

THE SIGNAL

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

NO. 32

CHRISTMAS 1984

PRICE 12p



Christmas Visions



1. WAS IT SUPERNATURAL?

IT is Christmas time so surely it is only right that we should try to catch the spirit by telling a tale of the para-normal. I was going to call my experience a ghost story but it isn't quite that - - - as you will see. But it was certainly odd.

Let me say at once that my story really is a 'one off' experience. Although my parents were interested in psychic research - table raising and all that sort of thing - I myself was always inclined to pooh-pooh the whole idea and was never more than a reluctant participant in this particular family activity. So what happened in Beirut in 1974 came all the more as a shock. Here is a 'ball by ball' account of what took place.

It was 7 a.m. (Beirut time) when I got up and went to the bathroom. I always use an electric razor (which is anything but silent) when loud and clear came the call "Gareth! Gareth!" in what I could have sworn was my mother's voice. Switching off the razor I walked quickly to the adjoining bedroom to ask Sheila, my wife, what was the matter. She made no response which was not surprising because she was fast asleep. I didn't want to wake her so, still puzzled, I returned to the bathroom and switched on the razor once again. I had hardly restarted when, for the second time, I heard "Gareth! Gareth!" This time I walked quickly to the other bedroom where my mother-in-law was sleeping only to find her reading a book and denying quite firmly that she had called out anything. Feeling rather disturbed I returned to the bathroom but this time there were no more calls.

It was mid-morning that day at the office - about 11.30 - when I received an overseas phone message from my brother in Wales to say

THIS CHRISTMAS ISSUE OF 'SIGNAL' COVERS THE MONTHS OF DECEMBER 1984 AND JANUARY 1985. COPY FOR THE FEBRUARY 1985 ISSUE SHOULD REACH OWLS END, NORTON CANON, NOT LATER THAN THURSDAY, THE 10th JANUARY, 1985.

that dear Mam had died suddenly. Shocked but curious I asked the exact time of her death to be told 'close on seven o'clock.' This, however, only added to the puzzle because Lebanese time is 2 hours ahead of U.K. It doesn't explain anything - except that Mam really did manage to say a final goodbye.

Have any of you any tales of the uncanny? If so, won't you write and tell us about them?

Gareth Evans

2. A CHRISTMAS CAROL, 1984

Variations on a Theme of Charles Dickens



MOST people would agree that it is to Charles Dickens, more than anyone else, that we owe the concept of the traditional English Christmas. It was he who, in such novels as 'Pickwick' and 'A Christmas Carol,' first pictured the Christmas family gathering, the now accepted form of celebration in which the salient features are gross overeating, general junketing and the exchange of presents. In 'A Christmas Carol' he expanded the concept by creating the character of Scrooge, the curmudgeonly skinflint who thinks Christmas humbug but is converted by a series of midnight visions, with the result that peace and goodwill abound on all sides.

'A Christmas Carol' was written in 1843 and it is interesting to speculate on how Dickens, if he were alive today, would tackle the task of rewriting the story to reflect 1984 conditions. The result would no doubt be a very different book. Its synopsis might run somewhat on the following lines:-

The 1984 Scrooge is an employer of labour on a fairly large scale, fully occupied in endeavouring to surmount the numerous obstacles and restrictions that nowadays make it almost impossible for a manager to run his business efficiently. His clerk in the original story, Bob Cratchit, is today a trade union official, a doughty fighter in the unending war between management and labour. He does not, as in the original, ask his employer diffidently for Christmas Day off to be with his family, but demands that the work force be given the complete week between Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Scrooge demurs on the grounds that the present three-day break is adequate, and the result is an immediate strike which closes down the whole outfit.

In the meantime Scrooge's nephew extends his usual invitation to Scrooge to spend Christmas with him and his family, not because he is sorry for his miserly uncle as in the original, but because he has Great Expectations. Although one-third of Scrooge's income has been taken from him by taxation and the remainder eroded by spiralling inflation, he is still comparatively well off, and his nephew, as his closest relative, knows that the bulk of the estate could pass to him on Scrooge's death, and for that reason, as he reminds his wife, they must keep in with the old so-and-so.

Scrooge is at first tempted to turn down the invitation as he has always done in the past, but having just been listening to the news on the radio, with its usual quota of wars, strikes, IRA Christmas bombings and a further decline in the value of the pound, he feels momentarily too depressed to face the prospect

of Christmas on his own and for the first time accepts the invitation.

He decides to contribute a turkey to the feast and, as in the original story, enlists the aid of a passing errand-boy for this purpose. In the original version he gives the boy half a crown, but we have progressed since then and it is a £20 note which he now tenders to the boy and asks him to purchase a turkey. Not surprisingly, the response is a volley of four-letter words in which he is told, in no uncertain terms, what he can do with his £20. He therefore sets out to buy a bird himself, but has once again been overtaken by progress. As it is Christmas Eve, all the shops have closed early.

So he goes home and packs his bag in preparation for tomorrow's journey, but when he wakes up in the morning he finds that someone has stolen his car during the night. He therefore decides to travel by train, but for the third time progress has outdistanced him. As it is Christmas Day all public transport has been halted and no trains are running.

He is therefore doomed after all to spend Christmas alone, but by this time he is not unduly put out as he has books to read and music to listen to and will be well able to keep himself entertained. In fact, not really being a particularly sociable type, he is secretly rather pleased that things have turned out this way.

The final cameo is set in the home of the Cratchit family. Bob, chilled and hungry after a long morning on the picket lines, is looking forward to his Christmas dinner, and Mrs. Bob has just got the turkey nicely sizzling in the oven when there is a power cut. They had momentarily forgotten the miners' strike. Mrs. Bob's first reaction is to damn Arthur Scargill and all his works, but she is sharply called to order by her husband who reminds her that it is the duty of every worker to show solidarity with his comrades in the fight against management. So the whole family, with the youngest child Tiny Tim in the place of honour, sits down self-righteously to a Christmas lunch of bread and cheese.

And so, as Tiny Tim observes, 'God help us, every one!'

M.B. Collingwood



3. STRANGER THAN FICTION?

TRUTH, they say, is stranger than fiction. In my experience this is most certainly a fact.

Before I begin, I want you to know that everything you are about to read is the plain unvarnished truth.

Some years ago, on an early Autumn Thursday evening, I walked to the Village Hall in Norton Canon for a meeting of the W.I. There was nothing strange about that, for many years I had enjoyed the meetings and this particular evening was no exception. After an interesting talk, delicious refreshments and congenial company, it was time to leave, approximately 9.40 p.m. The night was clear and cloudless so there was no need to use my torch. I left the

hall to walk home with my dear friend and neighbour Mrs. Barber. We strolled along chatting about the meeting until we were within sight of The Three Horseshoes, and it was then I suddenly became compelled to look up into the sky. There, above the pub, was the object which has stayed in my mind to this day. It was elliptical in shape, like one saucer inverted upon another and seemed to be made of fluorescent pale blue light. It was perfectly still and eerily silent and pulsed regularly, like a Belisha beacon. I raised my arm to shield my eyes from the painful brightness of the light, my skin contracted into a thousand goose pimples, my heart was beating crazily against my ribs and I was mortally terrified of the evil which was all round me. I opened my mouth to speak or scream but the sound refused to come out. I turned to Mrs. Barber and to my horror saw that she had collapsed near the hedge. As I tried to rouse her I looked up again and saw the object of my fear move soundlessly and at great speed over the rooftops toward Kington and away out of sight.

When Mrs. Barber had recovered sufficiently we made our way to her bungalow. Having seen her safely inside with her daughter and son-in-law I raced home to seek reassurance from my husband. Howard, (all credit due to him) never once used words such as 'imagination' or 'all in the mind' on the contrary he made some hot strong tea.

By this time I began to realise how incredible my story must sound to anyone who hadn't actually witnessed the events of that night. I rang Hereford Police and a kind policeman listened to what I had to say. He told me I was the fifth person to report the self-same event, from various places in the county. A week later, a tiny item in the national press reported an unexplained area of burned grassland of considerable size in Mid Wales.....

Make of it what you will.

Mai Jones

Winter in the Garden

DECEMBER

"Christmas is a-coming, the goose is getting fat etc. etc." But there are still a few jobs we can do around the garden. There must be, or I won't get paid!!

General Work

Digging of course! Just right after eating too much Xmas lunch!! Generally cleaning-up, dirty corners, yellow leaves on greens to prevent harbouring slugs and moulds. Time to catch up on all the jobs you didn't have time to do during the summer.

Vegetable Garden

Not much to do this month, but as and when possible do keep the hoe moving through any growing crops.

Keep an eye on any vegetables in store. Remember to cover the remaining celery and parsnips if the weather is very severe. Might be worth chancing a few Broad Bean seeds in a sheltered corner, when the ground is workable.

Fruit Garden

Pruning of trees may still continue if it's not frosty, also spraying with Winter Tar-oil wash or Jeyes fluid to get rid of overwintering bugs. If any new planting has not been done, better to get them in, somewhere sheltered, and leave until Spring. Currants, Gooseberries, if not already pruned, should be done as soon as possible. Raspberries should have any old canes cut out, leave tops until March. Chat to a neighbour farmer and get some well rotted manure to cover the Rhubarb, stand an old bucket or similar over the top to bring it on earlier.

Flower Garden

Not much this month or so, but any plants in the reserve garden, Lupins, Sweet Williams etc., give them some protection if possible. Prune any Roses not blooming, down to about half, to prevent wind-rock. Keep an eye on newly planted bushes, tread round gently after severe frost, to firm them in.

JANUARY

When Xmas is past and the New Year is ahead, it's time to think about the new season in the garden. If you haven't already done so get hold of your favourite firms catalogues and get your seeds ordered fairly soon.

General Work

As last month, keep those yellow leaves pulled off the greens etc. If the weather is mild keep the hoe on the go. Tie-up any wall plants, prune any rambler roses.

Vegetable Garden

Toward the end of the month, if your garden is fairly sheltered, sow a few Broad Beans, and a short row of round-seeded peas, (watch-out for mice.) If you have a South facing border and a few cloches you could sow a few cauliflower, radish, lettuce. Place cloches a few days before sowing to give soil chance to warm-up. Onion seed can now be sown in boxes, and placed on a warm window-sill to germinate. Place potatoes in boxes to sprout in a light frost free place.

Fruit Garden

Continue pruning Apples, Pears, etc. Finish Winter-spraying. If not already done, prune Currants, Gooseberries, Loganberries and Blackberries and tie-in.

Flower Garden

Just continue the 'good-work' as last month. Apart from that you can have a rest this month!!

Shrubs and Trees

Late extra - planting and pruning of all but Spring flowering shrubs e.g. Forsythia, can be done now. Evergreens I prefer to leave until late March, early April.

Happy Xmas and a successful season to all readers of the 'Signal', and their friends.

NORTON CANON NEWS

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH, NORTON CANON

It was in March, 1984 that we appealed to you all for help in raising over £1,600 for the repair of the windows in the church. Much of the glass dates from the 16th century and the work of specialised craftsmen was essential. Unfortunately the first person contracted to undertake the repair withdrew after personal tragedy and the work on the windows had to be postponed. After many disappointments it has now restarted and visitors to the church may see large pieces of plastic covering some window areas.

We would like to take this opportunity to convey our most grateful and sincere thanks to all who contributed to the appeal fund. We now have a grand total of £1,054 towards the cost, which will be in the neighbourhood of £1,700.

The excellent sum of £203.60 was raised from the Harvest Festival Thanksgiving Service. This sum has been put towards the Church Window repair and is included in the above total. The Parochial Church Council would like to thank all parishioners who contributed to the Harvest Festival and also to those who gave fruit, flowers and vegetables which were very much appreciated.

NORTON CANON LADIES' SOCIAL CLUB

At the meeting on 12th November a Committee was elected to run the Club: President - Mrs. Nora Medcraft; Secretary - Mrs. Joy Pantall; Treasurer - Mrs. Anne Cole. It is hoped that with the help of those ladies (and there were about twenty present that evening) who support the Club an interesting and exciting programme for 1985 can be arranged.

The Christmas Dinner outing has been planned for TUESDAY, the 11th December at the Unicorn Restaurant in Weobley. We meet there at 7.30 for 8 p.m., each of us already having chosen our own menu. (Please bring money in an envelope.) Any lady who was not present on the 12th and wishes to come to the Uniform may ring Anne Cole for menu details.

After this short business meeting, Mrs. Sally Williams created two splendid arrangements, one with fresh flowers and fruit, the other with dried grasses and flowers. She let us in to several secrets of the florists' trade as she deftly added false stems to 'Chinese lanterns' and spiked apples with cocktail sticks. No wonder the raffle was well supported; Sally had donated the dried flower arrangement as the prize.

On Monday, 14th January the first meeting for 1985 will be held as usual in the Village Hall at 8 p.m. This will be a Cheese and Wine Party (entrance 50p to include all refreshments.) At this meeting subscriptions - £1 for 6 months - will be collected from all who wish to belong to the Club. Remember! The Club NEEDS your active support.

Sheila Evans

NORTON CANON CHURCH AUTUMN SALE

This Sale, together with one or two small donations, raised the sum of £151.11 for the Church Fabric Fund. This money will be put towards the cost of the urgent repair of our Church windows.

A very big 'thank-you' to the members of the P.C.C and their families for their hard work in organising and manning the stalls, and to all those who came in the afternoon and spent so generously.

We regret to hear that Mrs. Lillian West of Moorhampton and Mrs. Mary Price of Eccles Green are both in Hospital. We hope they will make a speedy recovery.

OBITUARY

We regret to report the death of Mr. Lewis Weaver of Moorhampton. The funeral took place at Norton Canon on the 1st November.

Lewis had lived in the area for most of his life. He and Mrs. Weaver moved from Norton Canon to Moorhampton in 1958.

Much sympathy goes out to Mrs. Weaver in her great loss.

ROBERT LOXSTON

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

Post Office, Norton Canon

Phone: Weobley 8825

KINNERSLEY - COFFEE EVENING

A very enjoyable Coffee Evening was recently held at Hurstley Court, Kinnorsley by kind invitation of Mr. & Mrs. V. J. T. Skyrme. Approximately £175 was raised for the Churchyard Fund and thanks are extended to all who helped in this successful effort.

HEREFORD & WORCESTER COUNTY COUNCIL

Would you like to know more about Yoga?

Classes are currently running at Weobley Primary School every Wednesday and Thursday during school term, 6.40 p.m. - 8.15 p.m.

New term commences in January 1985 so just roll up at the School on Wednesday, 16th or Thursday, 17th January.

CHRISTMAS DINNER

DUCKLINGS 5 lb - 7 lb

CHICKENS 6 lb - 8 lb

SOME LARGER 10 lb approx.

GEESE approx 10 lb - 14 lb

CAN DELIVER - PLEASE ORDER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Tel: WEOBLEY 260, Mrs. Cole.

HELP YOURSELF TO HEALTH

Tuesday, 8th January at 7.30 pm
at EARDISLEY VILLAGE HALL.

Gardening without using chemicals. It is safer, healthier and less expensive.

Arthur Barritt, Member of Soil Association, will give a talk and answer questions.

Everyone welcome. Admission 30p.

(Please note - we are back in the Village Hall again.)

A day in the life of

A 'Lady' Postman

DURING THE EARLY 1940's.

by

MARGARET MARSHALL



AT this time I was living at the Old Vicarage where my folks were farming. My father was the subpostmaster and I was the local postwoman.

This meant rising at 6 a.m., boiling the kettle on a primus stove (we did not have electricity until 1954 and mains water until much later,) taking tea up to waken the family and then out on my bicycle to reach Weobley P.O. by 7 a.m.

A pleasant journey summertime, but in the winter with the blackout and very little light allowed, it was not too easy to decide what the state of the roads was before I started out down the hill and it was often anything but a comfortable ride.

After catching the early morning Yeomans double decker 'bus from Kington at the usual place along the Garnstone Road, I reached Weobley where it was a quick 'Good Morning' to everyone and then down to sorting the mail which had arrived from Hereford by motor van.

Mr. Jennings 'the postmaster' had by this time usually sorted the post into four districts and then I and the three postmen were off to do our own deliveries. We all started out around 8 o'clock with a short stint in Weobley and then I was out on the open road to call at most of the farms and cottages on the way to Shoal's Bank.

There used to be six dwellings up the hill in those days. Mr. Fred Williams lived at the top house, and he was quite a character as everyone who knew him will remember! He used to keep great numbers of unpenned pigs and the slurry from these in the winter-time would often leave my wellingtons submerged! I rarely got as far as the house and just had to shout hopefully for someone to meet me!

Back down to the road for my bicycle and on my way to Norton Canon. Here too there have been quite a number of subsequent changes. No bungalows then at Canon Drive or Upper Norton and several cottages

along Norton's Wood have since fallen down and their land merged into the fields. I can recall travelling over several fields to 'The Parks' where Mrs. Gertie Taylor was a great letter writer - and she always had the kettle boiling! Then on over the stream to where the Parker family used to live. All gone now.


On Wednesdays a 'bus used to run along Norton's Wood and up Calver Hill to Hereford and return in the afternoon, so I used to try and meet it at Eccles Green so that I could deliver the mail to the passengers on board.

With the outbreak of War, there was much more official post. The farmers used to dread the returns which had to be made to 'The Ministry.' 'Them green ones again' they would say and I even got the idean that they thought I was personally responsible! Ration books, Clothing and Petrol coupons all had to be delivered and woe betide me if someone received theirs and their neighbour didn't!

Christmas was another busy time and it was often afternoon before I got home. We delivered on Christmas Day and it was usually a happy occasion because the homemade wine used to flow! It still got made despite the sugar rationing. In wartime there was, of course, always the dreaded fear that a tragic telegram might have to be delivered. It was a thought you could never shake off. Eventually I got back home. The P.O. official distance was 17 miles and rarely did I ever complete it in the allocated time of 3 hours.

I was postmistress for a while after my father's death until May Loxston took over and now it is Robert and Jose so it has quite a long family connection ranging back to 1923.

Writing this has brought back a lot of memories - some sad and some happy. Sometimes I had to read letters to their recipients and then write their answer. Often I used to deliver personal messages along the way because, in those days, very few people had telephones. Generally speaking, my postal days were very satisfactory if perhaps very long.



THE KINNERSLEY ARMS

KINNERSLEY
(Ken and Pat Benjamin)

• Traditional Ales	• Beer Garden and Patio
• Wide variety of bar snacks daily	• Pool Room
• A la carte restaurant open Wed-Sunday	• Good car park

We serve a set three-course Sunday lunch at £3.95 per head. Bookings only.

Outside bars catered for. Phone: 05446 240

THE RADNORSHIRE AND WEST HEREFORDSHIRE HUNT WILL MEET AT THE KINNERSLEY ARMS AT 11 A.M. ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 28TH.

Church Notices

Sarnesfield

December

9th 10 am Holy Communion
25th 8 am Holy Communion

January

13th 10 am Holy Communion
27th 10 am Morning Prayer

Norton Canon

December

2nd 9 am Holy Communion
9th 9 am Morning Prayer
16th 9 am Holy Communion
23rd 9 am Family Service
with carols
25th 9 am Holy Communion

January

6th 9 am Holy Communion
13th 9 am Morning Prayer
20th 9 am Holy Communion
27th 9 am Family Service

Staunton-on-Wye

December

2nd 11 am Holy Communion
9th 11 am Morning Prayer
16th 11 am Lessons with
carols
25th 11 am Holy Communion
with carols

January

6th 11 am Holy Communion
13th 11 am Morning Prayer
20th 11 am Holy Communion

Byford

December

2nd 9.30 am Holy Communion
16th 6.30 am Evening Prayer
24th 11.30pm Holy Communion
30th 10.00am Family Service
with carols

January

6th 9.30 am Holy Communion
20th 6.30 pm Evening Prayer

Monnington-on-Wye

December

9th 9.30 am Holy Communion
25th 9.30 am Holy Communion

January

13th 9.30 am Holy Communion

Letton

December

20th 7.30 pm Carols in Church
and Old Letton
Court
23rd 6.00 pm Holy Communion

January

13th 11.00 am Family Communion
27th 6.00 pm Evening Prayer

A Christmas Service of readings
and carols will be held on Thurs-
day, 20th December at 7.30 p.m.
with the HEREFORD CHURCH SINGERS
Afterwards there will be a 'Pastry
and Punch' Evening at Old Letton
Court also with the singers.

Kimnersley

December

2nd 10 am Advent Carol Service
9th 10 am Holy Communion
16th 6.30 Carol Service with
Christmas Play (with
children of the village)
23rd 10 am Christmas Family Service
with carols
25th 10 am Holy Communion with
carols
30th 11 am Combined Service of
Holy Communion with
carols (for our group
of parishes)

STAUNTON-ON-WYE NOTES

FORGET-ME-NOT CLUB

Once again we had a beautiful day for our trip to the Elan Valley and Aberystwyth on 9th October. The sky was clear and the sun shone. We stopped at Rhayader for a coffee break and then on to the Elan Valley. Our driver was good enough to take us along the lakeside road so that we could get a good view of the dam. The water was cascading over the spillway and the reservoir was practically full - very different from six weeks earlier when I last visited it; then it was as dry as a desert.

We took some photographs and meandered along the mountain road till we arrived at Devil's Bridge, then on to Aberystwyth. On the way we saw several rare wild birds, one of which we think was a brown eagle.

It was very quiet at Aberystwyth and we were able to get a good

meal. Some of us sat on the front whilst others wandered round the shops. We found a very interesting museum in what was the old theatre.

We left at 5 p.m. and had an equally good journey home, stopping at Kington for a drink. Truly a lovely day - thank you Biddy.

P. McCann

STAUNTON-ON-WYE PARISH CHURCH

Due to its exposed position on a hilltop Staunton-on-Wye church has suffered periodic damage from winter gales. One of the windows in the tower was blown in last winter, and other windows are cracked.

The tower window was recently repaired by one of Staunton-on-Wye's most skilled builders and woodworkers, Mr. David Jones, and Mr. Reg McCann has also carried out repairs.

The clergy and church council express their gratitude.

Disco - Darts - Welly throwing - Tiddleywinks - Canoeing - Dance
Cards Tossing the caber - Cookery - Painting - Underwater singing

What do we want?

Staunton-on-Wye has very few activities for young people in the area. Are you interested in being involved in societies, clubs, special activity days or event locally?

The Parish Council is doing a survey on interest in youth activities, both helpers and young people. If you have any ideas or suggestions we should like to hear from you. Fill in the form below and return by Christmas either to Staunton Post Office or to Mrs. J. Thomas, Court Farm Cottage, Brobury.

Name and Address

Helper or Young Person

Age

Interest Weekly Group ☐ Short Course ☐

Day Event ☐

Suggestions for Activities

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Pet care - Table tennis - Football - Drama - Big game hunting
Fishing - Swimming - Astronomy - Collecting - Drawing - Cricket

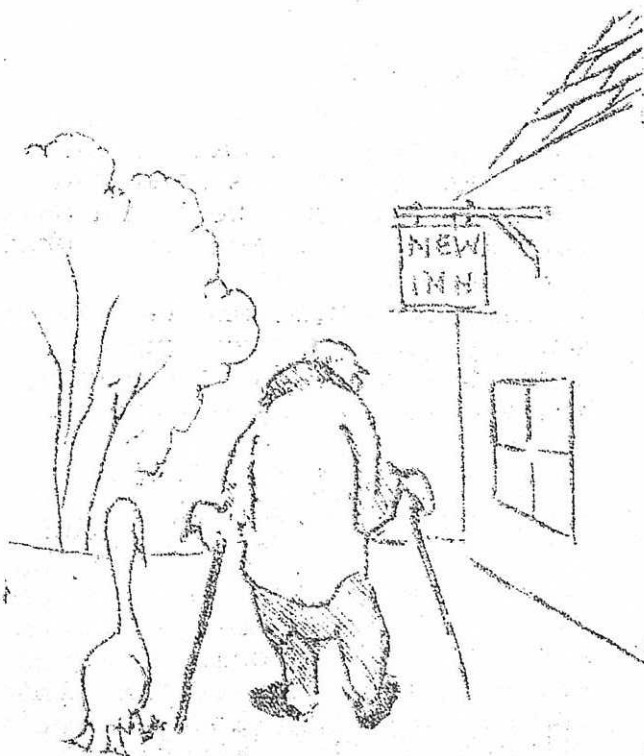
Some Village 'Characters'

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

OF STAUNTON-ON-WYE

by

PHYLLIS McCANN



WHEN I was a child in Staunton-on-Wye there were many outstanding people whom I shall always remember, and no doubt other older residents will remember them too.

The first one I remember, when I was about six years old, was Walter. I never knew his surname but he was a 'gentleman of the road' - and I mean 'gentleman.' He used to live in the millhouse at Scutt Mill for about six months and then he would travel around a few other farms doing odd jobs. He was to fascinate me with his tales and his carvings. He once made a doll with every joint movable. He fixed a handle to the back of it and then he would sit on a long thin board and whistle and make it dance. I spent many an hour with him watching him at his work.

Then there was Sue Coburn who lived in the almshouses. She used to come over to pick apples and pull swedes, and the capers she and Walter cut were as good as any T.V. turn. She was a wine maker - and she drank most of it herself.

At times during the week Sergeant Williams the policeman would call. 'Where's the key, missus?' he would ask, and you always knew what he wanted - a good draught of cider. He would leave his helmet on the kitchen table and be in the cellar for an hour or so. He was a big man and used to frighten me to death. Then Mr. Trumper the butcher would arrive - he needed a beast for slaughter and the cellar key would once again disappear. Tom and Jack would arrive to take the bullock home, riding on two horses like highwaymen. Sometimes Mr. Haines the keeper and Mr. Rootes would call to say there was going to be a shoot.

When I was at Staunton School I lived in the Storehouse and there were plenty of 'characters' around there. I remember dear old Polly who used to take the medicine for Dr. Steed to Bradwardine and Letton - she must have clocked up some miles. She was very kind and always found time to talk to a six-year-old.

I used to take the parish magazine to the almshouses and well remember Granny Parry with her linen bonnet and clay pipe. She used to sit by the fire puffing away and when you went in she put the pipe behind her back and you could see the smoke curling up over her shoulder.

'Happy Jack' was another 'character.' It took him all day to get to the New Inn, scuffling up the road on two sticks. He would start off at about 10.30 a.m. and arrive at the inn about midday, stopping on the way for rests. He would start back at closing time and we would pass him as we were coming out of school. Needless to say, the boys used to pull his leg. Another regular New Inn patron was Mr. Jones of New House. He would arrive in his pony and trap with his tame gander waddling along behind him.

The children went to school by horse, bike or 'chariot' (like Elizabeth and Ken Richards,) or on foot. We nearly all called sometime during the week at the village shop kept by Mrs. Kinsey, and we used to make her get all the boxes down for our penny. She was always very patient, and although I'm sure she must have been cross when some kid came in for a sherbet while she was cleaning her bedroom she always seemed happy to see us. The shop was a great meeting place for a chat.

Mr. and Mrs. Markham were the schoolteachers and we held them in awe. A few of us learned music and would be ushered into the inner sanctum where no foot normally trod. They were happy days.

Other people I remember were Mrs. Handley who was always ready to help and work like a man, and Mrs. Gladwin who used to do shopping for the village on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Then there was Anne Maund who lived at Chadnor's Gate. She was a very strange lady. She wouldn't allow anyone near her house and when we children went flower picking in the spring and passed her house she would shout and rave at us. She wore black clothes - one garment on top of another. Poor soul, I think her brain must have gone.

Another unusual personality was Mr. Murray. He was Irish and wore earrings - a most unheard of thing for a man in those days. Then there was 'Christmas' (I never knew his proper name) and Jack Porter, whose house was burnt down. You could go on and on for hours

Nor can we ever forget 'Welshie' Price who, in his own funny way, did so much for the Charity, the village and the church - and his great enemy Brassey, a great rival as regards the village hall. And there was Mrs. Turnbull, who used to 'borrow a dog' and go wooding - you never saw her without a load of wood she was dragging home.

Mrs. Skyrme used to take us to Barry for our Sunday school outing for which we would save up for months so that we could visit the fair there. The thrill of the 'bus journey was something to look forward to from Christmas onwards. And there was Mr. Price of The Ark with his black bowler hat. He used to teach us in chapel and organise the village funerals in his horse and trap.

They have all passed on now and others may take their places as village 'characters' - but it really was a very happy childhood.

Viewpoint.....

A MIRACLE OF MODERN PROGRESS

BY the time this issue of 'Signal' appears traffic between Hereford and Leominster will probably be badly disorganised due to the temporary closure of the A49 road while repairs are carried out to the bridge over the railway at Newton.

According to an article published in the 26th October issue of 'The Hereford Times,' traffic between Hereford and Leominster is being diverted along the A4110 road via Canon Pyon and Stretford, a detour of some five miles. But this is nothing compared to what local traffic between, say, Hope-under-Dinmore and Leominster is having to face. The idea here is to send motorists on a long jaunt through northern Herefordshire, via Burley Gate, Bromyard and Bredenbury, a detour of over twenty miles. One is reminded irresistibly of G.K. Chesterton's 'rolling English road' and

'The night we went to Birmingham by way of Beachy Head.'

According to a statement made by a spokesman for the Department of Transport, the closure of the bridge is due to 'urgent repair work to the parapets and side walls.' It is estimated that this work will take three months.

How different things were in the dark days of a hundred years ago, before the advent of modern engineering methods. As an illustration of this one has only to recall a big construction job in May 1892, when the Great Western Railway made the final conversion of its tracks from the 7-foot broad gauge to the standard gauge of 4 feet 8½ inches. It had been realised for many years that the gauge would eventually have to be converted to conform with other railways, and for this reason a third rail had been laid between the other two so that trains of both gauges could be accommodated.

The final conversion involved 171 miles of track, along with accompanying marshalling yards and sidings, a truly formidable task. How long do you think it took weeks? months? Not a bit of it - the whole job was done in two days.

If the time taken to repair the Newton Bridge is any criterion, this conversion job, if it were being carried out today, would probably take about five years.

One never ceases to marvel at the miracles of modern progress.

M.B. Collingwood

A CHRISTMAS CONCERT

by

THE VALE OF ARROW CHOIR

WEOBLEY
PARISH
CHURCH

ADMISSION £1

Saturday, December 15th at 7.30 pm

BIRTHDAYS

A Belated Happy Birthday to
BRIAN PUGH of Mornington-on-Wye
who was 18 on the 12th
November and to the following
whom we missed.

Mornington-on-Wye.

Luke Trumper	5th Nov
Jess Courtney	11th "

Staunton-on-Wye

Jeremy Price	7th Nov
Ian Jenkins	13th "
Nicky Andrews	18th "

A Very Happy Birthday to all
the following:

Staunton-on-Wye

Joan Kain	6th Dec
Daniel Kendall	8th "
Rupert Heaven	13th "
Leigh Mason	17th "
Nicky Morgan	27th "
Georgina Jelfs	29th "

Emma Price	5th Jan
Christine Morgan	6th "
Carol Morgan	11th "
Christopher Sheers	13th "
Kim Mason	13th "
Amy Howard	24th "
Thomas Arthur	25th "
Jonathon Sheers	27th "
Lydia Lewis	27th "

Norton Canon

Lyndsey Evans	2nd Dec
Nichola Cole	2nd "
Nichola Watson	7th "
Lucan Raphael	8th "
Tina Colecombe	11th "
Johnathon Absolam	15th "

Gail Davies	11th Jan
Jaime Loxston	12th "
Stuart Powell	25th "
Andrew Davies	26th "
Duncan Hardman	30th "

Moorhampton

Matthew Turley (Mansel Gamage)	6th Jan
Andrew Whitney (Upperton)	12th "

Sarnesfield

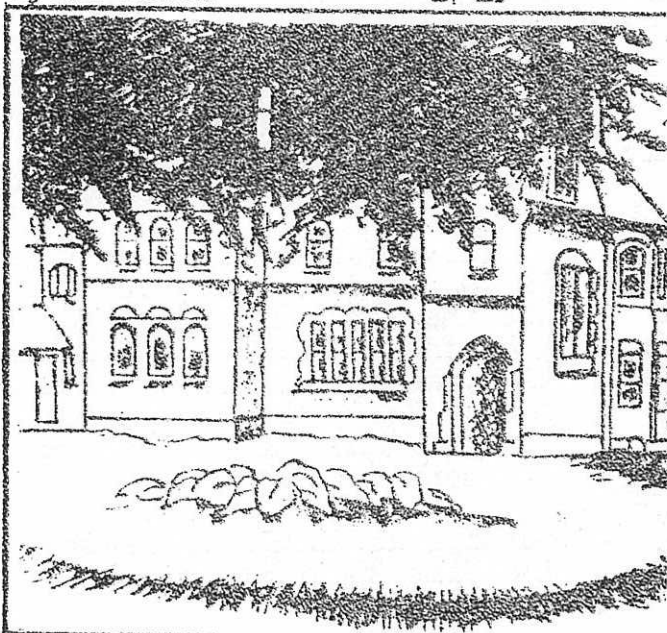
Wendy Evans	5th Jan
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Kimnersley

Ian Lewis	2nd Dec
Stephen Mark Thomas	17th "
Julie Ann Phillips (Sallies)	30th "

Over Letton

Robert Bryan	11th Dec
Mark Addison	24th "



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Readers' Letters

In regard to your community newsletter in the November issue of 'Signal,' I feel that the writer of the letter to the 'Times' has overlooked one aspect of advancing technology, viz., advancing understanding.

ready by the concept of the 'Test-Tube' Baby. We may even have to accept the idea of 'free love' and birth by incubation. Surely our so-called permissive society is already the first step in this direction?

F.C. Foreman
Kinnersley.

The Industrial revolution of the 19th century bred deep foreboding around the idea of progress and that same attitude to change still survives. Witness the difficulty today with which new techniques are introduced into any branch of industry. Nevertheless, there is some gradual appreciation of the idea that a change is necessary. Your very article illustrates this point, for it is already apparent that such is the accelerating rate of development that by the year 2000 it will be possible for all means of production to be executed by robot computer, and will thus require only a miniscule number of operators. Temporarily this concept will mean massive unemployment until minds were adjusted to the new conception and our long held viewpoint that a person is born to work from 18 to 65 will have to be dispelled. Then, and only then, will it be possible to introduce leisure programmes to satisfy the mental and physical needs of all.

Your Viewpoint article of November's issue of Signal asks 'What do you think' re limiting population growth to job availability.

If the options on offer were implemented we might as well be living in Communist China!

The options listed are by no means the only ones on offer, but I hesitate to activate the minefield!

J. Smith

Gareth Evans's front page article in Signal last month has succeeded in shaking me out of my sloth-like enforced inactivity to reply.

I would first take issue on a need to limit our population growth in the ways suggested. There is something 'Big Brother-ish' about enforced family size, although this is happening now in parts of China and India. I agree, however, on the need for education to make available to far more (if not all people) the new and different skills which are required to meet the demands of new technology.

Equally important, in my view, is the need to 'educate' (I use the word advisedly) for the inevitable increase in leisure time, as the number of jobs became less, the working day shorter, and the age for retirement earlier.

Perhaps we should increase the time spent at school

Now let's take your views on limitation of birth. Despite today's terrible conditions the world already produces more food than it needs. It can, in fact, produce much more and it is only the WILL that prevents ALL from being satisfied. Clearly, it is not necessary to limit the birth rate. This will come about automatically with increased leisure and increased opportunity which already are the main reasons why today the birth rate is so much lower in the western world.

We might well have to move nearer to the concept of Huxley's 'Brave New World,' prompted al-

studying Physical Education, Art, Music, Craft, Literature, Nature Study etc. towards these ends? At least in the likely event of unemployment and many hours to fill, folk would then be better equipped to enjoy their leisure in a pleasureable and profitable way? or am I living in 'cloud cuckoo land'?

What do you think?

Mai Jones

May I please use 'Signal' as a means of expressing my sincere thanks to all my friends and neighbours for their many kindnesses during a recent long illness.

I am truly grateful. Bless you.

Mai Jones
(Norton Canon)

FOR SALE

PICTURE Frame Window (approx. 56 ft. 9 in. high x 7 ft. 11 in. wide) complete with sill, £20.

(Advertisement in 'The Hereford Times')

A bargain for a cathedral repair job, perhaps?

HAVING PROBLEMS WITH YOUR CAR?

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High petrol consumption?
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Not charging?

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Tel. REG FILLING

ELECTRO-TUNE

MOBILE CAR CLINIC
MOCCAS 415

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NATIONAL CHILDREN'S HOME

Thanks go out to all who generously subscribed to the above Charity last month. The total collected in Norton Canon was £49.59, way above last year's figure which was £17.

With George Thomas, former speaker of the House of Commons, as it's President, the N.C.H. is comprised of 31 children's homes, 15 adolescent units, 12 homes and schools for disabled children, 24 family and day-care centres, 15 family problem phone-in services, and many foster families and other services throughout Britain.

R. Norman T. Lloyd, Weobley
Local Collector (Area Secretary)

STAUNTON-ON-WYE PLAYGROUP
would like to thank everyone who donated to their Jumble Sale and also those who came and supported it.

Thanks to your generosity
£70 was raised.

'SIGNAL' PRODUCTION

The last three issues of 'Signal' have been produced without the services of Lyn Stokes of Staunton-on-Wye, one of the key members of the production team, who tackles the formidable task each month of running off 360 copies of the newsletter on a duplicator. Lyn has been suffering from a long illness for some months and is at present receiving hospital treatment. We send her our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

We have also lost our talented artist, Sandra Children, who has moved away from the district. We are very grateful to her for the fine work she has done ever since 'Signal's' inception. As a replacement we have been fortunate in securing the services of Anthony Hamilton, a new resident of Staunton-on-Wye. Some of his artwork appears in this issue.

HEREFORDSHIRE TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Day and Evening Adult Classes in the City and Surrounding Districts - Spring Term 1985

Students may enrol for the classes below at the following times and places:-

1. At the Public Enrolment - Tuesday 8th January, 1985, from 9.30 - 7.30 p.m. in the Technical College Main Hall.
2. At College Reception from 10.00 a.m. - 12.00 noon and 2.00 - 4.00 p.m. any week day from Wednesday, 9th January 1985.

Classes start during the week beginning 14th January 1985 and run for 10 weeks in the evenings, UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.

MONDAY

Technical College: Badminton(day), Ladies' Keep Fit, Aerobics I, Aerobics II, Calligraphy, Adult Literacy, Recreational Woodwork (Level 2), "We are what we eat" (6 weeks), Welding, Motor Vehicle Maintenance, Servicing and fault repair of Microprocessor based equipment, Microwave Cookery (3 weeks).

City Schools: Adult Learn to Swim (Beginners & Improvers) (LEA Pool), Basketball (Whitecross School), Badminton (Maywood Sports Hall), Ballroom Dancing (Broadlands School).

TUESDAY

Technical College: Clarinet, Yoga I, Rock Climbing, Badminton (Beginners), Aerobics I, Aerobics II, Glassworking, Beauty Care, Computers in the Home, Level 1 Recreational Woodwork, Home Upholstery, Welding, Motor Vehicle Maintenance, Blacksmithing, Horse Management and Breeding, The Gourmet Kitchen.

City Schools: Men's Fitness Training, Portrait Painting, Dressmaking, Typewriting, Ladies' Keep Fit (Whitecross School), Golf (starts 22.1.85 for 6 weeks - Hunderton Primary School).

WEDNESDAY

Technical College: Men's Fitness Training, Aerobics I, Aerobics II, Yoga II, Cricket Coaching for Coaches, Plastering, Sign Writing & Lettering, Dressmaking (a.m. & p.m.), Welding, Motor Vehicle Maintenance, Basic Knowledge for first time horse owners.

City Schools: Ladies' Keep Fit (Bishops), Adult Learn to Swim (Beginners & Improvers) (LEA Pool), Yoga, Typewriting (Whitecross), Ladies' Keep Fit for over (Marlbrook).

THURSDAY

Technical College: Squash Coaching, Bridge, Writing for Pleasure & Profit, Aerobics (a.m. & p.m.), Ladies' Keep Fit, Plumbing Maintenance, Brickwork, Furniture Finishing & Renovation, Handicrafts, Entertaining at Home, Machine Code Programming, Blacksmithing, Repair and maintenance of small engines.

City Schools: Learn to Swim for Handicapped (LEA Pool), Yoga (Marlbrook), Golf (starts 24.1.85 for 6 weeks - Hunderton Primary School).

FRIDAY

Technical College: Adjustment to Retirement (EDC), Aerobics, First Aid at Work (4 Fridays, 6 hours per day), Furniture Finishing & Renovation.

COUNTRY CLASSES

TUESDAY

Introduction to Computers (Peterchurch).

WEDNESDAY

Yoga I (Weobley).

THURSDAY

Yoga II (Weobley), German (Kingstons).