

THE HISTORY OF BUTT STREET

by Mr. F. Masham

Butt Street, which enters Minchinhampton from the north and extends from the Blue Boys Dairy on the Cirencester Road to the Market House, appears to have had some houses built on its eastern side from at least the 17th Century; the western side, on the other hand, apart from the older houses in the narrow part at the southern end, was not built up until quite recently.

The actual line of the road itself, with its curve towards the Market House and High Street at the southern end and its shallow curve at the other end towards the Blue Boys, is interesting and invites speculation regarding the original layout of the town beside the Church and Manor House and the possibility that at one time there may have been a village green on the ground between Friday Street, Tetbury Street and High Street.

Be that as it may, by the 17th Century Butt Street certainly existed since it is mentioned in a Church "terrier" (a list of Church property) dated 1677, now at the Gloucester Record Office. A deed dated 1651 conveys two cottages, one on either side of "a little plot of waste ground" leading from the highway to the parson's ground called the "lyes". It is interesting that these two cottages were, according to this deed, owned by a Samuel Butt (mercator). The width of the "little plot" is given as 19 feet and it so happens that the present-day width of the driveway leading from Butt Street to Stuart House (which used to be the old rectory) is about 19 feet. Thus, although the deed does not mention Butt Street by name, it seems reasonable to assume that the "highway" referred to is in fact Butt Street. It follows from this that the "lyes" mentioned in Church terriers dated 1584, 1677 and 1704 is the ground on which the rectory was built in the 18th Century. Moreover, the area of the "lyes" is given in the terrier of 1584 which refers to "two other drye leases called or known by the name or names of the lyes containing by estimation 12 acres."

However it seems that this and other Church ground was not built upon until the 17th Century since the first mention of houses is in the Hampton terrier of 1635 where seven houses (and their tenants) are listed. By 1677 this had increased to nineteen and by 1704 to about forty-two. Not all of these, of course, were built on the "lyes"; of those that were, some would presumably be fronting on Butt Street, since the "lyes" appears to have extended as far as that.

As regards the dates of building of the present-day houses some have datestones in their external walls although, of course, these may only refer to rebuilding dates, or new buildings on cleared sites. A lot more research needs to be done on Land Tax and other records at the Gloucestershire Record Office and Gloucester City Library in order to link the names of proprietors and tenants recorded in the Rate Book of 1830 with the Land Tax returns of the same year, so that the owners and tenants of, if possible, every house in the street can be traced year by year back to 1780, which is the date of the earliest Land Tax record available at Gloucester. The hope would then be to link the ownership in 1780 with the earlier information from the Church Terriers dated 1704, 1677, 1635 and 1584 which were mentioned above.

Sources

Church Terriers	Glos. Record Office
1830 Rate Book	Minchinhampton Lib.
1830 Land Tax	Minchinhampton Lib.
Other Land Tax Assessments	Glos. Record Office

THE SALUTATION INN

by S. Francis & D. Wall

Why the Salutation Inn as a topic for research? An obvious choice really, as we had both lived there (but at different times). Both of us had some idea about the history of the building, and were interested to find out further details. The premises in Tetbury St. were a public house for at least 250 years, keeping the same name all that time. In 1966 it was converted into an electrical shop. The final spur to progress was the decision to use the history of the building as the basis for a window display in the 1984 Country Fayre.



The deeds are always a good place to start any investigation, and proved very easy to obtain in this case. The sale of the unlicensed Salutation necessitated many searches, including a detailed account of West Country Breweries, formerly Stroud Breweries, as the vendor. Also listed was “a bundle of old deeds” which upon unwrapping proved to be a continuous record of owners since 1743. The conveyance of that date was between a Mary Twemlow of Dursley (who put her mark ‘M’) and Thomas Earle, a maltster of Minchinhampton. This first deed also refers back to some earlier owners, although sadly without dates. In 1803 the “messuage, tenement and Inn commonly known or called by the name of the Salutation, with the brewhouse, stable and appurtenances” were conveyed to William Neale, described first as a victualler of the town, but later as an innkeeper. Thomas Earle is described as “getting on in years” but there is some confusion in the early C19th as it appears William Neale held the property in trust for his mother-in-law, Rosannah Cosburn, who received £15 annually from the property. In 1817, still in trust, it passed to Samuel Holder, only to be sold, finally “free of

encumbrances” four years later to Joseph Pitt of Eastcourt, Wilts. Inns at this time must have been a profitable investment, as there is a long period of outside ownership. The Salutation passed to Joseph Cripps, wool stapler and banker, of Cirencester in 1829, for the sum of £15!. Cripps and Company are listed in the 1830 rate returns as the owners of the George Inn on the High Street. The Salutation was sold to William Gorton, an engineer of Stroud, and on his death his widow and other testators decided to sell to Thomas May of Amberley who described himself as a coachman.

A second set of deeds then appear. These relate to a cottage “pulled down by Thomas May and the site thrown into the Salutation Yard” sometime after 1866. Various letters, marriage certificates and wills are in this group, and could be the basis of a separate study, as they appear to have close connections with the once owners of the Post Office. This cottage was bought at public auction and the Sale Notice still exists. Another set of papers relates to a dispute between

May and Samuel Marling, the Stroud clothier, over an alleged 5sh. ground rent owing on the cottage.

In 1875 the now enlarged premises were purchased by Messers Halliwell, Biddle and Stanton “partners and common brewers of Stroud” who later became directors of the Stroud Brewery Company, and held title until the purchase by Frank Wall in 1966.

The owners of this property provide only half the story, however, the other half being the occupiers or tenants. Directories such as Kelly’s and other trade directories are a good source of information when the property being researched is a commercial one, although sometimes there may be omissions. Census returns also provided occupiers names, as sometimes do the deeds.

In 1743 Benjamin Morse is mentioned as a tenant in the first deed in the bundle, but then there is quite a large gap in our present information until the Gell & Bradshaw Directory of 1820 in Stroud Library gives Harriet Wells as victualler at the Salutation Inn. The 1830 rate return stated William Woodward as occupying the premises listed as Salutation Inn and stable. The name Woodward turns up again in the 1851 Census where Ann Woodward, Widow and Innkeeper, aged 72 is listed as living in Tetbury Street; we shall, of course, be looking for the link here. By 1858 Nathaniel Wording is at the Inn according to Slater’s Royal, National and Commercial Directory and he is still there in 1861 with his wife Hannah according to the Census.

In 1865 and 1867 Robert Browning is mentioned as occupant in Morris’ Directories of those dates, and in the latter Nathaniel Wording has moved to the Crown. More information on Robert Browning appears in the 1871 Census. In this year, at 80 years of age, he is innkeeper and -head of the household, which consists of himself, his wife Caroline aged 62, and Miss Hannah N. Greening, their niece, a scholar aged 10. By 1876 Mrs. Caroline Browning has taken over the Salutation according to Kelly’s Directory, and is still there in 1881, when the Census lists her as head of the household, a -widow and innkeeper, although now apparently only three years older than in the last Census return! Her niece still lives with her as an unmarried servant. Mrs. Browning is still in charge in 1889 (Kelly’s) but in 1897 Miss Mary Greening (presumably the niece) has taken over.

Stroud Library has a copy of ‘A List of licensed Houses in the County of Gloucester 1903’ which was prepared by order of the Quarter Session Court, in which Mary Greening is given as licensee with a seven day licence, a closing time of 10 p.m. and an estimated rental of £16.

From various directories we know that Thomas Ball was in occupation in 1919, 1923 and 1931, Henry Jas. Andrews in 1939, and from personal knowledge Horace T.. Harmer was landlord from. 1947 to 1964.

The search for information has been fascinating and uncovered many avenues for further research. Extracts from the Gloucester Journal include four notices of sale from the 1730s and 1740's. The first, 1731, refers to “a freehold inn and the leasehold new building thereunto adjoining” which may help to explain some of the problems encountered in the deeds. By 1739 it is “now in very good custom” and it appears to have been owned by a Hampton schoolmaster, Giles Farr in 1742.

The study of early wills should enable us to take the history even further back in time.

Hopefully, Church records may enable us to find out more about the people who lived in the building at various times. Even since starting to write this short account, a copy of a will in Minchinhampton Library has yielded the name of the owner in 1695 — Mrs. Ann Guy -whose grandson Gyles- Farr is bequeathed her best bed. Perhaps even more interesting is the inventory taken at her death in 1718 detailing the furniture and goods found in the Salutation.- There is still, we're sure much more information to come to light, and our research continues.

Sources

Deeds to 4 Tetbury St.	F. A. Wall
Census Returns -	Glos. City Library
Various Directories	Stroud Library
	Glos. City Library
1830 Rate Book	Minchinhampton Lib,
Extracts from Glos. Journal 1722 to 1747	Minchinhampton Lib.
Copies of Wills and Inventories to 1722	Minchinhampton Lib.

THE KEARSEY'S AND THE HAMPTON WINDMILL

by Mrs. J Blanshard

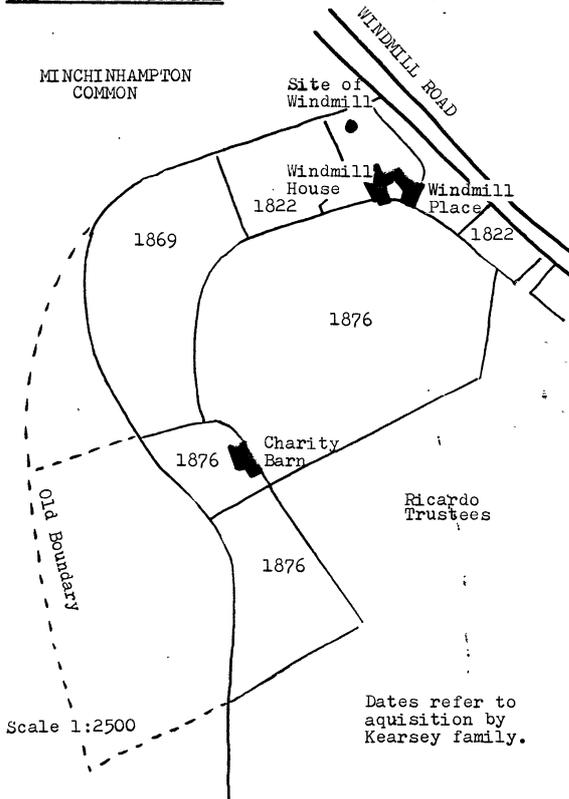


An imposing windmill once stood at Minchinhampton, at the Common end of Windmill Road, but its life span as a trading mill was considerably briefer than would have been expected from such a windmill. No records have yet come to light concerning customers or tradespeople who had dealings with the owners, but an 89 year old resident of Minchinhampton has said that his grandmother used to relate about people taking corn from a house in Brimscombe valley up to the mill to be ground. But there is evidence

that it was built very early after 1800, as it is marked on the 1803 map for the Survey & Valuation for equalising the Poor Rates in Minchinhampton, and William Clissold was in possession.

It would appear that trade at that time was not easy for a malster, for within the next ten years the windmill changed hands no less than four times, In addition to owning the windmill and cottage, a small close of land then came into the hands of William Clissold who, in 1809, sold it all to Charles Lowe for £490. He then, without delays exchanged it with Thomas Corkle for a cottage and malthouse in Box, Corkle, in turn, sold the mill, cottage and land in 1812 to John Dudbridge Gardner Kearsley, a maltster from Barnsfield, and it then remained in the Kearsley family for over sixty years.

THE HAMPTON WINDMILL



The cottage referred to, a two-up two-down building, had been built prior to 1799, with attached malthouse and stables, and later was to be enlarged into what is now Windmill Place. John D.G. Kearsley lived in this cottage but was an enterprising man, and almost immediately began building a much grander property adjoining the cottage. He obtained a mortgage of £200 for this new house, which overlooked open country to the south-west, and contained sitting-room, breakfast-room, dining room and kitchen; on the first floor were 3 bedrooms and on the second floor 4 bedrooms. This was to be named Windmill House.

It would appear that by this time business at the windmill was flourishing, and John Kearsley considered it was a good time to sell, not only his newly—built Windmill House but also the milling business.

The Gloucester Journal dated 12th December 1812 ran this advertisement:

TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION BY MR. GOODALL

On Saturday afternoon, the 19th day of December 1812 at 3 o'clock at the sign of the Horse & Groom, Northgate Street, Gloucester, unless previously disposed of by private contract:-
A CAPITAL FREEHOLD WINDMILL in excellent repair (built only 8 years since) and in full business capable of grinding 700 bushels per week, situate on the left side of the road leading from Minchinhampton to Stroud, containing two pairs of stones, and every convenience there—unto belonging.

Also a new built FREEHOLD MESSUAGE TENEMENT OR DWELLING HOUSE, with a piece of arable land adjoining, containing by estimation ONE ACRE be the same more or less. For a view of the premises and particulars known by applying to the auctioneer, Cheltenham.

The vendor, John D.G. Kearsley was the second of four sons of William and Sarah Kearsley, and all were born and brought up in Rodborough. When the youngest son, Samuel was 26 he married Ann Rogers by licence at Tetbury, and they had two sons, John and William, and a daughter Elizabeth. It was this Samuel Kearsley who in 1814 purchased the windmill and a small area of land around it from his elder brother John, and Samuel owned it until his death in 1871. At that point Samuel did not take the cottage (Windmill Place) or the new house (Windmill House) as he was residing with his wife and three children at Stockingbridge, Swells Hill. These two properties were bought by Richard Earl. However, in 1822 Samuel purchased the properties from him, and moved into Windmill House with his wife and family, at the same time purchasing a piece of land next to the road to provide a garden for Windmill Place.

Both the 1824 Bryant's map of Gloucestershire and the 1828 Ordnance Survey 1st Edition show

the position of the Minchinhampton windmill. The 1830 Minchinhampton Survey for equalising Poor Rates shows the area owned by Samuel Kearsley consisting of windmill, warehouse, malthouse, paddock, house and garden to be 1 acre 2 roods 37 perches, the total due from him being £10..7s.6d. Similarly, in 1839, the list of rents charged in lieu of tithes included Samuel's holding around the windmill, for which he contributed 7s.5d.

So Samuel continued in business at the windmill, and became a property owner and money lender. On the 1841 Census Return he is recorded as a maltster, aged 57, with his wife Ann aged 64, and his daughter aged 20 all living at Windmill House. By that time his two sons had left home; William Woodruff Kearsley was training to be a lawyer and from 1842 to 1880 was in business in Bedford Street, and later Russell Street, Stroud.

In April 1850 Samuel's daughter Elizabeth left home and married William Roland Berkeley at Cheltenham, and by March 1851 Samuel, then 67, had a live-in servant cum farm labourer John Glassonbury a native of Hampton, but it appears the business was deteriorating and the windmill and outbuildings were not being adequately maintained.

Two years later an important, family event took place when William Woodruff Kearsley married Sarah Isobella Harris at Stroud Parish Church. He purchased Burleigh Court in 1853, and lived there until his death in 1880.

Sadness came to Samuel in March 1860 when his wife Ann died. She was born in Chavenage and was buried aged 81 in Rodborough Churchyard. Samuel continued to live at Windmill House and engaged Hannah Brinkworth, a widow of 50 to keep house for him and Frederick Walkley (50) a miller, to attend to the business, boarding him and his wife, probably in Windmill Place.

By, 1863 Kelly's Trade Directory states that George Taylor was the miller there, trading with Edmund Taylor, a maltster and corndealer. But five years later William Chater, a farmer, was tenant in Windmill Place according to Slater's Trade Directory, and remained there at least 14 years. In spite of his advancing years in 1869 Samuel purchased another 3 acres of land near the windmill.

In 1870 Mary Adey was housekeeper to Samuel, but the demise of the old man and his windmill was drawing very near. On 12th March 1871 he died and was buried with his wife, Ann; the copper plate inscription on their grave reads: —

TO THE MEMORY OF ANN WIFE OF SAMUEL
KEARSEY OF THE PARISH OF MINCHINHAMPTON
WHO DIED MARCH 30th 1860, ALSO OF THE
ABOVE NAMED SAMUEL KEARSEY WHO DIED
MARCH 12th 1871 AGED 87 YEARS.

In his Will, made on 30th December 1868 he left all his money and property in trust to his sons, John Rogers Kearsley and William Woodruff Kearsley. Samuel's wish was that the hereditaments remain in the name of Kearsley. The Will mentions property owned in Stroud, Minchinhampton, Rodborough, Leckhampton, Prestbury, Huntley and Blaisdon, all in Gloucestershire.

By this time the Windmill itself was in very poor condition, as the following letter reveals: -

May 17th 1871

Dear Sir

Your being now in possession of the Property of your late Father in the Parish of Minchinhampton I think it is right to make you acquainted with some particulars which came to my knowledge while agent to him concerning the Windmill which instead of a profit to him was a dead loss of at least £20 p.a. and would suggest that any repairs being needed to it that it should be discontinued and converted to some other use, when I have no doubt the two adjoining houses would let to respectable tenants who would not think of living in them while annoyed by such a nuisance as a Windmill . . .

The writer of the letter, Thomas Smith, was a superannuated Revenue Officer, and aged 72 when he wrote it, living with his wife and family at Church Street Avening, and the letter shows that Thomas Smith had had Business connections with Samuel Kearsay over many years.

Within two weeks of his father's death William Woodruff Kearsay had advertised the houses for letting and had arranged for his father's effects to be auctioned. The following advertisements appeared in the Stroud Journal, March 25th, 1871;-

T. & W. DAVIS WILL SELL BY AUCTION ON THE PREMISES ADJOINING THE WINDMILL ON THURSDAY MARCH 30th L?&L, COMMENCING AT 12 o'clock. THE WHOLE OF THE USEFUL HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE AND EFFECTS LATE THE PROPERTY OF MR. S. KEARSEY DECEASED, COMPRISING FOUR-POSTS AND TENT BEDSTEADS, FEATHER AND FLOCK BEDS, QUILTS, COUNTERPANES, BLANKETS, WASHING & DRESSING TABLES, DRESSING GLASSES, CLOTHES CHESTS, BUREAU, CHESTS OF DRAWERS, NIGHT COMMODE, TWO CLOCKS ALARUM, CARPETS, OIL PAINTINGS, MAHOGANY AND WINDSOR CHAIRS EASY DITTO, SOFA, MAHOGANY AND OAK DINING, PEMBROKE AND TEA TABLES, MAHOGANY AND READING DITTO, TEA URNS GLASS, CHINA, TABLEWARE, PLATED SPIRIT STAND, FENDERS, FIRE UTENSILS, TWO WARMING PANS, COAL SCUTTLE, LARGE COPPER FURNACES WITH BRASS COCK, STEELYARDS, MEAT SAFE, COOKING UTENSILS, SEASONED CASKS, SALTING LEAD, DOUGH TROUGH, LOT OF MILL PECKS, CARPENTER'S WORK BENCH, NEW OAK GATE, IRON PIGS' TROUGH, THRESHING MACHINE, WHEELBARROW, QUANTITY OF POTATOES, SMALL QUANTITY OF BARLEY, PEAS & WHEAT, FIREWOOD, OLD IRON ABOUT 400 GALLS OF CIDER, IN LOTS, AND VARIOUS OTHER EFFECTS.

HOUSES TO LET NEAR THE TOWN OF MINCHINHAMPTON AND ADJOINING MINCHINHAMPTON COMMON. TO BE LET, EITHER TOGETHER OR SEPARATELY, AND DWELLING HOUSE LATELY IN THE OCCUPATION OF Mr. SAMUEL KEARSEY DECEASED, AND ANOTHER LYING NEAR, WITH OUT-OFFICES, MALTHOUSE, LARGE GARDENS AND TWO PADDOCKS - ONE ARABLE AND THE OTHER PASTURE. A WINDMILL NEAR MAY BE HAD BY ARRANGING WITH THE PRESENT TENANT, AND OTHER LAND COULD ALSO BE ADDED. THERE ARE VALUABLE RIGHTS OVER THE ADJACENT COMMON, AND THE SITUATION IS PLEASANT AND HEALTHY.

APPLY TO MR. W.W. KEARSEY, SOLICITOR, STROUD.

William dealt promptly and efficiently with his father's estate, but it is not known who were the immediate tenants of the two houses and windmill, or if in fact there were any.

In 1872 the Trustees of the late Samuel Kearsay used the money of his residuary estate to buy 4 acres of land, including 'Charity Barn' for £478 from the Trustees of H. D. Ricardo of Gatcombe Park, who had purchased a large area of land from the Charity Commissioners, it being once part of the Ursula Tooke Charity. At the same time William Kearsay bought a triangular piece of ground for the garden of Windmill House. The pool by the barn was enlarged to serve both the Kearsay land and the adjacent field still owned by the Ricardo Trustees. They retained a right of way from their field out to the gate in Windmill Road. (This is now the Beaudesert Park Sportsfield.) Finally in 1876 purchase was made of the field which borders the Common on the south side of the barn.

It was about this time, in the mid 1870's that the windmill was demolished, though no record of this has been found. A Kearsy family story says that when the mill was pulled down the stone was used to build Windmill Lodge.

There is however a tithe document, dated 1876 which infers that the windmill was still standing then. In any case the recommendation given by Thomas Smith appears to have been heeded, for it is known that by 1879 the newly erected Windmill Lodge was occupied by John W. Peyton, a plasterer and lodging house keeper.

In the following year, 1880, when William Kearsy died, and Burleigh Court was sold, three of his children, Edith, Arthur and Harold, moved into Windmill House and into Windmill Lodge came their two maternal spinster aunts, Mary and Helen Harris, who kept an eye on the young Kearsys.

A Cap Windmill of a type very similar to the one at Hampton as shown on an oil painting by Rev. Augustus Turner, dated 1888, maybe to perpetuate a record of the then demolished windmill.

Tenancies of the properties changed through the years, and in 1979 Windmill House was sold to Mr. & Mrs. M. Beard, and the Lodge was sold to Mr. Brookes about 1982. With the exception of these two transactions the remaining land and the property Windmill Place is still owned by the descendants of Samuel Kearsy.

HISTORY OF THE GLEBE ESTATE

by Diana Wall

In 1989 I undertook a Diploma in Environmental Education course, which involved, amongst other things, researching various aspects of life in Minchinhampton. Although we have such a wealth of historical sites in the Town, I decided to see if it were possible to undertake research into a modern council housing estate. The following article shows what was achieved.

The word Glebe comes from the Latin 'gleba' and is defined as "Church land forming all or part of a benefice." Certainly by the C17th all of the land to the east of Butt Street, from Friday Street to Blue Boys Farm is listed in the Terrier (catalogue of property belonging to Holy Trinity Church). Later the Rectory (now Stuart House) was built on part of the land, to the south was built the complex of buildings now known as the Coigne and the Priests House (another former Rectory) and the current Rectory, dating from the 1970's also lies on this land. The parcel to the north, however, remained as farmland.

The turnpike roads of the C19th by-passed Minchinhampton, so there was little growth and the Town stagnated, with many empty cottages. There was no pressure to use the farmland for building. In the 1830 Survey of the Town a parcel of just over 7 acres is listed as Glebe Pasture, with the occupier one John Hitchings, and having a rateable value of £7.4s.0d.

Minchinhampton saw a return to a more prosperous role during the C20th. Following World War I there had been a change in social philosophy, and a desire to provide cheap housing for those that needed it. 'Homes for Heroes' were provided in the larger cities; at St. Marks in

Cheltenham an estate was laid out on the 'garden city' idea, providing reasonably sized houses for rent. In Minchinhampton the then R.D.C. provided the first of the 'Council Houses' - those at the top of Tetbury Street, and parts of Box Crescent and the Tynings were built before 1939.

However, it was in response to the post-war baby boom that the R.D.C. began to develop the land it now owned to the east of Butt Street. After initial problems with drainage, which caused more than one hopeful occupier to write to the press, sixty-two houses were completed in Phase One, by 1959. These were built by traditional methods, of concrete block which was later rendered, in terraces of four or six. All had individual front and rear gardens, and were laid out around three cul-de-sacs called simply 'The Glebe'.

By the mid-sixties it had become apparent that further housing was needed, and the road was continued to the east, necessitating the re-numbering of half the existing properties. The new houses were of pre-fabricated 'Reena' design, and were composed of pre-cast concrete sections which were bolted together on site. To the south of the road semi-detached houses were built; on the north there were bungalows.

Changes were taking place in society, and in the sixties the R.D.C. recognised that many of the older houses were family-occupied, and provided a playground on the site. Increased lifespan and the recognition of the problems of old-age led to the provision of the bungalows, and also the building of George Pearce House, an elderly persons complex staffed by a warden. The sixties also saw an increase in car ownership. None of the houses in Phase One or Two had garages, but these were added in the form of rows, to the rear of some older properties.

Phase Three was completed in the early 1970s. The land around George Pearce House was in filled with bungalows and semi-detached houses. These were of reconstructed stone, built in the traditional way, and many of the houses had integral garages. The front gardens were now open-plan, although this meant that a cattle grid had to be provided on Summersfield Road, to avoid damage by straying cattle. The rear gardens are also much smaller than on the previous Phases.

With the additional building and especially infilling it became obvious that houses would again have to be re-numbered and new street names provided. The Parish Council was consulted, and their recommendations as to names were accepted by the R.D.C. They provide an historical record in themselves. The Glebe was renamed Glebe Road and off it ran Trinity Drive, from the dedication of the Parish Church. Syon Road was so named because Syon Abbey owned the Manor of Hampton in medieval times and Eastfield Road retained the name of one of the open fields which had lain adjacent to the Glebe.

By the mid 1970s there was only a small parcel of land which remained undeveloped, on the extreme east of the site. The County Structure Plan was published, and was seen to discourage any further development in the area, The Stroud District Council was exhorted to concentrate its development on prime greenfield sites, with access to the M5. At the same time there was a move towards private ownership, and the remaining block of land was sold to a private developer, who built eleven luxury bungalows on the site. (These were the last major housing development, private or public, to take place in Minchinhampton until the 1990's.)

The latest chapter in the story of the Glebe Estate has been brought about by political will. The Tory 'Right to Buy' legislation has encouraged tenants to buy the properties they live in, and a fair proportion of the houses are now privately owned. This finds expression in the increasing

individuality of the houses and gardens, although the provision of accommodation for elderly people is safeguarded, so that these properties remain in Council ownership.

The Glebe Estate is a good example of how a housing area evolves through the years. It may not have the architectural gems that can be found in the High Street or Market Square, but it exemplifies how social and economic trends can be investigated in an historical context.

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE CLOCK

by Hilary Kemmett

On 8th April 1897, a public meeting was held in the Market House to consider how to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. The Rector of the day put forward a scheme for "*a permanent and useful parish memorial*" to commemorate the occasion. As the existing church clock was old and nearly past repair, he proposed purchasing a new clock to replace it. The Parish Magazine of the time states, "*With a view of seeking the best advice [the Rector] had consulted Lord Grimethorpe, whose opinion is sure to be valuable, seeing he was the designer of the famous clock in the Parliament Tower at Westminster*". Lord Grimethorpe replied with brief emphasis, "*Smith of Derby will clock you in the best way, and as near to eternity as possible.*" A member of this firm had accordingly visited Minchinhampton, inspected the tower, and sent in three estimates "*for a clock with a 6ft. skeleton dial constructed in the best manner*" and guaranteed to vary less than four seconds a week. The highest estimate was £138.

The meeting voted unanimously in favour of the clock, and to use any surplus funds collected for "parochial festivities". The clock fund already stood at £8.6s.6d and a committee was then elected to collect further subscriptions. By early June, £188.7s.6d. had been raised, sufficient not only for a clock with "Cambridge" quarter chimes on four bells, but also for a parish event to take place on Jubilee Day, 22nd June 1897. Not only had residents been most generous but money had also been raised from entertainments by amateur talent, including a trio of Minor Canons from Gloucester Cathedral and Mr. Somerset Playne ("a most amusing singer and actor"). Familiar names appear in the list of sponsors – Mr. F.H., Mr. Edward and Mrs. Arthur Playne, Major, Mrs. And Miss Ricardo, Mr. Ralph and Mr. James Simmonds, and Mrs. Beale to name but a few.

The Jubilee festivities duly took place and were later described by the Rector in a sermon as "*Commemorations which, in one form or another, lasted from early dawn till nearly midnight*".

After some months a reassuring paragraph appeared in the Parish Magazine, "*People are asking when the Jubilee Clock will appear. Messrs. John Smith and Sons say (in a letter dated 8th October 1897) :Your clock is well in hand but we cannot yet tell when it will be finished. No time is being lost, excepting that we have some difficulty in keeping our men at work during this busy Jubilee Year.*" It was stressed that the delicate workmanship could not be hurried and the clock should last for 200 years "*if it suffers no accident and is properly treated*".

The installation of the clock was finally arranged and the inauguration ceremony fixed for Sunday morning, 27th March 1898. In spite of rain, many people assembled outside the West door and at five minutes to 11 o'clock the pendulum was set going and the chimes and stroke of the hour were heard for the first time. The congregation went into church, while the choir

sang the National Anthem. The theme of the sermon was the “Discernment of Time” from Ecclesiastics VIII, 5, 6. The Rector went on to say how delighted he was at the good sense of the parishioners who had decided on the purchase of the clock, which “*showed an improved and enlightened public spirit*” and “*will be a lasting adornment to our town*” as well as a reminder to be punctual in our religious duties.

The clock has only three faces – there is no North face. Legend has it that one face was omitted to prevent use by the devil, but it seems there is a more mundane explanation. The estimate for the clock had been for two faces only, but due to the energy of a local parishioner, William A. Harman, enough additional funds were collected to add the third, West face. Since then, the only modification has been the installation of an electric mechanism in 1963 – before that it had been laboriously wound by hand twice a week.

The clock has now been in use for over a hundred years and is expected to continue for another hundred varying by “*less than four seconds a week*”.

Thanks are due to Hilary for the permission to use this article which first appeared in the Parish Magazine and a programme for the Stuart Singers, raising funds for the clock refurbishment

FEATURES OF MINCHINHAMPTON COMMON

by John Cooper

A few years ago the Local History Group made a series of walks across Minchinhampton Common, sharing its history with other societies. These are some of the main features which were shown on those walks, and you can trace them for yourself, starting from the top of Windmill Road.

The Bulwarks are a massive Iron Age bank and ditch, which almost encircle the present town of Minchinhampton although their outline is less clear towards the east. When they were excavated in 1937 by Mrs. Clifford they were found to consist of a ditch 7m. across and 2m. deep, with a stone revetment on the side of the rampart facing the ditch. Finds of pottery suggested a date of about 40 to 60 A.D., and a coin of Bodovoc, King of the Dobunii, was found in Camp Field. The purpose of the Bulwarks is far from clear. They can hardly be a defensive feature, as the ditch is on the inside. The legend that this was the headquarters of Caractacus against the Romans is, therefore, very unlikely to be true. Probably they formed a large cattle enclosure or corral.

Crossing the road to Nailsworth you approach the Old Lodge Inn, once the headquarters of the Golf Club. This was built in the early 17th Century, and was associated with an extensive rabbit warren. The meat of rabbits was a valuable addition to the diet, and the “pillow mounds” around the Old Lodge represent the artificial burrows from which the animals could easily be caught. It is also possible to pick out the remains of the anti-glider ditches excavated in World War II; it was thought this part of the plateau was most likely to see a Nazi invasion, and concrete blocks were put in place, as well as the ditches.

Northwest of the Old Lodge, towards the reservoir, there is a linear embankment. This is now thought to be of mediaeval origin, possibly a woodland boundary. The whole area of the Common was once tree-covered, and ownership was jealously guarded, as not only was timber,

large and small, obtained, but there were also valuable rights of pasture. The embankment extends in an arc from Sprigg's Well in Pinfarthings towards the War Memorial at Amberley. A similar embankment also starts near Sprigg's Well and encircles the Old Lodge in a clockwise direction towards the Halfway House Inn.

There is an older earthwork, similar to the Bulwarks, which runs from Amberley School to the linear embankment. Mrs. Clifford also excavated this, and declared it to be an Iron Age construction.

Whitfield's Tump is a Neolithic long barrow, so called because the famous evangelist George Whitfield preached from it in 1743. It has not been properly excavated, and is in somewhat poor condition, but appears to be similar to others in the area such as Gatcombe and Hetty Pegler's Tump.

Crossing the main Stroud road it is possible to see two faces of the Crane Quarry, which has been re-opened to illustrate the type of bedding and quality of the stone. It was one of the larger quarries which operated on the Common until early this century, and was named because of the large steel jib crane used to extract and move the large blocks of building stone. These quarries on the Greater Oolite provided high-quality weather stone, but work stopped in the 1920s and most have been filled in.

Tom Long's Post is probably the best known, and most photographed feature on the Common. It is said to commemorate either a notable highwayman or the burial place of a local suicide, and is the meeting place of four important roads. The Cirencester to Stroud turnpike was the first in the locality, built in 1752, but its use was somewhat superseded by the construction of a new road along the Chalford Valley and up Cowcombe Hill in 1814. Until that date travel was much easier on the drier plateaux, and many tracks climb up to join the earlier road. Since the opening of the Ebley bypass this road has again seen an increase in traffic, as lorries and cars seek to avoid congestion in Stroud. In 1758 a turnpike was constructed to Tetbury, via the Cross in Minchinhampton and Avening. The road to Brimscombe was built in 1785 by the Thames and Severn Canal Company to transport goods to and from the canal junction at Brimscombe Port.

The road to Nailsworth is comparatively new. The old route was either via Well Hill, or into Box by the Halfway House. The route from the top of the Nailsworth "W" to Tom Long's Post was constructed in the late 19th Century as part of an agreement with the owner of "The Highlands" (now Beaudesert School), in return for the closure of a public right-of-way through his grounds.

Returning to Minchinhampton the route takes you across the Great Park, which was first recorded in 1187. The wall that surrounded this, and the gates, were taken down early this century, but traces of the boundary ditch can still be seen along the Cirencester road. The Park was attached to the old Manor House, which stood where the new Primary School is to be. The house was demolished in the early 1800s after the Sheppard family, then Lords of the Manor, moved to Gatcombe. For a long time the Golf Club owned the rights to the Great Park, but it is now part of the Common, in the care of the National Trust.

The Common has a long history of land use, possibly dating back to 3500 B.C. and Whitfield's Tump. Most woodland clearance dates from post 1100 A.D., and then it has undergone transformation by quarrying, the construction of warrens, roads, the golf course, and regulated

grazing. It now has its own importance as an area of limestone grassland, maintained by years of grazing.

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WALLS QUARRY, BRIMSCOMBE

by Claire Forbes

In "Minchinhampton and Avening in the 20th Century", the supplement to A.T. Playne's book, Frank Simmonds states "Wall's Quarry was said to belong to a man called Wall, and was worked by him." Further research has revealed more about Wall's Quarry and the Wall family.

Wall's Quarry was originally known as Wall's Hill or Scarry Hill, as shown in deeds of private houses in Brimscombe. The first reference the author has found to Wall's Quarry is from the Hampton Rent Role of 1844.¹

The first reference to a member of the Wall family residing in the Brimscombe area is of Joseph Wall, listed in the Manor Rolls of Minchinhampton 1651². However, in the Hearth Tax Record of 1671³ A Peter Wall is listed in the Brimscombe section as having one hearth. He was baptised in Minchinhampton in 1620, the son of John Wall whose place of birth has not yet been identified. Peter married Mary Gardener of Stroud in 1653. The 1690 Tax Assessment shows him as a highly rated taxpayer. He was obviously skilled as his will states him as being a Freemason. (A Freemason worked the best quality freestone i.e. stone that can be worked in any direction.) In his will of 1706 he bequeathed to his daughter Mary Kinnets of London his close of pasture ground called "The Mores" at Swell's Hill. He had a house in Kingscourt, which he left to his wife, that after her death, was to go to his daughter Martha Workman of London. His son Jeremiah had died at the time of Peter's will, but he left his son's widow 1/- and their children 5/- each. He had a sister Jane to whom he left £5.

It appears that subsequent descendants of the Brimscombe Wall family continued to work as stonemasons. James Wall, born in 1768, was a Master Stonemason living at Field Cottage, Butterow, at the time of the 1851 Census. Joshua Wall of Kings Stanley had a high reputation as a sculptor, and when the Parish Church of St. Lawrence, Stroud, was rebuilt between 1866 and 1888 he designed and executed all the carvings inside and out, including the font and pulpit.⁴ The 1851 Census shows many other stonemasons by the name of Wall in the Stroud area.

The building firm of Wall and Hook were based in Brimscombe from 1849 to 1908⁵. They were the builders of the new Stroud Parish church, as well as many other important local buildings.

¹ G.R.O. D1198/2

² G.R.O. D1198/1

³ G.R.O. D383

⁴ 4 D. Verey – "Gloucestershire, the Cotswolds"

⁵ 5 "New Stroud Directory" 1908

Although much research has been undertaken to discover the origins of the name “Wall’s Quarry” there is insufficient evidence to prove conclusively any one theory. If anyone has any further information that would help in the search, I would be most grateful to hear of it.

ROADS FROM NAILSWORTH TO MINCHINHAMPTON AND AMBERLEY

by Cyril Turk

A new TURNPIKE ROAD to be made. The Trustees acting upon an Act of Parliament for making and maintaining a Turnpike Road from Tiltups Inn in the parish of Horsley to Dudbridge in the parish of Rodborough and other roads therein included all in the County of Gloucester hereby give notice that a meeting will be held at the Lodge on Minchinhampton Common on Friday the 19th of May next for the Purpose of receiving Estimates for the making of the line of Road from Tiltups Inn to Dudbridge aforesaid from any Person or Persons who may wish to undertake the same.

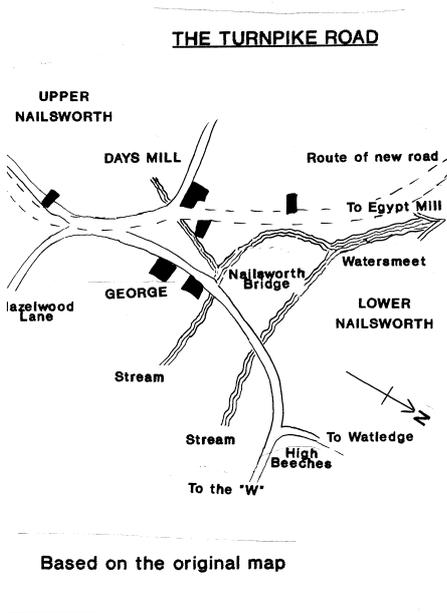
Particulars to be required in the execution thereof may be learned and the plan thereof see by Application to Mr. William Wilkins of Nailsworth.”

This notice which appeared in the Gloucester Journal for April 24th 1780 marked the setting in motion of plans which were to revolutionise the road system in this part of the Cotswolds. Movement of traffic between Nailsworth and Stroud in the eighteenth Century and earlier - was slow and difficult. (Shakespeare complained “These hills wear out our miles to make them long”) The road wound up and down the hills to the south, through Selsley and Woodchester, dipping down to the valley near Little Britain and Frogmarsh, while the roads to the villages and towns on the hills were exceptionally awkward - think of the Ladder as the direct road to Minchinhampton, with the alternative route for coach and cart traffic going via Watledge, Theescombe and Amberley and across the Common to the Windmill at Nailsworth Gate, The burden of such a system would have weighed heavily, particularly on the clothiers who must have spent many anxious hours discussing the advantages as against the costs of an improved system. Eventually, their minds made up, a small group of local men, sought, at a cost of £367-10-5 an Act of Parliament (20GeoIIIc84) authorising the setting up of Trustees for a Turnpike road, with branches, and the committee met on March 24th 1730 at the Lodge to decide the order in which the roads should be made:

- 1 The main road. Tiltups Inn to Dudbridge via St. Chloe’s Grounds.
- 2 Nailsworth Bridge to the Fives Court on Minchinhampton Common
- 3 Nurlsgate on Selsley via the Spout to the Bear
- 4 Dudbridge through Buckholt Wood to Frocester Hill
- 5 Nailsworth Bridge via Howcombe and Well Hill to Minchinhampton

By May 19th the line of the first road was marked out by Mr. Weston at a cost of £34/11/-; on June 13th an estimate of £1306 for the road was approved; approaches were made to various landowners for the purchase of land over which the road would go; finance was requested from leading men, many giving bonds e.g. Mr. Nathaniel Peach offered a bond of £150; by August the land was bought and Dennis Edsom appointed Surveyor; details of the construction were approved; and by May 7th 1781 the road was nearly completed, to be officially opened on May 30th.

Two days later, on June 1st, at a meeting at Mr. Biggs house in Nailsworth the Committee discussed the making of the first branch road.



In the course of making the main road the Committee had overcome one obstacle to this branch road. In front of the George Inn a stream, coming from Upper Nailsworth ran across the road to join the main stream, flowing towards Egypt Mill, meeting at the Bridge. (See map.) In June 1780 this stream was turned so as to pass under a “sufficiently covered archway between Mr. Wm. Keene’s house and Nathaniel Dyer’s shop. Later in this year they ordered that the archway should be ‘planked’ with stone to within two to three feet at each end to “accommodate Mr. Day’s Mill”, and on February 20th 1781 they arranged for a bridge to be built, later widening it by four feet with a parapet 34 feet high and coping 10 inches thick and 18 inches wide, at the same time requiring a substantial wall to be built from Mr. Wathen’s floodgate pile to the bridge.

With this part now completed on May 28th they arranged for the erection of a turnpike at Day’s Mill. The scale of charges proposed gives an interesting picture of the traffic using the road:

“Every horse, mare, gelding, mule, ass, ox or other beast drawing any carriage 4 d.”

This was reduced to 1d. if the animal was not drawing a carriage. Further:

“Every drove of oxen or cattle, 10d. a score, or in proportion.”

“Every drove of calves, hogs, sheep or lambs, 5d. a score or in proportion.”

Later in 1807 they increased the charges for Sunday use for horses and carriages to 6d. for “drawing” and 2d. for “not drawing” with the proviso that people going to a place of worship would pay only the weekday charge.

The Committee, then, at their meeting on June 1st 1781 considered the purchase of land from High Beeches. and from Mr. Smith. In his case the purchase was complicated because the proposed road would run across land, in the sub-tenancy of Mr. & Mrs. John Penley, and this land was also held in reversion by Mrs. Sheppard. In the event, she agreed to accept 14 years purchase while the Penley’s accepted £11. After noting that the next estate belonged to Mr. Biggs, the Committee went on to lay down details for the construction of the road.

Its width was to be 30 ft. but at the first turning after passing Barley Hill it was to be 50 ft. wide.. The ascent, from the Crown Inn, Nailsworth to Barley Hill was to be at 4 inches per yard, and thereafter 3 inches per yard up to the top at Cobs Stone. A quarry in Hazelwood could supply stone for the road which was to be laid 12 inches deep in the middle of the road and 6 inches deep at the sides, with special care taken of the swampy area near the top of the hill, with six culverts each 12 inches square were to be made to carry off the water.

So the “W” was finished in six months. On July 9th Mr. Pavey and Mr. Biggs were instructed to erect a turnpike at the foot of the road, to take down the bar across the road to Dunkirk and at the same time the recently widened road was covered with a foot of stone.

The Committee went on to consider the third and fourth of their roads and then on December 20th 1790 turned to the last on their list - the road from the bridge at Nailsworth by Howcombe

and Well Hill to the Tetbury Road in Minchinhampton. Mr. Howard estimated the cost as £300, which included any damage done by quarrying, keeping the road in repair and protecting the banks from slipping. A fortnight later, January 3rd 1791, he agreed to make the road with a further £20 p.a. to keep it in order for ten years. Seven members of the Committee - John Cooper, Sam Wathen, Thomas Perry, John Hawkins, Thomas Skipp and James Clutterbuck undertook to survey the road, erect fences and contact proprietors. Of these, Mr. Clutterbuck agreed to give up the necessary land through Rack Close so as to prevent the road going below Upper Rack.

On February 1st 1791 it was agreed to make the road in four stages:

- 6 from John Hawkins press shop to Howcombe Bend Cost £100
- 2 from the bend to where the road turns down to Longford's Mill Cost "84
- 3 from there to Forehead (s. Forwood) near the Lammas Cost £80
- 4 from Forehead to Hampton Cost £36

In June it was agreed to remove the turnpike house at the foot of Nailsworth Hill and to erect a new one where the two roads joined. (This has lately been taken down.) At the same time Thomas Chambers house in Well Hill was purchased in order to put it into repair and place a turnpike gate upon it. The road was completed by September.

But it soon became clear that the ascent at Well Hill was far too steep, and by August 1800 the surveyor recommended, breaking it near Forwood, going through the lands of the Rev. Williams, Mr. Chambers, Mr. Cambridge and Mr. Walker to join the road from the Half Way House to West End at Trapend Gate, which would give an ascent of 2 inches per yard instead of the 5 inches in Well Hill. So the New Road was made and the cottage at the new junction below Well Hill became a turnpike.

Now, with all the roads on their list completed, the Committee was urged in 1815 by the Baronet G.O. Paul to make the road leading from near Little Britain passing Broad Mead near St. Chloe's School and Culver House to Amberley Bank, with a branch road to St. Chloe's Green. This road had been considered some time previously. On December 21st 1799 it had been discussed and on August 4th 1800 authority sought for its construction. At last, on July 5th 1815, it was decided to go ahead and the surveyor, William Howard, was ordered to prepare an estimate of the cost. He reported on September 6th with a figure of £731/3/- which included the cost of fences, turnpike houses and gates, and the purchase of land. This was accepted and the Committee agreed to meeting part of the cost by allocating £100 from tolls for the section from Little Britain to Culver House, and a further £50 for the remainder to Amberley Bank.

Work began immediately and by April 17th 1816 the road was completed as far as Culver House estate. Good fences had been erected through the estate and Sinclair ploughed field, and on to Orchard Hill where a quick set hedge was to be planted. There had been one problem. Mr. Howard reported that his men's work had been interrupted by Joseph Hort, who lived at Littleworth. (He may have been the son of the Joseph Hort who held St. Chloe School until his death in 1815.) Hort and others claimed right of common against Howard's removal of turf and surface ground to a depth of 3 feet across the road width. Howard, in turn, claimed that he was following the line of the road laid down by the Act, which gave authority to remove turf and soil. The Committee backed him up and nothing more seems to have been heard of the affair.

By October 13th the remaining part was completed to Amberley Bank at a total cost of £733. Now, Sir G.O. Paul offered to make the side branch from Sinckley Green to Amberley for 60

Guineas, and later on December 5th 1820 he received in return the old carriage way from Little Britain to St. Chloe Green, which had been stopped up on April 27th of that year, at a charge of £10 for the estimated area of half an acre.

From now on the minutes are concerned mainly with the repair and maintenance of the roads. The Act gave them authority to make footpaths at the sides of the roads and this they decided to do. An annual concern was the letting of turnpikes, and occasional trouble there. The money from lettings was of course the only source of income for the Committee beyond the demands made on parish Surveyors of the Highways who were entitled to use statute labour on their roads, which was paid for from rates. Since they did not have to maintain the turnpike road in their parish therefore the Committee claimed compensation money annually; so when the Well Hill section was made Hampton parish was charged £6/10/6.

Turnpike lettings were advertised in the Gloucester Journal, bids were sought and the largest accepted. Here are the figures for 1813 with the successful bidder:

Lightpill Gate	John Heaven for	£134
Spout Gate	Thomas Rooke for	£130
Woodchester Gate	Thomas Rooke for	£35
Inchbrook Gate	John Bennett for	£102
Nailsworth and Well Hill Gate	William Wathen for	£110
Stanley Gate	James Marmont for	£40
Tiltups Inn Gate	Bartholomew Elwen for	£173

By the 1850's the turnpikes were coming to an end. The Continuation Act (17/18 Victoria 58) ordered that a turnpike trust should be wound up unless the Trustees were able to assure the Secretary of State that they had sufficient yearly surplus to redeem mortgages. This gave the Nailsworth Trust, who satisfied the condition, a short lease of life during which they were faced with the intrusion of the developing modern services on their roads. Thus, on August 18th 1857 Stroud Gas applied for permission to break up the Dudbridge - Nailsworth section so as to lay gas pipes. Agreement was given providing there was no unnecessary damage to the road and traffic was neither stopped nor delayed. A few years later, in 1863, the Committee received notice that it was proposed to lay a railway from Stroud to Nailsworth which would cross the road at three places. There must have been some hard talking in the Committee for the minutes record that agreement was given but "not unanimous" and a little later the Committee complained that the boarded fences by the railroad at Little Britain were so low that horses on the main road could see moving engines. Again in 1863, the United Electric Telegraph Company applied for permission to erect a line of telegraph poles. The Committee agreed to the application, but required that the poles should be erected so as to cause no obstruction to traffic.

In the next decade the Nailsworth Trust was ended by the Turnpike Continuation of 1877 (36/37 Victoria c90). The final act was to dispose of the turnpike houses. There was no offer for Woodchester; Culver Hill and Nailsworth were taken down as was Spout, and December 12th 1877 saw the final winding up meeting. The Trust, which had completely re-organised the road system of this area, was now history.

Source: Minutes of the Nailsworth Turnpike Committee.

EDUCATION IN MINCHINHAMPTON

by Pat & Mike Hopkins

Early Beginnings. The first schoolmaster was recorded at Minchinhampton in 1572 and in 1594 the Curate was teaching a school in the Chancel of the Church. In 1699 two Charity Schools were founded for boys, and another for girls in 1759.

Educational Charities. Sometime before 1697 Nathaniel Cambridge deposited £100 in the hands of Trustees to purchase lands for the establishment and support of a free school for boys born in Minchinhampton and Woodchester. In 1693 the estate known as the Manor of Seinckley (or Seyntcley, corrupted later to St.Loe or St. Cloe) was bought from Nathaniel Riddler of Edgeworth by these Trustees, for the purpose of a Charity School. The house was the master's residence and schoolroom. The boys, aged from 6 to 16 years, were to be taught reading, writing and arithmetic or accounting. The Rev. Richard Bond became the first Master at St. Loe's in 1699, and was succeeded by his son Nathaniel. Joseph Hort was Master until 1813, and at the time of his death the Trustees insisted that the number of private pupils should be restricted and introduced the Bell System and courses to include Practical Mathematics. In 1826 attendance was about 30 boys.

By a scheme under the Endowed Schools Act of 1888, the school was to be conducted as a Secondary School, with tuition fees of £6 to £28 a year, with the exception of ten scholarship boys. In 1908 the school was closed.

By deed dated 21st January 1698 Ursula Tooke granted to Nathaniel Cambridge and John Yeats, 20 acres of Arable Land and £80, of which £8 a year was to be spent on keeping at school six poor boys from Minchinhampton, to be taught to read, write and cast accounts, and to be brought up in the Protestant religion.

Henry King, in his Will of 1698 left the residue of his Estate, with the profits to be spent on the salary of a schoolmaster who was to teach eight poor boys to read, write and cast accounts; to be taught with them were the six boys of the Tooke Charity.

In 1721 a school was established at Hyde for teaching poor children and the Tooke and King Charities were used to support this school, known as the Endowed School. In 1818 the school taught 14 boys and 8 girls. It received £28/12/- from the Tooke Charity and £32 from the King Charity and £23 from Charities founded by John Yeats and Benjamin Cambridge. By 1826 there were just the 8 boys of the King Charity and 6 paid for by the Tooke Charity.

Other Benefactors. Elizabeth Coxe bequeathed £50 for a school to teach poor children the Principles of Religion. This was secured by Thomas Stephens of Gloucester and by Will dated 1721 he devised in Trust the tenement called Niblets with an adjacent Close. 50/- of the rent was to pay a schoolmistress and the remainder was to maintain the school. In 1818 the Endowment formed the basis of a Dame School which all might attend and in 1825 it was a Sunday School. The teacher was paid £6/10/- from the Poor Rate and a further £2/2/- from School Close was added to the Parish Stock. By 1827 the school had lapsed and Coxe and Stephens Charity was not applied to any established school. The poor preferred to send their children to David Ricardo's School in Minchinhampton.

In 1759 Rebecca Vick of Clifton settled a rent charge of £5/4/- to pay a poor woman to teach the girls of Minchinhampton to read. The Charity continued to 1826, but it is not known how

long the school actually survived.

From the late 18th Century to the early 20th Century Hyde Court was the home of the Beale family. While Dorothea Beale lived there, substantial alterations were made, including a private school.

David Ricardo Minchinhampton School. In 1816 a school on the Lancastrian System was started in the Market House by David Ricardo, who supported it until his death in 1823. About 250 boys and girls were being taught in 1818, when the system in the girls section was changed to that advocated by the National Society. In 1833 the school had 270 pupils, when it was supported by school pence. Two years later the boys section was moved to Tetbury Street (the present No. 33) where Mr. Fenning Parke took over as master. When the girls section applied for a grant in 1848, the greater part of its income was provided by the younger David Ricardo and the Rector, Charles Whateley. Both the sections of the school were apparently replaced by the new National School built in 1868 on the site of the old Manor House. In 1885 the average attendance was 290 mixed and infant pupils, including 14 boys and 15 girls supported out of the proceeds of the Parish Educational Charities.

In 1911 as the Minchinhampton Parochial School it had an average attendance of 268, falling steadily to 180 by 1936. A new building was occupied in 1969, and by 1973 there was an attendance of 422.

David Ricardo - Amberley and Brimscombe. In 1836 David Ricardo started a school at Amberley in schoolrooms in the basement of the new Church. In 1848 the attendance was 422 boys and girls, supported by Pence Subscriptions and collections, but in 1871 when it applied for a grant the school was teaching only 89. The school moved to a new building as a Jubilee Memorial in 1887. In 1911, as the Amberley Parochial School it had an average attendance of 113, falling to 65 in 1936, but 100 in 1973.

In 1840 a Church School was established in Brimscombe by David Ricardo and by 1885 there were 120 boys and girls attending. In 1911 it was called the Brimscombe Church of England School and had 107 mixed and infant pupils, 115 in 1936 but only 80 in 1973.

Small Schools. In 1826 an Infant School was established by voluntary contributions, in the Parish, possibly in Well Hill. By 1833 it was teaching 57 children. In 1870 an Infant School was established in Littleworth and eight years later another was founded at Box. It had 28 pupils in 1885, but soon closed.

Beauesart Preparatory School was formed in 1918. It was housed in a large house called "Highlands", west of Box, which had been the principal residence of the area in the 19th Century. By 1973 there were 120 pupils.

Sunday Schools. In 1786 the Church Sunday School started and 210 children attended in 1833.

A dissenting Sunday School with over 100 children had been started in 1818 and by 1838 there were three dissenting Sunday Schools. Two with 185 and 160 children were the Wesleyans of Brimscombe and Littleworth respectively, and the third was the Baptists, with 170 children. However, it was decided that the members were too poor to establish a Dissenting Day School or British School.

An Education Miscellany

Minchinhampton - The First Purpose-built School

In 1866 serious consideration was being given to the need to build a school for Minchinhampton children. There had been a National School in the Market House in 1816 but with the boys removed to Tetbury Street and the girls left in the Market House, jostling with other activities, it was felt the time had come to have a purpose-built school. At a meeting in the Rectory to discuss this, Mr. Ricardo took the lead by offering an acre of land near the church, and promising to head a subscription list with £330, but it was felt that this was too much to expect and they therefore settled on £200. The Rector, Rev. E. C. Oldfield, then sent a letter to all parishioners inviting contributions and suggesting that the cost of the school would be £1500. In the event, the first subscription list brought in £1200. Now when the school was erected, gas fittings introduced and play grounds laid out, it seemed the probable cost would be £1400.

Building work was started in early 1867 under the supervision of W. Clissold, an architect of Stroud, with the masonry work undertaken by E. Clayfield of Horsley, the carpentry and joinery by H. Harman, the tiling and plastering by D. Newman and the plumbing, glazing and painting by J. Simmonds - all three of Minchinhampton

There was an early snag. The site chosen was where the old manor house had stood. This had been pulled down in the 1830's by Mr. Whitehead with the intention of replacing it by a mansion, but only the cellars and cellar walls had been built when Mr. Whitehead withdrew. The discovery in 1867 of this buried work meant that the excavations for footings for the school were more extensive than had been expected, but fortunately building work was not held up too long.

Many parishioners will remember the school as it was when it was taken down, not so long ago, and may be interested in a description of it in 1868. It is then described as Early English style, with walls of local stone, laid in random courses. There was one room 20 feet wide and 72 feet long, divided by a movable partition into two almost equal parts, one for the girls and one for the boys. An infant room, 28 feet by 68 feet adjoined the girls' room. (In 1886 the infants were placed under their own mistress, Miss Charlotte Hamlett). The classrooms were furnished with desks of the best pine, purchased from the National Society in London. These when lain out in three tiers offered desk, seat and table. A gallery was built which could seat 50 and was movable. Open fireplaces allowed full heating whilst casements to each window gave a constant flow of air. The "gasoliers" for evening light were painted azure blue and picked out with gilding. The separate porches for boys and girls were paved with Staffordshire red and blue tiles, while the boys' porch had a turret with a store room and a tower built over it, with a steel bell. The bell was made by Vickers of Sheffield, whose first peal of bells was made for Chalford Church. Outbuildings were placed at a suitable distance from the school "having regard to ventilation and privacy". Altogether the comment was that "the novel and original features are boldly and skilfully carried out and harmonise well with the general style and purpose of the building".

The school was officially opened in April 1868. At 4 o'clock a procession of children carrying banners, and headed by town notables, preceded by the brass band, marched through the streets to the school where the children were seated halfway down the hall, with leading families and inhabitants. There followed prayers and speeches. Then Major Ricardo, H. D. Ricardo's eldest son, presented the Chairman with the conveyance for the land to be deposited with the town

documents. Tea for all, with a bun for the children, followed with the band playing and the ceremony closed with more speeches.

A new school was born.

The Girls and Infants Section 1875 - 1886

Miss Emma Webb had been headmistress of the Girls' National School in the Market House since 1861, and transferred to the newly-built school in 1868. She divided her school into Infants and Six Standards i.e. those stages through which the girls had to pass. Those were housed in two rooms, of which she gave details in 1879 to Dr. Partridge, Sanitary Inspector, who was inquiring into all schools in the area. There was a principal room, built for 140 children, and a classroom for 60, at the reckoning of 8 feet per child. Since the average attendance was 171, more children could be accommodated. The same arrangement was made for the Boys' School a room for 70 and a classroom for 20.

In 1879 when the school was at the minimum government number (attendance 118), the Standards were grouped with 3 to 6 in the charge of Miss Webb, 2 with the pupil teacher Mary Lewis (now in her third year), and 1 and the Infants with the second year pupil teacher Henrietta Essex assisted by a monitor Fanny Essex. As the school grew these arrangements changed. In 1881 Miss Webb took Standards 4 to 6 with 60 girls. Mary Lewis took Standards 2 and 3 with 58 girls. Miss C.J. Hamlett, Assistant Mistress, took Standard 1 with 57 girls, while the 57 infants were with Henrietta Essex.. Miss Webb planned to work sometime each day with Standards 2 and 3, and with the infants who were mainly superintended by Miss Hamlett.

Ladies of the parish came in to help. In October 1875 Miss Mabel Baynes came in on Tuesdays and Thursdays to take reading and dictation; on Wednesday the Hon. Mrs. Eden took reading. Later, Miss C. Baynes appeared regularly on Tuesdays and Fridays to take needlework.

The main help, however, was given by the clergy who, besides visiting the school every week and often bringing visitors with them, also from time to time took part in the religious instruction. The first entry in the School Log Book, on October 1st 1875, reads "The Curate taught Tuesday and Friday mornings". This was to be the regular pattern with the addition that the Rector, Rev. J. Hodson in December of that year came in for Scripture on Tuesday and Thursday mornings adding dictation in 1876, which became Reading in 1877. His work in the school was appreciated; in August 1877, on the occasion of his leaving the parish, the teachers and scholars presented him with an album of photographs, and received a photograph of him in return.

The main concern of the clergy was the Annual Diocesan Examination. As a lead in to this, the curate, Rev. W.A. Scott, in April 1880, examined the upper section of the girls on St. Matthew's Gospel. The examination taken that year, as for many years, by the Rev. C. Audrey, received his enthusiastic comments (and indeed his comments were always fulsome!) "The general tone and order remain unexceptionable and the care and pains that have been bestowed upon the children continue to produce good results, more especially in the Highest Group, where the knowledge of Holy Scripture and the Catechism is really good and intelligent. In the 2nd and 5rd Group there was a little weakness this year in the New Testament subjects and in Catechism.. The infant Group are making good progress."

Relations with the Rectors and Curates continued excellent, with them visiting the school, taking lessons and providing teas on special occasions. The Rev. F A Mather, who became Rector in 1884, made changes that were not always welcome. There was the change made in school fees in June 1885 when they were demanded in advance. Later in the month he altered the Certificate of Merit. Hitherto, the girls in Standards 5 and 6 who passed fully received a large superior certificate. Now, unless they had made at least 350 attendances they would receive only the smaller one, previously given to the lower Standards, who were now to given a smaller, plainer kind. The certificates for Standard 6 would be framed, Standard 5 unframed. A further blow was that those scholars in Standards 4, 5 and 6 who had passed fully, but had not made the 350 attendances would not be treated to the yearly seaside outing. It was hoped that this would improve attendances, but for the first time Miss Webb voiced criticism - "the girls are so often wanted at home".

One of the first entries in the log book is a two-page list of the Needlework to be covered by each class. Continually there are records of the prizes given for this. In March 1879 Miss Mabel Baynes gave prizes to Caroline Simmonds in Standard 6, who received a work-box, and to Jane Harman, who received a writing desk. Miss Webb was moved to write, "These are valuable presents." In 1880 Miss Baynes offered £1 and Miss Pavey 7/6d, Emily Allen and Mary Cox, 6/- each, Annie Hunt and Ellen French 5/- each. Miss Webb was absent in August 1880, having to go to London for treatment for eye trouble, but on her return she took needlework each afternoon, "to make up for time taken from that subject". In June 1881 she was pleased to report that, by request, samples of Needlework and Knitting had been taken to the Royal Albert Hall. When, in May 1878, an examination of 9 girls and 6 boys was held in the school for a medal in memory of Joseph Bowstead, H.M.I. and a member of the parish, the leading girls in the school were Ellen Cooke and Jane Walker, but Annie Bolton won because of her needlework. The other two girls each received 2/6d from the Rector.

Drawing also appears in the log book. In May 1877 there was a list of the successful candidates in an examination, supervised by the Rector and Curate, for Drawing set by the Science and Art Department. 37 children were presented amongst whom 7 gained drawing-board prizes - among them Fanny Essex and Mary Lewis - 5 gained certificates - among them Henrietta Essex and Jane Harrison - while 6 also got certificates in Geometry. All the others were marked satisfactory. Another list for March 1879 gives 25 candidates successfully presented - among them Mary Lewis and Henrietta Essex (both Pupil Teachers) and Fanny Essex - all three passing in Free Drawing, while Caroline Lovell carried off a prize.

Singing was regularly recorded as a subject in which H.M.I. was concerned. Hence every year there is a list of songs to be sung before the Inspector. So in November 1878, Percival Baliner, H.M.I. heard:

TRIOS -	We are spirits, blithe & free The Gypsies live a life of ease
SONGS -	The Fire Brigade Goodbye to Summer
ROUNDS -	If I were a Cobbler Glide along my bonnie boat

The infants presented two rounds - A boat to the ferry and Goodnight to you all - and songs with exercises - A little bird in a warm nest in a tree and A neat little clock in the centre it stands. Quite a concert. Does anyone now know these songs?

There was, in fact, a school concert usually at Easter. One such on Easter Monday 1879 had fifty children singing in “Glees and Choruses” with a few boys and girls singing duets. It was a success “in spite of stormy weather” and “many hearty encores bespoke appreciation”, and the school profited to the extent of £5/8/0d. When building work was done on the school in 1880 the Rector decided that a school concert should be held to help the Building Fund. The boys and girls had singing lessons after 4.30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and the concert made £12. In February 1881 a School Glee Club was formed, meeting on Tuesday evenings from 7.30 to 9.00 p.m. “Which the senior teachers attend”. In July 1884 the Rector brought in some ladies to hear the children “sing from sight, especially the infants”.

Other subjects, of course, were not neglected. Miss Webb refers once or twice to the weekly examination, taken sometimes by herself or the senior Pupil Teacher, and often by the Rector or Curate. These other subjects are always commented upon by the Inspector, not always favourably. The report in 1879 reads, ‘The school is as usual in excellent order, singing is good and needlework very commendable. The Standard Examination shows very great recovery from the misfortunes of last year in Writing and arithmetic. The subject in the first and seconds, and more particularly in the seconds, is very creditable. In the fourth Standard there is some weakness in Notation and in the fifth Standard tho’ there is clear evidence of teaching, there is some deficiency of quantity. The Infants, tho’ carefully taught, are hardly as advanced as Infants often are in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. Some additional lighting in the Schoolroom is very desirable. The Gallery in the Classroom is worn out. Maps of Scotland and Ireland and a small globe are needed”.

Some comment is necessary. The “misfortune” of the previous year was due in part to Miss Webb having to take charge of the Boys’ School while awaiting the arrival of the new master. She commented after her three weeks there that “on the whole the behaviour of the boys has been very satisfactory. There has been no rudeness nor disobedience of any kind”. Her other comment on the misfortune was “The difficulties of running a large school with inefficient and youthful Pupil Teachers”. All the subjects adversely commented upon were eligible for grant aid, which fell from £120/6/0d. in 1877 to £112/3/0d. in 1878.

Lighting to the Gallery was the building work done in 1880 A classroom belonging to the Boys’ School had been adapted and taken over by the girls, giving more room for Standards 1 and 2, Extra windows for the Standard 1 room had much improved the whole building, and the Gallery (Infant Room) had been newly seated. The following year Miss Webb obtained the approval for herself or “Any other Certificated Teacher” to use a detached classroom.

“Excellent order”, this is a recurrent phrase in H.M. Inspector’s report. In 1876 there is praise for “organisation and discipline”; 1879 “order and general tone excellent”; 1884 “The school is in a highly efficient condition”. Miss Webb seems to have maintained her discipline by praise (the successful children are always recorded); by taking part in the work of the school; supervision, help and living with the Pupil Teachers; having senior pupils with her at functions, teas and outings, and without severity. Unlike the Boy’s School where thrashings are regularly reported, in the Girls’ School there is only one instance of punishment. In February 1882 Fanny Smith was punished for disobedience. (Miss Webb writes “child” so she is one of the younger ones.) Pamela Latham had been questioned about the matter and Fanny’s mother thereupon “beat” Pamela. The managers took a hand and threatened to “take proceedings” unless Mrs. Smith made “a satisfactory apology to them” which she duly did in writing.

Miss Webb also ran an evening school for the senior scholars. In 1876 this was held for 40 nights, Monday and Fridays, from 7.30 to 8.30 p.m. for a fee of 1/- for the session. It started with 12 scholars. The Rector was so satisfied that he gave "Tea and a pleasant evening enjoyment" to all the night scholars. The Evening School seems to have been continuously successful, having 34 scholars in 1877. This year, though, the evening sessions were seriously disturbed. On August 10th Miss Webb reported that boys played pranks and made hideous noises about the schools, stones were thrown in through open windows, doors were tied up so that it was difficult to open them. At the same time the Drum and Fife Band, practising in the school made such a "deafening noise" that lessons were suspended and needlework taken instead. She also said that "it is a common thing for the floor of the Girl's School to be shaken by the force of the drums". The Evening School attracted a grant of £9/7/0d in 1876, £11/19/0d in 1877 and thereafter it drops out of the record.

Some Episodes Recorded

December 5th 1875

The girl whose job it was to light the school fires put the hot, dried wood upon a chair whilst she cleaned out the fireplace. There must have been some spark still in the wood, which ignited (after she left, says Miss Webb). Wind apparently blew upwards through the floor, so the fire didn't spread. As it was, the chair was completely burnt to a "skeleton", the floor burnt through and the joint "injured".

January 4th 1876

A late Christmas Entertainment. The schools were prettily decorated. Two trees were provided, one in each school. Some 500 scholars, teachers, parents and visitors came. The girls sang a selection of songs and the Drum and Fife Band played in the Boys' School. Each of the teachers received a present. Children who had made at least 250 attendances were given two presents, the rest received one, and everyone had buns and oranges. (The Boys' School Log book simply records the latter).

November 11th 1877

Police Sergeant Sampson removed his two children from the school. He objected to the Attendance Officer calling upon him, claiming that as a Police Sergeant he was exempt from the laws applying to agricultural labourers.

February 2nd 1879

Mrs. Ricardo of Gatcombe Park gave a supply of milk, both last week and this, for those children who stayed to dinner. She also provided warm articles of clothing for the most thinly clad infants.

July 3rd 1880

The Volunteer Camp was held in the Park adjoining the schools. Many of the children were late, having gone there on their way to school. The attendance at one time had been reduced by 50, and the afternoon was made a half-holiday because of the "Review". The Camp was a constant problem.

November 11th 1880

The school year changed. It was now to begin on May 1st.

August 8th 1881

“Bownham Fete”. There was a holiday on Monday because of the “general festivities in the neighbourhood” but the following day much of the school was late because of the late hour both parents and children had gone home on the Monday.

June 6th 1884

A list of newly admitted children, whom Miss Webb is sure she will have to class as exceptions in the examination because they “know nothing”, “have defective powers”, “weak intellect”, “are very dull” and “very delicate”.

January 23rd 1885

Mrs. A. Plane arranged lectures in Longford House on Model Cookery. Teachers attended Monday and Wednesday evenings, and Pupil Teachers on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday evenings.

Pupil Teachers

In 1875 when the School Logbook opened it showed a school with 150 pupils and a staff consisting of the Mistress, Miss Emma Webb, the only qualified teacher, with four pupil teachers; Mary J. Essex in her fifth year, Charlotte J. Hamlett and Sarah J. Jeffries both in their fourth year., and Elizabeth Smith in her third year. These four, who had taken what was the main avenue into the teaching profession for working class children, would have been apprenticed as teachers somewhere between the ages of 14 and 19, often starting as monitors in their last year at school. They would hope, at the end of five years apprenticeship and much study, to obtain a final training in a college, such as the Home and Colonial College in London, and then to receive a certificate which would be confirmed after two more year apprenticeship.

Mary Essex was nearing this final stage. In late June 1876 she was invited to attend the Home and Colonial College to sit the Queen’s Scholarship Examination. Success here meant being maintained at a normal school for a further two or three years. She duly went to London on early July, accompanied by Miss Webb, who went with each Pupil Teacher to their examination. In December she learnt that she had passed and would enter the college. Such a successfully completed apprenticeship justified a special event. Teachers and older scholars subscribed to a fund, a silver watch was purchased and presented to her by the Rector who, with Miss Baynes, arranged a tea for the subscribers and all had “a very enjoyable evening”.

Sarah Jeffries carried on to her fifth year, satisfying the Inspector in his examination, though in 1876 he felt that her spelling and map-drawing were weak, and in 1878 he reported her as “fair” with a need to attend to Geography. However, six months previously she too had gone to London with Miss Webb, and had already been notified of her success in the Queen’s Scholarship. Her career, however, was to be cut short. On June 4th 1880 the logbook reported her “very ill in the Girls’ School House” and on June 20th she died. On May 8th H.M.I. had visited the school and found the registers not marked at noon, but added “Miss Webb was absent attending a late P.T. of the school who lay dying”.

Charlotte Hamlett was to stay in the school. In 1878 she was listed as “late P.T. Assistant Mistress” and as responsible for Standards 2 and 3. She temporarily took over the whole school when the resignation of the Boys’ school Master meant that Miss Webb took over that school for three weeks. In January 1879 the Rector obtained permission from the Principal of the Home and Colonial College for her to take her certificate in the school. In fact, she sat for it in

Cheltenham Training College, passed successfully and in May 1881, shown on the staff list as Miss Hamlett, and in August 1886, when the Girls' and Infants' Schools were separated she became Mistress of the Infants' School.

Henrietta Essex followed the pattern. In October 1878 she was a first-year articled Pupil Teacher and by December 1883 had become Assistant Mistress. In 1884 she learnt that she had at last passed her certificate. Unfortunately this meant that the school was overstaffed, so she had to cease to be Assistant Mistress of Minchinhampton School.

Senior girls were presented for the Drawing Examination of the Science and Art Department. Among those successful in 1877 and winning prizes were Lucy Baker and Mary Lewis, certificate earners were Henrietta Essex and Fanny Essex. These, with others, would certainly have been Monitors and have been specially taught, and all became Pupil Teachers, Fanny and Lucy being presented as candidates for Pupil Teacherships in 1878.

The Pupil Teachers' time was fully occupied. They lived in the Schoolhouse under the supervision of the Mistress. Each of them learnt to teach by taking responsibility for a class under Miss Webb's supervision. Their formal education came through evening study. Monday to Friday from 6.30 to 9.15 p.m. was given over to secular subjects with Miss Webb. Tuesdays were devoted to Scripture, and here the Rector sometimes came in. In 1880 he took them for one hour on Tuesdays for Prayer Book work, and on Fridays for preparation of Sunday School sermons.

In the previous November he had taken them from 9.00 to 9.45 a.m. on Tuesdays whilst the Curate took the Scripture section in the School. In August 1880, when Miss Hamlett was preparing to take her certificate, he taught her Divinity each Saturday morning from 10 to 11.00 a.m. Summer months saw an extension of study time - 6.45 to 7.45 a.m. each day - though there were slight breaks. In April 1878 evening lessons were cut to two hours because the Pupil Teachers wished to attend Church services each night during Holy Week.

All this was for certificate purposes. There was the need also for teaching qualifications so we find them in October 1879 preparing lessons to be given before the Inspector and writing out tickets for the Needlework Examination. School functions also required their time. In March 1880 one hour of each lesson time was taken up with singing to prepare for the Easter Concert.

There were reliefs though. In August, when the school was closed for three weeks, the older teachers spent a week in London at the Rectors expense. In July 1882, along with eight of the most satisfactory scholars, they spent a week in Weston Super Mare; this was an annual event. As a special treat they went in July 1886 to the exhibition in London. This time the money came from a collection for the annual trip and from "liberality of the Rector and Mrs. M. Baynes" which enabled eleven pupils to go with them.

Sources

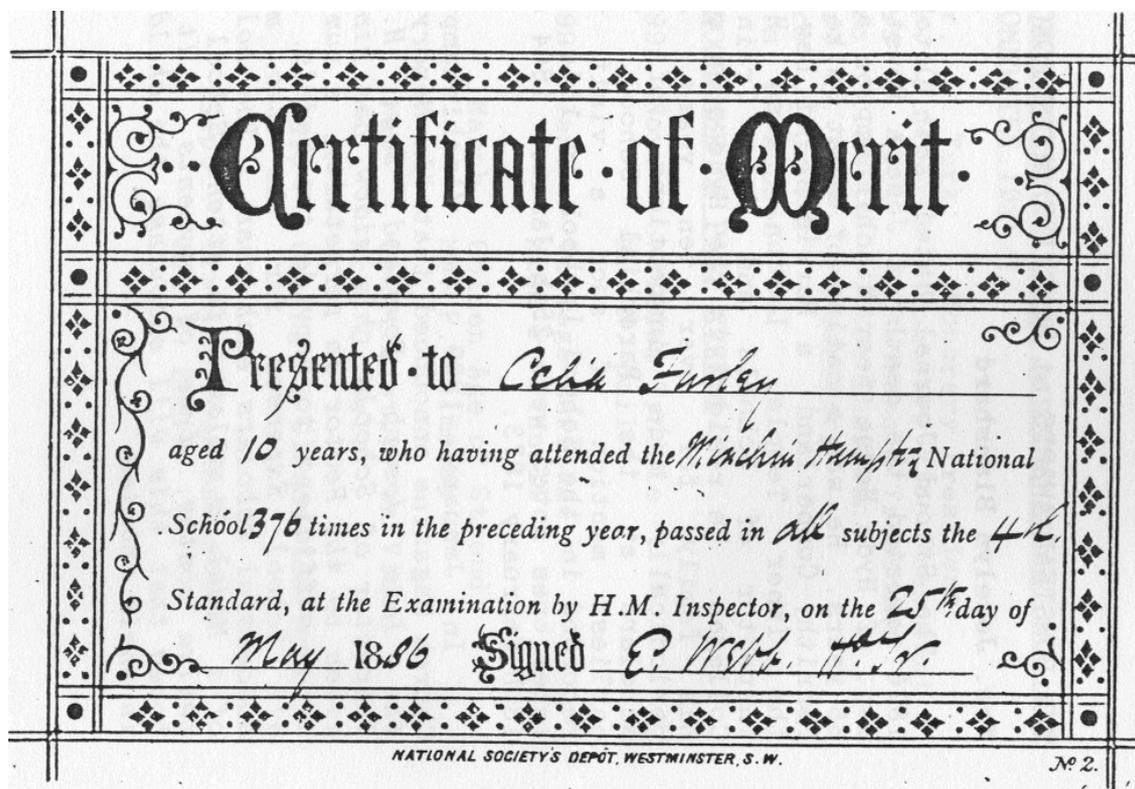
The early Log Books of Minchinhampton Schools.

THE BOWSTEAD AWARDS at MINCHINHAMPTON SCHOOL

Mrs. Jocelyn Blanshard

The Stroud Journal dated 28th October 1876 reported the death of Joseph Bowstead Esq. of Hyde House near Minchinhampton aged 65 years. He was a native of Great Salkeld, Penrith, Cumberland; a Barrister of Law of the Inner Temple, London; also H.M. Inspector of Schools and Male Training Colleges. He resided in the Hyde area with his family for over ten years, and periodically made inspections of the scholars at the Parochial School. The earliest mention of such a visit was recorded in the School Logbook in 1844, and later ones noted were 25th January 1864 and 18th February 1873.

In January 1869 the Minchinhampton Church Magazine announced that *“In Memory of the late Joseph Bowstead Esq. H. M. Inspector of Schools, his widow has kindly given to the Rector in perpetuity, a sum of money sufficient to provide two Medals, and all School Expenses for the two most successful scholars each year. The holder of a Medal is allowed to attend School for twelve months, free of payments. It is hoped that this will encourage the children in their studies.*



At that time the school fees were a quarterly payment of 5/- for each child above six years, and 3/- under six years. A later more detailed explanation of the Annual Examination appeared: “The Bowstead Examination is held yearly in the Boys and Girls Schools. Candidates must be born or living in the Minchinhampton Parish, and must be less than 13 years old on April 30th of the year in which the Examination is held. Requirements (Standard V):

- (1) Reading
- (2) Writing from memory a short story read twice. Spelling, writing and correct expression to be considered.
- (3) Arithmetic, four sums on easy fractions (addition and subtraction) practice, bills of parcels and single rule of three (unity method). The names of the successful candidates placed on the

school board. A silver medal (the die is in the hands of Mr. Albino of Nailsworth) is given to each top boy and girl, and a book (value about 6/-) for the second of each set of candidates”.

It is thought that William Albino was commissioned to inscribe the medals. He was a watch and clockmaker of Italian descent; his father Vitore, a jeweller, arrived in England in the early 1840's and settled in Bourton on the Water where William and his siblings were born. In 1882 William, his wife Mary and their family resided in the High Street, Minchinhampton, and their son Dominic attended the Parochial School, where in 1884 he was awarded the Bowstead Medal.

By 1889 William had moved his home and business to George Street, Nailsworth, and Trade Directories list him as a watch and clockmaker until as late as 1910. His premises were situated in what is Carmella's Restaurant and the rear cottage was at one time known as Albino Cottage.

A note in the Minchinhampton School Logbook at the time of the Bowstead Award Presentation in 1900 reported that *“5 boys and 5 girls entered the Examination. The Writing was good throughout. So also was the Reading. The boys showed a marked improvement in this respect as compared with last year. The Spelling and Power of Expression need attention. The Arithmetic was quite satisfactory as a rule.”* The Rector judged the entries, but in 1919 it was noted that in the absence of the Rector, the Examiner was Mr. Napier-Clavering.

The Bowstead Award procedure was continued until 1981 with a total of 207 surnames and forename initials appearing on the Award Boards, which are still displayed in Minchinhampton Primary School. Only two variations occurred from the original draft; in January 1947 the Resolution was passed that the giving of the Bowstead Medal should be discontinued and a book awarded in its place, and later, in September 1952, that the Examination should be taken at an earlier age before the children left for Secondary School.

The silver Bowstead Medal in a black presentation case was one and a half inches in diameter, inscribed: *“In Memoriam Josh Bowstead Esq. M.A. Pemb. Coll. Camb, of Hyde House in the Parish, Barrister at Law Inner Temple London, H.M. Inspector of School and Male Training Colleges, Died .15th October 1876 aged 65”* and on the reverse side the full name of the recipient, the year, Prize Medal Minchinhampton National School Gloucestershire, and the text: *“Blessed is the Man that Walketh not in the Counsel of the Ungodly”* (Psalm 1 v.1) encircling the edge.

The names of the Bowstead Award winners are listed in the Local History Collection, with forenames as accurate as it has been possible to ascertain. The whereabouts of eight of the original 137 medals are known. How many others are still in existence?

SOURCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many thanks to Minchinhampton School whose School Registers and Logbooks were used, Jessie Kirby, Alice Daniels, Stan and Iris Dyer. The Census Returns and Trade Directories provided further information.

BOYHOOD MEMORIES

Mr. Harry Morle

I was awarded the Bowstead Medal in 1930. The Rector, Canon Rex. V. Hodson was the examiner of part of the tests, and I well remember making just one error of pronunciation. I think the word was compromised, which I pronounced "com promised".

I don't remember if Canon Hodson presented the medal or if the Head Teacher, Mr. F. T. Robinson, did. The latter was a well-meaning martinet, very strict in all things, which was good for us children. I remember quite clearly a music lesson just before the end of morning school, when we were gathered in Mr. C.G. Tombs' room. Mr. Robinson took the class to teach us musical scales. We couldn't quite grasp the idea whereupon Mr. R., eyes out on stalks, demanded that we stare at the blackboard and not once take our eyes off it. We were all in such a state of near-terror at his explosion of anger, and I recollect that we stared at the board so long that our eyes watered! Mr. Tombs was a gentler sort, a lovely man, a keen footballer (he had kept goal for Minchinhampton A. F. C.) and he liked his game of golf. They and Miss Pearcey were superb teachers.

My medal was of solid silver and I have it still, polished! I do not think parents were invited to the award 'ceremony'. In those days parents and school were kept very much apart, unlike today when there are P.T.A.s. On leaving Minchinhampton School I attended Marling, following E.J. Shellard (Professor, retired), E. Ponting (Schoolmaster, retired), the brothers Critchley (both deceased) to be followed shortly by the Hughes brothers, not forgetting the Walker brothers. After Marling it was off to Bristol University, a break for the army during the War and then a teaching career from 1947 - 81.

Like many others of my time I'd had a hard start - my father died before I was four, my step-father before I was twelve (I'd just joined Marling) and both deaths were attributable to war service, gassing in the latter case. I well remember Armistice Parades from the British Legion Club to the Parish Church, led by bowler hatted ex-service officers, with three one-legged veterans taking part - David Newman (postman) Reg. Graham (motor cycling enthusiast, steward at the B.L. and cobbler) and George Ellins (steward at the Institute and the most cheerful man you could wish to find). In those days the Church was full for such an occasion.

There was a cohesion about Minchinhampton in those days - people cared for one another and were mutually supporting, and I was only conscious of one thing - the sacrifices my Mother made. There were other helpers too - the Rector, Mr. Robinson and the British Legion all played a part. The village (?town) shops have changed since, so have their names and owners, but "Hampton" remains much the same. It is lucky to be off the beaten track of motorways and main roads.

THE OLD MINCHINHAMPTON SCHOOL

Miss D. Fassnidge

In 1952 there were two schools in Minchinhampton: Mr. Robinson was Head of the Junior Mixed School; Miss Beard was Headmistress of the Infant School but due to ill-health she was forced to retire early, which was very unfortunate for her, as it was her first post as Headmistress. Miss Fassnidge was in charge of the Infant School until 1956, when the two schools were amalgamated under Mr. Robinson. There were three teachers and about 100 pupils in the Infants and four teachers and 220 pupils in the Juniors in those days. Mr. and Mrs. Robinson lived in the School House from about 1927 to 1960, with his daughter and son. Mr. H. Bosely became Headmaster on May 2nd 1960, and lived in the School House for several years before moving to his own house in Avening.

Morning lessons had to finish by 11.50 for children to wash their hands, and for the helpers to lay the desks for dinner. We had bowls fixed in the cloakroom for the children; the supervisor had to see each child wash their hands which took quite a time! About 60 children stayed to dinner and meals were brought from Dudbridge Canteen, they cost five pence a day. Local parents and friends helped to serve the dinners on a long table at the back of a classroom, and several carried trays of dinners to the Infant rooms. American cloths were laid on desks, with cutlery and beakers of water. After lunch plates were washed in the china sink, which was fixed in the small porch attached to the smaller Infant classroom, then the cloths were washed, left to dry, rolled up and stored in the cupboard, also fixed in the porch, before afternoon session. A gas ring in the porch was used to boil a kettle for tea or coffee at dinner time for the Infant teachers.

At the end of the summer term 1953 the smallest Junior classroom was converted into a kitchen, for a cook and four assistants. The cook allowed us to have tea or coffee at breaktime (10.45 a.m.) and also after dinner, if we paid two shillings, an offer we appreciated very much!

In 1958 Mr. C. Tombs, who taught from 1929 until 1966 when he retired, used the Market House for his classroom, and this went on until a Terrapin was placed on the lawn in front of the Infant School. The reception class moved into the old cookery room at this stage. Two teachers, Miss Fassnidge and Miss Cooper, shared the larger room with two low wooden partitions. There was a tortoise stove in the middle of the room, which the teachers had to stoke. If they happened to forget the fire went out and the rooms were very cold!

As the Infant School had no space for activities, they were allowed the use of the Market House two afternoons a week at a rent of ten shillings. Christmas concerts were given for parents in the Market House and the teachers paid for the children to have a little present from Father Christmas. There were great difficulties taking the children up and down from school to the Market House, continual traffic, buses standing in the Market Square and about sixty children each to cross safely over.

When structural defects were found in the old school, three Terrapin classrooms were provided and part of the main building was held up with scaffolding on the inside. In 1966 Mrs. P. Matthews moved into one of these with a class of 48 Infants; her old room could hold no more than 36 children. The new school was completed and desks etc. were moved in at the end of the autumn term 1968. The official opening was on May 10th 1969, when Lord Butler came to speak. The Ricardo family of Gatcombe Park had been benefactors of the school in previous

years, and Lord Butler was then owner of the Gatcombe estate.

This is based on the article provided by the late Miss D. Fassnidge for the Minchinhampton Jubilee Magazine in 1977.



FULL CIRCLE IN THIRTY YEARS

Mrs. Diana Wall

The structure of the second Minchinhampton School dates from 1968 and was built by Gloucestershire C.C. to a design by a Nottingham firm. It replaced one exactly one hundred years old, which had become too small for the numbers attending and was also structurally unsound.

The need to replace quickly and relatively cheaply probably influenced the Education Committee decision in favour of a system-built (prefab??) school, the S.C.O.L.A. Mark II. It was intended to be a two-form entry Junior School, with the site for an Infant School earmarked to the southwest, behind the present library building. When this idea was dropped two terrapin classrooms were provided behind the new buildings; in 1975 a third was added, the cost of £4,000 being raised by the P.T.A.

The main block is two-storey, and the nature of the site, with a fall of over ten feet to the south-east, necessitated several floor levels, and the provision of a terrace with retaining wall to the main facade. On the north there is a steep bank down to the building, where site excavation was carried out. Many similar system-built schools are to be found in Gloucestershire, both Primary and Secondary Schools.

The construction is based on an eight-foot wide module, with infill panels of a stone effect, to

complement the surrounding town environment. The whole building has a steel frame, and window panels of wood, with a rough plaster facing, were inserted between the stone sections. By 1988 many of the window panels had rotted, especially along the south-west front, and these were replaced with U.P.V.C. units. The modular construction meant that the whole replacement process could be completed within the six-week holiday period.

Throughout its life the flat roof has given cause for concern, and it has been repitched several times. Other school have found difficulties with the end walls of the modules, and this has also been the case at Minchinhampton, notably on the south-east. A mounting catalogue of problems, together with a new approach to the provision of facilities for the 4 - 11 age-group, finally led to the decision to replace the whole school by the end of the millennium. Full circle in thirty years!



THE FIRST MINCHINHAMPTON PARISH COUNCIL

Mr. C. Turk

December 7th 1890. There was mounting excitement in Minchinhampton. 'Everywhere small groups were in discussion and argument; names were being mentioned; tactics decided. By early evening men in twos and threes were converging on the Market Hall, and soon several hundred were gathered in the Square. As papers were-passed round from hand to hand, heated conversation sometimes broke out, but in general the crowd was in good humour, anxious mainly as to whether all would be able to get into the hall. The time given for the meeting neared and local leaders began to arrive - particularly Edward Playne, P. J. Evans, Howard Ferrabee, the Rev. Wicks — and, the crowd pressed urgently towards the doors. When these opened a little before 8 p.m. as many as could poured into the Hall, to take their seats on the benches laid across its width.

What was the reason for this gathering and this excitement?

For centuries English parishes had been administered by Vestries. In origin these were meetings of ratepayers to discuss Church affairs. Given the leading position of the Church in each parish, it was natural for the Vestry to assume responsibility for parish affairs. It was equally natural that the monthly meetings of the Vestry were attended only by a few of the richer and more powerful parishioners. Hence two forms of Vestry developed; the closed Vestry, self-perpetuating and nominating its own members and the open Vestry, small in numbers attending, but open to any ratepayer. Minchinhampton was an open Vestry, meeting (until 1818 when the building now known as the Vestry Room was bought) in the Crown Inn, with an attendance usually of only six or so, but rising to a dozen or more when some matter of concern arose, as when many parishioners refused to pay rates in 1755.

During the 19th Century the extension of the franchise for the election of Members of Parliament led to a demand for its extension to local affairs. The Act of 1888 partly met this demand by setting up elected County Councils, but since poor men were most unlikely to gain a seat on these councils, control was still in the hands of the same class as had run the former Quarter Sessions.

The demand for elected councils now moved to the parishes. There was strong support for this from the Nonconformists who saw the Vestries as being run by the local clergy and large landowners. These latter, of course, fought equally strongly to retain their privileged position. So when H. H. Fowler introduced the Local Government Act in 1894 -popularly known as the Parish Councils Act -there was fierce opposition, told at some length in the weekly edition of the Stroud Journal. The Commons discussed the Bill on thirty-nine days, the Lords returned it to the Commons three times, but eventually, with a number of amendments, chiefly one limiting parish council spending to a three penny rate, it passed on 1st March 1894, to come into force at the end of the year.

Minchinhampton reflected the national picture at local level. On March 31st 1893 the usual Annual Vestry Meeting was held in the Church with the Rev. F. Mather chairing it. The Stroud Journal reported it as "likely to be the last Vestry meeting in Minchinhampton" and referred to small groups of men wending across the Common before 10 o'clock and to the large gathering outside the Church door at the appointed time. The meeting seems to have been orderly; overseers were appointed, the state of the roads discussed "they shake you nearly to pieces when

you ride about”; though one comment by a parishioner was symptomatic for the future “we shall soon be able to elect our own men”.

Who these men should be was the talking point of the next autumn. At the end of October 1894 there was a lively meeting of Liberal electors in the Baptist schoolroom with H. Evans in the chair. He pointed out the difficulty of submitting names which would satisfy all, and said that a compromise had been worked out with twenty Liberals to meet twenty Conservatives to decide on the allocation of the thirteen seats. This was violently opposed with shouts of “we won’t have it”, “no compromise”, “can you guarantee we should have seven?”. Rev. Wicks thought it would be deplorable if thirteen of either side were elected. Eventually thirteen names were put forward for nomination: Rev. Wicks, W. Excell, J. Daniels, L. Smith, A Shipway, M. Day, G. Davies, H. Ferrabee, G. Shaylor, - Richards, R. Dangerfield, H. Evans and W. Jeffries. A questioner asked about the cost of a poll if one was demanded, and was told that a penny rate would bring in £64 and the poll shouldn’t cost that much. Finally Matthew Day told the meeting that if there were an election “they must put their shoulders to the wheel, sink their differences and go for the ones to serve best.”

By the time of the next meeting in early November feelings had hardened. A Liberal group had met a Conservative one for nearly two hours to find them flatly refuse any compromise, especially the one favoured by the Liberals of six Liberals, six Conservatives and a Unionist Chairman. So the meeting approved the thirteen nominations and prepared for action.

Now at 8.00 p.m. on December 7th 1894 discussion and argument were over and the time for action had come. Some 260 men were in the Hall. (The Act said that women could vote for a parish councillor if they were on the parochial list, and even, a signpost for the future, become a parish councillor, but there is no reference to women at the meeting.) On the platform were the two overseers, James Thompson and W. Paul Niblett who had the responsibility of arranging the meeting (not to be in a place where alcoholic drinks were served) and seeing that all in the Hall were parochial electors and there were 700 or more such in the parish. The Assistant Overseer, W.H. Jones opened the meeting by calling for nominations for Chairman. Two names were submitted, Edward Playne and P. J. Evans, with the former elected to the chair at 8.10 by 137 votes to 122;

Mr. Playne called for nomination papers. These had been issued by the overseers, received back by them and then checked. He now told the meeting of the procedure to be followed: each candidate’s name would be announced in alphabetical order voting would be by show of hands with no anti—vote being counted; each elector could vote thirteen times; if a poll were demanded this must be supported ‘by at least five of the parochial electors present. He then announced the first name, that of Charles Cole Baglin, a stone—cutter of Burleigh, and voting commenced with A. J. Evans counting the votes. The proceedings took just over an hour with a total of 3348 votes cast.

Shortly after 9 o’clock Mr. Playne read out, again in alphabetical order, the number of votes cast for each candidate. These ranged from 156 to 99, with 139 being the lowest given for a successful candidate. As the list proceeded down to Edwin Young, blacksmith of Park Terrace, it became obvious that all elected men were Conservatives with the nearest Liberal at 119. The Conservatives refusal to compromise had given them all the seats. W. H.. Ferrabee, a mill manager, for the Liberals, immediately demanded a poll.

A week later the Conservatives put out a manifesto. They would make every endeavour to keep down the rates, they would distribute the Charities to all in the parish irrespective of religion or politics (this had been a sore point for years), they would foster Clothing Clubs and they would endeavour to provide allotments for all who desired one (this was a new power given to Parish Councils).

A further week and the poll was declared:

J. Harman, farmer, 408

F. S. Critchley, pin manufacturer of Brimscombe, [402?]

W. Smith, brewer of Brimscombe, 399

C. C. Baglin, stone-cutter, 389

Jo Chamberlain, farmer of Box, 385

W. P. Niblett, builder of Littleworth, 383

W. J. Ogden, draper at the Cross, 382

W. G. Hill, baker of West End, 372

J. Hunt, publican of Amberley, 370

T. Blake, timberyard foreman at the Dye House Mills, 369

A. E. Philpott, timber merchant of Brimscombe, 360

E. Young, blacksmith, 359

H. Millford, gentleman of Box, 354

These were the same thirteen elected by show of hands a fortnight earlier. Reviewing the results in local parishes the Stroud Journal commented "It is evident that the government of the parishes of Gloucestershire is to pass from Vestrydom to councils which in an overwhelming degree will consist of working members" - a comment which is hardly true of Minchinhampton; but since the last year's minutes of the old Vestry are lost (unless they are still preserved but unrecognised in some family records) we cannot know whether the new councillors had been regular attenders at the Vestry.

The new Council which met on January 1st 1895 showed some of the characteristics of Vestrydom by electing Rev. F. Mather to the Chair. Their first business was to decide that since the Vestry purchased the building in 1818, therefore, as successors, it was now theirs. So the Vestry Room remains the Parish government's meeting place, and by its name commemorates the old Vestry. The clerk, W. A. Jones, was instructed to make an inventory of all belonging to the parish; 6d. was to be paid for fires to keep the room warm; the Church Vestry could continue to use the room at a payment of 5 shillings a year, and true to the manifesto promise, a committee was formed to inquire into the availability of land for allotments.

The elected Parish Council for Minchinhampton was on its way.

Sources

Stroud Journal 1894

'News & Journal'

Parish Council Minutes

Glos. Record Office

Minutes of the A.G.M.

Parish Council

THE MINCHINHAMPTON FIRE SERVICE

A History by Christopher Brown

INTRODUCTION

Why the Minchinhampton Fire Brigade as a topic for study? Not being a local person, I did not realise that the town had its own Brigade. I discovered its existence when the Local History Group visited the Gloucester branch of the County Library to examine their archives.

The subject appealed to me for the following reasons:

- 1) It had a finite life, i.e. a start and finish date.
- 2) It involved local characters.
- 3) It was possible that fires had affected the architectural shape of the town as we now know it.
- 4) It was still within living memory of the more elderly members of the community.

An initial, investigation locally revealed few collaborated facts and only a few paragraphs here and there written on the subject. A typical example is the extract from the "Story of Minchinhampton, 1850 - 1957" compiled by the Minchinhampton Women's Institute:

"The founder of the Fire Brigade was Mr. Baynes of Lammas. The fire engine was kept under the Market House and the water drawn from a well under the group of houses called 'The Island', The War Memorial now stands at this spot. The engine was drawn by an old grey mare and when she was out drawing a carriers cart, and a call came, the firemen had to push the engine themselves. Onlookers were called to volunteer to help fill and pass the buckets and were provided with an armband so that they could draw their pay. According to our informant some of them did not work very hard but drew their pay all the same. The hose was sometimes taken round on a wheelbarrow. The fire alarm was the tolling of the tenor bell. Nowadays the Nailsworth Fire Brigade is on call for Minchinhampton fires."

To date the research has consisted of examining documents at the Record Office in Gloucester, visiting local people to ascertain their recollections, and locating articles in newspapers on the subject. My thanks go to Mr. John Rubenson for giving me his newspaper research findings. A superb piece of journalism is the extract from the Stroud Journal dated 21st June 1913:

"SERIOUS FIRE AT MINCHINHAMPTON. £400 DAMAGE. About noon on Saturday a fire was discovered in the servants' portion of Forwood, Minchinhampton, the residence of Mr. F.G. Playne, a member of the well-known firm of Messrs. Ball, Smith and Playne, solicitors of Stroud.

It appears that one of the maids had occasion to go into an attic, and on opening the door found the room full of smoke. She at once raised an alarm, and several employees of Mr. William Harman, the builder, including Mr. William Excell and Mr. Frank Latham, promptly responded to the call, and rendered what help they could, besides calling up the Minchinhampton Fire Brigade. This organisation under Captain W. H. Webb, made an exceedingly smart turn out, and arrived at Forwood to find the upper storey enveloped in flames. They very wisely set to work to make a hole in thereof, through which they poured streams of water, of which there was a plentiful supply for their engine. By working with great determination they were able to confine the fire to the upper storey.

Meanwhile, many willing persons including Mr. Geoffrey Pavey-Smith (Captain of the Nailsworth Fire Brigade) and the Minchinhampton Patrol of Boy Scouts (under Scout Master Leonard Humphries) - were engaged in removing valuable furniture from the lower rooms to a place of safety. Realising the seriousness of the outbreak, P.C. Baker (with whom there were on duty P.C.s Tennant and Hitchings) gave information to the Stroud Police Station, from which place a Stroud Brigade was called. The Volunteer Brigade, under Captain Ford, arrived on the scene in good time, but prompt as they were, the Minchinhampton Brigade had by then succeeded in extinguishing the flames. The fire was put out before Mr. Playne who had been engaged on professional duties in Stroud, could get back home.

Considerable damage was done to the lower stories by water, but the furniture was saved and the total loss is estimated at £400. This, we understand, is covered by insurance. It is thought that the fire originated in the chimney of the servants' room."

It is something of a misnomer to call the research the 'Minchinhampton Fire Brigade, 1755 - 1931' as, although a fire engine was purchased by local subscription in 1755, the Brigade proper was not formed until 1864. For this reason I have decided to amend the title to "The Minchinhampton Fire Service". Sufficient information has now been collated to tell the story of this Service.

The task now into put the flesh on the bones by further investigation of the characters involved, more local recollections and yet more reading of old newspapers.

THE BEGINNINGS. 1755 to 1799

The Churchwardens Accounts¹ for 1755 show that a decision was taken to purchase a fire engine. A subscription collection was organised by a Nathaniel Perks. The ninety-nine subscribers gave a total of £74:12:6.

This money was spent as follows:

1) To Messrs. Newsham & Ragg	£55:10:0
for engine and 3 dos. leather buckets.	
2) 18 perches of wall for engine house	18:0
3) Paving for floor	6:6
4) To William Newman for stones	7:6
and planking.	
5) Cart and horses for the day	1:0:0
6) Unloading engine	2:6
7) To Thomas Dicks for mending axle	2:6
broken in carriage.	
8) To Joseph Dyer for fire hooks etc.	2:16:0
9) To Samuel Cosburn for work in	7:10:0
engine house, ladders etc.	
TOTAL	<u>£68: 2:0</u>

Vestry minutes for March 29th 1799⁽²⁾: "At a vestry this day it is ordered and agreed that Thomas Hill should be paid 10:6d. per annum for cleaning and oiling the fire engine, finding oil and materials for the same and 4:0d per annum in addition for proving and exercising same device every year and the said Thomas Hill having agreed to undertake the same on the above terms."

EARLY YEARS. 1819 to 1852

The information for this section has been taken from the Vestry Minutes ⁽²⁾.

1.7.1819 At a vestry this day held it is ordered that a vestry be held on Tuesday next at one o'clock for the purpose of appointing a Committee to take upon therein the management of having and keeping the Fire Engine, Buckets, Fire Hooks, Ladders etc. in good repair to be ready for immediate use in case of accidental fire.

6.7.1819 It was resolved that it was of the utmost importance to the security of the persons and prosperity of the inhabitants of this Parish and its neighbourhood in case of accidental fire that the Fire Engine be kept in proper repair. In order to ascertain if it be at present in such repair it shall be taken out for trial tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock.

That if the Engine be found to be out of condition it should be completely repaired as soon as possible and that there should be ladders, fire hooks and buckets provided. That a person be appointed with a sufficient salary to exercise the Engine at least once a quarter.

That four different keys be provided for the Engine House and also for the locks securing the ladders and hooks and kept at such places as may be hereafter agreed upon.

That the ladders be never lent to any person under any pretence except in case of fire nor used in any repairs on the Parish account.

That the following Gentlemen be appointed a Committee to see that the foregoing resolutions be carried into effect and to adopt such other Regulations as the majority may think advisable.

Mr. Cockin	Mr. Harman
Mr. W. Playne	Mr. J. Scuse
Mr. W. Browne	Mr. R. Iles
Mr. Townsend	Mr. Jos. Iles
Mr. Ball	Mr. P. Playne
Mr. Sankey	Mr. T. Sheppard
Mr. Bliss	

And the Churchwardens for the time being -

31.3.1831 At a meeting held this day pursuant to notice given in the Church for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of erecting a new Blind House. It was resolved to purchase the premises situated between the Market House and the road leading to Parsonage Court now in the occupation of Thomas Wall and William Grange and to build thereon a Blind House, an Engine House and two necessaries for the use of the Market House Schools.

The property belongs to David Ricardo Esquire who has agreed to sell it to the parish at the same price at which it was valued to him on his purchase from the Assignees of the late William Whitehead Esq.

William Cockin	
Frank Chambers	} Churchwardens
John Hitchings	}
John G. Ball	
Maurice Scuse	

15.4.1842 At a meeting held this day the following resolution was agreed to: That this meeting acting on the resolution adopted at a parish meeting held 6th July 1819, resolves that there will be six keys made (if needed) for the Parish fire engine house and also six keys for the parish ladders. These keys to be deposited in the hands of the following persons:

The Rector, the Churchwardens, Mr. J. G. Ball, Mr. W. Pearce, Mr. J. Ogden, and Mr. W. P. Playne

With the express order that the ladders should on no account whatever be used except in case of fire, and that, the above Gentlemen be constituted a Committee for carrying the above into effect and to adopt such other regulations as the majority may think advisable.

25.3.1852 It was agreed that Mr. Bamford be authorised to have the necessary repairs done to the Blind House and Engine House.

BIRTH OF THE BRIGADE, 1864.

Again the source of information is the Vestry Minutes ⁽²⁾.

28.6.1860 The carriage of the fire engine being in a dilapidated condition, the Overseers are requested to apply to Messrs. Whiting and procure from them an estimate of the expenditure of a new carriage.

29.9.64 At a meeting held this day pursuant to notice for the purpose of ascertaining the state of the parish fire engine and for taking measures to render it perfectly efficient.

The meeting, after inspection of the engine, resolve that it is desirable to put it in proper repair and place it on carriage wheels. For this purpose a committee consisting of the Church-wardens of the three Parishes of Minchinhampton, Amberley and Brimscombe - for the time being - Messrs. C. R. Baynes, William Playne, Peter Playne Smith, W.J.G, Frith, Charles Playne, Edward Dalton, Thomas Lancaster, J. Bowstead, W. W. Kearsy, W.H. Canter, William Simpkins, James Reeves, Samuel Fowler, John Rodway and William Tuffley, of whom five shall form a quorum, be appointed with instructions to carry out the same at an expense not to exceed £25, to be defrayed out of the Highway Rate as heretofore.

That the engine, when repaired, to be delivered into the charge of a Captain and assistants who shall receive such remuneration as the committee shall think fit and be responsible for its custody and management under a code of regulations to be prepared by the committee.

11.10.1864 At a meeting held this day pursuant to notice given to the full committee, the following was unanimously agreed:

- 5 That a sub-committee consisting of Messrs. Lancaster, Baynes, Canter, Reeves and Fowler be appointed for carrying out repairs to the engine so agreed at the last meeting and for enforcing the rules made or to be made by the general committee for its regulation and maintenance. Of the above, three to form a quorum.

- 6 That it be left to the sub-committee to decide whether to provide leather buckets or others as they may be informed and advised.
- 7 That the engine be repaired together with all its apparatus and the fire ladders be in the charge of Captain William Hill and two assistants to be appointed by him, subject to the approval of the sub-committee.

That the Captain shall receive £1 and the assistants 10/- each annually, on condition of keeping the fire engine etc. at all times cleaned, greased and ready for immediate use.

That the engine should be seen and certified to be in such condition by one or more of the sub-committee at least once a month. That such visits be entered in a book to be kept for that purpose.

- 8 That once every quarter, at such times the committee may order, the engine shall be brought out and proved to be in working order in the presence of at least two of the committee who shall enter their report of such inspection in the same book.
- 9 That the Captain shall make out a list of sixteen able-bodied men who may be willing to pledge themselves at all times to turn out with the fire engine in case of fire - each of whom shall receive 2/11d. annually.
- 10 That the annual payment to the Captain, the assistants and crew shall depend on obtaining satisfactory certificates of having done their duty. Such payments to be made at Christmas.
- 11 That in the case of fire, the Captain, assistants and crew shall go with the engine, receiving pay at 1/- each for the first hour and 9d. each succeeding hour they may be at work.
- 12 That no beer or other liquor to be given to or taken by the crew, save such modest quantities as the Captain may think necessary and serve out.

9) That the keys of the engine house and ladders be securely located. One shall be at the Police Station and one in charge of the Captain.

1.11.1864 At a meeting held this day of the fire engine committee, consisting of Messrs. C. Baynes (Chairman), Thomas Lancaster, J. Reeves, and Fenning Parke (Secretary) a letter was read from the Royal Insurance Company and Mr. Lancaster expressed a favourable opinion of the rules proposed for the management of the Minchinhampton fire engine and offering under advice of Messrs. Shand and Mason, Fire Engineers several suggestions as to the provisions of hose, buckets, etc.

The committee, having sent for William Hill, resolved before determining said hose, buckets etc. that he prepare an estimate of what was considered to be absolutely necessary at present to render the engine efficient in these respects.

The committee further resolved to accept the tender of B. Whiting & Brother for the alterations and repair of the engine as specified and shown for the sum of £11:10:0 and directed that the work be commenced at once.

22.11.1864 At a meeting of the fire engine committee, the Chairman having reported examining the wooden platform of the engine carriage, the condition of which could not be ascertained until the lead was stripped off. The repairs of which were not provided for in Mr. Whiting's contract. He found the carriage to be entirely rotten and therefore took it upon himself, pending confirmation of the committee, to direct that the necessary work be done at an additional cost of £1. The committee confirmed this order.

William Hill, having as directed made duty a list of articles required for rendering the engine efficient, the committee resolved accordingly that the following be procured:

- 13 That two lengths of canvas hose at present in hand be fitted with new union joints.
- 14 Two additional lengths of canvas hose each 40 ft. fitted with same joints.
- 15 Three pieces of suction pipe each 6 ft. long with union joints.
- 16 Two dozen galvanised iron buckets. One copper branch pipe with jet 3'6" long. One iron spanner to fit joints.

The committee request the Chairman to communicate with Shand and Mason to ascertain what will be the cost of these articles.

1864/1865 The committee have to report that in compliance with their instructions they have caused the engine to be put in complete repair. In doing so an expense of £33:10:8 has been incurred viz:

To Shand & Mason as per bill	£22: 0:8
To Whiting as per bill	<u>£12:10:0</u>
	£33:10:8

This exceeds by £.8:10:8 the amount originally sanctioned by the parish but the committee would observe that the sum was named on a rough estimate and as when work was in hand, it was found that it must either be incompletely done or this small additional sum expended, they took upon themselves the responsibility of incurring it and hope that in so doing they have met the wishes of the parishioners.

The engine being in an efficient state it is necessary to make provision for keeping it so and for its working when required.

In the first place, as to its place of deposit and custody. As was foreseen, the alterations having made it too large for the old engine house - which indeed was never suitable, being too damp and ill ventilated - Mr. Ricardo has kindly consented to allow it to be placed in the lock-up under the Market House. This will, of course, receive some slight repair and cleaning but more especially new doors of open work, either in iron or wood, which would allow the engine to be seen, be themselves ornamental and allow free circulation of air.

In regard to the arrangements to be made for working the engine, the committee do not know any better can be devised than those adopted at the last meeting which have since been submitted and approved of by the Royal Insurance Company.

Under these rules a small annual sum will be necessary for carrying them out, which the committee suggest may be raised by subscription.

In the event of the engine being called into actual service, there is no doubt that the insurance companies interested will pay the hire of the men, as provided by the rules and also any damage

would therefore sanction to expend a sum of £2 for the purposes of the engine, chargeable to the Highway Rate.

3.12.1868 A sum of £5 per annum to be paid out of the Poor Rate in aid of the expenses of the engine maintained by the Nailsworth Fire Engine Association for use in the Minchinhampton Parish.

25.3.1870 It was proposed and agreed that the chairman be requested to ascertain whether the Old Blind House and the engine house adjoining, now belonging to the Parish, be sold.

6.2.1872 Annual Dinner of the Brigade at the Crown Inn.

23.3.1872 Mr Baynes, who has acted as secretary and treasurer for the Fire Engine Committee since its appointment, submitted an account with vouchers and receipts and payments showing a balance in the Savings Book of £8/2/3. He begged to hand over the minute book and all paper connected with the engine to the Vestry clerk as ex-officio secretary of the committee, proposing that Mr. W. H. Smith be added to the committee. This was carried. Following a motion proposed by Mr. C. Playne, best thanks of the meeting were presented to C. R. Baynes Esq for his valuable services to the fire engine committee.

6.12.1873 C.R. Baynes, as chairman of the fire engine committee since 1864, reported that the Hon. R.H. Eden having been added to the committee, had been chosen as chairman and executive member, and would submit for the approval of the committee such alteration of existing rules for the management of the Fire engine and fire brigade as appeared necessary.

He moved that the committee be authorised to expend a sum of not exceeding £35 in placing the engine in a state of complete repair, renewing apparatus etc.

25.1.1876 Brigade Dinner at the Crown Inn. The Chairman of the evening Cpt. T.W. Gardner of the Stroud Volunteer Fire Brigade spoke highly of the energy displayed by Cpt. Whiting, who out of raw material and an indifferent engine had by perseverance obtained as good an Engine and Brigade as any in the County. Mr. Whiting read the annual report - The Brigade consisted of 14 members, had attended 12 practices and 2 fires. In one instance they had saved property to the value of several hundreds of pounds.

19.4.1876 The members of the Brigade presented as a mark of esteem to their Captain, Mr. Whiting a new dress cap.

16.2.1877 Annual Dinner at the Crown Inn. Cpt. Whiting said he had been a member for 14 years. The Brigade belonged to the Parochial Authorities and were not allowed to wear uniform.

He had tendered his resignation due to pressure of business but it had not been accepted and he would continue for another year.

16.8.1879 Competitions were held between the Minchinhampton Fire Brigade and the Brimscombe Volunteer Fire Brigade in Camp Field.

8.1.1880 Annual Dinner at Crown Hotel. Cpt. Whiting said it was the 16th anniversary of the formation of the Brigade and during that time they had been called upon to attend 40 fires. During the year they were sad to lose 2 members who had died. They were now left with 12 members.

3.7.1880 M.F.B. and B.V.F.B. had a mutual drill at Brimscombe, it being the custom for one Brigade to visit the other during the year.

15.1.1881 Annual Dinner. Cpt. Whiting said he wanted to see his men better equipped. He had tried three times to get uniforms but had had three doses of the cold shoulder. They had had four calls and eight practices.

15.10.1881 Cpt. Whiting gave a test call to the bell chamber of the Parish Church. The engine was brought out and 7 forty-foot lengths of hose connected and taken to the roof of the church. To accomplish this, one round 30 ladder was used, and 3 scaling ladders.

18.1.1883 The 19th Annual Dinner. Cpt. Whiting said they had had only one fire during the year and reached it within 17 minutes of the call. (Holcombe Mills) Cpt. Barrett said he had been connected with Fire Brigade work for 20 years, the earlier part with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. Cpt. Moreton represented the Nailsworth Brigade.

1.2.1833. The Brigade had purchased a large sheet to take to fires in buildings in case the inmates had to jump.

21.6.1844. M.F.B. Annual Dinner. To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the formation of the Brigade. At a recent fire the Brigade were on the spot and pouring water on the fire in 8½ minutes, and they were on duty at that fire for 76 hours. Capt. Whiting had served under Cpt. Hill for 10 years, and had been Captain for 10, but he now thought of retiring. He would like to see the Brigade in uniform.

6.4.1885 Annual Dinner. Cpt. Whiting said he had reconsidered resigning and was pleased to still be their Captain. The members were now in uniform.

25.7.1885. The M.F.B. accompanied by the B.V.F.B. drove to Stroud and met the Town Brigade. From there they all went to Nailsworth with their engines decked with flags. The S.V.F.B. did not take part because of lack of outfit.

13.5.1886. Annual Dinner at the Crown Hotel. Cpt. Collings and the Stroud Brigade attended in their new uniforms and boots. Also present were Cpt. Barrett of the B.V.F.B. and Mr. Hill representing the Nailsworth Brigade.

7.1.1888. The members of the N.F.B. were invited to spend an evening at the residence of their Captain to mark his 53rd birthday, and his 24th year of service in the Brigade. The paint room at Messrs. Whiting's Coach-building Establishment, in Butt Street, was tastefully decorated for the occasion and an excellent supper and entertainment was enjoyed by all.

3.9.1895. Brigade to be maintained from the rates as here for to. A small committee to be appointed to manage details. The position of each fire engine and address of Secretary, Captain and call boy of each brigade to be printed on cards, to be fixed on each Post Office, Police Station in the parish, or other prominent positions.

3.10.1895. A committee appointed - Messrs. Joseph Harman, W .J. Ogden, Thomas Whiting and James Simmonds.

12.12.1895: The Fire Brigade committee be authorised to purchase:

10 pairs boots
1 tunic
10 life lines
1 bucket strainer
1 pair lamps
irons and ropes
The cost not to exceed £10.

2.3.1896. Mr. Ogden reported that no second hand boots could be found. He brought samples of new ones at £1 per pair. Council authorised purchase of ten pairs, as per sample.

27.6.1896. M.F.B. proceeded to The Lammas, the residence of Mr. C. R. Baynes (the founder of the Brigade). The men were put through several drills by Cpt. Wess and an experiment with the jumping sheet was tried. Cpt. Baynes, grandson of Mr. Baynes, jumped from a second storey window of the house and successfully landed in the sheet. The party proceeded to the White Horse Inn, where they met the Chalford Brigade and went on to Sapperton, where an excellent meal was provided by Mr. Harrison of the Bell Inn.

5.7.1900 It was stated that the Market House Committee would charge the Parish Council a rent of Two Guineas per annum from Lady Day for the use of the Engine House.

6.12.1901. The funeral took place of Mr. Thomas Whiting, aged 66, who had been a member of the Fire Brigade for many years, and Captain for the last 25. The coffin was carried on the Minchinhampton manual engine the deceased's helmet being placed on top, and members of the Brigade acting as bearers. Many firemen from the local brigades attended - Stroud Volunteer, Stroud Town, Brimscombe and Chalford.

17.12.1904. The funeral of Mr. E. Young, a member of the Brigade. Amongst members from the Minchinhampton Brigade were: Cpt. Webb, Firemen H. Boulton, J. Hopes, T. Frewster, C. Close and A. Herbert.

21.4.1910 It was stated that the only water available for firefighting had to be obtained from wells and pools. It was suggested that several hydrants be installed. Also it was said that the condition of the engine and equipment was very poor and Messrs H. Smith and E. G. Barrett were appointed to look into the matter.

7.7.1910 The inspectors reported that the engine was in a bad state of repair and needed to be renovated. There were 290ft. of canvas and leather hose, one small hand pump 23 buckets and 1 jump sheet. It was said that the Parish Council made annual payment of £3/16/- and quarterly amounts of 15/- to the upkeep of the Brigade. The shortage of water was acute.

6.1.1911. The Fire Brigade Inspectors reported that repairs had been carried out to the fire engine by Mr. J. Hooper at the Motor repair Works, near Blue Boys, at the cost of 3/17/-. The engine now worked much better. The Brigade had 4 lengths of leather hose and 5 of canvas the couplings of which were of the old pattern and would have to be altered as they would not fit the new 2½" universal size. A hydrant is to be fixed at the Cross, and the cost of £2/10/- to be defrayed by the Parish Council, who would also offer the Stroud Water Company £1/1/- per annum provided they could occasionally use the water for practice.

15.4.1912. Hydrant fitted at the Cross and a connection piece had been ordered from Messrs

Newman and Hender to suit the old hose. As soon as it is received. the hydrant will be tested.

17.4.1913. A letter was read from Mr. A. Summers respecting the charges made for services at a fire at Blue Boys Farm on February 4th, stating that he considered them unreasonable, and asking if the Brigade is maintained by the rates. Cpt. Webb and Mr. Boulton attended on behalf of the Brigade and produced the rules and scale of charges. After considerable discussion the Clerk was instructed to reply to Mr. Summers and state that the Brigade is maintained by the rates and that the claim is made on the authority and in accordance with the rules adopted by the Council (a copy of which can be seen in the Clerk's office) and also to point out that the charges made by the Council are, they believe, the most reasonable in the District.

15.5.1913. A letter was received from Mr. Summers stating that in his judgement the claim made for services rendered by the Brigade is incorrect according to the rules. Mr. Summers attended the meeting as did Captain Webb and Mr. H. Boulton. Mr. Summers is to be given an account in detail with a list of the helpers and ask him to kindly favour the Council with a cheque to settle the same. Major Ricardo invited the Brigade to tea at Gatcombe and hoped they would give a display. The Major's invitation was accepted with hearty thanks.

14.7.1913. The Fire Brigade Committee Report. On Tuesday June 17th the Committee met the Brigade at the Cross where they inspected the hose and had the same tested from the hydrant and they were of the opinion that two lengths of leather hose and two lengths of canvas hose were useless. They then went to the engine house and inspected the engine and hand pump. The hand pump was found to be slightly out of repair and the suction boxes of the engine required new hinges. The Clerk was instructed to contact Mr. Jas. Hooper to see to the repairs to the hose. On June 26th the Committee met at the Crown Hotel, when quotations were received from Messrs. McGregor Ltd. & The United Brassfounders and Engineers Ltd. After careful consideration it was proposed by Mr. Grist, and seconded by Mr. Fyffe and carried unanimously that Messrs. McGregors quotation be accepted. The Clerk was instructed to order the same at once, this being really necessary. The Clerk placed before the committee a list of rules and regulations together with a scale of charges for the Brigade attending fires, which he had prepared for their approval. After adjusting the annual payment, of the Council to The Brigade, it was unanimously agreed to recommend the Council to adopt and pass these rules and regulations and scale of charges and that the scale of charges for the Brigade be printed on a board and placed in a prominent position at the Engine House.

The Fire Brigade to consist of a Captain, Hoseman, Assistant and five able-bodied men. Charge for the use of the engine per day of 12 hours, or any part thereof £1/10/- (Half price if not used). Horse hire to be charged at actual cost.

Captain or Officer in Charge 10/- for 3 hours or less, 1/- per hour thereafter.

Hoseman 7/6d for 3 hours or less, 1/- thereafter

Assistant 7/6d

” ” ”

Fireman ” ” ” ”

Pumpers & Helpers 1/- per hour or part hour

Ringing the Fire Bell 2/6d.

Messengers 1/- each

Cleaning the Engine, Hose and Appliances 10/6d.

The Captain or other officer in charge to serve the Brigade, Pumpers and Helpers with refreshment as necessary. (Drinkables not to exceed one pint of beer per man per hour) -

The above scales were made and adopted at a Meeting of the Minchinhampton Parish Council duly called and held on the 14th July 1913

H.G. Ricardo - Chairman

F. E. Jones - Clerk.

The Clerk was instructed to order Mr. J. Simmonds & Sons to paint the scale of charges on a notice board and fix same at Engine House also to put the following notice on the old notice board - 'The Fire Brigade will not attend any fire unless an official call is received by some member of the Brigade, the Clerk of the Council or the Police.'

The Council agreed the Fire Brigade Committee be authorised to purchase 4 lamps for the engine.

20.4.1914. The Fire Brigade Committee were elected as follows - Messrs. Grist, Smith, Barrett, Hutchings and Fyffe.

12.10.1914. The Captain stated that the lamps which had been got for the engine were not suitable and that they should find a large one more suitable. Mr. Barrett replied that he had seen Mr. Miller who had supplied the lamps, but could not get him to change them. Mr. Grist said he would do what he could in the matter.

11.1.1915. Mr. Miller was having a large three sided candle-lamp made.

THE END OF THE BRIGADE, 1916 - 1931

The final years of the Brigade, especially after World War 1, were largely punctuated by the need for better water supplies. Most of the references in the Parish Council Minutes³ are duplicated, so some editing has taken place in this section.

17.4 1916. A letter was read from Mr. Jones, Foreman of the Jury, over the death of the late Mrs. Heiron, calling the Councils attention to the fact that no water was available at the fire and suggested that two or three hydrants should be provided at different parts of the district. Amberley and the Pike at Brimscombe mentioned.

4.7.1917. The matter of the Fire Brigade expenses were considered and it was thought a safer protection to the town would be given if further fire hydrants were fixed.

14.1.1918. The Chairman reported that the Stroud Water Company could not undertake providing any fire hydrants during the War on account of the shortage of labour.

24.3.1919 The Clerk reported that the arched cellar underneath the Crown Hotel and the late Mr. Thompson's property would make an excellent reservoir for water supply in case of fire and it was probable that it would be filled up with debris, that the Council should take steps to secure it for the purpose named.

19.5.1919. The school managers had given consent for the stand pipe for the Amberley hydrant to be left at the Amberley Schools. A notice to quit was received from the Market House committee for the fire engine, owing to alterations necessary in carrying out a plan for a new War Memorial. The Fire Brigade Committee were instructed to visit and make new

arrangements at another site, also to carry out the cementing of the proposed water tank under late Mr. Thompson's premises as a reserve tank for fire purposes.

30.6.1919. The committee reported having visited several sites and found none so suitable as the shed in the Crown Hotel Yard and they produced an agreement drawn up for taking this shed at a yearly rental of £5/0/-. (This was paid quarterly.) Mr. Simmonds proposed that an inventory of all the fire appliances should be taken. The inventory

2 x 38', 2 x 50', 1 x 65' and 2 x 75' lengths of hose.	3 x 6' lengths of suction hose
1 lamp for engine	20 buckets
1 x ½" & 1 x ' nozzles	1 nipple to standpipe
Ladders	2 grip hooks
1 coupling	Pole shafts for engine
1 broom	1 soft broom
2 shovels	2 pickaxes
1 standpipe at Amberley School	1 standpipe in the charge of Mr. Barrett.

9.2.1920. Mr. Chamberlain spoke of the recent fire at Mr. Merrills, West End and strongly advised a fire hydrant be fixed near park Terrace gates.

11.10.1920. Mr. Barrett reported a visit from Stroud Volunteer Fire Brigade with their new motor engine who tested the new water tank which was found most satisfactory and he thought the town at this end was now well secure in case of fire there being an adequate water storage.

15.2.1921. Mr. Barratt recommended that new rates of pay be allowed to firemen when employed at a fire and suggested the following:

	Turn out (incl 1 hour)	Thereafter
Captain	10/6d	3/6d.
Fireman	7/6d.	2/6d
Pumpers	1/6d	1/6d
Engine	10/6d	2/6d
Horses	Actual cost.	

21.3.1921. Mr. Barrett on behalf of the Fire Brigade informed Council that the Captain and his men were very dissatisfied and the Captain was inclined to send in his resignation. The floor of the engine house was very unsatisfactory. They had no water supply, the pump being out of order. The uniform was completely worn out and unfit to use. After discussions the Council felt the Brigade had reasons for complaint but as times were now very uncertain and things so costly, they could not see their way to spend much money. It was suggested to write to Stroud Brewery Co. and see if they could put a new floor to the shed or engine house, it being their property.

18.4.1921 The Fire Brigade committee were elected as follows: Messrs. Barrett, Hall, Pond & Hutchings. The Clerk informed Council he had received Captain Webb's resignation.

4.7.1921. The Clerk reported that the Fire Brigade had met the Committee who had heard their complaints, chiefly on the condition of the floor of the engine house which made it impossible for them to keep the engine clean. Further complaints were made in reference to boots and coats but after consideration of the high cost at the present time, this matter to remain open.

8.11.1921 The Chairman opened four tenders received for the new floor of the engine house:

A. Daniels £40/-/-
W.A. Harman £16/-/-

B. Bishop £22/-/-
J. Simmonds £22/10/-

Discussion followed as to the proportion of cement being specified and eventually the Council accepted the tender of Mr. Harman on condition of the proportion being 4 to 1.

19.9.1921. Hydrant authorised at top of West End, near to Mr. Hooper's house and another proposed for Lamb Inn, Amberley.

9.8.1923. The Council inspected the fire engine and hose and found the engine defective and also three lengths of hose. The fire hydrant at the Cross was tested and found to be leaking. Captain Webb and Mr. Boulton met Council and made statements of what was required to repair valve to engine and that 400' of new hose was necessary. Captain Webb informed Council that he must now resign after 50 years service and hoped Council would support his nominee, Mr. H. Boulton as Captain. The Council felt regret at Mr. Webb's resignation, but could not expect him to continue in his advanced age.

24.9.1923. It was decided to inspect fire engine after repairs on Saturday 6th October at 3.00 o'clock.

6.1.1924. Fire hydrant had been fixed near Black Horse, Amberley.

5.5.1924. Fire Brigade Committee: Messrs. Barrett, Matthews and J. Hall.

25.8.1924 The Chairman reported that the inspection of fire hydrants at Amberley had been carried out by tests of the Stroud Volunteer Fire Brigade He recommended from what he saw that the Council would be well advised to scrap the old engine and maintain a few men as a reserve with the present hose and to call upon an outside Brigade should a fire occur. He thought it would be possible to give a sum of money per year as a retaining fee to the outside Brigade and thus have a call upon them. Mr. Barrett replied that he did not think the Council had the power to subscribe to an outside Brigade and noticed in the Chairman's remarks he had not referred to the Brimscombe Brigade which he thought were quite efficient and had a good engine. He would like to invite the Council to come down and inspect their turnout and see for themselves. ... The matter was adjourned to come up at an early meeting before Quarter Day.

24.9.1924 The matter of the Fire Brigade was again discussed and it was suggested that the engine be sold. Mr. Hutchings proposed that the Fire Brigade Committee should go carefully into the matter and prepare a scheme to lay before the whole Council. The Clerk suggested that the Council should meet the Brigade and have their opinion before doing anything drastic.

6.10.1924. It was stated that the Fire Brigade had drilled from hydrants and a tank, and was found to be satisfactory. Without the engine the tank in the High Street was useless. It was decided to keep the Brigade in operation.

17.4.1928. Fire Brigade Committee: Messrs. Barrett, Matthews, A. Dennis and L. Close. Fire hydrant was proposed for Box. There was discussion re. continuing upkeep of Fire Brigade and the feeling was that the Brigade was not of any great service, owing to altered conditions and it was not fair to the outside districts of the Parish. It was stated that the Brigade cost £303 in ten years, but for nine had received no call.

21.8.1928. The Fire Brigade Committee gave their recommendations:

- 17 That the existing manual engine be disposed of as being no longer sufficient protection.
- 18 That two men be appointed at a suggested fee of £2/-/- per annum to keep in order the existing fire pumps and using it for any small outbreak in the town. To test each fire hydrant in the Parish twice every year, report to the Council in writing that this had been done and have charge of present hosepipe. Perform any other duty the Council may wish to define.
- 19 That each hydrant in the Parish be marked with a brass plate and that authority be asked from the Water Company for a responsible person, appointed by the Council, to hold a turn key to water mains at the nearest point.

This report was carefully considered by Council and on taking the vote, was passed with one opponent.

25.9.1928. After discussion, it was agreed to give three months notice to the Captain of the Fire Brigade, to terminate on December 25th 1928.

10.12.1928. The Clerk reported that the Captain of the Fire Brigade would not accept the three months notice to terminate their engagement. Mr. Chamberlain thought that the Council were the employers and should not be dictated to by the Brigade. A fire hydrant was needed at St. Chloe.

The Clerk stated that he had spoken to Mr. Jeffery Smith, Captain of the Nailsworth Volunteer Fire Brigade and they were quite agreeable to attend at Minchinhampton or Amberley should they be required. It was agreed with the Police as to where to call Brigades for any part of the Parish. Mr. Hutchings be given six months notice to give up the engine house and advertise the sale of the manual engine.

18.3.1929. The Clerk informed the Council that the Captain of the Fire Brigade had notified to him that unless the Council gave a proper notice they should sue for their fees. After strong discussion it was moved and agreed that the rules of adoption be rescinded and that the Brigade give up in March 1931, and that three months notice be given at Christmas 1930.

25.6.1929. Four tenders were received for the old fire engine and the tender of Mr. C. Blick, £6/5/-, the highest was accepted. Discussion as to the remaining plant of the Fire Engine and storage tank took place and it was decided to get an inventory from the Brigade Captain and report at the next meeting. Mr. Hutchings kindly allowed same to remain at the engine house.

9.9.1930. Mr. Hutchings claimed further rent for engine house as it was still in Council hands. It was resolved to sell the, various articles at a Public Auction.

3.12.1930 The Clerk reported that the Fire Brigade utensils had been sold at Nailsworth Market for the sum of £6/10/9. paid into the bank and also that a sum of £7/-/- was paid to Mr. Hutchings and the key of the engine house given up in settlement.

24.2.1931 Last payment of £2/-/- made to Brigade.

March 1931. The Minchinhampton Fire Brigade officially ceased to exist.

Sources

- (1) Churchwardens Account - P217 CW 2/2
- (2) Vestry Minutes - P217 VE 2/3 & 2/4 -
- (3) Parish Council Minutes - P217a PC 1/1 & 2/2
- (4) Stroud Journals - Extracts compiled by Mr. J. Rubenson.

LET THERE BE LIGHT! GAS STREET LIGHTING IN MINCHINHAMPTON

Diana Wall

Every evening, at dusk, the photo-electric cells on the lamp standards switch on the yellow sodium street lights. Minchinhampton is no different from any other town in Gloucestershire, and in the last decade of the twentieth century we take somewhat for granted the safety that lighted roads will bring. It has not always been like this, of course, and the purpose of this essay is to unravel the history of pre-electric street lighting in the Town.

“At a Meeting held in the Vestry Room on Friday evening the Sixth day of February 1857 It was proposed :- That it is highly desirable that the streets of the Town should be lighted.” Thus the first entry in the Gas Accounts for Minchinhampton¹. Without more ado a committee was formed to collect subscriptions and to seek tenders for 14 lamps to be lit in the winter months. Such was the enthusiasm of those present that £10.2s.6d. was promised by the end of the meeting. The committee consisted of Mr. C. Turner, Mr. J. Fardon, Mr. J. Matthews and Mr. E. Hall. It seems likely that word of the intentions of the meeting had already spread, because a week later two tenders had been received, and it was resolved that *“Mr. S. Hill be employed to put up two specimen Lamps the one to burn oil the other naphtha (sic) The one Lamp to be placed against the Crown, the other upon Mr. Pearce’s House in Butt St., such lamps to be continued for one week.”*

The trial period was successful and Solomon Hill was instructed to put up seven lamps, for which he had tendered at 23s. each. There were to be two in West End, one each in Well Hill, the Cross, Tetbury Street and on the Market House and Mr. Simpkins’ house (possibly on the corner of King Street and Well Hill). It is not clear whether the two original lamps were to be left in position. Naphtha was the chosen fuel, and the charge for the winter of 1857/8 was 3d. per lamp per night. By the following winter a further lamp in Butt Street was installed.

Other towns in the locality were being lit by gas, and as early as 1858 hopes were expressed that this might soon be the fuel for Minchinhampton. A parish meeting was held in the Vestry Room on 27th September 1859, with the Rector, Charles Whately, in the chair, when it was unanimously agreed *“That it is expedient that the Town of Minchinhampton should be lighted with Gas’*. A new committee was formed, with full powers to put this into effect, as the Stroud Gas Light and Coke Company had extended its operations to the town. The lamps would be in the same places as before, and the cost still borne by public subscription.

The first three years of gas lighting went smoothly enough. All inhabitants of the town felt the benefits, and the funds remained in credit, although Mr. C. Baynes, charged with collecting the subscriptions, suggested it entailed *“much unpleasant work”* with *“objections brought against it which are certainly of great weight.”* Most of the original subscribers continued to fund the lighting, but it was felt that the expenses ought to be more evenly distributed, i.e. a rate should be levied.

At this time in England there were many moves afoot to improve social conditions. Acts receiving Royal Assent set standards for drainage, education and the relief of the poor. An Act had been passed in 1834 that laid down the provisions for lighting parishes, and the funding of such lamps.² Under the Act a Lighting District could be set up and a rate levied on properties

within this area.

A Public Meeting was called for 9th October 1862, when the options were explored. It appeared that three courses were open:

“1st. *That those who have already subscribed should increase these subscriptions, which they cannot be expected to do.*

“2nd. *That the expense should be defrayed*” by the introduction of a Gas Rate.

“3rd. *That the Town be left in darkness.*”

When the proposal was voted upon, a majority were in favour of the second option, which was adopted.

The Town was lit by gas in the winter of 1862/3, after a levy of 9d. was collected from the Lighting District. However, it soon became apparent that not everyone was prepared to pay up, and that some would prefer to stay in darkness. The Churchwardens, H.D. Ricardo and George Playne, who less than twelve months previously had been unanimously elected as Inspectors under the Lighting Act, were forced to report on 12th September 1863, ‘*that so much dissatisfaction has been expressed at the method of lighting by Rate and so much difficulty experienced in the collection, that they must decline, tho’ with regret being further concerned in the matter.*’ Those attending the meeting on that date were greatly in favour of the rate, and expressed themselves so in public. A group of five, Fenning Parke, Joseph Lewis, James Thompson, J. Sargeant and John Chandler requested a Public Meeting at which the whole issue could be aired. This meeting, a week after the first, failed to produce the necessary majority in favour of the Act, so a full poll of the ratepayers was held on the 15th and 16th of October. 141 votes were cast for the Act, 41 against, and the Churchwardens at last issued the notices of Rate. The Inspectors finally elected were C.R. Baynes, Joseph Fardon and C.W. Turner.

The Lighting District set up in 1863 lasted for many years, and clearly delimits the Town as it existed at that time. “*A Boundary commencing at the house and premises now occupied by George Clark in the road called the West End and including the Park Terrace and the Box Row to the left and right of the said road respectively and so on to the Cross. And from the said Cross down the Well Hill, to the right taking in King Street and the Shard and continuing as far as the house and premises occupied by George Playne Esq. and known as Forwood Brewery and the house and premises occupied by Mr. John Jackson and known as Forwood. And again from the aforesaid cross, up Tetbury Street to the end thereof including Tithing Lane as far as the house belonging to Mr. Chambers and known as Field House. And again from the aforesaid Cross along the High Street including Bell Lane and so on up Butt Street including Friday Street, the Rectory House, the Quoins and Parsons Court and as far as the cottages belonging to Mr. Lambert Esq. on the road to the Blue Boys Inn.*”

One final advantage of the adoption of a rating system was that the financial burden was removed from the original subscribers. Many of the same people would dig deep into their pockets in the years 1866 - 1869 as they became subscribers to the new parochial school.

The people of Minchinhampton were able to enjoy their street lights during the winter months, but as was the case in those days, it was not felt necessary to light lamps during the summer. People’s lives were governed by the hours of natural daylight and retired to bed fairly early by today’s standards. An entry in the Gas Accounts for 1886 suggests that by that time there were 19 lamps, lit “*from the 18th September to the 18th April less six days at the full of each moon*

during the period, viz. 3 nights before the full, one night of the full and 2 nights after to cease lighting” for which the Gas Company would be paid the rate of £2 per lamp. If the nights near the full moon were cloudy, then the Town was dark.

In February 1893 a case was brought before the Nailsworth Police Petty Sessions³ when 6 parishioners were summoned for the non-payment of the lighting rate. Mr. W. Excell was the first to be heard. His main objection was that parts of the town, notably the top of Friday Street, Parsons Court and Forwood were not properly lit, and that therefore the rate was excessive. All defendants had to pay, but Mr. Excell continued to press for cheaper rates at the meeting of the Lighting Inspectors later in the year. He wished all lights to be extinguished earlier, to save money. Enquiries suggested that it cost the Gas Company well in excess of £2 per lamp, and it was felt best not to push matters any further.

Mr. Excell was elected an Inspector, and continued as such until 1899.

The Parish Council took over the duties of the Vestry from 1894, but the Account Book continues to record the minutes of the Lighting Inspectors held each November. For many years at the turn of the century the sum of £40.00 was collected from the Lighting District, and proved sufficient to pay the gas Company. At times there were complaints about the quality of the gas, especially in Forwood, very close to the gasometer. Further lights were installed in Butt Street and at the entrance to Park Terrace. It was felt that the light was still insufficient, and among the improvements suggested were bigger mains more incandescent lamps, and a double burner at the Cross. The latter was implemented, and in 1909 this lamp was lit every night during the winter. Three years later, all lamps were lit, irrespective of the phases of the moon, from 1st October to 1st April.

The outbreak of the Great War in 1914 brought many changes to the Town. Large numbers of young men volunteered in the first few months of hostilities, and women took over some of the roles previously allocated to males. Gradually life took on a different meaning, as those left behind coped with food shortages, voluntary work providing clothing and comforts for the troops as well as work in the munition factories of the valleys. On February 11th 1916 a special meeting of the Inspectors was held *“to consider the advisability of not lighting the Street Lamps owing to the probable Air Raids by German Aircrafts”* (sic). Dr. Alfred Brown was in the Chair, and after reading an order issued by Stroud District Council about street lighting proposed *“that all the Street Lighting be dis-continued at once with the exception of the Lamp at the Cross, but this to be used shaded.”* The motion was carried unanimously, but, as ever with the lighting of the Town, financial considerations surfaced, as the Inspectors asked the Gas Company for a rebate on the costs! The reduced lighting was continued for three years, and must have helped to conserve supplies of coal in Great Britain. In 1917 the Stroud Gas Light and Coke Company were having great difficulties in ensuring a supply to Minchinhampton - the Parish Church used only half its lights for the last years of the War.

Peace eventually returned and an entry in the Gas Accounts for October 27th 1919 records *“A Parish Meeting held this day of Lighting Area when it was resolved the Parish Council should adopt the Lighting Act now carried out by the Inspectors and that 2 lamps be lighted viz, at Market House and The Cross to be paid out of existing balance in Bank to the A/c of Gas Inspectors.”* This was duly done and the account for £11. 6s. paid, leaving a balance of 12s. 9d. to be transferred to Parish funds.

Few entries are now made in the Gas Account Book, which passed to the Parish Council. Items referring to lighting are contained in the minutes of the Council, and the Lighting Rate became part of the Parish Precept. However, from time to time a major change was proposed to the Lighting Area, and reports of these have been noted. A report in the Stroud News⁴ on 14th March 1924 states *'The question of the extension of the lighting area of Minchinhampton was discussed at considerable length. Quite a number of new houses have been built since the boundary of the area was decided forty years ago. The Council thought the time had come for some alteration to be made. A resolution was proposed by Mr. Hall, seconded by Mr. Marmont and unanimously carried "That the lighting area be extended from a point in Butt Street across the Park to the house in Windmill Road known as 'Cristow' then down to 'Wellfield' and turning south to Box Lane". The matter is to be brought before a parish meeting to be held in the Market House'*. However, it seems that many of the people living in the extended area, who would now have to pay a rate towards the lights of Minchinhampton, objected to the extra expense, and managed to prevent the new area being adopted. They continued to obtain the benefits free!

It was another four years before the area was officially extended.

"From Cross, whole of West End to Hillfield, Windmill Rd. and Box Lane to Derhams Do. the Well Hill to the Grange, Forwood

Do. Tetbury Street to top Council House and Friday Street

*Do. High St., Market Sq., Butt Street to top house occupied by Mr. Excell, Bell Lane to School House up through Park taking in Windrush, Camp Field and Kalaria on road to West End"*⁵

Events meandered along at a slow pace in the Town. Other parts of the district were already receiving the benefits of electric light. As early as 1924 Stonehouse Parish Council had noted *"the advent of the Electric Power Co. The company would soon be due to be coming through Stonehouse and they would then be in a position to set that off against the Gas Co."* There was to be no such luxury for Minchinhampton however, as although some few domestic properties were linked to the electric supply in the early 1930s the main power source remained gas.

The romance of gas lighting was captured forever in the camera lens of a photographer in the thirties. The study "Dowsing the Glim" showing the last lamplighter Mr. F. Grange with the lamp on the Market House, was published nationally in "The Daily Mirror" in 1935. Already it was a scene that had passed into memory in some parts of Britain.

Whatever the plans for updating street lighting might have been, everything was put on hold at the outbreak of World War II. The blackout was again enforced, and although the War Book for Minchinhampton⁷ lists all manner of information for use in an invasion, there is no mention of lights or gas supplies. Presumably, the Gas Company in Stroud were under their own Emergency Orders and all decisions would be taken by them. There are no references to the restoration of lighting at the cessation of hostilities either; other more pressing needs were paramount.

There remain two pieces in the jigsaw amongst correspondence of the Parish Council. A signed and completed Agreement, between the South Western Gas Board and Minchinhampton Parish Council, confirms the lighting of the Parish in 1952 by gas power. However, in December the following year estimates were received from the Gas Board, for lighting for the next twelve months. Costs have been split to reveal the amounts of gas already used, and the duplicate copy,

on which the Clerk was to sign his acceptance of future costs, remains in pristine condition with the original.

Was a decision taken in December 1953 to pay the outstanding account, and to transfer the street lighting to electricity? The balance of probability suggests that this was the demise of gas lighting in Minchinhampton. The responsibility now passed to the Midlands Electricity Board, who continue the lighting authority to this day.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Manuscript Book, held by the Parish Council.
- 2 Statute 3 & 4 William IV Cap.90 - An Act to repeal an Act of the eleventh year of his late Majesty King George the Fourth for the lighting and watching of Parishes in England and Wales and to make other provisions in lieu thereof.
- 3 Stroud Journal, Friday February 3rd 1893
- 4 Original cutting pinned into Gas Accounts
- 5 Parish Meeting held 8th September 1928
- 6 Stroud News, 4th April 1924
- 7 Manuscript Book held by the Parish Council

A CRICKET CLUB AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

Diana Wall

In 1994 one of the recipients of money from the Minchinhampton Country Fayre was the Cricket Club Pavilion Fund. The M.C.C. (Minchinhampton, not Marylebone, Cricket Club) is long-established and the following is but a “snapshot in time of its history.

The poster, dated August 20th 1888, which is reproduced on the following page was found in the scrapbook of the Minchinhampton Improvement Association, in the Local History Collection. The Common was undoubtedly the scene of many local sporting events, and even when the Club was properly established, games would take place on the Camp Field, on the edge of the Great Park.

Play must have ben sporadic in those days, for there is no record until 1896, when an item in the Parish Magazine for October reads, *“It is a matter of congratulation that Cricket has been again revived at Minchinhampton, and that considering that the game had somewhat fallen into disuse of late, the season has been very successful. Certainly few years, as far as the weather was concerned, could have been more favourable for the game, and, until September, the fixtures have almost all fallen upon fine days.”* The officers for that year read almost like a

Who’s Who of the town,

President: Rev. E. Bryans

Vice-Presidents

Mr. Baynes

Mr. Brodie

Mr. Denne

Mr. Church

Capt. Ricardo

Mr. Pelham-Clinton

Mr. E. Playne

Mr. A. Playne

Mr. F. Playne

Rev. C. Hartley

Mr. Fowler

Hon. H. A. Lawrence

Captain: Mr. A. Jeffries

Vice Captain: Mr. W.J. Browning

Secretary: Mr. H.D. Newman

Treasurer: Mr. Fowler

During the year the team played 18 matches, won 9. lost 8 and drew 1.

It appears that at the turn of the century that there was a division based on religious allegiance. The Cricket Club was made up of members from Holy Trinity, the Parish Church, whilst the Football Club was closely linked with the Baptist Chapel! The Parish Magazine continues to print match reports and the list of subscribers who keep the Club financially afloat. In 1899 income for the year was £14.12s.6d., of which 29 members paid a subscription of 1/- each. The expenses for the year make interesting reading:

	£	s.	d.
<i>Mr. J. Harman - Rent of Field</i>	5	0	0
<i>Mr. Butcher - Bats, balls etc.</i>	2	15	0
<i>Mr. L. Wood - Ditto</i>	1	1	2
<i>Practice bats</i>		15	0
<i>Brake to Kemble</i>		12	6
<i>Mr. Newman - Stringing bats</i>		5	3
<i>Mr. Elliott - Fixture Cards</i>		4	8
<i>Mr. Hillier - Lawn Mower repairs</i>		10	6
<i>Mr. Hillier - Pavilion repairs</i>		12	8
<i>Mr. Hillier - Pitch Repairs</i>		14	6
<i>Mr. Hillier - Pitch Keeping</i>		12	0
<i>Mr. Chew - Locks and keys</i>		2	4
<i>Mr. Bennett - Tea</i>		2	0
<i>Postage, whiting and oil</i>		9	5
<i>Balance in hand</i>		<u>15</u>	<u>6</u>
	14	12	6

The games at this time were very low-scoring, compared to the present. A narrow victory was scored over Salmon Springs, 24 v. 23. At home in 1899 103 runs were scored for 3 wickets, but the more usual totals were less than fifty. This can be attributed to the late start of the matches, and the playing conditions on the edge of the Common. There would be a mown strip (as the accounts indicate) but this would not have been rolled, and “bouncers” would catch many experienced batsmen unawares. Regular opponents were Horsley. Longfords Mill and Brimscombe.

The connections between the Playne family of Longford House and the Cricket Club were strong. Not only were two matches played each season against the team from the Playne’s Mill, but several members donated money to the funds, and took an active part in play. Mr. Harman, from whom the field was rented, was a personal friend of A.T. Playne.

Some novel ways were found of raising money. In 1904 a concert was held, “*In order to replenish the impoverished exchequer of the Cricket Club, a concert was held in the Market House on the evening of Nov. 25th and a goodly audience enjoyed a long and diversified programme. Songs were contributed by Mr. A. G. Bennett, Rev. J. L. Stewart, Miss Bryans, Miss Lawrence and Mr. W. Jeffries, the last two being loudly encored. Miss Gladys Bryans played a violin solo and Mr. A. E. Selwyn sang two humorous songs in costume, which met with much favour, as did comic songs by Mr. F. Jones. Two mandoline solos were cleverly played by Mr. Blick and recitations - “The Groom’s Story” and Anstey’s “Costers Conversation” - were given*

with considerable dramatic power and sense of humour by Mr. L. E. Fawkes. The whistling solos of Mr. O. Chew were also highly applauded, and the Rector read "The Confession" from the Ingoldsby Legends, and, being encored, Hood's amusing little piece "Domestic asides". Mr. D. Apperley played a pianoforte solo with much executive skill, and also acted as general accompanist. The audience was extremely well behaved, and we noticed with pleasure an entire absence of gallery cat-calls and the objectionable noises which have sometimes spoilt the pleasure of our Market House Entertainments. The nett proceeds amounted to the satisfactory sum of £5. 1s. 7d." Thus it was reported in the Parish Magazine.

CRICKET.

A MATCH WILL BE PLAYED

(Weather permitting)

ON THURSDAY NEXT,

AUGUST 20, 1868,

BETWEEN ELEVEN

Players of Nailsworth

AND ELEVEN OF

Minchinhampton,

ON

MINCHINHAMPTON COMMON,

NEAR THE WINDMILL.

Play to commence at Half-past FIVE p.m.

LEWIN, PRINTER, NAILSWORTH.

Hampton 8/6 - Nailsworth 2/6

Only one photograph has come to light from this most interesting period. The print was donated to the Cricket Club some years ago by Mrs. S. Ridgway (née Newman) of Haresfield Beacon. Probably taken almost a century ago, it shows her father, Mr. S. J. Newman and also a Mr. Edward Hulbert, and a Mr. Jim Godsell. Sadly the sepia print is too faint to reproduce in the Bulletin, but it shows a marvellous line-up of players, the average age of whom must be well over thirty-five.

The attire of the gentlemen would cause the most interest on a present field of play. Although most are wearing white shirts, only a few have flannels. Everyone wears a tie (but this could be for the photographer's benefit) and the headgear ranges from cricket caps and straw boaters to what can best be described as a pith helmet! One gentleman in the back row (an official perhaps?) is wearing full highland dress, with sporran and beret.

Other names have been recorded for this period; A. Jeffries (the captain for several games) scored 37 on two occasions in 1899, H. Smith took four wickets in one over against Horsley, Wilkinson (no initial) took six wickets for 3 runs in a single innings defeat of Longfords team. As mentioned before; scores were low, so a two innings game seems to have taken place fairly often when the evenings were light. Most men could walk or cycle to their homes very easily. Cricket teas, or after-game drinks were yet to come.

Very little seems to have changed throughout the Edwardian periods in those peaceful (and fine?) summers before World War I. Whilst not winning any major trophies, or producing another W. G. Grace; the Minchinhampton Cricket Club appears to have flourished as so many in England at that time. No-one would have foreseen the upheavals and carnage of the French countryside in 1914. Perhaps Camp Field at Minchinhampton, as well as the playing fields of Eton, helped to mould that conflict.

MINCHINHAMPTON Girls Training Corps

615 SQUADRON 1944 — 1958

Iris Dyer

The Girls Training Corps (G.T.C.) was a national organisation formed to give girls aged from 14 to 18 experience of what life was like in the Services.

Minchinhampton G.T.C. was started at the request of a group of teenage girls, the chief instigator being Poppy Ellins (later Cooke). She had originally belonged to the G. T. C. squadron based at Stroud High School, and the main reason for her request for a company to be started in Minchinhampton was due to the wartime travel problems. The last bus left Stroud at 8.55 p.m. so she had to leave school at 8.30 p.m. to walk into town, thus missing half the parade. Poppy and pals Mavis Humphries (Davies) Eileen Cleverley (Young, now living in Australia) and the late Stephanie Newman (Hudspith) approached several influential local people. These included Mrs. Fyffe of "Bowmans Green" on the Park. Mrs. Holt of "Windrush" and a Mrs. Brown who was connected with the Red Cross. This lady promised to contact a friend and seek her help, and eventually a letter was received from the Staff Commandant of Gloucestershire G.T.C., Lady DeClifford of Gloucester. asking Poppy to meet her at Moor Court Hotel to

discuss starting a squadron at Minchinhampton.

When Poppy arrived at Moor Court, she was surprised to see that Lady DeClifford had contacted several other ladies from Minchinhampton, namely Miss Gladys Beale, Mrs Austin Richardson (Beadesert School), Miss Faith Playne, Mrs. Reg Lee, Mrs. Endacott, Mrs. Pegg (Senior Postmistress), Mrs. Dale Roberts, Dr. Grace Macrae, Mrs. Fyffe and others. Poppy was asked to explain why she thought a G.T.C. company was needed in Minchinhampton and this she did, explaining that as well as travelling problems, there was nothing for teenage girls to do as there were no Ranger Guides or anything similar, and also, as it was wartime, it was necessary to register at the age of eighteen to do either war work or join the Forces, so that the G.T.C. would be a good training ground for what life was like in the Services,

So it was agreed that a Squadron should be formed in Minchinhampton and the following ladies were elected:

Miss Gladys Beale (Commandant)
Mrs. Austin Richardson (Adjutant)
Miss Faith Playne (Quartermaster)
and a committee of the aforementioned ladies from the town.

The first parade was held in November 1944.

The uniform consisted of a navy blue forage cap with badge (free issue), white shirt, plain navy tie, navy skirt, light stockings or white ankle socks and a navy battle blouse which could be purchased from the Quartermaster; otherwise a short navy jacket was allowed. The Officers' badge was red/silver, Cadet Officers blue/silver and the Cadet badge was all silver.

Parades were held weekly in the Market House on Monday evenings from 7-9 p.m. and the cadets paid a small contribution towards refreshments and the use of the hall. Parade drill instruction was given regularly and other activities included aircraft recognition, with tuition by an R.A.F. Officer, first aid, keep fit, choral singing, verse speaking, public speaking and music and movement. Several certificates of merit were won at the Three Counties' competitions in these various sections.

After the end of the war, several trips were made to London. One of the first, on May 26th 1946 was attended by the patron, Princess Elizabeth, now the Queen, who cut the Birthday Celebration cake.

In 1947 three cadets, Joy Ellins (Tremelin), Iris Ellins (Dyer) and Sybil Excell (McNeill) were planning to go to Holland and join other contingents for a holiday. Their medicals had been passed, but a severe outbreak of polio in England prevented foreign travel, so they were sent instead to B.T.C. Headquarters in Holland Park for a week exploring the city. Two highlights from the week were a visit to the American musical 'Oklahoma' and the film 'The Best Years of our Lives'. They had preferential treatment when they went to see the film! That same morning, as the girls were exploring the area around the cinema they got into conversation with the doorman, who promised them good seats at the evening performance, and, true to his word, on their arrival he escorted them past the long queue waiting to go in and ushered them into front row seats - it was probably the uniform that did the trick! They enjoyed staying at the large house in Holland Park along with other cadets, and it seemed like a palace after the small cottages they lived in in Minchinhampton. They had the freedom of the house, including the luxury of the use of a grand piano. Sometimes they helped with the kitchen chores, or light

cleaning duties in the dormitory or library, and they travelled everywhere by Underground - another novelty to country girls.

The following year 13 officers and cadets travelled to a rally at the Empire Pool, Wembley, along with companies from Tewkesbury, Cheltenham, Cirencester and Minsterworth. Because of the war hotel accommodation was still scarce, so they were allocated sleeping quarters in the deep air raid shelters, where they bedded down, officers included, in very spartan conditions! After a church parade at Southwark Cathedral, the Lord Mayor of London took the salute from the Mansion House, accompanied by Mrs. Clement Atlee and the Princess, Royal.

In May 1949 Minchinhampton qualified for the finals of a Midland Regional Festival, at Smethwick, gaining first place in emergency first aid, second in competitive games, third in squad drill and a fourth in keep fit. All this against teams from throughout the three counties! The following year Doreen Buckle (Pegg) represented Minchinhampton at the winter sports in Switzerland, returning in 1951 and also making similar trips to Norway.

In 1951 a "Golden Key" scheme was introduced which required cadets to raise £3 in aid of the Headquarters deficit. The way to raise the necessary funds was to do a 6d. a job scheme (similar to the Scouts' Bob-a-job) and the Minchinhampton efforts won them a Golden Pennant and a letter of congratulation, noting that the appeal had been so well supported that a reserve fund could be set up.

A National Church Parade took place in June 1951. The parade, on Horse Guards Parade, was inspected by Lady Louis Mountbatten, who stopped to speak to cadet Sylvia Dyer (Phelps). As it was hot several cadets fainted from the heat and Lady Mountbatten was very concerned and apologised that the girls had had to stand so long. Included in the weekend was a visit to the Festival of Britain in Battersea Park. The organisers anticipated that the cost for each cadet, *"inclusive of two nights in the deep shelters, sightseeing and all meals should not exceed 25/6d."*

Gloucestershire G.T.C. celebrated its tenth birthday in 1952, with competitions in which Minchinhampton gained two second places, for competitive games and singing. Their own birthday party took place in November 1954 in the Market House. Refreshments, including a birthday cake cut by Miss Beale, were provided by the committee. Games and competitions were enjoyed, a playlet was acted, and a colour film of a previous county event was shown. Guests included parents of the girls, County Commandant, Mrs. Robinson, and fourteen cadets from Minsterworth.

Cadets also took part in local Armistice Day parades and sometimes formed guards of honour at fellow cadets' weddings. Discipline and attention to smartness of uniform was strict, and being a member of the G.T.C. was quite a serious business, not to be taken lightly. Before a county church parade at Minsterworth they were instructed *"Socks will not be allowed. If weather permits cadets will parade in white shirts with sleeves rolled. Battle blouses and other articles to be left in the Memorial Hall. Tea will be in the hall after the parade has been dismissed,"* Promotion was gained by a number of cadets but this had to be earned and was not easily come by, and serious training courses for all ranks had to be attended and passed.

Poppy Ellins (Cooke) rose from senior N.C.O. to Lieutenant, and Doreen Buckle (Pegg) and Winnie Glassonbury (Price) became officers.

For this they had to go to Staffordshire, then Holland Park for a weekend where they were vetted the whole time by varying top officers and by the Director herself— a very nerve— wracking experience. The late Lurlene Hammond also became a cadet officer, wearing white flashes on caps and shoulders. N.C.O.s included Mavis Humphries (Davies), Barbara Cribley (Cribley), Beryl Cribley (Browning) and Joyce Ind (Ellins). Two cadets later joined the forces; Sybil Excell (McNeill) in the W.R.N.S. and Iris Young (Muir) W.A.A.F.S.

The G.T.C. continued for fourteen years with Miss Beale as Commandant for the whole of that time. In 1958 she felt it was time to resign, and a letter of deep appreciation was received from Miss K. Curlett, Chairman of the Girls Training Corps, expressing her sadness that “*Minchinhampton has closed after such a long and honourable existence*”.

A reunion was held at Miss Beale’s home, Little Court, Well Hill on June 5th 1992 when about thirty girls attended. A presentation was made to her in appreciation of her kindness to them all, and a celebration cake was ceremonially cut. Later an album of photographs was presented to Miss Beale. Many passed through the competent and active company that was Minchinhampton 615 Squadron during the fourteen years, and look back now with deep gratitude to Miss Beale’s devoted service to her ‘girls’

MINCHINHAMPTON AND THE TROLLOPES

Peter Grover

Behind the existence of a modest gravestone in Minchinhampton Parish Churchyard lies an intriguing story. It marks the last resting-place of Rose Trollope, widow of the great Victorian novelist Anthony Trollope, their eldest son Harry and Harry’s daughter Muriel. In the adjoining grave lie Harry’s wife Ada and her mother. All died at Harry and Ada’s home, “Greylands”, in Minchinhampton High Street.

Anthony Trollope, then a minor Post Office official and struggling part-time author, married Rose Hestletine, the daughter of a seemingly respectable bank manager in Rotherham, Yorkshire. But this apparent pillar of society was, in fact, a crook. Visiting inspectors discovered that over the years he had embezzled more than £4000 from the bank; he escaped gaol by fleeing abroad where he subsequently died.

Rose, on the other hand, proved a model wife – scrupulously honest, faithful, lastingly affectionate though firm in domestic matters, and even tolerant of her husband’s too-keen eye for a pretty girl. She advised him on the feminine ways of his female characters, who form such a striking feature of his stories, on their way of speaking to each other on intimate matters, and the details of their dress, and he is said to have modeled some of his characters on her. She carefully checked all his manuscripts before publication, and kept his financial affairs in order.

They had two sons – Henry Merivale (Harry) and Frederick – neither of whom made much of a mark upon the world. Frederick emigrated to Australia, where he became a sheep farmer. Harry never had a real job. He dabbled in publishing, writing magazine articles and French translating, being an ardent Francophile. Like most of the Trollope tribe he also wrote a novel “My Own Love Story” which even his wife described as dull!

Anthony died in 1882 and within a few months Harry proposed to Ada Strickland, whom he had known since she was a small girl. As a child Ada had been introduced to the family circle by Harry's cousin Florence, and she became a firm favorite, especially with Anthony, who took the girls riding in Hyde Park and to see the sights of London, and enjoyed joining in their rumbustious horseplay.

Ada, in turn, clearly had a girlish crush on the bearded man old enough to be her father. Years later she was to write to a friend, "I knew Anthony intimately as a young girl and was head over heels in love with him and use to have a furiously gay time with him."

Why did Harry wait till after his father's death to propose to her? Had he proposed before and been refused? As Victoria Glendenning remarks in her biography of Anthony, "It was as if he had been waiting for the order of release." After Harry's death in 1926 Ada wrote, "I was good to my husband and LIKED him because he was Anthony's son and only married him because he said if I refused him fifty times he would ask me fifty times again!" This indicates a good deal more enthusiasm on his part than on hers. It all sounds remarkably like a scene from one of Anthony's novels!

Ada and Harry had two children, Tom and Muriel, neither of whom married and so the direct line died out in England, leaving it to be carried on by the Australian branch of the family. In 1908 the widowed Rose sold her house in London and moved in with Harry, Ada and Muriel at "Greylands". Ada's mother Sarah was probably there too.

Victoria Glendenning remarks that Rose saw things Anthony never dreamed of – motor cars, aeroplanes, short skirts, world war. She died on May 25th 1917, aged 96. Harry died in 1926 aged 80, Ada in November 1936 and Muriel in 1953. Thus ended the Trollope connection with Minchinhampton. Why Harry and Ada came to live in this then remote Cotswold town is not known, as there appears to be no family connection on either side. Can anyone provide a clue?

Miss Gladys Beale, a long time resident of Minchinhampton, remembers visiting the family at "Greylands". Occasionally dances would be held in the hall to the music of a wind-up gramophone. Muriel was tall, dark and statuesque. She eventually moved into a cottage in Well Hill, which she named "The Small House", possibly in contrast to the much larger "Greylands", or even a reference to Anthony's novel "The Small House at Allington".

DR. JAMES BRADLEY

It is three hundred years since the birth of Dr. James Bradley, who was buried in Minchinhampton churchyard. It is appropriate to reproduce part of the work by A.T. Playne which outlines his life.

“By far the most distinguished man who lies buried at Minchinhampton is Dr. James Bradley, in memory of whom there is this inscription, translated from the original Latin, engraved on a brass-plate in the south transept, formerly in the churchyard:

“Here lies buried James Bradley D.D., a member of the Royal Societies of London, Paris, Berlin and St. Petersburg, Astronomer Royal, Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford. A man highly esteemed for his knowledge of Physical Science and principally in the elucidation of the most abstruse points; so successfully diligent, and of such great wisdom, that all those who devoted themselves to these pursuits freely owned his superiority; and at the same time of such modesty that he alone seemed ignorant of the high reputation in which he was held by those most competent to Judge. He died July 12th, 1762, aged 70.”

Dr. Bradley was born at Sherborne, Gloucestershire in March 1693, and took holy orders in 1719, but resigned his ecclesiastical preferments on being appointed Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford. He had been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1718, and was appointed Astronomer Royal in 1742, succeeding the celebrated Edmund Halley. After a most distinguished career, he retired on a crown pension of £250 a year, and died in broken health at Chalford, within the parish of Minchinhampton. Dr. Bradley’s mother and sister are also buried at Minchinhampton.”

Much of Dr. Bradley’s work as the third Astronomer Royal was concerned with careful observation and recording of the heavens. He worked on the passage of light and also the axis of the Earth, and his theories are sometimes referred to as *a corner-stone of astronomical science*”. He based his measurements on a meridian at Greenwich, passing through the room at the Observatory where his telescope can still be seen. Bradley’s meridian is about 19 feet west of the present Greenwich Meridian, but was the one in use in the early 19th century, when the first accurate maps of Britain were being drawn by the Ordnance Survey. As a consequence, all the triangulations were based on the Bradley Meridian, and the grid lines on all O.S. maps to this day have this as their datum point.

Three hundred years after his birth, Bradley remains an important influence on modern science.

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