

WYCHWOODS HISTORY

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Contents

Foreword	3
Chesnut Close PETER LESLIE	4
Local Casualties of a Forgotten War in Iraq WENDY PEARSE	15
Some Wychwood Neighbourhoods about 1900: Shipton ANTHEA JONES, JOAN HOWARD-DRAKE, SUE JOURDAN, JOHN RAWLINS	19
A Problem of Ownership: Bruern Grange	33
The First Twenty-one Years MARGARET WARE	35
Book Review ANTHEA JONES	42
Hartley Heritage Part Two TRUDY YATES	44
The Society's Publications	63

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Foreword

In 2003 the Wychwoods Local History Society will be noting the 400th anniversary of Shipton Court in two important ways. First, we are planning a Gardens Open Day at the back of the Court on 28 June for WLHS members and their guests. Sign-up sheets will be available at the April and May meeting for those wishing to attend. At this event the committee will mount an exhibition of Shipton Court memorabilia held by the society and loaned by local residents. Teas will be served following a tour of the gardens. We hope to see all of you there.

Secondly, we are planning to devote the entire 2004 journal to the history of the Court and its owners. We have many newly-discovered photographs and materials to bring the history of this important local landmark up to date.

In this issue the research sub-committee reviews their findings of Shipton neighbourhoods in 1911. Shipton Court looms large in this survey as well. It consisted of 1,291 acres in 1911, an interesting statistic at a time when the front of the house is for sale with a modest two acres of land.

In Hartley Heritage Part Two the history of this remarkable farming/sporting family is brought into the 21st century; a short article entitled Local Casualties of a Forgotten War in Iraq gives sobering details of First World War battles fought in Mesopotamia – another timely topic. Peter Leslie explores the history of a familiar Ascott home, Chesnut Close, and the career of the privileged partially-sighted Harry Sanderson Furniss, who built it in 1913.

Margaret Ware has expanded the talk she presented at the WLHS 21st anniversary celebration and her article now covers our entire history as a Society. Lastly, a letter from Joy Timms about the ownership of Bruern Grange is welcome proof that readers are interested in our research and have information of their own to enrich our knowledge.

We hope that you will find this issue a rewarding read.

TRUDY YATES, JOAN HOWARD-DRAKE AND SUE JOURDAN

Chesnut Close

PETER LESLIE

'In 1913 we decided to divide our time in the future between Oxford and the Cotswolds and to build a house of our own at Ascott. The new house we called Chesnut Close, this being the traditional name of the field in which it was built. It was an almost exact copy of a Tudor Cotswold manor house. It was built of Cotswold stone dug out of a field adjoining the house, and was roofed with Stonesfield slates. The planning of it and the arrangements for the building were a great interest to me, but had I known what lay ahead of us, I should never have embarked on such an enterprise. We got into Chesnut Close in 1914, just a month before the outbreak of the War.'

Harry Sanderson Furniss, later Lord Sanderson, was born in 1868 to a typically successful Victorian family. The money came from a steel business in Sheffield, but Furniss' father, in common with many second generation 19th-century business families, lived the life of a country gentleman with a small estate in Suffolk. His four children were not expected to work for a living; the business continued to support a comfortable life style. This was just as well as Furniss was almost blind from birth and thus was educated by tutors or tutorial establishments. He was clearly determined that this should not prevent him going to university and in 1889 persuaded a doubtful Hertford College, Oxford, that he could read for a degree with the help of a secretary to read and write for him. He was equally determined that the life of a gentleman of leisure was not for him and, after getting his degree, lived for a time in Bristol, improving his mind, studying economics and doing some rather desultory charitable work.

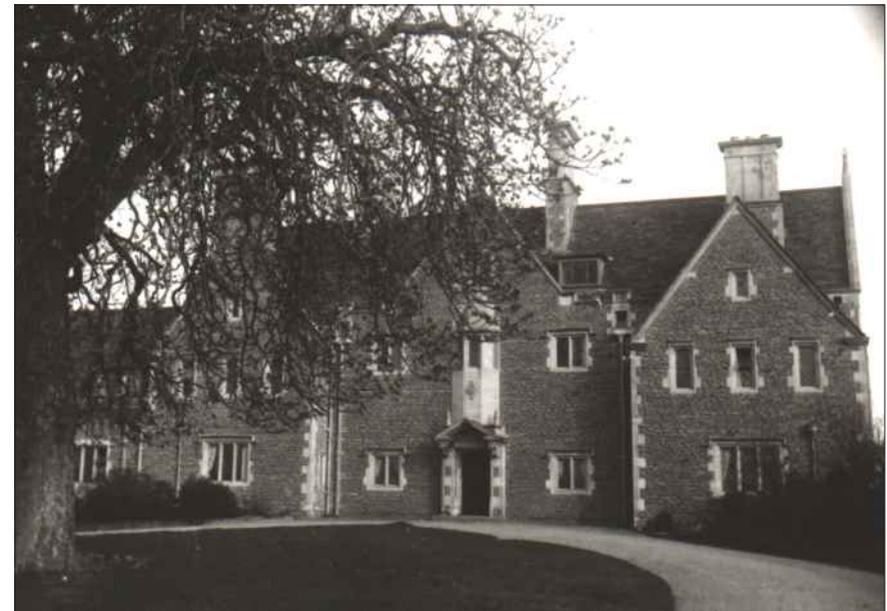
In 1902 he married Averill Nicholl from a similarly well-to-do family, and after some time they settled in Oxford. She was of enormous importance in his life, both by helping him to overcome many of the problems of semi-blindness, and by sharing with him his growing social conscience. In 1905 he started part-time lecturing at Ruskin College, the newly-formed and rather chaotic trade union college outside the University. This brought many new contacts in the field of Workers Education, many of them Liberal and some even Socialist and members of the Fabian

Society. He became more and more involved in the rather traumatic development of Ruskin College and in developing his economic interests. In 1916 he was, rather surprisingly for a still wealthy man, appointed principal of Ruskin College. By that time he and his wife had become increasingly involved in the Labour Party of which they were now members and had come to know many of the leading figures, some of whom he entertained at Chesnut Close. Following his retirement from Ruskin in 1925, this led to his being made a member of the House of Lords as Lord Sanderson in 1930, the year in which he completed his auto-biography.¹ By this time his blindness had become almost total and his health, never robust, increasingly restricted his contribution to public life. He died in 1939, leaving £61,000. His wife died in 1963. They had no children, although they adopted a young girl called Vera as their niece.

Why Ascott under Wychwood?

How did the Furnisses come to Ascott under Wychwood?

'In 1908 we first began to explore the Cotswolds, a part of the country with which we became very familiar in later years. Our first expedition was to Stow on the Wold, where we spent the night, walking back as far as Shipton under Wychwood the next day. ...In the spring of 1909 we stayed for a week-end at Ascott under Wychwood, the village where we



THE FRONT OF THE HOUSE WITH THE CHESTNUT TREE

had inspected a house some years before when we had been thinking of living near Oxford (in 1904). We were so charmed with it that we asked at our Inn whether there were any houses to be let, and were told that there was a small farmhouse at the end of the village. We went to look at this more out of curiosity than anything else, but were so much pleased with the little house that we immediately decided to take it, and for the next few years it was to Stone End² that we rushed for rest and quiet whenever we got the opportunity.

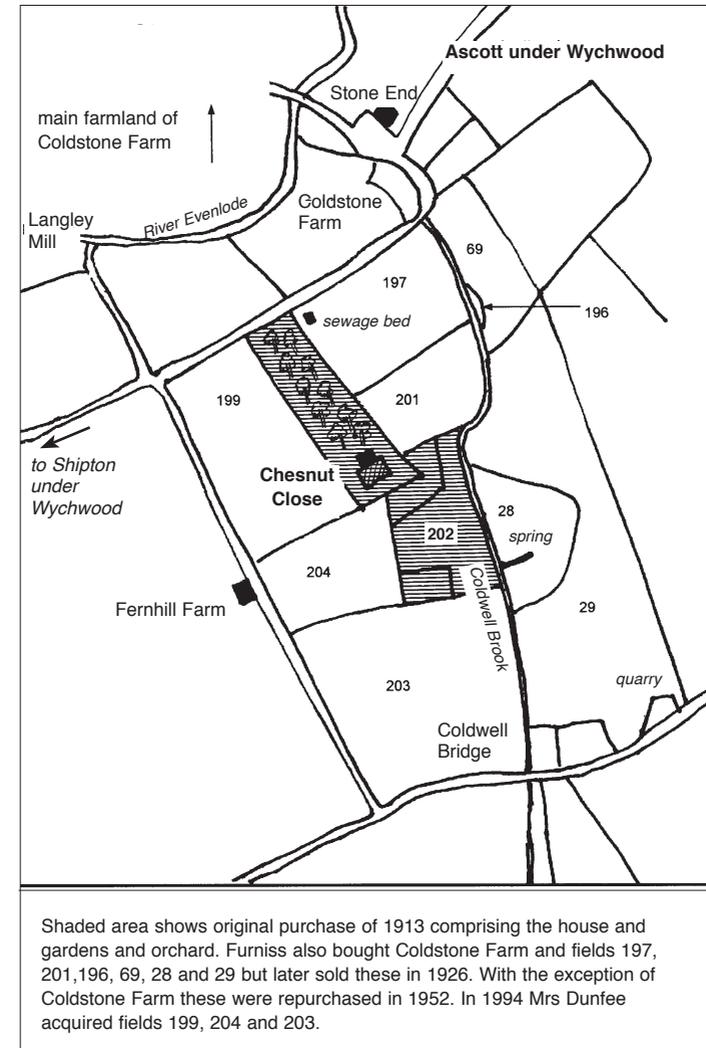
'We were there a great part of the summer of 1909, I going backwards and forwards every day to my work at Ruskin. We soon began to make friends with the village people and we were there all through the general election of January 1910. ... All through this summer Stone End became a sort of oasis for us from the difficult and uncomfortable atmosphere at the college. We used to have quiet weekends and Charlie Buxton often managed to get down by an early train on Sunday, sometimes arriving before we were up and singing loudly in the garden to remind us that it was time for breakfast.³ We set out on long rambles over the hills, either taking sandwiches or lunching on bread and cheese and beer in the village pubs – sitting under stone walls while Charlie read aloud his favourite poems and talking on every subject under the sun, but nearly always working round to Socialism. ... We went to meetings almost every night in the villages around Ascott, both speaking, I on the Free Trade question and my wife generally on the Land Campaign, for those were the days of Lloyd George's Land Taxes and the Land Song, which was sung ad nauseum. Looking back on it now, it seems astonishing what enthusiasm this land question aroused among the agricultural workers. ... I had given up my holiday, but certainly not my work, for all through the election (of summer 1910) I went into Oxford by the eight o'clock train from Ascott, often not getting back after teaching all day until six thirty, and then setting out to a meeting.'

The Purchase of Coldstone Farm

Furniss' father died in 1912 leaving over £240,000 including his estate in Suffolk. This was a large sum in those days and since Furniss' own work provided little income, much of it being unremunerated, he was now a rich man and able to take the decision to build a house in Ascott.

Furniss paid £5,100 to the executors of Edward Henry Marshall for Coldstone Farm of 199 acres one rood and three perches in January 1913. This included the field called Chesnut Close (after the big chestnut tree in the middle of the field) and some 25 acres of adjacent fields. Apart from these fields and the Coldstone farmhouse and outbuildings (including

Sketch map from the conveyance of 1952



what is now The Potteries) in Shipton parish, the bulk of the farm lay in Ascott parish, stretching north across the river Evenlode and up the hill to the Shipton/Chipping Norton road, with three fields east of Coldwell Brook to the south. From the conveyance it would appear that the farmlands had originally been in the possession of the Hackers and the Marshalls since the early seventeenth century, although it had been leased to a number of farmers, most recently in 1895 to Henry Edginton. By 1913

Edginton had also died and the tenancy was in the hands of his executors with his son Arthur Edginton running the farm. Subsequently it appears that Joseph and Richard Ashby farmed the land as tenants of Furniss.

The building of the house

The house itself was built by Groves and was completed a year later in July 1914. Unfortunately the name of the architect is not known but it is likely that it would have been one experienced in building Cotswold houses and based in Oxford or Cheltenham. Given the careful attention to detail both in the interior and exterior of the house, the architectural work is clearly of high quality. All Groves' records were destroyed in a fire in their offices in the 1920s or 1930s but a photograph records the completion of the work in 1914. Poignantly, many of the younger faces would have had only a few years to live. The proud initials 'HSF' (Harry Sanderson Furniss) remain engraved on a stone above the front door, whilst above the sunnier terrace door his wife is commemorated by 'AEF'.

Unusually for an Edwardian house, it was designed to be imposing but compact. Little space was wasted on halls or corridors. Downstairs there

CHESNUT CLOSE AND THE TEAM FROM GROVES WHICH BUILT IT. JULY 1914



was a large drawing room, a small morning room and dining room, plus by no means generous kitchen quarters. Upstairs, there were two large bedrooms plus smaller adjacent dressing rooms, two bathrooms and one other bedroom and on the top floor, six bedrooms for servants and a bathroom for them. Thus whilst the Furnisses were clearly well-looked after, there was really only room for two guests to stay, which suited their pattern of regular weekend entertaining. The chauffeur was accommodated in one of the two cottages and a gardener in the other.

The house was cleverly sited on a strip of sand at the top of the ridge above the Shipton road with views south over Coldwell Brook and up to Leafield, and north and east over the Evenlode valley and Ascott village. On the west the house and garden was laid out right up to the boundary hedge with Fernhill Farm which must have meant that it was very open on that side. To the east and southeast there were a number of big trees, mainly elms, in the hedge, which provided protection on that side. Indeed it was always said that the house was invisible from all sides, that is until the elm tree massacre left it visible from the Burford/Charlbury road. The 1906 map shows over 80 large trees on the property.

To provide all the facilities required of a gentleman's country residence, two cottages were built to one side of the drive gates and a coach-house on the other, the latter housing the still rather novel car rather than a horse-drawn carriage. The old hedges up to the house were well-filled with trees but Furniss also planted an avenue of some 30 lime trees on either side of a straight drive to the house from Shipton Road. On the right-hand side an existing copse of ash and oak was underplanted with *rhododendron ponticum*, which flourished on the black acid soil where the sand and gravel hilltop gave way to the river valley clays. The famous chestnut tree in the round lawn in front of the main entrance partially concealed the house from the Shipton Road.

On the south side the house sat on a raised terrace which led onto a large walled garden with a large lawn with beds under the walls. Steps led down on to a gravel path which crossed the main garden to further steps leading to a formal goldfish pond and rose garden. Beyond this was laid out a formal garden with rose-covered pergola on the right and a two-acre vegetable garden going down towards the brook on the left. Beyond that Furniss planted an orchard of pear and apple trees which have largely survived their 90 years. To the left of the goldfish pond garden, a gate led through a line of old elms to a large, new greenhouse built on a mound where the land sloped down to the stream. This was heated underneath by a boiler which burned coke.

Between the goldfish pond garden and the vegetable garden a ten-foot high wall was built, presumably to give wind protection and privacy to the main garden. Beyond the goldfish pond this was pierced by an amazingly

shallow arch which allowed a brief glimpse of the vegetable garden and pergola. This extraordinary arch disappeared some time in the 1930s, probably because it looked and was structurally unsound, which opened up the view to the lower garden. Later a hard tennis court was made in the orchard, accessed by a path from the west side of the goldfish pond garden.

Furniss records that the stone for the house was quarried from an adjacent field, but the nearby fields are all sand or clay and it is only where the land rises to the Burford/Charlbury road that limestone brash is found. It is likely that he was referring to the quarry by the B4431 on the other side of the Coldwell Brook near the site of the Ascott barrow, some way from the house but on land he had acquired.

Water was a great problem in view of the fact that the site for the new house was on a small hill above the Coldwell Brook. The title deeds reveal that this was solved by tapping the spring below the pumping station on the B4431, passing it to a storage tank and then to a feed tank on the hill above the brook from where it passed through gravity to a ram pump by the stream. From there it was piped up the hill to the house and into large storage tanks on the top floor which were only removed in 1987, many years after connection to mains water. The remains of the piping are still visible and the spring still runs all the year. Furniss also had a tank constructed by a spring in what is now Honeydale Farm on the upper part of his land near the A361 to pipe water down to Coldstone Farm and by gravity up Chesnut Close. This later became the main water supply.

Sewage was another problem. This was solved by piping waste down from the house to a sewage bed in the field by Shipton Road. Although long superseded by mains sewerage, the sewage beds still remain, overshadowed by a small copse of wild cherry.

Impact on the village

Ascott has never had a resident lord of the manor so there were no houses of size or local figures of importance other than the vicar and the leading farmers, particularly at Crown Farm. The coming of the railway had brought more visitors and in due course The Grange had been built near the station. Thus the coming to the village of gentry such as the Furnisses and their friends the Tiddys with their active liberal ideas created quite a stir, to the disapproval of the vicar and the more conservative inhabitants. But as Doris Warner makes clear in her memories of Ascott⁴ many of the villagers felt that 'A great change came to Ascott when Mr Reginald Tiddy came to live at Priory Cottage with his father and brother and Mr and Mrs Furniss had Chesnut Close built.' Whilst to our eyes some of the attitudes and activities of the newcomers might appear rather patronising, it seems clear that the village saw them as well-intentioned, helpful and a breath of fresh air. Even today the folk memories are warm and the Tiddy Hall keeps them so.



THE GOLDFISH POND AND THE ARCH WHICH DISAPPEARED IN THE 1930S

Furniss writes:

'We spent a great deal of time in Ascott, and in 1913 were there nearly all the summer, I going backwards and forwards by train to Oxford. In 1911 we made friends with R.J.E. Tiddy, a fellow of Trinity who had a cottage at Ascott. He took a great interest in the village and the village people, and was one of the leaders in the revival of folk dancing and folk song which took place about that time. He taught the villagers folk dancing which became extremely popular and subsequently bought a small piece of land and built a hall for the use of the people. There was folk dancing out of doors during the summer and weekly dances took place in the hall throughout the winter for many years to come. In fact folk dancing still flourishes in Ascott. It has undoubtedly been a great resource and recreation to the people and has done much to promote social intercourse and to break down the aloofness and lack of fellowship which is so common to village life. Tiddy was extremely fond of music and he used to have the village boys to the cottage and

play to them on his pianola with a view to testing their appreciation of different kinds of music.'

Mrs Warner describes how 'Mr Furniss used to play his fiddle to accompany the Morris dancers and Jigs although he was blind' and recalled frequent visits of Cecil Sharp and William Kimber, who played a key part in the national revival of folk dancing and who with Reggy Tiddy were 'three men who gave so much happiness to others'.

Mrs Furniss was also active in the village and started a school clinic.

'It was however, strongly opposed by the vicar (this was Revd C Walford), who for some reason regarded it as socialistic, but after a little hesitation it soon became very popular with the mothers and the village generally. ... The vicar disliked all our activities at Ascott. He was a nice, kindly man but had curious ideas not only about Socialism but also as to what was due to his position.'

Furniss also established a small holiday home for women and girls at Stone End, opposite Coldstone Farm, 'which was a source of rest and happiness to many overworked women' in commemoration of his blind sister, May, who had died. This continued until 1922 under a succession of matrons.

Another innovation was the establishment of a branch of the Workers Educational Association in 1911, the first village branch in the country. Albert Mansbridge had become a friend of the Furnisses and he came down to address an early meeting which clearly was rather sticky. 'Mansbridge spoke for the best part of an hour and at the end of that time he invited questions and discussion, but the request was greeted with dead silence.' However, before long the branch had become an important part of the village with Mrs Furniss taking a women's class and annual fetes taking place. At one of these the Mansbridges came down and 'we all danced up the village, I played my violin, and finally the whole village settled down to a large tea in an old barn and we finished up singing old folk songs.' This was very different from the very formal village hierarchy in most villages of the time. The Furnisses' active support for a strike of clothing workers in Chipping Norton in 1914, where they 'did their best to encourage the strikers, speaking at their meetings and joining in their processions', would have gone down even less well with the local establishment.

All this changed with 1914 and the war. Furniss spent more time in London and Tiddy joined up. 'A great blow fell upon us in the summer of 1916 in the death of our friend Reginald Tiddy, who was killed in action in France. He had joined up owing to very stern sense of duty, though quite unfitted for army life and so short-sighted that it was only after several unsuccessful attempts that he was accepted. However, he threw himself into his army life with the buoyant zest which was one of his

most attractive characteristics, taught folk dancing to the soldiers and was adored by them. Perhaps only his intimate friends knew how deeply he felt the horror of war and all it involved and his long weekly letters, often full of gaiety as they were, revealed the misery through which his soul was passing. To us his death meant the loss of one of our most intimate friends, one who was in sympathy with all our ideals and who shared our interests in Ascott and the Cotswolds.' Tiddy left the hall to Furniss and writing in 1930 'we still retain it for the village. It is known as the Tiddy Hall and contains a stone tablet erected in memory of Reggie by the villagers and other friends.' This memorial is now in the new Tiddy Hall.

There is no doubt that in these few years, the Furnisses and Tiddys and their friends made a considerable impact on the village which was much appreciated. Their institutions were firmly based and lived on afterwards for many years and, in the case of the Tiddy Hall, still does.

The sale

Sadly, the Furnisses had little time to enjoy their new house. He had been unwell and they spent much of 1914 and 1915 there, but as their servants all went off to the war, they left for London, leaving the house in charge of their gardener and his wife.

After the armistice, the Furnisses came down to Chesnut Close often for weekends, usually bringing one or two guests to stay but they found it difficult to keep up the house, particularly as his post as principal of Ruskin College obliged him to live in Oxford for much of the year. In 1922 they leased the house to a Mrs Gordon for seven years (for an annual rent of £300) but in 1926 Furniss writes: 'Chesnut Close had been let for some years, but our present financial position made it impossible ever to be able to live there again, so with great regret we decided to sell both the house and the farm.' The house and adjoining fields were sold to Mr Alfred Mason for £7,750. The farm, including Coldstone Farmhouse, was sold to Edgar Hughes Walton and James Jesse Walton, farmers of Ascott, for £2,600. This left the Chesnut Close property as a thin strip between, and overlooked by, two farms with only an orchard field of five acres. (By mistake the wrong fields were sold on the deeds and a rectificatory deed had to be executed when this was discovered). The rights of access to the spring tanks and ram pump as well as to the sewage bed were retained.

The Masons came from a similar background to the Furnisses – north country manufacturing financed the life of a gentleman of leisure. They had a young family and were keen on hunting, so stables were built by the coach-house together with a tennis court in the orchard. They led a social life in local society and the hunting field, and the garden features in a number of postcards of village fetes in the interwar years.

The Masons continued to live at Chesnut Close until 1951. Following Alfred Mason's death it was sold for £12,500 to a Commander Cunningham

who in turn sold it four years later to Mr Dunfee, in whose hands and those of his widow, the house remained until 1987. During that time, the house and grounds remained virtually unchanged from when they were laid out in 1914, except for the Masons' stables and tennis court and the addition of a swimming pool in the 1960s and a garage in the 1990s. In 1952, Coldstone Farm was sold by Mr Farrant of Chipping Norton, the mortgagee in possession, (the Waltons had mortgaged it for £8,000 in 1928) to Leonard Hill, 'builder', and Commander Cunningham took advantage of this to buy the fields south of Shipton Road to give added protection to Chesnut Close.

Sometime in the 1960s the chestnut tree fell down and was replaced rather bizarrely by a small bed of hydrangeas. Whether for this reason or a desire to acquire a more distinguished name, the house was then renamed rather pretentiously Wychwood Manor. At least it was not called 'Ascott Manor' since the Crown had held the Lordship of the Manor until the 18th century and, if anything, the name was applicable to the oldest house in the village at Manor Farm. In 1977, following the death of Mr Perkins of nearby Fernhill Farm, the fields to the west of the property were acquired by Mrs Dunfee and thus, at last after many changes, Wychwood Manor came to sit, as it does today, standing proud on the hillock where Furniss had sited it, entirely surrounded and protected by its lime avenue and belt of trees in the midst of 50 acres of well-grazed green fields.

References

- 1 H S Furniss, *Memories of Sixty Years*. Autobiography published in 1930. All quotations, unless otherwise stated, are from this book.
- 2 Stone End in Ascott Earl is on Shipton Road opposite The Potteries and is now known as Ascott Earl House.
- 3 Charles Buxton was the brilliant son of Lord Buxton, a government minister and subsequently Governor General of South Africa. He died young but was already making his mark in socialist thinking. Furniss wrote a brief biography of him printed privately for Lord Buxton, his only published work other than his autobiography.
- 4 Doris Warner, 'Personal Memories of Ascott under Wychwood', *Wychwoods History* No. 11 (1996).

Local Casualties of a Forgotten War in Iraq

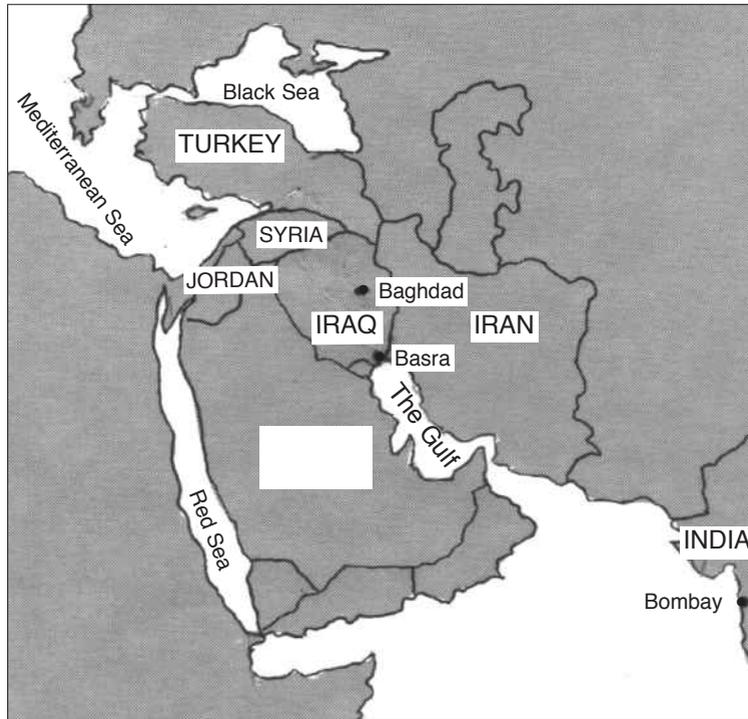
WENDY PEARSE

Before I uncovered the details of the experiences of Sergeant Frederick Smith of Ascott in the First World War, the campaign in Mesopotamia (now Iraq), including the Siege of Kut, one of the longest in British history, was virtually unknown to me. I then imagined that Fred Smith was probably the only man from this area who was part of this obscure theatre of war. But the more I read about this totally disastrous, badly planned and well concealed episode of the Great War, I discovered that an appreciable number of men from around the Wychwood area were involved. These were men of the regular army, members of the 1st Battalion Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry who were serving in the Indian Army before the war, and were sent directly from India, initially to help secure the oilfields of Mesopotamia during the latter part of 1914.

In the beginning good progress was made up the Tigris and Euphrates rivers despite lack of transport, poor planning, insufficient medical facilities and extremely difficult weather conditions. But the first casualty from the Wychwoods was Lance Corporal Charles William Wiggins from Milton who died on the 21 June 1915 from a fever contracted on board ship in the Persian Gulf whilst sailing to join the 1st Battalion. He was buried at sea and his name is on the Basra Memorial. A photograph of Charles Wiggins appears in *The Second Wychwoods Album*. Three brothers of that family died in the First World War. The Wiggins family of at least seven children lived in the last cottage on the right as you leave Milton for Upper Milton.

As the expeditionary force fought their way north up the Tigris and Euphrates valleys towards Baghdad, a Churchill man Gunner Frank Webb of the 10th Brigade, Royal Field Artillery became one of the many victims of the rampant local diseases. He died on 17 July 1915 and was buried in Amara War Cemetery. The battle of Ctesiphon took place in November as the force approached Baghdad. Although a victory beckoned for Townshend's men it was nevertheless a bridge too far. Massed Turkish troops lay entrenched before them and difficulty with supplies enforced a retreat. Francis Constantine William Wynter, Captain in the 1st Battalion Oxford and Bucks died during that battle on 22 November 1915, age 27.

Map of the Middle East showing Iraq, formerly Mesopotamia



His name is inscribed on the Basra Memorial. A quartet of memorials in Ramsden Church records the deaths of his brother in France earlier in 1915, himself in November, his father in 1914 and his mother, a member of the Dillon family of Ditchley Park, in 1917.

Following the retreat from Ctesiphon to Kut in December, Lindo Oronto Parsloe, also of Milton, was killed in action within the town and his body lies in the cemetery there. The Turkish army staged a major attack on Kut on 24 December during which the Oxford and Bucks were highly-praised for their part in the action. As Lindo died on 27 December, it may well be that he was fatally wounded in this action. Another family of at least seven children, the Parsloes lived in the present Mill Cottage which adjoined the former mill where Milton service station now stands.

On 6 April 1916 eighteen-year-old Christopher Handel Dyke, a private in the Oxford and Bucks whose parents Edward and Annie lived in Playing Close, Charlbury, became another local casualty. His death occurred during the siege when he may have been a victim of shelling. There is no record of a burial and his name appears on the Basra memorial. More likely however, he may have been a member of the newly raised 1st

Battalion Oxford and Bucks, who whilst attempting to relieve the troops in Kut suffered a severe defeat in Sannaiyat on 6 April when 13 officers and 220 other ranks were lost.

Major General Townshend surrendered to the Turkish commanders on 29 April 1916. Shortly after the surviving starving, ill and unfit men of the 17th Division, the Oxford and Bucks and three Indian battalions, were separated from their officers, and together with most of the remaining force were marched out of Kut on their long journey into captivity. By 2 May another Milton man, George Thomas Bridges, had succumbed to the dreadful conditions. He has no known grave but his name like that of Charles Wiggins appears on the Basra Memorial.

In the little book kept by Company Sergeant Major Love during his captivity in Mesopotamia and now held at the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry Museum at Headington, some of the men of the Battalion received their last mention. And it was there that I found the final record of Fred Smith of Ascott; 'Was left at Mamoura on the march to Airan suffering from dysentery have not been seen or heard of since. 26 June 1916.' He died on 15 August 1916.

On 3 July 1916 S. Joynes of Chipping Norton was left at Bagtchi suffering from cholera. His name appears on the Chipping Norton war memorial.

On 25 July, Edward John Faulkner of Taynton, age 34, son of William and Harriet, whose name is inscribed on the memorial in Taynton Church, also died at Bagtchi. Like Fred Smith, he was suffering from dysentery.

Another Chipping Norton man, also suffering from dysentery and lost on the march was Lance Corporal J.H. Keen, age 28, the son of Joseph Keen from Chapel House. He died on Sunday 6 August 1916 and his name appears on the Chipping Norton War Memorial. Together with Fred Smith and Edward Faulkner, his body was ultimately buried in the Baghdad North Gate Cemetery.

As well as these local men who all drew their last breath in Mesopotamia, and Charles Wiggins, buried at sea, one other man on the Shipton war memorial, 2nd Lieutenant Cedric Donovan Upstone was also a victim of the campaign. A member of the 1st/4th Devonshires who served as part of the Tigris Force in 1916, he died in India and his name is recorded on the Kirkee Memorial near Poona, not far from Bombay where the Expeditionary Force D embarked. His date of death was 11 July 1916 so it would appear that he either died of illness before actually embarking for Mesopotamia, or on reaching there may have been wounded and sent back to India as a casualty.

In August 1916 General Sir Frederick Maude arrived in Mesopotamia. With fresh manpower and ample supplies he advanced up the Tigris in December, Kut surrendered on 25 February 1917, and on 11 March 1917

allied troops finally entered Baghdad. Gerald Watts of Milton may be yet another local man whose remains lie in this foreign land. His family had recently left Poplar Farm in the centre of the village and Private M.G. Watts of the 5th Battalion Wiltshire Regiment who was buried at Amara war cemetery on 1 March 1917 is possibly another Oxfordshire man who never returned home.

It seems very likely that the family and friends of these soldiers who were casualties of the campaign never really knew about the dreadful conditions and experiences which their sons, husbands and brothers endured. Only over time has the full story emerged. Of the 300 Oxford and Bucks who went into captivity only 90 survived to return home. I should be very interested to hear if there were any known local survivors of this horrendous episode.

Today very strong recommendations are issued not to visit commonwealth war graves cemeteries in Iraq and certainly in the past vandalism has occurred at their sites. It is ironic that a neglected war there in the early part of the twentieth century took the lives of several of our local men and condemned their bodies to remain on that foreign field. How little would they or their fellow soldiers have imagined that in less than ninety years, their last resting place would become such a prominent flashpoint for yet another war.

With grateful thanks to John Rawlins for his assistance.

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Some Wychwood Neighbourhoods about 1900: Shipton

ANTHEA JONES, JOAN HOWARD DRAKE,
SUE JOURDAN & JOHN RAWLINS

A survey of property throughout the country was made in 1911 in connection with a new land tax proposed by Lloyd George. The background to the survey was described in *Wychwoods History* No. 17, together with a review of the material for Milton under Wychwood .¹ Two interesting findings were the number of relatively new farming families in the township, and the amount of cottage property owned by the Groves and Rawlins families, often providing an income for the ladies. The picture derived from the survey of Shipton is presented here. There were many owners of small groups of cottages in Shipton, too, but also more major property owners. The farmers were again, with one notable exception, newly established.

There was no concentration of houses in Shipton to compare with the dense development of Milton Street; Church Street in Shipton (once known as Main Street) had a small nucleus of craftsmen living and working there, and in Upper End there was a second smaller nucleus. New services had reached Shipton by 1911; the GWR railway station just across the parish boundary in Ascott and the gas works. Matthews flour mill was built in 1911 and the Beaconsfield Hall in 1885. Properties designated 'house' were mostly situated in the High Street on the western side of the main road and well-spaced apart; on the eastern side was Shipton Court, owned by W.F.Pepper, which was described as a 'mansion'. Other large houses were Shipton Lodge, part of the Court estate; Rectory Farm or Parsonage, now the Old Prebendal House; the Vicarage, built in 1818 by the Reverend Joseph Phillimore and subsequently extended; and St Michael's, the childrens' home.

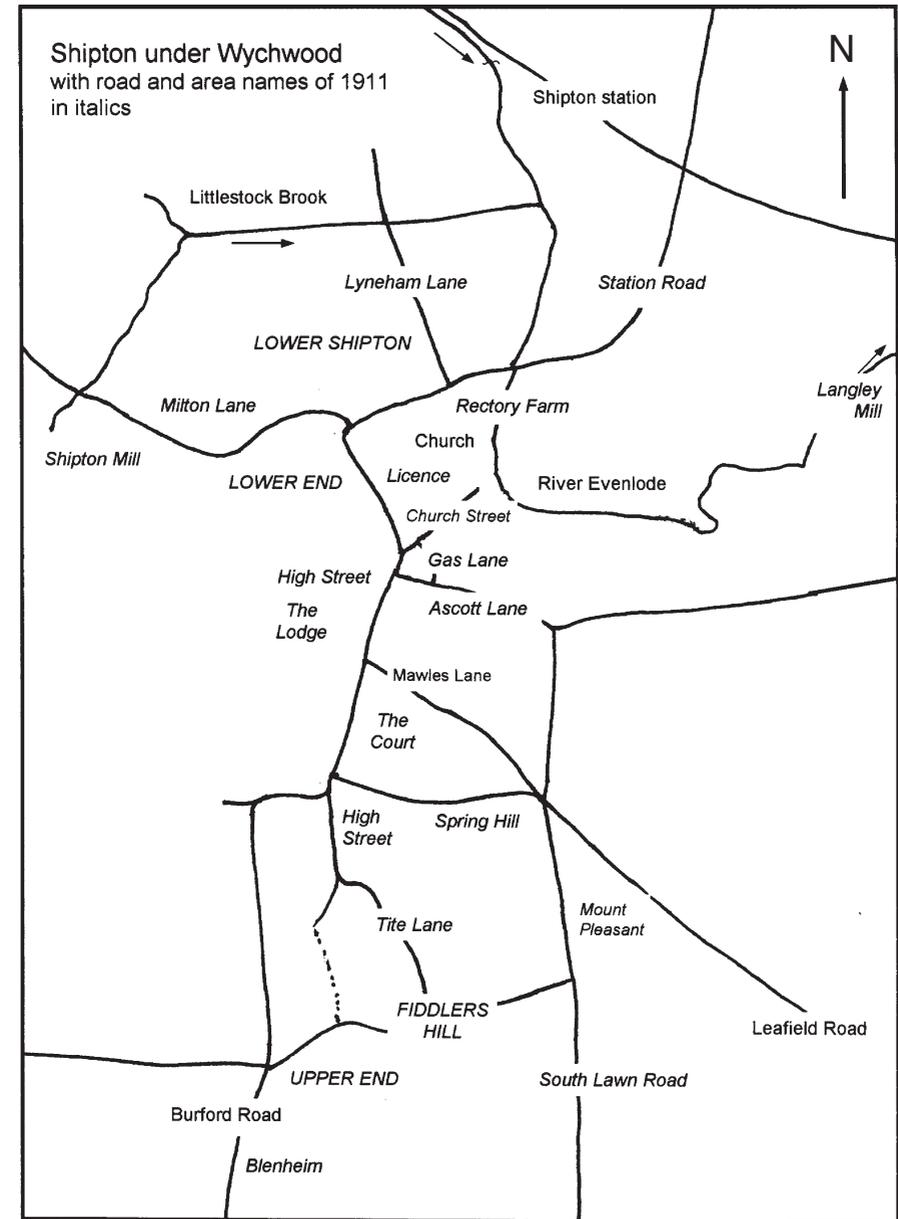
Shipton Court was central to the village. *Wychwoods History* No. 17 recorded the Duke of Marlborough's comment that the tax would not affect Pepper's 'small' estate as it would the much larger Blenheim estate; but his was a rather different perspective from Fred Pepper's. The Court estate was 1291 acres in 1911, large compared with any other in Shipton or Milton. W.F.Pepper was a Yorkshire man and his small fortune had been earned through the Monk Bretton coalmine north of Barnsley in Yorkshire;

he bought the Shipton estate in 1901, and was to sell it again in 1914. The 'mansion house' had about 21 acres of surrounding gardens, including the pleasure garden (the wild garden), the cricket field, the stables, domestic buildings and kitchen gardens (now Court Close). Pepper had altogether 83 acres kept in his own hand (ie not leased to a tenant), and in 1911 returned also a 'sporting estate' of 63 acres, which meant that he had shooting or hunting rights over land otherwise in tenants' hands. Nineteen acres were attached to the Lodge, occupied by the Hon. Algernon H. Mills. There were two principal farms, Grove Farm (504 acres) and Lower or Court Farm (431 acres). Richard Hartley was at Grove Farm, where he had been since 1892, and Harry Mawle (hence the name of the lane) was at Court Farm from about the same date. Both men were new to the village; Richard Hartley came from Wigginton and Harry Mawle from Cogges (now the farm museum), both in Oxfordshire. Harry Mawle also tenanted Springhill Farm in Plum Lane from Pepper.

Pepper's estate included Langley Mill at the eastern edge of the parish adjoining Ascott, and Shipton Mill, now the site of Milton service station,



HARRY MAWLE AT THE WHEEL OF HIS WOLSLEY



on the northern edge of the parish on the border with Milton. Shipton mill burned down in 1931. In 1911 Langley mill was tenanted by James Mullis together with 33 acres. He was a local man, born in Milton in 1844, and was in the 1881 census, occupation miller and baker; 1911 *Kelly's Directory* added 'farmer' to his trades. In addition to the land rented from Shipton Court estate, he also tenanted 20 acres in Ascott Lane from the Reverend Johnson who lived in Churchill. Mullis had the vote, and a lodger, his step-son Cressor Reynolds, could vote by virtue of renting a first-floor bedroom. He had apparently worked both Langley and Shipton mills in 1894, but in 1911 Shipton Mill and 9 acres of land was tenanted by John Hart.

Pepper also owned a number of houses and cottages throughout the village. He had three houses in High Street; Avery's house and shop in Church Street and two houses with gardens called The Cottage and The Laurels. He also owned five cottages in Church Street and High Street, including three along the edge of the Licence Field (now demolished but near where the fountain stands). In Upper End Pepper owned a shop, three houses and eight cottages; five cottages in Fiddlers Hill, a cottage and laundry in Tite Lane (now Chapel Lane), and two more houses at Springhill.

The principal farmers

Apart from Richard Hartley and Harry Mawle, there were three other significant farmers in Shipton; Maddox, Dangerfield and Bradley. Only one farming family, Maddox, was of long-standing in the village, though Miss Brookes² at Rectory Farm was the last representative of another long-standing former farming family.

The name Maddox appears regularly in the early parish registers, and in 1820 Thomas Maddox married Amy Spencer of Quenington, Gloucestershire. He was shown in the 1851 Shipton census as farming 200 acres and his son John Fowler 126 acres. John Fowler Maddox went from strength to strength, and in 1871 farmed 800 acres. He became probably the most important employer and a noted public figure in Shipton.³ In 1898 he retired to the house now called Hillborough in Shipton Road, Milton, and then went with his wife to live in Milton Road, Bath, where he died in 1919. He had a son, also called John Fowler Maddox, who may have succeeded him; in 1928 *Kelly's Directory* he too was called a farmer.⁴ In 1911 Maddox retained 511 acres of land; 84 acres on Shipton Downs was his own land, having been acquired at enclosure; 52 acres was owned by Pepper; 21 acres by the Crown Inn Charity Trustees, and his main holding, 354 acres, was owned by the executors of Miss Webb and was centred on Coldstone Farm although not so named in the 1911 tax return. He owned four cottages in Upper End; also 38 acres, a house and a cottage on the Downs, occupied by John Stallard who also rented 17 acres from



THE CORNER OF UPPER HIGH STREET AND CHAPEL LANE; THE LOWER COTTAGE STILL HAS A THATCHED ROOF. EARLY 1900S

the Walker Trustees⁵ Stallard was in Shipton in 1907, stated to be a farmer. There was one other cottage on the Downs, where the Rural District Council had an isolation hospital.

The second large farm in 1911 was occupied by the Dangerfield brothers, but was still in the hands of the executors of Joseph Jabez Dangerfield. Joseph Dangerfield came to Shipton from Devizes in Wiltshire sometime in the decade following the 1871 census. He appears in 1881 as a grocer, draper and manufacturer of shop clothing employing one man and eight women. *Kelly's Directory* for 1907 records him as grocer, draper and farmer, of Lane House. In 1911 the Dangerfield brothers had 64 acres of land and buildings at Lane House Farm and 75 acres and buildings in Sandpit Lane, now Fernhill Farm, near Ascott. The brothers also owned one cottage. Mrs J.J. Dangerfield, widow of Joseph, was in Lane House. In addition the brothers rented 7 acres of land in Ascott Lane from Vernon Watney of Cornbury Park, Charlbury.

The third significant farmer was Ernest E. Bradley. The 1911 survey showed him renting 88 acres and buildings at Rectory Farm but Millicent Brookes, Thomas Brookes' unmarried sister, lived in the house; the electoral roll shows another voter there also, Miss Florence Maxwell.⁶

Ernest Bradley was given as a butcher in *Kelly's Directory* for 1907 and in 1911 electoral roll was listed as living in The Laurels, part of Shipton Court estate, next to the present Box Cottage by the lane leading to the rear of the Crown. According to the 1911 Tax Survey, George Bradley lived at The Laurels, and rented an acre of land on the South Downs Road from the Crown Inn trustees. Were these two brothers? Rectory Farm was in the hands of the executors of Thomas Brookes, who had died in 1908; he had bought the property from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1888. This family, like the Maddoxes, was of long standing in the Wychwoods, and appears in the registers as 'of Milton' as far back as the sixteenth century. However the farming record really begins at the beginning of the eighteenth century when Peter Brookes took a lease of the Parsonage Farm. In the 1851 census Thomas Brookes senior farmed 160 acres; he died in 1869 and his son Thomas took over the farm with an acreage of 150 acres, rather more than was left in 1911.

There was only a small amount of land, some 126 acres on the margins of the parish, occupied in 1911 by people not resident in Shipton; their farms overlapped with Ascott, Fulbrook or Swinbrook parishes. H.B.Edginton had a house and land amounting to 31 acres at Coldstone by Ascott but does not appear to have been resident there; most of his land, 172 acres, was in Ascott, so that a study of just one parish gives a misleading picture. The whole farm, buildings as well as land, was owned by Miss E.H.Marshall, deceased. There were a number of households in Ascott headed by an Edginton in 1911, and William Edginton held Merriscourt, near Sarsden and also some land in Bruern. Another apparently small farmer, Daniel Smith had 18 acres on the Downs and 22 acres at Egg Barn near Swinbrook; but he tenanted more land in Swinbrook and Fulbrook, enclosed from Wychwood Forest. He lived in Forest Farm on the Swinbrook Road and was associated with Herbert Smith, who tenanted 18 acres on the Downs and nine acres at Caldwell.

Shipton below the Court, including Lower End and Lower Shipton

This part of Shipton includes the modern Church Street, High Street, Milton Road and Station Road and Meadow Lane. Altogether in this part of the township there were thirty houses, five of which had shops attached, thirty cottages, and two inns.

It was in Church Street that many of the cottages were found. There were thirteen, including Rose Cottage which was so named; four at right angles to Church Street are now known as the Alley or Magpie Alley. Eight cottages were owned by Miss Harris who lived in Bicester. There were also four houses, to three of which shops were attached, including the post office on the corner of Church Street and Gas Lane occupied by Henry Coombes. Many of the occupants of these cottages were craftsmen, four of whom had been candidates for or had served on Shipton Parish

Council after 1897. The occupations were carter, shopkeeper, blacksmith, carpenter, joiner, butcher, general labourer, railway platelayer and gardener/domestic servant.⁷ Six were not on the electoral register. Henry Coombes' wife, Bessie kept the post office, as his mother had previously. The Coombes series of postcards was produced by this family and many of these have been used as illustrations in Wychwoods Journals. Henry Coombes was a JP and district councillor; he was also a carpenter and wheelwright, and occupied buildings in Gas Lane probably used to follow these trades; another of his enterprises was letting nine cottages in Fiddlers Hill. It was typical for tradesman to own cottages; in the nineteenth century this was said to encourage the poor so that the parish suffered high poor rates. Gas Lane leads from Church Street through to the Ascott Road and there were three cottages here in addition to the gas plant. In one was an unmarried woman, Ann Castle and in another William Bartlett, a railway signalman.

Fronting High Street were most of the larger properties. The two principal inns, the Crown in the middle and the Red Horse at the northern



A GROUP AT THE BACK OF THE CROWN INN c.1908. SITTING ON THE RIGHTHAND END OF THE BENCH IS WILLIAM HENRY BRADLEY, FATHER OF ERNEST AND GEORGE. TO HIS LEFT IS EDWARD STEED AND STANDING BEHIND HIM IS WALTER LONGSHAW.

end, were run by women, as was the Lamb Inn in the Upper High Street. The Red Horse, owned by Hitchman & Co of Chipping Norton, was tenanted by Mrs Annie Longshaw, widow. The Crown, still owned by the Charity Trustees, was tenanted by Mrs R.Franklin who also occupied 14 acres of Crown Trustee land, and two cottages, one at Upper End and one at Fiddlers Hill, possibly to accommodate servants at the Crown. R.J.Franklin owned Bank House and Bank Lodge, described as 'house and shop', and 2 acres of land occupied by the Franklin brothers; part is now the offices of Chancellors estate agents. The Franklins were agents for the Metropolitan Bank (of England and Wales) Ltd. Next to the Crown were three houses and a cottage; Church View occupied by Miss Roe and Ivanhoe occupied by John Strong, the headmaster of Shipton school, both owned by G.F.Hambidge, and the Laurels. At Box Cottage was Dan Coombes. Across the lane leading to the rear of the Crown was a house at one time called Qu'appelle (now Monks Gate), owned and occupied by Mrs Elizabeth Bagg, widow of James who had been a plumber and glazier. James Arundel, a joiner and trade unionist occupied one of the two cottages in this part of the High Street.⁸

To the south of the Crown was the house owned and occupied by Jane Willis (whose husband had been a saddler) and probably her son, James Alfred Willis; he owned one of the Blenheim cottages along the Burford Road. The next two cottages close to Grove Farm were occupied by Joseph Powell, stockman, and Mark Dale, carter, who both worked for Farmer Hartley having come with him from Wigginton in 1892. Beyond Grove Farm were three more houses: 'The Cottage' (Coldstream House), owned by Pepper and lived in by Dr John H.E.Parsons, surgeon, public vaccinator and medical officer for Chipping Norton Rural District 4 and so in charge of the isolation hospital on the Downs; one now called Hunter's Lodge, owned and occupied by Mrs Fanny Bunting, baker, who also owned 12 acres in Leafield Road; and behind The Cottage was Shipton Lodge.

Shipton's 'Lower End' was north of the Crown beyond Bank House; three houses and two cottages were specifically said to be in Lower End. Next to Bank House was Holmwood surrounded by nearly two acres of grounds occupied by Mrs Evans and owned by George Yapp of Sloane Square, London. The house and shop which Harold Dee both owned and occupied were also in Lower End, and he occupied 2 acres of the Licence field and owned 2 acres in Milton Lane, while Mrs T.Deer occupied 10 acres in Lyneham Road, now Meadow Lane, and owned seven of the eight Blenheim cottages in Burford Road. There were a few private allotments on the Licence too. Also in Lower End were two cottages owned by Thomas Brookes, now Winterseeds, and Nara, now occupied by the doctor but then by Mrs Savidge. Rectory Farm was therefore probably in the area known as Lower End, also the Red Horse and the four Fairview cottages



THE CORNER OF MILTON ROAD, SHIPTON WITH ELMDENE STILL SURROUNDED BY ELM TREES WITH LANE HOUSE FARM ON THE LEFT

beside it, which were owned by R.Bunting of Chipping Norton. Richard Baylis at 1, Fairview Cottages was a railway signalman and Alfred Harris at number 2 was a carpenter. Edward Jones, a gardener, was at number 3 and George Slatter, another signalman, at number 4.

The description 'Lower Shipton' was used for two houses, both today in Meadow Lane. One was lived in by Mrs D. (Elizabeth) Alder and Jane Alder her daughter who was the owner, a spinster dressmaker whose brother Frank appears in the electoral roll as lodging with her in a part-furnished first-floor bedroom. The other, occupied by Thomas Coates, was owned by the Oddfellows who also owned a pair of semi-detached houses in Milton Lane, now Milton Road. There was a pair of cottages beyond the Littlestock Brook then called Lyneham Road; a footpath to Lyneham preserves the line of this old road.

Not many houses had yet been built in Milton Road, then known as Milton Lane, by this date. On the corner with the High Street is Elmdene, owned and occupied by Thomas S.Marshall. Beyond Lane End Farm was Wychwood House, occupied by Miss Matthews and owned by Miss Dee. Then came St Michael's Home owned by the Waifs and Strays Society.

The Oddfellows⁹ owned Berwyn occupied by Samuel Groves and Wayside which was empty. Thomas Bond occupied a house belonging to Robert Pratley, now Castle Bank. This house had been moved from the station to make way for the weighbridge of Matthews mill. The south side of the road had fields along its length as far as Shipton Mill.

There were two houses in Station Road; the Hawthornes on the north side of the road owned and occupied by Mrs Preece, almost certainly the stationmaster's mother, and on the south side John Peirce, retired headmaster of Shipton Church of England school who lived in Glenhurst, and was treasurer for Beaconsfield Hall.

Shipton above the Court

The higher, southern part of Shipton in 1911 was an area dominated by cottages, few with gardens large enough to be measured. This was an old focus of settlement and still has some old buildings, but it is surprising to notice how many cottages in groups of two, three or four, had been built in the half century or so before 1911, not speculatively to sell, but to generate rental income for the owners. The small cottage rows are clearly recognisable still, with their Welsh slate roofs (transported by railway) though some have been combined to make larger dwellings. The area of Upper End as described in 1911 is today the Upper High Street and Little Lane (Simon's Lane) and it continued nearly to the junction with Burford Road. Two cottages were described as Upper Shipton. Fiddlers Hill in 1911 covered Chapel Lane and Trots Lane and the groups of houses and cottages at the junction with the present Fiddlers Hill. Included in the analysis of this area are the cottages between the Leafield and Swinbrook roads. None of the lanes or roads was specifically named in the 1911 survey. Upper End had four houses and 22 cottages; three of the four houses were in the present Upper High Street; Fiddlers Hill had only one house and 20 cottages; and there were 19 cottages and one house between the Leafield and Swinbrook Roads.

Ownership on the east side of Upper High Street was quite varied but on the west side the houses were all part of the Shipton Court estate. On the east side, on the corner by Plum Lane were Maddox's barns and farmstead now Coldstone. He also owned four cottages in the angle between Chapel Lane and Simons Lane; these were probably used by his farm labourers. The Lamb Inn together with three cottages was owned by Hall & Co of the Swan Brewery in Paradise Street, St Ebbes, Oxford, and tenanted by Mrs P. (Annie) Smith, who was described as a beer retailer in the 1911 *Kelly's Directory*. Next came a house and shop, now the tumbledown Snowdrop Cottage with the letterbox, owned by G.F.Hambidge and occupied by Mrs Mary Anne Tubb, widow of Charles, butcher, and she also rented an acre of land from Pepper. She was one of only six women in

this part of Shipton to have a vote as did her two lodgers, A.Tubb and Charlie Tubb who was later the Court gardener.

On the west side of Upper High Street, William Cross rented a house (The Old Forge) and a blacksmith's shop from Pepper together with 50 acres of land. He himself owned two acres of closes called New Close and Eyeston Piece and he also owned a row of cottages in Leafield Road. Arthur Dyer occupied 'The Old Malt House', and Charles Miles, a baker, 'The Old Bakehouse'; Dyer had 7 acres from Pepper in Lyneham Lane at the other end of the village while Miles also rented nearly half an acre of land in Upper End. As in Milton many of these small paddocks would have been for their horses. Pepper owned four more cottages on this side of the road, and further cottages in Trots Lane, no doubt housing workers on the estate. The Court estate had a 'shop and yard' in Upper End, now the site of The Old Till House, and a laundry in Tite Lane, now Chapel Lane. Here are two pairs of cottages built by Joseph Reade; one pair, dated 1868, in front of the laundry and below the former Baptist chapel, and the other, 1869, at the Fiddlers Hill end of the lane.

Six cottages along the Burford Road on a narrow strip of land and two cottages on the corner of Upper End were then all called 'Blenheim'. The aged Mrs Dee, widow of Thomas Dee, grocer, 82 years old in 1911, owned all these cottages except one owned by Alfred Willis who lived in the High Street. Joseph Becket was the only owner/occupier of a cottage in Shipton above the Court, and he owned a row of three cottages between Upper End and Burford Road. At the end of Little Lane, Mrs Fenn, for whom no address was given and no further information has been found, owned six cottages, with H.J.Coombes of Shipton as her agent.

Henry Coombes of Shipton post office owned nine cottages in Fiddlers Hill; William Durham, thatcher, was one of his tenants. The one house in Fiddlers Hill, now called Snowdon, was owned by J.U.Parker of Park Villa, Stow on the Wold and occupied by Fred Clifford; Parker also owned six cottages nearby. Mrs Elizabeth Franklin who rented from Parker was the widow of James Franklin an agricultural labourer. It is probable that farm labourers generally lived in this part of Shipton. Philip Franklin, the Shipton postman for over 30 years, lived at the cottage now called Clinkers, owned by Pepper.

Between the Leafield and Swinbrook roads, Mrs Milton of Blockley owned all the eight New Barn Cottages, and the four Hill View cottages were all owned by William Cross the blacksmith, who had presumably built them on his own land; he still had an acre as yet undeveloped. One of the occupiers was Reuben Timms who was a stonemason; another was a widow, Mrs Amelia Peters. Seven cottages at Mount Pleasant, Swinbrook Road, six with large gardens, were owned by the Reverend Philip Upstone, vicar of Coaley near Dursley, Gloucestershire, who also owned property in



FIDDLERS HILL IN THE 1920S, WITH THE ONLY PROPERTY DESCRIBED AS A 'HOUSE', SNOWDON HOUSE, TO THE RIGHT

Church Street and Gas Lane. New Barn and Hill View were built back-to-back, a form of development more usually associated with industrial towns. There was one house, now Myrtle Cottage but then described as Hill View, owned and occupied by John Pittaway, a gardener. The parish council allotments in the Swinbrook Road covered eight acres.

The women ratepayers and voters living in Milton and Shipton

In the account of Milton in *Wychwoods Journal* No. 17, there was mention of women able to vote in local (county and parish) elections; not until 1918 were some women enfranchised to vote in parliamentary elections, and the 'flappers', young women under 30 years of age, had to wait until 1928.

In Milton twenty-five women who were householders in their own right were on the electoral roll for 1911. Nine could not be traced in either parish registers or in the 1891 census; eleven of the 16 who could be traced were probably widows, and five were single women, but the frequency with which two or more people had the same Christian name and surname can make identifications in different sources (nominal record linkage) uncertain. Examples of the widows were Emma Brunsdon, who lived in a cottage in the High Street and was the widow of John, an agricultural

labourer, and Maria Miles, one of 13 Miles listed in the tax list, who was the 47-year-old widow of Albert James Miles, a baker. Their husbands had died in 1899, John aged 54 and Albert aged 38. Widow Julia Pratley's husband, Stephen, a labourer, had died more recently aged 70 in 1907; she was 14 years younger than her husband and lived in a cottage in the High Street. Six of the women appear to have owned their own homes, or seven if Lydia Dangerfield who lived in a family property is included. Elizabeth Groves owned the house and garden in Milton Street in which she lived; Mary Groves apparently shared ownership of a house with Mrs Ricketts and owned one in Milton Street occupied by John Mace as well as four cottages. One of the six women owners was a spinster, Elizabeth Martha Steel. Although qualified to vote, four were not heads of households in Milton and may have lived outside the township or with another family member; for example Margaret Rawlins owned a cottage lived in by Sarah Hardwick but was not an occupier in Milton in 1911.

Shipton had one less woman voter than Milton, with thirteen probable widows, four spinsters and two married women; Mrs Coombes the postmistress and Elizabeth Durham, the wife of the thatcher. Five women could not be traced in other records, though there is an indication of the marital status of two of these in the tax survey. Mrs Elizabeth Bagg, Mrs Fanny Bunting and Mrs Jane Willis, all widows, owned the houses in which they lived. Millicent Brookes lived in the Prebendal house and Matilda Dangerfield, like Lydia in Milton, lived in family property in the hands of executors. Annie Longshaw and Annie Smith were widows and leaseholders of the Red Horse and The Lamb inns. Jane Alder, dressmaker, was a spinster and a voter, though her mother was the head of the household in the 1911 survey. One female voter, Miss Elizabeth Dalton, had moved from Church View, Shipton to be replaced by Miss Roe by the time the tax survey was made, showing the difference in the dates of the two lists. It would be interesting to know if these widows and spinsters used their vote.

The strongest impression, after walking round Milton and Shipton in the company, as it were, of the 1911 surveyor, is the stability of the basic shapes of the villages, which had not altered significantly since the new turnpike road in the eighteenth century and enclosure in the mid-nineteenth. Another strong impression is how unusual it was for people to own their homes – a well-recognised fact but one that is emphasised by a study of the village in detail. A few larger detached houses were already built on green-field sites along the roads and lanes, but a comparison with 2003 throws into relief the amount of later twentieth-century building for private purchasers. There had been changes in the previous half century; particularly notable was the shrinking number of farmers, while accessibility by road and rail was altering the

social composition of the villages. Some new services had come to the area. But shortly after the survey was completed major changes were to occur.

References

- 1 Oxfordshire Record Office/DV VIII (Maps) and DV X/32 (valuations). Oral history was also used.
- 2 Although shown as the occupier, she died 7 January 1911.
- 3 *Wychwoods History* No.14, pp 52,53
- 4 David Maddox, *Spirit of My Sire*, & letter dated 4 Oct. 1980 stated that no sons followed him into farming.
- 5 Mrs Walker was listed in 1911 living at Bleak House (now Sunset House) in Jubilee Lane, Milton.
- 6 Interestingly the Rectory Survey of 1649 gave 89 acres
- 7 Named in the 1891 census, *Kelly's Directory* and *Wychwoods History* No. 10
- 8 *Wychwoods History* No.10, 'One Hundred Years Ago: The First Parish Council Elections', Dr M Ware, pp39-41.
- 9 Wychwood Forest Lodge

A Problem of Ownership: Bruern Grange

After the article in *Wychwoods History* No. 17 on 'Some Wychwood Neighbourhoods', Joy Timms (née Griffin) raised a query about the statement that Bruern Grange, occupied by James Griffin, was owned by Earl Ducie. She wrote:

I am enclosing copies of two letters of condolence written to my great-grandmother – May Georgina Griffin née Turner. Her husband James died between Christmas 1910 and New Year 1911, 31st December. ... James Griffin's son, Joseph, my grandfather, took on the tenancy from the eighth Earl De La Warr and married my Grandmother Ada Cooper of Ascott Mill in 1916. My father and uncle also had a good working relationship with the ninth Earl, often entertaining him at the Grange.

The Cope Family who came to Bruern and Tangley after the Dissolution were of the same blood line as the De La Warr's. Therefore the same family had owned the Grange Farm until it was sold in 1990 when my father and uncle retired (450 years).

Edward Rhys Wingfield bought Tangley in the nineteenth century.

The Hon. Michael Astor came to the Abbey in 1947/8 and on the death of Joseph Griffin in the 1950s he purchased Bruern Grange Farm House with 100 acres of the land from Earl De La Warr. This left about 550 acres of Grange Farm land which was sold in 1990.

Out of the bundle of letters I thought you might be amused by the letter from the family butcher, written on his business pad, and the one from Mr C.Samuda – the warmth of the village life 100 years ago! I just want to show that Earl Ducie was not the owner of Bruern Grange Farm. In fact, my Gt Grandfather, James Griffin farmed a lot of Earl Ducie's land before coming to the Grange.

Yours sincerely
Joy Timms

The information about ownership and occupiers in the 1911 Income Tax survey was provided to the valuers of the Inland Revenue. What can be the explanation for this apparent anomaly? Probably a de la Warr son

had married a Ducie daughter, and Bruern Grange had been the lady's 'jointure', or part of it. As such, the income would have gone to the Ducie husband, and in the event of his death before his wife, it would have passed to the widow for the rest of her life, before reverting to the de la Warr family again. In 1911, Earl Ducie was the beneficial owner of Bruern Grange, and indeed in the 'comments' column of the Inland Revenue survey there appears against Bruern Grange the name 'de la Warr' but nothing else. 'Ownership' is indeed a slippery concept.

According to the returns of owners of land based on parish valuation lists, which in 1872 had been required to be made to the Local Government Board, and were published in 1876, Earl Ducie owned 5,193 acres in Gloucestershire and 8,798 acres in Oxfordshire; his seat was at Tortworth Court, Falfield, Gloucestershire. Earl de la Warr owned 2,941 acres in Oxfordshire, 3,240 acres in Cambridgeshire, and 17,185 acres in Sussex; his seat was at Buckhurst Park, Tonbridge Wells. John Bateman took the county returns, collated all entries relating to the same man, as far as was possible, and in 1883 published the results as *The Great Landowners of Gt Britain and Ireland*. His definition of a 'great' landowner was ownership of 3,000 acres or more worth at least £3,000, and these figures are his calculations.

It is interesting that a letter of condolence on the death of James Griffin was sent from the de la Warr estate office and from Cécile Samuda of Bruern Abbey; this last was an indication of the status of a principal farmer in the area, who tenanted more than 500 acres.

Wychwoods Local History Society The First Twenty-One Years

MARGARET WARE

Our Society came of age in 2002. In setting down its many achievements during that time, I make no apology for name dropping throughout this article, as these are the people whose sterling efforts have made the Society the success that it is. Many you will know, other friends are sadly no longer with us. But how did it all start?

During my work as a district councillor in the 1970s and 1980s local residents, especially the elderly, often told me snippets of local lore and legend. I realised there was a whole lot of fascinating information out there, gradually being lost as folk died or moved away. Another Shiptonian, Mike Linfield, was interested in copying and preserving old photographs and we both felt that a local history society would be an asset to the community. So the evening of Thursday 2 April 1981 in Shipton's Beaconsfield Hall saw 'The Inaugural Meeting of the Shipton and District Local History Society', with John Steane (Keeper of the Field Section, Oxfordshire County Museum Services) booked to give an introductory talk.

To our astonishment, well over 80 people attended. John Steane gave us every encouragement and many useful suggestions including the exhortation to 'write everything down'! Twelve people volunteered to form a steering committee, consisting of chairman: Geoffrey Giles; deputy chairman: Mr H Smith; treasurer: 'Johnny' Johnson; secretary: Norman Frost; meetings secretary: Gillian Stone; editor: Commander Rob Long; archivist: Jack Howard-Drake. Other committee members were Jack Chapman, Mike Linfield, Joan Smith, myself and, briefly, Michael Harman.

After several committee meetings to hammer out a constitution and programme, we changed the name to The Wychwoods Local History Society, and affiliated to the Oxfordshire Local History Association (OLHA). Initially the Society met four times a year, twice each at Milton and Shipton. At the first meeting on 22 September 1981 the chairman, Geoffrey Giles, spoke on 'Tracing your Family History', and in January Milton's Tom Barrett gave us 'The Story of Shipton Gasworks'. These were followed by 'Recording Oral History', and 'Vernacular Buildings'.

For the majority of members now who are just content to enjoy the social stimulation of a monthly speaker, it is worth recalling the original aims of the Society: '*To foster interest in the local history of the area, to preserve past records, to carry out local surveys, to record all the work carried out and to place copies of such records in the archives of the Society and of suitable libraries.*' A number of projects were recognised from the outset as being of high priority: a record of gravestones in Milton; a record of field names; a hedge species count; the compilation of a map of all historical and interesting sites; tape recordings of elderly folks' memories and dialects and as complete a photographic record as possible of buildings and sites. This was quite an ambitious programme to contemplate, and I think we overestimated the number of members who would be prepared to be actively involved. So there were a few false starts, but a lot of good work was done from the beginning.

Mike Linfield and Norman Frost concentrated on their photographic recording and Gwen Allen led a group of about twenty members on successful hedge-counting forays. An early task was the indexing and transcription of Shipton Court estate papers loaned from the parish council. A group transcribed the 1851 census returns from villages in the 'old' parish, which included Shipton, Milton, Ascott, Leafield, Lyneham, Langley and Ramsden. (Since then, subsequent decades' returns have been completed and 1901 is now in progress.) Neither the recording of village buildings nor the oral history project got off the ground in the early days. The first newsletter published in autumn 1981 contained an appeal to members for old photographs, maps, newspapers and items of historical interest. This first season saw 88 members and two editions of the newsletter.

After the first AGM in April 1982 the committee comprised Geoffrey Giles (chairman), Norman Frost (secretary) and Mr and Mrs H Smith, Jack and Joan Howard-Drake, Mike Linfield, Jack Chapman, Gwen Allen, Margaret and Frank Ware and Sue Jourdan. Frank Ware took over the treasurer'ship, I became membership secretary, with Sue Jourdan and Joan Howard-Drake undertaking temporary secretarial duties. Six meetings were arranged for the following year plus the AGM, with a fund-raising members' evening planned for the following January with a few displays of the society's activities. Jack Howard-Drake took over production of the twice-yearly newsletter after the death of Rob Long. Under the auspices of the Family History Society the Howard-Drakes started transcribing Shipton parish registers from 1538-1899, the Giles' Ascott and Leafield and the Ashtons Fifield, Idbury and Bould, a task which was to take several years. Meanwhile, in the winter of 1982/83, several members attended a series of 'Introduction to Archaeology' evening classes given by Clare Halpin. Little did we realise, as we squeezed onto the tiny chairs in the Wychwood School, what a seminal moment this was to be in the

history of our Society, as she described the hitherto unheard-of activity of *fieldwalking*.

In January 1983 we found that the fund-raising members' evening with wine and a ploughman's supper had grown to a substantial exhibition and well over a hundred enthusiastic people crowded into Milton Village Hall. Among the visitors was Dr Kate Tiller of the Oxford University Department for External Studies (as it was then) who congratulated us and offered to hold a series of evening classes in the Wychwoods on 'Sources in Local History', which duly started the following winter. In 1983 Mr and Mrs Smith left the committee due to ill health and we gained Tom Barrett and Sue Richards (as editor), while Jack Chapman became vice-chairman. Membership stood at about a hundred, audiences at meetings averaging nearly seventy at Milton, but only about forty at Shipton, thought in part due to the poor state of Shipton's old hall and the difficulty of parking. Norman Frost was by this time corresponding with overseas members of the Groves family, among others, and we were beginning to get an increasing number of enquiries from folk tracing their families.

Jack Howard-Drake succeeded Geoffrey Giles as chairman in 1984, and Rachel Grant joined the committee as meetings secretary. Norman Frost was busy compiling the Groves family tree, and gave a series of classes to local girl guides who were taking their local history badge. June 1984 saw our first summer field excursion when Frank Ware led a group round the common boundary of the Saxon Manors of Witney and Shipton. In September, eleven members took part in the Society's first fieldwalk. Elaborate preparations were made: we put up a tent, a stove and boiled a kettle for tea and Tom Barrett, a stalwart St John Ambulanceman, brought his first aid kit as if we were operating in the wilds of Africa instead of just down the Ascott Road! Fieldwalks have taken place nearly every year since, although preparations have been greatly simplified! The 1984/85 season saw the pattern of eight meetings established, originally September to May, but since changing from second Tuesdays to third Thursdays with the opening of the new Beaconsfield Hall, meetings have been held from September to June with no meeting near Christmas.

1985 was the Society's busiest year to date. The first journal, *Wychwoods History* No. 1 was published in May at £2. Set in a typewriter face, it contained an appreciative preface by Kate Tiller, while Sue Richards' original cover design is still used today. In November *The Wychwoods Album* of old photographs was published, part funded by 385 subscriptions in advance, with subscribers' names printed at the back. Both publications proved extremely popular, and were soon reprinted.

The 1985/86 season was another busy one, with about 200 members including several overseas, a very healthy financial situation, and the production of *Wychwoods History* No. 2. A group led by archaeologist James Bond surveyed a medieval site at Upper Milton in May 1986, in July

a visit to Ilbury iron age camp was led by Charlie Chambers, and in August we walked no fewer than five fields! (The limiting factor in fieldwalking for us was the time needed afterwards to process and identify the finds). The first 'Village Memories' teatowels printed with old photographs were an instant hit for Christmas. Meanwhile, Rachel Grant suggested and started to organise a detailed survey of St Mary's Church, Shipton, which occupied seventeen folk for at least two years and resulted in three beautifully illustrated volumes of records.

Our second exhibition held at Milton in April 1987 was a milestone for the Society and a resounding success. Despite an entrance charge of 50p, over 500 people queued to see the exhibits which included fieldwalk finds, old medical instruments (enthusiastically demonstrated by Dr Tom McQuay), histories of Alfred Groves and Sons and of the Groves family, nineteenth-century agriculture, the village constable and many photographs. The day was launched with morris dancers in the car park and the doors finally closed at 6pm, with many folk wishing they could have stayed open for two days! May 1987 saw two new committee members - John Rawlins who later took charge of publicity, and Wendy Pearse who was immediately recruited to compile the meetings programme. Some members were able to take part in the professional archaeological dig at Prebendal House under Brian Durham of the Oxford Archaeological Unit, prior to the house's conversion to retirement accommodation. *Wychwoods History* No. 3, devoted to aspects of life in Shipton and Milton in the nineteenth century and based largely upon the research by Kate Tiller's evening class students, who included several committee members, was a joint publication with the Oxford University Department for External Studies. A second teatowel was designed and quickly sold out. The meetings were now enhanced by the regular use of a speaker's lectern and microphone and loudspeakers, even if the latter were sometimes temperamental.

In 1988 the county's expert on medieval pottery, Maureen Mellor, spent two days examining the Society's collection of medieval pottery gleaned from local fields and village building sites, for incorporation in her forthcoming monograph in *Oxoniensia*, where the society's contribution is acknowledged. In April we hosted the spring meeting of the Oxfordshire Local History Association, and in May we entertained the national Association of Local History Tutors with tea and displays of our work. 1989 started with a bang with the January meeting taking the form of a Victorian evening's entertainment organised by Daphne Waugh and modelled on a concert held in Milton in 1885. In the summer we visited and entertained members from neighbouring societies, while in October an enthusiastic group under James Bond surveyed the Bruern monastery fishpond, courtesy of Mr David Astor. Babs Richards designed two

distinctive earthenware and porcelain mugs featuring buildings in Milton and Shipton; these were marketed by Jack and Peggy Chapman, our teatowel sellers, and proved just as popular. 1989/90 saw Norman Frost retiring from the secretaryship after eight years but staying on as archivist. Wendy Pearse took over as secretary, as well as being programme organiser, a dual role she has played with dedication and distinction ever since. I succeeded Sue Richards as journal editor. In September *The Second Wychwoods Album* of old photographs hit the shelves. At the tenth anniversary meeting in April 1991, ten members gave short talks on a variety of topics and we all drank the Society's health.

In 1992, after eight years as chairman, Jack Howard-Drake retired in favour of Sue Jourdan, while Janet Wallace and Trudy Yates joined the committee, Trudy finally to tackle the recording of oral history. For the next ten years the Society followed its established enjoyable pattern of monthly meetings, covering an astonishing range of topics. Talks given by Society members and other local folk often proved among the most popular. But several other highlights stand out. We heard a Michael Aston of Bristol University talk on 'Landscape Archaeology'. Once a Milton resident, he is now famous as Professor Mick Aston of TV's *Time Team*! We heard the Rev. Ralph Mann on the 'Ascott Martyrs', George Lambrick on the Rollright Stones, Brian Durham on The Witney Palace and Tom Hassall on his experience as an oarsman on a replica Greek trireme. We listened to that inimitable storyteller, Sheila Stewart, and heard Beryl Schumer and W D Campbell on 'Wychwood Forest'. We have enjoyed several beautifully illustrated tours of the Cotswolds with Tim Porter. Shipton old village hall was packed to the roof to hear Dr Celia Miller, the author of *Rain and Ruin*, an edited version of the Victorian diary of a local farmer. Enthusiastic audiences listened to Miss Dor Thomson's and Professor Hall's memories of their former home, Shipton Court, while we have been enlightened on topics as diverse as local railways and canals, sheep-farming, brewing and many, many more. Every meeting has been enhanced by the serving of coffee and biscuits, for many years by Peggy Chapman and her band of helpers and latterly by Jane Barea and Janet Wallace. Our summer excursions have included visits to the water meadows and hunting lodge at Sherborne, Chastleton House, walks round Swinbrook, Burford, Asthall and Worsham and the Chalfords, guided visits to local churches and a tour round the wartime volunteer resistance training ground at Coleshill.

In 1996 Wendy Pearse was interviewed on Shipton Green by two visiting New Zealand historians, and can now be seen and heard on screen in the Wellington museum, telling the story of the nineteenth-century emigrations and the tragic sinking of the *Cospatrick*. After a few years' break, the annual field-walking programme re-started in 1996; (all the

artefact records are currently being checked and gradually submitted to the County Sites and Monuments Record - a mammoth task). In May 1999 the society hosted the county's annual conference of local historical and archaeological societies, *Oxfordshire Past*. Later in 1999 James Bond led an extensive survey of the Norman castle and settlement site at Ascott d'Oilly. In 2000 the millennium was celebrated in grand style with an outstanding exhibition of the Society's work in Shipton's New Beaconsfield Hall. The attractions included a 1940s-style kitchen and a thatched Saxon hut with weaving loom and our own friendly Saxon, David Wilson. Also on sale was the Society's latest publication – *That's How It Was* – the story of women in the Wychwoods in the Second World War, and commemorative plates and prints designed by Wendy. About 800 people were thought to have visited the exhibition over the weekend.

2002 saw the publication of the seventeenth *Wychwoods History*, with the last six issues produced by an editorial committee. Our journals' consistently high standard of presentation and content are a tribute to both contributors and editors over the years, with a special mention of Sue Richards' ever-helpful technical guidance. They are deposited in national and local libraries and distributed widely to members both at home and abroad. In addition to our published work, the society's archives contain a vast storehouse of information, including the carefully annotated photographic record maintained by John Rawlins. Two members have the distinction of having had books published: Dr Anthea Jones on *Tewkesbury* and *The Cotswolds* among others, while Jack Howard-Drake's *Church Court Depositions* run from 1542 to 1616 in seven volumes.

Membership has been maintained over the years at between 150 and 200 plus, and includes people from various parts of the UK as well as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. These are often people researching their family histories, and we have been able to supply a great deal of information on local origins to a growing number of enquirers.

Frank Ware retired from the treasureship in 1994, succeeded by Duncan Waugh and currently by David Perceval. Joan Howard-Drake once more became guardian of the archives on Norman Frost's retirement from the committee after fourteen years' service, and I bowed out from the committee in 1996. Over the years, Tom Barrett, Clifford Stevenson, Freida Ashton, Richard Bidgood, Frank Barea and Anthea Jones have also served on the committee. Sadly, Geoffrey Giles died in 1998, while Jack Chapman had served as vice-chairman for sixteen years on his death in 1999. In 2001 we lost both Norman Frost and Peggy Chapman.

As with every organisation, a relatively small band of activists at any one time is engaged in research and in keeping the Society running. Our warmest thanks are due to them all, and to the indefatigable contributors to the journal, but we always need new folk willing to play an active part, otherwise we are in danger of merely becoming history ourselves, instead

of actively researching it! The Wychwoods Local History Society is widely acknowledged to be one of the most active and successful, not only in Oxfordshire, but also nationally. Let's keep it that way!

Book Review

ANTHEA JONES

This year, 2003, the seventh volume of Jack Howard-Drake's calendar of *Oxford Church Courts Depositions* has been published, covering the period 1609–1616. The first depositions book was started immediately after the new diocese of Oxford was detached from the enormous pre-Reformation diocese of Lincoln; the last book reaches to 1679. This means Jack has passed the half-way mark, at any rate in terms of the years covered.

Over the years calendared to date, which he has divided into six unequal periods, the percentage of tithe and matrimonial cases brought before the court fell, and testamentary cases increased; defamation cases, which reveal some of the more exciting language used by our ancestors, have fluctuated considerably as a percentage of all cases.

As before, the calendar presents all the names of persons involved in court cases, and these are also indexed, providing some most useful material for genealogists. There are some familiar Wychwoods names amongst them. A small quibble is that the index is not laid out as clearly as might be. The 'substance' of each case is beautifully described with a sharp eye for detail. Alas, we are not given the whole 'colourful' account of the circumstances in which John Bencher and Margaret Brookes (of Shipton under Wychwood) were said to have contracted matrimony. Apparently Margaret Brookes did not, after all, wish to go through with this marriage, and one of the conclusions which emerges strongly from this and similar cases is the importance of 'plighting troth'. Alice James and Edward Stubbs, for example, held hands and in front of three witnesses said in turn, 'I take thee to my wife/husband for better or worse, for richer or poorer, until death do us part'. Subsequently it was the man who did not fulfil this contract.

In dealing with the vocabulary of church court cases, there are no explanations of terms. This reader at any rate reached for the dictionary to find that jactitation of marriage was giving out falsely that persons are married, whereby a reputation of their marriage may ensue.

Apart from their obvious genealogical interest, these calendars have many potential readers. They are full of insights into personal relations,

into farming practices in open-field villages, into the division of tithes between non-resident rectors and resident vicars (one concerns a most amicable arrangement for tithes in Lyneham in Shipton parish), and many other unexpected topics. For example, in a testamentary case concerning the will of John Younge of Aston, Bampton, the court was told that both he and his wife 'died of the plague' in March 1610 'as had many others'. A neighbour had been given various papers from Younge's house after he died and 'had not dared to look at them for fear of infection ... and he had carried them home in a knot and had hung them on the end of a pike to air'.

What a graphic picture is incidentally given by the information that in a house which 'stood alone in a pasture' there was only a mud wall between the Whattons' chamber and the Drapers', 'which was so broken down that it could easily be passed through and seen through'. Hence on several occasions Elizabeth Whatton was seen with William Piggott 'in naked bed together'. There are enough calendars now for several interesting studies to be made.

As with all previous volumes, Joan Howard-Drake has been a true help-mate in reading and transcribing the material. Three cheers for this team. When the last volume rolls off the presses, the Wychwood History Society should give them a very special party.

Hartley Heritage

Part Two

TRUDY YATES

*The trees on the road are old trees used to living with people,
Family trees that remember your grandfather's name.*

'John Brown's Body', Stephen Vincent Benet 1898-1948

Descendants of RICHARD HARTLEY III (12 August 1883–10 March 1977) and DOROTHY ELIZABETH OLDHAM (1890–1978) married 1916 Richard Hartley III was a local sporting legend. This prowess was chronicled at length in 'Hartley Heritage Part One' in *Wychwoods History* No. 16. His cricketing days extended from his early childhood until his 65th year when he 'called it a day' after managing only 74 in a game for Shipton against Carterton. He had hoped for a century and was very disappointed. The Guv'nor, as his son Richard IV always called him, continued his passion for the sport, however, by managing and umpiring local teams and imparting his knowledge and skill to younger men. Richard IV was steadfast in his praise for the father he admired so much but did not choose to emulate. Sport – cricket, hockey, riding, shooting, farming – 1200 acres, a pedigree herd of shorthorns and a pedigree flock of Oxford Down sheep, did not leave Richard III much time to devote to his family. Richard IV had different ideas.

But first, there was a war to fight. Richard IV joined the RAF in World War II and trained at Pensacola in Florida. He was serving as the captain and pilot of a Wellington during a routine operation when a mishap over the Irish Sea in October 1944 very nearly brought this branch of the Hartley family to a sudden and tragic end. Dick set down the sequence of events which led to the ditching of the plane in the sea for his superiors and kept a copy for his family. All of his efforts to revive his failing aircraft came to nothing and, at 14.00 hours, he set the course of descent slightly cross-wind to avoid landing straight into a heavy swell. 'I used 20 degree flap', he recorded.

The five crew of the Wellington were never completely submerged but the cockpit was. There was considerable consternation among those clinging to the wreckage until the intrepid Richard Hartley clambered out of the water and joined them. Rescue by a submarine was not long in



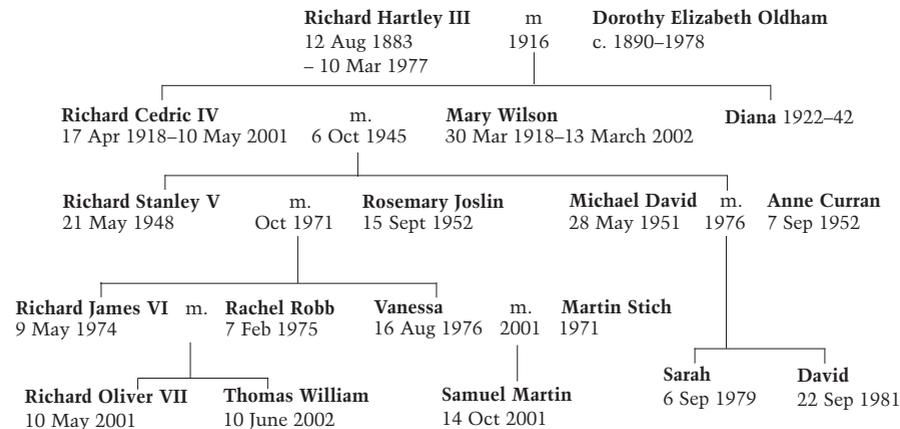
DOROTHY WITH HER CHILDREN
RICHARD (IV) AND DIANA

coming and the baptismal dunking afforded the entire crew membership in the esteemed Goldfish Club, an organisation composed of survivors of similar mishaps or victims of enemy fire.

When the war ended Richard IV returned and claimed Mary Wilson as his bride. They were married on 6 October 1945. Eleven months later, Dick's cousin Terry married Rachel Wilson, Mary's sister. The attractive young women had been introduced to the Hartley cousins by their aunt, Phyllis Hartley. Mary and Rachel were the daughters of the former vicar of Ilford, the Rev. Stanley Wilson and his wife Edith. Stanley Wilson's early death from cancer necessitated a lifestyle change for Mrs Wilson and she reluctantly answered an advertisement for a companion placed in *The Lady* magazine by Phyllis Hartley. Phyl was living in Aston Rowant at the time with her son John while her husband Frank managed the Eton Manor Boys Club in East London. She needed company and support after her first-born son Roger was killed by an army vehicle. When Phyl interviewed Mrs Wilson it was obvious that the two women with their shared tragedies would become fast friends. This was the case. When the Frank Hartley family returned to Shipton in 1944, Mrs Wilson came with them. Sometime later when the Wilson girls arrived for a holiday with their mother, Phyl thought to make their stay enjoyable. The young Hartley nephews were summoned, a convivial evening enjoyed at the Shaven Crown Inn and the rest is history.

Dick and Mary were considering a career in the forces but, while home on leave, Dorrie Hartley, Dick's mother, informed them that

Descendants of Richard Hartley III and Dorothy Oldham



Brasenose was going to sell Manor Farm. Richard III had no intention of buying unless his son returned to farm in Upper Milton.

'A decision had to be made immediately,' Dick said. 'Mary and I talked it over and decided to return.'

'I was all in favour,' Mary added, 'even though I knew nothing about farming'.

The young couple moved into Manor Farm with Dick's parents for two years before they built their own home, Green Acres, farther up the road in Upper Milton for £1,500.

'We borrowed the money to buy the farm at 2.5% and have added to it since,' Dick explained. 'My godfather left us a house when he died so we were very, very lucky.' Perhaps the old adage applies here – the harder I work, the luckier I get.

Dick worked very hard indeed. Dick and Mary had two sons, Richard Stanley born in 1948 and Michael David in 1951. The strong family tradition of farming is personified in Richard V.

'Oh, I guess I was a bit interested in mechanical things for a time,' he mused. 'I did a year's course at agricultural engineering college following Bloxham but spent the entire time missing the farm.'

Richard felt no pressure from his father or grandfather to farm, perhaps because this was his natural bent. Sport, however, was a different matter. He played a little rugby but his eyesight was never good and contact lenses were yet to be developed. 'I think grandfather was a little disappointed in me. I was a Hartley, my name was Richard and I should have been a sportsman.' But young Richard silenced any criticism from the older generation by becoming a thoroughly devoted and adept farmer.

Richard met his future wife Rosemary Joslin in 1968 when he was twenty and she a mere sixteen. They 'got together' as Rosemary put it in 1969 and married in October of 1971 when Rosemary was just nineteen. Rosemary was born at Shipston on Stour and lived until the age of 6 at Todenham between Moreton-in-Marsh and Shipston. Her father was 'not a particularly good farmer,' Rose explained 'and it wasn't a particularly good farm. He finally admitted defeat and went to work at Smith Industries in Witney where we then lived.'

Mr Joslin was also a Methodist lay preacher. Rose's earliest memories are of going around with him at the age of seven and reading the lessons at the tiny Methodist churches on his circuit.

'It was through the Young Farmers Club that I met Richard,' Rose said with a radiant smile. 'My mother insisted, forced me virtually, to go to the meetings.' Why? 'To meet a good husband, of course,' she laughed.

Richard and Rosemary were married at Holy Trinity Church in Witney and emerged from the ceremony to an archway of crossed pitchforks. This boded well for the future since Rose is very much a hands on farmer's

THE WEDDING OF RICHARD IV AND MARY WILSON, 6 OCTOBER 1945. RICHARD III AND DOROTHY ARE ON THE RIGHT OF THE PICTURE.



wife. For the first four years of their marriage the young couple lived at Gilbert's Bungalow in Upper Milton and it was here that Richard James VI was born in 1974. They now reside at Manor Farmhouse where they farm 1330 acres with two employees and a part-time worker. Richards V and VI do the rest with Rosemary often to be seen on the tractor or dealing with the turkeys.

Rose loves singing, sewing and dramatics. Wychwood Players can attest to her ability on the stage and she has been president and secretary of the Milton WI. She keeps the books for the farm, figures the VAT and loves gardening.

Vanessa was born in 1976 and 'she played county netball,' Richard reported proudly, still enforcing the family sporting prowess. Richard VI and sister Vanessa both attended Windrush School and St Hugh's prep school near Faringdon. Richard went on to Bloxham and then Shuttleworth Agricultural College in Bedfordshire where he met his future wife, Rachel Robb. Her father was a builder from Nottinghamshire and she was working nearby. Richard and Rachel were married in 2000 and live in Corner Cottage with their two sons, Richard Oliver VII, whose birth was awaited with such excitement by his great-grandfather Richard IV in May 2001, and Thomas William born in June 2002.

Vanessa went to Ellerslie at Malvern for GCSEs and then to Bloxham for sixth form. Following her graduation from Bournemouth, she took off for a trip around the world with a friend. Not content with this, she travelled to Tunisia where she met a young German officer, Martin Stich, who was a member of an elite police rapid response team. When he was sent to Kosovo for a nine month tour of duty, Vanessa went too, hoping to put her degree in tourism and business studies to some use. No job materialised but the young couple married, produced a son, Samuel Martin, and now live in the Munich area of Bavaria.

Michael David was born in 1951 and, like his brother Richard, attended Bloxham following several years at St Hugh's where he went at the age of eight. 'My parents came to see me every other weekend and I was allowed to sit in the car and talk with them,' he said rather grimly.

Mike was destined to stray rather farther afield than his brother, however. When he left Bloxham in 1969, he went to the USA and attended the Episcopal High School in Alexandria, Virginia for two terms. During the summer he travelled to California, Providence, R.I., North Carolina, Savannah, Ga. and many of the Civil War battlefields.

Mike was in his second year at Durham University when he met Anne Curran who was then 19. The two stayed in close touch when Mike returned to the farm for a year to decide upon his future direction. He would have liked to become a vet but felt that he was not good enough at science. When he made up his mind to attend teacher-training college at

Worcester, he persuaded a reluctant Anne to enrol as well. Protesting all the while that she did not want to teach, Anne became the teacher and Mike never entered the classroom. Anne did her practice teaching at Chipping Campden and taught there before Sarah and David were born. She now tutors privately at home in mathematics at GCSE and A-level.

Michael and Anne were married at St Mary's Church in Shipton in 1976. They lived at first in a flat at Manor Farm with Mike's grandparents and then moved to the Old House also in Upper Milton. Here their daughter and son were born in 1979 and 1981. Anne was the second eldest of nine Curran children. The family was Irish Catholic and, with no grandparents to help out, Anne grew up with a very strong sense of responsibility for her younger siblings. Her conversion to the Church of England began when she and Mike were married. The Rev. Windsor Cundell conducted a little service before the wedding so that she was 'in communication' with the Church of England.

Her confirmation took place quite recently when she decided to seek ordination as a local minister. Anne's involvement at St Simon's and St. Jude's up until that time was such that submitting herself for ministry training did not seem such a big step. She had served as Young Church leader, had supported her husband in his churchwarden's duties and had cooked for the Day Centre since its inception. Her three-year training began in the autumn of 2000. She now takes part in services in the local benefice, has taken the pulpit on numerous occasions and has conducted prayers at primary school assemblies and presided at Day Centre services. For her final training year before ordination she is working often with the vicar at Leafield.

When Mike Hartley decided to make Manor Farm his career, he chose to be the pig man in the family company, leaving the arable to his brother. He manages 200 sows and 1600 fatteners but admits that the last few years have been so disastrous for his part of the enterprise that Richard's arable has carried the day. 'It is horrendous,' he said in his usually understated way. 'Every time someone touches our pork, it costs. We've been handed the extra costs but no protection. The animal welfare bill passed by parliament gave pig farmers strict guidelines but the pork from other countries not so strictly controlled can still come here for sale. It is cheaper and people buy it.' Mike took his turn caring for Winnie the Pig in Parliament Square when British farmers demonstrated there. Manor Farm pork is slaughtered at an abattoir in West Bromwich and ends up at Tesco.

Mike has been churchwarden at Milton church since 1980 when 'Mrs. Batt wanted to give up and asked me to take over,' he said. 'It was right after Sarah was born and I was feeling that the time had come for me to become more involved.' He would never have believed that 22 years later

he would still be at the post with his wife serving as a member of the clergy team.

Sarah and David both chose Nottingham University for their further education. Sarah graduated in 2002 having read industrial economics; David is currently reading economics. Both were students at Bloxham as were their grandfather Richard IV, their uncle Richard V, their father Michael, their cousins Richard and Vanessa and their third cousin John. The Hartley family has more than made up for the fact that Richard III was denied a school career at Bloxham when the family moved from Wigginton to Shipton in 1892. Sarah has taken the student's traditional gap year at the end of her university education, spending three months teaching in China and travelling throughout the Far East, including a brief sojourn in less than welcoming North Vietnam.

2001 was a year of historic milestones for this sturdy branch of the Hartley family tree. The long awaited birth of Richard VII to Richard VI and Rachel Robb Hartley on 10 May 2001 was one of the happiest days in great-grandfather Dick Hartley's IV life. He rang friends and relatives with the wonderful news and then, with the continuity of the family to which he had dedicated his life guaranteed, he quietly died on the same day. Baby Richard's parents braved a torrential rainstorm to bring him to the funeral and the front row of the mourners just seven days later. Such a tragic coincidence would be quite enough in itself but there were other special events as well, the birth of Vanessa and Martin's son in October;



COUSINS NOT TWINS. DERYK STRONG (RIGHT), SON OF MARGARET AND KEN, AND TERRY HARTLEY (LEFT), SON OF ERNEST AND WINIFRED, C.1925.

Richard and Rosemary's 30th wedding anniversary; Michael and Anne's 25th anniversary; Sarah's 21st birthday; Martin Stich's 30th birthday; Mike's 50th birthday; the birth of Thomas William in June 2002; and, in September of that year, the 50th birthdays of both Rosemary and Anne.

Quietly, when least expected, Mary Wilson Hartley died in March 2002. She carried on bravely following Dick's death ten months before but fragile health finally overcame a strong will. And so for the second time in a year, the Hartleys gathered in Milton church to remember with love, to honour and to say final farewells. While in the background, omnipresent, the memory of the 2001 foot and mouth crisis loomed large. No sword of Damocles was ever more precariously suspended. Three million slaughtered animals nationwide was a constant reminder to every farmer of the danger of personal and professional disaster. Such is the stuff of family sagas.

Descendants of MARGARET ROSE HARTLEY (1 June 1892–16 July 1974) and Ken Strong (10 April 1893–27 March 1980) married 1922

Deryk Strong, born in April 1924 was the only son of Margaret Rose Hartley and Ken Strong. His mother and Terry Hartley's mother, Winifred Gantlett Hartley, were close friends as well as sisters-in-law. They were delighted to discover that they were both expecting and that their due dates coincided almost to the day. During the long, lazy days of late pregnancy they discussed possible names for their infants. Both of them seized upon Deryk as their favourite should the babies be boys. Since it would never do for cousins of the same age and growing up in the same community to share the same name, it was decided that the name would belong to the young matron who delivered first. Mrs Strong won the competition by ten days. The Strong baby was christened Deryk and the Hartley baby became Ernest Terence after his father and one of his sporting buddies. The two cousins grew up together.

Deryk lived with his parents at Lodge Farm and the Merrymouth Inn where his father both farmed and served as publican. He attended Burford Grammar School and followed the Hartley sporting tradition throughout his youth – cricket, rugby, football, hockey, tennis, golf. 'You name it,' said Deryk on the telephone from his home in Somerset, 'and I played it.'

Farming was also in his blood. He married Prudence Handy, whose father Paul owned Chadlington Manor. When Mr Handy was ready to step aside from the rigors and day-to-day demands of a large farm, Deryk and Prue took over. It was at the Manor that the couple's three children grew up. Peter William, born in 1949, attended Ullenwood Manor near Cheltenham for prep school and Herne Court at Poole. He returned to the farm in Chadlington for a time and then took a year off for travel. He went by boat to Australia via South Africa. It was a long, leisurely trip and

turned out to be a momentous one. On board he met a beautiful 18-year-old, Helen Rooke, and their relationship developed at lightning speed. He visited her home in Perth and, when the time came for his return to England, Peter asked Helen to accompany him. No alternative date for passage was offered to Helen. Peter's ultimatum was 'Come with me now or it is all over.'

Not surprisingly, Helen's parents were not best pleased at this precipitous proposal but, nonetheless, Mrs Rooke travelled to England some months later to attend the wedding, which took place in Chadlington. The young couple remained in England for several years before returning to Australia where Peter ran a plastics factory. He is now semi-retired. Their daughters are Fleur Elizabeth, who lives in Perth and organises catering for a large company; Sarah, who married Tim Grove in Perth 2 February 2002 and the youngest, Caroline, now 22.

Linda Louise (Lindy) born in 1951, attended Windrush School in Burford and when her parents left the Merrymouth to take over Chadlington Manor, she lived with her grandmother Margaret Rose in Milton until the end of the school year. She then attended Wroxall Abbey near Warwick before marrying Philip Allen from Ampney Crucis in December of 1974. They lived in Lexington, Kentucky for a year where Philip worked with stud racehorses. When they returned to England, he worked at Cornbury for a further year before deciding that Tubb's Elastic, the family business in Sherston near Malmsbury, was the best place to spend his working life. He commutes daily from the family home in Coln St Dennis. Their children are Emily born in 1978 and Freddie born in 1983. A daughter Harriet, born in 1980, died in March 1982 of cot death syndrome.

Emily attended Croft Hall in Fairford, Downe House near Newbury and graduated from Exeter having read history and politics. She is a PA to two bosses in a fund management company. Freddie attended Croft Hall, Elstree near Reading, Milton Abbey near Downford in Dorset and Hartpury College near Gloucester. Like his Hartley ancestors, Freddie loves sport and hopes for career in some aspect of amateur or professional gamesmanship. Lindy Allen explained that the family's former residence in Ampney St Mary between Cirencester and Fairford would always be home to Emily and Freddie. 'But we wanted land so that we could have horses,' she said. 'When we found Manor Farm House, it was completely derelict but we saw the possibilities.' The Allens chose well. The aspect from the patio of Manor Farm House down across the Cotswold hills is quite breathtaking even in the rain. And the Allen's love of horses has never diminished. A deal for another was closed on the telephone as our interview was taking place.

Simon Deryk was born in 1959. He attended Monkton Combe near

Bath and the Royal Agricultural College in Cirencester. The Hartley blood is strong in this young man who is devoted to farming. He began work at his Grandfather Handy's farm, Chadlington Manor, as soon as his education was completed, eventually taking over the entire operation from his father. He married Tessa Rye from Hampshire and the couple are the parents of Oliver aged nine and Toby aged five. Although the Strongs are no longer together, the boys are being raised on the farm, where they are learning about agriculture from hands-on experience.

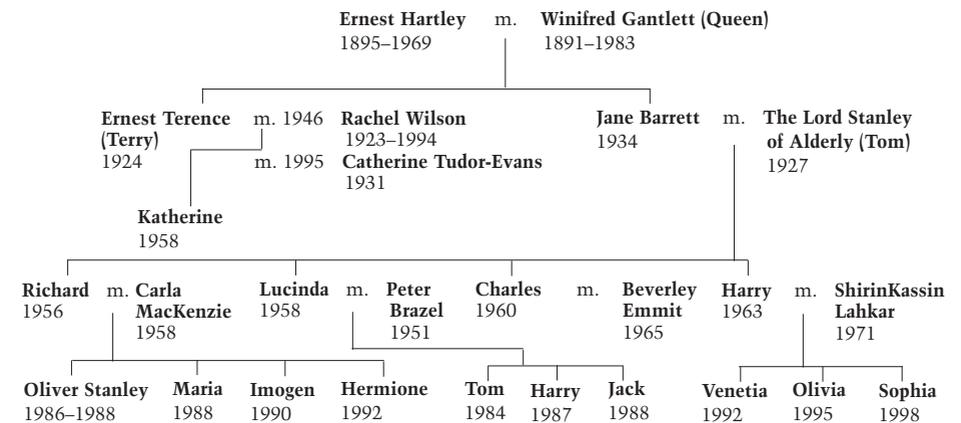
Following Prudence Handy Strong's death, Deryk met and married Jo Gilbert Harper-Powell. They now have a 40-acre farm in Somerset and a livery business. During the foot and mouth crisis in 2001 when hunting was banned, Jo Strong assisted the government inspectors.

Descendants of ERNEST HARTLEY 1895-1969 and Winifred Gantlett (Queen) 1891-1983; married 1923

Ernest Hartley was born three years after the family arrived at Grove Farm in Shipton. He was another brilliant Hartley sportsman. Like his brothers Tom and Frank, he experienced the living hell of trench warfare during the First World War and, with Frank, he answered his former commanding officer Arthur Villiers' call to help him set up boys' clubs in East London after the war. Ernest's friendship with Villiers was destined to last a lifetime and was invaluable to both men. It wasn't until the late 1930s that Ernest came back to the Wychwoods at Villiers' behest. He saw war coming again and felt that Ernest would be needed on the farm.

The story of Ernest and Winifred's acquaintance and marriage was

Descendants of Ernest Hartley and Winifred Gantlett (Queen)



described in the first part of Hartley Heritage. Tempting as it is to revisit Terry's rollicking version of the relationship, we will take up the story with the family's return to Oxfordshire. By the late 1930s Terry was a young teenager and his sister Jane, born in 1934, a precocious four-year-old girl. Ernest took over Lower Farm where he had been before leaving for London. The man who had worked it in the intervening years had inherited a farm in Berkshire and had left the area.

'Lower Farm was only about 150 acres but the Hartleys were all in partnership in the early days,' Terry recalled. 'It was R. Hartley and Sons. After the death of Richard II in 1928, Grove Farm was given up. Manor Farm and Lower Farm kept us going. It wasn't until after the war that Brasenose College owners of our farm, and University College, owner of Coldstone Farm, decided to sell. Dick (Richard VI) came back after the war to Upper Milton and Frank came back to Shipton and took over Coldstone. This was a great bit of luck. We all went on farming.'

In the interim, Ernest and Winifred's children went off to prep school, Terry to Swanage Hillcrest and Jane to Lady Dauntley's in Wiltshire. During the Second World War, Ernest served his country once more, but in a far less visible way. He was a member of a resistance network set up in case of invasion by the Germans, a covert operation which was explained to WLHS members at a recent meeting by Bill King. He entitled his talk 'Dad's Other Army'. Local cells were recruited under strict secrecy and operated only in an assigned area. Members were unaware of the existence of other nearby cells and were even forced to operate without the knowledge of spouses or other family members. The plan was that cell members would go 'underground' and sabotage the invaders at every opportunity – until caught, that is. Every cell knew that eventual capture was to be expected. In the event, the invasion never came and Ernest's secretive night-time forays into the countryside ceased. It is difficult to imagine that the very clever and adventurous Queen (Winifred) did not discover what her husband Ernest was up to during these long months of manoeuvres.

The story of Terry's meeting with Rachel Wilson has already been told. The young people were married in 1946. Soon after, Ernest and Queen converted the Old Barn where Terry and Cathy now live, and moved there, giving Lower Farmhouse to Terry and Rachel. In 1958 their beloved daughter Katherine joined the family, giving great joy and focus to her parents' lives. Katherine now lives in Somerset with a house full of animals.

'Our family have always been church people,' Terry said, 'but not on the PCC or warden like Uncle Frank and Mike. We were always involved with the parish council. Of course Rachel and Mary were very active in the church because their father was a Church of England vicar.'



THE REV.
STANLEY
WILSON WITH
HIS DAUGHTERS
MARY AND
RACHEL. MARY
WOULD MARRY
RICHARD IV
AND RACHEL
WOULD MARRY
TERRY

'Sport? Oh yes, I enjoyed my cricket and hockey', Terry said with a smile. Dad always told me to enjoy games. I was very proud of my father.' Terry eventually chose a new sport in which to excel – skiing. 'Dad wasn't so sure about it, fearing I might break an arm or a leg,' he continued. 'From that I began to do ski mountaineering, that was my real great hobby.'

Terry persuaded his parents to visit Switzerland in the summer and, after seeing the place for himself, Ernest was always very interested to hear about Terry's adventures. Rachel also skied as did Terry's sister Jane along with her riding. Cathy, Terry's present wife, also enjoyed the sport. Rachel Wilson Hartley died of cancer in 1994, two years short of their 50th anniversary. Her long illness had been devastating and so beloved was she in the Wychwoods that the entire community prayed for a miracle. It was not to be. Terry turned to a friend, Catherine Tudor-Evans, who had attended Bedford Physical Training College as Rachel had done. 'All Bedford students have great camaraderie,' Cathy said. 'I met Rachel and Terry at the same time and our friendship grew up gradually. I wasn't in school with Rachel, I came along a bit after her but that didn't make any difference to our warm relationship. Terry and Cathy were married in the autumn of 1995.'

Cathy was born in 1931 and has a twin sister Elizabeth (Betsy) who lives in Anglesey with her husband, Edward Newbum. The sisters are close and the Hartleys visit often. As luck would have it, Terry's sister Jane and her husband Tom live just four miles from Betsy at Amlwch on the north coast. 'So, when we go to my mother's house which we kept after her death,' Cathy explained, 'we can see both of our sisters.'

It is an ideal and loving relationship. Cathy is friendly and attractive, has an infectious smile and is brimming with vibrant good health. Because he enjoyed supreme happiness with Rachel over so many years, Terry considers himself the most fortunate of men to have realised such contentment twice. 'My girls,' he said proudly, presenting framed photographs of both Rachel and Cathy as young women, 'how lucky can a man be.'

Following preparatory school at Lady Dauntley's in Wiltshire, Jane Hartley attended Northampton Institute Agricultural College. Here she met a young man called Tom Stanley. Terry tells the story with a twinkle in his eye. The antics of a little sister are always worth relating.

'She brought him home for a visit,' he began, 'and it didn't take him long to tell Dad that he badly wanted to farm and didn't have one. He needed to do a year or two as a pupil so he eventually worked a short time at a farm in Burford. He didn't like it there so my father got him a place at Edginton's and I think that was when the friendship really blossomed.' Jane became engaged to Tom and he obtained a rented farm near Oxford that belonged to New College.

'What we didn't know, really, was that Tom came from a very aristocratic family,' Terry continued. 'Then, when we got to know him better, we thought he was very modest because he never mentioned all this business.' The 'business' was eventually clear. Tom's mother was old Lord Bath's sister (Longleat) and his father was the younger son of Lord Stanley. When Tom's grandfather died, his father's elder brother succeeded to the title. 'He was a bit of a spendthrift,' Terry explained. 'He went through a great deal of the family money and had four wives but only one daughter. When he died quite young, his brother succeeded to the title. He died within six months of cancer.'

Since Tom's father was already deceased the title went to Tom because (and here the story becomes almost too much to take in) Tom's two elder brothers had been suffocated in a huge rabbit hole they had dug in Anglesey sand dunes. The young men, both in their early 20s, were unable to extricate themselves when the sides of the hole collapsed. Tom was the third son. 'It was quite extraordinary,' Terry concluded shaking his head. 'My sister, to everyone's amazement, became Lady Stanley of Alderly'.

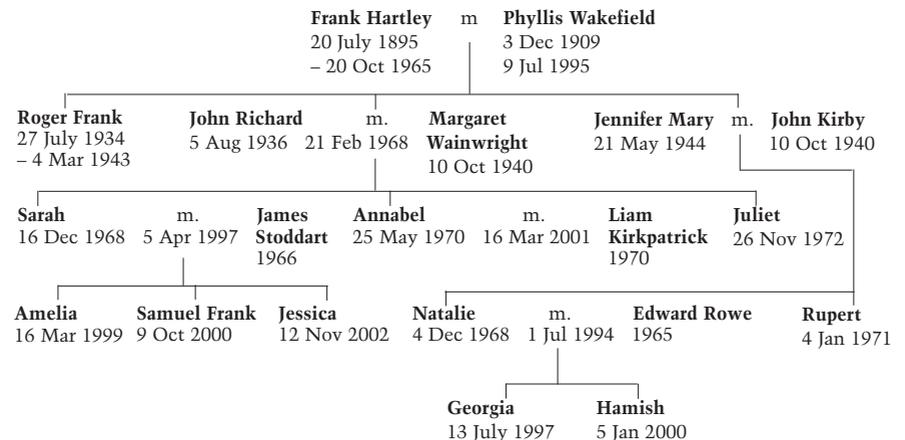
Jane and Tom's son Richard, born in 1956, now farms the same acres that his father took over years ago at Stanton St John. He and his wife

Carla have three daughters: Maria, born in 1988, Imogen in 1990 and Hermione in 1992. They lost their only son Oliver aged two years. Charles, born in 1960, is married to the former Beverly Emmitt and they, too, have three daughters: Venetia born in 1992, Olivia in 1995 and Sophia in 1998. Charles is employed by the De Beers diamond company. Harry born in 1963 works for a merchant bank in London and is married to Shirin Kassin Lahkar. Daughter Lucinda, born in 1958, married Australian Peter Brazel and they, of course, have produced a full complement of three sons, Tom, born in 1984, Harry in 1987 and Jack in 1988. Unfortunately, none of these young men qualify for the family title. The last hope for a future Lord Stanley now lies with Harry and Shirin.

Descendants of FRANK HARTLEY (20 July 1896–20 October 1965) and Phyllis Wakefield (3 December 1909–9 July 1995); married 1931

Not long ago a John Edwards from Romford, Essex signed the visitors' book at St Mary's church, Shipton. Instead of the usual remarks about the beauty and peace of the sanctuary, he bewailed the fact that no service was taking place on the Sunday he called. (It was the fifth Sunday of the month and Milton church was the venue for a beneficent communion.) He had made a special trip hoping to meet a descendant of Frank Hartley who, obviously, occupied heroic stature in his eyes. When the entry was called to John Hartley's attention he set about tracking down Mr Edwards. Thankfully there were few Edwards entries in the Romford telephone directory so John Edwards was soon rewarded for his initial disappointment by an invitation to call in at the Spout, John and Margaret Hartley's new home, when he was next in the area. A date was set forthwith.

Descendants of Frank Hartley and Phyllis Wakefield



John smiled at the memory of the meeting. 'John Edwards is approximately my age,' he explained. 'His father was an avid Oxford fan and my father held near mythic status in his eyes. This hero worship was passed down quite seamlessly to the next generation. It was almost embarrassing to hear my own father's athletic prowess praised so extravagantly.' Embarrassing, perhaps. Touching and deeply satisfying, certainly. Perhaps John Edwards learned from his visit that Frank Hartley possessed many other admirable qualities as well as soccer skill. Following the soul-searing months in the trenches during the First World War, there were the years as manager of the Eton Manor Boys' Club, a spell with the Corinthians (a team made up of Oxbridge graduates), three years as a professional with Tottenham Hotspurs and, after his marriage and the move from London back to Shipton, a very successful farming career at Coldstone Farm and a number of years playing local cricket.

Frank served as churchwarden from the day he returned to Shipton in 1944 until his death in 1965 when John took his place for a further 15 year Hartley tenure in the position. Frank was always a great sportsman. As a husband and father, however, he eschewed football and hockey, concentrating on cricket, hunting and shooting. 'I almost played with him.' John said, recalling his return to Shipton from Bloxham School in 1954. By that time Frank was 58 years old and not quite as actively involved with sport. The Hartley brothers had been instrumental in the purchase of the local cricket ground from Shipton Court in 1947. Many a charity match was played there with Dick Hartley's eleven in top winning form.

Following his nine years as a full boarder at Bloxham, John Hartley served for two years (1954-56) in the Royal Engineers. His father's desire to have him back home on the farm was obvious to John and, although he had passed the entrance examination to Oxford, he reluctantly gave up his place in October 1956. It would have been a great opportunity to develop his own sporting prowess. Instead, he went as a pupil to a farm in Lechlade and then to Harper Adams College in Shropshire for a year. It was here that he met bright-eyed Margaret Wainwright at a dance when she was in her last year of school. Margaret went on to Cambridge in 1958. After graduation she taught for two years at Montreux in Switzerland. Following this she returned to Shropshire and took a job at TWJ meat company. Dare we reveal that those initials stood for Tender Weekend Joints? We already have done. John was playing hockey in the late autumn of 1967 and finding himself in the wilds of rural Shropshire with a few fellow players, he suggested that they stop by the Wainwright farm for a cup of coffee. Luckily Margaret was at home and, after a nine year acquaintance, something clicked. John Hartley and Margaret Wainwright were married two months later.

John has been a member of the PCC since 1965. He played cricket for



JOHN AND MARGARET HARTLEY'S DAUGHTERS JULIET, ANNABEL AND SARAH

Oxfordshire for three seasons, rugby for Oxford Rugby Club and hockey for Oxford Hockey Club. He has served as president, secretary and treasurer of the Shipton Cricket Club in the 60s, 70s and 80s. He remembers that teas were always served at Coldstone until the pavilion was built. John enjoys skiing and travel, interests that Margaret shares. They set out to visit all seven continents and achieved their goal with many good travel years left to them.

Daughters Sarah, Annabel and Juliet were born at two year intervals from 1968 to 1972. John's widowed mother, Phyllis moved from Coldstone Farm to Fiddlers Hill and a new bungalow that she named for her childhood home, Signet. John and Margaret began their years of farming, community and area involvement slowly but surely as their daughters grew. All three girls attended Kitebrook School near Moreton-in-Marsh. Sarah and Juliet went on to Malvern Girls' College, while Annabel attended Ellerslie School in Malvern. All three graduated from Exeter University. Sarah pursued a career as a primary school teacher before her marriage to James Stoddart, a venture capitalist. With their three children, Amelia, Sam and Jessica, the Stoddarts live in London and Witney. Annabel became a chartered accountant and, since her marriage to Liam Kilpatrick, a project manager at B & Q in March 2001, has lived in Winchester. The romantic Kilpatrick proposed to Annabel at the summit of Mount Kenya. Juliet was employed by IMG (International Marketing

Group) where she served as secretary for several professional golfers, and then worked with *Daily Mail* sponsored events. She now enjoys an exciting career with the Diageo Company. Juliet also lives in London.

It is very difficult to sum up the contributions of John and Margaret Hartley to Shipton under Wychwood. There is not a worthwhile community project over the past 30 years in which the Hartleys, together or separately, have not had a hand. Church activities, repair and renovation; John retired in 2001 after 36 consecutive years on the Parochial Church Council; Pastoral Care Group and Welcome Pack compiler and distributor (Margaret); community projects, fetes and charity drives, ticket sales for all worthwhile events (have you ever seen Margaret Hartley when she didn't have a handbag bulging with tickets for one or more projects?); Women's Institute—at least two terms as president for Margaret plus many years as invaluable committee member, Wychwood Players, ticket sales, numerous pantomime roles and Coldstone Barn always available for rehearsals and special events; parish council duties for John (currently Chairman) since the 1980s; Children's Society – Margaret helped to sponsor countywide fundraising events for many years and she is the one who collects the individual savings banks each year, counts the money and promptly returns them. At Margaret's instigation, our local organisations put together a presentation that, in 2001, very nearly landed us first place in the Village of the Year Competition (as opposed to the Best Kept Village Competition which Shipton did win in 2002). Shipton was one point behind the winners. Lastly, and certainly many worthwhile activities were inadvertently left out, the New Beaconsfield Hall.

A great deal could be said about the vision, the energy and the steadfastness of the many people who worked tirelessly to bring this ambitious project to fruition. Some day an article in this journal will no doubt chronicle the individual contributions of each committee member. Readers will be reminded then that John Hartley was overall chairman and Margaret was the chief fundraiser. No-one else could have kept the community on side through the four and a half years of fundraising which culminated in entertaining half the population of Texas for a fortnight! (Yes I know. That's a slight exaggeration.) The Hartleys never lost heart even when luck and lottery grants threatened to run out. The New Beaconsfield Hall stands as a monument to their leadership and Shipton has been enriched a hundred-fold. Now that they have retired and moved into their dream home, The Spout, they may pause in their activities ever so slightly to cosset their beloved grandchildren.

John Hartley's little sister, Jennifer Mary, was born in 1944 not long before Frank brought his family back to Shipton. She attended Godolphin School in Salisbury and was married at 23 to farmer (and son of a farmer) John Kirby from Langford. Because the Kirby farm was not large enough to



THE HARTLEY MEN. SEATED: TERRY, RICHARD IV, JOHN. STANDING: RICHARD V, DAVID, MICHAEL AND RICHARD VI



THE HARTLEYS OF MANOR FARM. FRONT ROW: RICHARD V, MARY, RICHARD IV, MICHAEL. BACK ROW: VANESSA, RICHARD VI, ROSEMARY, ANNE, SARAH, DAVID

support two families, John and Jennifer moved to Little Dunmow in Essex, where they have farmed at The Grange ever since. Here their two children Natalie and Rupert were born in 1968 and 1971. Natalie continued the family farming tradition by marrying Essex farmer Edward Rowe. They have two children, Georgia and Hamish born in 1997 and 2000. Rupert has opted so far for life in London where he is employed as a bank property manager. He and his cousin Juliet Hartley sometimes meet at interesting London social functions.

Like their Oxfordshire relatives, the Kirbys have adjusted to the changing face of British farming. At The Grange, redundant pigsties have become six holiday cottages over which Jennifer presides. Paying guests can be as much trouble as boars, sows and piglets, Jennifer says, but they certainly are cleaner and quieter.

Postscript

In the autumn of 2002 an unfinished strand finally was inserted into the rich design of the Hartley family history. The Reverend Ron Curtis, curate in our local United Benefice, made what has become an annual pilgrimage to the First World War cemeteries in France. Ron and his good friend Steve Thompson of Witney along with Steve's father and uncle, have undertaken a survey of area village war memorials and a search for the grave site of each serviceman listed. The men photograph the graves and plot the locations. They have just presented a book to the village of Tackley with a complete record of each burial on their memorial. Carterton and Shilton are works in progress as is Witney where the graves of 50 of the 130 names have been discovered so far.

On this particular trip, after conversations with Mike and John Hartley, the men were on the lookout for the grave of Thomas Hartley, a member of the Oxford Yeomanry Company and brother of Ernest, Frank, William and Richard III (*Wychwoods History* No. 16, pp11, 16, 17). Thomas died of natural causes and was buried not in a military cemetery but in the churchyard of the small village of Caumont,

'The cemetery was alongside the village church,' Ron Curtis explained. 'Tom's was the only grave of a World War I soldier and, since there was no military involvement in the burial, one suspects the commanding officer, Arthur Villiers, saw to the erection of the stone.'

Ron further explained that in the Second World War an American bomber crew was shot down nearby and seven fatalities from the crash were buried in Caumont. Six of these graves are together in the northeast corner of the burial ground. The seventh, of the squadron leader, is located next to Tom Hartley's resting place in the opposite corner. Ron and Steve took a video of Caumont churchyard and Tom's grave, thus bringing to a close a Hartley family concern of 85 years' standing.

THE SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS IN PRINT

***That's How it Was: Women in the Wychwoods during World War Two* £5.50** An illustrated record of life in the Wychwood villages in World War Two, as recalled by the women who lived and worked there.

***The Second Wychwoods Album Now* £2.50** Eighty photographs illustrating life in Milton, Sipton and neighbouring villages, particularly between the wars.

***Wychwoods History, Number 1 (1985)* £3.00** Hedge Survey of Milton & Sipton, Pt 1; Milton Graveyard Survey; Railway Timetable 1853; Cotham Cottage, Milton; Royal Manor of Siptone in Domesday, Pt 1; Probate Inventory of William Hyatt, 1587.

***Wychwoods History, Number 2 (1986)* £3.00** William Master, Vicar of Sipton 1564–91; A Milton Field, 1842–1985; Survey of Baptist Ground, Milton; Letters of Thomas & Hannah Groves; Royal Manor of Siptone in Domesday, Pt 2; Hedge Survey, Pt 2.

***Wychwoods History, Number 3 (1987)* £3.00** Published jointly with OUDES and edited by Kate Tiller. Milton & Sipton in the Nineteenth Century – Farming and community before 1850; Village government; Decade of change, the 1850s; Decade of decisions, the 1870s; Growing up 100 years ago; Life and work 1880–1914.

***Wychwoods History, Number 4 (1988)* £2.50** Earthworks at Lower Farm, Upper Milton (survey by James Bond); Fieldwalking in Evenlode Valley; Prebendal House, Sipton (excavation by Brian Durham); My Father's Days; Wartime Wedding.

***Wychwoods History, Number 5 (1989)* £3.00** The Poor of Sipton 1740–62; Sipton Milestone; St Mary's Church, Sipton; The Reade Chapel; Plague Tyme; Change in the Wychwoods, 1938–1988; Medieval Pottery Finds at St Mary's School, Sipton.

***Wychwoods History, Number 6 (1991)* £3.00** The Untons; Leonard Boxe, Gentleman of Ascott; Infantile Mortality 1565–94; The Wharton Charity; Medieval Fishpond at Bruern Grange; Sipton School Log Book 1869–1905; Mary Moss; Life in Old Milton.

***Wychwoods History, Number 7 (1992)* £3.00** Origins of Sipton Minster Church; The Groves Family, Pt 1; Early Days at Sipton; Ridge & Furrow; Henry Mills, Sipton Vicar 1593–1641; Death by Misadventure; The Milton Murder; Cottage on the Waste.

***Wychwoods History, Number 8 (1993)* £3.00** Royal Observer Corps, Sipton; Base-born in Sipton; The Groves Family of Milton, Pt 2; Milton Church – Architect's Plan; An Anglo-Saxon Charter for Sipton? Field-walking a Romano-British site above Sipton; Vital Statistics: Sipton Parish Registers.

Wychwoods History, Number 9 (1994) £3.00 The Medieval Lords of Shipton, Pt I; The De Clares; Shipton in 1662, a Hearth Tax Study; Possession is Nine Points of the Law; The Groves Family of Milton, Pt 3; Emigrants to America; Old Christmas Custom at Chadlington; Moss Families of Ascott; Book Reviews.

Wychwoods History, Number 10 (1995) £3.00 Jessie Hunt, Evacuee 1939–45; Shipton in 1662: Hearth Tax Study, Pt 2; Shipton Village Shops and Roundsmen; First Parish Council Elections; Smallpox; Puzzles over Shipton Prebend; What really happened at Shipton Court; The de Langleys: Medieval Foresters; George Quartermain of Ascott.

Wychwoods History, Number 11 (1996) £3.00 Shipton Small Tithes 1727-34; Memories of Ascott; Ascott Priory Tithes; The Chaundys of Ascott; 'Where There's Muck...'; Agistment – a Tithing Nightmare; Asthall Roman Camp; A Determined Emigrant.

Wychwoods History, Number 12 (1997) £3.00 Welfare in the Wychwoods 1700–1834; From Annie to Barbara – Five Generations of a Shipton Family; More Memories of Ascott; Sheepwashing & the Ascott Sheepwash; The Barbers of Sarsden and Salome of Natal; Lady Harriet Reade; The Wychwooders Lament; Springhill Farm.

Wychwoods History, Number 13 (1998) £3.00 Mother Shipton; Gwen Morgan, a Milton teacher; Doctor's Bill; Killing the Pig; Occupations 1785-1817; The Stampe Family; Farming Memories of Chadlington.

Wychwoods History, Number 14 (1999) £3.00 Crime & Punishment in 1790, a Tale of Wychwood Men; John Chapman's Legacy; A Bouquet of Roses; A Roman Villa at Upper Milton?; Cospatrick Tragedy; The Agricultural Ladder; Memories of Shipton Station.

Wychwoods History, Number 15 (2000) £3.50 Survey of Earthworks at Ascott d'Oilley Castle; A Wychwoods Farming Year 1854–55; Shipton and Religion in Sixteenth Century; Medieval Pottery in Wychwoods; Burford to Banbury Turnpike Road; Wychwood Manors in Domesday Book; What's in a Name?

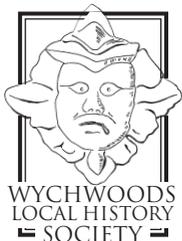
Wychwoods History, Number 16 (2001) £3.50 Hartley Heritage Part One; Shipton & the Foxe Family; James Longshaw of Shipton, Musician; Care in the Community Eighteenth-century Style; Ascott Tollgate Board; The Millennium Fieldwalk; Assigning Quarters in the Wychwoods 1939–45.

Wychwoods History, Number 17 (2002) £3.50 His Name be Not Forgotten; From Village Medicine Cupboard and College Cellar; Some Wychwood Neighbourhoods about 1900: Milton; Who's Heard of Daffy's?; Reuben Rainbow's Diary; Recollections by John Richards.

The Wychwoods Local History Society meets once a month from September through to May. Meetings usually alternate between the village halls at Milton and Shipton. Current membership is £5 for an individual and £8 for a couple or overseas member, which includes a copy of *Wychwoods History* when published. Further details can be obtained from the Secretary, Wendy Pearse, Littlecott, Honeydale Farm, Shipton under Wychwood, Chipping Norton, Oxon OX7 6BJ (telephone 01993 831023).

Further copies and back numbers of *Wychwoods History* may be obtained from Dr Margaret Ware, Monks Gate, Shipton under Wychwood, Chipping Norton, Oxon OX7 6BA (telephone 01993 830494). Postage and packing is 90p for the first copy and 40p for each additional copy. Cheques payable to Wychwoods Local History Society. See pages 63–64 for a full list of publications in print.

Cover illustration: *Harry Mawle of Court Farm, Shipton, at the wheel of his Wolsley*



£3.50

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WYCHWOODS HISTORY

THE JOURNAL OF THE WYCHWOODS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



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