

WYCHWOODS
HISTORY
THE JOURNAL OF THE WYCHWOODS HISTORY SOCIETY

Number Thirteen, 1998

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ISBN 0 9523406 4 X

Printed by Clouds Hill Printers, Chipping Campden

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The observations and opinions in the articles and notices in the Journal are those of their authors and not necessarily those of the Society

Foreword

Your editorial committee is pleased to report an embarrassment of riches for Journal 13. In fact members have been so co-operative that we are savouring a comfortable backlog of excellent material for the next journal. However we are always on the look-out for new areas of local research or reader-comment on published articles (see the sheepwash correspondence in this issue). It is gratifying to know that the journal stimulates thought and jogs memories. If members continue to respond to our efforts we will be delighted to institute a letters page, which might also feature genealogical or local history queries. Our archivist, Joan Howard-Drake, holds an enormous collection of census transcripts, newspaper articles and family history material. Perhaps she has the very piece of information for which you have been looking.

In this issue the fieldwalking group, led by Janet Wallace, report on a lean but interesting day. While the research group explores the 1788 small tithe account book of Dr Thomas Brookes. Occupations of the inhabitants of Milton, Shipton and Leafield were noted, including the status of the gentry. Was the resident excise-man in Milton in 1785 keeping a day-to-day watch on the operations he taxed? Sadly Tom McQuay died shortly after completing his article 'The Doctor's Bill'. We shall very much miss his contributions to our work.

The past recalled can provide a rich treasure-trove of historical information. Several of our articles prove this to be true and amaze the reader with the clarity and detail of childhood and youthful memories. Gladys Avery takes us back to a Chadlington farm in the 1930s and 40s; John Rawlins passes on Gwen Morgan née Silman's memories as the last pupil-teacher at Milton school and Gwen Allen tells us about the late Mrs Henrietta Hackling's thoughts on the day the pig was killed. All these memories provide rich embellishment to the bare facts and figures of census and tithe.

An interesting feature of Anthony Cronk's article is his determined search for the long-lost portraits of Harriott, Lady Reade, her husband, Sir John, the 5th baronet and their son, subsequently the 6th baronet. They are reproduced in this issue and are, along with the article, an invaluable addition to our store of Reade family information.

All things considered, forgive us if we disregard all superstition about the thirteenth volume of *Wychwoods History* and present it to you with a bit of a flourish!

T.Y., J.H-D., S.J. FEBRUARY 1998

'Mother Shipton' – A Cruel Irony?

ANTHONY CRONK

Subscribers will have enjoyed the article by Sue Jourdan about the colourful Lady Reade (1727-1811)¹. I hope my fellow author will allow me to add a footnote, which should be read in conjunction therewith.

The story of Harriott Reade (name so spelt in contemporary documents) is an essential part of the history of the Wychwoods which, as chatelaine of Shipton Court, she dominated for more than half a century. This eccentric and idiosyncratic lady, it was said, 'in many respects merited the sobriquet "Mother Shipton" by which she was generally known both in London and in Oxon'.²

Her husband was the only child of Sir Thomas Reade, 4th baronet and Jane Mary Dutton, co-heiress of the neighbouring estate of Sherborne, Gloucestershire, who died giving him birth. Thoroughly spoilt in his youth, and in early life a 'man-about-town' in Georgian London society, he became something of a Hogarthian 'rake'. As was not uncommon in those days he had sired children by at least one mistress prior to his marriage. Two of his acknowledged illegitimate offspring, by name Jane Reade and John Reade, received bequests under his will.³ A codicil to the will states, 'the above-named minors Jane Reade and John Reade are the natural children of Jane Day, spinster'.

Sir John, the 5th baronet, was already aged 38 when he married Harriott Barker, also an only child and herself a considerable heiress. Obviously many people were hoping that this auspicious union would produce a legitimate male heir, not only to the baronetcy but also to the entailed estates on both sides, a concern which has been of anxiety in other upper-class families before and since. If Sir John had had no direct and legitimate male heir the Reade baronetcy would have become extinct. It was not until 1762, three years after the nuptials, that the anxiously awaited news was announced that Lady Reade had given birth to twin sons at the family's London home in Golden Square, Soho.

Sue Jourdan's fascinating article is based largely on extracts from an unpublished MS by 'A Tourist'⁴. This pseudonymous 'Tourist' had been told that Harriott Lady Reade's well-documented eccentricity and eventual decline in mental health resulted from shame at the 'ridiculous idea of the indelicacy of having twins'. (In that particular context, the operative word appears to be 'ridiculous'.) The villagers of Shipton and Milton however



SIR JOHN READE, 5TH BARONET, BY SIR WILLIAM BEECHEY. Courtauld Institute of Art.



LADY READE, WIFE OF SIR JOHN READE, 5TH BARONET, BY SIR WILLIAM BEECHEY.
Courtauld Institute of Art

had an entirely different explanation, which we may or may not dismiss as scurrilous tavern gossip. Nevertheless, the Reade family historian writing in the nineteenth century, decided that such was its widespread credence, it ought to be recorded, for what it is worth.

When Sir John and his wife returned to Shipton Court with the infant twins it was remarked that the babies were in the care of one Mary Mason, a native of London. 'This circumstance, [Lady Reade's] eccentricity and [Sir John's] notorious irregularities combined to give origin to a tale which found credence among the lower orders of west Oxfordshire, that [the children] were supposititious, in effect that [Lady Reade], unable to bear the reproach of barrenness had foisted, with her husband's assent, the children of a woman named Mason, on Shipton Court and the family.'⁵

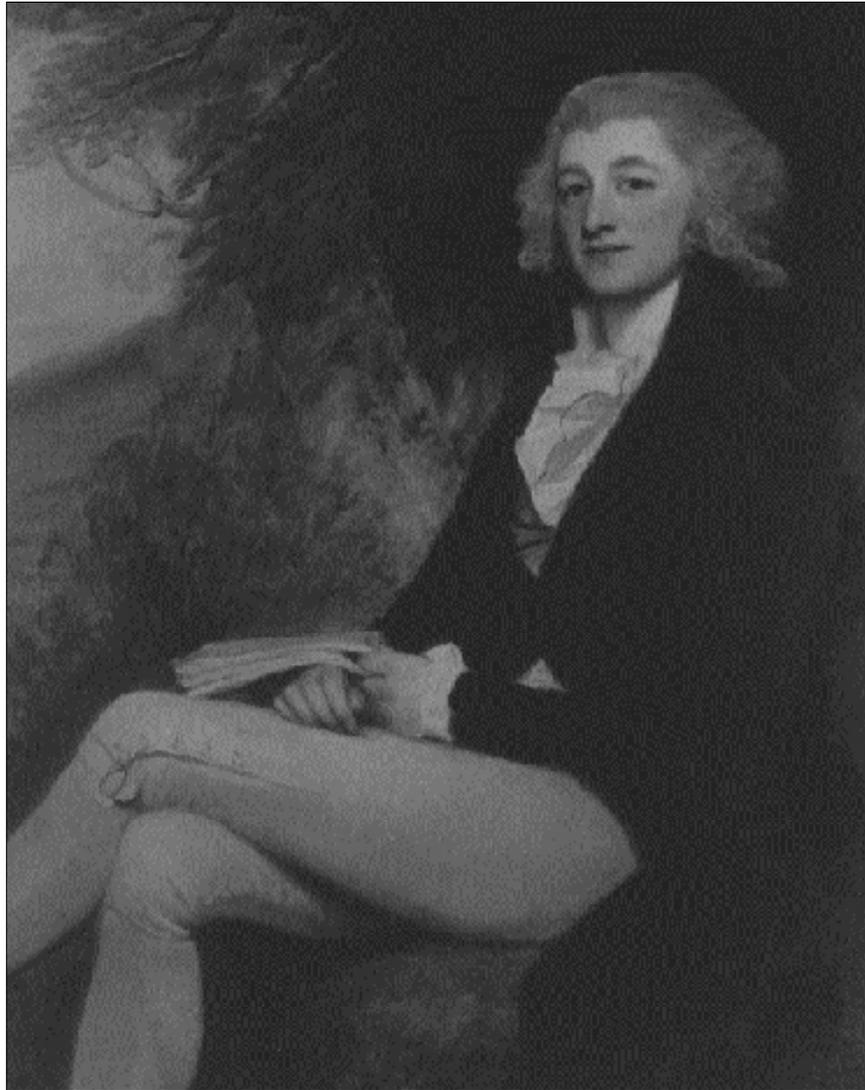
The truth about this extraordinary affair will probably never be known for certain. If Harriott Reade were truly the biological mother of these baby boys she would have had no occasion for shame; rather pride and satisfaction at having doubly ensured the family succession. If she were not, she would have had to bear the shame of the deception, and shoulder the burden of this guilty secret.

Of course the possibility cannot be ruled out that the local people misinterpreted what they saw and heard happening in their midst. But on the other hand if indeed, as was popularly supposed in the villages, Lady Reade had been induced to accept as her own the babies of one her husband's mistresses (and even the Reade family chronicler conceded the possibility), one can easily imagine the psychological effect this would have had. Once embarked upon, the deception would have needed to be maintained indefinitely, otherwise the shame and scandal on the whole family would have been insupportable, and the legal effects far reaching.

Hypothetically, might not such an unenviable predicament have unhinged the poor lady, and given rise to her notoriously eccentric subsequent behaviour and her withdrawal 'from the polished circle of society in which she had been reared'? Here perhaps we are straying into the realm of psycho-speculation.

Harriott's husband the 5th baronet died in 1773. The elder twin, another John, succeeded at the age of 11 as the sixth holder of the title. Thenceforth, to quote the family historian, 'whatever may have been his paternity or maternity, [he] adorned the position he held'. Having graduated M.A. from Magdalen College, Oxford in 1783, he married and began to take his place in county society. His mother having been granted the use of Shipton Court for her lifetime, he purchased the mansion and estate of Oddington, Gloucestershire, but died there at the early age of 27, leaving by his wife Jane two sons and a daughter. His elder son, John Chandos Reade, thereupon succeeded to the title at the age of 4 and to Shipton Court on the death of Harriott Lady Reade, whom of course he regarded as his grandmother.⁶

What happened, you will ask, to Mary Mason, the person from London



SIR JOHN READE, 6TH BARONET BY GEORGE ROMNEY. Philadelphia Museum of Art

who nursed the infant twin boys? She remained at Shipton Court to care for the growing boys – her status clearly superior to that of a servant. When the 5th baronet died he bequeathed 'to my housekeeper Mrs. Mary Mason' a comfortable annuity for life and the right 'to dwell in my mansion house at Shipton as long as she lives and at her death I desire she

may be buried in the parish church of Shipton-under-Wychwood'.⁷ These are exceptional provisions to put in a will. The expression 'in the parish church' could be taken to mean in the Reade family vault. Sir John evidently held Mary Mason in specially fond regard – was he guarding against the possible eventuality that his widow, Dame Harriott, might at some time be disposed to turn her out of the mansion? In the event she predeceased the testator by a few months, and was buried at Shipton, 26 March 1773.

The Reade Family Portraits

'A Tourist' was quoted in the above-mentioned article as alluding to a portrait of Harriott Reade by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Sue Jourdan reported its present whereabouts as unknown. In fact there is no record of that lady having sat for Sir Joshua⁸. The painting seen by 'A Tourist' is probably one of a pair depicting Sir John and his wife by the almost equally distinguished artist Sir William Beechey (1753-1839), court portraitist to Queen Charlotte. The pair were among those of the Shipton Court collection sold by Christie's on 13 July 1895 (lots 18 and 19). These are officially recorded at the Witt Library in the Coutauld Institute of Art as:

Portrait of Sir John Reade, fifth baronet, in a blue velvet court dress, holding his sword with his left hand. He faces three quarters to the front, turned to the left and standing in a vestibule. A landscape with a river falling in a cascade over rocks in the background to the left. Full length figure, life size.

Portrait of Lady Reade, in a black velvet dress trimmed with white lace, standing in a landscape, her right arm resting on a pedestal. Full length figure, life size.

These important works were last known to be in the private collection of Rodman Wanamaker of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They are reproduced here. Also in the Christie's sale were portraits of Sir John when a young man (1751) by Allen Ramsay R.A. (1713-58) and of his mother, wife of Sir Thomas (4th Baronet) and of her sister Miss Dutton, both by Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723).

Another interesting lot (no. 15) in the same sale was a portrait of Sir John Reade, 6th baronet, signed and dated 1788 by George Romney (1734-1802). This young man, shown seated, father of Sir John Chandos Reade,⁹ died the following year aged 27. He apparently suffered from the same eating disorder (bulimia) as once afflicted the late Diana, Princess of Wales.¹⁰ The portrait, having passed through the collection of William L. Elkins, is now a treasured possession of Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Today we mourn the fact that these great paintings were ever allowed to leave their Shipton Court setting where they historically belong.

References

- ¹ Oxfordshire Archives, Symonds Vol. 4 'A Tourist', reproduced in *Wychwoods History* No. 12, pp.48-51.
- ² *A Record of the Redes*, Compton Reade, 1899, p.56. Harriott's style as the wife of a baronet would have been Lady Reade – certainly not Lady Harriott Reade, which would have denoted a daughter of an earl, marquess or duke, which she was not. After the death of her husband his successor's wife would have become Lady Reade. She herself, as a baronet's widow, would thenceforth be styled Harriott Lady Reade or, by eighteenth-century usage, Dame Harriott.
- ³ This John Reade (son of Jane Day, spinster) appears to have been only relatively disadvantaged by his illegitimacy. Still a minor at the date of his putative father's will (1773) he was described therein as 'now or late of the Panther man-of-war on the New-foundland station'. He afterwards obtained a commission in the army, rose to the rank of colonel, and married Penelope Harriot Reade, a distant cousin.
- ⁴ *Wychwoods History* No. 12, pp.48-51.
- ⁵ C. Reade, op. cit. p.55.
- ⁶ *Wychwoods History* No. 10.
- ⁷ Last will and testament of Sir John Reade, 5th baronet quoted by C.Reade.
- ⁸ Letter from the National Portrait Gallery, 30 April 1997.
- ⁹ *Wychwoods History* No. 12.
- ¹⁰ *WychwoodsHistory* No.12.

Gwen Morgan neé Silman, Milton's Last Pupil Teacher

JOHN RAWLINS

This article is based on the recorded memories of Gwen Morgan, neé Silman. Now living at Wootton near Abingdon, where she celebrated her 90th birthday on New Year's Eve 1997, she spent her childhood and early working life in Milton under Wychwood.

On the last day of 1907 Fred Silman cycled through the snow to Burford to call out the young Dr Cheatle to come to attend his wife, Nelly. Nelly and Fred lived in a one-up, one-down cottage in Shipton Road (now part of Rose Dene) and it was here that Dr Cheatle saw the safe delivery of Gwendoline Louisa, his first delivery in Milton. Fred Silman from Bould had married Nelly Slater from Milton in 1903 with her four sisters acting as bridesmaids. The wedding was at the Baptist Chapel at the top of the High Street, and it was this chapel which was and remained a central pivot of their lives while they lived in Milton. Gwen was not a well child and in the primitive conditions life was a struggle. When Fred went off to work to a distant building site on a Monday, he took most of the available food with him for the week before his return on Saturday. Mother and child were left at home to manage on what food remained and to attend to garden, chickens and pig so vital to the household's economy.

By the time Gwen was ready for school the family had moved from Shipton Road to Calais Cottage at the end of Frog Lane, later to be the home of Olive Frost (neé Barnes).¹ Although on the edge of the village the cottage was only a few hundred yards from her father's work at Alfred Groves and Sons, and a similar distance from the Baptist chapel, the family's religious centre. But, in 1912, the schoolrooms of the chapel also served as the non-secular Milton Infants' School. On 12 May 1912 Gwen was admitted as No. 892 on the admission register and began her school life in the smaller of the two classrooms with Gertrude Mary Burden as her teacher. The larger room housed the slightly older children who were taught by the headmistress, Mabel Palmer. Between 40 and 60 scholars went to the Infants' School. There was adequate teaching space in the two main rooms although they were often poorly heated. Sanitary conditions

***** by PROMENADER *****

The Northleach Court Leet, a tradition when officers of this former court are elected, is to be held on November 26 and Mr. T.L.Miles of Gables Cottage, East End, Northleach, tells us that it has a connection with the Stow-on-the-Wold Court Leet House, and the grocery store which replaced it. Bruern Abbey, founded in 1127, owned a large bakehouse and several fishponds at Milton-under-Wychwood and bread and fish from the Abbey was sent to the Northleach market. This food went to the market cross and was there inspected by the High Bailiff and Carniss who will be part of the Northleach Court Leet.

Nothing could be sold in the market

until approved by these officials and in 1549 the Northleach Court Leet book records that one John Proffyt was fined a massive 6s 8d for receiving a "horse lode of bred ere it came to the cross".

After the dissolution of the monastries(sic) the bread and fish from Milton still found its way to Northleach market until about 200 years ago. Robert Gorton eventually took over the bakery business in Milton and sent bread to Stow and Northleach.

When Stow Court Leet house was demolished Gorton acquired the site and built a grocery shop there, and until about 1912 continued the old tradition of sending "horse lodes" of bread, via Stow, to Northleach.

FROM A NEWSPAPER CUTTING, POSSIBLY *Cheltenham Echo*, 1970s

were somewhat primitive with vault 'offices' as the toilets were called. The playground, then gravelled, is the same size today. As the school was rented from the Baptist Union, the schoolrooms had to be given up whenever required by the Baptists for funerals, meetings and teas.

Mr and Mrs Silman were keen for Gwen to get the best from the education service then available, but many parents were not keen and they created problems for those in authority who were anxious that all scholars made the full 400 attendances (200 x two sessions) per year. Absences due to illness and bad weather could be not be avoided, assuming that the reasons given were not exploited. If scholars played truant i.e. absented themselves without the prior knowledge of school, parents or employer, punishment was usually swift and painful – strokes with the cane. However, it was difficult to apportion blame and administer punishment when a child was absent with the connivance of parents and/or an employer keen to use cheap labour. To achieve regular attendance both 'stick' and 'carrot' methods were used.

The attendance officer made regular visits to the schools where he received reports on habitual absentees which were sometimes followed up by visits to the home and/or employer. If these friendly calls proved fruitless then action could be taken through the courts. This was sometimes taken but not very often. The Education Authority was very keen that registers were correctly and promptly marked with strict accordance to the rules, and that the attendance figures were sent in on time to the County Education Officer. From the school log books it would seem that although the heads did their part in keeping accurate records and encouraged regular attendance, they felt let down by the Authority's lack of effort in chasing up recalcitrant parents and employers. There are usually two or three references per year to this problem like these from Milton Council Mixed School log book:

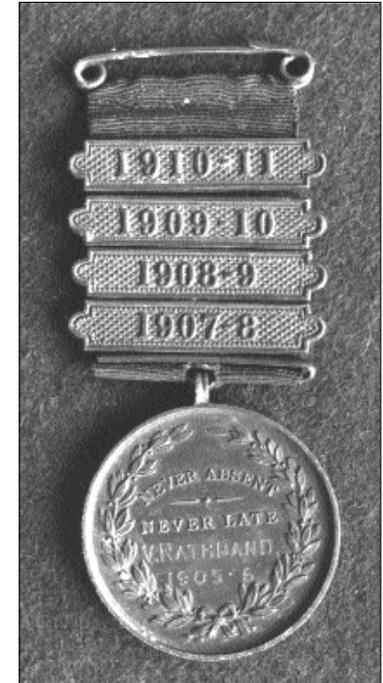
6 June 1922 There are still one or two children away with slight colds, they can run the streets till 10 o'clock at night and attend Sunday School etc. but attendance at day school is out of the question they are not ratepayers...

21 December 1923 The Authorities need to put some ginger into the work compelling parents to send their children to school regularly, ¹/₂ doz. families in this village are only doing as they like.

There are no references in the log books to any subsequent improvements in the situation, or to any effort by the authorities to take any action. Gwen, of course, did not belong to one of the half dozen families mentioned above. As a 'carrot', various incentives were given. For the Milton group of schools half-day merit holidays were given to any school which had achieved a 95% attendance during any month. This scheme did

not seem to apply to Shipton Church of England School. There were also individual rewards for scholars from the Lady Reade's charity.² Trustees granted 10 guineas annually to encourage regular attendance. This sum was divided by ratio among the schools then in the ancient parish of Shipton under Wychwood – Leafield, Lyneham, Milton Infants', Milton Mixed, Ramsden and Shipton. It would seem that each school decided how its share was to be allocated. In 1902 Shipton awarded 1d for every four weeks full attendance, but by 1903 this had changed to those children with above 90% attendance for the whole school year. In February 1903 Milton Mixed School's grant of £2 6s 0d went to those with 400 or more attendances with the amounts scaled from six pence to five shillings. The trustees did not renew the grant in 1907 by which time the Oxfordshire Education Committee had begun its incentives for scholars. These came as cash, books and inscribed medals for scholars with 100% attendance in any school year, with bars to the medals for each succeeding year. If the scholar could keep that 100% record for five years, with good conduct, then an inscribed silver watch was awarded. Certificates were given to those with 98 or 99% attendance, and also for scholars who had reached the required proficiency in reading, writing and arithmetic. However, these rewards seem to have been directed at those pupils who were most likely to be absent – the older scholars. Frank Edginton of Lyneham completed five years perfect attendance in 1911 but as he was only nine, he did not qualify for a silver watch. He left Lyneham School in 1915 and it was noted in the log book 'He has made 8½ years complete attendance and is entitled to a watch'. The log book does not record if he received it.

Some parents may have wondered



MEDAL 'Never Absent – Never Late 1905–6' AWARDED TO V.RATHBAND (sic), WITH BARS FROM 1907 AND 1911. THE REVERSE SHOWS A BRITANNIA FIGURE WITH THE WORDS 'Oxfordshire Education Committee'. MILTON SCHOOL LOG BOOK OF 4 AUGUST 1911 RECORDED 'Vera Rathband (sic) has earned a watch by attending regularly for 5 years'. 'DOLLY' RATHBONE DIED ON 18 FEBRUARY 1998

why there were such desperate attempts to maintain full attendance when the schools could be closed at any time on the whim of those in authority. This applied to the harvest or summer holidays which could be extended by two weeks or more if the harvest was late. This was done irrespective of whether all the children were required to work in the fields. Similarly the schools were closed for long periods for epidemics – measles, chicken pox, influenza etc. whether all children were ill or not. These closures did not always please the head, and his pupil teachers, including Gwen, were expected to attend school to continue with their studies during the epidemics.

The schools also closed for the whole day for Royal weddings etc., Sunday School outings (both Church of England and Baptists), Teachers' Conferences, bazaars, elections and Baptists meetings. Many of these closures could have been avoided by altering time and venue. The same could be said for some of the half-day closures which were usually in the afternoons when the schools closed for Temperance fetes, funerals, weddings, confirmations, merit holidays, Empire Days (occasionally), and the golden wedding of one of the school managers, Mr Gorton.

By 1914 the Silman family had moved to the little cottage, now Rainbow Cottage, in Milton High Street, almost opposite the Butchers Arms. Although nearer to the Baptist Chapel, Gwen was further away from school for, on 7 September 1914, she transferred to the big school. This was in Church Road, officially Milton under Wychwood Council Mixed School No. 149 which catered for the children from 7 to 14 (then the leaving age). Between 1914 and 1930 inclusive, the average number on the books was 91 with an approximate annual intake of 20 children in the same period.

On 30 October 1914 the headmaster, often called The Master, Mr T. Giblett, resigned after more than 31 years in the post. Mr C.S. Burch began duties as his successor on 27 November. Like Mr Giblett, he had overall charge of both departments of the school – the Mixed School in Church Road and the Infants' School in the Baptist schoolroom. To a lesser extent he also had some control over Lyneham Council Junior School.

War had been declared and the Milton School log books show some of its effects. In November 1914 the Red Cross classes began in the Baptist schoolroom, and in December Mr Burch had to re-write his requisition following 'a note from the Education Secretary asking the headteacher to reduce the expenditure as much as possible owing to the present time of stress.'

At the end of the year all the children from Lyneham, the Infant and the Mixed schools assembled at the Mixed School for the prize presentation by Mrs Samuda of Bruern Abbey. The children with good attendance and/or required proficiency received books, medals and/or bars or certificates. But 1914 was the last year that any prizes were given, for in the

interests of war economy, only certificates were awarded from 1915 onwards.

Gwen's memories of the war are limited. She can recall a train journey from London following a visit to relations when all the railway bridges were guarded by men in uniform. Like so many village children she remembers the deaths of relations like her uncle who had been in uniform only six weeks before being killed in France, leaving a widow and two sons. School life proceeded much as pre-war but the log books do refer to concerts to raise money for 'Christmas Parcels for the Army and Navy' and the 'Overseas Tobacco Fund', and that children collected paper for the war effort. A Belgian refugee attended the school while his parents made a temporary home in the village, and some lessons were given on the progress of the war.

In January 1916 the County War Agricultural Executive Committee brought 'to the notice of the County Education Committee the necessity of liberating from school attendance during periods of agricultural activity all children capable of rendering efficient service to farmers.' This would seem to have had its desired effect as the 'big' school closed for two weeks in both 1917 and 1918 for 'potato picking'. The log books also note that some boys were exempted to go to work before the leaving age of 14.

During the last years of the war all children played their small part in the war effort. Some went potato planting and picking, and during September and October 1917 after the registers had been marked, the school was closed and all children were taken out to pick blackberries which helped to make up the total of 40 tons picked by all Oxfordshire schools that year. On 9 October 1918 Milton Mixed School picked 366lbs of blackberries which brought in £14 11s 11d. This may have been the day Gwen went with the pickers to the old quarries up the Burford Road where they were paid so much for each pound picked, but she is not sure if the money went to the picker or school. However, by the end of that month picking had ceased as the school was closed due to the influenza epidemic. During this closure Gwen recalls running and dancing up Milton High Street with Dot Miles although at the time they were not certain why they danced on just that one day. It was Armistice Day. School re-opened on 25 November and the children were given three days holiday to go blackberry picking. The results – 1562lbs of fruit picked and £19 1s 6d paid to the pickers.³

Gwen progressed throughout the usual classes and standards under the overall tutelage of Mr Burch, a strict disciplinarian. He gave the cane to both girls and boys, Gwen included. One of the teachers was Miss Win Slater, her aunt, who maintained discipline with a sharp tongue. As Gwen was known to be a relation she sometimes got the blame when her peers were in trouble with Miss Slater. This was not the only occasion when pupils at Milton School had difficulty in coping with their own relation



CLASS 4, STANDARD VII, MILTON C. MIXED SCHOOL 1918-19 WITH MR C. BURCH ON THE LEFT. ALL THE CHILDREN, APART FROM FOUR, HAD BEGUN SCHOOL LIFE IN THE MILTON INFANTS' SCHOOL. GWEN SILMAN IS IN THE CENTRE ROW, THIRD FROM THE RIGHT, WITH OLIVE BARNES ON HER RIGHT. TWO OF THE BOYS WON SCHOLARSHIPS TO BURFORD GRAMMAR SCHOOL AND THREE GIRLS BECAME PUPIL TEACHERS AT MILTON

teaching in the same school. A later headmistress, Mrs Pearce, sent her own son, Colin, to school in Wales.

Most village children grew up together, played together and passed all their school lives in the same village in the state elementary system. Many then began their working lives in the same village. There were exceptions: the children sent to private schools, and the children of the itinerant farm labourers who moved around at Michaelmas, the time of the hiring fairs, although this practice had died out by the 1930s. Some secondary education was available but at this time, 1914, the nearest secondary school was Burford Grammar School. This was boys only, both day and boarding, and was fee-paying unless you won a scholarship. However, it was within cycling distance. But for girls from the poorer

homes, like Gwen's, the opportunity for secondary education was almost nil as the only girls' secondary schools were in the towns some distance away.

In the first quarter of this century there was very little demand in Milton for secondary education as most parents were anxious that their children left school at the earliest opportunity to become wage earners, or unpaid helpers at home. Although the statutory leaving age was only 14 some parents sought to take their children away from school before then. Scholarships were available to scholars who had the ability needed to win them from the Lady Reade's Charity. In 1904 the Head noted 'no child anxious to obtain the scholarship ... the fact is the parents are all too poor to afford to keep the boys longer at school than they can legally leave and although one or two girls would have like to compete the parents declined when additional expense they would be put to for the train fare to Oxford was put before them.' The head wrote in similar vein in 1906. In 1908 Dora Skidmore won a Lady Reade's scholarship of £10 for a year to Moreton in Marsh, and one boy in each of the years 1911 and 1914. More boys won County Scholarships in the 1910s and 1920s, but it is not until 1924 that we find the next girl to win a scholarship, Margaret Horwood to Milham Ford School, Oxford.

In the period from 1900-24 only 12 boys won scholarships from Milton school. Eleven of these were to Burford Grammar School and one to Witney Grammar. The latter was not taken up due to the extra cost of travel. In the same period only three girls won scholarships – Ruth Barnes in 1900 to Banbury Technical and the two previously mentioned. How the girls reached their schools is unknown. It was possible to travel by train or they may have stayed with relations near the school and come home on non-school days. For those children without an opportunity of a secondary education it meant leaving school at 14. The boys went to work on local farms, with building firms or on the railway. Some gained apprenticeships with local craftsmen and tradesmen, others went into domestic service, either home or away.

The choice was more limited for girls – to work with relatives, in local shops, or in service, very often living in the large houses locally or further afield. For Gwen there was another choice – to become a teacher. But, with no secondary education and no prospect of getting one, Gwen was not able to gain the necessary qualifications to gain a place in a teacher training college. This would have led to qualification as a certificated teacher like most local headteachers at the time. However, there was another route open. Gwen left Milton School on 23 December 1921 at the end of term. At the start of the new term in 1922 she was back at the same school but as a pupil teacher in company with two of her old school friends, Olive Griffin and Marion Gooding. The last named later taught at Shipton Church of England School between 1928 and 1931.

For the next four years Gwen kept normal school hours during which she taught and assisted with various classes for half of the day. The other half was spent in private study in preparation for her examinations. The class teaching was done in one half of the 'big' room, separated by a curtain from the class with Mr Burch at the other end. From his position he could keep an eye and an ear on both classes and pupil teachers. He also kept a check on their private studies which included extra tutorials after school hours. In the absence of any teacher from the school a pupil teacher very often took over complete control of their class until replaced by a supply teacher (one drafted in from elsewhere) or the return of the absentee. In her first year, Gwen received £1 1s 8s each month. This salary, in note and coin, was delivered by the school's correspondent who was the link between the school, the managers and the Education Committee.

On Saturdays Gwen and her fellow pupil teachers cycled to the Guildhall at Chipping Norton. Here they received lectures all day from tutors from Oxford. Gwen wonders how Mr Liddell of the Wesleyan School in Oxford coped with twenty lively teenage girls and one boy. All this training, both practical and theoretical was checked by His Majesty's Inspectors when they made their regular visits to schools. They either approved or made suggestions for improvements, and made the final decision whether a pupil teacher should continue. In December 1924 Gwen and her two friends took their examinations in Oxford. When the results came out in March 1925 Gwen had failed in one of the three parts of the examination and had to stay until the end of the year to pass the final part. On 22 October 1925 she left Milton school to look for a post as an uncertificated teacher where-ever she could find one. By this time the policy of training teachers by this method was being phased out and so Gwen was Milton's last pupil teacher.

Ironically, 1925 was the year that Burford Grammar School began taking in girls to its newly-built girls' department. Entry was gained by paying fees or winning a scholarship. If it was a County Scholarship it included free loan of an Education Committee bicycle. Milton's first girl scholarship to Burford Grammar School was won by Evelyn Miles in 1926.

After leaving Milton School Gwen had some difficulty in finding a permanent teaching post as an uncertificated teacher, so she began as a supply teacher. For the first two terms of 1925 she worked at Yarnton, Long Hanborough, Eynsham and Langford until she obtained a permanent post at Enstone Council School in September. She cycled from Milton to Enstone on Monday morning and shared lodgings in the same house with two other teachers during the week and cycled back to Milton on Fridays. While at Enstone Gwen learnt some of the harder facts of life. One was that the head of a school could make or break a new teacher. One head was

unhelpful, even resentful, whereas the other made all teachers feel of some importance and of great use to children and school. Regrettably he died of cancer within a short time of his contact with Gwen. At Enstone, Gwen, brought up a Baptist, found that there were others with differing religious beliefs, for her two fellow lodgers were Church of England and Roman Catholic. Although poles apart religiously, the three taught happily together and remained friends all their lives.

In 1928 Gwen's parents bought the burnt-out bakehouse in Upper Milton. Her mother, father and friends worked in their spare time to convert it into a home to be called Hollydene (now called Holly Cottage, on the corner opposite to Lower Farm). Gwen would return there at weekends, but in 1931 her father died and she gave up her post at Enstone to come back to live with her mother permanently. On 7 September 1931 Gwen Silman, Reg. No. 26/7206, became an uncertificated teacher on the staff of Milton School as infant teacher. Since Gwen had left the school in 1925, Oxfordshire had carried out a 're-grouping of schools' which caused several changes there. Lyneham Junior School had closed in 1927 and its scholars now attended the Milton schools. In 1930 the Infants' School in the Baptist schoolrooms was closed and from April all infant children were taught at the school in Church Road. This building had previously housed the junior and senior children aged from 7 to 14. From April 1930, apart from children who won scholarships or were fee-payers, all senior children, aged from 11 to 14 years, were 'bussed' to Burford Council School, unless they chose to walk to Shipton School which remained all age, i.e. 5 to 14 years.

There had also been some structural alteration to the building which formerly had two large teaching rooms with separate entrances for boys and girls. The girls' entrance was filled in to make one of the rooms larger. This room (the southern) was then divided into two classrooms by a wood and glass screen. The other room remained as it was with a curtain separating the two classes then using it. Another change in 1930 was the appointment of Mrs A.M. Pearce as headmistress. Mrs Pearce had left her native Wales where married women were not allowed to teach and moved to Oxfordshire. She became head of Milton Infants' School in January 1927 following a year which had seen seven different headteachers come and go. Mrs Pearce remained head of the Infants' School until its closure in April 1930 when she moved to the school in Church Road where she became its first and only woman head, a post she occupied until December 1958. Gwen's aunt, Miss Win Slater, was still teaching at the school, and the fourth member of the staff was Miss Kit Salter who was then living in the school house at Lyneham. With Mrs Pearce living in the school house at Milton all four teachers lived within the Milton ecclesiastical parish.

Between 1914 and 1930 the combined total of the two schools in

Milton had averaged 134 children. By 1930 the number on the books was 117 and although the annual intake remained at 20 per year, the total slowly fell to 64 in January 1939. Due to the decline in numbers Milton School lost one of its teachers, Miss Salter, in 1932. In comparison Shipton School averaged 108 on the books between 1914 and 1930, but then it rose with the intake of senior-aged scholars from other villages and from St Michael's Home for Waifs and Strays in 1930/31. For the first half of this century there were very few certificated teachers at Milton School apart from the headteachers. The assistant teachers were monitresses, pupil teachers and uncertificated teachers, all women. This was not exceptional, for in 1935, 74% of all assistant teachers in Oxfordshire elementary schools were uncertificated or supplementary teachers, of whom 95% were women.

Gwen taught the Infants in the main room of the school separated by a curtain from the class at the other end. She proved to be very popular with the children, some of them being sons and daughters of children with whom she had grown up. Gwen can recall no discipline problems for she was backed up by a staff keen on discipline, and parents who now gave their support.

GWEN SILMAN'S CLASS, MILTON SCHOOL C.1934, LOOKING TOWARDS THE VICARAGE. THE POINTED ARCH WAS FORMERLY THE GIRLS' ENTRANCE BUT HERE HAS BEEN ALTERED TO A LARGE WINDOW – THE LOWEST IN THE SCHOOL.



In 1935 I began my school life in this class but of it I can remember little, not even the class teacher, Miss Gwen Silman. But Gwen remembers 1935, not for my arrival at school, but for the year she went on a day trip with the North Cotswold Sunday School Union by train to Barry Island. On that day she met a young Welshman, Philip Morgan. Like many of his countrymen he had moved east to find work, initially 'in gentlemen's service' at Sezincote and later as Congregational Minister at Long Compton. A little later Gwen and Philip were to be seen walking arm-in-arm around the village. To us young children Philip became the most hated man in the village for he was going to take our favourite teacher Gwen away from us – not by force but by marriage.

By now Oxfordshire Education Committee had decreed that 'Appointments of women teachers terminate on marriage'. To support a non-teaching wife Philip now moved to Banbury to gain a higher income by working at the Northern Aluminium Company. Gwen became Mrs Philip Morgan at Milton Baptist Chapel on 31 July 1937. The wedding breakfast was held in the adjacent schoolroom with all the catering done by family and friends, except for the wedding cake, produced by Shipton's baker, Mr Kethro. The bridal pair were then taken to Stow on the Wold station where the Ports to Ports Express (Newcastle to South Wales) was stopped by request. They honeymooned on the Gower Peninsular and returned to stay in Upper Milton at Hollydene.

Philip now drove to work at Banbury by motorcycle while Gwen continued to teach at Milton. In 1938 they took out a mortgage on a new house in Banbury costing £1 12s 1d a fortnight. In March of that year they moved into their £450 new house. Gwen travelled by Midland Red bus from Banbury to Shipton every Monday morning with permission from the Director of Education 'to arrive 30 minutes late'. During the week she stayed with her aunts and returned to her new home in Banbury on Fridays until her contract ran out on 31 March 1938.

As the local Education Committee later permitted school managers 'to re-appoint married women teachers subject to the consent of the committee', Gwen was able to find some supply teaching posts in and around Banbury. Her mother was able to act as housekeeper as she had now moved in with Gwen and Philip, having let her cottage, Hollydene, in Upper Milton. She was also able to continue as housekeeper after the arrival of her first grandson, David, born to Gwen and Philip in June 1939. Then – war. Philip continued to work at Northern Aluminium Company which had its share of attention from enemy aircraft. Apart from his factory work, Philip was a fire-watcher and worked with the Blood Transfusion Service of the Red Cross. Gwen's mother died in 1943 by which time it was found that Gwen and Philip could have no more children of their own. They began plans for adoption. These were going



WEDDING GROUP OF MR AND MRS MORGAN TAKEN AT HOLLYDENE, JULY 1937. GROOM'S PARENTS ON FAR LEFT, UNCLE EDMUND (SLATER) TO RIGHT OF BRIDE WITH MRS NELLY SILMAN (NEÉ SLATER) SEATED RIGHT.

well until Philip was called up for military service and spent his first days in the army dodging 'doodlebugs' in trenches in Kent. On his weekend leaves he was able to meet Gwen in London at an adoption society. Philip was posted to India in January 1945, and so it was Gwen and a friend who collected a dark-haired 10-month-old girl 'on approval' for three months. There were no problems and the adoption papers were duly signed although this did take some time as all forms (in triplicate) had to be sent to the Indian N.W. Frontier to be signed by Philip and his C.O.

At the end of the war in Europe on VE Day 1945 Gwen took her children to see their grandparents in Blaenavon, South Wales. Then began the long wait for the return of Philip, but it was to be another two years before Philip first saw his daughter, Helen Louise, in November 1947. Then followed the difficult process of settling down to life in post-war Banbury, and, in 1950, a new phase of their lives began. They sold their house in Timms Road and moved to Barry Island where their association had begun. Here they ran a guest house, became involved with the Baptist church while their children attended local schools. On a visit to Milton in 1961 Gwen found her aunts not only older but physically poorer. By now

her children had set up their own homes and her first grandson, Peter, was born in 1967. In 1961 Gwen and Philip sold up in Barry Island and moved back to Milton. Philip worked at Smith's Industries in Witney while Gwen cared for her aunts. She also found time to run a nursery for six pre-school children including grandchildren of those she had been at school with.

One of Gwen's aunts, Miss Winifred Slater, had begun as a scholar in Milton Infants' School in 1890 and stayed within the Milton Schools grouping as scholar, monitress and uncertificated teacher until her retirement in 1950. She was the last of three aunts to be nursed by Gwen and after her death in 1970, and on Philip's early retirement, they moved to Strood in Kent to be near their son David and his family. Their daughter, Helen, her husband John and daughter Alexandra had gone to South Africa, later to move to Canada in 1976. In 1978 Gwen and Philip made another move back to Banbury where Philip died of cancer in 1984. Their son, David, who had been working in Oxford now took over the pharmacy and post office with his wife Margarita at Wootton, near Abingdon. And so Gwen made yet another move, this time to a bungalow in Wootton where she has just passed her 90th birthday. Her half-bungalow has enough space to receive a few visitors, including Mr Smith from next door who keeps an eye on her now that her hearing and sight are failing. There is also room for a telephone as Gwen thinks 'it good to talk' and when she cannot find any of her contemporaries to talk to, she talks to their children and grandchildren. She also has her own five grown-up grandchildren – Peter, Andrew and James in this country and Alexandra and David in Canada – as well as two great-grandchildren Bryony and Daniel.

Gwen makes occasional forays to Milton but does not like many of the changes of the last 80 years. Luckily she has her memories.

References

- 1 *Wychwoods History* No. 6, pp 66-70.
- 2 In the minute-book which begins at 1900 the title written was Lady Reade's Charity, as it was also written in the same book in 1936. In 1937 the title is written as Lady Reads Educational Foundation and the title used today is The Lady Reade Educational Foundation.
- 3 Although this seems rather late for blackberry-picking, the date given in the log book is 28 November 1918.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Gwen who has generously shared her memories with members of WLHS. Many have been recorded on audio cassette, and some have been used in this article and in other Society publications.

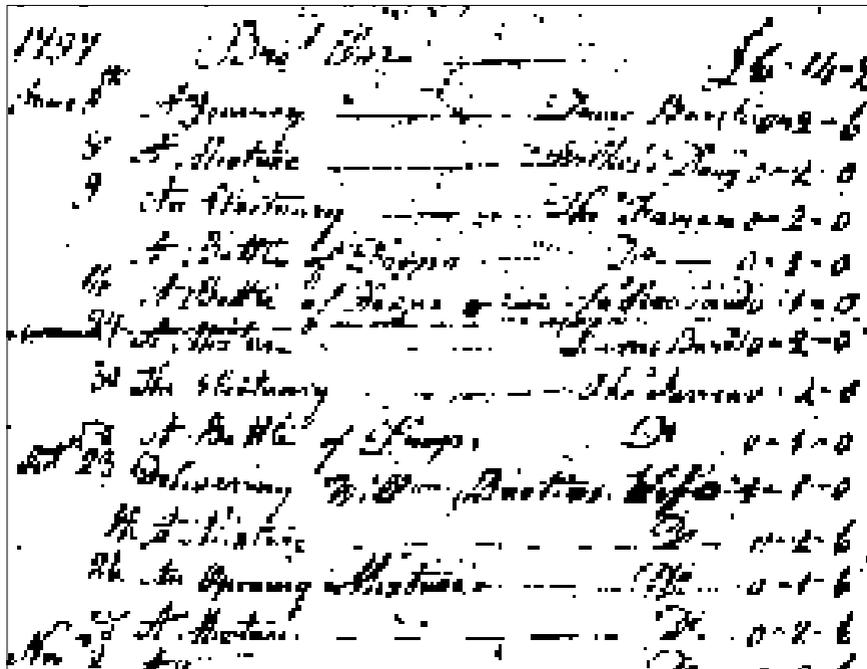
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The Doctor's Bill

TOM MCQUAY

The overseers of the poor, elected by the parish, were responsible for collecting 'a poor rate' and using these funds for poor relief and medical care for the sick poor when needed.¹

In 1795 there was no G.P. in either Shipton or Milton and most villagers relied on Dr Hunt's Burford practice.² Dr Hunt charged the overseers 2s.6d. for 'a journey' or in today's parlance 'a home visit' to a sick pauper in Milton and he made 17 such visits in 1795 and 1796. The overseers appear to have been most conscientious about the care of the sick poor. Squeezed between increasing demands from the poor³ and complaints from the rate-payers it must have been difficult to decide when a costly home visit was warranted.



They paid a guinea for the removal of a wen or sebaceous cyst from a patient's arm and the same amount for attendance at a confinement, presumably when there were complications and the Milton midwife could not manage.

It is obviously impossible to interpret the pharmacology of 'the mixture' in 1795 or what was in 'a bottle of drops' but the purpose of 'an opening mixture' leaves little to the imagination. 'A cordial mixture' was probably a tonic as was an 'electuary' which contained treacle and sulphur. An epithem was an ointment or cream.

This is a typical doctor's bill for that time with nothing to suggest inferior medicines or cheaper treatment for the poor. Such bills were ubiquitous until the coming of National Insurance in 1911 and were common right up to the start of the N.H.S. in 1948.

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- ¹ *Wychwoods History* No. 5, 1989, pp 23, 24.
- ² *History of the Burford Practice*, Dr R.G.Eager (unpublished).
- ³ *Wychwoods History* No. 12, 'Welfare in the Wychwoods', 1997, pp 20, 21.

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The late Mrs Henrietta Hackling's Memories of the Day the Pig was killed

GWEN ALLEN

In the early 1900s many Milton villagers lived in cottages along the High Street and in terraces that led off it at right angles. Each cottage would have a pigsty at the bottom of the yard or garden where the family pig lived. The pig, fed on offal and scraps, was a very important part of every family, accepted as a valuable asset to be killed when large enough to provide meat – a rare luxury to most families – to be cured and hung to supplement the winter diet. Meat only became more available when Mr Pratley, the butcher, introduced New Zealand meat to Milton.

In common with many Milton families, Mrs Hackling moved to different parts of the village as she grew up and was living with her grandmother in The Heath when quite young and helping with the annual pig killing and curing. These are her memories.

When fully grown, the pig was laid on a long stool in the yard ready for Mr Pratley, the butcher, to kill it and collect the blood in a bowl, to be made later into black puddings. Mrs Hackling's grandmother couldn't bear to see the killing, so blinds were always drawn across the yard windows during the operation. The carcass had to be drained for hours before it could be cut up but the yard was so small that the pig was tied to a pole and stood upright in a trough in the hall of the cottage. Mrs Hackling remembers being afraid to come downstairs next morning until her grandmother stood in front of the pig to hide it.

That day the butcher came to cut the carcass. The head was removed and made into brawn, called collared head: the trotters were made into jelly. The body was cut into two sides and salted until dry enough for hanging. The salt, bought in large blocks, was first cut up, rolled and put into jars. The sides of meat were usually laid on a shallow, wooden tray with holes in the corners for drainage into four buckets placed beneath. Then salt was rubbed into each side very thoroughly each day to bring the juices out of the meat, draining away the brine and leaving the meat dry enough for the butcher to come again and complete the specialist task of cutting the carcass into bacon to be racked and hams to be put in brown paper bags and hung on the wall.

When curing bacon, Mrs Agnes Early's mother used the following ingredients for a joint from a ten-score pig:

<i>1lb coarse sugar</i>	<i>2oz salt parnella</i>
<i>1lb bay salt</i>	<i>4oz salt petre</i>
<i>1lb salt bar (or block)</i>	<i>4oz black pepper and herbs</i>

They were mixed together, rubbed into the bacon and used for basting on alternate days.

As families owned a pig, the killings were spread over many weeks and friends and neighbours, who may have at times contributed scraps, would share those parts to be used immediately, extending the feast days until the process began again. These portions were removed from the fresh animal and included chitterlings, the small intestines, which were washed thoroughly (under a running tap if possible) and the stomach turned inside out to ensure complete cleaning. Then they were all soaked in water for three days with the water changed each day. Finally they were boiled for three hours.

Lard was made by heating the fatty connective tissue or 'melt' slowly for a long time, then straining it and adding sprigs of rosemary. The 'scratchings' from this process were used in faggots which were a treat enjoyed by all. Some folks made black puddings which were considered a great delicacy. The bladder was blown up and used merrily as a football until it burst, when it was dried and could be made into a tobacco pouch. Nothing was wasted in this traditional activity annually shared by so many villagers.



'Honey Merchant and Tailor' and other Occupations in Shipton, Milton and Leafield 1785-1817

TOM MCQUAY, JOAN HOWARD-DRAKE,
ANTHEA JONES AND SUE JOURDAN

In an article in *Wychwoods History* No. 11 (1996), we used information from an account book of small tithes kept by Revd Joseph Goodwin, vicar of Shipton under Wychwood. In this study we have used a similar account book for 1785 to 1792 of his successor, Thomas Brookes, which has also survived.¹ It is six and a half inches by eight inches and bound in yellowing vellum, its cover bearing the words 'Shipton & Its Hamlets viz Lineham, Milton, Leafield, Upper & Lower Langley & Ramsden Tithe Book'. It originally had 136 pages but the majority are lost and it starts on page 69 with the end of the Leafield list for 1786. The only complete year with entries for Shipton, Langley, Milton and Leafield extant in the book is 1788 which we have used in this study.

Thomas Brookes (1732-1814) was the sixth child of Peter Brookes who lived in Prebendal House beside the church in Shipton. The Brookes were probably the second family in social standing in Shipton in the eighteenth century, after the Reades at Shipton Court. Although the Prebendal estate belonged to the Professor of Civil Law, it was leased to Richard and Frances Morgan of Warley in Essex and they in turn sublet it to Peter Brookes in 1726, six years before Thomas's birth. The Brookes had to allow the Morgans and their servants the use of part of the house and joint use of the kitchen when they came to stay. When Thomas was only three his father died and Mary Brookes, his mother, took over the estate for three years at £106 a year. An inventory made at the time of a new lease in 1739 listed the rooms in the house in which young Thomas was born and brought up.² Upstairs there were eight chambers, including the Lady's Chamber and Sir Richard's Chamber which was 'hanged with purple very old', a closett and a boghouse with covered seat. Downstairs there was a parlour, a withdrawing room, hall, two passages, another boghouse with two wooden covers to the seat, staircase, kitchen, cellar and washhouse with a stone trough under the pumps, and a dairy house. The servants would have used the three garrets, maids' chamber and servants' hall. Little furniture was listed because the house was let part-furnished but the

casement windows, latches, bolts, bars and keys were all itemised. The lease eventually passed to Thomas's older brother, Peter. At the end of the nineteenth century the Brookes were still at the Prebendal and were able to purchase the freehold.

Thomas matriculated aged 17 at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, in 1749, becoming B.A. in 1753 and M.A. in 1756.³ That same year he married Mary Williams of Gloucester in Shipton Church. He became curate at Idbury and Fifield in 1766 and vicar at Shipton in 1773 when Joseph Goodwin junior died. Two years later he became a 'Doctor in Divinity'. Thomas Brookes had the help of a curate, Thomas Griffiths from Asthall, to serve the Chapel at Leafield and his son-in-law, John Tarn, as his curate in Shipton from 1776 when Tarn married his daughter Charlotte. Tarn also served Ascott, Fifield and Idbury when Dr Brookes was indisposed. Another curate, Walter Morgan, was married to his daughter, Amelia; 'Walter Morgan my son-in-law lives at Westcote and serves Fifield and Westcote occasionally. He is my curate and I give him £80 per annum. I assist his family, several of his children living with me which I educate'.⁴ The Bishop of Gloucester described Walter Morgan as 'a stout man from the Principality but incapable of spelling though a schoolmaster'.⁵ Bishop Butler of Oxford also had views about this clerical family when he thundered in his note book in 1784 'Dr Brookes, with so many cures on his hands, is shamefully non-resident'.⁶ Despite the bishop's displeasure, Dr Brookes was by no means unusual in not living in his parish. Oxfordshire had nearly two-thirds of its parishes with non-resident parish clergy in both 1778 and 1808.⁷ Some were fellows of Oxford colleges, some held two or more livings in order to increase their incomes, some lived in places they liked better. By 1790 the bishop noted Dr Brookes and his curate were resident in the vicarage. Perhaps on his return he resolved to serve his parishioners better and in 1785 took up the vellum note book to enter his small tithe accounts.

Like many vicars, Dr Brookes seems to have found the collection of his dues time-consuming and hard work. By 1787 he had given up the attempt to collect the small tithes from Ramsden and farmed them out to William Welch of Chadlington for five guineas a year. He listed, sometimes in his own hand, sometimes perhaps copied out by a clerk, the names of his parishioners in Shipton, Langley, Milton and Leafield and noted their occupations or, for the gentry, status. In Milton he entered 'Quaker' by the names of five who probably refused to pay tithes to the Church of England; two Quakers were also denoted as farmers. Bishop Butler noted in 1778 that there was one papist and seven to eight Quakers in the parish; they had a licensed meeting house in Green Lane, Milton. The more common occupations, like farmer or labourer, were indicated by 'F' or 'L'. On the inside front cover in 1791 Dr Brookes recorded the items on which he was

due a tithes: 'lambs, calves, milk, wood, colts, horses totally employ'd in Husbandry, agistment of sheep not shear'd or sold out after shearing, agistment of weaning calves, Heifers & unmilch'd cows, oxen, Horses taken into tack, orch., garden & Honey'. Sometimes he noted detail of unusual but relevant tithes against individual names but unlike his predecessor, Dr Brookes did not list the pennies he was due for the Easter offering and garden produce, and only entered the larger, more substantial payments with few under £1. Some were made in kind: 'Mr J.Young, carriage of oats £1 10s; in cash £1, all acct. settled £2 10s'; and other notes mentioned a load of straw and hops and malt.

Table 1: Small tithes paid in 1788

TOWNSHIP	NUMBER OF NAMES	NUMBER OF PAYERS	TOTAL PAID
Shipton	81	10	£31 8s 0d
Milton (1789)	104	17	£21 12s 11d
Leafield	66	7	£7 18s 8d
Langley	12	3	£7 16s 0d

Throughout the book there are many annotations of tithes part-paid, on account, not paid, in arrears, arrears paid, settling up after several years, as well as notes about marriages and deaths, names of those who had settled and those who had moved and those who had been given notice to quit. It is not surprising, with such detail to master, that by 1792 he had let Milton small tithes to Mr Edward Maddox for £30 a year. Dr Brookes can be imagined sitting in his study in Shipton vicarage trying to remember what he was owed, by whom and when, and his account book vividly demonstrates the nightmare of collecting so many small amounts from parishioners.

Shipton, Leafield and Milton in 1788

The tithe lists have provided an excellent source for a reconstruction of the population of these Georgian villages. For classification purposes, when two occupations were given the first was used for this study: Richard Ellis was a butcher and farmer, John Frankling was a tailor and shopkeeper, John Hedges was a labourer and an innholder. There was a certain logic in these combinations. Presumably the labourer's wife ran the inn when her husband was at work, but William Hawkes was a honey merchant and tailor, an unlikely combination. Only heads of households from whom small tithes were due were listed.

Table 2: Occupations as given in tithe account book 1788

OCCUPATION/STATUS	SHIPTON	MILTON	LEAFIELD
gentleman	2	0	0
lady	1	0	0
no occupation given	5	3	13
widow/spinister/wife	12	9	9
Quaker	0	3	0
poor	0	2	0
farmer	10(1)	22(1)	10
labourer	27	31	43
baker	1	3	1
blacksmith	1	1	1
butcher	1	1	0
carpenter	2	3	3
cooper	0	1	0
cowdoctor	0	1	0
cowkeeper	0	1	0
dairyman	2	0	0
exciseman	0	1	0
freeholder	1	0	0
furze seller	0	1	0
gardener	0	1	0
honey merchant	1	0	0
innholder (publican)	1(1)	2	1
keeper's son	0	0	1
keeps sheep	0	1	0
maltster	1	1	0
mason	2	4	0
midwife	0	1	0
miller	1	1	0
pig killer	0	0	1
potter	0	0	2(1)
schoolmaster	0	1	0
servant	2	0	0
shepherd	1	0	0
shoemaker	1	2	1
shopkeeper	3(1)	1	2
slater	0	1(1)	1
tailor	3(1)	2	0
watchmaker	0	1	0
weaver	1	3	0
Totals	82	105	89

(Figure in brackets = second occupation)

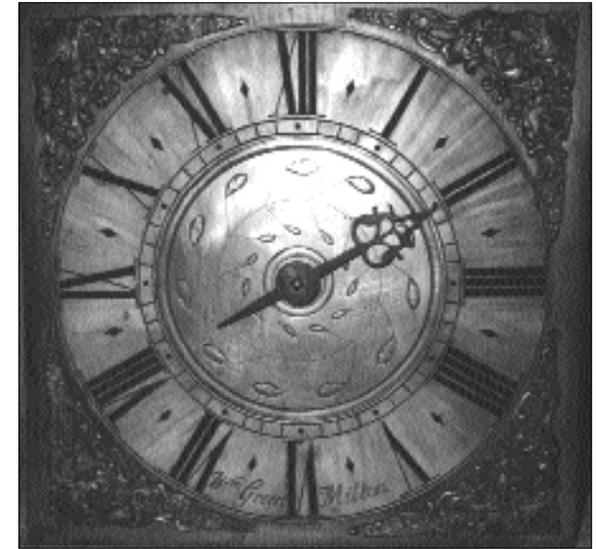
Each village had its own particular character. Shipton had the Court and the Prebendal House (Parsonage Farm), substantial farms and the essential tradesmen, artisans and labourers of a predominantly agricultural village. The Dowager Lady Reade resided some of the time with her staff at Shipton Court and contributed half of the small tithe total. Other tithe payers were also gentry class: William Flood and James Cook 'now dead'. Milton had no church while Leafield had a chapel served by a curate. Leafield and Milton had no counterpart to Shipton's affluent if small hierarchy, no manor house and no resident squire. Leafield was a forest village with a preponderance of poor labourers and few artisans or tradesman. Milton was almost a small town for the Wychwoods with twice as many artisans as Shipton; the variety of trades and crafts suggests a clatter and bustle of business, not a deserted street with everyone in the fields.

Agriculture was important in all three villages. There were ten good farms in Shipton compared with 22 smaller holdings in Milton. The many labourers were mainly working in agriculture, although in Milton some would have been employed in the stone quarries and in Leafield some would have worked in the Forest. In Milton there was a furze-seller who would have gathered gorse from the poorer, sandier land towards Bruern, which was sold for fuel or used as a base layer when thatching a house. The thatching of ricks and houses could have been done by farm labourers. There was no hurdle maker nor thatcher unlike Fifield where these were among the main crafts.⁸

The three villages all had a shop or two, a baker, a blacksmith, a carpenter, a shoemaker, and at least one inn. A butcher, maltster, mason, miller, tailor or weaver were all available in Shipton and Milton but not in Leafield. The most skilled artisans of Leafield were two 'potters' with John Door both a labourer and a potter. There were four masons in Milton, two called Groves and two called Sellman, who were related to the Groves family by marriage. This family's history has been described in *Wychwood History* Nos 7 and 8. Another two members of the Groves family were on the Shipton tithe list and also stated to be masons, with one noted as actually resident in Milton. Three carpenters and a slater may well have worked for Groves' building business which continues today. Although there was a total of eight carpenters in the three villages, there were none of the more skilled joiners or cabinet makers. In late seventeenth century Shipton, seven inventories showed that some houses already had joined furniture, where mortice and tenon joints were used rather than nails or lashings, evidence of higher quality and rising standards of living. This sort of furniture was probably made in specialist workshops elsewhere. There was no wheelwright in any of the villages and no turner and nothing to suggest a lathe worker among the carpenters. Nevertheless William Green in Milton was a watchmaker. This is the most skilled craft listed,



GRANDFATHER CLOCK AND
DETAIL OF THE DIAL MADE
AROUND 1760 BY WILLIAM
GREEN OF MILTON.
Photos by Peter Meecham



far removed from the many semi-skilled artisans. A village watchmaker relied on his fellow craftsmen in the area for making different parts and sharing machinery and technology. John Kibble, a native of Finstock, in his *Historical and Other Notes on Wychwood Forest*, published in 1928, discussed 'Time Recorders and their Makers', and stated that William Green of Milton 'had a Clock Club into which so much per week was paid to get a clock'. Another maker was quoted as saying that the price of a clock was four pounds and ten shillings. Kibble also wrote that Farbrother was clockmaker, farmer and viol player 'here and at Finstock', and mentioned other clockmakers, often Quakers, in the district. Dr Brookes made no mention of either William Green or John Farbrother, a labourer, as being Quakers. Milton also had an exciseman, James Walters. 'Excise' was the first tax on commodities bought and sold, and was introduced in 1643 at the beginning of the Civil War. It was found so useful that it has continued ever since. A tax was paid on every barrel of beer, and on candles and soap, leather and salt. It was extended to malt, hops and

spirits. Maltsters and brewers paid the tax directly, but the consumer indirectly. When the exciseman was resident in Milton in 1785, the American War of Independence was over (in 1782) but the government's difficulties in financing it were still evident. Sometimes the exciseman resided with his victim, keeping a day-to-day watch on the operations he taxed. There was apparently enough malting and brewing in Milton and the area to warrant the full-time presence of the tax collector.

The different characteristics of the three villages are emphasised when the vicar's tithe lists are compared with the Land Tax assessments for the same year, 1788.⁹ The Land Tax was not entirely what its title suggests: tax was also levied on buildings, moveable goods, salaries from certain public offices and the income from tithes. It started in 1692 and from 1776 it was fixed at four shillings in the £, so that assessments can be multiplied by five to give the rateable values. As each county was responsible for

Table 3: Comparison of Land Tax and tithe lists for 1788

	MILTON	SHIPTON	LEAFIELD
Names on tithe list	104	81	87
Identified on Land Tax	41	23	14
In Land Tax but not tithe list (presumably not resident)	3	7+2 clerics	7
Owners/occupiers	21	9	3
'Farmers' paying more than £7	3	4	4

raising a fixed amount, assessments were never comparable across the whole country, but the records provide very reasonable comparisons of the wealth of inhabitants within the smaller area of a parish, as agreed by neighbours and county commissions. Small landholders tended to pay relatively more than large.

The tax was paid either by the 'landowner', 'proprietor', or 'landlord' (all three terms were used), or by the 'occupier', according to individual arrangements. Although the Professor of Civil Law at Oxford owned the income from the prebend, Thomas Wood Esq. of the Inner Temple appears as the lessee ('proprietor') of the Prebendal land and great tithes in all three villages, and the Brookes family continued as his tenant ('occupier') in Shipton. Sub-tenants might sometimes be named, and at other times ignored depending on who might pay the tax. The Milton excise man, James Walters, had 'Officer of Excise' written across both proprietor and occupier columns; his assessment was £8 suggesting a salary of £40 a year. Shipton's vicar, as his predecessor's tithe lists made clear, received about

£50 a year but Revd Dr Brookes is named in the Land Tax only as proprietor of a property valued at 17s 8d, occupied by his curate Revd John Tarn. The largest assessment in the three villages for an occupier was Soloman Goffe of Leafield, £22 3s 4d, followed by Lady Reade at £17 1s 4d. The smallest was Sylvester Humphries of Milton at sixpence.

Milton is shown as a village with many more small-scale owners who occupied their own cottages and gardens than the other villages. A number of village craftsmen were owner/occupiers giving them a certain independence, for example, the watchmaker, the cow-doctor, two carpenters, a tailor, a mason and furze seller, a shopkeeper and a slater. All were assessed at less than six shillings. There were nine more substantial farmers. Comparison of land tax and tithe books brings some fascinating insights. The land tax recorded 'Wilkins' against two parcels of land and the vicar's Milton tithe lists indicated John Wilkins farmer and 'his brothers and sisters'. There were probably two sets of father and son working the same land and all called 'farmer' by the vicar but only one of

AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS REAPING



each set paid land tax. Some tenant farmers owned a small plot of land in order to qualify as voters in parliamentary elections for which the land tax was used as evidence, and at least four in Milton probably came into this category. Four small owner/occupiers were described as 'farmer' and two as 'labourer' by the vicar, all paying similar amounts. One 'labourer' kept 'three cows, a good orchard and garden' according to the vicar's list, and paid thirteen shillings and sixpence land tax, yet was not classified as a farmer, suggesting social distinctions that are no longer recoverable.

Smaller proportions of Leaffield and Shipton's inhabitants could be found in the land tax, and owner/occupation was much less significant. In Leaffield, as already noted, Solomon Goffe was outstanding for the amount of tax he paid and he also collected the tithes of the township; there was one other sizeable farm and two medium farms, one held by Catherine Hawkes, whose will is extant. One carpenter, two potters and two labourers paid land tax. The collectors of the tax, Lankford Harris and William Harris, were both called 'shopkeeper' by the vicar, but again only one paid tax, another example of a family business. In Shipton, there were three larger farmers and one medium, and two shopkeepers and three craftsmen who paid land tax, including Mark Reeve the blacksmith. A small 'leisured' group included a gentleman and a 'freeholder' though the vicar had second thoughts about this description and crossed it out. Eight people in Shipton and two in Leaffield combined rented and owned holdings.

Links with the Past

Six of the 43 hearth tax payers of 1662 have descendants on the 1788 tithe list; two of these had copyholds that could have given them security as long as they produced heirs. Mark Reeve was the Shipton blacksmith in 1647 in Main Street, now Church Street and, amazingly, a Mark Reeve was still the blacksmith in 1788, many generations and 141 years later. He died in 1802, ending the long line of Reeve blacksmiths. Mary Morton, a widow, was the relict of a family of carpenters whose cottage and small piece of land had been held on a 'lifehold' lease. Other long-standing Shipton families included the Cookes who had held land from Brasenose College since 1547, the last Cooke named on a lease died in 1774 although his name was entered in the Tithe Book in 1788, annotated 'now dead'. In 1794 the first lease not in the Cooke name for 247 years was made to Mary Leonard, James Cookes' niece, with the proviso that she produce a terrier (a description of the house and land) on parchment made by six honest men of the neighbourhood within one year.¹⁰ Two other long-term names were Shaylor (innholder) and Whiting (miller).

OCCUPATION OCCUPATION

YEAR OF

The Wills

The wills of 19 of the tithe payers were traced and transcribed.¹¹ Eight were from Shipton, five from Leaffield and six from Milton with estates varying in value from £20 to £2000. (The estate duty account of £45,000 and the will of Dame Harriott Reade will be analysed in a future journal; the will of Revd Thomas Brookes himself has no probate value entered). Eleven testators were artisans or tradesmen, four were yeoman, three were widows and one was a farmer, Dr Brookes's nephew, Thomas, at Parsonage Farm (Prebendal). No labourer left a will. Three men made a will when it seemed their lives were nearly at an end; John Costiff was 'in an indifferent state of health', Robert Bunting was 'aged and weak in body' while

Table 4: Wills of tithe payers in 1788

STATUS	IN TA	* AMOUNT	IMMEDIATE TESTATOR PROBATE	HEIR	VILLAGE	IN	WILL/
Lady Reade	S	widow		£45,000	1812		grandson
Goffe	L	yeoman	farmer	£2000	1796		wife & daughter
Thomas Baylies	M	cow-leech	cow-doctor	£1000	1799	John Rawlings	
Catherine Hawkes	L	widow	farmer & widow	£600	1805		son
Thomas Brookes	S	farmer	farmer	£600	1803		wife
John Smith	M	yeoman	farmer	£600	1805		wife & daughter
John Costiff	S	yeoman	farmer	£600	1788		son
James Cooke	S	butcher	gent now dead	£300	1774		niece Mary Leonard
Mary Kench	S	widow	widow	£300	1795	Sarah Harris	
John Vokins	L	potter	potter	£300	1790		son
Henry Shayler	S	blacksmith	innholder	£200	1790		wife
Tenant Shayler	L	blacksmith	blacksmith	£100	1797		grandson
Mark Reeves	S	blacksmith	blacksmith	£100	1802		friend
William Risby	M	carpenter	carpenter	£100	1801		various
John Silman	M	mason	mason	£100	1791		wife in trust to son
John Risby	M	baker	baker	£100	1796		son
John Green	M	tailor	quaker	£100	1798		various
Robt Bunting	S	baker	baker	£50	1799		children
Thomas Pratley	L	yeoman	labourer	£30	1788		wife

*The amount taken from probate given as 'not more than..', except for Lady Reade

The wills produced several surprises with, apart from Dame Harriott in Shipton, the most wealthy testators being Solomon Goffe in Leaffield and a cow-leech, Thomas Baylies of Milton. In a simple will he left property valued up to £1000 to a kinsman, John Rawlings. He must have been much in demand in this predominantly rural area running a successful veterinary practice.

It is interesting to compare the occupation given by the vicar on the tithe list with that given in the testator's will, reflecting the difference between their social and occupational standing. This was straightforward with artisans and tradesmen. A yeoman, who would have owned at least some of his land, was an old-fashioned term indicating a respected social status in his own eyes while the vicar, himself higher up the social scale, termed the same man a 'farmer', who would have rented most of his land. It suggests that the popular use of the word 'farmer' instead of 'yeoman' and 'husbandman' was becoming general. Solomon Goffe of Leaffield had property valued up to £2000 and was described as a yeoman in his will but as a farmer by the vicar. Previously he had also been a prosperous pottery manufacturer and the vicar considered him a farmer. Goffe had inherited a malthouse, properties and lands from his father, also called Solomon, from his aunt Elizabeth House, and from another lady, Jane Morton of Leaffield, and had purchased more. Although he had continued as a potter after his father's death in 1753 and even advertised in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* in 1761 'Earthen kilns for drying malt or oats or bark for tanners', at some point he leased the pottery to John Vokins; it was situated near the Green in the lane now called Chimney End.¹² On his death, his wife and daughter, both called Elizabeth, inherited the land and property. On their deaths, a grandson, John Pratt, was to benefit but, like so many of these wills, it was complicated because the testator wanted to control his wealth after he was dead. His wife and daughter were instructed 'to take

SOLOMON GOFFE'S ADVERT IN *JACKSON'S OXFORD JOURNAL*, 1761

EARTHEN KILNS, for Drying Malt,
or Oats, for Oat-Meal, or Bark for Tanners, are made
glazed, and sold, by SOLOMON GOFFE, of Leaffield, near
Burford, Oxfordshire, a Potter; he having practised those
Branches near Forty Years.

N. B. They dry with less Fuel than Iron, and are much
cheaper, and more durable.

care of my poor afflicted daughter Sarah Goffe.' If they refused, then 7s a week was to be paid from his estate for her maintenance. He was the highest tithe and land tax payer in Leaffield, a trustee of the chapel lands and a woodward of Wychwood Forest. He had certainly risen in wealth and status to change his standing in the neighbourhood from potter to farmer to yeoman.

The other wealthy person in Leaffield was Catherine Hawkes, a widow, who left property not exceeding £600, a similar amount to three men in Shipton and one in Milton. She was an overseer of the poor in Leaffield for two years, 1793/4 and 1794/5, a voluntary task not often undertaken by a woman, and paid a significant amount of land tax. Her will shows the complexity of communal living. A son, Thomas, was to inherit 'a cottage with the oven therein built and adjoining chamber'. A grandson was to inherit 'a cottage being the uppermost of the said three cottages and to enjoy the joint use of the hovel or outhouse built over the oven and also of the well as tenants in common.' Her daughter, Elizabeth Wiggins, was bequeathed 'all household goods except the warming implements'.

Many of the wills give insights into items then considered valuable. The Leaffield blacksmith, Tennant Shailer, left property worth less than £100 and made bequests of his best coat, waistcoat and breeches to his grandson, James, the next best waistcoat, breeches and coat to grandson, William, and next best coat and waistcoat to a third grandson, John Tennant Shailer. Beds and bedding were mentioned in seven of the wills. John Vokins, the Leaffield potter, left his bedstead, bolster and curtains to Jenny Dix; another testator, John Smith, a Milton yeoman, left his bed, bedstead and bed furnishings to his daughter. These substantial four poster beds with their curtains and bedding must have been desirable pieces of furniture. John Smith's clock and case were to go to his servant, the only instance, apart from Lady Reade's, of a servant receiving a legacy in the 19 wills. There was one charitable bequest of £5 to the poor of Shipton from Mary Kench, widow, from an estate worth up to £300 and Lady Reade bequeathed the interest of Old South Sea annuities to provide clothing and education to poor children of Shipton; this bequest now forms Lady Reade's Educational Foundation helping youngsters from the old ecclesiastical parish of Shipton under Wychwood. Dame Harriott also gave 'to all and every tenant at Shipton a mourning coat Hatband and gloves' and again, 'each of the 6 poor labourers who carry me to the ground shall have a mourning coat Hatband and gloves and 9gns to be divided equally between them'.

Comparison of the Tithe List and the Parish Registers

We have used the baptism registers in conjunction with the tithe list to reconstitute the families of those who brought babies to be baptised in the

Table 5: Numbers of households on the tithe list with entries in baptism register

	NO. ON TITHE LIST	NO. IN BAPTISM REG.	%
Shipton	81	18	22
Milton	104	21	20
Leafield	70	23	33
Total	255	62	24

five years between 1786 and 1790, with baptisms before 1786 and after 1790 also noted, and tried to assess infantile mortality rates, that is the death rates of babies under one year, compared by class or occupation of the parents. However, the numbers were too small to give a satisfactory result, but the exercise did throw great doubt on the adequacy of infant burial registration in all three villages, particularly in Leafield.

Less than a quarter of the households listed in the tithe book brought babies to be baptised. This figure seems to be what would be expected with about half the female population of child-bearing age at this time.

Wrigley and Schofield found that the average infant mortality in twelve parishes in different parts of the country, the nearest being Banbury, in the half-century 1750-99, was 128 per thousand, so the figures for Shipton, Milton and Leafield (Table 6) clearly give a very unlikely result.¹³ Leafield infants were supposed to be brought to Shipton for baptism or burial, and recorded in the Shipton registers. From 1784 Leafield baptisms took place in the chapel there and were recorded in a Leafield register, but it was not until 37 years later that the churchyard was consecrated with the first burial recorded in 1831.

The parish registers would appear to have been conscientiously maintained over four centuries and, in conjunction with the tithe list, can be a valuable source for family reconstruction. Yet the infant mortality-figures do not confirm other published studies and we can only surmise that under-registration was to blame. Although there was no evidence that our villagers were remiss about registering their baptisms and burials,

Table 6: Families resident in 1788 whose infant mortality could be reconstituted over the period between 1786 and 1795

	DEATH UNDER		NO. PER THOUSAND
	LIVE BIRTHS	ONE YEAR	
Shipton	109	9	82
Milton	90	5	55

many lived at a considerable distance from the parish church, and the vicar was sometimes non-resident, perhaps leaving an unsupervised curate in charge. Shipton's burial figure was notably higher than the other two villages, perhaps suggesting that families living in the village with the church were more likely to be known and recorded. Although the beginning of the nineteenth century saw a significant rise in non-conformity, only Quakers, of whom five were noted by the vicar in Milton, might have refused to register their children.

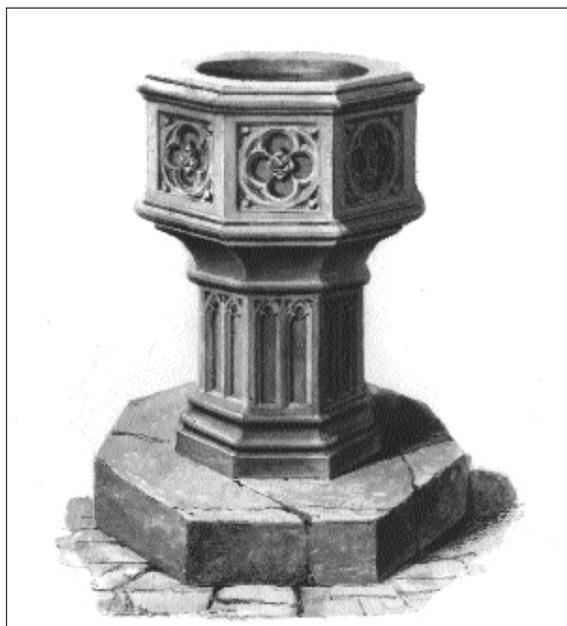
Leafield baptismal register gives evidence of widespread poverty; the curate wrote 'pauper' after many registrations. In 1790, 16 of the 18 baptisms registered were so described. It seems that he was conscientious, and specifically recorded the poor persons excused the duty of 3d for a baptism as imposed by Act of Parliament in 1783. The tax was considered 'most vexatious' by the clergy and was repealed in 1794.¹⁴ The numbers of paupers jumped notably in certain years. The curate's assessment of who was unable to pay was probably realistic but also involved his subjective judgement. The preponderance of unskilled labourers with just eight artisans in the village population meant that uncertainty of employment and consequent poverty must have been endemic.

Table 7: Leafield baptisms 1784-92

YEAR	NO. OF BAPTISMS	NO. NOTED AS PAUPER
1784	19	1
1785	17	1
1786	11	1
1787	18	12
1788	18	15
1789	11	8
1790	18	16
1791	14	1
1792	8	0

1813-1817: Occupation from the Baptism Registers

The portrait of the three villages from Shipton vicar's tithe lists is particularly useful because it is difficult to see the pattern of occupations before the 1841 census, when a separate schedule was completed for each household. Whether the population of the country was rising or falling was disputed at the end of the eighteenth century when Britain was at war with Napoleon's France and the 1801 census was initiated to show the numbers of men who could be called up if required. The censuses for 1801 to 1831 give only the barest outline of numbers employed in agriculture, in handicraft and in 'other' occupations. These figures do confirm that



THE FONT IN SHIPTON CHURCH, BY J.C.BUCKLER. Reproduced by kind permission of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (Ms Top. Oxon a68 no. 469)

Milton had many more artisans than the other villages and that agriculture was the principal occupation, except in Leaffield. The astonishing number of families classified in this village in 1811 as 'others', not as agricultural workers, may be explained by dual occupations with seasonal work in the forest or on the land.

Information can also be gained from the baptism registers which from 1813 recorded the father's occupation. This is a less comprehensive source dealing only with that part of the population who brought babies to be baptised but, by using a five year period, it confirmed the tithe list figures, particularly as regards the number of labourers and farmers. It also highlighted new trades and occupations in the early part of the century. There were no joiners in any of the villages in 1788 but, in 1815, James Frewen of Shipton, a joiner, brought his daughter, Kate, to be

Table 8: Occupations from the 1811 census

	SHIPTON	MILTON	LEAFIELD
families in agriculture	58	92	12
families in trade & handicraft	21	18	14
others	2	2	71

baptised. There was no saddler or harness maker on the tithe list, although there had been a saddle-tree maker in the mid-eighteenth century in the 'Welfare in The Wychwoods' study.¹⁵ In 1816 Richard Sedgley registered his daughter, Ann, and gave his occupation as a harness maker while the transcript of the register sent to the bishop gave him as a saddler. The third artisan with a different trade was a Milton glovecutter who registered his son in 1816. This may have been the start in the Wychwoods of the significant cottage industry which flourished in Oxfordshire throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹⁶ The glovecutter cut the fabric to the required dimensions and then distributed the cut pieces to the houses and cottages for stitching and assembling mainly by women and girls. Robert Smith, a superannuated sergeant of the Bucks militia, Lieut. Thomas Masters R.N. and Thomas Selman, a labourer but once a soldier in the 76th, all registered children in 1816 and 1817, reflecting the recent Napoleonic Wars which ended in 1815.

Table 9: Occupations given in the baptism registers 1813-17

	SHIPTON	MILTON	LEAFIELD
labourers	27	33	42
farmers	2	5	3
artisans & tradesmen	19	14	6
others	3	0	1
total of families	51	52	52

Conclusion

The 1788 small tithe account book provided an accurate insight into Georgian Wychwood village employment and social status fifty years before this information became available from a national census. The overall picture that emerges is of three predominantly agrarian villages historically within a common parish and yet with individual characteristics. Shipton was the ecclesiastical centre with a small village aristocracy. Milton had a greater diversity of trades and occupations. Leaffield was the poorest of the three, a forest village with a large, unskilled labour force, yet amongst its inhabitants was a potter rising to be a notably prosperous yeoman.

Appendix

From Shipton under Wychwood Tithe Account Book 1785-92
Oxfordshire Archives S-u-W Par. 236/15/F1/2

1792 - *Demands according to the present agreement as under:-
Orchard according to size; Fowls according to number*

Sheep sold out between shearing & shearing according to time about 1d or 2d per head

Offerings 1s for Master and Mistress included

2d per head for all above 14 years of age

Dry cows the same as milched except while on the common for which common 2s 6d per head

Odds of wool 1s from each sheep shearing Farmer

Colts according to value at the years end

Agist. of [unprof.] cattle a 10th part of the weeks keeping for the time feeding in the parish

Morturies for every person who dies worth £10 pays 3s 6d above; £20–5s above; £40–10s

Other things according to the tenth of their value

Pigs, lambs, calves and colts titheable when weaned from their dams or sold to the butcher

All above ten in number pay according to their value as suppose 12 lambs – 1 lamb out of ten to the vicar and suppose the other 2 sold for 10s each. 1s each is payable to the vicar of Shipton so it was 20 yeares ago.

Signed:- Thomas Brookes, vicar

March 1793: *The underwritten [sic] have been the rates from my institution to the vicar edge of Shipton above 20 yeers ago*

Signed:- Thomas Brookes

References

- 1 Oxfordshire Archives (OA) Par 236/15/F1/2, Shipton under Wychwood Tithe Account Book 1785–92.
- 2 Copy of a lease to Mary Brookes, 10 June 1739, in WLHS archives.
- 3 *Alumni Oxoniensis*.
- 4 Evelyn Goshawk, *Idbury History*, 1961, p15.
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 OA MS Oxf dioc papers c327, Diocese Book 1774.
- 7 D.McClatchey, *Oxfordshire Clergy 1777–1869* (Oxford 1960) p31.
- 8 Evelyn Goshawk, *Fifield History*, 1957, p21.
- 9 OA QSD.L.179.
- 10 Brasenose College Archives, Shipton under Wychwood leases.
- 11 Lady Reade PRO: PROB 11/1529.39. IR26/555.1812
All the following are in OA:

Soloman Goffe	131/2/14 1797	Henry Shayler	153/2/26 1797
Thomas Baylies	250/1/24 1804	Tenant Shayler	153/2/25 1797
Catherine Hawkes	263/1/31 1806	William Risby	272/3/4 1804
Thomas Brookes	250/1/19 1804	John Silman	64/4/9 1792
John Smith	273/3/27 1806	John Risby	148/2/24 1797
John Costiff	16/4/21 1788	John Green	131/2/25 1800
James Cooke	123/5/19 1787	Robt Bunting	228/2/4 1804
Mary Kench	138/5/23 1795	Thomas Pratley	54/2/32 1791
John Vokins	68/4/27 1791		
- 12 N.Stebbing, J.Rhodes & M. Mellor (eds), *Oxfordshire Potters*, Oxfordshire Museum Service Publication No. 13, (1980), pp21–24.
- 13 E.A.Wrigley & R.S.Schofield, *The Population History of England 1541-1871* (1981),

pp.248–249.

14 W.E.Tate, *The Parish Chest* (Cambs 1969), p50.

15 *Wychwoods History* No. 12, 1997. p7.

16 N.L.Leyland & J.E.Troughton, *Glovemaking in West Oxfordshire*, Oxfordshire City and County Museum Publication No. 4, (1974).

Authors' Note

It is sad to place Tom McQuay's name under the title of this article and know that this will be the last of a series on the history of the Wychwoods to which he has contributed; but we are pleased that he read the final draft before his unexpected death on 5 December 1997. His share in our joint projects of investigation and writing has been very substantial, and greatly appreciated and enjoyed. Hard work, humour and knowledge of the human condition fired his imagination of life in the past. He was too modest to want his name placed first, but this time it is our small tribute to him.



BRUERN TO OKLAHOMA - THE STAMPE FAMILY

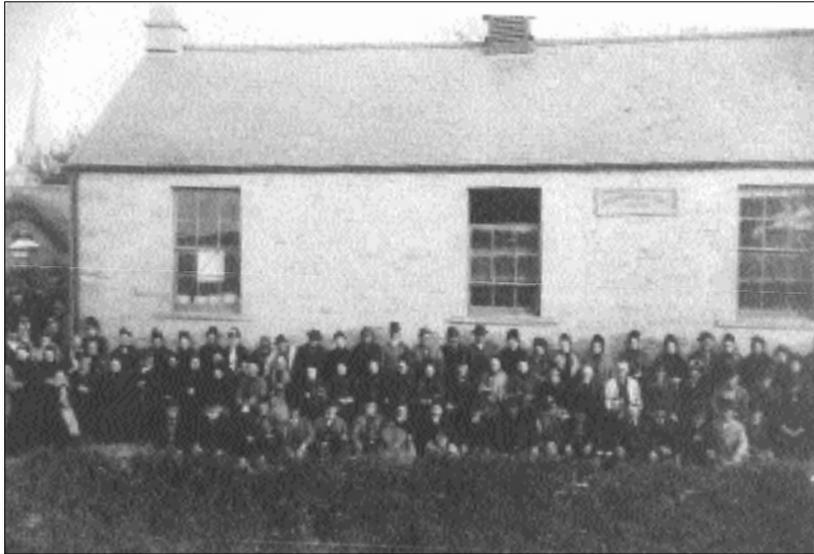
Many visitors from abroad search for clues to their ancestors in our churches and churchyards but few with such dramatic success as Mr A.L.Stamps of Oklahoma, in St Mary's Church, Shipton, recently. Mr Stamps had traced his family back ten generations to a John Stamps who was an immigrant to Virginia in 1635, and whose father was Timothy Stampe (the final 's' had later been changed to 's') of Oxfordshire. Timothy, however, had proved elusive, and where he had lived and died was not known.

Mr Stamps had previously stayed at Broadway on his visits to the Cotswolds but in April this year, on the advice of a friend, he came to the Shaven Crown in Shipton. He crossed the village green to the church, picked up the church guide, and there he read: 'On the south side of the altar is a memorial to Timothy Stampe, who died in 1614, with alabaster effigies in Jacobean dress oft himself, his wife, his son William, who became a theologian and chaplain to the Prince of Wales, 2 daughters and 2 babies in cradles'. He was overjoyed and amazed at his good fortune.

Timothy Stampe lived at Bruern Grange in the late 1500s. John was his second son, and all the Stamps in the U.S.A. are descended from him.

RACHEL GRANT

Alfred Groves & Sons
LIMITED.
 BUILDERS, CONTRACTORS & TYERS
 MILTON UNDER WYCHWOODS.



The Beaconsfield Hall was built by Alfred Groves and Sons in 1885 using local stone, with dressed Milton stone for the windows and doorways. The cost was £300 with a further £100 for furnishing and fittings, and originally comprised an entrance hall, the main hall and an ante-room. When the building was under construction in August that year the memorial stone which was given by Mr Edwin Groves, was laid by Mrs Wynne, wife of the North Oxfordshire prospective Conservative candidate with the proceedings enlivened by the music of the Shipton Brass Band under the leadership of Mr Thomas Alder. This photograph was taken shortly after the hall was completed and in use by November that year.

The Society is grateful to the firm for its donation towards the cost of producing this issue of *Wychwoods History*.

Correspondence

In *Wychwoods History* No. 12, Dennis Minson wrote about the Ascott sheepwash. Eric Moss of Ascott adds his memories of it in the late 1920s by which time the 'wash' was being used for dipping:

The Washpool was being farmed then by Jim and Edgar Walton, the latter being the father of Miss Walton, who was at one time Dr Scott Senior's dispenser. The sheep would be penned close to the dip and, as a friend of Edgar Walton's eldest son, I was allowed to operate the moveable hurdle of the sheep pen to allow the sheep out one at a time into the waiting arms of Mr Walton. He would grab the sheep and push it into the dip pool containing yellow disinfectant-smelling water, the colour came from Cooper's Sheep Dip, a very pungent pest-killer. The sheep's head would be pushed under water with a long Y-shaped pole, and kept there for about three seconds before being released to stagger up the inclined ramp out of the pool. Here it would baa and shake itself vigorously, throwing sheepdip far and wide, before entering another pen for removal to another field, or just to roam back over Washpool Field.

Sometimes other farmers used this sheepdip but on each occasion a policeman was present to see that all sheep went through. The polluted water was then allowed to run out into Coldwell (Colewell) or, as we locals called it, Cordell Brook and thence to the river Evenlode, three hundred yards away.

The hurdles forming the pen were most likely to have been made by Will Arundel (or Handle as we locals called him) from Leafield. He was a very busy man, making hurdles and hay feeders for those farmers who had riverside meadows and thus access to the willow trees growing there. There were more willows in the twenties and thirties than now, as hundreds had been blown down into the river with their roots soil-bound, and thus still living. They continued to block the river until 1937-38 when the Thames River Board sent gangs of men and machines to clear and dredge the river and build up the banks with the dredged soil.

A farmer would take a stack of approximately twenty-foot long pollarded willow branches to his rickyard where Mr Arundel cut them into appropriate lengths for the heads, rails and braces of the hurdles. He then split them with his riving tool and shaped them with a draw-knife, thinning the ends to make tenons to fit into mortice holes he cut in the heads. The heads were pointed at one end to drive into the soil, while the

top end was chamfered back to stop it splitting when struck with the shepherd's iron bar. Each assembled hurdle was nailed together with domed-headed iron nails, the ends being clinched back into the other side of the timber spar. Mr Arundel did all this for 10/- to 12/6d for a dozen hurdles. At this time (post-World War One) there were a number of hurdlemakers, including two brothers at Fifield competing with each other at this trade.

Young boys of my generation can remember how 'Mr Handle' always found time to make rough cricket bats for us which we cherished until we graduated to a man's bat with a sprung handle. Hurdlemakers are just another type of character the countryside will see no more – a great pity. On an overcast, cold dry but windy morning 19 people gathered to walk a



Dennis Minson writes:

Arsenical sheep dips for the control of mite were sold by Coopers from about 1850 but it was another 50 years before their use became compulsory. Existing facilities such as sheepwashes were pressed into service but only where the water supply could be disconnected. At Ascott this was easily achieved but at Upper Milton the stream runs through the centre of the sheep-wash and was most unlikely to have been used for dipping. At Ascott the wash was owned by Mr Walton but used for dipping by all the local farmers who owned sheep. Sometimes the dip was used by two farmers on the same day with the sheep to be dipped penned in temporary yards made of hurdles erected on the present site of Manor Cottage. Every sheep in the district had to be dipped hence the presence of the policeman.

Fieldwalk at Honeydale Farm, Shipton

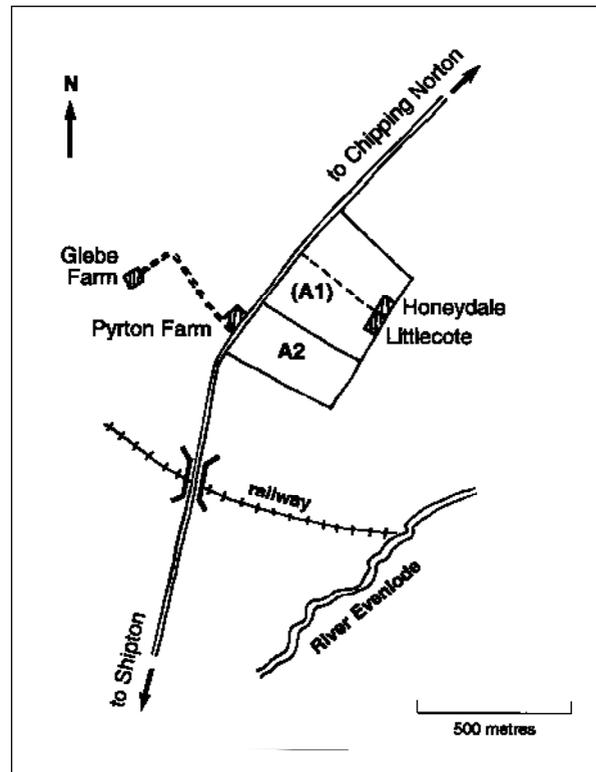
JANET WALLACE AND MARGARET WARE

field – A2, SP190/285 – on the north side of the Evenlode valley at Honeydale Farm. The soil conditions were not favourable as the ploughed soil was very dry.

From the point of view of the participants, some of whom had not fieldwalked before, this was a disappointing field. Only 180 artefacts were found, from 25 rows, quite the emptiest field we have encountered so far. But negative evidence is valuable, and still helps in the construction of a picture of historical land-use and settlement.

Five pieces of worked flint were found; one definite scraper, one blade and three flakes. Eight other pieces could have been knapping debris. Most of the flints picked up by walkers were of poor quality, probably glacial drift and showed none of the characteristic signs of human working. As usual pottery was the most plentiful artefact recovered (76 pieces). One very abraded rim piece found in the upper part of the field is thought (by Paul Booth of the Oxford Archaeological Unit) most likely to be early Iron Age (eighth to fifth century BC). Seven pieces of Romano-British (R/B) pottery, both coarse greywares and oxidised wares were found, and two pieces of possible R/B brick. Apart from one possible piece of medieval, and one of fifteenth-century midlands purple (Cistercian) ware, the rest was post-medieval. It contained the usual mixture of glazed red earthenware, probably locally-made ('Leafield type'), and non-local (midlands) white glazed earthenware ('chine') and porcelain, and kitchen wares (stonewares and black glazed pots). There was a scattering of glass, brick, Welsh slate and pieces of coal, clinker and slag, and three pieces of oyster shell.

The density of Romano-British artefacts was of the same order as that in the adjacent field A1 (17 pieces), walked by the Society in 1988, and is continuing evidence of R/B activity in this area of hillside, probably manuring of arable fields. The R/B site walked in 1991, reported in *Wychwoods History* 8, is only 500 metres to the north-west. The general paucity of all other later artefacts suggests that this land was not ploughed for much of its history after the Roman period, but may have been grazed as permanent pasture. If it was arable land, then it was not much manured



MAP TO SHOW THE POSITION OF FIELD A2

from the village middens, presumably because it would have been a long haul uphill from neighbouring Ascott. The presence of some coal and clinker however suggests steam ploughing at some stage.

One interesting feature of this fieldwalk was the refinement of the method of collecting artefacts which was employed for the first time. The rows were marked out with canes at 15 metre intervals, with a cane set every 30 metres in each row, dividing each row into 30 metre sections labelled A,B,C etc, and walkers changed bags at the end of each section. Potentially this enables the spatial distribution of artefacts in the field to be recorded more accurately, instead of merely 'per row'. In this field, there were no clusters of artefacts, and no significance could be deduced from the position of objects found.

Thanks to Jim and Wendy Pearse for allowing us to walk their field and to all who took part in this exercise.

Farming Memories: Chadlington in the 1930s and 1940s

GLADYS AVERY

Oxfordshire 1931 – moving day September 29th, Michaelmas Day - to a farm in the parish of Chadlington. A large stone house, which years before had been two cottages, now one oblong house, tall and strong facing due south, with walls 18-24 inches thick, giving wide windowsills for my mother's pot plants. There were six bedrooms, two staircases, two sitting-rooms, breakfast-room, bathroom and toilet. Across the small yard was the coal-house, wash-house and dairy, and at either end of this building was an earthcloset, with a large and small hole in each. Water came from springs pumped by a water ram in Sarsgrove Woods, the method being that whereby water works water. When the pond water became too low, the ram stopped pumping, and as our farm was the last in the line and two miles from the ram, water was very precious. We were fortunate to live just off the Old London Lane, so did not have too many muddy tracks across the fields, but there was a very long path to the front door, which we as children had to help weed. Water was on tap in the house, but only in the scullery and bathroom, and of course only cold water, so that frozen flannels and dishcloths in the winter meant that these rooms were not very popular. In dry weather the milking cows had priority over man for water, as no water meant no milk cheque, and that cheque was our bread and butter. There were three wells, one for washing and two for cattle troughs – nowadays these stone troughs and sinks are much sought after by gardeners. No electricity or telephone existed, and almost two and a half miles to walk to school each day.

The first person to greet us when we first arrived at the farm was the hay strusser, who was strussing hay from the ricks, to be moved out by the out-going farmer. Remember this was years before the stationary baler. Strussing was how the hay was moved; it had to be trussed before it could be transported or sold, and the hay strusser would work for a hay and straw merchant (e.g. Wilmer of Clanfield) and would cycle to whichever farm had hay for sale. Still on the subject of hay, all farms had rickyards where the ricks were built, first making a staddle of nut wood faggots for a foundation, always keeping the sides straight and the middle well filled in and slightly higher, for when the day's work was done it

could still rain at night, but if your rick was built right the rain would shoot right off. Ricks which were built too quickly, with hay that was not quite ready, could over-heat and this could be the cause of many farm fires. Next came thatching and tucking, for which wheat straw was used. First it had to be yelmed (this was straightening and dampening the straw) and then placed in a scratch, made from nut or ash wood, which would have been cut from the hedges or copses. Ash has a 'spring' in it, so that when you slung your full 'scratch' of straw on to your back to carry up the ladder, it was not quite so hard on your shoulders. The thatch was pegged down with hazelnut stays and twine, and later on the thatching needle was used. 'Tucking' was tidying all four sides of the rick, pulling out the loose hay and leaving the sides tightly tucked underneath the thatch. Hay was cut from the rick with a hay knife in a huge cube-like block called a kerf, then an iron hay pin was thrust through the middle of the kerf and you hoisted this on to your head. My father carried all hay like this from the ricks to the cowshed or stable, and as he is only a small man, there was 'more hay than man' – alas I have no photos of this.



FRONT DOOR AT EAST DOWNS
FARM

The farm was pasture land until the Second World War, so mixed farming was practised with 18–20 milkers and their followers i.e. calves, yearlings and heifers. The bull used was a strawberry roan Shorthorn who lived in a loose-box at the end of the cowshed (no A.I. in those days). Hand milking was the normal thing so all the family learnt to milk, so that they could help if the need arose. Cowsheds were warmer, cosier places in those days, albeit somewhat smelly, and memory is of milk pouring into buckets, froth rising and farm cats sitting in a row waiting for that lovely warm drink; but visitors were not allowed in at milking times as all had to be quiet. Milk buckets held three or four gallons, so yokes were always used to carry the milk to the dairy. My mother washed and cleaned all the dairy utensils, as well as looking after the geese and poultry.

Broody hens, big Rhode Island Reds, Light Sussex and Barred Rocks would each sit on four or five goose eggs, and these had to be dampened and turned each day. Turkey and guineafowl, as well as hen's eggs, were all hatched out under broody hens, or bantams who make excellent mothers. The first eight weeks of baby chicks' or goslings' lives were spent in coops in the orchard, and this made another job to help with, for each coop had to be cleaned and moved at least every two or three days. Besides food and water for hens and chicks three times a day there was the board to be put up at night and taken down in the morning, for stoats and weasels could make a meal of baby chicks. For larger quantities, day-old chicks were bought from poultry breeders and these were sent by rail to Chipping Norton station, packed in special boxes, 25 in a box. The weather could still be cold, so you hoped that the station-master would take great care of the chicks until you arrived to collect them, for telegrams were sent in those days. (No picking up the phone – that did not come until 1953). As soon as the chicks arrived home they were fed and watered. This took place on the kitchen table covered with newspaper, then they were put in the 'foster mother', which was a long wooden box with a top lid, inside which were two compartments, day and night. In the night part was a special oil lamp which had to be kept burning constantly, so this meant filling with oil and trimming the wick every day, for if the lamp went out the chicks died of cold, and if it smoked then they suffocated. These foster mothers were also kept in the orchard so that it was not too far to go to check the lamps at night. At eight weeks old the chicks were moved into the small folding units, or chicken houses in the rickyard, or Home Field, and at six months they would be in poultry houses in fields further away from the homestead. All poultry were free-range, which meant a fox could visit day or night, so all trap doors had to be closed at night. Some people may feel sorry for the fox, but don't forget that they kill for killing's sake, and when you have seen hens or ducks lying dead, their heads bitten off, and the rest of the hens gone off laying because of fright, you realise why most farmers kept a gun – I know

my father did.

Only a small flock of sheep was kept, but I remember having to turn the handle of the shearing machine – the warmer the day, the better the shearing, for it made the oil in the wool run, and the fleece came away easier. But it was a hot job for all. The wool market was at Charlbury, where Wesley Barrel now have a factory for furniture. Sheep used to have to be dipped twice a year by law, so this meant driving the sheep two or three miles each way to a farm with a dip, and our nearest was at Spelsbury Downs.

Saddleback breeding sows were kept, which were later crossed with Large White pigs, giving the Bluebacks, a longer pig for bacon. Sometimes a change of breed was introduced and Oxfordshire Black and Sandy, now seldom seen and not to be confused with the Tamworth, were kept along with Middle Whites and Gloucester Old Spots. Until 1939 a pig produced bacon, pork, ham, lard and offal from one carcass, but now they are bred for either bacon or pork but not both which is why the names of so many pig meat joints have disappeared for ever.

Local cattle markets were at Kingham and Charlbury, with Moreton-in-Marsh for poultry, fruit and vegetables. You could buy or sell fruit in 12lb chip baskets, and these journeys were always made in the milk-float with its sandy cob, who also pulled the governess cart on Sundays, and worked alongside the cart horse for mowing and other jobs. One highlight for us children was the Heythrop Hunt Point-to-Point, which was run over our farm, with two shillings being charged for a car park (1936). All work was done by horses, those great willing creatures. I cannot remember all of them but I can remember two who would allow you to load a waggon with hay or straw, and then refuse to pull it home, and home could be miles away!

The Second World War brought a great change, as approximately 90 acres out of 120 were taken for landing ground for the R.A.F. The War Department moved in with their bulldozers, and out came all the hedgerows and trees. We were not given time to move all the poultry houses from the fields before the hedges were gone, and the cattle became a big worry. My father bought a farm at Islip and the bulk of the herd went there, but it was a great loss as he could not get a good tenant and the farm was too far away to keep an eye on. Later this farm was sold.

We rented land from General Winsor – Dean Buildings – whose land adjoined ours before the War Department took over. The farmhouse and adjacent buildings were left to us, although the army took over the cart shed for a cook house and canteen, and pitched their tents in the only fields which we had left. Great were the arguments when the pigs ate the potatoes in the cook house, the sergeants telling father he must train his men to shut gates. The army was with us during the building of the Block

Houses.

One other loss was our great barn a hundred yards or so down the lane, with its own cattlesheds, pigsties and well – it was pulled down towards the end of the war to make a clearer way for the planes to land. This barn was big enough for a threshing machine to work in, with high double wooden doors, and it disappeared for ever. Yet now corn must be grown, as well as potatoes and root crops. Labour was short and many a day my brother and I would walk home from school to take over with the milking.

The R.A.F. were with us from 1940 when huts were built at the back of the cowshed, leaving just enough room for horse and wagon to pull into the rickyard. Two 'Blister' hangars were built on either side of the farm, and one still stands today with modern machinery in it. Fire tender and ambulance were parked outside the rickyard day and night, for this was a training airfield, and night flying was practised as much as possible. The rest of the camp stretched all around, touching the Chadlington, Burford and Charlbury roads – our farm sitting on the edge with airfield to the back and both sides.

Every morning milk had to be taken to the main road for the lorry to pick up and this meant crossing the airfield each time, for the lane was now in the landing area. My father had to wait for a signal saying it was safe to cross, and many times I had to flatten myself to the ground, for, whichever way the wind was blowing, the planes were taking off or landing, over our house and land. We were lucky that no plane crashed into our house, but as the pilots were training, many lost their lives, never to see active service. Before the NAAFI or canteen were built, the air crews and mechanics all descended on the farmhouse for a glass of fresh milk for mid-morning break. One morning an officer arrived at the door, having followed his men, explaining to Mum that he had no idea where they all went, and it was his duty to find out – needless to say he had a glass of milk too. Our faithful collie dog had much to thank the ambulance men for, as one day he ran straight into the mowing machine knife chasing a rabbit. He managed to drag himself home with both front paws almost severed and was treated and bandaged by the ambulance men, on the side of the airfield and was gently carried to the homestead - making a good recovery in a few weeks, but alas he was killed two or three years later by a plane taking off at night, although we had never known him to wander in the day.

Ploughing was done by contractors until 1948/49, when we had our first tractor, a David Brown, the only tractor with a double padded seat, which meant that two could ride in comfort. Corn crops were under-sown with grass and clover seed for next year's hay, and a one, two or three year ley was sown, according to how long that field could yield hay before being ploughed and put to corn again. Seed was sown with a fiddle, this being slung across your shoulder. There was a calico bag holding three or



BRYAN HABGOOD, GLADYS'S BROTHER, DRIVING THE DAVID BROWN TRACTOR WITH BINDER IN THE LATE 1940S.

four pounds of seed, which sat in a small wooden tray with fan-like blades one end. By drawing the bow back and forth the fan opened and closed, spreading the seed several feet either side. This was a long tiring job, tramping up and down the field until the last inch was covered – then you really knew what aching feet meant, plus a sore shoulder. In later years the seed was sown with the combine drills, mostly rye grass and red clover for one or two year leys, adding white clover if a three year ley. Sanfoin was much cherished in hay, but as this would last seven years, you could not plant it only to plough it up again. (Sanfoin has now disappeared from many a field, but can be found growing along some roadsides). Mowing with a good pair of horses, the only noise was the sound of the knife going backwards and forwards in its racket. Spare knives were taken to the field (always in their safety guards) for hitting a stone could easily break a blade. Stone picking was done whenever possible before the fields were closed for hay, thus saving the knives— and improving the gateways! Side raking followed the mowing, turning the hay and making two swathes into one so that the wagon could go between. If the weather held, the hay was picked up loose from the rows, and there is an art in running the pitchfork along the row and picking up a good pitch of hay and placing it on to the load so that it stays there, just as there is a right way to load a wagon – or you will lose the lot in a rough gateway. When the weather was wet, small haycocks were made in the fields so

that at least some hay was still good – musty hay will cause husk in cattle. Last of all the field was horse raked, and there's a bumpy ride if ever there was one. In later years when we had tractors, the haysweep was fixed to the front of the tractor and was pushed along, picking up the hay on long wooden tines and carrying it to the baler, where it was dropped in huge piles and then pitched into the baler. These bales weighed from one to one and a half hundredweight each, and had to be stacked in the correct manner, like bricks interlocking; which was very heavy work. Now the bale hooks hang in museums.

Italian and German prisoners of war were brought in gangs to help with potato planting and picking, also harvesting. This was quite a responsibility and we found the Italians easier to work with, as the Germans resented us. Later on we employed a Yugoslav and then a German full-time until he re-joined his family four to six years later. The prison camp was at Greystones, Chipping Norton, which became the Rates Office after the war, and is now a sports centre. Boys from schools in Surrey also came to Chipping Norton to help with the harvest, or other farm work, in their holidays. The boys' camp was in one of the Hitchman's Brewery fields; this is now a housing estate.

Mangolds were grown and these were a great asset to the milking herd, as they contained a high percentage of water, and this helped to keep the milk yield up. The first mangold seed we planted was done with a hand drill. This was a funnel-shaped box with a lid fixed to a large wheel, as a small wheel over ploughed ground would not move, and the wheel was fixed to a long handle which you pushed up and down the field. As soon as the seed was up it had to be hoed, then thinned to nine to twelve inches apart – many Land Army girls will remember this job. In September or October the roots were pulled, working about six rows at a time. You pulled, cut and threw, all in one continuous action - involving pulling the roots with your hand clasped around the leaves, bringing the knife up under the leaves with the other hand, and cutting and tossing the roots on to the pile dropping the leaves around the pile. This latter job was most important for if there was not enough time to cart the roots to a bury, clamp or shed, the leaves were used to cover the piles to protect them from over-night frost. Mangolds and potatoes were stored in mangold clamps or potato burys, which were long mounds of roots covered with soil several inches thick, and then thatched. In the winter of 1947 many farmers could not open their burys for fear of losing the whole crop by frost entering the smaller opening. Potatoes had to be sorted into seed, eating and pig potatoes and bagged before sale – all done by hand and often the weather just above freezing, and you are there from 8am to 5pm, though bales of straw at your back made work a little warmer. In later years you could hire planting and sorting machines.

Corn was cut with the binder, so stooking-up followed as soon as

possible to get the sheaves off the ground, six sheaves to a stook. You picked up two sheaves, one in each hand bottom side facing inside and placed two more either end, keeping flat sides inside. This method meant that the top side of the sheaf, which was rounded, was outside and would shoot the rain off better. You also needed to be able to look straight through the stook as the wind tunnel helped dry the corn. Double summer time made long days, and sometimes it could be 10.30 or 11pm by the time you had unharnessed, fed and watered the horses, and turned them out into the field.

We had one Oxfordshire and one Wiltshire wagon, and I preferred loading the Wiltshire as it had better shaped bed and ladders, so that the sheaves loaded on better. First you filled the bed of the wagon, laying the sheaves head to tail across, then placed sheaves down both sides, ears to the centre, butts to the outside, then another row head to tail across the middle, then the sides again, always trying to keep straight and building your load as wide as the ladders of the waggon. A well-built load will need no ropes, and it is also easier to unload. This was very important when ricks were high and you were having to toss the sheaves up to the rick builder. If you were not going to unload, you had to come down on to the horse's rump, first get over the top of the waggon ladder (which was sloping inwards), hope someone would guide your foot, tell the horse you were coming, and hope she did not move!

Corn was threshed in the winter and following spring, when the threshing machines were hired from Lainchburys of Kingham, or Woolcocks of Chadlington. Threshing was hard work but enjoyable. You worked with a gang of land army girls, each with her own job. 'Bondcutter' on top of the machine to feed in the sheaves (and some machines had no safety guards with most terrible results) and two girls on the rick to put out and pass, and here the job was made easier if the rick was well built. Another girl moved chaff and cavings to be used later as food and litter, and the next girl fed in the wires if the straw was to be baled, whilst the last girl moved the sacks of corn. The sacks were 2!scwt, and this had to be done by girls if no man was available. If wheat was being threshed, and the straw needed for thatching, then the Boltin Tyer was put on in place of the baler, and the straw came unbroken, tied each end in large bundles, which were then stacked. To lift a sack of corn into a cart, you gripped tightly your workmate's hand, let the sack back gently on your arms, taking the top weight, then placing your other hand under the bottom and lift together while pushing the top over into the cart.

I worked for my father for 14 years until 1957, doing every job there was to be done on a mixed farm, except exercising the bull. The farmstead is still there, and all the land back in agricultural use, but no hedges or trees have ever been replanted, so a way of life up to 1939, and a pattern of the countryside, is just a memory. At the time of writing, my father is



GLADYS HABGOOD, NOW AVERY, WITH A SCYTHE ON THE FRONY LAWN WITH PLUTO (NAMED BY AN AIRMAN AFTER THE FAMOUS PIPELINE)

almost 95 years of age. He fought in the First World War, was taken prisoner and made to work in the salt mines in Germany. After the war he had started farming near Swindon, on a council smallholding for ex-servicemen.

Postscript: My father, Robert Habgood, died in 1987 aged 96 years. This essay won the 1984 Ernie Pocock Memorial Essay Competition. It was first published in Oxfordshire Local History Vol. 2, No.4, Spring 1986 and is reproduced with permission of Oxfordshire Local History Association.

In the 1880s there were regular entertainments of music and readings in Milton under Wychwood which were organised by Mr Giblett. The following report appeared in the Oxford Times on Saturday 21 November 1885

AT MILTON UNDER WYCHWOOD

An entertainment was given in the Board Schoolroom, on Thursday, when the following programme was performed:-

PART I

Glee	– <i>Forester, sound the cheerful horn</i>	CHOIR
Song	–	MISS GORTON
Song	– <i>The Gates of the West</i> (by C. Lothian)	
	MISS GROVES WITH VIOLIN OBLIGATO BY MR. CHOULES	
Violin Solo	– <i>Life let us cherish</i> (by H. Farmer)	
Song	–	REV. A. GRISEWOOD
Trio	– <i>Sportive little trio</i>	
	MR. F. CLEMENTS, MISS POOLE AND MR. P. AWKRIDGE	
Reading	–	REV. A.W.N. DEACON
Song	– <i>Nil Desperandum</i>	MR. D. SALTER
Comic Song		MR. E. BRADFORD

PART II

Glee	– <i>The Hardy Norseman</i>	CHOIR
Song	– <i>Thy Voice is near</i> (by Wrighton)	
	MR. W.H. CHOULES	
Song	– <i>Surely</i>	MRS. SALTER
Quartet	– <i>Sweet and Low</i>	
Song	– <i>The Silver Rhine</i> (by W.H. Hutchinson)	
	MISS GROVES WITH VIOLIN OBLIGATO BY MR. CHOULES	
Song	–	MISS GORTON
Comic Duet	–	MESSRS. E. BRADFORD AND G. PENSON
Song	–	REV. A.G. GRISEWOOD
Reading	–	REV. A.W.N. DEACON
Comic	–	Mr. G. Penson

A similar report in the Oxford Times of 28 November and reproduced in Wychwood History No. 4, 1988, shows that the concert was usually provided by the same performers.

Book Review

ANTHEA JONES

The obedient English! Insights from *The Parish in English Life 1400-1600* eds. K.L.French, G.G.Gibbs and B.A.Kumin (Manchester University Press 1997 £45)

It will be no surprise to genealogists that half the contributors to this expensive but interesting book have crossed the Atlantic to study their subject. Alexandra Johnston and Sally-Beth MacLean are involved with REED – Records of Early English Drama – which has its headquarters in the University of Toronto. Their essay (Chapter Ten, pages 178-200) is about traditional fundraising church festivities, particularly drama, as far as they can be described from surviving churchwardens' accounts. Fund-raisers for the Shipton village hall will quickly find parallels to their activities, although probably less rowdy ones. One aspect of the Reformation was disapproval of what easily became drunken revels. The essay sets out to explore how quickly some well-documented parishes in the Thames and Severn areas gave up their plays, games, morris dances and maypoles. If estimates of crowds at Kingston upon Thames for its Whitsun festival and town fair can be trusted, up to 2,000 people were attracted from far and wide at the beginning of the sixteenth century. But between 1538 when the accounts stop and 1561 when they resume, shortly after Elizabeth I's accession, the Kingston church festival had stopped. The last recorded Easter play in the Thames valley area was at Thame in 1539. Most churchwardens, congregations, and of course their ministers, were responsive to bishops or archdeacons' orders to cease 'plays, games, sports, dancing and such like', though there was some resistance here and there: Banbury maypole was not taken down until 1589. The severe face of Puritanism under Cromwell had been an aspect of the Reformation from the beginning.

Obedience to new requirements in church services and in the buildings themselves is the theme of Chapter Thirteen (pages 230-249) by Caroline Litzenburger. She has used the churchwardens' accounts for St Michael's, Gloucester, between 1540 and 1580. These years saw amazing reversals of policy. Henry VIII died early in 1547. Edward VI's reign was remarkable for the extreme Protestant sympathies of those controlling the government for the young king. The Roman Catholic Mary Tudor, daughter of Henry VIII and his first wife Catherine of Arragon, reigned for five years, from 1553 to 1558. Then Elizabeth Tudor restored Protestantism. At each change of monarch, the churchwardens were obliged to carry out a fresh set of orders. The essay starts with the churchwardens paying labourers to

carry earth out of the church to lower the floor where the new communion table was to stand in place of the altar. Three years later a haulier brought the earth back, and after the accession of Elizabeth I it all had to be removed once more. Six citizens of Gloucester bought vestments and altar silver from the churchwardens during Edward VI's reign and sold them back to the church in Mary's reign. The church-wardens bought the new *Book of Common Prayer* in 1549, the first to have the whole liturgy in English instead of Latin. They took down the rood-screen, whitewashed the walls of the church to cover the wallpaintings or 'images' and installed new pews and a pulpit. Within a few years, parishioners had to pay extra amounts towards the expense of 'restoring' the church. A new rood-screen was only just finished when Elizabeth became Queen and it was dismantled and sold. More whitewash was applied to the walls. What ensured such obedience? The punishment for non-compliance could be severe: Bishop Hooper was burnt at the stake in his own cathedral town of Gloucester in 1554. John Foxe, prebendary of Shipton under Wychwood, described it in his famous *Book of Martyrs*.

Other essays are concerned with similar events, and also with wondering about the typicality of those records which have by chance survived, with the archaeological evidence about church buildings, with insights into the 'community of the parish' and with the incidental comments recorded in parish registers of the period. Some people will pick out this and some that, for special comment. It is a serious book but most illuminating. The parish has been the framework for a great deal of administration and communal activity for perhaps 1,000 years. A thought for the millenium perhaps?

From *Chipping Norton Deanery Magazine*, 1888

MILTON with BRUERN and LYNEHAM – July 1888

The Rev. Alfred Shildrick, whom the Bishop has consented to license as Assistant curate, is expected to arrive during the second week in July, it is hoped, indeed, that he may preach his first Sermon at Milton in 15th. Mr Shildrick has been working as Mission Priest in British Columbia for many years, three of which were spent as one of Mr Horlock's Assistant in 'the Parish'

of 300 by 200 miles which he had under his charge. We trust that the distinctly 'manly' type of Christianity for which Mr Shildrick is distinguished will find many followers in Milton.

Nine of our Teachers went to the Association Meeting at Charlbury, on the 23rd, the rest were prevented by engagements. A very pleasant, if somewhat long, day was spent and enjoyed.

The Sunday School treat will take place during the month of August.

CRICKET CLUB – There have been two matches during the month. On the 5th with Charlbury; there was considerable delay at the start. The batting on the Milton side was very weak, our score being 23 in the first, 49 in the second innings. Charlbury made 58 in the first, and in the second lost five wickets for the necessary 15 runs, thus winning the match by five wickets. In the 16th, we were visited by the Chipping Norton Club. Milton again made a miserably poor defence in the first innings, only 23, doubling, however, this score in the second. Chipping Norton made, first, 34, second, 24; Milton winning the match by

11 runs. There was considerable excitement at the finish, as almost to the very end it was 'anybody's game'.

Milton is rapidly filling with summer visitors; in a few weeks, we presume 'the Season' will be at its 'height', the truly life-giving breezes of the locality seem to be justly appreciated far and wide, it is undoubtedly one of the most healthful places in England.

BAPTISMS – Mabel Annie, daughter of George and Mary Barnes. – June 24, Harold Arthur, son of Henry and Susanna Mobley.

BURIALS – June 2, Sarah Tripp, of Lyneham, aged 62. – Harriet Louisa Hawcutt aged 5 years.

MILTON with BRUERN & LYNEHAM – August 1888

On Thursday the 23rd, the Sunday School Festival was held. There was a Celebration of the Holy Communion at 7-30. The children assembled at 3 for Service at the Church, after which they repaired to the field opposite the Parsonage, which had been kindly lent for the occasion by Mr. Lambert, and where a large marquee had been pitched to provide against uncertain weather. Our numbers were somewhat diminished by the absence of the Orphanage boys, who are now on their holidays, but 96 children sat down to tea at 3.45. There was a large contingent of both children and mothers from Lyneham, at which village a Sunday School has lately been established, under the very efficient superintendence of Miss Matthews, of Fifield. Tea and cake having been done full justice to, the children adjourned to the field, where the 'swing boats' that had been provided for them proved a great attraction, each boat

being continually occupied by successive inmates, old as well as young, up to, and almost after, dark. The mothers and other invited visitors then sat down to tea to the number of over 150. Cricket, racing for prizes, both for boys and girls, sack races, three-legged races, etc., were then the order of the day, and we believe a happy afternoon was spent by all. The proceedings terminated about 8 o'clock, amid vociferous cheering from many throats, old and young. There will be another Sunday School Entertainment about Christ-mas, when prizes will be given for good attendance and good behaviour. We hope that our numbers will be much increased by that time, and that not only will the children do their best to deserve rewards, but that the parents also will do all they can to ensure regular attendance, and to encourage and enforce good conduct and good discipline.

THE SOCIETY'S PUBLICATIONS IN PRINT

The Second Wychwoods Album (1990) Now £2.50 Eighty photographs illustrating life in Milton, Shipton and neighbouring villages, particularly between the wars.

Wychwoods History, Number 2 (1986) £2.50 William Master, Vicar of Shipton 1564-91; A Milton Field, 1842-1985; Survey of Baptist Ground, Milton; Letters of Thomas & Hannah Groves; Royal Manor of Sciptone in Domesday, Pt 2; Hedge Survey, Pt 2.

Wychwoods History, Number 3 (1987) £2.50 Published jointly with OUDES and edited by Kate Tiller. Milton & Shipton 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, Shipton (excavation by Brian Durham); My Father's Days; Wartime Wedding.

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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; Shipton School Log Book 1869-1905; Mary Moss; Life in Old Milton.

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

Wychwoods History, Number 8 (1993) £3.00 Royal Observer Corps, Shipton; Base-born in Shipton; The Groves Family of Milton, Pt 2; Milton Church - Architect's Plan; An Anglo-Saxon Charter for Shipton? Field-walking a Romano-British site above Shipton; Vital Statistics: Shipton 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 1939-1945; Shipton in 1662: a 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; Personal Memories of Ascott; Ascott Priory Tithes; Chaundy Family of Ascott; 'Where There's Muck...'; Agistment - a Tithing Nightmare; Asthall Roman Camp; A Determined Emigrant.

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Cover illustration: MEMBERS OF GWEN SILMAN'S CLASS AT MILTON SCHOOL CIRCA 1934. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: RALPH DAVIS, ERIC COLLIER, UNIDENTIFIED GIRL, IVOR HUNT, BERNARD HAWCUTT.

ISBN 0 9523406 4 X

£3.00

WYCHWOODS HISTORY

THE JOURNAL OF THE WYCHWOODS HISTORY SOCIETY



Number Thirteen, 1998