

THE SIGNAL

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

NO. 33

FEBRUARY 1985.

PRICE 12p

Editorial

Please help us. For some time now your Editorial Committee has had a recurring problem which, after many sessions of discussion and argument, has yet to be resolved.

The question at issue is: What kind of article should be printed in the Signal? Should we only include those with a direct relevance to life in our area or do you think we should range farther afield and include subjects such as Maurice Collingwood's 'More Railways for the Axe? Welsh Lines at Risk' which is printed in this issue.

Will you please read it and tell us what you think. We really would welcome your views - if only to stop us pulling each other's hair out.

And do please keep writing - on this or on any other topic that catches your fancy.

February in the Garden

I must say I'm finding it rather difficult to think so far ahead, when at the time of writing I have been out all day, on one of the coldest days of the winter; the land as hard as stone. But can Spring be far behind?

General Work

Very much as the last month or two; but whatever you do, don't be tempted to turn over any ground while it's frosty. Frost

COPY FOR THE MARCH ISSUE OF 'SIGNAL' SHOULD REACH OWLS
END, NORTON CANON, NOT LATER THAN FRIDAY, THE 8th
FEBRUARY, 1985.

buried in the ground will take ages to thaw, and will stop the ground warming up.

Take the opportunity when the ground is fit, to plant any roses, shrubs, fruit trees or bushes. If it's frosty, leave them wrapped up in a frost free shed or garage. At this time of year they won't take any harm for some time. If you are planting rose bushes now don't prune them yet, leave them for a month or six weeks. Also I think it's better to leave conifers and other evergreens for planting, for at least another month.

Vegetable Garden

Clear off old beds of Brussel sprouts, cabbages. Pea and bean sticks should be got ready, they'll soon be needed! Leeks can be dug up and planted close together in a cool spot. Onion ground should be got ready. Continue to sprout potatoes. When ground is fit the following seeds can be sown....Broad beans, Brussel sprouts (for early use,) cabbages, carrots, cauliflower, lettuce, onions, leeks, parsley, parsnips, peas, radishes, spinach and turnips.

Fruit Garden

Pruning of all fruit trees should be finished this month. If at all possible all trees in borders should have a good mulch. Damsons are best pruned this month, also pear and plum trees. Finally, strawberries; if new beds weren't made in Autumn, get these done now, as soon as possible.

Don't forget, Spring's just round the corner! More next month.

Mr. Weed

OBITUARY

We regret to report the death on 12th January of one of Norton Canon's oldest residents, Mrs. Dorothy Purves, at the age of 92. Mrs. Purves was the mother of Mrs. Sheila Evans of Lanzerac, Norton Wood, and had lived with Mrs. Evans and her husband Gareth (a member of 'The Signal' editorial team) at Lanzerac for some years.

In spite of her great age she preserved all her faculties up till her very last days, and died after only a very brief illness. We extend our sympathy to her family - her children, her grandchildren and her seven great-grandchildren.

Bond winner

At least one lucky Herefordian will not be totting the cost of Christmas too closely right now, thanks to a £10,000 prize with a Premium Bond number 9WT 664 + 4 + 1 IN THE January draw. The lucky winner's name has not been released.

(Hereford Times 11.1.85)

It looks as if the winning number was also anonymous.

A little incompatibility is the spice of life, particularly if he has income and she is patable.

Ogden Nash

An optimist is a girl who mistakes a bulge for a curve.

Ring Lardner,
American Writer

More Railways for the Axe?

WELSH LINES AT RISK

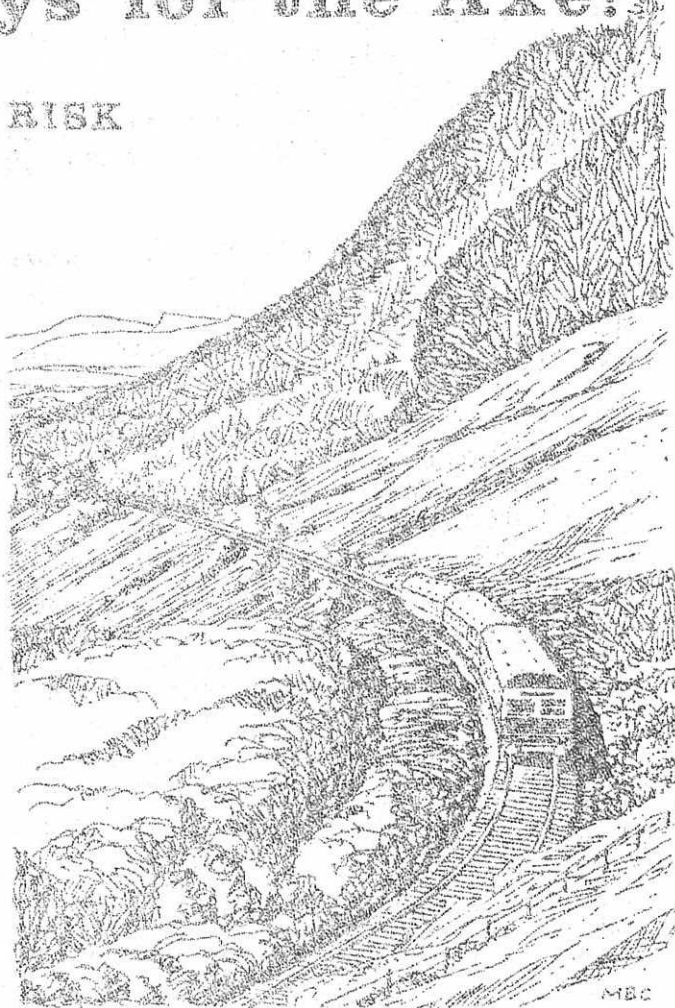
A recent article in the 'Sunday Times' warns that government plans are afoot to axe still further Britain's already attenuated railway system. This time it is lines in Wales and the Welsh border which are at risk, and the plan is to close 40% of the Welsh rail network and replace the lost services with buses. It will undoubtedly face stiff opposition from transport pressure groups and British Rail.

If the plan goes ahead 258 out of the existing 635 miles of Welsh rail will disappear and Wales will be left with little more than the three main lines - Chester to Holyhead, Bristol to Fishguard and the former Cambrian Railways line from Oswestry to Aberystwyth via Welshpool, Newtown and Machynlleth. The line from Newport northward via Hereford and Leominster would not be affected, but all the South Wales mining valley lines would disappear.

Among the lines which would be axed is one of the most scenic rail routes in Britain - the Central Wales line from Craven Arms to Llanelli and Swansea via Knighton, Llandrindod Wells, Llandovery and Llandeilo. This route has been under threat for some years now and if it is, in fact, to be closed it would be a major tragedy, for not only is it a vital link between towns in Central Wales but it is also a first-class tourist attraction very popular with rail enthusiasts.

A trip on this line - particularly along its most scenic stretch from Knighton to Llandeilo - is a most restful and enjoyable way to spend a summer's day and the journey takes you through some of Wales's most attractive and unspoilt countryside.

The first stretch, from Craven Arms to Knighton, follows the river valleys of the Clun and Teme through a pleasant undulating landscape, crossing into Wales just after leaving Knighton station. The line continues to follow the Teme as far as Knucklas and then leaves the river to cross a valley by the impressive castellated Knucklas viaduct, a 13-arch span.



From here onwards the scenery is spectacular as the line winds uphill through hilly country to Llangunllo, with fine views backward along the valley of the little River Hey. After passing through a short tunnel at Llangunllo the line then runs downhill along the Aran valley through Llanbister Road station to Penybont. There is another short tunnel just before reaching Penybont station.

The line then bends south-westward along the Ithon valley to Llandrindod Wells, the most important station on the route, for it is here that the single track doubles and the up and down trains pass each other, stopping sometimes for five or ten minutes if the other train happens to be late.

The line continues southward to Builth Road, the station for Builth Wells although it is almost two miles from the town. Then comes the most scenic stretch of the whole route - the long climb along the Irfon valley to the 820 feet summit point at Sugar Loaf tunnel. There are stations at Cilmery, Garth and the former spa towns of Llangammarch and Llanwrtyd.

Sugar Loaf tunnel, a 1,000 yard bore through the hill of that name, is one of the remotest spots along the route, and the tunnel is always very wet due to seepage from streams above. As the train emerges from the tunnel there is a spectacular view down the dramatic wooded valley of the River Bran with the Carmarthen Fan summit of Black Mountain on the distant southern horizon.

There is another viaduct, a curved one of 18 spans, at Cyngordy and the line then continues down the valley to Llandovery, crossing the River Tywi just beyond the station and following the river as far as Llandeilo. From this station, or from Llandybie a little further on, there is an interesting five-mile walk to the spectacularly dramatic Carreg Cennen castle, perched high on an almost sheer cliff.

After Llandybie the line begins to enter the mining and industrial area which continues practically the whole of the way to Swansea via Ammanford, Pontarddulais and Llandelli where it joins the main line from Swansea to Fishguard. The total distance from Craven Arms to Llanelli is about 80 miles.

It is estimated that some 500 passengers a day use the line in winter, rising to 1,000 in summer, so it is obvious that its closure would cause considerable hardship which a substitute bus service would by no means completely alleviate.

HELP YOURSELF TO HEALTH

5th March at 7.30 p.m.
in Eardisley Village Hall.

Aromatherapy and Herbalism..

Christine Stead, Aromatherapist
and Helen Hones, Medical Herbal-
ist, will give talks.

Everyone welcome. Admission 30p

M.B. Collingwood

They told me how Mr. Gladstone
read Homer for fun, which I
thought served him right.

Sir Winston Churchill

Youth is a blunder, manhood a
struggle, old age a regret.

Benjamin Disraeli

A day in the life of -----

Days of Wine and Dozes of a Retired 'So-and-So'



I always get embarrassed when friends - especially my old Shell buddies - ask me how I fill my days. If they are not put off by my usual response that it takes me all my time to remember how to breathe I usually go on to say that I am very happy and rarely bored. But they are often persistent. Am I, they ask, full of good works on behalf of some charity? Well, I used a year or two back to visit schools on behalf of Oxfam but this became more and more repetitive and basically unrewarding. My activities are now much more home orientated and concerned with the calls of children and grandchildren. So what do I do?

My first task is to write my diary. Since I have been keeping one now for 53 years the act of writing has become an automatic reflex but, as time goes by, how quickly does memory seem to falter. Retirement days are bound to have a sameness and often I have faced the blank page and asked myself 'Well, what did I do yesterday?'

I'm a great floor man. Psychologists say that if you watch a person's eyes when they enter a room the direction in which they look first indicates their main interest. Some look first at the wall decorations, the type of furniture, the pictures, light fittings, and other things that catch their fancy. For myself I always look first at the floor which perhaps explains why my immediate household task - after the diary - is to rush from room to room with a sweeper or vacuum cleaner.

Fire making is my province too and since our sitting room is upstairs this involves a lot of humping of coal and logs. An open fire may be heat wasteful but its a marvellous sight. During the summer months I make a point of collecting kind-

ling wood because I consider fire lighters the last resort of the amateur!

What would I do without books? Since I can rarely sleep for more than 4-5 hours at a stretch, it will come as no surprise that I read about 60 a year. Thank goodness Sheila has always been oblivious of the bedside light. And then there's my love of letter writing which so often encourages me to sit down before my address book and wonder who I can write to next. I do so wish that others would correspond more and depend less on what they can cram on to the annual Christmas card.

And finally there's my hobby of wine making - some 80-90 gallons a year - and the carrying out of 'unintelligent manual labour' i.e. digging in Sheila's garden. And I nearly forgot! I spend a lot of my time losing friends by trying to persuade people like you to write articles like this for Signal. So if you think I'm a nut case please write and tell me how your conduct of life prevents you from being one too.

Gareth Evans

NORTON CANON LADIES' MONDAY CLUB

All those who were at the Unicorn Restaurant for the Christmas dinner early in December voted the evening a complete success. Special thanks to Anne Cole for making such competent arrangements.

As we go to press the January meeting has not yet taken place and will be over by the time you read these lines, so no comment yet about the Cheese & Wine party on the 14th.

February's meeting will be held as usual in the Village Hall at 8 p.m. on Monday the 11th. We are hoping to have a holiday/travel film from Golden Valley Motors. Raffle and refreshments as usual.

ARROWVALE WINE CLUB

We held our Christmas Dinner at Norton Canon Village Hall on 7th December - members and guests numbered sixty in all. Mr. and Mrs. J. Farndon prepared and served a good dinner, and Mr. Brian Watkins gave an eloquent and hilarious talk about his experiences as a Vet.

During the last year the Club has lost, for varying reasons, a few of its members and some new ones would be welcome.

If you are keen on home wine-making, blended with a little socialising and interesting talks on many subjects, why not come along to the Annual General Meeting at Norton Canon Village Hall on THURSDAY, 7th FEBRUARY, 1985 at 7.30 p.m. - sample our wine and enjoy yourself!

Any further information may be obtained from the Secretary, Mrs. M. Jones, telephone: Weobley 700.

CHURCH NOTICES

FEBRUARY

The Weobley Group of Parishes

Sarnesfield

10th 10.00 am Holy Communion
24th 10.00 am Morning Prayer

Norton Canon

3rd 9.00 am Holy Communion
10th 9.00 am Morning Prayer
17th 9.00 am Holy Communion
24th 9.00 am Family Service

Staunton-on-Wye

3rd 11.00 am Holy Communion
10th 11.00 am Morning Prayer
17th 11.00 am Holy Communion

Byford

3rd 9.30 am Holy Communion
17th 6.30 pm Evening Prayer

Monnington

10th 9.30 am Holy Communion

Letton

10th 11.00 am Family Service
24th 6.00 pm Holy Communion

For your diary ...

11th Norton Canon School Governors
at 7.45 pm in school.
18th Fellowship Meeting in Willow
Gallery, Weobley 8.00 pm
19th Norton Canon P.C.C. at 7.45 pm
in the Village Hall.

Radic Wyvern Lent Course each
Thursday during Lent starting on
February 21st at 9 pm

Mothers' Union 7.30 pm at Weobley
on Tuesday February 26th.

KINNERSLEY

FEBRUARY

3rd 10 am Holy Communion
10th 10 am Mattins
17th 10 am Holy Communion
24th 10 am Family Service

MARCH

3rd 10 am Holy Communion

BIRTHDAYS

A Very Happy Birthday to:

Norton Canon

Cathy Goodwin 2nd Feb
Peter Knight 3rd "
David Gittins 18th "

Moorhampton

John Bradley 27th Feb
(Yarsop)

Letton

Roawan Hoar 5th Feb

Kinnersley

Susan Jarrett 6th Feb
Philip Sutton 7th "
David Bryan 10th "
Ashley Grant Cadman 14th "
Peter Griffin 14th "
(Sallies)
Jonathon K. Owen 26th "

Brobury

Edward Molley 17th Feb

Staunton-on-Wye

Ian Howard 1st Feb

HAVING PROBLEMS WITH YOUR CAR?

Bad starting?
High petrol consumption?
Poor performance?
Not charging?

You require a

CRYPTON TUNE

T.W. REG. FILLING

ELECTRO-TUNE

MOBILE CAR CLINIC
MOCCAS 415

I COME TO YOU!

NORTON CANON POPPY DAY APPEAL

The Poppy Appeal collection in Norton Canon amounted to £18.26.

Without your aid the Poppy Appeal could not raise the funds which are the only means we have of continuing The Royal British Legion's vital work of relieving distress and providing services for the benefit of those who have served at any time in the Forces, and who are now in need.

The problems the Legion is called upon to meet continue to increase as the veterans from the 1939-45 war find the stresses of age adding to the difficulties already experienced. It remains essential that our help continues to be available where it is required.

Therefore, I thank you most sincerely for your practical support; and hope for your assistance again next Remembrancetide.

Up £3 on last year! Well done.

ROBERT LOXSTON

- Extensions
- Repairs
- Roofing
- General Building
- Alterations
- Chimney Repairs

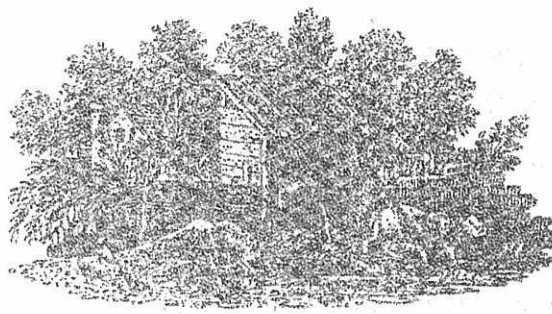
Post Office, Norton Canon

Phone: Weobley 8825

STAUNTON-ON-WYE VILLAGE HALL

The future of Staunton-on-Wye Village Hall may be in the balance unless new members can be recruited as officers and committee. The retiring chairman, secretary and treasurer, who have all served for a number of years, do not wish to be re-nominated and obviously unless we can find replacements there is a possibility that the hall may have to be closed until such time as a new committee can be formed. This would be a great pity as the Village Hall is the centre for many of our social activities.

If you feel that you may be able to give a little of your spare time to help your village please attend the annual general meeting in the hall on Wednesday, 13th February at 8 p.m.



ADVERTISEMENTS

We are pleased to accept advertisements of a local nature and we have a circulation around our group of parishes of about 350. The charge is £4 for a full page, £1 for a quarter page and for small, 3 or 4 line adverts a penny a word. For local events where no admission is charged adverts are free of charge.

It would be quite helpful if, in the case of single, 'one-off' adverts, payment is made when the copy is submitted.

Grandmother's Remedies



The hundreds of ready-made beauty preparations and toilet articles that we take for granted today were largely unknown in grandmother's day. So she had to rely on handed-down tips and recipes made from easily obtainable ingredients as aids to beauty.

Here are some I obtained from a book called 'Grandmother's Remedies' which I thought might be of interest to Signal readers.

Making an economical bathoil

Half fill an empty perfume bottle with olive oil and shake it vigorously.

Sunburn relief

A potato poultice will give rapid relief from sunburn. Grate raw potato and spread between two layers of gauze. Apply this to the affected parts.

Buttercup cream

Warm a quarter or half pound of vaseline in an old pan over a low heat with as many buttercup flower heads pressed into it as possible. (Do not boil the ointment.) Simmer for 45 minutes and strain into jars to set.

Sun or wind burn is soon relieved by an application of this cream.

Elderflower cream

First strip the flowers from their stalks. Melt one or two pounds of lard in an old saucepan and add as many elderflowers as the lard can cover. Simmer very gently (do not boil) for 45 minutes then strain through muslin. Add a few drops of rose essence or other essential oil used in pot-pourri, before pouring the cream into small screw-topped jars.

It is good for baby rashes, rough hands, heat lumps and as a face cream.

Marigold cream

Gather about one pound of fresh flower heads and put them into one and threequarter pints of hot water. Simmer very gently for about 2½ hours, then add 2 lb. of vegetable lard. Boil again until all the water has evaporated, be careful not to burn the fat. Strain through a fine cloth and store in glass pots.

It is good general antiseptic ointment specially effective on burns.

Nettle syrup

This syrup was traditionally taken as a spring tonic for its health-giving qualities.

Pick the tops of young nettles gathered in springtime. Wash them and to each one pound of tips add two pints of water. Boil for one and a half hours and strain the nettles away. Add one pound of sugar to each one pint of juice and boil for half an hour. Sterilize for twenty minutes. Drink the nettle syrup with plain water, soda or tonic.

Nettles boiled in water is also a good hair lotion. Rub a little into the scalp regularly.

D. Lewis.

Viewpoint.....

Aquatic Sports

Now that winter has set in we can look forward to the electricity power cuts which usually occur at this time of year. We had the first of them a few days before Christmas, and no doubt other will follow, caused by such accidents as swans getting caught in the power lines and other bizarre reasons. But this winter has seen a new element in the proceedings - the water authorities are also joining in.

During the past few weeks turning on the kitchen tap has become something of a gamble. We may possibly get merely a thin trickle of water, or it may be tinted a drab muddy colour. These features are, of course, nothing new - we have become accustomed to them. But this winter the water authorities have thought up an entirely new variant. We turn on the tap and find to our consternation that no water flows at all. We have a momentary sense of panic - have we, perhaps, neglected to pay our water bill and been cut off? Far from it, for the next moment there is a muffled explosion and the water bursts forth in a surging torrent of almost uncontrollable force, so much so that it is only by screwing down the tap to its utmost extent that we can turn off the supply, with consequent wear and tear on both tempers and tap washers.

No reason has been advanced for such vagaries. Perhaps the water authorities wish to add a spice of variety to their supply procedure by introducing a sporting element into the prosaic function of turning on the tap. Whatever the reason, we look forward with interest to the next novelty they may devise for our entertainment.

M.B. Collingwood

NEW BOOKS-----

The Secret Battle by A.P. Herbert (Penguin reissued paperback £1.95)

For most of us the name of A.P. Herbert (who died some ten years ago) will evoke memories of humorous tales and verses; stories of boating on the River Thames; librettos to charming musical comedies like 'Bless the Bride' and a lifelong parliamentary effort to reform the Divorce Law. How many would know that he is also the author of one of the finest war novels ever written - according to Winston Churchill.

And yet this is just what he did in 1919 when he decided, once and for all, to expiate his hatred of war based on his experiences in Gallipoli and the Western Front. It is a poignant tale, beautifully written, about a brave officer who was shot for cowardice. By any yardstick it is a fine novel and I hope one day you will read it.

Gareth Evans

THE WEAKER VESSEL: WOMAN'S LOT IN 17th CENTURY ENGLAND
by Antonia Fraser. Weidenfeld & Nicholson - £12.95

The 'weaker vessel' was a description often used to indicate the supposedly inferior capacity of women - physically, intellectually and spiritually.

This is a big book in more senses than one - 470 large pages of well researched (there are a further 70 pages of references, bibliography and index) and skilfully arranged material illustrating the roles and achievements of women from 1603 - 1702, the end of Elizabeth I through to the accession of Queen Anne, probably the most eventful period of our history. This is not dull history; it is serious historical writing, certainly, but alive all the time with thrilling biographical details of womens' experiences and achievements - but never dull.

It recently shared the 1984 Wolfson Literary Award and there is a copy available on the shelves of the Leominster Traveling Library van.

D.T.B.

A tombstone is about the only thing that can stand upright and lie on its face at the same time.

Mary W. Little,
American Writer

The Puritan hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear but because it gave pleasure to the spectators.

T.B. Macaulay

WAITING FOR THE BUS

Driving past a woman waiting for a 'bus in the pouring rain laden with shopping, prompted me to write this poem about an experience I had, (and no doubt many of you also) when the 'buses had been on strike in my home town, before I owned a car.

I stand at the 'bus stop all dripping wet
My shopping's a burden, my hair's just been set.

I think - "They must be 'working to rule'"
As I'm jostled and pushed by the kids out of school.

Not much chance of getting a seat
Already they're trampling all over my feet.

Lots of cars passing but no-one I know
Oh dear! Now the wind starts to blow.

A familiar car! - Give a wave and a shout,
Whoosh!! My umbrella turns inside out.

She couldn't have seen me-she wouldn't pass by,
Then out of the corner of my eye,
A splash of red, through the rain, can't be sure,
Yes! Hooray!! It's a 'bus - two- three- four.

J. Langmead.

WE HEAR THAT-----

According to a recent article in the 'Hereford Times' a Hereford Restaurant is planning to hold 'Ladies Only' luncheons where women will have the chance of 'having their own business lunches or of meeting a friend after shopping.' They also plan to enliven the lunches by asking along 'colourful local speakers such as Lady Betjamen (sic) and April Ashley'.

According to the article the scheme is likely to run into trouble, as the organisers have been warned by a local solicitor that, by excluding men, they could be breaking the Sex Discrimination Act. It is difficult to see why there should be any trouble over unisex luncheons as the idea is by no means new and has, in fact, been the practice in country establishments for many years. As an instance one could cite the men-only ploughman's lunches

served daily by Mr. 'Scrumpy' Bloggs of the 'Mucky Duck' at Mudford-in-the-Mire. Mr. Blogg's lunches are famous in the district and so generous are the portions served that they are guaranteed to put any ploughman on his back for the rest of the afternoon. Mr. Bloggs also has colourful speakers at his lunches. One customer, Mr. Charlie Coulter, is noted for his colourful speech, particularly on a recent occasion when someone accidentally upset his glass of beer.

In a recent interview Mr. Bloggs stressed that he does not necessarily restrict his lunches to men only. On the contrary, he pointed out, with an anticipatory twinkle, he would be only too glad to welcome ladies as well, particularly on market days when his wife goes to town for her weekly shopping. His customers unanimously endorse his statement.

M.B.C.