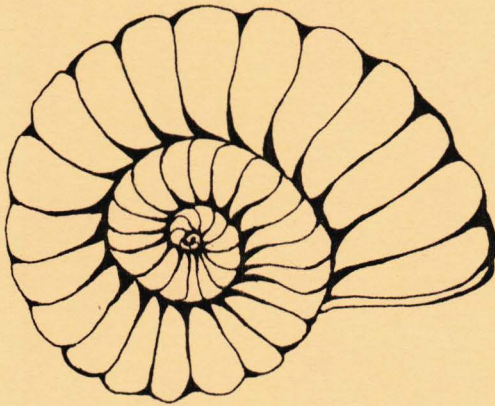


**NORTH WANSDYKE
PAST
AND
PRESENT**



KEYNSHAM AND SALTFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

No. 1, 1987

Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society!

NORTH WANSDYKE PAST AND PRESENT

Journal produced by Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society

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CONTENTS

Editorial	2
Ammonites and their Strange Religious Associations, by Bob Milner	3
Memories of Burnett, by Alfred Paget	5
Was Keynsham Trajectus?, by Charles Browne	11
The West Wansdyke Survey, by Bette Baldwin	15
A Section of the Ditch of Wansdyke, by Charles Browne	18
Somerdale Museum, by Charles Browne	20
Recent Additions to the Archives, by Elizabeth White	22
Keynsham Manor Woods Roman Site	25
Publications and Papers of Local Interest	26
Officers of Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society	28

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EDITORIAL

The Committee of Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society is embarking on a new series of publications, made possible by new techniques in word processing and printing. The obstacle for small societies wishing to publish has always been the high cost of typesetting, which is disproportionate if the potential market is limited. Now it is possible to produce small editions without the penalty of high individual cost.

The first of these publications is this *Journal*, which will be issued annually. It will provide a permanent record of some of the research carried out by members. Much of this has been communicated to the Society in the form of lectures, but members and workers in the same fields elsewhere will wish to have it in print. All workers in local history will welcome information about the archive and photographic collection which has been amassed over the years. Not least, we hope to interest all those residents who wish to know more about the people and processes that have made our locality what it is today.

The words *Past & Present* in the title show that local history workers are beginning to learn that history did not stop at some date in the past. It should be part of local history studies to record the present for the future. We are apt to think that everything today is more than adequately documented. But the experience of industrial archaeologists has shown that this is an illusion. Some "official" papers will survive, but large areas of life, particularly the humanizing personal content and the common everyday things, still go unrecorded.

One area worth exploring is in the memories of older people who knew our district in their youth. The Society has made a start in trying to capture them on tape recordings and it is hoped to publish extracts from these, with permission of the speakers. They add the vividness of personal knowledge to the dry bones of local history. We are delighted to begin in this issue with the evocative recollections of Mr Alfred Paget of Burnett.

Other series of publications will include both monographs and popular pamphlets on topics of local interest. They will be issued as manuscripts and publication funds become available. In addition to their own value, we hope that they will stimulate others to complete their own projects or embark on new ventures. Access to sources for local history is becoming easier year by year, as libraries and record offices improve cataloguing and indexing, and with the proliferation of microfilms and microfiches. This is a good time to begin new research.

AMMONITES AND THEIR STRANGE RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATIONS

Bob Milner

Geological Summary

Ammonites which flourished in the seas of 200 to 65 million years ago, that is the Triassic to the end of the Cretaceous period of time, are thought to have been of the same class of molluscs that include today the octopus, squid and cuttlefish. The common distinguishing feature is the shell, usually coiled, and made up of chambers probably filled with gas to maintain buoyancy. The soft parts of the ammonite have of course long since vanished but are thought to be similar to the present Nautilus, which has a similarly chambered shell

Our particular Keynsham varieties are from the Lower Lias rocks, and can be dated to the early Jurassic period, some 190 million years ago.

Geologists consider ammonites particularly important as they evolved into many distinctive species comparatively quickly which much assists the relative dating for the rock strata in which they are found.

The derivation of the name Ammonite

My dictionary derives the name from the Latin "Cornu Ammonis", that is, horn of Ammon (Amun Amon). Amon (the usual form today) was the name of the great ancient Egyptian deity, sometimes referred to as the "King of the Gods". The gigantic Temple at Thebes was erected in his honour and is, even today, a most impressive ruin. During the long history of his veneration he had many forms and, according to Rundle Clark, was sometimes equated with the Primeval Serpent - a monstrous serpent that arose out of the Primeval Waters before any definite thing yet existed. One of the forms in which the god was venerated was that of a ram with curled horns, and the likeness of these to ammonites was the origin of the name. It is however rather strange that there is also a serpent connection, in view of the Christian associations of ammonites with these creatures.

Ammonites and Christian Saints

The St Keyna legend must be familiar to all readers of this publication, but to refresh memories, here is a brief summary:

St Keyna, the beautiful daughter of Brychan, Prince of the province of Wales later known as Brecknockshire (Gwent), decided to consecrate her virginity to Christian missionary work. Directing her journey beyond the Severn she eventually arrived at a "certain woody place" (Keynsham), but the Prince of the area warned her that the place so swarmed with serpents that neither man nor beast could live therein. On her undertaking to rid the place of this "venomous brood" she was allowed to stay. During her stay she devoted herself to missionary work and by her prayers the "snakes and vipers" were converted into stones.

It must not be thought that the Keynsham legend of a Saint turning snakes into stones is peculiar to Keynsham. For instance, another place where ammonites are found in abundance is Whitby in North Yorkshire. Generally they are much smaller and frequently no more than two or three inches across. Any visitor to Whitby cannot fail to notice the impressive ruined Abbey which, situated on a cliff top, towers above the town. It was here that St Hilda became the first Abbess, and she died there in 680. Whereas St Keyna may be a rather shadowy figure historically, this was certainly not the case with St Hilda. However, the ammonite story is much the same - St Hilda caused all the snakes in the area to "curl up and die"; not only that, but to lose their heads as well, roll into the sea, and become stones!

The smaller size of the Whitby ammonites made them easier to handle and quite a trade developed in selling specimens "over the counter" as local souvenirs. Not having heads rather worried the good people of Whitby, so it was not long before an enterprising dealer thought of actually carving heads on them. Many were traded this way as being perfect specimens, which were very scarce, and only rarely met with!

To conclude on rather a nice modern note - Keynsham readers may be interested to note that a few years back a good local ammonite was sold in London for £100.

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge with thanks information received from: Mr R.D.Clark, Geology Department, City of Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, for most of what is in my Geological Summary; Scarborough Borough Council (Department of Tourism & Amenities), for the Whitby area story; R.T.Rundle Clark, *Myth and Symbol in Ancient Egypt*, and Paul Hamlyn, *Egyptian Mythology*, for the reference to the God Amon.

MEMORIES OF BURNETT

Alfred Paget of Elm Farm, Burnett, near Keynsham

Mr Paget's memories were specially recorded for the Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society on the 2nd July 1985. The interviewer was Bob Paulton, and the recording was made by Trevor Whitehead. The text printed here has been re-arranged and edited, while hopefully retaining the original flavour. The tape and a complete indexed transcription are preserved in the Society's archives.

Mr Paget: My name is Alfred Paget, of Elm Farm, Burnett, near Keynsham. The Pagets have been connected with farming in Burnett since 1761, when Elizabeth Paget, a spinster of Brislington, was granted a lease of 99 acres on the lives of her brother and his two young sons. These leases were usual things in those days. Benjamin Paget, who was, I think, her cousin, mentions in his will of 1723 that he rented the Albert Mill in Keynsham from a Mr Parsons of Bristol, a merchant. My son John now farms Elm Farm - the eighth generation.

I was born at Elm Farm in 1912 and have seen many changes through two world wars up until now. The farm was 270 acres. Seven horses were kept, five for heavy work such as ploughing, wagon hauling etc, one lighter horse for milk delivery, one pony for the pony trap which was the only means of transport unless the light horse had a saddle put on him for riding. All this transport arrangement altered when father bought a Morris Oxford motor car. I always remember the registration number: HT777. It was bought in 1920. And life was altered considerably by this.

Thirty cows were kept for milk production, 100 sheep mainly for producing fat lambs and of course wool. Several pigs were kept, and a lot of laying hens and ducks. Until motor transport became more widespread the milk was taken daily to Keynsham station to go to Bristol. Wool and grain also went the same way. Cattle and sheep were driven on the road to market or the fairs, there being no cattle lorries. For long distance droving from fairs, drovers were employed. Many farm necessities were also collected by the wagon. 1931 saw the first tractor on the farm, but horses still did a lot of work, as tractors could not go on the roads in those days - they only had iron wheels. Now, the next-door farm, as a matter of interest, had water meadows which were unusual in this part of the country. They are usually found in Wiltshire. This was a means of getting early grass by flooding the meadows systematically in the early Spring.

Farm Labourers

Mr Paget: Work in those days was hard: much more labour-consuming than today. Hedging, sheep folding, milking, hay and corn harvest, and threshing - all these needed manual workers. When I say manual workers, that is in excess of those regularly employed on the farm. Today the tractor, combine harvester, milking machine takes care of all this. Keeping weeds under control was one continuous back-breaking struggle. The sprayers now take care of all this, and increased production enormously. Lack of water, especially in the summer, restricted livestock farming.

Interviewer: Mr Paget, what would the wages of farm workers have been prior to the war?

Mr Paget: Prior to the World War Two, I should think between thirty and forty shillings a week.

Interviewer: And they were able to live on that?

Mr Paget: Well, they did and they brought up large families, although a number of people did emigrate then, I think, to chance their luck in Canada. And several went from this village actually to the States.

Interviewer: Would some of the produce of the farm would have been at their disposal to use for living: eggs and milk?

Mr Paget: Well, they usually kept their own hens for eggs, and also the old pig in the sty. The pig was really a joint effort. The local grocer used to provide the barley meal that was needed to help fatten the pig. When the pig was killed the usual practice was for the grocer to have half and the owner have half. Rabbits were another source of food supply. So although the wages were low these other things helped to make up.

Interviewer: What about living accommodation; was this provided by the farmer?

Mr Paget: Yes. There was a cottage provided for each worker. The maximum rent was three shillings a week in those days, but even this wasn't charged very often. Farm workers lived in adjoining cottages to the farms. There would be a kitchen sink, but no running water. This had to be fetched from a stand pipe in the road. There was always a large garden, but a rank of potatoes was usually grown in a field on the farm. The grocers came round for orders early in the week, and delivered a few days later. The butcher and the baker also delivered, as did the oil man.

Interviewer: What would have been the hours of work in those days for a farm labourer? A long day I would imagine.

Mr Paget: Yes. Milking at six o'clock in the morning, and they usually finished at five. Then, of course, it was seven days a week until latter years, when the half day came in, which

would have been, I suppose, in the late twenties: the Saturday after-noon was off. Then they had to come back to the milking and to look after the horses. So, really, they were at it all the time, nearly.

Interviewer: When they finished work I suppose they went home and tended their own gardens and their own produce.

Mr Paget: That's right.

Interviewer: What sort of leisure time would there have been, or what sort of activities around, available to them to take part in then?

Mr Paget: Very little. In fact practically nil. You see, television was not even thought of, and the wireless didn't come in until the late twenties, really, I suppose. Well, most people went to bed about half-past-seven or eight o'clock in the evening in the winter.

Interviewer: Was there an occasion when they had an annual fair?

Mr Paget: No, not here. The Keynsham Flower Show was the biggest thing. That was a two-day event in the latter years. It used to be held in Avon Lane. And before that I can remember it being held in the field where the entrance to Cadbury Schweppes factory is now. Everyone came from far and wide to that. Another event was Keynsham Heavy Horse Society Show which was held on what is now the ground field of Keynsham Rugby Club, in the nineteen twenties. Keynsham sheep fair was one of the oldest; it was held on land which is now Chandag Road, always in August.

Interviewer: So it was a day out at Keynsham on that occasion?

Mr Paget: Oh yes! Keynsham, after all, was no great shakes then: it was only about four to five thousand population.

Interviewer: The sabbath would have been kept very strictly in those days?

Mr Paget: Oh yes, I think you could say that. You see, I can never remember there being more than sixty inhabitants in Burnett. And yet there was a church and a chapel. So they were well provided for. And the farm workers looked to the farmer to set the example in going to church.

Interviewer: I suppose the Harvest Festival would have been important.

Mr Paget: Yes, it was quite an event. A wonderful collection of fruit and vegetables, and everyone trying to outdo everybody else to see who could have the biggest.

Interviewer: In looking back, is there anything in farming that you wish hadn't changed?

Mr Paget: No, I don't think so. It was a hard life, and it is no longer the same. I wouldn't want to go through that again.

Burnett Village and Village Life

Mr Paget: Until a few years ago Burnett was owned by the Bristol Municipal Charities. All rents went to the upkeep of the Red Maids School in Bristol. This was connected with the Alderman Whitson charity. Alderman Whitson also left one pound a year for the poor of the parish of Burnett.

No development has taken place in Burnett for over a hundred years, apart from replacement or conversions of existing buildings. Elm Farm was built in 1860, and it is one of the newer buildings in the village. Manor Farm House next door was built in 1829. The Manor House, I believe, is mainly eighteenth century though there are older parts. The church dates from the twelfth century, I understand. The Wesleyan Chapel was built by my great grandfather and a neighbour Mr Joseph Parker, round about 1860. The last service was held there in 1939. This building is now a very attractive dwelling. There was a village pound for stray animals, and a village pump at the bottom of the village. The pump is still there, and it is being renovated, with its surrounds, by the Parish Council.

Burnett, with Chewton Keynsham go to make up the Civil Parish of Compton Dando. The church is administered from Keynsham. At one time it was administered from Compton Dando, and prior to that from Corston.

A large underground ammunition dump was built in 1938 on the northern fringe of the village; also a large army workshop. The Royal Observer Corps was also near there, as was the Home Guard post. Heavy anti-aircraft guns were along the lane at Ashton Hill, in World War Two, and a search-light down on the Compton Lane. During World War One there was a large mule depot at Chewton Keynsham, and also one at Keynsham. The mules came from South America, and were fetched off the ships at Avonmouth. The mules were then used in France for pulling the guns. Many wounded soldiers in World War One were entertained in the village, from local military hospitals. The one I remember in particular was at Downend. The earliest tractor ploughing in the village was done by the army about 1917. Coal was mined in the village near the river Chew, in the seventeen hundreds.

No really notable people have lived in the village, except General Wilson who lived at Brooklands. He was famous for his part in the retreat from Corunna with Sir Thomas More. And his sword is in the church care, and his portrait. The only other person I can think of was Mr Tom Wise, who was Lord Mayor while he was living in Burnett.

Until the buses came in, in the late twenties, people often walked to Newton-St-Loe to catch a tram into Bath, the terminus being by the Globe Inn. Electricity came to Burnett in about 1930, and mains water in 1960. 1922 saw the closure of Burnett School, after which children went as best they could either to Keynsham, Corston or Marksbury for their schooling. The road through Burnett was widened in 1923 to 1926. This opened it up to charabancs, cars, and today it carries a vast amount of traffic. Before the road improvements there were two steep hills. One was School Hill and the other the Furse Hill. By driving cuttings through, the gradient was altered considerably. During this operation near the school a stone Roman coffin with a complete skeleton was found.

Local Dialect and Lore

Mr Paget: You see, when I went to school - I went to school in Bristol - I spoke two languages. I mean, I spoke the King's English, and I came back here and it was all "thee" and "thou" and "thine". In those early days that was how they talked. It's only the wireless that has altered all this. Radstock used to have its own dialect. And then you jumped, and Hanham and Longwell Green had exactly the same as Radstock.

Moles were known as "wants". Pigeons is "quists". And if you picked up a stone to throw at a rabbit or anything you picked up a "quinnot". Now "bodkins" or "whipple trees" were part of an implement which the trace chains were hitched to, for the horses to pull. "Spars" were the wooden spears used to keep thatch on the ricks, and an "entire" was a stallion which used to be led round the district once a year for breeding purposes. People might wonder today what a "drug shoe" is, but a drug shoe was put under the rear wheel of a wagon as a brake, so that it skidded along and the braking action (was) on the road, and did not wear the actual wheel itself. A "span" was a short rope which was tied round the cow's hind legs when you were milking it to stop it kicking. A "stook" was six to eight sheaves of corn stood upright in a field for drying purposes before taking into the corn ricks. These corn ricks or corn "mows" were placed on a foundation known as a staddle. We come to a "boitel" which is a wooden mallet which was used for driving stakes into the ground. And a "shard" was a gap in the hedge where the cattle used to get out through. And the "gaffer" was the boss. The "breaching harness" was that used on the horse in the shafts of a cart or wagon, whereas the "trace harness" was the one with the chains for the horse who went in front to assist on hills and the like. A "mattock" was a large hack, used for hacking through potatoes, and a "graft" was a narrow curved spade used for draining. A "gunters chain" was used for measuring hedges

and draining for payment of piece work.

Now, weather lore locally in Burnett: "Tormarton rain" was when the rain was coming from the north-east, in other words from the direction of Tormarton in Gloucestershire. If you could hear Pensford trains it was going to rain; also if you could see Pensford viaduct it was going to rain. But if you heard Saltford trains you were going to have a fine day.

A few odd field names in the village: "Hangman's Length", which presumably the hangman had for services rendered. There was "Deadman's Tynning" - whether this was anything to do with the product of the hangman I don't know. There was "Hoarstone", "Clannage", "Brinkles", "Boiling Spring", "Hot Wells", and "Lady Ground".

Earliest Memories

Interviewer: What is your earliest thing you can remember as a really young child?

Mr Paget: The first thing that I can remember? Well, I think I can remember that I always used to get a ride on the mowing machine - the horse-drawn mowing machine, with the old chap there. I remember the wounded soldiers coming here during the First World War. They used to have a bun-fight out on the lawn and everywhere.

Other things I remember: the steam wagons with steel wheels, owned by Tom Shepherd of Kingswood passing through with coal from the Somerset coalfield for the Bristol factories: in particular, the Bristol Boardmills. I remember steam ploughing, soon after the First World War, if not during it, where a steam engine was placed each end of the field and the plough was pulled between them by a steel cable. I remember steam threshing, when coal for the engine was fetched from the Camerton Pit and water for the engine from the village pump.

There were numerous tramps going from workhouse to workhouse; these workhouses locally being Temple Cloud and Keynsham. It was quite usual to find one asleep in the hay, when milking commenced in the morning.

I remember the early airships - the R33, R100, R101 and the zeppelin Hindenburg, just before the war. I think it was in 1938, there was a great display of the Northern Lights, which were reputed to foretell a great national disaster. How true this turned out to be!

WAS KEYNSHAM TRAJECTUS?

Charles Browne

*Some thoughts on the geography of the Keynsham area
in the early Romano-British period.*

The British section of the Antonine Itinerary (*Itinerarium Provinciarum Antonini Augusti*) is one of the few documents surviving from Roman times which gives contemporary topographical information about Roman Britain. It is a road book which gives the main Roman roads of the province, the names of places along them, and the distances between. The scene presented is that which existed about AD 200. Even so, minor roads known to have existed at that date are omitted, and even major ones such as the southern part of the Fosseway. The information contained in the Antonine Itinerary is readily accessible in map form, in the text accompanying the Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain.

Our interest centres on the road from Bath (Aquae Sulis) to Sea Mills (Abone), which runs along the north bank of the river Avon. From Sea Mills it continues across the Severn to Caerwent and Caerleon. A place is recorded on this road, with the name Trajectus. It is six Roman miles from Bath and nine from Sea Mills, which would locate it between Bitton and Willsbridge. However, no convincing evidence for such a settlement has been found, despite continuing interest in the problem over the last hundred years. H.T.Ellacombe (1883), Vicar of Bitton, placed the site in Bitton village where the road crosses the river Boyd. He had no evidence for this, and was to some extent misled by the earthwork just north of the village which has a Roman look to it, but has been shown by Boon (1954) to be of medieval or later date. Bitton parish contains a large number of Roman sites, as is to be expected in the neighbourhood of Aquae Sulis, but nothing that would fit the entry in the Antonine Itinerary.

The name Trajectus means a crossing, perhaps more specifically a crossing point or ferry. The name survives in modern Maastricht and Utrecht (Netherlands) (Rivet & Smith, 1979). This has led some to speculate that the settlement might have been across the river Avon from the Sea Mills road: at Keynsham. It is a notion that few have accepted, because the Roman remains at Keynsham do not appear to be a settlement in the sense that Camerton, Sea Mills, or Gatcombe are settlements; and the villas are too late in date for the Antonine Itinerary.

Rivet & Smith (1979) 177-8 take a quite different line. They argue that the crossing of the river Severn, an important

trajectus, would not have escaped notice in the Itinerary, and that it is therefore likely that the surviving copy is deficient or corrupt. Nevertheless, they allow that the Trajectus (or a name which merely resembled it) between Bath and Sea Mills might still be correct. However, before opening floodgates of conjecture by supposing a corrupt text, it is worth looking closer to see if there is any further evidence to support the name in the Willsbridge/Keynsham area. Rivet & Smith point out that in the Itinerary the word trajectus is used in three slightly different senses, one of which is the name of a place where a river is crossed, whether or not the route followed actually required the crossing to be made (e.g. at Utrecht, where the route does not cross the river). In such cases it seems to indicate a ferry or ford rather than a bridge.

It is possible that we have been looking in the wrong direction. In the 1960's a "new" Roman road was discovered on air photographs. It can be traced from Cherry Garden Hill, at Willsbridge, northwards via Warmley, Siston, Westerleigh and Yate to join the Sea Mills to Gloucester Roman road at Cam. It happens that the road junction at Willsbridge is in direct alignment (in good Roman engineering fashion) with a short stretch of road running north from the Roman lead-mining settlement at Charterhouse-on-Mendip. When Rahtz & Greenfield (1976) excavated Chew Park Villa prior to the flooding of the Chew Valley Lake, they thought that the road was merely a spur leading to the villa and no further than the Roman site at Golds Cross. In view of the evidence of the Willsbridge road we can reconsider the possible continuation of the Mendip road. Alas, good evidence on the ground is slight and unconvincing. One can point to the broken nature of the landscape between Chew Valley Lake and Willsbridge, and surmise that the road may have taken a devious route, un-Roman in character.

An alternative suggestion by Rahtz & Greenfield is that the road was built to transport lead from Charterhouse-on-Mendip only as far as the river Chew, where the journey could continue by water to Keynsham, and then either up the Avon to Bath or down river to Sea Mills. This makes sense for the transport of heavy goods. Whether by road or river, Keynsham is the first destination.

Roman roads were built by the military for some specific civil or military purpose. A road from Willsbridge to Cam makes little sense in any part of the Romano-British period. The main network, which is reflected in the Antonine Itinerary, was created soon after the Claudian invasion of AD 43. The Fosseway was initially a military supply route, created behind a temporary frontier, prior to the further push into South Wales by Ostorius Scapula in the AD 50's. At Camerton Wedlake (1958,

46) found that it was built c.AD 47. A branch road ran along the crest of the Mendips to the lead-mining settlement at Charterhouse-on-Mendip. Imperial exploitation of the mines was a high priority. Pigs of lead from Charterhouse are datable by their inscription to AD 49. The first decades after the invasion would have been dominated by military imperatives. One such was the siting of a fort at Sea Mills, as a naval and military base to control the Channel. Further north the main Legionary base was at Gloucester, with outposts west of the Severn as at Usk.

Here then, is a logical pattern of roads set up in the first decades of the Romano-British period, for military advance, for economic exploitation, and at Aquae Sulis for that odd mixture of social, religious, medicinal, recreational and prestige reasons which is still the character of modern Bath. Three military installations determine the road pattern: Charterhouse-on-Mendip and Sea Mills, each linked to the Fosseway by their own roads; and Gloucester linked to Sea Mills by a road which follows a similar route to the present A38. A further road from Mendip via Chew Valley Lake, Keynsham, Willsbridge and on north would have been a very direct route linking Charterhouse with Gloucester. The archaeological evidence suggests that this road did not have any other obvious function. It makes little sense except in the context of the situation in the 1st century AD. It does not pass through major Roman sites (apart from Keynsham!). There is an unexcavated earthwork at Siston which might be an early Roman fort, and a site at Yate has produced 2nd century pottery.

It seems possible that we have an early road crossing the river Avon at Keynsham. There was certainly a road junction north of the Avon opposite Keynsham. But was there anything Roman at Keynsham at that date? The two villas, one at the Cemetery at Durley Hill and the other at Somerdale, were both founded after the middle of the third century AD. Two burials in stone coffins at Somerdale likewise must belong to the latter part of the period. Scattered finds of pottery in the parish indicate 3rd and 4th century occupation. At Somerdale Museum, however, the list of coins tells another story. The earliest is AD 37, with a number in the 1st and 2nd centuries. There are also brooches datable to the 1st and 2nd centuries. The most notable datable object belonging to the 2nd century is a pedestal base for a statue, whose inscription dates it to AD 155. Examination of the finds and museum records show that there are altars and carved stonework which may well belong to a Roman temple. No temple structure has been found, and the site now lies beneath Fry's (Cadbury) chocolate factory. When Bulleid & Horne (1926) excavated the Somerdale Villa they noted some massive blocks of stone abutting the north wall, whose purpose was obscure, and

evidently belonged to some other structure unknown. Perhaps these were the remains of the Temple.

There is evidence for some highly Romanised early occupation on the plateau overlooking the confluence of the Avon and Chew. It suggests a religious site rather than a settlement, civil or military, but its location may be a consequence of the river crossing (the "trajectus") by a south-north road. It seems not to have developed into a large settlement, perhaps because the road on which it lay declined in importance after the military push into South Wales and with the depression of the Mendip lead mines in the face of Spanish competition during the 2nd century.

Prosperity was renewed in the mid 3rd century from a completely different direction: from Gaulish immigrants fleeing the Germanic invasions of the Rhineland, and bringing their capital and distinctive villa architecture to Somerdale (Branigan, 1973). The even more sumptuous and architecturally extravagant Keynsham villa at Durley Hill was founded. Farms developed in the neighbourhood, and other villas prospered at Newton-St-Loe, Burnett and Brislington. It was the great era of prosperity in this area. Yet, looking at the evidence in Somerdale Museum, it is clear that there was something very solid, prosperous and highly Romanised in the early centuries. It is tantalising that we are unlikely to learn much more about it.

At least we can look again at the Antonine Itinerary, and wonder if this early aspect of Romano-British Keynsham represents the undiscovered Trajectus. Unless, of course, someone comes across evidence for a worthy rival at Willsbridge.

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THE WEST WANSDYKE SURVEY

Bette Baldwin

The Wansdyke Survey is a project of ACCES (Avon County Community Environment Scheme), sponsored by Avon County Council with funding by the Manpower Services Commission. It is a valuable record of the existing state of the monument, and provide a basis for a management programme. Already it is being used by the Sites and Monuments Commission and the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) to update their records.

A map and drawn sections with calculations for the survey of the east flank of Stantonbury Hill has been deposited in the Archives of Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society, where it is available for reference.

The West Wansdyke is a 12 mile long linear earthwork, composed of a northfacing bank or rampart with a ditch in front, and presents a perplexing archaeological problem as to its origins.

This feature is a scheduled ancient monument and therefore of national importance. It is however, by its very nature, difficult to preserve. A narrow linear feature running across 12 miles of agricultural land cannot be easily or constantly kept under surveillance in the same way as a single compact feature. Possibly the main reason for this is access. Something stretching over 12 miles will obviously cross many different properties and access becomes the question of permission from many different landowners. The chances of coalescing all these landowners into a single cohesive body working towards the protection of the dyke seems remote, but the idea is attractive.

The object of the West Wansdyke Survey then is to record the dyke as it exists in 1986 and in doing so: (a) provide the data for future archaeologists (who may not have the privilege of seeing the dyke even in its eroded state) to undertake research on; (b) bring the Wansdyke to the attention of the farmers and landowners and hopefully move towards a conservation programme; (c) eventually produce publicity material for the general public's use and interpretative material to help in the understanding of the Wansdyke.

To date, the section of the dyke nearest to Keynsham which has been surveyed is at Stantonbury Hill. Mr Wyatt is the tenant of the Duchy of Cornwall land, and both have reacted most

encouragingly towards our work. Some of the survey work we managed to undertake just before the start of the spring growing season, but our intrepid surveyors managed to carry on even when the undergrowth had reached to chin level! The duchy agent gave us permission to cut swathes through the undergrowth in order to try and achieve our objective of a cross section every twenty metres along the dyke. This is a cross section of levels reduced to Ordnance Datum, the datum value being carried from a Bench Mark carved in a stone gate post in the lane to Stanton Prior. Positions were found by resections, using a theodolite to measure angles between local land marks found on the 1:2500 map.

On average, the cross sections are 30 to 50 metres long across the actual dyke. But where sections were taken through the hillfort earthwork, and down over the scarp face, sections of 100 to 150 metres long were recorded.

Some examples of the type of data achieved for Stantonbury Hill are shown here and some preliminary calculations as to the likely amount of material moved during the dyke's construction. These calculations have been made using data taken from the better preserved sections as these are most likely to give the most accurate answer. It is interesting to note how well the "cut" figure, i.e. the amount of material dug from the ditch, corresponds with the "fill" figure for the amount of material mounded up into the dyke.

Section Nos.	Distance	Cubic m Cut	Cubic m Fill
5 to 6	32m	255.20	238.88
6 to 7	32m	211.84	296.00
7 to 8	20m	165.06	184.20
8 to 9	20m	207.31	192.00
Totals	104m	839.41	911.08

Figure 1.

The original land level has been interpolated across the sections and the cross-sectional areas of the subsequent ditch

and rampart at that point calculated. By applying the distance between the individual cross-sections as the third dimension it is then possible to arrive at a cubic metre value.

Between section 5 and sections 6 the amount of material dug for the ditch is 255.2 cubic metres and the amount of fill on the rampart is 238.88 cubic metres.

Some of the values obtained for the section of the East Flank of Stantonbury Hill are tabulated in Figure 1.

The subjective parameter affecting this type of calculation, of course, is the interpolation of the original land level. But it seems a remarkably good cut and fill correlation.

A similar preliminary calculation has been made for a section of the dyke at Englishcombe (near Manor Farm).

Over a total length of 60m covering 3 sections the total cut was 452.6 cubic metres and the fill material amounted to 419.4 cubic metres, and this seems to provide reasonable accordances with the Stantonbury figures.

This will be an interesting interpretative exercise to pursue, and just one example of how Wansdyke Survey data can be put to use.

The area south of Keynsham, from Stantonbury Hill through Compton Dando to Publow Hill has large tracks of Wansdyke running through it and it is hoped that with the help of Landowners, History Societies and the General Public it may be possible to conserve and save this interesting South Avon feature and thus enable others to speculate over its origin, history, or just enjoy walking alongside a piece of English heritage.

A SECTION OF THE DITCH OF WEST WANSDYKE

Charles Browne

West Wansdyke is a linear earthwork comprising a ditch with a rampart on the south side. It runs from Maes Knoll hill fort on Dundry, through Norton Malreward and Publow to Stantonbury, where it seems to have incorporated the northern rampart of the hill fort. It then continues through Corston, Englishcombe and Vernham Wood to the Fosseway, and ends at the head of Horsecombe Vale south of Bath. Parts have been levelled by cultivation, but some stretches remain impressive at Hursley Hill, Stantonbury and Englishcombe. Like other comparable earthworks, such as Offa's Dyke in the Welsh Marches, it was never entirely continuous. The gaps may have been former areas of dense woodland. Major & Burrow (1926) published a detailed survey, valuable for its plans and delightful sketches, but uncritical in distinguishing Wansdyke from other earthworks along its course.

The date of West Wansdyke has never been determined by archaeological means. Opinion today favours the period of the late 6th century AD, perhaps arising from the political events connected with the battle of Dyrham in AD 577 (Clark, 1958 and Fowler, 1980).

Some have seen it as a negotiated boundary: it seems more likely to have been defensive though it is not always well sited for such a purpose. This weakness has been pointed out by many commentators, but it is illuminating to compare Wansdyke with the later Offa's Dyke as revealed by the perceptive and detailed work of Noble (1983). He suggests that it was never intended as a political boundary, but as a defensive "control line" some distance within Mercian territory, with Mercians living on both sides of it. Those living beyond the dyke could seek refuge behind it in times of trouble. If this is how we should regard West Wansdyke it makes better sense of its siting. It also explains why already existing land boundaries were not changed by its presence. There would have been no reason why Celtic/post-Romano-British landowners and farmers should not continue their peaceful lives on both sides of Wansdyke as if it were not there.

During October 1963 a cross-section of Wansdyke was exposed during road widening by Somerset County Council, at Hursley Hill, Publow (now in Avon), ST 61746530. The site was just north of the (now demolished) railway bridge that crossed the A37. The opportunity was taken to examine and record the section, though

in the circumstances no more than cleaning the face of the mechanically dug excavation was possible. Only the ditch was exposed at this point, the bank having been levelled during construction of the railway bridge. It proved to be a V-section ditch, about 5.4m wide at the top, and 1.8m deep, steeper on the south side, where the bank would have been, than on the north. The filling of the ditch was lias clay, with no sign of stratification. The natural soil was also lias clay, and the filling could only be distinguished by the plant roots which penetrated only as far as the natural bedrock.

There was no dating evidence, and no sign of silting at the bottom of the ditch. There was no sign of any revetment or stone structure having collapsed into the ditch.

This picture revealed at Hursley Hill compares with other sections observed. At the eastern end a pipe-line trench cut through Wansdyke revealed a loose bank construction, 2.1m high, of lias slabs overlain by reddish clay, dug from the ditch which at this point is wide (Fowler 1968). Another pipe-line trench through the dyke just east of Stantonbury c.1968 revealed its V-sectioned ditch 5.5m wide and 2.13m deep. No archaeological dating evidence appeared at either of these exposures.

Plans and photographs in the possession of the author will be deposited in the archives of Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society which it is hoped will find a permanent home in a new Keynsham Museum.

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SOMERDALE MUSEUM

by Charles Browne

Somerdale Museum was generously created by J.S.Fry & Sons, to preserve the finds from the two Roman villas which were excavated in Keynsham in 1922-4. The museum is in the lodge at the entrance to Fry's (now Cadbury Limited) factory, and can be visited by the public during working hours, on application to the security officer on duty. There are other mosaics in the factory, not normally accessible, including the celebrated "Europa and the Bull" from classical legend. Permission to see these mosaics should be sought in advance via the Hon. Curator.

A report on the villa excavations was published by Bulleid & Horne (1926). The existence of one villa had been known for many years, as it was on the site of the new cemetery at Durley Hill. It had to be excavated and then destroyed to make room for graves. The second villa at Somerdale was only found when construction of the new chocolate factory began. This site is now buried beneath the factory, but after excavation the foundations were removed and reconstructed at the entrance to the factory, on the opposite side of the drive from the museum.

The first discoveries at Somerdale were two Roman burials in Bath stone coffins, one of which was lined with lead. Further discoveries were made during subsequent building operations, including an inscribed statue base datable to the year AD 155.

Since the 1960s, when the Keynsham by-pass cut through the site of the medieval abbey, great quantities of carved stone, rescued from the bulldozers by Bristol Folk House Archaeological Society, have been stored in the museum or in the open nearby. Eventually a suitable home for this material must be found. It includes 12th century Romanesque sculpture which has aroused great interest in the international art world.

In the 1950's L.V.Grinsell, then Curator of Bristol City Museum, wrote a guide to the museum (Grinsell n.d.) and arranged for conservation of some of the metal objects. Bristol Archaeological Research Group published a Check-List of the contents (Fowler 1968). Dr Keith Branigan, while he was at Bristol University, revived interest in the Somerdale Villa when he wrote a paper (Branigan 1973) showing its close similarity, together with some other villas in the West Country, to villas in the Rhineland. In recent years there has been an increased scholarly interest in the mosaics. James Russell has published a detailed study of the hexagonal triclinia of the Keynsham villa

(Russell 1985). Somerdale Museum has been in existence for some sixty years, and in that time has changed little. During the Second World War the contents were removed to store for safety, and the building was taken over as a Home Guard Post. It was subsequently restored to its original state. A few years ago A.K. Borgelin volunteered to take on the curatorship. He was the first curator who was not an employee of the factory, and the first with an archaeological background. He produced the first complete and scholarly catalogue (Borgelin 1983 and later revision). When he left to go to university, Keynsham & North Wansdyke Heritage Trust recommended to Cadbury Limited that Charles Browne should succeed him as Hon. Curator.

One of the tasks to be done, to complement the work of re-habilitation begun by Andrew Borgelin, is to improve the display. The Area Museums Council for the South West has given helpful advice. Informative graphics and captions would make the meaning of the collection more understandable. Many local schools visit the museum. Keynsham & North Wansdyke Heritage Trust, one of whose main objects is an educational role, is keen to help improve educational facilities at the museum. Through the Trust some of this work will be done by Avon County Community Environment Scheme (ACCES). There is also a need for conservation treatment of some of the metalwork on display, for which a survey of the state of the collection will be made.

Somerdale Museum has passed through a period of somnolence. It has been revived, and with the increasing interest and concern shown by local people there is encouragement to try to make it fulfill a more meaningful role in the community. That was always the intention of its founders, in the Quaker philanthropic traditions of the Fry and Cadbury families.

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RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE ARCHIVES

Elizabeth White

The Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society's Archives have recently benefited from the donation of several collections of documents. The largest collection, an entire tin trunk full, came through Mr New from Stone King and Wardle Solicitors of Bath. These were papers relating to the old Keynsham Manor estate. These reveal what happened to the Manor of Keynsham after it was sold by Sir Thomas Whitmore in 1767. They confirm that Sir Thomas Whitmore was in dire financial straits before he sold the estate. In 1756 he mortgaged the entire Manor to a London merchant, William Chetwynd for £10,000. This document is in the collection, and details the entire estate field by field. In 1767 Sir Thomas sold the estate to Arthur Greenwollers of London, but many small parcels of land had been sold away from the estate by then. In 1768 Arthur Greenwollers sold the remainder of the estate to Edward Lyne M.D. of Brislington. Lyne had to buy some of the land in separate lots. He bought the Manor, with the title of Lord of the Manorial rights for £5,161. All these deeds are in the collection. Many documents in the collection reveal the efforts of Edward Lyne and his son Edward, to restore the rights and privileges of the Lord of the Manor; consulting Counsel about the legal position (Counsel's opinions are written on the reverse of the queries in very illegible handwriting); fighting expensive legal battles to assert rights over fisheries in the Chew and the Avon (unsuccessful), and to appoint a gamekeeper for the whole hundred of Keynsham (successful). It was obvious from these deeds that the Lynes tried to do what the Whitmores had neglected to do: improve their holding. Lyne exchanged land with Samuel Peach Peach of Tockington, who held land in Chewton Keynsham and the Courtney Road area in an attempt to create a consolidated holding. But Edward Lyne's descendants were no more successful financially than the Whitmores. In 1855 and 1865, Harford Lyne mortgaged his estate. In 1889 it was sold to R. D. Commans, a Bath businessman. By 1923 the estate was valued at £16,400, largely because of its road frontages and potential for housing development. By this time it consisted of the title, plus the Manor House, Wickhouse Farm and a few cottages. The documents relating to all these transactions are in the Archives.

Another small collection of documents from Stone King and Wardle relate to manorial custom and the rights of the Lord of the Manor. They show the origin of the belief that Keynsham was a town because it had a market. (A town is usually defined by having been granted a Charter, and has a Mayor and corporation. It is self governing and not controlled by a Lord of the Manor.)

When a weaver was prosecuted for having more than two looms when he did not live in a town, he cited as his defence that Keynsham was a town because it had a market. A copy of the regrant by Queen Elizabeth I of the town's right to hold a market is extant, and so are the bills relating to the restoration of the Market House and the provision of new weights and measures.

There are also copies of important local agreements, obviously deposited with the Manorial Court. One of the earliest documents is a sworn statement called the Customs of the Manor, dated 1634, which concerns the rights of outgoing tenants. They might remove doors, but not staircases; benches, shelves, wainscots and window glass but not partitions nor boards in the loft. All tenants had the right to take timber, stones and sand necessary for repairs. The document was signed by a jury of Keynsham men. Another interesting document is an agreement to Stint (limit the stocking) of Uppfield made by the tenants in 1703. These were usually made to prevent overgrazing. The document is signed by the tenants, including several women, and by the Steward of the Manor, Andrew Innys. Other documents relate to the Lyne family's land at Brislington. These documents show that the manorial court system was still exercised in Keynsham well into the 19th century.

However, much of the fascination of these documents lies in the incidental information they reveal. We know now, the exact amount (£3,835) paid by Ann Whitmore when she bought the Manor of Keynsham from James I in 1613/14. We know that the present Keynsham Manor was known as Cottage Farm in the early 19th century, from extant prints and plans. We know that a certain Mrs Phoebe Green used her deeds of a Lyne property as security for her debts to the brewery, though why Edward Lyne should end up holding her marriage settlement to Thomas Mills is a mystery. This document contains an inventory of the lady's goods and chattels, including 18 dining tables and 47 dining chairs. We assume she was a publican!

The Society has also been given two collections of 19th century documents by Mr Frank Vine of Saltford. One is a collection of letters relating to the restoration of St John's in 1861-2. They are answers to the Vicar, the Reverend G. Robinson's appeal for money. The Bishop's reply reveals much about the state of churches in the area, including Keynsham at this time. The Bishop sent £10, and apologised for not sending more. He had already given to 20 churches under repair, "and the year is but half done". He promised more if the pressure was taken off towards the end of the year, commenting that the cause which had impoverished him, had bankrupted the Diocesan Building Society. He did observe tartly that "if your parishioners had repaired

the Church as they ought to have done, help would (not) now be required". St John's was obviously in such a poor state it was dangerous. A licence was granted for services, banns, weddings etc to be held in the schoolroom. Fortunately few seem to have been as parsimonious as Miss Burdett Coutts (the banking family?). "She begs to inform him that she is usually obliged to decline the numerous applications she receives". More seem to have responded like H. Rooke of Frenchay, "I am glad that you are making arrangements for the restoration of your Church which must have been a very handsome one. I never saw but the outside. I am not able to give more than £50. If I live I may add more, but at near 83 it is no use to make promises that will most probably never be realised". The Vicar settled for cash, and "half of a fifty pound note" came the next week and the rest duly followed. The Vicar's appeals were successful and St John's took on the restored form that we know today.

The other collection of miscellaneous documents relate to the activities of the Feoffees in the 19th century. This was a highly secret body, founded in 1685, who dispensed a not inconsiderable income to the "Second Poor". These were poor people who had not approached the Parish for relief. It was given as an annual cash handout. Once on the list a recipient continued to receive the cash annually until death. But the Feoffees affairs were not made public, and in the 19th century there were several occasions on which disquiet about their activities quite literally made headlines. One of these occasions is recorded in these documents. It was a major row between the Feoffees and the Vicar, the Reverend G. Robinson in 1861. The Vicar refused to pay his share of the annual Feoffees dinner because he had not been there. The Proprietor of the Lamb and Lark was instructed to inform the Vicar that it was the custom to pay, whether or not the dinner was attended. The Feoffees warned him if he did not conform to custom he would be regarded as having resigned. The Vicar threatened to take the matter to the Charity Commissioners, claiming that they had no power to make him resign. They conceded their position was not legally enforceable but "if a gentleman's scruples do not permit him to maintain a time honoured observance then the least he could do was resign". The matter was aired in the Bristol Daily Post, and the Vicar felt he had been unfairly represented. Even the Feoffees admitted part of the problem was caused by the lack of any written rules for the conduct of the Feoffees Affairs, and the creation of written rules dates from a few weeks after this incident. Many lengthy letters later the affair was settled. The Vicar did pay for the dinner he had not eaten, and the receipt is in the Archives.

Many of these documents in isolation would have little

significance, but held in a local context, and related to other local material they form part of the picture of Keynsham and Saltford in the past. We hope that the existence of our local Archives will encourage people who have old documents relating to Keynsham and Saltford to consider giving or loaning them to the Society. Documents, especially those which seem to have little significance, are being lost or destroyed at an alarming rate, but each document can make a contribution to the overall picture of the past. There have been queries about a Local History society maintaining its own archives, but the committee of the Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society feels that this is the best way of keeping these documents accessible to local people. Avon County Council has no Record Office. The Bristol Record Office is so short of space that readers must book a seat days or even weeks in advance. The Somerset Record Office at Taunton is not easily accessible from Keynsham. A secondary, but valuable, function of a museum for North Wansdyke would be the storage of the Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society's Archives, which are at present kept at 31 Wellsway, the home of the honorary archivist Mr Frank Millard, where they may be seen by prior appointment.

KEYNSHAM MANOR WOODS ROMAN SITE

During 1985 the digging of a pipeline by British Gas exposed an extensive Romano-British site. It was noticed by A.K.Borgelin and J.Durnell, who reported it to Mr Gater who was responsible for the overall archaeological survey of the pipeline. The use of explosives to blast through the lias rock caused much damage. Nevertheless, with the help of Barbara Lowe, Margaret Whitehead and Tony Brown, a quantity of material was recovered, including pottery, metalwork, glass, and quernstones. Some 40 Roman coins were found by Mr Durnell, using a metal detector. Of particular interest were two ceramic coin moulds, used for casting "forged" Roman coins. Similar moulds were found by Professor Rahtz in an excavation at Lyons Court Farm, Whitchurch.

Staff at Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery have been studying and conserving some of the finds. As they are the property of Wansdyke District Council, Mr Hawtin, Chief Planning Officer of the District, has taken steps to ensure that they are all kept together, and hopefully will remain in Keynsham. Eventually they will be put on display to the public, though until a museum is established in Keynsham this can only be a temporary display.

Thanks are due to Mr J.Durnell, Mr A.K.Borgelin, Mrs B.Lowe, Mrs M.Whitehead and Mr A.Brown whose prompt action ensured that this site was discovered and the finds preserved.

PUBLICATIONS AND PAPERS OF LOCAL INTEREST

We include here not only new publications, but also older ones of particular local interest. Some which cover wider areas of Avon, Somerset and Gloucestershire are included if they are relevant to some aspect of our local history. Books currently available will be priced, where this is known. Those now out of print should be available at either Keynsham Public Library or in the Reference Libraries in Bath and Bristol.

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McGrath, Patrick (ed), *Religious Buildings in Keynsham*, Keynsham Civic Society, 1983, price 90p.

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