

Brimington and Tapton *Miscellany* number 4

Brimington and Tapton Local History Group's Yearly History Review

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Introduction, from Doug Spencer, Chairman of the Brimington and Tapton Local History Group

Welcome to our fourth edition of *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany*.

In this edition we have something of a people theme. Thanks to Peter Harrison, we are able to present his memories of 'A kid from Cott. Lane'. This has been transcribed and edited from a very popular talk Peter gave sometime ago about his memories of living on Cotterhill Lane, just prior to the Second World War. It's been eagerly awaited. We hope you enjoy it.

Elizabeth Pemberton and Philip Cousins have contributed the fruits of research into Brimington doctors. We also have an article on the capture of First World War Prisoners in Brimington, partially based on the recollections of the late Alan Wetton.

I must mention our editor, who does much of the behind-the-scenes work, including pre-publication design and editing. But it's a team effort, backed up by Marion Spencer and Alan Sharp, who do proof-reading for us. As always, I take this opportunity to thank our committee for their work, along with the contributors to this edition of *Miscellany* and of course you, our reader. We hope you'll enjoy what you find within the covers.

Doug Spencer

Addresses, other contact details, membership rates and activities may not be up-to-date.
Please check the group's website www.brimingtonandtaptonhistory.org.uk

Brimington and Tapton Local History Group

Officers and committee serving for 2011

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Other Committee members: Philip Hinchcliffe, Elizabeth Pemberton, Alan Sharp and Brian Smith.

Our meetings

All our meetings are open to non-members.

The group meets monthly during the year (except July and August) on the fourth Thursday of each month, at Brimington Church Hall, Church Street, Brimington, starting at 7.30 pm. In December the group meets on the third Thursday at 7.30 pm. These meetings usually comprise a talk by a guest speaker or a group member. One outdoor visit, usually a local guided walk, is held in June.

On the fourth Tuesday of every month (except December) a 'reminiscences' group meets at Brimington Church Hall, starting at 2 pm.

Our other activities

Our aim is to encourage people to bring along items that help record the history of Brimington and Tapton. If you have any old photographs, documents or a story to tell about the Group's area and would be willing to share these with us, we'd like to hear from you. Please contact Doug or Marion Spencer (address above) or come along to one of our reminiscence groups.

Membership

Membership of the Group costs £8 per year (there are no reductions). Benefits include reduced admission to the group's fourth Thursday meetings and free admission to the reminiscences group. In addition the Group actively collects and copies old photographs and information from the Brimington and Tapton area. Members have free access to this growing resource. All members receive a free copy of the *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany*. For further details contact the membership secretary.

The Group is affiliated to the British Association for Local History.

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Comments on articles should be addressed to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Group.

The comments expressed herein are those of the individual contributors. They are not necessarily those of the Brimington and Tapton Local History Group.

We welcome contributions to this publication, which should be with us before the end of October in each year. For details contact the Chairman or Vice-Chairman.

Front cover illustrations; Left: Peter Harrison the author of 'A Kid from Cott Lane', pictured in his younger days (Peter Harrison) centre: John K Goodall, Brimington's doctor from 1884 until his death in 1915; right: two local newspaper headlines, reporting the escape and capture of four First World War prisoners at Brimington.

OUR YEAR IN VIEW: NOTABLE EVENTS 2011

This is, necessarily, a selective view of life and events generally in the Brimington and Tapton area during 2011. It draws on media accounts, various internet resources, meeting minutes and personal information.

Buildings, Land and Businesses

Extensions and alterations to **Sainsbury's** commenced in February. An 8 February 2011 view is below, with contractors at work. Toilets, a shoe repairers and key cutters units were situated in the temporary buildings to the front, along with a large café. Extensions saw the right hand hipped roof section of the building totally demolished and replaced by a large two floor extension, which incorporates a café at first floor level. The store was closed completely from the evening of the 16 August until 24 August, in order that final alterations could be made.



About 70 additional jobs have been created alongside the increase in retail space of 20,000 sq. ft., bringing the total to nearly 60,000 sq. ft.¹

The **'Skull and Cross-bones' bridge at Tapton** (extensively covered in *Miscellany* 1 and 2) had extensive decking repairs carried out during the first half of the year. This necessitated traffic control during most of the period as only one carriageway was in use. The decking repairs continued into the late autumn of 2011, though traffic had been restored to normal working sometime previously.



The **John Street play area** (illustrated left, on 18 March 2011 from the Heywood Street entrance), reported in *Miscellany* 3 as being under threat, was sold on the instructions of the borough council, by auction, on 15 March. Described in the auction catalogue as 818 square metres, a former children's play area, with a guide price of £25,000,² it actually raised £48,000.³ Shortly after the auction the entrance from John Street was barricaded off, with the gate from Heywood Street locked. The play area has been the subject of complaints about anti-social behaviour for some years.

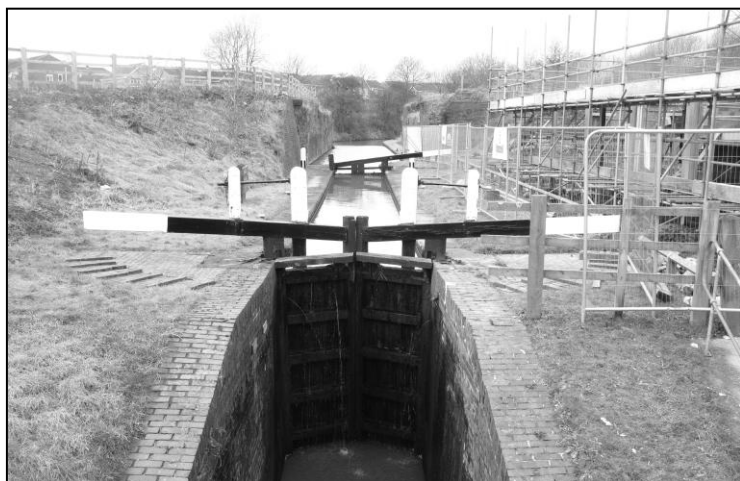
¹ *Derbyshire Times (DT)*, 1 September 2011.

² Mark Jenkinson and Son, Auction Catalogue, 15 March 2011, p. 30.

³ <http://www.markjenkinson.co.uk/auctions/tuesday-15th-march-2011/display/Former%20Heywood%20Street%20Play%20Area,%20Heywood%20Street,%20Brimington,%20Chesterfield-%7C-79#lot> last visited 18 March 2011.

It is intended that at least some if not all of the income will be spent on **Eastwood Park**,⁴ where local Brownies planted trees in the early part of 2011.⁵

The **Hollingwood Lock House** project, reported particularly in *Miscellany* 3, was completed during the year. Main contractors were Mansell Construction Services Ltd. The project has seen the lock house completely restored with a single storey extension erected. The scene is shown below, on 16 January 2011, when the steel framework of the extension was being erected.



Work on the project has been very ably chronicled in *The Cuckoo*.⁶

Unfortunately thieves stole the majority of the edging stones removed when the platforms, shown in *Miscellany* 3, were removed and levelled.⁷ These had been destined to form part of a landscaped area adjacent to the lock house and be used on construction works at Staveley Town Basin. Fortunately some have survived and have been used for these two purposes.



The ‘Hollingwood Hub’, as it is officially known, was formerly opened on 13 August 2011. The Chesterfield Canal Trust now has a permanent base at the Hollingwood Hub.

The 1892 date-stone, which was originally above the Chesterfield Tunnel, on Infirmary Road, has been incorporated into the retaining wall of what were the railway station platforms, to the left side of the canal (when viewed as the top photograph). The stone is shown, circled in its original position, in this July 1976 view.⁸

Unfortunately the canal was hit by two incidents of **lock gates being left opened**, wasting thousands of gallons of water and putting wildlife at risk. The incidents, reported in the *Derbyshire Times* in August 2011,⁹ had occurred at Blue Bank Lock and earlier at Tapton Lock.

Police were searching for a man who **stole a Severn-Trent Water plc** vehicle from the southern end of Manor Road on 29 March 2011. The man took the unlocked Ford Transit van, making his get-away despite intervention from Severn-Trent staff engaged in road repairs. The *Derbyshire Times* reported that equipment flew out of the van, some hitting other vehicles. The van ran into the back of another on

⁴ Brimington and Tapton Community Forum minutes, 7 September 2011, minute 0043.

⁵ Brimington and Tapton Community Forum minutes, 9 March 2011, minute 0077.

⁶ *The Cuckoo: the magazine of the Chesterfield Canal Trust*, winter 2010/2011, p. 8; spring and summer 2011; summer/autumn 2011, pp. 6-9.

⁷ *DT*, 14 July 2011.

⁸ For further discussion of this see *Cuckoo*, Summer/Autumn 2011, pp. 7-8.

⁹ *DT*, 25 August 2011.

Cotterhill Lane. It was later found abandoned on one of the back lanes off King Street.¹⁰ Despite the issuing of an 'e-fit' image of the man involved, no one appears to have been detained in connection with the incident.

In April 2011¹¹ it was reported that police were cracking down on the problem of **illegal motorbike use** in the Staveley area, including Brimington. Across the area 19 calls had been received in less than one week, during March, about the issue.

Also in April the ruling Conservative Group on Derbyshire County Council announced cuts in the **opening hours of 30 libraries**, including Brimington. The cuts are designed to help the council deliver £1.76m savings in the Cultural and Community Services Department.¹²

Co-incidentally 2011 saw the **40th anniversary of Brimington Library**. The Library first opened at the end of January 1971.¹³ The new premises replaced one housed above a shop (the present 'John Hinds House') on Chesterfield Road. The former premises could only stock 5,000 books. The new library was to open for 24 hours a week and was equipped with 9,000 books. The library facility is part of a much larger complex, which appears to have progressively opened during 1971. In June of that year the *Derbyshire Times* carried a feature on the new youth centre, complete with coffee bar.¹⁴ The whole of the building, which also included a clinic, education and the said youth centre, together with offices, was designed by the county council's Architect's Department to 'blend in with other new buildings.'¹⁵

1955 appears to be the date in which a county library gained its first permanent property in Brimington. In April 1954 the parish council received a letter of complaint about inadequate provision. The service was being provided by mobile library vans. In May it was reported that the county council had considered the matter and were in the process of acquiring suitable premises. By September the county council were able to advise that they had acquired the Chesterfield Road shop, with a target date for opening by April 1955.¹⁶



The official opening of **Springwell Community College's new buildings** occurred in the summer of 2011. Part of the impressive array of buildings, described as 'pods', are illustrated, left, at the opening ceremony on 15 July 2011.¹⁷ The buildings had been fully in use from November 2010.¹⁸ The ceremony was performed jointly between Derbyshire County Councillors Walter Burrows (Brimington Division) and John

¹⁰ Information in this paragraph from *DT*, 14 April 2011.

¹¹ *DT*, 14 April 2011 and Brimington and Tapton Community Forum minutes, 9 March 2011, minute 0073.

¹² *DT*, 21 April 2011.

¹³ *DT*, 29 January 1971, from which the majority of this paragraph is sourced.

¹⁴ *DT*, 4 June 1971.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁶ This paragraph sourced from minutes of Brimington Parish Council, Derbyshire Record Office (DRO) D177 A/PC 5, meetings of 13 April, 11 May and 14 September 1954.

¹⁷ For a report on the opening see *DT*, 8 September 2011. Information in this section, unless referenced is from personal recollections.

¹⁸ 'Springwell Community College: Welcome to our website and to our college', [online], last visited 24 July 2011 at URL: http://www.scs-online.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=61&Itemid=20&Itemid=18.

Williams (Staveley South Division). They have been associated with the school and its predecessors for many years.

The former Springwell Community School's site is on that of the former Middlecroft Secondary School, whose buildings had largely dated from the 1960s. The new building has been constructed by Bowmer and Kirkland as part of the former Labour government's 'Building Schools for the Future' programme. Springwell Community College is a successor to the secondary education element of the former Brimington Central Board Schools, on Devonshire Street.

Hollingwood Senior Girls' school had opened on 8 January 1941, transferring from the Devonshire Street site.¹⁹ Brimington Boys' school moved from the same site to Springvale Road in June 1957.²⁰ In 1977 the two schools amalgamated, initially being known as Brimington/Hollingwood School – on a split site, with a lower school at Hollingwood, the upper school being at Springvale Road.²¹ The school soon became known as Westwood School.

With falling school roles, the county council launched, in 1986, a highly controversial review of post-primary education in north eastern Derbyshire.²² This ultimately saw the closure of a number of schools in the district, including Tapton. Though Tapton figured in the council's plans for Chesterfield; Westwood, Netherthorpe and Middlecroft Schools were grouped in proposals for Brimington and Staveley. Netherthorpe and Westwood Schools were both to close, with a new school established – based on the Middlecroft site. A lower school would be established on the site of Westwood School's Hollingwood lower site (the original Hollingwood Girls') as an interim measure until, 'in the long term', Middlecroft would be developed to become the sole site.²³ This proposal was somewhat derailed (at least from the Staveley end) when Netherthorpe School became 'grant maintained' in 1990, removing it from county council control.²⁴

The proposal to close Westwood did, however, hold firm. From 1991²⁵ a new Springwell School was established on the site of the former Middlecroft Secondary School. As a temporary measure an upper school site was established on the former Westwood Upper site (i.e. the original Brimington Boys'). This arrangement was made so as not to affect pupils studying for exams there, with a potentially upsetting move. This upper school closed in summer 1992 and was subsequently demolished.²⁶ The Hollingwood buildings were also demolished following closure. Brimington Boys' is now the site of Brimington Junior School and some residential development, whilst Hollingwood Girls' is given over entirely to housing, excepting that the playing fields largely remain.

The Old Taptonians continue to meet. Their autumn 2011 reunion marked the 80th anniversary of **Tapton School's** opening on 15 June, 1931. A sadder occasion was also marked; that of the school's closing 20 years previously.²⁷

A tree was deliberately hacked in half at the **Peace Gardens, Tapton Park**, in the autumn of 2011.²⁸ The perpetrators of this act do not appear to have been apprehended. The tree was beyond rescue.

¹⁹ *Brimington/Hollingwood School, [prospectus]*, (1977), p. 3. *DT*, 20 December 1940. Hollingwood also took senior girls from Barrow Hill school.

²⁰ *DT*, 21 June 1957.

²¹ *Brimington/Hollingwood School, [prospectus]*, (1977), p. 3.

²² Derbyshire County Council, *Developing Education for Everyone's Benefit: review of post-primary education in the north-east of Derbyshire*, (1986).

²³ *ibid.* p. 44.

²⁴ W.E. Godfrey and C.J.G Bishop, *A history of Netherthorpe School, Staveley*, (1997), p. 40.

²⁵ *Springwell Community School Prospectus, 1998-1999*, (1997), p. 4.

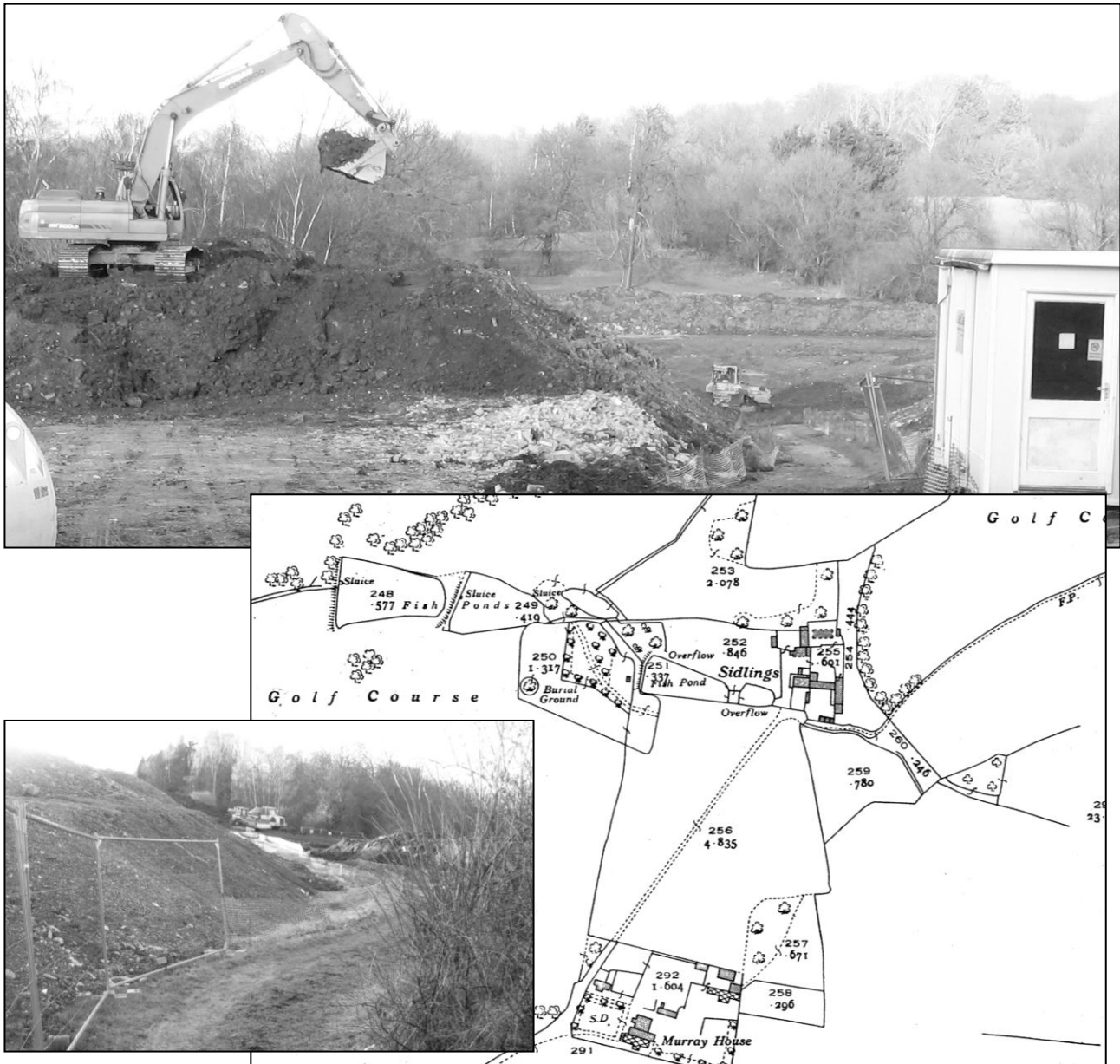
²⁶ Personal information and information from Alan Sharp, July 2011.

²⁷ This paragraph sourced from *DT*, 17 November 2011.

²⁸ *DT*, 6 October 2011.

At **Tapton Golf Course** plans for the building of a driving range, approved during 2010 (and briefly reported in *Miscellany* 3), were commenced during 2011. The site chosen was bisected by Bridleway number 14 – which took a route down a valley, through the site. In the bottom of this valley was formerly ‘The Sidlings’, not far from the Club House.

The Sidlings was possibly an 18th century farmhouse, complete with the usual outbuildings. There is a photograph of the premises in Roy Cooper’s *Book of Chesterfield*.²⁹ The farm and associated land had been purchased by Rosa Markham in December 1895.³⁰ It had succumbed as part of a two and a half years project to create a pitch and putt course, which opened in May 1971.³¹



Our photograph, (top), shows the operations from the bridleway at the rear of the Club House (looking north), on 28 January 2011. The tracked bulldozer, at the bottom of the hill, is levelling and compacting dirt brought via dumper trucks, filled from the excavator, to the left. The site of The Sidlings is to the right of the bulldozer. Above, left, is the situation, at ground level and on the same date, looking west.

²⁹ R. Cooper, *The book of Chesterfield*, (1977), p. 126.

³⁰ Chesterfield Borough Council, Tapton House and estate, deeds, box 77, packets 1-6.

³¹ *Star*, 3 May 1971.

The map is a reduced scale extract from the 1938, 25-inch Ordnance Survey of the area.³² Diversion of the bridleway (number 14) was the subject of a hearing at Chesterfield Town Hall on 12 July 2011.³³ By the end of 2011 the path had still to be diverted. This was despite permission having been gained to do so.³⁴ This resulted in walkers and riders having, perhaps, the surreal experience of walking along the former level, whilst being surrounded by the results of importation, compacting operations and overburden, in the middle of a golf course. There was a complaint in the *Derbyshire Times* during September 2011³⁵ that the **Markham family burial ground** nearby (and marked on the map extract) had become neglected. There are, apparently, plans to enhance this area.

The **Chesterfield Waterside** development continues to make the headlines, but as yet no bricks have been laid excepting creation of the basin described in *Miscellany 2*.³⁶ In January we were told that the 'project bucks the trend' and that it was 'raring to go in 2011,' according to Peter Swallow, one of the directors of Urbo Regeneration, the developer behind the 60-acre project. A January 2011 *Derbyshire Times* report³⁷ carried some impressive images produced by 'innovative architects OMI', including ones for 'Station Place' and 'Basin Square'. In July 2011³⁸ a two page spread, in the same newspaper, described how the development's first phase was expected to be complete by 2023. The whole is now 'officially listed as the 50th largest regeneration project in the UK.'³⁹

There was good news generally when the borough council's partnership approach to regeneration was awarded a highly commended prize in the national 2011 Regeneration and Renewal Awards. The award recognised the work that had gone into regeneration of the A61/River Rother corridor. This includes Chesterfield Waterside, the B2Net Stadium, Tesco Extra, Casa Hotel and the BMW and Mini showrooms opened on part of the old Pearson's Pottery site in 2011. Chesterfield came second only to the massive Olympic Park project, worth some £3 billion, whilst the Chesterfield schemes equate to £333 million.⁴⁰



The **Arnold Laver 'Timber World' premises**, Brimington Road, Tapton (above) were demolished in 2011. They had been abandoned during 2010. The Timber World outlet had been under threat since 2008, when it was reported in *DIY Week* that 'the company's directors were consulting employees and

³² Ordnance Survey, 25-inch, edition of 1938, Derbyshire Sheet, XXV.3.

³³ *DT*, 9 June 2011.

³⁴ I am grateful to County Councillor Walter Burrows for this information.

³⁵ *DT*, 1 September 2011.

³⁶ *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany*, number 2, (2010), p. 3.

³⁷ *DT*, 27 January 2011.

³⁸ *DT*, 14 July 2011.

³⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁰ *DT*, 6 October 2011.

their representatives about the closure and investigating alternatives, including redeployment of staff to other branches'.⁴¹ The premises, which form part of the Waterside regeneration project, are pictured on 28 January 2011. Urbo is a company formed by the regeneration arm of local firms Bolsterstone and Arnold Laver and the Waterside development is being carried out in partnership with Chesterfield Borough Council. After internal stripping, demolition work commenced during the summer of 2011.⁴²

The Brimington Conservation Area was reviewed during the year. A draft *Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan* was published by the borough council in July 2011. The comprehensive document, numbering some 64 pages with copious illustrations, a historical survey, along with discussion of architectural and townscape features, was discussed by the Brimington and Tapton Community Forum at its meeting on 7 September 2011.⁴³ The conservation area roughly covers the village centre.

Whilst this column will not routinely report on every shopping development in the area, it is worth recording that a **butcher's shop** opened on Heywood Street during 2011.⁴⁴ The village has been without a dedicated butcher for some years.

Retrospective planning permission was sought in June 2011 for shop-front alterations to **26-28 High Street** and retention of roller shutter, for Mr and Mrs J Birdi.⁴⁵

'A private hamlet of 8 homes' at **Plover Hill Farm**, was advertised for sale in October 2011.⁴⁶ A planning application for construction of a detached garage block, advertised as it 'affected the setting of a listed building,' was submitted in October 2011.⁴⁷



The future of the **Coach House at Tapton Grove** is assured. The planning and other issues we reported in previous editions of *Miscellany*⁴⁸ having apparently been resolved. At the close of December 2011 conversion and extension was well advanced, with fit-out to 'second fix' level in progress on the former coach house. Seen above, in a Boxing Day 2011 photograph, the original coach-house has been extended with a linked block (the building with the scaffolding around it) added. Some outbuildings have also been restored as part of the works.

There has been some rethinking on the **Local Development Framework (L.D.F.)**, originally reported in *Miscellany* 2.⁴⁹ The Core Development Strategy, which forms part of the L.D.F., identifies broad areas suitable for development and has been revised. It does not now include blocks of land adjacent to

⁴¹ 'No decision yet on Arnold Laver Chesterfield closure', *DIY Week*, 29 July 2008, [on-line] last visited at URL: <http://www.diyweek.net/news/news.asp?id=11447>.

⁴² For a picture of the demolition see *DT*, 15 September 2011.

⁴³ Brimington and Tapton Community Forum, minutes, 7 September 2011, minute 0036.

⁴⁴ *DT*, 8 September 2011 carried a planning application (CHE/11/00540/COU) for change of use from tattoo studio to butcher's shop, at 21 High Street, for Mr Craig Martin.

⁴⁵ *DT*, 23 June 2011. Planning application CHE/11/00188/RET.

⁴⁶ See also *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany*, number 3, (2011), p. 6

⁴⁷ *DT*, 20 October 2011. The planning application number is CHE/11/00543/FUL.

⁴⁸ *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany*, number 3, pp. 7-8; number 2, p. 9, number 1, p. 6. The later has a picture of the largely derelict building.

⁴⁹ *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany*, number 2, p. 6.

Manor Road.⁵⁰ The parish council also met with officers from the Borough Council during the year.⁵¹ A consultation exercise on the draft Core Strategy starts in February 2012 for six weeks.⁵²

Organisations and People

The death of sitting parish councillor for south ward, **Michael (Mick) Francis**, occurred in December 2010.⁵³ Mick had been elected as a Liberal Democrat Councillor but later joined the Labour Party.



In April 2011 **Bill Casterton** retired as Clerk to Brimington Parish Council. Mr Casterton (pictured left) had been Clerk to the Council since 1988. He lives at Far Press, Old Tupton. A function was held at Brimington Community Centre on 19 April 2011 to mark the event,⁵⁴ where this photograph, with parish council Chair, Cllr Christine Brown, was taken.

Mr **Clarence Percival Payne** of Calow died in the early summer of 2011.⁵⁵ Mr Payne's uncle⁵⁶ was 'Ten Goal' Payne (covered in *Miscellany* 3⁵⁷). Mr Payne had campaigned over a long period for some recognition for his uncle's record breaking exploits.

The **marriage of Prince William and Kate Middleton** (who were conferred the title The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge) on 29 April 2011, brought muted celebrations in the area. There were no reported street-parties in Brimington or Tupton. The day had been declared a public holiday, most people opting to watch the ceremony at home, on television.

Liam Pitchford, who we reported on in *Miscellany* 3, continues to make the sporting headlines. In March 2011 it was reported that Brimington resident Liam 'battled his way to the under 21 table tennis title at the English championship staged in Sheffield. Liam was also awarded the Victor Barna Award for his 2010 Commonwealth Games performance (see *Miscellany* 3 page 12). His all round form at the same event was rewarded by British Olympic Association's Table Tennis Athlete of the year for 2010/11. Liam went on to be named sportsperson of the year at the autumn Derbyshire Sports Awards.⁵⁸ He is also confirmed as England's number one table tennis player.⁵⁹ Liam is turning his attention to the 2012 Olympics, in London.⁶⁰

Dorothy Thorneycroft reached the grand old age of 106 in December 2011. Mrs Thorneycroft was born in Wharf Lane, Chesterfield, in 1905. She has lived in the Spinney Hop care home at Brimington for the last 6 years.⁶¹

The death of Mrs **Margaret Priest** (71) of the **Brimington Equestrian Centre**, Manor Road, was reported in March 2011.⁶² Mrs Priest had opened the centre in 1987. Running it as a family business, the

⁵⁰ Brimington and Tupton Community Forum, minutes, 25 May 2011, minute 0008.

⁵¹ *ibid.*

⁵² *Our Town*, number 188, December 2011, p. 4.

⁵³ Obituary in *DT*, 6 January 2011. Report of tribute at parish council meeting, *DT*, 27 January 2011.

⁵⁴ See also *DT* 16 June 2011.

⁵⁵ *DT*, 30 June 2011.

⁵⁶ *DT*, 20 November 2000.

⁵⁷ E. Pemberton, 'Some local sports personalities', *Brimington and Tupton Miscellany*, number 3, p. 26.

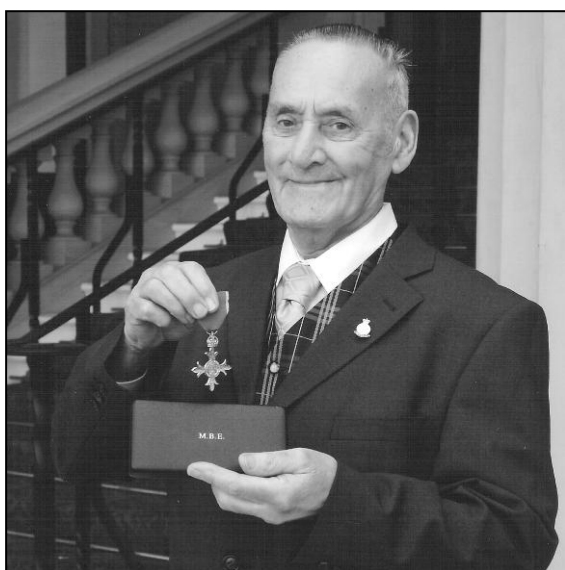
⁵⁸ *DT*, 17 November 2011.

⁵⁹ *DT*, 3 November 2011.

⁶⁰ Information in this paragraph from *DT*, 10 March 2011.

⁶¹ This paragraph sourced from *DT*, 8 December 2011.

centre has grown to become a popular venue with riding lessons, livery and tack shop, National Vocational Qualification training, equine health and safety training. The centre now boasts a 60m x 20m all weather floodlit arena, show jumps, cross country course, lecture room and refreshment facilities.⁶³



Jim Pullen, MBE (pictured left) died in July 2011, aged 84. Jim, a former railwayman, had worked at Chesterfield Central station among other former Great Central premises. He was well-known for wearing his red Parachute Regiment beret (for whom he served for six years) whilst in railway service. Born in Portsmouth and a resident of the area for 82 years, he had worked for British Railways for 37 years.

Jim received his MBE in 2006 for charity work, spanning some 40 years. He is seen here, with his award, at Buckingham Palace.

Jim was frequently to be seen in Chesterfield, collecting on Elder Way, where a plaque commemorating his work is displayed.⁶⁴

Violet Markham described as ‘a former Chesterfield Mayor, major government mover and shaker, campaigner for social reform’, was amongst 12 ‘important Derbyshire people’ short-listed for the second tranche of Derbyshire County Council’s Blue Plaque scheme, in June 2011.⁶⁵ Markham was born at Brimington Hall in 1872, living at Tapton House for some period.⁶⁶ She died in 1959.⁶⁷ A feature on her was presented in the *Chesterfield Advertiser* and *Derbyshire Times* in early August.⁶⁸

Markham did not make the list of worthies for Blue Plaques, but fellow Tapton House resident **George Stephenson**, perhaps unsurprisingly, did. A plaque was unveiled by county council Leader Andrew Lewer and Cliff Lea from the North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeological Society, at Chesterfield Station, in October 2011.⁶⁹



BBC Radio 4’s ‘Book of Week’, which concluded on 5 August 2011, featured **Lynn Knight’s memoir *Lemon Sherbet and Dolly Blue: the Story of an Accidental Family***. Lynn Knight is pictured left. The book, published on 1 August 2011 by Atlantic Books,⁷⁰ is set mainly in the Wheeldon Mill area of Brimington. It is probably as well to quote from the author’s own website for a concise summary.

‘150 Station Road, Wheeldon Mill - a short stride across the Chesterfield Canal in the heart of Derbyshire - was home to the Nash family and their corner shop, which served a small mining community with everything from Brasso and Dolly Blue to cheap dress rings and bright sugary sweets.

⁶² DT, 31 March 2011.

⁶³ [On-line] last visited at URL: <http://www.brimingtonequestriancentre.com.s>

⁶⁴ DT, 4 August 2011.

⁶⁵ DT, 23 June 2011.

⁶⁶ V. Markham, *Return Passage*, (1953), p. 1.

⁶⁷ T. Hallam, *The Family Markham*, (2006), p. 78.

⁶⁸ DT, 4 August 2011; *Chesterfield Advertiser*, 5 August 2011.

⁶⁹ North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeological Society, *Newsletter*, number 44, November 2011, p. 11 and DT, 20 October 2011.

⁷⁰ ISBN 978 184887 416 9.

But just as this was no ordinary home, theirs was no ordinary family. Lynn Knight tells the remarkable story of the three adoptions within it: of her great-grandfather, a fairground boy, given away when his parents left for America in 1865; of her great-aunt, rescued from an Industrial School in 1909; and of her mother, adopted as a baby in 1930 and brought to Chesterfield from London.

*Full of light, life and colour, spanning three generations and two world wars, this memoir weaves a rich portrait of a community and of family love and loyalty regardless of blood ties.*⁷¹

Lynn Knight is Derbyshire born, but currently lives in London. She describes herself thus:

'A writer, editor and independent lecturer, I teach literature by women writers from earlier periods, and life-writing and am particularly interested in the larger narratives behind ordinary lives.

*I teach at London's City Lit and have run study days and workshops at the Women's Library, London Metropolitan University, and the City University. I have lectured at the V&A, given talks at festivals and other venues, and appeared on radio. I have also written book reviews and occasional journalism. I am a former editorial director of Virago.*⁷²

In addition to *Lemon Sherbet...*, Lynn Knight has written a biography of Clarice Cliffe (published by Bloomsbury Books in 2005). She has also edited two collections of short stories – *Dangerous Calm: The Selected Stories of Elizabeth Taylor* (Virago 1995) and *The Secret Woman: Classic Women's Short Stories* (Virago 1993; reissued 2000) and abridged *The Diaries of Beatrice Webb* (Virago & LSE 2000).⁷³

Of a more macabre nature was news in the *Derbyshire Times* that a former Brimington resident, **Andrew Castle**, had tried to electrocute his wife at their home in Blackpool, with a 'home-made device', in March 2011.⁷⁴ Mr Castle formerly lived on the Pondwell Drive estate, but had moved from the district some years ago.

Alan Francis, of Wayside, Brimington, was awarded the Royal Humane Society award at a ceremony in the autumn of 2011. Mr Francis had rescued a man who had fallen into the Chesterfield Canal, at Bilby Lane, in July 2010.⁷⁵

The **Brimington Branch of the National Association of Women's Clubs** celebrated its 21st anniversary year, commencing in September 2011.⁷⁶ The group meets regularly at Brimington Community Centre.

Kevin Laming, was presented with a certificate in the autumn of 2011, marking his 40 years service as a preacher for the Methodist Church. He became a fully accredited preacher in 1971. He is currently mentoring two groups of local preachers. Mr Laming's certificate is signed by the president and vice-president of the Methodist Church.⁷⁷

Mike Thorpe's service to Brimington Parish Church was recognised by the presentation of the Bishop's Badge, at a service in Derby Cathedral on Sunday 25 September. Mike has been a Church Warden, Parochial Church Council member, Deanery Synod Representative and chorister, amongst his many roles within the wider Brimington community.⁷⁸

⁷¹ [On-line] last visited 11 August 2011 at URL: <http://www.lynnknight.co.uk/pp004.shtml>.

⁷² [On-line] last visited 11 August 2011 at URL: <http://www.lynnknight.co.uk/about.shtml>.

⁷³ *ibid.*

⁷⁴ *DT*, 14 July 2011.

⁷⁵ *DT*, 20 October 2011.

⁷⁶ *DT*, 29 September 2011.

⁷⁷ *DT*, 3 November 2011.

⁷⁸ *Celebrate and Share*, September 2011, p.8.

The Church

In *Miscellany* 3, we looked at possible plans to reorganise the Church of England's Mission and Ministry Area (M.M.A.). During 2011 the reorganisation was resolved.

As we reported, Brimington Parish, the Bolsover and Staveley Deanery had to reduce clergy numbers. A decision was made that when someone left from the M.M.A. 9 (Brimington, Calow, Sutton-cum-Duckmanton and Bolsover) that they would not be replaced. The current Archdeacon of Chesterfield met with churchwardens and clergy in 2010 to discuss this. A further meeting was held with representatives from Brimington, Calow, Sutton-cum-Duckmanton and Bolsover (churchwardens, current clergy and lay readers), to discuss how to move forward.



The proposal, at the time, was that Brimington and Calow would become a united benefice, as would Bolsover and Sutton-cum-Duckmanton. The finer details were not decided at that time.

Subsequently, the Archdeacon undertook further research, deciding that it would be better if the M.M.A. stayed as it was. This is largely due to the total population across the parishes. Once agreement was sought at Diocesan level the church was then able to advertise for a new Rector.⁷⁹

As a consequence the **new Rector for Brimington – the Revd. Daniel Benedict Cooke** – was inducted on Tuesday 26 July 2011, by the Bishop of Derby. The Revd. Cooke, pictured left (photograph by Doug Spencer), was ordained three years previously, before serving his curacy at Middlesborough. Brimington is his first parish. He is married with two young children.⁸⁰

Politics

The Labour Party took control of Chesterfield Borough Council from the Liberal Democrats at the **local elections on 6 May 2011**. Brimington North borough councillor, John Burrows, is the new Leader of the council, with fellow ward councillor, Terry Gilby, as his deputy. This ward returns two borough councillors. Labour took all three of Brimington South Ward's seats. Labour had previously won one of the ward's seats at a by-election. The other two were gained from the Liberal Democrats. On the borough council the Labour Party holds 34 seats to the Liberal Democrats 14; Labour gaining 23 seats from the Lib. Dems. Generally results were poor for the Liberal Democrats across England.

Parish wise, electors voted for an entire Labour council, across both North and South Wards.

A referendum on a proposed change to the voting system in parliamentary elections was held on the same day. Nationally this resulted in no change to the existing 'first past the post' system.

⁷⁹ We gratefully acknowledge the contribution to this and the proceeding paragraphs in this section by Catherine Hutchinson, Churchwarden, St Michael & All Angels.

⁸⁰ Biographical details from *Celebrate and Share*, August 2011, p. 4.

Transport

The need for the county council to reduce expenditure amounting to £90m by 2015, following reductions in the block grant from central government,⁸¹ saw a number of **local bus services** reviewed.

Locally, service 33 ‘Orbital bus’, which took a route through Brimington, was under the spotlight. In January 2011 a resident from Walton wrote a letter to the *Derbyshire Times* appealing for the service to be maintained.⁸² A petition had been circulating in Brimington for some months previous.

2011, consequently, saw a number of bus service revisions in the area. A new service 78 began operation from Monday 28 March.⁸³ Operated by K. & H. Doyle Ltd, of Meadow Lane Industrial Estate, Alfreton, this new service (78) runs between Hartington (Staveley), Chesterfield and the Royal Hospital, in the daytime, Mondays to Saturdays. In doing so it serves Station Road – a precursor for the withdrawal of the orbital service 33, which actually occurred on Saturday 23 July 2011.



Pictured above, on Station Road, is the last journey of the Chesterfield-Walton-Ashgate-Holme Hall-Newbold-Whittington Moor-Brimington-Calow-Chesterfield route of the **service 33**. This had commenced in Chesterfield at 1603 hours and was due back there at 1700. A service also operated in the other direction, with some short journeys on Saturdays.

The actual last working of the 33 was timetabled to be the return working of this vehicle – a 1726 Chesterfield departure to Brimington, Hall Road. This would then have formed a 1745 departure from Pondwell Corner to Chesterfield. The bus turned up at Hall Road on time, with no passengers on board. Nor did it stop – its digital destination indicating that it was not on service. Consequently there was no

⁸¹ *DT*, 27 January 2011.

⁸² *DT*, 20 January 2011.

⁸³ [On-line] last visited 10 May 2011 at URL:

http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/transport_roads/public_transport/news_notices/recent_bus_changes/default.asp.

working from Brimington to Chesterfield. It was fortunate that no one, at least at the Pondwell Drive bus stop, was waiting to catch the last timetabled 33 service! The service had been operated by TM Travel on contract to the county council. TM Travel had mainly used easy access low-floor buses, such as the one pictured, complete with 'Orbital link 33' branding.

Without the County Council contracted service 78 the western end of Station Road would not have received a bus service, following the 33's withdrawal.

Electrification of the Midland Main Line seems to take a periodic twist. It was on the back-burner, following an announcement in March 2011 by the then Transport Minister Philip Hammond. Until the route of High Speed 2 (HS2), phase two, which is scheduled to serve the East Midlands and Sheffield, is determined the government felt there would be little point in making plans for electrification of the line through our area.⁸⁴ Then, in September 2011, Network Rail published its 'Initial Industry Plan', setting out electrification of the MML as one of the enhancement projects required in the period from 2014-2019.⁸⁵ This, though, is only the first public examination of potential plans, and there is no identified funding.

Meanwhile, according to the county Chamber of Trade, there is widespread support from the business community for the extension of HS2.⁸⁶ This would see a planned London to Birmingham high-speed line (an entirely new railway) extended northwards in two routes. There would be a direct line to Manchester and another running through the East Midlands and South Yorkshire to Leeds.⁸⁷

Platform 3, at Chesterfield Railway Station, was commissioned from the commencement of the December 2010 timetable change (see *Miscellany* 3, page 13).

The **Royal Air Force's Red Arrows** display team passed over Brimington on the afternoon of Friday 2 September 2011. They were on their way to perform at the Chatsworth Country Fair. This was the first time they had performed a public display since the unfortunate crash of one of their pilots at an air show towards the end of August.

Philip Cousins.

Sources are referenced, otherwise remarks are personal observation. Unless stated, photographs are by Philip Cousins.

OUR YEAR IN VIEW: GROUP EVENTS

Talks Programme for 2011

A number of ex railwaymen joined us for the first talk of the year, when Ken Grainger took us on an illustrated journey from Sheffield Victoria Station to Chesterfield Central Station, on the old 'Derbyshire Lines' of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway. His January 2011 presentation showed us many unique photographs of the route, stations and locomotives that worked on it.

The joint presenters of our February talk – Peter Harrison and Philip Cousins – made the *Derbyshire Times*⁸⁸ with an article on their chosen subject; 'Life in Wartime Brimington'. Peter recounted his memories of life in the village during the Second World War. This culminated in his first-hand account

⁸⁴ *Nottingham Post*, 11 March 2011, [on-line] last visited 24 March 2011 at <http://www.thisisnottingham.co.uk/news/Electric-rail-decision-delay/article-3319505-detail/article.html>.

⁸⁵ *Rail*, October 19 – November 1 2011, pp. 6-7.

⁸⁶ *DT*, 5 August 2011.

⁸⁷ The go-ahead for HS2 to Birmingham was announced by the Transport Secretary on 10 January 2012. She also announced the intention to build the line to Manchester and West Yorkshire and have this operational by 2033.

⁸⁸ *DT*, 10 March 2011

of the night incendiary bombs were dropped on the village in August 1942. Philip followed this up with the official account, based on a file in The National Archive (TNA).

The *Derbyshire Times* reproduced a map plotting the site of the bombs, reconstructed from Peter's reminiscences and the TNA file, but unfortunately the newspaper transposed it. Anyone wanting to identify the sites needed a mirror! We intend to present an article on the bombing in a future *Miscellany*.

Philip Riden, from the University of Nottingham, presented an entirely new talk to us in March. This plotted trade on the Chesterfield Canal, presenting new research aiming to help measure the changes that the canal brought to the local economy. This was not a standard history of the canal. Instead this talk broke new ground following extensive and original research into what types of goods the canal carried, where they went to and how effective the canal was as a commercial enterprise.

We welcomed back David Templemen in April for his account of 'Arabella Stuart – the Queen that never was'. Arabella was the grand-daughter of Bess of Hardwick. David's talk touched on relationships within the royal court and between Bess and Arabella. In doing so he helped uncover some of what we might call the 'goings on' and the rivalries of the time.

Janet Murphy returned to tell us about 'The black and white buildings of Chesterfield', in May. She recommended we look up above the shop and public house fronts to examine the upper exteriors of many of Chesterfield's black and white buildings, most dating from the early to mid 20th century. Janet outlined the history of some of the buildings and also highlighted some of the losses through demolition.

Our outdoor walk in June was blessed with good weather. Philip Cousins took us around the outside of Tapton House, where stories about George Stephenson's association with the property were recounted. Philip showed us where the original Georgian house had been extended (it's easy to tell if you know where to look!) and also spoke about some of the other families who have lived at Tapton.

Lyn Pardo talked about Spital at our September meeting. She explained about the many features of this community, including the leper hospital, Spital Mission, Spital House and the burial ground. The latter was established in the 1850s by the Chesterfield and Tapton Burial Board. Lyn described a number of monuments and graves within the cemetery.

Ann Hodson made a very welcome return to us for our October talk; 'Tin Town – Birchinlee'. This was the story of the community created by the Derwent Valley Water Board to house workers and their families employed on the construction of the Howden and Derwent Dams. This village of tin huts (hence the nickname 'Tin Town') housed 250 to 500 people between 1901 and 1914.

The creation of the modern community of Hollingwood was the subject of November's talk. Here our Vice-Chairman (Philip Cousins) had assembled a history not only of the Hollingwood estate's construction in the 1920s, but also of the body responsible (the Industrial Housing Association for the Staveley Coal and Iron Company) and of the characters involved. Looming high was Charles Paxton Markham, who was involved in a battle with the Chesterfield Rural District Council (R.D.C.). This is the time during which Markham called the R.D.C. members a lot of old farmers, demanding that they should be sacked.

Our final meeting of the year saw our usual annual general meeting. This year, instead of short presentations by members, we were able to view part of Fred Wood's slide talk on Staveley. This has been recreated by Philip Cousins, working with Fred. Philip introduced the slides, with Fred joining in to supplement information. We also staged a mini exhibition on the area's farms.

I am pleased that our programme continues to entertain and inform those present. This year we have had two talks which have been premiered at our meetings (those in March and November). Quality has continued to be excellent, along with attendance. We've visited a historic house within our group's boundary, heard about a tin town, a railway, a potential queen, war-time memories, communities nearby and buildings in Chesterfield. All-in-all a varied and entertaining programme. My thanks to all our speakers and our listeners too.

Janet Walmsley.

Exhibitions



We again staged an exhibition in the Church Hall (by kind permission of the Church) on the day of the village market. Our theme for 2011 was Brimington's well-dressings.

Our band of volunteers did some sterling work in mounting photographs of the well dressings, which were held in the village from 1978 to 1995. One of our committee members, Brian Smith, is pictured with our Secretary (Janet Walmsley), making final arrangements to the second of our displays featuring 'then and now' photographs of Brimington and Tipton, prepared by Brian.

The exhibition on well-dressings was then held in Brimington Library during September. Our thanks to library staff for allowing the display to be staged there.

A brief history of the well dressings is perhaps appropriate here, pending a fuller review. The wells were dressed by Brimington Guides and Brownies. The chosen position was in a space created on the site of the former National School, fronting Church Street. Although the dressings were not on the actual site of a well, there were a multiplicity of wells and pumps in the area. For an example of just one such well discovered nearby, in 2009, see *Miscellany* 2.⁸⁹ In 1986 and 1987 the well dressing was positioned in the Church-yard, as the gardens created on the old school site had been controversially destroyed to enable a housing association refurbishment of the nearby cottages. In 1988 the dressings were transferred to a new Jubilee Gardens – part of what has become regarded as 'the village green'. As stated, the dressing was last staged in 1995.⁹⁰

Photographs and report: Philip Cousins

Reminiscences Group

Our fourth Tuesday afternoon monthly reminiscences group continues. Our main aim is to work on gathering information (personal memories, photographs, and the written word). We work to bring this together and collate it.

⁸⁹ *Brimington and Tipton Miscellany*, number 2, page 8.

⁹⁰ Information regarding the well-dressings from Mrs D. Cousins, June 2011.



A picture tells a thousand words. This photograph, a scan of which is part of our collection, shows a young Geoff Mellor (right), with Alec Creswick senior, in about 1939/40. The Creswicks were at Grove Farm for many years. By the time this photograph was taken Alec Creswick senior lived at 61 Station Road ('The Gravels'), where this photograph was taken. His son, Alec Creswick (junior), farmed from Grove Farm. Peter Harrison refers to the Creswick's land and orchard extensively in his 'Kid from Cott. Lane', which we present from the next page. Without photographs like the one above we couldn't put a face to Alec Creswick. (Collection Brimington and Tapton Local History Group, courtesy G. Mellor).

We now hold quite a large collection of photographs, which we catalogue. Some of these are originals. We have visitors who bring in information and photographs which we are able to scan and to add to our databases. We are currently working to make this information and resource more accessible to our members. We are extremely grateful to those who loan photographs for copying or present with us originals. We are also grateful for permission to reproduce these photographs, some of which appear in this edition of *Miscellany*.

We hold information on local servicemen who lost their lives in the First and Second World Wars. We have been able to help several people with their own family history research in this and other areas.

Several members have jotted down their memories, which we have been able to type up. As time goes by we hope to edit these for presentation in *Miscellany*. These memories are valuable in preserving our living history for others to enjoy. You can see an example of one memory, albeit recorded sometime before we started our work, in the article on the capture of escaped prisoners of the First World War, from page 61, in this edition.

Each year the Tuesday reminiscences group is mainly responsible for putting together an exhibition at the Village Market and in Brimington Library. This year's was entitled 'Brimington Well Dressings', which is reported on above.

Our ongoing project from the autumn of 2011 is farms and farmers in Brimington and Tapton. We displayed some of the information gathered at our December 2011 meeting. As part of this we hope to interview some local farming families so we can better understand the role they had in shaping our community's past and present.

Some members work on their own research and are always available to help others. We will always be pleased to see anybody who would like to come and share your memories, photographs or documents with us. Some months we just sit and chat, over a cuppa and a biscuit, about different happenings or times in the life of the village. So, there is no pressure to undertake detailed research. If you just fancy telling us about your own reminiscences, pop along.

If you would like to join us on the fourth Tuesday of the month (with the exception of December), at 2 pm in the Church Hall, please just come along. Alternatively, for further information please contact Marion Spencer at the address given inside the front cover.

Marion Spencer

'A KID FROM COTT. LANE' – GROWING UP IN BRIMINGTON DURING THE 1930s AND THE WAR YEARS

Peter Harrison (edited by Philip Cousins)

Foreword

Peter Harrison presented an illustrated talk, entitled 'A kid from Cott. Lane', at the April 2009 meeting of the Brimington and Tapton Local History Group. The group were able to record that talk. Thanks to Peter's efforts his talk has been transcribed, with editing for publication here undertaken by Philip Cousins. Illustrations, unless credited, are either taken by Peter Harrison or sourced from his own collection.

Introduction

These memories are nearly all about growing up in Brimington, more especially growing up in Cotterhill Lane. And here is the difference. If anybody grew up in Cotterhill Lane, they would have lived in a house with no running hot water, no bathrooms and with all the toilets outside. Yet, in some other parts of Brimington, there were brand new houses with all modern facilities. So, depending on where you lived and the type of house you lived in, you might have entirely different views of the time.

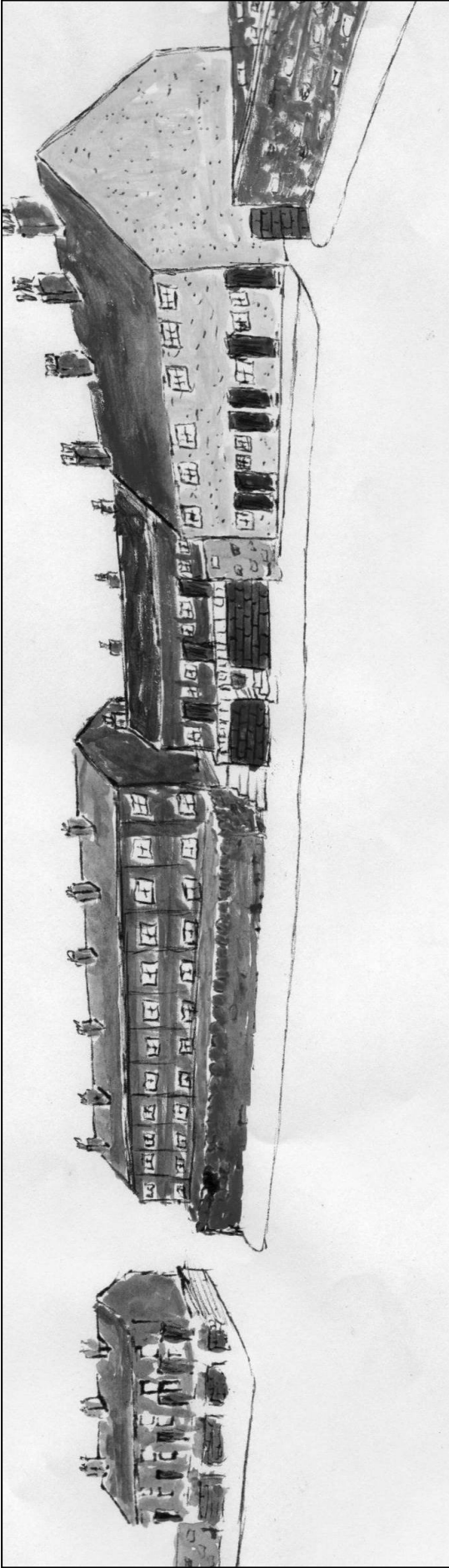
I will start by describing what Cotterhill Lane was like in the 1930s and describe my family background, because in the 1930s I spent more time with my brothers (when not in school) until the Second World War started.

Cotterhill Lane and my Family

Cotterhill Lane in the 1930s did not look anything like it does today. For those who don't know its whereabouts, it is the road from the Memorial Gates fronting Broom Gardens, on Manor Road, running down-hill, to opposite the Hall Road Methodist Church. The map on page 34 will help you locate it and some of the areas described in this account.

As you went up Cotterhill Lane, from the village centre end, in the 1930s, on the left hand side there was a wall all the way from top to bottom. The first third was the boundary wall of Brimington Hall, and then two thirds enclosed Sharman's field. Sharman's farmhouse was opposite Manor Avenue. This house was the only building with anyone living in it situated in the large 'roundabout' of Cotterhill Lane, Manor Road, Pondwell Corner and Back Street (as we used to call Hall Road). There were no houses up the left hand side of Cotterhill Lane at all. On the right-hand side another wall, part of which still remains, enclosed Alec Creswick's orchard and field. The Creswicks lived at Grove Farm. Their large farm-yard is now known as Grove Farm Close, with the farmhouse, dairy and other outbuildings surrounded by modern buildings. I knew that orchard as well as Alec Creswick did! Therefore, at that time, all the houses were above the footpath known as Jubilee walk. Unfortunately not one photograph has come to light of Cotterhill Lane, even in the 1970s. So, if anyone does have any photographs the history group would be glad to have a copy.

Fortunately Alan Sharp has been able to reconstruct the houses on Cotterhill Lane in the drawing reproduced overleaf. As I knew the lane a little better than Alan, I have altered it a bit to make it more accurate. I have also coloured it in. I never did get in the top-ten for art so, as Alan says, a good drawing spoiled!



Cotterhill Lane as I remember it, in this drawing by Alan Sharp. To the right are six stone built cottages at the village end of Cotterhill Lane (the nearest right). I lived in this row at number 65; the fourth door from the village end. Immediately preceding them is a footpath, known as Jubilee Walk, separated by a brick built wall which marks the backyard access to the stone cottages. The stone wall to the far right concealed Alex Creswick's field. A little lower down towards Hall Road this wall concealed his orchard. The row of four terraced properties, immediately after the row of six stone built cottages, were actually single storied terraced 'bungalows'. They had a set of stone steps leading to a small communal front yard. A five foot gannel separated these terraced properties from 'twelve house row'. These houses had no front doors. At the top of twelve house row, an opening (large enough for a lorry to pass through) separated the row from the next block of six terraces. Down this gap, another four house row was situated, at a ninety degree angle to the top of the twelve house row and separated by the row's back yard, so you cannot see it on this drawing. Two stone built cottages at the top of the lane, opposite the memorial gates, (not shown on this drawing) completed the 34 dwellings in the lane. All the houses on this drawing, with the exception of the three nearest stone ones, were demolished in the late 1960s/early 1970s. Top Pingle Close now occupies their site and that of their gardens. The stone wall still survives – in part. It was lowered with bungalows built behind.

The three houses which are still standing are the bottom ones on the drawing. At this time there were six dwellings. The three houses which are still standing are the bottom ones on the drawing and still retain their original numbers 67, 69 and 71. My father was born in the fourth from the bottom, number 65, in 1890, where I was also born. Except for when he was married and went in the army my father lived there all his life. My mother came to Brimington from Old Whittington, settling in the centre house of the long row – the penultimate block from the top. ‘Twelve house row’ is what we used to call it. That row is drawn exactly as it was built – there were no front doors.

Mother and father met, no doubt, due to their close proximity and they were married early in 1912. My only sister, Kathleen, was born nearly a year later, and then came the First World War. Three days after that war started my oldest brother Ralph was born. After this my father did something I’ve always found rather strange. As a married man with two children he volunteered for the army, with my mother’s younger brother my uncle John Keeling. They were two of the first of the 720 men who went from this village during the First World War. I think they thought it was all going to be over by Christmas. That was the propaganda. My father had been down the pits since he was a 13-year old boy. He had never set a foot outside Derbyshire. He thought it would all be over quickly but, of course, it was not.

In 1915 my father and my uncle John were shipped over to France. The photograph below is the one my father took with him. It shows my mother, my sister Kathleen and Ralph.

Now Ralph became the comic of the family. He grew up to be one of the happiest men anybody could wish to meet. Really happy . . . he never got married!

In 1916 the terrible Battle of the Somme took place. My father, along with my uncle John, served in the 10th Battalion of the Sherwood Foresters in that battle. Uncle John was posted missing on the 22nd August. My father was so badly gassed in 1917 he was sent home to recuperate. Well, he recuperated somewhat because my brother Jack was born in 1918.



My mother, sister Kathleen and oldest brother, Ralph. This photograph travelled all the way to France with my father, during the First World War.



Three weeks after the start of the Battle of the Somme, part of the 10th Battalion of the Sherwood Foresters is pictured in France. The man circled is my uncle John Keeling. John is second from the left on the front row of the photograph. I am almost certain that my father is the fourth, in the same row, from the left. Note the amount of captured German helmets the soldiers are wearing and the dog.

In the photograph below we see Jack as a little boy, next to father. All are pictured at the back of one of the cottages on Cotterhill Lane.

Jack became quite well known in Brimington but very few people knew that was *not* his correct name. He was actually John Keeling, named after the uncle who was killed at the battle of the Somme.



Father with his trusty terrier Spot. The building in view is the back door and pantry window of our house, number 65 Cotterhill Lane. My brother Jack is the little boy at the side of our father.



My brother James. The cottages behind him are those still standing on Cotterhill Lane.

In 1920 my brother James was born. Looking at the photograph (left), you can see why, for his short life, his family name was 'Curly'. Look at the clothes. It just shows that my family was not very well off at the time.

The cottages behind him are the cottages which are still standing. The trees at the back of the cottages are ten beech trees which were growing in Brimington Hall gardens. They were chopped down after the Second World War – a tragedy.

Brian was born in 1923 and in 1927 I came along. Ralph, the comic of the family, always said mother took one look at me and said; 'That's it, enough!'

The inside of a non-Brimington building is my first memory. I was two years old at the time and with my brother Brian and sister, we were confined to Mastin Moor isolation hospital, with diphtheria. We nearly lost Brian on that occasion.

School Days

My first memory of Brimington is the same as a lot of other children – Brimington Common School. My mother walked up with me on my first day in Easter 1931. She was there when I came out. But she never did that again – after that I was on my own. Not really on my own, though, as I had always somebody to walk up with. Rain, snow, sunshine (there were no buses anyway) we walked it. And we could walk right up the centre of the common carriageway – we would never have got hit by anything but a bicycle.

If anybody went to Brimington Common school and said they didn't like it there they would not have liked it anywhere. It was a lovely school to go to. There were three women teachers: Miss Babbs (left on the photograph overleaf), Miss Martin (right) and Miss Gascoigne, at least when I attended.

The photograph shows my brother Brian; the fifth child from the left on the back row. My best friend, Darrell Edwards, is third from the right in the front row. Walter Turton is fourth from the left in the front row. He is very well dressed for that year. At the time we were going through the worst depression this country has known. Ralph, my brother, was 17 at that time. He never had a job from leaving school. The boy next to Walter Turton, who looks too fat to fold his arms, is me! If you take a second look I am not fat at all – it is the coat, which is about eight sizes too big. I think it was one of my brother Ralph's coats, passed down until it had reached me. That is what happened in those days. Girls or boys, they all got the clothes passed down. Even after everyone possible had worn them, clothes would not be finished with. They would be turned into a peg rug.

I can remember very little of what I was taught at Brimington Common. One thing I can remember and for a Cott. Lane lad perhaps I should not even mention it; I was taught how to knit.

Three things I do remember, though. One: it was through the school I had my first sight of the sea. They ran trips to the seaside each year. The last year I attended we only travelled to Monsal Dale and I was really disappointed. Second: I saw my first film show. Sitting on the floor, on about a six to ten foot screen we saw Laurel and Hardy or Charlie Chaplin, with no sound. Thirdly: I attended my first social gathering with the opposite sex. I was only four. We played a game that I still do not know how to play – 'spin the plate.'



Brimington Common School photograph, 1931.

Although I said my mother did not meet me at the school gates, she did meet me between the *Bricklayers Arms* and the old *Prince of Wales* public houses. My first question would be; ‘What’s for tea, Mam?’

But she didn’t meet me on Mondays. Monday was wash day. Mondays were wash days in every house in Cotterhill Lane. Mondays were wash days in every house in Brimington. I think it was wash day in every house in the country. I hated Mondays.

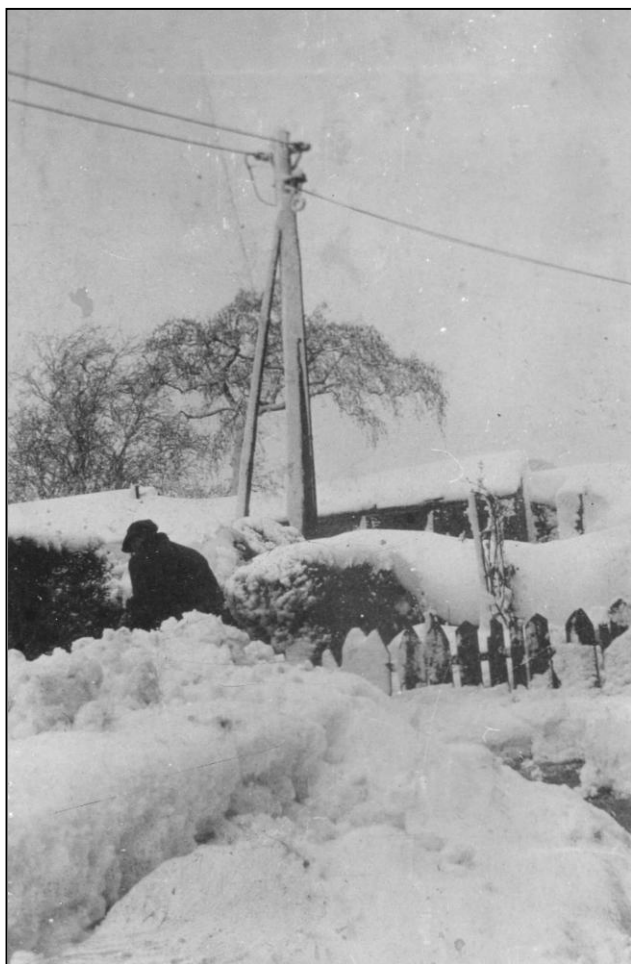
I would walk into our house in Cotterhill Lane (in that street every house was more or less the same two down and two up). The kitchen was stone flagged. It would be running with water on Mondays. As a kitchen we never did any cooking there. All we had was one gas ring, and that was never lit because that would have cost money. We had a copper boiler with a coal fire under it, in which the clothes were boiled up. One of those old-fashioned mangles, one small table for preparing food and one of those old-fashioned yellow and brown sinks. These sinks were very shallow with only a cold water tap. That was the only supply of water in the house, and that applied to every house in Cotterhill Lane.

I hated that sink. Bath nights were on Friday in front of a roaring fire. If I got dirty during the day, which I nearly always did every day, I was shoved into that sink.

Two steps down from the kitchen was a pantry, with a big stone shelf. Anything you wanted to keep cool went underneath; no freezers, no fridges, no electric vacuum cleaners. Yet that house was cleaner than the one I live in now! My wife would not have agreed with that if she had been here, but I am talking about now. The house in Cotterhill Lane was spotless.

The living room was quite large; the dining table was large too. I learned how to play table tennis on it. The net was a piece of my mother’s old net curtain and we had two home made bats.

My father was very, very old-fashioned. He was one of these people who believed that ‘manners maketh man’. When we sat down at that table on Sunday – the only time we were all together as a family – you never left the table until you had finished. Only my mother was allowed to get up. But the outstanding feature of that room was the fireplace. It was one of these old-fashioned things. Oven on one side, hot water boiler on the other. That was the only hot water we had. We had no heating upstairs, so the shelves in the oven would be wrapped in an old piece of blanket and shoved in the beds to keep us warm.



Only 12 yards to go! My father digs a path to the toilets at the bottom of our garden during the winter of 1931-1932. The pole is bringing electricity, by over-head line, to the cottages where I lived. At that time electricity was generated at the Staveley Coal and Iron Company's Devonshire Works, before being resold to the rather grandly named Brimington Electric Supply Company.

Of course we didn't have toilets inside. The photograph here was taken, I think, in the winter of 1931-1932. The toilets are the buildings just behind the electricity pole. My father is valiantly clearing the snow, heading towards them. He has still got about 12 yards to go. Imagine that today. The toilets were modern flush W.C.s in a row with the coal houses.

In the 1930s my family went through a big change when it came to food. In the early '30s my father and my sister were the only two working in our house-hold. Then, gradually, we had father, Ralph and Jack working. Kathleen had married in 1935. So our family fortunes changed. From 1934 onwards we became one of the better-off families in Cotterhill Lane, I know that – I started having my own clothes!

Food at the beginning of the 1930s was rabbit, rabbit, rabbit. This was the cheapest food a working family could buy and even cheaper if my father could catch one. But then about '34 to '35 things altered and it was beef, beef, beef. A large piece of beef for Sunday lunch, packed beef sandwiches for the workers on Monday, cold beef for tea, and then the joint finished up as a stew. Vegetables were never a problem. We had a very large back garden. Chicken? That was a dish for Christmas only. There was no battery farming in those days, so you never saw a chicken for sale in the shops. Turkey? That was a country in the Mediterranean.

Around Christmas 1938, Ralph and Jack entered the Joe Davis Snooker Championship and got as far as, I think, the semi-finals. The first prize was a crisp white £5 note and a cup. £5 was then a labourer's wage for two weeks. The rent for our house was 5 shillings a week, so £5 was a valuable prize. The losing semi-finalist got a bottle of whisky.

Ralph was the best player of the two, and made it into the final. Jack lost his semi-final on purpose to get the bottle of whisky. But of course plans do not always work out. Ralph lost the final and what did he win? A turkey. My mother had never seen one, alive or dead, so she decided to part cook it the night before, planning to finish it off the next day. As is the wont of young men, Jack and Ralph went out that Christmas Eve and came back with, I think, four or five friends, to drink the bottle of whisky, Ralph got hungry, started cutting the turkey. Next morning when I got up early, I had presents to undo. When my

dad got up he saw what had happened to the turkey and trouble brewed. I never heard my father swear. He probably did, being ex-army and an ex-miner, but I never ever heard him, and definitely never in the house. I think that morning was the nearest he ever came to it.

About 1952 I was rambling with a man, Cyril Cowlshaw. He was one of the friends who Jack had brought home. Cyril told me the details of that night. I think that Brian and I were the only two children in Cotterhill Lane who ever tasted turkey before the Second World War.

Back to school, but not Brimington Common – the ‘big school’. Now officially it was Brimington Central School. We never called it that, it was always the big school. I can remember my first day at the school on Devonshire Street, in Easter 1934. We were in what was called standard 2. The seven classes at the school were numbered standard 2 to 8. Standard 1 was at the infant schools – the top of the three we had at Brimington Common school. Class 7, for example, meant the same as standard 7. There was only one class per standard, but the number of pupils in each class far exceeded what we would expect to see today.

At that time (I’m talking about the immediate pre Second World War period) the school was actually two separate and segregated units; girls and boys. There were separate entrances, with a head teacher for the boys and a headmistress for the girls. All the boys used the same school yard entrance off Foljambe Road. The girls used a separate school yard entrance off Devonshire Street. Senior boys used the building entrance at the bottom end of the school, under the bell tower. This led into a porch. The junior boys’ entrance porch to the school was at the side of standard two. I have tried to draw the arrangement on the plan on page 28. Even playgrounds were segregated and this was rigorously enforced. Both girls and boys would leave school when they were 14 years old. Standard 5 onwards was treated as senior boys. From this stage added subjects were taught, such as science.

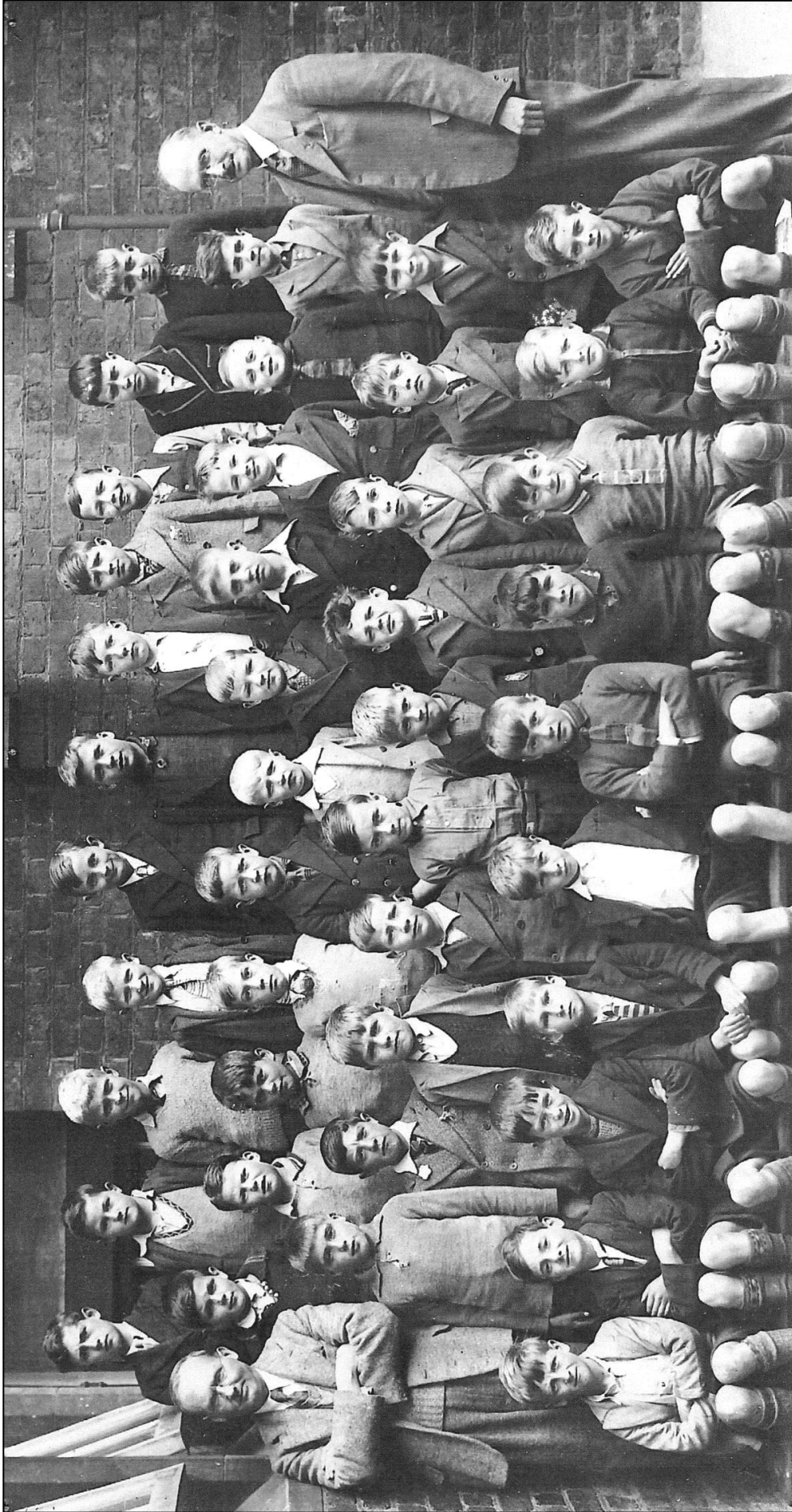
There were only about ten of us from the Common who went to the Devonshire Street schools. This made up a quarter of the classroom. On our first day we just sat on the right hand side waiting. Then we heard this ‘tramp, tramp, tramp’, and all the boys from Princess Street school marched into class. As they walked into the class I knew my lovely school days at Brimington Common had gone forever. They were rough boys and believe me some were tough. I spent the next seven years with them. There were poor boys, there were well-dressed boys, a real mixture. It is hard to understand in this day and age of the ‘welfare state’ that some of those boys had come to school with holes in their boots, with a piece of cardboard inside to keep the wet out. But that did happen.

When these boys came into the class the former Brimington Common pupils numbered 10, with about 35 of them from Princess Street. So, we were the new kids on the block. We got hostile looks from the Princess Street boys, but the hostility never came to anything because we met Mr Cogland.¹ ‘Coggie’, ‘Coggie’, Cogland. I do not know what policy the county council’s education committee had of, perhaps, getting a nice gentle teacher to break us in on the first day. But, I can tell you, Mr Cogland was not a gentle teacher!

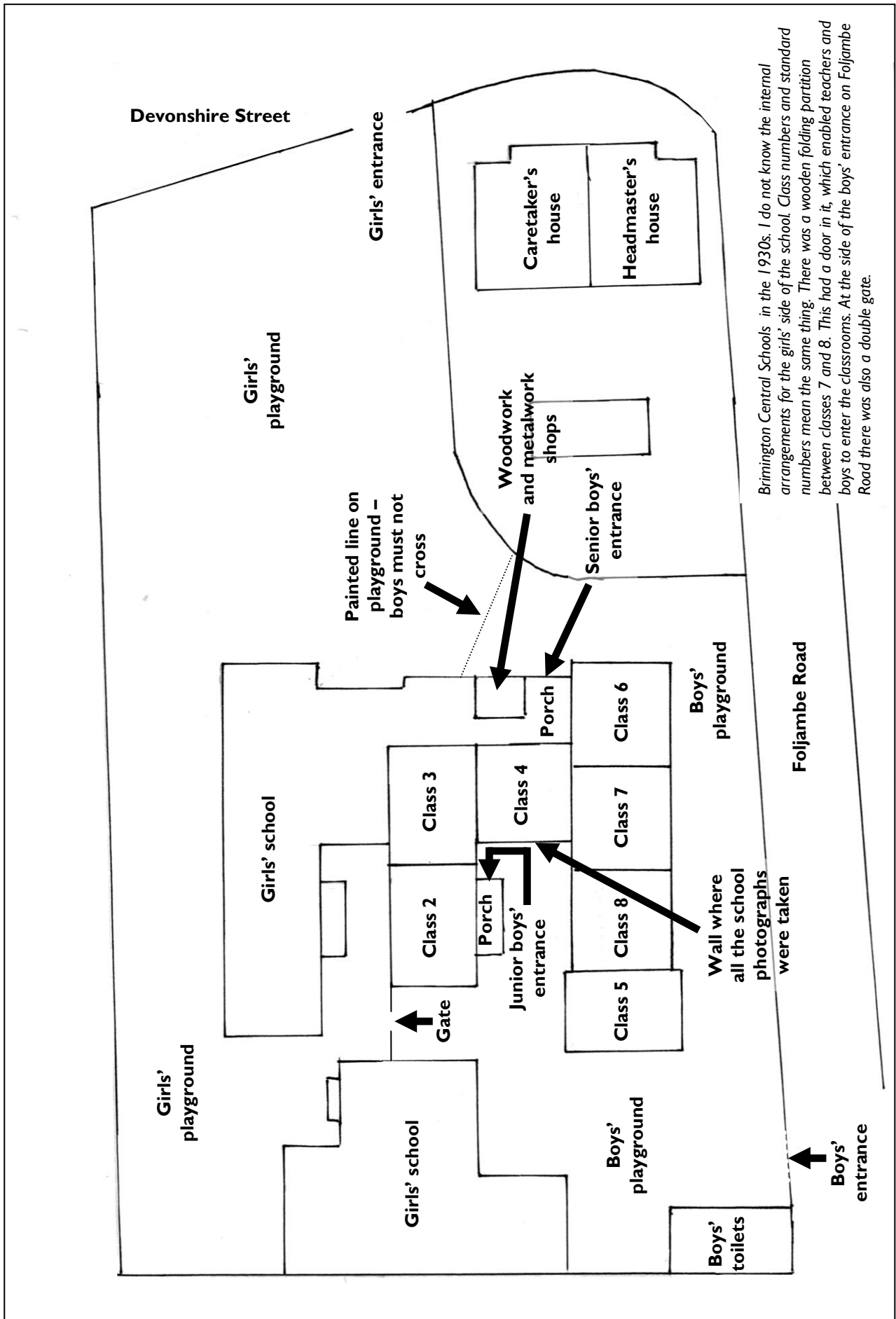
Mr Cogland had got a very bad habit. Looking at the photograph on the next page, you can see boys with a fringe. Cogland would get two fingers, wrap the fringe round those fingers, and then lock it with his thumb and pull you out of the class, so you not only got a good whacking you nearly got your hair pulled out as well.

My brothers told me, and I always believed everything my brothers told me, that every barber in Brimington was paid a bonus by Master Cogland to have our hair cut like that! I was so naïve. Only once in my life did I not believe my brothers, and that’s when they told me where babies came from. I would just not believe them!

¹ This may have been Mr O’Cogland.



Standard 2, Brimington Central Boys' School, 1934. Far right is Mr Harvey, the headmaster, who died in 2008. Mr Cogland is far left. I am sat front row, third from right. Amongst my 42 class-mates present on this photograph is Geoff Waddoups (front row second from left), who served on Chesterfield Borough Council as a Newbold Councillor for many years. He also became Mayor. Geoff Thompson is first on the right on the second row from the back. He was the organist at Hall Road Methodist Church for many years.



Brimington Central Schools in the 1930s. I do not know the internal arrangements for the girls' side of the school. Class numbers and standard numbers mean the same thing. There was a wooden folding partition between classes 7 and 8. This had a door in it, which enabled teachers and boys to enter the classrooms. At the side of the boys' entrance on Foljambe Road there was also a double gate.

What sort of syllabus did we have? My memory tells me that attached under my desk lid was a colour coded time-table. Arithmetic was coloured in red, with lessons every day, sometimes double. English comprised writing, spelling and compositions, (these were never called essays). We also had geography, history, music, art and P.T. (physical education). In the seniors we also had science, woodwork, gardening and metalwork. But one thing I have to thank Mr Cogland for was something we had never done at Brimington Common – mental arithmetic. Mr Cogland would stand in front of my class, starting us in mental arithmetic. He would bark out questions and then point to various class members. Woe betides you if you did not have the answer. So I have to thank him for the skill of mental arithmetic, which I still use to this day.

The school was centrally heated by large hot water pipes. I think the caretaker looked after the boiler. I am almost sure the desks were double with two ink wells, arranged in rows, facing the teacher.

Next class was Mr Roberts, in 1935. He was a Welshman, so of course his name was ‘Taffy’. I remember very little about his class – his was standard 3. I do, however, know it was the year that I paid my last visit to the school dentist. The building was on Brimington Road, opposite what used to be the Trebor sweet factory. It’s still standing there today, a place of medieval torture!



Even into the 1970s this Brimington Road building was used by the county council for their school dentist. Pictured here in 2009, the building is, at the time of writing (January 2012), empty.

One of the older boys told me that next time the dentist attended the school; ‘peep inside the envelope, if it’s a pink form you’re alright. If it’s green, your mum’s got to make an appointment.’ Every year after that I peeped in the envelope and every year it was green. I made sure my mum never saw it. It was nine years before I even went to a dentist again, much to my regret. The next dentist I went to was a Royal Naval dentist, and after one visit from a Royal Naval dentist I can assure you the place on Brimington Road was a pleasure palace!

One of the things that I have noticed when looking back at old school photographs, are the lack of pupils who had glasses. I am sure some of them needed glasses, but I cannot remember the school doctor ever doing any eye tests. In any case, the majority of the pupils would not have been able to afford glasses.

The next class – standard 4 – I could spend hours discussing. We had a probationary teacher called Mr Cammish.² His mother was a well-known lady, as she sold fish, living in Parkin Yard, (the gennel running from Church Street to Heywood Street). Mrs Cammish lived in Parkin Yard, in the second house on the left between Foljambe Road and Heywood Street. She was called Kitty, so, of course, everyone called Mr Cammish ‘Kitty’, but not to his face

The best single word to describe Mr Cammish was ‘dapper’, as he was very, very well dressed. A photograph on the ‘Picture the Past’³ website shows him complete with handkerchief in his top pocket, even at school. He played cricket for Brimington with my brother Jack. He was one of only two men who ever wore one of those coloured school cricket blazers. The other was Jim Richardson from Manor Avenue, who was the captain.

Mr Cammish would bring his sportsmanship into the class. Quite cheerfully, he would say; ‘Which hand would you like it on today, Harrison?’ and by that he meant the cane. I was right-handed, so I always had it on the left. I can assure you now that hand has had so much cane it should be deformed. But worse was to come. Cammish would say; ‘Fingertips, middle, or hand?’ He gave you the choice. He was a good sportsman, you see. I made the mistake once of saying; ‘Three on the fingertips,’ hoping he would miss. But he never did. He could make that cane whistle and crack. Whistle when he brought it down, and crack when it hit your fingers.

Now, why were we caned? Anything to do with lack of discipline meant a caning. The only other punishment I can remember having was being kept in at playtime. That was as well as being caned, not instead of. I was caned by every teacher in school but one, for the same reason – talking. So what good did the cane do for me? 70 years later I am still here yapping along!

If you did anything seriously wrong, you had to go to Mr Harvey, the head teacher. Other teachers could, as we have seen, give you the cane. I only had three strokes on my right hand, ever, in all my school life. That came after three on the left hand. A total of six was a serious misdemeanour . . . and my serious misdemeanour? I got caught in the girls’ playground. It was a set-up, though!

Our reading classes featured some really good adventure books such as *Call of the Wild* by Jack London and *The Scarlet Pimpernel* by Baroness Orczy. These were marvellous books for children to read. Reading classes! I and the other good readers were 10 pages or more ahead of the boy who was reading out aloud. The teacher could pick on any of the good readers and catch us out; we had to guess where the class had got. What happened? Cane, of course!

As the youngest of the family, I was very seldom called by my real name, except by my contemporaries. My father’s name was Mick so it was always; ‘Oh, its Mick’s youngest’. My brother Ralph was nicknamed Lammy. I was ‘young Lammy’, ‘young Jack’, ‘young Curly’, never Peter.

It is worse still when your brothers or sisters are better than you at anything. If you are the youngest and you are the best no one knows about it. And so this happened, in the next two classes.

Mr Camish did one thing for me, I do not know if it was the caning, his teaching or what, but that year I came top of the class, jumping into standard 6. Standard 5’s teacher was called Mr Pugh – Puggy Pugh. If you remember, I said one teacher never caned me. That is because I did not go in his class – he never got the chance!

² This may have been spelt with a single ‘m’.

³ Image DCCD000222 at [on-line] last visited 20 August 2011, at URL <http://www.picturethepast.org.uk/index.php>.



My brother Jack (far left), then around 11 years old, with a group of Brimington lads, having won the Everest Cup. I believe this to be taken on the Saltergate ground of Chesterfield Football Club. The blue and white strip is that of Brimington Central Schools. The date would be around 1930-1.

So I missed Mr Pugh and went straight into Mr Furnihough's class. I found out years later that my brother Curly had been one of Mr Furnihough's favourites. He accomplished something practically unheard of in Brimington by winning a scholarship to Chesterfield Grammar School. Scholarships to the town's grammar school and Netherthorpe, were scarcer than hen's teeth. I believe the education system was to blame for this lack of opportunity. This was the case until the Education Act altered things in the 1940s.

Mr Furnihough would come up behind me and look at my work. I was an awful writer – I still am. There were blots all over the paper, as we did not have ball point pens in those days. Furnihough would mutter something about; 'How could two brothers be so different'. But worse was to come. Mr Wright, teacher of standard 7, was a football fanatic.

Brimington School has always had a good foot-balling side. In the photograph above, my brother Jack is the one on the left. He played for Brimington Central Schools when he was only 11. He represented Chesterfield and Derbyshire Boys, but damaged a cartilage at 14 and never played football again.

From 1929 to 1932 the Clayton Challenge Shield, the Everest Cup, the League – Brimington were the winners of two of those every year. We played football on Thistle Park, which is officially known as Eastwood Park, on Station Road. The bottom football pitch ran parallel to the road and then there was another one 90° to the bottom one, at the top of the park. Mr Wright always took 22 boys to the top pitch. The boys who weren't interested, could not play, or were simply not bothered were gathered on the bottom pitch. The worst thing Mr Wright could do to the top pitch players was to send you down on to the bottom pitch. He would say to me; 'You're not fit to tie your Jack's shoelaces'. And I knew it. I loved football, but knew I was not as good as Jack.

Mr Wright was also responsible for the school's sports day. I think that those who went to school with me will probably remember school's sports days very differently to those I remember. There were running races – 60 yards dash. We did not call it a sprint in those days. I remember the sports days were held in Alec Creswick's field, off Chesterfield Road. Having arrived from school, we'd kick off our boots (we never wore shoes), putting on plimsolls. It was a 60 yards race for the youngsters, 80 yards for the seniors. I was at the Devonshire Street school seven years and I ran seven races – one each year because that was it. I was out, first round every time. I could not sprint to save my life. Or so I thought.

It was only when I joined the forces that I found I was a very good long distance runner. My brother Curly had a similar experience. He went into the Royal Air Force before he found out.

I left Mr Wright's class in the summer of 1939 expecting to see the inside of standard 8. I still have not seen it to this day. The Second World War started and we were told not to go back to school. The buildings were taken over by the Civil Defence. All the windows were strapped with paper and sealed up to guard against gas attacks. We had all been issued with gas masks, which we carried about in a little cardboard box.



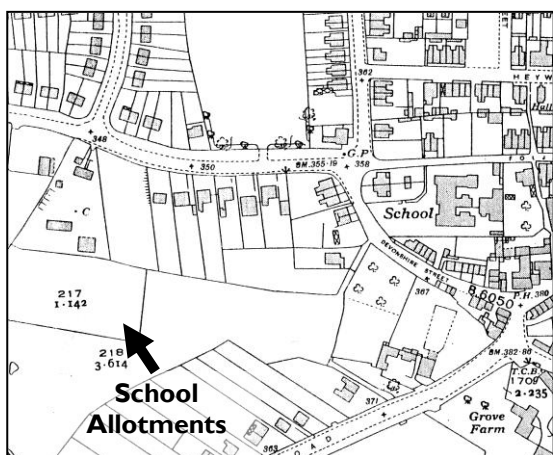
Devonshire Street 'Central' schools, taken in 2009. In my day this was the girls' part of the school. Here were three classes. It was quite a shock to find out that my lessons were to be here after the Second World War had been declared. After Hollingwood Senior Girls' opened in early 1941, I believe this became the senior boys'. Later two classrooms were combined for use as the school hall, with one classroom remaining in the left-hand side of the building.

In those days we had summer holidays which started in August, lasting four weeks. That year we had another five weeks off, not returning until the 8 October.⁴ When we did start we attended the girls' part of the school, this had been an area hereto strictly off-limits. I do not remember where the other classes went to, though. Boys attended in the morning, girls in the afternoon, then visa versa. After a period alternating on these lines, we then found ourselves attending the old Bethel chapel on Ringwood Road. This is now demolished.

The search for premises must have been difficult as from Bethel we then attended classes in the Church Hall, on Church Street. Mr Bailey was the teacher of standard 8 at the time. I particularly remember my class following him round Brimington; from the classrooms in the girls' part of the school, to the Bethel Chapel in Ringwood Road and later the Church Hall in Church Street, then back to the girls' classrooms

⁴ I am grateful to Alan Sharp for confirming our start date from school log books kept in the Derbyshire Record Office.

at school. When in standard 8 you were supposed to be taught metalwork and woodwork, but these were cancelled because of the war. The metal and woodwork classrooms were just inside the main entrance on the right hand side as you entered.



A reduced extract from the 1938 Ordnance Survey map showing the Central Schools and immediate area. The school allotment site is arrowed. (Ordnance Survey, Derbyshire Sheet XVII.15)

Whoever did the timetable must have just wrote in ‘allotments’ instead! The allotments were at the back of Station Road. We walked to the allotments through the girls’ entrance gate on Devonshire Street, then across that street, down a bridle path to the site, which was just behind the houses on Station Road. I have spoken to other lads of my year. Some of them loved gardening, away from the classes. I hated it. My father, by that time, was gasping for breath, so I was digging the garden at home and digging at school. So, all the love of gardening was dug out of me when I was 12.

After the first year of the war Mr Harvey retired. We then had a new headmaster, a Mr Unwin. A music teacher, many men in Brimington are now grateful to Mr Unwin because he taught them how to play a musical instrument. Boys like me, with one year to go, did not really have that opportunity, because Mr Unwin wanted at least two years to teach us. So, we lost out again and only the boys in my class who could already play an instrument were taught. When I left school I started an engineering apprenticeship at Staveley Works from Easter 1941. Two weeks before I went there, my mother bought me my first pair of long trousers.

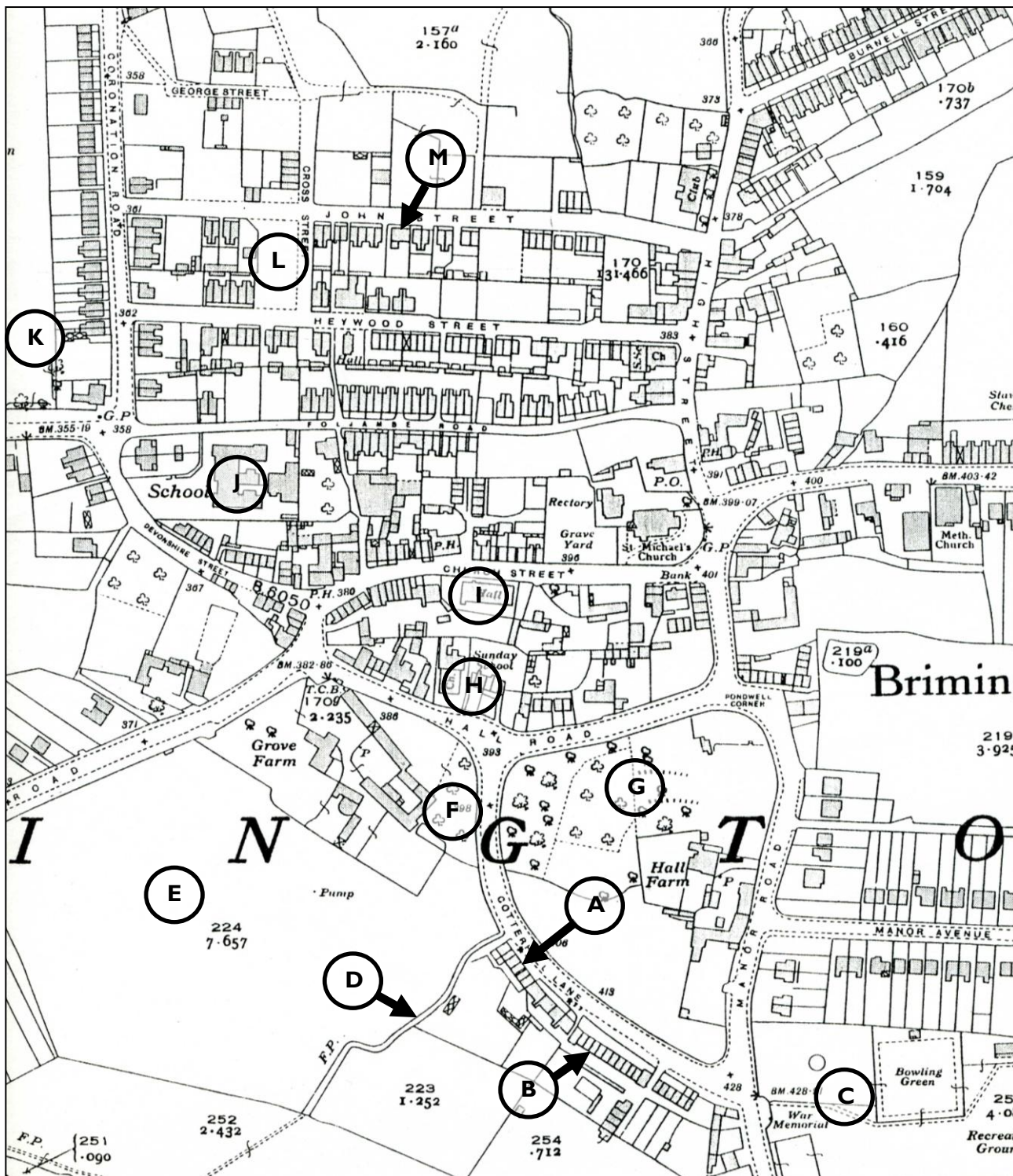
Sunday School

Sunday schools were part and parcel of life in the village at that time. I attended the Mount Zion Chapel, in Hall Road. This is roughly where the present Methodist Church now stands. All my family went there. I had two lovely teachers – Mrs Strong and Mrs Howe. I particularly remember that every year the chapel ran trips. The whole fleet of Doughty’s buses were used on these excursions to the seaside. Another memory which I recall are the walks. Every church or chapel had one. There were six chapels in Brimington, with two churches (as there was St Mary’s Mission at Brimington Common, plus St Michaels). Each had their own Sunday walk, on separate dates. Even though you might not have gone to chapel later on in years, you still went on those Sunday walks if you were an old pupil. These walks comprised walking the streets of Brimington behind the chapel or church banners. If I remember correctly, we also collected money at the same time for the chapel.

I also remember presentation days. Here Sunday school scholars were presented with awards, usually books. The books we had from the Mount Zion were very good books. The thickness of the book depended on how good your attendance had been through the year. I can tell you now, all the thick books in our house used to have ‘Kathleen Mary Harrison’ written in – my sister’s name.

Every Sunday when it was good weather, Cotterhill Lane and Brimington Common was at its busiest, not with traffic but with people, because they did what we call the ‘Sunday promenade’. Families used to come out of chapel or church to promenade. That was about the only time you saw husbands walking with wives and their children. We did it, not with my father though, he did not do it. Never-the-less we would walk right to the *Miner’s Arms* and back again. It is one of those things which everybody seemed to do in Brimington. Sundays were so unlike anything you can imagine now. In fact, it would take a better man than me to describe them. Nothing was open. There were no theatres, no cinemas, no

Tesco's – Tesco's weren't even here! No shops were open at all. So, if you wanted something you had to wait for Monday or borrow it from the neighbours. Neither was there any cricket, the schools and the playground were even locked up. It really was the 'Lord's day' or as near as we could get it.



Brimington in 1938 from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map of that date, showing some of the places mentioned in the text. A – my house (the toilets were at the bottom of the row backing onto Jubilee walk) ; B – '12 house row'; C – Brimington Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground, fronted by the Memorial Gates (the cricket pavilion is to the extreme right, running off the map); D – 'Jubilee Walk' footpath; E – Alec Creswick's field (the Creswicks lived at Grove Farm); F – Alec Creswick's orchard; G – Brimington Hall Grounds; H – Mount Zion Methodist Church and Sunday School; I – The Church Hall; J – Brimington Central Schools; K – 'Thistle Park' more properly known as Eastwood Park; L – 'The Green, where the Cubs and Scouts met; M – Air Training Corps, head-quarters. Note that the building is much larger than that shown on the photograph at page 46. (Ordnance Survey, Derbyshire Sheet XVII.15).

Money and Leisure

In the early 1930s I never had any money, so I never missed it. In the late '30s, when my family became a little bit better off, I still did not get an allowance – there was no such thing – I had to earn it. Three errands on Saturday made me two pence halfpenny – in old money (2 ½d). That was a penny for sweets and three halfpence for the Lyceum Pictures on Whittington Moor.

Going to the Lyceum Pictures on a Saturday was a must. *Hoppalong Cassidy*, *Buck Jones*, *Flash Gordon* – they got killed every week and they revived the week after. I can remember one week *Hoppalong Cassidy* fell off his horse, because he had been shot, but the week after we found out he had seen the sunlight on the bullet coming, so he had dodged it. How we used to believe things in those days.

There was never any sound at the Lyceum. They were talking pictures, but there was never any sound because of the noise inside the cinema. It was pandemonium from the minute you walked in to the minute you walked out. You could not hear a word. Kids used to throw things up into the projectors. When the picture started the noise just became louder. My bigger brothers taught me never to sit in the seats under the edge of the balcony, as you would not know what was coming down on your head. But it was like a drug – you had got to go.

My mum used to give me a penny extra to go down to Ringwood swimming baths. That is where I learned to swim. The baths improved later on, but in the '30s they were fed from Ringwood Lake. It was years before I found out that you could open your eyes underwater, because you never did in Ringwood baths. You might as well have swum in the lake! And you never, ever opened your mouth because the least thing you would get was a tadpole. It was either Ringwood baths, the 'cut' (the canal), or the River Rother. My mum would say; 'well Ringwood swimming baths is safer'. So that is why I got a penny from her – to stop me bathing in the river. When I got a little older we used the Stand Road swimming baths; at last we had somewhere clean to swim in.

In my last year at school (1941), though this still happened to children who were younger, we were given three days off to go potato picking. This was part of the war effort. I worked at Ivy house farm for Mr Goodwin and at Manor Farm for Mr Percy Yeomans. I was paid one shilling and three pence a day, plus a bucketful of potatoes. This was the hardest work for the lowest money I have ever done in my life. The other place to earn money was at Barrow Hill railway sheds, but you had to be 14 to work there.

When I started my apprenticeship at Staveley Works, in Easter 1941, I was paid 12s 6d a week. My mum used to keep 10 shillings; I had two shillings and 6d spending money. But I could double that by going down to Barrow Hill Roundhouse. Here they gave you a can of paraffin with some oil in. We would set to work cleaning the steam engines with two pieces of cotton waste. One piece was used to put the oil on, with the other to wipe it off. Paraffin rusts things – people don't realise that – so that was why the oil was added to the paraffin. This work was a lot easier than potato picking and double the money.

One other thing we did as a group of kids to earn money was Christmas carolling, which we performed door-to-door, from a young age. As we became older (around 13 to 14), we played out the Derby Tup. I have written down the version we used. This has appeared with a description of how we performed it in a previous edition of *Miscellany*.⁵

One story is worth recounting here again about the 'Derby Tup'. The pubs were obviously the best places to go. You could get shillings there, two shillings at a time. But one new year's eve I and my three pals tramped over a place called The Washes, up to Rennie's Farm, down to the fishpond, up to Tipton Grove. Here we were invited in to do the Derby Tup. There were four of us. For our troubles our small

⁵ P. Cousins (with material from P. Harrison), 'Some observations on the Derby Tup and the Brimington Mummers' plays', *Brimington and Tipton Miscellany*, number 2 (2010), pp. 17 – 28.

group were offered three half pence each. That was the last time we ever went to Tapton Grove doing the Derby Tup!

Amusements

With little or no money, what did we do? Generally we made our own amusements.

There were only two lamp posts in Cotterhill Lane. One was at the cause-way edge, exactly against the entrance to Jubilee Walk. The second was on the top side of the space between twelve house row and six house row. This is where we gathered in the winter months. There were never any problems as our mothers knew where we were. They just came to the door and shouted for you. Nobody ever came to any harm. The streets were largely without traffic in those days, so there was little problem using them.

Where the bungalows are now on Top Pingle Close, from just behind the houses running down Cotterhill Lane, going right up towards the fields, at the back, was a large back yard. As you can see on the 1938 map there were another four houses running parallel with a small road that went between twelve house row and top block of six. That made 34 houses in total in this small area. This one open back yard was marvellous for the children to play games. But it was terrible for anybody living in the area, because there was no privacy whatsoever. The girls would play hopscotch. A Cott. Lane lad never, ever played hopscotch. I still can't play it. I could not even mark you the thing out on the ground. It was then strictly a girls' game.

We would play marbles. Snobs was also played. All we had for this game were five pebbles. We also saved cigarette cards. These cards came free in packets of cigarettes. There was quite a physical game called 'Husky-Bum-Bum'. We played pin and button, parcelling the string, tying doors – everything we should not have been doing. One trick we played we called 'bull-roaring' This is really unsafe, but it made a hell of a noise. This was simply pushing a lighted piece of newspaper up the cast iron drainpipes. Whoosh!

There was always a line drawn in my mind, call it conscience if you want, of how far I could go. On the lines of; 'what would my mother say?' I did get into trouble with the police only once and the lorry illustrated here was the cause of it – Rigby's lorry. It must have been one of the oldest vehicles this



The cover of 'Rigby's lorry', usually used for transporting colliers to and from work is on the left. This contraption was put on the back of the lorry that was the source of my only brush with the police. Leaning on it is Richard Rigby, with his niece, in their backyard off Church Street.

village has known. I think it was acquired even before Doughty ran a bus service. It comprised a cover which was put onto the back of the lorry. Rigby, the family who owned it, charged a halfpenny or a penny to take miners down to one of the collieries before there was a public bus service. The family also had a stick business. The photograph was taken up the back of Church Street, in a dead ended yard. The gentleman you see standing was totally blind. They called him 'Blind Richard Rigby' and he used to chop sticks. And that was it – that was his job. The lorry used to deliver wood. It was that old you could hear it coming from a mile away. I remember it used to come down the back of Church Street, the *Ark Tavern*, turn up Hall Road (there was no one-way system in those days) and up Cotterhill Lane. We would be waiting for it as children. We could hear it coming, and used to hang on the tailgate. It was the only thing we ever rode on. For everything else it was 'Shanks's pony'.

One day, four of us were riding up on this tailgate. Although we could have walked up Cotterhill Lane quicker, it was a ride. As we dropped off at the top, to our horror right behind us was the local police sergeant, with his motorbike and sidecar. He grabbed one of us; the other three were quickly away. I dashed into my house. The bedroom door was just opposite our front door; in that few steps I shouted at my mother; 'If the police come, I ran away from here weeks ago and you've never seen me since!' Well, Mum had brought four sons up before me, so I think she knew enough. She left me alone for half an hour, then told me that she did not think the police would come this day, so I had better come down and tell her what had gone wrong. The boy that the policeman did catch was put over the sergeant's sidecar, who proceeded to take off his gauntlets, giving the boy six of the best on the behind. The lad was warned to tell his mates not to ride on Rigby's lorry again. We never did.

Only one week in the year was I desperate for money. That was a week in October when Mrs Odeley and Mrs Hall brought the fairs – 'the feast' – to Alec Creswick's field. This is the field fronting Chesterfield Road and going back as far as the lower part of Cotterhill Lane, where Nethercroft Road is now situated. The feast was held in various places, but it settled in Alec Creswick's field. Every kid in Cott. Lane was on the wall on the left hand side of Chesterfield Road, next to the entrance to Alec Creswick's field, watching the fair being set up. We never went anywhere near because 'rousterbouts', as we called those travelling with and setting up the fair, were a rough lot. You got a clip on the ear and a kick up the behind from these people. They would just kick you out of the field, but once the fair was opened you could not keep us away.

I would mither and worry my mum and my brothers for money. My brothers used to go to the fair at night. They would be too busy knocking coconuts off to bother with me. After a week it was sad really for children like me, to see the fair pack up and go, as it was like the seaside roundabouts coming to Brimington for a week. I never went on holiday. The first holiday I had, was in 1948 and that was the first week's holiday I ever had.

At the top of Cotterhill Lane was the Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground. Most Brimington people will know the Memorial Gates, Broom Gardens and Manor Drive. But in the 1930s none of the houses now built in these areas existed. The small gate on the left of the Memorial Gates opened and just to the left, was the childrens' playground. Here was a sandpit, swings, and roundabouts.⁶ A little further, just beyond, was the bowling green with a fence around it and I think a privet hedge, and gate. The minute any lad from Cotterhill Lane put a foot in that gate he would be told, in no uncertain terms, to get out. There was no way they were having Cott. Lane lads, with hobnail boots on, anywhere near that bowling green. Tennis courts were built later. There was a football pitch, which we had free use of. On there we would kick around just about anything which was round. Footballs were then very hard to get. We did not have one, so we would play with tennis balls or even tin cans. We would kick a tin can until it was flat, then pick another one up. My mum was always chastising me about my boot toe-caps being scuffed

⁶ For a full description of the ground, with a approximate plan see, A. Sharp, 'Recreation grounds in Brimington', *Brimington and Tipton Miscellany*, number 3 (2011), pp. 16-22.



The Memorial Gates on Manor Road, opposite the top of Cotterhill Lane. The gates were erected in 1925 and at one time fronted the Brimington Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground, itself opened in 1923. Behind is now Broom Gardens – named after a Clerk to the former Chesterfield Rural District Council. The gate on the left opened onto the childrens' play area, beyond was the bowling green, which still survives. (Philip Cousins)

by kicking tin cans. If we could not play football we used to play a game called 'peggy', which did not need a ball. We were bribed to keep off the cricket ground. The club gave us their old bats and pads – pads with one buckle on – but we still played with these.

Another place we used was called the Open Holes, adjoining Westwood. It was here that we would go camping. We never knew who owned the place when we were young,⁷ but that is where two or three days camping took place.

There was a family in Cotterhill Lane who had a tent and you could just squeeze 12 boys and two dogs in it. Down to Westwood we would go. As one of the youngest my job was looking after the fire. As a result we had to go into the woods and get more fire wood. We took sandwiches for the first day; well they had gone the first hour! Then it was to the frying pan. We also had a pan for boiling water. There was a spring in the Open Holes. As I have never visited for years, I do not know if it is still there. You could pick watercress from it, so it was really clean water. Imagine, then, what I looked like when I came home, after two or three days looking after a wood fire. But it was one of the pleasures of camping unsupervised – I never had a wash for two days!

Whilst we were lucky in having the Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground, we had a better playground than that. We had to share it with the lads from Pondwell Corner and those from Hall Road, and that was the grounds of Brimington Hall. I cannot remember it in all its glory, shown in the photograph on the next page, as it was taken down before I was born. The building to the far left was still standing, though, and we managed to find a way in to shelter from the rain. I think this was also the building in which the St. John Ambulance brigade had met, at one time. It is very hard to imagine now, but Brimington Hall stood in these grounds, accessed from Hall Road – which we used to call Back Street.

Besides the left hand side building in the photograph was another small building on the site – a brick built electric substation. This is now incorporated into the outbuilding of Geoff Mellor's house (number 14 Manor Road). I was taught, even when I was a little boy, by my brothers, never to go anywhere near the sub-station as inside it there were 'volts'. I did not know what a volt was, but my brothers said that if we got inside these volts would burn us to death. So we never went anywhere near. At the time a company called, rather grandly, the Brimington Electric Supply Company was purchasing electricity from the Staveley Company for resale in the village. This must have been their sub-station.

⁷ It was owned by Brimington Parish Council, having been originally purchased by Ald. Phipps, a local shopkeeper and prominent councillor. He gifted it to the parish council. Its official name is Phipps Open Holes. It is now owned by Chesterfield Borough Council.

We had electricity at home and school, but twelve house row had no supply. At this time we only used electricity for lighting. Families with a wireless (radio) could also use the electrical supply for it. But those with no electricity had to have a battery operated wireless. The batteries were called accumulators and one would be in use, with a spare on charge at Salmon's garage, in Church Street. The batteries were what we would call 'wet type' (lead acid).



Brimington Hall, pictured prior to 1923. This picture accompanied an article about Brimington by W.T.G. Burr, published in the East Derbyshire Field Club Yearbook of that year. This was not as I remember it. The building on the far left survived into the 1930s but everything to the right of and including the white greenhouse had been demolished by my early days of exploring the grounds.

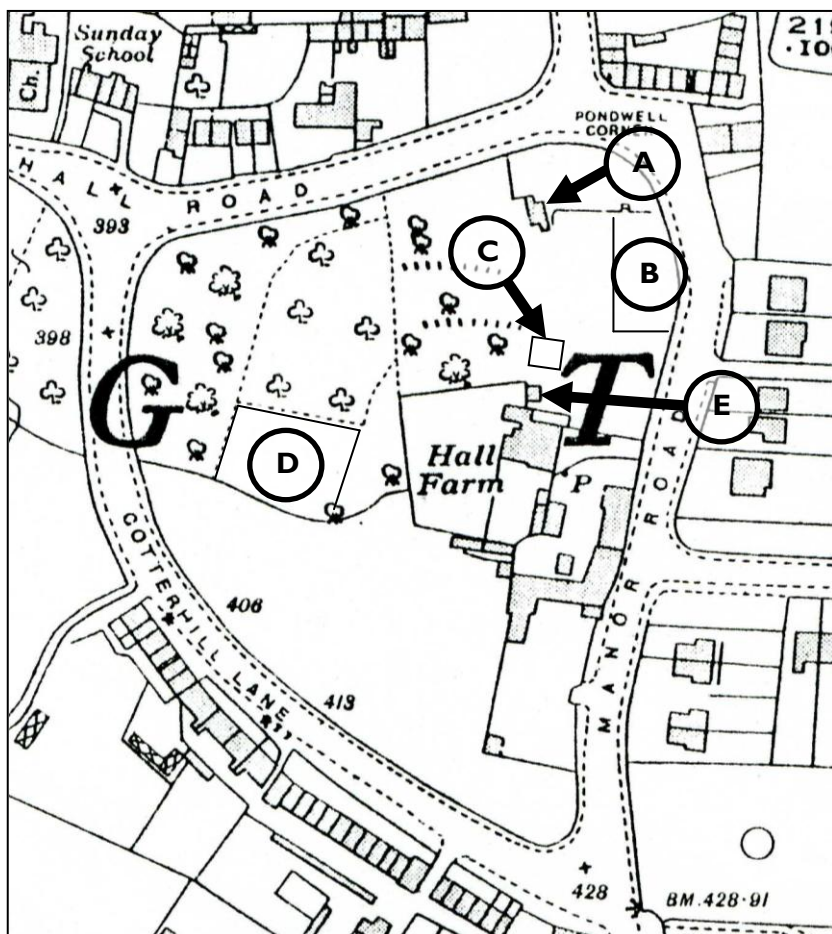
Another building on the old Hall site was a surviving single room stone gardener's shed. Staveley Works used this for the payment of electricity bills. Perhaps they were acting on behalf of the electricity supply company in collecting the money.

These, then, were the only buildings. The rest of the 'park' was ours. The gardens, the old park attached to the house, the old tennis courts – by that time only a flat bit of land down near Cotterhill Lane – were all ours to explore. There was another tennis court adjoining Manor Road, which I remember was topped with red shale. At one time there had been a lawn tennis club in the hall grounds.

We played cricket and had our own pitch and putt course at the hall. The course actually went over Cotterhill Lane, finishing in Alec Creswick's field. Mr Creswick did not know, of course, that we were pitch and putting in his field! The hall grounds were an attraction right from when I was a very, very small boy. I would go into the grounds and play Robin Hood. When we became older we would play all the games of hide and seek that you can mention. There were some marvellous hiding places in there. I remember that the entrance carriageway from the corner of Hall Road and Manor Road still remained. You could still make out the garden lay-out. There had, apparently, been three green houses. You could see the red and black floor tiles were still in place. The only fruit tree still there was a crab apple tree. Some of the ornamental trees were still growing there, a red beech was one. Most of the trees, I expect, had grown too large to be uprooted. You could still see the foundations of the house.

On the tennis courts we played a game called 'duckstone'. I think when my generation goes it will be gone forever. All you needed for duckstone was a household brick and then another stone which you had for a 'duck'. The household brick was stood on its end. Everyone had a duck (about a third of the size of a brick). One of us would place his duck on the top of the upended brick. This person was classed as being 'on' and would stand close to the brick and duck. The others would stand about 15 yards away behind a marked line. From behind the line, by throwing our own ducks, we would try, in turn, to knock the brick and duck down. If, say, about four unsuccessful attempts had been made by the group, those who had been unsuccessful would stand at the side of where their own duck had landed. If

the next one to throw knocked the duck and brick down, the one who was 'on' had to very quickly stand his duck and the house-hold brick back up again. The others had to quickly pick up their ducks and head towards the base-line. Having upended his brick with duck on top, the person 'on' would head towards those retreating. The idea was that he should 'tag' (touch) one of the retreating participants. If no one was tagged the original process would start again, with the original person 'on' remaining so. There was always a danger that during this process the expected 'new' person could tag the outgoing one. If someone was tagged the original person 'on' would retrieve his duck and the new person on would have to stand next to the brick, with his duck placed on top. If no one knocked the duck down there were options on how to progress – but I won't go into these here!



An annotated plan of Brimington Hall grounds from an enlargement of the 25 inch 1938 Ordnance Survey map of Brimington. The items * have been drawn on this map, they are not marked on the original.

Building A was the former gardener's stone shed;

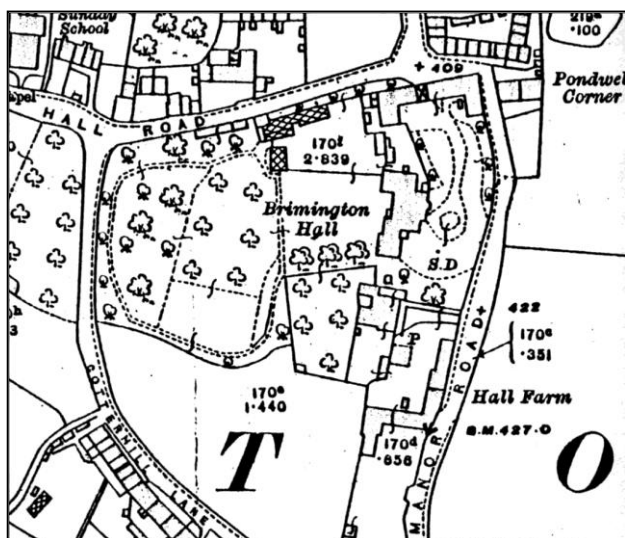
B* – Site of red shale tennis court (I think there was only possibly one here. It was dug up when a water tank was erected on the site during the Second World War);

C* – The remaining part of the hall we used to shelter in from the rain;

D* – Site of original tennis courts. (This was where we played 'duckstone' described in the text. There was a pronounced slope down to this area from the hall).

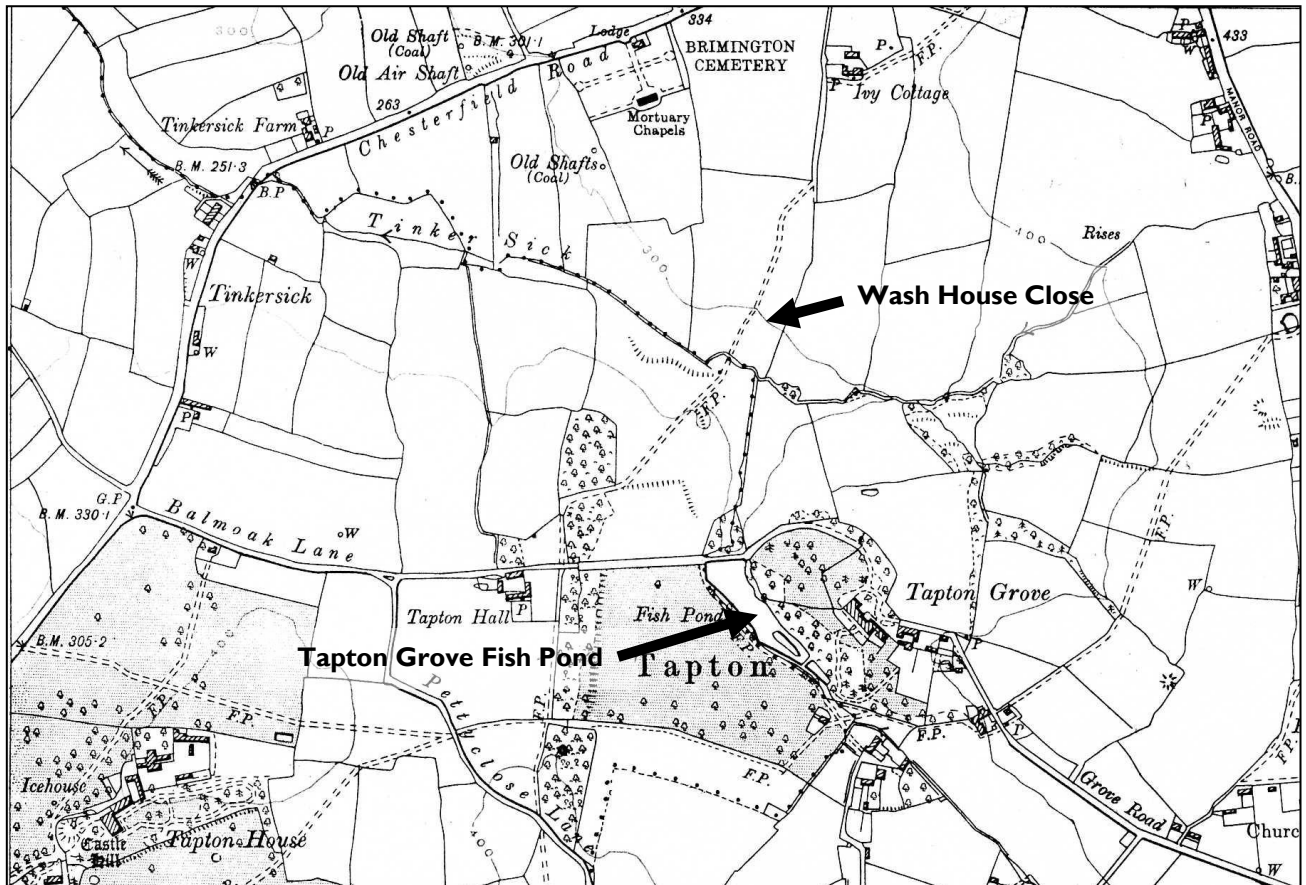
E – The electricity sub-station.

At this time (immediately prior to the Second World War) we could still make out where the flower borders and vegetable gardens had been. (Ordnance Survey, Derbyshire Sheet XVII.15).



An extract from the 1918 equivalent edition. At this date there must have been some uncertainty over the hall, as its last occupant – Henry Westlake – had moved out. Just twenty years later, as witnessed by the top map extract, the hall was mostly a memory. Comparison between the two maps will reveal that Pondwell Corner has been widened by 1938, with new houses constructed on Manor Road. On the hall site the 'S.D.' marks the site of a sundial – long gone when we used to play in the grounds. The hatched buildings are greenhouses. The carriageway entrance from Pondwell Corner is seen. We could clearly make this out in our time. Even in 1918 the name Hall Road appears, though it was still widely known as Back Street by all in Brimington. This was an old name, which appears on the 1876 Ordnance Survey map. (Ordnance Survey, Derbyshire Sheet XVII.15).

The one thing Brimington Hall lacked was water – we never had any water there. To get that we had to go to a place called the Washes. To get there meant a trek over Jubilee Walk, then through the first two fields, which led to Goodwin’s farm field (they farmed from Ivy House Farm, off Chesterfield Road). These fields were always under the plough.



Extract from a 1921 6-inch Ordnance Survey map of Brimington. Although of some 17 to 18 years before my escapades the geographical locations, discussed in the text, remain the same. In my days the Cemetery had been extended into the field beyond the ‘Mortuary Chapels’, with houses built along Chesterfield Road. (Ordnance Survey, Derbyshire Sheet XXV N.E)

Looking at the map above you will see a field marked called Wash House Close. To the bottom of this field (the south end) was a stream. This stream starts from the dammed fishpond to Tapton Grove, but is joined by another at the south-eastern corner of Wash House Close. There really is quite a valley here. Where the footpath crossed the stream was and still is a footbridge. The two streams form Tinker Sick, which is noted on the map. That stream; I have jumped in it, fell in it, jumped in the trees, dammed it so it was nearly big enough to swim in it, fished for sticklebacks in it. In parts there were some deep pools of water where we could sometimes find a nice big fat trout. I was taught by one of the best in the business to ‘tickle trout’ and that was my brother, Jack. You would not want more than two on these types of expeditions, it was even better to be on your own.

Now, where did those trout come from in such a small stream as at The Washes? Shentall’s Pond, officially known as Tapton Grove Fish Pond, illustrated on the next page. In my days there were no trees there at all, or bushes. The top of the wall was an attraction to us. We used to run along it or sit on it, watching the fish there. There is still an outlet below the wall, with a sluice on the pond side. Around that sluice, when I was a boy, was a wrought iron grill, 18 inches high, with, wire netting round it. This



2009 photographs of Tapton Grove Fish Pond. In my day there was not so much in the way of vegetation as there is now, but prying eyes were kept out by a 6 foot lap fence around the pond. Left: we are looking south-easterly from the dam wall, which takes the road up to Tapton Grove, from Balmoak Lane. To the left, on the bank and out of view, was a boat house. Right: The dam wall from the west bank. We used to sit on this wall. The outlet from the pond, described in the text, can be seen towards the centre of the photograph.

was to stop the trout going over. It would get blocked up with leaves, so the gardeners would lift the attached chain and clean the leaves from the wire netting, in order to stop the level of the pond getting too high. Why they never put a lock on it I cannot imagine. We would sit on the wall and watch all the fish jumping out of the water trying to escape. Well, it was natural for boys to help them, so up with the chain and up with the wrought iron grill.

Occasionally we would arrive to find the gates across the entrance closed; to keep the riff-raff out. The pond was surrounded by a 6 foot lap fence on the side of the road that leads down to Crewe Cottage and Tapton Manor. There was a boathouse about mid-way on the east side. This had a lock on it. I don't know why they put a lock on. Well, they didn't trust some people!

When the gates were closed, the pond was completely isolated from public gaze. That meant somebody was fishing. We'd run along the fence until we could find a gap to see Sir Ernest Shentall fishing in his boat. I don't think, though, that it actually was Sir Ernest. Some years later I discovered that it was actually John Charles Shentall who lived there.

I want you to imagine a beautiful summer's day, no wind, tranquil waters, all the little trout making small ripples on the pond; a man fly-fishing where the ripples came from. John Betjeman would have written a lovely poem about it. What he would have said about six kids from Cott. Lane coming to join him I don't know.

When we had found where the man was fishing, all of a sudden there'd be a plop behind the boat. The man would turn round and drop the fly. Three minutes later, plop, fly. Three minutes later, plop, fly. Of course there were no fish. It was just one of our group throwing a stone or pebble over to hit the water behind the boat. Ten minutes of that and boys get bored, so the next minute there would be six half-bricks all round the boat. His fishing was finished for the day. He shouldn't have kept us out! We would have just joined him, sat on the wall and had a nice quiet day fishing with him. After the bricks we'd run. I can never understand to this day why we would run away, because there was no way the fisherman could have got that boat to the bank, climbed a 6 foot fence and even caught me!

After this escapade our next visit would probably be to the golf course. We'd be looking to replenish the golf balls lost in Brimington Hall grounds, playing on our pitch and putt course.

The modern photograph below shows the thirteenth fairway. I've hit hundreds of balls down that fairway, and hit some of them into the hedge. I couldn't have taken this photograph in the 1930s because the hedge was complete. At this time you couldn't walk onto the fairway or indeed access it unless you were a very small boy or a dog. Our group had two of the best golf-ball finders ever known – they were two dogs called Jack and Bob.

Jack was our next-door neighbour's dog. He followed my brother Brian and myself wherever we went. The only time Jack went back next-door was to sleep. But the brains of the pair was Bob, who came from the top of Cotterhill Lane. That dog was so brilliant – you would shout 'egg' and he could go in a hen-hut and fetch an egg without even breaking it. So, golf balls were a doddle.



The 13th fairway on Tapton Golf Course. A favourite spot for golf ball retrieval.

It was on one of these golf ball collecting trips, up near the golf course, we had what, I thought at the time, was a lucky escape from a bull. We were crossing a field. But, we should never have been crossing it; there was no footpath, but it was open access to us. There were eight in the group that day – I was one of the youngest. As we were walking over one of the big boys said; 'There's a bull!' So, eight pairs of sharp eyes looked . . . and we could all tell a bull from a cow. One of the bigger lads suggested; 'Just walk normally, it won't hurt us.' We all started walking normally across the field, with eight pairs of eyes nervously focussing on the bull. Then it started walking towards us, so eight pairs of legs started going faster. And then it broke into a trot, and as far as I was concerned that was it. I revisited the area a long time after, to try and find that field, but I cannot locate it.

My brother Brian was with me on this occasion. He always used to tell the story of how I outpaced him that day. Brian was always charged, as usual, that he must look after his baby brother. There is no way he would have dared to go home and face my mother and say; 'Peter's been gored by a bull'. So, as we were making our escape, he looked round to grab me by the scruff of the neck. To his amazement I went past him. Not bad going for one of the worst runners in Brimington School. I got to the fence and was on the other side, having cleared it without even touching it, or so my brother told me. I can't remember the exact sequence of events, but I do remember being on the other side of that fence watching all the other boys climb it. How I got there I don't know. I do remember this massive bull, chasing these lads, about 15 yards behind them. The bull looked as big as an express train, but I was one of the first over that fence. Once over the fence in safety, in Cott. Lane style, we told the bull what he could do with himself and where he could stuff his copper ring!

Although, for the most part, we amused ourselves, there were organised youth activities in the village in the form of the Scouts, the Cubs, and the Church Lads' Brigade. If you wanted to join the Naval Cadets

or Army Cadets you had to go to Chesterfield. The Air Cadets (A.T.C.) did not start until 1941. I was a member of all the three movements – Cubs, Church Boys' Brigade and the Scouts.

Cubs met in the away dressing room of the cricket ground pavilion on the Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground, at the top of Cotterhill Lane. I only remember two things about my Cub days. One was a trek over to Ashover to see the Ashover Light Railway and the church. The second was how the Union flag is made up and the correct position it must be flown in. I got so irritated when the Union flag was flown upside down. It still irritates me!

Church Lads, Scouts and the Air Training Corps

I can deal with the Church Lads' Brigade very quickly. We used to meet in the Church Hall, on Church Street, but I can't remember on which nights. I was a member for three weeks, but then the Rector, Father McQueen, found out I went to chapel. This was the end of the Church Boys' Brigade for me as you had to attend church to be eligible to join.

I was in the Scouts, though. We met on the green. This is not the 'village green' as we know it today (on Church Street). This green was on Cross Street, between Heywood Street and John Street – where the pair of semi detached houses and the bungalow are. We met in a large wooden structure painted green. As far as I can remember it had one large room. As you looked at the green from Heywood Street the hut was on the left hand side.

The Scout Master was a man from somewhere near Calow. I think he was an Army reservist, but I cannot remember his name. My family was still short of money at the time (this would be around 1939/1940), as most people were. I can remember my shirt. It was a dyed khaki shirt, especially for the Scouts, so I had something to put my badges on. I don't think I ever had a proper Scouts' hat, as we couldn't afford one. We wore shorts as all boys did in those days. You never wore anything else until you went to work, unless a boy was very tall when he may have worn long trousers in his last year at school.

In the build-up to the Second World War I believe the Scout Master was called up. The Scouts gradually started going downhill after that. Later on in the War I think a new troop was started by Father Loughborough but I think it was a Church troop. Father Loughbrough was Rector of Brimington from 1943 until 1951.

In 1941 the Air Training Corps started in Brimington. The Corps met at a few places. Brimington School was one (the only time I went in the metalwork room), where we had lectures. In fact we had lectures all over the place.

In 1942 we obtained a permanent headquarters in John Street. I found a reference to the opening in a War issue of the *Derbyshire Times*;⁸

'On Monday the new headquarters of number 1082 Squadron, Brimington A.T.C., in John Street, were officially opened by F.O.J. Short. Others present were the Rev. D.D. Macqueen (Rector) and Messrs J.T. Holmes, A.W. Black, C.H. Mather and the Chairman (Mr. T.W. Godfrey). Accordion and harmonica solos were played by Cadet Spencer, F. Sgt. Starbuck and Cpl. Murkin, songs given by Sgts. Land and Drury and Cpl. Fry, and a recitation by Cadet Johnson. Mr. J.T. Holmes presented the Squadron Charter and also proficiency certificates to five cadets. F./Lt. W.F. Ransford spoke of the work of the Squadron since its formation.'

⁸ *Derbyshire Times*, 26 June 1942.

Flight Sergeant Tommy Starbuck was our first flight sergeant. There's some others noted too that I remember. Sergeant Gordon Land who rendered a solo song is the same Gordon Land who went on to have the shop on High Street.

The Air Training Corps became the most successful youth organisation this village has ever known. By the time we entered the new headquarters we had an officer called Mr Murray. He and his wife taught dancing. They taught the boys of the A.T.C. to dance. It was this that gave me the confidence to go to the Church Hall every Saturday night to the dance there. Around 1943 to 1945 the band was usually three, four or at the most, five musicians. Frank Lowe would usually play the drums, with his wife on the piano. Frank was a well known Brimington man, serving in the village's auxiliary fire service.

In the hall boys gathered on the right with girls on the left. It was up to the boys to walk across this room and politely ask a girl if she would give you the pleasure of that dance. We dreaded if they ever said no, but they never did – they were too polite! It was standing room only in the Church Hall. If there was a particular girl you wanted to dance with you had to be quick, as other boys would have the same idea, or you were too late.



Frank Lowe, in his war-time auxiliary fire service uniform, to the top right. Well-known in the village, his talents included playing the drums at many dances held in the Church Hall. Mr Robinson is stood top left. Front row L-R we have Stanley Walker, Mr Fox and an unknown warden. Can you help identify who he is? (Brimington and Tipton Local History Group, courtesy J. Walker).

Of course, the A.T.C. did more than teach boys to dance. They promised to make us good citizens; they promised to carry on with our education; they promised to take us on camps with the R.A.F. and they made a promise that we would be able to have the chance to fly. I would think most readers have flown in an aeroplane. Before the war, however, there were 5,000 people in Brimington. Out of that number I would doubt if 20 had ever flown in an aeroplane. Here, then, was an organisation promising that kids from Cott. Lane would have a chance to fly. I was in like a shot. And the A.T.C. kept all those promises.

I was taught a lot of lessons by the A.T.C., some by accident. I particularly remember the camps. These were all at R.A.F. stations, some of them while bombing operations were being carried out. I was talking to Gordon Land just before I originally gave this talk to the local history group. We were discussing which R.A.F. station we first had curry at. This was R.A.F. curry. I've never eaten any curry since. It was somewhere else on an R.A.F. camp that I became a little worse for wear from drinking cider. I've never drunk cider since either!

After a day of training with the R.A.F., at the camps, we went flying with them. At some of the training stations we even taught the R.A.F. lads Morse code, as the A.T.C. lads were better at this than raw recruits.

But I think one of the lessons I really remember well was at one camp. Unfortunately I cannot remember which one. I was only 15 at the time. Our group was mixing with sergeants who were 18. The three year age difference, in my case, doesn't sound much, but there was a vast difference then. At 15 you've just left school, at 18 you're all sergeants. One day you are a sergeant in the Air Training Corps and the next you're in the uniform of His Majesty's Services. Sadly some of them didn't return, so they were men.

After a hard day's work, we bedded down in the big R.A.F. dormitories. One of the sergeants would say; 'Get to sleep you young 'uns.' After 10 minutes; 'Any of you young 'uns still awake?' Well, none of we young ones was daft enough to say 'yes', as there was only one subject the sergeants were going to talk about if they wanted the young ones asleep. That was girls. As 15-year olds we wanted all the knowledge we could get. The sergeants would talk, and my ears would burn listening to what they were saying. When I reached 18, I realised what they had said was 75 percent lies, 20 percent exaggerated and 5 percent the truth! I probably did the same thing when I became a sergeant.



The first permanent home for the A.T.C. in Brimington was on John Street. It probably started life as a workingmen's club. After the A.T.C. moved it was home to the village's branch of the Labour Party. The Brimington Spiritualist Church also used it. The building was sold and then demolished. It is now the site of a pair of semi-detached houses. The wooden-built premises are seen here in October 2005, before demolition the following spring. The premises were much larger in my days with the A.T.C. The right hand side had another bay, almost covering the drive and grass to the right. There was a path – not very wide and to the right – which led to the rear. We had an aeroplane in this rear yard (a Westland Wapiti), which came in about three pieces. This was assembled by the people who brought it. We stepped in to install the smaller items, such as the controls. Walter Burrows writes briefly about his memories of the A.T.C. on pages 66 and 67. (Philip Cousins)

For now, my story of those young days at Cott. Lane is coming to an end. I will end by telling you about the evening my father spoke to me man to man.

I was the same as all the other lads in the A.T.C. As soon as I became 18 I went in the forces. This was in 1945, so the war had finished when I went into training with the Fleet Air Arm. On entering I was 5' 10½", weighing just over 10½ stone. When I came out three years later I was 6' 1½", weighing over 13½ stone. I was a young man, fit as a fiddle. I looked all round for the girls I'd left behind – the girls, for example, that I had danced with at the Church Hall. I'd walked them home, danced and dallied with them, kissed them goodnight by the doorway (they even wrote a song about that). But, they had all gone. They had got married. I had to look in fields afresh. The best place to look was the *Victoria Ballroom* in Chesterfield. So every Saturday night, six or seven of us would meet in the *Butchers Arms*. We would meet other nights for a drink, but Saturday was for the 'Vic'.

The night my father spoke to me I was running late. It was nearly 7 p.m. I was standing in front of the mirror when my father spoke to me. Now, it didn't worry me at the time, but I wondered for years why he chose that particular moment to speak to me.

The photograph below is when I was about 13 or 14. As you can see, my hair did not know what a comb was for. I realised later that is what I was doing when my dad spoke to me – combing my hair. Something must have been triggered in my father's mind by his youngest son combing his hair. It must have meant something to him. Suddenly he said the same words as hundreds of fathers have said beforehand; 'Peter, we do not want any woman trouble coming to this house'. I simply said; 'Alright dad'.

I think he was a bit late with those words, but with those same words at least he knew his youngest son had grown up.



'A kid from Cott Lane'. I was about 13 or 14 years old when this photograph was taken.

SOME BRIMINGTON DOCTORS

Elizabeth Pemberton and Philip Cousins

Foreword

This description of Brimington's doctors originally started as research undertaken by Elizabeth Pemberton. Separately Philip Cousins had a reference to and a photograph of Dr Kenaz Goodall, in a set of late 19th century biographies of county worthies. Philip had also carried out other research on Goodall, along with some other doctors.

It made sense to combine the two sets of research notes so as to describe some of the doctors that have served Brimington over a number of generations.

It is hoped to present another article, at a later date, unravelling the more recent history of doctors in Brimington. We would particularly welcome more information on this.

Introduction

For many years the local doctor – and he was then expected to be local – was one of the chief mainstays of the community.

This article gives some indication of the life and careers of some nineteenth and twentieth century doctors who served and lived in or near Brimington.

In addition to documentary sources, we have been able to call on the reminiscences of some local people. They remember how things used to be in the so-called 'good-old' days, before the advent of the National Health Service. For in days prior to 1948, routine treatment by a doctor would generally have been seen as a luxury for the relatively well-off.

David Bradley

Probably the first of the Brimington doctors was David Bradley. The first reference to a doctor resident in Brimington appears in a directory of 1881. Here we find a David Bradley, M.D. (Doctor of Medicine), resident at Sutton Villa.¹ An 1879 directory does not list a doctor in the village and has a 'Mrs Sarah Shepley' at Sutton Villa.²

Bradley was involved in an unfortunate case of an attempted sexual assault on a woman, at his branch surgery, on Whittington Moor.³ Bradley was convicted at Leicestershire assizes in late 1884 and sentenced to two years hard labour.⁴ There was much support for him in the profession, which led to a petition. Bradley was released in July 1885 as the evidence was found to be unsound.⁵

¹ Kelly, *Directory of Derbyshire*, (1881), p. 993.

² Whites, *Directory of Sheffield*, (1879), p. 67.

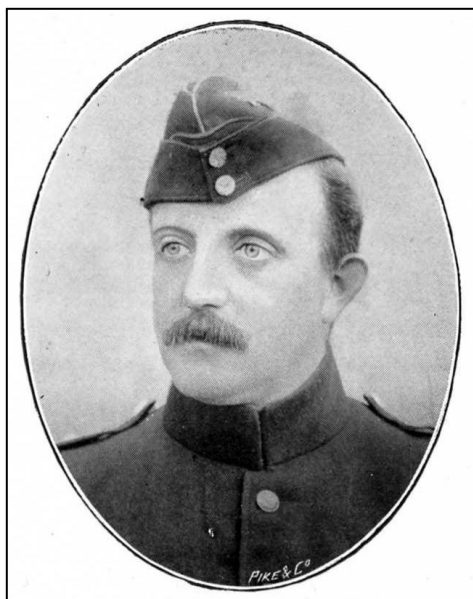
³ *Derby Mercury (DM)*, 13 May 1885.

⁴ *DM*, 22 July 1885.

⁵ *DM*, 29 July 1885 and *British Medical Journal (BMJ)*, 25 July 1885, p. 162.

John Kenaz Goodall

Our next Brimington doctor appears to be John Kenaz Goodall. He was born on 26th October 1859⁶ in Nottingham, the son of Thomas Goodall.⁷ He came to be highly regarded in the area.



Capt. J.K. Goodall from the 1901 publication *Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire at the opening of the twentieth century*.

An entry in *Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire at the opening of the twentieth century* gives a summary of Goodall's life up to the date of that book's publication in 1901. Goodall was educated at Nottingham High School. He became an L.S.A. (Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries of London) at London in 1882; an L.R.C.P. (Licentiate Royal College of Physicians) from Edinburgh; an L.M. (Licentiate of Medicine) in 1884 and a Licentiate Royal College of Surgeons. His career, pre Brimington, had seen him as Assistant House Surgeon and Clinical Assistant at Nottingham General Hospital. He had also served as Pathological Assistant at Charing Cross Hospital in London. Goodall commenced practice at Brimington in 1884.⁸

Kelly's *Directory of Derbyshire* shows Goodall resident at Sutton Lodge in 1888.⁹ The previously available directory entry of 1881, which shows David Bradley, has that doctor's residence at 'Sutton Villa'.¹⁰ It is assumed that Sutton Villa and Sutton Lodge are the same building. Sutton Lodge (number 2, Chesterfield Road) is a Grade II listed building. Though much restored in the late 20th century it incorporates an 18th century facade, with 19th century stone bay windows; to the rear is a date stone with 1787 engraved on it.¹¹ In 1925 Mrs Mary Anne Neale, who was born in the mid 1830s, said that she could remember Sutton Lodge as a candle factory.¹² This may have referred more particularly to the stone stable block, which apparently also had a safe set into the wall, presumed to have been associated with the business.¹³

Returning to Goodall, by 1901¹⁴ he was Medical Officer for the Glapwell Colliery Company and Medical Officer and Public Vaccinator of the Brimington and Heath district for the Chesterfield Board of Guardians. His association with the Board of Guardians may well have commenced in 1885 when he was elected Medical Officer of Health for the Bolsover District.¹⁵ He is also described as medical officer to 'several friendly societies'. Goodall was also vice-chairman, in 1901, of the Brimington School Board.

But his biography in *Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire at the opening of the twentieth century* is not under the 'medical' chapter. Instead he features in the 'military and volunteers' section, being described as 'Captain, "K" company, 2nd Volunteer Battalion Derbyshire Regiment, with nine years service' (in 1901). In fact Goodall had become interested in the volunteer force shortly after coming to Brimington,

⁶ *Census 1901*, The National Archive (TNA), RG 13/3251.

⁷ J.P. Briscoe and W.T. Pike (editor), *Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire at the opening of the twentieth century*, (1901), p. 307.

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ Kelly, *Dir. of Derbs.*, (1888), p. 54.

¹⁰ Kelly, *Dir. of Derbs.*, (1881), p. 993.

¹¹ Department of the Environment, *List of buildings of special architectural or historic interest*, (1977), p. 15.

¹² *Derbyshire Times (DT)*, 7 February 1925.

¹³ Information from the O'Daly family via Mr H. O'Daly, January 2012.

¹⁴ The majority of his career in this paragraph is from Briscoe and Pike, (1901), p. 307.

¹⁵ *DM*, 23 September 1885.

joining them in 1893.¹⁶ He appears to have taken an interest in ‘the noble art of self defence’ in his younger years.¹⁷

In 1901 Dr. Goodall was noted as;

‘...One of the pioneers of the Indian Game Fowl; many birds bred by Dr. Goodall have won prizes in the Colonies and America, and he has taken over 2000 prizes at the Crystal Palace Dairy Show, Birmingham, Liverpool, York, Bristol, Aberdeen, Belfast, Cork, etc.’

Goodall was also Hon. Secretary to the Indian Game Club, being credited as having some fine ‘Homer pigeons, some of which have flown five hundred miles.’ Finally, Goodall was described as ‘one of the largest dahlia growers in Derbyshire, having about two hundred distinct varieties’.¹⁸

The 1911 Census shows that Goodall, then aged 52, had been married to Sarah Elizabeth Kate (aged 45) for 20 years.¹⁹ She was the daughter of William Williamson of The Hall, Burton Joyce, Nottinghamshire.²⁰ *Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire at the opening of the twentieth century* names his wife simply as Kate, so we must assume this was how she was commonly known to her husband.²¹ The 1911 Census gives some insight into Goodall’s domestic circumstances. Living at Sutton Lodge were two general servants. Maggie Smalley was aged 35, with Anne Ward, aged 20. James Brierley, a registered general practitioner was visiting the Goodalls with his wife Florrie Lydia. At his funeral Misses Shemwell and Saxton ‘maids’ are listed as chief mourners, with floral tributes from ‘indoor and outdoor servants’ at Sutton Lodge.²²

As village doctor Goodall would have been expected to take the lead in many organisations. Though not an exhaustive list, in the 1890 to 1895 period we find him as one of the numerous vice presidents of the Brimington Cricket Club,²³ on the School Board,²⁴ President of the Brimington Common Football Club,²⁵ on a committee for ‘technical education’ in Brimington, where he was presumably taking ‘ambulance classes’²⁶ and President of Brimington United Football Club.²⁷ Goodall was also manager on the Chesterfield District Education Committee.²⁸ Mrs Goodall was doing her bit too. She was secretary of the ‘Female Benefit Society’ with her husband acting as their ‘surgeon’.²⁹ In addition to his Brimington duties, Goodall was the first doctor to have practiced in Heath, where he had been visiting from Brimington since 1890.³⁰

To underline the importance of the village doctor, Kelly’s directory of 1912 lists only Goodall along with joiners and builders James Fox & Son, with a telephone in Brimington.³¹

Goodall died on 23 September 1915, aged 56, of heart failure and complications.³² He had apparently been in poor health for over a year, but had worked ‘almost to the last’.³³ By this time, he had risen to

¹⁶ *DT*, 25 September 1915.

¹⁷ *DT*, 2 October 1915.

¹⁸ Briscoe and Pike (1901), p. 307.

¹⁹ *Census* 1911, TNA, RG14PN21106; RG78PN1257.

²⁰ Briscoe and Pike (1901), p. 307.

²¹ *ibid.*

²² *DT*, 2 October 1915.

²³ T.P. Woods, *Almanac 1891*, p. 374.

²⁴ First entry in T.P. Woods *Almanac 1892*, p. 386. He later became vice-chairman.

²⁵ T.P. Woods, *Almanac 1894*, (1893), p. 404.

²⁶ T.P. Woods, *Almanac, 1894*, (1893), p. 404.

²⁷ T.P. Woods, *Almanac, 1895*, (1894), p. 424.

²⁸ *DT*, 2 October 1915.

²⁹ T.P. Woods, *Almanac, 1895*, (1894), p. 426.

³⁰ *DT*, 2 October 2011.

³¹ Kelly, *Dir. Derbs.*, (1912), p. 76.

³² *DT*, 25 September 1915.

³³ *ibid.*

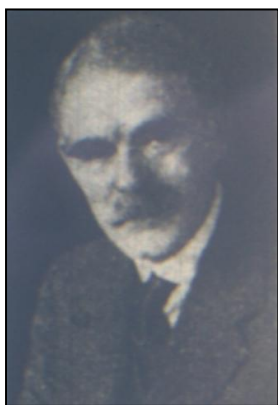
the rank of Major in the 6 Battalion Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Sherwood Foresters, though he did not see active service, due to his general health.³⁴

He was not accorded a full military funeral owing to war conditions, but, according to the *Derbyshire Courier*, ‘. . . the best that could be done was done by the military authorities.’ The cortege included representatives from four friendly societies (Goodall had been particularly active in them), the military and 80 to 100 wounded soldiers. ‘A large crowd gathered between Sutton Lodge and Brimington Cemetery.’ Representatives from the parish council, local traders and the medical profession were present. Goodall’s plain oak coffin was draped with the Union Jack, on top was his cap, sword and belt. His wife and sister are mentioned as being present in the list of mourners.³⁵

The *Derbyshire Times*, in a detailed report, said that the funeral was one of the largest ever to have taken place in Brimington, with several thousand people being present. This was ‘all the more remarkable having regard to the fact that heavy rain fell shortly before the cortege was due to leave the house [Sutton Lodge]’.³⁶ Probate was given on the 13th December 1915 to Mrs Goodall of effects valued at £576. 15s 0d.³⁷ The couple had no children.³⁸

At Goodall’s funeral a Dr. Rorke of Doe Lea is mentioned as his ‘assistant’, but he did not step-in to undertake the practice. Our next village doctor appears to have been Patrick Francis MacGinnis.

Patrick Francis MacGinnis



The best we can do for a picture of Dr. MacGinnis is the above, from his 1933 obituary in the *Derbyshire Times*.

Directories show Patrick Francis MacGinnis³⁹ resident at Sutton Lodge by 1922,⁴⁰ with a last directory entry for him there in 1932.⁴¹

At the latter date MacGinnis is described as an L.M.S.S.A (London) (Licentiate in Medicine and Surgery of the Society of Apothecaries); a Bachelor of Science; Bachelor of Arts and A.R.C.Sc. (Associate of the Royal College of Science).⁴² He received his medical training at the Royal University, Dublin.⁴³ His 1932 directory entry also describes him as a physician and surgeon, ‘medical officer & public vaccinator Brimington district, Scarsdale Area Guardians Committee & hon. Pathologist to Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Royal Hospital.’⁴⁴ The medical officer and public vaccinator role was also held by his predecessor – J.K. Goodall.⁴⁵ During his period at the Royal Collage of Science MacGinnis had carried out some research work.⁴⁶

MacGinnis’s 1933 *Derbyshire Times* obituary⁴⁷ states that he was in practice at Brimington for about 16 years (making a start date of around 1917). The newspaper stated that having lived at Sutton Lodge, MacGinnis had moved ‘a few years ago’ to Murray House, Tapton (now the club house for Tapton Golf

³⁴ *DT*, 2 October 1915.

³⁵ This paragraph from *Derbyshire Courier*, 2 October 1915.

³⁶ *DT*, 2 October 1915.

³⁷ England & Wales National Probate Calendar, (1915) [on-line] at URL www.ancestor.com-Death

³⁸ *DT*, 25 September 1915.

³⁹ The surname is sometimes used interchangeably with McGinnis.

⁴⁰ Kelly, *Dir. Derbs.*, (1922), p. 73.

⁴¹ Kelly, *Dir. Derbs.*, (1932), p. 77.

⁴² Kelly, *Dir. Derbs.*, (1932), p. 78.

⁴³ *DT*, 21 October 1933.

⁴⁴ Kelly, *Dir. Derbs.*, (1932), p. 78.

⁴⁵ For example, Kelly *Dir. Derbs.*, (1912), p. 76.

⁴⁶ *DT*, 21 October 1933.

⁴⁷ *ibid*, from which this entire paragraph is sourced.

Club). Dr MacGinnis's position of honorary pathologist at the Royal Hospital had been made in 1919, but he had resigned owing to ill health in 1932 whereupon he then accepted the position of honorary consulting pathologist and bacteriologist at the hospital.

MacGinnis was obviously well-known in the area. He drove a little Wolsley car and was, apparently, known for wearing large boots.⁴⁸ MacGinnis was married to Mary Josephine (nee Kelly).⁴⁹ They had six children.⁵⁰

Dr MacGinnis established the 'Dr. MacGinnis Female Society' in Brimington. For example, in 1933, this group is recorded as meeting in the Church Hall every fourth Monday.⁵¹ MacGinnis was also a divisional surgeon to the village's St. John Ambulance Brigade⁵² and a member of the Brimington Tradesmen's Committee.⁵³

In the early 1930s the MacGinnis family established a private Catholic Chapel at Sutton Lodge. According to *Chesterfield, Church of the Annunciation: a celebration of 150 years – 1854 to 2004* this was served from the Catholic Church at Staveley, but closed in 1933 when the old church in that place was replaced by St. Joseph's.⁵⁴ Another account,⁵⁵ however, has it that the chapel (which was established in the stone stable block) was opened by Mrs MacGinnis to help those in the area who would normally have to travel to the old church in Duke Street, Staveley. This chapel was served from Spinkhill; Dr MacGinnis collecting and returning a Jesuit priest every Sunday from that place. The two accounts do agree that the chapel was closed upon the opening of St Joseph's. The chapel has a subsequent history under the O'Dalys.⁵⁶ It was Mrs MacGinnis who brought the Presentation Nuns to Matlock.⁵⁷ In 1937 she further established the Daughters of Divine Charity at the convent and school on Newbold Road, Chesterfield.⁵⁸

Of Dr MacGinnis's sons Patrick Niall, who was born in Dublin on 29 March 1913, is probably the most interesting. Educated at Stonyhurst College, Lancashire, then studying medicine at Dublin University, he subsequently qualified as a house surgeon, serving as a surgeon in the Royal Navy during the Second World War. This MacGinnis (he was usually referred to as Niall) also had a prolific acting career, with some 80 screen appearances. His entry in the Internet Movie Database describes him as:

'...not as well known outside of Europe, but he was a wonderful character actor whose variety of roles matched his great gift for characterization and the look beyond just makeup that he projected.

*He worked in stage repertoire and stock companies and moved on to do significant stage work at the Old Vic Theatre in London, where John Gielgud was director and Shakespeare was a particular focus. MacGinnis had the burley look of a farm hand with a large head and curly hair falling away from a progressively receding hairline. He could portray a broad enough accent - or little at all, as the case might be – which could entail any part of the British Isles.'*⁵⁹

⁴⁸ Information in this paragraph is from Mrs Knights, May 2011.

⁴⁹ *England & Wales, Birth Index: 1916-2005* [on-line] last visited, 21 May 2011 at URL:

<http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8782>

⁵⁰ *ibid.*

⁵¹ T.P. Wood, *Almanac 1934*, (1933), p. 171.

⁵² *ibid.*

⁵³ *DT*, 21 October 1933.

⁵⁴ *Chesterfield, Church of the Annunciation: a celebration of 150 years – 1854 to 2004*, (2004), pp. 15-16.

⁵⁵ Information from the O'Daly family via Mr H. O'Daly, January 2012.

⁵⁶ See chapter on O'Daly, below.

⁵⁷ *Chesterfield, Church of the Annunciation: a celebration of 150 years – 1854 to 2004*, (2004), pp. 15-16.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁹ [On-line] last visited 14 July, 2011 at URL <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0532277/bio>.

Niall's first foray into films appears to have been in 1935. His more famous film roles included 'a not very dedicated Nazi Sailor'⁶⁰ in the British Second World War film *49th Parallel* with Laurence Olivier, Leslie Howard, Eric Portman and Raymond Massey. He portrayed Captain Mac Morris in Oliver's 1944 *Henry V*. In the 1953 film *Martin Luther* he played the title role. Perhaps his most famous role, though, was in the 1957 cult horror *Night of the Demon*. Here he played the villainous Julian Karswell. 1963 saw MacGinnis playing Zeus in *Jason and the Argonauts*. In 1969 he had a supporting role in John Houston's *The Kremlin Letter*.⁶¹

As he was a qualified physician, Niall was able to return to practice in the 1970s, after he retired from acting. He died from cancer, aged 63 at Newport, Wales in January 1977. He had been married twice.⁶²

Other off-spring from the MacGinnis' were:

- Edward J. MacGinnis, born in 1916 at Chesterfield. Edward worked at Staveley works and later at Markhams.⁶³
- Una R. MacGinnis, born 1918, died Chesterfield 1926.⁶⁴
- Dermot M. McGinnis, born 1920, Chesterfield.⁶⁵
- Francis R. MacGinnis, born 1924, Chesterfield.⁶⁶ He had a disguised diplomatic career, tragically dying in a car crash in 1993, aged 69.⁶⁷
- Frederick A. MacGinnis, born 1928, Chesterfield.⁶⁸ A pilot, he served in the U.S. Air force, piloting B47 jet bombers.⁶⁹

Doctor Patrick Francis MacGinnis died on 14 October 1933, at St Albans Hotel, Sandy Cove, Kingstown, County Dublin. He had been in ill-health for two years. A short time before his death he had joined his wife and family who were on holiday in Ireland. The funeral was held in Kingstown.⁷⁰ Probate was granted on 19 December 1933 to May Josephine MacGinnis (widow) of effects valued at £10581:18s.⁷¹

A feature of the time was the availability of doctors registered to medical agencies. As most doctors were single handed it was a useful resource – enabling doctors to obtain extra help (locums) when needed. This is still a resource available today. Dr MacGinnis had employed a doctor who was to undertake locum work for him, but he suddenly died. Dr Francis O'Daly, had been undertaking locum work in Grimsby, Co. Durham and south Wales and was a friend of the deceased doctor. O'Daly stepped in as the deceased doctor's replacement.⁷²

⁶⁰ [On-line] last visited 14 July 2011 at URL: http://www.enotes.com/topic/Niall_MacGinnis.

⁶¹ Information in this paragraph largely from *ibid*.

⁶² Information in this paragraph from [On-line] last visited 14 July 2011 at URL: http://www.enotes.com/topic/Niall_MacGinnis.

⁶³ *England & Wales, Birth Index: 1916-2005* [on-line] last visited, 21 May 2011 at URL: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8782> and information from Mrs Knights, Brimington, April 2011.

⁶⁴ *England & Wales, Birth Index: 1916-2005* [on-line] last visited, 21 May 2011 at URL: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8782>. It is thought she may have died from drinking contaminated water, whilst in Germany. Information from Mrs Knights, April 2011.

⁶⁵ *England & Wales, Birth Index: 1916-2005* [on-line] last visited, 21 May 2011 at URL: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8782>.

⁶⁶ *ibid*.

⁶⁷ Information from the O'Daly family via Mr H. O'Daly, January 2012 and [On-line] last visited 23 January 2012 at URL: <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/07/31/obituaries/f-r-macginnis-69-retired-british-envoy.html>.

⁶⁸ *England & Wales, Birth Index: 1916-2005* [on-line] last visited, 21 May 2011 at URL: <http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=8782>.

⁶⁹ Information from the O'Daly family via Mr H. O'Daly, January 2012.

⁷⁰ Information in this paragraph from *DT*, 21 October 1933. According to the O'Daly family, Dr McGinnis, who was a diabetic, caught typhoid from drinking contaminated water in France. They also believe that he died at Derby railway station, though the *DT* report states that his death occurred at Kingstown.

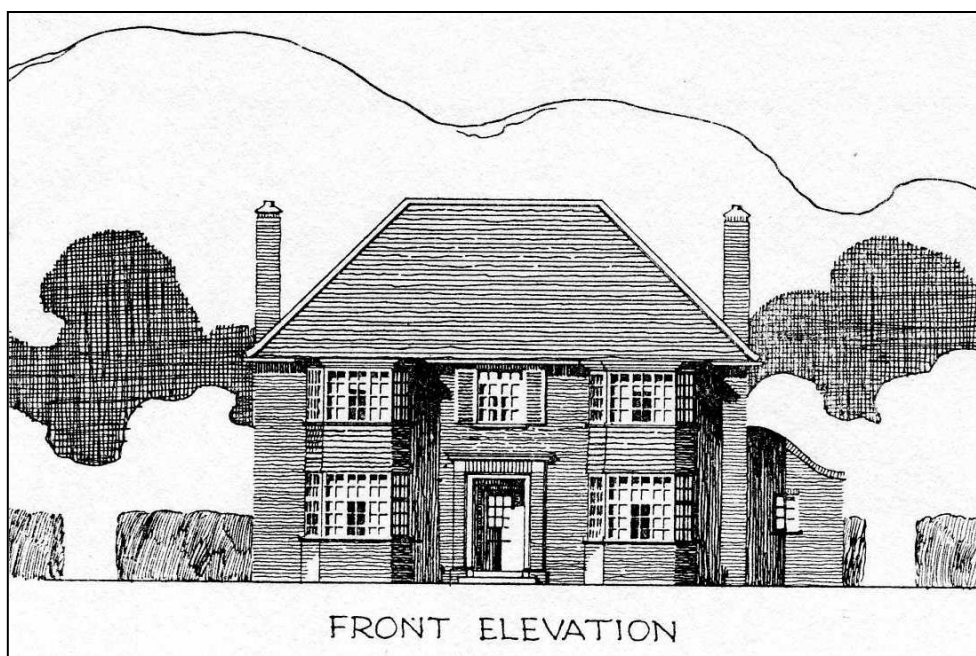
⁷¹ *England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1861-1941* [on-line] last visited 21 May 2011 at URL: <http://search.ancestry.co.uk/search/db.aspx?dbid=1904>.

⁷² Information from the O'Daly family via Mr H. O'Daly, January 2012.

Francis O'Daly

Dr Francis O'Daly subsequently worked as MacGinnis's assistant.⁷³ According to Dr O'Daly's *British Medical Journal (B.M.J.)*⁷⁴ obituary he was the resident doctor in Brimington from 1925 to 1968. We know O'Daly was in partnership with MacGinnis at that doctor's death in 1933.⁷⁵ It was natural, therefore, that O'Daly purchased the practice from Mrs MacGinnis.⁷⁶ Contemporary directories do not list O'Daly at Sutton Lodge until 1936⁷⁷ and the *Medical Register* for 1927 has him at Lurgahamia house Shantonagh, Co. Monaghan.⁷⁸

O'Daly first appears locally, at Hollingwood, in Kelly's directory of 1928,⁷⁹ where he was 'the first resident doctor for the employees and their families'⁸⁰ of the Staveley Coal and Iron Company. The Industrial Housing Association was constructing a housing estate for that company, where 'quite a number of houses' were completed in 1925.⁸¹ The development appears to have been largely finished in 1927.⁸² Dr. O'Daly lived⁸³ at what was then 45 Private Drive.⁸⁴ Here he worked as MacGinnis's assistant running the part of the practice he was responsible for – Hollingwood from the new house and New Whittington, from the church hall in Wellington Street.⁸⁵



Dr O'Daly initially lived in this house on Private Drive, Hollingwood. Along with the rest of the estate this was constructed by the Industrial Housing Association for the Staveley Coal and Iron Company in the 1920s. This contemporary illustration is taken from John Tudor Walter's 1927 book *The Building of Twelve Thousand Houses*.

⁷³ Information from the O'Daly family via Mr H. O'Daly, January 2012.

⁷⁴ *BMJ*, 320 : 1409, 20 May 2000 [on-line] last visited 14 January 2011 at URL: <http://www.bmj.com/content/320/7246/1409.full#article-title-9>. Hereafter *B.M.J.* (May 2000).

⁷⁵ *DT*, 21 October 1933.

⁷⁶ Information from the O'Daly family via Mr H. O'Daly, January 2012.

⁷⁷ Kelly, *Dir. Derbs.*, 1938, p. 77. The previously available directory of 1932 lists MacGinnis.

⁷⁸ *Medical Register* for 1927, p. 199. [On-line] last visited 21 May 2011 at URL www.ancestry.org.

⁷⁹ Kelly, *Dir. Derbs.*, 1928, p. 404.

⁸⁰ *B.M.J.* (May 2000).

⁸¹ S. Berresford, 'Some Notes on the History of the Staveley Company', *Staveley Company Magazine*, vol. 3, number 5, March 1929, p. 137.

⁸² *DT*, 29 January 1927.

⁸³ J. Tudor Walters, *The building of twelve thousand houses*, (1927). Plate XLIII. The plate illustrates an attractive detached house (reproduced herein), with plans showing five first floor bedrooms, ground floor with separate drawing and dining rooms, kitchen, scullery and hall. A waiting room, consultation room and dispensary, though integral to and connected with the house, had a separate entrance. There was also an integral garage.

⁸⁴ Kelly, *Dir. Derbs.*, (1928), p. 404. Private Drive appears to have been subsequently renumbered.

⁸⁵ Information from the O'Daly family via Mr H. O'Daly, January 2012.

Upon Dr MacGinnis becoming ill and his consequent move from Sutton Lodge to Murray House, Dr O'Daly moved into Sutton Lodge, but it had been empty for two years with only a caretaker in charge.⁸⁶ Dr O'Daly purchased the Brimington practice, having literally heard of MacGinnis's death whilst on his way to purchase another practice.⁸⁷

In 1941 Matthew Francis O'Neill is noted at number 45 Private Drive – 'firm, O'Daly & O'Neill', an obvious partnership between the two.⁸⁸ Dr O'Daly had sold a half share of the practice to Dr O'Neill. They then had patients as far apart as Mastin Moor and Heath. Dr O'Daly and Dr O'Neill had previously worked together at the Coombe Maternity Hospital in Dublin.⁸⁹

Dr O'Daly had been born on 9 January 1903 at Castellany, County Monaghan, Ireland. He qualified at the National University of Ireland in 1921. O'Daly had a long 'reign' at Brimington, where he stayed until retirement in 1968. He died on 5 January 2000.⁹⁰



As might be expected, Dr O'Daly was especially busy during the Second World War. He is pictured as the left-hand suited male on the second row from the bottom, next to Mr Edgar Garrard (or Garrod) who was in charge of the first aid post at the Church Hall. Here are the A.R.P. (Air Raid Precaution) wardens, who were based at Brimington Church Hall, along with A.R.P. auxiliary nurses. The photograph is taken in the yard at the Devonshire Street, Brimington Central Schools. (Brimington and Taptan Local History Group collection).

During the Second World War O'Daly trained personnel and organized equipment and supplies for the local Air Raid Precaution posts. He also helped with the welfare of educated families from East London. For many years he was lecturer and examiner for the St John Ambulance Brigade and was made an

⁸⁶ *ibid.*

⁸⁷ Information from the O'Daly family via Mr H. O'Daly, January 2012.

⁸⁸ Kelly, *Dir Derbs.*, (1941), p. 412.

⁸⁹ Except where separately referenced information in this paragraph from the O'Daly family via Mr H. O'Daly, January 2012.

⁹⁰ *B.M.J.* (May 2000).

officer in the Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in 1954.⁹¹ In succession to Dr MacGinnis, O'Daly was divisional surgeon to the village's St. John Ambulance Brigade.⁹² O'Daly was also treasurer to the Brimington Old People's Treat,⁹³ where he played a leading role. For sometime O'Daly appears to have carried on the 'Female Society' started by Dr MacGinnis. T.P. Woods *Almanac* for 1934,⁹⁴ published towards the end of 1933 (the year of MacGinnis's death) lists a society in MacGinnis's name. The year after we find the 'Dr. F. O'Daly Female Society', still meeting in the Church Hall.⁹⁵ The last entry for this society is in T.P. Woods *Almanac* published towards the end of 1935.⁹⁶

The O'Daly's had ten children. A son and a daughter became doctors but they did not practice in Brimington. One son (Francis) became a dentist. He had a building constructed at the side of Sutton Lodge – now off Bradley Way (which was constructed later). Dr. O'Daly would attend his son's practice to anaesthetise patients, when this was needed.⁹⁷ Mr S. Hartley took over this practice in 1969.⁹⁸

Waiting for the doctor in the surgeries of old was not like the sophisticated mini-health centres of today. Dr. O'Daly had what can best be described as an outbuilding slightly detached from the house. One approached the building from a driveway off Chesterfield Road.

Elizabeth Pemberton, in the 1950s, remembers this building. One room comprised the waiting room, which was filled with benches around three sides and very uncomfortable wooden chairs, in two rows, in the middle.⁹⁹ No receptionist, no appointments, no lights indicating the doctor was engaged or free. Those waiting knew somebody was in and when somebody came out and it was your turn, you simply went in. People moved seats when someone went into the surgery; you had to take notice of who was there before you, so you knew it was your turn. The second room was the doctor's surgery, where you would enter to be greeted by Dr. O'Daly. You would then explain your symptoms. If necessary an examination would follow. Dr O'Daly would then explain what was wrong with you; advising what do and/or prescribe medicine. Then you simply went on your way. Dr O'Daly used to prescribe and formulate most of his own medicine; this was undertaken in a third room.¹⁰⁰

Elizabeth can remember visiting the surgery, not having been for sometime. On telling Dr. O'Daly her name he answered; 'Once seen never forgotten'. From that time she realised that he knew all his patients. Elizabeth remembers Dr O'Daly as being very dedicated. Her Auntie was once very ill – he stopped at her house nearly all day until he could get her into hospital.

Dr O'Daly reopened the former private chapel (originally established by Dr MacGinnis) during the Second World War, due to travel difficulties faced at the time. The chapel was served by the priest from Staveley. Sometime after it was deconsecrated and used it as a fruit storeroom.¹⁰¹

After his formal retirement Dr O'Daly did social security and locum work, enjoying golf and studying history, but was predeceased by his wife, Elizabeth.¹⁰² Sutton Lodge was sold to brewing company Whitbreads in 1968, following his retirement. The brewers had some thoughts about turning the house and garden into a public house with restaurant facilities (we think this activity was branded at the time as

⁹¹ Information in this paragraph from *BMJ* (May 2000).

⁹² T.P. Wood, *Almanac 1934*, (1933), p. 171.

⁹³ T.P. Wood, *Almanac 1940*, (1939), p. 147.

⁹⁴ T.P. Wood, *Almanac 1934*, (1933), p. 170.

⁹⁵ T.P. Wood, *Almanac 1935*, (1934), p. 188.

⁹⁶ T.P. Wood, *Almanac 1936*, (1935), p. 182.

⁹⁷ Information from Mrs J. Crossley, Brimington, January 2012.

⁹⁸ Except where separately referenced information in this paragraph from the O'Daly family via Mr H. O'Daly, January 2012.

⁹⁹ We are grateful to Mr Peter Harrison and Mrs Sybil Jackson, Brimington, for supplementing reminiscences on this point.

¹⁰⁰ Information from Mr R. Packwod, Brimington, December 2011.

¹⁰¹ Information in this paragraph from the O'Daly family via Mr H. O'Daly, January 2012.

¹⁰² *B.M.J.*(May 2000).

‘Roadhouse’). At the same time as the house and garden were sold, the orchard and vegetable garden were purchased by the local authority for housing. Dr O’Daly retired to Holme Hall, until his wife died. He then moved to the midlands and thence back to Whittington Moor.¹⁰³

Dr. O’Daly is buried in Brimington Cemetery. His wife is buried beside him. She is buried with the couple’s first son who tragically died very young.¹⁰⁴ Dr O’Daly might well be regarded as the last of a particular line of village doctors – with his feet firmly in the village, surgery nearby and largely self managed.

Subsequent Doctors

We need to carry out more research to determine what happened to Brimington doctors within living memory. We would welcome more information on this. Briefly, however, Dr O’Daly was joined by Dr John Diamuid Ryan in 1950, from a hospital position in Penzance.¹⁰⁵ This was due to the increasing work-load experienced in the practice.¹⁰⁶ When the National Health Service was created in 1948 everyone had to register with a doctor. The practice had some 12,000 patients – far more than was allowed.¹⁰⁷ During the 1950s Brimington also saw a large council house building programme and the establishment of the Coal Industries Housing Association estate.¹⁰⁸

Dr Ryan was born in 1920 at Castlebar, Ireland and died on 30 January 2000, having at some-time been a chairman of the Chesterfield Division of the British Medical Association.¹⁰⁹ He is buried near Dr Francis O’Daly, in Brimington Cemetery.¹¹⁰

Dr Ryan’s family home was the last detached house on East Moor Road, where, after some time, he opened a branch surgery for Calow.¹¹¹ The practice now had surgeries in New Whittington, Hollingwood, Brimington and Brimington Common (East Moor Road).¹¹²

Entirely new surgery premises were constructed on Church Street, Brimington, in the late 1960s.¹¹³ Dr Ryan had arranged for these to be built with the then Chesterfield Rural District Council.¹¹⁴ Here were purpose built consulting rooms, waiting rooms and reception area. The three doctors especially associated with this practice were:

- The aforementioned Dr Ryan.
- Dr Quinn, who lived in Gladstone Road, Chesterfield. He joined the practice from the Sheepbridge Company’s medical centre when Dr O’Daly retired.¹¹⁵
- Dr Leary, who lived at Oak Close Brimington. He came to the practice when Dr O’Neill retired from Hollingwood.¹¹⁶

We leave our story of Brimington’s doctors at this stage. Suffice to say that in 2011 there are two practices based in Brimington.

¹⁰³ Except where separately referenced information in this paragraph from the O’Daly family via Mr H. O’Daly, January 2012.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Information from the O’Daly family via Mr H. O’Daly, January 2012.

¹⁰⁶ Information from Mr. H. O’Daly, January 2012.

¹⁰⁷ Information from the O’Daly family via Mr H. O’Daly, January 2012.

¹⁰⁸ P.J. Cousins, *Brimington: the changing face of a Derbyshire village*, (1995), p. 39.

¹⁰⁹ *BMJ*, 22 July 2000. [On-line] last visited 14 January 2011 at URL: <http://www.bmj.com/content/321/7255/243>

¹¹⁰ Information from Mr. H. O’Daly, January 2012.

¹¹¹ Information from the O’Daly family via Mr H. O’Daly, January 2012.

¹¹² *ibid.*

¹¹³ The exact date is not known and requires further research.

¹¹⁴ Information from the O’Daly family via Mr H. O’Daly, January 2012. See p.5 above for a description of the library adjacent.

¹¹⁵ Information from the O’Daly family via Mr H. O’Daly, January 2012.

¹¹⁶ Information from Mrs G. Cooper, Brimington, December 2011.

The Brimington Surgery, on Church Street, currently has five practicing doctors (one of these part-time), reception and administration staff, and a nursing team.¹¹⁷ The late 1960s building was replaced in the mid 1990s and recently further extended.

The Calow and Brimington practice serves both communities. A modern building in Foljambe Road serves as the Brimington base, with a building on Rose Avenue at Calow (which has less hours than at Brimington). There are three doctors, plus an 'associate doctor' at this practice.¹¹⁸ There is the now usual supporting reception, administration and nursing teams.

Other Doctors

Not that Brimington based doctors had it all to themselves. By 1932 Dr MacGinnis was competing, if that is the right word, for patients in New Brimington. 'Miller, Duthrie & McFarland, physcns & surgns. (attend daily 11 to 11.30 a.m.),' had a surgery in Queen Street at this date.¹¹⁹

In 1936 Duthrie, McFarland and Jeffrey were attending;¹²⁰ in 1941 we have an additional doctor – Dornan – practicing from the surgery at 34 Queen Street.

Elizabeth Pemberton remembers Dr McFarland's surgery in New Brimington, at the bottom of Brockhill/Princess Street. This was presumably that established around 1932. In reality this was a glorified shed. McFarland's main surgery was on Whittington Moor.

Conclusion

As health needs and expectations increased, along with the population, the village doctor became much more multifaceted. Gone were the days when a doctor, with support from a partner and perhaps a secretary, could manage the medical needs of a community such as Brimington. Today's modern practices are mini-health centres, some performing small operations that only 20 years or so ago would have been the province of hospitals.

Perhaps the wheel has come full cycle in this respect. Doctor Bradley would himself have been expected to perform operations. But today the modern practice, with its emphasis on health prevention and promotion, purpose built premises, associated health professionals and administration teams are truly a world away from the times of Drs Bradley, Goodall, MacGinnis and even O'Daly.

Acknowledgements

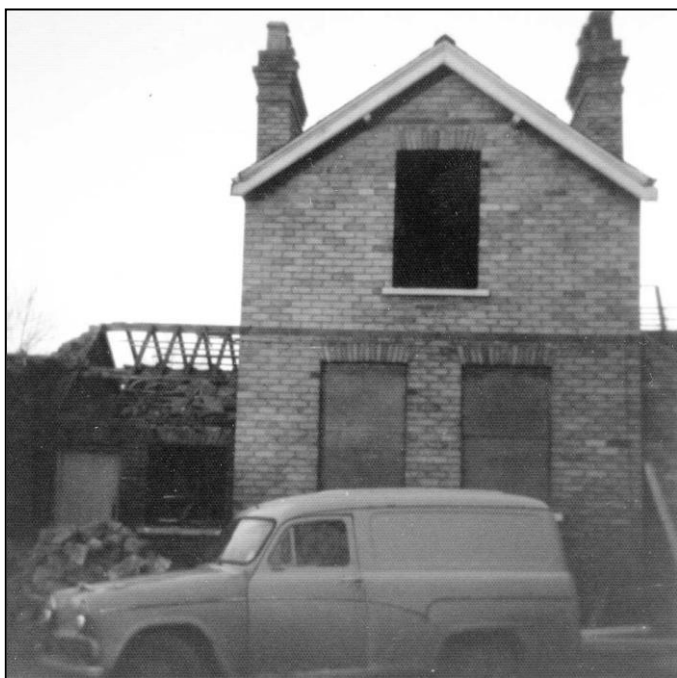
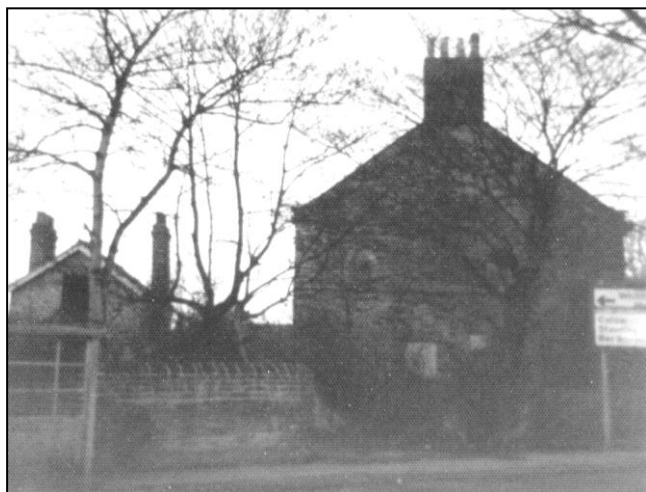
We are grateful to members of our local history group's 'Tuesday reminiscences' sessions who have contributed personal memories of some of the more recent doctors. We hope that they and others have received recognition for their valuable input in the footnotes. A particular thanks to the O'Daly family, in particular Mr H. O'Daly. As is usual in local history research, our thanks to the staff at Chesterfield Local Studies Library.

¹¹⁷ [On-line] last visited 18 November 2011 at URL: <http://www.brimingtonsurgery.co.uk/doctors.htm>

¹¹⁸ [On-line] last visited 18 November 2011 at URL: http://www.calbrimdocs.co.uk/practice_team.htm

¹¹⁹ Kelly, *Dir. Derbs.*, (1932), p. 78.

¹²⁰ Kelly, *Dir. Derbs.*, (1936), p. 77.



Though these are not particularly good pictures (being taken with a small pre-digital era compact camera) they are the best we currently have of Sutton Lodge, just before restoration, unless someone can help us. Indeed, demolition has begun on some of the outbuildings in these 28 December 1976 views. Prior to this the building had been owned by Whitbread East Pennines Ltd., who may have had some thoughts about conversion into a public house. The Derbyshire Times of 30 January 1976 reports that the Secretary of State for Environment had upheld a building preservation notice on Sutton Lodge. At the time its poor condition was causing concern to the borough council.

Above left: the view of the Chesterfield Road elevation, showing the first floor extension to the right of the main building. This was demolished as part of the restoration to be replaced with another.

Above right; the end gable of the 1787 building which still survives.

Left: A closer view of the outbuilding shown to the far left in the above photograph. (All Philip Cousins).



The 1970s renovation, though extensive, was an obvious success, as this January 2010 view of Sutton Lodge shows. Now officially known as 'Sutton Court Lodge' this building currently provides personal care and support for seven people with learning disabilities. The service is provided by Enable Care and Home Support Ltd.



This new surgery, in Church Street, was constructed sometime in the late 1960s or early 1970s. It accommodated Drs Ryan, Leary and Quinn. Demolished in the autumn of 1994, it was replaced by the present building, itself recently extended. (Philip Cousins).

PRISONERS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR CAPTURED AT BRIMINGTON

Philip Cousins, with information from the late Alan Wetton

Foreword

In January 1996 Mr R.W.A. Wetton sent the author an account of the capture, on the 30 September 1917, of four First World War German prisoners.

Alan Wetton had been the proprietor of Wetton's funeral and motor coaching business on Ringwood Road.¹ He had retired some years earlier to the Costa Del Sol.² Mr Wetton died in 2004 at the age of 96.³

Mr Wetton's account adds some detail to the event briefly recorded in Vernon Brelsford's *History of Brimington . . .*⁴ and in T.P. Woods *Almanacs* of the period.⁵ The author has taken the opportunity to add contemporary newspaper accounts and other detail to that of Alan Wetton's.

Newspaper and Other Accounts

One might expect that due to War restrictions, the event was not very well reported in the local newspapers of the time. But this is not the case. The *Derbyshire Times* ran a lengthy article 'Escaped Germans, Last Four Captured at Brimington. Prompt Police and Civilian Action'. This included a lengthy interview with one of those involved in the capture – Albine Stott.⁶ In addition, the *Derbyshire Courier* ran a front page article on the escape.⁷

Both newspapers give some background to the prisoners. They were amongst a total of 22 who had escaped from Sutton Bonington Camp, Nottinghamshire. The village is situated in the south-west corner of that county, near the Leicestershire and Derbyshire border.

Sutton Bonington camp was the requisitioned Midland Agricultural and Dairy College, situated in that parish. German officers were held there from the summer of 1916 until 1918.⁸ Sutton Bonington thrives today as the one of The University of Nottingham's three UK campuses. The establishment acts as the teaching and research centre of the University's School of Biosciences, along with that at University Park, Nottingham.

The school's website traces the history of the Sutton Bonington facility, mentioning the escape of the German prisoners of war;

In a letter from the Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire to the Under Secretary of State, the Home Office on 1 October 1917 he reports that "at 4.30am on the 25 September 1917, a Sergeant Richards and his men had re-captured three escaped POWs; Lieuts Lutz, Lehmann and Landsberg who had escaped, along with nineteen more, from the camp at Sutton Bonington." They had escaped through a narrow tunnel which they had made underneath the barbed wire enclosure. Soil from an escape tunnel was later found hidden under the floor of tiered lecture room in the Main Building (now Lecture Room 1). They had been caught in the West Bridgford area of

¹ For a brief account of this business see P.J. Cousins (editor) *Brimington: the changing face of a Derbyshire village*, (1995), p. 52.

² At the time Mr Wetton wrote the article he gave his address as La Cigala, Puerto De La Duquesa, Manilva, Costa Del Sol, Spain.

³ *Derbyshire Times*, 25 March 2004, p. 51. He died in St Bernard's Hospital, Gibraltar.

⁴ V. Brelsford, *History of Brimington from the Doomsday Survey to 1937*, (1937), p. 69.

⁵ For example T.P. Wood, *Almanac 1921*, (1920), p. 120.

⁶ *Derbyshire Times*, 6 October, 1917. (Hereafter DT).

⁷ *Derbyshire Courier*, 6 October 1917. (Hereafter DC).

⁸ University of Nottingham, School of Biosciences: History, [Online] Last visited 6 October 2009 at URL: http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/biosciences/general/school_history.php.

*Nottingham. Eighteen had been captured on the evening of 28 September 1917. The other four were arrested in Chesterfield on the 30th. The Chief Constable was most critical of the system of having soldiers on guard duty, as they had no training for doing the job. Apart from personal items, two of the officers had knives and all three had a pipe and tobacco. They also had in their possession a suitcase containing: twelve tins of sardines, seven tins of milk, two packets of bacon, one tin of rolled ham, one tin of cheese, four 2lbs bags of prunes, a number of German sausage[s], several packets of cheese, a large quantity of biscuits and eight packets of dried toast. They had excellent maps, evidently traced from the British Ordnance Map and several had in their possession ingenious hand made compasses. Many of the prisoners who escaped had done so before, some several times.*⁹

The four arrested at Chesterfield were those apprehended at Brimington. The men were named in local newspapers as Lieutenants Carl Koch (35), Frederick Seeberger (26), Dr Hans Ranconberg (37) and Joseph Wallmann (27). Koch was the only one in the party who could speak English. He was described ‘... in official notices as dangerous’.¹⁰

Of the two local newspapers examined, the *Derbyshire Courier* carries a more concise account than the *Derbyshire Times*. Bringing both accounts together it appears that about 1 pm on Sunday 30 September 1917 William Darkin of Brimington and George Fretwell of Whittington Moor were walking through Bluebank Wood, when they came across the four men, who were lying in a hollow. It was apparent that the four were foreigners, particularly from an exchange of greetings. Mr Albine Stott of 2 Princess Street, who had shooting rights in the wood, was sent for. He kept the four fugitives under observation. Mr Darkin informed Police Sergeant Parham of Brimington, who went to the wood with a constable. On arrival at the wood the four Germans had gone, but had left their luggage behind, which they had hidden. Mr Stott had continued to observe the four and was soon able to indicate their whereabouts to the police.

*Realising that the game was up, the fugitives offered no resistance and admitting that they were escaped German prisoners of war, they were placed under arrest by the police. The prisoners, along with their baggage, were then taken to the Chesterfield County Police Station by a motor-car belonging to Mr. Wetton, Brimington . . . News of the capture spread like wildfire in Brimington, and before the car left the prisoners were the centre of a large and excited crowd.*¹¹

It appears that this crowd, mainly of women, girls and youths, showed some hostility. The *Derbyshire Times* reported that ‘missiles were thrown, but no one was injured’.¹²

On Monday morning the prisoners had a military escort. They left Chesterfield by train, around noon. News of the departure had leaked out. A large crowd assembled, ‘...chiefly composed of women [who] gave them a noisy send-off as they walked the short distance from the police office to the Midland Station.’¹³

The *Derbyshire Times* interviewed Albine Stott. He recounted more details about the capture. Readers interested in learning further about this event are particularly referred to this account.

Alan Wetton mentions the presentation of watches to the three men responsible for the prisoner’s capture. The author has found a reference in the *Derbyshire Courier*¹⁴ to the presentation of a watch to William Darkin. There may be further references to the others. Darkin’s presentation occurred in January 1918 when members of the Markham Club (now Brimington Club) presented him with a gold watch at a social evening. We learn that the watch was inscribed ‘Presented to William Darkin by

⁹ [Online] Last Visited 6 October 2009 at URL: http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/biosciences/general/school_history.php.

¹⁰ DC.

¹¹ DT.

¹² DT.

¹³ DT.

¹⁴ DC, 26 January 1918.

Brimington Club members and friends as a mark of appreciation of his action, which led to the capture of four German prisoners, 30 September 1917.⁷

The whole episode may seem rather quaint in today's world of instant communication. But week after week local newspapers were reporting a seemingly endless list of dead and injured from the horrors of the front. We can perhaps understand, therefore, the real hostility that was evidently shown to the Germans at Brimington and in Chesterfield. The First World War saw 720 men in Brimington enlist, of whom 110 were killed, with 23 reported missing.¹⁵

Lynn Knight has also written about the capture of the prisoners of war in her book *Lemon sherbet and dolly blue*.¹⁶

Alan Wetton's Account: Introduction

Alan Wetton's short account shows how useful simple recollections can be.

Mr Wetton did confuse the location of the Prisoner of War Camp. He states that the fugitives came from 'Donnington Hall, near Derby'. This is not correct. Both the *Derbyshire Times* and the *Derbyshire Courier* are clear that the camp was Sutton Bonington. The former goes further in its description stating that the Sutton Bonington Camp 'is a separate camp from that at Donnington Hall, a few miles away'. There are also some discrepancies between Mr Wetton's and the contemporary newspaper accounts reported above.

Here, then, is Alan Wetton's short account, reproduced in full, below.

Alan Wetton's Account

During the Great War four German prisoners escaped from the Prisoners of War Camp for Officers at Donnington Hall, near Derby. This is how they were captured.

Three friends arranged to go shooting on land at Bluebank, down Cow Lane, owned by Mr Creswick of the farm at the bottom of Hall Road, Brimington.¹⁷ Their names were Mr Bill Darkin from Victoria Street, Mr Jimmy Deakin and Mr Albine Stott from Princess Street. They came upon four men hiding in the undergrowth who had obviously been there for some time. Suspecting that they were German, Jimmy Deakin and Albine Stott kept their guns on them and sent Bill Darkin up to Brimington for the Police. They needed transport, as he [Darkin] straightaway found Police Sergeant Palmer in Brimington, who assembled some men. They rushed to my father, Mr Radford Wetton, who apart from being the only funeral carriage proprietor with horse transport for any purpose, also owned a small 'bus that he had purchased about 1912 from Hadfield's pork butchers of Chesterfield. My father was available and they jumped in and set off and so did I – running after them down Heywood Street to Coronation Road only to find just about all Brimington there.

It appeared that Mr Bill Darkin ran up Cow Lane to Coronation Road and started shouting 'Lend me a bike, Germans on Bluebank.' So the word spread like lightning.

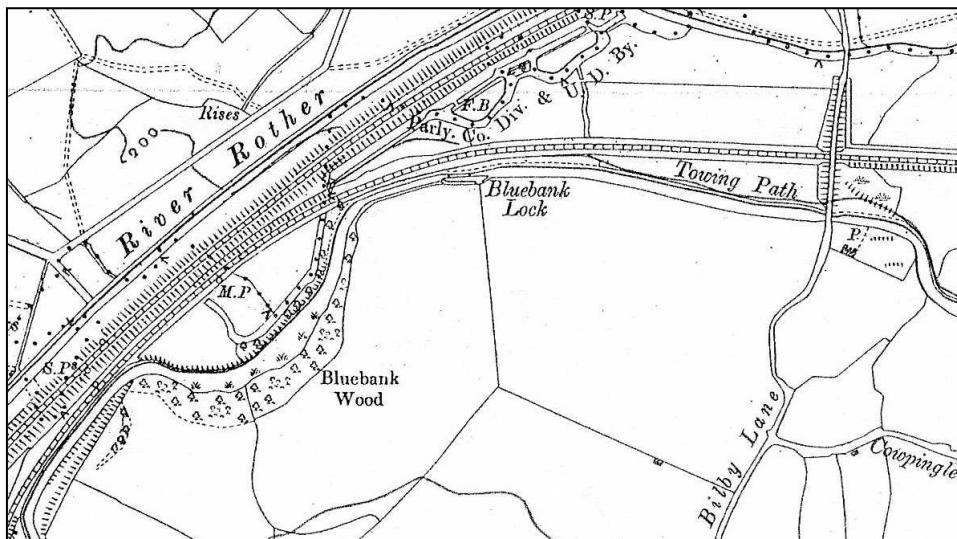
¹⁵ Brelsford, *History of Brimington...*, (1937), p. 43.

¹⁶ L. Knight, *Lemon sherbet and dolly blue. The story of an accidental family*, (2011), pp. 121-123.

¹⁷ This farm would be Grove Farm, now situated within Grove Farm Close.

Returning with the prisoners from Cow Lane my father had to turn up Heywood Street because of the crowd. I know because I was there and would be nine years old at the time.

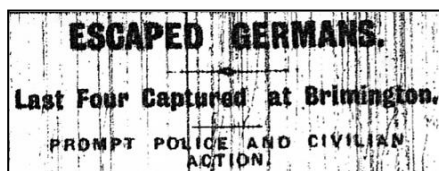
I would also place on record the three gentlemen were presented with a solid gold watch each duly inscribed. As I knew the Darkin family very well and Mr Darkin's son Arthur later married my sister Elizabeth, I saw the watch many times. Surely someone in Brimington will remember those gold watches.



Enlargement of the 1921, 6-inch Ordnance Survey map of the Bluebank area. Bibby Lane, leads up to Coronation Road. It is here, where, according to the late Alan Wetton, William Darkin ran up shouting 'Lend me a bike, Germans on Bluebank', allowing the presence of the escaped prisoners to spread rapidly about Brimington. (Ordnance Survey, Derbyshire Sheet XXV N.E.)



Part of Bluebank Wood, looking north-easterly, November 2011. (Philip Cousins)



How the 6 October 1917 editions of the Derbyshire Times (above) and the Derbyshire Courier (left) reported the capture in Brimington of the four escaped German prisoners. The . . . Courier at this date carried news on its front page and featured the event there. The Derbyshire Times carried advertisements on its front, though the article, which appeared on page 5, was much longer than its competitor's.

ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF MISCELLANY

Philip Cousins

Introduction

Here is presented some additional information applicable to articles in previous editions of *Miscellany*. I am grateful for these contributions, some supplied by our readers. In addition County Councillor Walter Burrows has contributed some of his memories of the Air Training Corps (A.T.C.) in Brimington. This acts as a useful postscript to Peter Harrison's 'Kid from Cott. Lane' in this *Miscellany*.

Canal Row (*Miscellany 1*)

In the article in *Miscellany 1* on The Canal Tavern, I briefly mentioned Canal Row.¹

I am grateful to Cliff Williams, who has written to point out that his research in the archives at Chatsworth House reveals that Canal Row was probably built around 1819. This was just after George Hodgkinson Barrow had leased the Hollingwood Colliery from the Duke of Devonshire.

Cliff adds that a survey and valuation for the new poor rate in 1839, shows Barrow was rated on eighteen cottages at 50 shillings per cottage totalling £45. The tithe apportionment (parcel number 98) confirms this property as Canal Row.

We might assume that Barrow needed the houses for workers as his industrial interests increased at Staveley Forge, which he was leasing from the Duke of Devonshire, and in mining.

Brimington Derby Tup and Mummers Plays (*Miscellany 2*)

Donald Stock, from Brimington writes about the Derby Tup, in particular his memories from Old Whittington. His correspondence is worth recounting in full.

The Cotterhill Lane version is virtually identical to that performed in Old Whittington in the immediate pre Second World War years. There were, however, two versions:

1) *'Door to Door'*

This used identical wording and play-acting, but limited the sung verse to the 'foot balls' and 'leather aprons' sections. I regard this as the 'carol singers' version since it signed off with the following:

*'And now our song is ended,
We have not more to say,
So please give us a new year's gift
And send us on our way
[Singing] Fay ley, fay ley,
Fay ley, nanny-go-ley*

2) *'The Full Monty'*

Since my knowledge of this is restricted to just one person who took part in it, the details are necessarily scanty. This version I would class as the 'upper crust' version, performed in the big houses and pubs in the district. With perhaps eight or nine verses, it had very similar content to the Cotterhill Lane text, but

¹ *Brimington and Tupton Miscellany*, number 1, (2008), p. 17.

closer to the 'Ballad of the Derby Ram', perhaps, since each verse had a first line which ended in 'Sir'. For example, 'As I was going to Derby, Sir'.

Peter Harrison, the source of the version printed in *Miscellany 2*,² points out that the Cotterhill Lane group never performed any more verses than those transcribed therein by David Chinn, though he has since become aware of the additional verses.

Sheepbridge and Brimington Station (*Miscellany 3*)

I am grateful to Mrs S. Jackson, of Brimington, for remembering two trips undertaken by Brimington Parish Church in the 1930s, via the London and North Eastern Railway (L.N.E.R.). She is able to recount exact dates, by use of her late brother's diary (the late Geoffrey Pike).

On 20 July 1935 a party left from Staveley Works Station for a trip to Skegness. A year later, on 25 July 1936, another trip was run, again to Skegness. The party that Mrs Jackson was with travelled from Staveley Works station, as they lived in New Brimington at the time. It would have been too far to walk to Sheepbridge and Brimington station, at Wheeldon Mill.

Reference to the *Derbyshire Times*, does see the July 1935 trip recorded. The 1936 trip is, however, recorded, but unfortunately it is not revealed if the train was a charter train.³ It seems likely it was, though, as there were no advertised public railway excursions to Skegness or, indeed, at all on that day.

Perhaps confirming things further is that the next day (Sunday 26 July) an L.N.E.R. excursion did run to Lincoln and Skegness, but from the old Lancashire, Derbyshire and East Coast Railway (L.D.E.C.) station at Market Place.⁴ Lincoln would have been gained via the L.D.E.C.; the route from Chesterfield of which is part illustrated on page 34 of *Miscellany 3*. From the newspaper report it is not possible to say whether the church excursion started from Sheepbridge and Brimington station, but it seems likely it did. Apparently about 200 scholars, with teachers, the Rector (Rev. D.D. MacQueen), the Deacon (Rev. R.W.T. Moore), Mr J. Hancock (churchwarden) and other members attended. Tea was provided for the party in the Pavilion Gardens.⁵

Interestingly Mrs Jackson's brother, who was in the church choir at the time, used Staveley Works station to travel on a trip to Blackpool on 30 August 1935. He obtained 3s 2d from the Choir Master as reward for his duties, to spend on the trip. Presumably he spent it wisely!

Finally Geoffrey Pike's diary records that on 13 July 1936; 'Took 3 pigeons in basket to Barrow Hill Station, going to Leicester, and all came back'. This gives a clue to the vastly differing traffic carried on yesterday's railways.

1042 Squadron of the A.T.C. (This *Miscellany*)

I am grateful to County Councillor Walter Burrows who has written to briefly outline his memories of the A.T.C. in Brimington. Cllr Burrows writes:

I joined the 1082 Squadron of the A.T.C. in 1948 and the building then was how it looked when the Labour Party took it over in 1952. The aeroplane that Peter Harrison talks about was in the cellar beneath the

² *Brimington and Tupton Miscellany*, number 2, (2010), pp. 27 – 28.

³ *DT*, 31 July 1936.

⁴ *DT*, 24 July 1936.

⁵ *DT*, 31 July 1936.

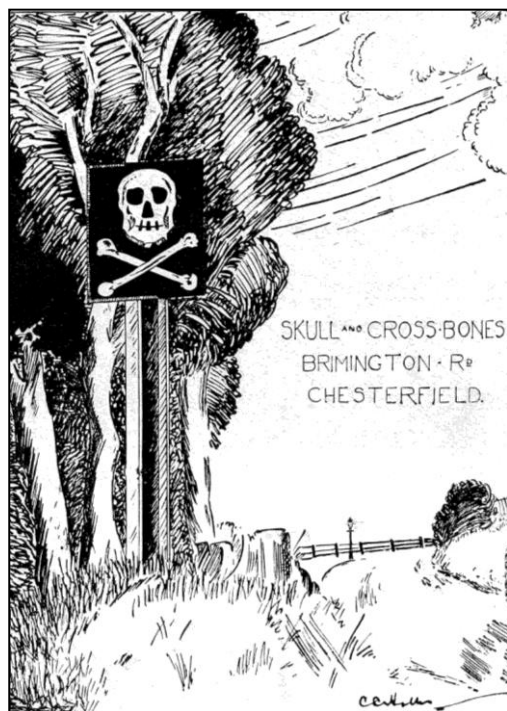
building. The A.T.C. moved to the new building on Chesterfield Road in 1952. I was a Flight Sergeant in 1952 when I joined the R.A.F. Flight Sergeant Starbuck, who Peter Harrison writes about, must have joined the R.A.F. during the War because when I joined 1082 in 1948, he was a Flight Lieutenant with the A.T.C. and took us flying each weekend to different Stations. The Officer in charge was Squadron Leader Pearson who lived on Cotterhill Lane.'

We would welcome more information about the A.T.C. In particular, why did the building reduce in size from when Peter Harrison remembers it and as the map extract on page 34 shows, to that shown on the illustration at page 46?

Skull and Cross-Bones Bridge at Tapton (Miscellany 1 and 2)

Mr Stock, along with writing about the Derby Tup, says that the skull and cross-bones signs guarding the bridge at Tapton had definitely been removed before September 1941, when he started to travel the area regularly to attend school.

This does accord with available sources explained in *Miscellany 2*, which indicate that the signs were removed sometime just before the onset of the Second World War. That is to say, after Chesterfield Corporation resolved to remove the signs, following an edict from the Ministry of Transport, in late 1938.⁶



The illustration of one of the Skull and Cross-Bones signs reproduced in *Miscellany 1*⁷ (left) originally appeared in the *LMS Magazine* for September 1927.⁸ At the time I wrote the original article it was not known which edition of that magazine the drawing had appeared in. The drawing, which, as explained in *Miscellany 2*⁹ still survives, had the accompanying text set-out below:

Passengers travelling on the mainline between Chesterfield and Sheffield or Leeds, who look out on the down side of the line just north of the former station, will notice just above the boundary wall a large blackboard with a gruesome skull and crossbones depicted upon it in white. This board is fixed by the side of the highway from Chesterfield to Staveley, which crosses the railway by an overbridge at a right-angle bend just beyond, forming a narrow and very dangerous corner. In view of the many mishaps which occurred at the spot, boards upon which a skull and crossbones are depicted in relief were erected at either side of the bend at the instance of a local resident, Mr. Charles P. Markham, late Chairman of the Staveley Coal & Iron Company, and it is one of these which is visible from the railway.

Our picture was specially drawn for the MAGAZINE by Mr. C.S. Hollis, who is platform porter at Chesterfield.'

⁶ *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany*, number 2, (2010), p. 45.

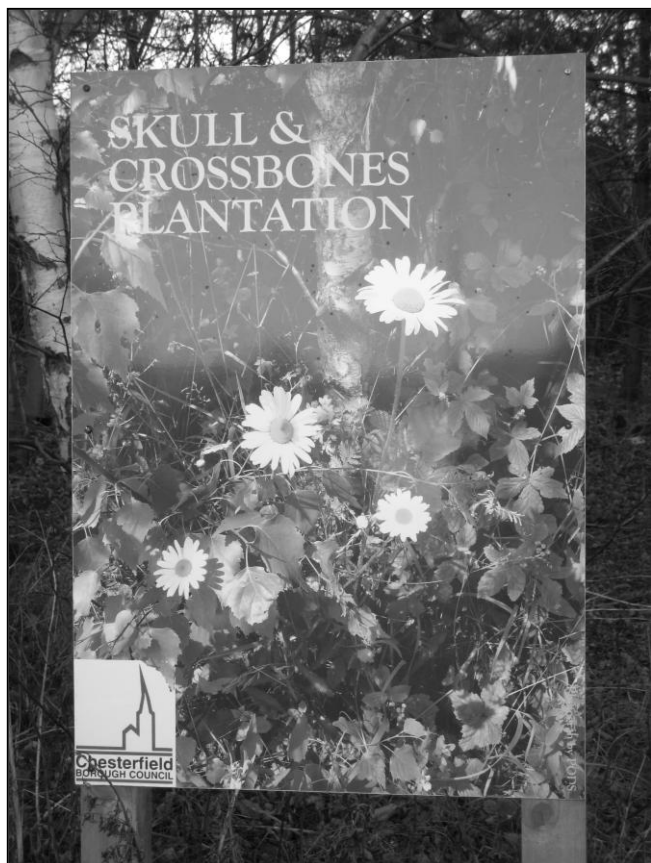
⁷ *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany*, number 1, (2008), p. 37. Described at p. 35 and at footnote 4.

⁸ 'Lineside Landmarks, number three—Skull and Crossbones near Chesterfield', *LMS Magazine*, volume IV, number 9, September 1927, p. 296.

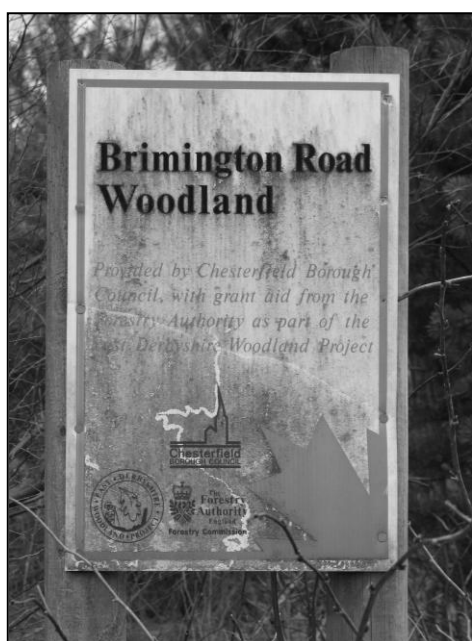
⁹ *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany*, number 2, (2010), p. 45.

We reproduce the sketch, again, above, for completeness sake. This sketch, as explained in *Miscellany 1*, was subsequently reproduced in the Staveley Company's magazine of November 1927.

Since my original articles the skull and cross-bones name has made a welcome reappearance. The plantation formerly known as the 'Brimington Road Woodland' now has a replacement sign adorned with 'Skull & Crossbones Plantation'. Details of this sign, and the one it replaced, are shown below.



A name resurrected. This sign (left and detail above) gives a new name to the former 'Brimington Road Woodland'. It is fixed within the plantation, on the south side of Brimington Road, just before the bridge. (Philip Cousins)



The former 'Brimington Road Woodland' sign. The text read; 'Provided by Chesterfield Borough Council, with grant aid from the Forestry Authority as part of the East Derbyshire Woodland Project'. That project's logo appeared to the bottom left of the sign. (Philip Cousins)