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OF
BACKWELL, NAILSEA,
TICKENHAM AND WRAXALL



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NAILSEA TANNERY, COURT DE WYCK AND THE COX FAMILY

LOCAL FAMILIES - BACKWELL FARMS

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A Short History of the R. N. Coate Cider Works at Nailsea 1925 - 1974 Part 3

by Trevor Bowen

Closure

In 1972 the decision was announced that Nailsea was to be run down and closed within two years. Alternative employment was offered at Shepton Mallet and the small number of staff who made the move generally settled in well. However for most Nailsea employees the thoughts of transfer were too upsetting and most found alternative work locally in the course of time. For Nailsea the R. N. Coate works had been the largest employer since the closure of the Glassworks in 1873 when 200 men and boys were put out of work.

By far the most impressive feature of the Nailsea works were the vats, 110 in total housed in six buildings, from many parts of Britain - Guinness in London, Schweppes at Chapel Allerton, Whiteways at Staverton and Georges in Bristol. With the exception of the latter which were cut up with a chainsaw, most of the vats found new homes when the works finally closed in 1974. Over 20 of the massive Guinness vats, which started life in Dublin before being moved to London, are still in use today for the maturing of Cockburns port at Quinta do Santa Maria in Portugal. The remaining vats went to west country cider makers including Sheppys at Wellington, Riches at Highbridge and Inches at Winkleigh near Crediton. Inches bought 21 and claim to be the fourth largest cider makers in Britain today. Here can be seen the vats 'Adam and Eve' whilst 'Adge Cutler' of Wurzels fame will be found at Riches.

The problem of moving a large vat are considerable and in 1973 the cost of dismantling, transporting and reassembling was in the region of £1000. Consideration had to be given to foundations, walls on which the underbearers stood, and some form of draught free building to surround it. Few men today have the necessary skills to maintain such vessels. However, one such is Trevor Thomas, time served at Coate's who currently works at the Cheddar Cheese Factory as a demonstration cooper making miniature casks for the tourist - one of only a dozen or so coopers still (1994) at work in England and Wales.

Two local men who had an early association with Coate's and made it to the top were Alan John Cutler, son of a Nailsea cycle dealer, and Robert Hobbs a

road haulier. After leaving Coate's employ as a warehouseman 'Adge' Cutler had a four year spell as a road manager for jazz musician Acker Bilk before forming his own group in 1966. This was The Wurzels. Their first two albums were recorded by EMI live on the upper floor of the Royal Oak in Nailsea. The Smokey atmosphere of a packed room where Coate's cider flowed freely and free resembled an eighteenth century revelry. Memories of the later part of the evening are somewhat vague according to those who recall the event, but the success of songs like 'Drink up the Zider' was immediate. Like his former boss Adge Cutler aimed to put his native county on the map by composing songs for Somerset people to sing in Somerset pubs. Some eight years later when on the verge of international recognition, Adge was killed late one night when his soft topped sports car overturned near the Severn Bridge. His ashes were brought back and scattered in the 'Holy City' as he called his beloved Nailsea.

Robert Hobbs was a contemporary of Redvers Coate. As a teenager he worked for Thatcher's Brewery in Nailsea as a lorry boy, and earned extra cash by washing bottles in his spare time. With £20 of his savings he bought an old 'Model T' Ford and converted it to carry barrels of beer for the brewery on a commission basis. He also persuaded Redvers to allow him to deliver cider throughout the summer, cider apples to the works in autumn and, in the winter cattle food to farms - the residue of the cider presses. Robert Hobbs always maintained that to get ahead one had to think ahead. So he seizes the opportunity presented by a government programme of road building in the mid 1930s, appreciating the need for heavy lorries. His first hire contract was with Somerset C.C. and Long Ashton R.D.C., transporting men and stone. In 1938 he purchased his first quarry at Backwell and soon after others at Olveston, Ashburton and Pyle. The Olveston quarry was particularly well sited for the construction of the Severn Bridge which he had foreseen; also the Brabazon runway at Filton where much of the Nailsea Glassworks lies buried as hardcore. In 1950 he set up ready mixed concrete plants in South Wales and the west country, to be followed by a contract to supply limestone for steel making in South Wales, and another for the removal of slag from Llanwern to be used in road construction.

In 1982 the Hobbs Group operated 16 quarries, ten ready-mixed concrete and four pre cast concrete plants. He was joined by his three sons in the business but following his death in 1982 part was sold to Wimpeys and operates out of

Nailsea as Wimpey Hobbs Ltd, whilst Hobbs Holdings is based at nearby Flax Bourton.

To return to the story of R. N. Coate and Company, little remains of the works apart from the vat houses erected by Showerings, but reminders appear from time to time in antique shops.

Most common are the buff coloured half and one pint mugs, barrel shaped with a single handle and bearing a transfer of the three jolly cider drinkers - Coate's trade mark - and the words 'Sweet Somerset'. Less frequently found are the uniquely shaped emerald green 'Quartet' bottles which contained 'Triple Vintage', Redvers favourite cider blend.

The author has been shown two 'freebies' of unknown date; a head and shoulders plaster representation of a Coate's jolly cider drinker in the form of a brooch; and a table cloth printed with six illustrated verses extolling the virtues and origins of cider.

The first two verses read:

When time began and early man
Thought apples were just for eating
A man in a hat, no more than that
Decided drinking went well with feasting.

To achieve his ends, along with two friends
A dog and a problem to grapple,
The thought struck all, as the crop did fall
Was how on earth to drink apple.

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

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

Redvers Coate (1977)
Stewart Allcott (1977)
Mary Coate (1991)
Trevor Thomas (1991)

Published Material

Grapevine, Showerings Group Newsletter (1966-1968)
Taverner, H., *Our Roots and Branches*
Choice, Allied-Lyons magazine (Sept - Oct 1990)

Portbury Historical Association

N&DLHS has recently made contact with The Portbury Historical Association and has invited them to supply some items for publication. First a brief history.

The Portbury Historical Association was formed in 1987 by a few villagers who had an interest in local history, the community and the environment. We retrieved a box of Portbury related documents etc from Portishead Library, where they had sat in a cupboard when the previous history group disbanded ten years before. The collection was catalogued, cross referenced and organised into appropriate files for easy retrieval of information. We have always been a very small group with no more than seven active members, hence no publications, talks or regular meetings. For the past three years, only Rita & Les Summerfield together with Mike Phipps, Chairman have held the group together. We collect no membership fees at present since membership, as such has ceased. Any expenses are met entirely by the Summerfields or Mike Phipps personally. Rita has held the extensive archives for ten years and is continually adding to the collection, keeping the heritage of the village as up to date as possible. It is hoped that in the future, she may encourage others to embrace the rich historical heritage of Portbury and become involved in extending the group once more. We hold our collection and our combined knowledge, ' in trust ' for future generations.

Portbury: the history of a village

by Rita Summerfield

Portbury village is situated between Bristol and Portishead, just half a mile from the M5 Motorway and the bustling Gordano Services. Few people realise that such a small community evoked such a rich history: In fact, I would suspect that most would not even notice it as they cruised the motorway on their daily business, or dropped down through the village from Nailsea en route to Junction 19 and beyond.

The earliest history begins with the Standing Stone, a lump of Dolomitic Conglomerate probably quarried from Conygar Hill, a known Roman quarry within the village.

It originally stood for a thousand years or more in a field behind the church until the 1950's, when it was used together with other rubble to fill in a

village pond . It was searched for and re-discovered by the Portbury Historical Association in 1988 and erected on a site near to the church and school. Buried nearby is a time-capsule containing various aspects of village life in the 1980's, newspapers and coinage etc. Its' exact location is only known by a few members of the PHA and it is hoped that it will be discovered again perhaps decades or even centuries from now.

Towering over Portbury is Conygar Hill, a small flat topped hill, with panoramic views of Wales, the Gordano Valley and Bristol. The remains of an Iron Age hill fort can still be traced on the summit, plus a small round barrow. To date, there have been no excavations carried out on the site.

In ancient times, the village lay much closer to the sea as its' name implies. The sea came farther inland than it does today, almost up to the base of Conygar Hill and the church. The old Roman sea wall could still be traced on the Portbury Wharf, until a few years ago when the land was developed by Portbury Dock and covered with a vast sea of cars. The name ' Portbury ', is probably derived from the Saxon, meaning approximately, 'a fortified port and town ' or the Latin *portus* meaning port. The ancient fortification of the Wansdyke after crossing Southern England, is also thought to terminate at Portbury Wharf, but there has been much speculation about this in recent years. This small village was once the principal town in the area, more important and larger than Portishead or Bristol. It was one of the ports used by the Romans who mined locally for stone and for the country's principal source of silver and lead from the Mendip Hills in Somerset (Charterhouse and Priddy) only about 15 - 20 miles away. During the excavation for the new school in 1972, the site of a Romano-British temple and cemetery were unearthed, dating from about 200 - 500 AD The human remains are still held at the Bristol University Archaeology Dept awaiting time and money to process them.

The lands around Portbury were owned together with most of Somerset , by the powerful Saxon family the Godwins, from which King Harold descended who was defeated at Hastings in 1066. During the Norman occupation the lands were owned by Geoffrey, Bishop of Coutances and upon his death passed to Robert Fitzharding, a rich merchant and Governor of Bristol. Obviously a very powerful and successful man, he was created Lord Berkeley by King Henry II for ' *services rendered* ' .

The Lords of Berkeley had their seat at Berkeley Castle in Gloucester and held the Manor of Portbury for nearly six hundred years. They were responsible mainly for the building and enlarging of the church, a manor house on Windmill Hill (no trace remains) and the building of a small Augustinian cell or priory subservient to the Priory of Bromore (Bromere) in Hampshire. Building commenced on the Priory in 1188 and the monks, never more than about twelve, farmed the rich soils and fished in the pills and streams. It was partly destroyed during the Dissolution of Monasteries and went into decline.

The allocation of a weekly village market (every Monday) and two fairs annually, were given to the village in 1348 by Maurice 10th Lord of Berkeley, who bought the right from King Richard II . This was possibly because he fought at the Battle of Crecy, France in 1346 alongside the Black Prince who was father of Richard II and the son of Edward III. Queen Elizabeth I, was godmother to Theophila, daughter of Thomas Berkeley who was created a ' Knight of the Bath ' at the coronation of King James I. As the only heir, Theophila, married into the Coke family of Norfolk, who succeeded the Berkeley family as Lords of Berkeley Castle.

The Coke family sold the manor of Portbury to James Gordon Esq. in 1785, together with the Manor of Portishead. The Gordon family made their fortune from the sugar plantations in the West Indies and invested much of it in draining land and building all over the Gordano valley, particularly the solid grey stone farmhouses for which the area is renowned. James Gordon was a major benefactor to the declining village and revived the old Hundred Court of Portbury and donated the wooden pulpit to Portbury church. The increased development of Portishead during the 18th and 19th Centuries, from a Victorian seaside town, to an industrial town and the opening of the Bristol to Portishead railway, were all factors in the decline of Portburys' importance as a town. Portishead was now the administration centre of the area and Portbury a mere farming backwater, although indirectly this all helped to maintain its' original charm.

Thomas Smyth MP, built Ashton Court mansion house in Bristol during the 1630's and it was Sir Greville Smyth of Ashton Court who purchased the Manor of Portbury in 1870. He gave the Old Priory building to the Diocese of Bath and Wells for use as the village school. It remained so until 1972 when the new school was built. He also sold the Grange or Portbury Priors . In 1959, after the death of Esme Smyth, the Portbury estate was sold again. More than

2,000 acres of village land was purchased by Newcombe Estates for housing development in 1958 and nearly 700 acres were purchased by The Port of Bristol Authority. By 1959, the rest of the estate was sold yet again to John Robinson of E. S. & A. Robinson Ltd. of Bristol, (now DRG the paper industrialists). The Robinson estate is now owned by Keith Sherrill with his famous farm shop, and it retains its' rural nature with improved footpaths and stiles put up by Sherrill. Adversely, the industrial developments at Royal Portbury Dock, the vast new car terminal and parking, the new housing development at Portbury Wharf on the Portishead boundary, have irretrievably changed the face of the whole parish for ever.

The church of St Mary the Virgin stands alone at the very edge of the village, almost as a sentinel, watching over the community as it has done so for eight hundred years or more. Dating from 12th century and formerly attached to the Abbey of St. Augustine (Bristol Cathedral), it is almost certain that an early Saxon church would have stood here before, perhaps with a wooden tower since wooden piles have been discovered. The present chancel is the oldest part of the church, dating from the Saxon period. Most of the fabric of the church as seen today is Norman, with a fine Norman arch in the South Porch and a lead lined Norman font. Above the porch is a small priests room accessed by a circular stone stair way and once used as a Sunday school room until recently. The Berkeley Chapel was built by Thomas Berkeley in 1337 in memory of his mother, Lady Eve who is buried there. Many original features can still be seen. The stone seats around the walls were once the only seating available for the old and infirm. Most of the pews are Victorian, with the exception of the Berkeley Chapel which still has the original Elizabethan oak pews. The fine Elizabethan chest, with its' three locks is still in pride of place by the South Door. It housed the parish and church documents and could only be opened by three separate keys simultaneously from the vicar and two church wardens.

The church tower was added in the mid 1400's and the clock was given by the village in 1897 to honour Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. The six bells, some of which date back to 1610 are hung on oak beams and have recently been heard ringing again and echoing down the Gordano Valley after decades of silence, due to repair work done by the Portbury Historical Association. The churchyard with its' ancient 800 year old yew trees, has some of the oldest gravestones in the country, dating back to the 1600's when gravestones were rare. For preservation purposes, these are now housed within the church. A

unique example, is the gravestone of William Godwin, yeoman who died 1584 aged 95. This large slab of stone was once an altar stone and the ' cross marks ' can still be seen

The Manor of Portbury Priors consisted of the 12th century Priory, as already discussed, Portbury Priors as the Manors' working farm alongside, (with orchards and gardens for the monks to tend) and the surrounding lands. The farm of Portbury Priors, was leased to John Morris of Bristol in 1519. During much of it's history, it was known as the Grange, housing the village bailiff and was probably the site of the Courthouse where the Hundred Court was held. After the Dissolution of the monasteries in 1536 by Henry VIII, and the destruction of part of the Priory, the Manor passed to Robert Goodwyn and eventually to James Gordon. The Old Priory and Portbury Priors are now private homes and to add to the confusion, the name 'Priory' monopolises much of the village e.g. Priors Wood, Priory Croft, Priory Road, Priory Walk, Priory Cottage, The Old Priory, Portbury Priors and The Priory!

In 1840, Portbury was described as having ' a rustic inn and half a dozen small houses '. The Blue Anchor was in the High Street on a site later to become Portbury Farm. In those days the mill race was an open brook and ran across the road and through the Blue Anchor yard. The inn was kept by Mr. and Mrs. Stokes. There is no record of when the Blue Anchor ceased to be the village inn, but it's possible that it closed because the present village pub, The Priory opened and the Stokes family took over the tenancy there.

The railway from Bristol to Portishead opened in 1867 and a station was eventually built in Portbury. The station is now a private residence nestling on the edge of the Sheepway, kept apart from the rest of the village by the M5 which dissects the village in two. Portishead was a major Victorian resort at that time, and Bristolians would have travelled there to ' take the air'. It is feasible that the Priory Hotel as the pub was then known, was built around that time for the purpose of attracting Bristol's wealthier Victorian visitors, since it was en route to Portishead. One can imagine the Victorian visitors disembarking at Portbury Station for light refreshments at the Priory Hotel, before resuming their journey by train to Portishead. The Priory underwent a massive renovation and refurbishment in 1997 by Bass Brewers Ltd who spent approximately £600,000 and in the process some of the original features like the flagstone floor from the earlier pub on the site were rediscovered

From church burial and baptism records, it can be seen that the Stokes family were in residence at the Priory Hotel at least from 1877 for a period of about 80 years until 1957. According to the Portbury Parochial Reports between 1873 and 1890 the above mentioned Stokes were pillars of society, holding such offices as: Churchwarden, Overseer of the Poor, Village Guardian, Way Warden and members of the School Committee. The Priory Hotel is mentioned specifically in the report of 1876, as having a ' public collection box ' for the Church's Foreign Missionary Fund.

Portbury was mainly an agricultural village, with the vast majority of people working as labourers, farmers and game keepers. The Parochial Reports of the 1880's states that there were over 27 farms in the parish. The massive housing developments of the sixties and seventies has changed this irrevocably and very few ' old ' cottages remain.

The village population now commutes to Bristol or beyond on a daily basis adding to the traffic congestion which the village suffers from so badly today. The natural, peaceful and rural environment of the marshes and grassland of the Gordano Valley has been replaced by vast housing developments, the M5 & M49, Gordano Services and Portbury Docks' intensive developments.

The times are changing perhaps and employment is no longer found in the tranquil farms of the parish, but the noisy, bustling world of the docks, the encroaching industrial sites at the Wharf and the towns of Bristol and Portishead. In some ways, Portbury has become a dormitory village, lost amidst the newly devised short-cut from Nailsea and Backwell to the M5 and Bristol.

Local Family History

The Manfield Family - The Saga continues

(Editor. - I have had several letters about this family and have included below the gist of the information received from those and other articles brought to my attention. I have spoken to Les Manfield, "Duffryn Villa" 18 Granville Terrace, Mountain Ash, Mid Glamorgan CF45 4AL who supplied the poem below and he confirms that Genevieve Baumgarten visited him when she came to England. He is also sending me more information about the family).

Les Manfield has mentioned that in one of the local districts Ynysboeth there is a hotel called "Tynte Hotel" and the upper part of that district is known as the "Tynte". Does anyone know whether this is associated with the Tynte family?

He goes on to say that Jim and George Manfield came to stay with their cousin William James Manfield (Les's father) at the West Lodge of Lord Aberdare's Mountain Ash residence "Duffryn House". George was killed by a stray shell as he was returning to his unit on the Western Front. A photograph supplied by Les is reproduced elsewhere in this edition.

From "The Greenwood Tree" the journal of The Somerset and Dorset Family History Society May 1999 and reproduced with permission.

What's in a name

When I was a youngster my father told me,
That we had a 'black sheep' in the family tree,
He had stolen a watch from some well to do gent,
And as a result to Australia was sent.

The story, of course came out in the press,
So the rest of the clan thought they'd drop out the 's',
They obviously thought, that, by changing the name
From Mansfield to Manfield they'd escape all the shame.
Alas, they forgot, there was soon bound to be
Another 'black sheep' in the family tree-
ME!!

Also included in The Greenwood Tree is the following reproduced from Vol 7 No 1 1981

“William Mansfield was sentenced at Somerset, 1st April 1802, to life, and was transported to New South Wales in the Calcutta arriving 1803. He was pardoned by the Governor on 23 May 1816”

Extract from the Western Flying Post and Sherborne & Yeovil Mercury of 12 April 1802

“William Mansfield, removed from Dorset for knocking down Henry Bythsea, Esq. and robbing him of a silver watch, was sentenced at the Assizes of Somerset held at Taunton, (which) ended on Wednesday”

(Editor - Coincidentally I had written to several people who were researching the name Manfield and whose addresses were included in the Genealogical Research Directory to mention that the society had information about the Manfield family. Several have replied. The following information maybe throws some light on the loss of the “s”.)

Mrs M Pinch writes from 60 Burwood Highway, East Burwood, Vic 3151 Australia.

Her 3Gt grandmother was Alice Mansfield bp 6 Nov 1754 at Barkway Herts. She died in October 1830 at Green Point Tasmania. She married 1. Thomas Harmsworth 25 Jan 1780 at Barkway Private RM with the first fleet with whom she travelled in the “Prince of Wales” with children Ann & Thomas Jnr & John born at sea 1 Dec 1787. Thomas Jnr d Sydney 24 Feb 1788, Thomas Snr died Sydney 30 Apr 1788

2. Daniel Stanfield 15 Oct 1791RM First Fleet “Sirius” at St Philips Ch Sydney. He had been baptised at St John the Baptist Peterborough Northants on 3 Aug 1766. He died at Hobart Tasmania on 4 Feb 1826. Alice and Daniel had five children - Daniel Jnr. Thomas, William, Sarah and Mary Ann.

Mrs Pinch is descended from the 3rd son William. His daughter Amelia mar. in Hobart in 1852 a Henry Manfield who was no relation and whose father William had been born at Taunton c1779.

This William had been tried and sentenced in Taunton on 1 Apr 1802 and he arrived at St Philip Bay on board the Calcutta. He married Maria Cole-Tucker (who was a convict's daughter) in 1809 at St David's Church Hobart. Maria and William had 16 children. Among the children were Henry and Josiah twins while Amelia Stanfield was herself a twin.

Henry and Amelia had 14 children but no twins.

Editor - Could it be that the story of the missing letter is somehow connected with the fact that in this family there was a gap of one generation when Mansfield changed to Manfield (via Stanfield)?

OTHER NAMES

ISAAC HALE

Mrs Doreen Stevens 110 Sherwell Road Chelston Torquay TQ2 6EX is seeking information on the parents of Isaac Hale born in Nailsea and Backwell area c1811. She says that he married Mary Ratcliffe from the St Mary Redcliffe area and also had connections with the Monmouth area and Llangywd Wales. She goes on to say that Isaac's father was probably a John Hale. By a strange coincidence the name HALE appeared in the papers relating to the Strikes and Riots in Nailsea. A series of 3 articles commences in this edition.

JAMES BURGE

Mr E Burge 16 Tilston Walk Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 2HL advertised for information about James Burge who married Susannah Jenkins at Wraxall in 1820. We were unable to find baptisms of any BURGEs at Wraxall between 1721 and 1800 plus. He was only 42 when he died (therefore born c1792) and was buried at Wraxall. The Wraxall and Failand Censuses show a family living at Charlton Lodge Gate in both 1841 and 1851 viz.

Susan	44	Ag Lab ?!	born	Somerset
Charles	19	"	"	"
James	15	"	"	"
Henry	12	"	"	"
Sarah	9	"	"	"

Susannah	54	Head	born	Portishead
Henry	22	Son Lab	born	Wraxall

They were at Charlton Lodge

Charles 26 Head Lab born Wraxall

(as his name is after his mother and brother maybe he had a cottage on the estate)

It is suggested that James may not have been born at Wraxall but would the family have lived nearer say to Portbury or Clapton in Gordano Churches? On the marriage of James and Susannah they are both classed "of Wraxall" but this only meant that they had been living in Wraxall for three weeks, probably both working in Wraxall. As the family were living on the Charlton House estate on the census returns would James' parents have been in that area? If so Portbury church would have been the nearest.

I notice in the B&AFHS Journal no 96 June 1999 that Mrs Cynthia R Waters PO Box 54 Pokeno 1872 Sth Auckland NZ e-mail:cynthia.walters@xtra.co.nz - is looking for information about the family of Robert Jones born 11 July 1824 at Nailsea and who lived and farmed at Clevedon and Kingston Seymour. Robert's father James Jones tallow chandler married Mary Ann Baker at St P&J Bristol 11 Jan 1818. A daughter Mary Ann was baptised 22 Nov 1818 at Congresbury.

Phyllis Horman has examined the registers and reports that there were no other children baptised at Nailsea. A James Jones was buried at Holy Trinity on 30 Oct 1853 aged 79 Years but there is no trace of a Mary Ann Jones.

From Dan Webb (mentioned before in the Manfield saga comes a request to say what the word Buckland means. It is the name of a River near Mount Buffalo and of course also the name added to the Batch near Nailsea Station. I have spoken to Julie Mansfield the N. Somerset Archivist and understand that it is land held by Charter, while Phyllis Horman, industrious as ever, has sent me a note to say that in "A Dictionary of English Names by A. D. Mills" - BUCKLAND is a common name from Old English BOC-LAND "Charter Land" i.e. Estate with certain rights and privileges created by an Anglo-Saxon diploma". If this is the derivation of the name of the river I would assume that it was part of charter land given to certain inhabitants soon after they arrived in the area.

Phyllis goes on to say that there used to be a family of Bucklands who lived near Bristol airport.

William BARNES - The Dorset Poet

compiled by Peter Wright and Phyllis Horman

In the May edition of Pennant a request for more information about William Barnes was printed. Phyllis Horman has been delving in the archives and found the following entries:

From the parish registers of Holy Trinity come the following (see also illustration*)

Marriages - William Barnes of Mere Somerset and Julia Miles of Nailsea 9 July 1827

*a copy of the entry has been sent to the editor by Julie Mansfield the North Somerset Archivist.

Baptisms at Holy Trinity

Laura Liebe # d of William & Julia (Schoolmaster Mere Wilts)	2 July 1830
Julia Eliza d of William & Julia (Schoolmaster Mere Wilts)	1 Jan 1833
Julius s of William & Julia (Schoolmaster Mere Wilts)	30 June 1834
Lucy Emily* d of William & Julia (Schoolmaster Dorchester)	18 July 1837

*Born 21 Jan 1830 # Should this have been "Libby" or what is the connection? There was a typing error in my draft showing 1837. *Printing deadline too close for checking, will confirm or show correct date in Pennant 25.*

I suspect that the person completing the entry for the marriage confused Mere Wilts with Meare Somerset. There is no indication that the family lived in Nailsea. They seem to have returned only for the baptisms. Does anyone have any details of how they might have travelled or other information about the family?

A Mr Stone drew the editor's attention to a book "William Barnes- The Dorset Poet" published by The Dovecote Press with an introduction by Chris Wrigley. I cannot comment on the poems but I was able to obtain the following information.

William Barnes left work in Dorchester to take over a school in Mere Wiltshire. The move was impelled by Barnes' desire to marry Julia Miles whom he had first met when she and her family had alighted from a stage coach in Dorchester. It was love at first sight, she was 16 and he was 18. Her father was supervisor of Excise.

They married in 1827 and Julia died in 1852. It is suggested that Julia may have been the influence that enabled the school to be profitable as after she died it did not do so well. They moved from Mere to Dorchester in 1835 having lived in Chantry House Mere from 1827 - 1835. After this William was ordained and made his living from the church.

William Barnes died on 7th October 1886.

The information in the book raises another question. Julia Miles father was stated to be a supervisor of excise! What was he doing in Nailsea? Could he have been working at the Glassworks? Where did the family live. More research is needed.

I lived at "the Camp" when I was young! Memories of life at Tyntesfield "Camp" after World War II

by Joyce Laidler *prepared for publication by Phyllis Horman*

I had written a letter to my niece Joyce, and had asked her if she remembered when I had taken her and her older sister to see Father Christmas at Clevedon (probably about 1954). We went on the bus - a double decker, and sat upstairs - and on the way I explained to Joyce what Father Christmas might say to her so that she would not be frightened.

I knew that Father Christmas was busy and had arranged for a Nailsea man, Jack Hickman who was really wonderful with children to take messages for him until Father Christmas himself could get back to Clevedon.

She assured me that she would talk to him and say thank you for her present, but she let me down! Through this letter Joyce has written a lovely account of things she remembers when the family lived at Tyntesfield after the Americans had moved out and the site was used for housing those who had returned to the area after the end of hostilities.

Joyce and her family moved to Middlesbrough when she was about 9 years old.

Firstly Joyce said "No" she doesn't remember being a bad girl and refusing to say thank you to Santa, also that she used to hate speaking to people when she was small. She continues: I do remember you coming to see Janet and me at Wraxall School during playtime to give us some sweets. Janet ran over to you but I would not go, so I didn't get any! I felt too embarrassed in front of all the other kids, probably thought they'd take them off me, as there was this fat girl, hanging around, who used to taunt me a bit.

I even remember the sweets, they were "Spangles". A square wrapped sweet sold in a packet. I wonder what happened to them?

(Ed. Note. I remember taking a packet of Spangles into the CII examinations in the 1950s. While everyone else hurriedly turned their paper over when we were told we could start I would unwrap a sweet and try nonchalantly to pop it in my mouth before unhurriedly turning over my exam paper at which time I often found that the questions appeared to be in a foreign language!)

This horrible girl used to wear a funny dress with pockets hanging down funny style. I remember Janet teaching me to knit at school and to wind her up I would pretend that I could not get the hang of it. She'd get in such a flap, because she thought she would get into trouble if I couldn't learn. I wanted to be different from other kids, they all knitted thin strips. I'd put on about 100 stitches and tell them I was knitting a cardigan. I didn't like school dinners (well not much), I liked salad but the dinner ladies used to smear it with salad cream which I hated.

Then I remember a time when Grampy and I set off to go to Wookey Hole Caves. We got lost so ended up in some cathedral town. I wonder whether it was Wells? Anyway Grampy asked me if I wanted a ride on his shoulders. I remember thinking that he looked a bit frail so I said "No". He then took me to a café. I recall staring at a man eating plums on the way home; it is funny how things stick in the memory.

Dad took us to see a circus once, it cost too much so he told Mum he took us to a menagerie instead. I don't remember that but he bought Janet an "Oliver Twist" book and me something plastic, I think it was a seaside spade.

I also used to be jealous of Janet as she had more friends and a den at the top of the allotments. I tried to follow her and a boy out of our front door one

day, and she slammed the door in my face, so I waited until she and the boy came over to sit on our doorstep. I opened the door and slammed it trapping their behinds in the door. They yelled their heads off.

I had a lot of frustration being younger; I couldn't climb the fence to get at the conkers like the bigger kids.

I liked the school nature walks and loved going into the woods with Mam and the kids picking flowers and beechnuts; going on the walk to Gran's; the poppies and wild flowers. I remember Mam leaving Janet and me to watch Steve Ruth and Liz while she hopped over a wall to grab some apples, picking cress from a stream and chasing butterflies in our garden. Lovely sunny days and making perfume from rose petals.

I enjoyed reading "Dick and Dora", "Jack and May", Fluff the cat (I forget the dog's name) spelling tests and writing stories.

Janet and I would hop on a bus, when Jan was about 11, for shopping at the Co-Op in Nailsea for Mam's order which always included a quarter (100gms) of sweets she would share out. There were long fruit ones and Jan and I would get a Crunchie. I used to watch the money whiz along the ceiling. Did that really happen?

(Ed Note. Most Co-Ops had a system where payments were sent in small containers along suspended wires to a cashier who would accept the money and return the container with the change. Some had tubes in which a container was "sucked or blown" along a tube from the point of sale to the cashier.

What an enjoyable time shopping in the Co-Op was and to add to the enjoyment in the early days they gave a dividend in the form of a metal token)

I liked the ice cream van that came to Tyntesfield, the sandwiches had a strip of cardboard which we peeled back to reveal striped coloured ice cream - BLISS!

We didn't get a lot of new clothes, but I remember a trip to Bristol and Mam got me a lovely pair of brown leather sandals with chunky bottoms.

We used to go to Ashton (I believe), there was a hardware shop. I loved it - the smell of paraffin and all sorts of smells - that was a lovely treat. There were swings nearby and a fascinating monkey puzzle tree. That was the first time I saw bubble gum, and on one of these trips one of my pals who'd had some told me to ask Mam to get me some. It was lovely.

I remember too one Christmas which stood out in my memory. We had a big tree, Janet had already told me I was getting "Noddy" books. I was as excited as anything. There was a "Lucy Atwell" doll at the bottom of the tree and every time I asked Mam who it was for she'd say "We'll see". I fell in love with it, and it WAS MINE!

Remember "Toby Twirl" books and "Rupert"? Among other memories was passing a huge cooking apple from mouth to mouth that Xmas. It wasn't meant to share but that's what happened. Pop Baber used to give us a "Morgan Sweet" apple, I've never tasted a lovelier apple.

Certain songs bring back childhood memories too. "I love to go a wandering", "Carolina Moon". Dad in his good moods used to sing "The Surrey with the fringe on top"; for years I thought it was "Sunny".

Joyce asks if Phyllis was with them when:

We went to the seaside one day. It was at Weston I think and I had a little woollen bathing suit on with a little pocket in it. I put a big pebble in the pocket and walked to a jetty and fell over the side.

Mam and Co were sat yards away and didn't see me. I was terrified and thought I was drowning (never liked the water since). Janet dragged me out.

Another time Janet and I had a beach donkey ride, it didn't take us back and we lost sight of Mam. I was worried but "little mother" Janet, always so capable calmed me down and found Mother and the kids.

I liked the Flower shows and country dancing and waking up to find another baby to be born in our family. I wanted Mam to call Ruth "Mary", I felt that I had a right to pick as she was my 6th birthday present, but Mam refused, so I suggested "Cherry" but that was a no no too!

I had a pal called Judith who lived down Granny's lane; I loved Gran's cat and was fascinated by her garden and outdoor lav. Didn't she have a big shell in her garden and a rain butt; it seems a hundred years ago and distant memory.

Do you remember Phyllis that when I started school, I screamed and screamed and was given a rag doll which I threw at the milk crate. I felt Mother had abandoned me.

The teacher asked me if I would like to go outside and wave but I said "No". She asked if I would like to see the time on the Church clock but I said "No". She asked me where I would like to sit. I chose a chair. Then I asked to be moved, she sat me elsewhere. I asked again to be moved. Teacher eventually handed me an ABC book and ignored me. I flicked through the book, A for Apple; B for Ball. I was interested (my education had begun) but I was so annoyed when I got to J. I later found that the word I could not read was Jellyfish but I did not know what that was.

Later, months or more, we all went to the Library and had a talk about our bodies. Veins were mentioned and we were told to look at the veins in our wrists. I promptly fainted, and Miss Largely, I believe took me home in her car.

I also remember the Cross Tree (Ed. see footnote) and waiting to go home with Janet and Stephen. It looks so small in a photo Ruth has. I recall a concert at Tyntesfield in a hall with Hula Hula girls and the one song that sticks out "She wears red feathers and a Hula hula skirt". We had sports and games and I also enjoyed the parties in the Battle Axes when hundreds of balloons would be released from the ceiling, that was even better than getting a present.

I remember a part of Tyntesfield I loved best, near the entrance, overgrown with trees and a clearing. I pretended that it was Peter Pan's Never Never Land. I also liked it when it rained as there was a patch outside our back door that we'd sail paper boats on, then I pick two raindrops on the window and race them.

I think I must have stopped believing in Santa when quite young because I always used to wonder where the presents were hidden. I found out later that they were in a box on a rack above our heads in the kitchen. Mum always used to say that the box contained apples and I believed her!

(1) Wraxall Cross Tree - see articles in Pennant No 9 and illustrations in Pennant 21.

(2) For earlier memories of childhood in Wraxall see also the privately published

“Memories of Childhood 1920s - 1940s”

by Doris Christie and Phyllis Horman.

(3) Did any reader work in Nailsea Co-Op? If so would they be willing to give the Society details of the day to day workings of the shop? Please contact the editor)

Holy Trinity Church Nailsea.

In the last few weeks there has been speculation as to how the Tithe Barn can be used now that the Social Services have moved to Scotch Horn.

This is not, however, the place to discuss future use but to deal with the past. N&DLHS has recently been able to obtain copies of parts of the Parochial School Log Book. That school, for those new to the area, used to operate in the building known as the Tithe Barn before the senior part moved to Backwell as the new Comprehensive School opened there. The Society has made further copies and donated these to the Somerset Record Office.

Among archives examined by your editor were three photos, probably dating from 1890 or earlier showing the Rev Johnson (the incumbent at Holy Trinity) and his wife. Accompanying these was a photo of Holy Trinity without the pinnacles but with the two cottages which were demolished in 1894 (see page 40 of Pennant 23). These three photos have been reproduced elsewhere in this edition of Pennant.

While we are on the subject of Holy Trinity does anyone know when “St Mary’s” was attributed to the area surrounding the church. Members of the Society are endeavouring to carry out research and need to find all references using this name. No guesses please as we have already received many. Hard facts are what is needed.

COAL STRIKES AND RIOTS IN NAILSEA Part 1

Original text prepared by Phyllis Horman from Newspaper Cuttings.

Typed Text scanned & converted to MS Works by Betty Brooks Transferred to MS Word and edited and abridged by Peter Wright.

INTRODUCTION.

I tend to think of industrial strikes as a modern means of making a certain point in relation to working conditions, often dealing with wages. Riots are as old as the hills. It seems almost incredible that a village the size of Nailsea should have experienced such mayhem as a strike and riots, but in 1855 it happened. The Bristol newspapers of that time had plenty to say about these goings-on, especially as some Bristol coalmines were also having the same problems as Nailsea. If we look back to 1852, there was the following advertisement. -

"TO COLLIERS - WANTED. Immediately, 20 or 30 Hewers and Carting Boys at Messrs. White and Co's Collieries, Nailsea. Rates of wages - Hewers 2s 8d. per turn or 16s. per week. Carting Boys 2s. 2d. per turn or 13s. per week, and constant employment Summer and Winter. Applications to be made to the Bailiff of the Works, Nailsea near Bristol".

There was work to be had and presumably this was average pay for country pits, town ones seemed to get a little more. However, in 1855 the troubles started, the newspapers had plenty to talk about.

STRIKE OF THE COLLIERS.

The colliers of Kingswood, Easton, Nailsea and Bedminster, with the exception of those employed at the Malago Vale and Northside Collieries, are now on strike, in consequence of the masters having given notice of a reduction in their wages. On Monday a large meeting was held at Kingswood, which was attended by a great number of the Bedminster men. Wednesday morning a meeting numbering about 1 200, was held at a place called the Marsh, just beyond the boundaries of the borough of Bedminster, and was attended by about 500 of the Gloucestershire men, with delegates from neighbouring collieries. The speakers enforced the necessity of the men keeping orderly and abstaining from all kinds of violence, and dwelt upon the hardship of reducing the wages at a time when provisions were so high. A committee was appointed to draw up the scale of wages at which the men would return to

their work, and to submit the same to the masters. It is said that the reduction sought to be imposed on the men is to the extent of nearly 3s. a week. Both meetings passed off very quietly, but there appears to be a strong determination on the part of the men to stand out against the wages now offered to them. The present price of provisions has produced general discontent which is not confined to colliers only. We are informed that at some other manufactories of considerable importance in the neighbourhood of this city the same feeling prevails. The collieries at Nailsea are still on strike. There were about 200 assembled at a meeting on Morgan's Hill yesterday.

The newspaper reports that "the following statement has been handed to us by the colliers in the employ of Messrs. Wethered, Cossham and Co. of the Parkfield Colliery, Pucklechurch".

"All the coal-miners commenced a strike on account of the reduction of wages. When the price of coal was risen our employers rose our wages 1s; but as the coal continued to rise, they only rose our "tales" from 6d. to 8d. per day on the big seam, and on other seams in proportion. We have complied with the wishes of our employers in every respect, by diminishing the amount of coals allowed us by one bushel a week for six months out of the year. The reduction now proposed is as follows:-

Those who earn	Reduction
£1 and over	3s per week;
15s. and over	2s. per week;
10s. to 15s.	1s per week,
under 10s.	6d. per week.

The burden is so heavy that we cannot bear it".

THE COLLIERS STRIKE.

The unhappy contention between their workmen and the coal proprietors in this neighbourhood still continues; indeed, a settlement of the questions at issue seems to be farther from taking place, than when the strike first commenced about five weeks since. The matter is now wearing a very serious aspect, as the supply of fuel to this city and neighbourhood is, in consequence of the stoppage of so many coal works, very much stunted, and it is very probable that not only a large number of colliers will for some time to come

be thrown as an incubus on society, but that some large factories in which steam power is indispensable will be brought to a standstill, and that thus a compulsory suspension of labour will follow, and multitudes unwillingly deprived of the means of earning a livelihood. In fact this has already occurred in one or two instances, and from this cause alone the Nailsea Glassworks have been closed, and about 100 men and boys thrown out of employ.

Of all the collieries in this vicinity the Coal Pit Heath, Soundwell, Malago Vale and Northside pits are the only ones now at work, which as may readily be conceived, are totally inadequate to meet the demands of the market. We believe however, that the Welsh coal proprietors have intimated their willingness to supply this district with any amount of coal which may be required.

The origin of the dispute was that the masters gave notice in April last that in consequence of a reduction being about to be made in the price of coals, the men's wages would be reduced 2s. per week. To this the workmen of Nailsea demurred, inasmuch as the price of coals at the pit's mouth at that place had not been reduced at all. The following statement we gathered from the colliers themselves, and unless it can be proved to be incorrect, they certainly have some cause to complain of the reduction :-

Between two and three years ago coals were selling at the pit's mouth at Nailsea at 10s. per ton, and the workmen's wages were 15s. per week; in the spring following the price rose 1s. per ton and the wages 1s. per week. In the winter of the same year another advance of one halfpenny per ton took place and the wages rose in proportion; during the same winter another rise of one halfpenny per cwt. took place, and the wages were advanced to 19s. at which they continued till the present "turn out" when (as the workmen allege) the masters wished to reduce their wages to 17s. without lowering the coal in a corresponding ratio. They also state that if the coal is lowered 2s. per ton at the pit's mouth, they are ready and willing to return to work.

They are expected to produce 10½ tons per day, at 3s 2d. wages, and if that quantity is not produced, deductions are made at the end of the week. On the other hand the masters say they have reduced the price of the coal they sell wholesale, but that statement is denied by the men.

The men and boys recently employed in the parish, but now utterly destitute, met on Tuesday on Morgan's Hill, where they divided their subscriptions, and

held a very peaceable meeting, but expressed a firm determination not to return to their work at the terms offered by the masters; they had no objections to share the difference in price with them - the workmen 1s. and the same amount for the masters - but on no other terms would they consent to go in, "if" as one of them remarked "they were obliged to eat grass to keep them from starvation".

It is satisfactory to know that throughout the whole proceedings the men have conducted themselves in the most peaceable manner, and as observations of a contrary tendency have been put in circulation, with the view of prejudicing the minds of the public against them, we deem it an act of justice to insert the following certificate from the minister of the parish, appended to a statement put forward by the workmen, in which the reasons on which they appeal to the public for support are set forth :-

"I believe the above statement to be strictly correct. Much distress prevails among the families of the colliers, in consequence of the suspension of work. The conduct of the colliers has been quiet and orderly throughout. May 7th. 1855. Frederick Brown".

The policeman has also given a certificate to the same effect. It is to be hoped that the unfortunate dispute will be speedily settled, for the consequences are already disastrous to all classes.

STRIKE OF THE NAILSEA COLLIERS - SERIOUS DISTURBANCES.

In a fourth edition last week we gave the particulars of a riot that had taken place at Nailsea late on Saturday evening, in consequence, as was supposed, of about 30 men, most of whom were married and had large families, having expressed their determination to "take their candles" and return to their employment. Up to this period, as we stated last week, the struggle had been conducted peaceably and quietly, and consequently they had excited the sympathy and support of a large number of the inhabitants, but the violence they committed on Saturday night will, no doubt have a tendency in a totally opposite direction. A disorderly mob of about 60 or 70 of those who had determined still longer to resist the terms proposed by their employers, congregated about ten o'clock on Saturday night, near the Royal Oak Inn and thence proceeded, armed with pistols, to the house of Wm. Wookey, and having smashed the windows, effected a forcible entrance, and destroyed the

furniture to a considerable extent. Wookey, would no doubt, have been seriously maltreated had he not fortunately succeeded in secreting himself in the chimney.

They then proceeded to the houses of some of the other colliers, and ill-treated the occupants. After which they went to the Royal Oak into the tap room of which they fiercely rushed and ordered all who were not colliers to instantly leave. This done, they extinguished the lights, and there being a man of the name of William Bacon there, ready to go to work, they threw a large stone at him which struck his forehead, and caused a deep gash. The poor fellow made his escape into the smoking room where he was shut in by the landlady Mrs. Davis, but he was speedily followed by the men, who demanded his production or else they threatened to break the room open. On being asked what they wanted of Bacon, they said they only wished to reason with him on the inexpediency of his resuming work, and they promised they would not hurt him. On this understanding Bacon was brought out, when they immediately pitched upon him and beat and kicked him most cruelly. He at last, however, managed to make his escape but not without being severely hurt.

A man, we regret to say, named Charles Redgers, was most seriously injured; his ribs having been broken, and other severe contusions inflicted. On Sunday it was deemed necessary, as he was considered to be in a precarious state, to take his depositions by the magistrates. Accordingly on Sunday morning Sir Arthur Elton and Col. Burrowes were sent for, and attended at the residence of Mr. White, where they issued special warrants for the capture of the supposed ringleaders, and the constables succeeded amidst great excitement and uproar, in taking into custody five of the men, who were sent off to the Central Police-station in Bristol.

So much excitement having been caused by the apprehension of these men it was deemed advisable, to prevent further disturbances, to obtain the assistance of some of the Bristol Police force. A messenger was immediately despatched to this city, and a special train in the evening conveyed a body of forty men, with Inspector Alexander, to Nailsea, and with the special constables that had been sworn in during the day, they endeavoured to capture the remainder of those who had been the chief cause of the disturbance, but only one of them could be found, the others having left the parish during the day.

It was very generally believed that the assistance of a large number of men from the Bedminster and Gloucestershire collieries would be obtained, in order to prevent any further captures, consequently, the police force were kept on duty during Sunday night to prevent further disturbances.

We regret to state that a deal of violence was manifested in the course of Sunday. Stones were thrown and large mobs congregated. Mr. Farler, one of the proprietors of the coal works, had a stone thrown at him, which struck him on the head, but fortunately without effecting much injury beyond a bruise, his hat having broken the force of the blow.

During the whole of Monday no disturbance of any kind took place, but the men appeared as determined as ever not to return to work.

To be continued in Pennant 25 & 26 to be published in January & May 1999

Backwell Farms in the 19th Century from Census Returns

by Bryan Button

Much information may be obtained from this source, but it is frustrating that it is not standardised. For instance in 1841 it was not necessary to give acreage, neither was it necessary in 1891, but it was in the intervening censuses.

More frustrating is the fact that some areas recorded the name of the farm while others did not. Consequently there is difficulty in linking the number of farms with the farmers named, for in some cases two people may be named as farmers, when they both farmed the same farm. Also, some small farmers may well have had more than one job.

We may have a good comparison of farm sizes from the 1861 census, but comparison with census details from other years shows that farmers made rough guesses on occasion.

Acreage	Downside	West Town	Church Town	Farleigh	Moorside	Common	Total
201 and over	0	0	1 (334 acres)	0	0	0	1
161 - 200	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
121 - 160	1	1	0	0	1	1	4
81 - 120	2	1	0	1	0	0	4
41 - 80	2	1	0	2	0	0	5
> - 40	1	2	0	2	0	3	8
NK	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	7	5	2	5	1	5	25

The largest farm, Court Farm, was farmed by James Sperrin, while Thomas Goulston farmed 200 acres at Moorside Farm. The average farm was less than 80 acres - a fact surprising to me.

Below, by amalgamating information from the censuses, and from local booklets, an attempt has been made to show where farmers worked.

Church Town	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
		W Ogbourne	W Ogbourne 20 acres	W Ogbourne 50 acres	W Ogbourne
Court Farm	J Sperrin	J Sperrin 334 Acres	J Sperrin	J Sperrin 211 acres	S Alvis
			J Batt		

Downside	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
High Hyatts Hyattswood	G Edwards	G Edwards 158 acres	G Edwards	R Edwards H Edwards 172 acres	R Edwards H Edwards
Oatfield	Ch Ball	Ch Ball 167 acres	Ge Ball	Ge Ball 190 acres	Ge ball
Downside	J Vowles	J Vowles 100 acres	J Vowles	J Vowles 70 acres	J Vowles
Harveys			I Hardwick 107 acres	I Hardwick 112 acres	F Marshall
		Sm Woolfe 30 acres			
	J Horler	J Horler 50 acres	R Horler	R Horler 87 acres	
		I Hynam 44 acres			
		J Kembery 110 acres			
			J Mead	J Mead 38 acres	
			J Vowles (jnr) 120 acres		
			I Hardwick 107 acres		
					E Young

					M Ball
Backwell Hill				H Baker 90 acres	

West Town	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Fir Grove Coles	?	Ch Cole 16 acres	Ch Cole 16 acres	Ch Cole 20 acres	Ch Hill
Grove	Ch Hicks	Ch Hicks 120 acres E Hardwick 140 acres	Ch Hicks 120 acres E Hardwick 140 acres	Ch Hicks 134 acres E Hardwick 118 acres	Ch Hicks E Hardwick
Hillside					H Davis
	H Parker	H Parker 20 acres			
	J Cottle	J Cottle 52 acres			
			E Derrick 16 acres		
			T Coombs 17 acres		
			T Baker 33 acres		
				S Hardwick 54 acres	

Farleigh Village	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
	W Sperrin	W Sperrin 78 acres	W Sperrin 90 acres		
	J Cambridge	J Cambridge 30 acres	J Cambridge 10 acres		
			H Cambridge 25 acres		
	J Edgile	J Edgile 70 acres			
		J Harris 110 acres			
Park farm					J Griffin M Norman
				J Longstone	
				T Nicholls	
				C Hill 79 acres	

Moorside	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Manor Farm	W White	W White 130 acres		S White 46 acres	S White (?) *Under West Town
Oaks Rushmoor	G Baker	G Baker 24 acres	G Baker 110 acres	G Baker 82 acres	E Holder
Common	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Dibden		J Batt 154 acres	I Batt 96 acres	I Batt 44 acres	I Batt
Old	S Morris	S Morris	S Morris	G Horler	G Horler

		40 acres	36 acres	42 acres	
Woolleys	T Woolley	T Woolley 39 acres under Moorside	T Woolley 39 acres	T Woolley 28 acres	
Moorside	T Goulston	T Goulston 200 acres	T Goulston 250 acres	T Goulston 100 acres	T Goulston
Hanse or Williams Cider	H Watts	H Watts 36 acres	E Watts 51 acres	E Watts	
Scrubbetts					D Horler
Brook					J Foord
				G Misson	G Misson
					G Fox

Where do you draw the line between farms and smallholdings, or indeed, between farmers and labourers? Family historians know all too well that on marriage certificates fathers were all too ready to promote themselves from "labourers" to "farmers". Census recorders must have had difficulty with borderline decisions. However, it seems reasonable to say that there were about 26 farms in Backwell in the second half of the nineteenth century. We can name 20 of these although we cannot attach farmers to all of them:

Court,
High Hyatts or Hyattswood,
Yew Tree,
Oatfield,
Downside,
Edsons,
Harvey's or Combe Head,
Fir Grove or Cole's,
Grove or Popes,
Hillside,
Park,
Brook,
Manor,
Oaks,
Dibden,
Old,
Woolleys,
Moorside,
Hanse or Williams,
Scrubbetts.

We can gain an idea of the number of people living in each farm from the 1891 census, but not of the other labourers who worked at the farm but lived elsewhere.

FARM	Farmer	Spouse	Offspring	Other Kin	Farm Servants	Domestic Servants	Lodgers Boarders
-	W Ogborn	-	-	1	-	1	-
Court	S Alvis	1	5	-	-	-	-
Hyatts	R Edwards	-	-	2	-	-	-
Hyatts	H Edwards	-	-	1	-	-	-
Hillside	H Davis	-	2	2	-	-	-
Oaks	E Holder	1	7	1	-	-	-
Manor	S White	1	2	-	-	-	-
-	C Hicks	1	1	-	-	1	-
-	J Rossiter	1	6	-	-	1	-
Grove	C Hicks	1	-	-	-	1	-
Oatfield	G Ball	1	5	-	-	1	-
Yew Tree	M Ball	-	3	-	-	-	-
-	E Young	1	5	-	-	-	-
Downside	J Vowles	1	4	2	1	-	-
Harveys	F Marshall	1	5	-	-	-	-
Coles	C Hill	1	6	-	-	2	-
-	E Owen	1	4	-	-	-	-
Park	J Griffen	1	4	2	-	1	-
-	M Norman	-	2	-	-	-	-
Moorside	T Goulstone	1	1	-	-	1	1
Old	G Horler	1	3	-	-	-	-
-	G Fox	1	1	1	-	-	-
Scrubbetts	D Horler	-	1	2	-	1	-
Dibden	I Batt	-	-	-	-	2	1
-	G Misson	1	7	1	-	-	-
Brook	J Foord	-	3	-	1	2	-

Nailsea Tannery, Court de Wyck and the Cox family.

further information from a descendant of the family.

Readers of Trevor Bowen's book Nailsea Tannery which saw life in Pennants 1 & 2 may remember the following passage

"Mr Ivor Grimsted of Whitchurch (Bristol) has made a study of the Bedminster tan yards and I am grateful to him for the following information on the Cox family and its involvement with the Nailsea yard:-

James Fitchew Cox was born in 1807, the second son of Stephen and Martha Cox of Court de Wyck, Claverham. In 1833 he married Ann White, both of them by then residents of Nailsea, and by 1836 James was referred to as "tanner of Long Ashton". A year later he took out a patent with a William Harepath for "a roller and belt process".

By 1839 he was living at Nailsea House - previously occupied by John Tanner, leather merchant and tanner of Bristol. James entered into partnership with his brother Stephen and by 1842 the business was registered as J & S COX (Patent Roller and Belt Process). In the same year Stephen built a tannery at Court de Wyck. James died in 1852 aged 45, but his brother who lived in Goss Lane Cottage (Nailsea) continued the family business. It is likely that he moved into Nailsea House following James' death, and he was certainly living there from 1857 onwards.

The business was styled COX BROS with the main yard at Bedminster and smaller concerns at Ashton, Yatton and Nailsea. Stephen retired in 1877. In 1878 the Bedminster yard was taken over by Thomas Ware who today trades as Thomas Ware and Sons, Clift House Tannery, the only survivor of the eight tanneries in the Bedminster area of Bristol.

With only two workers recorded in the 1881 census, we can assume that the Nailsea yard was all but closed.

An early advert for the Tannery appeared in a Bristol paper of 1778. My thanks to Martin Bodman for bringing it to my attention.

Sarah Farley's Bristol Journal
7th November 1778

Tanyard

TO be LETT, and entered upon at Lady-day next, or immediately if wanted, a large and commodious TAN-YARD, with constant Water, Lofts, Drying Houses, and every Conveniency for a good and large Trade; as also a good DWELLING-HOUSE near the same, (or a large and handsome House belonging to the same, now in the Possession of William Bullocke) with a good and handsome Garden, and an undoubted Right of Common to Wraxall-Hill, and Nailsea Moor, with or without 30 or 40 Acres of good Pasture Land, Orchard, &c. situated at Nailsea, in the County of Somerset, about ten Miles from Bristol.

For Particulars, enquire at the said Tan-Yard.

* *

* This will be but once more advertised.

Your editor is delighted to be able to add to the information following correspondence with Mrs Anne S Titley who lives near Bedford and is a descendant of the Cox family. She wrote to me following our appearance on TV about the evacuees.

James Cox (born 1744 d 1797) married Katherine Fitchew (b 1755 d 1816) at St Mary Redcliffe Bristol 1774.

Two sons are recorded John Cox and Stephen Cox. The latter was born 1776 and married Elizabeth Guille.

The issue from this marriage was as follows:-

Stephen and John (twins) both died at birth

Ann Fitchew Cox

Robert Sayer Cox

James Cox

John Cox

Stephen Cox.

Stephen married Martha Newton.

Seven years after James Cox married Katherine Fitchew they were living at Wrington Somerset where he was carrying on business of a tanner.

In the election for two members of Parliament for that year for Bristol he had a vote and therefore had some interest in the City of Bristol. In the election of 1784 he again voted, this time for an address Redcliffe Street Bristol in the parish of St Mary Redcliffe.

In 1787 he was running a tannery at Bedminster Causeway and in 1793 he seems to have removed it to Redcliff Hill or was running two concurrently.

In 1797 he was described in a Bristol Directory as a tanner in Bedminster and in that year he died at North Street Bedminster at the age of 54 on August 7th and was buried at Wrington.

After the death of James Cox the tanning business was carried on by James Fitchew his brother in law; James's widow continued to live at North Street Bedminster but moved in 1801 to Redcliff Hill.

Her brothers James and Stephen Fitchew carried on there a business as maltsters, hop factors and grocers. James living at 7 Colston's Parade and Stephen on Redcliff Hill itself.

In 1803 Stephen Cox son of James Cox and Katherine (Née Fitchew) came into the tanning business at Bedminster but in 1805 his mother, who seems to have been a forceful character, retaining her son in the business, took over and it was henceforth known as "Katherine Cox & Co, Tanners, Bedminster".

Katherine Cox died February 29th 1816 and was buried at Wrington .

References to the Cox family in "Nailsea Tannery" include the following

1839 J. F. Cox occ Tanyard & Bldg Ignatius Davis owner

1843 At a Vestry held on January 11th it was agreed that Mr John Brown should make a new survey of Mr Cox tanyard and the Nailsea Coalworks

1847 Samuel Parsons a man employed at the Tan works of Mr Cox of Nailsea had part of his arm cut off by the saw of a bark mill. On being conveyed to the Bristol Infirmary immediate amputation was found necessary. We understand the poor man is going on favourably.

1852 On New year's Eve, S. F. Cox gave the Society of Tanners in his employ a good old English supper at the Butchers Arms Inn served up in the worthy host Denton's excellent style.

Also provided by Mrs Titley is the illustration showing Court de Wyck which appears elsewhere.

“Nailsea Village Gossip”

More items from the Newspapers used in Phyllis Horman’s book of the same name

1856

Narrow Escape Of Sheep Stealers

On Wed. night last a sheep was stolen from a field on the farm of Mr Marsh, Nailsea. The thieves, having secured the animal in a bag, tied with cord, took it about a mile from the field, when they were alarmed by the approach of a respectable inhabitant and his wife. The robbers threw down the bag and made off. The persons approaching heard a low bleating sound and released the sheep which was nearly dead from exhaustion. The bag is marked J.W.N.

1856

On the night of the eleventh some scoundrels entered the walled garden of Isaac White Esq, of Nailsea. (I get the feeling he wasn’t liked very much!). They tried to open the garden house door, but failing this, they found the greenhouse, smashed the glass and ruined a great number of pots and plants. Not satisfied with this, they pulled up four beds of cucumbers and ‘carted’ them off without being detected.

1856/7

We have been favoured at last with two policemen and not before they were wanted. Last week Mr Thatcher of Tickenham had two sheep stolen and about 2cwt. of lead had been abstracted from the Old Church, here. Last Sun., Mr Samuel Lovell had about 14 bushels of wheat stolen from his barn. A reward of ten guineas is offered upon conviction. Thurs. night an attempt was made to steal a pig (which had been slaughtered the previous day) from the Queen’s Head, but the thieves were disturbed. This neighbourhood indeed, is troubled with a desperate gang of thieves.

1856/7

Emigration

On Mon. about forty men and women left Nailsea and the adjoining parish of Backwell for Australia. The men were principally miners and agricultural labourers and are sent out at Government expense, from Liverpool. On the Sun. afternoon previously, the emigrants attended Divine Service at Nailsea

and the Rector, the Rev F Brown preached an appropriate and affecting sermon. There was not a dry eye in the church and the following day the neighbourhood was a scene of wailing for the loss of so many of its inhabitants.

1856/7

Daring Highway Robbery

On Mon. while Mr Nathaniel Sholl, baker of Yatton was on his regular round of business, with his horse and cart about seven p.m. he was met in Coalpit Lane near Nailsea Railway Station by three men with masks on their faces. One seized the horse's head, the other two got into the cart, threw Mr Sholl out on his back and robbed him of 5 or 6 in silver. He cried out but was struck on the head and forehead.

Mr Sholl made no resistance but tried to reason with them. When they left him one said 'We don't want to hurt you' and set off across the fields apparently to get to Nailsea by way of Chelvey railway bridge.

Mr Sholl has not the least doubt that they are Nailsea men, as about a month ago, three men were seen skulking after him the same evening of the week, and he believes they took from his cart several shillings worth of bread.

The Society has also been asked about the COLE family and the following is some of the information we have

Ann COLE

dau. of William COLE & Hannah COLE(WIFE)

bapt.03-Aug-1806 in Wraxall Source: PR

Anne COLE

m.23-Jul-1752 in Tickenham to

James BULLOCK no children known to compiler of this list

Isaac COLE

m. to Mary COLE(WIFE) and had one child Joel COLE (bapt.02-Jan-1774).

Isable COLE

Servant to Robert Reede at Wraxall? Source: PR bur.07-Jul-1587 in Wraxall

Source: PR

James COLE Cordwainer at Portishead Source: PR

m.17-May-1773 in Holy Trinity Nailsea to Mary WARE no children known to compiler of this list

address: Portishead (Apr-1773-)

Source: PR Care see also Banns for James Cole & Mary Weare of Nailsea also published March and April 1773

James COLE

m.to Mary WEARE no children known to compiler of this list

address: 3/1773 Portishead (Mar-1773-) Source: PR No marriage recorded

Banns published March April 1773 show residence as

Nailsea; see also Banns for James Cole of Portishead and Mary Ware of Nailsea April 1773 are these the same people?

Joel COLE

son of Isaac COLE & Mary COLE(WIFE)

bapt.02-Jan-1774 in Wraxall Source: PR

John COLE

m 28-Mar-1803 in Holy Trinity Nailsea to Sarah GILBORD no children known to compiler of this list

address: Weston in Gordano (1802-)

Source: PR Banns published 1802 is marriage date wrong? Gilbard in Banns

John COLE

m.to Mary COLE(WIFE) and had one child:

William COLE (bapt.15-Dec-1672).

Source: PR

bur.16-May-1702 in Holy Trinity Nailsea

Source: PR see also John Colle

_____ Martha COLE

dau.of Richard COLE & Grace COLE(WIFE) bapt.29-Apr-1753 in Wraxall

Source: PR

_____ Mary Ann COLE

dau.of William COLE & Hannah COLE(WIFE) bapt.06-Dec-1817 in Wraxall

Source: PR

_____ Richard COLE

m.to Grace COLE(WIFE) one child:

Martha COLE (bapt.29-Apr-1753).

_____ Susannah COLE

m.08-Nov-1759 in Tickenham to James HAWKINS no children known to compiler of this list address: Tickenham Source: PR Tickenham

_____ William COLE m.19-Jul-1734 in Tickenham to Elizabeth PLUMNEY no children known to compiler of this list address: Clevedon Source: PR Tickenham

_____ William COLE

son of John COLE & Mary COLE(WIFE)

bapt.15-Dec-1672 in Holy Trinity Nailsea Source: PR

_____ William COLE registrar at two weddings at Wraxall (1655-1656) Source: PR

_____ William COLE

m.to Hannah COLE(WIFE) 2 children: Ann COLE (bapt.03-Aug-1806); Mary Ann COLE (bapt.06-Dec-1817).

_____ Grace COLE(WIFE)

m.to Richard COLE and had one child: Martha COLE (bapt.29-Apr-1753).

_____ Hannah COLE(WIFE)

m.to William COLE and had 2 children: Ann COLE (bapt.03-Aug-1806); Mary Ann COLE (bapt.06-Dec-1817).

Mary COLE(WIFE)

m.to John COLE and had one child: William COLE (bapt.15-Dec-1672).
bur.15-Jan-1702 in Holy Trinity Nailsea Source: PR see also Mary Colle(wife)

_____ Mary COLE(WIFE)

m.to Isaac COLE and had one child:
Joel COLE (bapt.02-Jan-1774).

_____ John COLLE

son of John COLLE & Mary COLLE(WIFE) bapt.13-Dec-1669 in Holy Trinity
Nailsea Source: PR

bur.30-May-1699 described as John Cole son of John Source: PR

_____ John COLLE m.to Mary COLLE(WIFE) one child:

John COLLE (bapt.13-Dec-1669-bur.30-May-1699).

bur.16-May-1702 described as John Cole widower Source: PR see also child
William Cole apparently son of this man and Mary

_____ Mary COLLE(WIFE) m.to John COLLE and had one child:

John COLLE (bapt.13-Dec-1669-bur.30-May-1699).

bur.15-Jan-1702 described as Mary Cole wife of John Cole Source: PR
see also child William Cole apparently son of this woman and John

This list compiled by Peter Wright N&DLHS on 1st May 1999 from information
from various sources