

THE SIGNAL

A Community Newsletter for
KINNERSLEY-SARNESFIELD-LETTON-NORTON CANON-BROBURY
STAUNTON-ON-WYE-MONNINGTON-ON-WYE-MOORHAMPTON

NO.57

APRIL 1987

PRICE 12P

S. O. S.

It was a cold winters' night, drizzling slightly as we left. The regular team had been put out of action - we were the only back-up team available.

In the darkness we passed houses, welcoming - lights on, families sitting around firesides - lucky them - but the mission must go on.

We arrived at the building which was in total darkness - raining steadily now.

By torchlight we sorted through the bunch of keys, lucky to have got these tonight - could have proved difficult otherwise.

The key ground in the lock of the heavy outer door and then we were inside - no warmer in here than outside, unfortunately - still, we'd wrapped up well against the cold - it was going to be a long night.

Once in the room we turned on just the one light - no-one would see us in this part of the building - nobody but us would be about on a night like this anyway.

The locked cupboard was easily entered and there they were - papers - lots of them - we were in luck!

We worked steadily, congratulating ourselves quietly from time to time on our good fortune, the mission was going well.

As the night drew on it got colder - glad we'd remembered the flask of coffee - it helped to warm frozen fingers - wouldn't be long now though, and we'd be back in the warm - how far away our base seemed now.

Then disaster - things weren't going right - copies weren't as clear - still readable though - no choice but to carry on - we wouldn't get another chance for this mission for perhaps a few weeks - by then it would be too late!

It was late when we slipped out of the building into the blackness - everything secured, they'd never know we'd been in.

As we drove off into the night, copies safely loaded in the back of the car, the thought of a warm fireside not so far away now, we had done the best we could - we hoped they'd be satisfied.

If you weren't satisfied with last months' copy of 'Signal'

PLEASE NOTE THAT COPY FOR THE MAY 1987 ISSUE OF 'SIGNAL' SHOULD REACH
TRISANNA, STAUNTON-ON-WYE (PHONE MOCCAS 517) NOT LATER THAN FRIDAY 10TH
APRIL 1987

then please don't complain - just put your name on our list of volunteers - there isn't one yet! - and we'll teach you the job. we're only amateur volunteers anyway! S.O.S. Save our 'Signal'!

Rita Kilvert

Editorial note:- The above graphic account of some of the difficulties encountered in producing last month's issue of 'Signal' will, we hope, explain why the standard of reproduction in this issue was below average. Faulty stencils were the cause of this, and the last four pages were particularly poor. We have therefore decided to reprint them, and they appear as the final four pages of the present issue.

Special Care Baby Unit

WE have been asked to bring this special appeal to the notice of all our readers. There will be a Bring & Buy Sale of plants in aid of the Baby Unit on SATURDAY, 16th MAY in the Cattle Market in Hereford at 10 a.m.

In case you don't know about the Special Care Baby Unit at the Country Hospital, it was established in 1964 to care for premature and sick new-born babies in Hereford and much of Powys. The facilities are now in desperate need of up-dating: 3 separate baby nurseries are required, a Milk Kitchen to prepare and store human breast milk and a Parents' Room where babies can be nursed and problems discussed in private with nursing staff. The total cost will be about £150,000! The Health Authority has so little money available that it cannot, without our help, plan these necessary improvements before 1991/2 at the earliest.

If you have any plants or propagated seeds to donate they can be collected by Mrs. Mary Wrizon (tel: Weobley 318008) if you cannot deliver them to her yourself.

If this Appeal is successful the project may well go ahead in 1987/8. Of course, the County Hospital is delighted to receive cash donations towards the Appeal, but the Plant Sale gives all of us an opportunity to contribute something towards the cost of looking after the 13% of all babies born in the hospital who need 'very special' nursing care.

Sheila Evans

SUBSCRIPTIONS 87/88

The same again, £1.20 per annum, is due from the April Edition of 'Signal'. Please help your deliverer by paying promptly.

ELECTIONS 1987

Kinnersley Group Parish (Sarnesfield, Kinnersley, Letton and Norton Canon) Council Elections will be held on 7th May if contested. Nomination day is 6th April.

Castle Ward which is the above area plus Almeley will poll on 7th May if the seat on Leominster District Council is contested.

I like long walks, especially when they are taken by people who annoy me.

Fred Allen.

If you do big things they print your face, and if you do little things they only print your thumbs.

Arthur Baer.

EASTER MONDAY 2 p.m.

- COME AND HUNT THE EGG
- FANCY DRESS OR EASTER BONNET
- BEST DECORATED EGG
- RACES

at NORTON CANON SCHOOL with the Youth Club.

All ages welcome.

Refreshments. 20p children
30p adults

Contributors! - Oh, Contributors!

YOUR 'SIGNAL' NEEDS YOU!

TO convince you of our sincerity we have even thought of simulating tear stains on the paper but as this is beyond the scope of our technical expertise - as can be seen from the last pages of the March issue! - may we say again how much we depend on what you send us. And let's start first with the children.

We are offering prizes of £3, £2 and £1 for the best stories under the following headings:

1. What I love doing most.
2. What I hate doing most.
3. My best adventure.
4. The May Fair.
5. A trip on a magic carpet.

The prizes will be awarded to children in the following three age categories:

- (a) Up to 9 years.
- (b) 9 to 12 years.
- (c) 12 to 15 years.

and, needless to say, all the winners will be printed in the 'Signal.' All entries to be received by 1st June next.

For everyone else, we invite your contributions on any subject that takes your fancy up to, say, 400 words. As some kind of yardstick we list the following possible subjects:

1. A favourite hobby/pastime.
2. A travel experience.
3. A typical day in the life of yourself.
4. Any book you have particularly enjoyed.
5. An uncanny experience.
6. Activities you admire.
7. Activities you detest, etc., etc., etc.

And one final plea. Help us to make the 'Signal' better. Tell us what you want to read and what you don't want to read. Do you want:

More articles dealing with local interests?

More contributions from young folk?

More poetry?

More articles of historical interest?

More humour?

If you will tell us what you want we promise to do our very best to meet your wishes.

ARROWVALE WINE CLUB

There were between twenty and thirty members present at the March meeting to hear Maurice Collingwood's account of how he was captured in the Western Desert in 1941 and of his sojourns and escapes from Italian and German P.O.W. camps.

The sincerity with which he spoke and the indelible impact of these experiences explained his ability to talk for over an hour without having to refer to any notes. It was an occasion we shall long remember.

Gareth Evans

Democracy: in which you say what you like and do what you're told.

Gerald Barry.

SAYING OF THE WEEK

Actor Michael Caine.... has also returned. After years of exile in America he has bought a £700,000 Oxfordshire mansion and a £500,000 riverside flat in Chelsea.....

'I miss England and want my daughter Natasha to be educated here. What I'm trying to do is give her a working class background.'

'TV Times', 14-20 March.

April in the Garden

GARDENING? Who mentioned gardening? For some days I have been suffering from the effects of a very severe cold, with neither the energy nor the inclination to look out of window much less gardening and as a result I have not started some of the tasks I advocated for February and March. However, I have had ample time to read a book on 'Companion Planting' by Gertrud Frank (courtesy of our mobile library) which I found most illuminating. Many of you will be aware that by planting certain plants together, e.g. carrots and onions, the ravages of carrot and onion fly are greatly diminished. This book extends that principle and suggests many ways in which 'Companion Planting' helps to ward off pests and disease without recourse to chemicals. Strong smelling plants like onions, marigolds, hypericum and valerian together with herbs such as sage, thyme, tansy and lavender are all very useful in warding off pests and would not look amiss if planted in flower borders. The book also suggests a fusion of fermented herbs - good and smelly - make an excellent fertiliser and soil conditioner. Always willing to learn, I intend to try some of these ideas but wonder for how long I shall be allowed to experiment with noxious brews. Only time will tell!

To return to the 'nitty gritty.' I would suggest the following tasks to be undertaken in the garden in April (weather permitting.) Prune early flowering shrubs, e.g. flowering currants, forsythia, etc. as soon as flowering is over. Remove two or three of the oldest branches to encourage new growth. Cut back quite severely large overgrown hollies and laurels. New growth should shoot from the base to encourage a well shaped shrub. Clip back evergreen hedges, using secateurs on large leaved plants to avoid unsightly leaf damage that occurs when shears or trimmers are used.

Reduce the number of shoots on delphinium, phlox and lupins to between five and seven shoots to produce a better display of quality flowers on sturdy stems. The trimming from delphiniums

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and phlox may be used for cuttings. Hoe herbaceous borders regularly to keep down the weeds.

Hardy annuals sown in March should be ready for thinning. Aim to leave sufficient plants to produce a solid display of colour. Close together they will support each other and reduce the need to stake. If the ground is dry, water and give a liquid feed as plants may have suffered some disturbance. Continue to sow new seeds as conditions permit.

Rub out unwanted shoot buds that are likely to cause overcrowding on rose bushes. Spray with a fungicide to control black spot and mildew, watch out for aphids, spraying if necessary.

Remove dead flower heads from bulbs; do not cut leaves. Divide snowdrops as soon as possible. Plant conifers, evergreen shrubs and gladioli for succession.

Fill in gaps in established rock garden, deadhead early flowering plants to encourage new growth and top up gravel or stone chippings to prevent weeds and improve appearance. Take precautions against slugs.

New lawns can be sown as soon as conditions permit and lawn mowing time will soon be here again. First cutting should leave grass about 1" high. April is a good time to repair and reseed damaged areas of lawn. Use a lawn fertiliser and 7-10 days later apply a selective weed killer. Finally prepare beds for dahlias and early flowering chrysanthemums.

Heigh Ho! with the herbs!

One Green Finger

Weobley and District Local History Society

Several aspects of the droving trade were examined and dwelt upon at the February meeting of the Society when Mrs. Oldham and Mr. Southwood of Kington jointly delivered a talk in verse and prose on the subject of Drovers' Roads with emphasis on central Wales and what might be termed the 'Hereford Gap.'

Particularly enlightening was the part played by this calling in stimulating a trade and communications along the routes they took through the hills of Wales and on into the more lush pastures of the Midlands and Southern England leaving behind a legacy of inns, pounds, forges and tracks some of which survive even today.

Readings of selected passages from past descriptions of cattle drives as far back as the early Middle Ages helped to heighten an awareness of the ups and downs, comforts and discomforts of following such a frequently precarious existence, difficulties to a

large part avoided by the present day use of road and rail transport. The wide variety of slides shown pointed up not only the sites of bygone centres of activity but also the beauty of the countryside through which generations of cattle and sheep drovers have passed, an aspect which the audience found most pleasing.

On 25th March, Mr. R. Watts will talk on the diaries and persona of that well-known personality Francis Kilvert. This will take place at the Willow Gallery at 7.30 p.m.

THE BIBLE SOCIETY

The Annual Spring Meeting of the Bible Society's Action Group will be held on Thursday April 30th at 7.30 pm in the Moravian Church, South Street, Leominster. The speaker will be Mr David Cotton from the society's headquarters in Swindon. He is a 'Text Processing Consultant' who travels regularly to Africa to assist translators in the use of computers in their work. It will be extremely interesting to hear of his experiences. All are welcome. Please come and bring your friends.

Church Notices

SERVICES DURING APRIL

Sarnesfield

12th 10 am Holy Communion
19th 10 am Holy Communion
16th 10 am Morning Prayer

Norton Canon

5th 9 am Holy Communion
12th 9 am Morning Prayer
19th 9 am Holy Communion
26th 9 am Family Service

Staunton-on-Wye

5th 11 am Holy Communion
12th 11 am Morning Prayer
19th 11 am Holy Communion

Byford

5th 9.30 Holy Communion
19th 11 am Holy Communion
26th 11 am Family Service

Monnington-on-Wye

19th 9 am Holy Communion

Letton

19th 11 am Holy Communion

KINNERSLEY

5th 10 am Holy Communion
preacher the Rev.

R. Lewis - Diocesan
Agricultural
Chaplain.

12th 10 am Palm Sunday Service
with the distribution
of palm crosses and
procession with a
donkey

15th 7.30 Lent Service and
(Wed) pm address

17th 10 am Good Friday Service

19th 10 am Easter Day - Holy
Communion

Are there any parents and child-
ren in Kinnersley who would be
interested in starting a Sunday
School at Kinnersley church?
If you are, please would you
let the two churchwardens know -
Mr. John Davies and Mr. Ray
Phillips.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

6th 7.45 pm Norton Canon PCC
Village Hall.

7th 7.30 pm Deanery Synod
Willow Gallery
Weobley

7.00 pm Holy Communion
9th 7.30 pm Monnington-on-
Wye AGM Chase
House

13th 7.30 pm Passover Meal and
Demonstration by
Rev P. Goldthorpe
(C.M.J.) at Willow
Gallery Weobley
Tickets £1 from
Vicarage (please
book in advance)

21st 7.00 pm Sarnesfield AGM
Sarnesfield Court

23rd 7.30 pm Staunton-on-Wye
AGM Village Hall

27th 7.30 pm C.M.S. meeting at
Holmer Church Hall
'Spring to Life'
Rev Jesse Hillman

28th 7.00 pm M.V. Weobley Holy
Communion in church
followed by meeting
in Vicarage

30th 7.45 pm Norton Canon AGM
Village Hall



HERBALIFE

WOULD YOU LIKE

TO LOSE WEIGHT

AND

FEEL FITTER

CONTACT: Mrs P H Shaw

Conifers, Norton Canon

TELEPHONE: Weobley 318604

Weekdays after 5 o'clock or weekends.

Norton Canon Ladies' Social Club

A really interesting evening was enjoyed by everyone in March when David Lovelace gave a talk, illustrated by his own aerial photographs, on the changing face of Herefordshire fields. It was possible from the slides to identify the old woodlands and see how many of them had gradually been turned into agricultural fields, perhaps with the irregular hedges marking the boundaries of what was once a wood. Ancient ploughing ridges could be clearly seen from the air in a way that's impossible if you are walking over them. Perhaps most impressive were the slides showing the flooded areas in our neighbourhood and being told that this great depression was probably the remains of a huge and weighty area of ice thousands of years ago.

It was all fascinating and there were many cries of recognition as our own houses or farms could be identified on the slides. We were most grateful to David for being such an interesting and enthusiastic lecturer.

In April, because of Easter, our meeting will be on Monday, 13th at the usual time, 8 p.m. in the Village Hall. Pat Shaw will give a talk on Diet. (I'm not sure if we shall be allowed refreshments afterwards but I think so!) Details of our theatre trip to Birmingham in May should be available then.

Sheila Evans

Save Our Schools

The Friends of Staunton-on-Wye School would like to point out a basic misunderstanding. Staunton-on-Wye School, along with several other small schools including Norton Canon, was the subject of possible closure as a result of the reorganisation of Secondary Education in the Rural West. Norton Canon is also under review because of the small number of children attending the school.

Staunton-on-Wye School has more children attending the school and is not under review because of falling numbers. The numbers here are well above the 25 children where closure becomes a possibility. The numbers are set to hold for the foreseeable future.

A suggestion of a merger between Norton Canon and Staunton-on-Wye was discussed but the physical difficulties of transport was the overriding reason for parents opting to turn down the suggestion.

The Friends of Staunton-on-Wye School have made their presentation to the relevant bodies with regard to re-

organisation of Secondary Education in the area and their views have been noted. There are no representations being made to keep the school open because of low numbers, as its numbers are not under question at this time.

In view of this report circulating at the moment, it is felt that any possible misunderstandings should be corrected.

Obituary

We regret to report the deaths, within a few days of each other, of two residents of Jarvis Charity Almshouses, Staunton-on-Wye.

Mr Henry Burgess died on March 17th. He was a former farm and road worker who lived at Hay for some years before moving to Staunton.

Mrs Nellie Mills died on March 19th. She was the widow of a former employee on the Garnons Estate.

We extend our sympathy to their families and relatives.

Keeping the Fauna from the Flora



IT wasn't long after taking possession some years ago that our boundary was invaded by the adjoining farmer's cattle, closely followed by his sheep. The cattle contented themselves with punching a lot of round depressions in the grass but the sheep, of course, consumed everything they came across including a fine show of daffodils.

Clearly something had to be done. The state of the fences in the surrounding area made it clear that we could not rely on the farmer to fence against his own stock, as I believe the law requires. I decided to take our long-neglected hedges in hand and have a go at laying them. It could not be claimed that my early efforts would win any prizes but, by the time I had completed the perimeter, the results were becoming presentable and certainly they have proved to be stock-proof.

Next, something had to be done about the vast number of rabbits which came and went as they pleased. I knew that, in erecting chicken wire round the boundary, it was necessary to go down 9 inches or so to keep them at bay. The necessary trenching alongside our well-established hedge proved a formidable task. It wasn't until the circuit was nearly complete that I learnt that it was sufficient to lay the lower 9 inches simply flat on the ground with a sod every few feet to keep it flat.

Slowly the battle was being won but the biggest problem remained - the local fallow deer. This very dark, almost black variety exists in large quantity in Yazor Wood and Barton Hill up behind our garden. I suspect they are the descendants of escapees from the black herd kept at Garnstone in the last century. It is lovely to see these delightful creatures but they are immensely destructive. They became very fond of spending the night in the garden, up to twelve at a time, and feasting on the young shoots of the trees and shrubs. Not content with this, the bucks stripped the bark from young trees with their antlers, flattening the saplings to the ground in some cases. There are many publicised ways of keeping them at bay but the only certain solution seemed to be a 6 foot high fence all round the garden. This took the form of three quite fine wires spaced one foot apart above the existing hedge, the lower two being electrified with a home-built pulsing unit operating a car ignition coil. It has proved completely successful and the garden shrubs and trees are growing well again.

Moles are an occasional nuisance. With the prodigious number of earth worms in our soil it is amazing we don't have more trouble - perhaps the buried chicken wire helps to keep them out. I have learnt enough of their habits over the years to be able to trap the few that do cross the boundary.

There remain the pheasants and the wood pigeons but they are only minor problems. The Foxley Estate shoots do their best to exterminate the former while the latter are kept fully occupied by the adjoining 25 acres of oil seed rape!

Denis Dighton

LOOKING BACK

Still they come rolling in - nostalgic memories sent in by readers who remember the days when life was harder, but undoubtedly more rewarding, than it is in this era of the affluent society. We give below a further selection, and two more, reprinted from last month's issue, appear on pages 13 and 14. We hope to publish more next month.

MEMORIES OF A NOT SO FORGOTTEN PAST

PERHAPS my husband and I can go back a little further than your recent contributors, for we remember riding in horse-drawn trams and buses, and as children we always rushed upstairs so that we could be first and sit by the driver. Most vehicles had trace horses to assist them up the hills. These were hooked on by little boys who ran alongside.

London streets, with their horse drawn hansom cabs, seemed just as crowded and congested as they are today - and remember that many were still cobbled. Both of us saw the electric tramways being laid, such a menace to any car which strayed into their tracks, which were laid in wooden blocks. Travel on these was very cheap, for a ½d you could travel a long way and for five days a week you could get unlimited travel for 2d but despite this it was not my favourite form of transport. It was always a marvellous sight on Derby Day to see all the horse drawn brakes and carriages driving down to Epsom.

Oh, for the muffin man! He came round with a huge tray balanced on his head, bringing crumpets and muffins, quite different from the ones we get today, summoning his customers by ringing a hand bell. Streets were lit by gas lamps, which the lamplighter lit at night and extinguished in the morning. Suffragettes were also active, and this included setting fire to some London churches.

There are so many things that we could tell about, but here are a few which may surprise some younger readers:

Public Houses were open all day.

Bread was 3½d - lovely crusty cobbergs and cottage loaves, which were always weighted and an odd bit of loaf cut off to make up the weight.

Eggs were a shilling per score.

Postage was ½d for post cards and 1d for letters and we had up to 4 deliveries per day.

Certain newspapers were ½d and a few 1d.

Marks and Spencers were a 1d bazaar and jolly good it was too!

Meat per pound was very cheap - rump steak 1/-, aitch bone 4d, shoulders of lamb 6d and small back rashers 1/-.

Sweets were 1d for 4 ozs and bars of chocolate 1d each.

Ice-cream cornets were ½d or 1d and wafers 2d.

Tobacco was 1/- per oz., cigarettes mostly 5d for 10 but Woodbines were 2d for 5.

As children we had to amuse ourselves with hoops, skipping ropes, diabolo etc.

Although there were mainly horses in the years prior to the Great War, there were of course some cars, for example, the Ford cars had to have their back wheels jacked up before you could swing the starting handle.

My husband's family were builders and contractors in North Kent, which later became part of the S.E. London postal

districts. Pay day was Saturday mid-day and everyone lined up in order of seniority, starting with the foreman, and were paid out by his father and grandfather in either gold half sovereign or sovereigns. By 1916 the foreman's wages were 1/2d per hour and most other craftsmen lld.

On summer Sundays his family would go into the country by horse-drawn landau for about twelve miles for tea. This cost 1/- and consisted of two boiled eggs, bread and butter, cos lettuce (the real big London cos) and tea. Strawberries and cream teas were 1/6d or 2/-.

With the start of the First World war, the horses virtually disappeared from the London streets, as they were requisitioned for the 'front.' My husband remembers them even being taken out of their delivery van shafts whilst they were actually out on a round, and the vans having to be man-handled home. Firms like my husband's family lost all their horses at the very beginning.

Yes, we also remember the Zeppelin being brought down by Leeft Robinson. We also had 'air-raids' in the First World war when aerial torpedoes and bombs were both used. I remember, very vividly, walking over Waterloo Bridge when the munitions factory at Silvertown exploded and caused damage for miles around.

Irene Harling

JARVIS CHARITY, STAUNTON-ON-WYE

Almshouse to let. Apply to The Clerk, Jarvis Charity, The Board Room, Staunton-on-Wye.

BIRTHDAYS

Owing to the difficulty in keeping records up-to-date we have decided to discontinue the procedure whereby we published birthday announcements by copying them from issues a year previous.

We shall, however, be glad to publish announcements from readers who specially request them.

Please send full particulars - the child's full names and date and year of birth - to any one of the following:-

Mrs M.Loxston, Bronte, Norton Canon, phone Weobley 318227

Roy Brock, Siete, Kinnersley, phone Eardisley 742

M.B.Collingwood, Trisanna, Staunton-on-Wye, phone Moccas 517

We give below two requests received for April birthdays:-

Staunton-on-Wye

Brendan Reese

April 28

Christopher Ridge

April 21st

Happy birthday!

When I was a boy I was told that anybody could become President; I'm beginning to believe it.

Clarence Darrow

A husband should tell his wife everything that he is sure she will find out, and before anyone else does.

Lord Dewar

MARITAL RESPONSIBILITIES

In my house my wife holds, as it were, a mid-management position and is thus encouraged to make minor decisions such as whether we will or will not buy a new car, where we shall go for our holidays and in what part of town we shall reside. I, on the other hand, make all the top level policy decisions such as whether the U.K. should adopt the system of unilateral disarmament, if U.S. nuclear missiles be allowed on British soil or if it should be obligatory for members of the Catholic church to obey the Pope's encyclical on the birth pill.

Gareth Evans

TO HEREFORD VIA AGINCOURT

by M. JENNINGS

THERE must be many people who have happy memories of Shakespeare's 'Henry V' or equally of the marvellous film of that name. At the time of its appearance the film seemed to be something quite new, both in its colour and, literally, in its blow-by-blow account of the theme; nor seemingly was the poetry diminished. For the audience it was delightful to be wafted out of one's own time and then set back in a world so very much smaller and more than five hundred years older than our own.

Shakespeare knew that he had a good tale to tell and was content to take his time. Not until the end of the fourth Act did he finish with Agincourt, with its ethical as well as its military implications, with the doubts as well as the glories of Henry's 'band of brothers,' the 'happy few.'

After such heightened tempo, there was a danger that Act V might prove to be an anticlimax, padded out perhaps with scenes where royal personages bandy courtesies and ambassadors devote time to catching up on their diplomatic history. In fact, no such bathos occurs.

To start with, Ffluellen, a caricature of a Welshman, is stung into testing conclusions with the rogue Pistol, whose 'green room' helmet is bedraggled with the nodding tail-feathers of several cockerels. Not for the first time, Pistol bids fair to run away with the play.

The scene then changes. We are transported to a palace in the countryside of France in the spring of the year 1420, a fanciful, heraldic countryside where Henry and the princess Katharine of France are poised on some exiguous battlements. Henry is playing the part of a 'plain soldier' as he makes his self-deprecating proposal to the princess. She in her turn, though halting in her English to say the least, manages remarkably well. Before many days have passed she will find herself not only queen of England but heir, as Henry's wife, to the throne of France as well. The Elizabethan playgoer, as he walked away from the theatre, must have felt that he had assisted at a decidedly happy ending.

What then did life actually hold for this young queen at Troyes, on the upper Seine, on 2nd June, 1420? Was she perhaps disconcerted by the fact that her new husband had previously been suggested for each of her two older sisters? Did it cause her grief to marry a king whose army had perpetrated the slaughter of her relations and friends at Agincourt and then, within the space of four or five years, besieged and taken countless fortresses, conquering France as far south as the Loire? The answers to these questions are not known.

The few facts that we do know are as follows. On the day after her wedding her husband went off to lay siege to Sens. In June it was Montereau. The autumn, also, was spent in campaigning. In November he took Melun and in December he entered Paris.

Nevertheless, he was with his queen in England for a few months during the winter of 1420-1421. Arriving in London a few days before Christmas, he undertook some days of prayer and mortification before celebrating the feast. In 1421, on 23rd February, Katharine was crowned queen at Westminster Abbey,

after which she accompanied her husband on his progress through the midlands and the north.

By April, Henry, hearing of his brother's defeat, was back in France warring against the dauphin. In December, news reached him of the birth of his son, the future Henry VI. The year is now 1422. In the spring, Katharine took her infant son to Normandy but her time with her husband was shortlived. By 31st August, worn out by campaigning and emaciated with dysentery, Henry died. Despite his justifiable foreboding that his French possessions would be lost after his death, he had made his will in detail. Only his wife, it seems, went unmentioned.

As the widowed mother of a king, Katharine was to preside over the royal establishment and to bring up her child, but she does not seem to have felt any of the ambition which was later to have characterized her future daughter-in-law, Margaret of Anjou. Perhaps she found it increasingly difficult to call her child her own in the face of mounting political pressures. Perhaps she failed to discern the growing saintliness of her young son and felt disappointed that he was not, after all, '.....a boy, half French, half English, that would go to Constantinople and take the Turk by the beard.....'

Perhaps she merely fell in love for the first time.

Sometime in 1423, Owen Tudor, a personable young Welshman of good antecedents but no particular wealth, received an official post in her household. Five years later, they were secretly married, and, astonishingly, slipped away to live in Wales without anybody seeming to notice. It may be that public attention was distracted by the fact that Joan of Arc was just then leading Charles VII of France to be crowned at Rheims. At all events, it was not until the middle of the 1430's that

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BACON Rashers 1.30 Gammon Joints 1.30 Boiling joints 1.00 per lb.

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the council became alive to the situation. By this time Queen Katharine and Owen Tudor had several children, one of them to be the father of Henry VII.

Eventually, the council struck. In 1436, Katharine was separated from her children and placed in a convent at Bermondsey where she shortly died. Meanwhile, Owen Tudor was twice placed in the Newgate prison and twice escaped, on the second occasion taking sanctuary in Westminster Abbey, but he was not to see his wife again, although he did make good his escape to Wales. Long afterwards, in 1461, he was taken while fighting for his stepson, Henry VI, and the Lancastrians at Mortimer's Cross in this county.

He was taken to Hereford to be beheaded. In a short and philosophic speech he prepared to forfeit 'the head that had lain in Queen Katharine's lap.' The chronicler continues: 'When Owen was beheaded and his head set on the steps of the market cross at Hereford, a mad woman combed his hair, and washed away the blood off his face, and got candles and set them around his face all burning, more than a hundred.'

As for poor Queen Katharine, even in death she was not to be granted her expected repose. In 1437, the inscription on her tomb referred to her as the wife of Owen Tudor. Later in the reign of her son, the inscription was changed to read, with equal justice, that she had been the wife of Henry V. During the reign of her grandson Henry VII, when the old Lady Chapel was pulled down to give way to Henry VII's Chapel, her tomb was moved. In 1667, her body was exhumed and briefly exposed; Pepys, surprisingly, kissed her. In 1778, her body was again moved, this time to the chancery chapel of Henry V. May she now lie in peace.

Looking Back

The articles published under this head in previous issues seem to have triggered off memories of the past from quite a number of our more senior readers. Here are two more contributions recently received, and we hope to publish a further selection next month:-

I remember

- starched white valences on beds.
- bell ringing boys who came round twice weekly, selling bread, muffins and pikelets (nowadays called pickalets.)
- house plants like aspidistras whose leaves were washed weekly with vinegar and water and then polished.
- hearths which had to be black leaded every day.
- family 'get togethers' in the summer for blanket washing sessions.
- when gardens were solely for flowers with vegetables banished to allotments.

One of the Whalleys

I remember

- my mother telling me about her work as a Doffer with the task of removing bobbins from woollen mill looms. (She started as a 'half timer' at the age of six and, being so short, had to stand on a stool to reach the bobbins.)
- the 'knocker up' who, with his long stick, beat on bedroom windows to wake up the mill workers.

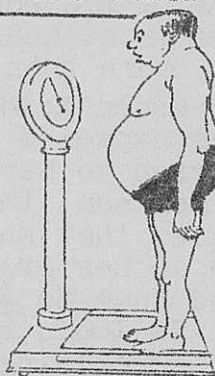
- the lamp lighters lighting the street lamps.
- hearing the clatter of clogs on flag stones as the mill workers passed by.
- 'half timers' asleep in afternoon school.
- horse-drawn trams.
- when electric trams arrived and the conductor (with a long bamboo pole) at the terminus changing round the connector to the overhead wire for the return journey.
- the distinctive smell emanating from German helmets and haversacks brought back by my father from the 1914-18 war. (This childhood memory was recalled when, in the 1939-45 war, I found myself in a cellar recently occupied by German troops.)
- sitting in a London Westminster office and hearing the fabled spring morning cry of 'Buy my sweet violets.'

The other Whalley

GOING ON A DIET?

by

Gareth Evans



WHY do we do it? I have often asked myself this question because over the past 5-6 years Sheila and I have starved ourselves eight times. But again why? An obvious reason would be when trousers or skirts become mysteriously tight or when you accidentally catch a sideways view of yourself in a long mirror. Or, more egotistically, when you believe that you have the strength of character to demonstrate the triumph of mind - especially your mind - over sordid matter. I do admit to getting some sort of 'kick' out of being able to lose a stone's weight in a fortnight and for some peculiar reason - not necessarily a physical one - I do feel all the better for it. All very odd especially when I well know that I shall be 'back to square one' in 4-6 months!

We have tried two types of diet which unfortunately both demand a monkish life with no friendly entertainment - and definitely no booze. There is one which details exactly what you can eat at each meal and the other (which has a fee attached) which does it with pills and strange concoctions. Stated boldly in this way, it would seem that the first alternative - which calls for no financial outlay - would be the obvious choice but, in an Irish kind of way, that 'ain't necessarily so.' If you have spent more than £40 on a diet it is remarkable how this fact impinges on the mind and rules any cheating or 'naughty nibbles' out of court.

After reading what I've just written I can see that it is lacking in logic. At the moment I can in all truth say that I am determined never to go on another diet and yet I have a nasty feeling that when my buttons re-tighten, I'll be at it again. One last thought. If I am to be reincarnated and the Almighty grants me one wish I think I'll ask that I should be able to eat and drink my fill and never put on an ounce. After all, others can so why shouldn't I?