

THE
LOCAL HISTORY JOURNAL
OF
BACKWELL, NAILSEA,
TICKENHAM AND WRAXALL



High Street Nailsea c1903 (note Glassworks cone still in place)

Photograph © NAILSES

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LOCAL HISTORY
GOSSIP - NEWS - RESEARCH



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Backwell Church Font - A Mystery Solved

by John Brain

A little piece of church history at St Andrew's parish church, Backwell was unveiled recently, and as in so many instances, it followed from a chance entry spotted in a ledger of 1908, some ninety one years ago.

Many of us possess sets of local village photos from Michael Tozer, of Pill, taken in years gone by, and some time ago two additional sepia photographs from Backwell became available, taken at the time of the famous Backwell Harvest Home celebrations at the end of the last century, which attracted literally hundreds of people. One photo shows the marquee prior to the meal, the other the church's handsome Victorian font, entwined with flowers and greenery, and decked with sheaflets of oats and wheat, all finely decorated for harvest festival service.

Visitors to Backwell church today will be pointed towards our oldest artefact, the Norman font restored to its present position at the west end near the vestry in May 1907, with a tablet bearing the names of the Rector of the time, the Revd. E. S. S. Cauldwell, and his two churchwardens, William Garnett and Dr H. O. Corfield.

For years I have puzzled over why the Victorian font was removed, and more to the point, what happened to it? There was always a story current in my young days that it had been given to a poor church in Bristol, but nothing to substantiate it. The Victorian font was almost certainly installed in the church when the building was reordered in 1872, and although historians no doubt welcomed retrieving the broken Norman font from the churchyard, where it had been dumped, and repairing it to be used instead, you wonder who was then the driving force in making the change? The vestry minutes of April 3rd 1907 read that "Mr Garnett proposed, and Mr Manning (Clerk) seconded that the old Norman font be replaced in the Church - carried unanimously". The work must have proceeded at once, if the restoration was completed in May but no further reference to the affair is recorded, and a photograph shows the Victorian font moved up to the east end near the screen, presumably to await disposal.

The lead came when I was perusing the old business ledgers of William Lott, one of our long standing local builders, whose records of work go back to 1893. William and later his son Jim, and their labour force carried out all the work at the parish church, and I came across this entry, undated, between April and November 1908 viz.:

3 men 5 hours each loading font to Bristol	5s 8d
Self 1 day and going to unload	5s 0d
Paid Cox in Bristol for men & trolleys	5s 0d
Paid Cox for repairs to font damaged	5s 0d
Hauling font to Bristol	<u>7s 6d</u>
	£1 8s 2d

So the font had gone to Bristol! The next piece of good fortune followed a discussion with Backwell's previous Rector, Prebendary Roland Clark, who now lives in Nailsea. He pointed out the obvious need for a Faculty before the font could be removed, and also his feeling that the old Bath and Wells Diocesan Faculties were kept in the Somerset Record Office in Taunton. How right he was! My enquiry coincided with the week in which a county archivist makes her monthly visit to Nailsea Library, and within 2 days I was in possession of copies of both the Petition to the Bishop, written in Revd. Caudwell's familiar hand, together with the Citation for exhibition in the church inviting any objections to the sale of the font. (£20 including the cost of conveyance!) There were also sepia photos of both fonts, which at the same time confirmed the authenticity of Michael Tozer's original print. There was one snag however - permission was given for the sale of the Victorian font "to the Vicar and Churchwardens of St Peter's Bristol" - yes but which St Peter's?

The trail led to the Bristol Diocesan Office and the City Museum. It turned out that dedications to St Peter were remarkably few, and two or three churches in today's suburbs had not even been built by 1908. My suspicion still lay with St Peter's in Castle Street., the oldest of the City churches dating back to AD1107, but our Church Architect, Alan Rome, and the writer considered it illogical that such an old foundation would wish to acquire a Victorian addition to such an ancient interior. The Museum, however provided the vital link, advising me that the Central Library contained the Archaeological Transactions of Bristol and Gloucs., including a comprehensive history of the Castle St. church written conveniently in 1909 by one Charles E. Boucher B.Sc.. It was not until the very last page, as I was losing heart, that the following entry appeared:

"The 19th century is a story of restoration. As a result, many interesting things have disappeared, among them being the font which I learn was a classical one, not unlike others of the period. The present font was designed by Street, and brought from Backwell Church".

Success at last. I have obtained from the Bristol Record Office a copy of that church's Faculty, dated 30th April 1908 approving the acceptance of Backwell's font in place of their existing one.

Older readers will of course remember the destruction of the church in the first wartime blitz on Bristol on November 24th 1940, a night still vivid in my memory, as the fires turned night into day even here in Backwell. The tower and the walls still remain, but of our font, sadly, there is no trace. The photo, however, remains as a pleasant reminder, and it is good to have unravelled a fragment of Backwell Church history that has been forgotten for most of this century.

John Brain has also written for Pennant the articles listed below, the figure in the first column is the edition of Pennant.

- 4 Country Baker, The
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- 9 War Memorial, Backwell
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- 15 Reflections on old belfry rules at St. Andrew's Backwell
- 17 Sir George Oatley (1863 - 1950)

A Short History of the R. N. Coate Cider Works at Nailsea 1925 - 1974 Part 2

by Trevor Bowen

This is part of an article previously printed in BIAS Journal 27 in 1994. It is printed with permission and the remainder of the original article will follow in Pennant 23 and 24. For a list of sources see page 7.

Showerings take Control

By 1950 the national annual output of cider exceeded 18,000,000 gallons compared with 13,000,000 some 20 years earlier. This figure was to remain constant throughout the decade before rising sharply in the early 1960s. Bulmers was the largest producer with perhaps two fifths of the market Whiteways and Coate in second and third positions, although accurate figures for comparison are not available. But if the production did not increase significantly in the 1950s, competition did and not just among the leading cider makers. Smaller companies introduced sales gimmicks, such as Ridler and Evans of Hereford who offered a free champagne glass with every six dozen of their new 'baby' bottles of cider.

In 1952 Bywater left the company and was replaced as works manager by Squadron Leader Stewart Allcott, a brewer who had worked with Barnes Wallis in developing the 'bouncing bomb'. A year later Freddie Pring became sales manager and the new team set about the competition.

However a major development was about to take place. Showerings at Shepton Mallet began to achieve success with 'Babycham'. Their point of sale advertising which projected the image of a young woman in a lounge or cocktail bar sipping a glass of 'Babycham', with a cherry on a stick, did wonders in the public house traditionally catering for the male. In 1954 and again a year later, Coate agreed to assist Showerings with the milling of pears. So it came about that in 1956 Showerings took a controlling interest in the Nailsea works with the intention of transferring their own cider production there, thus enabling Shepton Mallet to concentrate on 'Babycham'.

R. N. Coate became the first acquisition of the future Showering 'empire'. Then, shortly after, Vine Products took over Britvic and laid off most of the latter's sale force, these men eagerly joined Showerings. Merged with Coate's sales staff to sell both 'Babycham' and cider, and backed by a powerful advertising campaign which now included cinema and television, they doubled cider production within two years. They had achieved in that time what had taken Redvers Coate 30 years! Slogans introduced in that campaign, such as '*Coates Comes Up From Somerset*', still trip off the tongue even today.

Showerings made a large investment in Nailsea by way of plant and buildings - a modern mill house and additional semi automated bottling lines - together with glass lined vats and modern delivery vehicles. Coate's themselves introduced an orcharding service to rejuvenate the run-down Somerset orchards. This not only guaranteed the crop price but also provided farmers with suitable trees and assistance with maintaining these for the initial three years.

In 1961 Coate's introduced the half-gallon pitcher which was a radical departure from the traditional flagon bottle. Success was immediate with sales in excess of 1,000,000 within a year. Two years later the 'Quartet' was added to the range, an emerald green bottle of distinctive bulbous body and long tapering neck. This contained 'Triple Vintage' a strong cider first produced in 1951 along with 'Festival Vat' to celebrate the Festival of Britain. The pick of each season's apples was set aside for producing these top grade ciders. However Coate's 'Sweet Somerset' the ever popular sparkling cider still accounted for possibly two thirds of the total output at Nailsea.

The soil and climate of the west country produce ideal conditions for the growing of cider apples, but the expertise of Coate's staff played a major part in developing the clean full-flavoured ciders for which the company was noted. An important element in the production at Nailsea was the tasting session held at 12:30pm each day. Here the executives made a serious assessment of the latest batch of cider, since at Coate's all blending was done on the basis of taste alone. At the same session suitably disguised competitors' samples were similarly sampled for flavour and quality.

In 1966 Redvers Coate retired as managing director after 41 years during which time his fledgling company had become the second largest cider producer in Britain and put Somerset well and truly on the cider maker's map. He retained a directorship for a further 10 years as well as an association with the Long Ashton Research Station. In its later years the company employed 200 - 250 local people, depending upon seasonal activity, and many still have fond memories of Mr Coate who was immensely popular in a company which always enjoyed good labour relations.

He is remembered as a 'perfect gentleman', a keen follower of cricket - especially Somerset County - and as a champion of his drivers with whom he had a special working relationship, regarding them as his ambassadors as they travelled around the country. He retired with his wife Mary - he had reputedly been secretly engaged at the age of 13 - to live at Abbots Leigh on the outskirts of Bristol. Here in 1951 he had purchased 23 acres of land on which to plant 300 cider apple trees, ordered three years previously from a nurseryman and promptly forgotten until ready for delivery. Redvers Coate

died in 1985 and until recently the trees he lovingly tendered until his death provided apples for the production of cider at Shepton Mallet. Following his retirement Stewart Allcott and Freddie Pring took over as joint managing directors.

Showering's were expansionist minded and now set their sights on competitors in the cider industry and in the wine trade also. Vine Products, Harveys, Whiteways, Gaymers of Norwich - all were acquired so that the group now had three cider factories. Since Bulmers and Taunton cider were single units with the advantages of centralisation of production and administration, Showerings had to rationalise to remain competitive. With the financial investment made in Nailsea, it was felt certain that cider production would be centralised there and Stewart Allcott prepared to implement this. A new automatic Swiss press had been installed in 1971, described as '*the most revolutionary development in the history of cider*', for it not only produced more liquid per ton of apples (180 gallons / 810 litres) at the rate of five tons per hour but also did the work which previously occupied 25 men on the traditional 'cheese' presses. By now the works was processing up to 200 tons of apples a day during the autumn milling season.

To be continued in Pennant No 24 due to be published in September 1999

Sources

Enquiries made with Showerings, Vine Products and Whiteways Ltd., and Coates Gaymer in 1976 indicated that little archive material remained of R. N. Coate & Co Ltd. Representative photographs still exist, salvaged from the rubbish bins at the time of its closure in 1974, but ciné film held by Showerings and viewed by the author in 1977 was subsequently lost.

This short account of the works is therefore based on interviews with ex-employees and items that appeared in Showerings Group Newsletter.

Recorded Interviews	Published Material
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Redvers Coate (1977)	<i>Grapevine</i> , Showerings Group Newsletter (1966-1968)
Stewart Allcott (1977)	Taverner, H., <i>Our Roots and Branches</i>
Mary Coate (1991)	<i>Choice</i> , Allied-Lyons magazine (Sept - Oct 1990)
Trevor Thomas (1991)	

Seen in a facsimile of Felix Farley's Bristol Journal dated Saturday March 19 1757 issued with a recent edition of the Evening Post and brought to the Editor's attention

"To be Lett and enter'd upon at Lady - Day next A FARM called NURSE-BATCH, in the parish of Nailsey, in the county of Somerset, of about 50l per annum >> For further particulars enquire of Mr JOS. SYMONS, at Mr WARREN'S Compting House in *St Thomas Street, Bristol*"

Corrections Pennant no 22

My apologies to those members of the Hardwidge family who drew my attention to the correct spelling of their name and to the contributors whose articles contained the following errors:-

p 26 Hartwidge should read Hardwidge

p 31 In the 'Sperrin Family in Backwell' an incorrect date was shown

William Sperrin's date of baptism should read 26th Aug 1782 not 3 Nov 1782

Family History Enquiries.

In recent years the Society has had many enquiries. The following list, which is incomplete as not all enquiries have been indexed, gives an indication of the names that have been involved. The Editor has some of the information while papers for other enquiries are kept elsewhere.

NB Check against original entry as removal of table may have mixed up entries
Two columns "Surname subject of enquiry" & "Surname of Enquirer"

Ashfeild	Ashfield	Burchell		Crane	Popplestone
Ashfield	Ashfield	Burgum	Burgum	Dernford	Dunford
Atwell		Burrige	Adams	Dunford	Dunford
Bacon	Walford	Butcher	Moore	Durbin	Durbin
Badman		Cable	Moore	Durbin	Durbin
Badman	Poulter	Caple		Emery	Nicholls
Baker	Williams	Caple	Dunt	Feltham	Adams
Barnett	Moncrieff	Chaffin	Drake	Fisher	Mills
Barnett		Chard	Lewis	Fowler	Rasmussen
Becker	Clark	Chidgey	Maby	Fry	Fry
Betty	Betty	Cole	Kitt	Gayner	Adams
Bishop	Moncrieff	Coombes	Hewitt	Glew	Beavan
Bookless	Bookless	Coombs	Hewitt	Godwin	Denniston
Bowen	Stevens	Coombs	Tyree	Godwin	Tyree
Brake	Miller	Coombs	Dannenberg	Gore	Beavan
Brean	Brean	Coombs	Denniston	Gore	Beavan
Bridgman		Coombs	Meggett	Gorges	Buckley
Broom	Adams	Coulson-		Hale	Stevens
Broom(e)	Adams	Kernahan	Harris	Harris	Schieren
Budd	Porter	Crane	Adams	Hayes	Hayes
Burch	Pickens	Crane	Moore	Helps	Powell

Hiatt	Bowes-Taylor	Lacey	Field	Spencer	Husband
Hinkes	Elvins	Lock	Boudier	Sperrin	Everett
Hitchman	Everett	Lott	Rance	Squires	Hough
Holifield	Parsons	Lyall Coombs	Hewitt	Stokes	Hase
Holifield	Hollifield	Lyall Coombs	Tyree	Stokes	Moore
Hollifield	Parsons	Lyall Coombs	Dannenberg	Stokes	Stokes
Hollifield	Hollifield	Manfield	Webb	Stukey	Lockyer
Hollyman	Hollyman-Mawson	Martin	Marland	Summerell	Lewis
Hollyman	Poulter	Newton	Brown	Summers	Lewis
Hollyman	Cooper	Newton	Hase	Vowles	Miller
Holyfield	Parsons	Nicholas	Davis	Vowles	D'Costa
Holyfield	Hollifield	Noble	Adams	Wade	Smith
Homer	Walling	Phillips	Cornelius	Wade	Smith
Hopkins	Cornelius	Pope	Pope	Wall	Dunt
Hopkins		Pope	Smith	Ware	Mills
Hopkins	Cornelius	Pope	Duell-Thornton	Ware	Ware
Horler	Sweet	Pritchard	Poulter	Warfield	Smail
Hurditch	Miller	Rassil	Pope	Waymouth	Spence
Hurford		Rhys Davis	Flake	Wedmore	Hewitt
Hyatt	Bowes-Taylor	Ridge	Ruram?	Wedmore	Denniston
Hyatt	Hyatt	Robbins	Robbins	Wedmore	Nurden
Iles	Gadd	Rogers	Humble	Week	Adams
Jakeway	Jakeway	Rossiter	Webster	White	Steels
Jones	Adams	Rowles	Gillies	Windsor	Adams
Jones	Gannaway	Rowles		Wright	Adams
Jones	King	Rowles	Dunt	Wyatt	
Jones	Wake	Rumley	Fry	Yendole	
Keedwell	Smith	Russell	Moore	Young	Brown
Keedwell	Stephen	Sage	Nicholls	Young	Miller
Knight	Bookless	Smart	Parsons	Younge	Brown
Knight	Middlehurst	Spear	Adams		

Park Farm, Backwell

by Norma Knight

The house and land now known as Park Farm, Chapel Hill, Farleigh were formerly called Reeds Tenement. The earliest surviving mention is in a deed of 1631 when the owner William Tynte of Wrington, mortgaged the farm, then tenanted by Thomas Cooke, to Francis Derricke, merchant of Bristol. The mortgage was redeemed in 1633. In October 1635 William Tynte and his son Charles assigned the property to William and Robert Reade of Long Ashton for the use of William's newly married son John. In the 1670s the farm was mortgaged several times until in 1680 it was conveyed to Sir Haswell Tynte for £600, John Reed (Reade) remaining as tenant until his death.

From 1680 until the early 19th century Reeds formed part of the extensive Tynte estate. The Tynte family had originated in Wraxall (Tynte's Place) with branches in neighbouring parishes including Backwell where they prospered in the late 16th century. In the early 17th century they acquired Chelvey manor by marriage and later in the century Halswell in Goathurst (near Bridgwater), again by marriage. In the early 18th century Sir John Tynte married Jane Kemys of Cefn Mably in Glamorgan and the name became Kemys-Tynte,

In 1708 a survey of the estate of Sir John Tynte recorded that Reeds tenement at Farleigh comprised 19 acres and was tenanted by Thomas Parsons. Although Reeds was held by the Tyntes it was still part of the manor of Backwell. In 1709 a survey for the new Lord of Backwell manor, the Hon. Thomas Thynne (later Lord Weymouth) of Longleat, noted that Sir John Tynte was a freeholder of the manor, holding a tenement called Reeds in Farleigh for an annual chief rent payable to the manor of 1s 3d. In 1730 another survey of the Tynte estate described Reeds, now 21 ½ acres and worth about £21 a year, as being part of the senior Lady Tynte's jointure, meaning that it formed part of an estate from which she received an income as a widow. The tenant was then John Smith.

A later 18th century tenant was William Abrahall and after his death in 1765 the tenancy appears to have passed to William Wolfe, who was given permission in 1768 to build a house on land which formed part of Reeds, although he had to continue to maintain the original premises. The lease of the new house was renewed in 1805 and in 1807 William Wolfe's son John bought it from John Kemys-Tynte. The original house seems to have been occupied by a William Walters and he and John Wolfe shared the working of the farm lands.

In 1812, following the implementation of the Enclosure Award of that year, there was a major redistribution of land. The Kemys-Tyntes appear to have

relinquished their holding and Reeds became part of a large new estate built up by Thomas Keedwell, who had been Clerk to the Enclosure Committee. At the heart of the new estate Backwell House was erected.

Reeds remained part of the Backwell House estate through the rest of the 19th century and into the 20th century. It was only in 1916 that Alfred Robert Robinson of Backwell House acquired from the lord of the manor (the fifth Marquess of Bath) the full freehold of Reeds, redeeming the chief rent (still 1s 3d a year) for the sum of £1 15s 0d. For most of that period the tenants at Reeds were members of the Vowles family. In 1962 the Owen brothers took over the tenancy, by which time Reeds had been acquired by Lord Wraxall and had become part of the Tyntesfield Estate. In 1988 the house was sold separately from the land, which remained part of Lord Wraxall's estate.

The name Park Farm had emerged by the 20th century, following the re-organisation of the adjoining estate known as Backwell Park. The house there disappeared in the 19th century, leaving only some farm buildings with land which was acquired by the Tyntesfield and indeed after 1960 was farmed by the Owen brothers.

The house is a listed building, partly of medieval origin but mainly of the 17th century. It is possible that the original house was the home of the Backwell Tyntes. Edmund Tynte, who died in 1580, mentioned three sons in his will: John, Edward and William. There is no direct proof of a connection with the house, but it would explain the right of William Tynte to dispose of the property in 1635. The date stone over the front door, 1637, is that of a rebuilding which fits with the date when the house was acquired by John Reed, whose name it bore so long.

Sources

- 1 Tynte family deeds: S.R.O., DD/S/WH 45, 76, 187, 218.
- 2 Longleat (West Surveys of Backwell Manor 1709, 1787, 1812;
Muniment Room) 10A lv Chief rents sold and exonerated at Backwell
1896 - 1938 no. 25
Quoted by permission of the Marquess of Bath
- 3 Backwell Enclosure S. R. O., Q/RDC 6.
Award 1812
- 4 Tithe Award 1843 S. R. O., D/D/Rt 395.
- 5 Kellys Directories of 1861 - 1935
Somerset
- 6 Sales Catalogues; local information

Editor

See also articles in Pennant 21 "Nailsea and the Archives of the Kemys Tynte family" and in Pennant 22 "Longleat - Treasure Trove and Wildlife Park" by Julie Mansfield the North Somerset Archivist from Somerset Record Office and also refer to the brief note on page 11 of Pennant 22.

Norma Knight has also contributed the following to Pennant:

<i>Edition</i>	<i>Title of Article</i>
1	<i>Who was Richard Baber of Backwell, Clockmaker?</i>
2	<i>Early Schools in Backwell</i>
3	<i>The Uses of a Cow</i>

The Mount Buffalo Story 1898 - 1998 by Dan Webb and Bob Adams

Published by The Miegunyah Press / Melbourne University Press ISBN 0 522 84783 8, 188 pages with 87 black and white illustrations and 27 in colour

A Review by Peter Wright.

NB Mount Buffalo National Park 337 kilometres by road NE of Melbourne between Myrtleford and Bright.

This is a book to be handled with care and enjoyed. The Landscape format of this book is particularly appropriate as it has been written to celebrate the centenary of Mount Buffalo National Park where is preserved

"the unique landscape and nature of Mount Buffalo...."

From 1898, when a temporary reserve of 1166 hectares was set aside 50 years were to elapse before Mount Buffalo was eventually granted National Park status in 1948.

I have found distant relatives living 'Down Under' but regrettably I have never been to Australia the home of those men in white flannels and green caps who always seem imbued with a great desire to beat the 'Poms' and far too frequently ruin our cricket season!

Although I have tried my hand at several tasks since I retired I have never written a book review but I hope that the comments that follow will encourage readers to read or buy the book for themselves.

I was put in touch with Dan Adams (broadcaster and journalist and, I understand, wartime pilot) by one of his service colleagues who used to fly Dakotas. He telephoned me from his home in Somerset. In the

correspondence with Dan that followed came my rash offer to review the book for Pennant.

I hope that Dan Webb and his co-author Bob Adams (Ranger-in-Charge at the Mount Buffalo National Park during the 1980s and 1990s) will forgive my approach as an enthusiastic, and very envious, reader and publisher.

In the book we read that 'Alice Manfield*', established an enviable reputation as hostess, guide, photographer, ornithologist and ecologist'! (**daughter of James Samuel Manfield who was bapt. at H T Ch. Nailsea*)

Many of these attributes and a first hand knowledge of the area would certainly help a reviewer but the book is so well illustrated and written that even from afar one feels that the Mount Buffalo Plateau is familiar.

Mount Buffalo was first seen by Europeans when Hamilton Hume and William Hovell were blazing a trail between Sydney and the southern coast of the continent in 1824.

In later times there were risks in visiting the area. Twenty six people from Porepunkah spent all night in a vehicle as the driver battled through heavy snow to take them to the chalet. At another time a lady sitting on the brink of the Gorge fell 300 feet to her death.

From the point of view of the Nailsea reader, obviously there will be an interest in the Manfield family and those who inhabited the area at that time. There was great rivalry between firms providing transport (*Chapter 7 The Carriage Trade*) and also the families providing accommodation one of whom was the Manfields.

There are descriptions of activities as diverse as panning for gold and the discovery of new plants. Some plants are illustrated with stunning colour plates and described in (*Chapter 4*) 'A Garden of the Gods'.

'Painting, Politics and Progress' (*Chapter 5*) is followed by 'High Huts and Hospices' where we find a reference to the fact that the Manfield family continued to cater for tourists on the Plateau until the 1930s. During this period various chalets were built. Some stretched legality to the limit. A contract was awarded for a chalet to be built with work commencing in September 1909. Various problems arose and completion was delayed as rain came through the new but poorly designed roof. Winter played havoc with the new chalet and we read of "guests in the dining room wrapped in winter woollies overcoats and dressing gowns... and one miserable group camped in front of the building burning duckboards for warmth".

'Landlord and Landlady' takes the story to about 1924 when the Chalet was taken over by the Railways. It was in that year that Dr Henry Charles Varley fell over the Mount Buffalo Gorge. Valiant attempts were made to recover the body leading to several bravery awards.

In the following years, and after recovering from the surprise that the Chalet was built as a temporary wooden structure, the Victorian Railways spent large amounts of money and promoted the Mount Buffalo Plateau as a place to have fun in the snow. Australia's first motorised ski tow was opened there in August 1937. However even though the place was popular it proved difficult to make money from the enterprise.

In February 1939 serious bushfires swept Victoria damaging the flora on the Plateau. Despite the severity of the fires elsewhere the Plateau had a lucky escape as worse damage had been done by earlier smaller fires. In June 1939 eight new rooms were added. As war broke out the man who had overseen the changes was called to serve as Australia's first Director of Aircraft Production.

There follow chapters relating the history of the development of the park and the development of snow sports.

Post WW2 the area went through difficult times. Proposals by Tatra Development caused great concern. It is only in the last 25 years that the situation has improved to the extent that the mid 1990s brought the Mount Buffalo Chalet successive Victorian Tourism awards.

At the end of the book it is a pleasure to find detailed appendices. An example other authors would do well to note. The appendices contain the following:-

1. A complete synopsis of flora identified within the Mount Buffalo National Park.

About 450 entries each showing the Common Name, Family and Scientific Name.

2. Species of birds that have been sighted within the existing boundaries of Mount Buffalo National Park.

Over 120 listed showing Common Name, Scientific Name, Habitat and Comments.

3. Place Names and Features of Mount Buffalo National Park.

Over 125 entries giving the Feature, Grid Reference, Location and Comments.

Following these are Notes indicating the source of the information (about 350 entries); a list of further reading and an index containing about 750 entries.

I am sure that if you have read this far you will understand why I am envious and enthusiastic about this book.

As I write the authors are awaiting news as to whether they have won an award.

As publisher for the Society I would love to have the opportunity to have the chance to bring a book such as this before the public. Unfortunately in a place such as Nailsea I suspect that this is but a pipe dream. This book is a tribute to the work of the authors and to the publisher. Buy a copy. Why not include Mount Buffalo if you are planning a trip 'Down Under'. It sounds an ideal place for all and especially for 'Twitchers' and Ecologists'. Obtainable from Nailsea Bookshop the book costs about £23.

The reviewer, Secretary of Nailsea and District Local History Society also acts as its editor and publisher. He is also author of 'Villages at War' and 'Peace for our Time' and 'Nailsea - a Handbook of Dates and Events'.

The Manfield Family - Some clues for the Family Historian

by Peter Wright from information supplied by Mrs Genevieve Baumgarten

Readers of Pennant 21 will recall seeing the article about the two brothers James and John Manfield who went from Nailsea o Australia and who were involved in the Gold Rush. John died aged 34 but James was to become the first guide to the plateau on Mount Buffalo. In Pennant 22 mention was made of the book "The Mount Buffalo Story" by Dan Webb and Bob Adams. A review of this book appears elsewhere in this edition of Pennant.

One of James's daughters became known as Guide Alice during the early years of the century and Genevieve Baumgarten her daughter, who has provided the information for this article, first climbed the mountain when she was 3 years old.

Much of her childhood in the 1920s was spent in the clouds that shrouded the plateau on top of Mount Buffalo. When the mists lifted, she and her dog Punkah spent hours roaming the world of giant granite boulders and outcrops, twisting snow gums, rushing creeks and views stretching into infinity.

Now in her 80th year Genevieve recalls that she was never bored "Mum and Dad never worried about me, even if I didn't come back at night. I'd turn up some time or other. You couldn't lose me up there". © newspaper of unknown title, photocopy of article supplied to the editor.

The Border Mail reported in 1994 that her grandfather first visited Mount Buffalo in about 1856 and subsequently built Buffalo House.

Among the information provided is some which may assist those seeking to trace their family history among the Manfields.

Her grandfather said that there was a disagreement about an inheritance about 1700.

Genevieve's father was sent to the UK to recuperate after "Anzac" by which she obviously means the Dardanelles and the failed attempt to bring the first World War to an early conclusion. Her father said that a Manfield family who lived in a huge mansion made him most welcome as a distant relation.

Genevieve goes on to say that when she visited the UK she stayed with a cousin Leslie Manfield at Duffin Villa Mountain Ash in Wales. Leslie had just retired as Principal of Mountain Ash Boys Grammar School. He made her most

welcome and had a lot of Manfield history. Her father John Edmund Manfield was a grandson of John Robert Manfield.

Another bit of information that presents all sorts of possibilities for someone to research is found in a copy of a letter that she has. It is headed "Victory" off Cadiz Octr 27th 1805

"Dear Manfield

We have on the 21st Inst. obtained a most Glorious Victory over the Combined Fleets, but it has cost this Country a Life that no Money can replace, and one for whose Death I shall for ever mourn (*and ends*) I remain with all good wishes for all, Dear Manfield, Ever yours most Affectionately

T.M. Hardy".

(Editor - Genevieve says that Hardy was married to Ann Manfield daughter of Stan Manfield Solicitor at Dorchester.

Odds and Ends - or the result of an appearance on TV

by Peter Wright

Research carried out on wartime events led to the publication of my two books "Villages at War" and "Peace for our Time" and to an appearance with several other members of N&DLHS on BBC 2 in "Hart-Davis on History". From my point of view very useful as it led to several orders. From the Local History Society's point of view potentially even more profitable as contact was made with a number of people who left Nailsea many years ago or looked for contacts.

The following is a list of those who contacted me. If you remember them or their memories hit a chord please write to the editor or let me have a written note at the next meeting.

I emphasise a written note as it is nearly impossible to remember who said what and when in the hurly burly of a meeting. If you think that I am being fussy in asking for information in writing I would add that in the four months ending 24 March of this year I received or made telephone calls, wrote or received letters, delivered books or took other action on behalf of the Society on 481 occasions. This is not a complaint but we are a very active Society and would welcome some more active members.

1. Mike Hyde

Mike is now retired and writes from Marlow saying that between 1967 and 1970 he lived in Eastway Drive. Played football for Nailsea United AFC and won the Clubman of the Year tankard in 1968/9. He asks whether any of his fellow players still live in Nailsea and whether the football club still flourishes? He said that just before he left Nailsea 'we were about to set up a multi sports club with cricket and hockey teams'.

Would anyone who reads this be willing to let Mike know how things have gone?

He also says that if anyone gets around to writing a history of Nailsea, general or specific to his period in the town, or about local sport please let him know. Margaret Thomas' "Nailsea - a brief History" may meet one requirement but is there anyone out there with information about local sports clubs. The Society is always happy to publish snippets and to seek further information.

Is anyone writing a history of sport in general or maybe football or cricket in Nailsea?

2. Mrs Pauline Lewis née James

Pauline writes that she still has cousins living in Nailsea and recounts briefly her memories of the wartime when she was about 4 or 5.

“Mum and Dad were concerned at the increasing number of bombing raids on the Isle of Wight. The younger members of the family were taken to live with Aunt Ethel and Uncle Bill Baker.

My older brother and sister went to the village school there but I wasn't old enough and I can remember there being a little shop opposite the school, where after seeing my brother and sister into school, Aunt Ethel would buy me jelly baby sweets”.

She finishes “I can remember the day we arrived in Nailsea seeing the Man on the Bike (Jake?) going round the village blowing his whistle, which was the warning of an imminent air raid”.

Further recollections to the Editor please!

3. Mrs Mary K France

She saw the TV programme but did not get all the details down about buying the books. She mentioned that she is a member of a local history society and wondered whether the books would help them. I have answered that question both as an author and Secretary of the N&DLHS. I have offered advice and assistance if required. Correspondence is continuing.

4. Mrs Pat Coleman

She wrote to say that her husband Frederick Trump and his sister Gwen were evacuated to Nailsea. He was placed at a farm and his sister elsewhere. “I know he was very happy at the farm, apparently there was a large attic at the farmhouse where around a dozen boys slept on mattresses on the floor. He also delivered milk before going to school.”

Regrettably she has no further details. Can any reader help?

5. Frederick Skidmore

He wrote to say that when he was 6 years old in 1940 he was evacuated to Nailsea. He remembers living in a big house where there was an elderly lady who treated him very well.

(Ed. Possibly Moorfields House?)

6. Mrs G. D. Marston

She wrote from Letchworth and mentioned her mother's younger brother Will Elverd kept the fruit and vegetable shop in Nailsea during the war.

(Editor I have passed on her address to Len Elverd one of our members and a relation of hers.)

7. Mrs Anne S Titley

She wrote to say that her grandmother came from the area; she was the daughter of Stephen Cox who was the owner of Court de Wyck leather tannery.

(Editor - I remembered that the name Cox was also connected with Nailsea Tannery and we are in contact. She has supplied a copy of a fine drawing of Court de Wyck see next Pennant).

8. Mr W E Clavey

He has asked if there is any way in which the Society could trace where he was billeted during the war. He writes as follows:

"I can recall arriving by train from Paddington, at Weston Super Mare and being told we would be on the beach the next day. That wasn't to be as Weston was already full up with evacuees. We were moved on to Clevedon where there was a similar situation. Finally we arrived in Portishead. I feel sure that this would have been the old Portishead Village Hall, and that the evacuating London families were introduced to their new country cousins. We were the last to leave and this was with the billeting officer, who had decided to take us under his wing.

Mr and Mrs Beasley, were a charming elderly couple, with whom we stayed for a comparatively short period. In the eyes of an eight year old too short a period as I was having a very enjoyable time. Mr Beasley gave me a gun (no ammunition) which I carried when he took me rabbit shooting. The house was not of considerable size, but had a single castellated turret. The grounds were quite extensive and with walled off sections. These were high red brick walls and were entered through arched gateways. On either side of the drive were garden sheds of a varied nature. In the hallway of the house was a propeller from an aeroplane, in which their son had been killed in the Great War. Standing in the centre of the lane leading to the entrance to the property and looking left, I can recall seeing the two Portishead power station chimneys appearing over the brow of the lane. I feel the Beasleys were notable people in the area at that time."

(Editor - Can anyone help or do they know someone in Portishead to whom I can direct the query?)

9. Mrs E Walley

asked for copies of the books to give to her friend who was a resident in Nailsea at one time.

10. Mrs Lorna Cullen

She contacted me from Bournemouth to say that her father was the billeting officer for Nailsea. The name was Taylor and they lived at No 1 Nailsea Park not far from Dr Bown.

11. Mrs Mary Weatherburn

She wrote mentioning that she lived at the Tyntesfield village for some time after the war. I am awaiting more information.

12. Mrs Margaret Hinds née Baston

I was an evacuee in Nailsea for a brief period. I did not come by the usual route. I had a great aunt and uncle Maggie and John Sullivan who lived at Moor Villas and my mother took me to stay with them from September 1939 to the spring of 1940. I attended the village school and remember the school mistress Miss Morris who was kind to me. I used to walk to school with Madge Somerville(?) who was a daughter to the publican at The Bird in the Eye.

(Ed. Margaret indicates that she has doubts as to the accuracy of the names. Would I be right in suggesting Summerell rather than Somerville. The pub was of course The Bird in Hand).

My grandmother who had 11 children brought a small bungalow called Rocklea and throughout the war we visited her on and off. My great aunt and uncle later moved to a house opposite the church. They had met when they worked on the estate at Wraxall. My uncle worked at the quarry in Backwell during the war.

My mother whisked me away from Nailsea, to my great regret, as my London School had been evacuated to Box and she wanted me to take the London Scholarship.

13. Mrs Dixon

Wrote to me from Cornwall and mentioned that her husband had been evacuated to Nailsea West End.

14. Mr Rudge

He wrote from Yate sending a copy of his memories of the Blitz on Bristol.

(Editor - information about war time in this area is still sought. Please contact me if you have any.)

Nailsea Village Gossip

by Phyllis Horman

further extracts from her book of the same.

(For further extracts from 19th century papers see the article commencing on page 33)

1849

MELANCHOLY DEATH OF "OLD JEMMY BRITTON"

Old Jemmy Britton was found dead early one Sunday morning. He was an eccentric person and well known for many years in the vicinity of the Somerset collieries. His body was found in a shallow open well near a footpath leading from Wraxall to Nailsea. From the position of the body it would seem that the old man had either gone to the well to drink or wash himself, and having fallen backward into the water was unable to get up again.

He was a native of Camerton near Bath and in earlier life had worked in the coal mines of that area. For many years he had wandered about, living entirely on people's charity. He had been heard to say he had not slept in a bed for over thirty years. His inoffensive and unassuming manner won him the good opinion of everyone and with the children he was a special favourite. An inquest was held, when the jury, after hearing the evidence, said, "Found Dead."

June 1850

Two sad accidents occur in one week. Samuel Durbin had his collar bone and ribs broken when a quantity of coal fell on him. He was so severely injured he was not expected to recover.

David Martin was killed by accidentally falling down the shaft of a coalpit at Youngwood new coal works. He was a Cornish miner and left a wife and four children in Cornwall.

Aug 1850

FATAL ACCIDENT AT NAILSEA

Another fatal coalpit accident, Martin Trewella one of the Cornish miners, sinking a new pit. At the time of the accident, he was standing on the scaffolding, by which the men were lowered down, and one of the ropes

holding him gave way and he fell to the bottom of the pit. One of his legs was badly crushed and although he was put on a board to be taken home, he died before getting there. What made matters even more unfortunate, he had only been married three months. Another man was with him at the time, but he managed to save himself by catching the other rope.

This is the second fatal accident that has happened at this pit, and two men besides have been seriously injured. (Is this Youngwood, as well?)

1852

John Warfull and William Manfield of Nailsea were summoned by George Lilly for assaulting and kicking him and otherwise ill-treating him. It appears that they had just come from a beerhouse, when they quarrelled, which terminated in blows and kicking. Fined twelve shillings each or one month's imprisonment.

1854

An inquest at the Butchers Arms on the body of Mr George Withey Aged 72. He was a highly respected yeoman of Nailsea and highly esteemed by everyone. He was returning to his house one night with Mr Jolleff in Mr Jolleff's gig. They were talking together when suddenly Mr Withey fell over the side on to his back. Mr Jolleff got out immediately to attend to him and found him senseless. Mr Withey was taken to his son's home. Mr Adams the surgeon was sent for. He found Mr Withey still unconscious and he died within half an hour. From the appearance of the body, it seemed he died of a fracture at the base of the skull. Verdict, Accidental Death.

Nov 1854

At Nailsea an inquest on the body of Samuel Gray Withy aged 41 a farmer. He was an intemperate man and subject to fits. On the night of the fifth he was seen very tipsy, going towards his house. A labourer named Harvey asked him to come to his house but Withy refused. Harvey made him a straw bed in an empty sty but in the morning, found Withy dead, near Foster's farm. Verdict, Died from Epilepsy, accelerated by drinking.

1854

Banwell Petty Sessions

Samuel Davies of Nailsea, innkeeper, was summoned by Ann Vaughan of Weare, to show cause why he should not contribute toward the support of her bastard child, he being the reputed father. The plaintiff is a married woman whose husband left her five years previously. The Justices after mature deliberation, dismissed the case.

1854

Sheep Stealing

During the night of Wed. a sheep was stolen from Mrs Sarah Thatcher of Nailsea. The skin was found in a sack marked E.G.H. in a pit near Christ Church Nailsea.

1854

At Nailsea an inquest on the body of Joseph Manfield aged 3 years who, in the absence of the schoolmistress, swallowed boiling water from a tea kettle and died in great agony thirty six hours later. Verdict. Accidental.

1855

Nailsea Pig Stealing

On Wed. night, a porking pig the property of Mr Robert Newton was stolen from one of his outhouses. The Nailsea Association for the Protection of Property have offered a reward for the apprehension of the thief.

Havoc Among The Sparrows

We understand that the Nailsea Association of the Destruction of Sparrows and other small birds, have offered several prizes to be awarded on Easter Monday next, at the Royal Oak Inn, Nailsea, to the person who shall produce the largest number of heads of small birds.

May 1855

Daring Burglary With Violence At Nailsea

This was a most 'outrageous and diabolical' burglary, the worst in this area of Somerset since the one which had taken place at Nempnett when a Mr and Mrs Wilkins, two old people who kept a shop there, fell victim to the burglars, one of the old people must have died at or through the violence, which resulted in the burglars being hanged.

Here in Nailsea the victims were an aged couple, Mr and Mrs Shepstone who lived in a lonely residence about thirty yards from the road leading from Nailsea to Yatton. The only other occupant was a little girl, whose bedroom was between that of Mr and Mrs Shepstone and the room where the burglars made entry.

Between twelve and one o'clock on the Tues. night Mrs Shepstone heard the spring that fastened the sash windows pushed back and the window opened. She woke her husband who went toward the room and was confronted by four armed men, who aimed guns at his head and threatened to kill him. He tried to push them downstairs, but was seized by one of the men, who was a tall, powerful person, with crape over his face, and a bedroom carpet (?!) over his shoulders. He threw Mr Shepstone to his knees behind the bedroom door

where the child slept, aiming the gun, which fortunately mis-fired. Mrs Shepstone appeared and was seized by another man, who pushed her on the bed demanded the key and threatened Mr Shepstone to give up his money - or else! He told them that all the money he had was in his trousers pocket by the bed. All they found were a few shillings. The little girl came out and offered her cotton box if they would spare her parents lives. (Plucky little woman!).

The burglars said they were colliers and they wanted money or food, but it is presumed they were practised thieves. The two men broke open every drawer and box in the bedroom. In the secret drawer of a chest they found a small earthen vessel containing between £44 and £45 in gold. Not content with this they turned over the beds in case they had missed anything.

Later they went downstairs, opened all drawers and cupboards, taking six silver teaspoons marked A.T. and one silver tablespoon marked C.A.S. A quantity of brandy and cooked meat was also taken. Before leaving, the two downstairs called to the ones upstairs to keep watch over Mr and Mrs Shepstone, as they were going to have bread & cheese, and cider.

As soon as they left Mrs Shepstone went in her night-dress to the nearest neighbour Mr Wyatt, a farmer. In the path leading to the main road Mr Shepstone's gun was found. Mr Shepstone, with tears in his eyes, said later that he 'had but three halfpence left between earth and heaven.'

It is presumed that one of the men must have known the domestic arrangements of the family as up to a very recent period, the daughter and son in law has also been living there.

The entrance had been made by placing a ladder against a front wall, breaking a pane of glass, and unfastening the sash whereby the smallest man could enter, the window wouldn't open more than ten to twelve inches, and then letting the others in by the front door. Unfortunately no one was caught for this crime.

1856

A robbery was attempted at the Butcher's Arms Inn, Nailsea. The thieves placed a ladder against the house, and entered by an upper window. The servant, who had an occasion to go upstairs, saw a light in the master's bedroom, became suspicious and gave an alarm. The burglars escaped the same way as they made entry.

Nailsea Coalmines

Editor

Recently I have heard that a large number of bell pits were found in one of the fields off Lodge Lane that are about to be covered in housing. I have not been able to make any enquiries but I have passed a message to Vince Russett via Keith Gardner in the hope that some details will be able to be saved for posterity.

I notice that in the area immediately to the west of this site where Youngs pit existed there were references to many bell pits.

Extracts from Margaret Thomas' book "Nailsea Coalmines" follow:-

17. PRIDEAUX PIT

SITE: Wraxall - some distance off Lodge Lane
STATUS: Private land
REMAINS: Foundations of engine house and possibly other remains
HISTORY: Little known - no documentary sources
EVIDENCE: Possibly near South Parks described in wind mill experiment

16. YOUNGS PIT

SITE: Nailsea Park / Blackthorn Way
STATUS: Public open space
REMAINS: Extensive spoil tip; footings of shaft
HISTORY: Opened by 1792
Closed Not Known
EVIDENCE: 1792 Map of Bampfylde's coal lands
Dispute with Cannington Farm re damage caused by shallow workings.
Lot of bell pits in area, including "fire and water" shaft

"Nailsea Coalmines" by Margaret Thomas and its companion volumes "Nailsea Glassworks" and "Nailsea - a brief History"

are available from the Society each priced £4-00 inc post and packing.
Also available for £3.50 from any local shop handling the Society's publications.

The Smyth Family / The 'Nailsea Ships

Books which may be of interest to readers of this journal
by Peter Wright

Elsewhere there are details of the Mount Buffalo Story. While I do not have the time available to review the titles which are referred to below readers may have missed seeing them and might welcome their attention being drawn to them.

Anton Bantock's latest part of his story of the Smyth family is now available from the Nailsea Bookshop. It is the fourth part and if you find as I did that you have not got the third volume that is also available.

The Last Smyths Part 2 is priced at £9.99 as is Part 1. The two books together are £13.99.

Another book which may be of local interest is about aviation and Lundy island.

Of more immediate local interest is a book I obtained from Nailsea Library. This was brought to my attention by one of our supporters.

The Red Duster at War
by John Slader

pub by William Kimber 1988
ISBN 0 7183 0679 1 Price £15.50

It was obtained from Weston Library Church St Bath. Buy it if it is still available or borrow from the library.

The author joined the Merchant Navy being indentured to E R Management Co Ltd of Cardiff and Evans and Reid Company of Cardiff as an Apprentice Deck Officer. This company was one of those owned by Lieutenant-Commander Evans RNVR of Nailsea Court.

In 1943 while still only 19 he held the unenviable record of being sunk four times by the enemy within 24 months.

Among the items of information are details of the 5 ships bearing the word 'Nailsea' in their names:

Nailsea Court, Nailsea Lass, Nailsea Manor, Nailsea Meadow, Nailsea River.

The Late Henry Abbott wrote of his trip on board the SS Nailsea Meadow. Originally published in Pennant 2 the article was repeated in Pennant 19 to accompany another article about Lieutenant-Commander Evans RNVR of Nailsea Court.

Nailsea River

September 1940

Amongst those sunk by dive bombers off the Scottish Coast was Nailsea River

Nailsea Lass. Convoy SLS64 homeward from Freetown was intercepted by surface vessels. 9 out of 10 vessels sunk. One reached the UK after 3 months under repair in the Azores. Nailsea Lass fell behind the convoy within 24 hours of sailing with engine trouble. She missed the interception of the other vessels only to be sunk within 60 miles of Fastnet rock. 5 died in the boats. Capt. Bradford and chief mate were taken on board U-48 as POWs.

Nailsea Meadow,

Following the London raid on the night of 19/20 March (1941) the Royal Group of Docks in the Pool of London were left in ruins. Amongst the ships trapped was Nailsea Meadow(4962 grt)

Nailsea Moor,

A well defended convoy of 42 ships sailed from Liverpool on 2nd May 1941. Within 8 days 8 merchant ships had been sunk.

It was about this time that Bismark left port on her final voyage and the U110 was captured. Here a boarding party from HMS Bulldog found the complicated U-Boat codes which with her Enigma machine helped scientists to interpret vital German messages. This knowledge was to remain a closely guarded secret for thirty years.

OB318 was sighted by Herbert Kuppisch of U-94 on 7th May. He torpedoed the Norwegian Eastern Star and Alfred Holt's Ixion. Nailsea Moor the rescue ship turned back to assist rescuing 5 boatloads with 86 survivors whilst Captain Dark and his chief mate with 17 others in the ships jolly boat were rescued by HMS Marigold. Not one man was lost.

The author acted as third mate of the 4926 ton Nailsea Moor Captain Caldcleugh the only surviving Nailsea ship and his service took him to Montreal to Naples and supplying the Armed forces in the Adriatic. May 1945

saw Nailsea Moor in West Africa loading homewards and was in Lagos as peace was declared in Europe.

Nailsea Manor,

It was October 1941 when Nailsea Manor was sunk by U-126 en route from Lorient taking a southerly course to the equator. No crew members were lost.

Previously Nailsea Manor had been in collision with another ship while in convoy in fog.

Nailsea Court,

SC121 (61 ships) sailed from New York on 23rd February. 34 U-boats lay in wait north east of Newfoundland, later a further six were called up. Twelve ships were sunk among them Nailsea Court.

... In the middle watch action of 10 March against Coulmore and Nailsea Court U-229 (Lieutenant J G Robert Schetelig) surfaced and fired at point blank range. Nailsea Shipping Company's flag ship exploded amidships killing her master Captain Lee the company chairman's nephew articed as an apprentice and 42 others. There were only three survivors.

John Slader goes on to comment

... Probably more merchant seamen were lost during SC121 action than from any other convoy assault during the war.

Readers with a nautical interest may be interested in an illustrated article published in Pennant No 4
HMS Nailsea - A Ship too late for war by David Sowdon.

Questions to be answered

compiled by Peter Wright Editor of Pennant

This is your opportunity to provide answers to some of the questions we have encountered since the last edition of your Local History Journal was published.

Question 1.

In Margaret Thomas Book "Nailsea Glassworks" there is a mention of John Phillips being enticed to work at Nailsea in 1789 from Messrs Elton and Co of Bristol.

Roy Phillips has written to the Society from Stockport to say that this date seems to coincide with the family moving from Bristol to Nailsea. His son John Phillips who also worked for the Glassworks married a Hannah Crane of Wraxall around 1839.

Does anyone have any information about this family that they would care to pass on? If so please contact Roy Phillips direct at 24 Adelaide Road Bramhall, Stockport Cheshire SK7 1LT.

Question 2.

It relates to children of local parents of the Catholic faith. Where were the children baptised in the 19th century? This was asked by a visitor to our April meeting after the speaker had left. From enquiries I have made, including a call to our April speaker, there appears to be no simple answer. Clevedon, Portishead, Bristol & Wrington all appear to be possible. Have any local family historians details of local Catholic baptisms in their own family?

Would anyone who has further information please contact the editor.

Question 3.

Cecile Braide has had an enquiry from Australia seeking a Revd. Lance who lived in Bucklands Batch in the early part of this century. Has anyone any information about this person either personal or vocational?

Details to the editor please.

Question 4.

Ian White 23 Silverwood Road Kettering Northants NN15 6EL in a letter published in the Mercury edition dated April 15th 1999 asks for information about a Dorset Poet William Barnes who, he says, is recorded as living in Nailsea from 1825 to 1827 and possibly marrying there. Can anyone help?

Further extracts from local papers to 1894.

With an emphasis on the Engineer Volunteers compiled by Peter Wright (but see also Nailsea Village Gossip & N V News by Phyllis Horman)

As most readers will know the Glassworks seem to have encouraged workers to join the local volunteer regiment. I have recently received a letter from someone who is trying to gather information about the Engineer Volunteers and have passed his letter to Trevor Bowen.

At the same time I have been fortunate to see some cuttings that relate to events activities over a fairly lengthy period. The volunteers are frequently mentioned. It is noticeable that their description changes over the period.

The following are some of the extracts that caught my attention as well as a few other items of interest.

1878

In February members mustered at the Drill Hall for Church parade. Major Nash, Captain Gregory and Lieutenant Matthews and the band led the march from the drill hall to Holy Trinity church.

In December there was the annual meeting and distribution of prizes. Major Nash was ill and the large number of men present was under the command of Lieut. Scoones. The number of 'efficients' as at 31st October was 281.

Sapper Reed won a cup for the best at drill, he had attended 119 drills. Other winners for attendance at drill prizes were Sapper J Yendale, Bugler Male, Sergeant Brown, Sergeant Pope, Corporals Burchell and Butcher, Sapper White, Sergeant Bishop, Sappers H Boyden, W Waite, J Chard and E Palmer.

The first match for firing was won by Corporal G Horler, Sergeant Bishop, Sergt. Major Male, Sapper H Durbin, Sergt Brown, Lieuts. Scoones and Pilgrim, Corporals Mansfield and Coombs, Sapper T Mansfield and Sergeant H G Yendale.

The second match was won by Sergeant Major Male, Sappers A Durbin and H Durbin, Corporals Mansfield and Hawkins, Sergeant Pope, Lieuts. Pilgrim and Scoones, Sergeants Yendale and Lott, Corporal Horler, Sergt Brown, Corporals Blatt, Coombs, Butcher, Sergts. Green and Robson and Sapper Watkins.

The recruit match was won by Sapper A Parsons, Bugler Male, Sappers Harvey Bacon Palmer and Mountain. The consolation stakes were won by Sappers E Holder, W Reed, G Urch and Corporal Butcher.

1879

In December there was a distribution of prizes for drill and rifle practice. Major Nash was absent due to continued illness.

There is an extensive list of winners of various prizes.

1880

In the paper dated April 17th 1880 there is an account of a church parade at Clifton where members of Nos. 2 and 3 Companies of First Somerset Engineer Volunteers wore crape badges as a mark of respect for their late Commandant Major Nash. Captain Gregory was in command.

1881

In March the Weston Members of the First Gloucestershire Engineer Volunteer Corps assembled for Church Parade in the College Grounds. *This appears to have been at Weston.*

1882

Gossiping Notes on Nailsea Parish by W Hardman LL.D.

And lastly we may mention a recent tablet to the memory of Major Nash, erected by the officers and privates of the Nailsea Engineers.

Dr William Hinck(e)s

.... There is also a tablet to a once celebrated physician, Dr William Hinckes "who practised physic and surgery in the parish for 50 years with the greatest reputation and success" "

(there is in Clapton Church a monument to his wife).

"... Nailsea perhaps from its central position has long been a kind of medical axis round which revolved the care of the sick in the surrounding villages. In the last century was the famous Dr Hincks whose tablet we have mentioned and whose daughters lived on into the commencement of this century. They kept a kind of private asylum for the insane who in those days were treated with great strictness if not severity and it is asserted that the iron rings to which the poor mad folk were chained are still to be seen at the place where they lived at "West End ...".

In September the members of the Somerset Detachment of the First Gloucester Engineer Volunteer Corps were entertained at the Railway Hotel. Among the references to the recent war in Egypt it was said that over 100 volunteers had put themselves forward for immediate service in the east and a fair proportion of these were from the Somerset detachment.

1883

In July the annual inspection of the Somerset detachment took place in Nailsea before Colonel Storer Commanding Royal Engineers South Wales District.

Two men had been successful in the ambulance class examinations and Mrs Johnson the rector's wife presented them with the Geneva Cross badges which they had earned. It appears that the two were Corporal W E Male and Sapper Briant.

Members of the detachment accompanied by several of their officers dined in the evening in a tent near the Royal Oak Inn

1887

June 8th At the "Celebration of the Queen's Jubilee" a procession headed by the band of the 1st Gloucester Royal Engineers will be formed in the road by the Old Parish Church and proceed down Church Lane by the Butcher's Arms up through the village and round the triangular piece of ground by the Glass Works and so back to the field. The Friendly Societies in full regalia and the Parishioners generally, are invited to join in this procession.

1889

Headlines March 11th - The Floods in Bristol - a third of Bristol under water.

1891

In April members of the Volunteer Engineer and Rifle Corps assembled at the Drill Hall Weston super Mare for Church Parade.

The Rev E P Vaughan rector of Wraxall died towards the end of May and was buried on 1st June.

On 2nd August about 70 members of the Nailsea and Long Ashton detachment of the First Devon and Somerset Volunteer Royal Engineers attended the parish church at Long Ashton.

In November Dr J W Hardman LL.D. died in Yatton. It is recorded that he 'built' St Katherine Felton and lived at Cadbury House which nestles on the slopes of Cadbury Camp.

Shortly after this the death of the Rev J J Knox Fletcher was recorded He was rector of Whittlesbury Northamptonshire but had been in charge of Scarborough during the Bishop of Hulls residence in York. The Rev J J Knox Fletcher had been rector of Brockley from 1874 to 1885. Earlier in the year

two of his sons had drowned in a boating accident on the River Avon while they were students at Trinity College. They were buried at Whittlesbury.

1892

There is an account of the death of the Duke of Clarence apparently from influenza and letters referring to Russian Influenza! There is a long letter explaining how the writer was helped to recover from his attack by using several bottles of Warner's Safe Cure. Nowadays this would have carried a warning that it was an advertisement.

On Saturday 16th July there was a severe storm that caused the low lying areas around Nailsea station and Backwell to be completely under water. Large masses of land slid down into the roads completely blocking Wraxall-lane.

A beautiful cedar tree at Tyntesfield, the home of Mr Antony Gibbs, was struck by lightning and shattered to pieces. The house of Mr Norman Thomas was struck and a valuable mare belonging to Mr Thatcher was killed.

Later in July I notice that at the third annual cottagers' industrial, vegetable and flower show held in the Drill hall Nailsea L Manfield gained an award in 2 classes under the Industrial section open to General Servants of Nailsea. They were for Suet Puddings 2 and Boiled Rice 1. (*Editor - Any relation to the Manfield boys who went to Australia?*)

In August the 1st Devon and Somerset Volunteer Royal Engineers held a church parade in the Parish Church where in December the church bells which had been silent for nearly two years were rung again: the opening peal being rung by E Summers (treble) No 2 Evans, No3 E Day, No 4 S Butchers, No 5 C Cavill, No 6 (Tenor) F Brown.

1893

January 6th Many took advantage of the break in the weather to indulge in skating. The Clay Pits at Nailsea were largely patronised and the ice was in excellent condition.

In April there took place the Engineer Officers' Ball at Nailsea. Here the officers of E Company of the 1st Devon & Somerset V.R.E. had 100 guests at their headquarters. The guests danced to Mr Lippiatt's band

In June at Long Ashton 45 members including the band were present at the church parade of the First Devon and Somerset Volunteer Royal Engineers.

Surgeon Lieutenant Fuller, Sergeant-Instructor Silk, R.E. and Sergeants Brown and Clark are the only members named. The Rev J Johnson Chaplain to the Corps also attended and preached a very appropriate sermon.

The band had also been present at the annual church parade of the friendly societies in Nailsea on Whit Sunday afternoon.

In August the additional burial ground at Holy Trinity was consecrated and in November the newly restored parish church of All Saints Wraxall was opened.

In December the annual prize giving and dinner of E Company of the 1st Devonshire and Somerset Volunteer RE took place. The company fell in at the Drill Hall under Sergeant Instructor Silk and preceded by the band marched to the Royal Oak where they sat down to a capital dinner.

1894

On April 29th there was a church parade in Weston for the three volunteer corps. The Artillery mustered 45 and their band; the Engineers 62 and their band; the Rifle Corps mustered 90 including the cycling corps and Band.

Early in May the Clevedon Company of the D & SVRE paraded at St Mary's Church Walton.

On Whit Sunday the band of E Company of the 1st D & S VRE led the church parade of the Foresters, Oddfellows and kindred societies.

Mr George Abraham Gibbs of Tyntesfield came of age on July 6th and there were various celebrations.

In November there were floods at Ivy House, King's Hill, Jacklands, while the road and approach to the station was completely blocked and Nailsea Moor appeared to be just a large sheet of water.

In December the annual dinner and prize distribution of the Engineer Volunteers was postponed from Wednesday to Saturday as a similar event was taking place in Weston and then indefinitely as the commander Captain Rose was ill.

The Rev J Johnson and his family were to return to Nailsea after spending three months in Braemar. In their absence the Rev Speke-Mules had officiated. The Election of Parish and District Councillors December 15th 1894 compiled by Peter Wright from newspaper accounts.

The Election of Parish and District Councillors December 15th 1894

Compiled by Peter Wright from newspaper accounts

The poll took place in Christ Church Schoolroom from 12noon to 8pm under Mr S Perrett as presiding officer. Altogether 288 voters polled out of 376 on the register. A brother and sister came to the poll whose ages amounted to 180 years (brother 85, sister 95).

Immediately after the close of the polls the votes for the Rural District Councillors were counted. There were 10 spoiled papers.

Elected

Thatcher E.	184
Bastow F. L.	153

Not elected

Winstone J.	117
Allen Rev W H	67

Next followed the counting of votes for the Parish Councillors and during this rather tedious process many of the candidates were present. The counting took fully two hours and the result was not declared until past eleven o'clock. There were six spoilt papers. A large crowd had assembled outside the schoolroom and the following declaration of poll was heard with very mixed feelings of pleasure and disappointment.

PARISH COUNCIL

9 seats

Bastow F L	157
Shepherd J S	153
Atherton J	142
Gray E	138
Yendole G H	136
Marsh R	132
Lawrence J T	131
Jakeways T	128
Coughlan J	122

The above were elected and the following were the unsuccessful candidates:

Willcox W	121
Hardwidge G	120
Newton A G	119
Gray J	117
Winstone J	116

Thomas M N	105
Cannard J C	101
Allen W H	97
Raggett R	95
Derrick W	32
Keevill A G	16

As the election was fought mainly on political grounds, the Conservative party are naturally very well satisfied with their victory, which was all the more gratifying as they had not made the mistake of being too sanguine as to the result.

May 1894 Auction of property

Mr W H Shiner of Yatton sold at auction at the Butchers Arms the following freehold cottages and gardens situate near the parish church Nailsea:-

Two cottages and gardens situate on the Grove £265 purchaser Mr Oliver Shepstone; two messuages known as "Church-house" £50 purchaser Mr J Derrick for the Rev - Johnstone; three cottages and gardens near the last lot £260 the purchaser, the tenant Mrs Horler. After the above Mr Shiner sold four cottages situate at Kings-hill Nailsea. for £225 Mr Albert Denmead being the purchaser.