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## Introduction

Welcome to the sixth edition of the Alveley Historical Society Transactions. We hope that there is something of interest for all our readers. This year we have articles on the histories of several Alveley families. We also have two interesting articles on the industrial archaeology of the parish. Each issue prompts more memories of Alveley from those living in and also living far away from the village. We also have some entries from ancient archives and also more from the parish register and the census. Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this years issue.

Our recent book, "Images of Alveley", was in such great demand and was so well received that we have now sold out. However plans are afoot for a second edition containing images that we have acquired since publication. We would like to show images of the village right through the twentieth century. Any images which have a connection to the village are welcome, we hope to be inundated with your photographs. Please contact Tim White if you have anything that you think may be of interest. (12 Honeybourne Road).

In June we held a display of our collections which was very well attended. Mr Christopher Gill, MP, and Councillor Lea, Mayor of Bridgnorth, visited the exhibition and enjoyed the images and artefacts on show. Thanks to all who helped to stage the display, especially Margaret Sheridan who brought along her genealogy roadshow.

Our membership is now over 90, many of whom have been to our series of talks on the history of the village and the surrounding region. We hope to have more speakers next year.

**Alan Nicholls. Research Group Chairman.**

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## Facts about some of the Alveley Folk of 1881

**By Margaret Sheridan**

ANDREWS WILLIAM, farms 85 acres at Boathole. He and his wife Eliza share their home with two children Eliza and William.

BACHE MARY, (fifty-three), lives at Spring Cottage. She is described as "daughter of London Proprietor".

BAKER CHRISTOPHER, (born Alveley 1824- son of Isaac and Ann Baker) is a Brass founder and Coffin furniture Manufacturer in Kings Norton. He and his wife Sarah live at Hazlewell Hall, with their three children Frederick, Charles and Alice.

BAKER SAMUEL, (born Alveley 1833- son of Isaac and Ann Baker) is employed as a Brass founder in Aston, Birmingham

BANNISTER ROBERT, (aged thirty-four) is employed in a Shop . He and his wife Catherine (born in Alveley 1847, daughter of James a Emma Scriven) were married at Alveley Church in 1875 and have two children; Robert and Fanny

BASIN RICHARD, is an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Mary (daughter of Richard Scriven) live at 1 Dye Lane. They were married at Alveley Church in May 1865. Seven of their children live with them: Charles, Alice, Richard, Sarah Anne, Rhoda and Mary Elizabeth.

BASIN EMMA, (aged fourteen- daughter of Richard and Mary Basin of Dye Lane) is employed as a servant at Arley Mill, Arley.

BENNET ABRAHAM, (born Alveley 1797- son of Margaret a William Bennett) lives at Wombourne with his wife Sarah and adopted daughter Ellen Reading. Abraham is a Staffs and Worcs Canal co Pensioner.

BENNETT JAMES (born 1860-son of Thomas a Sarah Bennett). is employed as a farm servant at Hallclose

BENNETT HENRY, (aged seventeen) is a groom at Coton Hall.

BENNETT THOMAS, (born 1853 -son of Thomas a Sarah Bennett), is employed as an agricultural labourer at Pool Hall. He and his wife Elizabeth have two sons, John (seven) and Thomas (four).

BENNETT WILLIAM, (born Alveley 1840- son of William and Sarah Bennett) is a farm bailiff. He and his wife Elizabeth live at The Hollies Enville with three of their children; George, Albert and Walter.

BENNETT EMMA, (born 1863- daughter of William and Sarah Bennett) is employed as Housemaid at The Rectory in Enville.

BENNETT HARRIET, (born Alveley 1855- daughter of Thomas and Sarah Bennett) is employed as a domestic servant in Chetton.

BENTLEY BENJAMIN, (aged thirty-two) is a Butler at Coton Hall. BEVAN RICHARD, farms 116 acres at Filletts.

BIGMORE EDITH, is employed as a Lady s maid at Coton Hall.

BOUCHER ANN, (Born Alveley-aged 58) is an inmate at Bridgnorth Workhouse.

BRAZIER JOSEPH, (aged about forty-two) Innkeeper at The Three Horseshoes" Joseph and his wife Harriet have two sons living with them; Edward (nineteen) and Henry (sixteen).

BRAZIER ALBERT, (born Alveley-aged seventeen son of Mary France) is employed as a gardener in Nottingham

BRIDGWATER HARRY, (aged twenty-three) is Headmaster at Alveley School. He and his wife Eliza have a nine month old son named Percival.

BRISTOE GEORGE is a forty-one year old farm servant employed by Margery Cox of Turley Green.

BROOME MARY, lives in a small cottage near The New Inns with her nine year old grandson Thomas.

BROOME WILLIAM, (son of Sarah Bennett) is a thirty-three year old agricultural labourer. He and his wife Ann have three children, Amy (ten), Emma (seven) and Willie (four).

BROOME JANE, is a twenty-eight year old domestic servant at The Butts.

BROOME WILLIAM, is a twenty-two year old farm servant at The Butts.

BROOKS EDWARD, is a thirty-nine year old Shoemaker living at Turley Green. He and his wife Harriet (born Alveley about 1842-maiden name Hodgkiss) have two sons, Edward and William.

BUTLER JAMES, (born Alveley about 1840) is an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Harriet share their home with their three children; Henry, Harriet and James.

BULLOCK THOMAS~(aged forty) is an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Sarah share their home with three of their children; Mary Ann, Eliza and Charles.

BULLOCK WILIAM, (aged fifteen- son of Thomas and Sarah Bullock) is employed as a servant by Joseph Gretton of Heath House.

BULLOCK ELIZABETH, (sixty-two) farms 81 acres at Romsley.

BUTLER WILLIAM, is a stone quarryman. He and his wife Jane live at Pottersloade with their seventeen year old daughter Mary.

CHAPMAN JOHN, is a farm labourer. He and his wife Frances live at Bags Cottage with their two granddaughters Olive Chapman (twenty-three) and Fanny Scriven (thirteen) COLE WILLIAM, is a Painter. His wife Clarissa is employed in a Shop.

CHIDLEY HENRY, is a Farm Baliff. His wife Sarah is fifty-seven.

CHANDLER MARY, is a sixty year old widow. (Aunt to John Wier.)

CHANDLER RICHARD, (son of Mary Chandler) is a Shoemaker.

CLARK STEPHEN, (aged seventy-three) is a former Shoemaker. He and his Alveley born wife Sarah live at 5 Daddlebrook.

CLARK JOHN INSTAN, (born Alveley 1831) is Butcher a Innkeeper at "The Squirrel Inn" He and his wife Emma (born 1832) share their home with four of their children, George Birkins (aged eighteen), Charles (seventeen) Emma (eleven) and Minnie (six).

CLARK STEPHEN, ( aged fourteen- son of John Instan and Emma Clark) is employed is employed as an apprentice Draper in Bridgnorth.

CLARK JOHN ROBERT, (aged thirteen-son of John Instan and Emma Clark) attends a boarding school in Pedmore Worcestershire.

CLARK GEORGE,(aged about forty-three) is described as Miller, Grocer a Farmer of 210 acres, employing four labourers and one boy. His wife Bridget Phoebe is forty-one. Their niece Phoebe Jane Curtis (aged eleven) lives with them.

CLARKE JOHN, farms 167 acres at The Hadleys. He and his wife Eliza share their home with their four children, Henry, Annie, Jessie and Jemima.

CLEWS JOHN, is a twenty-fouryear old farm labourer. He and his wifeJoyce was (born Alveley about 1854 - daughter of Thomas Evans) have two sons Thomas and Joseph CLINTON THOMAS, is employed as a labourer. His wife Mary is a Laundress.

CLINTON JOHN, (born Alveley about 1865- son of Thomas and Mary Clinton) is employed as a Draper's Porter in Kidderminster.

CLINTON ANN, is employed as a farm labourer.

CLINTON MARIA, is a Housemaid employed at Dudhill.

CLINTON MARY, (born Alveley- aged eighteen) is a servant at Little Holt, Quatt.

COLEBATCH WILLIAM, farms 93 acres at Little London. He and his wife Ann have four children, William, Thomas, and George and Richard.

CORBETT JOHN,(thirty-nine) is an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Hannah live at The Lowe with their four children, Matthew, Betsy, Pamela a Charles.

COX MARGERY, is a eighty-nine year old widow- farming 14 acres at Turley Green. Her husband Thomas died 6thJune 1863 aged 64, buried at Quatt.

CRESSWELL ZEPHANIAH, (son of Stephen a Priscilla Cresswell) is married to Emma, (daughter of Sarah a John Harley).

CRESSWELL JOHN, lives at the Firs, Romsley.

CRESSWELL CATHERINE, lives at Lower House Romsley with her elder brother Stephen. Stephen farms 126 acres employing 2 men and a boy.

CRESSWELL PRISCILLA, (widow - aged seventy-two) lives at Lower House, Romsley

CHIDLEY HENRY, is a employed as a farm Bailiff. He and his wife Sarah live at Fenn Green.

CORFIELD JOSEPH, is a farm labourer. He and his wife Ann live at Salt Box with their two sons John and Walter.

CARTER LEWIS, is employed by John Harley as a Wheelwright's Servant".

DAY THOMAS, is a fifty five year old labourer. He and his wife Ann (maiden name Head) live at Cookscross.

DEE JOHN, (born Alveley-aged seventy-three) is an inmate at Bridgnorth Workhouse.

DEE SARAH, is employed as a servant at The Firs Romsley.

DOVEY JOHN, is a Roadman. He and his elderly mother Sarah live at Button Hall.

DOVEY THOMAS, (aged forty-four- son of Thomas a Sarah Dovey) is employed as an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Mary (daughter of Richard a Hannah Yates) live at Onions Cottage with their five children; Hannah, Constance, Walter, Laura and Jessie.

DOVEY THOMAS, (born Alveley- aged sixty-two) is a Shoemaker. He and his wife live at six ashes with their grandson Thomas Horton.

DOWNTON JAMES, (born Alveley-1865, son of Samuel and Sarah Downton) is an ordnance survey labourer, lodging at Culmington.

DOWNTON FREDERICK, (son of Samuel and Sarah Downton) is living in Cambridgeshire.

ELSON ELIZABETH, (aged eighteen) is employed as a servant at Little London.

ELCOCK GEORGE, (aged thirty-five) is a Wheelwright living at six ashes. He and his wife Ellen (maiden name Welch) were married at Chelmarsh in 1870 and have five children; Ellen Jane, Eliza, Jesse, George Henry, and Edward.

ELCOCK WILLIAM, (born Chelmarsh 1827) is as a "thrashing machine proprietor" He and his wife Harriet (born Alveley 1833- maiden name Monk) live at Townsend with five children; John, William, Catherine, Alfred and George . Daughter Harriet Ann (born 1878) died 1879.

ELCOCK WILLIAM, is a twenty-two year old farm labourer. He and his wife Sarah have two children; Thomas (three) and Emily (one).

ELCOCK ELIZABETH, (aged twenty-five- sister to William Elcock) is employed as a Cook.

ELCOCK JOSEPH, (born Alveley 1831- son of Joseph and Mary Elcock) is a farmer in Upton Cressett.

EDWARDS RICHARD, is Alveley Police Officer.

EVANS WILLIAM, is a Bricklayer, lodging with the Wood family at Pottersloade.

EVANS THOMAS, (aged seventy-four- widower) is a farm labourer. He shares his home with his daughter and son-in-law Joyce Hannah and John Clews and their two sons, Thomas and Joseph and two other grandchildren Allan Evans aged eight and Sarah Evans aged six

EVANS THOMAS, is a sixty-seven year old agricultural labourer. -married to Elizabeth. Their son Frederick (twenty) is employed as an agricultural labourer.

Thomas Evans was charged with being drunk and disorderly in the main street at Alveley January 18th 1881, and ordered to pay 5s and 6d costs or go to prison. A friend paid the fine.

EVANS HERBERT, (aged 14- son of Thomas and Elizabeth Evans) is employed as a butcher in Kingswinford.

FELTON GEORGE, is a coalminer. He and his wife Eliza have two children Mary and Elizabeth.

FELLOWS MICHAEL, (born 1811), farms 170 acres at HallClose.

FISHER HARRIET, (aged seventy-three -Cousin to Michael Fellows.) is a Housekeeper at Hallclose.

FLETCHER HARRIET, is a dairymaid, living at 3 Turley Green with her aunt, Margery Cox.

FRANCIS ELIZABETH (born 1857), is a dressmaker, living at New Inns with her sister Ann Jennings.

FRANCE WILLIAM, is a thirty-nine year old quarryman. He and his wife Elizabeth share their home with William's daughter Miriam (ten).

FRANCE JOHN, (fifteen) is employed as a Waggoner at Dudhill

FRANCE JOHN, (aged forty-one- brother of William France), is a stonequarry labourer. He and his wife his wife Mary live at Potters Loade. Eight of their thirteen children live with them. son Henry is employed at Highley Coliery.

FORDIGAN EDWARD, (aged sixty) is employed as a servant at "The Squirrel".

FOXALL HARRY SMITH, (born Alveley 1822 son of James a Lucy Foxall), farms 15 acres, and owns "The Three Horse Shoes" He and his wife Eliza (maiden name Hayward) live at Elm Cottage.

He purchased "The Three Horse Shoes' in June 1874 at auction from John Wood-Perks for £920.

FOXALL CHRISTOPHER, (aged forty-two) is a Bricklayer. He and his wife Elizabeth share their home with six of their children; Christopher, (sixteen), Sarah (ten), Charlotte (eight), Bertha (six), Clara (two) and Alice (five months).

FOXALL FANNY, (born 1869- daughter of Christopher and Elizabeth Foxall) is employed as a servant in Oswestry.

FOXALL THOMAS CRESSWELL, farms 4 acres. He and his wife Margery (daughter of George Hinton) live at Lady Pit Cottage, Romsley.

GWILLIAM JOHN, is a servant at The Lakehouse.

GRIFFITHS JOHN, (born Alveley 1832- son of William and Sarah Griffiths) is a tailor. He and his wife Emma live in Villers Street Kidderminster with their two daughters Clara and Edith.

GRIFFITHS ELIZABETH, is an eighteen year old servant at "The Squirrel".

GIBSON RICHARD, is employed as a coachman to Mary Bache of Spring Cottage.

GILES JOHN, is a Flour miller at Crowsmill.

GILES JAMES, is employed as a servant at Shropshire House.

GILES ALICE, is employed as a domestic servant at Shropshire House.

GREEN WILLIAM, is a coalminer. He and his wife Mary live at 1 The Stank with their nine children; Sophia, William, Thomas, Mary, Sarah, Elizabeth, Frederick, Clara and Arthur.

GREEN THOMAS, is employed as a farm labourer. He and his wife Kezia live at Finger with their five children; Henry, Thomas, Caroline, Samuel and Simson.

GREEN EMMA, (eighteen) is employed as a servant by John Harley.

GREEN HENRY, (born Alveley 1832- son of Thomas and Mary Green) is a Draper in Shoreditch.

GRETTON JOSEPH, farms 142 acres at Heath House Romsley.

HANSON WILLIAM, is a fifty-two year old Gamekeeper. He and his wife Hannah live at Coton Keepers House.

HARDING JOHN, farms 268 acres at The Greenhouse (employing six men). HARRIS VINCENT, of Broadoak farms 22 acres.

HARLEY JOHN, (forty-nine) is a Wheelwright and farmer of 35 acres.. He and his wife Sarah live at Allam bridge.

HARLEY CHARLES, (aged thirteen- son of John and Sarah Harley) attends a boarding school in Pedmore Worcestershire.

HARLEY LOUISA, (born September 1871- daughter of John a Sarah Harley) lives with her Aunt and Uncle Benjamin and Elizabeth Webb.

HARTLEY JOHN, (born Alveley about 1837- son of Thomas and Jane Nicholls) is a Waggoner. He and his wife Mary live at Wolverley with their daughter Sarah.

HAY GEORGE, (born Alveley -son of William and Mary Hay) is employed as a gardener in Lancashire.

HAYWARD THOMAS, aged fifty, farms 56 acres. He and his wife Mary (daughter of Robert Monk) were married at Alveley Church in August 1865 and have four children.

HAYWARD JOHN, farms at The Butts.

HAYCOX WILLIAM, is employed as an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Susan live at 1 Daddlebrook with their son John.

HAYCOX HENRY, (born Alveley- aged twenty-four) lives at Quatt with his wife Mira and baby daughter Edith.

HAYES ELIZABETH, is a dressmaker. She shares her home with her two children Henrietta and William.

HEDLEY ISAAC, aged sixteen, is an Organist lodging at Coton Cottages.

HOLLOWAY SARAH, is a fortyfive year old widow. She shares her home with her four of her children Mary, Louisa, Alice (seven), and George.

HOLLOWAY ELLEN, (born 1861 daughter of George and Sarah Holloway) is employed as a domestic servant at HallClose.

HANCOCKS CHARLES, farms 43 acres at Mayhouse.

HEMMINGS WILLIAM, (aged twenty-three) is a farm labourer. He and his wife MaryJane live at Cookscross with heir baby daughter Mary aged one.

HAY WILLIAM, aged sixty-two is employed as an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Mary (born Quatford 1821) live at 1 Papermill with their twenty year old Henry (agricultural labourer). Son George (twenty-six) is living in Lancashire.

HAY RICHARD, is employed as an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Louisa (maiden name Middleton) live at Allam bridge.

HAY EDWARD, (eighteen) is a servant at the Red Lion.

HEADJOHN, (aged sixty-eight- son of John and Rebecca Head ) is Beer retailer at The Red Lion

HEAD GEORGE, (aged sixty-seven- son of John and Rebecca Head) is employed as a road labourer. He and his wife Louisa live at 5 Cookscross with their son John HEAD HENRY~(aged twenty-two) is a wheelwright's Apprentice to George Wall.

HEAD GEORGE, (born Alveley- aged thirty-four) lives at Quatt with his wife Augusta and two children George and John.

HEAD GEORGE, (born Alveley about 1852) lives at Hillfields Arley with his wife Caroline (maiden name Middleton) and their three children; Lavinia, John and William.

HIGGS JOHN, is a seventy-five year old widower- former Butcher.

HIGGS WILLIAM, (born Alveley 1839- son of John a Ann Higgs) is a Alveley Butcher. He and his wife Emma (born Alveley about 1848) have five children; William, John, Arthur, Sydney and Annie.

HIGGS JOSEPH, (born Alveley about 1841- son of John and Ann Higgs) is a Butcher in Wolverhampton.

HINTON WILLIAM, farms 130 acres at Lakehouse.  
William Hinton of Lakehouse was an enumerator for the 1881 Census.

HINTON GEORGE, of Hartsgreen farms forty acres.

HODGKISS MARY~(born Chelmarsh 1801) lives with her daughter and son-in-law Harriet and Edward Brooks.

HUGHES JOHN, (forty-six) is an agricultural labourer, lodging with Edward and Elizabeth Lambert.

HUMPHRIES HENRY, aged twenty, is employed as a farm servant at Little London.

HUNT ROBERT JOSEPH, is a forty year old agricultural labourer. He and his wife Mary (born Romsley about 1851, daughter of Richard a Ann Packwood) were married at Alveley Church in October 1867 and have four children; Albert, Mary, Sarah Ann and William Henry.

INSTAN WILLIAM, (born Quatford 1820) is a Yeoman living at Turley Green.

JARVIS THOMAS, (aged twenty five) is a gardener at Coton Hall. He and his wife Harriet (Laundress) live at Coton Cottages with their six month old son Henry.

JAY THOMAS, (aged seventy-one) is a stone sawyer.

JARVIS AMELIA, (aged seventeen) is employed as a general servant.

JONES JOHN, (aged thirty-two) is a coalminer, lodging with William and Mary France.

JONES ANN, (widow) is a forty-four year old dressmaker living in a small cottage next to the "New Inns". Daughter Sarah (seventeen) is employed as a domestic servant. Son James is twelve.

JONES SARAH, (widow) lives at 1 Cookscross.

JONES RICHARD, lodges at Bradley Cottages with the Stratford family.

JONES THOMAS, (aged 38- son of Richard Jones) is an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Druscilla were married at Alveley Church in June 1881.

JENKINS ELIZABETH (aged twenty-eight -Born Rhayader) is employed as a Cook at Alveley Vicarage.

JENKINS JANE, (aged twenty-four- Born Rhayader) is employed as a Housemaid at Alveley Vicarage.

JENNINGS ANN (widow- aged thirty-eight) is Beer retailer at New Inns. Her husband William died October 1879.

JENNINGS JOHN, (Born Alveley January 1846- son of George and Rosannah Jennings) is a quarryman. He and his wife Phoebe Elizabeth (born 1848 daughter of Hannah Tolley) live at The Rowells with their six children; Hannah, Elizabeth, William Henry, John, Alice and Emily Phoebe.

KIRKHAM EDWARD, is an eighteen year old agricultural labourer lodging at 2 Cookscross.

KNOWLES THOMAS, is a forty year old farm labourer. He and his wife Sarah live at Finger.

KNOWLES JOHN G. is a twenty-five year old agricultural labourer. He and his wife Ann have three children; Robert, Harry, and Ann Elizabeth

KNOWLES HENRY, is employed as an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Elizabeth live at Dodds green with their five children; Mary, Harry, Walter, Emma and Joseph Henry.

LAMBERT EDWARD, (aged twenty-six) is a stonemason., lodging with John a Mary Gibson.

LANE GEORGE, is a Wheelwright. He and his wife Eliza live at Hammer, Romsley.

LAWLEY HENRY JAMES, farms 350 acres at Bowhills, employing 3 labourers and 2 boys. He and his wife Elizabeth share their home with their ten year old son Harry.

LEWIS MARY, (aged sixty-widow of Thomas Lewis), is a Grocer. Her eighteen year old son James is employed as a gardener.

LEWIS LOUISA,(aged seventeen) is employed as a servant at The Greenhouse

LEWIS JOHN, aged sixty-five is a sawyer. He and his wife Jane live at 4 Papermill with their granddaughter Jane Lewis..

LITTLEFORD GEORGE, (aged thirty-eight) is Publican at The Royal Oak. He and his Alveley born wife Harriet have two children Fanny and Walter.

LINK JOHN, (sixty- three) is employed as an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Eliza (maiden name Laurence) live at New Barns Cottage. They were married at Herefordshire in 1841.

LINK ELIZABETH (born Alveley 1854-daughter of John and Eliza Link) is employed as a Cook by a farmer in Claverley.

LINK WILLIAM, (born 1860 -son of John and Eliza Link) is employed as an agricultural labourer at Pool hall.

LINK GEORGE,( born about 1845-son of John and Eliza Link) is a stone quarryman. He and his wife Ann (born Quatt 1851-daughter of William Preece) were married at Alveley Church in September 1869 and have six children, Arthur (ten), Herbert (eight), Charles (five), William (three) and George Henry (one) and new born Frederick Ernest.

LINK ALLEN, (born about 1852- son of John a Eliza Link) is a labourer. He and his wife Sarah (daughter of John a Mary France) have a baby daughter named Jessie.

LLOYD ELIZA, is a forty-two year old Dressmaker living at Papermill with her nine year old daughter Charlotte.

MACKEY CLEMENT, (aged forty-five) is incumbent of Alveley Parish Church.

MACKEY SUSSANNAH, (aged eighty-two) lives at the vicarage with her nephew, Reverend Mackey.

MALLET WILLIAM, is employed as a servant at Coton farm.

MAPP WILLIAM, farms 180 acres at Shropshire House.

McNABB ANNE ELIZABETH, is employed as Lady's maid at Coton Hall.

MEREDITH WILLIAM, is an agricultural labourer living at 2 Dye Lane.

MINIFIE EMMA, (widow) farms 268 acres at Coton farm.

MILLWARD EDWARD, (born Alveley 1822- son of John and Ann Millward) is a Hotel keeper in Edgbaston.

MASSEY CHARLES, (aged thirty-seven), is a local Blacksmith and Preacher. He and his wife Emma (daughter of Alveley tailor William Griffiths) have five children; William Griffith (eight), Lewis Harry (seven), Mary Anne (five), Alice (three) and Bertha Elizabeth (one).

MUSGROVE ALFRED, aged seventeen, is employed as a Blacksmith's Apprentice to Charles Massey.

MONK ROBERT, (born Kinlet 1799- son of Robert and Mary Monck) is an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Mary live at 1 Pottersloade with their daughter Caroline.

MORGAN SOPHIA, is employed as Governess to the children at Coton farm.

MOULAND EDWARD, is a Coalminer. He and his wife Jane have four children, James (nine), Mary (seven), John (five) and Edward (one).

MORRIS RICHARD, (aged seventy) is an agricultural labourer

MORRIS RICHARD (aged twenty-eight) is employed as an engine driver. He and his wife Sarah Ann (daughter of Samuel and Sarah Downton) were married at Alveley Church in 1875 and have three children; Florence, Robert Ernest and Amelia.

MORRIS WILLIAM, (born Alveley 1846- son of Richard and Elizabeth Morris) is a Wheelwright in Birmigham.

MIDDLETON WILLIAM, (seventy-eight) lives with his daughter and son-in-law Richard and Louisa Hay at Allam bridge.

MORRAM CHARLES, (aged six- nephew of Emma Minifie) lives at Coton Farm.

MUNDAY JANE, (born Alveley-aged eighty-three) lives in Bridgnorth. with her nephew William Wier.

NICHOLLS JEMIMA (seventy-two) is the widow of Luke Nicholls. She lives with her daughter and son-in-law James and Sophia Powell.

NICHOLLS JAMES, (born Alveley 1846- son of Luke and Jemima Nicholls) lives at Upper Arley with his wife Harriet and six children: Luke, Sarah, William, Emma, James and Jemima.

NICHOLLS WILLIAM,(Born Alveley-aged seventy-five) is an inmate at Bridgnorth Workhouse.

NICHOLLS THOMAS,(fifty-five) lives at Finger with his wife Esther and two children Henry and Esther.

NICKOLLS MARIA, (aged fifty-four- sister of William Instan), lives at Turleygreen with her two children; Isabella and Charles.

NICHOLLS RICHARD, (born Alveley about 1818- son of William and Mary Nicholls) is employed as a glass bottle packer in Staffordshire.

OAKLEY CHARLOTTE, (Born Alveley-aged forty-nine) is an inmate at Bridgnorth workhouse.

OAKLEY EDWARD, (born Alveley 1815) lives in Bridgnorth with his wife Elizabeth. OWEN LOUISA, is employed as a servant at the Hadleys.

PACKWOOD RICHARD, (Born Ombersley 1821) is employed as an agricultural labourer.

PARRY JOHN, is a sixty-eight year old agricultural labourer. He and his wife Elsie live at 3 Papermill with their four children; Thomas, Sarah, Jane and Robert.

PARRY LOUISA ELIZABETH, (aged twenty-four) is employed as a domestic servant by Clarkes of Birdsgreen.

PARRY EZEKIEL, (aged twenty-four) is employed as a slaughterman by butcher William Higgs.

PIPER EDWARD, is a farm labourer. He and his wife Elizabeth live at Chidleys with their two children Ann and Joseph.

PITT MATHEW, (twenty-six) is an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Harriet (twentyseven) live at 3 Daddlebrook with their four children; Sarah (seven), Harriet (five), Charles (three) and Fanny (one).

PARTON THOMAS, is employed as an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Emma live at 3 Dye Lane with their five children; Eliza, William, Emma, Miriam and Charles.

PARTON MARY, (aged fifteen) is employed as a servant by Stephen Clark.

PASSEY JOHN, is a sixty-one year old agricultural labourer. He and his wife Emma live at 5 Papermill. Their twenty-two year old son James is a cabinet maker.

PRICE FANNY, (aged eighteen) is employed as servant at The Hay.

PRICE ELIZABETH, (aged eighteen) is employed as a servant at the Greenhouse.

POWELLJAMES, is a timber sawyer. He and his wife Sophia live at Romsley

POWELL EMMA, is a sixteen year old servant at Coton Farm.

PERIMAN RICHARD, (aged forty-two), is the brother of Emma Minifie of Coton Farm. PHILLIPS HENRY, (aged twenty-one) is employed as a Footman at Coton Hall.

PUGH SARAH, aged thirty-two is employed as a Housekeeper at Coton Hall.

POOL WILLIAM, (born Alveley- aged fifty-six) is a Blacksmith. He and his wife Mary live at Tuckhill with their two children Emile and Alfred.

PREECE WILLIAM, is a seventy-one year old agricultural labourer. He and his wife Ann live at Yew Tree cottage.

PREECE MARY ANN, (aged seventeen) is employed as a Scullery maid at Coton Hall.

PREECE WILLIAM, (Born Quatford 1850) is a Cowman. He and his wife Harriet (fortyone) live at The Finger with their six children; Susan, Harriet, William, John, Alice and Charles George.

PERRY (or PARRY??) ALFRED, aged fourteen, is a farm servant at Allam Bridge.

POUNTNEY JAMES, (widower) is an agricultural labourer living at the Clecker with his four children; Maria, Jessie, James, and Harriet.

REA ANN, widow (aged sixty-five) live at six ashes with her daughter and son-in-law Joseph and Fanny Haynes and

granddaughter Annie.

RHODES JOSHUA~(thirty-nine) is a coalminer. He and his wife Mary live at Daddlebrook with their daughter Elizabeth.

RICHARDS GEORGE, (aged thirty-nine) is employed as a gardener. He and his wife Mary live at Coton Cottages with their six year old daughter Edith.

RICHARDSON WILLIAM, aged sixty, is a former gamekeeper, lodging at "The Squirrel".

RIDDLE AMELIA, lodges at the Vicarage.

REYNOLDS JOHN, is a Baker at Birdsgreen.

REYNOLDS WILLIAM, (born Kinver-aged sixty-three) is a farm labourer. He and his wife Maria live at The Finger

REYNOLDS WILLIAM, is a forty-two year old agricultural labourer. He and his wife Druscilla live at 1 Fimbrells with their six year old son James.

SHAW EMILY FANNY (aged twenty-six) is employed as a Lady s maid at Coton Hall.

SHAW WILMOT (aged twenty-six) is a coalminer. He and his wife Fanny have two children Wil!iam and Mary.

SKELDING THOMAS, (born Alveley about 1813- son of Henry and Mary Skelding) is a retired medical pracitioner living in Bridgnorth with his wife Annie.

SKELDING JOSEPH, (born Alveley 1821- son of Henry and Mary Skelding) is a General Practioner in London.

STEWARD WILLIAM, is a forty-nine year old agricultural labourer. He and his mother Ann live at 3 Fimbrells.

STOCKALL ELIZA, is a seventy-seven year old widow.

STRATFORD WILLIAM, is a twenty-eight year old agricultural labourer. He and his wife Ann live at 2 Bradleys with their two daughters Sarah and Mary.

SHUTT SAMUEL, (aged twenty-six) is an agricultural labourer. He and his wife Mary Elizabeth (maiden name Malpas) have a two year old daughter named Susan.

SMITH JOHN, is a fifty-six year old agricultural labourer. He and his wife Jane live at Dumbolds.

SMITH EMMANUEL, aged forty-three, lodges with the Shutt Family.

SCRIVEN JOSEPH, ( born Alveley 1828-son of Edward Scriven) is a roadman. He and his wife Dinah (maiden name Taylor) were married at Alveley Church in 1856 and live at Enville.

SCRIVEN EDWARD, (born Alveley 1832- son of Edward and Sarah Scriven) lives at Bobbington with his wife Elizabeth (maiden name Nicholls)and five children: Lucy, William, Hannah, Edward and Joseph, and two grandchildren: Mary Jane and Francis.

SCRIVEN ROSANNA, (aged forty-seven- widow) is a Charwoman. She shares her home with her two younger children; William (seventeen) and Phoebe (ten).

SCRIVEN CHARLES,( aged thirty-six -son of Richard Scriven) is a farm labourer. He and his wife Ann (daughter of Thomas Bennett) live at Doddsgreen . They were married at Alveley Church in August 1871 and have five children; Annie Louisa, Bertha, Jessy, Richard and Ellen.

SCRIVEN JEFFREY JACOB, (born Alveley about 1860- son of Rosanna &Jeffrey Scriven) is an agricultural labourer lodging with John and Ann Knowles.

SCRIVEN WILLIAM, is a thirty-three year old Shoemaker. He and his wife Elizabeth live at Broadslane with their two children; Herbert and Edith.

SCRIVEN JAMES, (Born Alveley-son of John and Sarah Scriven) is eighty-six years old. His wife Mary (maiden name Williams) is seventy-nine

SCRIVEN OBEDIENCE, (aged sixty-eight- daughter of Sarah Scriven) is employed as a farm servant. She lives at Papermill with her son William.

SCRIVEN JAMES, is a forty-five year old stonequarry labourer. He and his wife Emma (forty-four) live at 2 Cookscross with their son William and other family members (see Bannister).

SCRIVEN THURSA, (daughter of James and Emma Scriven of Cookscross) is employed as a general servant in Bridgnorth.

SCRIVEN RICHARD, (Born Alveley 1805-son of John and Sarah Scriven) is an inmate at Bridgnorth Workhouse.

SCRIVEN GEORGE, (born Alveley 1823- son of James and Mary Scriven) lives at Milson with his wife Mary and children: Emma, Mary, Caroline, Elizabeth and William.

SCRIVEN THOMAS, (aged thirty-eight) is a farm labourer. He and his wife Hannah (twenty-five) live at Papermill with their two daughters Mary and Florence Elizabeth.

SPILSBURY THOMAS, (born Alveley about 1862- son of Edward and Harriet Spilsbury) is a miller in Monkhopton.

TAYLOR JOSEPH, (born Alveley 1805- son of James and Mary Taylor) is Blacksmith in Kingswinford.

TOLLEY HANNAH, is a dairymaid. She lives at No 2 Fimbrells with her daughter Emily. Emily is a Laundress.

THOMAS ELIZABETH, of Broad Oak farms 18 acres.

THOMAS RICHARD, is a Coachman. He and his wife Anne live at 1 Coton Lodge with their two daughters Fanny and Annie.

THOMAS THOMAS, (born Alveley 1799) lives at Wooton farm Quatt, with his son and daughter-in-law.

TOMLINSON LAVINIA, (aged fourteen) lives with her grandmother Hannah Yates.

TOMLINSON BENJAMIN, (aged forty-three) is a coal dealer. He and his wife Rosanna have two sons, Emmanuel and Benjamin.

THATCHER ANN, aged forty-one, is a general servant employed at Spring Cottage.

THATCHER RICHARD, is a farm bailiff. He and his wife Martha live at Lindridge with their two children, Ann and George.

THATCHER WILLIAM, (Born Alveley 1804-son of Benjamin and Elizabeth Thatcher) is an inmate at Bridgnorth Workhouse.

THATCHER GEORGE, (Born Alveley 1806-son of Benjamin and Elizabeth Thatcher) is an inmate at Bridgnorth Workhouse.

TOMPSON MARY LOUISA, (sister to Edward Maltby Wakeman) lives at Coton Hall.

WAKEMAN EDWARD MALTBY, (aged thirty-four) resides at Coton Hall with his wife Edith. They are Landowners.

WAKEMAN NEWPORT HENRY ALLEN, (Landowner- brother of Edward Maltby Wakeman) lives at Coton Hall.

WAKEMAN LOUISA, widow of Rev. E Wakeman lives at Coton Hall.

WAKEMAN OFFLEY, (Baronet) lives at Coton Hall.

WALL GEORGE, aged thirty-seven is a Wheelwright. He and his wife Emma (thirty-five) have five children; Ann, Leah, Lydia, Louisa and George.

WALKER HENRY, aged thirty-four is employed as a Farm Bailiff at Pool Hall. He and his wife Mary have a five year old daughter named Fanny.

WALKER WILLIAM, (born Kingswinford 1851) is employed as an agricultural labourer at The Hay.

WEST ERNEST, (aged fifteen) is employed as an apprentice Tailor.

WHATMORE ANN, (widow- aged seventy-eight) lives with her daughter and son-in-law Louisa and John Head at Cookscross.

WETHERALL THOMAS, is a Farm Bailiff. He and his wife Louisa live at 1 Bradleys with their six children; Louisa (nine), Mary (eight), Mathan (six), Alice (four), William (three) and Robert (eleven months).

WILCOX CHRISTIAN, (born Alveley about 1841-son of Thomas and Maria Wilcox) is a mariner. He and his wife Lucy live in Birkenhead with their four children; Alexander, James, Levi and Thomas.

WILLIAMS THOMAS, is an eighty year old retired labourer - widower of Sarah Williams. WILLIAMS MARY, aged forty-nine is the daughter of Thomas Williams.

WILLIAMS LUCY, (forty-three) shares her home with her sister Harriet (fifty-two) (Both spinsters -sisters to Phoebe Wright)

WILLIAMS EDMUND, aged thirty-eight, is a stonequarryman. He and his wife Jane (thirtyfour) have four children; Henry, Mary, Thomas and Jessie.

WOOD JAMES, (Born Alveley about 1833, son of Jeffrey a Druscilla Wood) is a stone quarryman. He and his wife Elizabeth live at 4 Daddlebrook with their children, Emily (fifteen), Jeffrey (nine), Ellen (six), Frances (three) and Ann (one). His mother Druscilla died in 1878.

WOOD HANNAH is an eighty-seven year old widow, living at 6 Daddlebrook with her son John and seven year old granddaughter Sarah Rowley.

WOOD GEORGE, (aged about fifty-two) is a stone quarryman. He and his wife Sarah (born Highley 1837- daughter of John and Lucy Kirkham) live at Pottersloade with their eight children; George (twenty-one), Alice (eighteen), James (fifteen), John (fourteen), Geoffrey (twelve), Elizabeth (nine), William (six) and Ada (three). Daughter Hannah (nineteen) is employed as a servant in Kidderminster.

WOOD GEORGE, (born about 1835 son of James a Mary Wood) is a stone sawyer. He and his thirty-nine year old wife Ellen have three children, Henry, Winifred Elizabeth, and Mabel Mary .

WOOD JAMES, (born Alveley about 1824) is employed as a Coachman in Kinver.

WIER JOHN LOWE, (born 1840, son of William a Mary Wier) farms 36 acres at Cookscross. He and his wife Jane (daughter of Mary Chandler) were married at Alveley Church in June 1881.

WIER WILLIAM, (aged thirty-six) farm 13 acres. He and his wife Mary Ann live in Pound Street, Bridgnorth

WARDER THOMAS, (aged thirty), farms 120 acres at Church Farm. He and his wife Eliza have two daughters, Agnes and Lilian Fanny.

Thomas Warder of Church Farm, Alveley was an Enumerator for the 1881 Census. WARDER JOHN, (aged sixty-eight) farms 180 acres at The Hay.

WEBB BENJAMIN, (Born 1840 son of Benjamin a Frances Webb) is a Stone Quarrymaster, employing nineteen men. He and his wife Elizabeth share their home with their two children William and Annie.

WRIGHT THOMAS, (son of William and Pheobe Wright) is a thirty-seven year old stone quarryman. He and his wife Ann (daughter of John Cooksey) were married at Alveley Church in 1865 and have four children, George, William, John and Thomas.

WRIGHT PHOEBE, (widow of William Wright) is seventy-six years old.

YARDLEY THOMAS, is an Allam Bridge Blacksmith. He shares his home with his children, Louisa (twenty five), James (sixteen), John (fourteen), Thomas (thirteen), Emma (seven) and Edwin (five). Daughter Alice (twenty-one) employed as a servant in West Derby.

YARDLEY HENRY, (born Alveley) is employed as an agricultural labourer at The Heath, Quatt.

YARDLEY GEORGE, (born Chetton) is a thirty-six year old agricultural labourer at The Mayhouse.

YATES HANNAH, (midwife) is a sixty-one year old widow, living at Whittal cottage with her grandchildren, Henry Yates (eighteen) and Lavinia Tomlinson (fourteen).

YATES SARAH, (seventy-two), is the widow of William Yates.

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## **Oakley of Alveley - Barbara M Philpott and Pauline Saul**

*In the spring of 1987 after many years research, I wrote the final page in my book "Oakley, Some Shropshire Family Trees", and copies remain to this day at the Records & Research Centre in Shrewsbury. It had been a long pilgrimage to trace the family of my maternal great-grandmother Ann Oakley, whose true identity and particular line had been so difficult to establish that I had perforce to account for as many other Oakleys (of all spellings) across all of Shropshire. Only then could I be certain which was my own line from the many others. Of the many other lines one which unfolded a story of its own was the Oakleys of Alveley. It was in the later course of that investigation that the paths of Pauline Saul and myself met. My Alveley story begins in 1766, but Pauline has blended her research and brought one line of these people to life and up to the present day. Genealogy is more than names and dates and places written on paper. Genealogy is people, and without people there would be no history. Add local history and you know that these Oakleys lived out their lives according to their own ways and in doing so made their own pages of history in Shropshire.*

*Barbara M. Philpott*

### **Part 1**

Edward Oakeley, Yeoman, of the Hill House, Alveley: Buried 14<sup>th</sup> June 1766 Quatt.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> February 1727 John Potter of the Hillhouse, parish of Alveley, made his will. Among items contained in it he mentioned 'his sister Ursula Oakeley living in Suffolk and her three children'. He also willed that the Estate called the Hillhouse settled upon his wife Elizabeth for her life should (in case he have no issue by her), descend to his 'Kinsman Edward Oakeley and his heirs forever'. John Potter's will was proved in London 1<sup>st</sup> July 1734, and his wife continued at the Hillhouse.

Ursula Potter was baptised 30<sup>th</sup> January 1673 at Ludlow where her parents married in 1672. I have failed to find a marriage of Ursula to Edward Oakeley in Shropshire; presuming 'Kinsman' to signify 'husband'. Whether the marriage was in Suffolk followed by the three children's baptisms there I cannot tell. Nor whether these vents took place in Counties adjacent to Shropshire. An inevitable presumption is that Ursula Oakeley died and was buried somewhere before 4<sup>th</sup> November 1738, for on that day Edward signed a Marriage Settlement to Anne Harris whom he married by Licence five days later at Quattford. (The Marriage Settlement of 1738 did not come to light until August 1991 four years after the completion of "Oakley", when it was found amongst the Apley Park Estate Papers. It revealed that Ann Harris was the only daughter of George Harris of Wootton in the Parish of Quatt, Yeoman.)

At this time John Potter's widow was still living and it was another 10 years before Elizabeth Potter made her Will on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1748. Elizabeth lived on for two more years, and it was not until 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1750 after her will was proved that Edward Oakeley eventually inherited the Hillhouse. This was more than 23 years after John Potter had made his will, the date of which is the earliest positive identification I have for Edward Oakeley, Yeoman, of the Hillhouse, as he became.

Edward was buried at Quatt, and his four children baptised there, but where he came from is not established. He may have been Edward son of Samuel and Lydia Oakeley who was baptised 6<sup>th</sup> April 1689, Ludlow, but this would have meant he was 16 years younger than his bride Ursula. He may have come from any counties bordering on Shropshire; Herefordshire, Worcestershire or Staffordshire in particular, or he may even have come from Suffolk.

Edward Oakeley was buried at Quatt 14<sup>th</sup> June 1766, and his Will was proved at the peculiar Court of Bridgnorth in 1767; it mentions his younger children, George, John, Elizabeth and Richard but not his eldest child Edward. It would seem however that upon his father's death Edward (baptised 1739) became entitled to the Hillhouse, which may account for his exclusion.

Edward (1739), subsequently referred to as "The Elder" appears to have had two children, Edward baptised 1776 and Mary 1769. (From hereon the spelling of Oak(e)ley in Admons & Parish Registers becomes frequent.) Edward Oakeley the Elder died intestate in August 1805, Administration being granted to his only son in 1806. Thus the third Edward came to have the copyhold of the Hillhouse Estate. The attendant Deeds and Writings reveal the sequence of events from 1738-1834, and of further interest particulars of Sale of the Freehold Estate called The Hill House, on 9<sup>th</sup> June 1859 at The Lion Hotel, Kidderminster.

Edward (1776) died at Paper Mill Cottage in 1829 and was buried at Alveley.

Of the first Edward's other children, George (baptised 1742) married when aged about 32 years Mary Glaze (who was at that time a Minor), at Alveley in 1774. Some years later between 1782-7 George kept an Alehouse in Alveley, and in all he and Mary are known to have had nine children. Of these nine there are assorted matters of interest which so far come to light.

The first of George and Mary Oakley's children to mention is George (1776) who seems only to have been an Agricultural Labourer, who married twice, having eight known children, but continued the line which survives to the present day, this being via John (1830), who was baptised at Claverley. John Oakley became a Groom at Whittimore Farm, Bobbington, where he met

Ellen Gwynn a native of Ombersley in Worcestershire and married her at Bobbington in 1852. Ellen had been a servant in the same household. After this John appears to have become a labourer, and they had four children John, George, Edward R. and William. In 1861 however, little George aged 5 was staying with his Gwynn grandparents at Ombersley, while the other three were at Alveley with their mother and father. It seems that soon after this John and Ellen Oakley and their four boys must have gone to live at Astley Abbots for sadly in October 1865 John was buried there to be followed to the grave 15 months later by Ellen also at Astley Abbots 31<sup>st</sup> January 1867.

Of the four boys orphaned at 14, 11, 9 and 6 years of age, by 1871 William the youngest was with an Uncle William Gwynn at Upper Forge, Cardington, while George then 16 was a Cowman at Astley Abbots. Five years later George enlisted in the Army at Birmingham. He served in the Army Medical Corps, with periods overseas in the Cape and the Mediterranean and was in the column that went to relieve General Gordon at Khartoum in the Nile. George married Kate Boylett at Aldershot in 1884 and they had 5 children. In June 1896 when acutely depressed and also worried over her husband's failing health, Kate committed suicide. George was invalided out of the Army three months later with tuberculosis; his pension was two shillings a day on which to support himself and five children. He died that year on 23<sup>rd</sup> December. So again there were young Oakley orphans, 4 boys and a girl Ellen Eliza Oakley (named after her two grandmothers) and born in 1889 at Aldershot Barracks. Descendants of Ellen Eliza continue the line today.\*

To return to the children of George (1742) the Alehouse Keeper of Alveley, the next youngest to George (1776), was Joseph (1780), and both of these appear to have had reason to go across the river Severn to Stottesdon. Young George was a witness to a marriage there in 1799, which may well have been of his sister Anna (Anne?) to John Lane, and five years later Joseph married there a Stottesdon girl Hannah Corfield, later having six children.

Hannah and Joseph Oakley's eldest child Caroline eventually went to Astley Abbots and married Valentine Matthews, and Joseph's eldest son John (1807) went to Highley (Netherton) and later Nordley by Astley Abbots in which parish John was buried in 1874, seven years after his namesake cousin John (baptised 1830 Claverley) and wife Ellen were laid to rest there.

Joseph and Hannah's daughter Charlotte who married John Brookes appears to have moved out of the county, their daughter Caroline reputedly having been born at Kingswinford. Hannah towards the end of her life when she was a widow lived at Alveley.

After Joseph (1780) came Thomas Oakley (1782) who was killed at Hall Close Quarry, Alveley in 1824 of which incident more anon.

The other brother of these two of whom anything much is known is Edward Oakley (1784) who became a Gamekeeper to Harry Lancelot Lee for the Manors of Astley, Alveley, Nordley Regis and Romsley. Edward's branch of the family eventually became settled at Worfield, having another Gamekeeper (George 1813) in the next generation.

There remains then the descent from Richard Oakley, youngest son of Edward Oakley and Anne nee Harris with whom this [chapter] started.

Baptised at Quatt in 1752 Richard Oakley married Sarah Glaze who was most likely related to Mary Glaze who married Richard's brother George Oakley. Research into the Glaze family of Alveley could reveal further useful information as one George Glaze was an Executor to the Will of Richard, and was also concerned in the Administration of Richard's widow Sarah (nee Glaze). (George Glaze's signature also appears on the Administration of the Estate of a John Oakley who reputedly died 21<sup>st</sup> February 1821 but whose identity I have not been able to establish.)

Richard Oakley was of the Hall Close, Alveley, when he died in 1815 and his Will mentions his ten surviving children. Of these children, William (1778) the eldest seems to have struck a new note when choosing his occupation for in 1815 he is referred to as an Excise Officer of Welch Hay, Co. Brecon.

Jane (1780), next in line was the only daughter, and married John Bradley of Worfield in 1805 at Over Areley, Worcs, who was 'of Bobbington' when Jane's father made his Will in 1814.

The next born to Richard and Sarah Oakley had been John baptised 1<sup>st</sup> March 1782 at Alveley, and it was with the death of this John Oakley that a curious and sad link occurred with his cousin Thomas Oakley who died four years later.

John Oakley (1782) was 'employed with other men in removing a millstone in Alveley Quarry, an iron bar with which they were at work gave way so that the stone fell upon him and lacerated his thigh, he died of haemorrhage'.

The Coroner's Inquest was held on 28<sup>th</sup> November 1820, the death having taken place upon the previous Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> November about 11 o'clock in the morning. John was buried at Alveley on 29<sup>th</sup> November, aged 38 years.

It is a curious fact that John's cousin Thomas Oakley was killed four years later at Mrs Jane Bradley's Hall Close Quarry Pits Alveley. Likely Mrs Bradley was John's sister (and Thomas's cousin also), though the relationships are not mentioned in the

## Coroner's Report.

The Inquest on Thomas was held at the Three Horseshoes, Alveley, evidence being given by Henry Oakley, farmer, at work in the Quarry Pits with William Yates, William Bennett and William Wood, who saw Thomas under a stone of about 2 tons 10cwt and took a bar to get the stone off him. Thomas was not dead but bled a little at the nose. William Yates, quarryman was lifting a stone and went to shift the block forward but before he could do so the stone fell upon Thomas who stood against it to hold it upright. William Bennett stood opposite Oakley, if it had not been for a wheelbarrow he would have been killed on the spot, as it was he had four or five ribs broken. William Wood, quarryman said that the stone fell so quickly Oakley could not get out of its way. After the stone fell, only Thomas's head was showing. The accident happened on a Saturday morning around 10.30 o'clock it being the 20<sup>th</sup> November 1824. Thomas lived on for three days, dying on 23<sup>rd</sup> November; the Inquest was on 25<sup>th</sup>, which was his baptismal anniversary and also the fourth anniversary of his cousin John's death. Both men had been baptised the same year of 1782 and both their mother's names before marriage were Glaze. One of the Jurors at the Inquisition was George Glaze. Henry Oakley's relationship was not noted but he said that he lived at Hall Close and it seems safe to assume that he was Thomas's cousin.

The next child of Richard and Sarah Oakley to be born had been Richard (1784), who may have married Ann Broadfield on 16<sup>th</sup> January 1811 at Alveley but there is some doubt as to whether the bridegroom might have been the Richard Oakley (1788) – a cousin and youngest child of George Oakley and Mary.

The fifth son of Richard and Sarah was Benjamin Oakley (1787) a Labourer who became a Farmer. Benjamin's Will made 29<sup>th</sup> December 1855 shows that he owned three freehold cottages; he also names 'my four children John, Richard, Benjamin and Ann'. One of the Executors of the Will was Benjamin's brother Jesse Oakley then a Druggist of Broseley. The Probate of the Will stated that Benjamin was a Labourer.

It was Benjamin and his brother Henry (baptised 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1796, Alveley) who were signatories (with the ubiquitous George Glaze), to the Administration of their mother's estate after her death intestate in 1826. Henry's good clear signature also appears (again in company with George Glaze) on the Administration papers of the intestate John Oakley of 1827. Other than this, and Henry's testimony at the Coroner's Inquests there is nothing to add, although further research could well reveal more.

Abraham Oakley baptised in 1799 Alveley, the penultimate child before the final Jesse of 1800, moved about a little. In 1841 he was a Labourer at Nordley Common where he remained 1851 but then called himself a Landowner. In 1861 he was a Pauper living at The Swinbutts, Worfield, a widower, and uncle, so stated to John Reece the head of household and his wife Sarah, but this relationship has not been verified and at present remains obscure. Sadly Abraham was stated to have been of Bridgnorth Workhouse at his death in May 1867 when he was buried at Alveley.

But Abraham was not the last of these Oakleys to die in Bridgnorth Workhouse. A daughter of his cousin George Oakley (1776), called Charlotte (born c.1832/3) who was dumb was all too acquainted with the Workhouse, and eventually died there aged 61 and was buried at Alveley in 1894.

The beginning of this fragmentary pedigree is shrouded in mystery and poses many questions.

Were Edward and Ursula man and wife?  
Were 'her three children' hers and Edwards?  
Had Ursula been married before?  
Why was she in Suffolk?  
Where was Edward while Ursula was there?  
What became of 'her three children'?  
Where and when did Ursula die?  
Did she leave a Will?

Also of course, where did Edward come from?

It is unfortunate that Samuel Oakley of Ludlow, who was buried there 27 November 1724 left a Will which has not survived. There is only the Inventory left to see, and no clues to help with a possible link to his son Edward. Samuel's wife Lydia (nee Jorden), whom he married at Ashford Bowdler 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1678, died intestate in 1728, Administration being granted to her daughter Anne Oakley in 1731.

As is common, the frequent changes in the spelling of Oakeley to Oakley (with variations) are no guide to establishing true identity, in some cases two versions of the name appearing in one document referring to the same person.

It may be that Edward Oakley's origins lie fairly close to Alveley and Quatt. Sedgeley in Staffordshire perhaps? There is reputed to be the Will of an Edward Oakley (1721/2) proved in that place.

## Part 2

\*Ellen Eliza was the middle child and only daughter of George Oakley ('the soldier' born 1856). After George's discharge from the army in 1896 (when he was stationed at Bodmin Barracks) the five children were split up. John William (born 1885)

and Edward (born 1887) were sent to the Duke of York's school (for the sons of soldiers), Sydney James (born 1891) was adopted by an Uncle (Mr Rose), Ellen Eliza was sent to Lady Robartes Orphanage, near Bodmin and baby George Albert (born 1894) was placed in Dr Barnardos home in Stepney.

Not a great deal is known about Sydney after that; John and Edward went on to successful military careers, marriage and fatherhood. Ellen married William Ernest Saul in 1918 and produced two sons Stanley Ernest and John Barrie, and they in turn each fathered three children. It was, however, baby George who had a short but remarkable life that should not go unrecorded.

George Albert was to remain in Barnardos care in England until 24th March 1904 when, aged 10 and along with numerous other Barnardo children, he was sent to Canada aboard the *SS Southwark*, arriving in Halifax, Nova Scotia on 3rd April. Four days later he was placed in his first foster home at Severn, Ontario (an overland journey of around 1000 miles from Halifax). He was to reside at seven more foster homes over the next 10 years; mainly farms, working hard but seemingly overall well treated and well-liked according to the comprehensive notes kept by Barnardos [Toronto & London]. In 1904 he was referred to as a '*smart little fellow*'; by 1908 he was '*needing a firm hand*' although later that year his employer stated that the '*lad was giving satisfaction in every way*'. During most of 1909 George was badly troubled by rheumatism of the ankles and feet, necessitating a return to the Barnardo home in Toronto for treatment. In 1911 he was '*very interested in taking music lessons*' and by December 1913 he was working in Forest and described by his employer as '*strong, healthy, capable and giving good satisfaction*'. The Barnard notes also record that in March 1905 George received a letter from Curragh Camp, Ireland (Army Base) so it is reasonable to assume that this was from one of his elder brothers, John or Edward.

In October 1914 the notes record that George "Left for the West last March – no address. Barnardos heard from George from Bracebridge, Ontario. He was enquiring about his family background. Barnardos asked for details from London and these were sent to George together with his uncle Mr J W Rose's address in Swindon, Wiltshire. Barnardos also sent George the balance of the money in his Trust Account."

As a consequence of that enquiry George made contact again with his sister Ellen Eliza, now living in Birmingham, Warwickshire. In April 1916 he joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force and on his disembarkation in England en route to France he and Eliza met up again, the first (and last) time they had been reunited since their separation in 1896.

George was killed in action on 19 August 1918 while serving with the 75<sup>th</sup> Battalion at the Battle of Amiens. He is buried in Le Quesnel Commonwealth War Grave Cemetery. For the rest of her life it was his sister's dearest wish to visit George's grave and this was fulfilled in March 1975, when she herself was 86 years old! A never-to-be-forgotten pilgrimage.

It says much for Barnardos record keeping that as late as November 1923 an entry reads "Former employer, Mr Lester, stated that he had heard rumour (unconfirmed) that George had been killed in action in the war".

That was not quite the end of this particular chapter in the Oakley family history. In 1993 on a visit to Canada I was able to visit some of the places where George had lived and worked, in particular Parry Sound his place of enlistment in the 162<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 'the Timber Wolves' in 1916. It was here that his cap badge from that battalion (which had been in Ellen Eliza's possession until it passed to her son John Barrie on her death) was returned to its rightful place, the West Parry Sound District Museum. A far cry from Alveley...

## Alveley Bridge

This year there has been much discussion about the future of the Miners Bridge. Shropshire County Council, who own the bridge, have advised that in five years time a replacement will have to be considered due to the deterioration of the present construction.

The bridge was built in 1936/7 and the following article which appeared in the August 1937 issue of the Concrete and Constructional Engineering Magazine gives a detailed description of the construction process.

### The Construction of Alveley Bridge - By A.P. Masons

THE fundamental problem in the construction of the bridge described in this article was to overcome the difficulty in bridging a river liable to sudden bringing down heavy debris which make the use of falsework supported the river bed hazardous and expensive. It was decided to avoid all temporary works in the river and to erect the bridge by cantilevering consecutive sections from each bank until the gap became small enough to close in one operation .

The bridge is on the river Severn a few miles below Bridgnorth. At the site the normal flow is rapid and the depth adjacent to the Alveley bank is about 15ft. At any time of the year the water level may rise rapidly from low summer level (75.00 O.D.) to the maximum flood level (89.00 O.D.). During the construction floods frequently occurred, and at one time the water rose to within a few inches of the highest known level.

Notwithstanding the bad weather in 1936 and the early part of 1937 construction proceeded without serious delays. The cost of

construction by the special method adopted was not greater than it would have been in building a bridge in the ordinary manner, and it was unnecessary to bring piling plant, cranes, etc., on to the site. The cost of special plant such as would not be possessed by a public works contractor in a moderate way of business did not amount, at the time of construction, to more than £250 on a contract worth about £6000.

### General Arrangement and Design

The bridge contains a river span of 150ft. and two shore spans of 60ft. There are also three culverts of 7ft. span on the Alveley side to assist in carrying away exceptionally high flood waters. The two hollow river piers are bonded into mass concrete foundations taken down to blue clay containing large boulders. The shore abutments are also retaining walls to support the approach embankments. The ends are returned as dwarf skirting walls to protect the banks from erosion. The bridge is on a skew of about 60 deg.

There are two parallel girders continuous over three spans and monolithic with the river piers which sustain the greater part of the weight of the bridge. The extreme ends rest on sliding plates to provide for contraction and expansion, and to reduce the unknown stresses arising during construction. The outer sides at the ends of the girder bear against bituminous sheeting placed against the sides of the holes in the abutment walls; on the inner sides there are clear spaces. This permits reasonably free longitudinal movement whilst preventing lateral movement, a matter of particular importance during construction. The gaps in the roadway at each end are closed by overlapping angle sections made of rust-resisting steel. Counterweight blocks, each weighing 37 tons, were cast between the girders close to each abutment.

The spans, width, total waterway, and clearances were arranged in conjunction with the owners, the Highley Mining Company, the Severn Catchment Board, and the Severn Commission. The main span has a maximum clearance of 13 ft. above the highest recorded flood level, and for a width of 25 ft. on each side of the centre there is a minimum clearance of 26 ft. above low summer level to provide for possible future navigation. The bridge is 17 ft. 4 in. wide and accommodates two coal-tub roads and a footpath for the men going to the colliery. It will enable the company to bring coal from the new sinking at Alveley across the river to the Great Western Railway on the Highley side. Previously the only overground communication was by a ferry boat operated on a rope stretched across the river. Below ground a new heading connects the Alveley pit with the existing pits at Highley.

The general principles and order of construction were settled before the detailed design was prepared, and these considerations had a profound effect on the design. After construction of the abutments and piers the end spans, together with short lengths projecting on the river side of each pier, were erected on falsework carried for the most part on dry land. The greater part of the main span was cantilevered in lengths of 5 ft. from each end until the centre section could be deposited in one operation. The deck slab was omitted from the centre span until the girders were completed so as to reduce the amount of counterweight required and the stresses during the period of incompleteness.

The design of the bridge took into account the following considerations:

- (1) Before cantilevering out the centre span begins, the end spans and river piers act as inverted L-frames carrying the construction load, deck slabs, and counterweight blocks.
- (2) The halves of the centre span act as cantilevers increasing in length to 75 ft. and carrying the construction load but no deck slab. This covers the alternative case of two cantilevers supporting a suspended span of 23 ft. The cantilevers were anchored by the shore spans and counterweights.
- (3) The remainder of the dead and live loading of the completed bridge acts as a three-span girder whose moments and shears are superimposed on the moments and shears produced by (1) and (2) taking account of the variable moment of inertia.
- (4) The completed structure acts as a rigid frame. This condition concerned particularly the design of the river piers with which the girders are continuous.
- (5) Lateral wind pressure at all stages of construction, particularly just before closing the cantilevered centre span when there was very little lateral bracing to the girders.

In the abutments, piers, and end spans the arrangement of the reinforcement followed normal lines. The bars in the end spans are 1.5in. in diameter and in lengths up to 40ft. which overhang the river piers by varying amounts up to 21 ft. 6 in. All bars in the cantilevered parts of the bridge are 1.5in. in diameter and 15 ft. long; at 5ft. intervals a number of bars stop and a number begin. This made it possible to construct the bridge in 5ft. lengths, and at every construction joint approximately one third of the bars projected 5ft., one third projected 10ft., and the remainder stopped, further bars being introduced. In the centre section longer bars fixed to the cantilevers on opposite sides of the river were used.

The main girders are 9ft. 4in. apart between centres and the deck slab is supported between them, cantilevering on each side. Iron railings are set in small thickened projections of the deck slab, and the division between the tub-ways and walkway is made by a tubular railing.

## Details of Construction.

The only access to the site was from the Alveley side, all material for the Highlev side being transported across the river by the aerial ropeway. The 0.875-in. diameter rope was carried on poles and was anchored to trees on each bank. The 0.375in. diameter flexible haulage rope passed around one of the back wheels of an anchored down Austin Seven car which provided the motive power. Approximately 700 tons of material were hauled across by this arrangement, as many as 400 runs being made daily while the concrete was being deposited in the Highley bank foundation. The speed was approximately 80 yd. in 18 seconds.

The concrete was mixed by machine and hoisted to a wooden gantry. The bucket was then changed over on a four-wheel bogie on rails to the aerial ropeway for use on the Highley side. Concrete used on the Alveley side was taken over the gantry in two-wheel carts and deposited by a chute, a 6in. rubber pipe being used to place it in the deeper sections of the girders.

The end spans were constructed by ordinary methods, the centering being supported on timber falsework. Concrete was placed in horizontal layers 2 ft. deep so that the lower layers were able to assist in carrying the upper concrete, thus relieving the falsework

A short section of each cantilever was constructed with the end spans. The lower part of the joint was formed at right angles to the curve of the girder and was stepped half-way up to prevent the formation of a complete shear plane. At regular intervals all over the girder section 0.75in. bars assisted in making a good bond.

Trollies on rails laid on the completed work were used to support the weight of the cantilevered sections. Each trolley carried two pairs of 12-in. by 3.5in. channels which projected towards the river and were anchored down with eye-bolts at the shore ends. Three-inch diameter asbestos-cement tubes were built into the girders at 5ft. centres and steel pipes passed through these and the eyes of the bolts. A stock of reinforcing bars, spare inside shutters, and sand was kept on the backs of the trollies and assisted in counterweighting. At first the slight deflection of the trollies under load was found to be troublesome, but this was prevented by stiffening the cantilever channels with chains and turnbuckles passing over vertical posts.

Across the channels there were 12-in. by 6-in. timbers from which steel ladders were suspended by the top rungs. The soffits of the ribs were carried on 9-in. by 3-in. timbers placed through the rungs of the ladders and packed up as necessary. The outside shutters were carried on the soffits and fastened to the 12-in. by 6-in. timbers at the top. The inside shutters were built up in 2-ft. lifts as concreting proceeded to enable the concrete to be properly rammed around the steel. The joiners followed the concretors and fastened the inner shutters to the outer with wire ties. The soldiers and walings were 5-in. by 2-in. timbers. The 6-in. by 1.25-in. boards were arranged to break joint so that to some extent the new work was cantilevered off the shuttering for the previous sections.

Concreting proceeded in 5-ft. sections, the trollies being moved forward at each operation. The order of operations was (1) fix soffits for 5-ft. length, (2) erect outside shutter for the whole length, (3) fix steel, (4) fix part of inside shuttering, (5) concrete part of depth, (6) raise inside shuttering, (7) concrete a further part of the depth. (8) complete shuttering and concrete placing to the top, (9) strip and cement wash, (10) move trolley forward 5 ft. The series was carried out at approximately weekly intervals and it was arranged that the front wheels of the trollies should always come over work at least two weeks old. The first lifts in the deep portion of the girders were deposited on two days, because one lift would have been too much for a short November day

Stripping was carried out from back scaffolds suspended from the trollies. The outside timbers were dropped into the river and retrieved by a boatman. The inside shutters were stacked on this scaffold so as to give more working room on top. Stop-ends were made with short boards and paper bags wedged between the reinforcing bars.

The upper reinforcing bars were supported by chains and turnbuckles, the lower steel being packed up on wood placed outside the stopping-off boards.

When the gap between the two sides had been reduced to 23-ft. preparations were made for casting the closing section. The soffits of the shuttering were supported by trussed beams each made up of three 11-in. by 3-in. timbers carried on bearers between the ladders. The reinforcement was passed through on top and the complete sections assembled. Concreting was carried out in two horizontal lifts with a short interval between to enable the first lift to harden sufficiently to assist in carrying the upper lift. This relieved the ladders and channels which might otherwise have been over-loaded.

After the centre section had been stripped the trollies were moved back to their original positions over the piers and used for supporting the cantilevered deck shuttering. The 12-in. by 6-in. timbers were placed across the trollies and the ladders were hung from the ends. Pipe bearers resting on the ladders passed through the asbestos-cement tubes built into the ribs, and these carried the shuttering for the cantilevered slabs. The span of the slab between the girders was supported on 0.875in. diameter hangers resting on the ribs. For convenience in stripping, which was done from wooden ladders set up on a swinging scaffold carried on the steel ladders, the shutters were made in 5-ft. lengths. The centre section shutters were dropped into the river and

as far as possible picked up by the boatman, the outer shutters being lifted up on top. Holes in the edge of the decking for building in the stays of the iron railing were cored out with parsnips which were much easier to remove than wood plugs. The trollies and ladders were used again while painting the bridge with white water paint.

All materials were received on the Alveley side of the bridge at a point about 500 yd. away and were taken downhill to the site on a temporary colliery-tub track. The stocks of gravel, sand, and reinforcement, and the mixing plant were situated on the Alveley side, everything required on the other side being brought over by the aerial ropeway.

The aggregates consisted of washed and graded gravel and sand. Normal Portland cement was used in most of the work, but rapid-hardening Portland cement was used for the centre span.

### **Construction Schedule and Rate of Progress.**

The Contractors, Messrs. Thos. Beighton, Ltd., commenced operations at the site on June 30, 1936. The first few days were spent in putting up and experimenting with the aerial ropeway and arranging a temporary ferry. Excavation for the pier foundations was put in hand, but unusually high floods filled the excavations for a large part of the month of July, the flood on July 15th being a record summer level for fifty years. During this time the excavations were started for the abutments.

The Alveley pier foundation was excavated through a bed of gravel into firm blue clay, and continuous pumping and packing with hay was required to hold the gravel back. Boulders of large size were found in the Highley pier excavations some of which were tunnelled under, those at the bottom of the excavation assisting in spreading the load. Both abutment walls were concreted and stripped early in September.

Falsework was erected and shuttering was fixed for the two end spans. Floods during this period caused the ground to settle and loosened the props, but during the period of concreting the water remained within its banks. During concreting the Highley side-span the ropeway took over 190 tons in a working week, making twenty runs hourly. Towards the end of October the trolley was assembled on the Alveley side, and early in November the first lifts were concreted. The trolley for the Highley side was taken across by the ropeway and the first concrete was deposited by the middle of the month.

Construction proceeded in regular stages from both ends, and in the intervals the three culverts and the training walls were put in. During December the river rose continuously, reaching on December 17<sup>th</sup>. a point just below the springing level of the arches and within a few inches of the highest known flood level. No damage was done and work on the bridge was not completely stopped. The river at this time was 100 yards wide and flowed through the culverts. High water continued for most of January and February and construction by normal methods would have been impossible. Strong winds during January caused no noticeable lateral movement of the ribs.

By February 4<sup>th</sup>. the gap had been reduced to 45-ft., and a month later work had reached the point when preparations could be made for putting in the closing section. About this time a small horizontal movement on the sliding bearing plates became apparent. This was expected and was due to the bedding down of the river sides of the pier foundations as the load became more evenly distributed. On March 8<sup>th</sup>. the closure was effected and the most difficult part of the job was at an end. The deck slab was then constructed and in May the railings were fixed and the painting completed.

Most of the cantilevered work was carried out in a period of four months by the foreman, six men, and a boy. It is interesting to record that no accidents occurred during the whole construction period, though there was a certain amount of loss of small tools and timber.

The British Reinforced Concrete Engineering Co. Ltd. Acted as engineers for the work, prepared the design and working details, and supplied the reinforcement. All the reinforcement was bent by the contractor at the site.

### **Hampton Loade Furnace - David Poyner**

Many individuals will know of the forge that operated at Hampton Loade from 1796 to 1866; indeed last year I contributed a short article on a tunnel system apparently connected with the forge. However, far fewer people are aware that there was a blast furnace on the site in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. My colleague, Dr Gwyneth Nair of Paisley University, had for some years been aware of the existence of one John Legas, a potfounder, living in the north of Highley in about 1660. Neither she nor I could work out why a metal worker should be in Highley at this date as the village was almost entirely agricultural. The mystery was solved by a chance conversation I had with Peter King, an expert on the iron industry of the early modern period, particularly in the West Midlands. Peter had catalogued the huge mass of Foley papers at the Hereford Record Office, which deal with the local iron industry at this date. Not only was he very familiar with the Legas family, he was also able to tell me of the existence of the blast furnace at Hampton Loade. In this article I will review what I have so far been able to discover about this furnace.

## The West Midlands Iron Industry in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.

It is worth spending some time considering both the technical and economic background to the local iron industry. By this period, all local iron was made in blast furnaces. Iron ore was mixed with charcoal (the fuel) and usually limestone (to act as flux) inside the furnace.

Figure 1. shows a typical blast furnace of this period. The furnace contents were ignited and a temperature of over 1000°C was reached, helped by regular blasts of air from bellows. The bellows were worked by a water wheel. The typical furnace was set close to a source of ironstone in a well wooded area on a stream. Metallic iron was released from the ore and at once melted; the molten metal could then be run out of the furnace into moulds. This produced cast iron. This form of iron could be cast directly into objects such as pots, pans, kettles, fire grates and backs or smoothing irons. These found a ready market through retail ironmongers. However, cast iron is a brittle material and much was converted into the more resilient wrought iron. The iron was cast into bars called pigs and passed onto the iron forge. Here they were remelted, perhaps after blending with other types of iron and refined to reduce their carbon content. They were then drawn out under the forge hammer to give bars. These could be sold directly to iron merchants, or passed to slitting mills. At these mills the bars would be rolled and cut into thin rods, particularly suitable for nail making<sup>1</sup>.

Shropshire had numerous blast furnaces in the Seventeenth Century, associated with the Coalbrookdale and Clee Hill coalfields, where iron ore could be found. Most pig iron was turned into bars and rods for the metal workers of South Staffordshire. Particularly along the River Stour there was a very high concentration of forges and mills (see Figure 2). From the late 1630s the local iron industry came to be dominated by the Foley family. The founder member was Richard Foley (1580-1657), the son of a Dudley nailmaker, who built up a collection of works along the Stour in Staffordshire. One of Richard's sons, Thomas (1616-1717) of Stourbridge and Witley Court added other works in Worcestershire and Staffordshire as well as in Shropshire, Gloucestershire and Sussex. Thomas gave up full time management of his empire in 1668 and his youngest son Philip (1653-1716) took over the Stour works. From the start of the Eighteenth Century the Foley family gradually lost their pre-eminence in the West Midland iron trade to be replaced at least partly by the Knight family. The Knights owned numerous forges on the Stour as well as furnaces in Staffordshire and Shropshire<sup>2</sup>.

Both the Foley and Knight family businesses largely revolved around the production of bar and rod iron. Pig iron from their furnaces was blended at their forges with superior iron from elsewhere in the country and then used for the manufacture of bars and rods. This trade made much use of river transport and warehouses.

### Hampton Loade Furnace - Outline History

The first references to Hampton Loade Furnace come in the 1640s. In 1623 Thomas Gervois granted Lye Hall in Quatt to Richard Nash, Margaret his wife and Mary their daughter.

In 1647 there was a settlement on behalf of Margaret for £42-10-00 pa between Richard Nash on the one part and Seabright Nash and Thomas Beardsmore of the other part. This document indicates that the lands included in the original 1623 lease now included portions sublet to Edward Richards, Walter Blunt and also "one furnace known as Hampton Loade furnace in the holding of Thomas Foley". The Lye Hall estate forms the boundary between Quatt and Alveley, just north of the present Paper Mill Brook. This strongly suggests that the furnace was roughly on the site later occupied by the Hampton Loade Forge. The furnace had been in existence for several years by the time of the 1647 document, for on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1641 Thomas Foley reached an agreement with John Heath of Alveley, a miller. Heath held a mill known as Elliot's or Moorehouse Mill. Foley had built a dam across the stream below this mill, to divert it to his furnace. The dam had raised the stream above its normal height, causing damage to the mill. Foley agreed to pay Heath £1-6-8 pa for 7 years to indemnify him against claims for damages by Launcelot Lee, the mill owner.<sup>3</sup>

It seems likely that the furnace must have been built about 1640. John Heath would have wanted to settle the problem with flooding as soon as possible. Furthermore, Thomas would only have been 24 in 1640, it seems unlikely that he would have taken out a lease much earlier. This would make Hampton a contemporary of a number of other Shropshire furnaces. Both Bouldon, on the west slopes of the Clee Hill, and the famous Coalbrookdale furnaces were established about this time. These furnaces were to have considerably longer lives than Hampton.

The next mention of Hampton comes in 1653, when Thomas Whitmore paid £13-2-6 for 1 ton 6cwt 1qr of "cast necessities from Hampton Loade" (appendix 1). Whitmore was probably a member of the local Whitmore family originating from Apley, north of Bridgnorth. His bill was reduced as he supplied 36 cords 6 feet of wood for charcoal making in 1652. The cord was the traditional unit in which wood was supplied and was defined as a stack of wood 4' x 4' x 8'; thus Whitmore was supplying about 4700 cubic feet of wood. The nature of his the "cast necessities" are unknown.

The final direct reference to Hampton Loade furnace comes in 1662, with the survival of a receipt for £1 for the casting of pots and other objects by John Legas at Hampton Loade, Grange and Coven furnaces (the latter two being in Staffordshire).<sup>5</sup> John first appears in the locality in 1648 when he baptised his son Richard at Chelmarsh. It seems that he and his wife Ann moved to Highley in about 1655. Their eldest son, John purchased 14 acres of land in the far north of the parish in 1660 and in 1668 Ann described how they owned a number of cattle and leased land elsewhere in the parish. John was still a potfounder but, perhaps significantly, his work meant that he often had to travel away from Highley. In fact it seems unlikely that Hampton Loade furnace was still working in 1668. The works were not transferred to Philip Foley and the detailed accounts that survive from that and subsequent years do not mention a furnace at Hampton Loade. Indeed, an inventory of Hubballs Mill in Morville, part of the Foley empire in 1668 records the presence of "materials from Hampton", perhaps suggesting that the furnace had been

dismantled and various items salvaged. John Legas was still living in Highley as late as 1672 when he paid Hearth tax. He was buried in Diddlebury in 1688. A Sebastian Legas, probably a son, was also living in Diddlebury at this period and perhaps worked at Bouldon furnace. Sebastian also seems to have worked at Tislop furnace (south of the Clee Hill) and Cleobury ironworks. John the eldest son worked at Leighton Furnace. Another John, son of Sebastian and so probably grandson of John of Hampton became a partner in ironworks in Sussex.<sup>5</sup>

### **Hampton Loade Furnace - Operation**

The success of any furnace was determined by the ease both with which it could get its raw materials and dispatch its products to market. Hampton Loade was just outside the main iron producing districts, although it was not unique in this respect. However, on the banks of the Severn, it was in a good position to receive and send out materials. Its general location was probably determined by its proximity to iron ore and particularly woodland for charcoal supply (Figure 2). The immediate site was dictated by the presence of a stream that could power its bellows and the attractions of easy river transport.

Iron ore could have come from two sources to Hampton Loade. Some doubtless came downstream from the Ironbridge Gorge, brought to the furnace by boat. However an alternative source would have been from the Wyre Forest Coalfield, in Billingsley and Chorley. In the mid Sixteenth Century there was no other local outlet for this ore and it would have involved a relatively short journey of about 5 miles by packhorse to bring the ore to the furnace. Crossing the river would have involved few problems as the furnace was next to a ford and the ferry was also in existence at this time. In the next century, ore from Billingsley and Chorley was to be sent much further distances<sup>6</sup>.

The main cost of a blast furnace at this date was for charcoal, the fuel used to smelt the iron. Wood was cut in nearby forests and converted to charcoal on the spot, the finished product was then carefully transported to the furnace. Charcoal is bulky and fragile, crushed material was no use to the furnace masters. The maximum range from which it could be bought overland was about 10 miles, if this distance could be kept to below 5 miles, so much the better. To a first approximation, something like 100 acres of woodland a year would be needed for a furnace producing 200 tons of iron p.a. Once cut, the wood would take something like 20 years to regrow before another crop could be taken from it. We do not know the capacity of Hampton Loade Furnace, although other furnaces of this date in the West Midlands produced about 300 tons of iron a year. Very roughly, it seems likely that Hampton Loade would have consumed about 150 acres of wood each year and would have needed access to about 3000 acres of woodland for sustainable production. Whilst we do not know for certain the extent of local woodland in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> Century, it was probably not that different from that existing at present. A 10 mile radius from Hampton Loade covers the entire Wyre Forest; 6000 acres of woodland. Within 5 miles there is probably over 2000 acres, including Arley Wood, woods in Kinlet and Chorley, along the Borle and Severn Valleys and at Dudmaston. (The presence of this woodland belt may have been a crucial factor in the decision to build a furnace in the vicinity of Hampton Loade). There would also have been perhaps another 1000 acres or more around Kinver and Enville. Against this, it needs to be recognised that these woods were used by other iron works. The woods at Kinver and Arley must have supplied the various Stour iron works and these certainly drew on sources further into the Wyre Forest in the 1670s. There were iron forges at Cleobury and Morville and other furnaces around the Clee Hills, East Shropshire and Worcestershire (Figure 2). In the short term, Hampton would have no problem in meeting its needs for charcoal. In the Foley papers there are a number of transactions for charcoal from local estates which might be connected with Hampton Loade Furnace and these are shown in Appendix 1. In the longer term, some skill would probably be needed to ensure an adequate supply of fuel, perhaps having to bring charcoal some distance along the Severn.<sup>7</sup>

It would have been desirable to use limestone for flux. Small quantities of limestone are available in Alveley with larger amounts in Trimpey. However, the furnace would probably have needed to bring in most of its material from Wenlock, Benthall or perhaps even the Clee Hills.

We know nothing about the details of how the furnace operated. Seventeenth Century furnaces often worked intermittently; with periods of inactivity stretching over several months. Hampton may well have fitted into this pattern. When it was working, it certainly was busy making castings as the presence of John Legas the potfounder demonstrates. Some furnaces specialised in castings; thus Abraham Darby essentially used the furnace at Coalbrookdale for this purpose in the early 18<sup>th</sup> Century. In the Civil War there would have obviously have been a market of armaments and Thomas Foley subsequently supplied these to the Navy, However the main thrust of the business was the production of bar iron; the furnaces in the 1670s existed to supply pig iron for the forges. As far as I know, there is no evidence to show whether Hampton Loade was involved in this trade, although it would be surprising if it did not supply at least some local forges.<sup>8</sup>

In the absence of accounts, it is impossible to say why the furnace probably closed in the 1660s. Its life of 20-25 years indicates that it achieved at least modest success. Presumably the Foley's found that they could supply their needs more effectively from other furnaces. If it really did specialise in castings rather than iron for forges, it may have become too peripheral to the main family business. There may have been local problems ensuring a steady supply of charcoal and the expenses of transporting ironstone must have also added to its costs.

### **Hampton Wharf**

The closure of the furnace was not the end of Hampton's involvement in the iron trade. The Foley accounts from 1668 frequently refer to a warehouse at Hampton for storing iron. However, Peter King is of the opinion that this was located in Wolverhampton not Hampton Loade and logistically this makes much more sense. The Foleys had a large warehouse at Bewdley to serve the Severn Valley. However in the 1730s there are references to a wharf at Hampton Loade in the Knight

family accounts. Richard Knight owned a blast furnace at Charlecotte (in Aston Botterell parish, east of the Brown Clee) and a furnace and forge at Bringewood, west of Ludlow in Herefordshire. Pig Iron from Charlecotte went to a number of places including the Bewdley warehouse, a warehouse at Roundthorn near Ludlow and the wharf at Hampton Loade. At the end of the 1730s a new wharf at Bridgnorth owned by William Oates appears to have largely replaced Hampton as a place of despatch.<sup>9</sup>

### **Surviving Remains.**

As the likely site of the furnace and warehouse was extensively redeveloped at the end of the Eighteenth Century for Hampton Loade Forge, it is not surprising that there are now no obvious remains of earlier activity. However, there are a few intriguing pointers (Figure 3).

The most long-lasting memorial to any ironworks is the slag that it produced. There is no shortage of slag at Hampton Loade, almost all of it coming from the forge. Fortunately the slag from a charcoal blast furnace is quite distinctive; it forms green, glassy lumps. When the Alveley Historical Society visited Hampton Loade two years ago, I recovered a single lump of this material from the much more extensive forge slag on a beach besides the Severn. Most of this material had probably been washed down Paper Mill brook. Under other circumstances this would hardly be compelling evidence; however, given the later disturbances the site has seen, including the deliberate removal of slag at the end of the last century, it is perhaps as much as could be expected. Of course, the Severn can carry material many miles, but as the rest of the beach was entirely made up of slag from the forge, the simplest explanation is that the blast furnace slag was also from the site.

On a subsequent trip this May, Paper Mill Brook was followed upstream from its confluence with the Severn for about 0.5 miles. Through the site of the old forge complex, the stream bottom is covered in silt, but just above this it becomes rocky. No slag was visible here or anywhere further upstream. This strongly suggests that the furnace was close to the Severn, on the site of the later forge. If it had been further upstream, there should have been traces of slag in the brook.

As expected, there is no sign of the furnace upstream of the forge and indeed the next man-made feature is the weir that fed the water course for the forge. The latter can be traced on the ground all the way back to just before the former holding pond on the forge site. No other leat can be seen. We know that Thomas Foley “diverted” Paper Mill brook for his furnace; this presumably means he constructed a weir, water course and holding pond. In undisturbed woodland some trace of these features would be expected to have survived. It is a distinct possibility that the forge reused the weir, leat and holding pond originally constructed by Thomas Foley for his furnace. There would certainly have been significant repair and reconstruction of these features; however, I suspect that they still preserve much of Foley’s work. This would suggest that the furnace would have been somewhere close to the current cottages.

One other possible survival from the time of Foley is the small cottage, just to the east of the old forge pool. This has not been examined in any detail, but superficially it appears that it could date from the mid-17<sup>th</sup> Century. However, it is not shown on a map of Quatt of 1817 so its outward appearance is probably deceptive.<sup>10</sup>

### **Conclusions**

Hampton Loade has a long association with the iron industry, first with a furnace then a warehouse. Particularly if the warehouse was on the site of the old furnace, then memories of this industrial past would still have been fresh when the Thompson brothers arrived looking for a site for their forge. If the water works associated with the blast furnace were still visible and reusable, this could have been an important factor in the siting of the forge at the confluence of Paper Mill Brook. I believe much can still be discovered about the earlier phases of the iron industry at Hampton Loade, both from research in the archives and especially a survey on the ground.

### **Appendix 1**

#### **Possible charcoal purchases for Hampton Furnace**

E12/VI/KAc/83 Wood and mines from Thomas Cooper, pp Earl of Leicester.

552 cords 2.5’ @8/6 per cord in Hawkeswood

347 cords 2.5’ @8/- per cord in Leigh Park

524 loads of mine, whereof 250 loades allow unto the price of wood.

(Not a strong candidate, unless Hawkeswood can be linked with Hawkbatch, in the Wyre Forest. “Mines” is a term for ironstone)

E12/VI/KAc/84 Thomas Whitmore for cast necessities from Hampton Loade

1 ton 6cwt 1 qr at 10<sup>s</sup>, £13-2-6

Credit of 36 cords 6’ of wood rec’d in 1652. Henry Shaw says not worth more than 5/- per cord but I allow 5/6. £10-2-1½.

(See text; almost certainly cordwood for Hampton)

E12/VI/KAc/105 Thomas Wolryche’s account 1656-61

550 cords 6’ @ 6/6, £178-19-10

1284 cords 4’ @ 5/-, £321-12-6; this payment for cutting cords by John Sharp.

(Wolryche owned Dudmaston Hall and was ultimately Foley’s landlord, having purchased Ley Hall from Thomas Jervois in

1628)

(References are to Foley Papers, Hereford Record Office).

## **Appendix 2 Elliot's Mill**

Elliot's/Moorehouse Mill appears to be previously unrecorded as a mill in Alveley. Its approximate site can be established from the present Moorehouse Farm, in the north-west of Alveley, although from at least 1770 its lands did not border on Paper Mill brook. The indemnity granted by Foley to Heath indicates that it was upstream of the furnace weir; it is unlikely to have been much further downstream Paper Mill Brook than Crow's Mill which survived into this century. It must have been close to Crow's Mill; it is possible that the two mills are same, the older name being forgotten as it changed ownership. A survey of Paper Mill brook might clarify the relationship between them.<sup>11</sup>

John Heath, the miller is mentioned in the Alveley Parish Registers. He baptised two children, Thomas in 1639 and Elizabeth in 1642 before Elizabeth his wife was buried in 1649. It seems that if there was periodic flooding of his mill. this did not put him out of business. Why the mill was called Elliot's is not clear. The parish registers record the burial of Thomas Eliotes in 1584 and assorted baptisms and burials associated with a Francis Eliotes from 1600 to 1614. Perhaps one or other of these men held the mill.

### **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank Mr. P. Foley for access to the Foley papers in Hereford Record Office. I am very grateful to Peter King for commenting on a previous draft of this article. Mr and Mrs Ibottsen gave access to their land at Hampton Loade and Tim White assisted with fieldwork.

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- 3) Hereford Record Office (HRO); E12/VI/KAc/161, Lease 5<sup>th</sup> April 1623; E12/VI/KAc/162 Settlement 19<sup>th</sup> July 1647; E12/VI/KAc/64 Agreement 13<sup>th</sup> April 1641.
- 4) E12/VI/KAc/92
- 5) See Chelmarsh and Highley parish registers (baptisms) for John Legas's early movements. Evidence of Ann Legas, Public Record Office E134/21&22 Chas II/Hil 29. For ownership of Legas lands in Highley, see Shropshire Records and Research Office (SRRO) 6000/593, 541 and 609. The movements of Sebastian and John can be followed in the parish registers for Diddlebury, Cleobury Mortimer, Milson and Leighton. The career of John II in Sussex has been documented by P.W. King in *Sussex Arch. Coll.* 133 (1995), 255-62) and Jeremy Hodgkinson (*ibid.*, 134 (1996), 155-67). The inventory of Hubball's Mill is in Schafer, 30, *op. cit.* Peter King is of the opinion that Hampton was worked on a 21 year lease from 1641-1662 and closed when this lease expired. (*Early statistics for the iron industry; a vindication*, P.W.. King, Journal of Historical Metallurgy 30 [1996] 23-46).
- 6) See *The Wyre Forest Coalfield*, D.R. Poyner and R.E. Evans, Tempus, 2000.
- 7) I have based my estimates of charcoal consumption and furnace capacity on those derived by Prof. G. Hammersley, *The Charcoal Industry and its fuel*, Economic History Review, 2<sup>nd</sup> Series, 26 (1973), 593-613. The Foley papers in HRO contain many accounts for coppicing and purchase of charcoal. At this date coppicing may have been on a 16 year cycle, but given the uncertainties associated with other parts of my calculation, I have not corrected for this.
- 8) For a general account of the West Midlands iron trade at this time, see Rowlands, *op. cit.*
- 9) See *Charlcombe Furnace 1733-1779*, N. Mutton, Bulletin of the Historical Metallurgy Group, 1966, 36-42
- 10) SRRO BB/E/1/5/1/8,9. This map together with the tythe map and the 1:2500 OS First Series map has been used to produce Figure 3.
- 11) Crow's Mill is marked as a paper and leather mill on a 1770 map of Alveley and is still shown by the OS in 1928 (A.J. Nicholls, *The history of Alveley*, 1994, maps 1 and 6).

## **Alveley Holidays and my Grocery Round - By Barry Cox**

Twelve or thirteen years of age meant a paper round or grocery round to help the family finances. Ten bob a week and Mother would be waiting on the doorstep on Saturday, the pay day, with her hand out, my brother worked at thirteen in a bakery for eight shillings a week (he finished up owing one of his own, so all wasn't for nothing).

But we all had to help, even if it was getting a load of coal in for a neighbour (do you know, that is another thing of the past that has been forgotten, the load of coal tipped on the pavement and then the shovelling it down the cellars, or barrowing it round the back). I remember my mother having a go at the coal merchant if coal he had delivered wasn't up to a certain standard, I don't think they let the suppliers get away with anything in those days.

I have been side-tracked down the nostalgia track again; it is amazing how writing of one subject, so many other things come into your mind that make you sit up and think "blow me, I'd forgotten all about that".

To get back to my little tale, when you did have a little job, of course, it had to be covered whilst you were away for a week camping, so you would get your pal to stand in for you.

My pal was Bazza James and after a little bribery and cajoling, it was agreed that he would cover for me.

So, with the Alveley camping holiday just two weeks away, he came on my round with me to learn the calls and other things appertaining to the job, i.e. how to control the grocery bike (the bike was the model with a small wheel at the front – this allowed for a bigger basket to be carried, hence bigger boxes of grocery, hence more weight, hence the back wheel coming off the floor if you didn't keep it down with your body firmly planted in the saddle; I assure you, Roy Rogers and Silver would have been proud of it – this worked wonderful down hills but, of course, getting the load uphill was another thing entirely – having to dismount to push the load, the bike would immediately tip up and everything would finish on the floor).

Having explained the rudiments of the grocery bike to Bazza, I then had to explain how to stop it, the machine's brakes being non-existent. The only way to brake was firmly to wedge your shoe heel between the rear forks and the tyre and then just hope you had everything right, in case of an emergency.

The exciting day arrived to leave Netherton for our Alveley camping holiday and the grocery round was soon forgotten in all the excitement surrounding the job of loading the lorry and the journey to Charlie Evans' Farm, where we were to spend the next seven or eight days (wonderful days).

Of course, the days fled – one wonderful day after another; in the Lido, down the river, fishing at the Hall Farm, family walks down to the river ferry and the Pub on the other bank for shandies for us kids and the ladies, and of course a good pint for the menfolk – the long walks back shortened by the deep conversations, the men discussing the future world and how it should be, us kids running in front to get to the camp site first to grab a cheese sandwich or something that might have been left from dinner (i.e. cold potatoes from dinner sliced onto a noggin of bread with HP Sauce). By this time, our mothers having caught up, cocoa would be on the go, after all that, I assure you we could have slept on bricks (come to think, half the time, it felt as if we were).

Having re-charged our batteries for another year, it was time for home – school for us, work for our dads and the heavy housework chores for our mothers (no automatic washing machines then – Dolly and tub, hot water, Lifebuoy soap and a lot of muscle being the order of the day).

One of my first calls when I had sorted myself out at home, was to visit Bazza, who lived just over the road, to see if my round was still in order or if he'd put the kibosh on it for both of us. This is as near a remembrance of the conversation on that meeting.

"How do, Bazz – orite? How did yu gerron?"

"God, that soddin' bike, it nearly killed me."

"Why – wo happened?"

"I was goin down Primrose Hill an' a ruddy lorry come out right in front on me. I did what yo said and stuck me heel down between the fork and tyre – it soddin' ripped the sole off me shoo, everythin' went all over the show. Three boxes of stuff got mixed up – Mrs Warren got Phipps' sausage, Taylor gid me a cussin cus there was gravel in her butter and somebody gorrer cheese – an' I at tu walk hum with no bottom in me shoo. I got ten bob wages – it ruddy cost me thirty bob for some new shoos."

We would be about thirteen years old when it all happened. I cor remember what he told me to do with the job, but yo con guess!

Happy days, ruddy marvellous days.

Anyway, he covered for me while I spent my camping holiday down Alveley and the laughter we had over his mishaps on my

bike went on for years.

I can't remember who did the round for me on other occasions; I know it wasn't my old mate, Bazza James.

## **Wartime Holidays by Barry Cox**

How could any boy or girl now even grasp the excitement of those times, the wonderment, the complete freedom of being let out to explore a new land, a new country even, as it seemed to us then, ten miles across country from Netherton to Alveley, it was darkness into light, sulphur laid in air to country air, it was freedom to run the fields, it was my nursery, memories of that time vividly return with the excitement of that time. The years 1942/3/4/5 and on, were our wartime holiday years when with borrowed camping equipment (Primrose Hill Scout Group) the families made their way to Alveley, for some of the happiest times of our lives, where dreams began and future plans for the betterment of our families were laid and I suppose some mislaid. The only time I see a parallel these days is the look of wonderment the kids give if they are promised "Disneyland" if they are good and if the few thousand quid gets saved (which of course it usually is).

Before our camping days we were imprisoned in our side streets, where we made our own enjoyment for no cost whatsoever; different times, different age, our nights (and what fun they were), hours swinging fire cans, kick the can, hunkem bunkem against the wall, the other team leap frogging to get as many on the backs as they could before they collapsed, they did of course, to the usual shouts of "chatin. Yo was chatin! I sid his foot touch the flooer" and all it cost was an empty treacle tin, they were so profuse around the place then because it helped the sugar ration out (I loved it in tea), for kick the can and, of course, a good wall to lean against for the back breaking hunkem bunkem game. The other ingredients that helped in all the fun making was your mates, all as poor as one another, your street gang who just met night after night, no arrangements, no times, somehow you all just met up, three chalk marks on the wall and you were batting for England, two piles of coats thrown on the road and you were playing for the Wolves or Albion (never heard of Man Utd in those days), seasons of course dictated the sport, weather dictated the venues, someone's side entry for five jacks if it was raining, marbles down the gutter if it wasn't, old bike wheels for bowls to knock about the roads at ninety miles an hour, what a time we had! Disneyland with its plastic hype can never, never hold those solid memories for the young of today as the street games our street gangs manufactured out of nothing those many years ago.

Holidays – what were those? I remember being taken down to Haden Hill Park at a very early age on a Bank Holiday Monday and I remember mum making and putting some tea in a milk bottle for our refreshment together with some tomato and cucumber sandwiches to eat for our little picnic (I remember she couldn't find a cork for the bottle of tea, so she wrapped up a strip of newspaper until it made a suitable bung). What a day we had! Cold tea, sandwiches and a playing field to run in, what a holiday because really that's about what it was, your holiday – a couple of days in the year off and a ride on the bus to a local park Fete.

Not until very many years later when a week's paid holiday came into force by law, did families start to think of some time away from home. A week's holiday with pay – can you imagine? I know it's very hard now to realise the impact it made on us as a family, but it was from those days that my happiest memories come from and the catalyst was Alveley and our camping holidays. So many happy hours we were to enjoy over so many years into a never ending story, with tales that are still recalled by the fewer and fewer family and friends who were there at that time.

Saturday!!! Saturday morning, cousin Harry and myself were running about early, we knew the lorry that would transport the two families to Alveley would be turning up. I can't describe the excitement, a week camping and a ride on the back of a lorry (if you equate the experience to a flight on Concorde today you would approach the excitement we were going through then). We waited patiently, constantly looking for the first sight of the lorry as it turned into North Street, somehow it was always late, fingernails to bite would be at a premium, then the lorry would show its nose around the corner (believe me as I write this I am there, reliving it all). It's here, it's here! Dad! Mum! Before we knew, tables, tents, buckets, boxes of tinned food so carefully saved over the months, wooden folding camping beds, trestle tables and benches and oh so many other items deemed necessary for our six or seven days holiday were being loaded onto the open lorry. Then the icing to top it all off, us sitting where we could find a bit of space amongst the now piled high vehicle (I hasten to add, the laws against having a load of kids and parents riding on the back of an open lorry were not then in place).

"Everybody all right?" came the shout from the cab, studded to capacity with the driver, mother and aunty Sue, the kids on their laps. "OK, we're off" and to a lot of waving and shouting we trundled out of North Street, en route for the holiday of a lifetime.

One incident I do recall on one of the journeys we were going down the steep hill towards "The Mill" (the restaurant that is now) and the very severe bend at the bottom; the driver had turned his engine off to save fuel, which was at a premium because of petrol rationing, forgetting he had servo assisted brakes (which only worked with the engine running) we went round the bent on two wheels. The driver had to stop the lorry just up the road as he was "all of a shake". It didn't seem anything to us riding on the back, but to aunty Sue and mother in the cab, watching the wall hurtling towards them, it must have been one experience they could have done without. I remember years later, mum going over the story as if yesterday, she lived until she

was ninety-six and that freewheel down the hill and our narrow escape she related time and time again.

Fenn Green came into sight, we turned down the lane. Evans' farm was a hundred yards on the left. We were here! Cousin Harry and myself climbing down to lift the huge farm gate open (somehow, it always seemed to be tied up with bits of rope) and of course the cows trampling in and our making a quagmire of the entrance so of course Harry and myself were both up to our knees in mud and dung in the first few seconds of our arrival, but who cared? We were on the farm, this was what it was about, freedom. Who cared if you got a bit of muck stuck to you? Can you imagine that in Disneyland? Mickey Mouse always has immaculate white gloves, he wouldn't dare open an old farm gate!

We waved the lorry off, after the arrangements were made about picking us up the following week. Then we started to sort out our equipment and get the tents erected so that within a short time we had the semblance of a camp site. Soon Primus stoves were hissing, tea was being handed out and beds being made up ready for a first night under canvas. For me, never one of immediate sleep, what with the bumps and lumps, cousin Harry taking of his plans for us the next day well into the night (until the call came from Dad "Will you tow get to sleep!") – but how could I after being told to "cover your ears because the earwigs could burrow into your brain if they got in through your ears". Harry was always dropping little gems out like that.

The next day we opened the tent flaps to discover a kitchen in full flow, tea on the ago, bacon cooking and Dad and Uncle Tom, up earlier, had picked the mushrooms. I was talking to my sister the other day and she said the one smell that had always stayed with her was the smell of bacon and egg breakfasts cooking across the meadow on camping mornings. For me, too, home cured bacon, eggs that filled the pan with yolks that were like rising suns (no more than one day old). My God, my mouth's running just thinking about it! Then after, a noggin of bread to dip in the bacon fat was even more tastier, what a way to start the day! Afterwards, it was get the buckets of water to start the dinner with and when the lads had done the chores it was time for swimming, tree climbing, camp making and all the things young lads get up to.

I remember one evening going round the rabbit warrens with wire nooses to try to catch a few rabbits. When we returned the next day we found the traps were just as we had left them, without a trace of a rabbit. Our street skills of fire cans and kick the can did not extend to the skills of the country rabbit hunter, so if a rabbit was required for a stew, it was purchased from the village butcher (of course, these were pre-myxamatoxis days when nothing could beat a slow jugged rabbit with fresh vegetables. Years afterwards of course, seeing them around with bodies all diseased and rotting was another thing.)

Somehow, it's the simple things that have engraved themselves the deepest in my memory. The walks with dad, calling in at the farm for a glass of milk right off the cooler (nectar of the gods) that cost half a penny, learning to swim in the lido, Harry pulling me out on my third sinking, me not knowing that the bottom of the pool was deeper in the middle than at the sides (where I could touch the bottom – two steps out and I was out of my depth!). All of this only seems like yesterday.

As with all holidays, after the first four or five days we were counting down and from the white pallid faced kids who had arrived the previous week, we had taken on the colour of Red Indians. We had so many stories to relate to the unfortunates we had left behind! So it was, the days flew by and we waited for the lorry to return (not with so much excitement as when it collected us to bring us down, I may say).

What days they were. Now it was back to kick the can, fire cans for another twelve months and a winter that lasted all of three months with Netherton Reservoir freezing solid right across. We made hundred yards slides to wear our boots out on, running home with fingers blue with cold and to cry at the pain as you dangled them in front of the fire as they warmed up.

Yet, that's another story to tell for the future. All I can say is what times we had, holidays on a shoestring – they don't know the half!

### **Private Ryan, Alveley and my first portable radio.**

Not being of the war mongering type, it has taken nearly two years and then only by the cajoling of my family, to sit and watch "Saving Private Ryan".

Quite a moving film it turned out to be and very different from the gunga din/Errol Flynn type movies that I expected and that we experienced shortly after the last war (shall I state that as WW2). There have been so many conflicts since then, the word "war" could be misleading. However, the Errol Flynn films, where everyone dies laughing their heads off for some reason (I think to show their pearly whites off) were produced to portray how good the life of a typical army private was, it didn't even hurt when you got hit with a great lump of shrapnel between your ears. It was great, the nurse held your hand until it suddenly dawned on you that it wasn't that funny after all and you wanted your mum.

It took me back a few years, in a nostalgic way, after seeing the film, because I remember the build up to that huge invasion that was to be code-named D-Day. Alveley, as with so many small villages throughout the United Kingdom, was to be called upon to take part in a massive build-up of the military hardware which was to be required for the eventual invasion that the film "Saving Private Ryan" was to portray so vividly.

The first sight of the United States Army insignia (a large white star in a circle) on the lines of vehicles, jeeps, canvassed covered lorries and so many other track and wheeled vehicles that started to fill the fields, was awe inspiring to the likes of me at the age I was in 1944/45. The memories recalled by such films as “Saving Private Ryan” sends me down that well-worn lane of nostalgia that I seem to travel more as I get older (“any gum chum” – remember?).

The Yanks arrived in long columns of trucks and turned off the Bridgnorth/Kidderminster road as if going down to “The Mill” restaurant. They continued up Astley Bank right to the top of the lane. Then they started to disperse into fields along that top lane. Over the following weeks, hundreds of fighting machines were lined up filling huge areas of land and, as I recall, a canvas camp to house the personnel. The building I remember being along that area of any substance, was a long shed (with a story of its own – for years after the war it was, I believe, squatted in by a family who, eventually, after many years scratching a living as smallholders, bought the land and built a house there. I think he was an American? – I’m not sure about this though). There was no other building up there to stand any test of time, so it was known that as an army camp it would have only a short duration there and as soon as they got the signal it would be up pegs and go.

With the American trucks came the American personnel to drive and service them. Men who in due course had time off and needed somewhere to relax. One of the places they headed for on days off was the Fenn Green Lido. On those days they would gather in their little groups and loll around the pool. Local dialects were soon mingling with the long American drawl that John Wayne always did so well.

So to the title “Saving Private Ryan, Alveley and my First Portable Radio”.

The GI’s, or “Yanks” as we called them, who arrived with the transport as drivers etc, soon found the idyllic spot of Fenn Green Lido, the ideal place to meet young ladies and the very well manicured lawns that surrounded the sparkling pool soon filled with off-duty GI’s and girls lounging around listening to music (I would like to say Major Glenn Miller was the band of the American Air Force). Of course, it was so long ago I don’t know who it would be, but you can bet that it would be a big swinging band of someone like Glenn Miller.

I have rambled on a little to get to the point of my story, this being the radio they heard their music on. It was the first little portable I had seen or heard and how “Hollywood” it seemed. Handsome GI’s, lovely girls, a sparkling pool to splash and play in, the friendly “can’t catch me” chases, where the girls saw to it they were indeed caught and kissed and then drying each other down, listening to the music on that (which I would have died to own) portable radio.

Of course, the weeks passed quickly and as the landings that were about to take place in Normandy approached, the vehicles which had gathered in the Alveley area, started to make their way to the southern staging areas, ready for the invasion. Driving these vehicles were the nineteen and twenty year old lads, the Ryans, the Smarts, the Kesslers or whatever name you would like to give them, taking in the last lung full of Shropshire air and the last view of thatched round house with the pool they had gamed in, as they had waited for that fated day, D-day. Which, after the horrific battles to get a foothold on the beaches, was of course, successful.

So, there you go, little old Alveley played a small part in its success. Fenn Green helped to lighten the few weeks before the invasion for the GI’s, maybe one of them could have been a “Private Ryan” – who knows? I wonder about that little radio, you know – did he take it with him when he hit the beach? Was he reminded of that little bit of heaven he’d shared with us when he listened to it later? Did it survive those initial weeks after D-day, or was it blown to pieces like so many of those young lads in the first hours of battle?

What happened to the girls they left behind? Were any of the unions that were made strong enough to survive those years apart? Did any of them meet again and splash in that lovely pool together in happier times?

On my desk, I have a model of an American Sherman tank. I have never thought about it until now, but do you know, I’m sure I’ve seen a few hundred of them lined up somewhere, and that little portable radio they brought to the pool, I’ve got two or three around the house now, but do you know, there is only one that stays in my memory – that’s the first one I heard when I was about nine or ten, those many years ago, when the Yanks were here, a long way from home. Let’s hope they did make it back OK and that the little radio played into the peace.

### **Findlay Family Connections with Alveley**

Our family tree was researched by my cousin John Findlay, but about 18 months ago, I decided to try and find out why my Scottish family settled in Alveley, Shropshire.

I started my search on the internet and received a response from Tony Colton of Bridgnorth who sent me Tim White’s address.

From there things moved very rapidly when Tim introduced me to Margaret Sheridan.

Tim and Margaret were a great help and soon found connections with my family to “The Bell Inn”, “the Finger Inn” and the “Six Ashes Inn” (it seems the family had an obsession with drinking!).

The reason for my family moving to Alveley in the 1880’s is not clear, but it could have been to manage “The Bell Inn”.

The 1891 Census records my Grandfather John Gemmill Findlay (aged 20 – occupation Colliery Clerk) lodging at the home of James and Emily Scriven at 49 Alveley, a small cottage near “New Inns”.

The following year, my grandfather John married local Alveley girl, Alice Holloway. Other members of the family also settled in the village – Grandfather’s sister Jane married Henry France and had three children: Gladys, Henry and Wilfred. But, unfortunately, in April 1896, Henry was killed in a mining accident at Highley Colliery.

Alice and John had five children born in Alveley, but must have moved to Highley about 1909 because the death of Alice is recorded in Highley on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1909. Four of their children remained in Highley, one went to Kidderminster and the remainder (including my father) moved to Birmingham.

Some of the most interesting Findlay information came from David Poyner. David’s notes revealed that my Grandfather John Gemmill Findlay was the Union District Organiser and was involved in the strike actions of 1912 to 1926. These must have been very hard times for local mining families – my father lost his job at the mine when he was just 17. It was nice to know that my Grandfather was well known in Alveley and Highley and tried to establish a reasonable wage for the miners.

Our branch of the family lived in Birmingham until 1967 when we moved to New Zealand with other family members joining us in the 1970’s.

Thank you to all the people that have assisted me, particularly Margaret, Tim and David. I retire at the end of this year so will have to save for a trip to visit you all!

Rob and Jan Findlay  
New Zealand

## **My Family** by Betty Millichip

Our Mom Marjorie Jane France was born 28<sup>th</sup> August 1913, the third child of six born to Enoch and Maude France.

Enoch’s family had been in Alveley for generations and Maude (nee Summers) came from Dudley.

Mom was baptised in St Mary’s Church Alveley on November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1913.

The family home was the end cottage, one of four (now one cottage) opposite “The Three Horseshoes” pub!

They had a poor but happy childhood. Enoch worked down the coal mine for 54 years.

Maude died young at 43 in 1928 leaving the eldest daughter Hilda and mom to look after younger brothers Reg and Ray. Elder brother Harry worked as a carpenter for Mr Griffin, whose premises were at the chapel end of the village on the opposite side.

The sixth offspring, Amelia, died aged five in 1917.

Grandad Enoch moved from the cottage into “Sunnyside” bungalow, Little London Lane. Mom started working at Mr and Mrs Pitt’s house, “Severdale”, doing general housekeeping and helping with their two children David and Jim.

When mom was eighteen, an accident caused her to have all her teeth extracted. She caught the bus to Kidderminster, the last bus had gone when the dentist had finished and she walked the seven miles home.

On Easter Monday March 29<sup>th</sup> 1937, Mom married William Alfred Williams at St Mary’s, Alveley, the service was conducted by Rev. Easten and the reception held at the Methodist Chapel Hall. Dad had come from Clee Hill to work for Jim Beddoes, the local butcher, many years later opening his own shop at “Pen-y-croft”.

In 1938 Gwendoline, their first child, was born.

In 1939, like a lot of the young men, dad, followed by uncle Reg and uncle Ray, went to fight for his country in the second world war.

While the war was on, mom would go potato and pea picking to earn money to look after the family while dad was away. They also gave a home to three evacuee brothers from Liverpool, sent to the country for safety. She remembered hearing the drone of the planes following the line of the river and the explosion when a bomb dropped on Turley Green.

Mum could remember the big party on the church ground, trestle tables, everyone contributing food to welcome the men home from war. Our family was lucky. Dad, uncle Reg and uncle Ray came safely home, but my mom’s cousin Billy Leigh died, his

parents aunty Jessie and uncle Will were excitedly waiting the return of their only son, not knowing that he had been killed in action.

After the war, mom and dad had two more children, Elizabeth in 1946 and a son Paul in 1948.

Enoch died at "Sunnyside" on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1960, aged 77.

"Sunnyside" remained the family home until mom died aged 82 on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1995. We proudly walked through the village that had been her life, cottages with their curtains drawn and the village shop closed in respect, to a church packed with family, friends and neighbours. The "Lady Chapel" where we had all gone to Sunday School full, and extra seats at the back.

How lucky we were to have had such a wonderful mum.

Dad died six months later unable to cope without her.

"Sunnyside" was sold and a beautiful new bungalow "Chapel Lodge" built in its place, but our happy memories stay and "Alveley" is always home.

### **The Alveley Singers - 25 Years of Harmony**

From an idea conceived over a pint in a local hostelry by two Alveley men, the Alveley Singers was born in February 1975. Initially, the choir had nine members, mostly resident in the village with the exception of one or two "outsiders". Rehearsals were held in the local primary school. By the time a concert was held in St Mary's Church, celebrating the first anniversary of the choir, membership had already risen to twelve voices. The choir performed works by Bach and Mozart at that concert, accompanied by a small guest orchestra.

Throughout its 25 years, the choir has been fortunate in having the expert guidance of five musical directors, each bringing the choir his or her own style and musical flair. Each variety of style has influenced the development of performance and repertoire which the choir is now able to offer. By far the longest serving musical director has been Joan Morris, who guided the choir for 19 years and continues to serve the "singers" as accompanist. The choir currently has a membership of 24 musicians, just double the number who performed at that first anniversary concert in 1976. The repertoire has broadened considerably from those early days to include classical and sacred works, madrigals, items from stage and screen musicals and many more pieces of a light hearted nature.

The choir enjoys membership of the National Association of Choirs and has taken part in two magnificent Choral Spectaculars at Wolverhampton Civic Hall, organised by the local branch of that association.

In 1993 the Alveley Singers undertook probably their most ambitious and demanding task to date, the preparation and production of a professional recording of their work. After weeks of rehearsal, the recording was finally made during a long Saturday session at a recording studio on the outskirts of Worcester. The result, a cassette entitled "All Ye Who Music Love" soon became a bestseller amongst serious and non-serious followers of the choir.

Success has also been experienced in several competitive music festivals. Among these have been First Prize at Dudley and Minsterley. Competition always brings a sharpening awareness of strengths and weaknesses as well as the tension and excitement of the occasion, renewing that corporate spirit which is at the heart of any good choir.

Over the years, the Alveley Singers have performed in halls, churches, chapels and community centres both far and near. On countless occasions they have raised money for local or national charities. Open air venues have included Dudmaston Hall, Alveley recreation ground and Arley Station, where they take great pleasure in lightening the smiles of those waiting to see Father Christmas.

In 1996 the choir celebrated their coming of age with a concert of their favourite music at St Mary's Church in Alveley. It was a truly memorable evening, attended by many invited guests who had previously been members of the choir. The compere for the evening was Jim Preston, one of those two men whose brainchild of 1975 had now reached its 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. The concert was followed by refreshments of a summer punch and beautiful celebratory cake kindly made and decorated by a former chorister. It was lovely to hear the memories of those people who had encouraged the infant choir to take the first few steps on its musical journey, a journey which is still not over.

The years have come and gone, but always the choir has continued its work of giving musical pleasure both to the listener and the performer. The regular commitment of people travelling from Telford, Kinver, Stourbridge and elsewhere to rehearse and prepare programmes for concerts and other events is real evidence that local amateur choirs and choral singing are indeed alive and well in Alveley in this high-tech age.

So, let's say "well done" to Jim Preston and David McIntosh for having that brilliant idea which became the "Alveley Singers". Little did they realise that their idea would still be bearing fruit 25 years later. Here's to the next 25! Cheers lads!

### **Newspaper Extract – January 1881**

The following court case was printed in a local newspaper in January 1881 concerning Thomas Evans of Alveley.

The 1881 census records Thomas Evans (sixty seven) living in a small cottage in the main street with his wife Elizabeth and son Frederick.

"Thomas Evans of Alveley was charged with being drunk and disorderly in the village on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

Defendant asked for an adjournment as his witnesses had not had time to come.

Superintendent Galliers said there had been seven clear days since the service of the Summons.

The Chairman (to the defendant) Where are your witnesses coming from?

Defendant – I don't know where they are coming from. They are not at home.

Police Constable Edwards said that at 10.20pm, he saw the defendant, who was very drunk, staggering about the street at Alveley and making use of very bad language. Defendant remained on the street for about 10 minutes but his wife and son eventually got him in the house.

Defendant, who walked around the dock in a most excited manner, exclaimed to witness – You threatened to take my life away, where was I to go? You brought me to what I am, you villain!

The chairman asked the defendant if he was a householder. Police Constable Edwards said he was.

Defendant (excitedly) – Please, am I allowed to speak? He threatened to ruin me down till I have not a bit of bread to eat. Am I to have protection or not? Gentlemen, your worships?

Mr Purton – The charge against you is for being drunk. What have you got to say to that.

Defendant – I was a deal more sober than I am now, and I have had nothing this morning.

The chairman said the defendant would be fined 5s and 6d costs or go to prison for seven days.

Defendant – Then I will go to prison. I will never pay a halfpenny for that.

A friend in the court paid the money."

### **Joseph Highmore's Portrait of the Lee Family**

The following article appeared in the Birmingham Post on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2000. Wolverhampton Art Gallery held an exhibition dedicated to the "Lees" between June and September.

"Complex History of a Family Portrait"

Joseph Highmore's large portrait of *The Family of Eldred Lancelot Lee* bought by Wolverhampton Art Gallery in the 1970's, gives a vivid glimpse of a family of Shropshire squires which was apparently determined to leave its mark on history.

The Lees, of Coton Hall near Alveley, in the Severn Valley (family motto Inon Incantus Futuri – Not Unmindful of the Future), claimed descent from Huga de la Lega, one of William the Conqueror's knights and – according to tradition, at least – were the ancestors of American Civil War general, Robert E. Lee.

Highmore's family group was painted in 1736, two years after the death of Eldred Lee. It is startling to discover that he and his wife Isabella married in St Peter's Church, Wolverhampton – right next door to the Art Gallery – in 1713. He was 63, she was 23.

Isabella, the daughter of Sir Henry Gough, grew up at Perry Bar Hall, Birmingham. Her grandfather, also Sir Henry, gave £1,300 to Charles I on the eve of the battle of Edge Hill – a mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century painting by Robert Farrier in the Wolverhampton collection, called *The Courier*, is traditionally believed to show him arriving at the Swan Inn in Wolverhampton to hand over the cash.

Amazingly, Isabella and Eldred produced 11 children in their 23 years of marriage, of whom only one, Catherine, died in infancy. A family tree which slightly predates Highmore's paintings is on display in the exhibition.

In the portrait, the widowed Isabella is at the centre, surrounded by her children with Eldred looking down from a painting within a painting and Catherine portrayed as a cherub in the upper right corner.

Highmore, a family friend, returned to Coton to paint portraits of Isabella's daughter Elizabeth – aged 12 at the time of the group portrait – in her mid-20's and of Isabella, then approaching 70, in 1759. These paintings are also in the Wolverhampton collection and a chalk drawing of Isabella has been lent by the British Museum.

The heroic age of British 18<sup>th</sup> Century portraiture lay later in the century and the long-lived Highmore (1692 – 1780) was a painter of only modest accomplishment. A number of his other works have been lent to the exhibition, including his most famous, the series of four paintings illustrating the novel *Pamela* by his friend Samuel Richardson, from the Tate.

The narrative format of these paintings, but not their technical quality, invites comparison with Hogarth's similar series *The Rake's Progress* and *The Harlot's Progress*. There are also two paintings of an unidentified man and woman dating from 1745, from Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. I am not sure whether I have ever seen these before, but they have certainly not been on public display in recent years.

The Art Gallery has set out to make the most of this exhibition with numerous interactive exhibits aimed at family visitors, although devoting three whole galleries spreads it rather too thin.

The intriguing American connection – including as well as Robert E. Lee, two signatories of the Declaration of Independence including Richard Henry Lee, who actually introduced the resolution to Congress, calling for independence, two days earlier – is given rather cursory treatment.

It hinges on the Richard Lee who became colonial secretary general for Virginia in 1649. He used the Cotton coat of arms and apparently encouraged the connection with the Shropshire Lees which has always been traditionally accepted.

However, doubt was cast on the link in the late 1980's when an American historian looked closely at the documentary evidence. Oddly enough, the alternative provenance for the Virginian Lees would move their heritage only 20 miles south, to a family of Worcester cloth merchants.

### **Mary Anne Jennings**

The 1997 Transactions included a family tree showing the descendants of William Jennings of Alveley. One of the several family mysteries concerned his grand-daughter, Mary Ann who, after marrying Edward Bird in 1861, seemingly vanished.

Some progress was made when she was found in the 1881 census index of Wolverhampton where she was living with Edward (bootmaker) and 6 children. But once again she disappeared.

The magic of modern technology then took a hand when, in September 1999, someone in Canada made contact with Margaret Sheridan via the internet who proved to be a direct descendant of Edward and Mary Ann.

It got even better in July this year, when Margaret was contacted from Australia by a descendant of Thomas Rowlands of Alveley who, it appears, was the brother of Mary Ann's mother.

The two following accounts from Michael Kaehn in Canada and Janet McKenzie in Australia throw interesting light on both Mary Ann's descendants and ancestry.

It is hoped that in the future Michael may be able to sort out the history of the Jennings/Potter family.

John N. Jennings

#### **From Michael A. Kaehn, Victoria BC, Canada**

Dear Tim

I am pleased to send you some information on my connection to Alveley. I am also trying to write an article for the Bridgnorth Journal so I am trying to write both letters as one.

Many thanks  
Michael

I have been interested in my family's history since about 1975. Only in the past several years have I been working on the part of the family that takes me back to Alveley, Shropshire. I have known since I was young that there were Jennings here in Victoria that I am related to, but had not been able to make the connection. The only Jennings connection I could find was the marriage of my great-great grandparents, Mary Ann Jennings to Edward Bird in Alveley. That is until a recent letter from a Jennings cousin had some information that sent me searching once more. What I found quickly answered several questions that had not been answered for many years.

Last September I made contact with Margaret Sheridan concerning the name Averley, Shropshire, that was given as the place of birth of my great-great grandmother, Mary Jennings. I had not been having any luck locating Averley in Shropshire, so I sent a letter to Margaret to see if perhaps Averley (as spelt on my great-grandmother's death certificates) was actually Alveley. Sure

enough, through Margaret, I found out that my Jennings were from Alveley and was soon in contact with a cousin by the name of John Jennings. Seems that they had been wondering where we had been for the last 100 years.

Edward Bird was born 10<sup>th</sup> May 1842 in Shrewsbury. He was a son of Richard Douglas and E.(Rowley) Bird. In Alveley on 14<sup>th</sup> November 1861 he married Mary Ann Jennings the daughter of George and Rosanna (Rowlands) Jennings. Edward was a shoemaker and at this time I would like to think that he married his boss's daughter, as George Jennings was also a shoemaker. Shoemaking seems to have been in the family back then, as George's younger brother, Thomas, was also a shoemaker.

Sometime shortly after they married, Edward and Mary Ann moved to Liverpool. At that time, he was quite possibly working with or for Mary's uncle, Thomas Jennings, who was also living in Liverpool. Their first child was Sarah Ann who was born in Liverpool in 1866. By 1868, their second child, Frances, was born in Wolverhampton, followed by Douglas in 1870, George in 1873, Harriet in 1876, Mary (my great grandmother) in 1878, Hannah in 1880, Georgina in 1884 and Henry Richard in 1886.

Around 1973 the Thomas and Sarah (Potter) Jennings family left Liverpool for Toronto, Ontario. By 1889, two of Thomas and Sarah's sons had moved west to Victoria BC and by 1895 the Edward Bird family was also in Victoria. Not being sure what brought the Edward Bird family to Victoria, thanks to the letter from the Jennings cousin, I have very recently found out that one of Thomas and Sarah's sons married Sarah Ann, the eldest daughter of Edward and Mary Ann.

Edward set up a business as a Leather Merchant, selling leather footwear etc., which I presume he also made. By the information found in Edward's will, he must have done fairly well in his business. Only a few years after he arrived, there was a stampede north for the Klondike Gold Rush. I would like to think that many a prospective miner bought his much needed boots from Edward's store. I have quite a few relatives that took part in the Gold Rush in one way or another. The ones that sold supplies down here (Victoria BC) or packed them up north to the miners, did far better than any that actually mined for gold. One of those being Arthur Ford who eventually became Edward and Mary's son in law.

I cannot remember my grandmother ever speaking of her Bird grandparents. In the 1970's I do remember going through a collection of pictures with my grandparents and asking who the people were and writing down the names on the backs of the pictures. At that time I was not even thinking that these very pictures would come into my possession many years later complete with names and dates in my own handwriting. Unfortunately, there were none marked with Edward and Mary Bird, but there were quite a few of their children in later years.

As for the children of Edward and Mary Ann Bird, Sarah Ann who married her mother's first cousin, ended up being the wife of a very successful brick manufacturer here on Lower Vancouver Island. The two Jennings brothers ran the business for over 50 years; that turned out to be only about six blocks from where I live. I have no further information on Frances at this time. Either Douglas or George was supposed to have been a very good singer in Chicago around the turn of the last century (Home of the Jennings Millions story??). Whichever one it was had wanted my great grandmother Mary Bird to go to Chicago and sing with him, as my father told me she had a very beautiful singing voice. Both George and Douglas were living someplace in New York State when Edward and Mary Ann passed away. Edward in 1920 and Mary in 1925. I have no further information on either son.

Harriet married George Chadwick who was born to English parents in New Zealand. He was a druggist in Victoria and they had no known children. Mary, my great grandmother, married Arthur Ford. Arthur happened to be born in Harborne, Staffordshire, but they met here in Victoria. Arthur worked for a firm here that made explosives that was used for mining etc and then later for the war efforts. They had two children, Constance (my grandmother) and Barbara. Constance married Clifford Kaehn, whose parents came from the Volhynia area of Polish Russia to Kansas, USA in 1876, during an upheaval in that area of Russia. Eventually, they made their way to Vancouver Island in 1916. Barbara never married after her boyfriend drowned in a boating accident.

Hannah married twice and had a child in each marriage. From the first marriage one grandchild survives. The child from the second marriage was John Nicholson who was a very well known builder of fine boats up to about 50 feet, here in Victoria. His Uncle Henry (Harry) Bird taught him his trade. These boats still ply the waters of the Pacific Northwest. I have seen pictures of some of these boats and they were very beautiful indeed. In the early 1970's, I asked John Nicholson if he was interested in taking me on as an apprentice, but he was nearing the end of his career and was not working enough to keep me employed. I have no further information on Georgina Bird and, as I mentioned, Harry was a local shipwright, also very well known, and never married.

As for myself, I was born and raised here in Victoria. I married in 1987 and have two daughters, Olivia and Hannah. My grandfather, Clifford Kaehn introduced me to woodworking when I was fairly young. By the time I was in high school, I was working in his basement woodwork shop every weekend or going out on jobs with him. I eventually attained both my Carpenter's and Joiner's (cabinetmaker) papers.

I am now a Joiner for a local school district here in Victoria, with about 25 new schools of various sizes, where I run the cabinet shop. We make all of the new millwork required in our schools. Presently, we are just finishing a brand new computer lab for a Middle School (grades 7-9). Upcoming, we have four existing computer labs in different schools which need

upgrading to suit the new larger and faster computers. I can design and build everything needed in a modern computer lab, but am sure that most of the students would show me up in a matter of minutes with their computer skills.

In 1987, when looking to purchase a home, our Real Estate agent told us not to buy the biggest house on the street. So I ended up buying the biggest and ugliest house on the street. Since 1987 I have been renovating it, trying to keep the atmosphere that was original to the house in 1913. For all of these years, my wife and myself have been trying to come up with a name for our home. It's not exactly common practice to name your home in my neighbourhood. Come to think of it, I don't think I have seen a name on anybody's house anywhere around here. It's just something that I wanted to do.

"Lakehouse" came to mind after reading through a book on Alveley where the Jennings family lived. Unfortunately, there are no lakes for quite a way from my house. My mother told me her grandfather, McDonald, names his properties "Glencoe" after the famish Scottish massacre. That was not along the lines that I had for a name. Then one day "Alveley" came to mind and I knew that was the name that I was going to use.

For a long time I had an image of what I wanted the sign to look like, just no name to go on it. Armed with the design in mind and finally a name, I went to several different sign painters to find somebody to make it for me. Of course, they mostly work with computers in this day and age, so within a short time I could see what the finished sign was going to look like. It is now fastened to a cross member on a covered gate that takes you from the front of the house to the side of the house. It hasn't been up long enough to gather too many opinions. I did mention it to a gentleman that I work with and he said that it really sounded like a name that might have come from England.

I don't think any of my neighbours are too surprised with my new sign. The old time residents have watched my house change over the years from somewhat of an eyesore to its present condition. At the front of the house I fly both the Canadian and British Columbia flag, again something that is not too common for my neighbourhood. Now that I have picked an official English name, I will have to fly the appropriate flag.

So, thanks to the letter from my Jennings cousin, I have now found that Sarah Ann, the eldest daughter of Edward and Mary Bird, and her family came to Victoria about six years before her parents. I have also been able to sort through all the names that I knew I was somehow related to and get them all in order. Now it's back to reading microfilm and old newspapers at the local library and archives to finish putting the family of Thomas and Sarah Jennings back together and to visit the family plot in Historic Ross Bay Cemetery here in Victoria, where many of Victoria's pioneer families are buried. And then there are always the letters and/or phone calls to unsuspecting relatives to see if they would be interested in adding their family information to a very old Shropshire family.

## **Rowland and Findow, Severn Valley, English Midlands**

### **Janet McKenzie**

Thomas Rowland and Hannah Fidow were the parents of Sarah Jane Rowland, who married George Dixon and became my great grandmother.

#### **Rowland: Steadfast and True**

The Rowland family lost a box of documents and heirlooms overboard when they were disembarking on arrival in Australia. Most of what we know about them comes from a letter from Sarah Jane to her son when he was in France during World War 1. It is a poignant account, showing how emigration to the far side of the world had severed the family bonds within her lifetime.

*Father never talked much about home or family, but once or twice he would tell us tales about different ones belonging to him and he always impressed on us that his family motto was "Steadfast and True". Just before we came to Australia, father took me, a child not three years old (he was then 29 himself), we went on a coach a long way and we stayed at a quaint old cottage two or three days.*

*One day he took me a long way through hills and valleys to a long white house high up, the name was Welsh and I cannot spell it or remember it, but the meaning of it was "the high place above the valley". My father cried when leaving it.*

*Years after, I told him what I remembered. Then he told me that had been the home of the Rowlands for generations, but his father had lost everything when he was nine or ten years old. [The house] is some two or so miles from Shrewsbury in Shropshire, England, it is in Montgomeryshire, Wales, but he had lived most of his life in Shrewsbury after leaving his home. That quaint old cottage belonged to great aunts, but he did not tell me on whose side they were.*

*There is no-one belonging to my father in England or Wales to my knowledge now. You see, there was only one son in each generation, my father had sisters but they are all gone and left no-one. If I knew of anyone I could send you to in England or*

*Wales, who could tell you anything, I would be only too pleased, but I had my third [actually her fourth] birthday in Australia so do not remember any place or person.*

Sarah Jane told her grand-daughters that Tom's father died soon after losing the estate. Presumably Tom's mother was also dead, for he was sent to live with two great aunts, Patience and Obedience, in Shrewsbury.

A later account by one of her grand-daughters shows how the details of a story get changed over time:

*[Tom Rowlands] was the youngest son of Welsh gentry who once had money and quite a large estate but two or three generations of spendthrifts went through the money and of course those estates were always entailed and the eldest son inherited. I think by the time it came to his brother, or it could have been his father, it was heavily mortgaged and no money to keep it going. The rest of the family had to fend for themselves.*

Sarah Jane was in her sixties when she wrote her account of her father and she was recalling events that took place when she was a tiny child. In fact, the records show Tom Rowland's family not in Montgomeryshire, Wales, but across the border in the neighbouring county, Shropshire, England. One branch can be traced back six generations.

#### Tom's father's family: Scriven, Rowlands.

We'll look first at the family of Tom's father, starting with his mother's side, the Scrivens. They lived at Alveley, a small village on the Severn, halfway between Bridgnorth and Kidderminster on the Shrewsbury Road.

#### Tom's Grandmother, Obedience Scriven

The first mention of the name Scriven in Shropshire is very early, 1458, referring to Anne Scriven, whose parents were Robert Scriven and Alicia Corbett. This is around the time that surnames were being adopted, so Robert was a scrivener – writer, copier, scribe or clerk – with education beyond the ordinary.

There were other Scrivens in the district over the following centuries. One mention hints at a Puritan influence in the name of Moses Scriven, who was christened in 1599 at Bishops Castle, thirty miles or more west of Alveley. His father's name was given as Phi, presumably short for Phillip, a name from the Greek Classics – another indication that the family was educated.

Scriven was a common name in Alveley from the sixteenth century. By the time Tom's grandmother was born, around 1770, we know that the family was definitely Puritan, because she and her sister were called Obedience and Patience. A century or so earlier, the fanatical Puritans of Cromwell's time had named their children Praise God, Mercy, Godgiven, Repentance and Fear Not (and how did that sound when you called them in for meals?). Obedience was a common name at that time, but it was rare in the late eighteenth century.

As Sarah Jane tells us, Obedience had a sister called Patience. We have no way of knowing if they lived up to their names. Obedience married David Rowlands in Alveley in 1792.

#### Tom's Grandfather, David Rowlands

Now we turn to Tom's father's family, the Rowlands. The name is probably from the given name Roland, and the form with final 's' is chiefly a surname of Wales. The earliest members of our family spelt their name that way, so we deduce a Welsh origin. There is no evidence that the family were gentry or owned an estate.

We don't know anything about David before his marriage – or after it, for that matter. He was probably a stonemason, for his son and grandson followed that trade. The records, as far as they go, confirm Sarah Jane's belief that there was only one son in each generation.

Stonemasons were mobile workers because masonry can only be done on site. David's descendants were the only Rowlands in Alveley, so David was a blow-in. It's likely that he was working on a job in the neighbourhood – perhaps even lodging with her family – when he met Obedience and after their marriage, they settled in her home village.

Alveley, on a hill overlooking the Severn, was in a prosperous agricultural district; the farms were large, the land was well drained and improved, the farmhouses were mostly brick. The village was small, outclassed by Bridgnorth and Kidderminster, only six or seven miles away to north and south. The district had seen fighting in the English Civil War, when Bridgnorth castle gave refuge to Charles I and was blown up by Cromwell. By 1801, a decade after Obedience and David married, the population was just under eight hundred and it increased steadily over the next half-century to reach one thousand.

Alveley was a good location for a mason. When David was an old man, an 1851 directory reported: "Stone quarries near the village are worked to a considerable extent; immense blocks are raised and worked into grinding stones for gunsmiths and others." The directory listed the village as having one quarry owner, one mason and three quarry masters (two of them had

other jobs, as farmer and mason). Also listed were twenty-eight farmers and ten tradesmen (tailor, blacksmith, carpenter) and some odd combined occupations such as butcher and shoemaker, beerhouse keeper and wheelwright. There were three inns, the Bell, the Squirrel and the Three Horseshoes, and the church could accommodate four hundred people.

David and Obedience lived in “a long white house high up” and David, homesick for Wales, named Blaen-y-cwm or Pen-y-cwm, the high place above the valley. If the house had been in the family for many generations, as Sarah Jane thought, it belonged to Scrivens rather than Rowlands.

#### Tom's Father, Thomas Rowlands

David and Obedience had only one child, born a year or so after they married. Named Thomas, he was our Tom's father. The family tradition is that he was a stonemason, and also a spendthrift who lost the family estate, whatever that was. Was he a drinker or a gambler, frequenting the beerhouse or the Three Horseshoes? Was he steadfast and true? He married Rosannah Swift of Wellington on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1815.

#### Tom's mother's family: Swift, Parker, Barnes

Tom's mother's people lived in Wellington, a centre for the production of cloth and leather since medieval times. The town was close by the ancient Roman road of Watling Street, which formed the main route from London to Shrewsbury and on to Holyhead, the port for Dublin.

Although it was only twelve miles east of Shrewsbury, Wellington staved off the competition and grew into a market town, providing an outlet for the produce of the surrounding countryside and supplying craft goods. It was home to many dyers, weavers and tailors who worked with the local hemp, flax and wool. There were the usual tradesmen such as carpenters, shoemakers and coopers and also bell founders, nailmakers, ropemakers and a brick kiln. The town drew on its rich farming hinterland, attracting people from the villages to Thursday markets and monthly fairs to sell their farm and dairy produce, horses, cattle and sheep. The June fair was noted for cart horses.

In the mid-seventeenth century, the town's population was 725, a steep increase from the 130 households of a century before. In religion, they were conservative; there were only forty adult Dissenters. In the mid eighteenth century, the vicar strenuously opposed the spread of Dissenting views and tried to spoil a Quaker meeting in the market hall by ringing the church bells. His efforts were in vain; by the end of the century one in five of the parish had rejected the Church of England, being mostly Methodists with a few Baptists and Quakers.

Wellington was at the forefront of the urban growth of the Industrial Revolution. Mining of the nearby coalfields brought prosperity and enlarged the town and by 1801 the population had multiplied to 400, a fivefold increase in a century and a half. Wellington's growth continued and it eventually combined with nearby villages to form the twentieth century city of Telford.

Although the families in this district did not intermarry closely, we find a few connections over the years. As well as the Scriven-Corbett marriage in the 1450's, there was a Parker-Barnes combination in Wem, ten miles north of Shrewsbury, about 1730 and Barnes-Corbett in Wellington in 1747.

#### Tom's great grandparents, Phoebe Barnes and Sam Parker

Tom's mother's family can be traced back all the way to be late seventeenth century, but the names and dates reveal little. In Wellington around 1680, William Barnes married a woman with the classical Greek name of Phoebe. We can thank Phoebe's patents for their inspired choice, for the repetition of the name through the generations - sometimes as Phoeby or Phebe - enables us to reconstruct the family.

William and Phoebe had a son named Benoni (a variant of Benjamin) who married a woman called Mary in 1702. Their first child was Phoebe (1704) and there were several others, one of whom was James (1714). When James was twenty, he married a woman called Sarah Jones - notoriously the commonest surname in Wales. In about 1740 James and Sarah christened their daughter Phoebe after her great grandmother and her aunt.

Phoebe Barnes grew up and married Sam Parker in 1759. The name Parker, meaning park ranger, is a common one throughout England. In Shropshire there were Parkers in Alveley, Broseley, Madeley, Shrewsbury and several other places; they are first mentioned in Wellington in the 1590's, so Sam was a local boy. The connections between the families were strengthened the following year when another Sam Parker married Mary Barnes in Madeley. Sam and Phoebe christened their daughter Phoebe Barnes Parker, after her mother, in 1760.

#### Tom's grandparents, John Swift and Phoebe Barnes Parker

On Christmas Day 1783, twenty year old Phoebe Barnes Parker married John Swift in Wellington. It must have been a great

party, with both families gathered for the holiday.

The name Swift comes from a fast moving ancestor and it is mainly a north midlands surname. There were a lot of Swifts in Wellington and a dozen babies were christened John Swift there in the century after 1670. Assuming our John Swift was both in the village and married in his twenties, he must be the one christened in 1759, with parents Joseph and Mary Swift.

#### Tom's mother, Rosannah Swift

The eldest child of John and Phoebe was long awaited, born in 1790, seven years after the wedding (though older children might not have been recorded). They named her Rosannah, a combination of Rose and Anna, but she was often called Hannah. After her came John (1793), Moses (1796), Rebecca (1799) and Joseph (1803). The Old Testament names show that the Swifts, like the Scrivens, were Dissenters.

The pattern of names is suggestive, but it's hard to determine exact relationships. Rosannah's brother Joseph married a woman called Phoebe – his cousin, judging by her name. In Madeley, when Rosannah was in her twenties, Thomas Parker (maybe her mother's brother) and his wife Elizabeth named their daughter Rosannah.

Rosannah grew up in a prosperous, expanding town and we can assume her family took advantage of the opportunities. Wellington's timber fronted houses were being rebuilt in brick and soon a savings bank would open. Coaches ran daily to Shrewsbury and London. The water supply was a disgrace, though; many households had to fetch water from a distance until the waterworks opened many years later. South of the town, the huge wooded mound of the Wrekin rose above the fields; it offered a destination for a pleasant walk, rewarded with extensive views over the English midlands and into Wales.

As we have seen, Rosannah Swift married Thomas Rowland, our Tom's father, in 1815. Oddly, the ceremony took place in Kidderminster, it was only a few miles from Thomas's home village of Alveley, but the bride's family had to travel more than twenty miles to attend. Afterwards, Tom and Rosannah lived near (or with) Thomas's parents in Alveley.

#### Tom Rowland, 1828 – 1915

The four children of Thomas Rowland and Rosannah Swift were baptised in Alveley. Sarah Jane is right in saying that Tom had older sisters; Sarah (1817), Mary (1820) and Rosannah (1823). Tom himself arrived five years later, on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1828. We know nothing of the girls.

Tom went to school in Alveley enough to learn to read and write and was apprenticed to his father as a stonemason. Sarah Jane says that Tom's father "lost everything" and died about 1837. It looks as though Tom's mother Rosannah was also dead, for Tom was sent to live with his "great aunts" in Shrewsbury – in fact, as we have seen, one was his grandmother, Obedience Rowlands. By the time Tom was twenty three, a namesake of Obedience was living in her home village; in 1851 the census shows "Obedient Scriven" in Alveley.

We assume that Tom, steadfast and true, worked for some years as a mason in Shropshire, building the bridges and factories of the Industrial Revolution. The next we know of him is his marriage to Hannah Fidow on 8<sup>th</sup> June 1851. It took place at Donnington, a village five miles east of Shrewsbury, near his mother's birthplace. One of the witnesses was Thomas Rowland, who must have been a distant cousin if Sarah Jane is right in saying that there was only one son in each generation.

Now we turn to the woman Tom married.

#### Hannah Fidow, 1821 – 1879

[I've omitted stuff here on Hannah's parents, Priscilla Bell and William Fideau of Kidderminster – Hannah told fibs about her father, telling her granddaughters that he was an army surgeon at the Battle of Waterloo, but on her marriage certificate, she gives his occupation as gardener).

Hannah was known as "Frenchy" on account of her surname and she anglicised the spelling from Fideau to Fidow. Her great grand-daughter's recollection reveals the later family attitude to the French connection:

### **Memories of Alveley By Olive Humphries**

I came to live in Alveley in 1940 when I was seven years old.

I lived with my aunt and uncle George and Jessie Molyneux at 51 Ivy Place. Jessie and George were well known Alveley people and George was affectionately known as "Darky Molyneux".

I remember feeling very apprehensive about starting at a new school, but I need not have worried as everyone was very

friendly.

Miss Richards was my first teacher. She was Welsh and later married George Ward. Mr Benson was the Headmaster at the time, he left shortly afterwards and Mr Pye came to take his place, but he wasn't there very long.

The next Headmaster was Mr David, he was still there when I left school in 1946. He and his wife lived with Mr and Mrs Beddoes at "Elmsleigh". Mr Beddoes was the local butcher.

There were a number of evacuees in the village during the war that came from Liverpool. As there were only three classrooms at Alveley School, the assembly hall was used as a classroom. It was very interesting to read Bill Poland's recollections of his time as an evacuee in Alveley. I remember Bill staying with Win and Jenner Gittins in Lowe Lane.

During the summertime, our highlight of the week was our visit to Fenn Green swimming pool, we sometimes had to convince the teachers it was warm enough to go. During the summer holidays we spent a lot of time there, as there was little else to do as going to Kidderminster or Bridgnorth was rather difficult because the buses only ran on Thursdays and Saturdays and then it was only one each way. The only other option to get to town was to cycle there, which we did if there was a film showing that we wanted to see.

I also remember the German and Italian prisoners of war who were brought from Worfield into the village every morning to work on the farms. Some of them worked at "The Hadleys" and others at "The Moor House". In an afternoon, they gathered outside Ada Evans' cottage (Elm Cottage) with coloured patches on the back and on the trousers. There was never any trouble with them.

Not many of the houses had water laid on in those days and stand pipes were placed around the village, which on occasions dried up. We then had to go down to the spring at Banky Whittal. It was quite hard work bringing water up from there in jugs and buckets and we sometimes had to make three journeys.

During the war there was an American Army camp up at Coton. A number of the soldiers came to evening service at the Methodist Chapel, two of whom were invited by my Auntie and Uncle to come to tea on Sundays. They came on several occasions, then one day they called unexpectedly and told us they were moving on the next day. They said they would keep in touch, but we never heard from them again. We were told later that troops from Coton were involved in the D-day landings in Normandy.

In the village during the war we had a Home Guard, Auxiliary Fire Service and ARP Wardens. One Sunday morning, it was decided they needed to practise rescuing people from a house which had supposedly been hit by a bomb. They asked my Auntie if they could use our house, two of my friends Iris Winwood and Alwyn Evans, and myself, had to be rescued from my bedroom, which caused great excitement and quite a crowd gathered outside Ivy Place. I was rescued by Ted Bennett. We all thought it was great fun.

As there wasn't much traffic through the village, we often made our own entertainment in the street – we would tie a piece of rope to the railings of Yewhurst and attach it to the hedge on the other side of the road. Jean Bywater, Margaret Davies and myself would play tennis nearly all day without much interruption except for Walter Jones and his milk float, and Betty Turford delivering the miners' coal. We also played hopscotch and rounders.

When Mr Evans from Yewhurst was harvesting, my friend Jean Bywater and I would help out by taking sandwiches and drinks to the men working in the fields, sometimes it was as late as 10.00 pm when they finished. There was also a village blacksmith, Mr Jack Baldwin – the blacksmith's shop was next to Ivy Place. We often went to watch him making horseshoes and shoeing horses and repairing farm implements.

As in most villages, the church and the chapel were the central part of village life. Reverend Easten was the vicar during the early 1940's. Sunday School was held in the vestry, mainly because the church was so cold. There were about twenty members and in summer we were invited by the Thompsons to Coton Hall for a picnic and games – a real treat in those days.

I left school in December 1946 and was offered a job with the "Highley Mining Company" as a telephonist. The mine was taken over by the National Coal Board in January 1947. I worked there until I married on November 8<sup>th</sup> 1952; sadly my Auntie Jessie died just eighteen days later.

My husband Dennis played cricket for Alveley. They only played friendly matches – no leagues in those days. But the Alveley team were very successful in the Bridgnorth and Highley knockout competitions. Not many people had cars, so we travelled by coach or minibus driven by Ivor Garbett or Ray Pinches. Most of the wives went to the matches – we had some great times. There was a great deal of community spirit in the village in those days.

In 1957 we moved from Ivy Place to a newly built bungalow in Daddlebrook Road. We named it "Oldene".

When the colliery closed in January 1969, Dennis was offered an under manager's position at a Cannock Chase colliery, which meant we had to leave Alveley. This was a very sad time for us and our children, David, Paul, Susan and Mark, as they had to leave their many friends; also for Uncle George as he had spent most of his life in the village. But he soon settled down with us in Cannock, until he passed away in 1975. We felt sorry for all the men who lost their jobs when the colliery closed down.

We have many happy memories of Alveley and often visit as we still have connections in the village and, thanks the Historical Society and Margaret Sheridan, have recently made contact with people who we had not heard from for over fifty years.

## Evacuee in Alveley 1939-1942

The following details of an evacuee in Alveley during the war is written by Bill Poland. Bill, who has contributed to previous "Transactions" gives an in depth look into his wartime childhood spent in Alveley.

Tim White.

As an 11-year old (Liverpool) schoolboy, back in 1939, I sensed, rather than knew, that things were about to change for me. There was an atmosphere of hustle and bustle among the adults; the word "evacuation" was being tossed around and my parents kept asking me if I would like to live in the country.

I only realised they were serious about my moving away from home when they sat me down one evening and gave me a choice – Canada or the country? (Ships were sailing to Canada and America with evacuees at that time).

This was a heart-stopping moment for me. Would I be on my own; how far away would I be; would I ever see my mum and dad again; and how would I get my weekly comics?

Having been assured that everything would be sorted out, I made my choice and on the morning of Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> September, with a pillowcase full of clean clothes, a label tied to my jacket and a gas mask draped around my neck, I was taken by my mother to one of the main railway stations in the city.

There, with a last wave to my mum, I was ushered into a crocodile which was being fed into carriages. Once our carriage was full with about fifteen other kids and a welfare lady, the door was slammed shut and we were told to sit still.

The four-hour trip to Bridgnorth was frequently broken to allow other groups of evacuees to be dropped off. An extra long stop was made at Shrewsbury to allow a troop train to overtake us (the soldiers waved and we waved back). The train had no corridor, so we had the problem of answering nature's call – my only recollection of this is of the welfare lady holding some of the smaller children out of the train window whenever the train slowed down.....

By the time we arrived at Bridgnorth, our numbers had dwindled to around eighty. We were hustled onto two coaches and driven seven miles to our next stop, the village hall of Alveley. There, by mid-afternoon, we were paraded for the benefit of the locals who (Government grant persuaded) were to decide our fate – at least for some (or all) of the "duration".

Back home we had all gone to the same school (Council, in a working class area) and were well acquainted with each other. So it was distressing to watch strange speaking adults taking our friends away. There were very few tears or complaints from us, even when brothers and sisters were separated. I suppose we were too tired, or in a state of shock.

It was early evening before our numbers were reduced to just two, a boy named John and myself. Our welfare ladies were beginning to look worried. Then the hall door was thrown open and a rough looking, unsmiling man barged in. In answer to a question from one of the ladies, he confirmed that he had come for "a couple of evacuees" and, after weighing John and me up, told her he would "take 'em".

Dusk was setting in when we were finally bundled into a small car (my first car ride) and driven, by one of the ladies, some two miles to the end of a narrow and shadowed country lane. Mr G, who had not spoken to either of us, set off down the lane with us in tow. Eventually, we arrived at a darkened cottage (even in those early days, blackout procedure was already being followed in some areas). Mr G knocked and the door was opened by the lady I was to come to know as Mrs G and who would be responsible for my survival during the next two and a half years.

The cottage was very small, without a back door, a sitting-come-dining room and a small kitchen on the ground floor, one master bedroom and our room, merely an open platform on the right of the staircase. Our only form of lighting was by oil lamp.

For the next hour or so, we were fussed over, given something to eat and drink, allowed to use the outside, non-flushable toilet and finally let to bed. Both John and I, sharing the same bed, fell asleep almost immediately – it had been a long, long day.

Some of the children had been housed in the village, the rest, like John and me, in outlying cottages or farms. The next time we all met up again was on our first day at the village school (Monday September 4<sup>th</sup>), but since the headmaster quickly put us into our appropriate classes, along with the locals, we had no time to create any form of disturbance. What must have come as a welcome surprise to his small staff, both groups took to each other right away.

Of course, there were some confrontations, mainly among those who sought leadership. Once these had been settled, common ground was established and we got on with the business of learning from each other.

The village school had been built in 1934 and was well maintained. It's administration section was based in a three storeyed tower and it had only three ground-level classrooms. Each of the classrooms had one wall consisting of fold back window sections and overlooked a large grassed area. There was a football pitch, a cricket pitch, a number of bee-hives and an allotment (an ideal school).

The Alveley Historical Society's 1995 Transactions carries the following:

*"The whole weekend has been given up to the reception and billeting of evacuees from the Liverpool area, eighty-one children with six teachers and a headmistress have been received from Walton Lane Council School, Liverpool, and they will treat this school as their centre (September 4<sup>th</sup> 1939). The school, for the time being is to be worked in two shifts, one school taking lessons in the classrooms, while the other school takes informal activities at the village hall and out of doors, this being changes over at mid-day (September 11<sup>th</sup> 1939)."*

Before we had spent our first week at school, locals and evacuees were taken by coach to a cinema in Bridgnorth to see an English film named "The Lion has Wings". It was a commercial/propaganda film about our air power. It made quite an impression on the boys, we were convinced that the war was as good as over (the film was considered to have done a lot for the general morale of the country and has since been shown on television).

The first few weeks of our arrival began to highlight some of the problems caused by the different ways of life. Complaints were made to the authorities of us playing out till "late", objecting to going to bed "early" and, even worse, encouraging the local children to follow suit.

Some of us began to return home by the Christmas, some 30% had gone (including the lad who had been billeted with me). Those who remained merged with their country peers and settled down to a healthy and adventurous period of childhood (with never any recorded ill-treatment of evacuees in the area, it could also be considered to have been a reasonably happy one).

Village life can be every bit as adventurous as city life and with so much to catch up with, we cheerfully followed the village lads in their pursuit of "fun" (since girls only did "girlish" things in those days, they were never allowed to join us in our "pastimes").

Following an overgrown track just outside the village, we could arrive at the old worked-out stone quarry. With old rusty winches, bogeys which still ran down-hill if pushed (exhaustingly) to the top of the quarry entrance, various trails leading upwards to wide ledges from where rocks could be thrown down on any pursuers, a filthy black pool at the base of a fifty foot sheer drop, there was still plenty of mileage left in that old quarry.

It was always our belief that we contributed largely to maintaining the fitness of our LDV members by encouraging them to chase us over nearby land with their brook handles, until they collapsed. We agreed among ourselves that they had reached their peak of fitness when they received their first issue of rifles.

Pocket money (always a problem) could be earned by occasional poaching, mole catching (for their skins) or "beating". In season, and for the sum of two shillings and sixpence and two thick meat or cheese sandwiches, one would spend the whole day "beating" one's way through bushes and brambles in order to disturb the pheasants (or partridges) out of hiding. The local gentry would then enjoy the "shoot" by killing as many of them as they could. To qualify as a "beater" one had to be prepared to wear any old rags and not complain as one was being scratched beyond recognition or perhaps accidentally shot.

Pea-picking, potato-picking, fruit-picking, helping with the harvest, were other ways of making (small amounts) of money, should you be helping on your own place, you had to settle for a glass of cider and the ubiquitous thick cheese sandwich topped off with a big dinner at the end of the day.

During the harvesting, grown-ups and children would gather in the fields where the tractors had reduced the area of crops to a few square yards and waited, with sticks or shotguns, for the last of the terrified rabbits to make their last dash for freedom. Here, again, one could be in mortal danger from excited shooters, if one chased the wrong rabbit.

As a choirboy, one could earn one (old) penny for a Sunday service and, because it was difficult to get us to attend during the

week, two (old) pence for choir practise. When the son of the Lord of the Manor and his wife were given a wartime uniformed red-carpeted wedding, the choirboys were given sixpence.

In our more serious moments, we took it on ourselves to defend any marriageable maidens of our acquaintance from marauding adult males. Whenever we spotted one being abducted slyly from the village, we would follow on foot, with all the skills of Indian scouts and the moment they appeared to be in danger, we would whistle and shout in order to distract the male, thereby giving the maiden the opportunity to escape. We felt that those young ladies had a lot to thank us for, but very few ever did.

Mrs G was in her late twenties, Mr G some ten years older. She, like many other girls of that period, had done her time in "Service", giving her a good grounding in housekeeping and cooking.

Mr G. had spent most of his working life working on farms but, when I arrived, had been working down the local coal-mine for quite some time.

Although Mr G was a stern type of chap and spoke little, they were quite happy together (I do not recall them ever falling out). They had no children of their own and perhaps they took the opportunity of evacuation to fill a gap.

They let John and me sleep in a little that Sunday morning. But we were at the cottage window as breakfast was being cooked. The view, the space and the fresh air was so different to what we had been used to.

After a wash in cold water and breakfast, Mr G took us for a long walk. The weather was lovely and we were able to take our time. On the way round (for he took us in a circle) we stopped off at his sister's (Mrs E) small farm.

Mrs E's husband was also a miner. They had eight children (four of each) ranging from their early twenties to about nine years of age. I came to love Mrs E, she was a kind and motherly lady and even with all the work she had to do, she would always take time to listen to me.

It was at the farm that we heard Mr Chamberlain's speech; the importance of it was not lost on any of us, children included.

But, it was school the next day and, having been given general directions, we set off. In the years that followed, I came to know every tree, stone and bush on that two mile walk.

As there were plums and damsons yet to be picked and, now that the harvest was over, many other jobs to do either at home or on someone's property, there was a pulling-togetherness that I found hard to understand at that time, but I soon adapted.

Just before the Christmas, John returned home. I was not unhappy about that, we had never really liked each other before we left home. From then on I became an "only child" and enjoyed all the advantages of my position.

The winter of 1939 was one of the coldest on record. The deep snowdrifts, the iced up trees and hedges were beautiful to see and for us youngsters it was a time for fun. But it was a dreadful time for the adults and the thaw came none too soon.

My daily routine was to get out of bed when called, light the fire, make Mr and Mrs G a cup of tea, make my own breakfast, wash the previous night's dishes then make my way to school. I had never had to do these things at home and it took me quite a time to get over my fear of lighting a fire, boiling water and using kitchen knives.

On my return from school, I would have to chop firewood and break up large lumps of coal for the next day's fire, wash any dishes that had been left and take the dog Trixie for a run.

Two or three afternoons a week Mrs E would visit her mother, who lived in the village. I would join her there straight from school and for two or three hours would be able to join in the excitement of village adventures.

Mrs G's family lived in the old village rectory. Her mother (who lived to be over 100), father, five brothers, one sister and an evacuee, made that old house a lively happy place for me to visit. Three of Mrs G's brothers served in the Army (one was a POW), her father and other brothers worked at the pit.

For the time I lived the life of an evacuee, I was part of both Mr and Mrs G's families, which made my having to return home a very sad occasion. But, with only six months to go before I would have to look for a job and the bombing of cities having fallen off, my family decided that it was, indeed, time for me to return.

Our minds seem to wish us to remember only the good times and my only recollection of returning was one of my brothers taking me home on a darkened train, retracing my steps from the railway station to my home, and feeling totally confused.

I finished my schooling, got my first pair of long pants and found my first job. I wrote regularly to Mr and Mrs G for some time, but with having to adapt to my grown-up life, I gradually ceased to write. Twenty-five years later I returned to the

village.

Childhood memories are always vivid ones, impressions made can last a lifetime. As I look back to those days as an evacuee, I see some of the events and situations which made my life at the time so different to what it might have been. The space I saw and felt, the freshness of the air, the smells, the sunshine, the warmth of the sun, the excitement of walking in country lanes; my introduction to country ways all coloured my life for the next two and a half years.

Among my many recollections are my having to “weed” a long, long garden path whenever I did anything wrong. My having to regularly help Mr G empty the family toilet (from whence came the prize winning rhubarb). And, since not many can claim the honour, the day we had pheasant for dinner (a countryman’s catapult is a fearsome weapon and Mr G was an expert).

Our female (Jill) ferret, which never bit anyone, but whose many offspring lived only to enjoy the taste of human flesh ... particularly mine. Our visits to Mrs E’s farm where I learned to ride a bike, lay snares, feed pigs, dip sheep and came to understand procreation. On Sunday evenings we would gather round the radio and listen to the “Happidrome” show. While at Christmas time, the “best” room would be opened up and, while one of the girls played the piano, we would sing carols.

On a wider scale, the crashing nearby of an RAF training plane, in which the pilot was killed – never even to get a crack at the enemy. The drone of German planes as they used the moonlight on the River Severn to find their way to Liverpool. The dropping of two bombs close to the village by a fleeing German plane. And perhaps the worst memories, those of the nightly red skies over Birmingham (which is due east of the village) the sweeping of the searchlights over the sky, the sound of the bombing, all of which went to reminding me of what might be happening at home.

But most of all, the memories of the friendships I made, the many acquaintances which, in that period of time, no doubt, for better or worse, helped to make me the person I am today. Evacuation was a very important part of my life and one which I am always happy to recall, which is why I have enjoyed doing these few lines.

In the late sixties and having bought my first car, I decided to show my wife the place where I had been evacuated. I was full of apprehension – was it fair of me to rake up the past with people who, perhaps, had forgotten me? But my desire to see the old place, even if I avoided the people, was overwhelming.

I asked at the village post office if Mrs G was still around and found that she had returned to the village and was living just across the road. It took some time for her to understand who I was but, from then on, it was amazingly as if I had never left. There had been changes, of course. Mr G had passed on, so had Mrs E. Mrs G’s parents and sister too. Mrs G had adopted her sister’s son and the two of them lived in a council house.

From that day until November 1995, when Mrs G passed on, we were in constant touch. We visited them four or five times a year, brought them up to our home, we corresponded frequently and never missed a Christmas visit, when Mrs G and her son would ensure that we would have wild holly for our decorations.

Now, when my wife has passed on and I no longer drive, I am only able to take an occasional bus trip to the village, and only in the good weather. But I shall endeavour to do this until I am no longer able, then I will have to make do with my memories, like a lot of others.

Bill Poland

### **Early Councillors of Alveley** (continued from last year’s Transactions)

Following the first and second ten years in the last two issues, this is the next ten years of the true record of the Gentlemen elected on the Alveley Parish Council.

#### **Parish of Alveley**

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting, held in the (old) School Room, Alveley, the 15<sup>th</sup> day of April 1914.

Parochial Electors present: E.M.Wakeman Esq (in the Chair), Messrs W.Cross, C.Massey, W.Link, A.W.Ellis, C.H.Roden, H.E.Monk, W.Webb, J.Wilks and W.Elcock.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read, confirmed and signed.

The Chairman laid a Statement of Accounts of the Charities of Arden and others for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1913 before the Meeting.

E.M.Wakeman, Chairman, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1915

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting, held in the (old) School Room, Alveley, the 20<sup>th</sup> day of April 1915.

Parochial Electors present: E.M.Wakeman Esq (in the Chair), Messrs W.Cross, C.Massey, H.E.Monk, W.Link, C.H.Roden, W.Webb, J.Wilks and W.Elcock (Clerk).

The Minutes of the last Parish Meeting were read, confirmed and signed.

The Chairman laid a Statement of Accounts of the Charities of Arden and others for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1914 before the Meeting.

E.M.Wakeman, Chairman, 18<sup>th</sup> April 1916

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting, held in the (old) School Room, Alveley, the 18<sup>th</sup> day of April 1916.

Parochial Electors present: E.M.Wakeman Esq (in the Chair), Messrs W.Cross, W.Link, A.W.Ellis, H.E.Monk, C.H.Roden, W.Webb and W.Elcock (Clerk).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read, confirmed and signed.

The Chairman E.M.Wakeman Esq laid a Statement of Accounts of the Charities of A.Arden and others for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1915 before the Meeting.

E.M.Wakeman, Chairman, 16<sup>th</sup> April 1917

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting, held in the (old) School Room, Alveley, the 16<sup>th</sup> day of April 1917.

Parochial Electors present: E.M.Wakeman Esq (in the Chair), Messrs W.Cross, C.Massey, H.E.Monk, C.H.Roden, W.Webb and W.Elcock (Clerk).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read, confirmed and signed.

The Chairman laid a Statement of Accounts of the Charities of Arden and others for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1916 before the Meeting.

E.M.Wakeman, Chairman, 15<sup>th</sup> April 1918

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting, held in the (old) School Room, Alveley, the 15<sup>th</sup> day of April 1918.

Parochial Electors present: E.M.Wakeman Esq (in the Chair), Messrs W.Cross, A.W.Ellis, C.Massey, H.E.Monk and W.Elcock (Clerk).

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read, confirmed and signed.

The Chairman, as Secretary, laid a Statement of Accounts of the Charities of Arden and others for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1917 before the Meeting.

Mr W.Cross proposed and Mr C.Massey seconded that the accounts be passed, which was carried unanimously.

E.M.Wakeman, Chairman, 17<sup>th</sup> March 1919.

(The same Councillors elected in 1913 served all during the First World War, without having an election every three years)

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting, held in the (old) School Room, Alveley, the 17<sup>th</sup> day of March 1919.

E.M.Wakeman Esq laid a Statement of Accounts of the Charities of Arthur Arden and others for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1918 before the Meeting.

Mr T.A.Shepherd was unanimously elected Chairman of the Parish Meeting.

The following persons were duly elected Parish Councillors for the Parish of Alveley:

Messrs: W.Cross	A.Davies	
H.E.Monk		C.Massey
C.H.Roden		E.M.Wakeman
W.Webb		S.Williamson
W.B.Wood		

A hearty vote of thanks were accorded to Mr T.A.Shepherd for his services as Chairman of the meeting.

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting, held in the (old) School Room, Alveley, the 19<sup>th</sup> day of April 1920.

Parochial Electors present: Col E.M.Wakeman Esq (in the Chair), Messrs W.Cross, A.Davies, C.H.Roden, H.E.Monk, S.Williamson, W.Webb, W.B.Wood and W.Elcock.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read, confirmed and signed.

The Chairman as Secretary laid a Statement of Accounts of the Charities of Arthur Arden and others for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1913 before the Meeting which were duly passed.

V.Cross, Chairman, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1921

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting, held in the (old) School Room, Alveley, the 20<sup>th</sup> day of April 1921.

Parochial Electors present: Col E.M.Wakeman Esq (in the Chair), Messrs W.Cross, A.Davies, C.H.Roden, H.E.Monk, W.Webb, W.B.Wood and W.Elcock.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read, confirmed and signed.

Col E.M.Wakeman laid a Statement of Accounts of the Charities of Arthur Arden and others for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1920 before the Meeting, which were duly passed.

V.Cross, Chairman, 13<sup>th</sup> March 1922

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish Meeting, held in the (old) School Room, Alveley, the 13<sup>th</sup> day of March 1922.

A large number of Parishioners attended the meeting.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read, confirmed and signed.

Col E.M.Wakeman laid a Statement of Accounts of the Charities of A.Arden and others for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 1920 before the Meeting.

Mr S.Williamson proposed, Mr J.Lancett seconded, that the Accounts as read be passed, which was carried unanimously.

Election of Parish Councillors.

Mr S.Williamson proposed, Mr A.Davies seconded, that Mr Shepherd be Chairman of the Meeting, carried unanimously.

Resolved that the Non-voters present may remain for the meeting.

The following persons were nominated as candidates for Election on the Parish Council, The first nine being declared duly elected.

Wood, William Benjamin	66 votes	
Davies Arthur		60 votes
Webb, William	56 votes	
Williamson, Simson		51 votes
Roden, Charles Henry		47 votes
Lancett, Joseph	46 votes	
Cross, William	41 votes	
Evans, William Jr	41 votes	
Wakeman, Edward Malhby		41 votes

Beddoe, Albert James	37 votes
Gatliff, John Francis	32 votes
Link, William	23 votes

Col E.M.Wakeman proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman of the meeting, Mr T.A.Shepherd, for presiding, which was passed with applause.

T.A.Shepherd, Chairman, 16<sup>th</sup> March 1925

### **Alveley Parish Records – 1412 – 1701**

The following details of Indemnity Bonds, Apprenticeships and Parish Charities are an extract from a list of records compiled by Shropshire Records and Research.

#### **Indemnity Bonds**

##### Indemnity Bond 2 September 1650

Thomas Pearson of Alveley taylor and Nicolas Pearson of Kinges Swinford (co Staffs) taylor and Henry Pearson of Himley co Stafford Naylor TO Thomas Vickers of Alveley churchwarden and Edward Juden of Alveley yeoman.

Bond in £100 to save the parish harmless from expense on account of Thomas Pearson and Jane his wife lately married and come to inhabit in Alveley.

Witnesses:- Lancelott Lee, Robert Gravenor, John Cordell.

##### Indemnity Bond 10 May 1675

Henry Wood of Hales Owen (co Worc) yeoman and Gabriel Moore of the same minor (minutarin') TO Thomas Wilkes of Onneons on the parish of Alveley yeoman.

Bond in £40 to save the parish harmless from expense on account of Richard Moore becoming a parishioner.

Witnesses:- John Booth, Lancelott Nicolls, Thomas Nicholls.

##### Indemnity Bond 1 Mar 1676

Edward Elfe of Alveley yeoman and Thomas James of Filliods in the parish of Alveley gentleman TO Thomas Langmor of Romsley and John Woolrige of Nordley yeoman

Bond in £40 to save the parish from expense on account of Henry Nevell becoming a parishioner.

Witnesses:- Humfrey Nicolls, Thomas Nicolls, Richard Heaven.

##### Indemnity Bond 6 January 1701

Humphrey Postan of Alveley carpenter, John Postan of Chelmarsh weaver, Benjamin Postan of Kingswinford (co Staffs) husbandman TO John Perry of Alveley churchwarden.

Bond in £40 to save the parish from maintaining John Postan the elder, father of Humfrey, John and Benjamin "being now blind in both his eyes by reasons of which he is rendered incapable of getting his livelihood."

Witnesses:- Thomas Oseland, Mathew Davis, John Grove.

#### **Apprenticeships**

##### Apprenticeship Indenture 1 May 1635

Richard Badger of Hauus in the parish of Alveley husbandman TO Thomas batch of Alveley yeoman and John Arden of Alveley yeoman.

Apprenticeship Indenture 13 June 1668

Frances Bucknell, one of the daughters of John Bucknell late of Lane Green Avleley, husbandman deceased TO Humfrey Smith of Fenn Green in Alveley joyner.

Counterpart agreement with consent of Humfrey Fluitt and Thomas Toye, churchwardens and Thomas Holloway and Edward Jorden, overseers of the Poor of the Parish, apprenticing Frances to Humphrey Smith and his wife for 9 years as servant. Witnesses:- Thomas Holloway, Edward Jorden, Thomas Grove, John Burton, Thomas Smeth.

Apprenticeship Indenture 1 January 1700

Thomas Nicolls and Thomas Teverall, churchwardens of Alveley, and James Jorden and Richard James, overseers of the poor TO Margaret Longmore of Alveley widow.

Counterpart agreement by which the churchwardens and overseers apprentice Margery Holloway, a poor child of the parish, to Margaret Longmore, for 7 years, and pay 20/- towards clothing her.

Witnesses: Henry Dyson, George White, William Clare.

**Parish Charities**

Parish Charity 4 June 1412

John Boreley and others to John Hadeley and others.

John Boreley, John Corbyn, Katherine his wife, and Hugh Carpenter, clerk, to John Hadeley senior, Giles Alcockes, Hugh Baskervyll and John Whitenhull:

Feoffment in a piece of land in Alveley on le Church Grene being 30 feet in length and 24 feet in breadth in trust to build a house with upper story for 2 blind, lame or feeble men or woman not having anywhere to live except on charity, for the love of God, Blessed Mary and All Saints, giving themselves to pray for the good estate of the lord there and for the souls of all benefactors and of all the faithful departed. The churchwardens of Alvethely with the advice of 2 honest men of the parish are to keep the house in the best repair they can and to give the surplus revenue to the poor in money and to receive others when they die or depart. Rent a red rose at Nativity of St John Baptist.

Witnesses:- Roger Lee, High Leth, Thomas Fyhylyde, Richard Wodehouse, Henry Donsowe.

3 seals, one with amorial bearings defaced and the word Burnel.

Parish Charity 18 March 1455

John Dolman to William Lee John Dolman of Alvethely to William Lee of Alvethely, William Holowey of same and John Longeley of same:

Feoffment in land and tenements in the vill and fields of Alvethely which he held together with John Hadley and Thomas at Siche by the feoffment of Thomas Whitenhull and Agnes his wife, in trust for the survivor to enfeoff 3 others.

Witnesses:- Richard Blyke senior, Richard Blyke junior, John Lee of Coton. Given at Alvethely.

Parish Charity 31 October 1479

William Holowey to Thomas Lee William Holowey of Alveley parish to Thomas Lee of the same yeoman, and John Elcock junior of the same husbandman.

Feoffment in a meadow called le Towne medu in Alveley, lying between land of Richard Blyke (S) and Lady Elizabeth Blount (N) which land he had together with William Lee and John Longeley now deceased, be feoffment of John Doman in trust.

Witnesses:- Lewis Eyton Esq, Richard Blyke, Hugh Lowe, William Gravenor, Richard Hake.

Parish Charity 21 November 1536

Humfrey Elcock to Humfrey Lowe.

Humfrey Elcock son and heir of John Elcock (dec) to Humfrey Lowe gent, John Lousley (or Louxley) and Humfrey Dollman: Feoffment in lands and tenements in Alveley which descended to him on the death of his father from a grant made to him with Thomas Lee and John ----- of whom John Elcock was the survivor, in trust.

Witnesses:- Thomas Tonge, Thomas Hall, John Nicholles.

Parish Charity                      1 January 1542

Humfrey Elcock to John Pottar.

Humfrey Elcock to John Pottar "his brother":

Release to his brother of half the property in Alveley which he has demised to Humfre Pottar by indenture dated Michaelmas 28 Henry VIII (1536) to hold from the death of Jamys Pottar and Margaret his wife ---- father and mother to the end of the year at half the rend with agreement that if a law suit arises, John shall pay half the cost and if he does not, Humfre Pottar shall expel John and have his former estate again.

Witnesses:- Syr Thomas Ryshfure, vicar of Highley, John Stuard.

Parish Charity                      10 March 1546

John Pottar to Henry Pottar.

John Pottar, late of Alveley, to Henry Pottar, his brother, for £3 consideration:

Assignment of a term of years in a tenement in Tyrley Greene in the parish of Alveley, which he had from Humfrey Pottar his brother by deed from Humfrey Elcock called Humfrey his brother, dated Michaelmas 28 Henry VIII (1536) to hold from the death of James Pottar and Margaret his wife.

Witnesses:- Thomas Longmore, John Pountne

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Parish Charity                      20 June 1552

Humfrey Lowe to Thomas Dovie and others.

Humfrey Lowe of Alveley gent, for the love which he bears towards those whom the Lord has called and shall call, to Thomas Dovie, Thomas Lowe and John Hollowey of Awfilley yeoman:

Feoffment in trust in a rent of 2/- from a tenement called Tytterforde (tenant John Mosley) on conditions specified in a schedule attached.

No Witnesses.

Parish Charity                      18 March 1558

Humfrey Lowe and John Longley to Humfrey Pottar.

Humfrey Lowe of Alveley gent and John Longley of the same yeoman to Humfrey Pottar of Tyrley Green:

Lease of a messuage, one Noke of land called Jonkyns lond and one Noke of land called Okes, in Tyrley Grene, in the Lordship of Alverley (tenant Humfrey Potter) for 21 years. Rent 10/- and 12d heriot.

No Witnesses

Parish Charity                      31 August 1561

John Raynoldes and others to John Ardun and others.

John Raynoldes of Alveley husbandman, Thomas Holowey of the same husbandman and George Longley of the same yeoman

to John Ardu of Alveley yeoman, Thomas Jones of the same yeoman and John Holowey:

Feoffment in all lands and tenements in the vill of Alveley which they had by feoffment from John Longley on condition that when 2 of the feoffees die, 3 honest men shall be chosen within a month "by the moste voice of the seyde townshippe of Alveley" to hold the property and pay the money from the Lord's rents to the poor people of the parish "except there fall a tascke or knights expence for that yere that hit fallythe then the seyde townshippe of Allveley shall have all that that yeres ---- to helpe them to pay the seyde taske or Knightes expence" and six of the best men of the lordship to advise on using the land to the best advantage.

Witnesses:- John Lee gent, John ---- 11, Humfrey Potter, Humfrey Bycottes, Arther Lawley.

(Seals – one armorial)

Parish Charity                      24 March 1563

George Longley and others to Thomas Ley and others.

George Longley, John Reynoldes and Thomas Holowey of Alveley yeoman to Thomas Ley and Nicholas Potter of Alveley yeomen:

Appointment as his attornies to take seizen of a messuage called Juxe in the Lordship of Alveley and lands which he had by feoffment of John Langley of Alveley and hold it.

Witnesses:- John Lee gent, Humfrey Potter, Artir Lawley, Roger Holowey, John Hield.

(seals – on armorial)

Parish Charity                      12 February 1577

John Nycholes and Humfrey Jones to Arthur Arden.

John Nycholes and Humfrey Jones, churchwardens, ---- yeoman to Arthur Arden of Allveley:

Lease (with consent) of a messuage, toft and land called the Allmes Howse, including 2 bays of building and a close at rent of 6s 8d to use of the poor.

Witnesses:- Tomas Wollythons, Homfrey Nyclos, Jhon Lamor, Homfrey Grove, Homfrey Dovy, Gorge Lomey, Henry Holes, Thomas Holley.

Parish Charity                      2 April 1577

John Arden and John Holloway to Thomas Arden.

John Arden of Alveley yeoman and John Holloway of the same to Thomas Arden of the same, taylor, Margaret his wife and Nicholas Arden their son, with the consent of 6 hones men of the lordship:

Lease of a moiety of a messuage in Tyrley Grene in the lordship of Alveley, called Jukes Tenement (tenants Humfrey Grove and Humfrey Potters) to hold from 26<sup>th</sup> March 1580 for ---- score years of the lives of Thomas, Margaret and Nicholas. Rent 20/- Heriot 12d.

Witnesses:- Robert Barret, Samuel Arden, Jhon Bosqyyfilde, Jhon Lowe.

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Parish Charity                      1 October 1623

Humfrey Lowe to Francis Bromwich.

Humfrey Lowe of Alveley husbandman to Francis Bromwich of Astley in the same parish gent, Thomas White and Thomas Howell of the same, yeomen:

Feoffment in a rent of 2/- a year from land in Alveley called Tytterford (tenant formerly John Moseley, now Thomas Groveor) in trust to make new trustees and to use the rent for the poor of Alveley, for whom it was given by Humfrey Lowe gent,

deceased “for the love and zeale wch hee bare towards the poore and distressed people then inhabitinge or wch whould be inhabitinge wthin the said parishe” by his deed dated 20 June 6 Edward VI to Thomas Devy, Thomas Lowe and John Holloway, who conveyed the property to Humfrey Lowe by deed dated 10 (?) June 6 Elizabeth (1564) in trust “towards godly and pious uses”.

Parish Charity                      June 1564

John Holloway to Humfrey Lowe

John Holloway of Alveley to Humfrey Lowe of Alveley, husbandman:

Release of land called Titterfords held under a feoffment dated 20 ----- Edward (VI) by Humphrey Lowe gent to Thomas Dovie and Thomas Lowe lately deceased and John Holloway.

(Witnesses names lost)

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**Kirkham Family Research**

My Husband, Kevin Ferns, knew that his father Harry was the son of Joseph and Eliza Ferns, but although we knew she was born in Upper Arley, we could not go further back until the advent of the 1881 Census on Compact Disc. Sure enough, when I looked through the Arley section of the CD, I found them living at Baynhams, Upper Arley.

Dwelling:            Baynhams  
Census Place:      Upper Arley, Stafford

William KIRKHAM	M	30	M
Highley, Shropshire England			
Rel:	Head		
Occ:	Quarryman		
Esther KIRKHAM	M	29	F
Droitwich, Worcester, England			
Rel:	Wife		
Rebecca KIRKHAM		5	F
Droitwich, Worcester, England			
Rel:	Daur		
Occ:	Scholar		
Mary A.KIRKHAM		3	F
Arley, Stafford, England			
Rel:	Daur		
Eliza KIRKHAM		1	f
Arley, Stafford, England			
Rel:	Daur		
Joseph BROADHURST U		23	M
Arley, Stafford, England			
Rel:	Lodger		
Occ:	Gardener and Labourer		
Henry BROADHURST U		20	M
Arley, Stafford, England			
Rel:	Lodger		
Occ:	Ag Lab		
Charles BROADHURST U		16	M
Arley, Stafford, England			
Rel:	Lodger		
Occ:	Gardener's Labourer		

In Autumn 1999, I joined a genealogy mailing list on the internet and put out a message for “Kirkhams of Arley” and within minutes Margaret Sheridan replied saying that the family also had connections in the neighbouring parish, Alveley. So we began to pool our resources and by Christmas had managed to piece together the majority of the tree and solve quite a few puzzles on the way, including:

*How was Lucy Addis (Granny Addis) related to the Kirkhams and the Painters?*

Well, Lucy's maiden name was Kirkham, she married twice, firstly to Thomas Painter, and then to Joseph Addis.

*How were the Kirkhams related to the Wood and Evans families of the Bell Inn?*

The answer to the second puzzle took a little longer to solve, but we eventually cracked it – Alveley born George Wood was married to Sarah Ann Kirkham!!

By early spring a large family had been pieced together spanning several centuries and included many of Alveley's well known families:

Addis, Beddoes, Breakwell, Evans, Painter, France, Wood and Ward.

Kevin and I recently visited Alveley and were privileged to meet some of the names on the tree and have also received many photographs enabling us to put names to faces.

One very interesting correspondence has been with a blind man, Charles Brown of Wolverhampton, who had created a hand written Kirkham family tree dating back to the 1500's which I am in the process of verifying.

*A family tree never comes to an end, there is always something to add to or alter and I am proud to say that our first grandchild is due next February and I look forward to adding that very special entry!*

### Chapter 1

The first Kirkham that I know of to settle in Alveley was William Kirkham of Pattingham who married Mary Burgess at Alveley on 18<sup>th</sup> September 1759. They had at least four children who were all baptised in Alveley; William (1760), Rachel (1762), Thomas (1764) and Richard (1765).

It is ironic that in 1759, James Brindley designed the Worsley-Manchester Canal, the first true dead-water canal which marked the beginning of a new form of transport in Britain, which was to affect the fortunes of the Williams descendants.

### Chapter 2

On 1<sup>st</sup> September 1788, William, now 28 and a stone mason, married Elizabeth Wilcox at Alveley. They moved around a bit in the area, one can only think that it had to be to do with his work. I have traced four children of theirs – William was baptised in Highley on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1789, Elizabeth baptised Bewdley 1793, Mary baptised Arley 1797 and Thomas baptised Upper Arley 1800.

Also living in Alveley at the time is a Richard Kirkham who married Esther and their first child John, who was baptised on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1820; they had a daughter Hannah baptised 16<sup>th</sup> November 1823. I cannot find a record of Richard's baptism, but think it is likely that he is another child from William and Elizabeth's marriage and if Elizabeth is the daughter of Richard and Elizabeth Wilcox, this would mean that all four grandparents' names had been used.

William's sister Rachel married Joseph Brown at Highley, having had some children prior to their marriage, which took place on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1787. Richard was baptised on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1781 and Nancy Brown Kirkham on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1787, both at Alveley. Elizabeth and Joseph Brown, as far as I can ascertain, were the only children born in wedlock and were born in Bewdley in 1792 and 1794 respectively.

The third child, Thomas, died in infancy and was buried in Alveley May 1764.

Richard moved to Bewdley and worked there as a Shoemaker. He had a daughter named Ann who was born in 1793. She in turn had a number of children, mainly sons (she was Charles Brown's great, great grandmother).

### Chapter 3

William and Elizabeth Wilcox's Children:

William married Elizabeth Jones in Bridgnorth in 1809. They had the following children, all baptised in Alveley: Hannah (1809), John (1811), Ann (1814), William (1816), Sarah (1819) and Mary (1824).

It is a lot easier to see what the family was doing and where they are living as 1841 brought the first legible census, which

although limited, gives details of all British families.

In the 1841 census, William Kirkham aged 53, is recorded as living in Stanley, Highley, with his wife Eliza (65) and their daughter Mary (15).

The following census of 1851 records William Kirkham (63) working as a quarry labourer living with his wife Elizabeth (74) and their daughter Mary (26) described as an agricultural labourer!

The next census of 1861 records William Kirkham (77) still at Stanley working as a quarryman living with his wife Elizabeth (84).

William died in 1866 and was buried at Highley on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1866 aged 83.

Elizabeth died in 1870 and was buried at Highley on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1870 aged 94.

Elizabeth, their second child, married John Brown in Ribbesford (1824) and had two sons – William c 1824 and John c 1826.

Another puzzle still to be answered is what happened to their third child Mary?

Thomas married Mary Stanley, a widow, in Highley on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1826. Their first child, James was christened 8<sup>th</sup> April 1827. Harriet was christened in Highley on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 182(?) and another daughter Sarah was christened in Ribbesford on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1831. Sarah died in Bewdley aged 3 years and was buried on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1834 in Ribbesford.

Thomas remarried c 1820 Jane Oakes, the widow of Francis Oakes, and they had two sons; William 1838 (he married Mary Ann Haywood, Alveley, 5<sup>th</sup> November 1861) and Thomas 1845 (he married Sarah). Thomas died in Bewdley and was buried on 13<sup>th</sup> October 1848 in Ribbesford – he was 49.

The 1851 census records Jane Kirkham (born in Bewdley) a widow aged 47, working as a Laundress living in Dog Lane Ribbesford, with her step-daughter Harriett, aged 21, also working as a laundress, and her daughter Ellin aged 15. Jane died on 13<sup>th</sup> November 1880 aged 75.

#### Chapter 4

William and Elizabeth Jones's children:

Hannah to date is another puzzle.

The census of 1841 records John living in Highley, working as a labourer aged 25 with his wife Lucy and their four children – William (7), Edward (5), Sarah (3) and Betsey (1).

John married twice. His first wife Lucy was born in Aveley about 1809 and they had nine children, all baptised in Highley: William (1834), Edward (1835), Sarah Anne (1837); John (1840), Betsey (1842), Thomas (1844), Lucy (1847), Ann (1849) and Richard (1852).

Alveley Wilcox Family History records the following story:

*“About 1842 there was a quarrel between two members of the Wilcox family regarding possession of an Inn at Stanley near Highley. The Inn was called “The Royal George” but was known as “The Ship”. “The Royal George” was indeed a Shop which capsized. The Inn sign probably showed a ship and stood on the bank of the river Severn. The quarrel involved litigation and an ejectment order carried out by bailiffs from Shrewsbury”.*

The Ship Inn at Highley, which is still standing by the river, was occupied in 1851 by John Kirkham aged 41, the Innkeeper and a quarry labourer, his wife Lucy aged 42 and their children; William (15) a blacksmith, Edward (13) a postboy, Sarah (11), John (9), Thomas (5), Betsey (7), Lucy (3) and Ann (1). Lucy died 28<sup>th</sup> April 1856 aged 46 and was buried a few days later on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1856.

The 1861 census records John Kirkham (51) working as a quarryman living with his children John (15), Lucy (13), Ann (12) and Richard now aged 10.

John's second wife was Elizabeth Nachell and they married in Highley on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1862. John died on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1870 and was buried in Highley on 11<sup>th</sup> September 1870. He only lived four months after his mother died. The 1871 census records

Elizabeth Kirkham (47) widow, living with Richard Kirkham (23).

Richard died in Cleobury Mortimer Workhouse aged 27 and was buried in Highley on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1879. I cannot find out what happened to Elizabeth, she may have married again, but it looks as if after John died, they may well have had to give up their home and go to the workhouse at Cleobury Mortimer.

Their daughter Sarah Ann Kirkham married Alveley born George Wood in Highley in September 1858. Their children included Ann (1858), George (1860), Hannah (1862), Alice (1863), James (1866), John (1867), Geoffrey (1869), Sarah Elizabeth (1870), William Benjamin (1875), Ada Harrietta Ethel (1878).

The 1881 census records them living at Potters Load with two lodgers:

Dwelling: No 2, Potters Load

Census Place: Alveley, Shropshire, England

George WOOD	M	58	M	Alveley
Rel: Head				
Occ: Stone Quarry Lab				
Sarah WOOD		M	44	F Highley
Rel: Wife				
George WOOD	U	21	M	Alveley
Rel: Son				
Occ: Plate Layer				
Alice WOOD		U	18	Alveley
Rel: Dau				
James WOOD			15	M Alveley
Rel: Son				
Occ: Ag Lab				
John WOOD			14	M Alveley
Rel: Son				
Occ: Ag Lab				
Geoffrey WOOD		12	M	Alveley
Rel: Son				
Occ: Scholar				
Elizabeth WOOD		9	F	Alveley
Rel: Dau				
Occ: Scholar				
William WOOD		6	M	Alveley
Rel: Son				
Occ: Scholar				
Ada WOOD			3	F Alveley
Rel: Dau				
William EVANS		20	M	Chesterton
Rel: Boarder				
Occ: Brickmaker				
Charles GEORGE	U	32	M	Lydbury North
Rel: Lodger				
Occ: Brickmaker				

Sarah died 1<sup>st</sup> December 1981 in Highley at 81 years of age.

John married Henrietta (known as "Tettie") Hayes 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1895. They kept the Grocer's Shop at 56 Alveley (the property is no longer a shop but it's still there).

William Benjamin Wood married Ellen Jane Beddoes. William was employed as a miner and George, his father, as a quarryman.

Ada Henrietta Ethel Wood married Ernest Lloyd Evans at Alveley Church on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1901. They had twin daughters, Ada Henrietta junior and Sarah Alice, born about 1907. This is the Ada Evans who had the Village Shop at 56 Alveley with her life long friend Miss Willmott.

Ann (William and Elizabeth's third child) died in September 1840 aged 26 and was buried in Highley on 13<sup>th</sup> September 1840.

William (their fourth child) married Ann Rowley on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1838 at Highley and had seven children, Mary Ann (1839), Harriet (1841), Eliza (1844), Emma (1846), Henry (1849), William (1852) and Rebecca (1856). William was working as a stone quarry man from 1838 until the mid 1840's, he was then employed as a shop keeper and by 1856 as a publican (was he working at The Ship? - Another riddle).

The census of 1851 records William Kirkham aged 34 living at Stanley with his wife Ann and their five children – Mary Ann (11), Harriet (9), Eliza (7), Emma (5) and Henry (2).

Ann died aged 42 and was buried on 19<sup>th</sup> January 1858 at Highley.

William married again to Mercy from Wolverhampton and they had three more children, Frederick (1862), Alice (1864) and Walter (1866). William died in Arley in 1873 and was buried on 15<sup>th</sup> September 1873 in Highley.

The 1881 census shows Mercy living in Arley with Frederick and Alice, working as a Quarry Stone Merchant.

Dwelling: Arley Village  
Census Place: Upper Arley, Stafford, England

Mercy KIRKHAM	W	46	F	Wolverhampton, Staffs, England
Rel: Head				
Occ: Quarry Stone Merchant				
Frederick KIRKHAM	U	18	M	Arley, Stafford, England
Rel: Son				
Occ: Quarryman				
Alice KIRKHAM		17	F	Arley, Stafford, England
Rel: Dau				

Their fifth child, Sarah, is yet another puzzle.

Mary (sixth child) appears to have left hole between the 1851 and 1861 census, she was 26 in 1851 and still unmarried.

#### Chapter 5

William and Ann Rowley had seven children. William, the sixth child, married Esther Allen, daughter of Daniel and Margaret Farr, in Kidderminster Register Office on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1875. Esther was born St Peter, Droitwich, Worcester on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1852. Esther was the daughter of Daniel Allen and Margaret Farr.

William and Esther had eight children, Rebecca (1875), Mary Adelaide (1877), Eliza (1880), Emily Esther (1882), Edith (1884), Sarah Ann (1885), William Allen (1890) and Edwin (1894).

William and Esther lived at 75 Lowe Lane, Alveley, in their latter years and their grandchildren can remember many happy days spent there. My father in law, Harry Ferns used to go there when he was a little boy and washed under the pump by the back door.

Another grandchild, Gladys Bow, can remember the lovely smell of bacon cooking when she woke up in the morning.

William died 25<sup>th</sup> January 1917 aged 65.

Esther died 18<sup>th</sup> July 1933 aged 81.

Frederick Kirkham, son of William and Mercy, was born in Arley in 1862. He married Isabella Martindale and they had five children, Frederick (1890), Alice Jane (1893), Mercy Belle (1895), John Dawson (1897) and William Frederick (1900). Records of 1891 show Frederick, aged 28, farming in Alveley with his wife Isabella with their first child. Frederick married and had a son William. He became a recluse in later life after he came out of the army and lived in a caravan. He moved into a family cottage in Arley. Apparently, the Martindales came from Cumberland to Arley, to Castle Farm.

According to Charles Brown, William died c 1901 at 39 years of age.

Another question raised was what happened to Isabella?

Again, Margaret came to the rescue. I received the following e-mail one evening

*“I took William to see the Steam trains at Arley on Saturday afternoon, which he really loved. We also had a walk around the*

churchyard and found a piece of metal lying on the ground near a gravestone which said "Isabella Kirkham, born 1866, died 1938" (Frederick Kirkham's wife???)

Thanks again Margaret, another puzzle solved.

Alice, daughter of William and Mercy, lived in Arley with Mercy after her father's death and died aged 17. She was buried at Highley on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1881.

In 1881 Walter, their son, is recorded at the Grammar School in Wolverhampton.

According to records of 1904, Mercy was the owner of Hextons Quarry.

## Chapter 6

William and Esther's children.

Rebecca was christened in St Nicholas Church, Droitwich on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1875. She married Charles Yearsley at Alveley Church on 8<sup>th</sup> October 1900. They had two children, Gladys and Alfred.

Mary Adelaide married James Bow in Ribbesford, Worcs, 1896. James was employed as a ferryman on the River Severn. One of their sons, Victor, was crushed at the pit in Alveley. He was aged about 20 and the cage crushed him.

Eliza Kirkham was born on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1880.

All of William's daughters went into service when they were of working age. Eliza went to work at Weston Park. This is a stately home surrounded by parkland (not far from Telford). She married Joseph Ferns in Manchester in the Parish of Gorton on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1901. Joseph died in 1944 in Windlehurst aged 68 years of age and was buried on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1944 in St Thomas Church, High Lane. Harry, their only surviving son, was born on 1<sup>st</sup> June 1910. He married Leonora Rachel Lloyd and fathered my husband Kevin, their seventh child!

Eliza died 17<sup>th</sup> October 1929 in Manchester Royal Infirmary, aged 49, and was buried on 21<sup>st</sup> October 1929 St Thomas, High Lane.

Emily Esther emigrated to Canada, to Nanoose Bay. She married William Glover Bunce who was born in West Bromwich 1873. Emily died in Canada in 1945 and William died in 1953 aged 80.

Edith died July 1940 in Alveley aged 56.

Sarah Ann Kirkham aged 22 married William Painter in Alveley Parish Church on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1908. Sarah died in 1969 in Alveley, aged 83 years. Their son, Frederick Cambria Kirkham was born on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1917. Freddie married Betty Shuck at Wolverley on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1946. Kevin and I were fortunate enough to meet Freddie and Betty last year, shortly before his death. A lovely tribute was paid to him in the Alveley Parish Magazine:

*"On leaving school, his first job was a trainee plumber with a Mr Probert in Kidderminster, followed by a short while in a laundry in Birmingham. He then began work at Highley Mining Company. In 1939 he was called up into what was known as the First Militia. When the war was declared, he joined the Royal Artillery and spent some time on the big guns at Cymbran. He was posted to Palestine where he volunteered for the first SAS, joining the Parachute Regiment. He saw service in North Africa, Egypt, Italy, Germany and Holland where he took part in the Battle of Arnhem, being taken prisoner of war for 9 months. On his return to "Blighty" he met his wife Betty and they made their home on Peacock Hill and Fred returned to mining at what was now called Alveley Colliery. Fred and Betty had 2 sons, Robert and Lynn and have 5 grandchildren, Rebecca, Richard, Russell, Thomas and Emily, all very much loved by him. Fred was made redundant from the Colliery and went to spend eleven happy years at the Severn Trent Reservoir at Trimpey. For the last nine years he suffered ill-health, but was always cheerful, a true "English Gentleman"."*

Bertha Kirkham married and moved to Canada and they had a daughter named Betty.

In 1933, William Allen Kirkham was living in Llandarcy, Skewen in the County of Glamorgan.

Edwin married Millie Marsh in St John's Church, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, on 19<sup>th</sup> April 1919.

All the research proves that the Kirkhams were mainly quarrymen and later stone masons. The Arley Kirkhams were related to

the Wilcoxes who owned the barges on the River Severn, who helped prepare the stone for Bewdley Bridge. A Frederick Kirkham who was buried at Arley was a huge man of 30 stones and the Rector recorded this against the entry. Mercy Kirkham was a well known character in the area and transported cut stone down the river in a barge.

There are still so many questions to be answered, but one thing is certain – when William Kirkham married Mary Burgess in the lovely village named Alveley on 18<sup>th</sup> September 1759, little did they know that their offspring would be living in all parts of the world; Canada, Wales, USA and Australia, to name but a few.