

## Editor's note:

Next talk is by Chiz Harward on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June, and this is sure to be a sell out after Chiz's publication of his book on the church. This is by the way an excellent read, and if you haven't already bought a copy they will be available to buy, and I am sure that Chiz will be more than happy to inscribe your copy on the night. Chiz has sent this message: -

"Thank you to everyone who came to the launch of the new book on Holy Trinity church, there will be another opportunity to hear about the church and its history at the Market House on the evening of the 27<sup>th</sup> of June. I'll be giving an overview of the church history but also going into more detail on the beautiful but poignant memorial to the newborn Anne Baynham, recently rediscovered and moved to the narthex thanks to MLHG members. Following that work, research into the family, the monument and the possible sculptor has revealed some fascinating insights into early 17<sup>th</sup> century attitudes to death, loss and memorial, and though there are few definitive answers it is hopefully thought-provoking!

Copies of the church book will be available on the night (£20)"

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## Hyde in the 1841 census

Richard Davis



*Detail from Ordnance Survey map, 6 inches to one mile, 1882 (rev. 1901) (Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland, <https://maps.nls.uk/>)*

The 1841 census is the first census in England and Wales for which full records survive (see <https://1841census.co.uk/>). Hyde fell within Minchinhampton District 9:

All that part of the Parish of Minchinhampton called Chalford Division lying to the North of the Cirencester Road and to the East of the Road from the Bourne to the Blue Boys.

There was no map attached to the census and, apart from Hyde House and Hyde Court, houses were not separately identified. However, it is possible to match people with places by reference to the Tithe Apportionment of 1839.

The census is a record of every person who slept in the parish of Minchinhampton on the night of 6 June 1841. Forms were distributed to householders a few days before the census date and collected the following day. They showed the street or place, name, age, sex, "profession, trade, employment, or of independent means", and whether born in the county, Scotland, Ireland or "Foreign Parts". The information was then collated by the enumerator into schedules.

### Analysis

The section for Hyde lists 36 households, consisting of 176 people. The schedule gives the same description to the head of household and other family members living with him. Thus, there was only one incumbent, but the schedule uses the same term for his family members. Other cases could be different: a family of cloth workers might all be engaged in the trade, even the very young and the very old. Agriculture and the cloth trade were the two main sectors.

[Editor - Below will be found a breakdown of the households]

Sector • Trade/occupation	No. of people	Interpretation
Agriculture		
• Farmer	8	There were two households with this description.
• Agricultural labourer	33	Ten households, with between one and eight occupants.
• Shepherd	4	
Church		This refers to the new ecclesiastical parish at Brimscombe, where a church had been built by David Ricardo in 1839.
• Incumbent	4	Living at Hyde House.
Education		Boarding school for young ladies at Hyde Court.
• Teachers	5	
• Pupils	30	
Independent means	9	Nine separate households. This category includes both the wealthy and those living off a small annuity or rental income.
Industry		
• Overseer	1	Supervisor at a mill (or possibly a parish officer dealing with the poor rate).
• Cloth worker	40	Twelve households.
• Labourer	10	Five households.
• Malster or Mallster	2	Variations of maltster. "A brewer, maker or seller of malts."*
• Mason	3	
• Carpenter	1	
• Post Mistress	1	Entry immediately after Hyde Court.
• Toll keeper	1	Refers to the turnpike at Hyde Gate.
• Miner	2	Possibly working in the underground stone quarries at Ball's Green.
• Waggoner	1	
Service		
• Female servant	9	Five households: two had one servant, two had two, and one had three.
• Male servant	1	
• Groom	1	
• Flyman	1	"One who drives a fly (a single horse carriage)."*
• Gardener	3	Two households.

\*<http://worldthroughthelens.com/family-history/old-occupations.php>

## Agriculture

We know from the Tithe Apportionment that most of the land at Hyde was owned by three families: Ricardo, Clutterbuck and Beale. It consisted of a mix of arable, pasture and woodland. There were two tenant farmers.

Richard Hitchings, aged 39, was living at Hyde with his wife Mary and their children Ann, 3, and Mary, 1, together with Jane Holtham, 26, of independent means, and Ann Whiting, 19, a servant. He farmed over 150 acres in the parish, mostly in Hyde as tenant of William Beale and James Clutterbuck. He occupied the Hyde Court estate, including the garden of Hyde Green Cottage, and lived at parcel 1583 (Houses and Barn) which corresponds to Upper Hyde House. There is also a John Hitchins whose household consisted of agricultural labourers, possibly a relation. John Hitchings was a witness to Richard's marriage to Mary Marsh Neale in 1837. By 1847, Richard and his family had moved just across the county border to Oaksey in Wiltshire, where his mother's family came from.

The other farmer was Samuel Pimbury, aged 54, who lived at Hyde with his wife Harriet, their seven children and a female servant, Ann Arnold. His name was not included in the tithe schedule but a Thomas Pimbury is listed at parcel 1585 (House and Garden) which corresponds to April Cottage, Upper Hyde. The family had long been associated with Hyde. Samuel's father, also Thomas Pimbury, who described himself as a yeoman, swore a deposition on 5 March 1827 in which he stated he had lived there since he was three (Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University, D1188). He was then aged 81, and was buried in Minchinhampton on 2 December 1827 [Editor – almost certainly we will never know where as the burial book says "Under the 2nd Flat Stone North of the High Tombe [sic]" – but which high tomb?] Going further back, Bigland records an inscription in Minchinhampton churchyard to a Richard Pimbury of Upper Hyde, Waggoner, who died on 19 June 1742, aged 81. [Editor – no longer extant – the only named Pimburys in the graveyard are Samuel Cosburn Pimbury [1864][Age 85], and his wife, Harriett [1869][Age 72] – The ages do not match but this was not unusual in censuses so it is likely that these are the "Samuel" and "Harriett" named by Richard above.]

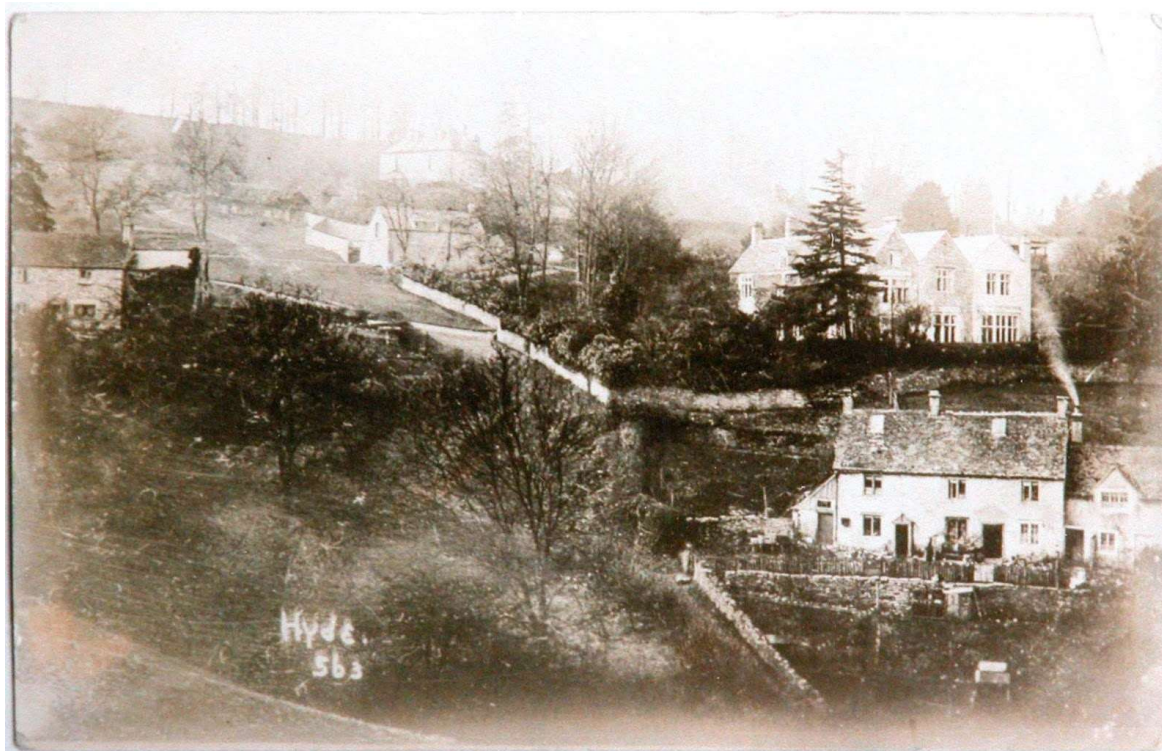
Some of the agricultural labourers may have lived in Young's Cottages at Upper Hyde, which were owned by David Ricardo and may have been tied cottages. He also owned extensive farmland in the parish, e.g. south of the Cirencester Road, where they may have worked.

## The cloth trade

There were twelve households of "cloth workers". The term does not distinguish between the various skills involved in making cloth, perhaps because by 1841 processes such as spinning and weaving were carried out in factories at the mills rather than in people's homes (see Josephine Tann, *Wool and Water*).

One worker who can be associated with a specific house is Mary Beard, who occupied parcel 1387 on the tithe map, now known as Hyde House Cottage on Knapp Lane. She was aged 57, living with her children Sarah and Peter Beard, aged 18 and 21 respectively, and Peter Sharpe, 14, a groom (most likely working at Hyde House or Hyde Grange). She is probably the Mary Beard shown in the 1851 census as a widow, "formerly a spinner", living at Pinfarthing with her daughter Sarah, a cloth picker, and her husband, a shearman.

We also know from auction particulars of 1850 that Leonard and Martha Dadge, both cloth workers listed in the 1841 census for Hyde, were living with their one-year-old daughter Hester in one of three adjoining cottages shown at the bottom right of the photograph below, now known as Hunter's Cottage. The particulars also mention Martha Lumley as a yearly tenant. She is referred to in the census as a cloth worker aged 58 and must have been their next-door neighbour.



*Photograph of Hyde by EP Conway, c.1907 (Howard Beard)*

The large house above the cottages is Hyde Lodge. The square house just visible at centre top of the picture is Hyde Grange. The building at the left edge is Hyde Green Cottage.

In the tithe schedule, Hyde Green Cottage was occupied by John Jones. He also appears in the census.

Name	Age	Occupation
John Jones	66	Agricultural labourer
Debora Jones	70	-
Thomas Jones	30	Agricultural labourer
Emma Jones	6	
William Jones	4	
Maria Tranter	66	Independent

It looks as if three generations of the Jones family were living together.

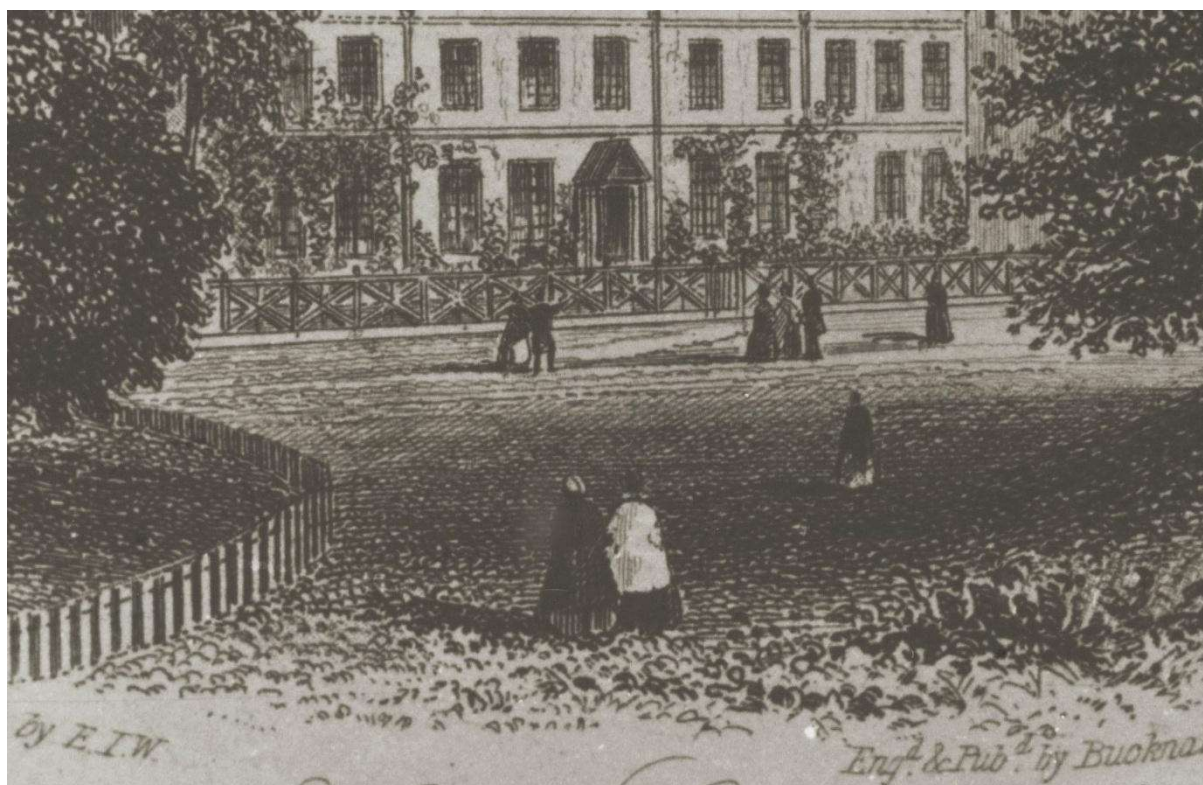
#### Other occupations

In the tithe schedule, Hyde House (parcel 1429) and the surrounding land was let by James Clutterbuck to Thomas Taylor. At the census date, however, the occupants of Hyde House were listed as:

Name	Age	Occupation	Born in county
Rev Henry James Legge	40	Incumbent	No
Mary Legge	71		No
Mary Legge	30		No
Anne	25		No
Elizabeth Nalder	22	Servant	No
Naomi Dance	23	Servant	No



The Rev Legge was renting the property from Mary Ann Clutterbuck, the widow of James Clutterbuck who died in 1840. He was living there while he was building a new parsonage at Brimscombe where he had been appointed curate.



*Detail from engraving of a drawing, attributed to Eliza Jane Whittingham, c.1850, showing people walking on Hyde Common outside Hyde Court School (Gloucestershire Archives D9746/1/17/2)*

The next entry but one is for Hyde Court. The census enumerators were instructed to round down a person's age to the nearest multiple of five. They have done this here but not in other places. This presumably reflected how the head of the household had completed the form.

Name	Age	Occupation	Born in county
Jane Whittingham	55	Mistress of school	Yes
Lavinia	35	Partner	Yes
Ellen	30	Partner	No
Maria	25	Partner	No
Eliza Jane	15	Partner	No
Anne M Wills	15	Pupil	Yes
[29 further pupils]			
Anne Warner	30	Female servant	Yes
Elizh Cooke	25	Female servant	Yes
Caroline Clutterbuck	15	Female servant	Yes

The reference to "partner" next to Mrs Jane Whittingham's daughters' names reflects their roles in relation to the school. She had taken it on from a Mrs Bennett in 1838 and remained there until her death in 1860, after which her daughters continued it until they moved the school to Ball's Green in 1869. William Beale, the owner according to the tithe schedule, died at the end of 1839 and the house was acquired by his nephew John Evans Beale, a London surgeon, in April 1841. Accommodating a community of 38 women and girls must have been something of a challenge!

The census records a George Tainty, 30, a gardener. He may have been living at what is now Fulmer Cottage, near the old Mission Chapel. The Tithe Apportionment lists the cottage as parcel 1440, a "House & garden" owned by William Beale, then in the occupation of John Tainty. He was probably working for the school as Hyde Court had a large kitchen garden.

Joseph Weare is described as a "Mallster", living with his wife Mary. This fits with the tithe map which shows them in occupation of Ivy Cottage, described as a "house and malthouse" (parcel 1436), and of part of the adjoining paddock (parcel 1437). According to the map, the malthouse stood opposite the front door, set back about ten feet inside the stone walls in the foreground of the photograph below. There was another malthouse at The Knapp, owned by John Neale.



*Ivy Cottage, Hyde, 1944 ©Peter Shephard courtesy of Stroud Local History Society*

The post mistress listed in the schedule was Mary Ann Cother. She was appointed post mistress at Minchinhampton in 1828 at the age of 34. She was transferred to Chalford as sub-postmistress in 1836 when a new office opened there, in lieu of Minchinhampton. (UK Postal Service Appointment Books 1737-1969, Ancestry).

Like today, smaller Post Offices were Sub-Post Offices run by Sub-Postmasters. Although there were some exceptions, the majority of Sub-Postmasters were not salaried staff but ran shops and other businesses from their premises and only ran the post office as a franchise. (Postal Museum, Family History Guide, 30).

She is recorded in the 1851 census as living at Chalford, her entry following that for Charles Gobey. By the 1861 census, he was living at Ivy Cottage in Hyde as a maltster in succession to Joseph Weare. Could she have supplemented her income by helping with the malting?



*This Victorian post box is in the wall of Ivy Cottage. Wall boxes were introduced in 1857 ([www.lbsq.org](http://www.lbsq.org)). Could it have a connection with Mary Ann Cother?*

Finally, the census refers to “Thomas Iles, 46, Overseer”. This probably refers to the role of supervisor in a mill. His name is not recorded in the tithe schedule, but it does give Ann Iles as owner of parcels 1411, 1412 and 1413 (now Hyde Brae, then described as Houses and Gardens and Sermons Orchard). It is not clear whether they were related, or whether he had any connection with John Iles, who sold the mill which bears his name in 1806. He is probably the Thomas Iles baptised in Minchinhampton on 30 November 1794, the son of Joseph and Mary Iles. He seems to have remained unmarried, living in a one-person household, possibly in one of the cottages now known as Hunter’s Cottage or even a separate house later subsumed into Hyde Lodge. He is shown in the 1851 and 1861 censuses at Hyde as annuitant and agent to corn dealer and fishing net mender respectively.

### Independent means

Edward Beale is listed in the census as a single-person household, of independent means, then aged 68. He died in 1848. He was the brother of William Beale who left him an annuity of £20 in his will. Edward had inherited £1000 from his great-uncle Samuel Whitmore on his 21st birthday. He is not referred to in the tithe schedule.

A further person of independent means is Charles Lowe. He was also not mentioned in the tithe schedule, but is included in the “gentry” category in Hunt & Co’s Directory for 1849. He was a retired surgeon and a shareholder in the County of Gloucester Bank.

Name	Age	Occupation	Born in county
Charles Lowe	65	Independent	No



Esther Smith	50	Female servant	Yes
Robert Grange	14	Male servant	Yes

It is not clear where he was living, but by a process of elimination it was probably at Hyde Lodge. In the tithe schedule, Hyde Lodge was owned by Thomas Beale (William's nephew) and occupied by Alfred Pitt, together with three large paddocks adjoining it, but Alfred is not mentioned in the census.

The following record comes immediately before the entry for Hyde House and refers to Elizabeth (or "Betty") Clutterbuck of Hyde Grange recorded in the tithe schedule.

Name	Age	Occupation
Elizabeth Clutterbuck	81	Independent
Anne Wakefield	25	Female servant
Mary Boulton	40	Female servant

In her will, she left Ann Wakefield "nineteen pounds and nineteen shillings" together with a cottage: "I also give and devise unto my servant Ann Wakefield all that my Messuage or Dwellinghouse at Hyde aforesaid with the Garden thereunto adjoining now in the occupation of Harriet Brown ..." (The witnesses were her closest neighbours, Edward Beale and Joseph Weare.) In the census, Harriet is recorded as living with her husband John Brown, a gardener. Oddly she is shown as occupying an uninhabited cottage, or one being built.

John Brown	30	Gardener
Harriet Brown	25	Cloth worker
James Brown	3	•
William Brown	9	•
Alice Brown	19	Cloth worker

By inference, John Brown was the gardener at Hyde Grange, and also perhaps Hyde House. The bequest of the cottage to Ann was for her life with reversion to Betty's nephew Thomas Clutterbuck, who inherited all her real property, together with her pew in Minchinhampton church.

The census also records Jeremiah Alder, 89, independent, living with Ann Alder, 55, cloth worker. The entry is immediately after that for John Dutton, 60, toll keeper. In the tithe schedule Jeremiah Alder owns parcel 1587, now known as Upper Hyde Farm, on the corner of the Cirencester Road and Hyde Hill, opposite Hyde Gate. GG

He married Ann Lathem at Minchinhampton on 4 July 1815, witnessed by Samuel Keene and Elizabeth Lathem. His signature on the certificate is identical to that on a deposition he swore for David Ricardo on 5 August 1830 confirming his knowledge of the title of two pieces of land on the south side of the Cirencester Road which Ricardo was purchasing (Cadbury Research Library, Birmingham University, D1123). He described himself as a farmer who had known the land "for upwards of sixty years" (the length of time usually required by conveyancers to prove title). He was buried in Minchinhampton churchyard on 2 April 1847, aged 95, on the "North side of his high tomb Behind Church".

Some people in this category were not wealthy, e.g. Maria Tranter (born Maria Iles) referred to above living with the Jones family at Hyde Green Cottage. Under the will of Sarah Lees dated 3 January 1829,

she received a bequest of a half share of Sarah's wearing apparel and two shillings a week for life, to be her own property independent of her husband Joseph Tranter and his debts.

## Conclusion

The census gives an invaluable snapshot of the community of Hyde as it existed on 6 June 1841. In some respects, such as the list of pupils of the school, it is our only source of information. Previous parish surveys had been based on property, e.g. to calculate liability for the poor rate. The census was different in focusing on people, including women, children, and servants within its ambit. Most had been born within the county. There were no foreigners, but an advertisement placed by Mrs Whittingham in 1838 stated that "A French Lady will reside in the house", and later censuses show this. Perhaps she was on her way.

The census also gives a basis for reconstructing the social history of the period. The number of actual houses appears to be roughly the same as today: there has been little new building since then, but judging from the tithe map some cottages have been demolished, and others amalgamated to create larger dwellings. It seems that the hamlet was more densely populated then.

People worked within walking distance of their homes. We can imagine the lanes and footpaths busy with cloth workers walking to and from the mills on the valley bottom, and agricultural workers on their way to the fields across the parish. The 30 young ladies boarding at the Hyde Court School would also have gone on long walks for their health. Horses were presumably still a common sight but then they would also have drawn vehicles: the census tells us that John Long, a waggoner, lived at Hyde, and those living in the big houses had their own carriages.

We can also get a hint of more ephemeral things, such as the scent of the barley being dried in the kiln at Joseph Weare's malthouse, carried by the wind.

## Ricardo's Memorial Hall

By Brian Lett

*Imagine: it is the summer of 2024.*

*An Australian in his thirties cycles down Tetbury Street, Minchinhampton, and stops at the cross. He is looking for someone from whom he can ask directions to his destination. He spies an elderly couple, probably husband and wife, walking down the High Street towards him. "They will know" he thinks.*

*"G'day" [Editor – love the stereotype!] he says in greeting. "My great grandad grew up here in this town and fought in the First World War. Do you know where I can find the Memorial Hall, if it is still standing?"*

*The elderly couple look puzzled. "We have a war memorial – or two, actually – one in the churchyard and the memorial at the top of this street. But we don't have a Memorial Hall – only the Market House opposite the pub."*

*"But there must have been once" says the Aussie "my great grandad told his kids that just before he emigrated to Australia in 1920, a Memorial Hall was given to the town, dedicated to the memory of the fallen of Minchinhampton in the First World War. They included great grandad's brother. My great grandad would not have got that wrong."*

*"Well," says the woman "I suppose it could be the Market House..."*

How many of those living in Minchinhampton today know that the Aussie [or his great grandfather] was right? Minchinhampton was given, in 1920, a Hall to be used **"as a Public Hall by way of a Memorial to the men of Minchinhampton and District who have fallen in the Great War."**

How many know that the woman was right in her guess that what we know as the Minchinhampton Market House is also the Memorial Hall to the fallen of World War One?

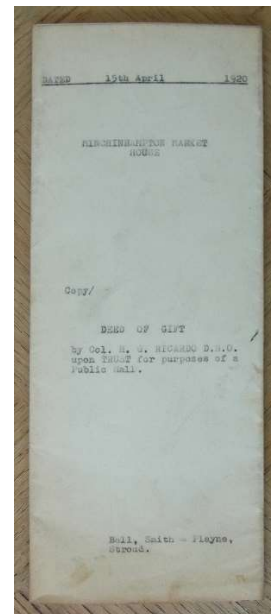
Despite taking part in the presentation of two Remembrance Day Commemoration Events in the Market House, in 2023 and 2024, I did not know until recently that the Market House itself was a Memorial Hall to the dead of World War One. Obviously, the commemorative tablets are on the wall of the Market House, and the Memorial Cross stands on what was once Lower Island in front of it, but I did not know then that the Market House itself was a dedicated memorial.

Earlier this year, whilst continuing my research into the Ricardo family of Gatcombe Park, I came across a fascinating document in the collection of the Minchinhampton Local History Group [which hopefully will soon be safely housed under the roof of the new Parish Council building]. It proved the circumstances in which the 1698 Market House passed into the "ownership" of the Town and Parish of Minchinhampton in 1920.

In April 1919, Lt Colonel Henry George Ricardo, the fourth Ricardo Lord of the Manor of Minchinhampton who himself had fought in the war, considered the future of the Market House.

Before the Great War, he had leased the Market House at a low rent to a Market House Committee, who ran it for the benefit of the town, for whom it was a most important social centre. During the period in the First World War, the Royal Australian Air Force had been based locally, and they had

rented it regularly for dances. After the war, Ricardo decided to give it to the town and parish as a lasting memorial to the fallen from the Great War. He therefore asked the Market House Committee to stand down and relinquish their lease, so that a Trust could be created which would assume ownership of the Market House on behalf of the town and parish.



*The Minchinhampton Market House and the Deed of Gift dated 15 April 1920*

Ricardo also donated the buildings known as “Lower Island”, once also a Market House, to the Parish, with the intention that they could be refurbished as homes for returning soldiers. Unfortunately surveys of the old buildings showed that they were in very poor condition, so the decision was taken to demolish them. Public money was collected and used to install a memorial cross on the site, and tablets to the fallen on the side of the Market House.

Editor – Due to suggestions from Gary, the church contacted the CWGC and now there are signs at the entrances to the churchyard stating that war graves are present within. Brian has suggested, and I agree that it is a very good idea, that there should be a plaque [which currently there isn't] within the market house, commemorating the gift of Colonel Ricardo to the town. Moreover, the plaque should state that the gift was given as a memorial to our casualties in the Great War by him. I would be interested in our members opinions on this, so could you please drop me a line on the email above?



Blast from the past

This month, Gary Atkinson has suggested that we reprint the following article. It's called Bananas and commemorates the Fyffe family of Box.

## BANANAS



It's over 130 years since the first commercial delivery of bananas arrived in England [1888]

Interesting stuff – but what has that to do with the small village of Box near Minchinhampton?

“A fruitful life in Box”

THE LITTLE girl's delighted squeal echoed round the narrow lanes of the Cotswold stone village, and brought the other children, running helter-skelter, to see what had happened.

“What is it, Ethel?” asked a tussle-haired boy, catching her by the shoulders. The other children gathered round - girls in their white pinafores and lace-up boots, boys in their fitted shorts and jackets. With a look of great importance and excitement, the little girl announced,

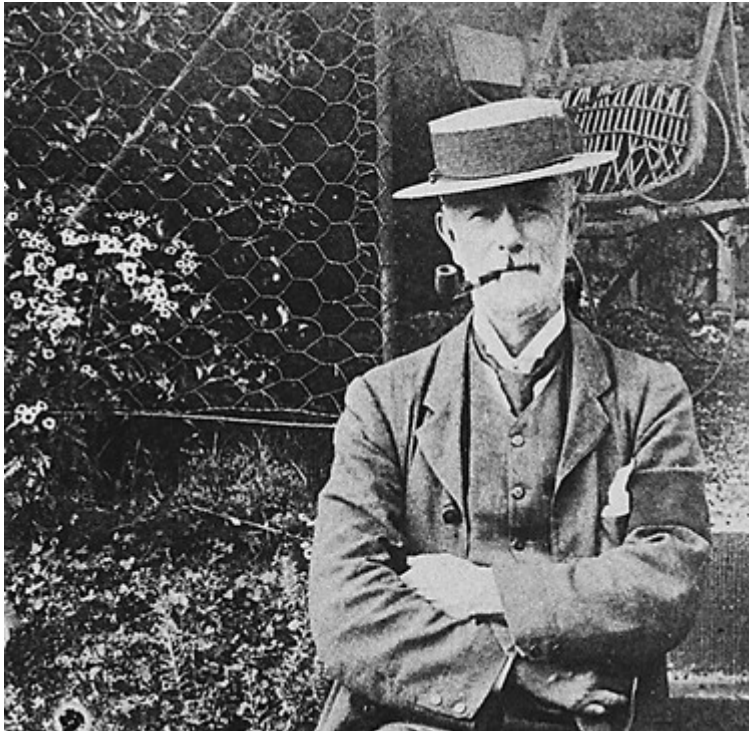
“Mr Fyffe is back! I've just seen him!”

In those far-off days, at the turn of the last century in the little village of Box near Minchinhampton, “Fyffe” was as much a household name as it is today. But whereas nowadays it conjures up images of deep yellow bunches of bananas cascading over greengrocers' shelves, it meant something different back then. It meant that the elderly gentleman had returned from his travels in exotic locations, laden with things to show the village children.

“After his wife died, he and his daughters would often go to Jamaica. When they came back, they would bring many things to interest us children. The thing I liked best was a piece of sugar cane,” wrote Ethel Smith, one of those youngsters, many years later.

Edward Wathen Fyffe had a huge affinity with the Cotswolds. His family base was in London – his father's firm, E W Fyffe, was in the Howford Buildings, at 148 ½ Fenchurch Street – but as a young lad, he spent much of his time in Box.

The family firm was old and established, dealing in tea, and was started during the early 17th Century when James I was on the throne. [Editor – it set up an office in London in 1789 from Scotland so if this is so James VI not James I] Edward was one of two brothers, but the elder, Ebenezer, was not interested in commerce. He became a chaplain in the Royal Navy, so after their father died in 1882, it was Edward who found himself in sole charge.



Edward was obviously successful enough, carrying on with the tea importing, but when his thoughts turned to love and marriage, a series of events were put into play that were to change the course of his life.

His bride, Ida Stanton Brown, was from Nailsworth, just down the road from Box. As the granddaughter of Isaac Hillier, who owned a factory in the town, she was from one of the prominent families of the area. The couple went on to have two little girls, born within 13 months of each other, but the strains of two pregnancies so close together quickly told on Ida. She fell ill with tuberculosis, and her husband was

advised to take her away from the perils of the English climate.

And so it was, in 1887, that the Fyffe family found themselves in the warmth of the Canary Islands where Ida was to make a full recovery. There were a limited number of British expatriates in Las Palmas and in Santa Cruz de Tenerife in those days, and the Fyffes were made very welcome. And during an active social life, Edward began to see the makings of a business opportunity – importing bananas.

This fruit, which was considered so expensive and rare back in England, was cheap and abundant out here. He wasn't the first man to see the potential of the fruit. Other importers had already tried with limited success. One had been dismayed to open barrels arriving back in England, only to discover that a brown sludge was all that remained of the once yellow bananas. But Edward was canny. Rather than take the risk of importing spoiled and useless fruit himself, he talked the growers into using him as an import agency – he would sell their bananas back in London on a commission basis.

The first shipment did, indeed, contain many overripe bananas. But with experience, the amount of usable fruit increased, and Edward began selling it to Covent Garden, to London green grocers, and to barrow-boys. Lack of competition meant that the market was wide open for him. The Fyffe business began to grow at an enormous pace, and Edward decided to take a partner in the form of James Hudson who owned a chain of high-class fruit and grocery stores. But no sooner had this partnership been finalised, than the fruit growers back in the Canary Islands decided they wanted to buy the men out. The terms were so good, that both men accepted and, at the age of 44, Edward Fyffe was able to retire to Box.

He and his family moved to the lovely Trullwell House in 1897, where he was to spend a happy 38 years. During his "retirement", he took up duties and hobbies alike: as a parish councillor; as chairman of Hillier's Bacon Curing Factory in Nailsworth; and as a founder member of Minchinhampton Golf Club. He also helped to raise money for the National Trust to buy Minchinhampton Common.

He is particularly remembered as the first person in Box to own a car. "I remember the first motor car in Box. It belonged to Mr Fyffe at Trullwell House and he employed a chauffeur named Bob Whitehead," recalled resident Harold Heiron, who died in 1984.

"But cars were not so powerful in those days, so that when they got to the steepest part of the Halfway House Hill, the passengers had to get out and walk, while the chauffeur drove up to the top and waited for them to walk up.

But Mr Fyffe soon altered this arrangement by cutting a roadway out of the back of his premises and across the common, coming out near Hampton Green. This way, needless to say, was not so steep."

Others recall the Fyffes letting the village children play in their back garden, where they had games with swings and see-saws.

In spite of such a long retirement, Edward Fyffe died a rich man, leaving £38,493 – a lot of money in 1935. [Editor – approximately £3.5 million today] But his legacy was far more than cash in the bank. He helped to bring a well-loved fruit to England, employment to many – and excitement to a generation of children in Box. His grave is in Amberley Churchyard, alongside those of his wife and mother, one of many lasting memorials to a particularly fruitful life.



## Grave of the month

By Martyn Beaufort [With thanks to Gary Atkinson]

### John Midwinter 1827-1894

One of the biggest problems I have had in mapping the churchyard is the deterioration of gravestones. Our burial books are very good in that from 1824 onwards, the burial register tells us where the burials were carried out in relation to other burials. However, if the location of the related burial is unknown – as they often are - this really doesn't help in assessing where the burials are.

Sometimes this this was accelerated by human hands as seen in this excerpt from the "Bath Chronicle" of the 17<sup>th</sup> of June 1830.

"In the course of Thursday night last, no less than seventeen brass plates were stolen from the tombstones, in the churchyard of Minchinhampton, in this county. Strong suspicion is attached to a travelling tinker who was seen lurking in the town the evening before. Some time since a plate to the memory of Dr. James Bradley, Astronomer Royal, (who was buried at Minchinhampton,) was stolen from his tomb, but was luckily recovered, and is now more securely placed in the chancel.[Editor – this will now be found in the Lady Chapel] Visits of this kind have so often been paid to this churchyard, that very few memorials of this description now remain"

This is of course very frustrating for a historian but can probably be understood in the circumstances of the time when there was a depression in the textile industry and widespread poverty. It was also a lot better than the murder of the "Bisley Miser" by an unemployed cloth worker in the same year. The Bisley "Miser" in fact only had a batch of cancelled banknotes from a bank that had closed years before. This was unfortunate as it led to two deaths – the miser himself and the murderer at the end of a rope. Perhaps there is a moral there about not bragging about your wealth? I'll try and tell that story in our next issue.

However, even though hopefully, no more brass plates will be lost in that way, gravestones are still year by year decaying. The church has in fact recently laid down a lot of gravestones, because there is an obvious health and safety risk in several hundredweight of gravestone falling on someone.

So, this issue, I am putting in this newsletter a gravestone which in a few short years – alas – will become unreadable. The gravestone of John Midwinter. I am sure that you can see the problem in the pictures below: -





IN LOVING MEMORY OF  
JOHN MIDWINTER  
SERGEANT OF POLICE  
WHO AFTER MUCH SUFFERING NOBLY BORNE  
ENTERED INTO REST JULY 21<sup>st</sup> 1894  
AGED 67 YEARS  
Neither shall there be any more pain

John Midwinter was baptised in Minchinhampton on Christmas Day, 1827. In fact there were numerous baptisms on that day, which does make one wonder why. It seems there are two possible reasons for this which are: -

- 1) Baptisms on this day were carried out by the clergy free or:-
- 2) As a minimum, people [who were not necessarily churchgoers] had to attend church on Easter Sunday and Christmas Day or could be fined by the Ecclesiastical courts, and if they could not afford to pay the fine could be imprisoned indefinitely.

I am to be honest not sure about the first reason, but a look at Hansard [link below] does indicate that until 1842, fines were levied for non-attendance, even though it does suggest that it was more general than a fine only been levied on the two days above mentioned.

[COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AT CHURCH. \(Hansard, 11 February 1842\)](#)

It seems that John did not serve as a policeman at Minchinhampton. He joined the police on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September 1846 and thereafter was a policeman at Charlton Kings and Moreton in the Marsh. He obviously kept his connection to Minchinhampton as in 1861 he is listed as a visitor here. However, the rest of his family can be found listed in the Moreton in the Marsh census.

I have looked at the newspapers and identified a few cases that Midwinter was involved in. Most of them were run of the mill, and involved quite a few where various pub landlords had infringed the licensing laws such as the below example from 1853: -

“William Marmer landlord of the Hewlett's Arms, a beer house in Hewlett-road, was charged by P.C. Midwinter with keeping his house open for the sale of beer during the hours of divine service on Sunday morning last. The defendant admitted the offence but pleaded that he had a few friends

from Gloucester call to see him. If the magistrates would deal leniently with him, he would take care the offence should not be repeated. He was fined 10s. and is. 7s 6d. costs, which was immediately paid”

I have to say that the implied threat here that the magistrates had to treat him leniently or he might repeat the offence probably did not help his case!!

The worst case that Midwinter seems to have been involved in – and it is a nasty one dates to the same year and was captioned in the Cheltenham Chronicle as “THE RECENT CHARGE OF VIOLATION BY DAUGHTER AGAINST HER FATHER” According to the daughter, who was aged 16 at the time of the case, the father had been doing so for 2 years and therefore the newspaper was quite correct in saying “The particulars of this horrid case were fully reported in the Chronicle ..... the prisoner being charged with the revolting offence on Monday, the 25<sup>th</sup>” This was both “horrid” and “revolting,” but as to whether this happened will never be known. The girl was a poor witness and also had made accusations against another man for stalking her. Also, when she went to the magistrates to complain about her father raping her in 1851, they refused to deal with it as it was two years before. Whereupon coincidentally, her father then committed the same offence a few hours later. That of course looked like she was making the second offence up, and probably she had, but that of course cannot tell us absolutely that nothing had happened in 1851. She would have wanted redress and how else could she achieve it? However, because criminal cases then as now have to be “beyond reasonable doubt” the father was found not guilty.

Midwinter was made a Sergeant of Police in 1855, and was superannuated in 1867 as the below excerpt from the Stroud Journal of the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 1867 states: -

“Sergeant John Midwinter, who joined the force in 1846, and was promoted in 1855, being now disabled with a rheumatic affection, was superannuated with an allowance of £29 17 1d”

The roughly £30 a year that John received was hardly generous [Approximately £4200 now], but it is probable that his second wives’ job as a dressmaker [mentioned in the 1871 census when he lived in Westend] helped the family budget and both of his eldest children [16 & 14] were working as well.

By 1881, the family had moved to Blueboys. At this time, John’s second wife was still a dressmaker, and one of John’s children [Alice] is listed as working in the cloth industry. Unusually, however the household contained 8 boarders [all boys] between the ages of 9 and 12. Perhaps, John to supplement his income was running some kind of school?

In January 1883, the family were still living in Blueboys as his father William died in the garden as can be seen from the below extract from the Stroud Journal of the 13<sup>th</sup> of that month: -

#### SUDDEN DEATH AT MINCHINHAMPTON

An inquest was held at the Crown Hotel, Minchinhampton, on Tuesday, before Mr A. J. Morton Ball, the district Coroner, on the body of an old man named William Midwinter, 73 years of age, who lived at Butt-Street, Minchinhampton, and who fell down and died suddenly on Monday morning whilst working in his son's garden.....The Coroner, in opening the enquiry, said the circumstances of the case were very unusual, and the death was extremely sudden; but he had no doubt when they had heard the evidence of Dr. Hayden and the other witnesses that they would come to the conclusion that death had been satisfactorily accounted for.

Mary Midwinter, wife of John Midwinter, a superannuated sergeant of police, was first called. She stated that she lived at the Blue Boys, and that her late father-in-law was a labourer. She believed he was about 73 years of age. He occasionally worked for her husband in the garden. She last had a conversation with him about a week ago, when his health was pretty good. He had not recently had any medical attendance.

About ten o'clock on Monday morning she was at the window and saw him removing manure from one part of the garden to the other, in about three or four minutes afterward, she looked out and could not see him, and on going to another window she saw that he was lying down by the side of the wheelbarrow. She immediately went to him and lifted him up and spoke to him, but he never spoke. He was lying on the left side and had a slight mark on the left temple. There was a little blood around it. She called for the assistance of a man named Bishop, and took the deceased indoors, and sent for a doctor, who came in about a quarter of an hour. Deceased never complained of being in ill-health and was not regarded as a weakly man for his age.

Mr Nathaniel J. Hayden said he was a surgeon practising at Minchinhampton. Deceased was not his patient or a patient of anybody else. He had known the deceased for ten years. He had often asked him his age, and he always showed considerable reluctance in referring to it. He had always believed him to be more than 75 years of age. He believed deceased never had a day's illness in his life. He was fond of boasting that he never was under a doctor's care in his life. The coroner; A good thing for him, perhaps.

One of the jury, said he boasted that he never took a pill or tasted any medicine in his life.

Dr. Hayden, resuming, said when he went to the deceased he was lying on the floor of the kitchen. He was quite dead and appeared to have died recently. He noticed a slight scar on the left temple. The blood was clotted to it. It was a slight punctured wound, caused by deceased's falling on a sharp stone; but this, in his opinion, would not have caused death. He had heard deceased complain of giddiness, resulting probably from an imperfect circulation of blood through the brain. His opinion was that deceased died from apoplexy, resulting from diseased arteries of the brain. The work he was doing was not such as would have been likely to injure him. The death was antecedent to the fall.

The jury returned a verdict in accordance with the medical evidence, that the deceased died from natural causes. The jury gave their fees to the widow of the deceased.

By 1891, John and Mary lived alone in a street called Church Street. I believe that this was most probably near Blueboys as this is the next entry on the sheet. This would mean that the family had lived in Blueboys from sometime after 1871 but before 1881 and until 1891. John died on the 21<sup>st</sup> of July 1894, and his death entry gives his address which is Woodbine Cottage – this is the house next to Blueboys garage. The entry also gives the reason for death as “Chronic Rheumatism Exhaustion” so it looks like he had suffered with this ailment since his retirement in 1867.

268	Twenty first July 1894 Woodbine Cottage Minchinhampton R. S. D	John Midwinter	Male	67 years	Superannuated Police Sergeant	Chronic Rheumatism Exhaustion Certified by O. E. Church L. S. J.	M. Midwinter Wife of deceased Present at the death Woodbine Cottage Minchinhampton	Twenty first July 1894	W. A. Jones Registrar
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## Dates For Your Diary

### 2025

Jun 27 – The Market House – Chiz Harward – Title to be advised.

Sep 19 – The Market House – Richard Davis – Tom Long's Post.

Oct 3 – Alan Vaughan – Showing of Local History films for the group

Oct 31 - The Market House – Kirsty Hartsiotis –Ghosts in the Stones: Supernatural Tales in Gloucestershire.

Nov 7 – The Market House – Remembrance talk – Title to be advised.

Dec 19 – The Market House – MLHG – AGM [+ Talk = TBA]

### 2026

Jan 24 – The Market House – Howard Beard – Title TBA

Mar 20 – The Market House – Stuart Butler – Radical Stroud

Apr 17 – The Market House – Ian Mackintosh – Life and Times at: Longford Mills and Ham Mills

Oct 30 – The Market House – John Putley – Witchfynder - History of witches and tales of Gloucestershire witches

Nov 6 – The Market House – Andy Meller – The Glosters at Waterloo.

Dec 11 – The Market House – Patrick Furley – Magic Lantern Christmas Show followed by AGM.