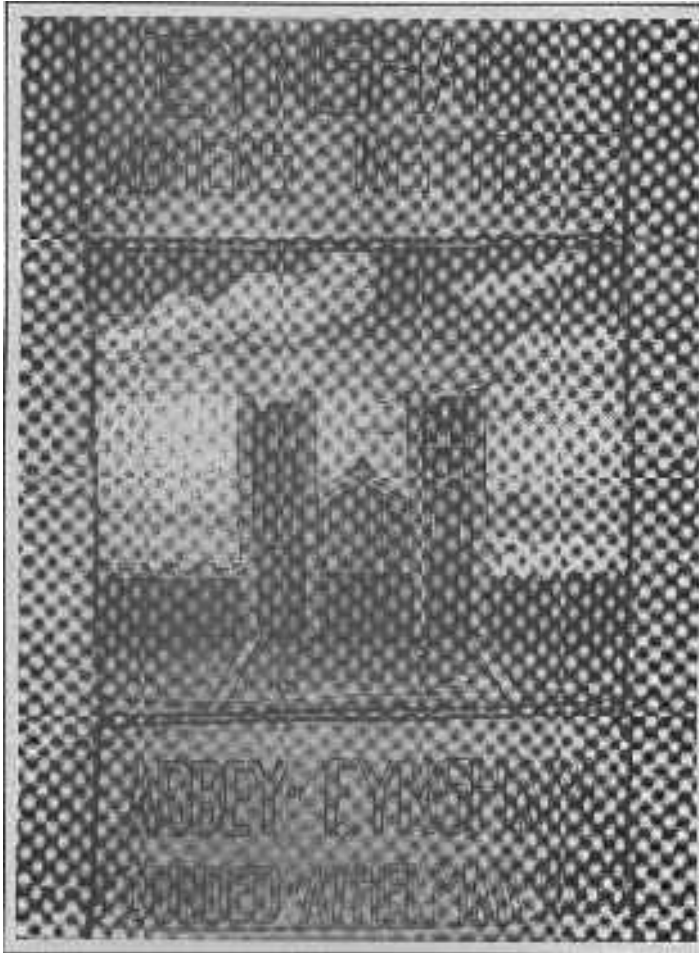


# THE EYNESHAM RECORD



Number 15 – 1998

## NOTES

1. Images have been optimised throughout for online viewing.
2. Typographic errors in the printed edition, where identified, have been corrected in this digitised version.
3. Errors of fact or interpretation in the original which have since come to light are repeated but followed by an amendment in curly brackets {thus}
4. The pages are not available for printing “as is”, though you may copy/paste sections into another document.
5. Back numbers of the Eynsham Record are available in **print** for £1 plus p&p.
6. Contacts:
  - (a) the Editor Brian Atkins, 8 Thornbury Road tel 01865 881677 email [brian@fbatkins.free-online.co.uk](mailto:brian@fbatkins.free-online.co.uk)
  - (b) Fred Bennett, 68 Witney Road tel 01865 880659

### Note on abbreviations

Bodl..	Bodleian Library, Oxford.
Chambers, 1936	Chambers, E.K. <i>Eynsham under the Monks</i> . Oxfordshire Record Society, vol.18, 1936.
E.H.G.	Eynsham History Group.
<i>E.R.</i>	<i>Eynsham Record</i> .
<i>Eynsham Cart.</i>	<i>Cartulary of the Abbey of Eynsham</i> . Salter, H.E. (Ed.), (1 and 2) in 2 volumes, Oxford Historical Society, vol.49 (1907) & vol.51 (1908).
Gordon, 1990	Gordon, Eric. <i>Eynsham Abbey: 1005-1228</i> , Phillimore, 1990.
O.S.	Ordnance Survey.
Oxon. Archives	Oxfordshire Archives, (formerly Oxfordshire Record Office)
P.R.O.	Public Record Office.
<i>V.C.H. Oxon.</i>	<i>The Victoria History of the County of Oxford</i> .

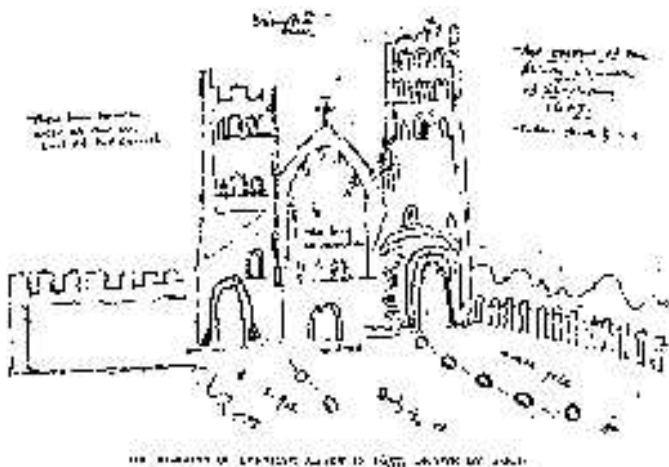
**FRONT COVER:**

Eynsham's branch of the WI celebrates its 75th birthday this year (see pp.16-19). Its banner was embroidered in 1932 by a team of ten members led by Mrs Oakeley. It was designed by her sister.

# **THE EYNSHAM RECORD**

**Number 15: 1998**

**Journal of the Eynsham History Group**



ISSN 0265-6779

© Published by the Eynsham History Group

All material in this publication is copyright

# CONTENTS

Editorial .....	1
Miss Mary Oakeley (1913-97) ... by Joan Weedon .....	2
Eynsham Abbey - the story so far .. by Alan Hardy .....	4
Medical Care in Eynsham : Part 2 A selection of doctors and surgeons of the 19th & 20th centuries .. by Martin Harris.....	7
Eynsham's Women's Institute ..... by Pat Atkins .....	16
THEN and NOW .....	20/21
'The Domestic Affairs of an Eynsham Man' ..... by Pamela Richards ....	22
The Churchyard Extension of 1929 .....	24
The Ensham National School, 1864-1890 ... by Joy Richardson....	25
Old school photographs .....	31
An old footballing photograph .....	24
Eynsham's Infant School, 1890-1985 ....by Joy Richardson .....	33
Childhood Memories..... by Jean Buttrick .....	41

## EDITORIAL

This year's professional contribution comes from Alan Hardy, a Project Manager at the Oxford Archaeological Unit, who is directing the post-excavation research on the Eynsham Abbey project.

The last year has seen the publication of Martin Harris's *The Changing Faces of Eynsham* (Robert Boyd, Witney, 1997), a splendid compilation of old and new photographs of the village, its streets, buildings, people and activities. A second volume is in preparation. Martin, who continues his account of the history of medical care in the village in these pages, is also our new Chairman.

The village is the poorer following the death of Mary Oakeley (see pp.2-3), but we are fortunate that in the last year of her life this indomitable lady published her autobiography, *The Long Timetable* (Pentland Press, Durham, 1997). This deals largely with her long and successful career as a schoolteacher and headmistress, at home and abroad, but contains references to Eynsham in the early chapters where she describes her childhood.

I have had enormous pleasure from *After the Dance*, an audio cassette produced by Eynsham Morris. We all know that they can dance, but they are also all exceptionally good entertainment value as singers! My justification for mentioning this in our local history journal is that it includes, among other old ditties, an excellent rendition of the Eynsham Poacher's song.

It seems that, despite cost cutting threats by the OCC last year, our branch library is to survive. Good news, not least because the EHG will continue to have a home for our books and archives, secure but accessible on application at the library.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the NHS (see pp 7-15), and the 75th anniversary of the village's WI branch (see pp 16-19).

Thanks to all contributors, and to Dr Leslie Goulding who has helped with the photography.

## MISS MARY OAKELEY (1913-1997)

by Joan Weedon

It is with the greatest regret that we record the sudden death of Mary Oakeley on Thursday, December 18th 1997.

'Mary O', as she was affectionately known, was in her 85th year and had recently published her autobiography, *'The Long Timetable'*. Her book begins with her birth in Bristol in April 1913; an event which took place in a girls' school, the chosen nursing home being full. Thus began Mary's life-long association with teaching and schools.

The Oakeley family moved to Eynsham shortly after Mary's birth and her early life was spent in the village where she attended Miss Swami's school in Redthorn House. Mary had a deep respect for Miss Swami and thought her 'a marvellous woman and a fine and caring teacher'. From the age of ten she attended St John's School, Bexhill, followed by study at St Hilda's College, Oxford, where she graduated in History. Mary's teaching experience began at Malvern, at a school where the 'Dalton' system (an informal method) was in operation. This was followed by employment at an Ascot school where the headmistress called teachers by their surnames and crept up to classroom doors to spy upon them.

In 1940 Mary travelled to New Zealand on the last passenger ship to sail through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal during the Second World War, the boat being chased by submarines until it reached Gibraltar.

The post of headmistress at the Craighead School at Timaru in the South Island was a daunting one for a young woman of twenty-seven; however, when Mary finally left in 1955 she had transformed an establishment of 42 disenchanted girls into the leading South Island school with 220 pupils, a new chapel and playing fields. During this time she had become the second woman in the Anglican church to be appointed lay-reader and had preached in Roman Catholic and Presbyterian churches in New Zealand.

Mary's second headship was at St Felix School, Southwold, where she worked for twenty years until her retirement in 1978. The school had suffered wartime deprivations but during Mary's administration, a language laboratory, a new form block, squash courts, an art room and a sixth-form house were also built.

During her retirement in Eynsham, Mary worked in an Oxford Summer School for ten years, operated St Leonard's Boys' Club and the Drop-in Club at the Church Hall. She became a Diocesan Synod representative and assisted at services in St Leonard's church for many years.

As Chairman of the Eynsham Society her expertise was greatly appreciated during parish meetings on the vexed question of local gravel extraction.

She remained very active to the end of her long life. A long-serving member of the Eynsham History Group, at the time of her death she was its Outings Secretary, and had urged us to produce a formal constitution, providing a suggested draft.

She was a source of strength in village society, honest and direct with an immense 'savoir faire' and a fund of amusing local tales. Her support and her optimistic presence will be greatly missed.

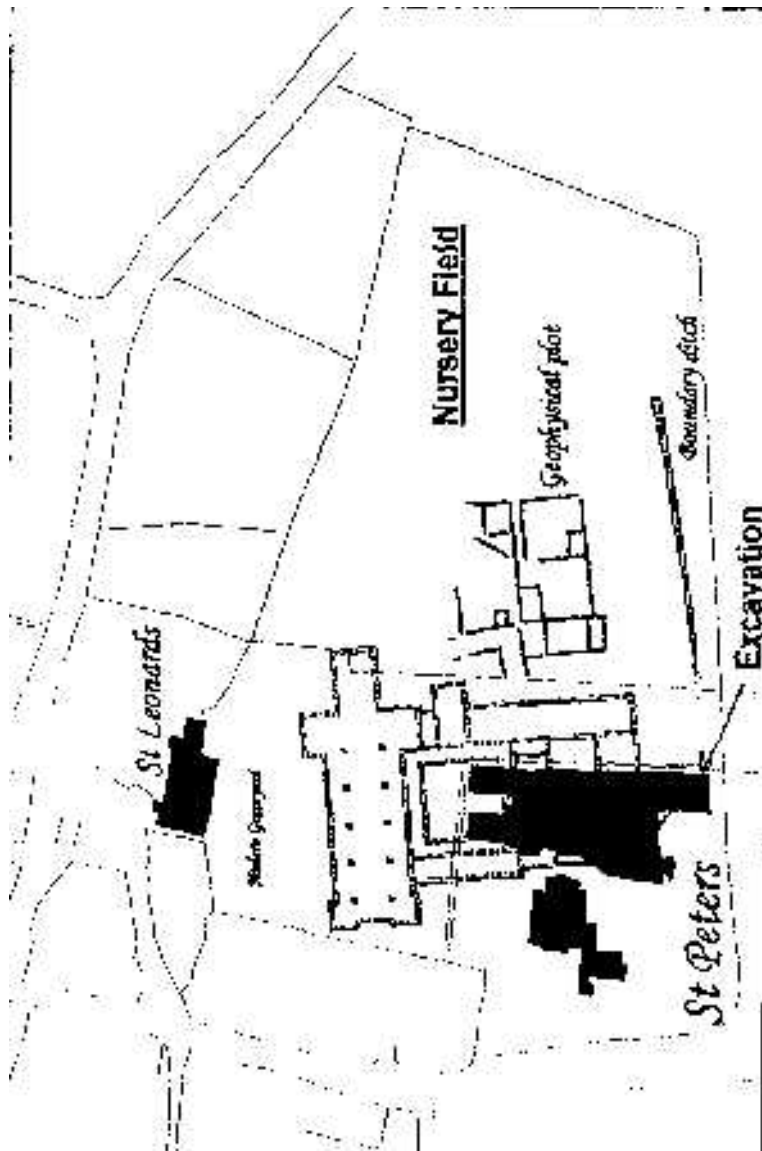
Publications:

*The Long Timetable*; Pentland Press, 1997 (her autobiography)

The Major; *E.R.* no.3, pp. 45-6, 1986 (a short piece about her soldier-father, who had fought in the Boer War, and settled with his family in the Gables in 1913)

Mr A.H.Richards

Mr A.H.Richards, who died in 1997, was a member of the Eynsham History Group for very many years, and its Treasurer from 1974 to 1976. In the early years of the Group he took many photographs on its behalf; and he had the foresight to record on 8mm cine film the last passenger train journey through Eynsham. He was a skilled amateur silversmith.



Plan, showing the conjectured location of the Abbey Church, its cloister and principal buildings in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. This is based on detailed evidence from the recent excavations.

## **EYNHAM ABBEY - THE STORY SO FAR**

**by Alan Hardy**

It has been five years since the last caravan was towed away and the last piece of turf was laid, and the diggers of the Oxford Archaeological Unit left St Peter's Churchyard in peace again.

So what's been happening since?

The process of turning all that information, and all that excavated material into a story that makes sense has been a slow but rewarding one. That process is nearly over, and it has involved many specialists - in the Oxford Unit and all over the country - in a painstaking study, to try to get the most from our labours. To give you an idea of the size of the jigsaw, it involved, among other things:

1,200 site plans and drawings

21,000 pieces of animal bone

750 kg of tile fragments

18,000 pieces of pottery

2,500 different layers, pits, walls, floors, ditches, drains, yard surfaces,... etc.

40 different structures, ranging from a Bronze Age round house to a late medieval toilet

3 grape pips

2 strawberry seeds

1 plaster wall

9 human burials, one of a man with 13 fractures to his ribs and 2 fractures to his arms - none of which caused his death!

754 pieces of worked stone

1 figure of St John made of walrus ivory

1 stirrup mount made of iron with a silver inlay

43 knives

35 coins

16 keys

1,500 pieces of glass

1 beaver skeleton

1 button made from a nutshell

...and some sewage fly larvae.

The basic story, of a sequence of occupation starting 3,000 years ago in the Bronze Age and continuing right through to the 17th century hasn't changed. What we have been able to do is put flesh on the bones with details of how the Minster, the forerunner of the Abbey, came to be here in the 8th century, what it may have looked like and how the people of that community lived together - how the Abbey was developed after its foundation in 1005 - what happened when it was temporarily closed after the Norman Conquest - and how it was refounded in 1109 and flourished for over four hundred years.

The illustration shows where we think the Abbey church and the main buildings stood in its heyday of the 13th century, overlaid onto a modern map of the centre of the village. You can see what a small part of the Abbey precinct was actually excavated - something like 10% - and what a large part still remains safely preserved.

The final product of all these labours will be a monograph, due to come out -with a bit of luck - in 1999. But for you internet surfers there will be an alternative! English Heritage, who financed the whole Eynsham Abbey project, is setting up a pilot study to see if it is workable to put the archive - that is the raw data from an excavation - on the internet. The use of computers during the analysis will therefore mean, perhaps, that Eynsham Abbey may soon be known around the world!

---

## **MEDICAL CARE IN EYNSHAM: Part 2**

### **A Selection of Doctors and Surgeons of the 19th & 20th centuries**

**by Martin J Harris**

#### **Introduction**

This is a continuation to my article 'Medical Care in Eynsham' (*E.R.*, no.14, pp.11-19, 1997). It summarizes what I have discovered concerning members of the medical profession, resident in Eynsham, over the last two centuries. In the case of the earlier ones it has not been possible to discover the extent to which they practised their profession in the village. For more recent times, I have excluded from these biographical notes those doctors still alive.

#### **Paul Edward Elers Welchman**

In the parish registers for 1816 and 1817, when three of his children were baptised, Paul Edward Elers Welchman is listed as a 'surgeon'. In 1809 he had married widow Martha Scudamore (née Nash), great-great-aunt of the Revd William Nash Bricknell, Vicar of Eynsham (see Lilian Wright 'An Oxfordshire Clerical Family' *E.R.* no.6, pp.27-36). An Edward Elers Welchman, born ca.1811, almost certainly a son, was buried in Eynsham in 1888 aged 77. In 1862 Welchman junior was a druggist in Northampton, and in 1881 he was a widower living at Newland Lodge, Cassington Road, Eynsham as a retired chemist with his housekeeper Mary Muddiman. His father-in-law was Samuel Druce.

#### **William Grigg & William Jurycroft**

The 1841 census lists a chemist, Thomas Goodall in Acre End Street, and two surgeons, William Grigg in Newland Street and William Jurycroft in George Street. All were born outside the county. A few years later, a William Alsop Grigg MRCS and LSA, appears in the 1847 Provincial Medical Directory living in Ramsbury, Hungerford in Berks.

#### **William David Twycross, born Watford, Herts, died Eynsham 1853**

In 1842 William David Twycross, surgeon, married Elizabeth Gibbons, daughter of Eynsham shoemaker Richard Gibbons in St Leonard's Church. (Was this the Elizabeth Gibbons who was servant to William Jurycroft in 1841?). Twycross's father, Isaac, was a physician, but not of Eynsham. Twycross is still listed as a surgeon when his son George was christened in 1844, but a year after his death in May 1853 two of his children, John (b.1850) and Betsy (b.1853) were baptised,

and their late father is then listed in the parish register as an apothecary. In the 1851 census he was living in Newland Street with his wife and children. He was buried in Eynsham.

**Manwaring Shurlock, born 1814/15 Farnham, Surrey**

The next known Eynsham surgeon was Manwaring Shurlock who was listed both in the 1847 Oxfordshire Post Office Directory and the 1847 Provincial Medical Directory. In the latter directory he was listed as being a General Practitioner in 'Ensham', MRCS 1837, LSA 1836 and a former Medical Officer of the Witney Union. Shurlock appears in the 1851 Eynsham census in Acre End Street with his London-born wife Jane and his house servant Ann Watson. In 1853 and 1854 directories he was still listed as a surgeon in Acre End Street and as an agent for the Medical, Legal and General Mutual Life Assurance Society.

Edwin/Edward Allen

In a different 1854 directory the Eynsham surgeon is listed as Edward Allen. An Edwin Allen, surgeon and his wife Rosalie have many children christened (and two buried) in Eynsham during the period 1854-1859.

**Henry Banks Spencer, born 1834/5 Chippenham, Wilts**

In the 1861 Eynsham census, Henry Banks Spencer, living in Acre End Street with his wife Mary and Sutton-born servant Emily Batts, is described as a Doctor of Medicine. There is also a 64-year-old surgeon Frederick Wright living in High Street. The Spencers seem to be a medical family, as in the 1847 Provincial Medical Directory there is a Francis Spencer (possibly an uncle or some other relative?) who is a General Practitioner in Chippenham (MRCS 1839, LSA 1839) and Medical Officer of the Union. Henry Banks Spencer was next located at Magdalen Hall (now Hertford College) Oxford, matriculating on 7 June 1870, aged 35.

**Thomas Smallhorn, born Dublin 1838, died Eynsham 1902**

Eynsham's doctor for 37 years (1865-1902). I have provided an extended biography in the previous number of the Eynsham Record, which also carries his photograph on the front cover (E.R. no.14, pp.31-33, 1997).

## **Robert 'Watson' Cruickshank, born Aberdeen 1870, died Oxford 1940**

On the same day as Dr Smallhorn's funeral, the Board of Guardians gave notice to appoint his successor two weeks later. The successor was Dr Cruickshank who had already been working with Dr Smallhorn.

Robert Watson Cruickshank (known as Watson) was born in Aberdeen in 1870 the son of Alexander, who was a grocer, wine and spirit merchant. He went to Aberdeen Grammar School (1880-1884), then served an apprenticeship as a chemist with Messrs Davidson & Kay of Aberdeen (1885-1890) and then graduated from Aberdeen University with an MB and CM in 1895 before eventually moving to Eynsham. With Dr Cruickshank taking over the Shrubbery after Dr Smallhorn's death, patients could continue to come there for their medical care. One of Smallhorn's daughters, Ida, married Cruickshank later in the year of her father's death, 1902.

Dr Cruickshank was a committed doctor, fair but sometimes strict. Tommy Harris (born 1905) recalled quite a few memories of him:

'You get down High Street, where you've got Dr Peterson in the Shrubbery now. Well when I was a kid that was Dr Cruickshank. He was a good doctor, he done it all himself you see. If you wanted Cruickshank you had to wait - 'cause we lived opposite we could see if he hadn't got a queue outside if you wanted to see him. And you'd stand outside - there was no waiting room. If you wanted a doctor you had to stand and wait outside until your turn come whether it was raining or not. He only had one at a time in. And he mixed your medicine before you come out.

'He was strict, no messing. I mean when I had the measles, he told me to go back and go to bed. 'Cause then in our house I could look out to see if anybody was coming. I remember one day I was just looking out the window, I see him coming across the road. I was back in bed like a nipper. He come and had a look and said, "You can get out now a bit." I thought, "I already have." Oh yes, he was very strict.'

Eynsham men, including Tommy and his brother Ern also went to see Dr Cruickshank when a medical was required to join the Cirencester Club (run by Stanley Green's father). It cost Tommy half-a-crown and for his money he got a 'thorough examination from top to bottom'.

Although for transport Dr Cruickshank initially used a pony and brougham driven by a groom, by the time of the First World War he had a car, a 1912 holly green De Dion Bouton which during the years was looked after by Bill Moby,

John Pimm and also Jack Green. Jack Green, who was born in 1902 just after Dr Cruickshank took over from Dr Smallhorn, recalled:

'I left Witney Grammar School in 1917 I think, and went to work for Dr Cruickshank. He taught me to drive when I went to look after his car. I used to do the rounds with him. Just to mind the car. You sat there frozen sometimes. We used to do Cumnor, Farmoor, Swinford, come back to Cassington, a bit of Bladon, Long Hanborough, Church Hanborough, go to North Leigh a bit, cross the road to South Leigh, Stanton Harcourt, bit of Standlake - there was another doctor come from Witney that shared Standlake. Oh yes, there was nothing else about apart from the horses and carts, pedestrians and cyclists. I mean, when I was out with Cruicky we rarely met another car.

'He used to have surgery every morning 9 'til 10, go in and get a bit of lunch or coffee or something, go out and get in the car, go on the rounds 'til about 1, get home have his lunch, get back in the car, go round and finish the rounds wherever he'd got them on, all round the area, get back for surgery at 6 o'clock - 6 'til 7. He was lucky he finished.'

Dr Cruickshank kept his car in the garage round the back on the other side of the entrance gates. Also in that building was a wash-house where Sammy Harris washed medicine bottles every day ready for Cruicky to re-fill. Frank Pimm, the postman, helped to deliver the medicine to some of the patients.

Jack Green was working with Dr Cruickshank (or "Cruicky" as he called him) during the time of the deadly 1918 flu epidemic. Dr Cruickshank was busier than ever during that time.

John Pimm replaced Jack Green for a while before Moby came out of the Army and resumed his pre-War job. Bill Moby lived up the alley off High Street (now Pug Lane) in the left hand side of what is now Keith Green's cottage. At one time Bill Alsworth also worked for this doctor.

Dr Cruickshank, like doctors today, provided sick notes for his patients. In 1904 on notepaper embossed with the heading 'The Shrubbery, Eynsham, Oxon' he provided a note certifying that Mr Thomas Hanks of the Newland Inn was 'suffering from influenzal cold & is unable to work.' A similar note was provided in 1908. It was said that he worked night and day and took no half-day holidays even when he had an assistant. He was even known to visit patients in his pajamas if he was called out for an emergency at night. Amazingly when he took his annual summer holiday and visited his home town, Aberdeen, he would even go to the Royal Infirmary Hospital there to study operations.

He had two daughters, Alison (christened at Eynsham in 1903) and Leslie. Alison, or 'Buffy', nicknamed on account of her ginger hair, died tragically when a young adult. Leslie later married a Mr Gillett. Cruickshank's wife Ida was also one time president of the WI at Eynsham (see also pp.17-19).

He retired due to ill-health in 1933 and moved to 21Apsley Road, Summertown, Oxford, where he died on the Saturday night of 24 May 1940 aged 70, having spent his final years in and out of nursing homes. However he had still managed to be a deacon of St Colomba's Presbyterian Church (now United Reformed) in Alfred Street, off High Street, Oxford up to the time of his death. His funeral was held there where, by his request, only garden flowers were to be sent. In his will he left £100 to his nephew Thomas Smallhorn (grandson of the late Dr Thomas Smallhorn). Joint executor was his friend the Vicar of North Leigh, Walter John Hornagold Wright. So far I have not managed to locate where he was buried (it was not Wolvercote Cemetery).

**Edward/Edmund Kemp Bourne MB, CM Edin. 1885, MD Edin. 1884 LRCP & S Edin.**

During Dr Cruickshank's time as the main Eynsham doctor, Dr Bourne lived at Blankstone's in Acre End Street. He was listed in the 1911 and 1915 Kelly's Directories as residing there although no such entry exists for 1907 or 1920. His exact role in the village is not quite clear although, despite being fond of his drink and the ladies, he was considered to be a very good doctor. An old Eynsham resident who died in recent years was said to be his daughter.

Bourne is included in the 'University of Edinburgh List of Graduates 1859-88'. There is also a Charles H Bourne who may or may not have been related to him (Charles was MB, CM 1882).

Tommy Harris remembered Dr Bourne:

'There was another doctor, Dr Bourne, he used to live in Acre End. The house is laid back behind the old pig farm. He was around in Cruickshank's time. Gert [Tommy's eldest sister], when she was still at school I think, had tapeworms and Cruickshank tried to treat them and anyway didn't get rid of 'em. And Dad got talking to Dr Bourne and he cleared her of yards of these tapeworms in a week. I believe he was a chaser after women and all that sort of thing. I've got an idea he went to Wolvercote. He was a big bloke. He looked more like a retired farmer.'

Dr Bourne did indeed go on to practise in Wolvercote where he was a well-remembered character.

## **Charles (Charlie') Tighe, MB ChB , born 1889/90, died 1952**

Dr Cruickshank's replacement in 1933 was a Welshman, Dr Charlie Tighe.

Dr Tighe was born 11 September 1889 in Llanrust, North Wales the son of Benjamin, an Inland Revenue supervisor, although he spent much of his youth at Portsoy, a fishing village on the north coast of Banffshire. He was a member of the 4th Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders - a territorial battalion - and during the 1914-18 war served as a captain in the Royal Army Medical Corps. He was an Aberdeen University graduate and after his marriage to Annabel Henderson in 1921 in New Derr, Aberdeenshire, he first practised in 1922 at Chesterfield, Derbyshire, before coming to Eynsham in 1932. In between his time spent at Derbyshire and Eynsham he was at Trinity College, Dublin in the late 1920s/early 1930s where Dr Kate Ferrier's father-in-law, Eynsham resident Alec Chalmers, came across him as a very fine rugby player. He was actively involved in Eynsham life. He was president of Eynsham Fire Brigade (and president of its Welfare Fund), president of Eynsham Boy Scouts Association, president of the Eynsham branch of the British Legion and vice-president of Eynsham Football Club.

He had two children, a son, Charles Irwin Tighe, and a daughter Mrs R G Shaw (possibly Isabel Mary). He also had two sisters, Miss A L & Miss K V Tighe.

Prior to his death on 8 June 1952 aged 62 at his sister's home in Gloucester, Dr Tighe had been in poor cardiac health for some time and had to retire from the presidency of the Cotswold Fly Fishers. His love of fishing resulted in his ashes being scattered over the waters of the River Ithon, Radnorshire, North Wales where he often fished. In his will, signed less than a month before his death, as well as bequeathing most of his estate to his family, he also gave £100 each to his godchildren David Franklin of Swinford Farm, Pamela Badger of Chilson near Charlbury, and Elizabeth Searby do Mrs Bolton of Willow Bank (Mrs Smallhorn's old house). He also left £100 to his gardener (and Dr Cruickshank's former chauffeur) Bill Moby.

## **George'Derrick' Bolsover, MB BCH Oxon MBE, born 1920, died 1987**

Dr Bolsover is still fondly remembered by his patients. He was born 29 April 1920 in the Sheffield area, the son of a metallurgist. It is said that he was descended from Thomas Bolsover the inventor of Sheffield plate in the 18th century. He went to King Edward's School, Sheffield before coming to Oxford to study medicine where he graduated from New College in 1943. As a result of his sporting achievements at Oxford he was made a member of Vincent's Club. After doing

house jobs under physician Dr Alec Cooke at the Radcliffe Infirmary he married Yoma. He was then sent to Burma returning in 1946.

He spent some time working in West Africa as a locum and visited the scene of the Italian earthquake with the Kidlington Round Table.

He teamed up with Dr Tighe in 1947/1948 (just before the NHS started) and lived in Long Hanborough dealing mainly with patients in the Long Hanborough area although he had to do most of the night visits for all patients being the junior GP and perhaps due to Dr Tighe's poor health. He first rented a house in Long Hanborough just opposite Oliver's garage and used a wooden 'village hall style' nearby. He then had a house built in Millwood End in about 1950 with a surgery built onto it.

After Dr Tighe's death the Bolsover family moved to the Shrubbery in Eynsham. Fortunately the Tighe family had kept the place very tidy although it was equipped with only a few electricity points.

Dr Bolsover was regarded as being an extremely talented and outstanding GP. He practised medical hypnotism (along with Dr Simpson) and found it rather amusing when nurse Gill Williams sat in on a session and was hypnotised along with the patient. Hypnotism however was very time consuming. He also once appeared on a television show about medical ethics. The old fashioned one-ear piece type stethoscope was often preferred along with old fashioned and alternative medicines. He knew his patients well enough to know who was related to who within Eynsham and the surrounding villages. Although medicine was his life and despite a knee injury when a young adult he still managed to be a keen golfer and a member of Frilford Heath Golf Club.

Marjorie Crossley worked as a secretary for Dr Bolsover and the other doctors from 1965 when she joined to her retirement in 1989. She also came from near Sheffield. She greatly enjoyed typing Dr Bolsover's witty letters. She also recalled how during the day Dr Bolsover would disappear for coffee, a pipe smoke and perhaps the latest cricket results which hopefully wouldn't make him too late for his surgery. When Marjorie first joined there was just Drs Bolsover and MacLamon assisted by Dr Barbara Clark, Dr Mike Pawson (Yoma's nephew) and nurse Anne Adnams. Dr Clark was a friend of the Bolsover's who lived at Aston Clinton, Bucks. Her brother John was a senior master at the Dragon School in Oxford which Dr Bolsover's sons attended. Then in the early 1970s receptionist Anne Porter was taken on and there were also district nurses Liz McLoughlin and Nurse Nulty.

Dr Bolsover was chairman of the local medical committee from 1964-1983 and was chairman of the Oxford Division of the British Medical Association in 1960. In 1985 he was awarded the MBE for his work and services to the community.

He died on 4 December 1987 from cancer. His ashes were buried in Eynsham churchyard. A thanksgiving service was held on Saturday 23 January 1988 at Eynsham church, the address being given by Dr Simpson.

Dr Bolsover was intending to write his memoirs which Marjorie would have typed and give a talk to the Eynsham History Group but sadly death intervened. [He had also promised me a piece on his early days in the practice, which would have made a splendid read. Editor]

There were five children. One of the daughters Leigh (who married Peter Winder) told me how the children would often help their father out at village births such as by holding a lamp in the appropriate place. Leigh and one of her sisters accompanied their parents when they went to Buckingham Palace to collect Dr Bolsover's MBE. Leigh believes that Yoma was probably more 'chuffed' about the honour than Dr Bolsover was.

**James 'Craig' MacLarnon FRCR, MB, BCh Oxon  
(born Belfast 1925, died 1993)**

Craig was Dr Bolsover's long term replacement at Long Hanborough about a couple of years after the latter moved to Eynsham. He left in 1966 and went on to become a well-respected radiologist at the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre. He retired a few years before his death on 31 March 1993.

He was educated at Belfast and at Jesus College, Oxford where he graduated in 1952. During his time in National Service he trained as a pilot in the Fleet Air Arm and flew over Indiana, Texas and the Gulf of Mexico. Like Dr Bolsover and Dr Simpson, he also worked for Dr Alec Cooke at the Radcliffe Infirmary. He was a keen rugby player in his youth, and he enjoyed playing the piano and golf. He was a Conservative District Councillor. However, medicine was Dr MacLarnon's life, the subject he loved reading, writing and talking about.

When Wednesday was a half day at Eynsham surgery Dr MacLarnon would take secretary Marjorie Crossley to Long Hanborough to carry out their clerical work.

His widow Isobel, whom he married soon after qualifying, still lives in Long Hanborough.

## Key to medical terms

CM Master of Surgery

ChB (also BCH, BCh) Bachelor of Surgery

FRCR Fellow of the Royal College of Radiologists

LRCP Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians

LSA Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries

MB (also BM) Bachelor of Medicine

MD Doctor of Medicine

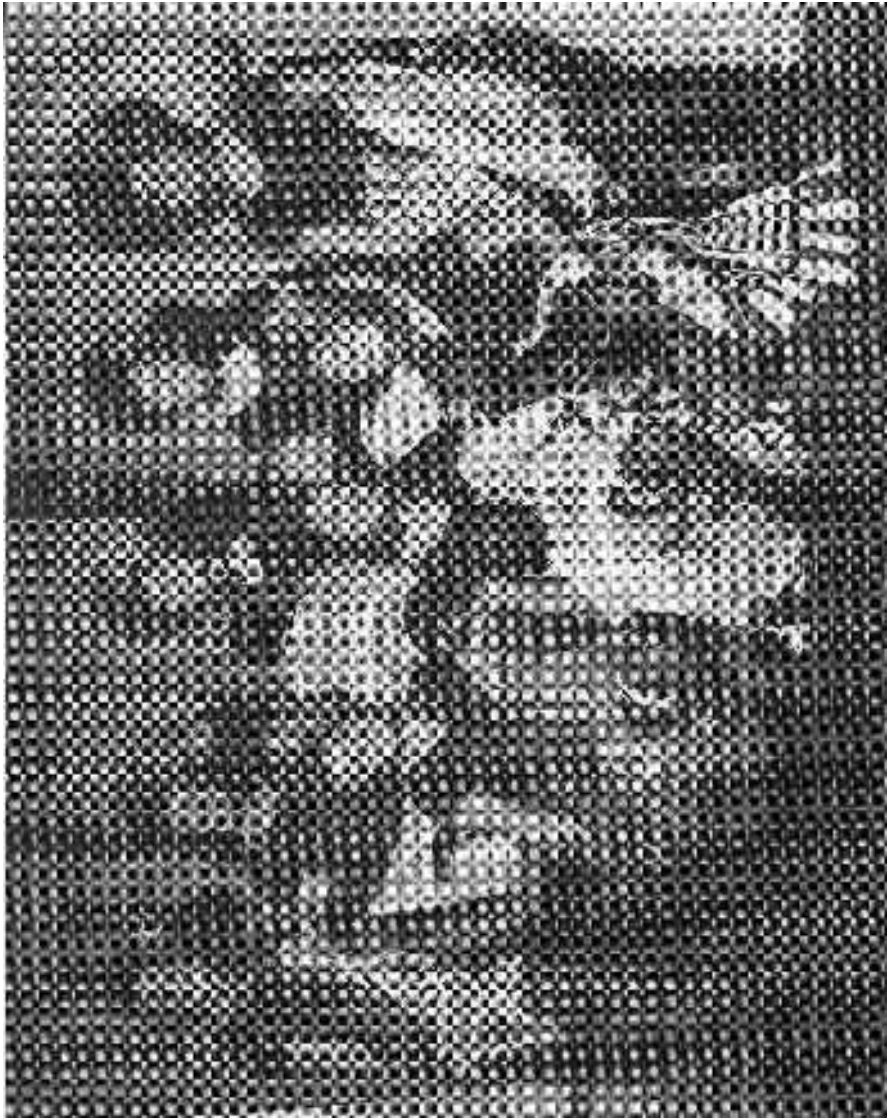
MRCs Member of the Royal College of Surgeons

## Acknowledgements.

In addition to those credited in *E.R.* no. 14, may I also thank:

Aberdeen Family History Shop, Jean Buttrick, Alec Chalmers, Dr Jonathan Ferrier, Joan Jefferies, Anne Porter, Joan Weedon, and anyone else I have failed to mention.

---



The drama group, Eynsham WI, 1970.  
(Photo courtesy of the Oxford Mail and Times)

## EYNHAM'S WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

by Pat Atkins

The WI movement was started in 1897 in Stoney Creek, Canada by Adelaide Hoodless. One of her children had died, she believed, as a result of her own ignorance of hygiene, and so she started classes for local women on domestic science. The first WI in Britain met in 1915 at Llanfairpwll, Anglesey, under the aegis of the Agricultural Organisation Society, and the movement spread rapidly. The Eynsham branch was started in February 1923.

It was obviously popular; 109 members are recorded for that first year, out of a population of about 1500. The President was Mrs V.Norman, the Secretary Mrs E.Blake, and the Treasurer Mrs W.Cruickshank. Meetings were held on the last Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. in Eynsham Institute in Swan Street, now known as the Sports and Social Club. This had been built after the First World War for the use of returning servicemen, and the WI continued to meet there for many years.

During the next ten years membership increased, reaching 131 in 1930. In 1928 Mrs Cruickshank became President, Mrs Hill Secretary and Mrs Lulham Treasurer, and these officers continued until 1934.

Regular committee meetings were held, printed programmes issued, and courses run in Dressmaking and Gloving. In 1927 there was a course in Dry Cleaning. The WI organised and took part in charitable activities including support for the village nurse, teas for Baby Welfare mothers, the Earl Haigh Fund, and a Chain of Pennies for the Churchyard wall in 1929.

Babies born to WI members received National Savings Cards for 5 shillings in 1927 and 1930.

In 1932 it was noted that three members left as they were unable to pay the subscription. By 1935 the President was Mrs Hill, the Secretary Miss Jepson, and the Treasurer Mrs Trethewy; and 101 members were recorded. This level of membership continued until 1939 when Mrs Tighe was President. In 1935 a letter was sent to Eynsham Bakers asking them "to consider the advisability of delivering bread in wrapping"; and a 1939 letter supported secret ballots for the election of Parish Councillors.

During the Second World War years there is mention of a 'War Working Party', helping at the Radcliffe Hospital canteen, a soldiers' recreation room, and a National Savings Group. During this time officers included Mrs Hayward -later

Bolton- (President); Mrs Philcox, Mrs W.Russell and Mrs S.Ayres (Secretaries); and Mrs Harris, Mrs Wickson and Mrs Dormer (Treasurers). The membership numbered 140 in 1941.

From 1945 onwards, although membership numbers and names of officers are known, there are few details of activities. Miss Philcox became President in 1946, and in 1950 Mrs A. Winterbourne's name first appears (as Secretary). She was to become our President seven times, and is still a member today. The last mention of courses held is in 1950. In 1959 the membership was down to 65, but rose again to 78 in 1961 when the President was Mrs M. Crawford.

I referred earlier to meetings being held in the Village Institute for many years. In 1963 some members wished to move meetings to the Bartholomew School, but their proposal was defeated by 29 votes to 24. 1964 sees a comment by a visitor from Oxfordshire headquarters that "this Institute does not seem to be very alive"; and 1968 that "the meeting room is depressing, which reacts on members".

In the 'Diary for a year in the life of Eynsham [WI] Institute, 1970', reference is made to meeting in the British Legion Hall. This was clearly while a modernisation scheme costing £9000 was undertaken in the Swan Street building. It was formally reopened on 21 March 1970, and in May the WI returned. Mr George Pimm, Secretary of the Village Institute for 48 years, was heard to say that the Women's Institute "do a lot of good work for the village and of course they must have their meetings in the Institute".

However, during the late seventies relations between the committee of the Sports & Social Club and the WI deteriorated. In 1977 there were disputes about the use of the hall, its facilities, and the storage of WI equipment. In 1980 a visitor from Oxfordshire WI headquarters noted that the "noise from the bar was very wearing". In 1983 the piano belonging to the WI was removed, and in October 1985 a notice in Roundabout gives the meeting venue as St Leonard's Church Hall. I believe that WI meetings have been held there ever since.

From the beginning Eynsham WI had an interest in dramatic productions. During the sixties and seventies a particularly enthusiastic group performed pantomimes and variety shows at the Bartholomew School and to other institutes in the county. The photo of 1970/1 certainly gives a different image of the WI from that of 'Jam and Jerusalem'!

The banner (see front cover) was embroidered in 1932 by a team of ten members led by Mary Oakeley's mother. It was designed by Mrs Oakeley's sister.

This year the Eynsham WI is celebrating its 75th birthday. The membership has been steady at about 50 for several years. The current President is Mrs Mary Evans (daughter of Mrs Alice Winterbourne), and several retired Presidents and Officers regularly attend meetings. Printed programmes are still issued, but the courses undertaken are usually at Denman College at Marcham.

### Acknowledgements

The above is based on the few surviving records; and recollections of Alice Winterbourne and Mary Evans to whom I am duly grateful.

#### JANUARY 29th.

Lecture : Mrs. Temple—" Aid to Displaced Persons."  
Competition : Most articles beginning with B in a 1 lb. jam jar.

Social Half Hour.

Tea Hostesses : Mrs. W. Evans and Mrs. A. Evans.

#### FEBRUARY 26th.

Lecture : Mr. Till—" The Conquest of infection"  
Competition : Feathery Flake Cake.

Social Half Hour.

Tea Hostesses . Mrs. W. Floyd and Mrs. E. Floyd.

#### MARCH 24th (34th Birthday)

Lecture : Eynsham Police College

Competition : The Prettiest Collection of Buttons—all different and sewn on card.

Social Half Hour.

Tea Hostesses : The Committee.

Bring and Buy Stall.

#### APRIL 30th.

Lecture : Mr. Heather—" Care of Pets."  
Competition : The best home made and dressed Rag Doll.

Social Half Hour.

Tea Hostesses : Mrs. Ford and Mrs Fox.

#### MAY 28th.

Lecture : Miss Froom—" The Pitfalls of Cake Making."

Competition : Borwicks Cake.

Social Half Hour.

Tea Hostesses : Mrs. L. Pimm and Miss Morgan.

#### JUNE 23th.

GARDEN PARTY — "The Hythe Croft."

Competition : The Best Floral Arrangement in a Saucer.  
Games. Etc.

#### JULY 30th.

Lecture : Mrs. Masters—" Herbs and their Uses."

Competition : The Best knitted Baby's Matinee Coat.

Social Half Hour.

Tea Hostesses : Mrs. Gregorek, Mrs. Buckingham and Mrs. Holloway.

#### AUGUST.

ANNUAL OUTING.

#### SEPTEMBER 24th.

Lecture : Brig. Simpson—" Elephants."

Competition : The Best "Get Well" Card.

Social Half Hour.

Tea Hostesses : Mrs. Reynolds and Mrs. Bridge.

#### OCTOBER 29th.

MEMBERS' NIGHT.

#### NOVEMBER 26th.

ANNUAL MEETING.

Lecture : Mrs. Smith, V.C.O.—" Ideas for the Social Half Hour.

Competition : The Best Xmas Present costing not more than five shillings.

Social Half Hour.

Tea Hostesses : Mrs. Blake and Mrs. Winterbourne

ELECTIONS BALLOT.

#### DECEMBER 31st.

CHRISTMAS PARTY.

JANUARY 1st, 1958.

CHILDREN'S PARTY.

## Eynsham WI's programme for 1957



The corner of Abbey Street and Swan Street, drawn by J.Buckler in 1826.



... a slightly out-of-date picture - the Abbey National office has since moved.

**NOTE:** the images opposite  
have been re-sized to reduce the overall size  
of this .pdf file.

Back numbers of the Eynsham Record are available in print for £1 plus p&p.  
Contact the Editor Brian Atkins, 8 Thornbury Road tel 01865 881677 email  
[brian@fbatkins.free-online.co.uk](mailto:brian@fbatkins.free-online.co.uk)

or Fred Bennett, 68 Witney Road tel 01865 880659

## 'THE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS OF AN EYNESHAM MAN'

by Pamela Richards

Trawling through back copies of the *Witney Gazette*, a report in the edition of Saturday, July 13th 1901 with the above heading caught my attention. It was not until I had read through the whole sorry story that I realized it had some significance to Eynsham history.

The man in question was described as Henry George Hanley, commercial traveller, of 55 Gerard Street, Derby, late of Eynsham. He was summoned before Derby borough magistrates by his wife Louie for his persistent cruelty to her. As more details of the lifestyle of the man came to light, his supposed income of £500-£600 a year, his ability to pay £55 a year renting a house, and his purchase of a dining-room suite costing over £100, it also emerged that he was connected with the brewing business.

The magistrates heard that he had married in 1883, and that there were four children, one boy of 17, two boys at school, and a 5-year-old girl who was living with her mother. Mr Hanley was a Roman Catholic and Mrs Hanley was a Protestant, but on the whole there were no religious disputes, Mrs Hanley having contracted to bring up the children in the Catholic faith.

Her complaints were against the violence of her husband towards her, and his infidelity. Apparently he had once, when drunk, pushed her down the cellar steps and on another occasion, as a result of an argument about his pocket-book, he had pushed her out of the front door and kicked her in the back as he did so, so that she fell down the steps and in trying to save herself put her hand through a pane of glass and severely cutting her wrist. She also complained that he had once taken her to Scotland and abandoned her in a hotel there. The magistrates thought that this last allegation was a little exaggerated.

Counter claims of adultery and misconduct were thrown at Mrs Hanley. She denied that she had been found in a room with a man with the doors locked and the blinds down, or that she had ever been locked in a farmhouse kitchen with a man at Eynsham. But she did admit to having visits from men who were her husband's friends while he was not at home but, she said, "He was always out!". She also denied going to London for some weeks with a friend, Annie Gardiner, and two men.

When asked if she had ever told her husband she wished he were dead, she agreed she had said she wished he would cut his throat while shaving, but that she

had, at least four times, stopped him from committing suicide when the brewery "went smash" - and herein is the important Eynsham connection.

The brewery in question was the Crown Brewery established in Acre End Street in 1852 by Charles Goodwin. In the 1881 census Charles Goodwin is described as 'a brewer of ale and porter', but he was by then aged 71 and employing only four men. It seems that soon afterwards Hanley acquired the operation, adopting a lifestyle which a declining business could not support. In 1890 he gave up the Crown Brewery, and moved with his family to Burton-on Trent, the centre of the English brewing industry. At the time of the court case, he was still engaged in the industry, now as a traveller for a firm trading in flake malt. He obviously still enjoyed the pleasures of male and female company, and he owned a hunter. His wife told him that she hoped he would fall off his horse and break his neck.

The Derby magistrates decided that there was no possibility of a reconciliation. Mrs Hanley and her daughter were still living in Burton-on-Trent where most of the violence had taken place. The boys seemed to have been under the supervision of their father, who was certainly paying for the younger boys' education. Presumably the 17-year-old was working.

Having established that Mr Hanley's assets were not quite as substantial as his wife had claimed, a separation order was signed, and he was ordered to pay £2 a week towards his wife's maintenance, the latter to have custody of the five-year-old daughter.

---

## THE CHURCHYARD EXTENSION OF 1929

In 1924 the Vicar drew to the attention of the Parochial Church Council the need to enlarge the churchyard (see Lilian Wright's article in *E.R.* no.14, 1997, pp.3-4). Several years were to elapse before this was accomplished by the addition of the southern extension. In the meantime, a full two years after the matter was first raised, the PCC Minutes record that:

'The Churchwardens expressed their approval of the ground for the churchyard extension and that Mrs Smallhorn be asked to give her tenant a quarter's notice at Michaelmas from the half acre. The Dedication Festival Offertory to be given towards the purchase money of the land and a letter drawn up to be printed and circulated appealing for funds. An estimate for fencing, opening the wall and conveyancing to be found out and added to the sum of £100.' (PCC Minutes of July 1926). Presumably the £100 refers to the purchase price of the land.

The following year the PCC was unable to provide £35 suggested by the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings for the restoration of the Preaching Cross because money was required for the churchyard extension.

The wall enclosing the extension was built in 1929. There must have been an appeal for funds at this stage, as in that year Eynsham Women's Institute organized a 'chain of pennies' in the cause (see p.17).

---

# THE ENSHAM NATIONAL SCHOOL, 1846-1890

by Joy Richardson

In October 1846, William Simcox Bricknell, the Vicar of Eynsham, applied to 'The National Society for the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church', for aid in setting up a new school in Eynsham.

In 1819 a Parliamentary Committee had been established to 'enquire into the education of the poor'. The return from Eynsham mentions the free school financed from the bequests of Mr Bartholomew and Mr Plasterer, several small day schools, and 'a Sunday School on the National Plan, containing about 100 children who are educated and partly clothed by voluntary subscription'. A later return of 1835 also includes the Baptist Sunday School founded in 1830, and a boarding school 'where 30 females are educated at the expense of their parents'.

By 1846, the population of the village had reached 2000, and concern about the education of the poor was growing. Plans were made for a two-roomed school to hold 288 children and incorporating a house for the Master and Mistress. Local residents had raised £580 of the £630 needed for the building, and the intention was to meet the recurrent expenses of the school from subscriptions, church collections and school fees.

The application for aid submitted by the Vicar was accompanied by a request for union with the National Society and the Diocesan Board of Education, and a statement of intent that 'the children be educated in the Principles of the Established Church'. In a footnote to the application form, the forthright Vicar gave vent to his feelings on another score; 'There is every reason for believing that when the National Schools are prepared, the Baptist Sunday and Day Schools will be closed, and as they are supposed to constitute the main support of the Baptist preacher, it is hoped that he will not be able to remain ... He is a most bitter enemy to the Church'.

The application for union was successful, and building proceeded. Two plans for the school exist. The second was drawn when the grant was reduced from £180 to £140, and shows the Master's house at the north end of the building. The original plan with the house in a central position was implemented when the full grant was restored.

The plan of the school site shows Church Road to the north, Mr Druce's stackyard and pasture to the east, Marlbro Mall to the south, and Swann Lane to the west. Girls entered the playground to the left, and boys to the right, and proceeded through divided entrance porches into their separate schoolrooms. Each

room or 'school' had a central stove, writing desks fixed to the wall around the perimeter of the room, and a desk or table for the teacher. The girl's room contained a 'gallery' in one corner. This was a tiered construction in which large numbers of children could sit or stand, enabling mass teaching to be carried out with maximum supervision by the teacher.

The 'Rules and Regulations for the Central Government of the Ensham National and Sunday and Weekday School' give a clear picture of the aims and organisation of the school.

1. The general management of the School and the direction of the religious instruction to be given to the Scholars, will be conducted according to the scheme laid down in the Deed of Conveyance, *as* approved by the Committee of the National Society, and by the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education, and duly enrolled in Chancery according to Law.
2. The School being in union with the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the principles of the Church of England, the Master and Mistress for the time being are required to conform to the system established by the late Dr Bell, and explained in his published Manuals.
3. The name and age of every Child, previous to his or her admission into the School, together with the names and residence of the Parents or Guardians of the said Child, and the date of his or her admission, shall be entered in a register kept for the purpose; and no child shall be admitted into the School under the age of Four years.
4. Every Child, with the exception of the Scholars on the Foundation of Mr Bartholomew and Mr Plasterer, shall pay, in advance, one shilling for the quarter in which he or she is entered, and the same sum for every succeeding quarter during his or her continuance in the School. The quarters to be reckoned from March 25th, June 21st, September 29th, and December 25th.
5. No difference of religious opinion in the Parents is to be deemed a sufficient cause for the exclusion of Children, provided they conform strictly to all the Rules and Regulations of the School.
6. The Children are to assemble at Nine o'clock in the morning (Saturday, which is a whole holiday, excepted) throughout the year, and remain until Twelve. In the afternoon they will attend at Two, and be dismissed at Five, except during the months of November, December, January and February, when the School will close at Four o'clock.
7. All the Children connected with the School, and residing in the Village, are required to assemble every Sunday morning at Nine o'clock, to be instructed from that time until half-past Ten, in the Religious Exercises of the School, and

afterwards to attend Divine Service in the Parish Church. They will again assemble for the same purpose at Two o'clock in the afternoon, and remain until a quarter before Three, when they will proceed to Church as in the morning.

8. The Children are required to be punctual in their attendance, and to come to School with clean hands and face, clothes mended, neatly dressed, and without finery.

9. The School is to open and conclude with the appointed Morning and Evening Prayers and Hymns.

10. In order to promote habits of Industry and Frugality, a Provident Society is established in the School, to which the Children contribute a Penny a week, at their option.

11. The School will be open to Public Inspection during the appointed School Hours; but no interference with the ordinary mode of conducting it can be admitted, except as regards managers of the Institution.

12. Visitors will be appointed from time to time, by the Managers, for every week, or for any longer period, as circumstances may require. Such visitors shall be members of the Church of England, and annual Subscribers to the School of not less than Five Shillings.

Dr Bell's monitorial system was favoured by the Church of England in the first half of the nineteenth century as the ideal solution to the problem of bringing education to the neglected masses. It offered maximum output of learning from a minimum input of teaching, claiming 'A single master if able and diligent, could conduct ten contiguous schools, each consisting of a thousand pupils.' The master exerted overall supervision and taught the oldest children, who then became monitors and instructed the other classes. The system relied on rote learning, mechanical answering and rigid discipline. By 1846, the deficiencies of the system were being recognised but, nevertheless, this is how children were taught when they arrived at the newly-opened Ensham National School. Classes were arranged in squares, all within the one room. The children sat or stood around three sides of the square facing a monitor on the fourth side, and under the supervising eye of the Master or Mistress.

Few improvements were possible without a better supply of trained teachers. The Oxford Diocesan Board of Education, formed in 1840, recognised the need, and a training school for Masters was established in Summertown. In 1848 the Ensham school was supplied with a master from this source.

1846 saw the start of pupil-teacher apprenticeships. These could begin at age thirteen and lasted for five years. The pupil teacher assisted in the school, and

received regular instruction outside school hours from the Master or Mistress who were paid for their services. The pupil teacher received a salary which rose from £10 to £20 per annum. Exams were taken yearly and, if successful at the end, the apprentice could gain admission to a 'Normal School' or Training College. In Oxfordshire at this time, most boys left school at 10 or 12 to work in the fields, and girls generally left between 11 and 14, many of them to go into service. The pupil teacher scheme aimed to prevent the early removal of able scholars, and to improve the quality and supply of assistants in schools. Nevertheless, the self-help tradition persisted, and (to the despair of visiting Inspectors) monitresses continued to be responsible for a large part of the teaching at the Ensham Infant School, well into the twentieth century.

The main responsibility for school management lay with the clergy. In 1846 the Revd Bellairs, Inspector for Oxfordshire and the surrounding counties, reported to Parliament that the clergy had a vital role to play in the nation's educational system: schoolmasters were encouraged by the presence and interest of their superiors, and parents respected schools where the clergy gave tuition. In Ensham it appears that clerical interest sometimes amounted to unwelcome interference.

In the 1850s, a broadsheet directed against the Revd Bricknell advertised for a Vicar who would 'not prosecute the Schoolmaster when acting in the discharge of his duties'.

The building of the Ensham National School was assisted by a government grant of £228 3s 6d, as well as by the National Society. It was not, however, in receipt of an annual grant, and so it was not subject to annual government inspection or to other parliamentary regulations.

1875-1890

The 1870 Education Act made provision for universal elementary education, and in 1875 a School Board was formed in Eynsham as part of the Witney Union. In 1877 new schools for boys and girls (the buildings, on the Witney Road, now comprise the Bartholomew Comprehensive middle school) were completed at a cost of £3,950.

The bare facts, as stated in the official returns for the period, give no indication of the furore which these events occasioned. Clearly the National Schools were felt to be unsatisfactory, otherwise they might have been enlarged to meet the requirement of the 1870 Act, while retaining their Church connection. Instead a School Board was formed, and in a printed circular the Revd Bricknell chastised his flock: 'It has been well said that the Elementary Education Act is a highly

penal Statute, inflicting the penalty of a School Board School, with all its excessive cost and trouble, where Christian men fail in doing their duty. If the rate-payers of Eynsham have incurred this penalty, they must remember that it has been self-imposed. A tenth part of that amount, which they will now of necessity be required to pay would, if voluntarily given, have sufficed to provide all the school accommodation required for the district ...'.

With plans for Board Schools going ahead, the question now became whether the National Schools could be handed over to the Board without violating the original Trust deeds. The deed of conveyance by which the school site had been given by the late Samuel Druce Sen. in Trust to the Vicar and Churchwardens contained the provision that 'The said schools shall be always in union with the Incorporated National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church'. The lack of security for religious teaching in Board Schools was an emotive issue at this time, and with his co-trustees, the Vicar declared himself incapable of violating the Trust 'by transferring Church of England Schools to a Board who would have power to appoint, as the future Master and Mistress, persons of any religious denomination and none, Churchmen or dissenters, or Jews or Papists; a Board under whose direction the reading of Holy Scriptures might be altogether prohibited and who are absolutely forbidden to allow, in any School under their Management, the teaching of those very principles, Creeds and Formularies, for instruction in which the Eynsham National Schools were founded'.

In 1875 the transfer scheme was abandoned, and the Vicar informed the National Society that 'New schools will be built by the Board, but our present buildings will remain in connection with the Church of England, and be-used, at all events for a Sunday, and I hope eventually for a daily Infant school also, to be conducted upon Church principles. The Secretary of the National Society was 'Gratified to learn ... that your National School will be saved from the hands of a Board'.

Kept out of the hands of the devil, the oblivion of the deep blue sea threatened the school five years later when 'My Lords considering the clergyman's school unnecessary' the Education Department made moves for the opening of a Board Infant School. The Revd Bricknell retaliated, and 'after a hard battle' the proposal was withdrawn. Instead the Department recognised the National School for an annual grant, upon the appointment of a Certified Mistress. Standards had clearly fallen behind those expected of a Board School and the Vicar admitted 'The expense of rendering the school and premises fit for the approval of Her Majesty's Inspectors has been very considerable.' The carrot and stick approach of

nineteenth century education by which government grants were given to reward high standards, rather than to enable their achievement, proved effective once again.

All the same, it was an unequal struggle. The death in 1888 of the Revd William Simcox Bricknell who had presided over the National School since its inception and had carried on a largely personal fight for its preservation marked the end of an era. His going took the heat out of the controversy and by the end of the century three major changes, fiercely resisted at an earlier date, had come about - the National School closed in 1889; a Board Infant School opened in 1890; and the National School premises were transferred to the use of the Board in 1898. The Board Infant School which moved to the Station Road site in that year showed none of that raging atheism which the late Vicar had feared. The building was leased to the Education Authority for fifty years at a rent of £10 per annum (the lease being extended for a further seven years in 1948), but the Church's influence continued. The Revd. William Nash Bricknell followed his grandfather as Vicar of Eynsham from 1893 to 1928, and for the last ten years of this time seems to have acted entirely alone in the management of the school. In 1929 his successor the Revd Rowton sought to rectify the situation by arranging the management body in accordance with the original Trust Deed. The National Society was mystified by his enquiry, pointing out that since it was now a council school, management was entirely the business of the local authority. Either the local authority was as confused as everyone else, or it was simply reluctant to interfere with the de facto arrangement. Certainly there was considerable continuity between the National School and the Infant School which succeeded it.

#### Sources

Oxon Archives T/S Plans 25: Building designs 1846

Correspondence concerning the National Society at Eynsham: in the National Society Archives, Church House, London SW1

## **Old School Photographs**

Page 38 of the previous number carried a photograph of pupils and staff of Eynsham's Board School in 1927, and readers were asked if they could provide identifications. Many thanks to Mrs C.Gardner (née Connie Palmer) and Mrs P.Russell (née Phyllis Batts) who independently supplied the complete listing as follows:

### **Back row, left to right.**

Mons Perkins, Bert Ainsley, Horace Russell, Percy Walker, Bill Bailey.

### **Middle row, left to right.**

Mr Famish (Headmaster), Beatrice Lambourne, Michael Leach, Tony Brinkler, Bill Alsworth, Ralph Russell, Gordon Evans, Marian Smith.

### **Front row, left to right.**

Nancy Wiggins, Joan Quainton, Evelyn Pratt, Nellie Jeffery, Doris Mathews, Hilda Clinch, Lottie Styles, Connie Palmer, Olive Edwards, Phyllis Batts.

Other old Eynsham school photographs have been published. See, for example,

*From Acre End*, by Mollie Harris (Chatto & Windus), 1982, pp. 41, 62, 63, 64, 125, 126.

*The Changing Faces of Eynsham*, by Martin J.Harris (Robert Boyd), 1997, pp. 68, 69, 70.



### **An Eynsham football team of 1912-13**

Can you identify any of these chaps, including the manager/coach?

What does 'ENC', chalked on the ball, stand for?

Where have they posed for this picture? - the old Litchfield pitch?

Editor.

## EYNHAM'S INFANT SCHOOL, 1890-1958

by Joy Richardson

The Board Infant School opened in 1890 on the Witney Road school site with the separation from the Girl's School into a room of its own, and transferred to the old National School buildings in Station Road in 1898 where it continued for 60 years until it was re-incorporated into 'Eynsham County Primary School' in Beech Road in 1958. The log books (which had become compulsory from 1862 in all schools receiving a government grant), dating back to the start of the new Infant's School, have fortunately survived.

They provide a vivid picture of school life around the turn of the century. They reveal the immediate preoccupations of the Mistress in charge, and they hold up a mirror to developments in national thinking about education.

Attendance emerges from the log books as a cause for constant concern. Registers were checked regularly by a member of the Board, and the accurate keeping of them amounted to a sacred ritual! The government grant was assessed on the basis of average attendance, so it was essential to exclude children under three, who could not legitimately be counted. Concerts, fairs and Baptist tea-parties all occasioned half-holidays, as to engage in uneven competition with such rival attractions was to court the danger of low attendance.

The winter of 1890-1 was severe, and the Mistress, Emily Goodall, noted in November - 'Deep snow. As only 19 children came to school in the morning and 10 in the afternoon, the registers were not marked and school closed morning and afternoon. I had previously obtained the sanction of 2 members of the Board. The weather affects the attendance to a most discouraging extent'. As the winter progressed, her exasperation increased. 'The children, or some of them, who are alleged to be ill, are I believe continually out of doors, sliding, running on errands, and attending tea-parties, and other amusements. Out of over 100 children on the books, there are only 30 present this afternoon. The circumstances are causing me extreme anxiety as the absent children are necessarily forgetting much that I have taught them.' In an era of payment by results, the Mistress grieved as the annual government inspection approached to see her best efforts thwarted by the recurrent absence of her pupils.

Blackberrying, gooseberry-picking, feather-picking and attendance at wild beast shows all feature as causes for absence. Nor were the staff entirely removed from the pressing affairs of country life. In 1892 the provisionally-certificated

mistress Ethel Wall was granted leave of absence 'to attend a course of lessons on butter-making', and later to attend 'Competition Day for the Dairy Class'.

Headmistresses came and went with great rapidity at this time; Emily Goodall, Elizabeth Woolford, Bertha Smith and Catherine Pierce followed each other between 1890 and 1896. Bertha Smith commuted daily by train from Oxford, and when she missed the train in the morning, did not arrive in school until the afternoon. Elizabeth Woolford also enjoyed the pleasures of travel, and the Board granted her a day off before the commencement of the six weeks holiday in August 1892 'that I might have the advantage of taking an excursion train'.

The health and hygiene of children in the school was a perennial concern. The school was often cold, and in 1893 Bertha Smith recorded her method of dealing with the situation - 'There are no fires as the coal has not come in, so I let the children take drill and marching and singing and repetition of tables, as the best means of keeping them warm'. The inspectorate voiced its dissatisfaction with the school - '...The first class is very crowded in the desks, the stove smokes badly, and the closet seats are dirty ... The teachers do their best but it is impossible for the children to be taught in one room. If the school is to continue to receive the highest variable grant a classroom will have to be provided for the Babies'.

To achieve this necessary extra space, the school was moved to the old National School, 'the lighting and ventilation of which have recently been improved'. Conditions were still far from luxurious. 'The position of the offices [lavatories] close under the East wall of the school is most offensive and unsanitary' complained the Inspector in 1899, and 'excellent new offices' were duly erected. The lack of light from the diamond-paned windows was also criticised, and their replacement with plain glass requested. The school now had two rooms at its disposal, but the 'Babies' still had to share a room with another class, so the erection of a wood and glass partition was suggested. This was done in the south room to create separate classrooms for each class.

Heating and ventilation were a constant battleground. The recalcitrant stoves frequently refused to offer up their warmth, and when persuaded to do so, retaliated by filling the room with smoke. Mrs Charlotte Buckingham, Headmistress from 1901 to 1915, insisted in the face of the caretaker's efforts to keep the school warm, that the windows should always be kept open 'as in the hospital'. She acted in self-defence: 'Many of the Eynsham children can be smelt a yard or two away from them'.

Inspectors noticed that many children in the school seemed undernourished, and on occasions the Vicar provided daily hot milk for children who were

'dirty, neglected, ill-clad and half-starved'. Children found suffering from lice were sent home 'to be cleaned', but not all parents were co-operative. In 1902 the Headmistress recorded 'Having had occasion to speak of the unclean condition of Beatrice Styles' head, the mother came to the school and annoyed the teachers by using abusive language'.

For many children, particularly those from outlying farms, the journey to school was a long one, and they brought with them their lunch-time provisions of bread and lard. These were not always consumed with a grateful heart. On one occasion, Ida Humphries' dry bread and raw swede were found on the floor during the course of the afternoon. She obviously preferred to go hungry.

In bad weather, attendance suffered, and those who braved the elements often had to be dried out and warmed up before work could begin. Places close to the stove were coveted by the children, as Arctic conditions prevailed in the far corners of the room. In hot weather, the Headmistress sprinkled disinfectant to keep the room cool, and complained that the children went to sleep in the afternoons.

The cattle market, held behind the school, was a cause of fear or fascination for children on their way school, and there were many other temptations to dawdle along roadside and field edge. Children often arrived late at school through playing on the way, and were duly punished. Parents often attempted to send two year olds to school, but these were promptly sent home when their true age was discovered.

The school syllabus comprised reading, writing, elementary number, Scripture, drill, object lessons and Kindergarten. Lessons were planned for a year ahead in June, and any deviation from the timetable was meticulously recorded in the Log Book. Progress from 'the Babies' through into Class I depended on reading ability, as did transfer to the 'Mixed School' which usually occurred between six and seven. 'Mr Banbery brought in a lame boy of 8 sent to his school. He knows no letters, and so was put down on the babies' register!' Children progressed from letter names to words of one and then two syllables. In 1905 a new phonic method was introduced, and the top class was 'rushed through the initial, final and middle vowel sounds' according to 'N.Dale's new method'.

Writing was from dictation, or from copy. The 'Babies' practised their letter shapes in clay and on slates. From around 1900, paper was occasionally used by older children. Such events were proudly recorded: 'The second class wrote words of two syllables on paper for the first time today'. Number work is rarely mentioned, except by one inspector who considered it 'inadequate'.

Object lessons were a nineteenth century attempt to implement Froebel's idea that children learn through their senses. Delivered by unimaginative practitioners, they successfully achieved the very reverse of what Froebel had intended. The lessons were generally taken in the gallery (until its removal in 1904) by Classes I and II together. Once planned, the lessons were rigidly adhered to, and had to be completed in time for the May examination. Harassed by this pressure in the spring of 1892, the Headmistress gave the following four lessons at weekly intervals:

Coral, parts I and II and Cheese, part I

Cheese, part II and the Sea

Salmon and Cocoa

Spices, parts I and II and Balloons

It is doubtful whether the 80 five and six year olds who listened learnt much through their senses or by any other means. The Headmistress became frustrated -'Detained nearly all the 1st class after 4 o'clock in order to continue an object lesson on lead, as I found it almost impossible to obtain any satisfactory answers from the children. I continually experience great difficulty in giving object lessons, the children seeming sadly deficient in intelligence'.

Happily, object lessons were not always such dismal affairs. In 1901 Mrs Charlotte Buckingham became Headmistress, and she remained until 1915. Her lessons were illustrated by real objects; a canary, a pigeon, a hedgehog, bottles of curds and whey, examples of cheeses, and specimens of rope were all borrowed for this purpose from various members of the community. She seems to have been adept at incorporating children's natural interests into her teaching. On 19th April 1901..'as it was Primrose Day today, and many of the children were wearing primroses, they were made the subject of brushwork and drawing lessons'. Fossils from the gravel, tadpoles, caddis fly larvae, leaves, flowers and birds' eggs, were all brought into school, and a museum cupboard was set up to house them. Mrs Buckingham noted 'The children enter into the spirit of their work very eagerly now'.

'Kindergarten' activities were a response to the German idea that children learn by doing. As with object lessons, the gap between theory and practice was large, and the activities were usually determined by the availability of materials. Hence, in 1894, the Mistress decided 'to change the occupation for the second class from wool-winding to bead-threading for this year. There are so many beads in school that were procured for last year's work that it seems a pity not to use them'.

Drill, which later came to involve the use of drums and tambourines, flags or balls, was an important aspect of school life. First and foremost it inculcated discipline, but it also provided physical exercise, occupied wet playtimes, and kept children warm when the stove went out. It could also be used to impress visitors, as in March 1898 - Drill and singing taken this morning from 9-9.30 instead of Holy Scripture, as a visitor came to see the school'.

Parents rarely entered the school building, but Board members and other local dignitaries visited from time to time to assure themselves that the children were in good order. Most terrifying of all was the annual visit and examination by Her Majesty's Inspector, after which the children were given the rest of the day off, presumably to recover. The Inspectors' reports had to be copied into the log book, and they provide an interesting contrast to the Headmistress's own comments about the state of the school. After the turn of the century, the Inspector's comments become increasingly critical of the regimentation of young children. In 1902 he wrote 'I cannot approve the habit of giving teaching lessons while the children stand up'. He had just witnessed, with disapproval, the three- and four year-old children being made to stand on the same spot for one and a quarter hours. Crosses were marked on the floor for them to stand on, so that they kept their feet still. In 1909 the Inspector insisted that 'the work of the Babies' class should be more purely recreative than it now is, and everything tending to restrict freedom of action either in their set games, or in their general movements, should be eliminated'.

At the same time, the Inspectors were quick to notice any lapses of discipline - 'Irregular answering ought to be entirely suppressed'. Miss Goodwin, who joined the school as a monitress in 1902, recalls one novel method by which an Inspector tested the strength of discipline in her class. He dropped a bag of marbles on the floor. They scattered, the children went to pick them up, thereby failing the test of not moving without prior permission.

Improvements in the school were held back by the lack of qualified staff. The Headmistress, whose class always numbered over 40 children, found herself hampered by poor teaching earlier on, writing in 1904 - 'The 1st class are again a weak lot and will take a year's very hard grinding to prepare them for 1st standard in the Board Schools. This state of things will continue so long as we have monitresses to teach the lower divisions!' Up until the period of the first World War, the Headmistress was assisted solely by monitresses and pupil-teachers, and 'Article 68' teachers. The latter could be any female over 18, 'recognised' by an Inspector. Consequently there was little incentive for monitresses to apply for

pupil-teacherships, and few did so from Eynsham, preferring simply to graduate to 'Article 68' status.

Under these circumstances, the Headmistress endeavoured to supervise both the teaching and training of her staff. In 1904 she noted with approval the efforts being made by her young staff faced with enormous classes, there being 143 children in the two-roomed school at the time. 'Special lessons have been prepared and given by each girl with enthusiasm and emulation'. Having taught the children during the day, the Headmistress gave lessons to her staff out of school hours, writing in 1905 - 'The monitresses have completed their number lessons with me. They are now taking 'methods of teaching singing'. The Article 68 teacher also continues to study with me'. Perhaps this was Mary Goodwin, now just eighteen, who remembered her arrival at the Infant School a few years earlier - 'The Mistress heard me playing the piano at the Board School and said "You ought to be an Infant school teacher, my dear", so the next week I was!'

Complete obedience and discipline were expected as much from teachers as from children. It would be interesting to know what provoked the irate entry in 1902, when members of the Board were summoned to back up the Headmistress's authority. 'Miss K.Barrett was guilty of subordination this morning, so Mr Blake and the Vicar visited the school, and want the Board to be told if any breach of discipline occurs again'.

Attitudes to the punishment of children were, however, changing; and in 1902 the Inspector cautioned - 'I see a cane in the drawer of the table. I conclude that the Head Teacher is aware that corporal punishment is no longer sanctioned by the Board of Education'. An object lesson given to a class of 1896 was also disapproved of, but Mrs Buckingham defended the practice - 'I am responsible for order etc. in all lessons given by teachers to the higher classes'.

1914-1958

The period of the first World War brought the admission of 'war migrants' whose fathers were in France, the absence of teachers to bid farewell to husbands about to leave for the front, fund-raising 'for providing comforts for soldiers and sailors', and attempts to economise on heating by using only one classroom. In the last two years of the war, responsibility for the school passed through the hands of no fewer than eight head teachers.

Stability returned in 1919 with the appointment of Miss Jepson who presided over the school throughout the entire inter-war period. She had previously taught in the Senior Department, and was at pains to adapt her methods to the needs of

younger children. In 1921 the Inspector, Mr Forbes, encouraged all the teachers to visit other schools to see 'the successful employment of progressive teaching methods', such as the 'look method of reading'. He commended Miss Jepson's enlightened efforts in the preparation of apparatus, and the encouragement of individual work, but cautioned - 'It may be necessary to secure more prompt and orderly attention before it is possible to give that free play and exercise to children's faculties which the Headmistress doubtless has in view'.

Numbers in the school fell as low as 50 after the First World War, before rising again to around 90. Changes in the curriculum brought the introduction of 'free composition', country dancing and gymnastics. Increasing concern for the physical well-being of children resulted in monthly inspections by a health visitor, the provision of hot milk drinks upon payment of a small parental contribution, and, in 1938, free milk for children who were thought to need it.

The Second World War caused considerable disruption to school life. Evacuees arrived from London, accompanied by their own teacher, who wished them to be taught separately within the school. A demarcation dispute ensued, and the Headmistress complained to the Education Office when the teacher 'rudely commanded the evacuated children to withdraw themselves from my lesson in the playground'. In the end, the children were distributed among existing classes, in accordance with Oxfordshire policy. Children from the senior school, on holiday while the infants were working, created havoc by roaming the playground on bicycles, breaking walls and entering classrooms.

More serious was the danger of air-raids. Pictures were removed from the walls as a precaution, and struts were placed across the windows. The children's gas-masks were tested regularly, and black-out was fitted in the gas-lit rooms. Double summertime had bad effects on the children who 'come to school unwashed, hungry, yawning and often late, and yet are seen on the streets at 11 or 12 at night'.

The war ended, and the welfare state began to influence school life. Cod-liver oil and orange juice were distributed to the under-fives, and 29 children stayed for the first school dinner. Attendance was no longer a problem, at times reaching 100%, as for instance for a whole week in 1952. (Fifty years previously attendance had averaged 90 out of 192 on the books). The Education Service was expanding, and in the early 1950s Advisory Teachers were introduced to the school, and an Educational Psychologist began to visit. The old desks were discarded and replaced with tables and chairs.

The school, however, was nearing the end of its life. The lease which had already been renewed several times was due to expire in 1959. On July 14th 1958 parents received letters informing them that 'from the end of term, there will not be a separate Infant School. The children will attend Eynsham County Primary School'.

'The National School', 'The Infant School', 'The Old School': After serving the educational needs of five generations of Eynsham children, the building in Station Road fell out of institutional use. It was converted to a private residence and for many years was the home of Sir Walter Oakeshott.

The poor children of Eynsham' for whom it was built in 1846 would notice little change in the exterior appearance of the Cotswold stone building. Doubtless they would not recognise the interior, where among other alterations the floor was raised by three feet. It is now possible to see out of the windows which were intentionally placed so that nineteenth century scholars should not be distracted by the outside world.

For the last thirty years the young children of the village have been taught in the County Primary School in Beech Road, opened in 1967 to meet the needs of healthier, wealthier and hopefully wiser generations. It was said to represent 'the most advanced thinking in Britain' about primary education (The Times, 5 July 1968), but that is another story!

#### Sources:

The Infant School Log Books for the period 1890-1958 (2 vols.): Oxon Archives  
Kelly's Directories for 1883 to 1903.

#### Parliamentary Papers:

Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education  
Education Department; list of school boards and school attendance committees.  
Oxford Diocesan Papers:  
Oxford Diocesan Board of Education Reports  
Inspection Reports

#### Acknowledgements:

When researching this subject while teaching at Eynsham Primary School in the 1970s, I received valuable information from the following Eynsham residents:

Miss Aldridge, who attended the school from 1893.

Mrs Crawford, who attended the school while Mrs Buckingham was Headmistress.

Miss Goodwin, who became a mistress at the school in 1902 and remained there until 1952.

Sir Walter & Lady Oakeshott, long-time owners of the former school house.

## CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

by Jean Buttrick

In the village as I remember it in the 1930s, we lived in a small cottage in Mill Street. It had two bedrooms and a stone cellar with an iron grid outside where the coal man used to tip his coal or the wood man used to tip his wood.

On a Sunday I used to have to go to church with my grandfather Egar Sawyer. My mother would get me ready for church, hair all nicely combed and shiny black shoes. About quarter to eleven I would go, partly running and walking down Newland Street, past the blacksmith's towards my grandfather's village shop. As soon as I arrived outside the shop door I could hear the key being put into the lock, and behind the navy-blue blind would be my grandfather waiting to let me in. Then I would go behind the wooden counters and through the middle door to *see my* grandmother. She would be getting ready to cook the Sunday dinner. She would then inspect me to see if I was looking all right to go to church with my grandfather.

So off we would go, my grandfather with his trilby on and with his best walking stick, holding my hand. We would go up Queens Lane leading off Newland Street. We could hear the church bells ringing very clearly as we were walking through the little lane. Nearly always as we approached the Square the church clock would strike eleven o'clock, so into St Leonard's we would go. One of the churchwardens would greet us and hand us a prayer book and a hymn book. To the family pew we would go and sit down until, the Vicar came into the church walking up the aisle with the Eynsham Church Choir following up behind. We would all stand, there would be Mr Prat on the organ which he played very well. The service would begin, all of the hymns would be on the hymn board. My grandfather gave me my own hymn book which I still have today. I can see him singing now. I used to look up at him, a big man, he would always sing in a low tone. My eyes used to focus on a stone bible which was positioned in the middle of the church arch which read 'Our Father Who Art in Heaven', that's all I could see, which is no longer there.

When the church service was all over, my grandfather would be talking to church people outside the church in the Square. Nearly everybody would call him 'Uncle Egar', so whether we were relations, distant or not, I don't really know. After a short time people would start going home. My grandfather and I would make our way back to the shop and there would be my grandmother waiting with a nice Sunday dinner. I can remember there were always two little pork sausages

around the roast beef and that was my little treat. I can always remember the wonderful Yorkshire pudding; it would always curl up at the ends, all golden brown.

Every Sunday I would go to church and then to dinner. Sometimes I would stay for tea and have some of my grandmother's lovely soda cake. After tea in the winter time we would sit in front of a blazing coal fire, then it would be time to go home - what memories!

---

### THE PARISH BIER

'We are glad to be now able to announce that the above has arrived, and can be seen in the Church. Any Parishioners wishing for the use of the Bier, can obtain permission for it through the undertaker. A *small* charge will be made for the cleaning of the same.'

Extract from *Homewords - for Heart and Hearth* (Eynsham Parish Magazine), December 1904.

# EYNSHAM HISTORY GROUP

## Founded 1959

The E.H.G. exists primarily to encourage studies in, and to promote knowledge of the history of the village and parish of Eynsham, Oxfordshire, by means of regular meetings (normally at least ten), with invited speakers, during the winter and spring; and occasional outings in the summer.

### **New members are welcome.**

Please apply to the Secretary for details of meetings and subscriptions.

Chairman:	Mr M. Harris, 150 Westminster Way, Botley
Vice-Chairman:	Mr D.S.Richards, 6 Abbey St. Eynsham
Secretary:	Miss C.Foster, 2A Acre End St, Eynsham
Programme Secretary:	Revd M.T.Farthing, 32 Falstaff Close, Eynsham
Outings Secretary:	Mr R.T. Hull-Lewis, 14 Newland Close, Eynsham
Treasurer:	Mrs P.Pimm, 65 Witney Rd, Eynsham
Editor:	Dr F.B.Atkins, 8 Thornbury Rd, Eynsham
Publications Manager:	Mrs E.Mason, 26 John Lopes Rd, Eynsham
Librarian:	Mrs J.Weedon, 2 Clover Place, Eynsham
Committee members:	Mrs J.Buttrick Mr S.G.Green