

THE SIGNAL

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

NO.56

MARCH 1987

PRICE 12P

THE END OF THE VILLAGE CHURCH?

AS we are well aware at the moment, many village schools are under threat of closure due to decreases in the number of pupils. Due also to declining attendances another village institution could well disappear in the near future- the parish church.

This is not the place to discuss the reason for decreasing congregations, but it is undoubtedly true that in many villages all over the country the number of regular churchgoers is falling steadily. What is even more noticeable is that the faithful few who do attend regularly are in most cases made up of the over-sixty age group and there appear to be few among the younger generation to take their places when they have passed on. It therefore seems fairly certain that the day will come when the average village church will be virtually empty, and it is difficult to see how it can possibly survive.

The position at the moment in most villages - at any rate those in the area in which 'Signal' circulates - is that people attend church on special occasions such as weddings, funerals, christenings and harvest festivals, but stay away at other times and assume that in the meantime the church will somehow carry on until they need it again.

But, like any other organisation, the church is run on business lines and each parish has to pay its way. The average church's main source of income - in many cases its only source - are the collections taken at the Sunday service. Due to the small congregations these do not normally amount to more than a few hundred pounds a year. They are usually sufficient to cover routine expenses such as lighting, heating and routine maintenance, but they are nowhere near adequate to cope with major repair jobs and the church's heaviest outlay - the annual quota which each parish pays to the diocesan office.

This quota is the diocese's main source of income, and it covers clergy stipends, running expenses and general organisation. The quota for each parish is fixed annually by the diocesan office and the rural deanery and is calculated on such considerations as the total village population (irrespective of whether or not they are Anglicans or even whether they are churchgoers at all) and the number of persons on the church electoral roll. Like everything else in these days of inflation they tend to increase every year and are in many cases quite unrealistic.

For instance, Staunton-on-Wye, which seldom has an average Sunday attend-

PLEASE NOTE THAT COPY FOR THE APRIL 1987 ISSUE OF 'SIGNAL' SHOULD REACH
TRISANNA, STAUNTON-ON-WYE (PHONE MOCCAS 517) NOT LATER THAN THURSDAY 12TH
MARCH 1987

ance of more than half-a-dozen, was in 1985 assessed at over £1,300. As a result of a new system of assessment in the Kington rural deanery this was decreased to £914 in 1986 but has risen again to over £1,000 in 1987. The new system lays down that each parish in the area should pay a minimum quota of £500, and this has hit some of the smaller parishes which formerly paid less than this amount.

What usually happens is that most of the quota money has to be raised by such methods as bring-and-buy sales, coffee evenings, garden parties and other functions, the organisation of which involves a great deal of hard work which falls mainly on the shoulders of the faithful few - usually elderly persons - who make up the regular congregation. Periodic appeals for funds are also necessary and as time goes on a certain amount of resistance to these is generated, as people tend to think that the church is always appealing for money.

Even with these additional fund raising methods it is sometimes impossible for a parish to pay its quota in full, and if such shortfalls were to become general diocesan expenditure would have to be cut, and this could result in a reduction in the number of clergy. Already all over the country many rectors and vicars are responsible for three or more parishes. In the Weobley group of parishes the vicar is responsible for no less than seven churches - Weobley, Sarnesfield, Norton Canon, Staunton-on-Wye, Byford, Monnington-on-Wye and Letton - and he ministers to these with the help of a part-time assistant priest and one or two lay readers. There are also a few retired clergymen living in the area whose services can be called on when needed, but this is an additional bonus not available to the average group of parishes.

It may be suggested that one way to cope with the problem would be to close the churches with the smallest congregations, and this has already happened in Herefordshire where in recent years a few parish churches such as Willersley, Mansel Gamage and Lucton have been made redundant. But this doesn't really alleviate the situation because, if the church with the smallest congregation in the Weobley group - Staunton-on-Wye - were to be closed it would merely mean that its annual quota would be allocated pro rata among the other six parishes, most of which are already finding it difficult to pay their present quotas.

There seems to be no ready solution to the problem, which can only become more and more acute as village populations continue to decline through lack of local employment or, as more often happens, become homes for retired people who, however regularly they may attend services, are generally unable through advancing years to take an active part in the fund raising schemes necessary to ensure the church's survival. There seems little doubt that, by the end of the century, most village churches will have been declared redundant and their congregations forced to travel to church in the nearest town if they wish to continue worship.

M.B. Collingwood

We extend our best wishes for a speedy recovery to Mr Jannie Morgan of Box Tree Cottage, Staunton-on-Wye, who is in hospital at the time of writing.

We extend our sympathy to Roy and Joyce Brock of New Bungalow, Kinnersley, who were recently involved in a motor accident. Mrs Brock sustained a fractured collar bone and bruised ribs and we wish her a speedy recovery.

VARIETY SALE

Eardisley Hall
Saturday, 14th March at 2.30 pm.
CAKES, PRODUCE, BOTTLES, JUMBLE,
WHITE ELEPHANT, DRAW, TEAS

Admission 5p

In aid of Letton Church Restoration Fund

I wish Adam had died with all his ribs in his body.

Dion Boucicault.

Women have a wonderful sense of right and wrong, but little sense of right and left.

Don Herold

Everyone threw the blame on me. I have noticed that they nearly always do. I suppose it is because they think I shall be able to bear it best.

Sir Winston Churchill

Save Our Schools

NORTON CANON-OFFICIAL COMMENT

AS part of the current campaign to save Norton Canon school from threatened closure copies of last month's 'Signal' were sent to Leominster MP Peter Temple-Morris and to County Councillor Sir John Cotterell to ascertain whether they supported the school's retention.

A letter has been received from Sir John Cotterell and this is published at the end of this article. Mr Temple-Morris has also replied stating that he is well aware of the situation regarding the present County Council review which he considers unavoidable bearing in mind the need to spend available resources in the best interests of the pupils. He points out that this is not an effort to cut anything but merely to spend money in the most effective way on education.

'As you may know', he continues 'I have already toured affected secondary schools in my constituency and have written to the Chairman of the Education Committee, in some detail, as a result of these visits. Up to now all the County have done is to get reactions from a Working Paper and towards the end of March hope to announce their proposals which will then go out to a period of formal consultation. Once these proposals are known I intend then to concentrate on the most affected areas be they primary or secondary. As you will appreciate the fate of primary schools very much depends upon proposals relating to secondary schools.'

'I have also been in correspondence with the Department of Education about the rural primary schools and hopefully we will succeed at making it at National level as this matter progresses. I hope to visit Norton Canon School in due course and will bear its future very much in mind.'

With his reply Mr Temple-Morris enclosed a letter he had received from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department of Education and Science, of which the last two paragraphs read:-

'You will see that the draft circular does not - as some commentators have implied - say that schools which are below a certain minimum size must be closed. Rather it emphasises that there are a number of considerations to be taken into account in assessing the viability of an individual school, including its ethos, the quality and balance of expertise of its teachers and its non-teacher support, links with neighbouring schools, and the fitness for purpose of its premises. It also acknowledges that, for geographic and other reasons, it may not be possible to bring all small schools up to the educationally desirable minimum size at which they can operate cost-effectively. What the draft circular is asking providers to do is to look carefully at schools which are at or below the guidelines on minimum size to see whether the standard of education they provide is good and if not to decide what steps are necessary to remedy this.'

'Finally, I would like to say that both Kenneth (Baker) and I have seen examples of rural schools where excellent work is going on thanks to the efforts of dedicated teachers and the commitment of the local community. It is with a view to encouraging and strengthening such schools that the Secretary of State has been making available funding, through Education Support Grant, for pilot projects to examine educationally and cost-effective ways of providing an adequate curriculum in small rural primary schools.'

The wording of this letter has a touch of 'Yes, Minister' about it, but it appears to indicate that schools with a good ethos - i.e. a determination not to be closed - can be conveniently accepted as exemptions from the general rule. This gives weight to the reasoning that those who support the retention of Norton Canon school should endeavour to attend the meeting in Worcester at 2 pm on March 3rd of the Working Party of the Education Committee which will decide on their recommendations for change, both on the review of secondary education in Hereford and the rural west and the various primary schools in that area which are currently under threat of closure through not having 26

pupils. This is the working party which is going, initially, to indicate whether there should be any changes to the existing system.

If any changes are recommended they will be discussed at a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Education Committee on Tuesday March 17th. If the recommendations are agreed they will go forward to the full Education Committee on April 6th, which is the meeting referred to by Sir John Cotterell in his letter.

Would all those interested in attending the March 3rd meeting please contact me on telephone Weobley 318306.

Rod Kilvert

P.S. The 'Hereford Times' published a resume of the Friends of Norton Canon School Report in its issue of February 19th, and further complicated the situation by stating that the report suggested that Staunton-on-Arrow school would be a better candidate for closure.

In actual fact, of course, it was Staunton-on-Wye school to which the report was referring, and the suggestion of its closure was only one of several options mentioned. Fundamentally the report is not in favour of any closures.

'Signal' is considering opening a fund to purchase reading glasses and large-scale maps of Herefordshire for the benefit of 'Hereford Times' staff.

Garnons,

Hereford.

16th February, 1987.

R. Kilvert Esq.,
Brewery House,
Norton Canon,
Hereford.

Dear Mr. Kilvert,

I am delighted to have this opportunity to make it quite clear that I fully support all those who are campaigning against the closure of Norton Canon school. It is an excellent school, well supported by the parents and by the very lively Association of Friends of Norton Canon School.

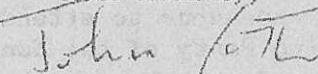
It may be of interest to your readers to know that the Department of Education and Science regard any school of under 60 pupils to be non-viable. This means that they believe that a child cannot get the full benefit of primary school education in a school under that number.

The present County Council policy is to close a school which has little prospect of achieving more than 25 pupils in the foreseeable future. The County Council has, though, to take into account the various circulars from the Department of Education and Science and has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that all children have a chance of a full primary school education. At the same time, I think it is clear that the County Council does acknowledge the importance of village schools, which is why it does retain some of those whose pupil numbers are well below the Department of Education and Science's recommendation. It may be that the future of small schools can be ensured by more co-operation between village schools.

I think it is likely that the County Council will instigate further public discussions along these lines and I hope that your readers will take a full and interested part in those discussions.

The future of the school will be decided on the 6th April at the Education Committee. I am confident that there is a future for Norton Canon school, provided it continues to receive the sort of support it has at the moment from parents, teachers, Governors and the community.

Yours sincerely,


Sir John Cotterell, Bart.

Norton Canon Ladies' Social Club

THE February meeting was a lovely evening - we were entertained by the Choir of Holbrook Manor Boys School and a delightful group they were. Many thanks to Mary Compton and Mr. Jim Baskerville for bringing them to us and conducting them. We all hope to hear them again at some future meeting.

Our 16th March meeting will be a talk with slides by David Lovelace on 'The changing face of the countryside!' David is always interesting to listen to so we hope for a good attendance.

The seats have been booked for 'Evita' at the Hippodrome, Birmingham for our 18th May meeting, so will Ladies please let me know how many tickets they need for themselves and guests. Tickets will be £11 each covering the coach fare too. All money must be in by our March meeting at the latest. There will probably be a few spare tickets so if anyone outside of the Ladies Club is interested, tickets will be on a 'first come - first served' basis for any non-members or their guests, so please let me know as soon as possible. Telephone Weobley 318306.

Rita Kilvert

ARROWVALE WINE CLUB

BETWEEN 20 and 30 turned up to our February meeting which, for an AGM, was truly remarkable. As such occasions can so often be anything but animated we had planned a 'members own' social activity e.g. recitations, tall tales etc. but, helped by our wine, the AGM stimulated such lively discussion that the former were not required.

The Chairman (Gareth Evans) and Treasurer (George Jones) were re-elected for a final year while our hard working and much missed Secretary (Pat Shaw) was compelled to stand down for personal reasons. Pat has been replaced by Nora Medcraft.

Gareth Evans

Canon Motors

(Brian Robbins)

NORTON CANON

Phone: Weobley (0544) 318317

- Servicing and repairs carried out on all types of car and light commercial vehicles both petrol and diesel engines.
- M.O.T. preparation and estimates carried out.
- Gas and MIG welding facilities - Fabrication work - Competition preparation service.
- Prompt and efficient service at all times - Competitive rates.

Hours of business: Monday
to Saturday 8 am till 7 pm
Sundays 9 am till 1 pm

ROBERT LOXSTON

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

Post Office, Norton Canon

Phone: (0544) 318825

March in the Garden

I trust you have all completed tidying up the garden as March can be a very busy month. If the ground is suitable plant herbaceous perennials and renovate old overgrown herbaceous borders. After several years border plants such as Michaelmas daisies, phlox and delphiniums grow into large clumps that tend to decay in the centre. Often they become infested with difficult weeds such as couch grass, bindweed and ground elder. By lifting, dividing and replanting the border it will look much tidier, and the plants will be greatly improved. Lift with a fork and split up the clumps, retaining young healthy pieces and discarding old bits from the centre, teasing out any weed roots at the same time.

If you are buying new plants, select with care from a reliable source. Always prepare the ground well before planting. Dig in some compost or well rotted manure if available, together with a slow release fertiliser where the plants are to go. Firm the plants in well and protect from slugs and rabbits if necessary.

Make flower beds more interesting by using a mixture of plants; to get a bold effect plant your herbaceous plants in groups of 3 or 5 whether in a mixed or a herbaceous border.

PRIORITY JOBS

Most summer flowering bulbs can be planted in March. Scarify the lawn in early March on poorly drained or mossy lawn. Use a spring tined rake or a motorised scarifier and follow with a dressing or equal parts of coarse sand, sifted soil and peat. Apply it about $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " deep then brush it into the turf. You can also apply a general lawn fertiliser at the same time. Lay turf whether making a new lawn or repairing an old one. Wait another month before sowing seed.

Finish pruning roses. Begin by removing dead, weak or straggly shoots then shorten back the less vigorous shoots by one third to a half, the new stronger shoots by about one third. How far you cut them back will depend upon the age and vigour of the bushes and type of rose, but always cut back to a healthy outward pointing bud.

Prune summer flowering shrubs.

Clip deciduous hedges; coniferous hedges, such as Lawsons cypress, should be cut at the end of March or in April.

If you have a greenhouse sow summer flowering annuals.

IF YOU HAVE TIME

Dig over beds that are to take annuals in the summer. Sow hardy annuals at the end of the month unless the season is very cold.

Plant pansies and violas which are often sold coming into flower at this time. They can be particularly effective in a bed of their own.

Remove cloches or glass placed over alpine to protect them from rain and weather during the winter.

Give fish in the pond a little more food as the weather becomes milder, taking care not to overfeed.

Try to discourage bullfinches from stripping flower buds from trees and shrubs; bird scarers may help.

Help in the garden is always useful but not always forthcoming, particularly from the younger generation, but a healthy interest can often be generated by giving them a plot of their own to grow whatever takes their fancy. The sheer delight of growing one's own flowers or crops is a pleasure which, in my case, has lasted a very long time.

One Green Finger

WENTLEY AND DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Herefordshire in particular possesses an abundance of half-timbered buildings both great and small and it was to the subject of renovation of these properties that Mr J. Greene addressed himself during his talk to the society at their last meeting.

With the aid of numerous slides both photographic and diagrammatic he was able to point out some of the pitfalls and visual/ structural gaffes which could result from lack of understanding of the traditional forms and methods employed over the centuries.

Himself a practising professional in these matters he was the first to admit that even well-intentioned contract builders could be pressured by insistent patrons into a compromise on aesthetic and other values.

That this subject was of immediate interest was indicated by the large audience and the question-and-answer session which followed, and it is expected that the subject at the next meeting - 'Drivers' Roads' - given by Mrs Oldham and Mr Southwood will be as interesting an attraction.

HOW PARISH COUNCILS WORK

Although the work of parish and town councils consists primarily in the running of the parish they play a useful part in supporting village activities and village halls and commenting on matters which affect village life.

In order to give everyone the chance of finding out how parish councils work the Rural Community Council and the Leominster Marches Project are organising two informal evenings, each with an introduction by the RCC and a contribution from a parish councillor. There will be time for a question and answer session.

The first meeting will be held at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 10th March in the VI form room at Lady Hawkins School, Kingston, and the second on Wednesday March 11th at Hope-under-Dinwade.

Everyone is cordially invited to attend.

A jury consists of twelve persons chosen to decide who has the better lawyer.

Robert Frost

BIRTHDAYS

A Very Happy Birthday to:

Norton Canon

Julie Lewis	18th Mar
Clare Lovelace	18th "
Charlotte Raphael	26th "

Kimmerley

Claire Hales	17th Mar
Olivia Owen	18th "

Over Letton

Richard Bryan	18th Mar
---------------	----------

Woorhampton

Camilla Whitney	13th Mar
Laura Jay	30th "

Sarnesfield

Georgina Synock	11th Mar
Sharon Phillips	26th "

Brobury

Sam Morley	23rd Mar
Clare Jones	26th "

Staunton-on-Wye

Joe Heaven	18th Mar
Darren Morgan	21st "



WOULD YOU LIKE
TO LOSE WEIGHT

AND

FEEL FITTER

CONTACT: Mrs P H Shaw

Conifers, Norton Canon

TELEPHONE: Wentley 318604

Weekdays after 5 o'clock or weekends.

Church Notices

SERVICES DURING MARCH

Sarnesfield

8th 10 am Holy Communion
22nd 10 am Morning Prayer
29th 3 pm Mothering Sunday

Norton Cazon

1st 9 am Holy Communion
8th 9 am Morning Prayer
15th 9 am Holy Communion
22nd 9 am Family Service
29th 3 pm Mothering Sunday

Staunton-on-Wye

1st 11 am Holy Communion
8th 11 am Morning Prayer
15th 11 am Holy Communion
29th 3 pm Mothering Sunday

Byford

1st 9.30 am Holy Communion
15th 11 am Morning Prayer
29th 3 pm Family Service

Mornington-on-Wye

8th 9.30 am Holy Communion
15th 11 am Morning Prayer
29th 3 pm Mothering Sunday

Letton

8th 11 am Family Service
22nd 6 pm Evening Prayer
29th 3 pm Mothering Sunday

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Lent Study Group 2.30 pm each
Monday at Fennore, Weobley,
starting on 2nd March.

Ash Wednesday Holy Communion
10 am in Weobley Church, 7th
March.

Women's World Day of Prayer
Weobley Parish Church 10.30
am Friday, 6th March.

Speaker - Mrs. Joan Bardsley.
Letton AGM 7.30 pm Monday,
9th March.

Byford AGM 7.30 pm Monday,
23rd March.

Kimberley

1st 10 am Holy Communion
4th (Ash Wednesday) 10 am
Holy Communion
8th 10 am Mattins
15th 10 am Holy Communion -
prescher Rev. N. Outlaw
from the Leprosy Mission
18th 7.30 pm Lent service and
address.
22nd 10 am Mattins
29th 10 am Mothering Sunday
Service

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

6th MARCH, 1987

CALL TO PRAYER.

Come and Rejoice - with praise
and thanksgiving.
The members of the International
Committee for World Day of Prayer
call everyone from the north and
the south, from the east and the
west, to celebrate the Centenary
of the Women's World Day of
Prayer, 1887-1987.
Come and rejoice - for the Lord
has guided our footsteps and
still leads us in His way.

Speaker - Mrs. Joan Bardsley.

at WEOBLEY PARISH CHURCH
FRIDAY 6th MARCH, 1987.

COFFEE 10.15 am MEETING 10.45 am

Recipe

Shredded carrots, onions and
white cabbage.
1 tin sweetcorn.
1 large smoked diced sausage
Diced Brie cheese (or similar)

Mix together with mayonaisse or
salad cream, add pepper and salt.

Good dish with a baked potato.

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 bother occurs.

To start with, Fluellen, a caricature of a Welshman, is stuck 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 Montreuil. 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 21st August, worn out by campaigning and associated 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

Little Logaston Farm Products

WELSH WOLFEHART MEAT

EDDITIVE FREE * NORE DRUGS * LOCAL * GROWTH PROMOTER FREE

PORK Leg + Shoulder 1.25 Chops 1.40 Ham 1.00 Belly 85p

LAMB + MUTTON Leg 1.60 Shoulder 90p Lamb chops 1.60 mutton 1.25 Neck 75p Breast 30p

BEEF Roast 1.30 Gorman joints 1.30 Boiling joints 1.00 per lb.

***** SPECIAL OFFER *****

10% OFF ORDERS FOR THE ABOVE OF £25 OR MORE

Wolfehart or Half Pigs + Mutton
ready for the freezer bagged + labelled
75p per lb.



Lardisley (05446) 344

Little Logaston Wootton Bassett Herefordshire BF3 6QH

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 Barking 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 1687, her body was exhumed and briefly exposed; Pepys, surprisingly, kissed her. In 1778, her body was again moved, this time to the chantry 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 valances 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.

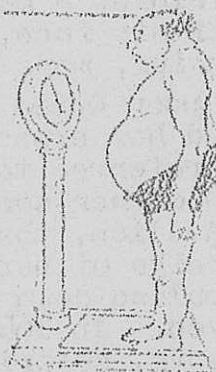
- the lamp lighters lighting the street lamps.
- hearing the clatter of clogs on flag stones as the mill workers passed by.
- 'Half timers' asleep in afternoon school.
- horse-drawn trams.
- when electric trams arrived and the conductor (with a long bamboo pole) at the terminus changing round the connector 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 tabbed 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 will 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 monastic 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. Starbed 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?