AROUND KEYNSHAM & SALTFORD PAST AND PRESENT

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AROUND
KEYNSHAM & SALTFORD
PAST & PRESENT

Contents

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ST. AUGUSTINE'S MEDICAL PRACTICE
STATION ROAD, KEYNSHAM.

These notes were written by Doctor Jane Wyatt
for the centenary celebrations of the Practice.

2005 was the centenary of St. Augustine's, formerly Station Road Surgery. For more than half of the 100 years, the Practice was carried on at Hanover House – at number 2, rather than at number 4, Station Road.

Hanover House was purpose-built as a Doctor's House and Surgery by Mrs Elsie E. Kinnersley in 1905, possibly as a wedding present to her daughter, Charlotte Elsie, when she married Dr. William Peach Taylor. He was the son of a Wesleyan minister from Yorkshire who had held the Wesleyan ministry in Keynsham from 1895-1901.

Dr. Peach Taylor read Medicine privately and was apprenticed to a doctor in Bradford, Yorkshire, although he apparently had obtained a place at the Middlesex Hospital which, perhaps for financial reasons, he did not take up. Thus, when he qualified in 1902, he was a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries (LMSSA). That same year, he started General practice in Keynsham, at first, living and working at Failand House in the High Street, as well as doing locums in Bristol.

In the First World War, he joined the Royal Army Medical Corps from 1915-1917 and was posted to an hospital in Alexandria, Egypt. He also worked on an hospital ship, bringing the injured back to Tilbury, having to operate on wounded soldiers in their bunks, which he claimed gave him a bad back afterwards. During his absence, Dr Harrison (founder of West View practice) looked after his Keynsham patients, but it seems he was back in time for the 1918 'flu' epidemic!

He studied for an external degree at Bristol University, so got his MB, ChB, and held posts at the Bristol Eye Dispensary and the VD Clinic, as well as being Public Vacccinator for no.2 District, Keynsham Union. He built up a substantial practice in Keynsham and travelled around the town on a bicycle as well as owning a car---- a rare sight on the roads then. An elderly patient claims to remember his car being a Wolseley convertible, and that he was short, fat and bald, smoked a pipe and wore brown gloves and a trilby hat. The practice still has the same `phone number he did – only then it was just Keynsham 43.

In 1938, Dr. Peach Taylor retired to Brackersmead Cottage in Compton Dando, although when World War II broke out, he returned to work in an air raid First Aid Station in Keynsham. His granddaughter, Mrs Flora Giles of Marksbury, remembers he was musical and played the piano and guitar, and was keen on chess. He died in 1957 at the age of 95, which means he was 75 before he gave up his practice! (and 40, before he started it!).

Dr. Norman Gerrish bought Hanover House and the practice with the financial help of his mother. His father had been a GP in St. George, Bristol and he qualified at Bristol and did some locums before starting work in Keynsham. He acquired a Receptionist ---Marjorie Bowland --- and, in 1947, a partner, Dr. John Field. In 1949, he married a nurse who had come to Keynsham from Sheffield during the War, in 1943. Georgie Gerrish stopped work when she married, but her friend, Muriel Pitman, continued as Distict Nurse and was joined, later, by Miss mary Boaden and Miss Peggy Rogers --- always known as `Boad and Rog`.

During the War the population of Keynsham was around 8,000, but afterwards it increased rapidly and Dr. Geoffrey Herepath joined the Practice as a third partner in 1953 and Miss Josie Cantle became the Receptionist.

Geoff was the son of a Bristol Physician. He had done National Service in the RAF and was also married to a nurse – Pam. They lived in Saltford in order to establish a Branch Surgery there – at their house in Beech Road, which is now Saltford Rectory. The Practice had previously held surgeries in a room adjacent to the former Central Stores on the corner of Bath Road and Beech Road.

Norman Gerrish was well known locally as a sportsman, he played cricket for Keynsham until 1958 and was then President of the Cricket Club and the Rugby Club.

When Hanover House was compulsorily purchased for demolition, to make way for the Keynsham by-pass, there was a suggestion that a surgery might be built as part of the council offices development in the town centre and leased to the Practice, but Planning Permission was obtained, in 1961, to use no. 4 Station Road (St. Augustine's, which had been built for Mr. Thomas, a Mill Manager) and it was bought with a loan from the GP Loan Fund. The Practice moved in 1962 and the Gerrish family went to Park House further along.

At St. Augustine's, the Practice only needed the ground floor for medical purposes at first and the upstairs remained residential. A fourth partner, Dr. Richard Weston, joined in 1970; he stayed for 5 years before going to Australia. The same year, Mrs Jenny Lashenko and her three children moved into the upstairs flat and she became an evening Receptionist.

Late in 1970, Dr. Norman Gerrish, who had planned to retire in April 1971, suffered a heart attack on holiday in Cornwall. After a second attack in February 1971, he died, and has been much missed ever since by all the patients who knew him.

Dr. Tony Fox then joined the Practice and, in 1975, Dr. Tom Garrettt replaced Dr. Weston. At that time, the practice area stretched from Upton Cheyney and Golden Valley to the north, to High Littleton to the south, and Dr. Field was the Medical Officer

at Keynsham Hospital. He retired in 1977 after 30 years in the Practice and was replaced by Dr. Jane Wyatt, the first woman GP in Keynsham for 16 years, since Dr. Vera Dowling retired from what is now, the Temple House Practice. Dr. Tony Fox and Dr. Christopher Richards from West View surgery took over the Keynsham Hospital work and started an active programme of Respite admissions and discharges.

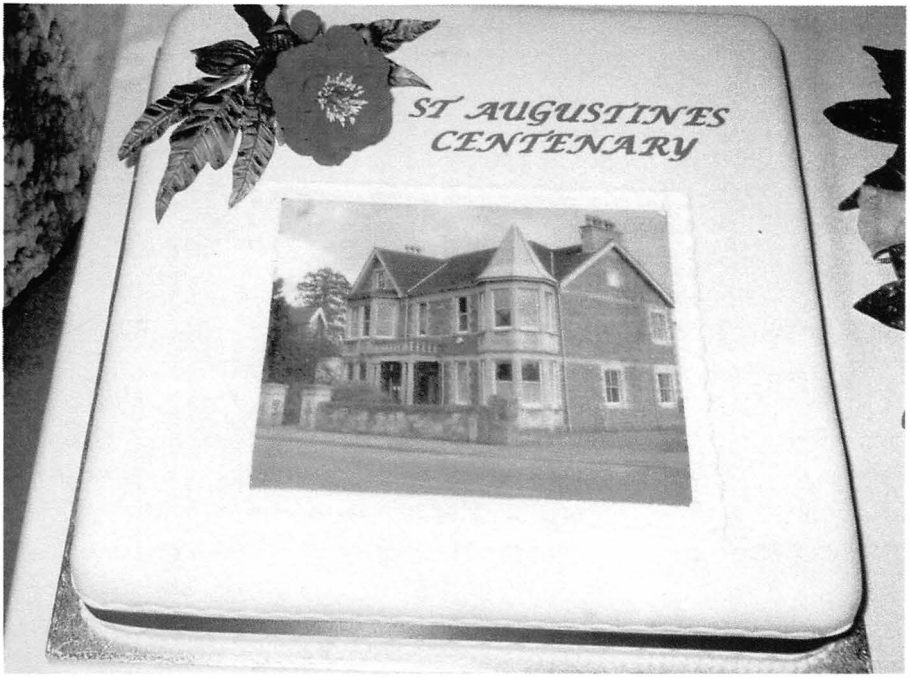
Dr. Fox became increasingly interested in Homeopathy and left in 1980 to practice Homeopathy full time. He was replaced at the beginning of 1981, by Dr. William House. In 1985, with an increasing workload, an extra fifth partner was appointed, Dr. Martin Blackwell. Dr. Robin Davidson replaced Dr. Geoff. Herepath when he retired in 1987, after 34 years in the Practice --- would he have seen more changes in Medicine than Dr. Peach Taylor did in his 34 years?

Dr.Tom Garrett started GP training in the Practice and, by 1993, had become very involved in all aspects of medical teaching, so he and Dr. Jane Wyatt changed to part-time work and a former Trainee, Dr. Michele Cameron, was taken on as another part-time partner.

Modern General Practice requires GP input into all sorts of committees as well as teaching and research, so more part-timers have joined the practice as assistants; Dr. Phil Hammond and his wife, Dr. Jo Rose: Drs Seema Kapoor, Vicky Franklin and Ellie March. Seema, Vicky and Robin are currently the Medical Officers at Keynsham Hospital.

Acknowledgements.
With thanks to Elizabeth White, Barbara Lowe, Flora Giles and Charles Gerrish.

Jane Wyatt.



St Augustines Centenary Celebration Cake

The Doctors being Presented with a Clock

Entertainers at The Centenary Celebrations

ARNOS VALE CEMETERY

In May, members of this Society were taken on a guided walk around Arnos Vale Cemetery by Joyce Smith. There are many interesting graves there, giving an insight into the lives of people long gone and the impact they had on the people of Bristol and the surrounding area. One grave is that of a Dr Herepath, whose descendant, Dr. Geoffrey, is well remembered by Keynsham and Saltford residents. On entering the main gate of the Cemetery, turn right along the main path and, within a few hundred yards you will come to the memorial to William Herepath. In 1833, lecturers from medical establishments across Bristol joined forces and formed the Bristol Medical School. Among those lecturers was William Herepath, who taught chemical toxicology from 1833 to 1867. His son, Dr. William Bird Herepath, became an even more famous chemist and a Fellow of the Royal Society. Together they made great strides in forensic medicine, helping the police to solve murder cases.

In 1835, the father made legal history when he was called to give evidence at Bristol Assize Court. In October 1833, an elderly woman, Clara Ann Smith, died in a lodging house in College Green. Her relatives, wondering why they had not heard from her, made enquiries of the landlady, Mary Burdock. They were concerned about her many possessions and a sum of £800 which Clara had received just prior to her death. During Mary Burdock`s trial, some 14 months after Clara`s death, her body was exhumed and Dr. Herepath was able to demonstrate that the body still carried a lethal amount of arsenic which Mrs Burdock was known to have purchased shortly before Clara`s death. She was found guilty and hanged at the City Gaol.

In 1852, Dr. Herepath and his son were again involved in a suspected case of murder, but this time father and son disagreed. A labourer by the name of Baker had given a lady a potion to treat a pain in one leg. She died, so the Drs Herepath were called in to

test the potion. The father said there were no traces of poison in the medication, while his son said the sample contained nicotine. His ruling was upheld.

Much of this information, and more, may be found in "Keynsham & Saltford. Life and Work in Times Past" edited by Elizabeth White. The story of Clara Smith was supplied by Joyce Smith of the "Friends of Arnos Vale Cemetery", to whom I am very grateful.

Sue Trude.

Unwrapping the Presentation Clock

ROYAL VICTORIA PARK

We all know Victoria Park but perhaps are unaware of its beginnings and the significance of some of the features to be found there. In the 18th century Bath had a number of "Pleasure Gardens"; Sydney Gardens, Spring Gardens and Grosvenor Gardens, but these were commercial ventures so not open to everyone. The idea of open spaces for use by all the population came into being in Victorian Britain and was given a boost by the findings of the Select Committee on public walks in 1833, but, even before that, Bath had already held meetings to consider a "garden" area that would be free for all its citizens. To the west of the Royal Crescent was a large area of common land, divided into lower, middle and upper commons. These were in the hands of Freemen of the City who had put forward two schemes for building on the land but, fortunately, Sir Nicholas Hyde, Recorder for Bath in 1619, had decreed that "the common fields were for the use and enjoyment of the free burgesses inhabiting the city and should remain so for ever". So now the Corporation was looking to develop the middle common into a park but to access this ground an entrance way was needed. Lady Rivers, who owned the land, was approached, and willingly gave consent for Royal Avenue to be built, forming the main gateway to the proposed park beyond. So, in 1830, a Parks Committee was appointed. Funds were raised and, over time, entrance gates were commissioned, a drive was constructed around the perimeter, 25,000 assorted trees were planted, an ornamental lake was fashioned and the Botanical Gardens and Great Dell were created, the latter from a disused stone quarry. William Beckford, of Fonthill Abbey, and Canon Ellacombe, Rector of Bitton, offered advice on tree planting and botanical specimens. The Victorians looked upon their parks not only as places of recreation but also places of learning, thus all the trees and plants were labelled with their names.

The Park was opened on 23rd October 1831 by Princess Victoria, who was visiting Bath at the time. Having been driven around the "ride", she then expressed a wish that the park should be known as The Royal Victoria Park. Other Parks were built in the country but this was the only one entitled to call itself a "Royal Park". Pedestrians were allowed free access but anyone wishing to drive around had to pay. It was at once very popular and very fashionable which, in itself, caused problems. A warden was appointed with powers to remove anyone judged to be unclean or undesirable. Vandalism seems to have been a problem then, as now, so railings were erected to limit entry and the gates were closed at night. In 1835, night patrols became necessary.

Various Royal occasions were marked with additions to the park and when Princess Victoria reached the age of 18 years, in 1837, the Committee decided to commemorate the event. An obelisk, with crouching lions at its base, was designed and placed just inside the Victoria Gate. The official opening was held on the Queen's Coronation Day, 28th June, 1838. "The Prince of Wales" oak was planted in 1863, not far from Victoria's column, to mark the marriage of Princess Alexandra of Denmark to Edward, Prince of Wales, and, in 1887, another oak was planted for the Queen's Jubilee.

Apart from marking Royal occasions, the spoils of war also had a place in the park. A pair of Russian guns, brought back form the Crimea, were placed to the east and west of Victoria's column. The were installed with due pomp and ceremony on 9th September 1857, the second anniversary of the fall of Sebastopol. The finale to these celebrations was the firing of the guns. The report in the London News is as follows; "the iron tongues of these grim trophies of the deadliest struggle ever waged within the memory of man were loosed ---- again and again came the roar of the cannon, mingled with *jeux de joie* from the gallant old pensioners, maimed and scarred and spangled with medals ----- standing now with heroes of Alma and Inkerman".

Two Carrara marble vases, which stand either side of the bandstand, were designed by Canova, and originally commissioned by Napoleon Buonaparte for the Empress Josephine in 1805. A Colonel Page brought them back to England after the Peninsular War, and they were given to the park by a Joseph Fuller, in 1874. The last vase to be left to the park is the one just at the start of Royal Avenue, by the Rivers Gate. Originally, the vase came from the Villa Grimaldi, near Padua, at a time when things Italian were all in vogue. Two other quite remarkable features are to be found in the Great Dell. One is the huge head of Jupiter, which was placed there in 1839, and the other, the Shakespeare Memorial placed there on the 300th anniversary of his death, in 1864.

In the 20th century, the Temple of Minerva was rebuilt at the top of the Botanical Gardens. Initially, it was the exhibit of the City of Bath at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, in 1924. About the same time, the cascade, the rustic bridge and the pool were built, all looking very much as they do today, but the largest feature to have been introduced into the Park in modern times, is the children's play area which has been a great success, as I am sure anyone who has passed by during the Summer months, will agree.

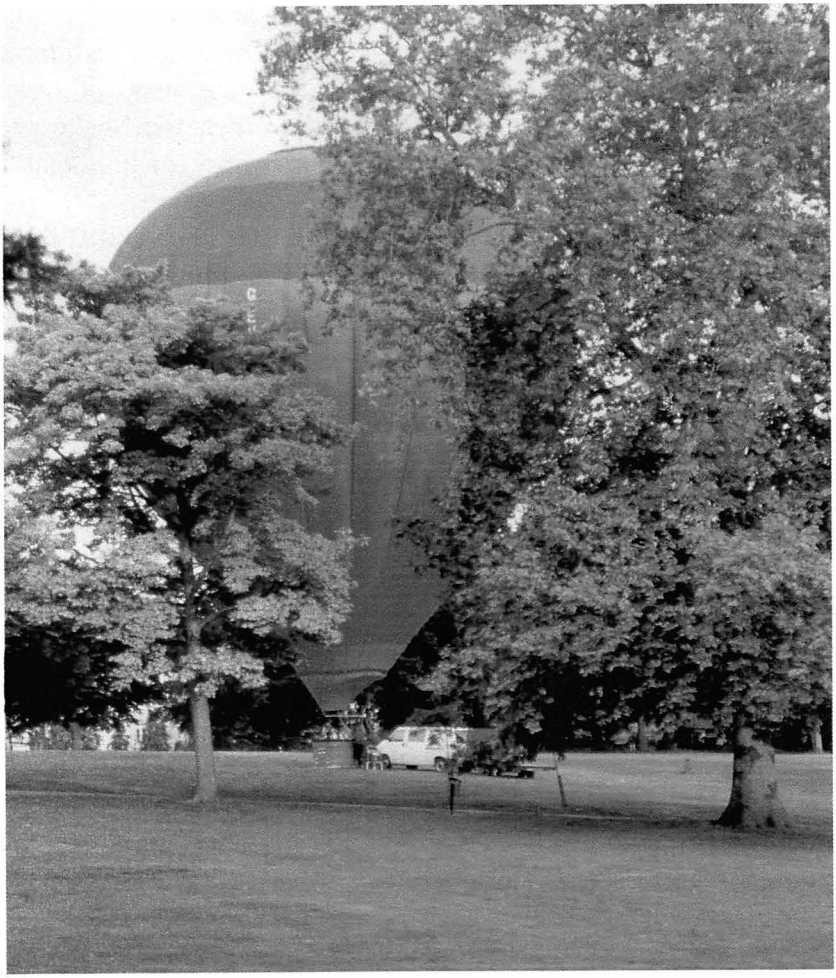
The Park's Committee continued to run the Park, which was financed by voluntary subscriptions and donations until 1921, when the Corporation took control. The Park continues to be a great place for all kinds of leisure pursuits for the citizens of Bath, fulfilling the mandate of 1619.

Over the years, other parks have appeared; Hedgemead Park in 1889; Henrietta Park in 1897; Alexandra Park in 1902, as a memorial to the Coronation of Edward VII, and the most recent, Alice Park, on the City outskirts.

Acknowledgements.

I would like to thank Robin Whalley for allowing me to use much of the material he researched for his article on the Royal Victoria Park in Bath History volume 1.

Sue Trude.



Balloon in Victoria Park

A GRAND DAY OUT----1920`s STYLE!

Amongst the fascinating range of items from the Society`s archives that were put on show at our 40th anniversary exhibition held at the Fear Institute on 1st October 2005, was a small album chronicling an excursion undertaken by pupils from Bath hill School, Keynsham, eighty years previously, in 1925.

The scope of the excursion was extensive in terms of distance travelled--- Keynsham to Southampton and back --- places visited, so much so that one of our committee members, browsing through the album, expressed doubts that all that had been chronicled could have been achieved in a single day.

I decided to investigate further! Firstly, of course I read through the album. It gives the date of the excursion as 24th July 1925, so clearly it was a treat at the end of the Summer term. This gave the advantage of plenty of daylight hours for travelling. The album contains 28 short essays written by the children, with some closing notes on the last page, written by the teacher. The essays cover various aspects of the journey and the particular places of interest seen and visited along the way. A few of the essays --- including one on the new floating dock at Southampton --- and generally described as "Miscellaneous papers written in anticipation of the visit", were composed in the weeks leading up to the 24th of July. Doubtless, as the great day approached, excitement mounted. In reading through the essays, there is the sense that some of the children may not have travelled previously far from Keynsham.

John Brewer, in describing the first stage of the journey,--- Keynsham to Bath and then on to Winsley—mentioned that although he had frequently been to Bath, beyond there "everything was strange".

The next contributor, W. Veale (generally, in the album the boys are listed by initial and surname, whereas the girls` names are given in full) took up the story, with the stage of the journey across Salisbury Plain. He described and drew examples of the

military badges, carved in the chalk hillsides by the soldiers stationed there in the First World War. With that conflict still fresh in the memories of, at least, the children's parents, the sight of the badges must have been particularly poignant.

How did they travel? There are occasional references, in the essays, to a "charabanc". Development of these motor vehicles in the early 1920's opened up countless opportunities for cheap travel that earlier generations, including the parents of the Bath Hill School pupils, had not experienced. It all started with ex-military lorries from the First World War being converted to passenger-carrying vehicles by having rows of bench seats fitted transversely behind the driver's seat. Access to the passenger seats was by way of rows of doors along the sides of the vehicle's body.

The ex-military vehicles ran on solid tyres – not the most comfortable of rides – and in common with other heavy vehicles -- those weighing more than two tons -- were restricted to a maximum speed of 12 miles per hour (mph). Thus when the Greyhound Company inaugurated a regular daily service between Bristol and London in 1925, using solid- tyred Dennis buses, the scheduled journey time, including a refreshment break at Newbury, was eight hours.

Gradually, pneumatic tyres were introduced and speeds increased accordingly. The Commer Company produced a 29-seater passenger vehicle, in 1922, running on pneumatic tyres and, in 1927, Orange Brothers of Bedlington pioneered a Newcastle-upon-Tyne to London express service using a small Gilford coach. The scheduled time for the 270-mile trip was 12 hours – an average of 22 1/2 mph – but details of what were known as "convenience halts" are not known.

Nearer to Keynsham, the Bristol Tramways & Carriage Company Ltd., as well as providing tram, bus and coach services, was also building "charabancs" at their Brislington works. As with other manufacturers, their early models ran on solid tyres, but even these charabancs were capable, albeit unofficially, of quite

high speed. There was a story of one of them going at almost 40 mph across Salisbury Plain, but with poor road surfaces, the passengers must have experienced a great deal of vibration. Apparently, on another occasion, when a charabanc made a "convenience halt", the driver was surprised to see all the passengers leaving the vehicle by climbing over the doors. It transpired that every one of the exterior brass handles had unthreaded itself due to the vibration, and fallen off during the journey! History does not record how the driver accounted for this deficiency on his return to Bristol.

In 1923, Bristol Tramways & Carriage Co. Ltd. introduced a 2-ton charabanc, running on pneumatic tyres, with seating for twenty adults. Such a vehicle could have accommodated the Bath Hill School party. Twenty-seven children are shown in a photograph taken on the day out in the New Forest, but several were quite small and slim – no signs of childhood obesity in 1925 – so would not have taken up a great deal of seat space.

How much might the day out have cost? At the beginning of the 1920's, charabanc trips were very expensive. At a time when the average working man was earning slightly less than £3 per week, a return trip from Bristol to Bournemouth cost 12/6d (62 1/2p), but with increased competition from other operators in Bristol, several of whom "ganged up" to undercut Bristol Tramways, the fares came down substantially. By 1924, the return journey to Bournemouth was down to 7/6d (37 1/2p). Private parties could enjoy even lower rates, and one Bristol operator was quoting as little as 2/6d (12 1/2p) per head for a return trip to Southampton. Hopefully, the parents of the Bath Hill School pupils were able to take advantage of such a bargain, especially as it appears that some families had two children going on the outing.

Given a speedy, up-to-date, and comfortable charabanc, the round trip of 140 miles to Southampton, could probably have been accomplished easily in about seven hours, but, even so, there was much to be crammed into the day by way of places visited.

Unfortunately, the album does not give a precise itinerary of the day's journey. However, the essays tell us of a visit to Salisbury Cathedral where, after waiting for a service to finish, the children were given a conducted tour by one of the canons. There was a stop in the New Forest to see the stone recording the death of William II (the Rufus Stone). Here, the party encountered gypsy children selling picture postcards of the stone. In Southampton, the charabanc stopped outside the dock gates so that the party could be taken over the Royal Mail Ship, "Berengaria". Again, post cards were purchased. These showed important features of the vessel and were included in the album to illustrate the essays. The children were clearly impressed by the size of the ship – described as longer than the span of Clifton Suspension Bridge, and – when measured from sea level to funnel top – twice the height of Keynsham Church tower. The RMS "Berengaria" was also another reminder of the First World War and J. Wiltshire records, in his essay, that it was previously a German ship "Imperator", taken by Britain after the war, in compensation for the sinking of "Lusitania".

Apart from a brief reference to having tea, there are no details in the album as to how the children were refreshed on their long day out. Clearly, it was a long day as one of the children wrote an essay headed "Bath at Night", and was very impressed with the street lamps of great power and "one great blaze that stretched high into the air". This was the Empire Hotel. Given the time of year, it seems, therefore, that it must have been very late in the evening before the party arrived back in Keynsham, although, the teacher, in "Closing Remarks" noted that "home was reached within a few minutes of schedule time".

Although there are twenty-seven children in the group photograph in the album, only twenty-two contributed essays and illustrations. They were; Gwynneth Belston, C. Bishop, Agnes Botting, John Brewer, D.Churches, Isabelle Churches, J. Cook, S. Cook, Dorothy Harding, Derek Higgs, Freda Hooper, Lily

McMahon, T. McMahon, Lily Ollis, Kathleen Parsons, R. Phelps, Gordon Reed, Margery Robbins, Gladys Sealy, Roy Stacey, W. Veale, J. Wiltshire.

The name of the male teacher, or "master" as mentioned in one essay, is not recorded, but we know that the headmaster of Bath Hill School at that time, was Mr Hugh Mansey.

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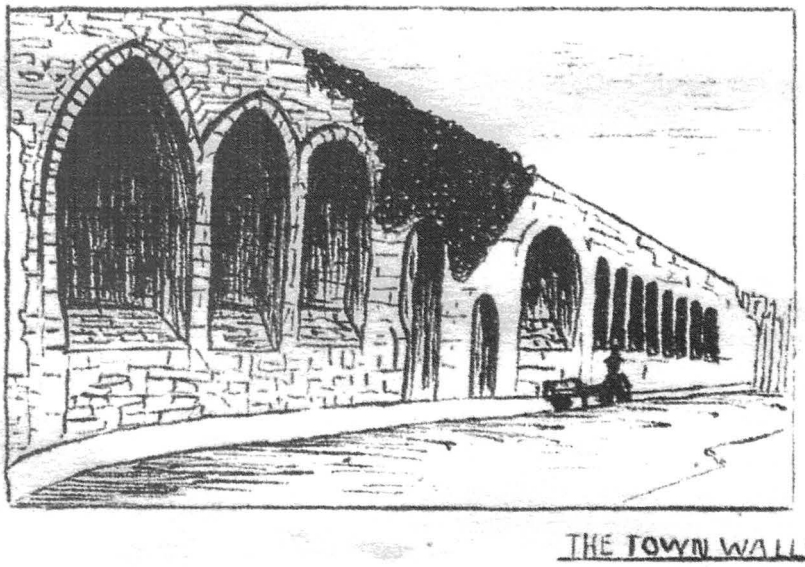
Dennis Hill.

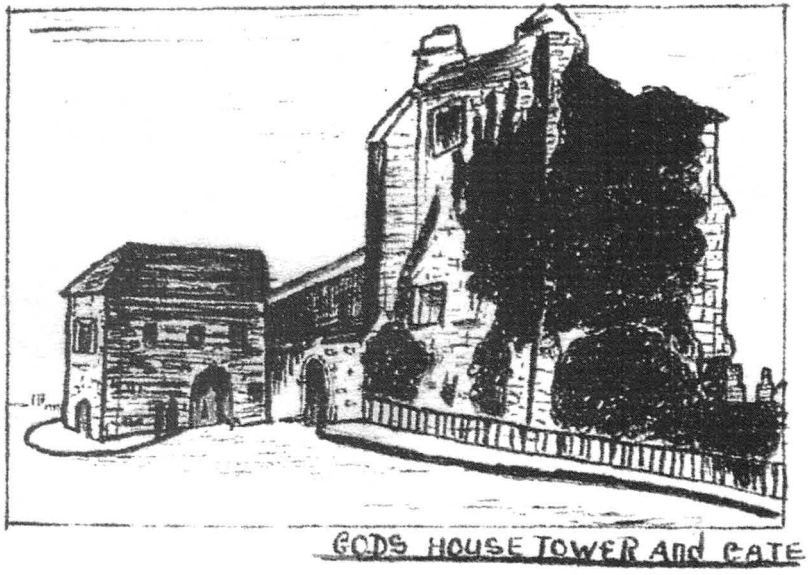
Keynsham School Choir in Charabang
en route to Bath Festival

Bath Hill School Choir 1926

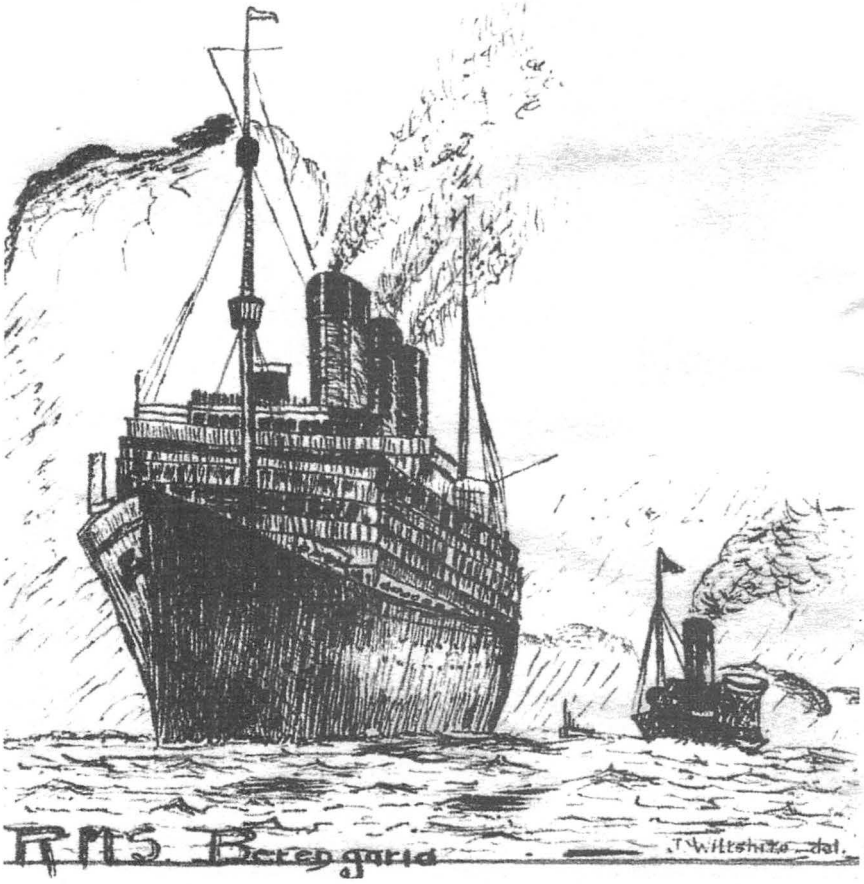
Bath Hill School at The Rufus Stone 24-7-1925



Sketch of Southampton Town walls - D. Higgs



Sketch of God's House Tower & Gate - D. Higgs



Drawing of RMS Berengaria by J. Wiltshire

BASIC EDUCATION IN THE 1920`s
At UPTON CHEYNEY SCHOOL

"Nymphs and shepherds, come away" we sang. It was in preparation for a Gloucestershire schools` singing competition to be held at the Shire Hall, Gloucester. From the junior classroom came the chant, almost as tuneful as ours, "Twice one is two, twice two are four, two fours are eight ----- ". "George", says Miss Stockall, "Go next door and tell Miss Birchall her children are making too much noise, and do it politely --- say "Miss Stockall says please"." Soon we were off again---- "All out with the raggle taggle gypsies 0" and "The Grand Old Duke of York". We boys did not go much on nymphs and shepherds, but we could identify with gypsies who we saw frequently in our lanes, and with the Duke`s marching men. Nor could we join enthusiastically with "Dashing away with the smoothing iron" but we did enjoy "The youth who bore, mid-ice and snow, the banner with the strange device, EXCELSIOR!"

Eventually it was "Nymphs and Shepherds" and "Early one morning, just as the sun was rising" we took to the Shire Hall. Our rendition was "Commended". We enjoyed the trip in the charabanc, going for the first time for many of us, far, far, beyond the distance barrier set by our ramshackle bicycles.

Singing continued in the playground --- "When the red, red robin comes bob, bob, bobbing along" and a rude version of "Bye, bye, Blackbird".

Upton Cheyney School in the 1920`s, taught what are now known as the three "R`s", gave the children an unashamed patriotism and the basis of citizenship. It introduced such minor arts as singing and reading for pleasure. The sandtray where we made our letters with sticks in the sand, and the slates and crayons had been abandoned, and pencils, exercise books, and, for the more advanced, there were pens, ink (and crossed nibs and blots!).

We had hymns and prayers daily. We learnt all three verses of "God Save the King", and savoured "Confound their politics, Frustrate their knavish tricks". We sang a Rudyard Kipling hymn, with each verse ending in "Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, Lest we forget, Lest we forget".

We celebrated St. George's Day and Empire Day with pageants. On Empire Day, children were dressed to represent the Empire ---- a tea-towel turban and blacked up face for India, a Scouter's hat with a red band and a jacket with a maple leaf emblem for Canada – etc. There was a large map of the world on the wall with a dominance of red representing the colonies, and pink showing the administered territories. This map was often in use in our history lessons. Our history heroes were Drake, Nelson, Raleigh, Clive of India, Gordon of Khartoum ("Show me where Khartoum is on the map Betty" and Betty would point the ruler in the direction of the River Nile), Florence Nightingale, General Wolfe, Edith Cavell and Richard Grenville.

The latter featured in our poetry readings, when we read about the "Revenge" and the heroic fight against all odds, and did not his brother, Bevil, die from wounds at the Battle of Lansdown at Hamswell House, just beyond Beach. We boys enjoyed the poems of mystery and adventure --- "The loss of the Royal George", "The Inchcape Rock", "The Highwayman" and "The Lady of Shalott".

We had dictation: "The cart rolled down the lane". As we formed our characters a voice would plea "Can you go a bit slower, please Miss?" There was reading aloud and the books were "Treasure Island", "Midshipman Easy", "Children of the New Forest", while we were encouraged to read R.M.Ballantyne and G.H.Henty stories and Sir Walter Scott novels. We had Shakespeare, too, though we found the plots complicated.

History and Geography seemed intermixed but compared to mathematics, they were full of interest.

THE SCHOOL

The school was built on a high banked promontory between two lanes. It was built in 1894 and consisted of two classrooms, one smaller for infants and a high-vaulted one for seniors. The latter had high windows, preventing scholars from being distracted by outside events. Lighting was by oil-lamps, and heating in the small classroom by a fireplace, and, in the main room, by two large coke stoves which glowed red when the boy stoker deliberately left the damper open. On the top of each stove was a tortoise-shaped, cast-iron receptacle holding humidifying water. Coke came from a heap at the top of the boys' playground, beyond the boys' and girls' lavatories which backed on to each other and were furnished with large, galvanised buckets.

The playgrounds were separated and incursion of one sex into the other's territory was only by teacher's permission. In each playground there was an area of flat macadam and a larger area of cinder. The girls tended to play hop-scotch, skipping, leapfrog and "touch" or "tag". The boy who could produce an old tennis-ball enjoyed great popularity, and football of a sort was the main boys' game. No tennis-ball and a bundle of rags or paper tied with string into a rough spherical shape was adequate, but rapidly disintegrated as the hobnail boots belted it. Other games were tops, conkers, marbles and a game flicking cigarette cards at a card propped against a wall --- if you dislodged it you claimed the card.

The school stood between two lanes, the metalled one with steep banks and wild strawberries in season, led to Beach. The other lane was a rough cart track that eventually led to Lansdown. The boys' playground skirted this track which provided interest as many passers-by were on foot. Bath races attracted a trudging clientele who had come by train to Bitton station and walked from there. "Good luck, Mister" we would shout in the morning, and, if they had good fortune, they might toss us a penny to scramble for in the afternoon. Other pedestrians were the golf ball men. They, often with a dog, skirted Lansdown Golf Course, retrieved lost

balls, cleaned and repainted them and sold them to the "slicers" and "hookers" among the golfers. Granny Bees came by carrying a large wicker basket covered in a spotless white cloth. There was only one cottage on the track so presumably she went to the Lawrence household at Brockham End with her wares.

"Happy" Sid came by. His melancholy countenance raised cheeky comments from us boys, provoking a string of profanities. We were safe behind the playground railings and were forbidden to go into the lane during school time (we did, of course, to recover lost footballs). The lane banks were lined with primroses, violets and red campion and were home to bumble bees. One summer there was a wasps` nest and one day, "Happy " Sid was seen approaching. A boy ran across the lane, stirred the nest with a stick, and ran back again. A cloud of angry insects enveloped the happy one and he ran waving his arms and swearing as we cheered and jeered.

The Wick Beagles came up the lane in search of hares, the hounds waddling and slobbering and the men followers, in polished leather gaiters, puffing along behind.

Sometimes, as we sat in the classroom, we would hear the noise of motor cycle engines and knew that the "Douglas Testers" were trying out the Kingswood-made machines on rough terrain.

There was some bullying. One form, usually performed on a younger boy, followed the chant "The Lord said unto Moses, all people shall have round noses, except Aaron, he shall have a square`un", when an attempt would be made to change the victim`s nasal shape. The practice of wearing a red band on the arm, showing that you had a recent smallpox vaccination, inevitably invited a good thump. Another ploy was to invite a smaller boy to put his head through the railings --- some were narrower than others and the head would get stuck!

The school catchment area, though under Gloucestershire control, included villages in Somerset. Most of the children came from Upton itself. Everyone walked to school and some, perhaps the poorest, had to walk from Kelston Mills, often with cardboard in their boots. The children from North Stoke had to cross five fields, numerous stiles, a brook and a muddy lane. The Always family came from North Stoke, the Bonds and Fudges and Egertons from the Mills, while the Frankcoms and Knights came from Swinford. Inevitably some came late and were caned on the hands. Inevitably some came wet through and sat steaming through the morning lessons. All were supposed to bring lunches but some were without food and were given warm drinks. Some village children would share their lunches and some, lucky enough to go home, would invite a friend home with them. The friend was often deemed too dirty to enter the house and ate his meal in the wash-house or on the steps outside. There were bright children who qualified, at the age of 11, for Kingswood Grammar School but, because of poverty, were unable to take up the opportunity. Most children were required to bring in a family income as soon as possible and, at the age of 14, went into poorly paid agricultural or horticultural labouring. The girls went into service or to the Golden Valley Paper Works or to horticultural work in the village.

There were practically gifted children, boys who could mend punctures in the teachers' bicycles and girls skilled in sewing and knitting. The boys had the opportunity, eagerly taken, to have woodwork lessons at Bitton School on Friday afternoons, and some, because of this, were able to gain employment in light engineering works in Bitton and Bath.

Attendance was variable with the seasons. The two-and –a –half mile walk to school in a blizzard was daunting, and the diseases of measles, chicken-pox, German measles, mumps, whooping cough and other respiratory ailments re-cycled every year. Ever present were headlice, scabies, impetigo and ring-worm. Seasonal harvesting and fruit picking also affected attendances --- a week's

cob-not picking at Pipley Farm could earn a child a shilling or two.

THE TEACHERS

Miss A. Walley and Miss A.M.Stockall dominated the 1920`s as teachers in all subjects. They carried an enormous workload day-in, day-out, not only in education but in administration and welfare. Their dedication and enthusiasm was , to some of us, infectious.

Jim Allen.

Upton Cheyney School in 1924
Jim Allen 3rd from Left in Front Row
Jack Allen, round faced, sitting Centre

A VILLAGE SHOP IN 1925.

The earliest morning callers at the village shop in Upton Cheney were the smokers. You could set your watch by Tom Clark's 7-15am visit for five Woodbines. A few minutes later, in came his brother, Moses, on his way to Wick quarry some four miles away. "Good morning. An ounce of Superfine (tobacco) and a box of England's Glory (matches), please". He already had his empty pipe in his mouth. Then Stan Spare came for his Ten Star and Art Williams for "the usual" (ten Weights).

The shop, the converted front room of a square-faced house, had been in existence since the 1890's and was once the provider not only of groceries, but bread and bacon. The string-course below the upper windows proclaimed "HOME BAKED BREAD. HOME CURED BACON", although the bakery had ceased operating during the First World War; neither was there any curing of bacon, although the villagers still used the back yard of the house to slaughter their home-reared pigs.

The shop came into the care of Elizabeth Mortimer in 1907, on the death of her parents, and it was she who served the early callers, winter and summer. She was summoned by the ringing of a spring bell which jangled whenever the front door was rattled and continued jangling after the door was open.

A long counter divided the shop and Miss Mortimer had to pass her customers to get to the serving side. On the counter were small scales with little brass weights; paper bags; sheets of grease-proof paper and a tall, tin tea-caddy. The larger, wrought-iron scales with iron weights from 2lb to 14lb, were on the level concrete area of the otherwise flagstone floor.

On the customer side of the counter ranged the goods that were difficult to pilfer: sacks of sugar, rice, dried peas, salt and flour in fine woven sacks, all raised on decking off the floor. Alongside were blocks of lard and butter in boxes of thin wooden slats, wired and stapled --- which made them difficult to turn into kindling.

On a block stood a round of cheese draped in cheesecloth and there was a stand for a keg of vinegar which had to be broached by knocking in a bung and forcing home the spigot end of a yellow applewood tap. Underneath was a drip tray.

Behind the counter, was a round wooden tub of corn for the villagers' chickens and a crate of mineral water bottles, the necks of which, when broken, yielded glass marbles. The wooden sliding till and the cigarettes were kept on the far shelf, as far from pilfering hands as possible. Nearby were the popular sweets, the sherbet dabs and fountains, the liquorice sticks and rolled-up laces, the dolly mixtures and the gobstoppers. On the shelves above were the jars of dearer sweets: humbugs, pear drops, mints, aniseed balls; and, in one jar, lemonade crystals. Each jar had a glass stopper to maintain a degree of air-tightness.

Under the counter, and again on boards to keep them off the floor, were wooden boxes of currants, sultanas and raisins, and a long, shallow box which held crystallised halves of citrus fruits with glazed sugar in their cups.

Almost everything was sold by weight in plain white bags: triangular for sweets, or grease-proof paper with a newspaper overwrap. Sugar was packed in specially textured blue bags and small scoops were used for anything sticky.

Daily trade was sporadic. After the tobacco customers came a lull, enabling Miss Mortimer to have her breakfast and feed the fowl in the yard. Then the housewives would come shopping for their pinch of tea or their penny candles. Miss Mortimer did not encourage them to gossip in the shop, but they did so on the path outside.

Afternoons were relatively quiet, giving Miss Mortimer time to cultivate her big garden. In the early summer there were gooseberries to pick for sale (a penny a pound). There were potatoes to plant and earth up and beans to sow and stick. Later in the year would come the early apples, Worcester Pearmains, Beauty of Bath and plums aptly named Early Rivers. Autumn brought her the tasty but scabby produce of a Cox`s Orange tree and the Jacklabelle, an early cooker but non-keeper, and the Newton Wonder, an apple that kept through to March. Perhaps its proximity to the cesspit accounted for its wholesomeness. For Miss Mortimer it took pride of place.

After 4pm the bell started jangling again as the children began running errands for their parents and ha`porths of sweets. In theory the shop closed at 6pm but the trade continued spasmodically until about 8pm.

Then, as late as 9-30pm, a child would ring the bell and ask, "Please Miss Mortimer, could you let our mum have four ounces of cheese for our Dad`s bag tomorrow?"
"Do you know the time! Have you got the money?"
"Yes Miss".
"All right, but just this once. Tell your mother to get her cheese where she gets the rest of her groceries!"

Miss Mortimer was alluding to the CO-OP van which came once a week and lured customers away with a promise of a dividend. Her pet hates were the CO-OP and bad debts.

Apart from cigarettes and Sunny Jim Cornflakes, Snowfire for chilblains and Oxo, there were very few pre-packaged cartooned goods. Tinned goods included corned beef, boot polish, Zebo Grate polish, Gibbs Dentifrice (Fight Giant Decay), Vaseline and tinned pears, peaches and mandarin oranges. There were bottled jams, but villagers mostly made their own preserves.

In season, there were Seville oranges, soaps – Lifebuoy and Sunlight—and a coarse soap which had to be shredded before use in the boiler. These goods were stacked up in the recess of an old grate.

The only commodity on sale and not kept in the shop was the preserved eggs from Miss Mortimer's hens --- they were often free-range in the garden. The eggs were kept in a slimy preservative called isinglass, in large earthenware pots in a dark cellar.

Although the shop was swept daily and washed weekly, it could not claim to be hygienic. It was lit by an oil lamp on the counter which, together with the fumes from a Valor oil-stove in winter, stained the ceiling yellow. Fly-papers hung from the ceiling and attracted a good harvest in summer and autumn. There were mice, kept under control by traps and the cat which was locked in overnight. There was no hygiene inspection but there was a visit from the Weights and Measures Inspectorate, which brought Miss Mortimer a degree of panic.

The wrought-iron scales c1890 were suspect at the point of balance, and the weights, though cleaned and black-leaded,

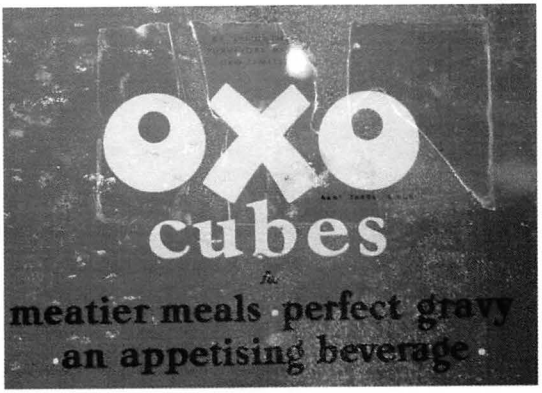
never seemed to comply with the standard set, usually being overweight. The threat of confiscation always followed these unannounced inspections and remedial measures had to be paid for.

The wholesale grocer was A.J.Phippen of Victoria Street, Bristol. Their representative called on Tuesdays for the order; he bought the gooseberries, apples and damsons in season, presumably to sell on elsewhere at a profit.

The goods were delivered on Fridays in an upright box-type narrow-tyred van. This was one of the few motorised vehicles to climb the steep hill to Upton Cheyney, apart from Dr Aubrey`s Morris and the Foden steam wagon which brought beer to the Upton Inn.

The weekly turnover in the shop was about £30. Open all hours did not bring Miss Mortimer a fortune. When the bell jangled for the last time in 1940, she had done much more than shop-keeping. True, she had inherited a shop in debt, turned it to profit despite bad debts and the inspectors but she had also given board and lodging to a succession of Upton Schoolmistresses and to the Squire and his wife who came two or three times a year to collect rents. Most of all, she had brought up her late sister`s daughter, and when that niece was widowed, her two sons.

Jim Allen.



Upton Cheyney Village Shop
(Room Left of Door)

Fry's Advertisement

SOMETHING YOU MAY NOT KNOW

A lot was written about the Second World War last year, much of it we already knew, but I, for one, did not know the part that was played locally towards the War Effort, and which may have contributed to the bombing of Bath or the Baedeker Raids as they were more often called.

In Bath, for example, five firms were involved. Stothert and Pitt designed and made the prototypes for all the gun mountings for the tanks, e.g. the Sherman and the Challenger, and all the mountings for machine guns. For the Navy they made equipment such as sea-plane cradles for war-ships and fixed gantry cranes, also landing bridges for various types of landing craft used on D-Day.

The "Chariot" was a human torpedo, a mini-submarine manned by two frogmen and propelled by a small motor. It carried a detachable explosive war-head for fixing to ships' hulls and was launched from a submarine under cover of darkness. Another of Stothert's "secret weapons".

Runways were in need of tons of concrete to repair them or create new ones, so Stothert and Pitt made hundreds of cement mixers, not very special in themselves, but vitally important to the War Effort.

Horstmann Gears made specialist wireless apparatus to keep pilots in touch with ground controllers, and also the parts needed for Radar, which, at the time, as comparatively new. They made sonic location devices (ASDIC), which were, as I am sure you know, placed on ships in an effort to detect German submarines. Other timing mechanisms were made which had a variety of uses.

Even wooden aeroplane parts were made at the Bath Cabinet makers: such things as laminated propellers, fuselage and wing sections for the De Haviland Mosquito, also for the Air-speed Horsa gliders that were towed to Normany on the eve of D-Day and later, in1944, to Arnhem carrying hundreds of airborne troops. It all sounds rather "Heath Robinson" when you think of today's technology, but again, vital in its day.

Most surprising, I found, was the fact that Harbutt's plasticine had some important uses. One, as ear plugs to prevent damage from gunfire, another as a substitute in the training of the use of plastic explosives, and lastly, it was used to make accurate scale models of proposed targets.

On the Home Front it was used to seal any small hole or crack in our houses in the event of a gas attack, as the following advert shows;-

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!

GAS

Are you ready to preserve yourself and others from the dangers of poisonous gas raids?
Because you will find that
HARBUTT'S
A.R.P. PLASTICINE

Is the safest, surest and best means of making rooms, windows, doors, floor joints, keyholes, cracks, ventilators etc. absolutely secure from GAS. This quality of plasticine is made softer and in long, thin rolls that can be pressed into corners and cracks at a

MOMENTS NOTICE

Full instructions with every packet. Can you afford to ignore this safeguard?
Special 2lb cartons will seal a normal room
2/6, Post Free.
From HARBUTT'S PLASTICINE LTD.
"G" Bathampton, Bath.

Harbutt's Plasticine factory was bombed by the Germans but fortunately, the bomb did not go off, and after being made harmless by the bomb squad, it was on view a week later at the village fete for six-pence a look.

Lastly, Bath Overseas Airways Corporation repair shops at James Street West and Pitman's on the Lower Bristol Road, overhauled aircraft propellers.

Of course, there was the Admiralty housed in Hotels, schools and huts in and around Bath, their location being marked on German maps. The plans for the Mulberry Harbours were thought up at Kingswood School, which had been requisitioned by the Admiralty, and were said to have been named after a mulberry tree in the grounds.

So how much of this information was known to the Germans and did they think Bath was strategically important enough to bomb, or was it just because Bath had some cultural significance, as has been suggested, hence usually known as the Baedeker Raids?

Even closer to home, in fact in Keynsham itself, there was a small group of people doing their bit towards the War Effort. During World War Two, many small workshops and garages were

Correct - but there is still there
out side main 35 entrance of School!

converted to machine shops. CANNOCK`S GARAGE at 36, Bristol Road, was one of these workshops producing nearly a quarter of a million small parts for the Bristol Aeroplane Company, the Admiralty, Ministry of Supply, Horstmann Gear Company and others.

The machines used were elderly, some dating back to the First World War and considerable ingenuity and improvisation was necessary to achieve the required standards. Operators were drawn from existing garage staff and from young men awaiting call-up.

The work force was as follows;

E.A.Cannock –Supervision and inspection.
P.G.Hawley – Garage Foreman and millwright.
A.C.Travers—Capstan Operator and milling machine.
G.J.Taylor—Inspection and despatch.
W.Long – Capstan Operator.
R.Ford –Capstan Operator & despatch.
E.J.Cannock – Centre Lathe and tool setting.

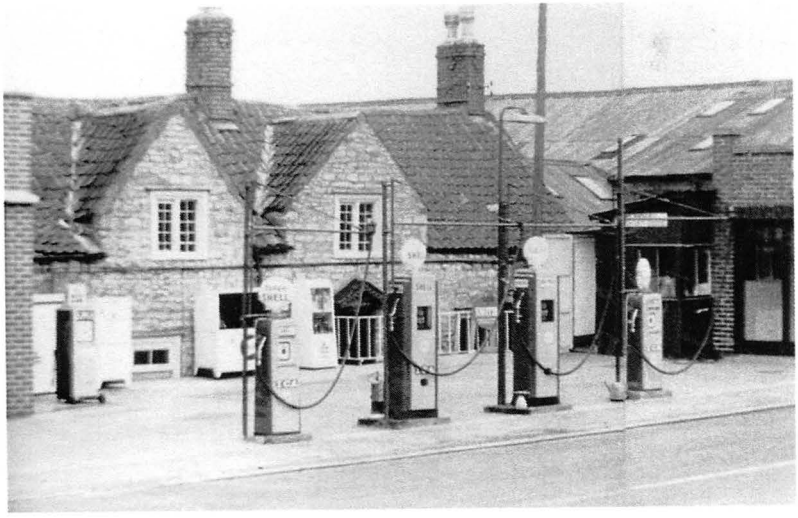
The machines used were;

Bardon & Oliver capstan lathe.
Lodge & Shipley geared lead centre lathe.
Greenwood centre lathe.
Muir centre lathe.
Norton tool & cutter grinder.
Denbigh pillar drill.
Selig Sonnenthal hand shaper.
Drummond centre lathe.
Small capstan.

Jobs such as I have described were going on all over Britain. I find it quite amazing. All I can say is "No wonder we won the war"!!

My thanks to
(a) Alan Williams who let me use much of the information he had for walks around Bath last year called "Bath at War".
(b) The Bath Chronicle`s feature on "Bath at War".
(c) Our LHS archives relating to Keynsham`s part in the war effort.

Cannocks Garage pre-World War II



Cannocks Garage after World War II