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PENNANT



Wroxall Church 1995

by Peter Wright

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

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Society News

9 October 1995 - Brief Summary of Annual General Meeting

The Society's AGM was held at Nailsea Library with a good turnout of members. Dr Notton stood down from the Committee but the remaining committee members were re-elected. Cecile Braid remained on the Committee but stood down from the task she has done so well over the last few years namely that of Programme Secretary. In doing so she has left us with a very interesting programme for 1996. As a result her successor will have an easy first year. Sadly nobody volunteered at the AGM to take her place.

The Society holds a large and varied stock of books and funds are adequate to enable our programme to continue. Subscriptions were due in October, if you read this and realise that you have not yet paid please hasten to do so.

Information

Where possible N&DLHS is always willing to assist those with an interest in local history and local families. Unfortunately there are few of us with the knowledge of past events and the whereabouts of current records that can provide this service. Please encourage your friends and acquaintances (especially those with children at school) to make the most of the information available at the library. It is amazing the number of queries that are directed at our few willing members that could have been resolved by the questioner had he or she spent 15 minutes in Nailsea library.

N&DLHS Projects

Farms

Phil Barclay has been very active in gathering together information. More work in this area needs to be done and we hope that members will assist the small group who have so far indicated their interest.

The Land Yeo

Following the publication of Martin Bodman's "Mills on the Land Yeo" and the work of other members in "Mills on the Land Yeo -Further Discoveries" you will have read Keith Gardner's article "Who Cut The Land Yeo" in PENNANT no 11 and the subsequent comments in PENNANT No 12.

We have decided to take up Keith's suggestion to form a small group in association with others to explore the history of this waterway.

Volunteers have been decidedly hard to find so far. If you have any interest in exploration either in the field or in the archives please contact the editor.

Future Publications

The Nailsea I Knew / Nailsea and Far A field

These were two of our early publications. They were both written by Jack Hart and were very popular. We have decided to produce an edited version combining the best of the two books and to add suitable illustrations.

The original text was typed for us onto disk by Dr Notton and Martyn Davis is now pruning it to a more reasonable length prior to publication.

Brockley and Chelvey By Jim Pullan

This book has been out of print for several years and we felt that it may now be time to consider re-publishing this in A5 format. Dave Robbins is busy preparing the text. When this is ready the Committee will consider the costs and likely sales before proceeding further.

Noah's Ark by Gwyneth Parker

Dave Robins has put this on disk and we will be preparing this for publication in limited numbers during the Spring of 1996

War Memorials

Peter Wright will eventually produce a booklet which will combine details of all the memorials in our area of interest and will include expanded versions of the articles currently being published in PENNANT.

He seeks information / photographs of anyone named thereon or who gave their life during the past wars and police actions during peacetime. This will of course include persons from the area who died serving on humanitarian missions and those born outside of our area who died in the four parishes while serving their country. (egg aircrew who were killed in local crashes and soldiers who died at Tyntesfield Hospital).

If anyone has details please contact the editor.

Weston-super-Mare Family History Society

By the time that you read this we will have received a talk from the Weston Super Mare Family History Society and this reminds me that we have an arrangement to exchange journals with that Society. If members want to know what is going on at WSMFHS they can borrow a copy of the latest journal but I would be failing in my duty if I did not encourage members of N&DLHS (who are interested in Family History especially with ancestors from the immediate area) to join the relevant Family History

Society. WSMFHS has just produced a booklet of Members Interests. If you would like a copy telephone George Knox 01275 791261 for details. NB new phone number.

Other Publications now out of Print
Any member wishing to help put these on disk contact the Editor.

Termination of "Books on Approval" scheme The decision has been taken with some regret to terminate this scheme. Future books will usually be produced with an initial run of about 100 copies.

The War Memorial at Christ Church Nailsea Correction

In PENNANT 11 the list shown on the inside back cover of names that appear on the memorial contains two errors. Please amend your copy.

W J BKER should read W J BAKER
H O BAR should read H O BAKER and
L H KINGHARMAN should read L H KING-HARMAN

Letters to the Editor

From Mr J A Jouniaux, Fleurus, Belgium

This followed some astute detective work by John "Hercule Poirot" Christiansen.

Mr Jouniaux writes to say that he spent the war years in Backwell and had attended the Hammersmith School while there. He is willing to write down his memories. While in Backwell he became a friend of John Christiansen. They lost touch more than forty years ago when John was in the forces and about to go to Germany while Mr Jouniaux was leaving for the Belgian Congo.

From information given in his second letter I discovered that we lived for part of 1940 less than 1 mile away from each other in Hornsey North London.

From Mr & Mrs R Tyree, Otago, New Zealand.

Mrs Tyree a descendant of the Coombs (Coombes / Lyall Coombes) families wrote having been given my name by "Bid" Wheeler who she met in Nailsea while on a tour of the British Isles.

She enclosed a copy of information she had about the family tree and a rubbing from a brass plate. This latter item was identical to one I received last year (see Pennant 8) from Freda Hewitt, also from NZ. I have written to Mrs Tyree giving her the address of her "cousin". If anyone has information about the family who lived at Mizzeymead and Coombe Grange Farms please let the Editor know.

From Somerset Record Office

In reply to a query from me about what they had that might assist research into the War Memorials in Tickenham and Wraxall they mentioned that there is a gap in the series of vestry/PCC minutes held at Taunton covering the period of the War Memorials for Tickenham. At the inspection in 1979 the Tickenham parish held Parochial Church meeting minutes from 1920 and PCC minutes from 1922. SRO suggests we make enquiries locally. Does anyone have information?

SRO also gave the following references which may assist readers.

"There is a register of services which may give the date of the dedication service after the Second World War under the reference D/P/tick 2/5/.

Items that may interest readers which relate to Wraxall are as follows. That relating to the unsuccessful attempt by Mr Kilmister to erect a seat in the church follows later.

S/1096 D/P/Wrax

4/1/5 1896-1931

Accounts to 1920; vestry mins (joint with PCC from 1925) 1 vol
List mems Wraxall Bell Ringers Soc with printed rules 1906

9. Vestries and other meetings

9/1 Vestry Meeting Minute Books

See also 4/1/1-5

9/1/1 1831-1970 Vestry Minutes 1 vol

CIVIL

13. Office and functions of the Overseers of the Poor

13/2 Accounts

13/2/1. 1707-1761 Joint accounts and rates for Overseers 1 vol
churchwardens and way wardens (note re Elton
& Marchioness of Northampton Gifts 1808)

13/2/2 1762-1792 Overseers accounts to 1783 rates to 1772 1 vol
notes concerning unsuccessful attempt by
Jn. Kilmister to erect a seat in the church 1770

13/2/3 1793-1836 Overseers accounts and rates 1 vol

13/2/4 1836-1848 Overseers accounts 1 vol

13/3 Settlement Papers

13/3/1. 1831 Removal order to Wraxall 1 doc

14 Office and Functions of the Waywarden

14/5 Accounts

(for accounts 1707-1761 see 13/2/1/above)

14/5/1. 1790-1820 Accounts 1 vol

This list provided by Somerset Archive and Record Service and printed with their permission.

NB IF YOU WANT TO VISIT THE SEARCHROOM YOU MUST MAKE AN APPOINTMENT. SRO APPOINTMENTS ONLY Tel No "redacted"

Churchwardens Accounts of All Saints Wraxall

Copied from the original by Phyllis Horman

Prepared for Pennant by the Editor.

Published with appropriate acknowledgement to the SRO.

Whereas a citation from the Ecclesiastical Court of Wells dated 17 Oct 1770 was affixed to the church door at Wraxall on Sun 28th day of the said month requiring the Minister and Churchwardens to appear at Wells on the 30th of the same month to show cause why a faculty should not be granted to John Kilmister to erect a seat in the said church. In the said citation it is among other things alleged that opposite the clerk's seat there are two seats or benches extending to the South to the North Alley of the said church and bounded eastwards with a cross alley which parts the same from two seats belonging to Mr Martindale and Mr Hollester to which seats no person what ever hath any right or claim and therefore the said John Kilmister prayed to have a faculty to erect a pew on part of the ground of the said two seats opposite to Mr Hollester's seat to abut on the said South alley to contain six feet each way and to have the same to himself exclusive of all others.

In pursuance of the said citation the Minister with the Churchwarden and farmer Vowles (Sir Chas Tynt's tenant) did appear at Wells Court on Tues the said 30th day of October but

as Mr Jason the Proctor was through illness unable to attend that day the Court adjourned the cause to Tues 13th Nov following.

In the meantime a vestry was summoned to be held in the Church on Sunday 4th of said Nov at which vestry were present viz. The Rev Mr Phelps, curate, George King, Churchwarden, Walter King Esq., Mr Matthew, Mr Hollester, John Vowles Junr, Wm Knight, Robert Askey, John Kilmister and Jas. Martindale.

When the whole proceedings were fully laid out before them and in order to consider more maturely of the business the said vestry was adjourned to Fri the 9th day of the said month when the following persons attended viz. The Rev Mr Phelps, curate, George King, Churchwarden, Walter King Esq., Mr Matthew, Mr Hollester, Thomas Jenkins and Jas. Martindale when they unanimously approved the steps which had already been taken by the churchwarden and agreed to oppose the said citation and ordered that Mr Phelps and John Vowles be desired to go to Wells again and employ Mr Jason for that purpose, at the expense of the parish. On the 13th of said month Mr Jason appeared at Wells Court and gave such substantial reasons why the faculty ought not to be granted but said Kilmister's proctor Mr Sutton having prayed further time the cause was adjourned to the next Court Day. But when that day came Mr Sutton having nothing further in favour of his client's cause, the Court thought fit to dismiss the cause.

DISBURSEMENTS OF GEORGE KING AND PETER GRIFFIN 1770-1771

Mar 30th To horse hire expenses and trouble for Mr Phelps Farmer Vowles and myself when we went to wells on 30th October last to appear to Mr Kilmister's citation £1-05s-0d

Paid to Mr Phelps and Farmer Vowles chaise-hire expenses and trouble when they went to Wells to oppose the sd citation on 13th Nov. By order of the Vestry £1-16s-4d

April 10th 1773 Paid to Mr Tuson's (?Jason's) Proctor at Wells his bill in John Kilmister's affair £1-08s-2d

The Royal British Legion Roll of Honour for Nailsea as read at the Remembrance Day Service Peter Wright

As I write this article Remembrance Day is but 9 days away. As many of you will have noticed there are discrepancies between the names commemorated on the War Memorials at Christ Church and Holy Trinity Churches. It is my intention to resolve these before the Society publishes its book about the memorials and the individuals named thereon in 1996/7. However there is some urgency about resolving the following discrepancy as quickly as possible so that due recognition can be given to those whose names appear on one of the memorials but who are not mentioned at the service.

I had assumed that as the Remembrance Day parade takes place at Holy Trinity it had always done so and that the list of names read out at the service was a list of those whose names appeared on the memorial at Holy Trinity. Accordingly I approached the British Legion and pointed out that the names they read presumably omitted M Lock whose name appears only at Christ Church.

Having been proved wrong in that M Lock was included on their list we looked further and find that there are four names omitted from their list and those names are those that appear only on the Holy Trinity memorial. More to my surprise was the information that Christ Church War Memorial is the official Nailsea War Memorial and that between the wars was the site of the Remembrance Day Service. Does anyone have memories of these

services or knowledge of how the move to Holy Trinity came about?

Comparing the list used by the Royal British Legion it appears to have been copied from the information used to produce the list at Christ Church of those fallen in the Great War 1914-1918 and the similar information used to add the names of the fallen in WW2 to Holy Trinity memorial although the order of names seems to accord more closely with the list at Christ Church.

I have been asked to ascertain what I can regarding the four persons that are currently not mentioned at the Remembrance Parade. If any reader can give me the name of any living relative of the four and the circumstances in which the last three of the following died and when and where they were buried I will pass the information onto the Royal British Legion.

A G Badman Pte 2nd Wessex RE wounded France 1915 died Nailsea of wounds 1922

A Durbin 1st Rifle Brigade France 1918

F W Toombs 3rd Batt Glos Regt Flanders 1915

R G Tyler Lce Cpl 8th Batt Duke of Cornwall's L I Salonica 1917

The Thatchers, the Farlers and a house called "Trostry"

by Phyllis Horman

I was sorry to learn recently of the death in Canada of Mrs Thatcher whose father in law was Herbert Edwin and whose ancestors were the Thatchers of Nailsea who started the brewery and caused the Friendship Inn to be built.

I had met both her and her husband when they visited England and was pleased that their son Tony, who wrote to tell me of her death, was interested in the family history. I was able to send him several items and met him and his (sister / wife?) when they came to England recently.

Tony's mother had been keen to find a house (built in Wraxall for her husband's parents) which had been named "Trostry". She had seen it many years ago but had forgotten the exact location.

Tony remarked in one of his letters

"Thinking about "Trostry" my grandfather (Herbert Edwin) lived for a number of years around the turn of the century in Newport, Mon. running the other Thatcher Brewery on Mountjoy Street. I see that there is a street called Trosty in Newport not far from the Brewery and I wonder if the name originated there...."

In the same letter he also said

"Regarding the Farlers, we hold a photograph of John Farler who was reputedly the governor (or on his staff) of Zanzibar. He is wearing a fez and (it) was taken last century. I wonder if he was the eldest son of John Farler of Coal Pit fame. Another little mystery!"

On Wednesday 2 Aug 1995 I met Tony and his wife (or was it his sister? I don't know) and his daughter at Nailsea Library and we had a "Grand Tour" of the area of most interest to him.

To begin with we went to Christ Church where I pointed out the corner where many Thatchers and Farlers are buried. We then walked to the Friendship where I pointed out where the brewery and water tower had been, and looked at Heath House.

Back we went to Clevedon Road car park where they had parked their car and so the "tour" commenced.

They wanted to see Back lane so we went down Whitesfield Road (originally Back Lane) along Queens Road and Hannah More Road to The Grove and Holy Trinity Church. Here we found the Thatcher great grandparents grave with other members of their family buried with them.

Next we went to Farlers End to see the tower of Farlers Pit. On to Rosemount now Trendlewood House where John Farler and family lived. Unfortunately this is almost impossible to see. Tony even picked the daughter up on to his shoulders to see if she could take a photo, but the wall was too high, this was their only real disappointment.

We then went to Wraxall and up Tower House Lane as this seemed the most likely area to look for "Trostry" We were almost at the top when Tony's wife / sister recognised the road. She had been here a few years ago and had "Trostry" pointed out to her. She pointed at the house now named "Sunrise" as being very like "Trostry"

We then went along the top road to Wraxall Hill and down to All Saints Church. About three years previously Tony had been to England for a few weeks and had visited Wraxall Church and located his grandfather's grave. This year he was able to go

straight to the grave again. You can imagine the number of photos taken during the morning.

We came back to Nailsea, the "tour had taken two hours and I must say it was two hours of real pleasure in exceedingly pleasant company.

Early Crime in the Nailsea District

by Derek B Lilly

Village Pump Local History Research Group

In the 18th and early 19th centuries petty criminals were mainly caught not because of the cleverness of the local constables, but mostly because of the lack of forethought on the part of the culprits.

A farmer from Nailsea named Godwin appears in all of the three cases which follow (it seems likely to have been the same person).

The name crops up first on the 2nd day of September 1785.

The witnesses Joseph Crow, John Elliot, John King and John Hiatt all stated that

" - John Godwin of the Parish of Nailsea, in their presence and hearing did tell their master Isaac White that if he did not move a Wheel House which was erected over a Coal pit in the said parish of Nailsea in the said County belonging to Joseph Whitchurch, Peter Cox and him the said Isaac White within three days the said John Godwin would cut it to pieces and burn it to the Ground. And sayed in order to bind it he would be damned if he did not - And all these informants say that the said wheelhouse was actually set on fire and burnt to the ground the second day of

August last between twelve and one o'clock in the Morning, And they all severally say they believe on account of the said John Godwin's threatenings as aforesaid that he or some other person or persons by his order did set the said Wheel House on fire "

Unfortunately we do not know the results of this case, it is one that was not recorded on the roll.

Farmer Godwin is in the courts of Quarter Session 15th December 1785. This time as a complainant. His sister Mary (wife of Isaac Brown a butcher) giving evidence against his servant Mary Williams, whom she alleged was passing her brother's goods to her friends:-

Mary Williams she claimed

" ..Asked her if she had shut her brother's door for she had some cream to give to Molly Bird (meaning William Hedges's wife) and that if her master knew he would be very angry - saith she - threw her apron over the cream which was in a tumbler that might hold near half a pint, and carried it into the porch called said Hedges's son and gave him the cream. "

Godwin was quick to state that he had several times missed such things as "milk, cream, butter and baked cakes". Yet he had not dismissed Mary Williams, so it would appear that he was not sure of this. Another servant of his Abraham Windsor bore witness as well, but I would imagine that his evidence was regarded as petty spite by the Justices; because for this case we have written in on the roll :

"William Hedges, Caleb Hedges, Mrs Williams, Bills of Indictment having been proposed against them but the same having been returned IGNORAMUS let them be discharged "

(Editor - "Ignoramus "Shorter OED "The endorsement formerly made by a Grand Jury upon a bill or indictment, when they considered the evidence insufficient to warrant the case going to a petty jury".)

We wonder whether it is the same "Farmer Godwin" who comes into court 20 years later.

The information of Thomas Lasper of the parish of Nailsea in the said County taken on his Oath before me one of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the said County

"Who on his Oath saith that a little after twelve o'clock last night he saw farmer and John Godwin the younger his son take and carry away a quantity of Hay from a mow the property of Mr John Combs in a field in his occupation within the Parish of Wraxall in the county aforesaid. Said that the said hay so taken and carried away was in the Informants judgement about three quarters of a hundred weight"

Sworn the 14th day of March 1806 before me G Seymour. John Godwin sentenced to the House of Correction Shepton Mallet for three months. John Godwin the younger privately whipped and then discharged.

Penalties were severe, take the case of "Sarah Edghill (Singlewoman) late servant to Alexander Combes (farmer) the 2nd day of October 1812

" - on Tuesday morning last Sarah Windsor of the said Parish of Nailsea (Singlewoman) who was then at work as a washerwoman - desired her to give some Bacon Bread and Cheese - in consequence of such desire she cut the Piece of Bacon now produced off part of the flitch on the Bacon Rack in the kitchen of the said Alexander Coombes' Dwelling House and the Bread and Cheese now produced she took from the Milk

House and Pantry - all of which she delivered to the said Sarah Windsor who put the whole in her Pocket Handkerchief. - said Sarah Windsor immediately took them out of the House - (and) put them under a Hay Mow in a field called the Nine Acres belonging to the said Alexander Coombes".

Sarah Edghill was found guilty and

"Having been convicted of Grand Larceny let her be imprisoned in the Gaol at Ivelchester for three days".

There are two pleasures in dredging through the old Quarter Sessions rolls for court cases and settlement orders. First is the entertainment given by their styling and phrasing of our language. Secondly there is the linking of names in our village to the trades these people occupied and the consequent fitting in of another "jigsaw puzzle piece"

In Clevedon we had long been aware of one Richard Cox a small farmer, but a case of stealing hay in Tickenham, with he and Farmer Doggett as witnesses gives him as by trade a "taylor". It seems that "Moonlighting" is not a modern invention at all.

Occasionally one is surprised to find family involved. My Great great grandfather John Lilly who lived at Mary's Garden on Cadbury Camp featured in a case of punching Richard Cox, he was sent to Wilton Gaol for six months as a result. Our family believe that he deserves a posthumous award, Richard Cox at that time was the local Tax Assessor.

(for other local crime stories see "Nailsea Village Gossip" by Phyllis Horman available from the Editor price £2-50 inc p&p)

The Brockley Elephant

by Gordon and Ailsa Walker

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In the Autumn of 1994 an elephant skull was kindly given to Bristol Zoo by a Mr Garland and is now on display in the Activity Centre.

In 1958 Mr Garland was working at Backwell School where the Science teacher was wanting to build up a natural history collection and had asked his pupils to bring along anything they though might be suitable. One boy had found a large skull in the woods on Backwell Hill which he thought was from a cow or a horse but when it was brought to the school was identified as an elephant. It remained in the School Science Department and subsequently in the Art Department for some 36 years and would have been thrown away but for Mr Garland recommending it should be donated to the Zoo for educational purposes.

The skull is of an Asian Elephant which had probably lived to be around 20 to 25 years of age. It is without tusks but retains its full set of four teeth. The lower jaw is now being displayed separately from the remainder in order to preserve the whole from further damage.

We thought it might be interesting to examine the strange fact of an elephant apparently having died in the woods some 10 miles south-west of Bristol.

A booklet written c1980 by Jim Pullan ("*Brockley and Chelvey*" published by Nailsea and District Local History Society currently out of print but soon to be republished in the Pennant Special Series) includes a reference to

"A small building near Brockley Cottage, built during the 18th century, is said to have been intended to house an elephant that was used to haul timber from the woods. An inscribed stone in an end wall gave the date 1789 with, presumably, the initials of the owner "J.P." The building was converted a few years ago into a cottage now called "Pigotts".

The importance of this piece of information lies in the fact that Brockley and its woods are adjacent to the woods of Backwell and that the whole of the land, even as far as Weston super Mare, once belonged to the Pigott family.

John Pigott of Brockley Court was a Member of Parliament for Somerset 1705-1707 and had purchased the lands and manors of Weston in 1696. He married Florence Smyth of Ashton Court Bristol, and their descendant was John Pigott (b1741 - d1816). There is little doubt that the initials "J.P." on the preserved stone dated 1789 refer to the latter gentleman.

Nikolaus Pevsner, historian of England's churches and ancient buildings, in his 1958 publication "North Somerset and Bristol" contains a paragraph on Brockley Court and Brockley Cottage which includes the following "There is a persistent rumour that one of the outbuildings was originally an Elephant House erected by the East India Company for an elephant they had brought over".

Research into the history of the Pigott family has so far not revealed a connection with the East India Company. We have corresponded with living members of the family and apart from one having actually lived in Brockley Cottage many years ago and having a clear recollection of the building known as the Elephant House was unable to provide further information.

It is recorded that John Pigott was "widely travelled" and was being repatriated from France during the Napoleonic Wars when he died in Calais in 1816.

On our visit to Brockley the present tenants of the Cottage were kind enough to show us the Elephant House and much to our surprise an elephant bath in their garden. This large hole has a cobbled slope leading down into the water. It is sufficiently proportioned and would have been an ideal structure in which a very large animal could bathe.

The certainty that John Pigott owned an elephant in rural England in 1789 leaves us speculating on its life style and the manner of its death at a comparatively early age.

Merchants and wealthy travellers in those days would have encountered elephants as beasts of burden in Asia (Hannibal had the benefit of them when crossing the Alps in 215 B.C.).

Did John Pigott buy or import the beast or was he favoured with a gift from some noble Maharajah? It would undoubtedly have been of great value for logging in the extensive woodland on the Pigott estate and a great status symbol! Did it die of overwork or an unsatisfactory diet or was the British Climate finally too unbearable? At least it would seem to have had care and consideration, witness the shelter of an Elephant House and the provision of a bath.

One wonders how many elephants may have ended their days in Britain over 200 years ago?

My introduction to the Nailsea Local History Group

by Peter Wright

I am delighted that Jim Smith has given me a brief note of how the local Junior Football club was founded as it was while running the line at Scotch Horn for my son's team that I saw two men nearby measuring the old stonework.

In a lull in the game I asked them what they were doing. They told me they were measuring the site of the Glassworks. I expressed interest and they introduced themselves as Trevor Bowen and Harry Dommatt. Trevor said that there was a local history group and he would let me know when the next meeting would take place. I was duly invited to a meeting which took place in the library. For some reason there was no secretary and they needed someone to take the minutes. 19 years on the consequences of my volunteering make a separate story!

Becoming involved with the club led to some lasting friendships as well as a strange introduction for Joan and myself to nearby villages. For some time when discussing a village we would have to ask a question such as "Is that the one with the sloping football pitch"? A strange introduction to the area but one which we enjoyed. Now to the start of Junior Football in Nailsea.

Nailsea Junior Football Club The beginning

by Jim Smith

Because there were 5 boys playing for South Avon Schoolboys in 1973/74 but there was no local junior football club Jim Smith and Det Sgt Len Smith (no relation) decided that they would start one the following season.

Adrian Davies who ran a sports shop in Nailsea was contacted and agreed to assist. Notices were put in his shop window and the Schools asking anyone interested to attend Grove Sports field at 6pm on a particular Monday evening.

When Jim and Len arrived they found the place so crowded that you could hardly move for bikes and boys. There seemed hundreds of them, some with parents and some without.

They started by splitting them according to age and taking details. Eventually the parents with Len and Jim repaired to the Ring of Bells where, after some discussion a Committee was formed.

One of the first fund raising efforts was to collect old newspapers for recycling. At that time it was a practicable proposition as those collected could be sold for a reasonable sum.

All the newspapers were delivered in small amounts to Jim's house where they were sorted and bundled in his garage before being taken to Pam Wyatt's farm for storage until there was enough to fill a lorry.

Adrian Davies supplied kits and footballs etc. The club's first bill was for £365 with nothing in the kitty until the first lot of paper was sold.

Jim Smith was the first Chairman and his wife became Treasurer and Secretary. *(Ed. Jim can just be seen at the back of the photograph accompanying this article).*

There were so many interested youngsters that two teams were put out at each age group, the first team was called Nailsea United and the second team Nailsea Athletic. For technical reasons the FA requires the sides to be run as two separate clubs albeit with the same administrative officials.

Twenty years have elapsed since then and the club has gone from strength to strength.

(Editor's note - The current secretary of the club recently told me, at a meeting called for local organisations by the Nailsea Civic Society, that the Junior Football Club now caters for 300 boys aged from 8 to 16. It has two pitches off Greenfield Crescent which being in a low lying area makes them very vulnerable to bad weather.) ADROIT..ILLUSTRATION..IN ALBUM.....Nailsea United U12s 1977being presented with the cup by John Sillett at that time Manager of Hereford United

Memories of Backwell schooldays in the 1930's

by John Brain

As a boy, back in the 1930's, I was an avid reader, including of course the comics of the day. The "Hotspur" became my weekly diet, and I still remember one of the school stories published in 1935 - "At school in 1975" which fantasized about scholars talking to one another over a television screen. What would the author have thought of the speed with which reality overtook the fiction of 60 years ago!

Nursery education, playschool, and all the other opportunities of today's world were totally absent in the 1930's, but our village school in Backwell was quite happy to take children from the age of 4. I came into this category and arrived, accompanied by my mother on the first two or three mornings, after which you were on your own, left to make tentative approaches to other youngsters to walk with them to and from school, and cultivate your first early friendship.

Like most village schools, church connections were strong, the building being opened in 1862 on land given by the Rector of the day, the Reverend Lord John Thynne, and largely funded by the parish's patron and largest landowner, the Marquis of Bath.

When I joined its ranks in 1932 the headmaster was John H Webb, a man of many talents, who lost a leg in the first World War, but who came home to serve the school with distinction for twenty years and despite his disability, lived to the ripe old age of 91. Whilst John taught the 10-14 class which included those who took the Secondary exam at 11 (with the prospect of secondary education in Bristol), his wife Sarah taught the 9-10 group. Two local lady teachers, I suspect both uncertificated, covered the infants and the 7-9 groups. Firmness, and yet

kindness was the hallmark, although the need for the former quality grew as we moved up the school!

Backwell before the war was very much an agricultural village. Nothing changed very much, poverty was not unknown especially in the larger families, but the sense of security and trust was far more apparent than it is today. The church was never locked, and its four silver candlesticks remained in the chancel, with the silver alms dish on the altar throughout the year - the idea of theft from the church in those days was unthinkable.

Discipline however was well maintained, and Mr Webb used the cane judiciously when the occasion arose, on the hand of course. Those of us who got it earned it and as parents almost invariably supported the teacher, respect for authority was learned at an early age.

Church influence was strong. I still remember my first impressions in the infants class where we were taught by Miss Rossiter, the daughter of a local builder, and seeing large pictures depicting biblical scenes hanging from the walls. The upper classes always sang a hymn, usually "Praise my soul the King of Heaven" and said the Lord's Prayer before lessons, and at the end of day we sang:

"Lord keep us safe this night Secure from all our fears May angels guard us while we sleep Till morning light appears". For good measure we sang "Be present at our table Lord" before lunch, and "We thank thee Lord for this our food" when we came back - all part of the daily ritual.

The Rector of those days, Prebendary Urch, came in regularly to test our religious knowledge, as well as to pick out prospective boys voices for the church choir; I have to say that 60 years later I am still a member, with a love of church music undimmed by the

passage of time. Both John and Sarah Webb were prominent choir members; one of our other teachers, Mrs Hayward, sang soprano, and was the wife of our long serving organist of that time, Ernest Hayward, who in turn was a school attendance officer - church and school at Backwell were inextricably mixed.

Reference has been made to our walking to school, and it's worth remembering that boys and girls walked from Downside over Backwell Hill, from the far end of Backwell Common and Chelvey and even the beginning of Cleeve - it was hardly surprising that hob-nailed boots were quite commonplace.

Although there is no comparison with today, our teaching was thorough, and at an early age. Tables by rote was well learnt in the first two or three years, and we were given a good grounding in English history and geography by the time we were 9.

During the spring and summer Mrs Webb would take her class on Backwell Hill for "nature walks", boys and girls separately, and we would come back with flowers and sprays of leaves, jars of tadpoles and newts, which all became part of the classroom's stock in trade, and naturally gave us a good insight into the world of nature.

There was also a large tract of land behind the school across the road leading down from Backwell Hill which was the site of the school gardens, divided into vegetable plots, which older boys cultivated under Mr Webb's supervision - our introduction to nature was not merely decorative, but practical!

School was not all work of course. Games evolved in the playground; there was always a spirit of mild anarchy amongst us, and sometimes scores were settled. Backwell Hill was a natural playground during the lunch hour. There was a junior and a senior playground and woe betide a junior who ventured

through the narrow entrance to the "big boys" section: there was always someone who would clip your ear for daring to enter their preserve!

We enjoyed the marble season and the conker season, and in October brought chestnuts to school to roast at dinner time on the open fire in Mr Webb's room, sometimes deliberately leaving them to explode, just to liven up the proceedings!

Summertime too, meant the fruit was ripening, and I am afraid that pinching apples from the various orchards on the way home from school was a harmless pursuit that was universally followed. In those days the "Morgan sweet" was grown by most farmers and formed part of our regular diet in addition to our tea.

If you were caught you received summary justice; as few people had telephones few incidents were reported to Mr Webb unless they came from the irate farmer whose orchard was bounded by the school wall. Not many boys took that risk!

These are but a few memories of my schooldays at Backwell's Junior School, still happily going strong under its headmaster, Peter Turner. We were taught respect, discipline, and self-reliance - no "counselling" if you got the cane! Above all it left me with a lasting high regard for our teachers, a pride in our history, and an abiding love for the Church of England.

We left school numerate and literate, and I am not so sure popular opinion today doesn't have a sneaking regard for the standards which were instilled in us by our teachers of 60 years ago. They all served Backwell's children well.

Other articles in Pennant relating to Backwell schools include:-

Cox R 07/08.Backwell Junior School Photo (back cover)

Darbon C 08/06.Backwell Junior School Photo

Knight N 02/02.Early Schools in Backwell

Lambert B 08/14.Fairfield School, a Short History to 7/65
Wright PC 08/07.Local Schools (Fairfield PNEU School)

Articles relating to Education in general include

Horman P 04/14.Wraxall and Failand Schools

Milton C 04/02.150 yrs. Educ at C.Ch/ Four Oaks School

Wright PC 08/07.Local Schools (memories wanted)

Wraxall War Memorial

Information from Documents

Although several people have tried to find out about how the memorial came into being and the names of those involved little evidence has been unearthed. It seems that we will have to go to Taunton to investigate what is available at the Somerset Record Office.

One item that has come to light is the following; an extract from

Wraxall and Failand Parish Magazine

December 1920

Armistice Day (November 11th) was observed at Wraxall, a bell being tolled a few minutes before 11am, when there was a short silence for two minutes from ordinary occupations. In the evening the bells were rung. On Sunday evening (November 7th) there was a special service at the Church, at which a large number were present and took part.

On Monday evening (November 8th) a meeting of the War Memorial Committee was held at the Girl's School, Wraxall, Mr T R Davey of Wraxall Court presided. A letter from Col G A Gibbs, M P was read, in which he stated that he purposed presenting

the parish with some land to be added to the Churchyard, and the meeting decided to erect the new War Memorial in the centre of the new ground. It was decided that the Memorial should take the form of a Cross. Several designs were submitted, and one of them was chosen by the votes of those present. It was considered generally that a Cross, as a Memorial, would be more suitable than another form, to appeal to the present generation.

50th Anniversary of VJ Day

A service of Remembrance and Commitment to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of the second World War was held at Wraxall Church on Sunday 20th August 1995.

Prior to the service the Royal British Legion laid a wreath at the memorial in the churchyard and prayers were said followed by a two minutes silence. The young people of the area were represented by a small contingent from No 2467 (Nailsea) Squadron Air Training Corps.

The Wraxall War Memorials

There are three in all, inside the church are two narrow brass panels one for each war and each of similar height (approx 3ft). The stone memorial in the churchyard is only to those who fell in the first world war. (details on inside back cover, photograph on back cover)

One of the two brass panels inside the church bears the names of those lost WWI, the other those lost in WWII. The first carries the names shown on the memorial outside the church and includes the middle names for which initials only are on the stone memorial in the churchyard. For completeness these are shown below.

The panel relating to World War II is as follows:-

WORLD WAR II OF 1939 - 1945

**CHARLES EDWARD BALL
JOHN CHARLES F BOVINGTON
THOMAS FFOSTER CHAMBERLAIN
HOWARD CLIFFORD GAY
HENRY GEORGE GREEN
RAYMOND JOHN MITCHELL
ARTHUR JOHN NEATE
ALISTER JOCELYN PERCY
THOMAS LESLEY TANNER
GILBERT GEOFFREY YOUD**

**GREATER LOVE HATH NO
MAN THAN THIS THAT A
MAN LAY DOWN HIS LIFE
FOR HIS FRIENDS**

The brass plaque inside the church dedicated to those who fell in WW1 is as follows:-

**TO THE GLORY OF GOD
AND IN HONOURED MEMORY
OF THOSE OF THIS PARISH
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR
THEIR KING AND COUNTRY IN
THE GREAT WAR 1914 - 1919**

**ALEXANDER ASSHER
HUBERT WILLIAM BANE
JAMES JOB BRICE
SIDNEY HHOWARD BRIMBLE**

CHARLES BUTCHERS
JOSEPH THOMAS BUTCHERS
RICHARD JOHN CLARKE
CHARLES DANCE
THOMAS KERRISON DAVEY
WILLIAM JAMES FAULKNER
WALTER FREEMAN
ALBERT GALE (no "T" is shown)
EUSTACE LYLE GIBBS
RICHARD FRANCIS GOULD
REGINALD ERNEST HARRILL
WILLIAM LIONEL HUGHES
LEONARD JARMAN
EDWARD LEWIS
FRANK MARTIN
ALBERT VICTOR PARTRIDGE
ERNEST JOHN PRICE
HAROLD ERNEST STOKES
CHARLES WILLIAM HOWARD STOKES
ARCHIBALD GEORGE STONE
GEORGE JOSEPH VOWLES
OSCAR WILLIAMS
JOSEPH GEORGE WILMOTT
ROBERT BRUCE MELVILLE WILLS
JAMES WATTS
SIDNEY WEDMORE
THOMAS WILLIAM WYATT
HERBERT GEORGE YOUNG

The War Memorial in Wraxall Churchyard

This is in the form of a cross mounted above a four sided block which is itself placed upon an octagonal block placed on three steps which are also octagonal and which decrease in size as they ascend. It bears on three of its four faces the names of those who fell while on the first (facing the main road others 2 , 3 & 4 clockwise) are carved the words

TO THE GLORY OF GOD

**AND
IN MEMORY OF THE
OFFICERS AND MEN
OF
THIS PARISH
WHO FELL IN
THE GREAT WAR
1914 . 1919**

(side 2)

**ALEXANDER ASSHER
HUBERT W BANE
JAMES J BRICE
SIDNEY H BRIMBLE
CHARLES BUTCHERS
JOSEPH T BUTCHERS
RICHARD J CLARKE
CHARLES DANCE
THOMAS K DAVEY
WILLIAM J FAULKNER
WALTER FREEMAN**

(side 4)

**ALBERT T GALE
EUSTACE L GIBBS
RICHARD F GOULD
REGINALD E HARRILL
WILLIAM L HUGHES
LEONARD JARMAN
EDWARD LEWIS
FRANK MARTIN
ALBERT V PARTRIDGE
ERNEST J PRICE
HAROLD E STOKES**

(side 3)

**CHARLES W H STOKES
ARCHIBALD G STONE
GEORGE J VOWLES
OSCAR WILLIAMS
JOSEPH G WILMOTT
ROBERT B M WILLS
JAMES WATTS
SIDNEY WEDMORE
THOMAS W WYATT
HERBERT G YOUNG**