

# Minchinhampton

---

The newsletter of Minchinhampton Local History Group

No 5 DECEMBER 2024

[minchsec@gmail.com](mailto:minchsec@gmail.com)

Editor: Martyn Beaufort

---

## Editor's note:

We have been very busy with our plans for next year, and so far, we have bookings for 3 out of the 6 slots planned. At the end of this newsletter, you will find the dates for your diaries!! Plans are also afoot for a trip to the National Arboretum and the History Trail. So, 2025 looks like an exciting year!! Our AGM is going to be on the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2025, and the exciting news about that event is that there will be a talk by local historian Howard Beard on the photographs of E P Cowley before it – so get your tickets as I am sure that Howard will be a crowd-puller!! Why not buy some for your favourite history buff for Christmas?

## Membership News

As advised in newsletter 3 existing members can renew their membership for £10 rather than the £12 for new members. Please bear in mind that members discounts for talks are only available at the door or if paid directly to our bank account. The Market Stores can only take payments for full price tickets.

### Contents

MLHG Acrostic Quiz By David Wethey	2
Minchinhampton and the Boer War By Brian Lett	3
Old Maps of Minchinhampton By Richard Davis	5
A Christmas Journey By Fay Inchlawn	14
Dates for your diary	20
Answers to Acrostic Quiz	21

## **MLHG XMAS ACROSTIC QUIZ**

**By David Wethey**

The first letters of these answers spell out the alleged venue of a battle between Saxons and Danes. Moreover, for many years this was the site of an excellent dairy.

- 1) Who was King of England when the Market House was built?
- 2) On what type of limestone does Minchinhampton lie?
- 3) Who was the first King of England to own Minchinhampton?
- 4) Which local football club was formed before Manchester United?
- 5) What Status does the Royal Agricultural College now enjoy?
- 6) Which mill in Minchinhampton date from the 14<sup>th</sup> century and acquired a 12-acre lake two hundred years ago?
- 7) Where were the legendary Hampton cars built?
- 8) Which village had the only church in England built by a Queen?
- 9) Name the town with mills named after a town in Northern France and a country in North Africa
- 10) What do 1066 and 2024 have in common?

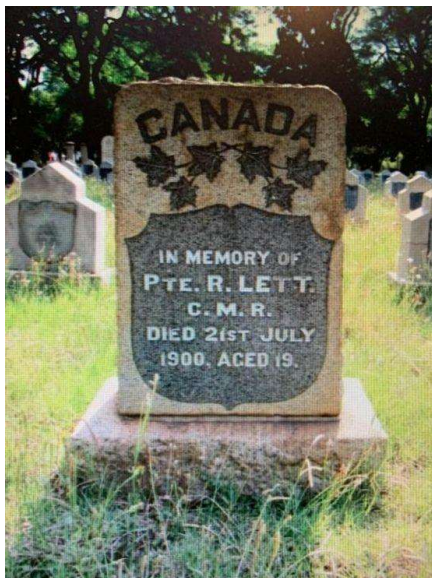
*Answers – page 10*

## Minchinhampton and the Boer War.

By Brian Lett.

Following a successful Remembrance evening on Friday 8 November 2024, the Minchinhampton Local History Group has been wondering which conflict or conflicts should feature in next year's Remembrance show. One of the candidates is the South African War of 1899-1902, more often referred to these days as the Boer War. South Africa was then a part of the British Empire, and the Boers [the Afrikaner community] were seeking to create an independent state. Eventually, the British Empire prevailed.

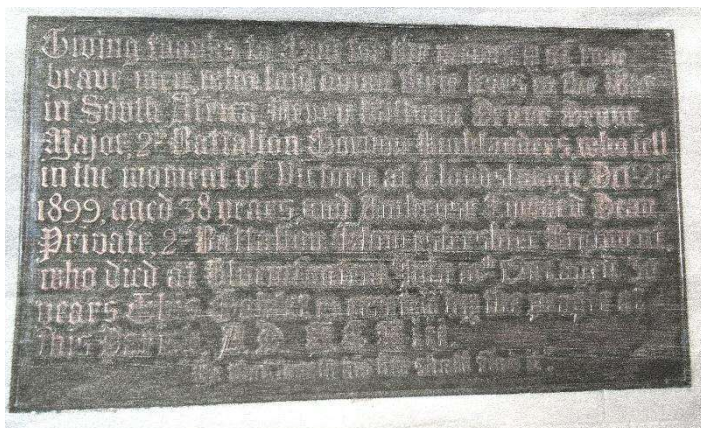
The Boers fought most effectively as commandos of horse-mounted troops, and they knew their country well. Thus, it was a long time before they were defeated by the undoubted might of the British Empire.



The war has a place in my family history – my great uncle Dick Lett left England at the age of 17 to emigrate to Canada, and having started his life there as a farm labourer, in early 1899 he joined the Canadian Mounted Police. When the war in South Africa started, he transferred to the Canadian Mounted Rifles, and by March 1900 he was serving with the British Empire's forces in South Africa. He served at Johannesburg, Diamond Hill, Cape Colony and the Orange Free State. At some point he lost his horse to either sickness or death, and therefore became "dismounted". When an appeal went out for volunteers for the Transvaal Mounted Police, who were short of men, Dick transferred to them, which brought him a new horse. Sadly, he died in Pretoria on 21 June 1900 aged 19 – not from enemy fire but from enteric fever [typhoid] – he was one of many who perished in that way.

Therefore, I asked myself the question: how did the South African War affect Minchinhampton, if it did at all? The answer is that it did affect Minchinhampton, for the simple reason that the Gloucestershire Regiment were there.

Visitors to Holy Trinity, Minchinhampton may, if they are particularly observant, have noticed a bronze memorial plaque that reads as follows:



"Giving thanks to God for the memory of two brave men who laid down their lives in the War in South Africa, Henry William Denne Denne, Major, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion Gordon Highlanders, who fell in the moment of victory at Elanslaagte, Oct 21 1899, aged 38 years, and Ambrose Edward Dean, Private, 2nd Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment, who died at Blomfontein, July 10<sup>th</sup> 1901, aged 30 years. This tablet is erected by the people of this parish 1903. He that

loseth his life shall find it."

So, who were Major Denne and Private Dean? I took on the job of researching Major Denne, the MLHG Secretary, Dr Martyn Beaufort, researched Private Dean.

Ambrose Edward Dean lived in Butt Street, and it appears that he, like several others in his family, was not of unblemished record, and was familiar to the Magistrates Court. At some point he joined the Gloucestershire Regiment and ended up miles from home fighting for his country in South Africa.

Henry William Denne Denne may, or may not, have lived in Minchinhampton at one time. More probably, his inclusion on the memorial plaque was because he had been Henry [Harry] Ricardo's best man at his wedding and was presumably therefore his best friend – and no doubt a regular visitor to Minchinhampton. Both achieved the rank of Major, although in different regiments. Harry Ricardo had retired from the army before the South African War.

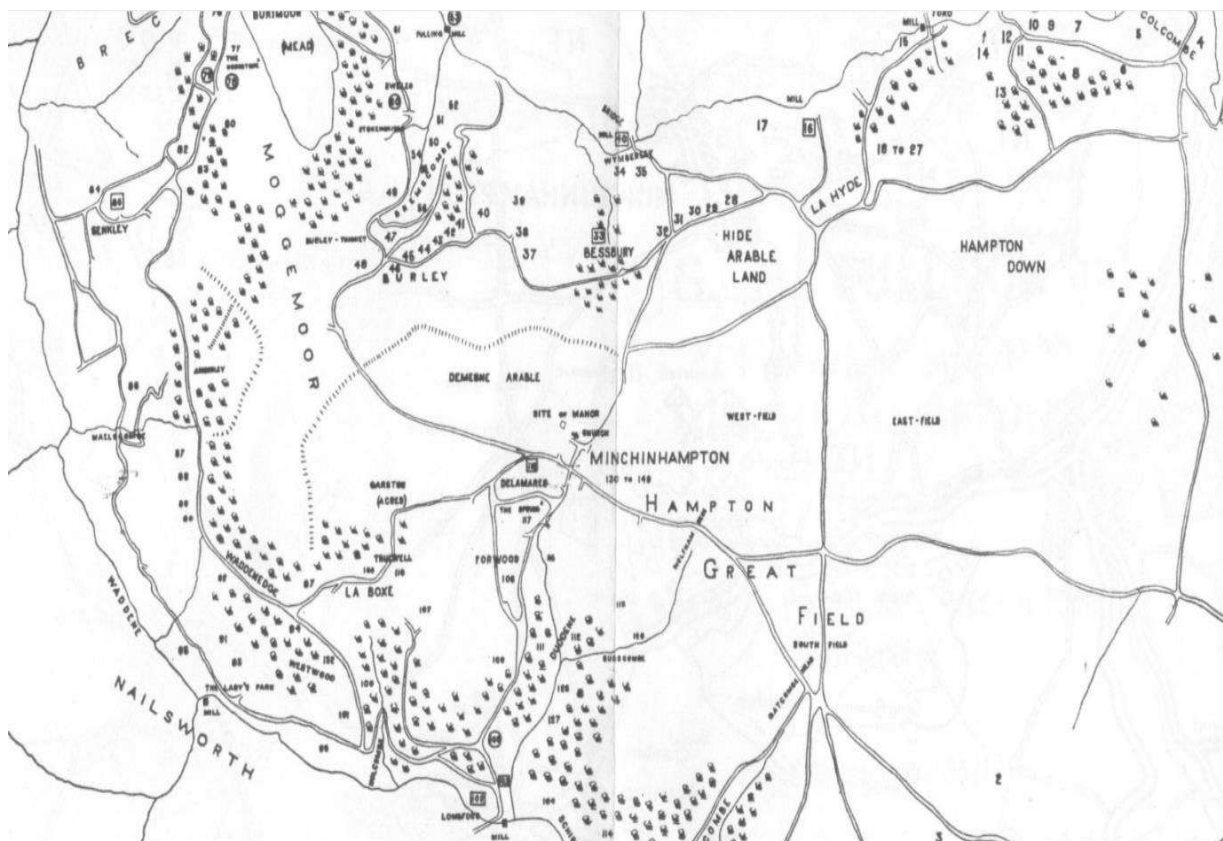
Soldiering was a different business before the arrival of the First World War, and modern weapons. Hopefully, the MLHG will decide to give some time in its next Remembrance show to the South African War.

[Editor – We have been contacted by Jon Crouch who has been studying the role of surgeons in the Boer War. In doing so he identified that Dr Brown [of Dr Brown's Road fame and the GP in Minchinhampton for many years] was a surgeon in the Boer War. I have requested an article from him and this should hopefully appear in our next edition due out on the 15.02.2025]



# Old Maps of Minchinhampton

By Richard Davis



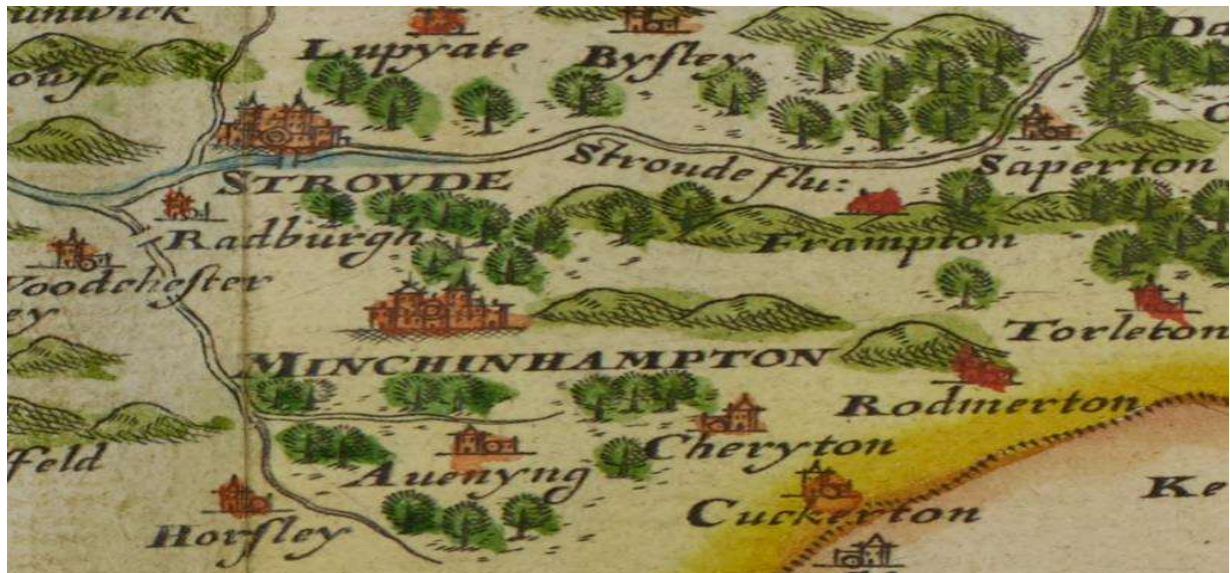
*Map of the Manor of Minchinhampton by CE Watson (Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society)*

An image is more powerful than words – a map can present the past in a glance. When the Rev CE Watson was translating a Latin survey of the manor made in about 1300, he realised that the order in which the places were listed followed an anticlockwise route around the parish. The map above is his best guess of where the individuals named in the survey lived. [1]

There are features that seem strange to us. The Cirencester Road is not there! There is greater emphasis on the settlements that encircle the plateau, especially those in the north. As the eye travels around this document, it notices that some footpaths are treated as medieval roads and properties are positioned in areas which are now open fields. Watson has studied local maps and taken them back in time.

It is an imaginative tour de force but is not set in stone: he later changed his mind on one aspect at least. We could regard it as an invitation to engage with the original sources, and to

test his conclusions against our own fieldwork and the literature and archaeology published since his day.



Early maps of Gloucestershire such as those by Christopher Saxton of 1577 and John Speed of 1611 are both beautiful and economical. The detail from Saxton's map pictured above displays the maker's skill in choosing what to put in and what to leave out in the interests of clarity.

It demonstrates the town's relative importance compared to its neighbours. Speed also records the hundreds into which the county was divided. Minchinhampton was in the hundred of Longtree which stretched from Woodchester in the north to Shipton Moyne in the south. The hundred was a pre-Conquest administrative unit concerned with the administration of justice: for example, in the early 17th century, the high constable for the hundred of Longtree was Richard Pinfold who lived near the rectory in Minchinhampton. [2]

I would also mention the famous engraving by Johannes Kip published in 1712 which gives a high level of detail of properties at the northern edge of the town and the surrounding topography. It is not known whether he trained as a surveyor, but it looks like it. In a recent book, Anthea Jones wrote:

"The bird's eye view ... is not like a modern map; in order to compress the scene onto a single plate, the scale could not be the same throughout. Nonetheless modern maps do indicate that Kip placed features correctly in relation to the house, albeit the distances involved are often foreshortened and the orientation sometimes adjusted. ... Kip achieved an approximation to the accuracy of a map and the atmosphere of a sketch." [3]

It would be worth trying to plot the details on Kip's engraving onto later maps.

Kip's engraving shows a heavily wooded Great Park north of the church. An Act of 1773 entitled justices of the peace to make orders stopping up and re-routing roads and paths. Some of these orders have survived, with their accompanying sketch plans. One from 1797

shows the diversion of a footpath across the Great Park (Glos Archives Q/SRh/1797/C). These sketches can be valuable sources of information.



*Detail from  
Taylor's map of  
Gloucestershire,  
1777 (Glos  
Archives)*

The earliest map of any detail is by Isaac Taylor of 1777 (Glos Archives MA19/23). We can now see built-up areas in the town centre, even individual houses, some marked with their owners'

names. Just below "Hampton" is the name Shepherd Esq, referring to Edward Sheppard, lord of the manor; Mr Perkes is Nathaniel Perks of The Lammas, for many years a member of the Vestry; Clutterbuck Esq was Edmund Clutterbuck of Hyde House, a well-known attorney whose name often appears on deeds and wills of the period; and Whitmore is Samuel Whitmore of Hyde Court, an eminent clothier who owned Wimberley Mill. The map has become a social space.

For the first time we can also see the highways and byways connecting the town with the wider parish and beyond. The road system he portrays may not have changed much since the medieval period. In this connection Taylor's map came at just the right time. Within 50 years, new roads, and new sections of road by-passing steep and narrow medieval highways, had set the basic pattern in use today.

The northern boundary of the parish with Bisley is the river Frome. Part of Chalford, including St Mary's Mill, lies south of the river and is technically within the parish of Minchinhampton. In a talk given to Chalford Parish Local History Group on 16 October 2024, Roger Carnt spoke about the historic maps of this area, known as Chalford Bottom, and there is an excellent summary with illustrations in the "Past meetings" section of their website. For purposes such as taxation or the census, the names Chalford Tything or Chalford Division were also used.

The first full-scale parish map of Minchinhampton was made by Samuel Keene in 1803-4 (Glos Archives P217a/VE/1/1). It is about 29 by 42 inches at a scale of ten inches to a mile. It is the first of several maps made for purposes of taxation, in this case to ensure the fair allocation of responsibility among landowners to fund the poor rate. Parish boundaries were



important in this connection because incomers could be sent back to their parish of origin if they were unable to support themselves. It was necessary to survey all the land holdings and give each plot a separate number. This was marked on the plan and cross-referenced to a book which gave the owner's name and his liability for tax. The map involved the accurate measurement of quantities in terms of acres, roods and perches. It was not necessary to make an accurate plan of the houses and usually a simple rectangle was given regardless of the building's actual ground plan. It shows in brown ink the course of New Road at Forwood superimposed on the existing fields.

Ordnance Survey maps were originally commissioned for military purposes but after the end of the Napoleonic Wars there was a more general demand for them. [4] The first maps for Minchinhampton are preparatory drawings made in 1816 at a scale of two inches to a mile (Glos Archives OS/1/5/1). Minchinhampton is split across two sheets along the line of Windmill Road and Tetbury Street: no.164 shows the area north and east, no.171 the area to the south and west. One detail not found on other maps is the milestone on Windmill Road (next to the bus stop outside Horsfall House).

*Detail from OS map, 1828 (Trove, National Library of Australia)*



The hatching and shading on Taylor's map showed how the town, common, and fields lay on a plateau surrounded by deep valleys. The OS drawings go into more detail, notably of the side valleys or combs etched into the slopes and give a real sense of the drama of the landscape.

The OS drawings were revised and consolidated on a single sheet dated 12 August 1828 at a scale of one inch to a mile, helpfully included on the Chalford group's website in the note on Roger's talk. [5]



*Detail from Bryant's map  
Gloucestershire,  
1824 (Glos Archives)*

The contours are also evident in the county map by Bryant of 1824 (Glos Archives)

CW/G912GLO/1824) which clearly sets out the different grades of road by width. Bryant is meticulous in recording milestones and toll bars, marked "TB" on the plan [& ringed in red] [6]



*Detail from the  
1830 Survey  
showing Walls  
Quarry, Burleigh  
and Besbury  
(MLHG)*

The Survey "made for the purpose of equalising the Poor Rates" in 1830 by Y and JP Sturge of Bristol (Glos Archives PC/1908) is more precise than Keene's map in delineating house plans. There is a

full-size copy of the 1830 plan in the group's Local History Collection, and an extract showing the town is given in the Images section in the group's website. [7]



*Detail from 1839 Tithe map (Know Your Place)*

The tithe map of 1839 enables us to match individual plots of land with their owners and



tenants. Taken with the census, which recorded everyone staying the night in the parish on 6 June 1841, it is a valuable resource for researchers. The ground plans of houses are still not especially accurate. The map shows some buildings which have since been demolished, and the northern boundary as it was before the opening of the railway in 1845. It is possible to calculate how much land each person owned across the whole parish. [8]

Geoff Gwatkin has re-drawn the map in a handy 60cm by 84cm printed format, adding the field names. The group's Local History Collection holds copies of his versions of tithe maps for Minchinhampton, Avening, Rodborough, Woodchester, King's Stanley and Leonard Stanley. [9]

There are many smaller plans of land attached to individual houses and farms, for example, a sketch from 1865 showing the Holcombe Estate "belonging to the late Mr John Wise" (Glos Archives D2219/3/1). I am awaiting permission to publish this map from the copyright holder, so will hopefully return to this at a later date.





*Detail of map showing boundary changes made by GCC order, 1891 (Glos Archives)*

Holcombe was part of the land transferred from Minchinhampton to the new civil parish of Nailsworth in 1892 by an order of Gloucestershire County Council made the previous year (Glos Archives C/CL/P/37). This is the area to the east of the line marked D-A on the

plan above. The boundary has since been changed, e.g. by transferring back the land between the W and Scar Hill marked "Nailsworth Hill" on the plan. [10]

The last map I would like to mention is a plan included as part of auction particulars prepared by Davis, Champion and Payne dated 26 September 1934, on behalf of the executors of the late William Clutterbuck Chambers (Glos Archives D4586/13).

In total, the estate amounted to 112 acres, including two plots at the bottom of Well Hill not illustrated below. It seems shocking to us today but these parcels of pasture, arable, gardens and allotments were "scheduled as Building Land under the Town Planning Scheme" and marketed as development opportunities. The agents spoke of "attractive building land" and "valuable building estate": the land was described as "ready", "eligible", and even "ripe" for development.

A barn was "readily convertible at little cost into a good Dwelling House". The executors had a duty to obtain the best price and that meant they had to sell it as potential building land. Minchinhampton would look very different today if all this land had been built over.



*Detail from  
auction  
particulars of  
the Chambers  
estate, 1934  
(Glos Archives)*

In the end, only plots 1, 9, 10 and 11 have been developed. Plot 1 on the top right was Blue Boys Farm. As explained in the Landmarks sections on Blue Boys and

Glebe Estate on the group's website, this area evolved into today's Glebe Estate. Plot 9 became Horsfall House, while 10 and 11 are now Dr Crawford's Road and Box Close. As well as showing the effect of planning law at that time, the plan gives rise to the question how such a disparate land holding came to be assembled by the Chambers family. Some details of the family history are given by Jocelyn Blanshard in her research on Blue Boys (MLHG cat. 538, 1990). It is interesting to note that Blue Boys Farm had been acquired by Thomas Chambers in 1806. He had married Elizabeth Clutterbuck, daughter of Samuel Clutterbuck of Holcombe, in 1771.

In conclusion, it seems to me that historical maps are not just sources of information. They are images which have a certain depth – they have a way of drawing you into them such that contemplating them you lose your sense of time. They are a good way of nurturing an interest in local history. You are not just seeing what the surveyor recorded but sharing his purpose which often reflected the spirit of the age in which he was working. If you are focusing your research on one area, perhaps the place where you live, a map can make connections for you with another – it can broaden as well as deepen your engagement.

## References

Acknowledgements to Gloucestershire Archives for permission to reproduce the documents indicated.

[1] The complete version of Watson's map is given in the Images section of the group's website, courtesy of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society. His translation can be found at <https://www.bgas.org.uk>. Search for Transactions, vol 54.

[2] National Archives STAC8/194/1. The hundreds can also be seen on the map by Joan Blaeu of 1662, available on the website of the National Library of Scotland, <https://maps.nls.uk/view/104188057>.

[3] Anthea Jones (ed), Johnnes Kip: the Gloucestershire Engravings, The Hobnob Press, 2021, p. 15. There is a good quality open-source copy of Kip's engraving at Leicester University's site: <https://specialcollections.le.ac.uk>. Choose "Views of England and Wales" and search for Minchinhampton.

[4] See the book edited by WA Seymour uploaded on <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/>.

[5] <https://www.chalfordparishlocalhistorygroup.org.uk>. See also the version on the NLS site, <https://maps.nls.uk/view/257576759>. This is numbered sheet XXXIV, and described as "Surveyed: 1808 to 1816, Revised: 1827 to 1828, Published: 1828". There is another version of this map on <https://coaley.net> which has been revised to add the route of the railway.

[6] There is a good copy online at <https://coaley.net> under "Historic Maps".

[7] The schedule of owners has survived for the 1830 plan (Glos Archives D4209/1).

[8] The map can be consulted online at [www.kypwest.org.uk](http://www.kypwest.org.uk) in the Basemap layer. The schedule of owners and tenants is at <https://ww3.gloucestershire.gov.uk/GROTithe/>

[9] <https://geoffgwatkinmaps.co.uk/>

[10] The NLS site gives the current boundaries of civil parishes:  
<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/boundaries/>



As you probably know, our website has a section with all the bulletins the old group created. There is some fascinating stuff there, and I would really recommend that you take a look. In order to give you a taster [and also because it is Christmas], I am reprinting an article from the 2001 bulletin entitled "A Christmas Journey": -



## A Christmas Journey

By Fay Inchfawn

Extract from 'Something More to Say\*' by 'Fay Inchfawn\*' (pseud), pub. Lutterworth, 1963, describing a visit to Minchinhampton in 1885, when the author was aged five and lived in Portishead, Somerset.

Printed exactly as it appeared by kind permission of a descendant of the author.

The real name of Fay 'Inchfawn' was Elizabeth Rebecca Ward (née Daniels). After living in Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire, during the First World War, she moved with her husband, Atkinson Ward, to Freshford, Somerset, where she died on 16 April 1978. Her father was Gilbert Daniels, born in Stroud in 1851, who in 1877 married Mary Arundell Jones, born in Minchinhampton in 1855. Gilbert died on 14.4.1928 and Mary on 29.10.1948. They are both buried in Canford Cemetery, Bristol.

'Grandmother\*' (see text) was Elizabeth Daniels (née Ridler), born Minchinhampton May 1816, died 14.12.1902 at The Bourne.

The year is 1885, the time is evening, but we are not preparing for bed. We are standing just inside the front door; my father, my mother, my sister and I, muffled up to the ears. A loud knock on the door makes my mother jump.

We all know who it is. The door is opened and there stands the old cabman with his cab and his old grey horse come to take us to the railway station. It is Christmas Eve, and we are 'going to Grandpa's' for Christmas. We are bundled into the cab so hurriedly there is scarcely time to notice that it is snowing.

In those days it always snowed at Christmas. The train is waiting for us and soon we and our luggage are in it. The engine gives a great puff, the slow grind of wheels begins, and we are off upon our Christmas adventure, two of us at any rate prepared to enjoy every minute of it.

What a journey it was! Only fifty miles—but it took half a day to get there. The first stage brought us to Bristol Temple Meads. We were turned out on a crowded platform. Trains were hissing—porters were running here and there. Guards were shouting and waving flags, and people, men, women and children, were talking, screaming, and in some cases struggling. Trains puffed in and trains puffed out—it seemed a long time, but at last our train came in. The porter who had the care of our luggage rushed forward.

Soon we were inside, and how smelly and close and smoky it was—but our belongings were in the rack, and we were sitting beneath it. My Father had me on his knee with Lilian on his other side. The porter was leaving the carriage when my mother handed him threepence saying: 'Get yourself a cup of coffee with this, and will you please bring a footwarmer?' The man touched his cap. At that time threepence was quite a good tip.

He returned with a tin, flat on the top, and placed it under my mother's feet just as the train began to move. My poor mother! How she hated this journey! The icy cold, the odour of cheap tobacco, and the dirty floor, in spite of a notice on the wall "No spitting!"—an injunction which obviously had not been heeded.

Why did not my father put his foot down, and veto the project altogether? In view of my mother's ill-health and her sensitive nostrils he would have been within his rights so to do. I know now that he could not bring himself to the point, because he knew how greatly my mother desired to be with her own people at Christmas. She had never quite got over the feeling of homesickness which assailed her when first she and my father left her hometown to settle at Portishead. The only Christmas she had spent apart from her parents was the year when I was born.

An event which took place a little later than was expected. She had everything mapped out but had not reckoned on the possibility of herself not having recovered strength sufficiently to make journeying a practical proposition. Nor on the fact that the winter of 1880 was unusually frigid. Although some things happened which sweetened the experience, she had nevertheless taken it to heart. Knowing this, and that she would brave any discomfort to get there, my father felt his part was to help her through whatever ills might be encountered without complicating matters by opposition. With some fortitude he remained silent when she tucked up her skirt, which was rather more than ankle length. She cleared her throat and held her handkerchief to her nose just as the engine with a piercing shriek rushed into a tunnel—a sulphurous smell invaded the carriage before my father could shut the windows.

We emerged at last only to stop at the first station, Yate, where people climbed in and crowded the carriage to capacity. There was, of course, no corridor. Soon the train began to crawl onwards again. It was very slow, stopping at every station. There was now only standing room. People carrying bundles of holly and mistletoe were forcing their way into our compartment, and would-be passengers were walking past the window unable to find seats. Every-one seemed to be going away

for Christmas. Sleepy children whimpering because of the cold were lifted in, and after a few stations lifted out again. The lamp in the ceiling flickered and seemed about to go out.

At last, we drew up. Porters were shouting: 'Stonehouse, and 'Change for Stroud!' -How we got out—how we staggered to a seat—how we crossed the line and went down a dimly lit covered way which led to the branch line for Nailsworth takes little time to tell. But it was a wearying and stumbling process.

At last, we were there, almost at journey's end—packed into a one-horse fly, still with the long climb from the Valley over ice and snow, round the Devil's Elbow and up-up-up to Minchinhampton Common. During this hazardous ascent Lilian and I must have slept. I was dimly conscious that my father was walking—the driver, alternately admonishing and cajoling, walked beside the horse which climbed manfully, only now and then sliding backwards.

At last came the short trit-trot past the Old Bear Inn—down the West End and the swirl round the corner to Well Hill. Then the sudden standstill before an open door. I remember being lifted out of the cab and rushing into the brightly lighted house so warm and pleasant with the familiar smell of nice things cooking, and of gas from the small burner in the hall.

Wide awake now, there was first a wild rush around the house to discover Aunt Carrie in the kitchen still at work. In her hands were the preparations for the morrow. Homemaking was her speciality. She was Grandmother's right hand, but she was also the ministering angel who stepped into all the domestic crises in the family. The whole house was for me a place of peace. My Mother was happy. Her bonnet and her coat taken upstairs for her; she sat with our grandparents in the parlour — a child at home.

The grandfather clock was tick-tacking on the stairs. Aunt Emily and the pretty Aunt Amelia escorting us to bed in the attic was an overweight of joy. Anyone reading this narrative who has never slept in an attic will not even in memory experience the ecstasy Lilian and I felt as we stepped in. The great beam in the ceiling was in one part of the room so low a child could have bumped her head. The tiny window high up in the wall—and the big feather bed with curtains. An enchanted room, if ever there was one.

With the two aunts to assist us, and our prayers said, we were soon snuggling into the warmth of the curtained bed. Our stockings were hung over the bed rail and the soft closing of the door was the last sound I heard. It is curious that I remember so vividly the journey, but only dimly the various delights of being with the Grandparents at Christmas.

The pretty Auntie took us to church. The snow was crisp and crackled under our feet, and the bells were ringing from the tall church tower. I watched with rapture little boys clad in white issuing from the vestry singing "Hark! the herald angels sing".

The Christmas dinner! A sumptuous affair for which uncles and aunts and cousins had arrived in traps and gigs, no one being farther away than Tetbury. But one Christmas party spent with the Grandparents was very much like another, and yet who would have liked to miss that gathering of the clans? I remember it was an unwritten law that after midday dinner my mother and her sisters went to Grandmother's bedroom to sit around a big fire. I think they met to hear and to tell secrets, and to talk over items of family news not to be aired in public. Children were not admitted, so it must have been something mysterious which even Lilian did not know.



On Boxing Day my father took Lilian and me down to The Bourne to see his mother and some of his other relations. For this excursion my mother dressed us with great care. Our coats were of pale cream material which I now suppose to have been some sort of fur fabric with a deep pile.

The coats had little capes to make them doubly warm. It is remembered that I had, on the first time of wearing, discovered that if you began at the edges, you could pick it out—one short strand at a time till quite a gap appeared. I remember that my father and Lilian were instructed to see that I did not engage in this fascinating occupation.

As it happened I had not much opportunity. Going down the narrow lanes to The Bourne the branches of trees on each side almost met, and here and there interlaced overhead. Icicles, looking like crystal pencils, hung from them.

As a great treat my father reached up, secured two of the longest, and gave them to Lilian and to me to suck. Was there ever such a walk with such a father? Having finished the icicles, we held his hands one on each side and he let us slide a good part of the way down the frozen hills.

When we reached The Bourne we went first to Grandmother's house. She lived next door to her eldest son, who, with his wife and two daughters, had undertaken to take care of her while allowing her the pleasure of her own domain.

My father did not knock at the door. He turned the handle and walked into a room where an old lady was sitting beside a fire. She turned to look at him—but her eyes were so deeply set and apparently rather dim that she had to rise and peer into his face before she took his hand and called him by his name. She was very small. She wore a black lace cap, and her face was so tiny and so thin she was rather like a brown bird. When my father pushed us forward we stood staring at her.

This Grandmother, who was a stranger to us, was talking to her son, and seemed not to notice that we were there, until the door opened again and Aunt Polly and the cousins from the next house came in. They had seen us arrive and had come to say we must have dinner with them because Grandmother was too old to have visitors for meals. Over this there was some altercation. At last, it was arranged that they would supply the dinner, but we should eat it at Grandmother's table. Then Lilian and I were taken into the next house so that Grandmother could have our father all to herself till dinner time.

Now, indeed, we were petted and feasted. How kindly everyone spoke to us—and looked at us. Cousin Nellie took off our little coats, admiring the style of the material and the lining, and laying them carefully on the parlour sofa. Aunt Polly had one eye in the oven, so she said, and Emily was making mincepies. We strayed from one to the other feeling very pleasantly entertained. 'Now,' said Cousin Nellie, 'I have to go to the shop and get potatoes' To our surprise she took us through a door in the sitting room, and lo and behold there was a shop—all part of the house! Nellie drew up one of the blinds and took potatoes from a sack under the counter while we looked round. Bottles of sweets, cheese, all sorts of groceries were there. And would you believe it, we were allowed to play at shop just as we liked.

At home we had a toy shop, so-called, in a box—a dolls' shop with tiny articles painted to look like sweets. But now we had real brass scales and proper things to weigh, and all the while admiring relatives were within call. All too soon it was dinner time. We had reluctantly to leave the fascinating shop. The two grown-up cousins smoothed our ringlets and deposited us and our dinners at Grandmother's house.

One thing I remember. It is the two china dogs on the mantelpiece and not being able to get on with my food because of their fascination. If they had moved their ears or wagged their tails, the desire to handle them could not have been greater.

The rest of the visit is only a blur. Early in the afternoon we had to begin the journey back to Minchinhampton. It was a long steady climb, and my father had to support us most of the way. It was nearly dark when we left The Bourne, but as we ascended, the sky was lit with the last rays of the sun. When we emerged at last from the lanes it was sheer pleasure to slip down from my favourite place on my father's shoulder and to take short runs with Lilian on the more level common road.

On reaching the well-known door with its seven steps, we rushed once more into the warm well-lighted house just in time for tea and toasted muffins. Although I recall the outward journey so vividly, I cannot remember anything about our return to Portishead—to the house called Whitegates in the centre of the village, and the young maid Maria.

But that the family pattern was printed indelibly upon the mind of a five-year-old there can be no doubt. That old house where my mother's early memories lived so fervently: she always spoke of going there as 'going home'.

Notes on the families mentioned in the above article. The Jones family of Well Hill were important to Minchinhampton, in that William Arundell Jones was the Assistant Overseer and Registrar for the district. He was a coal merchant, and his son Charles carried on the business, whose name can still be seen on the wall of the brick building in Egypt Mill yard, the former station yard at Nailsworth.



The 1881 Census enables a picture of the family relationships to be built up. At that time William and his wife Rebecca lived in Well Hill with two daughters: Caroline (27) and Emily (21), and two sons: Charles (18) and Fenning (13). The younger daughter did not marry but became the proprietor of a fashionable haberdasher's business in Well Hill, and Emily is shown on the left in the photograph above, taken by her brother in 1905, outside her shop. In 1881 she is described as a milliner, as are her mother and sister, and the shop would seem to be an offshoot of that business.

In 1881 Charles would appear to be learning his father's business, as he is described as a clerk.

Older residents remember his team of horses in the 1920s being watered and fed at Park Farm, which he then owned.

In the local History Collection there is a scrapbook, compiled after 1913 of news cuttings relating to the family, including the obituary for William Jones. One wonders if the younger son was named after the well-known local schoolmaster Fenning Parke. F.E. Jones was later nicknamed “Funny” Jones, because of his appearances in local concert parties, and his mother, the grandmother in Well Hill visited that Christmas in 1885 was the sister of “Jolly” Nash a London music hall entertainer. William Jones had appeared in a concert to raise money for Minchinhampton Town Band in 1862, and both sons became part of the Obijiway Minstrels, touring Gloucestershire in the 1890s. The Wiltshire and Gloucestershire Standard in 1899 writes of “Funny” Jones, “His amusing examples of Gloucestershire drollery, the inimitable manner of his facial alterations, the style of his laughing songs. when he taxed the risible facilities of his audience to the utmost, should have been witnessed to be properly understood.”

Like his cousin “Fay Inchfawn” he wrote articles and poems — a truly artistic family. “Fay Inchfawn” was Elizabeth Daniels, and her mother was born Mary Jones in 1856. It appears possible from the Census that Mary and two of her sisters married into the Daniels family of the Bourne. Grandma whom she visited on Boxing Day was another Elizabeth, living with her sister, and as the extract relates, with a son and his family next door. “Fay’s” uncle was another coal merchant — was this how the two families became so interlinked? A chance article with some reminiscences has led onto the trail of some prominent local tradesmen and their families.

Dates for your Diary [2025]

January 24<sup>th</sup> 2025      7.30pm      Market House

Howard Beard – The Postcards of E.P. Conway

March 7<sup>th</sup> 2025      7.30pm      Market House

Dr. Ray Wilson – Stroud Industries – More Than Just Cloth!

September 19<sup>th</sup> 2025      7.30pm      Market House

Richard Davis – Long Tom's Post

November 7<sup>th</sup> 2025      7.30pm      Market House

Remembrance Event

3 more slots to be filled plus talks, walks and a proposed trip to the National Arboretum.

Next Newsletter 15<sup>th</sup> February 2025

- 1) William III
  - 2) Oolite
  - 3) Edward The Confessor
  - 4) Forest Green Rovers
  - 5) University
  - 6) Longfords
  - 7) Duddridge
  - 8) Avening
  - 9) Nailsworth
  - 10) Even Numbers
- Answer = Woeful Dane