 p.339

Within the letter there is a mention of the possibility of providing substitutes. The phrase “if they escape” refers to the chance that the replacements might abscond with the money before they were formally entered in the muster list in place of the pressed men.

The next two letters are addressed to Lord Charles Spencer, the first with good news and the second with less good, and are signed on behalf of the Lords of the Admiralty by Mr (later Sir) Evan Nepean. The latter (1751 - 1822) had a distinguished career as politician and administrator. He joined the navy in 1773, became (in addition to holding other offices) secretary to the Board of the Admiralty in 1795, then a commissioner of the Admiralty and finally governor of Bombay 1812 - 1819 (see his entry in *DNB*).

Admiralty Office 30th Oct. 1797

My Lord,

Having laid before my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty a Report, of the 27th Inst, from Adml Sir Peter Parker at Portsmouth, upon the cases of the two persons, named in the margin, who have been impressed and are now on board the Robust; I have the commands of the Board to acquaint your Lordship that they have ordered them to be discharged; and have the honor to be,

My Lord,
your lordship's most obedient humble servant
Evan Nepean

RightHonble
Lord Charles Spencer, at Norwich

In left margin:

W.^m Wastie
Jer.^h Smith

A little later this less welcome letter followed:

Admiralty Office 8th Nov. 1797

My Lord,

Having laid before my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty the Letter which your Lordship transmitted to me from Mr Wastie, respecting the two persons named in the margin, now on board the Robust; I have the commands of the Board

to acquaint your Lordship that the Robust sailed from Spithead to join Admiral Lord Bridport before the Order for their discharge arrived at Portsmouth, but that their Lordships have, by this night's Post, sent similar directions to Lord Bridport for the purpose above mentioned. I have the honor to be,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's
Most obedient
humble servant,
Evan Nepean

Right Honble
Lord Charles Spencer

In left margin:

W^m Wastie

Jer.^h Smith

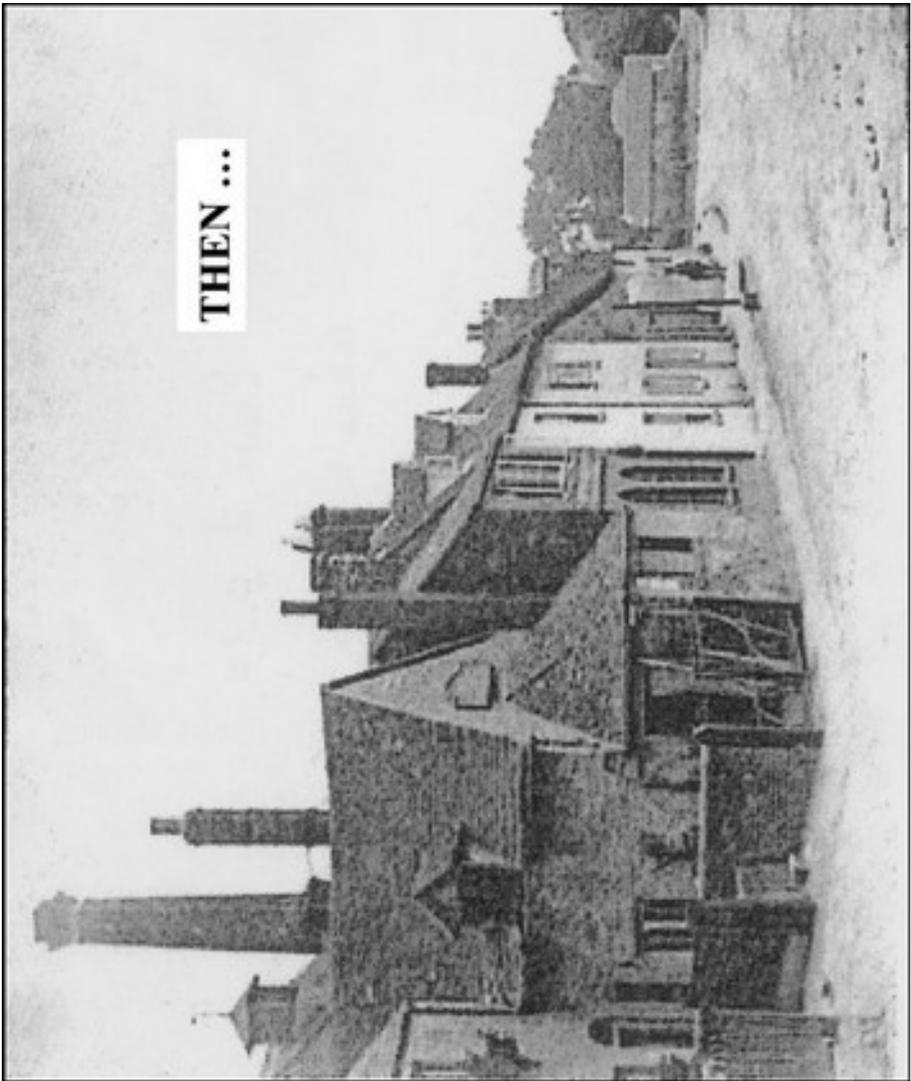
William Wastie and his friend were, as we can see, destined to have some active service since H.M.S. Robust had sailed, with the two of them on board, to join the Channel Fleet which was blockading the French ports. During the years 1797 till 1800 the Channel Fleet was commanded by Alexander Hood (1726 - 1814) who was created 1st Viscount Bridport for his role in the battle of the Glorious 1st June, 1794.

At this point we unfortunately lose sight of the two unwilling seamen. The only other relevant paper is a note that reads:

Lord Charles Spencer encloses a part of a letter relative Mr Wasties Son and the other young man which he has recieved from Admiral Gambier, a Lord of the Admiralty.

This covering note was written on November 9th 1797 at Wheatfield, between Watlington and Thame, where Lord Spencer had purchased and restored the manor house. It was posted at Tetsworth in the neighbouring parish, which was on the main London road at that time. The enclosure itself is lost. Admiral Gambier (1756 -1833) had been made rear-admiral and a lord of the Admiralty in 1795. One hopes that his communication, received by Lord Spencer and passed on by the latter to Mr Wastie, promised the speedy release of the young men.

THEN ...



THEN...

An 1886 photo of the High St.

NOW: The High St is so choked with cars as to make a modern photo from this viewpoint meaningless.

In the old picture the tall chimneys to the left belong to Gibbons brewery. The ground floor windows with the rounded tops are part of Robin Saunders's shop, Evenlode DIY. The large building with the plaque on the gable end was probably the smithy shown on the 1876 map (below), later the garage with the mock-Tudor frontage. The single-storey buildings beyond Queen St are no longer there but are shown on the 1876 map; they may have been outbuildings associated with Lord's Farm or Lord's cottages..



EYNESHAM BARNs and FARM BUILDINGS Past and Present **by Tim Jordan**

Suffixes: Numbers relate to locations on the map.

Letters are references, listed at the end.

Barns have been part of the landscape since the Middle Ages. With a relatively simple architecture they provide a window on to our rural history and traditions, each with their own distinguishing regional characteristics. This is especially true in the Cotswolds where, from simple field barns to large threshing barns and a number of elegant surviving estate and manorial barns, they display a number of characteristic features. Most obvious is the harmony the majority have with their surroundings, due in large part to their construction in the local stone under the ubiquitous Cotswold stone tiled roofs.

Modern farming practices, however, no longer fit these earlier stone predecessors and most are now redundant, incompatible with 21st century machinery and intensive farming.

Whilst on the edge of what might generally be considered as the Cotswolds, Eynsham exhibits a long history of a rural economy and allied trades and vestiges of a number of associated buildings can still be seen. Like many a Cotswold village several barns within the village envelope have now been converted to other uses, notably into domestic housing; but equally many more have disappeared completely over the past decades.

It is not within the scope of this article to provide anything approaching a comprehensive agricultural history of even just the village itself; nevertheless, a walk around Eynsham will reward the interested observer with a number of these aspects and some of the key features, as well as being able to locate where some earlier ones existed.

Oxford colleges owned substantial tracts of land in and around the Cotswolds, and Eynsham was no exception. Down in Bitterell a large 18th century barn¹ (Hall barn) belonged to Corpus Christi College. During WWII it was used as Eynsham's War Ag. Depot where agricultural equipment such as binders and ploughs was lent out.

Subsequently it lay empty for many years and then burnt down and lay derelict (fig. 1) until the mid 70s before being sold and rebuilt for domestic use (fig.2). Nearby 'Little Barn' was a small byre² (fig. 3), also converted in the 70s, with a granary³ on staddle stones, now lost (fig.4)). These formed part of Florey's yard and farm as did the adjacent field, now being developed for yet more houses — and apparently to be know as Swinford Green. Another wooden granary, also set on staddle stones, was demolished in 1965; its precise location is currently unknown , through it is believed to have been part of the Home Farm complex between Mill Street and Back Lane ^{18a}.

On the corner of Queen Street and Oxford Road is Lord's Farm⁴ with an adjoining row of cottages. There is, however, no recent evidence of any farming practices here; and perhaps most notably it was the home of Margaret Foote for many years ^A

Returning to the centre of the village, behind Llandaff house and just off Thames Street is Llandaff Barn⁵. This too lay empty for many years with its gable end open to the elements (and pigeons) and which became a particularly fine repository of guano before being converted in the 1980s. Behind this, accessed now from Newland Close, is a small byre⁶ which has also been converted for domestic use. Also off a yard in another part of Thames Street the Seeney family had a garage⁷ (formerly a barn) until its demolition in the 1980s.

Old Farm⁸ was on the corner of Abbey Street and Swan Street ^B where the farmhouse until very recently was in use as a nursing home. This was run by the Ashbys and then the Malins. Swan Farm⁹ was a little further along the street by what is now Haycroft and was run for many years by the Bryants. Both farms were council farms.

Behind these is Abbey Farm^o. Although no longer a working farm, it retains a number of its original features and outbuildings , together with a very fine barn (fig. 5). The latter appears to be the most easterly example of the Cotswold feature of diamond shaped holes which often give a candle-flame like appearance above vertical ventilation slits and sometimes above owl holes. In this instance it can be seen above a series of nesting holes. For many years this farm was the home of the Druce family who had earlier come from Witney ^C. Under their stewardship it increased significantly in acreage, acquiring land and properties throughout the village in the mid 19th century. In 1920 the Duke of Marlborough sold various properties, including Abbey Farm which was then purchased by Jim Hoskins who let his brother William take it over, running it until his retirement in 1946 when his son Bill continued the dynasty. The family by then had also bought Foxley Farm on the



Fig 1. Hall Barn, in Bitterell, derelict after fire.



Fig.2. Hall Barn in Bitterell after rebuilding for domestic use.



Fig.3 Little Barn in Bitterell before conversion.



Fig.4 Little Barn, with adjacent byre on staddle stones, now lost.

outskirts of the village. Like most farms of the period it was a 'mixed' farm, with dairy beef, sheep, pigs and arable – employing several men and a couple of boys. Barley was grown for malting, wheat too and for thatching straw. Bill continued to farm until 1972, it was then tenanted until recently when it passed to other family members. The house itself has been restored from a rather sorry state and the outbuildings and associated land are currently under consideration for housing development.

Southfield Barn, a short way along the Stanton Harcourt road is also up for sale and development. This is a fine Cotswold stone barn with a porch entrance at each end and retaining a number of interesting features including the carpenter's markings on its seven bays (chiselled in Roman numerals in traditional fashion – straight lines being easier to scribe than curved ones).

Returning to Acre End Street, the alley way by the chemists, Wastie's Lane, leads up to a small converted barn¹¹ (with a triangular owl hole in its gable end) once known as the Cockerels. At one time this was run by the Buckingham's before they moved to Five Elms farm.

Blankstones Farm¹², a little further along and on the opposite side of Acre End Street, had a number of remaining outbuildings until very recently; these included a byre, a small barn in line with the farmhouse, pig pens as well as a stone barn with the unusual, if not unique, feature of being entirely brick lined - even to the ventilation slits – and dated as 1805 on an internal tie beam (fig. 6). In the 1920s/early 1930s this was farmed by Edward 'Piggy' Howard before Michael Morley's father took it over. ^D This group of buildings is now in the process of being converted into further domestic housing.

Merton Farm (owned by Merton College) and barn¹³ were almost 'next door' to Blankstones; only now remembered by the name of Merton Close. A drawing of Merton Barn was made by Norman Hayes (fig. 7) before its demise in 1980 and shows a typical Cotswold stone barn with gabled porch/cart entrance, and a then tin roof in a very sorry condition. Lichfield farm had a small red brick barn¹⁴ near the beginning of Chilbridge Road.

Returning to the centre of the village and moving along Mill Street we come to Wintle's Farmhouse¹⁵ (on the corner of Newland Street). This too has completely lost its large barn, though there do seem to be vestiges of attached outbuildings – at one

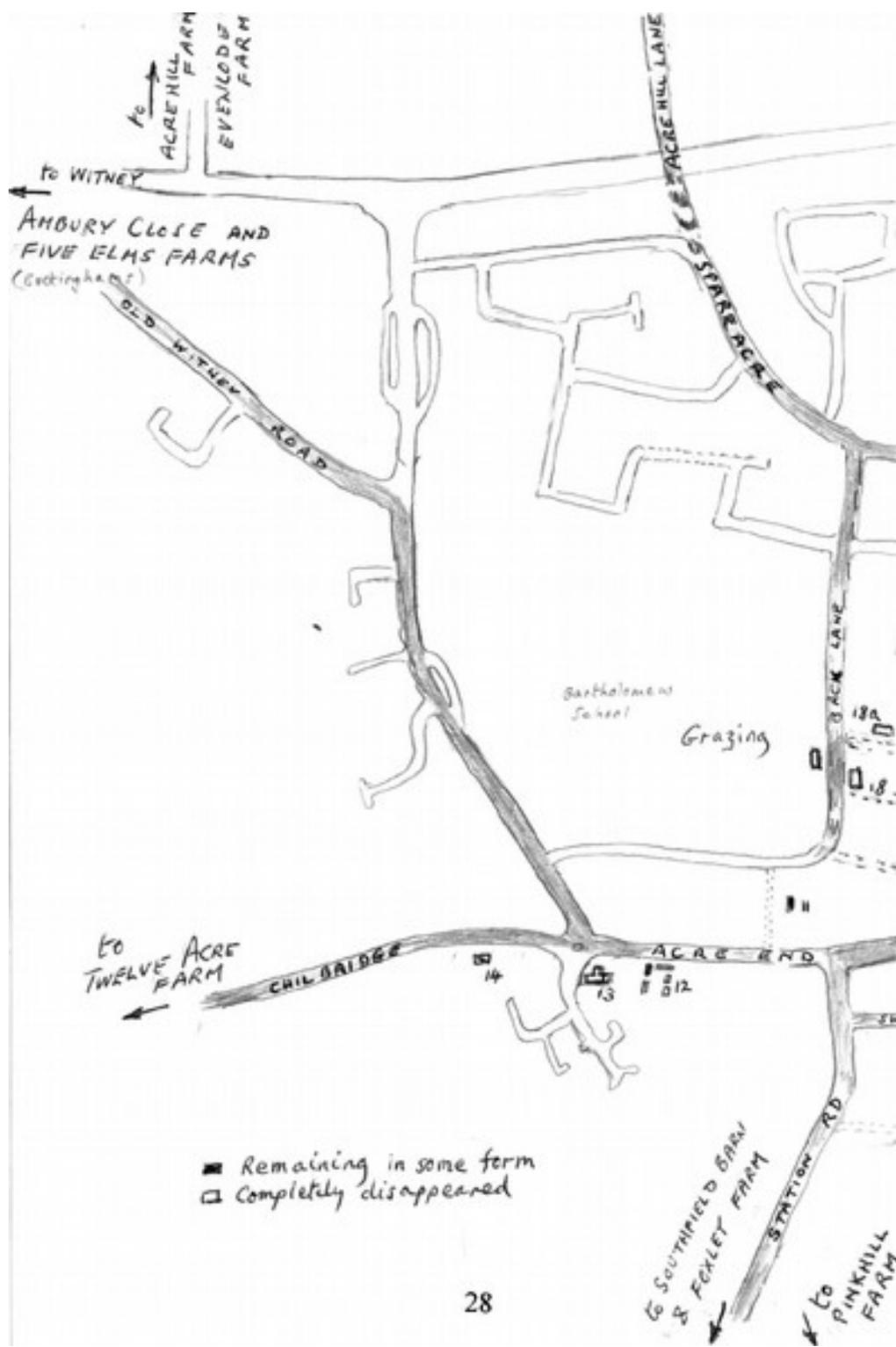
time Barclays Bank, then a small trading company and now The Emporium.

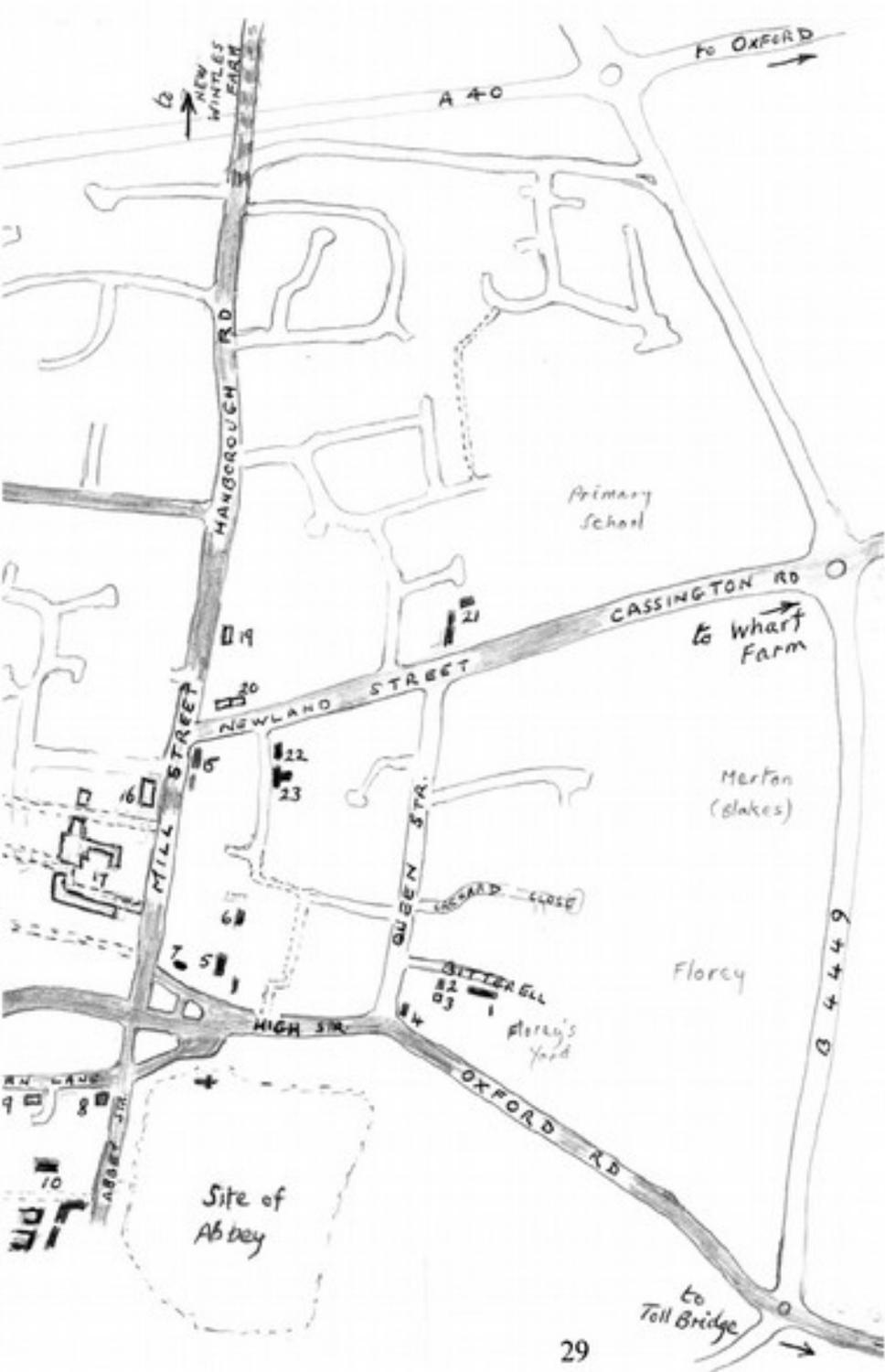
Almost opposite and next to what was the Apostolic Church was Middle Farm¹⁶ (where John Lopes Road and the Post Office now stand). Next to this (towards the village centre) was a small passage-way between, leading through to Back Lane, was Home Farmhouse¹⁷ with its land and various farm buildings as well as a barn¹⁸ to the rear on Back Lane. This was run by the Coates family, Eric and his father Arthur; again as a substantial mixed farm enterprise.

Swan Farmhouse¹⁹ (opposite the old water tower), home of the Bantings from about 1927, was built just before WWI. The Banting family also ran Middle Farm. William Banting had a couple of very splendid shire horses and had land at Acre Hill (behind where Wastie's garage now stands) as far as Acre Hill Farm on the Freeland Road. They grew corn, potatoes, sugar beet, as well as beans for cattle feed. Much of their land in Hanborough Road, opposite the farmhouse, was later compulsorily purchased for council houses.

Turning back into Newland Street were thatched barns²⁰ on the left, part of Swan Farm, the milking parlour and hay barn. These were later destroyed by fire (fig. 8) ^E and never rebuilt. A short distance along Newland Street on the same side and opposite Queen Street is Newland House (now a nursing home) with a row of buildings to the side and a small barn to the rear²¹. This at one time was a small operation run by the Temples, keeping the Jaguar in the coach house and chickens in the back. Returning to the western end of Newland Street on the opposite side, 'The Haven' retains some features of its earlier farming days (its large barn²² has recently undergone major roof repairs and re-thatching) and 'next door' in Newland Close (Previously in the grounds of The Haven) is what was once a small hay barn with adjoining thatched stables²³ (with an unusual and rare faggot roof) which were converted for domestic use in 1972.

The sketch map shows the concentration of these farms within the confines of the village; their abundance in the centre is hard to picture today. For example to the west of Mill Street up to and beyond Back Lane which itself was only a track, consisted of farmsteads, barns, pig sties, cattle pens and yards. Much is now but a fading memory even for the village's older residents, and certainly the present younger generation can have little, if any, appreciation of the almost total self-sufficiency of Eynsham's recent rural and agricultural heritage. Visualising even this recent past is difficult; though a few lines of anecdotal evidence conjure up some





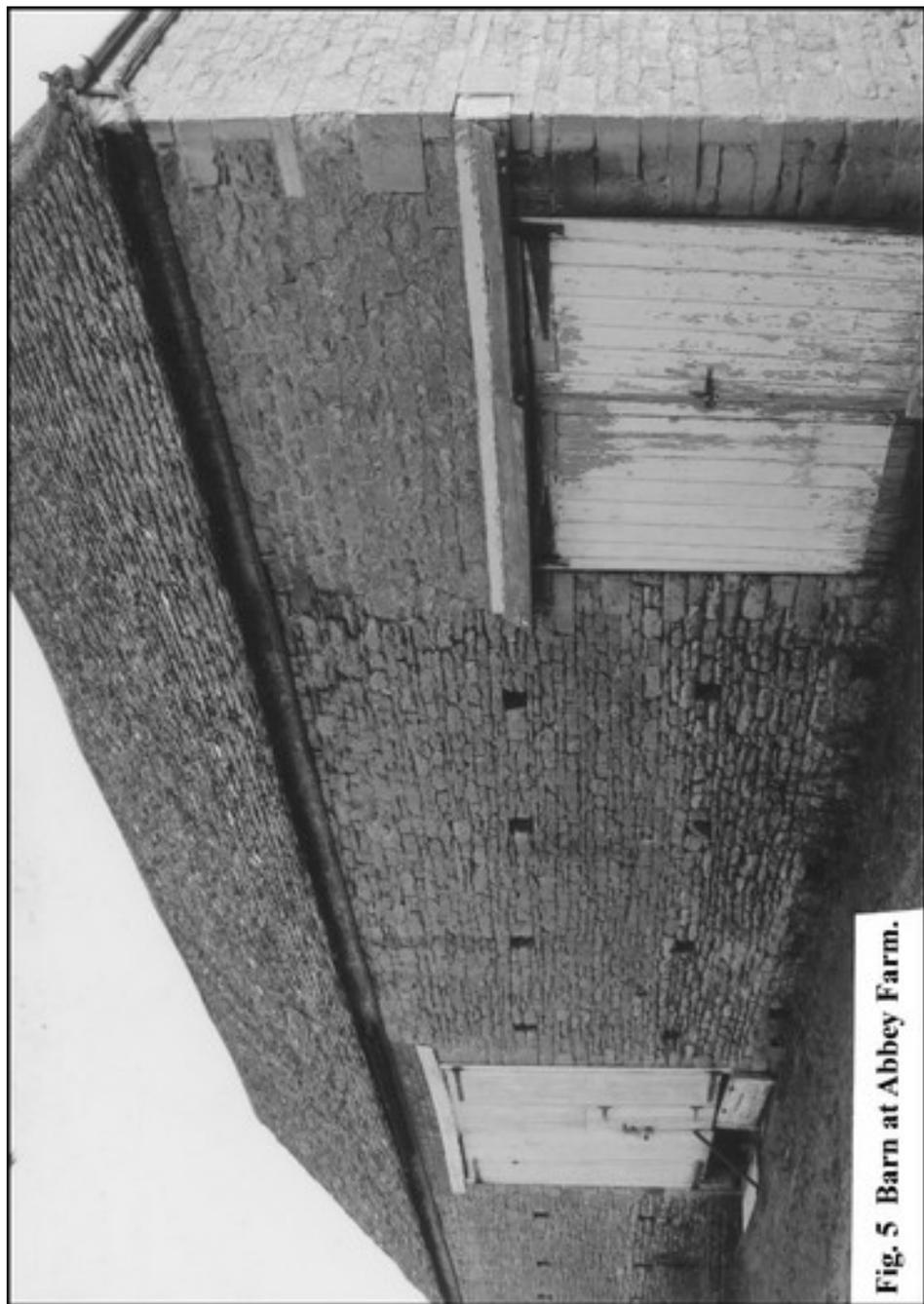


Fig. 5 Barn at Abbey Farm.



Fig. 6. Barn at Blankstones Farm.

amazing scenes. Most, if not all of these farms had land in other parts of the village or surroundings, separate from the home farmstead itself. At various times of day cows would be taken to and from these further pastures and meadows: Abbey Farm took theirs to Southfield Barn or the common; the Bryants took theirs down Chilbridge or up the A.40 to fields opposite Five Elms; Eric Coates from Home Farm took his through the centre along the Cassington Road as well as the Oxford Road to fields opposite the Talbot; Middle Farm herded theirs across the A.40 to Acre Hill. The Pimms at Llandaff took theirs down Station Road; and those from Wintle's Farm were taken down the Hanborough Road. At times it was 'more like a rodeo' according to Norman Butler-Miles who spent the early part of his working life at Abbey and Buckingham's Farms. On Saturday mornings Jo Halford could be seen taking his boar through the village, making a little extra money by 'hiring' it out to service a number of sows along the way!

There were of course a whole host of allied trades and crafts supporting this way of life; some indication of which can be gained from Pamela Richards's article in these pages, and from an earlier map compiled by Mr & Mrs P Faulkner.

But we should set all the above in the context of Eynsham's earlier history. A community has existed here since at least the 6th century and there is evidence of settlement going back some 3000 years. The community evolved over the centuries, at a much slower pace than today! The Abbey, founded a thousand years ago, held sway over a substantial part of England, and much of its known history is detailed in a number of publications. The 'Newlands', established by the Abbey, were perhaps the next significant growth point; a distinct type of medieval planned development, usually consisting of a single street lined with burgage plots.

The Black Death, which apparently wiped out the nearby hamlet of Tilgarsley, would mean that little if any growth followed for some time. Subsequent changes in farming practices would have happened very slowly. Arguably, the next substantial changes took place following the Enclosures. Prior to these, land in Eynsham consisted of three open fields along with meadows and heathland, illustrated in a map of 1762. By the 18th century changes in crops, technology, industry and less labour intensive farming all contributed to change. Between 1800 and 1802 the enclosure of land by Act of Parliament resulted in allocations of land to several bodies, including Jonathan Arnatt, James Day, Joseph Druce, the City of Oxford, Corpus Christi College and Merton College.



Fig.7 Merton Barn (now demolished). Drawing by Norman Hayes.



The Mill Street end of Newland Street shown at the time of a thatch fire in a barn

Fig. 8

I have obviously barely touched upon the number of outlying farms which included Salutation Farm at Barnard Gate and Whitehouse Farm and City Farm along the lower road to Bladon (until the 1950s owned by Oxford City Council), Evenlode Farm, Ambury Close Farm, Twelve Acre Farm beyond Chilbridge, Pinkhill Farm and Wharf Farm near Cassington Mill. These will have to await a possible further review.

My thanks to the many people who have contributed their invaluable recollections to a relative newcomer of a mere 38 years; especially to Norman Butler-Miles, and Phil and Mark Pratley. Martin Harris's books on *The Changing Faces of Eynsham* also provide a great source for many of these old scenes.

References (see inside front cover for abbreviations)

A.E.R., no 9, pp.34-42

B. for a drawing of Old Farm in 1826 by J.Buckler, see E.R. no. 15, p.20.

C.E.R. no. 24, p.5 and front cover.

D.see Michael Morley's reminiscences in these pages.

E.Fig. 8, picture and caption reproduced from *The Changing Faces of Eynsham*, book 3, by Martin J.Harris, p.20.

A manuscript note by the late J.F.Wastie

In the 1890s when the pews were removed from St Leonards Church, Eynsham Mr Charles Faulks, the Station Master (whose house was the last on the left hand side before reaching the Level Crossing in Station Rd) had one and put it in his Summer House and on the book ledge is a verse written by the late Mr Jimmy Davey one Sunday when the 80 year old vicar (Revd Rowton) became forgetful and made his sermon last till 1-30 p.m.

"Oh man of God, our ancient vicar,
Emblem of life's declining flicker,
Our dinners spoilt and housewives vexed
Through length of Sermon and of text"

James Patrick Davey

Service lasted from 11 am to 1-30 pm and folks came to find out what had happened.

THOMAS SMALLHORN'S MAP OF EYNESHAM

by **Brian Atkins**

Brian Spooner owns a map that once belonged to the village doctor, Thomas Smallhorn (1838-1902, and local doctor from 1865 until his death)*. It was originally marketed by the map seller Edward Stanford, 26 & 27 Cockspur St., Charing Cross who was the Sole Agent by appointment for the Ordnance Survey and Geological Survey maps, the Admiralty charts, the Indian Government maps, etc. In preparing it for sale Stanford took certain liberties. He trimmed the original so that it lost its key and its date. However it is clearly the first large-scale (1:2500) Ordnance Survey map of Eynsham of 1876.

It has been cut into 21 rectangular pieces 6"x 9" and mounted on a linen backing leaving small gaps between the pieces so that it can be neatly folded into a 6"x 9" rectangle enclosed in a decorative cardboard cover (if you fold it correctly!). There is foxing along some seams and the scale bar which has been cut from the original and pasted on the linen in three sections is useful only if one makes allowance for the gaps between the pieces! The map is coloured (buildings red, waterways blue and roads brown). The village itself occupies the equivalent of only three of the twenty-seven pieces, so there is much to be learnt about the surrounding countryside in 1876.

Part of the map is reproduced (without colouration) on p.21.

*For an account of the life of this popular village doctor, see Martin Harris's article in *Eynsham Record* no.14, 1997, pp.31-33, and his photograph on the front cover.



Smallhorn's signature on the map.

MICHAEL REMEMBERS

by Michael Morley

Most Good Englishmen and True are born with an innate love of their countryside and the ocean that surrounds it, and I am no exception having been born on the edge of the Weald in Sussex-by-the-sea. It was a small village which boasted an oast house at one end and a railway station at the other. Quite astonishingly, despite the best endeavours of DEFRA and Dr Beeching, both remain intact today.

After my father was demobbed from the RAF in 1945 he was determined to resume the career which his ancestors had pursued in farming. But finding a smallholding was not easy. He repped for the agricultural feed firm, Farmers' Marketing Supplies in Berks, Bucks and Oxon driving his own pre-war Singer Bantam, reg. APN 15. He eventually discovered his blessed plot in a lively Oxfordshire village and he moved his family into Eynsham - mother, me and my twin sisters, Veronica and Angela in 1953. All the best people were doing it likewise - Her Majesty also moved into her new residence that year.

My father bred pigs here (Landrace and Large White for those in the village who still retain some farming memory of the old days), and kept a few thousand laying hens whose output was mainly sent to the packing station to have a little lion stamped on them so that the nation could "go to work on an egg". Approximately one quarter of the farm produce was sold at the door of Blankstones Farm. The Post Office, in its pedantic and nationalised way, later mundanely and simply designated our farm, my father's pride and joy, to be '37, Acre End Street' which did not particularly please him. One of my sisters' boyfriends carved BLANKSTONES FARM into a piece of oak and my father screwed it up high on the wall above the entrance. He never did display any '37'!

Many of you older readers will remember all of this and, indeed, I still have customers and visitors who remember my father, Jim, with great fondness, and those far-off days when you could buy from him a single large or two small cracked eggs for poaching, frying or baking cakes. By 1971 he had to charge seven shillings and sixpence for a dozen huge eggs (that's 37 and a half pence for those of you who do not remember English money), and many of them were double yolkers because he fed his hens so well!

This was back in the days - and it really does not seem so long ago - when a self-employed chap looking after livestock did not expect ever to take a holiday and, apart

from the time when we were very small and we were taken to the little seaside villages of Barnham and Climping in Sussex, I do not remember my father's being able to spend a summer holiday with us except on one occasion. This was when my mother and grandmother took us to spend a week in a chalet on Dunster Beach in Somerset. My father, I remember, was able to take four days away from the farm at that time as his good friend, Joe Halford, an extremely strong and larger-than-life character who also kept pigs here in the village, promised to look after my father's livestock while he was away. This was the norm; we did not think of ourselves as being deprived in any way; we understood, even at our young age, that daddy was a wonderful daddy who provided for his family at the cost of his own time and leisure, and we had the most idyllic and carefree childhood here on the farm. He worked so hard for us and I will always love him for that. He died of a brain tumour in 1977 at the young age of 63, my own age now, and is buried in St Leonard's churchyard.

I have already mentioned how kind Joe Halford was in looking after my father's livestock so that he could have a short break away with us, and he gave my father a hand in many other ways. A farmer on his own needs a friend to help him with the heavy work now and again, and there came a time when my father was able to return that kindness, although under most sad circumstances. Joe and Mrs Halford were about their usual business in Banbury livestock market one morning during the freezing winter of 1962 when a cow suddenly kicked over a heater which set fire to a ten gallon tank full of paraffin. The place became an immediate inferno trapping Mrs Halford inside the building. Joe, who was outside, rushed in to rescue his poor wife who, by this time, was on fire herself. They both survived although Joe received 40% and his wife 70% burns. She was not expected to survive. During their long recuperation my father was able to help Joe's young family with the husbandry of their livestock. The Halford family was well regarded and many other folk rallied round in other ways to help during that time. But Joe's daughters, Josie Smith and Marilyn, still remember my father with fondness for the aid he gave them then. Joe died in 1966, but Mrs Halford, despite the horrific injuries she had received, lived on into the nineties, an extremely well-respected figure in the village.

Who amongst you will also remember some of these other legendary Eynsham characters from my father's generation: Phil Blake (son of Ernest Blake, founder of Blake's Mineral Waters) and his son, Roy, who ran the motor scrap garage with its single petrol pump next to Blankstones at Grange Mill, now 35 Acre End Street; or Mr Johnson who kept the grocer's shop at what is now Janty's; or Mr Evans the chemist (now Lloyds), and, next door to Evans, David and Peggy Knight who ran Knight's Stores at 62 Acre End Street rented from Mr and Mrs Beauchamp? Who

remembers Stan Launchbury's bicycle shop or his mother's dressmaker's and haberdashery shop on the high pavement which was later taken over by Mrs Marsh? Some while later it became a rather snooty antiques shop. The front was eventually taken down and it reverted to being a domestic dwelling. There is no trace left of the fine shop it was. It stood next door to the bakery, also on the high pavement, whose proprietor, Edmund Hall, would personally bring his freshly baked bread round to the doors of Acre End Street and beyond in a voluminous wicker basket slung on his arm; and, of course, many more will remember his rival Bigger's, the baker on the corner of Thames Street and The Tuer whose firm long-outlived Mr Hall's widow, Mary.

So many things have disappeared from Eynsham. Where are the two great landmarks, the water tower and the railway bridge?

31 A Acre End Street is part of The Grange which belonged years ago to Mr Burleigh James and his mother, and now belongs to Sally Moyes. It is a small shop with a two-step-down entrance from the pavement but it has had a great influence on a number of businesses in the village. Who remembers Hammond's, the electrical shop where, for sixpence, you could get your enormous glass radio battery recharged in a week? It was also a bus and coach booking office, and a collection point of goodies for raffles and fetes in the village. Electrical Sales and Services spent their early years here; it was Mrs Merchant's Antiques shop and an early venue for my own business, The Country Gallery. It housed Helen Peacocke's emporium, The Wooden Spoon, and finally it has become today's business, The Pantry.

Who remembers Bert and Dora Ayers at the Ropewalk or Fred and Mrs Hayes at Rose Cottage who were evacuated from London during the war? Many of you will remember Cecil Calcutt, builder and organist, whose widow, Joan, still resides in Acre End Street; but who will now remember the blacksmith/farrier, Mr Burden and the forge in Newland Street which was demolished in order to provide an apparently greater asset to the village, Hawthorn Road? And who remembers Lottie Pimm who kept the shop on the island opposite The Square? Do you remember the old post office run by Bevan Pimm and his son, Stephen (still with us, *Deo gratias*) on the site now occupied by Abbey Properties?

And who will remember Bill Sawyer who kept the most wonderful and useful shop in the village next to the farrier's in Newland Street which held everything from cheese to Wellington boots? This was the most popular meeting place in the village as I recall. After lunch on a Saturday afternoon, my father would resort there to meet

some locals with the excuse that he must replace an old galvanised bucket, or sheet of corrugated iron to repair the roof of a pigsty, or to buy a piece of lumber to block a hole in a fence. Bill's customers would trawl through the debris he called "stock" in the yard at the rear of the shop. They would point to a scruffy item which might resemble a rusting pig trough or a piece of second-hand roofing felt. Bill would say, in his Oxfordshire accent, "Bugger me, I didn't know I had that there. Well, I would think about 4/6, eh?" The deal would be struck and my father would return home with some barbed wire and a length of chain! The important thing was that he had shared some chat and caught up on some local news over a pipe of tobacco with the local farmers. Bill's was a most colourful place and you may find more information on it from his daughter, Jean Buttrick. She has written a lovely nostalgic history of her family's shop, and I am sure that Robin Saunders won't mind my saying that the nearest equivalent to Sawyer's in the village today would be Eynsham DIY - but without the swearing!

No history of Eynsham would be complete without a mention of Father John Lopes (pronounced Loe-peez) the first Catholic priest to arrive in our parish since Henry VIII destroyed the beautiful Benedictine abbey here in the mid 16th century. This gentleman had a long and extraordinary journey. He was born in 1882 to a Jewish Portugese father and Spanish Catholic mother, and was ordained into the Church of England, and then converted to the Catholic faith under the influence of John Henry Cardinal Newman (proclaimed a saint in 2010 during the visit of his Holiness Pope Benedict XVI).

Father Lopes bought and lived in The White House in Mill Street in 1929 (later to be owned by Basil and Mary Streat and their family). He was a wonderful and eccentric man who could now be remembered only by those of us who are at least 60 years old! With his own family's money he built the first Catholic church in the village (since St Leonard's) upon the site of the former Benedictine abbey. He dedicated it to St Peter. That is to say he built the sanctuary and its altar facing east, as was proper, and he then ran out of money! The nave was then built of timber and the roof of corrugated iron sheets and this served the Catholic community of Eynsham for many years. Father, in his later years, suffered dreadfully with swollen feet and he used to say Mass in his socks. This made him rather slow in movement but gave him the excuse of sitting down to deliver his serious and pithy sermons which could stretch for three-quarters of an hour making Low Mass last for at least an hour and a half. He was witty, funny, irascible and devout, and many of us would not hold our Catholic faith today if it were not for him. He was most solicitous in teaching us young ones our catechism and keeping the local Catholic congregation

up to the mark in the reception of the Sacraments. I remember him myself with very great affection and gratitude, and can say that when he went to meet his Maker, at the age of 80 years, it was with both sorrow and pride that I was able to assist in serving his requiem Mass and burial in St Peter's churchyard in September 1961.

Father Lopes did not live to see the completion of his church, and it was left to the modernists to turn his beautifully built east-facing sanctuary into the common entrance at the back of the present St Peter's church which now, against all tradition, faces west. I do not think he would have been pleased!

Our parents were most solicitous over the education of their children. They sent us to get a good traditional Catholic education at St Aloysius School in Oxford, next door to what is now The Oratory, until we were eleven. My sisters then went to St Juliana's Convent, Begbroke, and I attended Salesian College, Oxford.

I emerged from there with my science subjects less than adequate. I was chucked out of Maths, Chem. & Physics 0-Levels although I can still quote Archimedes' Principle, which stands me in good stead re. the current 'melting icebergs and rising sea level' arguments, but I have still found no use for algebra or logarithms. I still don't know what 'x' equals, but I did reasonably well in Eng., Eng.Lit., Hist., Geog. & Languages.

The latter subject brought me my first job translating German correspondence into English in the Foreign Department of Blackwell's bookshop in Oxford. My colloquial German was not that hot but my "bureaudeutsch" was a thing of great wonder. You know the sort of thing: "Ze pen of meine Tante finds itself next to ze glorious bust of Adolf on ze bureau of mein Onkel". I spent a year in that department and then a year in the English Literature and History departments in the front shop in Broad Street. I then took part in an exchange arrangement when I went to Giessen in Germany for a while but, on return, I realised that advancement would not be easy within the family business that was Blackwell's at that time.

I moved down to Bath in Somerset where I was employed briefly by 'Lewis and Harris', a lovely firm of leather bookbinders and restorers. They taught me how to restore old maps and prints and, with the help of my father who had long before realised, unfortunately, that a farming career was not for me and that I would not be following in his footsteps, I set up in business in 1969. I was taught by a very dear friend who had a picture-framing business in Bath how to restore, mount, frame and present all kinds of pictures and artifacts, and I was able to mount a couple of exhibitions of my own landscape water colours in the early seventies.

I married Jane in 1974 and we returned to Eynsham in 1979. My mother had the old cowstall and milking parlour converted into Rickyard Cottage and we moved in with our two children, Jacinth. and Timothy. I was able to move my business into the village and began trading from 31 A Acre End Street. Our third child, Alexandra, was born here in 1982 and the rest is modern history. I moved the business to No.35 and then, finally, to the top of our garden at 39, Acre End Sreet as the daily commute to No.35 was beginning to get me down! And that is where you will find me today.

I am a devotee of American history beyond the Mississippi and have driven approximately 15,000 miles looking up the old trails, mountains, canyons, buttes, plains, deserts, cow towns, gold and silver mines and gravesites of the famous and infamous who make up the story of the Old West.

Another great interest is the Reformation history of the Church in England and Jane and I are the co-ordinators of the Traditional Catholic Mass Centre in Oxford for the Society of St Pius Xth.

Most of you will now have seen the development work going on around us at the moment. Since my mother died and was buried next to my father in 2008, my sisters and I have had no option but to sell this blessed plot because of inheritance tax. It is a matter of great regret that we could not have passed it on to our children. But I think my parents would be pleased to see that the gentleman who bought our land has understood the history and nature of the farm and would appreciate the sympathetic hand with which he is adapting the uses of the past into the needs of the future of the village.

Plus ça change

Eynsham Parish Council voted once again to ask Oxfordshire County Council to consider abolishing tolls at Swinford Bridge. The matter was raised by Mr R.P.Clarke, who joined the council earlier in the year. Chairman Mr H.L.Hill said the council had been pressing for the abolishment for a long time. The council agreed to send a letter to the county council.

Oxford Times. October 21, 1960

EYNSHAM HISTORY GROUP

Founded 1959

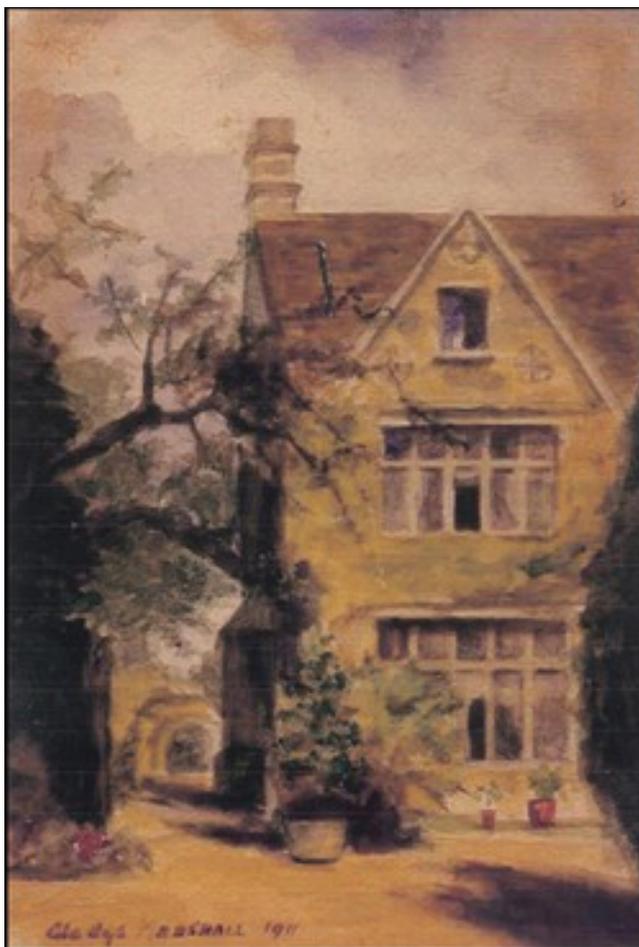
The E.H.G. exists primarily to encourage studies in, and to promote knowledge of the history of the village and parish of Eynsham, Oxfordshire, by means of regular meetings (normally at least ten), with invited speakers, during the winter and spring; and occasional outings in the summer.

New members are welcome.

Please apply to the Secretary for details of meetings and subscriptions.

Officers and Committee members subject to confirmation at the next AGM
Unless otherwise stated, all addresses are in Eynsham

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