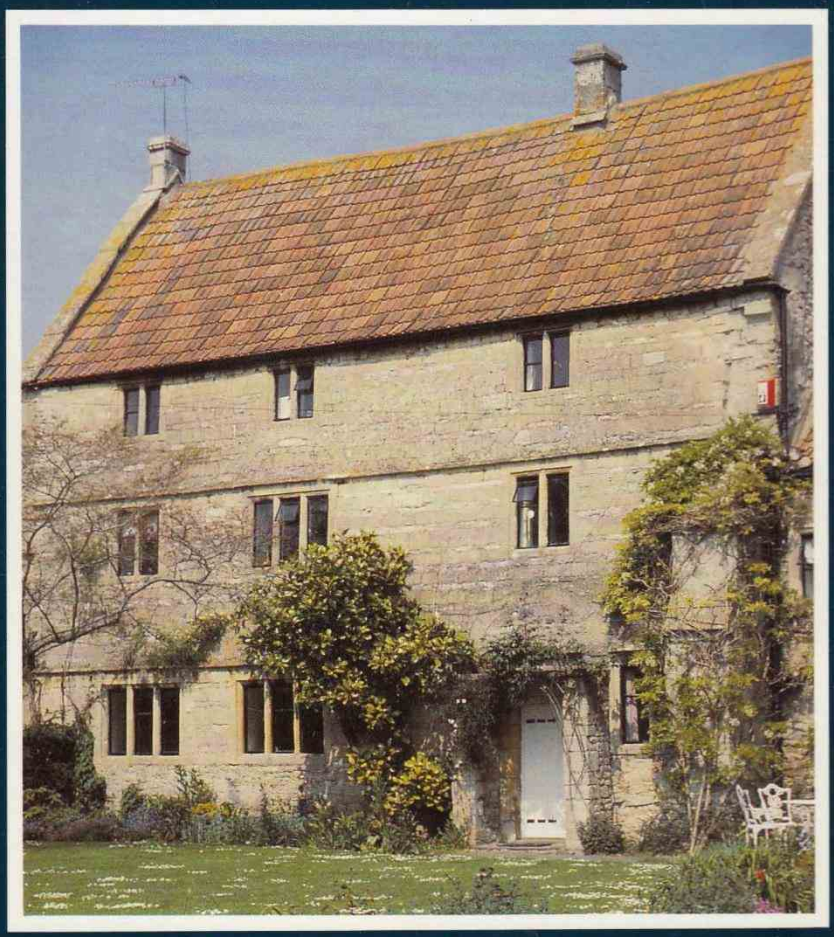
KEYNSHAM
and
SALTFORD



Life and Work in Times Past

1539 - 1945

Keynsham and Saltford

Life and Work in Times Past 1539-1945

Keynsham and Saltford Life and Work in Times Past 1539-1945

Produced by the
Keynsham and Saltford
Local History Society

Edited by Elizabeth White

First published 1990

ISBN 095121530

Published by Keynsham and Saltford Local History Society. Typesetting

by RPP, Chipping Manor, Wotton-under-Edge,
Gloucestershire GL12 7AD

Digitally scanned and converted to PDF and searchable Word files
as authorized by Keynsham and Saltford Local History Association
Feb 2015
Original page numbering retained
Bibliography and Sources – Please Note: The original text duplicated and omitted some source numbers and did not always reference sources in strict numerical sequence

The authors dedicated this book with respect and affection to MARY FAIRCLOUGH in recognition of all she has done to promote interest in the history of Keynsham and Saltford

Contents

Introduction

There have been many requests for a reliable history of Keynsham and Saltford, but the Keynsham and Saltford Local History Society has been somewhat diffident in responding to them. A major reason for this is not the Committee's reluctance to turn author, but an awareness of the difficulty of the task. The main source of these difficulties is the absence or non-availability of source materials. The Abbey records have disappeared. The Whitmores sold the manor of Keynsham in 1767 and the manorial records have largely disappeared, although a remnant has been found in Shropshire. The papers of the Bridges family who bought the Abbey site, formed part of the papers of the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos at Stowe, which were bought by Henry Huntingdon, and are now in the Huntingdon Library in California and hardly accessible to local historians. Saltford was never dominated by a great family that kept extensive records. Keynsham had no Enclosure Act. It did not have a Town Council until 1938 and so lacks town council records. It was not a Parliamentary constituency, so there are no election records.

The Church and Chapel reports are incomplete. This makes the writing of a local history difficult, necessitating the collection of fragments of information from a wide variety of other sources. However, Keynsham does have an interesting history, and the Committee has endeavored to reflect this using such source materials as have been found. The Committee chose to begin at at he Dissolution of Keynsham Abbey in 1539 for several reasons: it did mark a great change in Keynsham's fortunes; by doing so the amount of material to be searched was reduced to what the Committee felt could be covered in a book of this size, and there are already some books on Roman Keynsham and Keynsham Abbey. Each chapter is the work of the author whose name is given at the head of the chapter. Sources are listed at the end. The Society will be pleased to be informed of any errors or inaccuracies and of the existence of any documents that have not been consulted.

We regret that cost has prevented the inclusion of the colour plates mentioned in the text

FRONT COVER illustration is of SALTFORD MANOR

BACK COVER illustration is of Keynsham Manor

ERRATA

Pages 9/10	Photographic captions transposed
Page 21	RHS line 5, last word should read 'Hempshurd'
Page 29	RHS photograph caption should read 'Logwood Mill'
Page 89	LHS line 9, word 8, should read 'Leet,
Page 90	LHS line 10, word 4 should read 'Butler'

Note on measurements and money

I mile = 1.6km
1 foot = about 30cm
3 feet = I yard (just under 1m)
1 shilling = 12d (5 new pence)

1

Rich and Poor

Elizabeth White

THE RICH IN KEYNSHAM

In 1539 by orders of Henry VIII, Keynsham Abbey, like all the monasteries and abbeys in the country, was dissolved, its monks pensioned off, the lead stripped from its roof, its bells sold. For Keynsham it was the end of an era.

After the Dissolution, Keynsham was dominated for about 300 years by the two great families who bought the land - the Bridges and the Whitmores. The Bridges bought the Abbey land and eventually built a Mansion House, which remained until 1775. They continued to own property here until 1854 when the family went bankrupt The last property sales were in 1858. The Whitmores bought the Manor and Hundred of Keynsham in 1613, but never lived here. Their Keynsham lands had all been sold by 1767. The two families had a great influence long after their actual presence was gone. These non-resident landlords affected the town's development in two main ways. There was little large scale investment in either Keynsham industry or agriculture. Keynsham did not expand as rapidly as did other places in the 19th Century, despite having many advantages ·including good communications and nascent industries. The other effect was that Keynsham was largely left to organize its own affairs. By the mid 19th Century there were no resident gentry and no Great House. Keynsham was controlled by business and professional men, shopkeepers and farmers. Throughout the period Keynsham showed a marked independence from external authority and a determination to do things its own way.

THE BRIDGES FAMILY

Sir Thomas Bridges[1] of Cornbury in Oxfordshire bought Keynsham Abbey and its lands from Edward VI in 1552 for £922.2s.2d, but he never lived here. For his money he got the lands and Abbey site. The Abbey had been despoiled of its bells, its lead roof, stone and much else besides. Occasionally Abbey remains turn up in unexpected places. Renovations in the High Street in 1988 revealed carved Abbey wood and stone built into other properties. Sir Thomas also gained the granges of Eastover and Westover. Eastover has been identified as Eastover Farm along Manor Road, whose farm buildings have recently been converted into dwellings. Westover has not been positively identified, but may have been in the Lockingwell Road area He also gained a holding at Stockwood, the Chapel and sanctuary of St Ann in the Wood, Brislington, with the house and wood nearby, called Newyke, the wood of Hancliffe below the Parish of West Hanham and a close of land called Cosyners Lease near Warley Wood.

This Sir Thomas died in 1559 and was succeeded by his son Henry.[2] Henry Bridges, unlike his father, held no court appointments, and lived much of his life at Tangley Hall in Oxfordshire, but when he died in 1587 he was buried in St John's Church, Keynsham. His monument is on the left of the altar. As owners of the Greater Tithe, the Bridges had the right to present a candidate to the living and the right to be buried in the Chancel which they had to maintain.

He was succeeded by his son, Sir Thomas, who was made a knight in 1603. He was the first Bridges to live here. He died in 1621 aged 54. In the intervening years he had been very active in local affairs. He was a local JP and attended the Quarter Sessions in Wells, Taunton, Bridgwater and Illchester. Sir Thomas and Mr. Francis Baber of Chew Magna were assigned to the NE division of the County and after 1605 were required to meet mid term to see to the maintenance of law and order and the administration of the Poor law. Pensford was a convenient meeting place and they usually met there.

The mansion built on the Abbey site may have been built in his time, doubtless from Abbey stone. Prior to this the family probably used the former Abbot's Lodging. The mansion is described as superb and elegant with one of the finest chimney pieces in the country. Sadly, subsequent generations did not think so. It was described by the Dowager Duchess of Buckingham as draughty and the site was sold in 1775. The vendor was requested to raze the site to ground level, which accounts for the fact that no trace of it remains today.[3]

Sir Thomas died suddenly before making a will. He, too, was buried in St John's Church, to which he and his wife Elizabeth Hyde of Kingston Lisle had given an oak screen, now on the south side of the Chancel. He was succeeded by his son Edward, who was nothing like so active in local affairs as his father. He did not even contribute much to the rebuilding of the Church after it was extensively damaged by the collapse of the Old Spire, though he did give permission for stone to be quarried from the Abbey walls to rebuild the new Western Tower.[4]. He had married, advantageously, Philipa Speke, daughter of George Speke of White Lackington and Dillington. She

died young in 1628 at the age of 34, probably in child birth, though all seven of her children lived to maturity. Her children are mentioned in the bequests of her father George Speke's will. Amy got a pair of virginals, she, Philipa, Elizabeth and Catherine got 3 coach horses (the 4th was lame "and not worth the giving") and Edward was given a young sorrel gelding with a white face and black mane and tail.

When Edward Bridges died in 1638 his eldest son, Thomas, was "beyond the seas", possibly on the Grand Tour, the fashion for which was just beginning. He had to return home and at 22 assume responsibility for all his brothers and sisters, now without father or mother.

On his return he married Anne Rodney, daughter of Sir Edward Rodney of Rodney Stoke. She became a rich heiress and inherited Rodney Stoke on the death of her father. In 1641 Charles l knighted Thomas and he remained a staunch Royalist for the rest of his life.

SIR THOMAS, KEYNSHAM AND SALTFORD IN THE CIVIL WAR, 1642 - 1649

The Civil War was fought between Charles I and Parliament over supremacy in Church and State.[5] The people of Keynsham and Saltford were dragged into this conflict regardless. When Charles I raised his standard at Nottingham in August 1642 local people had to choose whether to support him or Parliament. Up to 1642 there had been widespread discontent in Somerset with Charles l over his financial exactions and religious policy. He had exacted Ship Money (money supposedly levied from coastal towns to maintain the fleet) three times from the whole county. Its collection had strained the loyalty of local Justices of the Peace and constables. Bishop Piers of Bath and Wells had vigorously enforced Archbishop Laud's ordinances concerning Church furnishing and worship. It was this which gave us many "Jacobean" altar rails and furnishings.

The times were hard, for plague had visited the area several times in the 1630's. Subsidies granted by Parliament to finance the war against the Scots further added to local people's burdens. In July 1638 a presentment made at County Assizes at Bath complained that heavy taxation meant high prices because "it causes farmers to sell their grain at high rates to support their charge, by which labourers are not able to get sufficient sustenance and is the cause of many thefts and felonies"[6]. In 1640 all the Somerset MPs had spoken against Ship money and the changes in religion.

However, when it came to the challenge, Somerset as a whole remained loyal to the King, but Bath and its neighbourhood did not. Keynsham was a strongly Parliamentarian area, despite having an ardent royalist, Sir Thomas Bridges, in residence. The reason for this probably lies in the strength of loyal personalities in specific local conditions. Sir Thomas was no match for the zeal and enthusiasm of three local men, all ardent supporters of Parliament William Prynne of Swainswick; John Ashe, a wealthy clothier from Freshford and Alexander Popham, heir of Littlecote and MP for Bath. These were ably supported by John Harington of Kelston. Keynsham was thus Parliamentarian in politics, and Presbyterian in religion in these years. Keynsham suffered much from both armies, by heavy financial imposition, by quartering of troops and by disease, which followed in the wake of the armies.

In 1642 Parliament had established County Committees to collect money or plate to maintain horsemen or arms. Keynsham responded generously. Forty people lent £82.15s in money or plate and others provided horses. Robert Bagnall, the Constable of Keynsham, gave "one horse with his furniture and 28s with muskett, sword and bandileers, value £6.10s[7]". Other well-known local families contributed -Nathaniell Saunders, Mr. Flower (from Saltford), Steven Radford (a future Church Warden), John Stibbins (a donor to the Feofees), along with Robert Ford (another future Church Warden) and Thomas Rawlins, all names that occur frequently in 17th century documents. They also had to send supplies to relieve distress in Ireland. Keynsham had to send "77 bushells of pease beans and barley, 80 cheeses", plus quantities of beef and bacon.[8]

Soon voluntary contributions were inadequate and a weekly assessment was imposed on each individual householder. Somerset was expected to find £1,050 each week. In addition, the local villages had to contribute to the support of the garrisons of Bath and Bristol Small wonder that John Ashe wrote to Nathaniell Fiennes on 1 June 1643, "the inhabitants and counstables of the hundred of Keynsham bring in very little money, alleging that they are eaten up and charged more than comes to thire share by the Bristol Troopers and Dragooners..."[9] Things were not to improve. In 1643 Charles made a determined effort to seize Bristol and Bath[10]• Keynsham saw Sir William Waller's men come to bolster the Bristol garrison which included Alexander Popham's Bath Regiment. Waller was desperately short of money and had to quarter his men on the countryside around Bath. From June 1643 the area south of Bath was overrun with Parliamentary soldiers. The conflict culminated between 2nd and 5th July when the two sides fought the Battle of Lansdown, the noise of which was audible in Keynsham and as far as Bristol. Tactically it was a Royalist victory, and they occupied Bath, though Sir William Waller's army retreated intact to Wiltshire.

However, on 13 July 1643 he was decisively defeated at the Battle of Roundway Down near Devizes. The pressure was now on Bristol. Men loyal to Parliament flocked to defend it. Robert Bagnall raised a company of foot from Keynsham. During the course of the siege, he, Richard Hippisley of Cameley, and Latimer Sampson of Freshford urged Nathaniell Fiennes, the Governor of Bristol, to counter-attack and seal a breach in the walls, but were told to withdraw. Once their men were left in Wine Street for two hours, discipline disappeared, along with the men to the nearby taverns. Prince Rupert brilliantly co-ordinated the attack, and after a four-day siege, Bristol, the second city in the country, fell into Charles' hands.

Changing a Parliamentary master for a Royalist one did not improve things for the local people. Most people tried to live as before, and struggled to get a living. But the evidence of the war was everywhere: wounded soldiers and prisoners had to be supported. Disease was rampant, especially in Bristol. Charles and his son soon left the City for Bath, which was believed to be healthier. Financial exactions were heavier than ever. Somerset had to provide the King with £2,000 each week.[11] The local inhabitants were less willing to support the King's cause than they had been Parliament's. The required amount was never achieved. Charles even used Irish troops commanded by Ridgeley to coerce money from the local people. Ridgeley was soon replaced as Governor of Bath by Sir Thomas Bridges. His new position gave him a salary of £7 per week,[12] a house provided by the Council, with an annual linen allowance of £10, and a present at Christmas "of one hoggshead of Clarrett and 2 or 3 sugar loaves."[13] Sir Thomas now had the task of raising

money for Charles' cause and finding free quarters for the soldiers. · By 1645 the tide was turning against Charles. After the victory of Naseby on 14 June l645, the New Model Army turned its attention to the West. Part of the plan was to take Bath prior to taking Bristol. Sir Thomas Bridges proved quite inadequate as a Governor of Bath. Prince Rupert in Bristol was aware of the weak Bath Garrison and that Sir Thomas Bridges "was quite out of heart to keep it ". Rupert sent 60 men, mostly Welsh, to bolster the garrison. The good citizens of Bath refused to let them in, crying "as one man all against the Welch, No Welch, No Welch." The townspeople were doubtless aware that Bristol was infected with plague. They were also displeased with Sir Thomas Bridges so that they were "not willing to beare Armes". Sir Thomas, too, was reluctant to admit the soldiers because he did not "take it well that he should be displaced and another put in."[14]

Rupert's apprehension about the Bath garrison was well-founded. The following day, Tuesday 29 July, two regiments of Horse under Colonel Rich and two Troops of Dragoons were sent by Fairfax, the Parliamentary Commander, to reconnoitre the situation. They arrived south of the City at dusk and surrounded it.

Inside Bath panic reigned. Sir Thomas, believing that the whole Parliamentarian army was about to descend on the City and hearing rumours of troops' approaching from the North, requested a parley with Colonel Rich. By sunrise, he had surrendered the City, along with all arms, ordnance and ammunitions.[15] All common soldiers were made prisoner. The officers, Bridges included, were to be free to march away with their horse and arms. Sir Thomas left in such haste that his bag and baggage and his personal standard were all left behind. He had surrendered Bath so quickly that Prince Rupert, who had set out with 1,500 horse and foot, heard news of his capture en route. Sir Thomas' cowardice was widely mocked. Doubtless the customers in the local taverns, the Angel, the Lamb and Lark, and the King's Head enjoyed their landlord's humiliation. When Bristol surrendered on 11 September 1645, for the people of Keynsham and Saltford the war was virtually over, but not the exactions it caused. Bath and the villages round about still had to provide food and lodging for a thousand soldiers. The people here would have echoed the cry of the Corporation in Bath, "God preserve our Kingdom from these sad troubles much longer." [16] When King Charles was handed over to Parliament by the Scots to whom he had surrendered there was general rejoicing in this area. Men from Keynsham and Saltford were invited to the celebrations in Bath, and given a pound of tobacco and 3 dozen pipes.[17]

· Sir Thomas Bridges was now a victim of the fortunes of war. A Committee for Sequestrations and Composition had been established to allow royalists to pay a fine to recover their estates. He claimed that the whole value of his estate, £4,000, had been confiscated at the start of the war and so he could not possibly pay the fine demanded, £1,380. He was allowed to pay £868 on condition he handed over the tithes of Keynsham Parish to the Minister, Thomas Codrington-whom, ironically, Thomas Bridges had appointed as Vicar in 1639.[18] Financially these were hard times for Sir Thomas. Bath Corporation were suing him for the recovery of a forced loan of £100.[19] These difficulties may explain the absence of contributions by Sir Thomas to the Church rebuilding fund.

Charles I was executed in January 1649.The country was to be briefly a republic governed on Presbyterian lines. The dominant civil authority in Keynsham was John Harington of Kelston, an ardent Parliamentarian, and convinced Puritan. The area was to be more tightly regulated under Cromwell than it had been under the personal rule of Charles l. Throughout the country the celebrations of Christmas, Easter and Whitsun were forbidden.

Time brought an end to the rule of Oliver Cromwell. In 1660 Charles II was restored to his throne and Sir Thomas to his estates. He began building Chandos Lodge (in Durley Lane), a hunting lodge from which he could look down over Keynsham. The house still stands, though it has been subdivided and much altered. Everywhere local loyalties were re-established. Most former royalists showed little desire to exact revenge.

Sir Thomas was an exception. With Henry Chapman, who had been lieutenant while he was Governor of Bath ,he planned to oust former Parliamentarians, Prynne and Popham as MPs for the city of Bath, putting himself and Sir Charles Berkeley in their place. When the Mayor of Bath would not respond, Sir Thomas tried to get him dismissed by the Privy Council as Mayor of Bath, and replace him with Henry Chapman. This failed. Prynne and Popham were returned by the Council as MPs for Bath. Chapman refused to accept this, declaring that all freemen, not just the Council, should be able to vote. Holding a mock election, he declared that Bridges and Berkeley had been elected. The Commons ruled this out of order, but still the two would not accept defeat On the opening day of Quarter Sessions in Bath they kidnapped nine members of the Corporation and held them prisoner 40 miles from the City to disrupt the election of the Mayor. They were all summoned before the Privy Council and rebuked for their squabbles. Henry Chapman was dismissed, and Sir Thomas never became MP for Bath. Perhaps his appointment as Deputy lieutenant of Somerset consoled him for this failure. In these years he was active in persecuting Dissenters, especially the Quaker, James Pearce, who had been sequestrator of Sir Thomas' estates during the troubles.[20]

Sir Thomas had his own personal troubles. In 1661his son, Thomas, was made a Knight of the Bath in recognition of his father's services to Charles l during the war. Within two months he was dead. His sorrowing parents raised a magnificent monument to his memory, on the right of the altar in St John's Church. ·

Sir Thomas seems to have been associated with the Duke of York, who became King James ll in 1685. In 1674 Sir Thomas and his wife had been present with Sir John Churchill (one of the Duke's entourage) at a notorious dinner given for Barbara Villiers, Countess of Castlemayne a mistress of Charles ll, at the Three Tuns Tavern. Sir Thomas' pro-royalist sympathies were evident in the Monmouth Rebellion.

THE BRIDGES AND THE MONMOUTH REBELLION

The accession of Roman Catholic James ll, on the death of his brother Charles ll, caused great Protestant alarm, especially in the West of England, where the Nonconformist tradition was strong.[21] When James, Duke of Monmouth, landed in Lyme Bay on 11 June 1685 he soon found supporters. By the 18 June he had reached Taunton, and received a tumultuous welcome. However, his support was from ordinary· people, labourers, artisans and tradespeople; very few wealthy or titled people joined him. By the 18 June he was planning an attack on Bristol, with probably around six or seven thousand men. When

Monmouth reached Pensford, a dull glow lit up the night sky - a ship on fire in Bristol docks.[22] It was widely believed that the Duke of Beaufort had threatened to burn the City and all the shipping if Monmouth advanced against the City. Others believed it was a pre-arranged signal by Monmouth supporters because there were some in the City. By 25 June Monmouth and his army occupied Keynsham. The County bridge had been partially broken to try to prevent their crossing the Avon and approaching Bristol from the less-well-defended side. Captain Tiley and a small group had spent the previous night driving off the Gloucestershire Horse Militia, preventing them from fully demolishing the bridge. Repairs were quickly effected and the rebel army was able to file across and camp in Sydenham Mead (field opposite Fry's factory).

Monmouth occupied the Bridges' mansion and the Royalist prisoners who had been taken were lodged in the Bridges' stables. Here they were visited by John Hicks, Keynsham's non-conformist minister. Monmouth's army was driven from the Mead by a sudden downpour and took refuge in the town.

During the evening Monmouth's men suffered two independent Royalist attacks.[23] Colonel Oglethorpe, with about 100 men in a scouting patrol attacked from the South, and Colonel Parker, having swum the river, rode along the south bank of the river with 150 of Faversham's troopers. Monmouth sent a lookout up the Church Tower to see what was happening.

When he reported fighting it was widely believed that the rest of the Royalist army was about to fall on them. Monmouth's men repulsed the attackers, though the hand-to-hand fighting had been fierce. One supporter relates that he "came to push of pike" with the Royalists in three passages in the town.[24] The Royalists suffered 20 casualties and three were taken prisoner.

Monmouth then held a Council of War. [25]. Although Monmouth wanted an attack on Bristol he was afraid of Beaufort's retribution on the civilian population. His army was in a poor state, with worn-out shoes after marching 100 miles.[26] A decision was made to strike camp immediately despite the assurances from Bristol that they could infiltrate him into the City and that he would find little resistance. He was desperately short of money for arms, and lacking arms, lacked vital support; "gentlemen" were still not coming to support him.

So the decision was made to march to Bath and try to find support in Wiltshire. It was the turning point in the rebellion. Even a supporter of James II, John Reresby, said, "Had Monmouth obtained a victory it was much to be feared that the disaffected would have risen in such numbers in the several parts of England as to have made the crown precarious".[27] The departure was hasty. Monmouth abandoned his dinner.[28] The army marched in pouring rain to Bath, where the citizens refused Monmouth entrance. Keynsham was the highest point of his fortunes.

The sequel is a sad story. By 3 July, Monmouth was in Bridgwater, harried by Royalist troops gathering in great numbers. He had shown ability as a commander in fighting Royalist cavalry at Norton St Philip, but his untrained and ill-armed men were no match for trained troops in a set-piece battle. The final tragedy was at Sedgemoor, near Westonzoyland, where Monmouth tried a surprise attack on the Royalist army, marching from Bridgwater, in the dark and in silence, over the Levels and across the Rhines. They so nearly succeeded in a surprise attack, but they were slaughtered by the Royalist army in the ensuing battle.

The outcome is well known. Monmouth was captured, tried and executed, suffering horribly from an inept executioner. Judge Jeffreys was sent to try all those who had been captured, or were believed to have sympathised with Monmouth. There are many legends associated with his name and the documents bear witness to the ferocity of the punishment he meted out. He was, however, required to report all back to James II and acted under orders. From South Somerset probably a quarter of the male population had marched with Monmouth. Probably 1,000 had died at Sedgemoor and about 1,000 were tried in assizes around the South West. Legend remembers Judge Jeffreys gloating over the executions; he is said to have tried prisoners in almost every small town. In fact they were tried at Assize Towns such as Wells, Dorchester, Bath and Taunton. The executions were carried out elsewhere. Records show that he ordered 11 men, whose names are listed in a warrant to the. Sheriff of Somerset to be hanged at Keynsham. [29] 0ther records state that only 6 actually were hanged.[30] The site was probably near Lichfield Lodge on Bath Hill. They had all been sentenced at Taunton on 19 September 1685. Its seems unlikely that these were Keynsham men as the names are unfamiliar:-

Charles Chapman	Richard Bowden
Thomas Trocke	Lewis Harris
Edward Halswell	Howell Thomas
George Badoe(Baddoe or Badd)	Richard Evans
John Winter	Andrew Rounsell
John Phillelrey	

It seems more likely that these were men from somewhere else whose execution would not arouse too much local sympathy. They were not given Church burial and there is no record in the registers. We do not yet know where Keynsham men were executed.

We do know what happened to John Hicks.[31] He had escaped after Sedgemoor and had been sheltered and given hospitality by the aged Dame Alice Lisle of Moyles Court. She was tried at Winchester and found guilty of harbouring rebels and executed. Hicks was accused of urging others to join Monmouth. His last letters to his wife Elizabeth are extant and reveal his anxiety for the danger she was in. "My dear, be very cautious not to speak one word, lest it be wrested in a wrong sence, which may ruin you." His farewell is especially poignant, and may serve for all the others unable through illiteracy to contact their families either before execution or transportation. "Farewell my dear, farewell in the Lord, until we meet to be married to Him forever. My heart is as full of love to thee as it was the first day I married thee, and if God spar'd my life it should have been as fully manifested until Death."[32]

He was tried at Wells, where 500 were tried and sentenced in a day. He was executed at Glastonbury, and due to the intervention of the saintly Bishop Ken, buried in Glastonbury Church. Two hundred and fifty pickled heads and one thousand quarters of corpses were displayed at crossroads, bridges and other prominent places until James ordered their removal.

Many of the prisoners were sentenced to transportation to the West Indies. There are no Keynsham names in the extant lists, but as there are very few names from any North Somerset towns or villages it may simply be that names from these areas went unrecorded. Many found it necessary to lie low, while Commissioners seized the goods of any who had been involved in the rebellion. The Constable in Keynsham was required to go to the Assizes to answer concerning "those who had been out

of the Parish in the time of the late rebellion."[33] We have no record of Keynsham names, but John Boulter and John Harris of Queen Charlton are recorded as being absent and not returned."[34] The effects of the rebellion on Somerset were many, not least in lack of men and the hardship of the widows. A general pardon was issued in 1686 and the West settled down to endure the rest of James ll's reign, and to rejoice with the advent of Protestant William and Mary in 1689. Tradition says that the Almshouses in Bristol Road which Sir Thomas founded about 1685 were for the widows of men killed in the rebellion (see plate 11). In view of his Royalist views it seems unlikely that these were Monmouth's supporters. Sir Thomas also gave a large donation to establish the Feoffees Charity. He died at the age of 90 in 1706/7. His will reveals his flair for business, being full of business transactions, though sadly he did not tie up satisfactorily the endowment of the Free School which he had established on a site next to the old Vicarage.

SIR HENRY BRIDGES

He was succeeded by his son Henry, or Harry (see plate 5). He was an able man, a linguist and well-travelled. He served as a magistrate for 50 years, and his bold signature can be found on many documents. His first wife was Diane Holles, daughter of the Earl of Clare, but they had no son from this marriage. He did have a son, James, born in Wells in 1697 whom he recognised (see plate 7). James was given his father's name. He became a lawyer and prospered. He married Mary Creswicke of the well known Hanham family (see plate 8). He kept a Memorandum Book which gives many details of life in Keynsham in the 1730's and 1740's.[35] We do not know where he lived, but it had fine freestone chimneys and a stone urn, brought by water from Bath. The house had ample cellars, judging by the quantities of beer and cider stored there, and a "closett" where he stored brandy, rum and port. He had much trouble with his servants, probably in the case of his men servants because they received only bed, board and uniform, but no wages other "than I shall think proper to give him for pockett money." On one occasion he sacked his maid because she hanged his dog. We learn of highlights in the life of the town, like the visit of the Prince of Orange, and mundane details like an inventory of his shoes, and extraordinary details like a vivid dream "that AB was in bed with CD with his Boots on." We have not yet been able to trace who James' mother was, because his birth was not registered. His Memorandum Book is referred to in other chapters of this book. James became Steward of his father's estates in North Somerset in 1718, which was soon after he had finished his apprenticeship to a Bristol attorney, for which his father had paid.

In the autumn of his life, Harry married Elizabeth Freeman, daughter of a Bristol gentleman (see plate 6). She caused a great scandal when in 1728 she announced she was pregnant. Harry was furious, and, declaring it could not possibly be his child, disowned her and her offspring. Elizabeth eventually produced twins-both girls- so the estate could not go to them -nor could it go to James, the illegitimate son to whom Harry left all that he could in his will. To Elizabeth, his wife, he left one shilling. He died soon after his wife's revelations. Elizabeth later remarried, but brought her daughters up to regard Harry as their father.

The estate in Keynsham passed to Harry's nephew, George Rodney Bridges of Avington in Hampshire. He was the son of George Rodney Bridges (Harry's brother) and Anne Maria Brudenell. She was very wealthy, but one of the most notorious women of her day. Men fought duels for her favours. In 1666 the Dukes of Buckingham and Shrewsbury fought over her, and Shrewsbury and a second were killed. Anne Maria was a witness to this episode, disguised as a page. George Rodney Bridges appears to have tamed this wild young woman and they seem to have lived happily together. Their son, George, lived most of his life at Avington, and as he had no children, on his death the Keynsham and Avington estate passed to his cousin, James Brydges, Duke of Chandos, the most famous member of the family.[36]

THE DUKE OF CHANDOS

He was the patron of Handel; the builder of Cannons, regarded by Defoe as the most magnificent mansion house in England; and Paymaster of the troops abroad. He made an estimated £600,000 from the office in 8 years. He combined "eternal optimism within curable credulity." He invested in a multiplicity of ventures, from oyster farming to soap making, very many of which failed. His attempt at coal mining in Keynsham is a case in point. In 1730 he persuaded his cousin, George Bridges of Avington, to allow him to put up the money for a mining venture. He had been persuaded that there was coal in Keynsham. He did make enquiries locally about the likely success of the scheme, and was told that his cousin, Harry Bridges, had explored the possibilities of mining coal profitably and abandoned the scheme. But when Mr. Bowman, the Duke's expert, found not one but three seams of coal- one of which was 40" thick, his enthusiasm revived; "Success will answer in every respect".

The coal was, however, in 8 fathoms of water oozing from the Avon. Then the miners hit solid rock. At this point Bowman decamped. The Duke turned to the other experts, who told him that the seam lay so deep in water, it was not worth working. There was nothing to do but pay off the miners and try to compensate cousin George, still the owner of the property, for the inconvenience and disfigurement the mining had caused. It is possible that these mines were in the area north-west of Durley lane, which was land owned by the Bridges, and close to the Avon.

Keynsham was owned by the Dukes of Chandos throughout the 18th century and managed by an agent. The Dukes had increased the size of their estate, buying up property including the mills. The Third Duke of Chandos had no male heir, so his estate passed to his daughter Anna, Baroness Kinloss. She was married at 17 to Richard Grenville, Earl Temple. In 1822 he was created the First Duke of Buckingham and Chandos. Anna kept personal control of her estates. Her consent was necessary before any portion of these was sold. Richard, nicknamed "Blubberhead", was incapable of living within his means. In 1827 they had to live abroad for 2 years to escape their creditors. He had no notion of reducing his expenditure. When it was suggested that as he had a French chef and an English roasting cook, he might dismiss his Italian confectioner, he was horrified. "Good God!" he cried. "Mayn't a man have a biscuit with his glass of sherry?"

His successor, the Second Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, needed money quickly and in 1841 put the Keynsham estate up for sale. It was 4,000 acres including several farms, Eastover, Stockwood Park, Ham and Garston, the Crown Inn, the Fox and

Hounds, quarries and wharfs on the Avon, and 1,183 acres- the original estate were tithe free. The estate did not sell en bloc – possibly because the GW Railway had cut the estate in two. As it was only recently built, all the embankments and cuttings were still raw and devoid of cover.

The land in Keynsham was sold off piecemeal. In 1857 Edwin Newman of Yeovil purchased the bulk of the remaining 462 acres for £30,000. The last vestiges, consisting of the rectorial tithes and rent charge of £85.10s, some plots of land, including Hawkswell, the land around Lodge Farm (the old hunting lodge), the right of fishing in the river at Saltford and lopping trees on the banks of the Avon, were sold in September 1858. So ended the connection between the Bridges and Keynsham.

And the family? In 1854 the Second Duke of Buckingham and Chandos went bankrupt and all had to be sold, including the great house at Stowe. The world and his wife came to view. The Times described the scene as like the road to Epsom on Derby Day. The Duke's long-suffering wife finally divorced him. He ended up living in a Paddington Hotel. The title of Ear1 Temple had been created in 1799 for Richard Grenville. It was this title that William Stephen Gore Langton of Newton Park, a nephew of the third Duke took. It was from this title that Temple Street in Keynsham took its name.

THE WHITMORE FAMILY

While the Abbey lands were in the hands of the Bridges, the Manor of Keynsham (the village lands) remained with the Crown. Between 1539 and 1613, when James l sold it, the Manor may well have been administered by a "Dapifer", a Royal Steward, whose title is still attached to a house in Dapps Hill which is of an age to have been lived in by such an official.

The Manor and hundred of Keynsham were purchased from James I in 1613 by Ann Whitmore, widow of a wealthy London merchant; William Whitmore (see plate 3). The family originally were yeomen farmers from Claverley near Bridgnorth, but with the business acumen of William, acquired land and other investments all over Britain. William also lent money at very high rates of interest and traded with Spain. His widow continued to acquire wealth. She gained the leases on all the town mills in 1595, which she promptly released at a higher rate. The Whitmores were an extremely wealthy family. They owned land in Staffordshire, Hertfordshire, Buckingham, Middlesex, Cheshire, Somerset and Gloucester as well as smaller properties in Cumberland, Hampshire, Camarthen, Brecon, Sussex and Yorkshire as well as 12,000 acres in Shropshire, where they built a huge mansion on the River Severn at Apley near Bridgnorth.

·Ann bought the Manor and Hundred of Keynsham for £3,835. For this she got "all sites, messuages, mills, assize of bread, beer, felons goods, deodands, faires, markets, free warren and all franchises as freely as the Abbot held them":

They were far too grand to have lived in Keynsham although there is a 17th century house now called the Old Manor House. The only reference to a Manor House is in 1683 when Sir Wil1iam Whitmore leased it to Rowland Thrupp. Sir Thomas Whitmore did come to Hotwells, Bristol, to take the waters, but there is only one reference to prove that they visited the town. In Martin Innys, the Steward's accounts for 1734 is the entry,

·"By expenses at Keynsham when you was there. £13.2s.6d."

They had bought the Manor of Keynsham as an investment. They made their money from rents, heriots and legal fees for the renewal of leases. Customary tenants (those who had no deeds, but paid rent according to village custom) paid about £70 a half year. Some paid only a few pence, a few as much as £5. In 1729, only one paid as much as £20. The main source of income was from fines for the renewal of leases. When a tenant wished to take out a new lease, or add a life to an existing lease, he could do so at a price. The annual income from these fines varied, but was usually over £1,000 per annum. The highest amount paid in 1734 was £550 for the lease of a "capital messuage," the same amount that the Champions paid to lease the town mills. Heriots provided an additional small income. This was the fee paid by an incoming tenant on the death of the previous tenant. Originally the tenant's best beast, it was by the 16th century commuted to a money payment.

In the absence of the landlord, Keynsham was administered by a succession of stewards. The Whitmore's stewards either lived in or held the farm, (still standing), called Rookhill in Wellsway. This may have been a perk of the job. In the 17th century, at Rookhill lived Robert Randall and his daughter, who married Andrew lnnys, Steward for more than 40 years till his death in 1729. His younger brother, Martin, then took over. Andrew and Martin both lived in Bristol and acquired considerable wealth. Andrew's daughter married John Cosyns who built Redland Court. It was the Steward's job to hold the Manor Court (the Court Baron to register tenancy charges and the Court Leet to try petty offences) twice a year (See Chapter 8).

In the 17th century the estate was carefully administered . All rent rolls etc. were returned to the Estate office in Bridgnorth for checking and any discrepancies noted. Some of these rent rolls with the queries attached still exist Then they were filed in boxes, along with maps, accounts, leases and deeds. Sadly, many have disappeared. Only a fragment of the documents relating to the estate have survived. In the 18th century, the estate was not carefully managed. The family who had been so good at making money proved even better at spending it. William Whitmore's successors did not have the preoccupations with business and farming that he did. The Keynsham lands were not improved, nor was their industrial potential realised. Keynsham did not share in the great wealth generated by the woollen industry in the West of England that can still be seen in the buildings of Frome, Bradford on Avon and Trowbridge, nor was the potential of the metal industries fully developed.

The income from the Keynsham lands began to decline. Martin lnnys, the Steward, wrote in 1732, 'The reason that the estate's lessen so much in value in the West Country is owing to the improvement made by french grass, clover etc. on the hills, for formerly the hill countrymen sent down their sheepe and cattle to fat, and now they fat them themselves which must certainly lessen the Estate very much." The effect on Keynsham of having two absentee families was considerable. For long periods there was not even a visit from the Steward. Martin wrote in 1731, "I thank God I am got rid of the gout and propose to put my boots on to goe to Keynsham next Fryday."

So Keynsham was left much to itself from the mid 18th century onwards. It always considered itself a town, though strictly speaking it was still a village. In 1728 a weaver, Henry Bonner, was prosecuted for operating more than 2 looms which was an offence unless the weaver was resident in a town.[40] His defence was that Keynsham was a market town because it had a Royal Charter to hold a market and a fair (see Chapter 8).

Keynsham ran its own affairs, which were managed by small farmers, craftsmen and workers. It was a homogeneous society without the extremes of wealth. The system of agriculture was largely unimproved and industry was relatively small scale.

THE LYNE FAMILY

The Whitmores became increasingly hard-up in the mid 18th century. They sold off small parcels of land and finally mort gaged the whole Manor for £10,000. When the Manor was sold, it was first bought by a London merchant (possibly a money lender) in 1767. Arthur Greenwollers sold off parts of the estate. Many buildings in the High Street/Temple Street were sold, including Cranmore House, the Trout Inn and the site of the former Angel Inn on which the Victoria Methodist Church now stands. The following year he sold the remainder, along with the title of Lord of the Manor, to Edward Lyne. He was a wealthy Quaker from Bristol who had acquired this wealth as a successful doctor and businessman, and by inheritance. He had to buy the land and the rights separately, paying Greenwollers £5,213 for a substantially reduced Manor. His son Edward inherited the estate, but his home was at Lansdown Crescent in Bath. He is sometimes described as of Saltford. This could be because he was living at the "Manor" House in Manor Road, or in some other rented property.

Edward Lyne had a struggle to restore the Lord's rights and tried to do so through the Courts.[42] He prosecuted people for fishing and established the right to appoint a Gamekeeper for the whole of the Hundred of Keynsham. He also tried to consolidate his land from the strip scattered in the open fields. Most of the remaining land owned by the Manor was in the Hurn Lane area on the Chandag side of town. He negotiated land exchanges with neighbouring landowners (notably with Samuel Peach of Tockington, who owned the Manor of Chewton Keynsham). It was about this time (early 19th century) that Cottage Farm was renamed Keynsham Manor, which later gave the name to Manor Road. Later members of the Lyne family lived there.

When Edward died he left no heir, so the estate passed to his nephew Richard Harford, a relative of the Harfords of Blaise Castle. He lived in Clapham, London. He was elected as a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1788 and was described as "a Gentleman very conversant with Antiquity, History and Polite literature."[43]

In 1820 Richard Harford adopted the name Lyne. His son, Henry Harford of Balham Hill, did the same in 1827 when Richard died. Henry Harford Lyne died at the Manor House in Manor Road in 1868, and there is a memorial tablet to him in the North aisle of St John's Church. Henry's son was christened Harford. He lived in Keynsham at the "Manor" House and does not seem to have had a London address. He got into financial difficulties, first mortgaging[44], then selling the estate in 1895. It was bought by R D. Commans, a Bath businessman, who is reputed to have made his money from patent dentifrice. When he died the estate passed to a Williams family at Marshfield. In 1923 the estate (or what remained of it) was valued at £16,400. This was largely because of its road frontage, and its potential for housing development So the last vestiges of the Manor were sold: the Manor House with 2 cottages and buildings, Wickhouse Farm with 6 cottages and buildings, and Roundmoor Cottages; in all, 289 acres. It was the end of the Manor of Keynsham, though somewhere, somebody, perhaps unwittingly, still has the right to be called Lord of the Manor of Keynsham.

THE RICH IN SALTFORD

Saltford followed a quite different pattern of development from Keynsham. Today it appears a typical English village with its ancient church and manor house around the village square with the village school and cottages clustered nearby. In fact the Manor House was not so called until the 20th century, and the history of the village's development is much more complex than it appears on the surface.

THE MANORS OF SALTFORD

The critical factor in the way Saltford developed was its division in the early Middle Ages into at least 2 estates, both called the Manor of Saltford.

At the time of the Domesday Book (1085) it was a single manor, part of the holding of the Bishop of Coutances, but his family lost their estates when Robert de Mowbray rebelled against the Crown in 1095. Saltford became a manor in the Honour of Gloucester. In return for his estate the holder of the manor was requested to do, or pay for, knight service for the King. By 1295, Saltford was divided between the Baoicis and the Basset families: each provided a quarter of a knight's fee.[45] Some of the land was held directly by the holder of the Honour of Gloucester.

In 1306 Thomas de Baoicis sold his estate in Saltford to Richard de Rodney for 100 marks (£33.6s8d).[46] The Rodney family thus held a major part of Saltford right through the Middle Ages, though they never lived there as far as we can tell. The Dissolution of the Monasteries made little difference to Saltford because the village was never owned by a monastery, and Saltford Manor was never a monastic house.

Great changes came to Saltford in 1601, when Sir George Rodney died childless.[47] He is reputed to have committed sui-. cide by falling on his sword out of unrequited love for Frances Howard, Countess of Hertford. His estates, centered on Rodney Stoke, were then divided into three parts, held by his sister Dorothy (married to Rice Davies of Tickenham), by Francis Trenchard, nephew of Sir George's sister, Jane, and the heirs of Sir John Rodney, his brother, who inherited the title. Everything was divided into three parts. Leases for Saltford property still survive relating to a third of a cottage and a third of a mill. Even the advowson of the Church (the right to present the next candidate for the living) was divided into three. A deed exists detailing the sale of half of a third part of the advowson of the Church at Saltford, though how anyone exercised such a fraction of a right remains a mystery. None of the three owners of this "Rodney" manor lived in Saltford. The village was tenanted by yeoman farmers with a multiplicity of leases, which must have kept the lawyers happy.

In 1621 Rice Davies leased out and then in 1627 sold to Lamorock Flower "third of all that capital mansion House or Farm Place of Saltford",for"102.12s" [48]This is the family which was connected with Saltford and with this house until l946, when Noel Flower sold the house for £900. The unusual Christian name Lamorock is the name of one of King Arthur's knights. The house which the Flowers bought was not known as the Manor House until the 20th century. Previously it was known as Lower Farm (1784), Old Barton (1839), Court Farm (1861), Court House (1894).

The estate in which the Flowers had bought a share was about 110 acres, some of it a1ready enclosed, especially the fields near the church, like Culverhay Close, but much of it was still open field, and village pasture lands such as Upfield, Downfield, Upmead and the Common Mead. The Flowers probably began the alteration of the old Medieval Manor House with its first floor Hall and Solar at about this time. The Hall was divided and a floor inserted, crossing a medieval window. Fine chimney pieces were inserted, and stone piered windows on the South side. In one of the bedrooms is a mantelpiece bearing the date 1637 and the initials LF and AF. This probably commemorates Lamorock and his wife Ann (nee Brode) whom he had married in 1621.Another fireplace in the main downstairs room has the date 1645 and the initials LF, AF and E. The E probably stands for Elizabeth Goodhind, married to Lamorock Flower possibly in 1645.

The Flower family did not own all the house until the 18th century.[49] 1n1755 they leased, and in 1784 they bought for £933, "two full third parts of all that capital messuage or tenement. In Saltford otherwise Saltford in the County of Somerset commonly called or known by the name of Lower Farm", and about 100 acres from the Duke of Chandos. The Flowers were expressly excluded from the full manorial rights as lord of Two Third Parts of the Manor, so that although the Manor Court was probably held on their premises in the so called "Magistrates Room" they only received a third of the profits, which they were entitled to from Lamorock Flower's original purchase in 1627. The other two thirds went to the Bridges and later to the Dukes of Chandos. Sir Thomas Bridges had bought Sir Edward Rodney's share (he had married Anna, one of Edward's daughters) and the Trenchard share.

When the Dukes became increasingly hard up they sold their two thirds of the manorial rights on several occasions. So by the 20th century the lord of the Manor of Saltford was a third Flower, two thirds Earl Temple.

The Flowers were a large and scattered family, with members living at Chewton Mendip, Emborough, Bitton and Kelston, as well as Keynsham and Saltford. Relations between the different families were not always friendly. In 1807 there was an extensive and lengthy lawsuit between George and Lamorock Flower over the exact division of the lands and income they had from Saltford and Bitton, supposedly in common. The Flowers continued to live and work in Saltford. In the 1851 census,Lamorock Flower, aged 43 and unmarried, lived at the Court House with his brother, Thomas. By 1861 the house is described as "Court House Farm", and Lamorock employed 5 men and 2 boys on his 120 acres. By the 1871 census, Lamorock had retired from active farming. In 1878, the Flower family moved and let the farm to tenant farmers. They had occupied the house for 257 years. When the last tenant farmer left in 1934, the house was unoccupied and semi-derelict. In 1939 Saltford Scouts used it as their Headquarters. When Noel Flower sold it in 1946, the family had owned it for 325years. It is now restored as a private house which is not open to the public.

The other half of Saltford, the Manor of Saltford, belonging to the Basset family has been much more difficult to trace. The estate passed through several families due to the lack of male heirs. From the Bassets it went to the Romseys and then to the Horseys of Marten in Wiltshire. [50] Then in 1574 William Goodhind bought the Manor of Saltford from Bartholemew Horsey.[51] William was the great grandson of John and Edith Godehyne (c1450-1500), the first recorded members of the Goodhind family which had probably moved from Bitton in the 15th century. The family can be traced back 14 generations. William, like his father, John, was a clothier and a prosperous one too. He bought "the lordship and manor of Saulforde, with the capital messuage" for £306. Included in the sale were 4 small farms or tenements, each with land allocated to it, called Braynes Taites Fryes and Racards. It has not been possible to identify which properties these were. Together with the land he had inherited from his father, John Goodhind, William was now a wealthy man.

Just how wealthy can be seen in his widow's will. William died in 1583, but his wife Alice survived unti1 1614/15. Her will mentions several rooms in her house, including the "zolar" where the "grate bed" was. Her bed was in the parlour. By the standards of that time she had a considerable amount of property to bequeath. She left her feather bed and bedstead, feather bolster, sheets, blankets, canvas coverlet, pillowcase and towel (plus two ewes) to her granddaughter, Sapience Sturridge. She left the "grate bed" and the flock bed and bolster lying under it to someone else. She bequeathed specifically large quantities of linen, including half a dozen white cutworke napkins, a Holland board cloth (a linen fabric table cloth) a tapestry coverlet and Holland sheets and pillowcases. The rest of the linen she divided between her daughters, Joan and Sarah. She had 30 sheep, which she left to her numerous grandchildren. The rest of her animals were left to her son. She also had 8 silver spoons and a silver goblet to bequeath, as well as a large quantity of pewter pans, dishes, platters and porringers. She also bequeathed the best items in her wardrobe. Her daughter Joan received the best gown, petticoat, cloak, hat (lined with velvet), and a fustian waistcoat (Fustian was a coarse cloth). The other daughter had the green gown, a red petticoat and a red waistcoat, with "the little trunk now standing in the parlour where I now lie". It is possible that Alice and her mother-in-law Joan before her had rented the Rodney Manor House to leave their own Mansion House vacant for the new head of the family and all his children. The Flowers did not lease it unti11621, several years after Alice's death.

Sadly, the Goodhind prosperity soon began to decline. Several factors contributed to this. Firstly, the family was a prolific one,[52] and the estate was divided up to support them all. William's eldest son, John, had at least nine children, and bequeathed three smaller estates to his three surviving sons when he died in 1624. Secondly, the family became embroiled in several expensive lawsuits over possession of land. Indeed it is likely that the cost of these suits exceeded the annual value of the tenements they fought over. External factors such as the state of the local wool trade and the effects of the Civil War also played a part in the decline of the family's wealth. Lastly the character of the people themselves contributed to their difficulties. Two of John Goodhind's sons, John and Abednego, are known to us through the Chancery Law Suits they started.

His eldest son John had a lengthy dispute with his cousin William Fisher over Braynes Farm in Saltford.[53] While the judgment was still pending he tried to pasture his cattle on the land and this led to family fisticuffs. At Easter in 1683 the manager of Braynes Farm, William Lane, and John Cox of Saltford, finding John Goodhind's cattle in his fields, drove·them to the Hundred of Keynsham pound. Two days later the Goodhind family drove them back. Abednego told his brother Jeromy to kill Lane or Cox with a knife. The same day Lane and

Cox tried to drive the cattle back to the pound, but Abednego, Jeromy, Arthur and sister Ann, prevented them. Abednego even snatched up a hatchet and held it at Lane's head saying he "could find it in his heart to strike the said Lane in the head". A few weeks later Jeromy, Arthur and Ann chased a mare belonging to William Fisher out of the field, while Abednego held the gate. When Abednego was shown the official warrant with the Royal Seal, which confirmed Fisher's possession of the farm, he replied, "I care not a turd for it, nor for him that sent it."[54]

Such forthright opinions probably explain why Abednego and his brother had to disappear from Saltford during the Civil War. They seem to have incurred the displeasure of Parliamentarians and were forced "to retire and abscond themselves in places remote from their habitations." Another described them as "plaine and uncaring men". The people to whom they entrusted their lands seem to have neglected them, causing their value to diminish.

Abednego seems to have been especially poor at managing money. William Hodges of Corston said of him in 1685 he was "a foolish giddy headed fellow and ready to pawne anything for a quarter of the worth of it." His widow said, "Abednego was a foolish crazy man and would part with what he had for less than the value of it, and would often go up and down his neighbours and borrow off them a shilling or two or three, and give them back halfe for the loan of it."[55]

His cousin, Thomas Goodhind, a cloth worker of Saltford, said that during the Civil War Abednego loved to keep his coat whole, and took neither King nor Parliament's part. He "kept his church and molested not on either part, but was accounted rather a Loyal than a Roundhead."

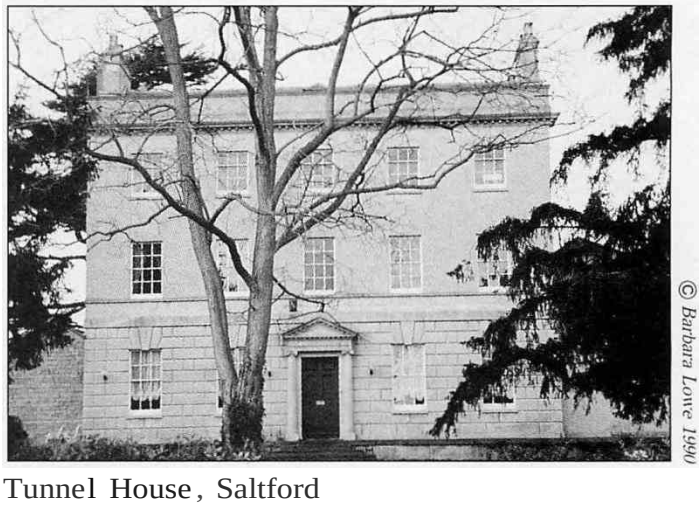
It is small wonder that such a man was hoodwinked by others. In 1646, he mortgaged Tates Farm to a William Bayley, who persuaded Abednego to let him have the deeds on the pretext he would try to resolve a family dispute over them. William then refused to hand them back although Abednego's widow, Anne, and his son, Shadrack, tried to recover them. So Abednego's family lost part of their lands.[56]

John's family, too, received a much reduced inheritance. Two of the tenements which formed part of the Manor were described as ruinous in 1639. John had sold away much of the land he inherited. He became involved in at least 3 lawsuits. He seemed to have lived, at least the latter part of his life, at Whitchurch, although he desired to be buried in the Church at Saltford. Thus by 1650, although there were still many Goodhinds living in Saltford, they did not have the wealth and status of William Goodhind and his wife Alice.

Many of the Goodhind properties seem to have been acquired by the other branch of the Goodhind family, descended from the younger son of John and Edith Godehyne (c1450-1500). A considerable estate was amassed by Thomas Goodhind (1683-1757), a clothier. The Goodhind estate was purchased by Thomas Browning who left it to his son Thomas who lived at Box in Wiltshire. The abstract of title for this estate (1807) describes it, and the "capital messuage or mansion house" that went with it.[57] This seems to be the mansion house of William Goodhind, passed through many hands. We have not been able to identify positively this house, though we have narrowed down the possibilities to one or two. Without definite proof we are unwilling to name them. Perhaps readers might try their own identification of Saltford's other manor house. The best clues are found in the description given in the Abstract of Title for Thomas Browning's estate in 1807. "Capital messuage or manner house, adjoining the land leading from the *Bristol* Turnpike Road to Saltford and the Mead on the northward side there to adjoining with the Garden offices and curtilages and appurtenances thereto adjoining and also all that Farm House yard, barton and garden lying contiguous to the capital messuage or manner house before mentioned and on the northward side of the said lane with Barn Stables and buildings thereon and the orchard behind the same known by the name of Home Orchard." It cannot refer to the present Saltford Manor House, which was safely in the hands of the Flower family by this time, and none of the fields identified later in the abstract are found in the Flower estate deeds. So, at the end of the 18th century Saltford had much the same pattern as it had at the end of the Middle Ages: small farms, many still situated in the village street, whose owners/tenants went out to work their land scattered in the fields around the village. Some patches were enclosed, some not; few were consolidated into compact holdings. The legal complications of having 2 manors in the same village, one divided into three parts, the other split up into many small parcels of land, effectively held off the kind of agricultural changes seen elsewhere in the county.

THE NEW RICH

But change was coming to Saltford. In the 18th century several large houses were built in Saltford whose inhabitants did not depend for their wealth on the land or what it produced. Tunnel House is one such. It is possible it was built as a rectory; certainly the Rector, the Reverend Haviland John Hiley died there in 1754. In the 19th century this house seems to have been



Tunnel House, Saltford

let on short leases. We have found no evidence to support the legend that I.K Brunel lived there while the GWR was being constructed through the village, though it is strange that the. only section of the railway in a tunnel through the village goes under this house; the rest is in an exceptionally deep cutting. It is possible that the opening of the GWR, giving ease of access to Bath, attracted people to Saltford. Many of Saltford's new inhabitants were retired Service officers. One of the longest periods of residence at Tunnel House was the Haviland family. Captain Francis Haviland of the 2nd Regiment of Dragoons was promoted to Major in 1873, and ended up as Colonel of the North Somerset Yeomanry. When he died in 1880, aged 84, he was buried with full military honours. There is a memorial to him just inside the churchyard at Saltford, erected by the Yeomanry as a tribute to him.

After Colonel Haviland's death at least 4 tenants took the house before 1900. The most tragic tenant was Lewis Wright, who was killed on the railway line in 1906. By 1910 the house was tenanted by Major H. C. Jarr. He was killed in the 1st World War, but his widow continued to live there for many years.

A house which was to have more significance for Saltford was Saltford House. This was probably built at the end of the 17th century, but has been extensively altered. The first known resident was Moses Corbett in 1712. The first extensive alterations were probably in 1771 and thought to have been carried

Saltford House for many years the home of Mrs Admiral Kelley

out by John Bennett, the Bath architect. Both date and initials are on the lead guttering. The Barrington family lived there at the end of the lOth Century. Lord Barrington died there in 1801 and is buried in Saltford Churchyard. The house then had a succession of tenants. In 1806 the house was to be let and is described as "commodious and fit for the reception of a genteel family 5miles from Bath and 7 from Bristol, with a good garden wall around and walls well covered with choice fruit trees and full bearing and about 18 acres of grasslands and adjoining to and surrounding the same, with a coach house, a four stall stable, a cowhouse and other convenient requisites for a country residence."[58] Like Tunnel House it had ex-military tenants. Lieutenant Colonel William James JP, ex-Indian Civil Service, lived there until his death in 1855. There are several memorials to this family in Saltford Church, including one to the son, Captain Marshall James of the 28th Bengal Native Infantry, who was shot by mutineers in the Indian Mutiny in 1857. His only sister, Julia, married the rector's son, the Reverend C L Wightman, and went to live in Shrewsbury, where she became well known as a social reformer and temperance worker. In 1855 the House was up for sale again. It was purchased in 1856 by Admiral Benedictus Marwood Kelly. By now it had three main reception rooms and thirteen principal bedrooms: a spacious residence indeed for an elderly admiral and his new bride.

Benedictus Marwood Kelly was born in 1785 at Holsworthy in Devon[59] He joined the Royal Navy at about 12 years old as a midshipman. He served throughout the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, and by 1818 was made commander of HM Sloop Pheasant. His task was checking ships engaged in the now illegal Slave Trade. This brought him prize money, £852.4s.10d, a nice supplement to his pay of under £300 per annum. He was appointed Captain in 1821 of HMS Royal George, but ill-health compelled him to retire from active service. He returned to England in very poor health, suffering from "a great weakness of digestive organs caused by derangement of the nervous system. "After one Doctor's treatment he said, "I believe the fellow's object was to make a job of me." In 1837 he married in St. Margaret's, Westminster, Mary Ann Price, the only surviving child of Richard Price, a banker of Westminster. Within a year she was dead, and the Admiral entered a lonely and difficult period of his life. He seems to have been obsessed with the desire to save money. He must by now have been a wealthy man, but he lived in one room near the Haymarket, spending his spare time at the United Services Club. He took his washing to his brother's house once a week and a kind relative darned his stockings. He took to city life and became a director of several railway companies.

In 1855 he married again a Miss Juliana Boyd, whose father was a banker and colliery owner originally from Newcastle, but resident at Beerfield Priory in Gloucestershire. Legend says she asked the Admiral to wait because her invalid father required her care, but he declined, saying he was getting on in years. He was 70 and she was 52 when they took up residence in Saltford.

He made an immediate impact on the village. The house was extensively renovated and altered. The completion of the alterations was celebrated by a dinner for the 40 workmen whose efforts were soundly praised by Admiral Kelley. He was made Rear Admiral in the reserve List of Flag Officers in `857 and an Admiral in 1863. He was a generous forthright man, who called a spade a spade. He had a lifelong interest in education. Much regretting being so poorly educated himself, he wanted to prevent other children being so handicapped. He had by his economical, if not parsimonious, lifestyle amassed a considerable amount of money, and he always intended to devote it to education.

Saltford benefited from some of it. In 1864 he gave £100 to provide support for the village school. Legend has it that he wanted to found a school here, but he had a quarrel with the Rector over placing a memorial window in the church. So, the money went to found Kelly College near Tavistock. The story seems unlikely and no evidence for it can be found. Admiral Kelly was devoted to Devonshire. He wanted to be buried in his native Holsworthy. The senior branch of the Kelly family have lived at Kelly House, Lifton, Devon, for about 700 years. It seems very unlikely he would have left his money to found a school outside the County.

When he died in 1867 he left £132,000 to found Kelly College.[60] His wife was left an income and the house, both of which were to go to the College on her death. When Kelly College opened in June 1875 Mrs Kelly went down for the opening. It was the biggest event Tavistock had seen for many a long year, and must have been very exhausting for a lady of 72. She was to lay the foundation stone and attend a luncheon. She listened to no less than 26 toasts and speeches; one hopes at least some of them were very brief. Mrs Kelly outlived the Admiral by 29 years. After she died in 1896 Saltford House was sold and the money used to complete the Big Library, classrooms and Fives Courts at Kelly College.

In her widowhood Juliana Kelly, Mrs Admiral Kelly, as she was always known, was Saltford's Lady Bountiful. She paid for the rebuilding of the village school in 1874. In harsh winters she gave warm clothing, such as woollen cloaks for the girls at the school, and distributed coals and soup to the needy.

Every year she gave a treat to the village in the field adjacent to Saltford House. The children enjoyed sports and a tea. They

had a ha1f day holiday from school, and were so exhausted by their activities that attendance at school the next day was often recorded as being very low. There are photographs showing at least 30 servants employed at the House and Farm. Towards the end of her life she became very frail. Outside she was wheeled in a chair and indoors carried on the shoulders of her butler and general factotum, who lived at Rose Cottage which the Admiral had bought for him.

After her death the house was extensively repaired and altered. It had obviously been somewhat neglected and unaltered from the time of the Admiral's death. In one bathroom, obviously little used, the toilet had been repaired with glue and canvass and needed complete replacement. A complete inventory of the house had been made when .the Admiral died and gives us a marvellous picture of the prosperous mid-Victorian home. The drawing room furniture was in walnut; 5 tables of differing styles, 3 easy chairs, 2 sofas, a piano, 2 chiffoniers (a cross between a cupboard and a sideboard) and masses of ornaments (including 5 alabaster figures on pedestals) and 8 large oil paintings. The dining room was furnished with mahogany: including a huge 5leaf dining table and 14 chairs, a sideboard more than 7ft long carved with vine leaves and bunches of grapes, and 11oil paintings on the walls. The library had 22 pictures and books which tell of the Admiral's interests: books on discoveries in New Guinea, Steamships, Geometry and Trigonometry, dictionaries in 4 languages, Burke's Peerage and landed Gentry, Gisbourne's Duties of Women, Adam's Private Thoughts and Campbell's Pleasures of Hope. The principal bedrooms had mahogany 4 posters with straw palli-asses and feather beds; the servants' bedrooms had iron bed-steads with flock or millpuff mattresses. Outside, the house had 2 vineries and a tomato house.

The inventory listed the pictures in detail, including portraits of Benedictus and Juliana The Admiral's portrait has gone to Kelly College, but sadly that of Juliana cannot be traced. The strong memories of Juliana that survive pay tribute to the affection with which the people of Saltford remembered her.

The next resident of Saltford House was also an ex-service man, Colonel Rolleston. He was 56 when he moved to Saltford, and is remembered as a bluff, generous man. His home was the epitome of middle class Edwardian comfort. His was one of the first motor cars to be seen in this area He took to a motor car after a riding accident His 1906 Bristol car is being restored at the Bristol Industrial Museum. Oral tradition says he gave everyman in the village a pint of beer on hearing the news of the relief of Mafeking in the South African War. He is remembered as giving packets of tobacco to men and sweets to children on his walks round the village. He was a natural choice for Chair- man of the Parish Council and held the office for many years. He was also Church Warden from 1898 to 1912.

When he died in 1921 Saltford House was sold to Mr A J. C. Coles. He, his wife and his sister (later Mrs Benjafield) lived there. After his death Mrs Coles and Mrs Benjafield lived there until it became too much for them. The house was sold in 1953 to become a Nurse's Home.

By the 20th century, Saltford was entering a period of greater prosperity than it had ever known. The ease of access to Bath made it a desirable suburb and its popularity as a residential area is seen in the rise in population:-

1801	223
1901	500
1931	922

It soon became a dormitory village, with few of the male residents actually working in the village, and fewer employed in agriculture than ever before.

THE POOR IN KEYNSHAM AND SALTFORD

The picture of Keynsham and Saltford which emerges from the documents is that of a small township and a village in decay. The Dissolution of the Abbey had made more land available, but its purchase by absentee landlords had prevented investment in the town's industry or agriculture. In Saltford the manorial subdivisions hindered the creation of compact enclosed farms and the development of improved agriculture. For a long time the area was a poor sort of place. Leland described it in the 16th century as "sumtyme a good, now a poor market town and ruinus". In 1631 the parishioners were described as "men of small ability and poor handicraftsmen".[61] In the 18th century it was labelled “Smokey Cainsham”[62]. 1788 another writer described is as poor shabby place, consisting of one long street of miserable houses"[63]

It is always harder to chronicle the lives of the poor than it is those of the wealthy. Although we have documents relating to the poor we do not know with any certainty what percentage of the population was poor by the standards of the time. We know about the poverty that was relieved, but not whether there were poor people who were not helped and who are not mentioned, certainly until the 20th century. Without the relief provided by the Poor law and the Charity Foundations in Keynsham and Saltford many would have been totally destitute.

THE POOR LAW

In both parishes the Elizabethan Poor law of 1601, by which each parish was to care for its own poor, seems to have been well administered.[54] The inhabitants chose each year at a Parish meeting of Vestry, usually held on Easter Monday, overseers of the poor for the next year. Their job was to collect a rate from every householder, to provide a House where the poor could be set on work to care for the elderly and handicapped, and to provide for orphans. The account books surviving now, in the Somerset Record Office, show that they faithfully collected the money and dispersed it to the poor. The old received a small weekly pension. In 1827 there were 49 pensioners in Keynsham, 31 of them women. Poor families were helped in time of sickness or accident. Orphans were looked after until they were old enough to be apprenticed.

Vestry minutes - 26 September 1748: "Ordered that Betty Keynsham and Cashell's girl be forthwith put out apprentice to proper places." Unfortunately there were always more orphans than places for apprentices. So a rota of householders was drawn up, and householders took apprentices when their turn came, whether or not they wanted to. Later a system of balloting was substituted.

Vestry minutes - 7 June 1803: "It is order that the following children namely James-Beece aged about 15, Mary Faux aged about 11, Ann Tippany apprentice in the same parish to be balloted for by the inhabitants liable to take apprentices."
The overseers do seem to have had some regard for the way these apprentices were treated.

Vestry minutes- 17 November 1762, "And that William Brown of Weekhouse be applied to take care of his apprentice

girl, and upon his neglect to proceed with him as the law directs."

Anyone receiving a weekly pension was obliged by law to wear a badge, a very unpopular and much evaded regulation.

Overseers Accounts -1 December 1745, "Ordered that each and every person receiving weekly relief from the said parish shall constantly wear their badges on the outside of their uppermost garments as the law therein directs, and on default thereof to stop their pay for 1 month or till further order."

It was the overseers who had to pass vagrants on to another parish, especially pregnant women. If they gave birth here their children became a charge on this parish. They buried a surprising number of unknown strangers who died while passing through.1710 - "paid for tending and burying a travaling maid that died in ye small pox, 19s.6d."They gave aid to soldiers and sailors travelling "with a pass" allowing them to claim relief in every parish through which they passed. The overseer supervised the burial of their own paupers, too, paying for shrouds, coffin, bran to pack it with, then for the bells to be tolled. All the accounts were totalled up, usually by someone paid to do it, who seems to have been somewhat inexperienced; against each yearly "summa" (total) are the words "errors excepted".

It was not easy to find overseers to do this thankless unpaid task despite the legal penalties for refusal. It seems to have landed on all eligible, like the parish apprentices, by rote, or lot. In this way the task could fall on widows farming their own land. They usually paid someone else to do it for them, though some women did it themselves. Overseers Accounts 1704 – "Mrs Bricker served the office of overseer", 1710-1711- "Account of John Maggs serving the office for Mrs Ann Tilly".

The system was unsatisfactory. By the 18th century the parish paid an overseer to do the job for them. Overseers Accounts- 1747 William Lydyard- My half year salary- "£5.5s."

The Sturges Bourne Act of 1819 permitted the establishment of a Select Vestry to oversee the administration of the 1601 Act in order to reduce expenditure on the poor which was rapidly implemented in Keynsham where in 1819 the Poor Rate was at record levels. This must have been a severe burden on small-holders who were but one step removed from poverty themselves. The problem was made worse by the system first put forward by the magistrates at Speenhamland in Berkshire in 1795. Very low agricultural wages were supplemented out of the poor rate, by reference to the price of bread. This was copied in many rural areas in Southern England. It had the effect of subsidising the wage bill of wealthier farmers from the poor rate. It particularly hit the small farmer who worked his own land and thus did not get cheap labour. At the end of the Napoleonic War the Government switched from direct taxation, income tax, to indirect taxation. Imposing the Corn Laws kept the price of bread high. Poverty increased and so did the Poor Rate. In Keynsham it soared from £856.0s 8d in 1802 to a staggering £1,638.17s in 1819.[65] The population at the time was 1,748. Each property was liable for a fixed rate, but this might be collected six times a year. When Keynsham established a Select Vestry the administration quickly altered things. They met weekly at 5.30 pm. This timing would prevent working men from being able to serve. From now on the administration of the Poor Law was in the hands of wealthier men, farmers, solicitors and professional men. Women did not appear.

The poor rate dropped dramatically to £582 by 1822. It was not only due to an upturn in the country's economy but also to a harder attitude towards the poor. The entry in the Minutes for June 1820 is typical.

"Benjamin Radford applied for relief – ordered to work. Widow Williams applied to have her windows mended- ordered that the windows be partly stopped up and the remainder repaired. Jane James applied for relief for her son- ordered that no relief be allowed. Sarah Faux applied to have her son apprenticed- deferred to further- consideration- the Vestry having nothing to do with it. John Wise's wife applied for relief for her child- refused. John Cook applied for relief- refused. James Williams' wife applied for money for stone breaking – ordered to be paid 6s. William Tod's wife applied for clothes for her daughter to place her as servant to Mr. Williams- ordered that 6s be paid towards her clothes.

Some families who applied for relief for their children were refused unless the children were sent out to work, some as young as 6. Many were sent to the silk factory at Batheaston. Vestry minutes- 6July 1835"Ordered that the pay of Sarah Holbrook, Nanny Tippitt, Ann Batt, Mary Brimble, William Cantle, Harriett Cantle, Alfred Hoar, Ann Long, William Wellington be stopped unless their children go to the factory at Bath Easton."

The Select Vestry even tried to encourage emigration to America. 2 April 1832 "Ordered that notice of a general vestry be given to consider the application of certain persons who wish to emigrate to America and to determine whether a passage shall be paid for them to that country."

Illegitimate children were always likely to become a burden on the parish, so that great efforts were made to find the men responsible.

Select Vestry minutes -15November 1826

Ordered that Sarah Williams and Mary Lacey be summoned to appear before the magistrates to swear fathers to their respective children. If the man was unmarried he was compelled to marry the girl. The Overseers and Churchwarden supervised these "knobstick weddings". The cost of the wedding was borne by the parish, and the child thus became the man's responsibility, and not the parish's. ln 1749 the overseers paid £5.7s to get Richard Rawlings married to Eleanor Davis. They paid guards 12s to guard him for 3 days while they secured a special licence. They paid Parson, Clerk and Sexton 13s.6d and £2 1s.6d expenses when he was married. This was usually ale all round. So Richard became responsible for Eleanor and her baby.

If the man was already married a Bastardy Order was taken out against him, and he was compelled to pay maintenance. Vestry minutes-2November1807. "Ordered that the Overseer shall not on any pretence permit any person on whom a Bastardy Order has been made for the relief of this Parish to be in arrears beyond one month."

When the Select Vestry was appointed these rules were even more rigorously applied.

The 1601 Act instructed parishes to build a poor house on the outskirts of the parish, where all poor people on parish relief were supposed to live, and where the able-bodied poor could be set to work. This is exactly what Queen Charlton Parish did, and its poor house still stands on the crossroads. In Saltford 3 cottages adjacent to Norman House were used for the poor.

Keynsham did not build a poor house, but relied on a succession of cheap rented properties. In 1747 it was a tenement called Drapers (between St Ladoc Road and St Francis Road). In 1759 this was described in the Vestry minutes as "a nursery

of vice and debauchery." By 1785 the Parish was renting a thatched property called Coles (near Carpenter's Lane). This was the house in which the least desirable and most riotous paupers were put. Another cheap property was the Batch (in the Dragons Hill area).The house which needed the most attention was the old Kings Arms in the Milward Lodge area. In 1821 it needed retiling, but it seems to have been badly done. It needed redoing in 1823. In 1824 it was whitewashed inside and colourwashed outside. The windows were repaired, but the paupers were told they would have to pay for future breakages. In1827one family occupied a room. Single people had to share a room; some objected violently when they were told of the new regulation. In all, these tenement properties were costing £65 per annum in rent, besides the repair bills.

In Keynsham and Saltford these properties had become homes for the sick, the handicapped, the helpless, the old and deserted women and children. The numbers of poor people began increasing, so that Keynsham in particular, needed further accommodation. In 1831the Parish raised a mortgage of £720 from the Feoffees (see subsequent section) and bought a rank of cottages called Swan River Tenements. They were owned by John Clarke, a basket maker and lime burner, who had built them in 1824. These still stand (creamwashed and dated) adjacent to the River Chew in Dapps Hill. Also included in the sale were the properties in Dapps Hill known as Chew Cottages. The Parish had made its decision to purchase very late, in fact after the establishment of a Royal Commission which it was widely believed would alter the old system of out-door relief, (i.e. relief given to the poor without their having to enter a poor house.)

Keynsham was overtaken by events. The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 did alter the old system, substituting whenever possible indoor relief of the poor in workhouses, which were to be built by each parish or group of parishes. So Keynsham Parish was left with a half-paid mortgage on its cottages. The cottages were let and the tenants paid their rent direct to the Feoffees. In 1844 the Feoffees bought back the cottages for the amount of the outstanding mortgage. By now the properties were in a poor state and not worth anything like the original mortgage price. They needed constant repair. The Feoffees struggled on unti1 1859 when they raise a loan and spent £240 repairing the cottages. They made 18 tenements, each with its own privy, and renamed them Chew Cottages. A Mr. Floor was appointed to collect the higher rents. By the 1870's the cottages again needed repairs, so the Feoffees sold them for £640 to Mr. George Sheppard. These cottages in Dapps Hill now bear no resemblance to the multiply occupied poor houses of the early 19th century.

THE KEYNSHAM UNION WORKHOUSE

By the terms of the 1834 Act Keynsham was to form a union with neighbouring parishes and provide a workhouse to accommodate the Poor. The Keynsham Union originally consisted of- Keynsham, Brislington, Burnett, Compton Dando, Corston, Kelston, Marksbury, Newton St Lowe, Priston, Queen Charlton, Saltford, Stanton Prior, Bitton, Hanham, Kingswood, Mangotsfield, Oldland, Syston.

All householders who had property rated at £30 per annum were entitled to vote to elect a Board of Guardians. These controlled the Union. Until the workhouse was built these met at the Lamb& Lark in Keynsham.They were responsible to the Poor Law Commissioner in London, with whom they sometimes disagreed (further examples of Keynsham's independence from external authority).

Three acres of land were purchased from Mr. James Heale and the Workhouse was built by V. & W. James for £3,750 to a design by Mr. Armstrong. The money was put up locally by Mr. Edward Dowling at 5% because the banks would not lend it. The poorhouses in the village were sold off to help pay for the Workhouse. The Union Workhouse (now Keynsham Hospital) was opened in 1838.[66] Soon it was apparent that the inhabitants of the Workhouse were not the able-bodied poor whom the Government believed were exploiting the old system, but were the old, the sick, orphaned children, the handicapped, and unmarried or abandoned mothers. The Workhouse was needed. By 1841 it had 183 inhabitants and 50 called at the door daily for relief.

No workhouse was ever popular, but Keynsham does seem to have been humanely administered and well run, bearing in mind the Act aimed to reduce the cost of pauperism by shaming the poor into self reliance.

There were no scandals here like that at Andover where half- starved paupers fought over the gristle on the bones they were set to grind. Nor were the conditions in the Union as unhealthy as they were at Illchester where they died like flies from infection.

The Account Books, Minutes Books and the Punishment Books of the Keynsham Union, now in the Somerset Record Office, reveal in great detail the life of the inmates. The food was ample, if stodgy and dull. It was principally oatmeal porridge, potatoes, peas, bread and cheese, but meat, bacon, tea, sugar and vegetables (from the workhouse garden) were consumed. Suppliers were rebuked if the quality was poor. When the inmates had roast beef and plum pudding at Christmas some ratepayers thought the inmates fed too well! The Guardians felt obliged to state that they had paid for the dinner; it was not out of the rates.

The Doctor called regularly and was obliged to attend mothers in childbirth or he did not receive his fees. The insane were treated separately and sent to private asylums. Both Dr. Fox's at Brislington (See Chapter 5) and an asylum at Box were used. The condition of these lunatics was inspected and reported upon.

All workhouse children were educated in the Workhouse School.

This is 50 years before the provision of free compulsory elementary education. Unusually the School Master and Mistress were not allowed to administer corporal punishment. They found their task a hard one. The children could be wild and violent. The School Mistress, Miss Scully, was frequently exhorted by the Guardian to enforce her commands. Nor were the adult inmates much easier to control. Swearing, fighting, abusing of the officers, refusing to work, breaking windows and disorderly conduct are all recorded in the Punishment Book. One inmate threw gruel over the Matron.

In 1864 there was a near riot when mothers were not allowed to visit their children and give them whatever they had saved from their own rations. Four unruly women broke several windows. What Ellen Ford got up to be punished three times in a fortnight for "filthiness" we shall never know. The Master and Mistress did not have a wide range of punishments to use. Isolation in a special room for periods of one hour or more on bread and water was the severest penalty. Beyond that, repri-

mands by the Board of Guardians were given. After that the culprit was dealt with in the Magistrates' Court as a petty - criminal and sent to the House of Correction.

It seems, contrary to popular belief, to have been easy to get in and out of the Union. Elizabeth Wiltshire entered and discharged herself 20 times in 7 years. Some entered for the winter months and left in the Spring. Others entered for medical reasons such as confinements. Edwin and Louisa Clark entered the workhouse at least 5 times and 5 of their children were born there. Some women are recorded as having 3, 4 or 5 illegitimate children there.

Outdoor relief was still given and relieving officers were appointed who could dispense a few shillings to the aged poor to keep them out of the Workhouse. The Guardians had soon found it was cheaper to give people help in their own houses than to take them into the Workhouse. A single person in 1836 was allowed 2 shillings a week, a married couple 4 shillings, but the paupers had to pay their own rent.

The Guardians could act quickly, cutting through bureaucratic red tape. When in 1837 Benjamin Moss, a pauper of Oldland with 4 of his 8 children was ill of a malignant fever which his wife had died, (possibly cholera) the Guardians removed the whole family to another cottage, provided clothes and bedding and borrowed bedsteads from the Workhouse on loan for a few days. It was all effected within a day.

Very well-known names appear on the list of Guardians F. E. Whittock, the Keynsham solicitor; Tho Oxford, Clerk to the Guardians for many years;- each of the vicars; and the local doctors like Dr. Charles Harrison and Dr. G. G. D. Willett.

By 1837 the Board of Guardians were also responsible for the Registration of Births, Deaths and Marriages, and the organisation of public vaccination against small-pox. Civil marriages were conducted there until l936. In 1930the Boards of Guardians were abolished and responsibility passed to the County Council. The Workhouse became known as Clements House, a name kept unti1 1948 when it became Keynsham Hospital. Up to 1930 all categories of poor were being admitted. The elderly, the mentally and physically handicapped, children in care and unmarried mothers. The introduction of Old Age Pensioners in 1908 had improved things for the elderly-up to that time a third of all old people had died in the Workhouse.

Old Keynsham residents can remember the tramps who walked from one workhouse to the next. In exchange for a bath, a meal and a bed in the casual ward, (now the physiotherapy department) they had to do some menial task, stone breaking or wood cutting. Others remember the school children coming to attend the local schools (established after the workhouse).

The children were instantly recognisable by their clothing and their short haircuts. Children were reluctant to sit near them or associate with them.

The Workhouse did have a sinister reputation which was not helped by the fact that the Morgue was there, and by its forbidding appearance. Its 8ft high stonewall, the stone flagged floors without covering, the plain clothing- corduroy trousers and heavy boots for the men, and long skirts and striped aprons for the women -were all calculated to deter. Even married couples were separated into different House Blocks while they lived there. Underclothing was not provided for inmates at first, though the women were given stays. All inmates were received, and if necessary, cleaned up in the Reception Ward. Some were filthy and suffering from "the itch".

There are stories, perhaps legendary, of a miserly master whose dog fared better than the inmates, who were fed nothing but bread and water. The documents and extant photographs do not confirm this. The Master in the 1920's and 30's was a Mr. Huxtable who is remembered as a kindly man who set aside time each day to play with the very small children. His wife was the Matron.

The 1930 Poor Law Act put workhouses under the control of the County Councils, so Keynsham was separated from Kingswood and the parishes in South Gloucestershire. The Workhouse still cared for those not covered by the National Assistance Act. Mr.Clifford Dowling, the last Relieving Officer, paid outdoor relief to people in their own homes, admitted sick or homeless to the house, took children into care, and saw to the provision for the mentally ill. On one occasion Mr. Huxtable and his wife were unable to find anyone to act as Master in their holiday period, so Mr. Dowling and his wife slept at the Workhouse for a week to cover the absence of Master and Matron.

In spite of all its redeeming features the Workhouse was a dreaded place. Entering the Workhouse was a terrible social stigma, and this alone made it difficult for inmates to find work, and for children reared in the Workhouse to shake off the prejudice against them.

THE FEOFFEES

However, "going on the Parish" was not the only means of receiving help in Keynsham. In l685 a group of benevolent men had given some money to purchase land. The rent from this was to be given to the Poor. These men were the first Keynsham Feoffees, (trustees holding land for charity)[67], their names and the amounts they gave are listed on the Charity Boards in St John's Church:

	£
Henry Bridges	50
Carew	20
William Carter	5
Walter Holbin	50
Joan Wright	5
Stubbins	5
Thomas Cox	2
Robert Bagnall	50

With the money they bought land at Saltford, including that on which Spring Side Cottage stands. In the course of the next 200 years they were to increase their income from £11 in 1752 to £222 14s.9d in 1918. This was achieved by the skilful management of their property, land exchanges, investment and further donations. The Feoffees were eventually limited to 12 in number, and had to be resident in Keynsham (though an exception was made for the Duke of Buckingham). They lost their place if they became bankrupt The Feoffees filled such vacancies, "in the room of those who are dead or declined", by election.

Their money was distributed annually only to those who had not claimed Parish Relief, though from the number of times this rule was reiterated one suspects it was broken. Widows who claimed Parish Relief were allowed to have Feoffees' money for their children.

Once on the list, a person received the money each year for life. Sometimes the poor regarded it as an hereditary right. When there were more claimants than they could cope with, the Feoffees introduced a 15 year residence rule. Many well-known

Keynsham names occur in the lists. Sometimes due to the great similarities of name the money was given to the wrong person. One way of avoiding such mistakes was for the Clerk to record distinguishing features, such as one eye, one leg. The extent of the problem is revealed by the 1868 list

	£	s
Cantle, John (Thomas)		15
Cantle, John (James)	1	00
Cantle, William (Busca) later described as Busker	1	00
Cantle, James (Junior Tanyard)		10
Cantle, Job		10
Cantle, William (Free Schools)		10
Cantle, William (Shopkeeper)		10
Cantle, James (Happy)		10

Similar confusion over a different family is shown in the 1870 list

	£	s
Ollis, Hemy	1	5
Ollis, George	1	00
Ollis, John	1	10
Ollis, Nathaniel	1	10
Ollis, William Spring	1	5
Ollis, wid of Charles	1	10
Ollis, William Jarman	1	00
Ollis, William (epileptic)		10
Ollis, William (son of German)		10
Ollis, William (son of Nathaniel)		10
Ollis, George (later described as one eye)		10

Sometimes the Feoffees were touched by the stories of the people who applied for help:

"William James' wife at the Kings Arms, in addition to what was given her on account of her goods having been distrained for rent, her having a large family and now being in a state of pregnancy. 7s" "Mary Brookman in addition to being an industrious woman and possessing a pride not to be troublesome to the Parish. 2/6"

The affairs of the Feoffees were highly secret. Their accounts were not published. Their lists of recipients, even the names of the Feoffees, were not known. No one knew exactly what they had to disperse, the grounds on which it was given and whether it was dispensed honestly. In such an atmosphere, rumours abounded. In 1887 the disquiet reached the public press with a letter written to the Bristol Mercury, by T. Sherwood Smith, who lived at the Pines (the large house on Dapps Hill now demolished and incorporated into the Park). He complained that the distribution of money encouraged drunkenness. His concerns were echoed by Mr. Clifton from Uplands (a house in Bristol Road- not the farm in Wellsway). He complained that the public did not know who the Feoffees were, how they were appointed, or by what qualifications they held the office. He suspected that tradesmen and others receiving the money were not actually 'poor' at all. (The Feoffees did get him on their side eventually. He became a Feoffee in 1894).

The Feoffees felt obliged to answer, but made the mistake of doing so anonymously. The writer claimed that there was no drunkenness resulting from the distribution and that the poor were grateful for the money to buy winter boots for their children. The tone of the anonymous letter was offensive, criticising newcomers for interfering in Keynsham's long established affairs. It revealed the gulf between the old established Keynsham people and the recent newcomers who had come to live in the substantial houses such as those built close to the GWR station. This letter caused a furore: several letters were subsequently published from Keynsham residents agreeing with the criticisms. A Mr. George Sheppard maintained, "Ever since I can remember, it is an undeniable fact that at the annual distribution a proportion of the recipients spend the money in drink. In my opinion, this is one of the chief agents which causes people to seek the hand of charity, fills our workhouses with paupers and saddles the rate payers with heavy burdens."

The Feoffees seem to have been impervious to these criticisms. Nothing was altered in their affairs. Mr. T. Sherwood Smith did not give up so easily. In 1892, he was again writing to the Feoffees, complaining about the distribution and suggesting improvements, but the Feoffees resisted all demands for change.

Despite this resistance to changing their methods there is no evidence of misappropriation of their funds, though some of their actions were not strictly legal. For instance, in 1739, James Sanders had left £100 for the use of the Poor; to be administered by the Feoffees. In 1746 they used it to buy land at Brislington. This gave them Common Rights on Brislington Common. When this was enclosed they received two acres of land. In 1783 the Feoffees exchanged this for land at Broadmead and Edgelands. But since the land was subject to a reversionary clause the Feoffees did not gain possession of it until 1813. Although ultimately the income from it was higher than from the Brislington Common land, the poor were deprived of any benefit for 30 years.

The Feoffees maintained the traditional Keynsham disregard for authority. There are, for example, several instances when they ignored the advice of the Charity Commissioners. For example, in 1882 the Charity Commissioners recommended that the £600 donated by Miss Eastwick should be invested with the Official Trustees. This had been left for the benefit of the old women in the Bridges' Almshouse. The Feoffees left it with the Bristol Gas Stock, probably because one of Miss Eastwick's executors was a Feoffee. Then he died in 1896, and the Bristol Gas light Co. refused to pay dividends on the shares until the original certificates were produced. The delay meant the Feoffees had to pay the recipients out of their own pockets until the money was due. After this the Feoffees capitulated and the money was invested with the Official Trustee.

By the 19th century the Feoffees made their distributions on the Monday after Epiphany at St John's Church. For propriety's sake an old woman was paid to act as chaperon at the distribution. Afterwards the Feoffees returned to the Lamb and Lark for a dinner, paid for, as they painstakingly pointed out, by themselves not the funds. This had to be paid for, whether or not the Feoffee was present to eat it, as the Vicar in 1861, the Reverend George Robinson, found to his cost. When he refused to pay for the dinner he had not eaten, he was told he ought to resign. The matter became a cause celebre in the local press. The rest of the Feoffees warned the Vicar that if he did not conform to custom he would be regarded as having resigned. He threatened to take the matter to the Charity Commissioner claiming that they had no power to make him resign. They conceded that 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." What galled the Vicar was not paying for the dinner he did not eat, but paying for the wine he could not in any case have drunk. He ended up paying for both.

Even the Feoffees admitted that part of the problem was caused by the lack of written rules for the conduct of their affairs. The next AGM was a stormy one, some Feoffees

protesting that the Minutes had been altered since the last meeting. Eventually the confusion and acrimony was sorted out. A written set of rules was printed and distributed. A new account book was started, which is a superb example of Victorian copper plate handwriting.

The Feoffees continued to distribute their money well into the 20th century. They began to sell off their land and invest the money. Their land at Saltford, Broadmead and Ellsbridge had become valuable land. In 1921 they sold land to Fry's, for the building of the Somerdale Factory. They then discovered to their consternation, they had been given, way back in the 17th century, only the right to the first cutting of hay on the land, not the hind itself, but they were accepted as the legal owners.

They were also given money in the will of Mr. J.N. Fear-the interest from an ancient rent charge originally belonging to Sir Thomas Bridges, who was paid income by the Dean and Chapter of Bristol for some land in Gloucester. They used this to provide each of the Bridges Almshouses with a WC, a coal house and a back kitchen, "to break the force of the North Wind and to keep the living room warmer. "They had somehow, over the years, become responsible for the Almshouses which they did not, in fact, own.

The lists of the Feoffees reads like a Keynsham Who's Who for the period. For example, in 1849 they were:-

Richard Page	A solicitor and a Select Vestryman
John Lintorn Simmonds	A solicitor and Clerk to the Vestry who lived at Flanders House, Bath Hill East (now demolished and incorporated into the park}
John Hurle	AJP and landowner at Brislington
William Hutchins	A surgeon
Henry Bridges Smith	Lived at the Old Manor House a descendent of James Bridges
Samuel Wood	A landowner and Poor Law Guardian
Henry Lyne	Lord of the Manor who lived in London and The Manor House in Manor Road.
George Angus Harding	The Vicar of Keynsham
John Proctor	The mill owner, who lived in Dapps Hill and a Trustee of the Jubilee Friendly Society.
Joseph Long	
James Edgell	

They were all worthy and wealthy men.

In the tradition of these men was John Nelson Fear who was born in 1839. He began life as a plumber and glazier, but became the Secretary of the Keynsham Gas Company whose premises were in Dapps Hill. He also became Clerk to the Parish Council. He was in many ways a typical Victorian gentleman, strong minded, outspoken and tenacious. He was well known in the town for his public work. He had strong religious convictions and was a member of Victoria Methodist Church where he led a Bible Class for Young Men. He was a keen cricketer and played in a way which matches his character. His score mounted by ones and twos. He never hit a boundary and was rarely bowled, usually being caught out. He was a man of integrity but a plodder.

Towards the end of his life, he had a disagreement with the Victoria Methodist Church over their decision to introduce electric lighting. So he left his money, after the life interest of his wife, not to the Church, but to set up an Institute, bearing his names, for the "purpose of reading, entertainment, meeting and recreation rooms and club for the benefit of the people of Keynsham." He died in 1917 and the Institute was to be built on the site of one of his two houses in the High Street, No. 30. Unfortunately the money he left, £6,000, was insufficient to build a good hall. So the Trustees invested the money and waited until sufficient had accumulated. Many thought the Institute would never materialise. It was finally opened in 1937 and has been in constant use ever since.

KEYNSHAM CHARITIES

There were other ancient charities in existence in Keynsham[68]. Thomas Holbin left land in Berkeley, Gloucestershire, in 1619 for the poor of Keynsham. This produced £5 which was distributed by the Church Wardens on 21 December each year- usually as money but occasionally as bread or clothes. Thomas Bowles left land in 1729 to provide £10 a year to help educate and apprentice poor boys. By 1825 some of this money was helping toward a Schoolmaster for the parish school.

When the Parish Council was created in 1895, the position of these charities was reviewed. Any charity over 40 years old not for specifically ecclesiastical purposes, which stayed vested in the Church Wardens, was taken over by the Parish Council. The more recent foundations were taken over by the Parish Council when they were 40 years old. Even in 1895, the Parish Council was unable to find any particulars about the foundation of the Milward Almshouses in Charlton Road. These, along with the Bridges' Almshouses, became the responsibility of the Council.

After the Second World War, the whole situation was reviewed by the Charity Commissioners. A scheme was drawn up and agreed by the UDC, the Church Wardens and the Feoffees.[69] This ama1gamated all the Keynsham Charities into two branches, the Almshouse Branch, which included the Bridges and Milward Almshouses, the Eastwick and George Greenwood Moran's bequests, and the Poor Branch which included the Feoffees Charity, Holbin's money and the other bequests. This was adopted in July 1956 and the independent life of the Feoffees came to an end, but the Keynsham Charities still distribute money which is the result of charitable giving of centuries ago.

THE POOR IN SALTFORD

In Saltford the Parish was to provide its own poorhouse, but this was a considerable burden because so many householders were exempt from rates due to poverty. In 1615 the house they had built for the poor had to be enlarged.[70] They asked the Justices at Quarter Session for permission to enlarge the house. Richard Doggett was to do the work. It was needed particularly to house two poor widows with 10 children between them. They also petitioned to be relieved of paying 5 shillings a year to the Parish of Pensford because they had so many poor people of their own to care for. The people of Pensford had suffered badly in an epidemic and all surrounding parishes had been ordered to help them. Saltford had many poor people throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. In 1670, 10 households were exempt from paying the Hearth Tax because their properties were not worth 20 shillings a year and their occupants did not possess goods worth £10. Unfortunately the Overseers' account books

for these years have disappeared. Not until the 19th century have we evidence of how the poor were treated. The picture does not seem very different from that of the earlier period. In 1831 about 30 householders had to provide the rate to support the paupers.[71] The largest contributors were James Edgehill at Avon Farm, (£7.12s.8d) the Brass Mill (£7.0s.Od) and the Rector, John Wightman, (£4.2s.10d). A rate might be raised more than once a year. Many householders were exempt from paying rates through poverty. Immediately prior to the opening of the Keynsham Union Workhouse, the Parish of Saltford was paying £114 a year on maintaining its poor, a large sum for a village of 381 people.

The Saltford overseers usually met at the Ship Inn. It was probably a convivial occasion. A meeting usually cost 10 shillings. In the early 19th century the maintenance of illegitimate children was a considerable burden. Four were supported in 1831, although one payment was five years in arrears. In 1831 the Poor House was causing considerable expense. In May 1831 the Overseers repaired and cleansed the Poor House, provided new clothes and a bedstead and bedding for one inmate. In July they paid another £2.19s.6d for repairs, and in 1832 a further £8.17s.9d. These cottages reverted to private use after the building of the Keynsham Union and were subsequently known as Fir Cottage and Fern Bank.

Another frequent expense at Saltford was the recovery and burial of people drowned in the Avon:

22 October 1831 – "Expenses to taking the late Thomas Evans out of the River Avon, carrying to Church, witnesses and sending for the Coroner. £1.10s"

As in Keynsham, the poor rate was used to pay for repairs to Parish property:

September 1831 - "paid Thos Brown's bill for repairing stocks."

Although the Parish overseers and the parish poor houses disappeared after 1834, rates continued to be levied for other purposes and were constantly resented until 1990. The extreme poverty which the charity and workhouse documents reveal did ease. Measures such as Old Age Pensions (1908), benefits for industrial injuries, sickness and unemployment (1911) helped those who had previously been forced to seek parish relief, enter the workhouse, or accept the occasional doles of the ancient charities.

2
Work and Play

WORK *by Joan Day*

(with Agriculture Section by Elizabeth White)

THE EARLY WORKING COMMUNTIY

After the demise of Keynsham Abbey in 1539 the labour required to support the local community continued to be based on the agricultural background, in common with similar rural areas. This involved not only the husbandry to grow crops and raise beasts for food, drink and clothing but also the processing of produce. Under the Abbey, such tasks had included brewing, baking, tanning and the production of woollen cloth, all of which in future centuries were to be extended from this original scale of production. Good use had also been made of the available local waterpower by leasing mills on the Chew and Avon, to millers for grinding of grain and to fullers for the finishing, or fulling, of wool cloth. Some of this cloth may have been produced locally, the spinning of yam by women and weaving by men of the household being undertaken domestically. Probably, the bulk of the cloth would have been brought to the fulling mills from Bristol where the strict guild regulations of the city's medieval industry, combined with a shortage of suitable waterpower, is known to have hindered the introduction of water-powered fulling processes.

Although Saltford lacks early information comparable to the records of Keynsham Abbey, it can safely be assumed that its inhabitants were involved in similar agricultural activity and the processing of its products. Saltford possessed two major mill sites on the Avon, which were equal to those in Keynsham. Thus, the whole local area was well provided with ample waterpower to operate these early processes of its agricultural products.

These important sources of power later proved to be a strong incentive for introducing more industrial activities in the centuries which followed. Good stocks of local coal and other mineral resources, combined with the proximity of the port of Bristol bringing in imported raw materials and the need to supply the export trade, provided other crucial factors in the future of the working community. For the time being, however, in the sixteenth-century the activity of both local communities must have been concentrated on the labours of agricultural husbandry.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture was the one occupation in which almost all the inhabitants of Keynsham and Saltford shared. In addition to whatever trade they plyed they also farmed. In 1539 the agricultural organisation in each village was still medieval with strips in open fields, common pastures and hay meadows, but there were signs of change. Documents refer to "closes" (enclosed land) "tynings" (enclosed from open fields) "gastons" (en- closed paddocks) and "breeches" (cleared woodland).[1]

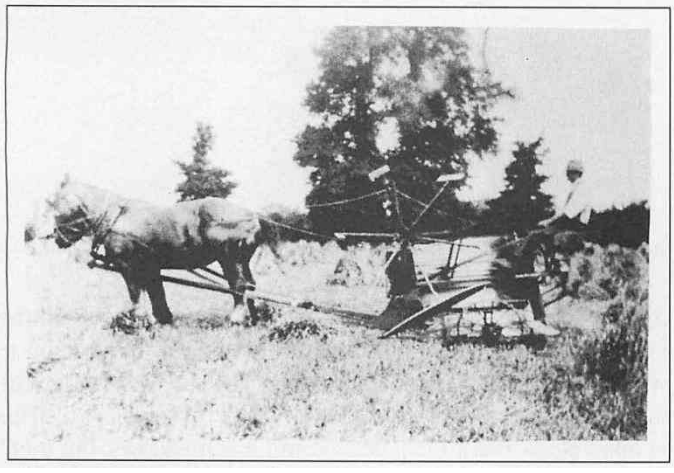
In Keynsham the former Abbey lands, the best agricultural land lay in the center and to the west The Abbey had pushed the village lands out beyond the old West Field to Culverhouse Field and Stockwood Field, and in the East out beyond the River Chew to Upfield ,Middlefield and Downfield. The village meadow lands lay near the River Avon, Stidham, the Great Ham, Broadmead, Horseham, Hawkeswell and Angelmead.

By the 18th century much Keynsham land had been enclosed, but there were few compact farms. Parkhouse, Stockwood and Eastover farms were established by the 16th century, but their acreage varied with different generations. Parkhouse had 120 acres in a ring fence in 1777[2] By 1945 it was sold with 45 acres.[3] Some farmers held land from both the former Abbey and the old village lands. James Harris (about 1760) held Eastover and Culvers Farms from the Duke of Chandos and 59 acres of other land sublet from 8 different tenants.[4] James Betterton in the 1720s held 13.5 acres from the Whitmores in 7 different places; some of it in 2 different places in the same open field.[5]

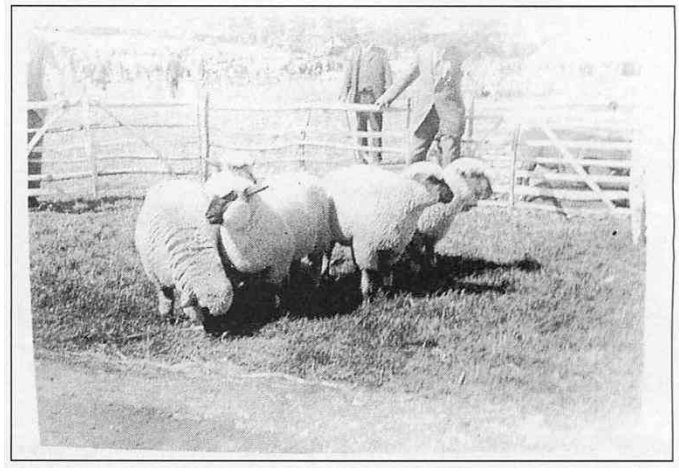
The sales of the two estates, the Whitmores in the 18th century and the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos in the 19th century were piecemeal. This meant many small parcels of land came onto the market and enabled a wide distribution of land to continue. Farmers, living in the village street and going out to work their land in the open fields remained a feature of Keynsham life longer than elsewhere. In 1875 there were 52 landowners listed in the Government Survey of landowners in Keynsham: 27 of them held less than 10 acres. The Kelly's Directory lists William Harris as farming at Milward Farm, Bath Street (now Bristol Road). Dapps Hill Farm (170 acres) sold in 1889 as part of Keynsham Manor Estate, lost its land when Temple Street School was built on its Home Field. The Farm was demolished in the 1960s many other small farms disap-

peared under buildings, for example Culvers Farm, and the small farm in Temple Street belonging to Daniel Mereweather.[6] He rented land in the 1760s from the Whitmores and the Duke, land in the Ham, Broadmead, Ellsbridge, Stidham and Downfield. By 1839 his property had become a dwellinghouse with outbuildings and craftsmen's shops. The land had been leased elsewhere.

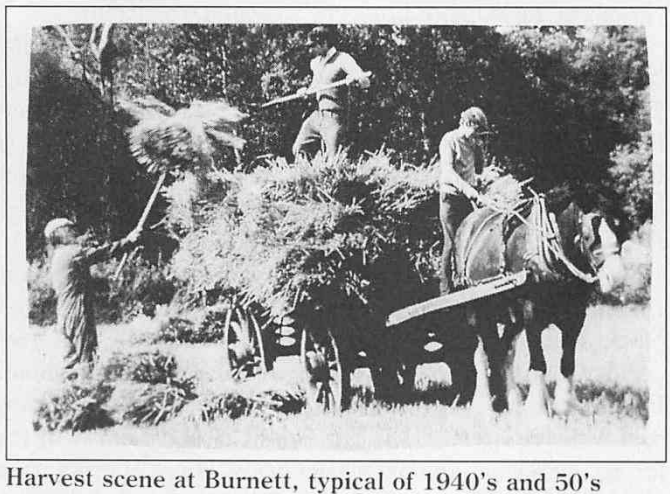
Larger farms emerged in the late 19th century. In the 1881 census Alfred Wood farmed 300 acres at Lodge Farm (Chandos Lodge) employing 5 men and 2 women. Leys Farm had 99 acres farmed by Hungerford J A Clapp and 1 labourer. Rookhill Farm, the former holding of the Stewards of the Manor still had 150 acres. Rock Hill farm was held by C H Wood with 150 acres employing 5 men and 1 woman. New Barn Farm (Uplands) had 300 acres with it. James Candy Lock had over 300 acres at Mill House Farm, Bath Road, employing 9 men, 2 boys and 1 woman. Documentary study has revealed some 40 farms to have existed in Keynsham at some time between 1539 and 1945.[7] Farms at Chewton Keynsham had been consolidated at a much earlier date. By 1880 it was established in 4 main farms Elm Park Farm, Red Lynch Farm (or Redditch) Farm, Warners Farm and Manor Farm.



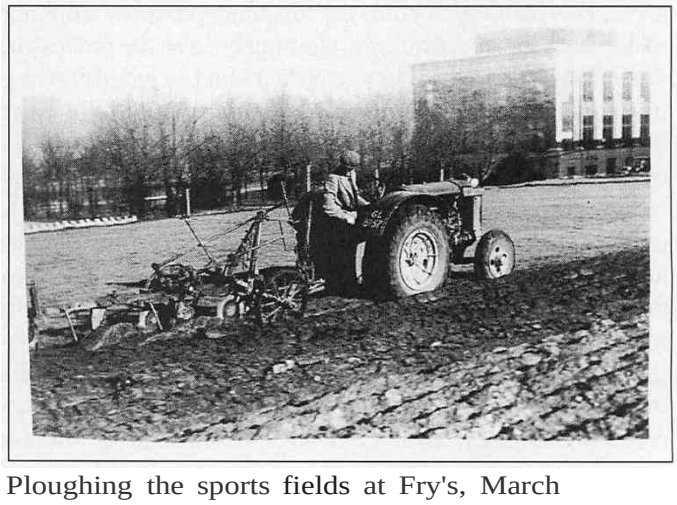
Charles Church working at Townsend, Burnett



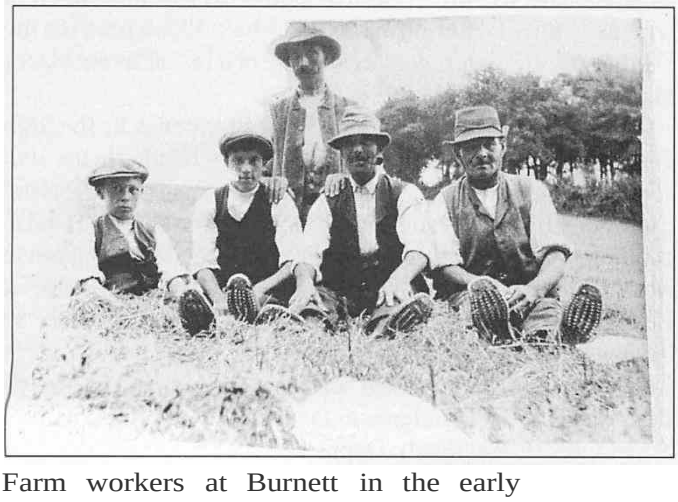
C.H. Paget's prize winning lambs. NE Somerset show at Pensford, late 20's



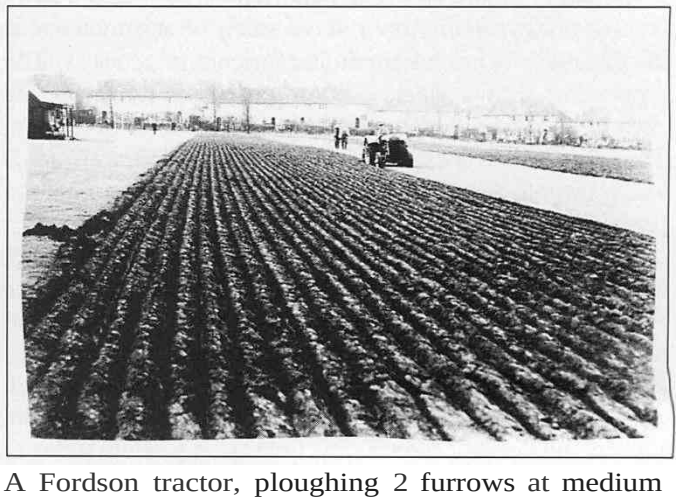
Harvest scene at Burnett, typical of 1940's and 50's



Ploughing the sports fields at Fry's, March 1940



Farm workers at Burnett in the early 1920's
(rear) James Bailey, (left to right) John Bailey, Gilbert Church, Charles Church, George Bates



A Fordson tractor, ploughing 2 furrows at medium depth, behind Chandos Road, March 1940

In Saltford the last unenclosed land disappeared in 1851 when Saltford Mead was enclosed.[8] Prior to enclosure the 60 odd acres were divided into 83 small doles; some already grouped together. Some were held by copyhold tenure (copies of the entry in the court roll) some by leasehold, others by village custom. Tenants without deeds were unable to prove their legal rights, and received no allocation of land. The Common Mead was divided between 10 owners, of whom the Rector, J B Doveton and George Norman received more than one half. The Common Mead became the enclosed fields of today, with the lane running beyond the Jolly Sailor, just as the old access lane to the strips had done. The fortunate recipients were able to exchange, consolidate and improve their holdings. By the 1880s there were 6 principal farms in Saltford. Avon Farm (with 157 acres the largest), Manor or Court Farm, Hill Farm, Saltford Farm, land attached to the Jolly Sailor and the Rector's Glebe. Agriculture was the predominant occupation, although the Railway and the Brass Mills provided some other employment.

The system of land tenure and farming methods in Keynsham remained old fashioned. The last vestiges of the system of common pasturing on the village meadows remained until the 20th century. The methods used to regulate grazing on the Common Land were cited in the sale particulars of the Manor in 1889 exactly as they had been 250 years earlier.

In the 17th century they had managed to get agreement to limit (stint) the animals turned out, to check overgrazing (one of the evils of the system). By the 20th century such communal decisions were harder to achieve although a hayward was appointed in 1911. In 1909 the Feoffees complained to the Lord of the Manor that the regulations were being broken, but he refused to act.[10] There were further disputes but the problem was solved when much of the unenclosed land was sold to Fry's. The boundary stones which once marked each owner's dole or strip have virtually all disappeared.

Keynsham was famous for stock rearing and fattening cattle on its hams. The riverside pastures in Wellsway reared Mr. Bowring's Red Devon cattle. James Sheppy at Redlynch Park Farm who had 3 champion Dairy Short Horns at the London Dairy Show and prior to the first World War, was a champion milk producer. Sheep too, played an important part in the prosperity of Keynsham and Saltford, first as a source of wool, and later for their value in enriching the land when they were folded on it prior to the wheat crop. The Keynsham Sheep Fair was held annually in August in the Chandag Road area up to the Second World War.

The 1801 Crop Returns show that 3 to 4 times more wheat than barley was grown. The traditional medieval crop, peas and beans was still extensively grown, just as much as barley. Potatoes were grown but few other roots. We do not know what crop rotations were used, but two things seem likely. On enclosed land a whole variety of rotations was practised. On unenclosed land the rotation commonly included a fallow year. Of 411 acres of arable land in the Duke of Chandos' survey (1781) 55 were left fallow. The proportion of fallow in leasehold land was much less, possibly an indication that the wealthier leasehold farmers were more open to agricultural improvements than the poorer copyhold tenants.

For agriculture improvements were in the air. In 1777 the Bath Society (later the Bath and West Society) had been formed. One of their enthusiastic correspondents, Nehemiah Bartley[11] farmed on the recently enclosed Brislington Common (1778). He keenly experimented with new crops; buckwheat, turnips, canary seed, anise, potatoes, black oats, Jerusalem artichokes and coriander. Flax he wrote off as a crop, but there is evidence it was grown and processed in Keynsham in the early 19th century. Judging by the field name (Hempshund) it had long been grown here.

He also tried growing woad. Keynsham and Saltford had been famous for it, probably since the 16th century when Queen Elizabeth tried to encourage its production, though not its manufacture in her vicinity (she loathed the smell). Bartley was assured by local woad growers it would not grow in Brislington. He sowed half an acre which grew wonderfully, but he could not persuade any Keynsham growers to purchase and process it.· He concluded that it was very easy to grow. The only difficulty was in marketing.

The Bath Society tried to encourage a diversification of crops improved methods and new machinery. A Keynsham farmer, John Thomas took part in a ploughing match held at Barracks Farm, Bath in March 1778, believed to be the first ever held. He used 4 small Welsh oxen and a light swing plough, but he needed an extra horse, "the soil being too stiff for the strength of the oxen". He took 5 hours and 30 minutes to plough an acre 4 inches deep. Mr. Thomas got 2 guineas for his efforts and his servant a smock frock. The winner ploughed an acre in 3hours 4 minutes using a double coulter plough.

Nehemiah Bartley was an advocate of the new plough and of deep ploughing. When he ploughed land 9 inches deep local farmers came to shake their heads at his rashness. Some said it would take seven years to recover others said it never would. He believed deep ploughing was one reason for his excellent crops.

Other crops important locally were fruit, especially cider apples and pears, (Mr. Sheppy made cider at Chewton prior to his removal to Three Bridges), osiers and rushes, teazels and burs (leaves were used for wrapping butter). The area had a reputation for cheese making. Daniel Defoe refers to Dundry Daps in Keynsham in the late 17th century. Cheesemaking was to become more important after the establishment by the Hardings of Marksbury of the scientific principles of cheesemaking. Liquid milk was of less importance until the introduction of the railways. Market gardening became increasingly important to supply the needs of Bath and Bristol.

Agricultural improvement did come to the area. Martin lnnys records that sanfoin was grown locally. There were well known animal breeders at Corston and Twerton. In 1777 an advertisement in Felix Farley's Bristol Journal notes that Park House Farm had a marl pit and a good lime kiln. The land was described as 120 acres of improvable land. Marl, a soil mixture of clay and lime was also dug at Queen Charlton, Chewton Keynsham and Burnett.

The bad times for agriculture began in the 1870s. A combination of cheap imported agricultural produce, appalling weather and increased animal diseases dramatically lowered prices and farmers' incomes. The price of wheat, 126s.6d a quarter (four and a quarter hundred weights) in 1812, was 5s.4d by 1894. The Feoffees' Accounts reflect the difficulties small farmers were in. In 1887 and 1889 they reduced their rents by 10% because so many tenants were giving up.

Wars improved agricultural prices, but the slump after the First World War was the severest the farmers had yet known. The repeal of the Corn Production Act 1922 halved the price of wheat, but did not alter agricultural wages. Between the Wars

4 million acres of arable reverted to grass.[13] The weather too, continued contrary, 1924 was appallingly wet. Smaller farmers found it better to sell their land for building. The Foeffees sold the last of their land and invested the money. Larger farmers managed to survive by the adoption of greater mechanisation and diversification. Elm Farm, Burnett had its first tractor in 1931[14] though steam ploughing and threshing had been used locally since the turn of the century. Availability of markets too, helped the local farmers. Keynsham market was busy. A Heavy Horse Show was held on what is now the Rugby Club Ground. Elm Farm produced milk, fat lambs, wool, pigs, poultry, ducks and eggs. Milk production had been encouraged by the provision of school milk from 1934 onwards. Space precludes a detailed account of the fortunes of local farmers in the interwar years.

It was wartime needs that transformed farming here as elsewhere. Vegetable plots sprouted in ornamental parks and gardens. Fry's ground was ploughed up. "Dig for Victory" was the slogan. An army of land girls took the place of the men. Machines were needed as never before. Food production soared. The agribusiness had begun.

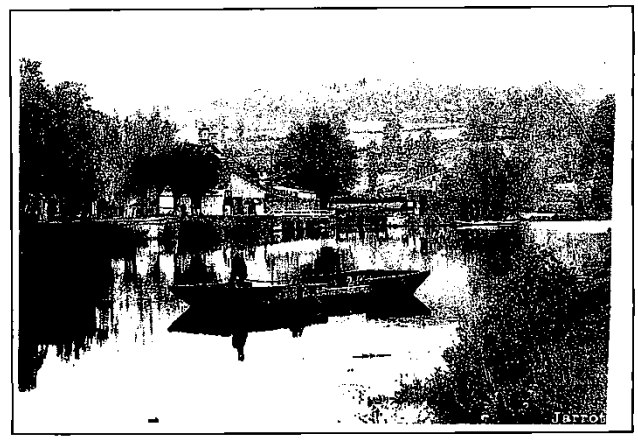
THE EARLY WATERMILLS

Wool, Cotton and Flax

From the days of the Abbey, Downe Mill or Chew Mill as it was later called, with traces remaining in Keynsham's Memorial Park, was being used as a grist mill for the grinding of corn. The processing of grain for both human and animal food had been the earliest use for watermills in England as they proliferated from the time of the Domesday record. Corn milling continued at Downe Mill until the early eighteenth century but other mill sites in the area had long been extended to another, probably more lucrative, use in the woollen trade. Where a greater fall of water, and therefore more power, was available, local mill sites had been utilised for two separate functions producing grist, the meal from grain, and at the same time, also fulling cloth for the wool trade.

The powerful Avon Mill site near the County Bridge(see plate 17), and South Mill (more recently known as the Albert Mill near the bottom of Dapps Hill (see plate 13), had been leased by the Abbey for both purposes concurrently, each site probably operating two separate water wheels. The Lemman or Leman family had been associated with fulling leases of these sites from the late 15th century[15]. Water-powered fulling process, often known in the West Country as tucking, had been introduced to England from continental countries during the late twelfth century. The cleansing, and thickening by partial felting, of loosely-woven woollen cloth had previously been carried out by fullers beating, or treading the cloth as it soaked in water-filled vats. Fulling, tucking or walking are thus synonymous terms in this context. The water-powered wooden mallets, called fulling stocks, were able to accomplish the task more quickly and effectively. This resulted in an increasing use of heavy fulling to make the thick, West Country broadcloth, exported largely in its undyed state, which brought great wealth to the Wiltshire clothiers.

The trade nearer Bristol was more involved in producing locally dyed coloured cloths, an activity confirmed by medieval references to dye vats and woad vats in Chew Valley villages.[16] Export in this sector of the wool trade was declining towards the close of the 1500s[17].This may explain why John Leaman obtained permission from the Popham estate to convert one of his two existing fulling mills to a grist mill in his lease of 1606.[18] His family name must surely be linked to the Leman family of Avon and South fulling mills, noted above who, however, continued to lease these two latter fulling mills until later in the century. At Saltford, John Cox, the fuller from the lower mill in the parish, pleaded for clemency in 1613/14, after hard times and loss of his premises.[19] The Upper Saltford mill along The Shallows at Saltford, a more powerful and probably earlier mill, is also



The site of John Cox's fulling mill can be seen on the far side of the Avon. The chain ferry in the foreground transported horses to that side as the towpath changed banks at this point.

believed to have been adapted to fulling although less information is available. It is possible that Cox had also worked here. The setbacks in trade at this time must have affected local employment in the home spinning and weaving of cloth, but it is doubtful if these troubles affected a wide number employed at the fulling mills which probably were manned mainly by the fuller and his family.

Although some fullers' fortunes may have fluctuated in these times it appears that their trade provided the main function of mills in the area throughout the seventeenth century, but the former importance of the earlier woollen trade in the vicinity of Bristol was never fully regained. By the late 1600s a Bristol poor house was set up by the Quakers specifically for the cloth workers and increasing pauperism there in the early 1700's was said to be due to the general decay of the local cloth trade.[20] With trade further depressed by the 1720s employers combined to reduce wages, inevitably causing unrest Keynsham weavers were among those who took part with those of Bristol and adjoining areas in a Parliamentary Petition in 1719 protesting about their plight. In 1728 it was reported that "The weavers have risen again this Week without Lawford's Gate to the number of 500, where they seized and burnt 30-odd lombs (looms); and Thursday morning they set out in a body to visit the Neighbourhood of Chew Magna, and came round to Pensford and Keynsham, in which round they destroyed a great many lombs and one house; and they are not yet made easy."[21] Inhabitants of Keynsham itself appear not to have been involved on this occasion; perhaps opportunities for employment in other industries were improving locally by this time.

During the eighteenth century, as other more buoyant industries were being introduced to the mills, only South Mill at Keynsham continued to be involved in the production of woollen cloth. Writing of Keynsham 1780s, Edmund Rack stated,

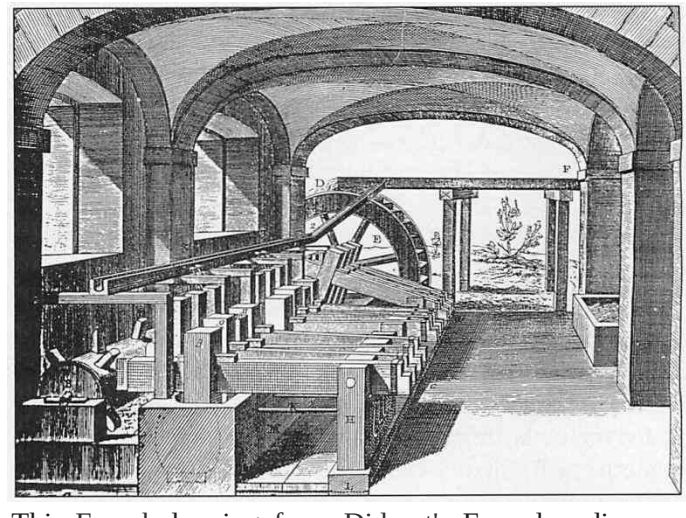
'There was formerly a considerable woollen manufacture carried on here, but it is now entirely dropt; many of the poor however are still employed in spinning for the Bradford, Trowbridge and Shepton clothiers".[22]

In 1788, William Overend, owner of a cotton mill opposite Hotwell House in Bristol moved his business to South Mill in Keynsham. In doing so he introduced mechanised processes for scribbling and carding for both wool and cotton in addition to spinning jennies. Although invented by James Hargreaves in 1770 for the spinning of cotton the jenny had later been adapted for wool. There had been riots when it had been installed in 1776 at Shepton Mallet.[23] In March 1790, less than two years after Overend's business moved to Keynsham, the Bristol Mercury reported that: "On Tuesday last a number of women assembled at Keynsham in the County of Somerset with the avowed purpose of destroying certain machines lately introduced into the woollen manufacture at that place, but were happily prevented from carrying their design into execution by the seasonable and judicious interference of the civil power. .." There is significance in a report in the same paper at the end of May. "On Wednesday a detachment of the 1st Regiment of Dragoon Guards arrived from Exeter at Keynsham, near this city, where they are to be stationed." These stringent measures failed to achieve any long-term effect in establishing the new industry. Financial restraints, possibly aggravated by the impending upheaval of the Napoleonic War appear to have restricted the availability of cotton. Villagers were soon applying for poor law relief because of "shortages of cotton at the mills" or "shortage of work at the cotton mill". The mill appeared under the name of Messrs Fry, & Rawleigh when insuring the building for £2,000 in 1792, and by 1798 they were advertising the business for sale. In the early years of the 1800s children under 14 years of age were sent to the cotton mill if their parents applied for poor law relief. Further sales advertisements for the business appeared in 1808, apparently still with no result, and by 1811 a final sale offered all machinery, and stock in trade, after bankruptcy of the owners, Messrs Oakley and Overend. Keynsham's brief entry into the cotton trade had come to an end.[24] From later references it appears that the premises were being used for processing hemp and flax. This required considerable manual labour in somewhat similar processes *involving retting,* or soaking in water, then ripping the long stalks through metal combs to expose usable threads and discard the waste. Vestry minutes record that nineteen children between the ages of six and eleven were to be employed at the hemp factory in the parish from December 1810.[25] An 1830s list of brass company premises revealed the ownership by including, 'The Cotton Mills on the river Chew, comprising a large stack of Building with five floors, now used as a Flax Mill, with one water wheel and a fall of twelve feet- also a small dwelling house adjoining."[26] In the 1831 census returns, 79 men are recorded as being employed at Keynsham flax mill. In the June of that year, the brass company offered the mill for sale and deleted it from its list of property. Hemp and flax processing was discontinued, undoubtedly bringing distress to the many families depending on it for a livelihood. The influence of the South Mill enterprise probably accounts for two Keynsham traders listed in Pigot's Directories of the 1830s. Thomas Edwards, was a flax spinner, a rope and sack maker, Thomas Goldworthy a rope, sack and twine maker.

The Paper Mills

The craft of papermaking had arrived in the West Country at Wookey Hole by 1610. Originating in China, it had come through Arab countries to Spain and the Continent by the 12th century. It had then taken centuries to become established in Kent by 1588, after earlier attempts had failed. At this period, English paper was made from linen rags macerated in water to pulp or "stuff' by water-powered mallets, similar to those of the fullers' stocks.

By 1678, part of Chewton Keynsham Mill, formerly the fulling mill of John Leaman and his successors, had been adapted to make paper whilst also still housing a grist mill. A surviving inventory listing existing equipment at this date, refers to fifteen hammers headed with iron heads, also three "throwes" each one plated at the bottom. These were the three troughs in which the material was pulped, presumably each one arranged with five hammers working in them. The inventory also listed one vat from which "they take the paper out of with their moulds."[27] The moulds were sieves used for dipping into



This French drawing from Diderot's Encyclopedia, shows equipment similar to that described in the Chewton Keynsham paper mill. Pulling Mills also had wooden mallets, sometimes different in shape and housing, and operated singly or in pairs, but they could be very similar to this illustration.

the vat to take up a layer of prepared "stuff'. This was drained, turned over on a layer of felt and, when another felt was placed over it, the operation was repeated. Multiple layers of stuff and felts were eventually pressed free of water and the sheets of stuff dried to form paper. Although the wording of the Chewton Keynsham inventory is somewhat obscure, it does relate to these early methods of English papermaking and records the earliest-known instance in the Bristol region.

The mill was leased for 99 years to Nicholas Falx which, it has been suggested, may be a name with Huguenot origins.[28] Papermaking was a craft associated with such immigrant victims of religious persecution. The Falx family seem to have met with little good fortune for by 1695 only Mrs Falx was paying land tax, and another papermaker, John Browne, was buried at Keynsham in 1698.[29] In the new century two Falx children were sent to the hemp mills under poor law administration. Later, and up to 1727, Land Tax was assessed to Mr. Ross, apparently still continuing papermaking until 1749 when the premises and stock, reported in a newspaper[30] to be valued at £500, were

completely destroyed-by fire- a particularly common fate for paper mills.

This did not end papermaking in the area. A map of the environs of Bath first published in 1742 shows Saltford paper mill situated where John Cox the fuller had formerly worked, at the lower mill site in Saltford.[31] The present Jolly Sailor Inn was the mill house occupied by Francis Hunt In 1765, Hunt advertised that his apprentice, Robert Pain, – of dark complexion, wearing leather breeches and coat and waistcoat of birds-eye welton, had absconded. Kind treatment was promised if he returned immediately and prosecution threatened if any other papermakers provided employment for him.[32] The outcome was not reported.

The Saltford method of papermaking had probably been improved compared with that of Chewton Keynsham. The introduction of the "hollander", or beater, proved far more effective in producing the stuff. Rags in a water-filled vat were shredded by a water powered revolving drum set with knives meshing with projections in the vat itself. Many small watermills by then were using the hollander in the Bristol area, the Avon valley and vicinity of Mendip. They were eventually to succumb to large continuous papermaking in the early nineteenth century. Thomas Thorpe's map of 1799 still showed Saltford paper mill which, by then was owned by a Mr. Whittingham but it is by no means certain that paper was still being produced at this time. In any event, it ceased just after the turn of the century, and the premises appear to have been converted to a leather mill.

No further local activity in papermaking was to take place until the twentieth century when in 1927, E S & A Robinson purchased Keynsham's Avon Mill, site of the old brass mills. A modern factory and plant incorporating continuous methods of making paper to a width of 162 in was installed in 1933.[33] The factory specialised in making coated papers by the latest automated methods, bringing the long history of this craft into the modern era It still survives at a time when so many other large west-country paper making factories have closed.

The Processing of Dyewoods

Although the production of woollen cloth came to an end at the start of the nineteenth century the processing of dye materials which formerly had been part of the local cloth industry still continued to thrive. Woad and other local natural plants had been used for this purpose whilst others such as indigo had been imported. The cultivation of woad, already mentioned above, is said to have provided good wages for women and children during the eighteenth century, more especially after the introduction of cotton manufacture.[34] Evidence of it being grown and processed also at Saltford can be found in the field name Woad Range.[35] This refers to the timber barn in which woad leaves were balled up and dried before being crushed, usually under edgerunners consisting either of vertical millstones, or wooden circular frames containing knives, propelled round a circular trench by horsepower.

Other forms of natural dyes derived from local timbers were discovered by the Spaniards in use by natives of Central American areas and brought to Europe. In the sixteenth century, English woad growers campaigned successfully for legislation against such use claiming the dyes were inferior, but also fearing the threat to their employment. Nevertheless, Swinford Mill is said to have been processing dyewood from Elizabethan times.[36] The ban was lifted by 1661 after Flemish cloth workers fleeing to England showed skills in using these imported dyewoods. From then the demand increased rapidly, with Bristol being a main port of entry from Central America The sale of dyewood machinery in Chew Magna was advertised in 1728[37] and from 1762 Chewton Keynsham mill was occupied by John Durbin, a "drysalter" dealing in the coarser types of chemicals with which dyewoods were marketed. The premises were described as a most complete mill for the manufacture of woods for dyers when advertised for sale in 1784, apparently unsuccessfully. The then owner, Thomas Lediard, or his descendants with various partners continued at Chewton Keynsham until the 1850's, despite a severe fire in 1843. Christopher Roberts was in occupation during the 1870s,[38] and 80s but then, between 1889 and 1894 the mill was taken over by Colthurst and Harding, names well known in Bristol for paint manufacture.

By this latter period, the former woollen, cotton, and flax mill premises of South Mill, now rebuilt, was being utilised by the Thomas family for dyewood production. John Thomas had formerly worked at Chewton Keynsham under the Lediard ownership.[39] Having later moved to Swinford Mill, Wotton-under-Edge and then Stroud, his descendants returned to Keynsham to set up their own dyewood production, overcoming yet another disastrous fire of their South Mill premises in the first year of business there. Colthurst and Harding later sold the goodwill of their dyewood business to their new neighbours just downstream at South Mill.

The imported timbers were chipped by a revolving water-powered disc set with knife blades, and then either reduced to sawdust under revolving drums, or finely powdered under heavy water-powered stone edgerunners (see plate 14). The chips, sawdust or powders were supplied direct to the dyers or cloth producers to make infusions and incorporated into dye recipes suitable for wool, cotton or fine leathers. Logwood, the main wood to be processed came from a small tree in the pea family. It produced a blue dye which could be modified by the use of chemical mordants to shades in the mauve range or could give a good black in combination with other dye materials. Other woods processed included brazilwood producing a red dye and the old and new fustic woods giving shades in the yellow ranges. More colours could be produced from woods brought from lndia, the Eastern Mediterranean and other parts of the world.

The Thomas family were successful in their business, particularly in the production of suitable chemical mordants which were incorporated with their dyes. After occupying additional premises in Albert Road Bristol, they changed the name of their Keynsham Works to Albert Works and South Mill was renamed the Albert Mill.

The introduction and gradual adoption of artificial chemical dyes eventually diminished the use of dyewoods. This caused a decline in their competitors, but the chemical expertise of the Thomas family enabled the Keynsham dyewood production to survive as part of their more widely based business as dry salters, which, as time progressed, also included chemicals other than those related to dyeing. Thus, the occasional processing of dyewoods in Keynsham outlived all competitors elsewhere in the country, managing to survive until the Second World War. Even afterwards when it was no longer possible to import new supplies of dyewoods, intermittent processing of old stocks still took place into the 1960's, The mill building by then was mainly

serving as a warehouse for chemicals.[40]

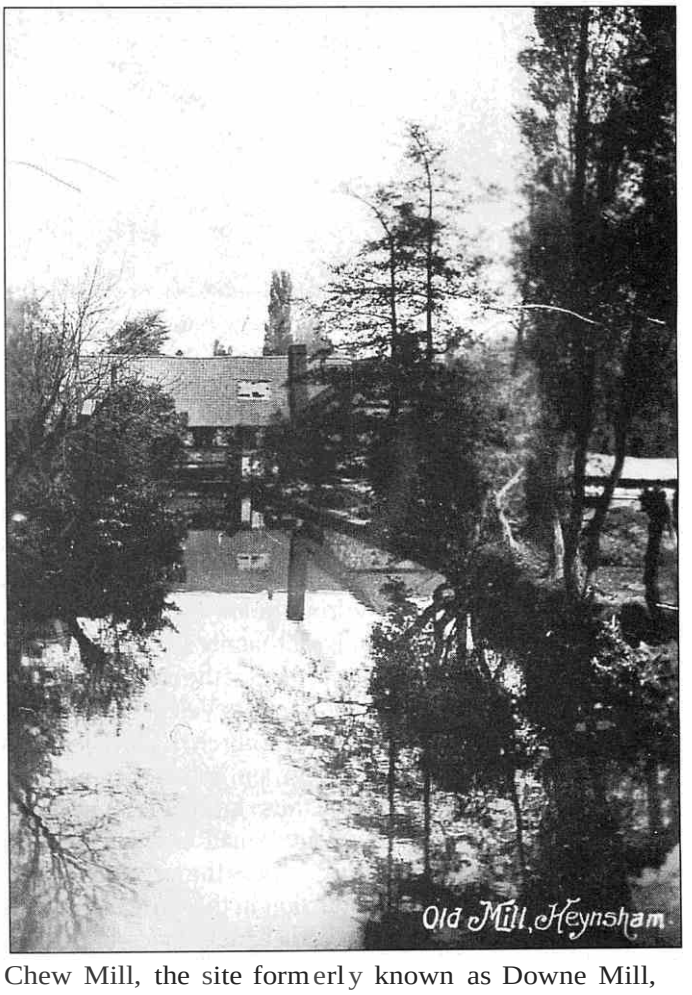
Another different Keynsham industry, but related to latter phases of trading in chemicals at the Albert Mill had been established from the early years of the century. Its main purpose under the name of Polysulphin was the supply of soaps and other chemicals for laundries, but Keynsham residents usually referred to it as the "soap works". It was started by the immigrant Peters family in a large red-brick factory building, believed to have been originally constructed for the Avondale Iron Company Ltd., of Keynsham. This latter company appears to have set out to become involved producing galvanised iron in the 1890's. Whether it actually succeeded in producing anything has not so far come to light.[41]

The Metal Industries

In the 1600s iron working was taking place at mills higher up the River Chew near Pensford and Chew Magna.[42] They were forges working wrought iron using water-powered hammers, a far heavier development of the fullers' stocks.

During the century experiments had been taking place in the Forest of Dean and other parts of the country in the production of steel, a special alloy of iron containing small amounts of carbon of up to about 1.5%. By the end of the century successful methods had been introduced in areas specialising in its production, the Midlands, the North East and Sheffield. Good quality bars of wrought iron, packed with charcoal in iron chests, were kept heated with coal fuel in furnaces housed under a conical chimney. By absorbing carbon into the surface the wrought iron was converted to "blister" steel, capable of hardening and quenching to make edge tools, cutting instruments and cutlery. Surprisingly, by at least the 1720s, steel was being produced by such methods in Keynsham. It may just possibly have also been made in Bristol at this time but, otherwise , was unique to the whole South and West of Britain. Swedish traveller Henric Kahlmeter, investigating British metal industries in 1725, referred to a steel furnace at "Kensham", near Bristol. His countryman, Reinhold Angerstein, making further reports in 1753 also noted the steel works , with its furnaces and one hammer for forging.[43] Swedish iron, the best for this purpose, but also English , Russian and Spanish iron, was being converted to blister steel for merchants at Bristol at a charge of £2.00 per ton . The overall price for forged bars of steel was £26 to £27 per ton. Angerstein arrived as a furnace was being loaded with chests packed with its iron bars in crushed charcoal and covered with fine sand. He found that the steel master had recently died and was met by his widow, "so big and fat she could have concealed the whole furnace".

Very little local information is known about this important industry apart from the surviving name of Steel Mills Lane and the converted steel mills buildings on the opposite bank of the Chew from the Albert Mill. James Millard, a steel worker was nominated as Church Warden in 1785. Thomas Mills a steel maker was similarly nominated as Overseer in 1788. The name of Christopher Shallard seems to have been associated with work in its latter stages. Poor rates were being met by William Overend of the cotton mills up to 1819. This may have been to enable additional water power to have been used at South Mill or, possibly, steel production continued until then. Deeds of the premises are said to have been held in modern times by a local inhabitant who thought that the works ceased to function by about 1822.[45] By then the works would have been out of date as production of the much improved "crucible steel" had been introduced to the Bristol area. The proximity of the port, with its importation of raw materials from far-distant countries, its requirement for finished goods for export and its trading, appears to have been the main reason for this local enterprise. The port was of similar importance in establishing the local production and manufacture of brass, but other vital factors included the availability of local coal, good sources of water- power and above all, Mendip calamine, the zinc ore needed to combine with copper in order to produce the alloy.[46] The brass company which was started in 1702 in Bristol by a group of Quakers, including Abraham Darby, was expanding after a few years. Downe Mill, described as "2 water griste mills formerly used as one mill" was being leased by partners of the brass company in April of 1705,[46] rather earlier than previously had been thought. The brass was produced at Baptist Mills, the original premises in Bristol where waterpower sources proved unreliable. Downe Mill was adapted as a "battery mill", using water-powered hammers to beat out sheets of metal from flat



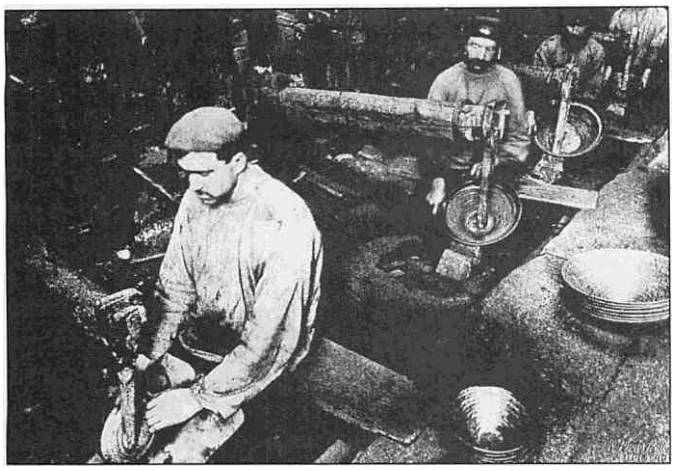
Chew Mill, the site formerly known as Downe Mill, situated in what is now Keynsham's Memorial Park and photographed here in the early years of this century

ingots or plates cast at Bristol. The sheets were then beaten under the hammers to shape them into hollow ware vessels of comparatively thin brass. This was a method of manufacture which had been perfected in European centres of the industry.

Earlier efforts to make and work brass in the country had met with failure or only comparatively short-lived production. It was necessary, therefore, to find workers with the required skills from the European industry. The nearest were situated in that

part of the Netherlands which later became Belgium, or in the vicinity of Aachen in an adjoining area of Western Germany. Calamine, the zinc ore, was available locally in both areas.

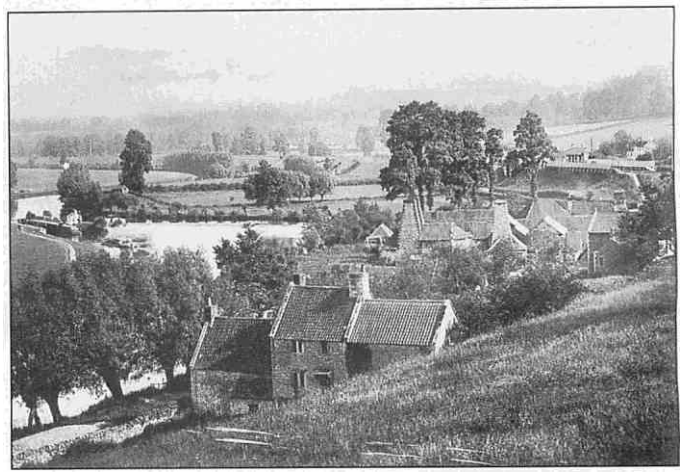
Abraham Darby is known to have travelled to Europe in the early years of the century to obtain the skills of the "melters" and "batterymen", those who could produce the alloy and others to operate the fast water-powered hammers.[48] As early as 1708 the parish registers of St. John Church were recording the birth of a son for John Buck, described a brass worker and believed to have been an immigrant. A month later similar records refer to the Steger family, known from later references to have had continental origins. Names later recorded include those of Francome, Craymer, Rackham, Fray, (anglicised from Varoy), Crinks, (anglicised from Krintz) and Ollis, most with variable spelling but all connected with the immigrant workforce.



Brass pans being formed under battery hammers at Stolberg, Germany in 1905, an identical process to that operated at Chew Mill until the 1870's and at Saltford Mi ll until 1905. Photograph by courtesy of Dr. Karl Schleicher, Stolberg

By tradition, the immigrant brass workers have been assumed to come from Holland as Abraham Darby is said to have referred to them as "Dutch". This description, however, was frequently used to include those from the low countries generally, including Germany. The immigrant family of Graft, Graft or Graef, as it is so variably spelt, on settling at the brass company's Weston Mills at Bath, gave their home as Veit in Germany on a memorial tablet in Twerton Parish Church, Bath. The immigrants' names have identified as a group, both in Belgium and Germany, as being most typical of those in areas in, or near, the western borders of Germany. The small German town of Stolberg near Aachen on the borders, was the largest and most successful centre of brass production in the early eighteenth century, having overtaken the earlier importance of Aachen itself and the areas now lying in Belgium. It is very likely that Darby journeyed to Stolberg to find the best source of skilled labour.[50]

By 1710 the brass company had expanded further to Bath, as mentioned above and to Woodborough Mills on the River Chew. Copper ore imported through Bristol from Cornwall was being smelted at the company's own works at Crew's Hole two miles upstream of the city. The company obtained a lease of the mill on the upper weir at Saltford in 1721 in still further expansion. Battery hammers were installed and, perhaps later, water powered rolling mills were adopted as a more effective means of producing brass sheet than the earlier method of



The Saltford brass mill and its associated dwellings photographed against its river and railway background on 7 July 1884 by W.R. Stock of Long Ashton and Clevedon. By courtesy of Clevedon Civic Society and Woodspring Museum

beating. Immigrant families were accommodated in the mill cottages adjoining the site.

The River Avon was used as communication between the various premises owned by the company and this was made easier after the Avon Navigation locks which by-passed weirs on the river had been completed in 1728 (see plate 15 and 16). However, use of the navigation locks lowered the river level, and the ancient rights of the mill-owners gave them precedence in using the water. When water levels were threatened, the brass mills angered users of the waterway by claiming their right to close the locks.[51]

Avon mill at Keynsham was also added to the company sites in the early years of the century. This was the most powerful mill on the river and eventually was operated by as many as eight waterwheels powering rolling mills and much other ancillary equipment. By the 1740s wire-drawing equipment had been installed, adding another local brass product. This was the only company site to include the manufacture of wire. Cast brassware was never made at the mills as a commercial product but ingot brass was sold in Bristol and more particularly to Birmingham foundries which specialised in this kind of production.

New improvements in the techniques of making brass were being introduced by the company in the 1720s. The use of coal instead of charcoal as fuel was emphasised, as in the new method of annealing, or softening of metal which had been work hardened during manufacture by prolonged heating proc- esses.[52] This process as it was later more fully developed is illustrated by the remaining annealing furnace at Saltford brass mill site; the only surviving near-complete, example of its kind (see plate 18).

These innovations brought commercial success as the Bristol area gradually became recognised as the Country's main centre of brass production and manufacture, eventually surpassing the former continental industries in output and technical expertise. Both Keynsham and Saltford were at the heart of the growing industry.

An agreement was made between the parish of Keynsham and the brass company in 1740 concerning the immigrants families. When falling on hard times and needing parish relief, through ill health or misfortune, workers originating from outside the parish would normally have been required to return home for assistance, under the Act of Settlement of 1662.

The impracticability of this solution for the foreign workers had caused of several disputes between the company and the Paymaster of Keynsham parish who, as a result, had to cope with an additional burden on parish funds. In the agreement the brass company assumed future responsibility for all such families.[53] From then on it was in their own interests for them to remain with the company, and this probably accounts for the long-standing employment at the brass mills of many of their descendants. Local tradition has it that the company undertook specifically to provide employment for descendants up to the third generation. This cannot be verified although many families were still represented at the mills a century later, and a few remained until final closure in the 1920s.

The 1740's agreement also provided for apprentices to be taken on from the poor of the parish, naming "the son of the late widow of one Rawlins" to be so placed immediately. Local men, meanwhile, had been supplementing the work force and integrating with immigrant workers as production had increased. This trend was further extended with time. While the brass workers appear never to have been highly paid, they were secure in their employment during most of the eighteenth century and appear to have had considerable pride in possessing the unusual skills of their craft.

Toward the end of the century the brass company started to lose its domination of brass production. Although still described in a Parliamentary Committee Inquiry of 1799 as "perhaps the most considerable brasshouse in all Europe", it faced opposition from new copper-smelting interests and a growing industry in brass which had been introduced in Birmingham. The remaining descendants of the old Bristol managing partnership were more interested in banking and commerce. The company started to sell its many sites owned between Bath and Bristol, most having been disposed of by 1830. Keynsham's Avon Mill became company headquarters when Baptist Mills was relinquished, and from that time undertook production of the brass alloy. Saltford Mill and the two mills at Keynsham were the only working mills which remained when all brass company premises were leased to Charles Ludlow Walker in 1833. This change brought some rebuilding at Avon Mill with a new "Upper Yard" being added which included some steam-powered plant, although it is only believed to have been used when the waterwheels were out of action. Waterpower was cheaper to run. New simpler methods of brass production were introduced which employed metallic zinc instead of the ore, calamine. A new manager's house was constructed, the building which still survives. These were small improvements and too late to make any effective impression on the superior strength in the industry which had already developed in Birmingham.[54]

When Walker's lease was due to expire, several attempts were made to dispose of the remaining business. Land owned at both Avon Mill, Keynsham and the Saltford mill had already been sold to the Great Western Railway for their new Bristol to London line. At Saltford then, the brass workers chose to commemorate the start of its construction by roughly incising a stone at the side of one of the annealing ovens, "Begun Digging the Rail Road 11 June 1836".

The remaining business was transferred to a partnership headed by Donald and David Bain after sales auctions advertised in 1859 and again in 1862 failed to produce prospective buyers.

The Bains ran the mills very much as formerly, but now as a small, local, skilled-craft industry, in contrast to the original large-scale enterprise of national importance. They were proud of the ancient traditions and eighteenth-century methods of working, but introduced enough new plant to enable the business to survive. Another small steam engine was installed at Avon Mill, but the eight waterwheels continued to be the main source of power. Production of pin wire was increased, and a number of water-powered shoe rivet machines catered for the growing Kingswood production of working boots. The Keynsham battery-mill site at Chew Mill, formerly Downe mill, was sold during the 1870s but Saltford battery-mill hammers continued the eighteenth-century methods of producing brass hollow-ware vats and pans. It remained working, somewhat spasmodically until 1905, the last working mill of its kind in the country. The last men to work at the hammers making brass pans are said to have been George Brimble and Tom Shellard who became foreman at the works. Saltford rolling mills continued to operate when work was available.

Employment at the brass mills was no longer secure. More work became available with the need for brass shell cases of the First World War and, afterwards for brass memorial tablets, but these were not lasting requirements. Saltford Mill closed in 1925 at the death of the last of the Bains. A T Davies, the manager took over Avon Mill with the help of his son. but was forced to close in less than two years. Descendants of immigrant workers were still being employed at the mills in the very last stages. Old William "Jarmin" Ollis was said to be of the ninth generation to work at Keynsham brass works, and descendants of his large family are still in business in Keynsham. Similar families represented as the industry came to a close included the Frays and the Frankhams. Members of the Frankham and Ollis families are known to have worked at Keynsham, Kelston and Saltford sites. Edwin Fray had started work at Avon Mill in 1842 at the age of 9, just after construction of the Great Western Railway, and continued working at the brass mills for the next sixty-six years, one of many who gave similar long service. Henry Fray, his kinsman, worked at Avon Mill in its final stages, the last representative of his family as local production and manufacture of brass ceased in 1927 after more than 220 years of existence.[55]

MINERAL SOURCES

The production of brass in Bristol and Avon Valley areas had originated partly because of nearness to the country's first discoveries in Elizabethan times of calamine, the zinc ore, found on Mendip and its outliers. The existence of iron ore in several nearby areas proved with time to be less influential, being unsuitable in quality for production of good iron. By the post-medieval centuries, most iron worked locally was brought into the port of Bristol from the Forest of Dean, Wales or its borders, or from far distant overseas countries.

Coal, however, was a most important commodity of the available mineral resources, being widely available from early times in both quantity, quality and differing grades. It could be had from areas immediately north-east of Bristol at Kingswood and its surrounding localities, and also from the North-Somerset sector of the coalfield. Special qualities of coal came into the port from areas elsewhere. This easy availability gave rise to its use in several different local industries at an early date, such as dyeing and lime burning, and its later employment in the smelting and working of metals.

Keynsham itself can never be said to have taken part in any major coal-mining but there were small areas of low-key activity

from time to time within the parish and in adjoining areas. No similar records have been discovered for Saltford although there were considerable coal stocks in the neighbouring parish of Newton St. Loe in the vicinity of the Globe Inn,[56] and also on the other side of the Avon in the Golden Valley just north of Bitton.[57]

A member of the Bridges family put his name to a lease in 1708 granting coal-mining rights to surviving executors of Robert Langton.[58] This appears to have concerned the area known as the "humpy-dumps", the spoil heap remains still visible between the railway embankment and Keynsham bypass adjacent to Durley Park. It is believed that this was also a site of trial borings and shafts sunk by George Brydges in 1730, but any work carried out here must have been on a comparatively small scale.

In Charlton Bottom a site near a tithe-map field name of Coal Pit Ground formerly contained a long low grass-covered spoil heap and fragmentary remains of an engine house. In 1969, a 150ft shaft containing 84ft of water was exposed by a farm worker who was bulldozing the land to clear the colliery workings. The fragments of masonry which had survived until then were from the housing of a Newcomen pump engine, described as a "Fire" engine as is usual for the time, in a 1781 advertisement [59] for the sale of Charlton Bottom Coal Work. A waterwheel was also installed on the site, undoubtedly, also

arl of
to his
from
icular
ip for
: situ-
it has
·
ıley's
unes,
n has
a le-
:hters
ıdded
:pay-
:s, is
ıbove
ıglish
erke-
:r son
t St.
Hen-
Vif-
ne of
elder
or of
roaft,
m, of
eſtern
book-
beef-
a his
cured
ı who

Rent of One Shilling per Ann.
The Houſe hath lately been put in good Repair, under which is a large convenient Cellar.
☞ For Particulars apply to T. FISHER, Attorney, in Small-ſtreet.

A COLLIERY, in SOMERSETSHIRE.
To be Sold by Auction,

On the 8th Day of October next, at the EXCHANGE COFFEE-HOUSE, in the City of Briſtol, between the Hours of One and Two o'Clock in the Afternoon, unleſs ſold in the mean Time by private Sale, of which Notice will be given,

CHarlton Bottom COAL WORK, ſituate about Half a Mile from the Turnpike Road leading from Briſtol to Keynſham, diſtant about four Miles and a half from Briſtol, and ſeven and a half from Bath, with Fire Engine in good Repair, the Furnace being new about a Year ſince, Water Wheel, a complete Set of Smith's Tools, and all other Tools and Implements thereto belonging.

Three Veins or Mines of Coal are now Open, from whence may be raiſed Twenty Score of Coal per Day, at an eaſy Expence.—This Work is capable of great Improvements, as there are Leaſes granted for coaling on a large Tract of Land adjoining the ſaid Work, for the Remainder of ſeveral long Terms of Years, upwards of thirty whereof are now unexpired, which Leaſes will be ſold with the Work.

For a View of the ſame apply at the Work, where is a large Quantity of good Coal for Sale, and for further Particulars to Mr. THOMAS WEBB, at Keynſham aforeſaid.

Gloceſterſhire *and* Somerſetſhire.
To be Sold by Auction,
By Mr. WILLOCK,

At Mr. CARR's, the WHITE-LYON in Broad-Street, in the City of Briſtol, on WEDNDSDAY and THURSDAY the 17th and 18th of October, in Thirty-ſix Lots, be-

The sale of Charlton Colliery advertised in Bonner & Middleton's Journal, 6 October, 1781

used for pumping as commonly practised in Somerset collieries. Three veins of coal were said to be worked from which twenty score of coal per day may be raised, but unfortunately this leaves the interpretation of a "score" as somewhat uncertain. In spite of the glowing description, any continuation of work here is debatable as no further references have been discovered.

Again in the 1960s, there were still noticeable remains of small spoil heaps in Chewton Keynsham near the roadside in the vicinity of the church. These have now disappeared but a larger spoil heap still forms the garden backdrop of the cottages formerly known as Pitt Cottages, further along the Compton Dando road. A newspaper sales advertisement [60] of 1833 gives some details of activity from at least 1822. Steam engines at the upper and lower sites are listed, together with buildings and tram roads belonging to the late Mr. Betts. It was

THOS. TAYLOR & CO.,
AVON PAINT AND VARNISH WORKS
SALTFORD BRISTOL.

Telephone: 2 Saltford, BRISTOL.

Telegrams: Taylor, Saltford, Bristol

"REXWYTE" (The King of Outside White Paints)
Most durable and extraordinary covering power. One coat of "Rexwyte" is equal to 2 coats of White Lead. Will withstand almost any chemical or atmospheric action. The ideal paint to resist the action of Sea air or any Factory Fumes.

"AVOLAC" Hard Gloss Lacquer Paint
Pure Colours. Finest Varnish. For all Outside and Inside Work.

"FLAXTON" Flat Oil Paint
For Inside Decoration
Beautiful Soft Egg-Shell Finish—Showing No Brush Marks.
T.L.P.—GENUINE LIQUID PAINTS

An advertisement in the Directory for Bristol Industries 1937 for Thomas Taylor's Saltford-made products

also claimed that "coals may be conveyed by river into Bristol in about 5 hours". There are further references to new pits having been sunk "recently", suggesting their dating from the 1870s, but with little subsequent information, it would appear that no worthwhile stocks of coal were found at this time. The area is very close to a field near the River Chew, which is marked 'coal-pit ground' on the tithe map and also to similar tithe map field names on the far side of the river in the parish of Burnett.

Writing in 1717, John Strachey[61] mentions some small scale coal mining in these areas which had by then ceased adding evidence to an overall impression of the intermittent nature of the local extraction of coal. Far better stocks could be had in nearby localities.

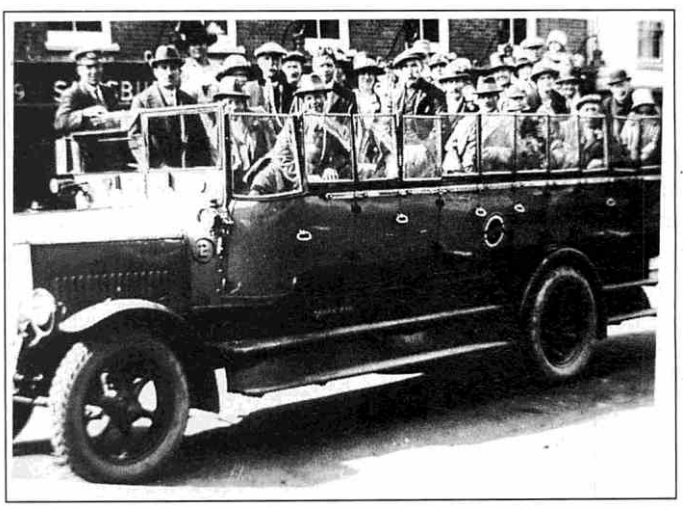
The same could be said of building stone, with a wide range of sandstones and limestones being extracted from the very variable geological strata of the Bristol region from early times. The characteristics of Bath stone meant that it was brought from its quarries surrounding Bath to be used in any special buildings of high quality, our local churches for example. Being a freestone being capable of being worked by hand with a mallet and chisel, made it specially suitable for masonry which needed careful shaping, such as the surroundings of doors and windows or the quoins or cornerstones of a building. Stone however is a heavy, difficult and expensive commodity to transport, so that local resources, quite adequate for many purposes, were also commonly used.

The main local building stone then was the blue lias limestone, which weathered to a uniform fairly-dark grey. (Only with the eye of faith can it be said to be bluish in colouring). It is not a material that is easily shaped and so was often used in the walls of local buildings in conjunction with Bath stone for the facings. Blue lias was only suitable for building where it could be extracted in beds of suitable thickness, but this was available quite near the surface in parts of central Keynsham, often associated with the large ammonites which are so typical of Keynsham and which are characteristic of these particular strata.

The area behind the old Bath Hill Police Station where the Magistrates Court was built was a former quarry, shown still to be working on an early Ordnance Survey map of 1902. Another site adjacent to the end of Park Road stretched along Workhouse Lane for a considerable distance. More recent workings from the 1920s were excavated just off Manor Road now providing the base for a modern housing estate, and the bottom of Wellsway where a builders' supplies distributor now operates. 1920s housing facing Wellsway in the vicinity of this latter quarry were built from the stone extracted just a few yards away.[63] There are probably several other areas which can no longer be identified and which have long since been built over. Most of the houses and shops of the high street and Temple Street were of blue lias faced with Bath stone, before their wholesale demolition and replacement in comparatively recent times. Saltford had its own resources of good quality blue lias limestone in the beds adjacent to Mead Lane near the banks of the River Avon. On higher the ground of both parishes, thin beds white lias were extracted which, in its best quality could be used for buildings but most was more suited for walling. The friable nature of much of this stone after weathering can be seen in the dilapidated condition of many field boundaries of the district. Pennant sandstone from the Conham and Hanham gorge of the Avon was also brought up-river for houses built early in this century, again in conjunction with Bath stone. Although used in early times for road building, neither white nor blue lias was hardwearing enough for roadstone under more modern conditions. This could be better supplied from the hard carboniferous limestones of Clifton Gorge and Mendip areas.

Where the local lias was available in a quality or thickness unsuitable for building it provided a raw material which could be burnt to produce lime. Demand for agricultural lime increased from the eighteenth century once an interest in new farming methods and land improvement became fashionable. Building lime for mortars was produced in kilns sometimes specially built for an important building project. The repair accounts of Keynsham's parish church in 1634 included the expenditure of 17s. Od for "making a lime kiln."[63] The brown building lime which resulted from the burning of the local blue lias had specially valuable properties as "hydraulic" lime, capable of being made up into a mortar which would dry out slowly in very damp, or even wet conditions.[64] Lime kilns for this purpose were in existence at the sites of Keynsham quarrying mentioned above. One of the three built by the Keeling family at the Wellsway site was the last of the traditional West-Country kilns, working up to the early 1970s. Others that are known to have existed in various places adjacent to Keynsham and Saltford parishes had long since finished by that time. In the 1860s, the Blue Lias Lime Company was occupying South Mill, probably using water-powered edgerunners to crush the limestone after it had been burnt. A newspaper reporting the memories of an old workman known as "Chibby", referred to twenty-one limekilns existing near the bottom of Dapps Hill, adjacent to the site of South Mill.[65] Keynsham hydraulic lime was said to be exported to the North American continent.

A new firm called the Keynsham Lime, Paint and Colour Company run by a Mr. Owen had taken over South Mill by the 1870's, combining lime burning with the processing of another raw material which was obtainable from various parts of Mendip and its outliers. This was ochre, a decomposed iron oxide which, when suitably crushed under edgerunners and refined, could be used as a base for paint manufacture, polishes, coloured tiles, floor cloths and other coloured products. A bright red ochre was mined extensively near Winford, where it was known as reddle or ruddle. Owen was greatly expanding the business and employed thirty men and a number of boys when a disastrous fire badly damaged the building. Keynsham Parish Fire Engine proved inadequate to deal with the flames and by the time a Bristol engine arrived "Roofs had fallen in, windows were out, walls were down and various substantial pieces of machinery lay about in chaotic confusion". Lime and ochre production at South Mill ceased abruptly, subsequently allowing the Thomas family to introduce the processing of dyewoods to the site.[66]



Gould Thomas works outing (Coswood Mill)

Chew Mill was later adapted as a colour mill for the grinding of ochre under edgerunners. After the closure of the brassmill here by 1875, materials for emery and glass papers had been prepared under a succession of different ownerships, but the new change of use came towards the end of the nineteenth century. The different colours and qualities of ochres obtained from nearby areas were augmented by supplies imported through the port of Bristol, particularly consignments from Spain, and ground here by edgerunners. Local memory recalls the Hickling family being involved and a Mr. lley as manager under the name of the Valley Watermills Colour Company. Its production continued up to and through World War II when colour bases for camouflage paints were being prepared.[67] The site by then had become very dilapidated and all work had ceased by 1945. The surviving waterwheel remaining in the Memorial Park mill site is one of three once existing at the works.

At Saltford, the lower mill formerly the fulling and paper mill site, was referred to as the leather mill in the first half of the 19th century, but was being used by the Taylor family for paint production in the latter part of the century. Waterpower continued

to be used here, so possibly oil seed was being pressed or ochres processed as a base for some of the finished paints. In the late 1930's the work was still in production and Thomas Taylor and Company by then advertised the sale of the finest varnish, "Flaxton" flat oil paints, "Avolac" hard gloss lacquers, and "Rexwhite" white lead paint, which was claimed to withstand almost any chemical or atmospheric action and ideal to resist any factory fumes.[68] The latter was probably dependant on the processing of white lead carried out in Bristol's lead smelting industry which gave rise to several paint manufacturers in the area.

THE SERVICE INDUSTRIES

Following interest aroused by an early lecture in 1805 about gas lighting, a shop was lit by gas in Bristol's Broadmead by 1811, and a gas works was set up at Temple Back in 1816. By the mid- century smaller towns were beginning to see the benefits that gas lighting could bring, and Keynsham followed this trend in establishing its own gas company in 1857.[69] The works were built by specialist engineers, T Atkins and Son, who claimed responsibility for the construction of 42 such works up to that date. They were also building gas works at Aberavon and Chepstow at about the same time. The Keynsham site was situated at the bottom of Dapps Hill. Two small gas holders were installed which have long since disappeared but a retort house still survives, now converted into office accommodation. In 1925 Ted Summers came to see Charles Abbot, the then secretary of the company, and was then engaged as manager running the works at Keynsham . He had been working for the previous twenty years at "everything, from producing the gas to putting in the mantles" at Chew Magna's one-man gas works. On his arrival he installed a new retort-house engine and new purifiers and condensers.[70] Within three years, however, the demand from the new Fry's factory for gas, was such that Bristol Gas Company bought out the Keynsham company. Ted Summers was transferred to Bristol and Keynsham gas works ceased to function.

The communication services of the electric telegraph came to Keynsham in 1865, when the rating assessments record the use of the Great Western Railway line as the route.

Two years previously the benefits of electric arc lighting had been demonstrated briefly in the Victoria Rooms Bristol and in the following year on Clifton Suspension Bridge . It was not until 1881 that experiments in street lighting were approved by the Bristol City council, with seven arc lamps in High Street which were withdrawn after a few weeks.[71] In that same year however Godalming in Surrey was replacing its gas street lighting by electricity generated by waterpower. Public supplies were available in Taunton by1885, St. Austell in 1886 and Okehampton in 1889. These details are noted to counter local claims of Keynsham being the first scene of public street lighting. However, such facts cannot detract from well documented records of a very early supply in Keynsham, before Bath or Bristol achieved lighting on a regular basis.

In October 1889, *The Electrician*[72] reported that at Keynsham, 'The opening meeting in connection with the Working Men's Conservative Association was the occasion of a quick piece of work on the part of Messrs King, Meadham & Co who were requested at very short notice to light the public hall by electricity. A set of accumulators was telegraphed for to London while a traction engine was secured to drive the dynamo which supplied current to the arc lights. The lighting was in every way a success." The public hall was the old Drill Hall between the school and the present entrance to the Memorial Park.

It is believed that a West Country shoe shop owner, H G Massingham, who applied for and received powers a year later to supply electricity to Bath, among other places with which he was connected, was also linked with early experiments at Keynsham. In 1892 George Parfitt, who later became a Fellow of the Royal Society was appointed engineer to Keynsham Electrical Engineering and Power Company, Ltd. Its steam generating station and headquarters were situated at the site of the present SWEB premises near the church, with the boiler chimney at the rear showing up in some early photographs of the High Street.

William (Bill) Webb who at the age of thirteen was appointed apprentice to the company in 1892, later recorded his memories. He recalled that the steam generation ran parallel with a waterwheel driving another generator $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles away at Chewton Keynsham Mill, the former dyewood mill, mentioned above, vacated by Colthurst and Harding in the early 1890s. The combined DC capacity of the two generators was about 120kW. Apparently it was necessary to keep a close watch when the Chew was in flood as debris threatened to block the grating of the waterwheel. The Keynsham company must have changed their waterwheel later as a water turbine was found in the Chewton Keynsham millrace when the ruined building was later rebuilt.[75] In 1921, when the Bristol company extended its statutory area of supply to Keynsham. Bill Webb became an employee of the Bristol Corporation Electricity Department , and the Keynsham company lost its identity, having brought the town into the modern era.

CHOCOLATE COMES TO KEYNSHAM

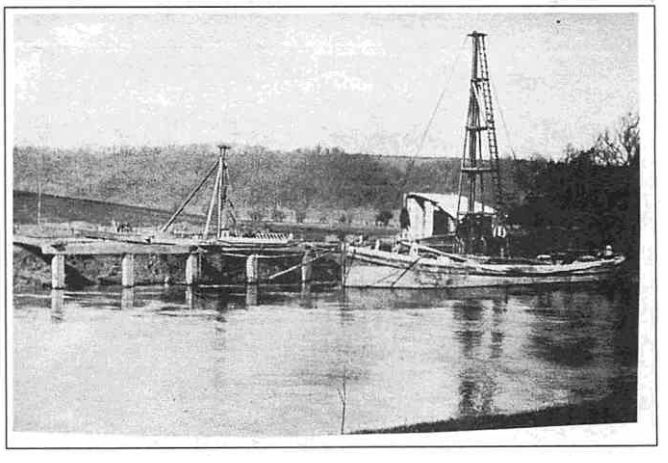
The assimilation of the large modern chocolate making factory complex in Keynsham during the 1920s was responsible for the growth of the former small-time village community to that of a busy town. It was an intrusion that, originally, was resented by many of Keynsham's older inhabitants but, inevitably , that feeling was dissipated as the advantages became apparent. Preparations to remove the business to the 230 acres of green fields in Keynsham were under way in 1921[76] after years of struggling to accommodate its ever-expanding premises in a cramped area of central Bristol. The firm of JS Fry and Sons Ltd was notable in claiming a foundation based on the earliest manufacture of chocolate; its roots stretching back for almost two hundred years to 1728.

The introduction of drinking chocolate through Europe from Central America, was dependant on the individual services of the coffee houses of London until well into the eighteenth century. The quaker, Walter Churchman founded a business in Bristol in 1728 and was granted a patent the following year for an "Engine for making chocolate". He probably used water powered edge runners for preparing cacao beans by crushing on a far larger scale than previously . Quaker apothecary, Dr Joseph Fry, also became involved in chocolate making at Small Street in Bristol during the 1750s.[77] He purchased the patented process after the death of Churchman and by 1661 had set up his business at Castle Mill in Bristol. His enterprise thrived and after his death it was carried on by his wife, Anna , and son, Joseph Storrs Fry, who gave his initials to the name which survived into modern times as J S Fry and Sons Ltd.

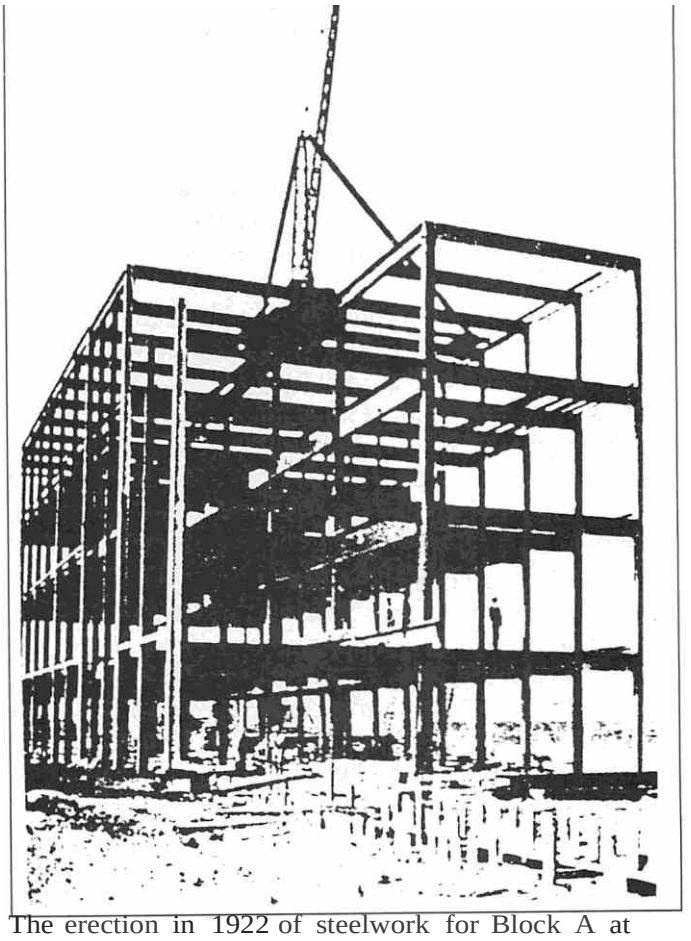
The business expanded, still producing slabs of chocolate for making a rich fatty drink for the relatively wealthy from the roasted and finely crushed cacao beans. In 1828 Conrad Van Houten in Holland started to press the excess fat or cocoa butter from the bean which, after sieving, produced a powdered cocoa from which a more pleasant drink could be made.[78] Very soon the additional cocoa butter so obtained was being added to batches of the whole crushed cocoa-bean mass and, with sugar and flavouring added, was hardened to produced eating chocolate. By the 1840s the Frys firm was producing eating chocolate on a large scale, being the first in this country to do so.[79] From 1853, a cream filled chocolate stick was being made in Bristol on a factory scale production, as opposed to the expensive hand-made confectionery which had been available previously. Mass production allowed lower priced products to reach ordinary people, and at the same brought prosperity to Frys.

The quaker ethic assured a high standard of working conditions for its two hundred employees that was quite unusual for its time and remarked upon in a report on Bristol employment printed in Parliamentary Papers of 1865.[80] Seven new factories opened in Bristol between 1860 and 1907. Joseph Fry moved to Union Street, Bristol, when built as a new thoroughfare in 1777. Additional buildings had to be taken over in the vicinity of the early premises as the need arose and as they became available. In 1875 the Swiss firm of Peters introduced a method of combining milk with chocolate to make a solid milk chocolate bar.[81] A milk bar under the name of "Five Boys" was being made by Frys from 1886, introducing the mass production of this kind of product to the country. Its distinctive wrapper showing five expressions ranging from "desperation" to "acclamation" on the face of a young boy, survived to be remembered by many. In the early 1900s and after many years of experimentation Cadburys introduced their Dairy Milk Chocolate produced by improved methods which quickly gained popularity. Frys company was tending to concentrate on its cheaper products at this time and its former pre-eminence in the confectionery market was gradually overtaken. The Birmingham company concentrated on milk chocolate to a far greater extent, gaining further ground. John Cadbury, also a staunch quaker, had founded his business as a tea dealer and coffee roaster in Birmingham in the 1820's and extended to the hand-grinding of cocoa during the 1830s.[82] Thereafter he and his descendants guided a growing family concern in cocoa and chocolate manufacture, whose business was quickly overtaking that of Bristol in the early years of the twentieth century. After a considerable period of negotiation between Frys and Cadburys, during which time Frys had considered selling out to the Swiss firm of Nestle, the British United Chocolate and Cocoa Company was formed as a holding company between the two firms in 1919 virtually a merger of the Fry company with Cadburys.[83] When Frys took up their new site at Keynsham it was under this new joint direction. In 1919; Major Egbert Cad bury, later to become Sir Egbert Cadbury, joined Frys after service as a flying officer in World War I. This was without the approval of his quaker family concern at the time, but year later he was appointed managing director of Frys. Later at Somerdale he came to be greatly respected by all employees as an approachable man, who was always prepared to take his part in spare-time activities of employees. By 1936 Frys was a subsidiary of the Cadbury firm although the old company title was still retained for several decades to come.

In 1924 the name of Somerdale was given to the new factory site at Keynsham after a nation-wide competition.[84] This new name was emblazoned along the railway embankment and incorporated into the extension of Keynsham's GWR station; a facility provided for transporting large numbers of employees to Keynsham from surrounding districts of Bristol. The firm as a whole was said to have 5,000 employees at this time. The move took eleven years to complete, production gradually being transferred as each new manufacturing block was constructed. From 1926 a start was made on the construction of a housing estate adjacent to the works under a Housing Trust scheme.[85]



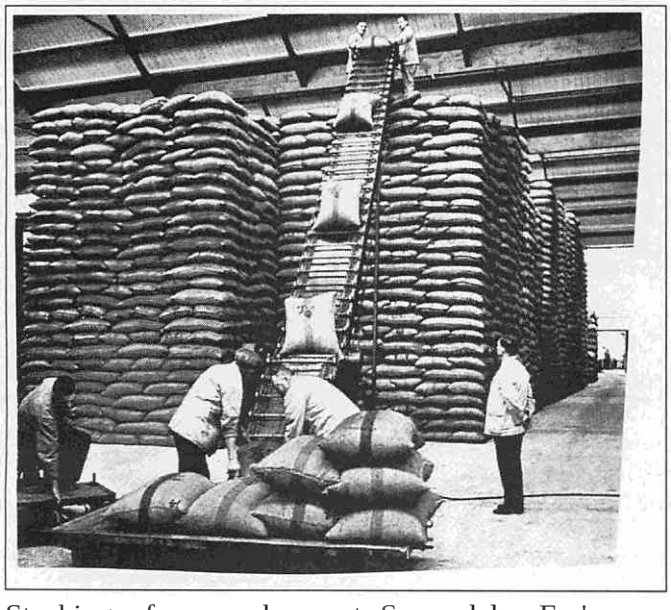
Construction of the riverside jetty for the new Fry's site at Keynsham in 1921. Fry's Works Magazine, December 1921



The erection in 1922 of steelwork for Block A at Fry's site, Keynsham. Fry's Works Magazine, September 1922

Twenty houses had been built by 1928, a further twenty were under construction and very shortly another twenty were planned. In the *Bicentenary Works Magazine* of 1928, the estate was described as Somerdale Garden City, no doubt with the extensive Cadbury estate of Bourneville in mind. It was not until 1935 that the whole of the Bristol business was entirely transferred to the new site. By then many former Bristol employees were already resident in Keynsham, and native residents of the town were becoming part of the organisation.

In these comparatively modern times, cocoa bean had long been shipped from West Africa where cacao trees had been planted and farmed, rather than brought from their original indigenous sources in Central American countries. Shipments



Stacking of cocoa bean at Somerdale. Fry's Visitors' Pamphlet

came into Avonmouth and were transported by rail to the Somerdale bonded stores via the works' own siding from Keynsham station. In addition to the rail link a riverside wharf was constructed at Somerdale for water-borne transport of timber packing materials and made-up cases from the centre of Bristol.

The processing of the beans started with thorough sieving and cleansing by strong blasts of air. They were roasted in revolving drums to develop a full flavour, and also loosen the husks, work which required skilled judgement of timing. A winnowing process detached the husk, leaving the nib, or edible part of the bean, which was then crushed in a series of horizontal grinding mills similar to those of a corn mill. Pressure, heat and friction reduced the nib to a semi-fluid "mass", the basic ingredient of both cocoa and chocolate, with a fat content of cocoa butter amounting to just over 50 per cent. For the preparation of cocoa, a proportion of cocoa butter was then extracted from the mass by pressure, leaving a solid hard cake of cocoa which was broken up before passing through rotary sieves of fine silk. After blending, the finely powdered product was passed to the packing department for placing into paper lined tins and labelled; all these materials being produced on the premises.

As intimated above, the early process of making eating chocolate required the addition of cocoa butter which had been removed previously in the production of cocoa. If milk chocolate was being produced, the mass was transported to the Cadbury milk factory at Frampton-on-Severn which had been built in 1913. There, milk was collected from surrounding farms of the Severn Vale and condensed before adding, with sugar, to the chocolate mass. It was then reduced to a dry "crumb" consistency and returned to the Somerdale factory for the further processing.

The manufacturing processes were continued, with milk chocolate crumb receiving additional amounts of cocoa butter while the dark chocolate mass received its requirement of sugar. After these adjustments both underwent a thorough mixing under pairs of large vertically revolving cylinders of granite which moved round on a heated circular granite bed. These were a development of the early edgerunner, usually referred to as "melangeurs" in the chocolate industry. A refining process followed in which the mass was fed between sets of water-cooled steel rolls. Revolving horizontally at differing speeds, the material rose from bottom to top of the rolls to be removed as a cooled dry flaky material. This was then shovelled by hand into the tubs of the "conches" where it underwent several hours of slapping back and forth under a tight fitting horizontal roller. This conching process had been found to produce a fine texture in the finished product, and it was at this stage that the flavouring substances were added. Such terms as "conch" and "melangeur" betray the continental forerunners of these basic chocolate-making processes. At the end of these operations the chocolate was at last ready for use, either by pouring into moulds to create blocks or filled bars, or for making the individual chocolate covered units of assorted boxes of confectionery.[86]

Young girls carried out much of this work of tapping the chocolate out of the moulds, wrapping it and packing in boxes ready for despatch. More girls were employed in making individual chocolates for assorted boxes, often covering the centres and decorating them by hand. Again, they were packed by hand by a small army of white-clad girls. This work seemed

A last minute check on Double Milk Assortment units before covering. Fry's Visitors' Pamphlet

to be extremely tedious to the onlooker, but was done automatically that the girls appeared not to notice it. An impression of a happy working atmosphere was certainly conveyed to the large parties of visitors who were welcomed daily at the factory during these years.

In 1929 a new Frys "Crunchie" bar had been introduced that was particularly linked with Keynsham. 'Tiffin" was added to production in 1937. During the years of the Second World War production was geared to supplying cocoa and chocolate to the Services. Details of the processes were updated and became more automated with time but it was not until after World War 11 and new management arising from company re-organisation that automation had any significant effect on the company or its employees.

It was feature of the company's employment policy at Somerdale to provide a range of facilities for spare-time relaxation and enjoyment which matched those of Cadburys at Bourneville.[87] Employees were no longer summoned by hand- bell to start their working day with a religious service as in the earlier days at Bristol, but it was still forbidden to bring alcohol on to the premises. A booklet published in 1928, for the bicentenary of the firm, was already listing Frys Amateur Dramatic Society, the firm's orchestra and military band, its choral society and dark room for budding photographers and a well- stocked library. Cards, billiards and table tennis and various outside sporting activities such as football, cricket, tennis and bowls were also provided for and there were special clubs for young boys and girls. With time, these activities were increased to play an important part in the life of Keynsham. Such patronism by a large manufacturing company was derided by a minority but many past employees and indeed, Keynsham residents in general, have good reasons to look back on these early days of Frys, as it used to be, with approval, respect and some happy memories.

PLAY

Leisure Pursuits in Keynsham and Saltford

by ERIC UNFIELD

For much of the period covered by this book , ordinary people had precious little time for leisure. The Protestant Reformation in the 16th century affected the leisure activities of the people in two main ways. It reduced dramatically the amount of leisure available to them, with the abolition of many Saint's Day holidays. These had been very numerous. Dean Colet, founder of St. Paul School in 1510 allowed his pupils all Sundays and major Saints' Days off, 153 days in all.[1] After the Reformation only Sundays, major Church Festivals and locally important days (such as Keynsham Fair Day) were holidays. By the 19th century Friendly Society Days were usually holidays, and in 1871, Bank Holidays were introduced. In the 20th century holidays with pay were gradually introduced for workers. What people were actually allowed to do in their leisure was also affected by the Reformation. James I in his Book of Sports, issued 1618, tried to preserve Sunday Sports and Past Times but in strongly Puritan areas it was ignored. There is no evidence in 17th century Keynsham that the people were allowed Church Ales, Maypole dancing and other such festivities, but it was too difficult to stamp out all the pursuits, dancing, gaming, card playing, of which the Puritans disapproved.

Much of the leisure activity of the 16th and 17th centuries centred on the inn and alehouse. The authorities tried to keep control of the numbers of these. In 1630 the Justices at the General Sessions of the Peace at Wells, closed all the alehouses in Chew, Chewton, Pensford and Keynsham, considering that there were "Innes sufficient to give Interteguement". Will. Saunders of Keynsham was in particular trouble, and was expressly forbidden from ever brewing beer again "under pretence to sell it to the poor."[2]

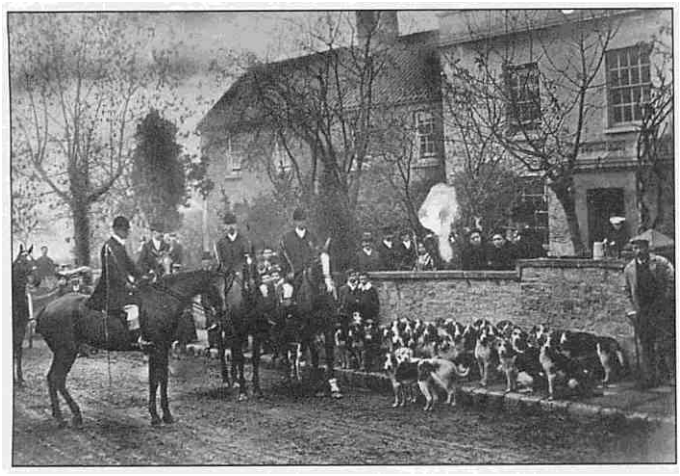
Keynsham was especially well endowed with inns. There are 17th century references to the Angel, the George, the King's Arms and the New Inn. There are 18th century references to the Lamb and Lark, the Crown, the Trout, the King's Arms, the Bear, the Green Dragon, the Bell (or Bell and Lion), the Old George and the Prince of Lorraine. Of these the Crown, the Lamb and Lark and the King'sArms were still functioning in the first half of the l9th century, whereas the Ship, the Trout and the Royal Oak (now the London Inn) were first recorded as licensed premises later. The Crown, the New Inn, the Trout, the Ship and the London Inn still exist, and the Talbot and the Pioneer have joined them. A complete list of the 19 inns from the 1841 Tithe Map and later trade directories is given in the Notes on Sources.[3] Sadly, the licensing records, which give the best evidence for the existence of inns are not available in detail for Keynsham and Saltford.

Saltford had three inns, a surprising number for such a small village. The Crown served the needs of travellers on the Turn Pike Road, as did the Ship Inn. The Jolly Sailor found much of its trade in the river traffic and the mill men. The Bird in Hand was started in the mid 19th century in what was formerly cottages. The Ship ceased to be an inn probably about 1894.

Obviously, in spite of 17th century attempts to limit them, Keynsham Inns flourished as did the activities traditionally associated with them. Dicing, gaming and card playing survived and drunkenness remained a problem in Keynsham and Saltford. Board games such as backgammon and draughts were popular, while at Stanton Prior parishioners could play the ancient game Nine Men's Morris in the porch of the Parish Church. Chess became increasingly popular in the 19th century. ln 1866 chess matches were being played between Bath and Bristol players and an open Tournament arranged for players from the West of England.[4]

There are some outdoor games referred to in local records of the 17th and 18th centuries. Fives was played in the Churchyard at Keynsham, and Burnett had a bowling green. Archery was a duty, and probably not regarded as a sport until after the demise of the bow as a weapon. All males over the age of 16 years were supposed to practice archery on Sundays. Keynsham's "Butts" were in the Hurn Lane area of the Open Fields. In the 19th century it became a popular sport for ladies as well as gentlemen. Bath Archery Club, founded in 1857 by Lady Cockburn, was "one of the most flourishing in the kingdom".[5] Darts, a form of indoor archery, was popular in many public houses.

The traditional country pursuits of hunting, fishing and shooting flourished here. Sir Thomas Bridges in the 1660's built himself a hunting lodge overlooking Keynsham. By the 19th century there was a problem over the shortage of quarry. Carted deer and foxes were being hunted as the Bath Chronicle reported on December 27th 1821 "a stag will be thrown at Saltford tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock before the hounds of G. Cresswell of Sherston Park. A bay fox will be in readiness to fill up the sport of the clay". Lord of the Manor of Keynsham, Harford Lyne, is reputed to have eliminated the last deer in the area by hunting in the mid-19th century.



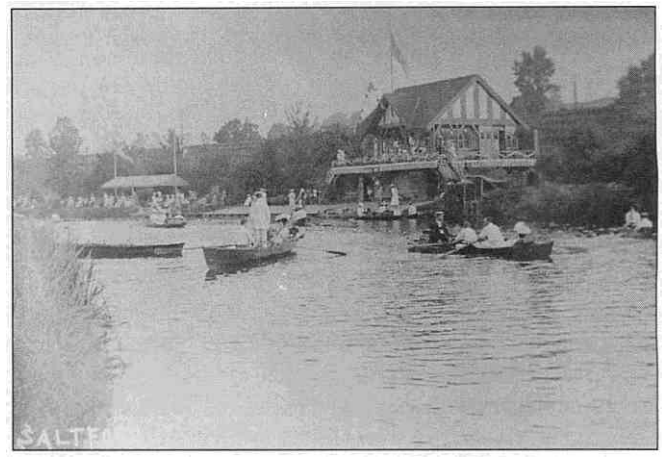
Bath & County Harriers outside 24 Bristol Rd, probably about 1890

Shooting, too, was popular. By the 19th century it was restricted to those who could pay £4. 0s.10d for an annual game licence.[6] In 1858 seven men paid, RH Arundel, G.T. Barnard, G.F. Fox, Harford Lyne, Jack Smith, Captain Whittuck and George Docwra of Saltford. Sir Thomas Courtenay Warner had a shooting lodge built in Chewton Keynsham in 1883. Pigeon shooting had its followers. In January 1873 the Bath Chronicle gave details of a pigeon match at Saltford for £25 a side. The birds were brought from London: each competitor was allowed 21. Before an excited crowd of 500, Mr. Reynolds of Bristol was defeated by Mr. Nelmes of Wick by 14 hits to 9, at the 17th shot. Happily in the 20th century such live sport was replaced by clay pigeons. The live pigeons were in the hands of pigeon fanciers such as Mr. Roadnight, Mr. Fray and Mr. Perry the postman. Pigeon fancying was a very popular hobby as the schedules of the Fur and Feather Show at the Keynsham Horticultural Show indicate.

Fishing was at first more of a source of profit than pleasure, and Lords of the Manor sought to limit it. The River Avon contained a wide variety of fish. There are 18th century references to salmon. These may well have been poached for profit or food. In 1866 efforts were being made to improve the fishing in the Avon as a sport by restocking it with salmon.[7] By the 20th century it was more a sport for all, and angling clubs, such as Keynsham Angling Association, flourished. The Local History Society has glass negatives of unknown gentlemen enjoying their fishing at Keynsham prior to World War I.

The River Avon had become popular for pleasure trips by the rich visitors to Bath in the 18th century. In July 1750, Prince Frederick of Wales (eldest son of George Ill) and Lady Augusta, his eldest daughter, and their party, whilst visiting Bath for their health, travelled down river in wherries (sailing barges) and ate a picnic under two tents near the waterside in Browning Park (a meadow below the Ship Inn, Saltford). The Prince offered two hogshead of ale for any who would drink it. Not surprisingly, a crowd gathered, music was played and dancing began. The Royal party returned to Bath about 9 pm. Sadly, the Prince died the following year, apparently not greatly mourned. The people of Saltford, however, wanted to erect a memorial to him but lacked the necessary funds. Instead, they decided on a commemorative annual cricket match in the picnic meadow, because cricket had been a favourite game of the Prince. Accordingly, on 13th July 1751, a Memorial match was held, but after a few years it was forgotten. [8]

The first Regatta recorded was at Saltford in 1849 above Kelston Weir. The grandstand held 500 to 600 spectators, some of whom came from Bath and Bristol by river. When the Avon Rowing Club was formed in 1864, it led to the holding of many more regatta at Saltford. Not only Avon and Ariel Rowing Club but also Clifton had their club houses at Saltford. Clifton Clubhouse was burnt down in 1894 and 10 boats were destroyed. In 1903 the Saltford Regatta was described as the



Saltford Regatta 1907

Henley of the West. In addition to rowing, water polo and swimming took place in the river. In 1887 the Amateur Swimming Association Championship Race was held at Saltford.[9] In cold winters, such as 1873, 1913 and 1923, the rivers were used for skating. When severe cold followed flooding ice hockey was played on the flooded Hawkeswell. The River could also be used for gentler pursuits. A trip on the river to Beese's Tea Gardens was a pleasure for many.

The shooting and fishing which was sport for some was a necessity for others. Poaching has a long history in the area. In the 17th century men were prosecuted for having gaming pieces. The Lynes tried to stamp out unauthorised hunting and fishing. Two men, Gregory and Harvey, in 1778 were compelled to sign a bond not to hunt or fish in the manor of Keynsham. The Lynes appointed Gamekeepers for the Manor and the Hundred, which included the areas of Saltford, Farmborough, Compton Dando, Belluton and Stanton Prior.[10] In 1868 Harford Lyne tried to control all fishing from river banks. These activities, however, continued despite the increasing severity of the late 18th and early 19th century Game Laws.

The fortunate owners of common rights in Stanton Prior were allowed to shoot rabbits on Stantonbury until 1874. In 1918 Keynsham Parish Council complained about rabbit coursing on Hawkeswell. They wanted to stop matches being held, and brought the matter to the attention of the Police, the Home Office and the Local Food Committee (Food was very short at the end of World War 1). Mrs Gwen Newman (nee Glover) recalled her father's poaching activities early this century. On one occasion, coming from Court having been fined for poaching, he produced from his pocket a rabbit he had taken into Court. In true poacher fashion he became Gamekeeper to two estates. He taught his daughter how to skin a rabbit when she was about 8 or 9 years old. He also taught her how to prepare partridges and hares and she remembered preparing and enjoying eating rook pie.[11]

Particularly in the 17th and 18th centuries many popular pastimes were unashamedly violent. The public took great interest in cock fighting, bear baiting, bull baiting, prize fight-

ing, even in public hangings. In 1773 a cock match was held at the King's Arms, Keynsham, between 2 teams from Keynsham and Paulton prizes were 4 guineas for the winner of each contest, and 20 guineas for the winning team.[12] The large prizes indicate widespread support for cock fighting. Such sports involved heavy gambling, and often led to public disorder. In 1816 a bull, decorated with blue ribands was led through the streets of Bristol prior to being baited on Clifton Down. The spectators then began fighting among themselves. [13]

Prize fighting was another popular and violent spectacle. the Magistrates and later the police, made largely unsuccessful attempts to stop it, regarding it as a source of public disorder. In 1821, the Bath Chronicle recorded that an immense crowd had gathered at Saltford for a prize fight. To avoid the Magistrates they crossed to Bitton. The two fighters were roughly handled by the spectators, the one for trying to make off with the money collected, the other for trying to abscond. The day finished with a bull being baited and many of the spectators having their pockets picked. The colliers at Newton St. Loe are also recorded as having organised prize fights. The *Bath Journal* of November 1744 recorded an even more violent type of contest held at the Prince Charles of Lorraine in Keynsham, when a piece of silver plate, value £4, was awarded to whoever broke the most heads. The contest began at 10 in the morning and continued till dusk, with an hour off for lunch. Competitors had to bring their own sticks. There were less violent pursuits. Bell ringing was a tradition in North Somerset and a source of rivalry between villages. Special Peals were rung to celebrate national and local festivities, and, in 1901, even to welcome the Vicar, The Reverend P.D.Hatchard and his wife back from their honeymoon.[14]

Music was always popular. The Churches and Chapels had their singers, and there was a well established Town Band. It certainly existed prior to World War I, and was reformed after the war. By 1922 they were finding it difficult to collect subscriptions because so many men were unemployed. The small fee paid to Bandsmen for appearances must have been a great help.

Keynsham Town Band in the 1920's with Bandmaster Harding

They had to tender for engagements. For instance, in 1922, they played at Brislington Flower Show for £12, without refreshments. The 20 players had to play from 3 p.m. to 9.30 p.m., with agreed breaks. When in 1923 they purchased new instruments they renamed themselves the Keynsham Town Silver Band. Many well known Keynsham men played in the band, including the Hardings, Webbs, Jack Exon, and Harry Keeling who played from 1922 to 1939. They paid their conductor, Edwin Pritchard, 20 shillings a week and for many years their bandmaster was Albert Townsend. They played at many local functions especially during the summer and at Christmas. The Band was reformed after World War II and was disbanded in 1968.[15] By the end of the 19th century Keynsham also had a Choral Society and an Orchestra. Their Concerts were ambitious affairs. In 1899 a Sacred Concert was held in the Drill Hall. The stage was widened, draped with art muslin in differing colours, and was decorated with trailing ivy, plants, ferns and flowers. The Amateur Operatic Society also staged its shows in the Drill Hall. This flourished in the early years of this century. They undertook an ambitious performance of the Mikado in the midst of wartime in 1916. They gave two performances in Keynsham and one to soldiers in the Mineral Water Hospital in Bath. Their performance was enthusiastically received, but the reporter commented on the temperature of the Drill Hall. "0h! the Keynsham Drill Hall. We sat with overcoats, mufflers and were even forced to the gross breach of courtesy and etiquette

-we wore our hats all through the performance. Even then we left the Hall with feet so benumbed that it was necessary to go stamping up the street to get the circulation going. Such acute premature cold storage is not quite comfortable". One wonders whether it was the fault of the Drill Hall or wartime shortages. Again the names of the performers are familiar -The Thomas family were prominent in all musical activities, as were the Jollymans, Miss Gerrish, Mr. Shellabear, Mr. Fairclough, the Gibbons, Wiggins, Hicklings, Chappells, Bowdens and Snooks.[16] The Orchestra also played when the Drama Society, which was in existence by 1897, gave its plays. Mr. and Mrs Frank Whittuck began producing plays in the Drill Hall in 1921. By 1926 it was called Mr. and Mrs Frank Whittuck's Company. There seems to have been some dissent about this, because another group calling itself the Sine Nomine (without a name) Drama Group was also producing plays after this date. By 1937 the Whittucks had moved their productions to the recently opened Charlton Cinema. Their performances were always in aid of charity: Earl Haig's Fund, the Church Heating Fund, the Cricket Club, the Social Service Centre, and above all, for the Keynsham and District Nursing Association, especially in 1939 to raise money for a car for Nurse Stidson, a busy District Nurse. Performances were held annually until the outbreak of war, and a very wide range of plays were performed, Shaw, Drinkwater, Somerset Maughan, J.M Barrie. The cast lists read like a roll call of the influential in Keynsham at that time; the Whittucks, the Bowrings, Dr. Harrison, the Scammells, the Folliotts, Dr.Evans, Mr. Bush.

There were, in the 20's and 30's plenty of less formal entertainments. Some remember the impromptu dances and sing-songs that accompanied Girls' Friendly Society meetings in the Church Schoolroom. Others remember the Flannel Dances organised by the Scouts: "the best place to meet young men". There were also tea dances. Mrs Edith Fewell remembered the dances in the Drill Hall, and having to be home by 9 p.m., "my mother has often come up the High Street with a cane if we were 10 minutes late". After 1936, the Cinema in Charlton Road provided entertainment with film shows for all ages (see plate 20).

These were great years for pageants and outdoor performances of every sort. Chewton Place was a popular venue for these, its huge trees and banks of shrubs making a perfect backdrop for the performers. About 1928 Miss Cooksley's

Keynsham Girl Guides in 1920s

pupils gave a performance of the Pied Piper of Hamlin. Others remember a splendid performance of a Midsummer Night's Dream. In 1934 an ambitious event was planned in aid of Chewton Scouts. After a Garden Party , opened by Lady Helena Gibbs, a niece of Queen Mary, a performance of the operetta San Marino , with full orchestra, was to be given by the 0ldland Amateur Operatic Society. Armchairs on the terrace cost 2/6d and deck chairs on the lawn 1/-. After a boiling hot day the performance began splendidly, but immediately after Act 1 there was a tremendous thunderstorm: the heavens opened, the singers, orchestra and audience fled to the house for shelter where the occupants, Mr.and Mrs Hall, lit fires to dry them out. The rest of the performance was abandoned.[17]

Saltford, too, staged elaborate events. In 1930 great crowds attended a 4th century pageant of the Three Kings staged by Saltford Women's Institute Players with more than 60 in the cast. As it took place in the Football Field on the Bath Road it attracted many passers by. There was also a Fete, the S.L.I. Band and dancing.[18]

Undoubtedly the highlight of the local year was the two day Keynsham Horticultural Show, held on August Bank Holiday Monday and Tuesday. Mrs Gwen Newman remembered her eager anticipation, hoping for a prize in the children 's competition. As the first prize for a child was 4 or 5 shillings, and the child winning the most points received a watch the excitement was understandable. Pocket money, for those who had it, was about 3d a week at that time. The Show had a long history and was certainly in existence by 1887. It was not held during World War 1 but was restarted in 1919. By 1928 it was described as 'The Show of the West". More than 15,000 people attended, and 1,085 competitors entered for the £350 prize money. They had fireworks , amusements, sideshows, music and dancing. The latest music for dancing was supplied by "Badman's Marconiphone Amplifiers" .At the same time a Fur and Feather Show was held. In 1923 there were classes for 15 different breeds of poultry , 9 different kinds of pigeons and 7 different breeds of rabbit. Exhibitors came from all over the country, from Cornwall, Hereford and Surrey. The competitors in the Rhode Island Red Hen class were very well known: Mr. Bush of Keynsham House, Mrs Willis of Charlton Park and Mr. Willoughby of West View Road, but many other well known local people exhibited their poultry: Mrs Paget from Burnett, Mr. Chappell from West Field, Mr.Skuse of the Royal Oak, Jack Titley from Park Poultry Farm. The show ceased during the Second World War, but was restarted afterwards. The Society was wound up in 1970 and its papers given to the Local History Society Archives. One quotation from the 1939 Schedule illustrates the different world of the pre-war years in Keynsham. It was the regulations for the Table Decoration Class: "assistance in decorating (practical or suggestive) will disqualify, servant handing materials to the competitor excepted". A different world indeed!

In outdoor activities the mid 19th century saw great changes. There was a greater emphasis on the moral and the physical value of team games. There was an increase in leisure beginning with Bank Holidays in 1871. The emancipation of women encouraged greater female participation in sport, and the gradual easing of extreme physical labour both for men at work and for women in the home left more energy for vigorous leisure pursuits. All of these features can be seen in Keynsham and Saltford. Sporting Clubs proliferated here from the end of the 19th century.

One of the most flourishing of the Sports Clubs was the Lacrosse Club. It began in Keynsham as an offshoot of the W.D . and H.O. Wills' team from Bedminster who played on the Downs in Bristol, much to the annoyance of adjacent lady hockey players, through whose matches the lacrosse players charged. Eventually there were enough players from Keynsham to form a separate club. By 1913 they were good enough to be runners up in the S.W. of England Competition .The trophy was a green silk flag with an embroidered Red Indian head on it. We wonder where it is today. Two players from this Keynsham team, H.T.W.Srnith and R Gibbons, played for the West of England team. When the club restarted after the First World War it was more popular than rugby. Keynsham won the flag in 1923. Stalwarts of the team were the three Gibbons and S. N. Fairclough (Hon. Sec. of Bristol and West of England Lacrosse

Lacrosse, the Wills team in the 1920's

Keynsham Lacrosse Club- 1921

Association). Matches were played on the field, now the cricket ground in Wellsway until 1937.[19] We have been unable to trace when it ceased to be played. One Keynsham resident who was taken to see matches remembers little except the horrific accidents, especially to the mouth and face.[20] Was this a factor in its decline?

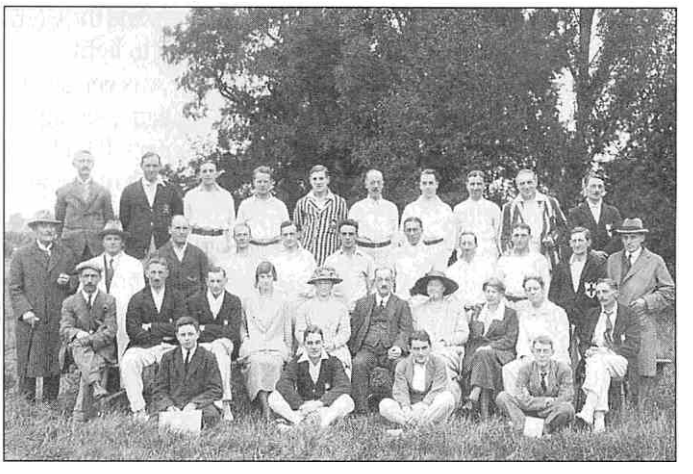
When lacrosse declined rugby expanded Keynsham's Rugby Football Club's new premises on the Bristol Road with its attendant facilities belie their humble beginnings. The club, known to have been in existence in the 1890's, was reformed in 1923. It had two early problems, the competition from lacrosse and the lack of a field. The first playing area was the Gastons behind Keynsham House at the junction of Bath Road and Chandag Road. It had a badly drained pitch and no facilities, so home players went straight home, while visitors walked to the Lamb and Lark where four baths, towels and the services of an attendant were available, for which the club paid £5 per season. The early club had many great characters in it Frank Taylor was Chairman, Harry Shewring, who played for England against the All Blacks in 1905/6, was Club Coach Farmer Jack Smith played, and Robin Baker once every three weeks (he was a Steward on the Queen Mary).

In 1930 the Club obtained a new pitch in Avon Road, and on site facilities due to the initiative of some members who purchased, for £14, a railway coach from the Great Malvern and Swindon Railway which was delivered free to the ground. A loan of £25 converted the carriage into dressing rooms and showers heated by a coal fed boiler- such luxury! This acquisition was master minded by the new Chairman, "Mitch" Bond. The early thirties were not very successful in 1931 they lost their first 14 games. Gradually, however, the team pulled up, and even established a 2nd team. Players in the thirties included Stephen Gore Langton, nephew of Earl Temple of Newton Park and Don Belsten, undertaker, who was known to turn up in the hearse after funerals.

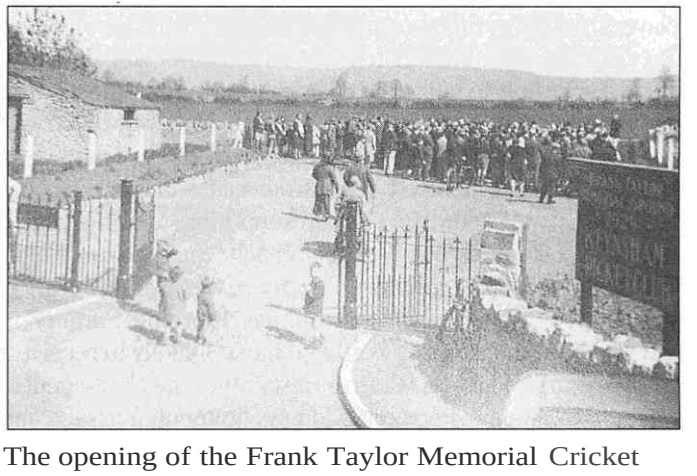
When the Avon Road was developed in 1937 the Club moved to Manor Road and the railway coach went too. This time it was connected to the mains water. The £35 cost was paid for by the issue of five shilling goodwill shares to players. During the war 50 of the club's 56 players went into the forces and 5 were killed on active service. The Club was one of the first to be restarted after the war. In 1945 it made its fourth move, to Crown Field. "Mitch" Bond, Roy Cryer, Jack Hickling, Ken Gibbons and Bill Rossiter were all there to organise the purchase of the Crown Field, and revive the Club's fortunes.[21]

Keynsham also had a flourishing Association Football Club. Certainly in existence by 1896, its first ground was on the Hams where Fry's factory is now situated. Displaced from there, the Club played on Gastons. From there it moved to Park Road, where Edinburgh Road was developed, and then to Charlton Road, where Ashcroft Avenue now is. It moved to its present site after the Second World War. Stalwarts of the Club included Jo Cantle, Waiter Carter, Belsten and Bill Shelton a long serving Secretary. There were other teams playing in Keynsham in the early days, including one called Albert Road Villa Team![22]

Like the Rugby and Association Football Clubs, the Cricket Club had to be restarted after the First World War. The first field used was at Broadlands, but a committee soon formed to find a suitable field. Mr. RA Bowring of Rockhill Farm was approached with a view to renting one of his fields. The field in fact was the Club's present ground. In 1925 they started a fund to purchase the ground. When, in 1927, Frank Taylor (Chairman since 1920) died, it was decided to rename the fund the "Frank Taylor Memorial Fund". In 1930, the Rockhill Ground was purchased for £1,500 and a mortgage raised for the outstanding amount (at 5%). Dr. Harrison gave the small plot of land for use as the Wellsway entrance. Mrs Taylor opened the ground in April 1930. Lacrosse and hockey were played on the ground in the winter and local elementary schools were allowed to use it.



Keynsham Cricket Club in 1922, Dr Claude Harrison is 2nd from the left in the 2nd row from the front. Frank Taylor, Captain of the 1st XI after whom the ground is now named, is next to him



The opening of the Frank Taylor Memorial Cricket Ground 1930. Note the absence of houses in the background where the Chandag Estate now is

In 1939 Dr. Harrison had to resign as Club Captain and wrote off the rest of the mortgage making the Club owners of the ground. During the war the ground was let for sheep grazing, used for military parades, sports meetings and War Savings Weeks but a Single eleven captained by Dr. Norman Gerrish, continued to play. A Club photograph of 1922 shows many of those associated with the Club in the following decades, among them some well known Keynsham names Dr. Harrison, B. Ollis, F.Frankham, R. Bowring, R. Belsten, L. and F. Clothier, H. Shewring. Many are names which occur in connection with other sporting and cultural activities in Keynsham.[23]

Saltford, too, had Cricket, and Association Football Clubs. Saltford Cricket Club is very unusual in that it was started in 1916, during the First World War when many clubs had to close because the men were on active service. It is possible that it was started by convalescent soldiers. The first field used was behind Saltford Church and the Manor House. The Club's second field was behind the Crown, where the Football Club also had a pitch.

They had to move from here towards the end of the 30's, probably because the land was being developed. Their third home was in Norman Road, where they stayed until that too was needed for building. Their fourth and present home is behind the Community Hall in Saltford. There are no Club records extant for these early years. They appear to have run a single team playing on Saturdays. The names behind its formation were W.J.Curtis, E.C.Llewellyn, Arthur Hollings and Mr. Bodman.[24] The names of the outstanding players and the Club's early successes and failures have not yet come to light.

Saltford Football Club has a long history. It was certainly in existence in 1910 when Stan Lavington began playing; an association he maintained for more than fifty years. It had to be restarted after World War I. The original colours of the team were red and white. Players had to buy their own kit, a considerable expense for young men from Saltford which was not the wealthiest of villages. Boots cost 7/6d a pair; one ex-player remembers a hand-made pair costing half a guinea (52 1/2p) which lasted years and years. The team played on Farmer Lavington's field, then behind the Crown and finally on the recreation field behind the Mission Hall. This field had been provided by the Parish Council in 1933; an action doubtless prompted by the fact that boys had been prosecuted for playing football in the street. None of the fields had any facilities. Visiting teams changed at the Crown and walked to the field. At first, Saltford was in the Bath and District League, but later joined the Bristol and District at a flat rate of l/6d a head, whatever the distance. When the match was on the other side of Bristol it was a scramble to get to the coach by 1-30 p.m. Almost all the players worked on Saturday mornings. The coach did not travel fast and it was difficult to get to a 2 p.m. kick-off. The teams were enthusiastically supported. Billy Brookman and Lily Hill could be relied upon to round up enough supporters to fill the coach, and to important matches another coach would go too. There were very few serious injuries. What there were would find their way to Dr. Claude Harrison's Sunday morning Surgery in Keynsham and of course, would be most unlikely to receive a bill. Minor injuries were taken to Harry Stiles the Newsagent in Collins Buildings, who applied iodine, liniment, massage and bandages as appropriate. There was little trouble on the pitch, though occasionally the spectators were a disturbance. On one occasion at Weston Sports the mother of one of their team who was not performing too well, rushed onto the pitch and clouted a Saltford Player round the ear! Unlike some of the poor pitches they played on, Saltford's pitch was good. They borrowed the Golf Club's mowers to keep it cut, and "Tommy" Taylor from the Paint Works let them have paint for the goal posts. Goal nets were not compulsory at this date. The Club had to be restarted after World War 11 when it appeared in a new red and black squared strip, donated by the Landlord of the Crown who chose the colours.[25]

The most successful of Saltford's sporting activities was the Golf Club. This was laid out as a nine hole course in 1904, under the initiative of Mr. Archer Symes and H.S. Radcliffe. It flourished right from the start. Mr. Harry Vowles came and advised on rearrangements and bunkering, and the course was well used by members and visitors. It was one of the few local clubs to prosper during the First World War. In 1915 the Chairman, Mr. G. H. Wetherman, reported that they had a surplus of £51, which increased their cash at the Bank to £267, thus they felt able to waive subscriptions of the thirty members who were serving with the Colours. Immediately after the War the Committee decided it was essential to convert the course to 18 holes to ensure its success. The Club began to expand when the 18 holes were completed. Bath and Bristol people came by train, walking up with their clubs from Saltford Station. Local members included "Tommy" Taylor, owner of the Paint Works, and his two sons one of whom, Rex, became a County Golfer. Sunday was a very popular day to play. The Huntley brothers used to arrive from Bristol in pin-striped suits and bowler hats, having told their father they were going to Church. The Club also had two hard tennis courts. Members could join to play tennis or golf or both. The first wooden Club House had been obtained from the Bristol and Clifton Club at Failand . It was licensed and provided simple refreshments. In the 1930's the game was popularised, and younger men joined the older professional men who had dominated the membership. The standard of play rose under Mr. Ham, the Professional. It had the leading team in the district, of which S.H.R.Hornby was an outstanding player. It also ran a women's team two of its outstanding players were Mrs. Gardner, a left-hander who played for Somerset and Mrs. Mercia Castle, an ex Lady Mayoress of Bristol. The Club had a very difficult period financially in the mid thirties, after the Secretary, Major Crawford, committed suicide. It was found that the register of 10/-Membership Shares had not been properly kept and the Club was deeply in debt. The advice of Counsel was needed to avoid prosecution for violating Company Law. The Club was rescued by local businessmen, including Mr. Headley Jenkins and Mr. Braithwaite of Durley Hill House, Keynsham. During the War part of the course was ploughed up and shorter holes constructed. One member while he was on active service left his clubs, golf balls, shoes and jacket for the use of any soldier who wanted a game. When he returned they were all still there, the golf balls a little more worn.[26]

In the 20's and 30's women in Keynsham were able to play hockey and above all tennis. The town had three Tennis Clubs, the St. Keyna, which played in the Dragons Hill area, the Westview, and one run by the Scouts. The St. Keyna also had facilities for bowls and croquet. Mrs Gwen. Newman remembered Dr. Charles Harrison playing croquet there with elderly ladies. She also remembered him swearing and chewing his handkerchief to shreds, one hopes not in front of the elderly ladies! These Clubs were as much for social entertainment as exercise, and delightful photographs exist of members taking tea at the St. Keyna Club.

Facilities for leisure pursuits were vastly improved when J.S. Fry and Sons moved to the town. The Management believed in the provision of educational, social, cultural and sporting facilities of every kind. There were opportunities for employees and their families to participate in a very wide range of activities as so many of their employees were women, this greatly widened opportunities for leisure activities for women in the area. The Sports Grounds and all the activities provided became an invaluable part of Keynsham's leisure scene. In addition to organised sports there were many "one off' activities in which the residents became involved. Some were quite bizarre. From the man who was walking on a ball, to the feat of Mr. John Stokes who in 1815 walked 1000 miles in 20 days over a course laid out behind the Crown Inn at Saltford. He began walking promptly at 6 a.m. and usually took 13 hours to complete each day's walk.[27]

National festivities were an opportunity to involve the whole

community in the celebrations. The Golden Jubilee of 1887, the Diamond Jubilee of 1897, Coronations of 1910 and 1937, and the Silver Jubilee of 1935 were all marked with great style. In 1935, in Saltford, all the children received a souvenir and the Old Age Pensioners had a tea. Keynsham had sports; the Church was illuminated; shops were decorated there was a Thanksgiving Procession from Albert Road to the Church with 950 taking part, led by George Ollis, the Town Cryer, and the Keynsham

The Ollis family at the Flower Show Carnival, 1930's

Town Silver Band. One small draw-back was that Fry's, who had been inundated by demand for commemorative boxes of chocolates could not supply them for Keynsham children, so they had to be purchased from Cadbury's, to go with the commemorative medals the children received.[28] We wonder if any of these souvenirs can still be found in Keynsham and Saltford.

Keynsham also had political clubs. The Conservative Club had its origins in two converted cottages in Duck's Lane, Bristol Road. It moved to its present premises about 1910. It was always licensed, unlike the Liberal Club which was "dry" This was housed in the building at the top of Bath Hill West, which served for a time as a Library but, has since been demolished. The British Legion was started in Keynsham in about 1930 by the Reverend W.S. Hale a curate in the parish. Saltford had its Working Men's Hall. This was formed towards the end of the 19th century by Mrs Mallinson. After her death in 1883, the premises she had built a hall and cottage, were acquired by the Rector of Saltford who used it for many parish activities but refused to let it for gospel meetings. So in 1892 it was purchased by Messrs Chrystal and Holborow and eventually became Saltford's Evangelical Church. [29]

Newspapers and other documents show that there was, in Keynsham and Saltford, an amazing variety of leisure activities. Some we know little about other than their names, such as the Victoria Mutual Improvement Society. Others we know more about, but which each deserve individual research, such as the Women's Institutes, and activities for young people, such as Scouts, Guides, Girls' Friendly Society and the Band of Hope. There were other sporting activities about which we know little, such as Tug-of-War though we do know the team, based at the London Inn under Licensee Jim Jayne in 1907, challenged the Metropolitan Police Team.[30] We would hope that all Societies will preserve their Minute Books and other documents so that these details are not lost.

All these activities were sustained by a local population which by 1931, had only risen to 4,521 in Keynsham and 922 in Saltford. We are drawn to the conclusion that despite the more limited leisure time they had used it more actively. Today, Keynsham and Saltford have a large number of Societies and activities but they have five times the population of the 1930's. Many Societies especially those for young people, find it difficult to get leaders. The increasing use of the motor car has made it possible for people to enjoy leisure activities away from the town, but even allowing for this, we wonder if the advent of television, video cassette players and personal stereos has encouraged greater passivity.

3
Homes
Elizabeth White

Many of the houses mentioned in this book have either disappeared or been altered almost beyond recognition. Gone are the Bridges' mansion (built early 17th century, demolished 18th century), the Old Court House (built early 17th century, demolished 1979), Flanders House (built end of the 17th century, demolished 1960's), The Pines (probably early 19th century, decayed by the 1950's), Abbotsford (built late 19th century, demolished for the by-pass), and Fairfield Terrace (a 19th century "purpose built slum", demolished for the Park Extension (1950's)).

Altered almost beyond recognition are West End House (16th century or Earlier), the Old Manor House (early 17th century), Chewton Place (18th century), Hill House (17th century, refronted 19th century). Saltford's historic buildings have been far less altered and a wide range of period houses can be identified there.

In this chapter we have concentrated on identifying some existing buildings which are typical of their age, type and location, and would thus help in the identification of other similar buildings. These houses are, of course, private dwellings and are not open to the public, so we have not considered any internal features.

Nothing remains in Keynsham that can unequivocally be dated to the 16th century. The 15th century range of buildings in Station Road opposite St. John's Church began as a range of farm buildings, not housing. West End House, facing the Church, could at its core be a 16th century or even earlier building, but there are few external indications of it, and little means of verifying it. So we must begin with the 17th century and with houses which must have belonged to the wealthier of Keynsham citizens. The homes of the poor have not survived.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY HOUSING IN KEYNSHAM

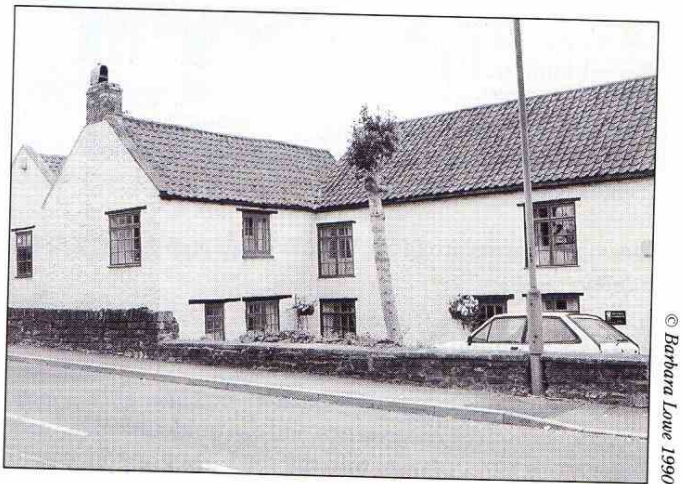
DAPPIFER'S HOUSE

This probably dates from the beginning of the 17th century, though it could possibly have been built at the end of the 16th. It is the home of a prosperous person, so its name, linking it to a royal steward, may well reflect its origins. The relieving arches over the windows and the height above the first floor windows are characteristic of houses in this area at that date.

© Len Coggins 1986

ROOKHILL FARM

This is one of the best documented farms in Keynsham and can be traced back to the early 17th century. It seems to have been tenanted then by the Steward for the Whitmores, Robert Randall, and was leased by the later stewards, Andrew and Martin Innys, until the mid 18th century. The present house has 17th century internal features but incorporates 18th and 19th century buildings which probably began as farm buildings. The whole has been extensively altered.



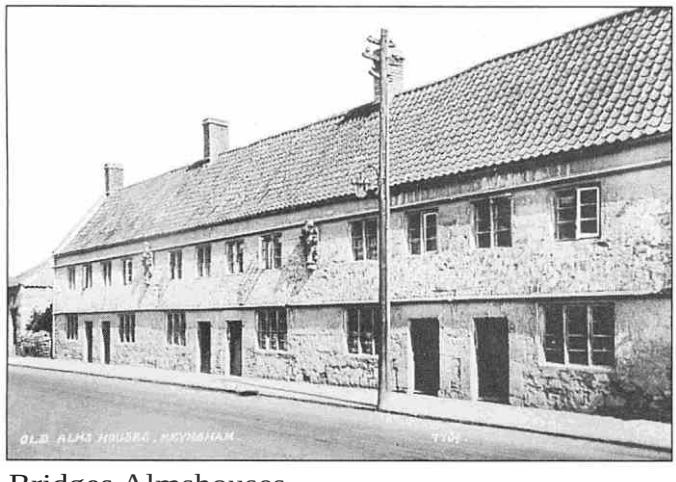
© Barbara Lowe 1990

MILWARD LODGE 1600

This is another substantial house, built in what was the original core of the village. There are several houses of this age (and slightly later) in this area of Keynsham, indicating that this was a prosperous part of the town. The houses of the poor were probably in a less salubrious part down by the river. In its size, style, with frontage of approximately 30 feet, and chimneys at either end, it is typical of houses of this area. It is now rendered but was built of Lias stone. The doors and windows have been altered.

THE ALMSHOUSES (see **plate 11)**

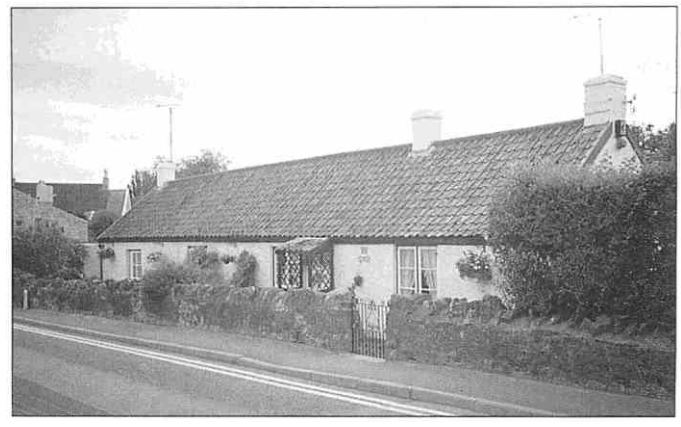
Reputedly built by Sir Thomas Bridges for the poor widows after Monmouth 's Rebellion in 1685, these little cottages are now a single dwelling. They were substantially built, which has enabled them to survive the raising of the road level and the proximity of very heavy traffic. The two light stone mullioned windows are typical of 17th century smaller houses.



Bridges Almshouses
The coats of arms are of Sir Thomas and his wife Lady Anna Rodney.

QUINCE COTTAGE

Quince Cottage is a typical "squatter" cottage. These were cottages built on roadside verges, and can be identified by their long, narrow plots, parallel with the road. They are difficult to date with precision because they have probably been built and rebuilt several times. Such cottages were usually started in the 17th to late 18th century. Such building became increasingly frowned upon; in theory it was illegal since an Elizabethan Statute forbad the building of cottages without 4 acres of land to each one. This cottage is interesting because, despite its rebuilding in the early 19th century, it has remained a single storey.



CHEW COTTAGES

These cottages dated 1683 in Dapps Hill have had a very chequered history. Like the Dappifer's House they are in Dapps Hill, an area of Keynsham which probably developed after the Bristol Road end, Possibly when the bridge was built.

They were built as fairly substantial houses, but in the 18th century were allowed to deteriorate, and early in the 19th century along with all the cottages behind them (see subsequent photograph) were all rented by the Parish as Poor Houses. They were multiply occupied, a family to a room, with single people sharing. After the building of the workhouse they were redundant. They were repaired, improved and sold (see Chapter 1) and now show little of their past history.

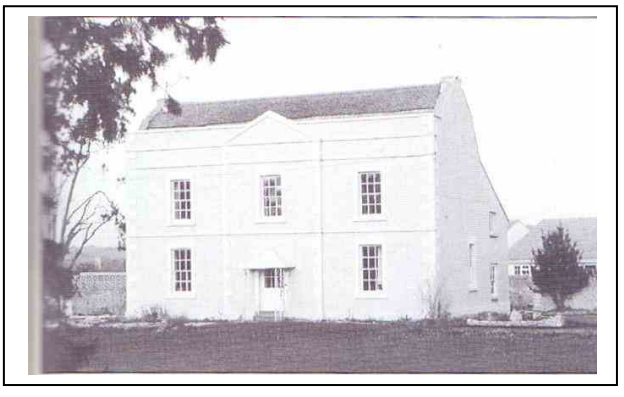
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY HOUSES IN KEYNSHAM

There are some sizable 18th century houses remaining in Keynsham. Some of these may be earlier houses refronted. Compared to the number of 19th century houses it would seem

that the population in Keynsham was fairly static at this period. 18th century cottages are quite hard to spot. Temple Street, which had many, has sadly been redeveloped. 18th century cottages that do remain are at 26 and 28 Bristol Road, and 29-33 Bath Hill East.

WICK HOUSE FARM

This is a typical farm on a very ancient site. The name could indicate that the first settlement was in early Saxon times . The house shows evidence from many periods, especially at the



back. It can be traced in documents to the 17th century This wing of the house, refronted in the 18th century, had a mansard roof, and was given a new porch and enlarged windows in the early 19th century. It has the characteristic end chimneys.

PARK HOUSE FARM

Judging by the surviving number of windows and those blocked up this house was originally built before the first imposition of window tax in 1696. In the 18th century it was enlarged and now has a double roof. The porch and window frames are modern. The front is lias stone, but the rest is limestone rubble. It is built on the land of the Abbot's Deer Park, hence its name. Welford House and Milward house in Bristol Road were also built in this period, as was the Mill Manager's House, recently restored, at Avon Mill.

© Barbara Lowe

NINETEENTH CENTURY BUILDING IN KEYNSHAM

There are some substantial houses from this period in Keynsham. Keynsham House opposite Chandag Road, an early 19th century house, still in the classical style, has a three storyed centre with two storey wings, stucco walls and incised pilasters defining blocks. Lichfield Lodge on Bath Hill East, the National Westminster Bank, the Conservative Club and 33 High Street (formally Midland Bank) are all early 19th century. Quite different is the mid-century Tudor style Ellsbridge House, built onto a much older farmhouse.

CHEW COTIAGES 1824

Examples of early 19th century cottages are Chew Cottages. These stone built cottages were built by Clark, a basket maker, and unusually for houses in this area, dated. They have been

© Barbara Lowe

rendered and colour washed . The frontages are little altered apart from the porches. They were extensively damaged in the 1968 floods, but have been sympathetically restored.

ABBEY PARK

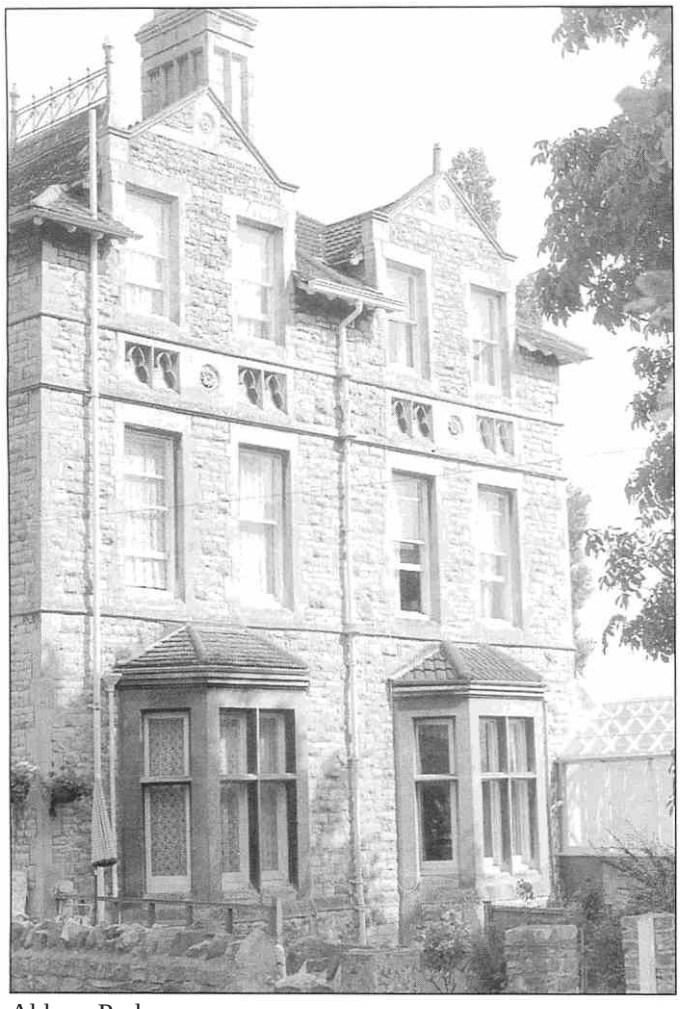
Typical of larger Keynsham houses built at the end of the century are the houses in Abbey Park. They were built by speculative builder, R.B. Cox. He bought several acres of the Old Park, and built substantial properties there between 1865 and 1885. They were designed to be attractive to the businessmen of Bristol who wished to get away from the City to live. Their proximity to the GWR station was an advantage.

The excavation for the building of these houses revealed, for the first time since 1776, the site of the Abbey. They are built of lias stone, with Bath stone window surrounds, and many decorative features in stone and iron work.

CHARLTON ROAD

These houses dated 1883 are typical of the smaller houses built in the later 19th century, when Keynsham was beginning to expand. The one on the left is built of lias, that on the right of Pennant sandstone with Bath stone surrounds for doors and windows. The decorative barge boards are characteristic of

m e n o f T h e T h



© Barbara Lowe

Abbey Park

houses here of this period and can be seen in many other houses in the town. They were among the first to be built in Charlton Road. This building marks the change from being a lane through the fields to Queen Charlton to a residential area. At much the same time West View Road and Rock Road were being developed.

ALBURY TERRACE, ALBERT ROAD

Further down the scale were these terraced cottages in Albert Road, built about 1893. They are built of blue lias but with cheaper brick surrounds to the doors and windows. They were said to have been built for workers at the Albert Mill, while those opposite (see photograph below) were built for the mill fore- men/managers. They are somewhat grander. They are semi- detached, larger, have Bath stone surrounds to the doors and windows and the decorative barge boards.

BUILDING BEFORE WORLD WAR TWO

By the turn of the century Keynsham had developed on all the roads leading into the town. Bath Road, Lower Wellsway, Charlton Road, Bristol Road, Station Road all had new houses. Houses were beginning to appear beyond Albert Road and Park Road, developing what had previously been field tracks. After the First World War the Government encouraged, through subsidies, house building by Councils to provide better rented accommodation, and work for the growing number of unemployed. The earliest Council houses in Keynsham were built in the mid-twenties in St. Francis and St. Ladoc Road, by Thomas Bros, and Babbs – both local builders. St. Anne's Avenue followed soon after. The area was known as Pittsville. These houses are built in a style hardly altered to the present day. They are built in brick, which had become a cheaper method than using local stone.

© Barbara Lowe

CHANDOS ROAD

Frys, too, built houses for their workers. These in Chandos Road were built in the late twenties on farmland of an old farmhouse, which was demolished. The standard of dwelling they provided is indicative of the paternalistic character of the company at this date.

© Barbara

WELLSWAY

In the 1930's Keynsham shared in the building boom. This property, fortunately dated, is a substantial property, one of several built in Wellsway around this time.

During the 1930's development gradually spread up Wellsway, which was then still known as Burnett Lane. These bungalows were cheaper properties than the detached house and indicate

that house ownership was spreading down the social scale. By the outbreak of war in 1939 this ribbon development had reached the top of Wellsway just beyond Courtney Road, where it was halted. Post-war controls checked such ribbon development by the implementation of Green Belts and the imposition of planning regulations and building controls.

SALTFORD

Saltford is fortunate in having more of its historic houses and cottages extant. Even here, none (with the exception of the Manor House, which is medieval with 17th century alterations) can be positively dated to the 16th century. So again, we start with the 17th century.

17TH CENTURY BUILDINGS IN SALTFORD

High Street

There are some interesting survivals from this period. The following photograph, taken in the 1960's before the growth of trees shows an interesting group in the High Street just below Saltford House. The house on the left, now divided into two was

© Pat Vine 1965

a very substantial building. The trace of a relieving arch above a window would indicate a date at the end of the 16th or the beginning of the 17th century. The windows are all much later, some indeed inserted in the 1960's. The house is now 3 storeys, but may not have begun that way, judging by the unusual positioning of the windows. The house was originally a farm with its farm buildings behind. The cottage next to it was built

in the mid 19th century, blocking off access to the farm buildings. The house on the extreme right is now called Jeffreys Lodge. The frontage is 18th century, but the house is almost certainly earlier. It, too, was a farm with its farm buildings behind.

Cox's Close

These cottages in the Shallows are typical of the small cottages of the 17th century and are comparatively unaltered. Tradition has it that they were the homes of the Ferrymen. They have coursed rubble walls, and are of two storeys stepped uphill. Some have stone mullions; others, less grand, wooden frames to the windows. The view is from the back, the least altered, side.

© Barbara Lowe 1990

High Street

Saltford High Street contains many 17th century buildings. This one is relatively unaltered. It has freestone surrounds to the windows. The original roof was probably thatched. Clay tiles are later additions. Humbler houses had thatch and wealthier ones stone tiles in the 17th century.

© Barbara Lowe 1990

COLLIN'S BUILDINGS

These cottages illustrate the interest and the difficulty of studying smaller houses of this period. These can be traced back to the 17th century, but show evidence of change in every century since. With the cottages to the right of these they form a remarkable collection of cottage styles.

© Barbara Lowe 1990

18th CENTURY BUILDINGS

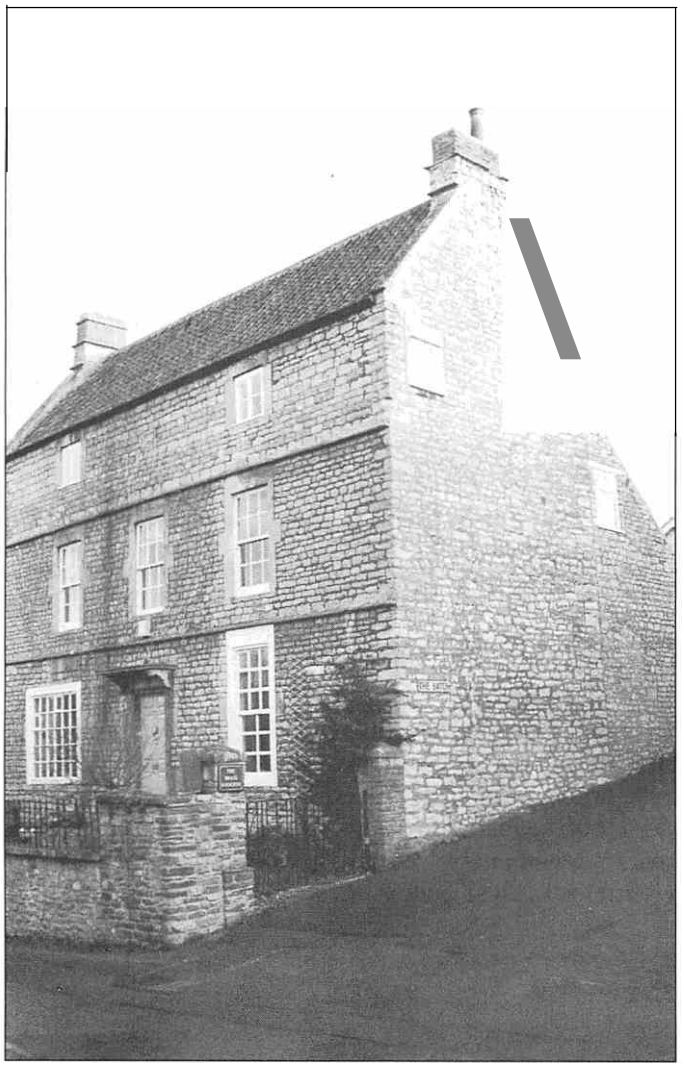
Saltford has several notable 18th century houses, including Tunnel House and Saltford House. Both may have been started earlier; both were altered in the 19th century (see Chapter 1).

SPRINGSIDE

Springside in the High Street has been altered far less. (See plate 19). It was originally built in the 17th century. Bought by the Feoffees in 1699, it was not relinquished by them until the 20th century. The house has an 18th century facade. The old thatched roof was removed, the level raised and a tiled roof built. The top window is 19th century. It is typical of this area in its size frontage approximately 30 feet in its lias stone and its end chimneys.

THE BRASS KNOCKER

This is an interesting house dating from 1747, but probably on the site of an earlier house. It has been an inn and a shop, first a butchery then a grocery. It has also been the village post office. It still has an 18th century shop window. It is built of coursed rubble lime stone with weathered string courses. The door has a stone moulded hood on brackets.



THE OLD SHIP

Another well documented inn is the Old Ship, shown here before the recent alterations. It was used as a staging post on the turnpike road between Bath and Bristol. In 1840 it had stabling for 17 horses. Later it was used as the village post office

From the height above the first floor windows it is possible it was built earlier and refronted in the 18th century. It has rubble walls with 2 string courses, and a doorway with a narrow hood.

There seem to be fewer 18th century cottages than 17th in Saltford and those remaining have been much altered Wick Cottage, and 65 High Street probably date from that period.

19TH CENTURY BUILDINGS

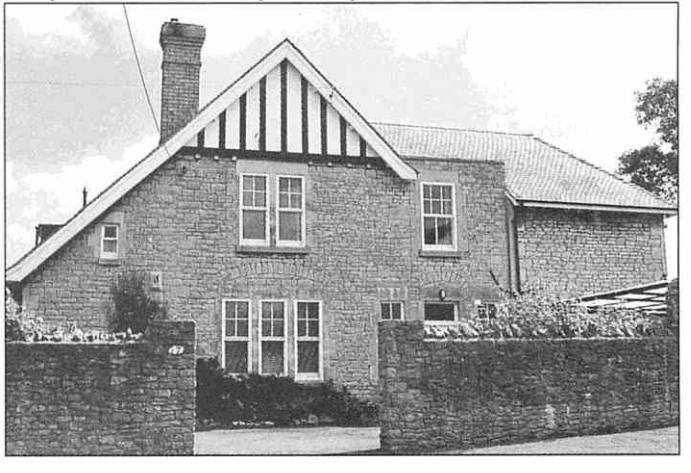
The Old Rectory

This was built in 1814 and its size indicates that Saltford was a favoured living. The site of the former rectory, mentioned in the Glebe Terriers of 1606 and 1620, has not been identified, but was probably much nearer to the Church. The front has been rendered, with the later bays rising through the eaves. The bays have ornamental parapets and hoods for blinds. Its whole appearance indicates the status of the Rector in Saltford.

THORNCLIFFE

There are not many large Victorian houses in Saltford. In fact the population here dropped between 1841 and 1861 from 427 to 363) and again between 1881 and 1891 (from 437 to 405). It was not until the 20th century that the population grew rapidly and many more houses were built.

Thorncliffe was built about 1889. It has many features revived by Victorian builders: relieving arches over doors and windows, decorative black and white work, large ornamental chimneys. It is also asymmetric, a move away from classical symmetry.



20TH CENTURY BUILDINGS

High Street

In the early 20th century a new phenomenon appeared in the High Street: semi-detached houses built of brick. In this photograph

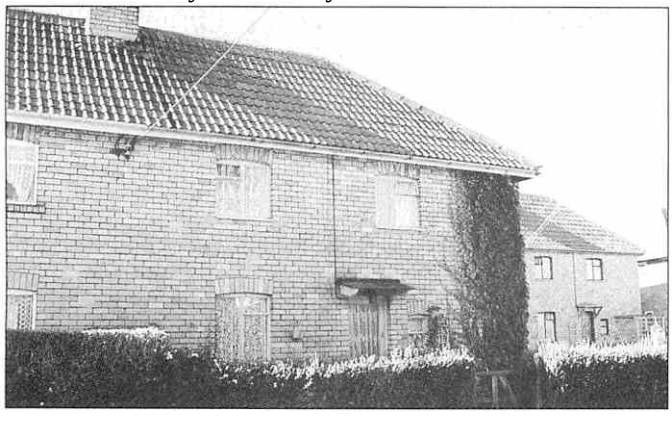
the houses have stone window and door surrounds and ornaments, and were substantial dwellings, although brick was a cheaper material than the traditional stone.

BATH ROAD

These houses, also, are brick built in the early 20th century. They were ideally placed for commuters, opposite the GWR station, a walk from the trams at The Globe, and by the 1930's on a bus route. The house at the extreme right is older and built in the more traditional stone, with ornamental barge boards.

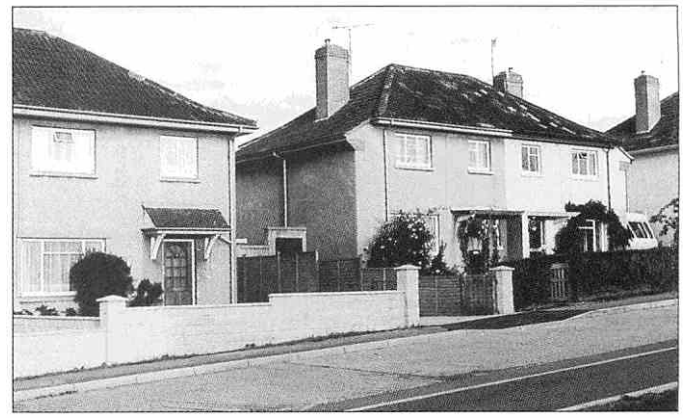
Norman Road

Saltford too, had its Council houses, built in the 1920s. Permission was given by the Parish Council for 8 houses to be built between Tunnel House and Mission Chapel. Like those at Keynsham they were brick built.



Hazelbury Grove

These were built for the Council after the Norman Road ones. Houses were being built in both public and private sector using blocks and rendering the exterior, as has been done here.

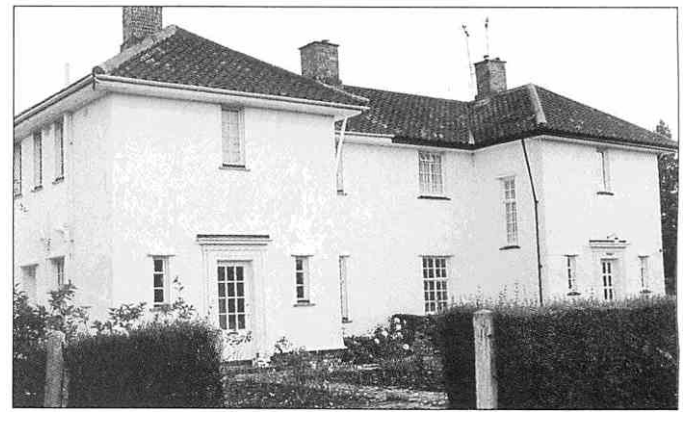


Bath Road in 1932

This photo shows the beginning of ribbon development on the A4. Even as early as this, residents were complaining of the traffic, and these bungalows were built with longer gardens on one side of the road to accommodate the future road improve- ments it was thought were inevitable. These bungalows are very similar to those built in Wellsway at the same period.

Homefield Road

Rather more substantial semi-detached houses were being built, both in the heart of the old village, and on the newly developed roads south of the A4. The photograph shows a pair of large semi-detached houses in Homefield Road. Uplands Road was being developed at the same time. The Council was busy trying to find suitable names for these new roads developed in the 1930s.



4

From Place to Place

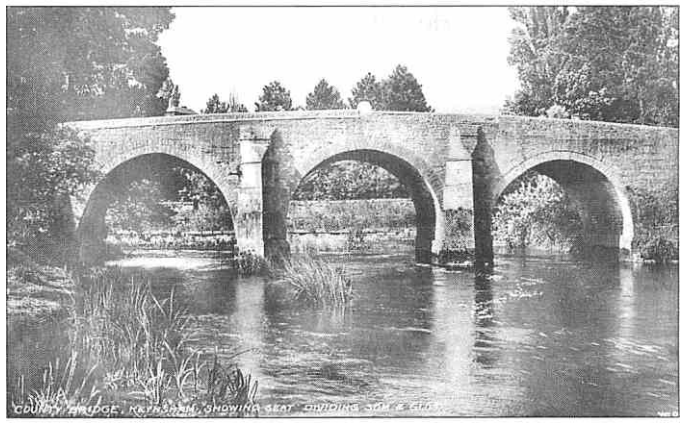
Barbara Lowe

Wailing sirens, flashing lights, proclaim an emergency; the very ground shakes as roaring juggernauts storm up Bath Hill; bellowing motor cycles weave crazily through traffic as though competing in a slalom; a pair of' 'Tornadoes" screech over head; the sound of traffic on the by-pass builds to a crescendo, falls and rises again; the distant rattle of a high speed train is almost a comfort; the clippity-clop of a trotting horse is rare balm to our ears. This is Keynsham 1989. To our forebears of 450, or even 150, years ago, this noise, frantic haste and flashing light would personify Hell!

Keynsham Street, in January 1539, was a rough , stony, often muddy and insanitary way when John Tregonwell, William Petre and their men rode away from the Abbey after persuading the Abbot to sign the Deed of Surrender.[1] They were on their way to Hinton Priory, a 12 mile journey which took them half a day. This emphasises the difficulties of road travel in winter at that time, even though Keynsham was well served by roads. Some of these date from very early times because Keynsham was at the confluence of the Avon and the Chew and was the first fording place from Avon's mouth. There were Roman roads here, but we have no definite knowledge of them. In the Middle Ages the villagers established tracks to Church, mills and common fields, mostly on the East side of the Chew, necessitating a ford.

The Abbot, as Lord of the Manor of Keynsham, undertook the building of bridges, their repair, and that of the roads, as a pious duty. The 13th century County Bridge spanned a river which was a County boundary, and both Somersetshire and Gloucestershire shared its upkeep *(Plate 1).* Keynsham had several other important stone bridges probably dating from the 15th century:- Horsepoole (near present Rest-a-while Cafe, Bristol Road), Cooks (Dapps Hill) , Downe or Keynsham (bottom Bath Hill), all of which are mentioned as Highway bridges needing repair in the early 17th century. All were originally about 12 feet wide between the parapets, to allow a single cart to cross. They had pointed arches and cutwaters (which broke the force of water upstream of the bridge). Swan bridge, on the track from Chewton Keynsham to Wellsway, is similar. This track was formerly part of the highway route from Bristol via Whitchurch, Queen Charlton, Chewton Keynsham, Gypsy Lane (Burnett) to Corston and so to Bath and London. *(see plate 9).*

Towards the end of the Monastic period, the condition of bridges deteriorated, as is evidenced by the 1531 "Statute of Bridges", which empowered local JP's to raise funds for their repair. In 1559, Sir Thomas Bridges (who bought Keynsham Abbey remains), Willed 40s and as much stone from the old Abbey Church as was necessary for the repair of the bridge and causeway over the Avon. With the Abbot dispossessed, and the decline of feudalism, a need arose for the parish to take responsibility for the community services previously undertaken by him as Lord of the Manor. The first Highway Act, 1555, stated that two parishioners were to be elected at a parish session each year, to serve as Highway Surveyors (Waywardens), within the parish. They were to inspect highways (roads between market towns), water courses, bridges and roadside walkways, and report deficiencies at Quarter Sessions. The landowners were responsible for the by-ways. This office was unpopular and unpaid. If anyone refused to accept it he could be fined 5[li]; (£5). Only Doctors and Clergy were exempt. Everyone holding arable or pasture land of annual value over 50[li]; was required to provide two able-bodied men, one wain or cart with a team of oxen, horses or cattle, with tools for the work, for 8 hours on 4 consecutive days annually, chosen by the Waywarden. The 4 days were increased to 6 in 1563. Cottagers without land were expected to work themselves or find someone to do their share. No standard of maintenance was defined and some Waywardens chose to repair selected by-ways rather than highways. Generally,



1: The County Bridge over the River Avon at Keynsham. A stone seat (probably from the Abbey), on the central parapet, divided Gloucestershire (left) from Somersetshire (right)

large stones formed the basis of the roads with small stones from the fields laid on top to be ground down by passage of carts and waggons. There were few hedges at this time and travellers were liable to wander off boggy strips of track in search of firmer footing, even if crops were growing. This, in part, accounts for our meandering country lanes. There was very little wheeled traffic before the 16th century and from 1563, drovers and badgers (hawkers) "such only as be or have been married", had to be licensed.[2]

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

We do not have information about early Waywardens for Keynsham or Saltford. However, in 1608, an order was issued at the General Sessions at Wells regarding raising money for the repair of Keynsham Bridge which was in "great decaye". The repairs were completed the following year using 20[1]; (£20) out of both Western and Eastern Lycils (limits) with some of the hospital monies from each division. This same Session received a petition from Keynsham's parishioners to the effect that "Downe Bridge was founderous and had fallen into decay to the great danger of all people travelling over the same". The matter was referred to JP's Sir H. Smith, Sir T. Bridges, E. Popham, F. Baber, J. Bysse and W. Chappell (or any 4 of them) "to examine and see whether the town or Hundred, or part of same, are to repair the said bridge". No special funds were set aside for road and bridge repairs, so it was important to determine responsibility for upkeep. The Hospital and Maimed Soldiers' Fund was the only one the parish had.

Queen Elizabeth 1 started a fashion for travelling. With her large retinue of Officers of State and about 600 baggage waggons, she paused for refreshment in Keynsham as she journeyed to Wilton from Bristol in 1574. By the end of her reign, large numbers of 4-wheeled waggons, pulled by 8, 9 or 10 horses, carrying 3-ton loads, caused tremendous damage to roads. Parishioners objected to the extra expense of upkeep, so, in 1618, 4-wheeled waggons were limited to 5 horses in an attempt to reduce the damage. In some towns, like Bristol, streets were too narrow for coaches and they were banned. The first public carriages were waggons without springs, the body resting on the axle. About 1608 these came to be used for carrying letters. The depressed wool market and outbreaks of plague had impoverished local people so they must have felt very bitter when, at the Sessions of January 1632, an extra rate was allowed to pay for the, now completed, repair of Horsepoole Bridge. Keynsham folk probably had not benefited from the "wheelage" or "cheminage" collected annually at the Gloucestershire side of Keynsham Bridge in the forenoon of St Lawrence's Day (lOth August) - 1d each pack saddle, 2d wain or cart, and marked with iron mark- as recorded in 1629.[4] What despair there must have been when the steeple of the Parish Church crashed on to the North Aisle and part of the Nave on 13th January, just a few days after the extra rate was announced. Fortunately, a Brief was issued, and money became available to finance repairs. This "Act of God" brought extra local employment for the next few years. Over 130 people are mentioned in the Churchwardens' Accounts. These included those who had any sort of animal or vehicle capable of drawing, hauling or dragging the necessary rebuilding materials. In 1637, the old lead was carried to Bristol by road, to be recast, while 2 tons of new lead were brought up the Avon and unloaded at Avon Wharf by Mr. Bridge's men (who were rewarded with ale).[5]

Local roads and tracks (not least of these being the main street where they "tried for stone") must have suffered from the transportation of all the heavy materials, especially during the widespread flooding of February 1635.

During the Civil War, in1643, Colonel Fiennes ordered the destruction of Keynsham Bridge to prevent Prince Rupert's approach that way. The Roundheads found roads in a very bad state during the war, so when they were in power in 1645, they passed an Act empowering JP's to raise revenue for road repair by a land tax. Licences for travel were required during the Commonwealth Period. This Act, ignored at first, was re- enacted in 1662, by which time there were many stage coaches on the roads. Small parishes could not afford the upkeep of busy roads, so a 1663 Statute empowered toll gates to be erected to provide funds. Statute labour was still required, fines being extracted for failure to perform this duty- (labourer, 1s6d; man and horse, 3s; cart and 2 labourers, 10s). Most people preferred to pay! At the Sessions of 1670, John Andrews of Corston was reported for failure to clear out Pond Close Ditch which "caused annoyance to users of the highway between Bath and Bristol".

In 1635, Charles I established a state postal service whereby private letters were carried by Royal Messengers who blew a horn three times in every mile and changed horses at a stage or post at 20 mile intervals. Inn keepers often acted as Postmasters and kept fresh horses ready. By 1660, even tiny villages had a Post Office, and by 1675a network of Post Roads had developed, linking the main cities of the country.[7]

The condition of roads and bridges became more important. In 1674, Keynsham's County Bridge was again in a very bad state, and in January eleven years later, Monmouth sent a small force to repair it (for his troops to cross), after the King's troops had broken it down. It was further repaired under instruction from Gloucester Sessions (see plate 10. The same year, accounts show that £6 was collected from 12 villages in Glastonbury Hundred towards this. After 1691, the appointment of Waywardens fell upon the local JP (here, the head of the Bridges family). Waywardens were selected from small farmers, tradesmen and innkeepers, who were often ill-suited to the work, and, consequently, the road conditions suffered. The difficulties encountered by travellers is exemplified by the report of Queen Anne's visit to Bristol from Bath on 3rd September 1702. The road through Kelston was "foundrous", the narrow track by Keynsham was muddy and in an even worse state, and the road near Brislington only 7 feet wide in places, so the Royal party (with thirteen, 6-horse coaches) went to Newton-St-Loe, along Saltford Shallows, forded the Avon at Swinford, through Kingswood and entered Bristol by Lawford's Gate.[8]

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The increasing problem of road maintenance led to the setting up of Turnpike Trusts which raised loans for road repair and collected tolls from road users in order to repay the loans. They installed Turnpike Gates, so called because they were tapered, lance like bars, pivoted to swing across the road. Later, they were replaced by ordinary gates. The earliest Somerset Turnpike Act was passed in 1706/7, for the improvement of some 15 miles of road in and around Bath. This did not extend in our direction beyond what was to become Newbridge. From 1714,

a Turnpike surveyor was empowered to direct Turnpike road improvements, using one third Statute labour, and to take gravel, stone, chalk, etc. from the common lands.
The years 1726/27 saw the first Act for the improvement of Bristol road, which included turnpiking the road from Bristol, through Brislington and Keynsham to Newbridge. This was known as the Brislington Turnpike Road and a toll gate was set up on Saltford Hill. By 1829, the toll house was in such a bad state that a new one was erected a hundred yards nearer Bath. This still exists, albeit altered. Keynsham's George Rodney Bridges was one of the Trustees of the Bristol Turnpike Trust. There were tolls for cattle and sheep, with a sliding scale for horses or oxen and waggons. There were Turnpike Gates on all the main roads out of Bristol, but the lawless Kingswood miners resented the tolls on coal mules, so they assembled in great numbers and pulled down all the gates.[9]

Improvement of the roads was only gradual, so travel and carriage of goods remained uncertain and difficult. In 1720, Ralph Allen of Bath planned to establish a system of cross-country post-riders. He was granted a countrywide monopoly (outside London) but the horse-back riders were very vulnerable and at the mercy of highwaymen. It was to be August 1784 before the successful introduction of the Mail Coach took place.[10] Heavy goods were expensive to transport, and traders were anxious to see the River Avon navigable to Bath. This had been possible prior to the 13th century when millers began construction on weirs or dams to improve water supply and control water levels so that their waterwheels could operate efficiently and continuously. These weirs obstructed through river passage to Bath. (In 1248, the Abbot of Keynsham was in trouble because his servants threw down a weir in Bitton).[11] The earliest, but unsuccessful, attempt to make the Avon navigable again, was by Sir John Harrington in 1606. Permission was granted in 1712, but not until powers were transferred to 32 individuals who agreed to bear the cost, did the project begin. The navigation extended only from Bath to Hanham, so the rest of the route was only passable at high tide. The Palladian style New Bridge was built at this time, but the causeways were too steep for vehicles and it was modified c. 1800. New locks and short channels were constructed to bypass the weirs at Hanham, Keynsham, Swinford, Saltford, Kelston and Weston, the river deepened and the fords dug away. Large barges, pulled by men, were able to reach Bath.[12] The work was completed in December 1727 and Bath's Samuel Tonkins was "quick off the mark", operating a new passage boat between Bristol and Twerton Lock. The journey took 4 hours.[13]

In May 1728, Princess Amelia, daughter of George II, visited Bath for health reasons. She hated road travel and had come by Sedan chair carried by teams of eight men. Invited to Bristol, she decided to travel by water. A roomy, brightly decorated wherry (sailing barge), with attendant barges, took her party downstream to Temple Back, but gangs of men had to haul them back up-river to Bath after the visit. There were many spectators at Saltford and Keynsham, and indeed, along the whole route. The cost to Bristol Corporation was £242 14s ll d including wine, pewter plates, cutlery, Hot Well water and 14 black velvet caps for the rowers.[8] Not everyone was pleased with the opening up of the river. Colliers from Kingswood and the Somerset Coalfields bitterly resented better quality Shropshire coal now being conveyed to Bath by water and they resorted to violence. An act was passed allowing punishment by death for destruction of locks or weirs. Nevertheless, in Novemember 1738, a disguised mob almost destroyed the locks at Saltford yet managed to escape punishment.[9]
In spite of rough roads, by 1732, a regular Flying Coach service ran from Bristol to London. On Mayday of that year, Martin Innys, steward to Mrs. Whitmore, Lady of the Manor of Keynsham, sent a freshly caught salmon to her in London by the Flying Coach to the "White Boar" in Piccadilly, thence by a porter to Great Marlborough Street. It apparently arrived in good condition and was enjoyed by her Ladyship.[14]
The hazards of travel are well illustrated by the following lines written by James Bridges on 9th September 1735: "I had a terrible fall from horse coming from Bristol on Buselton Common which bruised me in a terrible manner, and had it not been for the Divine Providence of God I might have dislocated my neck and dyed on the spot it being betweene 9 and 10 at night and no person with me for which I returne God Almighty my whole promise not to run the same risques for the future nor keepe such hours but to stay out all night when I am late and darke unless an extraordinary occasion and necessity."[15]
The road through Keynsham was still in such poor condition in 1738, that Colonel Bridges invited the Prince and Princess of Wales (who were travelling from Bath to Bristol) to proceed through his Park (Durley Park) which extended almost to Brislington Common, in order to "avoid one of the worst portions of that mirey highway". It must be remembered that the line of this first Turnpike road was not quite the same as that of the old A4, and that various springs and small streams flooded over it after heavy rainfall. The earlier highway through Queen Charlton and Chewton Keynsham was not much used after this time.

The increasing popularity of Bath was beginning to affect Keynsham and the traffic through it. Following a law preventing gambling in Bath in 1739, coaches crammed with wild mobs and prostitutes often stopped at Keynsham on their way to Bristol, causing "distress" to the inhabitants. There was another Turnpike road from Bath to Bristol through Bitton and Kelston (the upper road), but about this time the Brislington Turnpike (the lower road) became preferable, because, although the former was shorter by 2 miles, the latter was "less incommoded by carts and colliers".[16] The London and Newbury waggon now regularly passed through Keynsham, causing increasing damage to local roads, so two extra Waywardens, Sam Sheppard and Robert Hunter, were appointed to assist the existing two, William Thomas and Richard Durban. (Keynsham's earliest named Waywardens were Henry Hales and Thomas Mills for 1744, and Robert Hunter and Daniel Mereweather for 1745). More road work was necessary, so when people from the tiny hamlet of Chewton Keynsham were accused of neglecting their duty with plows to the highways in 1747 they protested bitterly that they had "all done two days work for ages and the trouble was caused by the very extraordinary concourse of waggons, coaches and horses". Two years later, they still had not done their share and Warrants of Distress were procured (at the expense of the Tything) against those who refused to comply.[17] This same year, Keynsham Churchyard also seems to have suffered, for the Vestry Minutes record a ban on all horses, pigs, beasts and gigs therein, with a reward of £1 for intelligence of any being in the Churchyard.

In spite of the Waywardens' efforts, our roads continued to be poor. In 1748, Miss Mary Champion (Aunt of the Bristol Potter) and her grandmother, on their way to Bath, were forced to leave their embogged coach, climb over a wall and make their way

through fields to Keynsham. In an attempt to reduce road rutting, Parliament ordered wider width wheels (greater than 16 inches at the time). Locally, John Wiltshire began a service to London using a heavy, wide-wheeled waggon which took two weeks for the return trip.

Waywardens' Accounts for Keynsham survive for the years 1760 to 1800. John Cottrell and Thomas Webb held the office for the first three of those years. In 1761 the Vestry planned to collect a composition in lieu of Statute labour on the private roads, in order to raise £50 for Bristol Turnpike Trust towards repair of the road through Keynsham. Any deficit would be made up out of the Poor Rate. Accordingly, for 1762, the Waywardens named "all who did their duty and them that answered by payment". 57 people each worked 3 days, 16 worked 9 days between them, 143 each paid 2s, 8 paid £3-13s- 8d between them, and 32 neither paid nor worked. A rate of 3d in the £1 was also levied. It is not clear whether or not the Poor Rate suffered as it did in 1753 when £20 had to be found for the same purpose. Men were now employed for road work William Cantle and Smith were paid £3-l0s-0d for quarrying 280 loads of stone. Hauling the stone was worth 1s a load. In 1766 a new road with covered gouts (drains) was under construction, and Stockwood Hill and Culvers' Lane were repaired. A landflood in 1768 badly damaged Stoney Lane. James Brown opened a new water course and the town gout was covered with flagstones. To cover these expenses, a rate of 6d in £1 was requested. In 1769, timber had to be hauled from Wapping Dock to mend Stoney Lane, a hedge was grubbed out and 7 trees thrown down to widen Lays Lane, and in subsequent years, repairs carried out to Red Lane (Stockwood), Danes Lane, Rock Hill, Daps Hill and Avon Lane.[17]

There were unsuccessful experiments with coach suspension but in 1758, a Bath Innkeeper started to run a machine on steel springs which took 3 hours from Bath to Bristol at a fare of 2s-6d. Some years later, Richard Tredwell of Bath invented "plate and worm" springs. Locally, John Emery, a maltster of Keynsham, began daily carriage of goods on 12th June 1769.[18] (John Emery's Memorial Tablet was removed from the South wall of Keynsham Church to make way for the 1914/18 War Memorial).

Ingenious ideas were being developed to protect the mail service but it was not until 1784 that John Palmer of Bath successfully introduced the idea of a mail coach protected by an armed guard. By then, the Posting system was sophisticated and roads considerably improved. At Posting Houses a fresh team of horses and a competent Post-boy could be hired. By 1780, posting had become open to public contract and it seems a shame that John Baber of 'The Crown", Keynsham, should have become bankrupt in 1776. The Bristol to Bath "Diligence" now passed through Keynsham and Saltford, and in 1782, a new Stage Coach reached London in 17 hours. The first Mail Coach left Bristol on 2nd August 1784, at 4pm. It was an ordinary Stage Coach with the roof seats removed and a strongly padlocked Mail chest mounted above the rear axle beds. There were 4 inside passengers but none outside, and it reached London GPO at 8am the next day. 1793 saw the extension of the penny post to Bristol for local letters. Uniformed, general post letter-carriers were employed to collect mail daily, and take it to town. The carrier rang a bell to attract attention. Since 1782 it had been illegal to carry letters by Stage Coach but some people overcame this by making them into parcels, which were permitted. Another ploy was to wrap the letter in newspapers because the latter were carried free. By 1800, a fine of £5 and costs could be imposed for these offences.[7]

Experiments were being made with other potential forms of transport. The sight of two air balloons, launched from Bath in January 1784, must have caused amazement and excitement. One, made of taffety and sarsnet and filled with gas made from sulphuric acid and iron filings, disappeared after $2\frac{3}{4}$ minutes, the other was later found between Bath and Bristol. Fortunately they were unmanned! One was launched by Mr. Dimwiddie![8]

The Brislington Turnpike Road was still causing problems in wet or frosty weather, particularly on the steep Durley Hill, the inadequate bridges and the several dangerous bends. An advertisement on 23rd February 1788 requested contractors to build a bridge over a stream near 'The Globe" at Newton on the Bath Road to "ease the hills adjoining". This bridge apparently did not solve the problem because in 1810, contractors were required to make a new road on the upper side, and nearly parallel with the original road from Saltford Turnpike Gate to Corston's Ash.

There were, of course, many coaching accidents such as that of 29th October 1976, when the long coach (Prince of Wales), returning from Bristol to Bath, was "overset" below the 5-mile stone (near 'Talbot Inn"), by which 5 persons were materially injured. One man, who had lately recovered from a fractured leg, had it rebroken, two women had their arms broken, a poor servant girl had her eye nearly cut out, and two Keynsham people were much bruised. The fault was not the coachman's for he had endeavoured to give way to a waggon. The coachman suffered a large wound in his forehead and the "Gentlemen of the Faculty" (Doctors) at Keynsham gave immediate attendance.[19]

NINETEENTH CENTURY

The 1804 Sessions records refer to Keynsham's Public County Bridge being much out of repair and in need of widening. (This was Downe Bridge. The "County" means it was on a County Highway before the road was Turnpiked). Keynsham Parish and the Turnpike Trust offered to bear two-thirds of the cost and Somerset County Treasurer the other £37-6s-8d. A copy of the proposed plan has survived, but the work was apparently not carried out until 1839.

Judging by tolls taken at Saltford Gate, which rose from £676-12s-2d in 1804, to £2,450 in 1827, road traffic was increasing through Keynsham and Saltford, so one wonders why, in 1819, Mr. Bennet had to sell his 7 waggons and horses. Keynsham Hams were famous for the fattening of horses on the rich grass (which cost 28s a month per horse, payable on entry).[20]

Heavy loads still went by water in barges pulled by men, until an Act of 1807 enabled a horse-towing path to be made between the Quay, Bath, and Hanham Mill. Barges could then be towed by one or two horses along special paths, sometimes on one side of the river, sometimes the other, according to the terrain. This meant that horses had to cross the river at certain places, in large flat-bottomed boats worked by chains which passed through iron runners on each side of the boat and were fixed to iron stakes in the river banks. Such a horse ferry was sited near The Jolly Sailor at Saltford. If a horse refused to enter the boat, its harness was removed and it was encouraged to swim across to join its fellows on the far side. Navigation was, however, still impeded by want of water in summer and by flood in winter.

Proposals to improve the water passage to London by extending the Kennet and Avon Canal to Bristol had caused proprietors and occupiers of the land concerned, and the Committee of Bath Navigation, to meet at 'The Lamb and Lark", Keynsham, on 5th November 1795. Various resolutions were passed – all against the proposals – and published in Bath and Bristol Newspapers. The scheme involved a level, 13½ mile route, from Old Bridge, Bath, through Twerton, Saltford, Hanham, Barton Hill to Old Market Street. The work would have involved cutting into the rocky hillsides at Saltford and building an aqueduct across the Avon above Keynsham.[21] Royal Assent was granted on 15th June 1811, but, as we know, the scheme was never implemented.

In 1813, "Charlotte" was the first steam vessel to carry passengers and goods from Bristol to Bath, but by 1814, Lewis and Thomas were operating a regular steam packet service. "Fly" boats, narrower than barges, were run by Haines, Wilson and Gerring.[18]

Meanwhile, highways and roads were gradually improving. Jack Metcalf and Thomas Telford had introduced methods of roadmaking whereby a foundation of large stones was covered by small ones, watered in and rolled. Only the centre of the road as a chipper and ditcher, sitting by the gate at the was thus treated, a causeway of 1½ yards being left on either side for pack mules and mounted riders. Most roads were still difficult in wet weather, particularly the turnpike through Keynsham, so, in December 1815, John Loudon McAdam was authorised to resurface it. Accordingly, he laid a 6 to 10 inch thick layer of graded, broken stones, less than 1 inch across, directly on the sub-soil, watered in and crushed with a heavy roller, allowing a 3-inch camber for surface drainage.[2] (Not until about 1866 was gas tar to replace water to bind the stones).

Real road improvements were now possible. In July 1825, contractors were required for the excavation and removal of earth from Durley Hill, in accordance with plans to lower it. This was the cutting of the "new" Bristol Road past today's cemetery and through the hill beyond. The new alignment began at 'The Crown", then went just north of Horsepoole Bridge on a rising embankment, through the garden of Durley Cottage, to the summit of Durley Hill (which was lowered by 20 feet). The top of the lane to Chandos Lodge was cut off, leaving the elongated triangular plot of ground around which the old tracks had led, to be taken into the field southwest of the new road. This route was planned by W. H. Townsend for Bristol Turnpike Trust, and in 1829, he drew up another plan for road improvements opposite 'The Lamb and Lark", Keynsham. The new 40 feet wide road was to run westerly from the old "Fox and Hounds", across a widened and straightened bridge over the Chew, through where the Drill Hall now is, through Memorial Park, to emerge into the High Street at the entrance to the recently (1988) obliterated, ancient, Back Lane. Neither this plan nor an earlier, undated one, was put into effect. The earlier one, commissioned by the Duke of Buckingham, was planned to avoid the hills and the dangerous turn opposite 'The Lamb and Lark", and, except that the western end of the road began immediately south of the Church, its line through Memorial Park appears remarkably similar to that of the 1966 Keynsham By-pass![2]

Obviously, much small stone was required for road repairs, so all those able-bodied men (and women) who applied for Poor Relief, were ordered to work at the quarries or at stone-breaking. However, this scheme was not successful, and, in March 1832, the Assistant Overseer, Giles Fear, was awarded a £10 increase in salary for "the able way" he dealt with the problems which arose. (Apparently, this stone-breaking was still necessary for Keynsham's minor roads as late as the 1930's. Piles of stones, of two or three fixed sizes, were kept at the sides of certain roads, such as the Lockingwell/Charlton Road junction and the "Scramble" to Chewton Keynsham (Stoney Lane).

A local resident remembers a Chewton Keynsham man, employed as a chipper and ditcher, sitting by the gate at top of the "Scramble", with a hammer rather like a small coal pick, chipping away for hours at a stretch. In 1832, two large loads of stones for chipping were brought, in barges, from Hotwells to Lodge and Avon Wharves, by William Rawlins at 2s 9d per ton. He also agreed to supply any quantity of stone from St Vincent's Rock for twelve months, at the same price. He brought 645 tons from Hotwells.[23]

Even with better road surfaces, accidents often happened. The heavily laden, two-horse coach of Brown & Co. of Bristol, "upset" on Saltford Hill and several passengers were seriously injured. The coachman was driving furiously uphill to overtake a four-horse coach which had just passed![21] Favourite public transport was by glazed omnibus which seated 16 to 18 inside passengers allowing a central walkway.

Each was liveried according to the route served. Such was the "Royal Blue" on which Caroline Jane Price was sent from Keynsham back to London on 1st December 1830.[23] Interestingly, this line is reputed to have orginally been the green liveried "Eagle" line to Pimlico, but after one of its drivers, John Clarke, steered clear of a horse ridden by Queen Victoria, and was acknowledged with a grateful, gracious bow, the line became the blue-liveried "Royal Blue".[10] The veracity of this is doubtful unless a very young Princess Victoria is the central figure, because the "Royal Blue" came through Keynsham seven years before Victoria came to the throne. Locally, Sims operated a caravan service to Bath, and James Cantle ran a carrier service to Bristol, Bath, Bradford and Trowbridge.[25] The transport of mail was becoming increasingly proficient, and by 1816, the Bristol Flyer reached London in less than twelve hours, including stops. For extra speed, mail bags were snatched from the roadway or upstairs windows. There were strict rules too, for in 1829, Thomas Moor, driver of the mail coach from Bristol to Calne, was fined £5 and costs for allowing an outside passenger to drive the coach from Keynsham to Bath.[26]

Transport of heavy goods was still problematic. On the other side of the River Avon from Keynsham, traces still remain of a horse-drawn tramway for bringing coal, cheaply and easily, from Mangotsfield. It was opened in 1832, and was a single-track, standard gauge, line, with passing loops, and rails 15 feet long secured to stone block sleepers 3 feet apart. It ran from a junction at Mangotsfield, to Oldland Common and Willsbridge, where it forked, with one line to Avon Wharf and the other to Londonderry Wharf on the river near Keynsham. This scheme allowed the Bristol bound coal traffic to avoid tolls at the Keynsham Locks. The line closed in 1865, except for a section where the incline from California Pit (ST665715) entered the line, and this closed in 1904.[27]

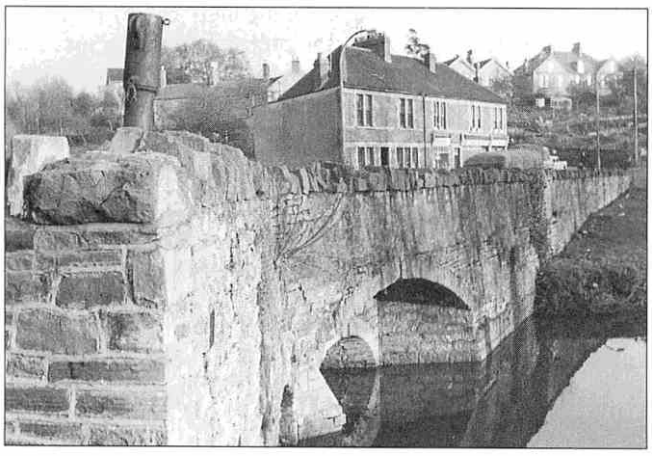
By the Highway Act of 1835, Statute Labour and Team Duty were abolished, and salaried staff and hired labour could be used. Not all highways were Turnpiked, so the responsibility for them still rested with the parish through which they passed. This led to arguments over who was responsible for which roads, and to the closure of some. The Act of 1815 had allowed

any two JP's to close any highway, bridleway or footway deemed unnecessary, and some amendments were made in 1835. In 1838, Keynsham Vestry Minutes recorded a request "to stop up the road by Parkhouse and the one to Chewton Keynsham, past Conygre, at the expense of the parish". The road from Dragons Hill (Bath Hill East) to Avon Mill was not to be repaired by the parish "because they had never done so before 1828".

Long disputes arose over the road from Chewton Log-wood Mills to the Burnett Road. In 1836, the owner of this dyewood chipping mill proposed to alter the roadway and cut a new road in front of the mill, to eliminate bends, but this was never done. Another local road fell into disuse a few years before this (probably c. 1820). This was the top section of the old highway from Chewton Keynsham, over Swan Bridge, which originally went to Burnett. Point, but was replaced by a farm track to the New Barn Farm (Uplands).

From 1838, drivers and coaches had to be licensed and wear numbered badges. Safety adaptations were being devised and more Highway Acts passed . Pedal operated, rear-wheel block brakes replaced the old drag shoes on coaches, although early 20th century farm carts still used drag shoes.[2]

In 1839, the Turnpike Commissioners finally implemented the plans drawn up in 1803 for altering Downe Bridge. It was widened from 12 to 23 feet, and raised 5 feet, with a footpath beside it. The Waywardens were instructed to pay £5 towards alterations to the causeway on the Batch (which was opposite Flander's House on the south side). These alterations left Flander's House below the level of the road, and a flight of steps had to be installed. There was formerly a slipway from this house to the river, and a cottage and wash house stood on the site of the present Memorial Gates. Until the floods of 1968, an old iron pump stood on the south-western end of the bridge. This was installed for drawing water from the river to lay the dust and settle the road surfaces, but could later have been used by steam vehicles.



2: Downe or Keynsham Bridge over the River Chew. Notice the old iron pump, top left. The arches below clearly show where the bridge was widened in 1839

As early as 1809, a scheme had been put forward to link Bristol with the English Channel by a horse-drawn railway, but the project was abandoned through lack of financial backing. Following the success of the Stockton and Darlington (1825) and the Liverpool and Manchester (1830) Railways, local businessmen were quick to recognised the potential of a Bristol to London line. Isambard Kingdom Brunel and W. H. Townsend were engaged to survey and cost the project. Subsequently, 'The Bristol and London Railroad Company" (to become the "Great Western Railway in 1833) came into being. The project was strongly opposed by local land-owners J. Hurle, J. Clayfield-lreland, P. Fenton, Dr. E. L. Fox, J. Cooke, and H. Brown Sen. In spite of their efforts, and the unsuccessful presentation of the Great Western Bill in 1834, Royal Assent was granted in August 1835. No time was lost in starting work on the Bristol to Bath section. The thick underwood at Brislington was tackled in September, and, a year later, the long embankment across the Keynsham Hams had been completed . According to a roughly incised stone at Saltford Brass Mills, rail work began at Saltford on 11th June 1836. It had been hoped to open the line in July 1838, but 7 tunnels were necessary in the 12 miles from Bristol to Bath and, as one can see from today's train journey , considerable heavy work was required to make the cuttings, embankments and bridges. Those bridges near Keynsham were extremely well constructed with fine quality pennant stone quarried from the "Humpty Dumps" near Durley Park. Remains of the trackway from the quarry to the riverside may still be seen. Brunel decided to drive the railroad below Saltford village in a short tunnel which passes under "Tunnel House". A culvert was laid very deeply in the High Street, and this, unfortunately, cut off or impeded the springs which supplied the dipping wells and pumps in the village. On 13th December 1838, Saltford Parish Meeting gave the GWR 21 days to "supply the inhabitants permanently with spring water, both in quality and quantity, and at as convenient situations as at the time of the passing of the Act of Parliament (1835) ". Water carts brought in fresh water for several years. Another complaint was the failure of the GWR to erect the agreed archway over their road at or near the mills. They had also destroyed part, and injured part, of an ancient footpath from the mills through the osier bed towards New Bridge, Bath, and had diverted an ancient footpath across "Mallows" enclosure, without Church Council consent. (Mallows was opposite Saltford House). March 1839, another "completion date" came and went but, by August of that year, three tunnels, including Saltford, had been completed. The winter of 1839/40 was exceedingly wet, so flooding added to their problems. In an attempt to complete the section, gangs of "Navigators" (Navvies), wearing yellow corduroys and open shirts, worked in relays around the clock, including Sundays, with huge fires illuminating the scene at night. Local "respectable" people were horrified by these swearing, hard-drinking gangs, although ale-house keepers and victuallers must have welcomed their trade.[28] Two cottages, known as Holbrook's Cottages, were converted to become 'The Bird in Hand", Saltford, whilst the "Black Horse", Keynsham, became "The Railway".

In spite of much opposition, Brunel was allowed to use the 7ft $^{1}/_{4}$ in. broad gauge track, and 6 new Gooch steam engines, built to fit this, were delivered in parts, (two engines from Bristol and four from the north), by water, and assembled in Saltford Tunnel. The two from Bristol were named "Arrow" and "Dart", the others, "Fireball", "Spitfire", "Lynx" and "Meridian". When the track was nearing completion, on 21st August 1840, four committee members and Brunel, made a trial trip in "Arrow", from an engine house near the unfurnished Temple Meads Station, and reached Keynsham in 10 minutes. Here, it was necessary to change engines and lines before continuing in "Meridian" to Newton bridge (where the engineer, Frere, was picked up) and Bath viaduct. The whole trip took 33 minutes. The first public train, "Fireball", left the still unfinished Temple Meads, on a rail laid only 30 minutes before, just after 8am on 31st August 1840. Three, 1st class and five, 2nd class carriages

were pulled by the flag-bedecked engine, which gave a shrill whistle as it slowly, majestically departed amidst the clamour of Church bells and the greetings of multitudes who lined the road on either side, or watched from boats on the river. The train stopped for 3minutes at the newly opened station at Keynsham, and the whole trip to Bath took 33 minutes. There were 10 trains, each way, that day, but only 6 stopped at Keynsham. The fares from Keynsham to Bristol and Bath, respectively, were, 1s 6d (1st class), 9d (2nd class) and 2s (1st class), 1s (2nd class). The takings at Keynsham were £21-14s-Od. Enterprising owners of horse omnibuses, coaches and fly traps, waited at the unfurnished stations to ferry the adventurous travellers back to their homes, or take them sightseeing before embarking on the return train trip. Saltford's wooden station was opened on 16th December 1840, but burned down on 7th August 1873. The replacement station survived until it was closed down in 1970. Tragically,on 23rd September 1840, cow-keeper, Robert Ruddel, aged 80 years, was struck by the 5 o'clock up train (Stag) from Bristol and killed as he crossed the line to the gravel pits at Keynsham.[18]

As soon as the various sections of the Bristol to London line were opened, they were put into use, and a travelling post-office was set up. The ordinary mail coach was simply put on the train as far as the line went, then taken by horses to the next stretch of operational line, and so on. In April 1840, a fire began on the Bristol Mail Coach as it was travelling on the GWR from London. The guards could not attract the conductor's attention and the whole front boot was destroyed by the time the train reached Twyford.[26] This section opened March 1840.

;

The earliest train times gave trouble because trains ran on Greenwich Time which was eleven minutes earlier than Bristol time. So in 1852, Bristol adopted Greenwich Time.

Railways took over the long distance goods carriage, and whilst bargemen suffered (like 71-year-old Henry Salmon who was in Keynsham Workhouse in 1881), local carriers gained extra work. They complemented the railway system by transporting passengers, goods and agricultural products to and from the stations, an Act of 1832 having allowed picking-up and setting down at places other than staging posts and termini as hitherto-fore. Locally, Dobson and Light were daily carriers, 1842 to 1853, with Miss Mary Light still operating the business in 1872. During the 1850's, Joseph Shellard offered carriage to London and Bristol by canal.[25]

As traffic increased, so checks for toll-paying became irksome and more unpopular, thus causing people to devise ways to avoid tolls. Some tried removing one horse from a cart before passing through the gate (an accomplice skirting the gate with the horse), as did Thomas Chancellor of Chew Magna at Saltford Gate in August 1851. Others forged or altered tickets from one gate for use at another. An ingenious dodge, eventually stopped, was the use of clogs as beasts of draught, because, before May 1851, dogs were not subject to tolls. Clever John Carpenter, a Frome miller, successfully appealed against a toll on the grounds that the gate was not positioned in accordance with the Act of Parliament. Sometimes the position was reversed, as when George Sweetman, toll collector at Marksbury, was fined 10s for charging Robin Perry tolls on a cart conveying a hay-collector, which was exempt. There were regulations, too, about the control of carts. George Street, a haulier, was fined 10s for allowing his waggon to obstruct a footway in Keynsham. William Sanders, of Stanton Prior, was summoned for riding his waggon on the Turnpike road at Marksbury, in March 1864, without some other person to guide.[29]

On 30th November 1861, a plan was presented for a Keynsham to Radstock Railway. The loop was to go eastwards from Keynsham Station, through Memorial Park, cross the Bath Road east of' The Talbot", follow a southerly route curving west just before the Hurn Lane/Manor Road junction, cross the Wellsway, pass over Leigh Hill, through Houndstreet Park and Chelwood.[30] As we know, this was never built.

An Act of 1823, stated that boundary stones were to be erected where a parish boundary crossed a turnpike road, and several of these survive in this area, e.g. Saltford/Keynsham at ST678672 and Corston/Saltford at ST692661. The most profitable years for the Turnpike Trusts had been 1837, but the trains were cheaper and quicker, and many Trusts were in financial difficulties by 1850. Eventually, in 1867, the Bristol Turnpike Commission ended and all gates were removed. (The Saltford Gate was reputed to survive at Wickhouse Farm).

The General Highway Act of 1835, had empowered small parishes to combine into larger Highway Districts, sharing a common surveyor, but few parishes were willing to surrender their autonomy, least of all, Keynsham. It was not until 1862 that JP's were empowered to compulsorily combine parishes into Highway Districts to function under Highway Boards composed of J.P.'s and Waywardens. The Vestries were then left with the power to raise rates to meet the demands of the Board and annually to elect unpaid Waywardens to assist the Board's salaried Surveyor. The first meeting of Keynsham Highway District Board took place at noon on 13th April 1863 at the Union Workhouse. Those present, ex-officia, were James Clayfield Ireland, William Gore-Langton, Henry Lyne, Richard Ricketts, Colonel Inigo Jones, John Stuckey Lean and Rev James Phillpott. The Waywardens for Keynsham, Charles Harris Wood and Benjamin Paget, and Saltford's Henry Highnam were also present. The next day (and again on 30th December) advertisements were placed in Bristol and Bath newspapers, for a Surveyor to the Board, to cover the areas of Brislington, Keynsham, Whitchurch, Queen Charlton, Saltford, Burnett, Compton Dando, Corston, Marksbury, Stanton Prior, Newton St. Loe, Priston, North Stoke and Kelston, covering 110 miles of road. Salary £120 p.a. The Board made a good start by collecting outstanding Highway Rates. Urgently needed stone was obtained from new quarry sites on Burnett Hill and Priston. Interestingly, the Sale Deeds of Wickhouse Farm, in 1889, stated that the Highway Board paid 2d per yard Royalty on all stone quarried from a site nearly opposite, plus £5 annually. Three years later, the principal roads, including drains, had been "cleaned up". New pitching was laid by the "Black Horse" the Church and "Royal Oak", and some asphalting done to the causeways. Mr. Ambrose laid a new gas tar path by the new Chapel in Saltford, but he left lime, stone and ashes (which had been delivered by water), at the side of the partly finished road there. Amusingly, Mr. Ruddle of Keynsham, in May 1867, requested permission to enclose a piece of road, near his stable, on which to deposit manure! (Probably near "The New Inn".)[31]

After the closure of the Turnpikes, the repair of highways again became the responsibility of the parishes through which they passed. The Highway Surveyor, Edwin White, had his salary increased to £170 p.a. in respect of the extra work thus arising.

County Bridge repairs were now regularly carried out, and five-year contracts given for Chew, Cooks, Keynsham, the Mill Bridges and part of Avon Bridge. In 1851. the contract for the

"Mill Bridges on the Queen's common highway leading from Compton Dando" was given to John Sheppard, mason and builder of Keynsham, William Sheppard and Edwin Lovell.

The Midland Railway wished to extend the line from Mangotsfield to Bath to link up with the Somerset and Dorset Railway, but the necessary land could only be obtained if a station was provided at Kelston. Work was in progress by May 1868 and a bridge was constructed across the Avon between the Saltford and Kelston Locks. An 18-foot wide, new road leading past The Bird in Hand"), when completed, was found to be steeper than agreed, so it had to be altered. The line opened on 4th August 1869, with no special ceremony.[28]

In 1874, the Great Western Railway decided to provide a mixed gauge in our area by adding a third, standard gauge line to the broad gauge already in use. Hundreds of labourers worked in shifts. Each section was closed for several days whilst the work was carried out. The men worked 18 out of the 24 hours, were paid Is 3d a day for rations, and were provided with unlimited quantities of an oatmeal drink. Sheds were erected for sleeping accommodation. The last section to be completed was at Brislington in the 1890s.[32]

There were accidents, of course. On l0th June 1878, a man, a great deal the worse for drink, tried to cross the line at Keynsham Station just as the through train from Salisbury was approaching. Mr. Waiter Phelps, a Keynsham Saddler, managed to drag the man clear. On 12th January 1889, in a tunnel near Keynsham, the footboard of the first coach of the "Flying Dutchman" express, was smashed by collision with a large stone which had fallen from the roof.

In 1823, several houses were removed to widen the road outside Keynsham Church. The west wall of the Churchyard was taken down and replaced so as to include about 32 feet of the parish road "which from the late improvements has been, or become, useless". The stocks were removed, the paths through the Churchyard stopped up, the walls raised and an iron gate and rails, hauled from Bristol, were placed at the West end of the Churchyard. No burials were to be made in the new space unless with headstones . For some unspecified reason, in November 1878, it was proposed to remove these railings and again throw the space into the road. Six months later, the space was offered to the Highway Board but reserving an 8 feet wide path in front of the Church. In 1884, proposals were made to remove the North wall of the Churchyard and replace it with railings. The saga was not yet over, for in 1891/2,the ownership of the space was disputed, with Mr. E.M.J. Parker claiming it. He eventually made it over to Somerset County Council (which was created from the ancient County by an Actof1888, replacing Government by J.Ps) _23

The river at Saltford was popular for leisure activities. Regattas had been held there since 1849, and Clifton College had a rowing club boathouse which was burnt down on 12th July 1894, with the loss of 10 boats. In spite of the efforts of Isaac Sheppard, Purnell (the Saltford Signalman) and some passing cyclists, the building was burnt out. A second boathouse met the same fate but the third one still stands (1989).[32] Joseph Withey established a successful boat-hiring business in 1896, and, in 1906, George Sheppard set up in opposition. They both prospered, and, in 1927, Sheppard bought Withey's business through a third party. George Sheppard's sons carried on the business until the 1970s.[9]

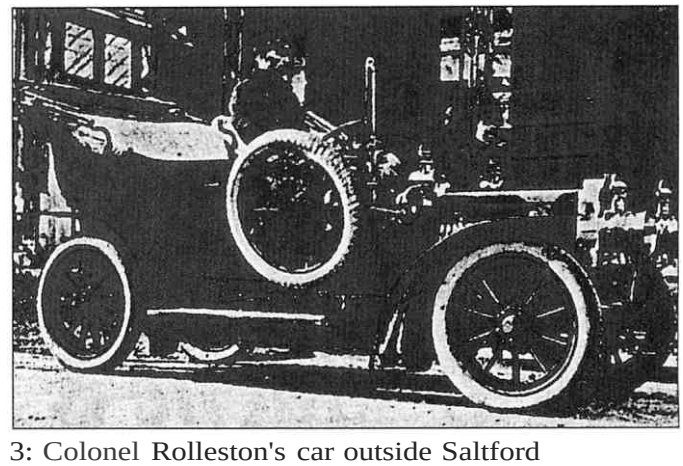
Bicycles made their debut about 1880. Pneumatic tyres replaced iron in 1888 and a cycle craze raged from 1890 to 1895. Postmen, however, were not given cycles until 1906, and it comes as a surprise to learn that, on June 2nd 1918, it was decreed, that in the event of a day light air-raid warning, the local Police Constable should cycle around Keynsham displaying a placard reading "Air Raid".[23]

In March 1896, Keynsham Parish decided to commemorate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee with the erection of a drinking fountain on the site of the Pound (for straying animals), "which could be moved to a less conspicuous place". Mr. Commans, Lord of the Manor, sanctioned this and the Pound was removed from the top of Bath Hill East to land behind 'The New Inn". lnterestingly, a 1780 Deed of this Inn mentions that the Pound was then West of it, so perhaps the Pound returned to its original place.

Cab-proprietors, carriers and hauliers were often also Innkeepers, as were; Ambrose Ford ('Talbot Inn"), Thomas Janes ("Railway Tavern"), Robert Williams ("Royal Oak"), and William Ruddle ("Fox and Hounds"). Other local carriers were; James Keates (Fly proprietor), James Cox (haulier and carriage owner), Fred Weymouth and John Webber. Frederick James Weymouth, of Doveton Cottage, Saltford, was a wood and coal delivery merchant from 1861 until 1902, and he also took washing for "cleansing" in Bath -in a separate vehicle, one hopes! John Webber began a haulage business in Saltford, in 1889, which was continued until after 1927 by his wife and son.[25]

TWENTIETH CENTURY

Between 1860 and 1885, experimental internal combustion engines were developed on the Continent, but Britain's first 4-wheeled, petrol driven car appeared in 1896.The first recorded "horseless carriage" in this area, was that of a Burnett Clergyman who drove his battery-powered vehicle through Keynsham in a storm Of dust. Colonel Rolleston of Saltford House, the proud possessor of a Bristol 1906, 16/20 motor car, seems to have been the first Saltford resident to own a motor vehicle. *(Photo 3).* The Avon Motor Manufacturing Co., Bath Road (where the "Car Centre" now is), produced various motor



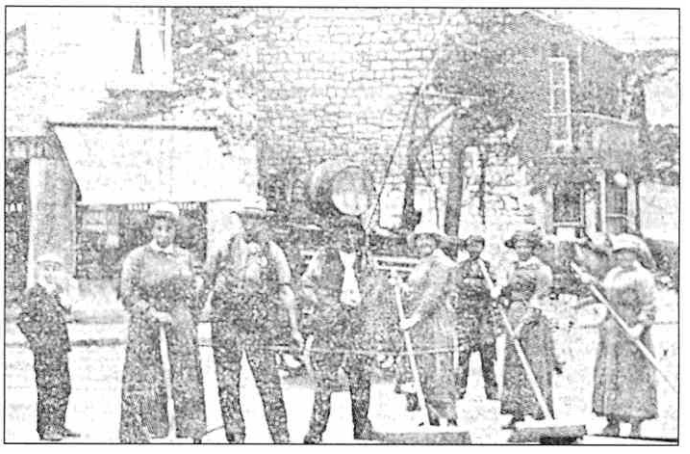
3: Colonel Rolleston's car outside Saltford House. The Chauffeur was Mr. King

vehicles between 1902 and 1912. The Proprietor was George Henshaw, and the most famous vehicle was the 'Trimobile", a two-seater, driven by a single cylinder water-cooled engine. Apparently, the low-tension ignition system and the leather-faced clutch were rather unreliable. It was classed as a motor cycle, so Mr. A.E. Cannock was able to own and drive one in 1911, when he was l4 years old. *(Photo4 overleaf).* Mr. Cannock's

4: Mr.A.E. Cannock at the wheel of his Trimobile in 1911. At his side is his Aunt, Miss E. Cox and dog

sons now run the garage he began in 1919 at 36, Bristol Road. The Avon Motor Co. also produced a 4-wheeled version, the "Avon Light Car", and manufactured 2 and 30 H.P. engines for cars, boats and farm vehicles. Petrol was then supplied in cans -pumps came in the 1920's. The Post Office used Trimos, such as the 5 mph -"Little Mercury" (designed to carry 32cwt.), as postal delivery vans during 1905/6. This was the first use of internal combustion engines by the Post Office. (A set of commemorative post-cards, issued in 1987, depicts the four methods of mail carriage, namely, a horse-drawn mail coach, the S.S. Great Britain, the Avon Trimo and British Concorde). The Tangent Tool Engineering Co. took over Mr. Henshaw's premises c.1922, and manufactured the "Keynsham" lawn mower and other products.[33]

As the number of cars increased, so road surfaces were destroyed and choking dust arose from the pneumatic tyres sucking up the fine particles which bound the Macadamed surfaces. In 1907, complaints were made about the dust nuisance, noise and speed of motors at Saltford, and it was so bad in Keynsham that appeals were made for the main street to be tar-Macadamed. This was eventually carried out by Somerset County Council in 1911. Experiments in tar spraying had been made with tar heated in a horse-drawn, wheeled, boiler ("tar-pot") and poured over the road using ordinary watering-cans fitted with coarse "roses". A sprinkler bar was later devised to fit on the boiler, but the spreading of limestone chippings over the tarred surface was done by hand. On 1st March 1898, Mr. Wheeler was engaged to steam roller the local main roads at l0d per cubic yard. This was the first use of a steam-roller in this area. During World War 1, women took over the work formerly done by men. *Photo 5* shows such a group of Keynsham women, proudly wearing their "war work" green armlets (with crowns on), helping repair the road at the top of Bath Hill West.[23]



5: Women carrying out War Work during World War I. Mrs. Kate Box, Mrs. Nell Ethel, Mrs. Hitchcock, Mrs. Barnes, "Jim from Bath", Miss Emma Reed, Albert Newman (boy), Charlie Rayson

Towards the end of the 19th century, the construction of new housing estates in Keynsham necessitated new roads, drainage and water supplies. (Keynsham had been supplied with mains water by West Gloucester Water Company, sometime prior to 1889.) Objections arose in January 1897, from owners of new properties in Albert Road, regarding sharing the cost of making the new road. Some people had already made up their frontages, so separate estimates had to be submitted. A similar problem arose with Rock road in 1901. Various roads were widened. *Photo 6* shows workmen widening Burnett Road (re-named Wellsway) in the 1920's. In 1909, the Parish objected to the purchase price of the 755 yards of Mr. Butt's land which was necessary to widen the road between the Grange and Pix Ash Lane, but Henry Harvey's terms for widening Charlton Road were accepted. This road was then a rough, clayey track, with stepping stones up the middle, liable to flood in wet weather.

6: Workmen widening Burnett Hill. Back row: D. Trengrove enland, T. Ollis, Evans, T. Williams, L. Carter, F. Macey. Front row: Palmer, Vales, Loman, Whatley, B. Glover, F. Neale

Requests to the District Council to tar spray the district roads in 1911, were countered with requests for contributions from the Parish. It was suggested that house owners should pay by instalments for this tarring, but their comments are not recorded! In 1912, the RD.C. did tar Temple Street to a width of 14 feet. The next year, both Temple Street and Charlton Road needed repair, but requests for tarring to a 21 feet width, were refused. The owners of houses in Charlton Park refused voluntarily to give up the land necessary to make the road the

required width. Following these problems, the R.D.C. was asked to enforce by-laws regarding the laying and making up of new streets, before plans were passed for housing.[23]

Street watering, using a special cart, was necessary to control the dust. Starting in 1903, this was carried out daily (after 9am), but by 1908, Temple Street required watering twice daily. In March 1912, a contractor was engaged to water (with mains supply) the main road from The Elms to Hamleaze Corner (near "Crown Inn") at least three times a day, Temple Street, Charlton Road, Station Road and Durley Hill at least twice a day, and the other roads, once daily.[23]

Persistent rain during February 1900, caused a landslide on the Station side of Saltford Tunnel. In March, the last down train from Bath careered into about 100,000 tons of rubble, which covered both lines. The engine and four coaches were derailed, injuring the fireman's legs and alarming the, otherwise unhurt, passengers. The up-line express had passed the spot only minutes before. In the days which followed, expresses were diverted via Swindon and Cheltenham, but local trains shuttled to and from the obstruction. Passengers alighted and walked past the blockage to an awaiting train the other side. Large numbers of local men were employed to clear the obstruction. Owing to the risk of further landslips, the work was hazardous, and relays of three men, roped to stakes in the field above, worked day and night (using naptha flares) and slept at 'The Railroad Arms" (now 18, High Street). More problems arose the following year from flooding at the Keynsham end of the tunnel. Excessive rain proved that the ditch and 5 foot deep culvert on the top of the downside embankment were inadequate and allowed rubble to wash on to the line.[28]

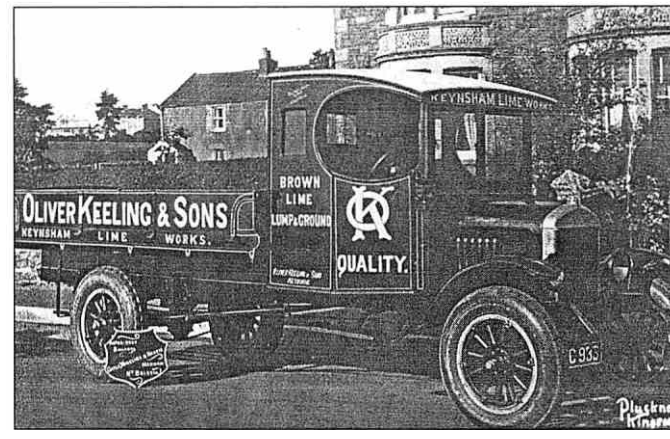
Goods traffic had been passing through Saltford Station since 1869 but it was 1903 before the much needed Goods Station was approved. Early in 1903, the Bristol, London and Southern Counties Railway undertaking, backed by a local petition in favour, requested a station at Keynsham. Saltford Parish Council had also discussed plans for a proposed new railway which would pass through the heart of the village. Concern was expressed regarding footpaths liable to be undercut by such work. However, nothing came of the scheme. A footpath was provided over Kelston Railway bridge, to link Kelston and Saltford. In March 1907, Keynsham's request for a special early morning workmens' train was unsuccessful. The G.W.R, in 1908, planned new sidings with a new road at Keynsham. Unemployment was high in the area, so the G.W.R was urged to carry out the work, but problems arose over Rights of Way, so the project was abandoned.[34] A horse-drawn tram service had been operating in Bath since 1880, and electric trams were introduced in 1904. In the Saltford direction, the route originally terminated at Newbridge Park but was extended to 'The Globe Inn", Newton St Loe, on 5th August 1905. The route was financially successful, so a further extension to 'The Crown", Saltford, was proposed. Although approved in 1906, poor weather delayed work, and, following a decline in receipts, the scheme was abandoned. (The Newbridge to "Globe" section closed in November 1938.)

In Bristol, an electric tram service began in 1899 but was not extended to Brislington Village until the end of 1900. Agreement was reached, in January 1904, between Bristol Electric Tramways Carriage Company Ltd., and K.R.D.C., for its extension to Keynsham. A single track was to lead from Brislington to Hamleaze corner, then, from there to 'The lamb and Lark", part of the road was to be laid with wood blocks and tar-macadammed metal between the rails, with a sufficient loop for passing near the Church. The plans eventually came to nothing.[23]

In 1905, motor omnibuses were tested in Bristol, and in August 1906, a new 'bus service began which connected the tram termini at Brislington and Newton St Loe. The fare from Keynsham to Saltford was 2d.

During World War 1, Fred Veale used to deliver groceries for George Chappell, in a friction drive, Golling Wood-Keeling motor delivery van which had pneumatic tyres and wire wheels. This, however, was a rarity in our area, so when Fred Ollis began his Carrier business in addition to his bakery, in 1916, his first furniture van was a heavier version of his baker's cart, topped by canvas stretched over curved iron bars, hitched-back curtains in front, and pulled by two horses. A local resident vividly remembers her family being moved "lock, stock and barrel" from Avon Mill Lane to Station Road, in this van.

Walter, son of Herbert Beak who began a motor engineering business in Keynsham before 1919, ran one of the first Hire Cars. Around 1926, this business became "St. Keyna Motor Works", run by Messrs. Bailey and Maddicks. In Saltford, Mrs. Lizzie Perry ran the Crown Garage, c. 1923. A Keynsham family business, still thriving today, is that which Ernest Ollis began c.1914, with a carrier service based in Bath Hill. Other vehicles, familiar in the 1920's, were those of 0liver Keeling & Sons. One was a 3-ton, chain-driven "Hally" lorry *(Photo 7).* They were



7: Oliver Keelings 3-ton, chain-driven "Rally" lorry

used for the lime business at the quarry in Wellsway. The lime-kiln building (with 3 kilns) was pulled down in 1981, but the family business continues for the manufacture of water-proofing material.[25]

Steam vehicles, still in use in 1922, were most unpopular because of the "slush and muck" caused by the engines stopping near Horsepoole Brook to take in water and stoke up fires. They also damaged the bridge. However, no one seems to have complained about the large number of vehicles standing there during motor trials near 'The Crown" in September 1923.[23]

Motor traffic was steadily increasing, but even into the 1930's, most local people either walked or rode horseback, and very few had pony traps. The 'buses were not much help either, for in 1926, they tended to be full-up by the time they reached Keynsham.

Saltford Ferry was operated by Hannah Gregory from 1886 until 1908, when it was taken over by William Hill and his wife. Traffic across it gradually declined and, by 1925, the Ferry steps were in such poor condition that they had to be repaired

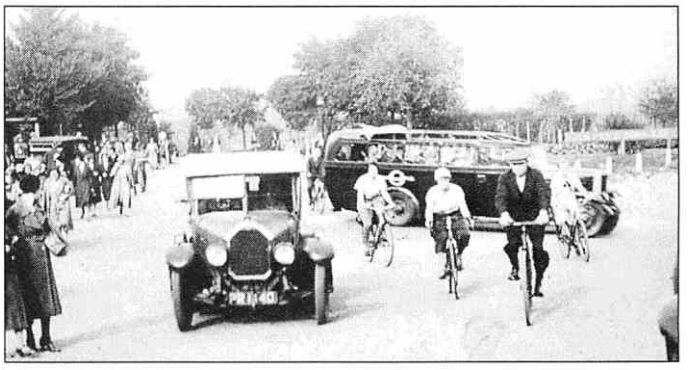
with railway sleepers. By 1929 the Ferry had ceased completely.[9]

Speed boats, the latest craze, were becoming a nuisance at Saltford and by-laws had to be enforced.

Another craze- the motor bike and side-car, left its riders cold and filthy, by all accounts.

The construction of J.S. Fry & Sons' Keynsham factory in the early 1920's, caused a huge increase in local traffic. The "Cocoa" pony-cart and the steam driven lorry-train became familiar sights. By 1924, Fry's had constructed their own railway siding and had their own locomotive. In the early 1930's a Puss-moth aeroplane was used for making urgent chocolate deliveries in connection with a travelling exhibition. Workers employed a variety of means of transport *(Photo 8).*

An Act of 1929 introduced changes in the system of highway administration, and since then, there have been enormous



8: Workers leaving Fry's Factory at the end of a shift

developments in transport and road conditions. World War II, although halting the development of domestic transport, accelerated that pertaining to military affairs.

5
Sickness and Health
Susan Trude

How be?
'I'll be proper poorly, what'll I do?
'Go down Abbey. One of they monks knows all about healing.' Attached to each monastic establishment would have been a monk well versed in the use of herbs. But what happened after 1539 when the Abbey was dissolved and the monks forced to leave? Did one monk with knowledge of herbs stay close by, or did the people of Keynsham and Saltford have to look elsewhere for 'medical' help? Perhaps there was a wise woman in nearby woods who concocted potions to help cure all ills, not only of the body but of the heart as well.

One supposes that people attempted to cure themselves at first, using tried and tested remedies. Goose grease was a time-honoured remedy for chest complaints, while eye complaints could be treated in Keynsham at the local mineral spring, according to Braggs' Directory of 1840. Even earlier, in 1735, James Bridges noted in his Day Book that sore eyes could be cured by a visit to Bath to 'wash them with the water of the spring or well that lays in Lyncombe Bottom near Bath which have done great cures to those that used the said waters'. James Bridges also noted down a number of cures for 'cholick', on the 13th July 1734.

Take of Bay leaves Balme and spearminte one handfull of each boile them altogether in a Pot of Water well then strain it and put in double refined Sugar and Brandy to your mind You may burn the Brandy if you think fit and let it tast of the Brandy most and drink it warme'

Another:

Take a Quantity of Bean Shell Water at times'

Another:

'Evans' water sold at the sign of St Tho Church in St Thomas Streete Bristol and nowhere else'

Another:

'One ounce tincture of hiera picra or hiera sana and one ounce of aque vite mixed together to be taken in a glass of warme white wine halfe or two thirds at night and the rest in the morning and continue it for four mornings or other if continues In the Day Drink Toddy warme of Brandy rum or Geneva what you like'

The Hot Springs in Bath were available to the rich and the poor. All manner of complaints could be cured by a visit to those Baths. Dr Thomas Venner as early as 1628 said They be of excellent efficacy against all diseases of the head and sinews, proceeding from a moist cause, as rheums, palsies, epilepsies, lethargies, apoplexia, cramps, deafness, forgetfulness, trembling or weakness of any member, aches and swelling of the joints-those that fear obesity, that is, would not wax gross-to come to baths'.[1]

Perhaps Francis Flood, remembered for ever because her story is engraved on a stone in Saltford church, should have paused for a while at Bath to seek a cure. Francis Flood was born at Gitsom (Gittisham, near Honiton, Devon), on 22nd January 1723, when aged 32 she went from Philip's Norton to Saltford where she lodged at an inn. The inscription is as follows:

'Stop reader and a wonder see
As strange as e'er was known
My feet drop'd off from my body
In the middle of the bone

I had no surgeon for my help
But God Almighty's aid
In whom I ever will rely
And never be afraid

Though here beneath the mold they lie
Corruption for to see
Yet they shall one day re unite
To all eternity'

These verses were put into print, and in fact she went about on crutches selling the story of her misfortune.

In some cases the doctors travelled to the people. The Bath Journal, 21 April 1766 reported:

'We are assured that the real Senior Shappee, Practitioner in Physick and Surgery, who travels by Act of Parliament for curing Ruptures or Broken Bellies of all kinds, if the Grief can be put up, in Half an Hour, and is allowed by all who know him to cure more of these diseases than any man in England.

Any Persons, who have applied to Mr Leadwood and have not met with the Satisfaction required let them apply to Mr Shappee, who will undertake them NO CURE NO MONEY.

He waits on Gentry at their own houses (if required) and gives his advice to all gratis. He is now at the Duke of Cumberland in Keynsham in order to receive Patients from Bath and Bristol'.

From the sixteenth century individual parishes were respon-

sible for the very poor, and overseers were appointed to raise funds by rating the inhabitants.[2] Also charitable bequests were left on the death of patrons. Poor relief remained a function of each parish until the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, which grouped parishes into Unions. Keynsham and Saltford became District Number 327.

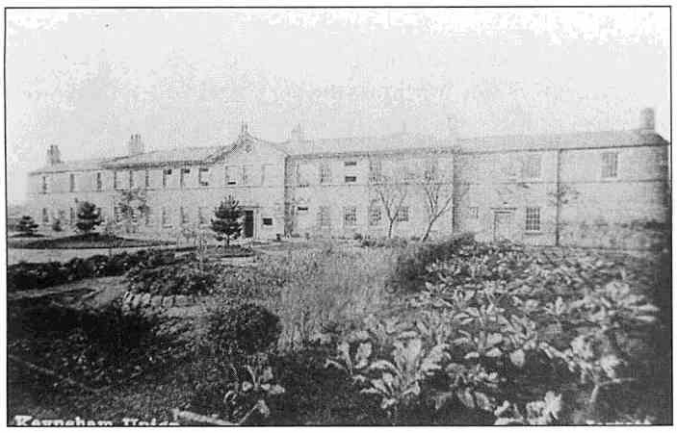
The overseers provided medical help. An example of this is found in the accounts dated 1702:

'Elizabeth Wayford earthen pot	0s 4d
Mulling's wife for attending Wayford	1s Od
Milk for Elizabeth Wayford	1s 6d
Milk for Elizabeth Wayford	1s Od
Mulling's wife for Wayford's child	1s Od'

Elizabeth Rawlings did rather better when she attended James Bridges' daughter. His account book records that she received £31-19s-Od for nursing Anne.

The eighteenth century saw a great change in the public attitude to the poor. Charity hospitals and dispensaries were built where all medical and surgical staff were honorary. The patients paid no fees, help came from the parishes. On 8thAptil 1793the overseer in the Parish of Keynsham was ordered to pay annually to the Bath Hospital2 guineas (£2.10p).

Keynsham's Hospital began its life in February 1837,[3] and ten months later the rather forbidding building was completed. It was known variously as The Keynsham Union Workhouse', The Poor House', The Poor Law Union', and after 1930 'Clements House'. Not until 1948 did it become known as 'Keynsham Hospital'. The workhouse looked after the poor of



The rather grim looking aspect of Keynsham Union. now the hospital in 1898

19 parishes, administered by a Board of Guardians. The 'poor' consisted of the elderly, mentally handicapped, children, unmarried mothers and itinerant workers or tramps. Thought by many who entered those doors as being the end of everything, it was in fact to others a place of shelter where they were given a bed and food-meat three times a week-and medical attention. This did not come entirely free, as those who were able worked outdoors on allotments, pig keeping, chopping wood and breaking stones for road repairs and indoors in the laundry or the kitchen. In September 1841 there were 183 indoor patients, and a staggering 1,486 called at the door. It was a very different picture from today's bright, airy, up-to-date hospital, caring for the old and new citizens of the area.

In the days before the National Health Service, perhaps as a barrier against the workhouse, many people, for only a few pence , became members of a Friendly Society.[4] The Union Friendly Society met at the Lamp and Lark, and the Jubilee Friendly Society at the Fox and Hounds. Sadly, both these establishments have been demolished. The aim of these Societies was 'the raising of funds for the support of those members who may, by sickness or infirmity be rendered incapable of labour and for the decent internment of its deceased members'. The Jubilee Society was a going concern in the 1830s. All members were required to attend the annual walk, or pay a fine. The parade began at the Fox and Hounds, and all members marched behind the brightly polished emblem bedecked with ribbons to match the cockade worn in every hat (see plate 12). It processed to the church for a service and sermon, followed by a feast prepared by the Society Stewards. An item from the Select Vestry Minutes, dated 27th April 1835, makes one pause and wonder what was so special about Purnell: 'It is ordered that Purnell is to have allowed him the sum of £12 ten shillings by this Parish for the purpose of placing him in the Children's Friendly Society at Hacknys Week for the purpose of being fed and maintained, clothed and provided for without any further cost to the said parish'.

And so to Doctors[5] In the very early days physicians would probably have graduated at one of the following places — Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, even Padua or Montpellier, but before the eighteenth century 'doctors' could practice medicine with no qualifications or experience. Regular medical training in this area began in Bristol on the 20th June 1737 at the newly opened infirmary where the resident medical practitioner was allowed apprentices, followed shortly afterwards by surgical apprentices. By 1745 surgeons separated into two guilds, each having a seven-year apprenticeship. A Doctor Edward Lyne was a physician at Bristol in the eighteenth century, and he earned a great reputation with a secret cure for dropsy. It later transpired that this was 'Bristol Milk'. He resigned after eight years at the hospital, saying that the work interfered with his private affairs, one of which was acquiring land in Keynsham, the other setting up a charitable society for apprenticing poor children and relieving distressed lying-in women within the Hundred of Keynsham.

Dr Fox was also at the Infirmary in the eighteenth century, but he left to set up an asylum in Brislington.[6] He began by buying the Brislington House estate from the Willoughby family. He designed a building specifically for caring for the mentally ill. His ideas of having large airy rooms overlooking the gardens with no bars on the windows, and facilities for recreation such as cricket, football, tennis, etc. outside, and billiards, chess, music and so on inside, were all very radical. Not for him the bloodletting, purges, special diets, hot and cold baths and a complete loss of liberty. In fact, he erected mounds at intervals near the surrounding wall so that his patients could view the outside world . His whole approach was very humane and caring. He tried to understand the reasons for his patients' illnesses, rather than just keeping them locked up away from the public eye. He did, however, have a range of apartments at the back of the house, where the most violent and noisy patients were kept during very disturbed periods.

The administrators of the Poor Law in Keynsham sometimes called on Dr Fox for help, as was the case on 24th February 1829, when an application was made by the wife of Joseph Bryant 'to have him, the said Joseph Bryant, confined, he being insane'. It was ordered that 'he be sent to Dr Fox's if he will have him'.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the trend towards

more experience and better qualifications was brought about in several ways.[7] The Society of Apothecaries was authorised to prosecute any unqualified apothecaries practising in the City of Bristol and to examine and licence all new men. In 1826 a Mr Henry Clark established a medical school in Bristol which was so successful that by 1828 the lectures were recognised by the Society of Apothecaries. In 1833 lecturers from the various medical establishments joined forces and formed the Bristol Medical School. Finally, in 1858, a Medical Act restricted the practice of medicine to those who had passed a recognised examination, and by 1886 no half qualifications were acceptable.

Among the list of people giving lectures at the Medical School in Bristol was a certain Mr W. Herapath, who lectured in chemical toxicology from 1833-67. His son became an even more famous chemist and a Fellow of the Royal Society. In November 1852 their work brought about a disagreement, as this extract from the Bristol Mercury of that date reports:

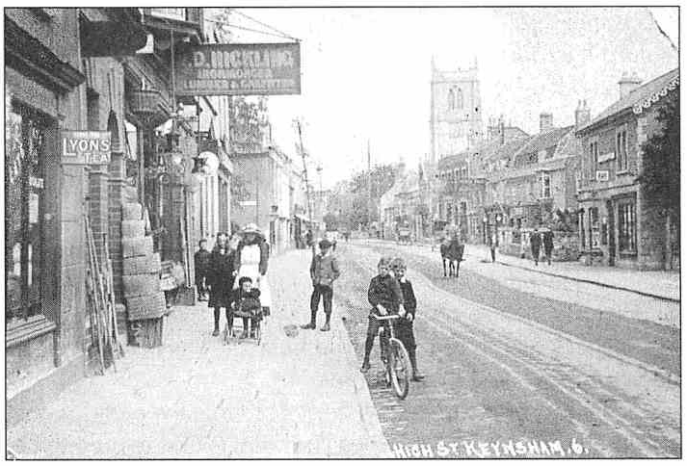
'A labouring man named Baker had treated a lady for a pain in one leg. She died and William Herapath, the celebrated forensic chemist was called in to test the potion and said no poison could be found but his son Dr William Bird Herapath disagreed with his father saying the medicine contained nicotine. His ruling was upheld by the court.'

Members of the Herapath family have continued in medicine. In fact, Dr G. Herapath's father was the first cardiologist at Bristol Infirmary, and he was himself the first doctor to open a surgery in Saltford.

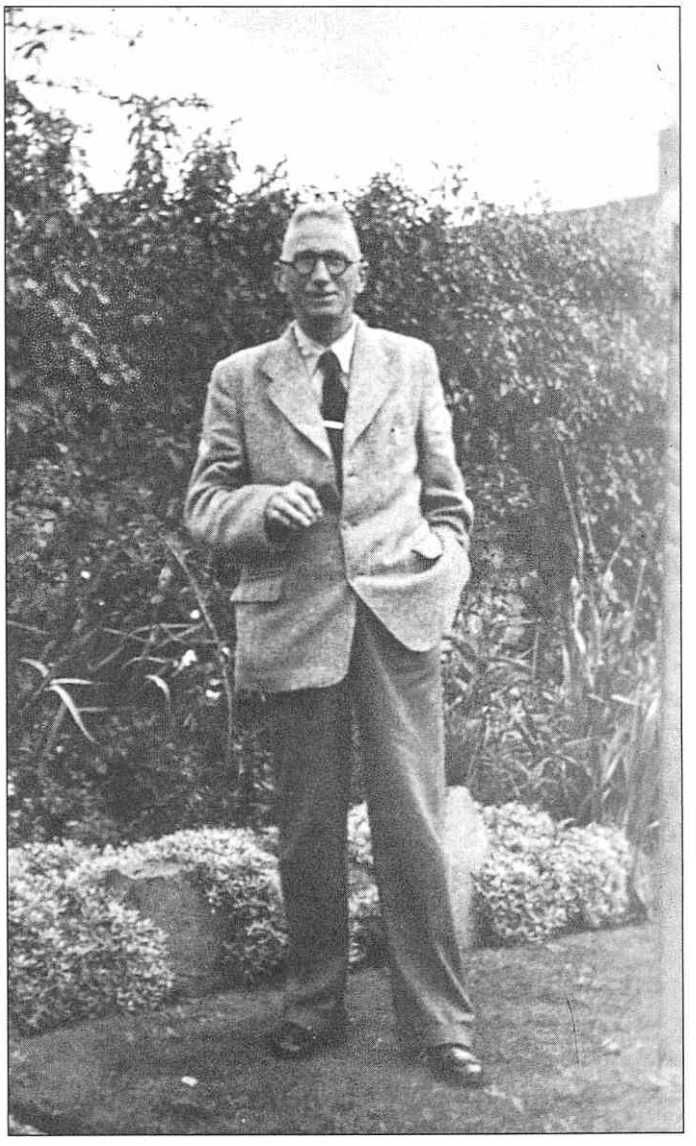
Keynsham seems to have been well served with doctors, no doubt due to its close proximity to Bristol. James Bridges used the services of a Dr Rosewell, a Dr Ford, and a Dr Evans. In 1748 Dr Pye was paid £1.1s.0d by the Poor Law Administrators for delivering Ab Ford's wife. Later, on 5th October 1785, it was 'agreed between the paymaster then present and Mr Thomas Palmer that the paymaster shall allow him £10.10s.0d a year for taking care of the poor, and finding them in medicines and also to allow the said Thomas Palmer the liberty of the Infirmary for casualties which the parish now have in right of their subscription'. A Mr Palmer is mentioned some years later in Bourne and Middleton's Bristol Journal. The entry on the 4th February 1797 notes the dissolution of the partnership of Palmer and Whitney, practitioners in physic and surgery, on 28th January 1797 by mutual consent, leaving J. Whitney to carry on alone. Did they set up in opposition, one wonders? By the end of February that same year there was a note to the faculty that an assistant was urgently required: 'A man 40/50 years would be preferred able in his profession and a practitioner of midwifery by Palmer a surgeon of Keynsham'.

Whether a suitable applicant was found we do not know, but in 1826 an entry in the Poor Law accounts reads that a Mr Ralph, accoucheur, of Bristol was ordered to attend George Week's wife in a case of great danger and his charges to be paid. (An 'accoucheur' was a male midwife.)

From 1848 Keynsham and Saltford had never less than two doctors practising in the area. Also a chemist was available from that year. Some of the doctors were 'on call' for many years. A John Lodge, first mentioned in Kelly's directory of 1861 was still listed in 1897. George Gilmor Willett of Milward House was another such doctor who arrived in Keynsham around 1889 and was still in the area according to Kelly's in 1931. For much of that time, he was surgeon to the Fever and Isolation Hospital off Park Road. This corrugated iron building consisted of three wards, where those suffering from diphtheria, scarlet fever and other infectious diseases were sent. The patient was collected in a yellow horse drawn ambulance. The pickup was occasionally delayed when the horse proved difficult to catch. On 15th March 1895 Dr Heaven wrote to Keynsham Rural District Council complaining bitterly about the ambulance being used without his consent by a medical man in the district. The



Dr. Willett, who lived at Milward House, riding down the High Street about 1900



Dr. Claude Harrison, whose home and surgery was in the High Street, near where Savory and Moore (Chemist) now is

Council to write to Dr Willett (the man in question) not to give Mr Ollis or anyone else orders for the use of the ambulance without consent first obtained of Medical Officer of Health and to inform him that the Council was willing to concede its use with such consent on the basis of the person using the same paying for the horse hire clerk to write a similar notice to Dr Harrison, Dr McClellan, and other medical practitioners of the district.' The same Rural District minutes noted on 7th December 1897 that Mr Ollis reported that 'Francis Brown of Saltford had refused to have his children's clothes disinfected after they had been afflicted with scarlet fever. To take out a summons under the Infectious Diseases Act'. Later, on 21st December 1897, 'He (Francis Brown) as fined £5.0s.0d for not having his goods disinfected but this was reduced to £2.0s.0d when he allowed them to be done'.

Some Keynsham residents remember visiting patients in the Isolation Hospital, and having to talk to them through the windows. They also remember, as young children, hoping to become sick as the regime at the hospital was in some cases much more relaxed than at home.

One family, of whom many stories are told even to this day, were the Harrisons. Dr Charles Harrison is first mentioned in 1889 and he continued to care for the people of Keynsham and Saltford until the late 1930s. In 1923 he was joined by his son Claude. One recollection, often repeated, is the fact that the Doctors omitted to present their bills to those who would have found difficulty in paying. Many people paid in kind. Others remember to their chagrin waiting outside the surgery, and when noticed by the doctors being told in no uncertain terms to go home and stop wasting his time.

In 1935 an equally loved doctor by the name of Norman Daniel Gerrish, spoken of by some as the last of the true 'family doctors', set up in practice in Keynsham, and like the Harrisons was also very interested in sport.

As to people's teeth, there was no dentist before 1919, so perhaps the doctors 'did' a bit of dentistry as well. Leslie Gordon Ki1mersley of Abbey Park was the first mentioned in Kelly's Directory. By 1939 George Wallis, Albert James Constance, and William Holder Shipway were all available to take care of any dental needs.

In conclusion, I believe that although the people of Keyn sham and Saltford were cared for medically very well, it would seem that Saltford residents had to travel to Keynsham or Bath for consultations.

6
Unwillingly to School

PamMoore

For willing or unwilling pupils Keynsham has been well blessed with a variety of schools over the years, though apart from the Parochial schools, which kept log books, our information about them is scant.

THE BRIDGES' SCHOOL

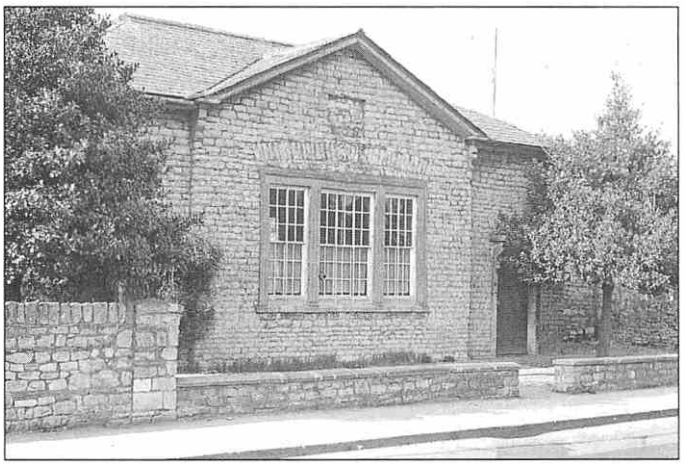
We can assume that, in common with most abbeys, Keynsham Abbey provided some education for boys, but our earliest record of a school in Keynsham is that founded by Thomas Bridges in 1705. In Keynsham Church, against the south wall of the tower, is an inscription listing the benefactions of Sir Thomas Bridges, which reads, "Sir Thomas Bridges hath erected a school and endowed it with twenty pounds a year for the teaching of twenty boys of the town and parish." In the words of the indenture of 26th February, 1705 the school was for "the advancing and encouragement of virtue, good manners, ingenious education and learning". The boys were to be from families who were members of the Church of England. None were to be admitted who were not able to read the New Testament and Psalter. They were to be taught writing, arithmetic, Latin and grammar and "any other learning that the master should be able to teach", and also to be instructed in the principles of the Christian Religion and "whatsoever else might tend or conduce to the promoting of the glory of God and the salvation of their souls." The boys could remain at the school until they were 15.[1]

Sir Thomas appointed the then Vicar to be the first Master of the school and directed his heirs and trustees that in future the Vicar should be the chosen Master if he should be willing to be so appointed. It seems to have been more often the Parish Clerk. In 1819 the Master received between £30 and £40 per annum! The original schoolroom stood next to the old vicarage, Church Square.[2] In 1838 the old school building was incorporated into the vicarage to accommodate the Vicars' growing family, and a new school building was erected on Pool Barton, Station Road. The building ceased as a school in 1858, after which it was used as a Church hall, Sunday School etc. until the early 1960s when it was demolished to make way for the Station Road bridge spanning the new by-pass. The income of the foundation was transferred to the new Parochial School on Bath Hill.

We learn from advertisements in local newspapers and other sources, of a variety of schools in Keynsham in the 18th and 19th centuries.

1766 to 1773, Mistress Letitia Jones, ran a boarding school for young ladies in "a house called The Abbey, formerly the house of the 2nd Duke of Chandos, a few steps from the Church".[3] This was the Bridges' house which was demolished in 1777. Dancing, French and writing were included in the curriculum, whilst strictest attention was paid to the morals of the pupils.

Miss Mary Bishop also ran a boarding school for girls in Keynsham at this time. She was friendly with the great John Wesley and we know that he visited her school in October 1787.[4] In a letter to her in 1781 he exhorted her to "Make Christians, my dear Miss Bishop. Let everything else which you teach be subordinate to this."



The Old School, Station Road, demolished for the Bypass

Another Friend of Wesley, Mr. Thomas Simpson MA who was Headmaster of Wesley's School, Kingswood from 1770 to 1783, afterwards set up an Academy for boys at "Keynsham Place".[5] He died in 1806, and his son, the Rev. Thomas Brown Simpson, who had become Rector of Keynsham in 1804, then advertised that "It is his intention to continue the Academy at Keynsham Place, to educate young gentlemen designed for the learned professions. Those parents who entrust their children to him may depend not only on his general care and tenderness, but also upon his strict attention to the moral and religious

instruction of his pupils. Terms for Board and for instruction in English, writing, arithmetic, Latin, Greek, geography and book-keeping, 30 guineas per annum."[6] We are not yet sure of the identification of this house.

Another school is noted in 1812; "Mrs. Singer and the Miss Ford's School at Keynsham will recommence. All kinds of needlework, reading and English grammar, £21 per annum. French, drawing, dancing and music on the usual terms."[7]

In 1819, in Parliamentary papers, (Report of the Select Committee on the Education of the Poor), it stated when Keynsham had a population of 1748, apart from the Bridges' School,[8] which at that time had 40 pupils, 20 under the endowment and 20 by subscription, there were "several dames' schools containing 47 boys and 44 girls." Saltford at that time had a population of 249 and "about 20 children are taught by a woman." The Paper states, 'The poor possess sufficient means of education but the parents are very indifferent about the instruction of their children. If a school were established in every parish, or at least for every two or more parishes, the salary to each teacher need not exceed £15 to £20 annually and it would be the only cure for ignorance, pauperism and vice."

In 1823 the National Day and Sunday School opened, which taught 41 boys and 22 girls daily and 68 boys and 26 girls on Sundays. This school on the site of the later Zion Methodist Chapel at the end of Temple Street, was supported by annual subscriptions and voluntary contributions.[9] In 1848 the Master was William B. Matthews and the Mistress was Mary Faux. In 1857 this building was a girls' school only, but it ceased when the new Parochial school was built. Zion Chapel was built on the site in 1861.

In 1824 the Charity Commissioners, as part of a National report, investigated the Keynsham Feoffees and thought they should devote some of their funds to the Charity School. The report observed that "as the School, has been for many years in an inefficient state for want of funds ...it seems perfectly within the competency of the Feoffees to use their own discretion in applying rents ...and that they should use a proportion of those rents towards increasing funds of the school, as will be sufficient to raise the same to a state of permanent and efficient activity."[10] Nothing was done!

In 1827, Mr. Cozens' Commercial Academy for boys was re-opened at Laura Cottage, Bristol Road. It was advertised that the strictest attention was given to promoting the moral and intellectual improvement of his pupils."

The Rev. Thomas H. Tucker, Minister of Queen Charlton, had from 1832 to 1837 lived in Bath Road at what is now the Grange Hotel, where he had conducted Tucker's Academy, a private boarding school for boys.[12] On his death at the age of 37, Mr. Oswald Cockayne, M.A, succeeded him. Pupils followed a course of reading, mathematics and classical literature as pursued at the universities.

1835: According to another Government report, the population had risen to 2142, and there were:-

> "7 infant schools wherein 36 boys and 74 girls are instructed at the expense of their parents;
> 4 daily schools, one the Bridges' School, the others, privately run, teaching a total of 43 boys and 13 girls; 2 Boarding Schools, privately run;
> 1 Day and National Sunday School, to which a lending library is attached.
> 2 Sunday Schools, one whereof appertains to Baptists and consists of 26 males and 74 females; in the other are 19 males and 41 females; both these schools are supported by voluntary contributions."[13]

In this report, Saltford, with a population of 380, catered for a total of 45 children in 3 daily schools, one of which was supported by Major W. James.

In 1837, Mr. Browne of Brislington moved to Belle Vue Cottage, Keynsham, where he advertised the opening of a school for "a limited number of young gentlemen whom he boards and educates in Greek, Latin and English and every branch of polite and useful learning. Terms moderate. No corporal punishment."[14]

In 1849, Hunt's Directory lists a Church of England school for 20 boys, Master, Thomas Gill, and an infant school with Mistress, Mary Bazley.

In 1856 the Feoffees considered applying to the Charity Commissioners for authority to appropriate a portion of the funds to the support of the Parochial Schools.[15] Nothing happened!

For many years, certainly between 1848 and 1883, the Misses Caroline and Louisa Hudden ran a school for young ladies at Flanders House, (now demolished, formerly at Bath Hill East).[16] Girls were taught dancing, music, French and other accomplishments thought suitable for young ladies of the day. Miss Louisa Hudden was still living there in 1906.

In 1860, The British and Foreign School, attached to the Baptist Church, was opened to provide education without sectarian teaching.[17] It was open to children of any denomination, but its pupils were expected to attend a place of worship on Sundays. The first Master was Mr. Joel Stinchcombe (great- great-uncle of the writer of this chapter), followed in 1868 by Mr. Alfred Lucas, and in 1869 by Mr. Samuel Jordan.

The school closed in 1871, possibly connected with a dispute over the ownership of the schoolroom, and probably a Government grant had been refused because the building was in poor condition. It opened again in 1876 with Mr. AG. Wheeler as Master. A Government grant was finally obtained in 1880 after various improvements to the schoolroom. From 1880 until its final closure in 1894 the Master was Mr. Usher.

Kelly's Directory for 1866 lists the Misses Eleanor and Elizabeth Ford as Proprietresses of Hill House, a boarding school for young ladies. Hill House stands opposite Keynsham Police Station.

Longton House in the High Street, opposite Charlton Road, currently insurance offices, was a school. Miss Edith Shellard and Miss Ellen Mee were the teachers in 1906. It closed early in World War One when the then teachers, Miss Knowles and Miss McCorkell, went to nurse in the war.[18]

Longton House School in 1906

At the beginning of this century, for 10 years or so, there was a school at the building, which is now the National Westminster Bank. It was started by Mrs. Gus Gibbons (nee Garraway), initially for 8 boys up to 12 years of age, and the teacher was Miss Jones of Clifton. The school later expanded and, with about 30 pupils, moved to 59 Charlton Road, where Miss Jones' sister also taught.[19]

There are various mentions of schools in Cheapside, on Bath Hill, opposite the school. Miss Hammond charged one penny a week at her school there. Miss Phyllis Gunstone, who later taught at Bath Hill and at Temple Street, taught there, as also did Mrs. Boston in the early 1920s.

In the early part of this century there were two schools in close proximity in Charlton Road. One was run at No. 41 by two sisters from Jersey, the Misses Malvine and Elsie Messervey, who took a few boarders. The school closed when the sisters retired to Jersey just before the last war.[20]

At No. 37, Mrs. Jollyman ran a small Progressive Kindergarten, employing two Froebel-trained teachers. She included among her pupils slow or physically handicapped children who were often treated as imbeciles in the normal schools.[21]

In 1935, Broadlands Senior School opened. Until this time, with village schools educating children to the school-leaving age of 14, the only secondary education available meant travel to a fee-paying school in Bath or Bristol. Many children did this, or families moved away from the village. Bath Hill ceased to be an all-standard school and its status changed to that of a Junior establishment. Not until after the 1944 Education Act was secondary education available for all children.

THE WORKHOUSE SCHOOL

The 1845 Workhouses Act ruled that workhouses had either to provide schooling for their children or to pay fees for them to attend local schools. Many boards of guardians thought the education of pauper children to be unimportant so often kept children from their lessons to help with household duties. After the introduction of the Board schools children were often sent to these in order to free the workhouse from spending money to educate them.

In 1841 the Keynsham Union Workhouse advertised for a "respectable person between the ages of 25 and 45 years to fill the position of schoolmistress. She must be well trained in a system of National Education, able to write a good hand, well acquainted with the rudiments of arithmetic and without encumbrances. She will be required to reside in the house and to make herself generally useful. Strict credential of character as to sobriety, honesty and morality will be required together with a specimen of handwriting.[22]

Teaching at the workhouse can have been no easy task, as the teacher was not allowed to administer any punishment directly. All offences had to be reported and punishment decided by the Workhouse Guardians and administered by the Master of the Workhouse.

In the Workhouse Punishment Book we hear of William Bull who was flogged by the Schoolmaster, in the presence of the Master, for throwing dirt down a girls back and having previously struck her, and of Susan Long who used bad language to the schoolmistress and was therefore ordered to be confined to a separate room for 24 hours and her rations altered for 48 hours.

In 1851, when education was supposed to be provided for children of 7 to 13, there were 33 children in that age range in the Keynsham Workhouse, of a total of 147 inmates, and another 25 of 6 years or under. Children as young as 2 were listed on the census return as "scholar".

There is recorded also, in considerable detail, an incident concerning the Schoolmaster and Schoolmistress. In April 1864 a complaint was recorded that Mr. Woolwright, the Schoolmaster, had postponed 13 of the boys' dinners, the reason given that he had lost a key and suspected the boys of it. Mr. Woolwright stated that the Master knew of the postponement, which had his consent. The Guardians censored the Master for allowing it, and reprimanded the Schoolmaster for lax discipline.

The Master further complained that Mr. Woolwright had not allowed mothers into the Girls' and Boys' day rooms on Sunday afternoon to give them bread and dripping, or whatever else they might have preserved from their own meals in the preceding days. Unruly behaviour followed this break with normal practice; several panes of glass were broken by 4 irate females, one of whom was locked up for 4 hours!

One of the women, Elizabeth Dear, acknowledged she had done wrong, but said that as Mr. Woolwright had got them into trouble she wished to say something about him. She stated that he and Miss Batt, the Industrial Teacher, were frequently in each other's bedrooms. She had known Miss Batt to be in Mr. Woolwright's room for 10 minutes together, by day! Another woman had also seen them in the closet together in the evening, with a lighted candle. She had told Miss England, the Matron, who afterwards spoke to Miss Batt on the subject. Two other inmates said they had seen Miss Batt and Mr. Woolwright together in each other's rooms on various occasions. Mr. Woolwright acknowledged that he had occasionally been in Miss Batt's room. He explained the reference to the closet, that they had a barrel of beer there and that they had been tapping the cask on the occasion in question. Miss Batt said she had only once been in Mr. Woolwright's room alone, to bathe his throat when he was ill! The Board reprimanded them, but on account of their long service no further action was taken.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

Sunday Schools have played quite an important part in the life of many of Keynsham's children.

The Baptist Church Sunday School is believed to have commenced as early as 1804.[23] In the middle of the last century there was an average of 138 children on the registers. Until the Schoolroom was built in 1858, the children participated in morning worship from the gallery, with many incidents of disciplinary problems!

When the new Victoria Methodist Chapel opened in 1887 a new schoolroom and 3 classrooms had also been built at the rear, later to be replaced by the Key Centre.[24]

Sunday School treats became accepted annual events from the middle of the last century. At first they took the form of a tea party, but later outings were arranged, sometimes by train, to such places as The New Passage and Weston-super-Mare. In the 1930s there were 5 Sunday Schools each having outings on different days in June or July, much to the chagrin of Miss Brown at Temple Street school who was so annoyed at the disruption caused by the absences on these days that she

entered them in her log book in red ink!
The churches causing this annoyance were the Bethesda, Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists, the Baptists and the Parish Church! Later it became the practice for all the Sunday Schools to have their outings on the same day.

THE ADULT SCHOOL IN KEYNSHAM

The Adult School movement, initially for the teaching of reading, was established by Thomas Pole, an American Quaker,[25] who settled in Bristol in 1802. William Smith started the Bristol branch in 1812.
In September 1813 an Adult School was established in Keynsham which soon had 103 scholars of both sexes, who were so keen to learn to read that they requested classes on two evenings a week as well as Sundays. Classes were often held in private houses.

BATH HILL PAROCHIAL SCHOOL

When the Rev. George Robinson became Vicar of Keynsham in 1854, he found that the old Free School, (the Bridges's school) [26] was taught by the parish clerk, with only 11 boys. He instigated plans for building a new school on Bath Hill. The builders were the master masons of Keynsham, William and Henry Sheppard, and the architect was Mr. S. B. Gabriel of Bristol. The cost was about £1,200 of which £500 was raised by public subscription and the rest came from Government grant.
It was opened on Tuesday, June 9th 1857, on a very wet day. It is reported that someone remarked, "It seems to have pleased the gods to Christen the building!" When it opened, 113 children were taught there. There was a Master, Mr. Thomas Shackleton, and a Mistress. The school at first housed infants in one of the three classrooms. There were separate playgrounds of rough ground for boys and girls, and a purpose-built house for the Master.
In 1872 the Education Department served a notice on both the Parochial School and the British School ordering that either the British School must be improved and re-opened, or that the Parochial School should be enlarged. As the British School remained closed, the "Friends of the Church School" had Bath Hill enlarged, at a cost of over £300, to accommodate a possible 353 children.

THE SCHOOL BOARD DISPUTE

The 1870 Education Act introduced Board Schools, the first state-provided schools, governed by a board of elected people. The Act did not make education compulsory but School Boards could make it so. Schools could be run either by the Church or by a board. The boards provided undenominational Bible instruction which was compulsory, and they could appoint School Attendance Officers. Schools which decided to continue to be run by the Church became known as Voluntary Schools.

Keynsham did not elect to have a School Board but obviously the matter was much discussed over the ensuing years, those in favour being mainly connected with the British School. In 1893 a meeting was arranged. Fortunately for posterity the Rector, the Rev.J.H. Gray had bronchitis and could not attend.
He therefore had printed a 12-page pamphlet stating his very strong views on the subject [27] He anticipated "bitter religious feuds" in the parish should a Board be decided upon; "a system which may prove hazardous to the moral and spiritual well- being of our youthful parishioners , and entail heavy and wholly unnecessary expenditure". The Rev. Gray had been Rector of Keynsham for 23 years and obviously felt any changes to the current system undesirable. His main objection was that should a school board be chosen, they could elect not to give religious instruction.

Rivalry between the schools was strong because any Government grant payable to the school was dependent on the numbers of children on the registers and on the amount of fees collected from them. Thus there was a lot of bad feeling between the Parochial School and the British School and the pamphlet continues, after many exhortations about "thunderings and lightenings from Sinai" and pleas to the parishioners "to rise up at this crisis in our Parish history", with the following: "As the movement in favour of a Board has emanated from the British School on the present and every preceding occasion since 1870, I may assume that the aim is to obtain for themselves a New School standing in a goodly piece of ground, and built and maintained at the cost of the ratepayers ... Meanwhile the friends of the Parochial Schools, while compelled to bear their share in the building and maintenance of this costly and extravagant school, must bear unassisted the whole burden of their own schools. Does it not loudly exclaim, Men of Keynsham, look before you leap?" He states the population at the last census to have been 2810 but that due to the closure of the Galvanised Works (see Chapter 2) and the reducing numbers of workers in the Boot Factory and a "considerable exodus" of families from Keynsham, resulting in a reduction of numbers in the school, that the present parochial schools could well accommodate all the children of the parish.

Obviously he convinced the majority of the parishioners, for no Board was established and in 1894 the British School finally closed and in the same year the new building to house the Infant department of the Parochial School was opened.

THE BATH HILL LOG BOOKS

In 1862 the Privy Council of Education ordered that every school should keep a diary or log book. Those of the Parochial Schools give a unique insight into our town's history.

The Log Books have an 'atmosphere' which changes with the years and with the character of the Master or Mistress who made the entries.[28] Throughout we are reminded how much the weather influenced school life. If it was a wet, cold or snowy day many children might not attend. The frequent occurrence of many illnesses kept children from school and epidemics were sometimes serious enough to cause the school to be closed entirely for maybe a week or two.

Various local events would keep children from school: a Prize Fight, a Wild Beast Show, Keynsham Fair, a Flower Show, Keynsham Yeomanry Races, a Circus, Bath Races, Saltford Regatta, an Agricultural Show in the Park, a Tea Meeting, a Public Meeting at the Lamb and Lark; and each year the various Sunday School Treats were held on schooldays, resulting in absences.

Other aspects of village life often kept children away from school. Wednesdays were Paupers' relief days and the children

went with or for their parents to receive Parish pay. Children were often absent because their parents were unable to pay their "school pence".It was common practice to send children home if they came without their fees. Other reasons given for absence were; potato planting, potato picking, haymaking, gleaning, picking apples, picking blackberries, minding the baby, taking father's meals to the fields, having no shoes, and every illness from Typhoid fever to Ringworm, and "faceache".

Bath Hill School in 1976

The annual Inspector's reports, copied into the logs by the Rector in his position as correspondent to the managers, give insight into the changing face of education. The Diocesan Inspectors also sent reports after their annual visits. They were almost always lavish with their praise. The Government Inspectors were less so on some occasions! The Vicar (a title freely interchanged with Rector) was a frequent visitor to the school, often showing guests round; 'The Vicar, with a strange lady and gentleman walked through the school".

The Bath Hill Log Books begin in January 1863, when the Master was Mr. P. Appleby, and the Mistress was Miss E. Culliford. Mr. Moses Owen succeeded Mr. Appleby in March of that year. He was assisted by Mrs. Owen, her sister Miss Ginders and a paid monitor.

1863; March lOth, 'The Princes' Wedding Day; a whole holiday; each child received a medal and a bun."

In 1863 the school was used temporarily for services while the Church was refurbished, and in June we read; 'The pulpit used for the church services has been moved and converted into a Master's desk and the school re-arranged in proper working order." Next day, "seven lady visitors".

In 1863, a family tragedy is recalled in the Log Book:

3rd July: "Master's child ill".

7th July: "Holiday; funeral of Master's child".

In December 1863 a gallery was made in the classroom to accommodate another class.

1864, March 24th; 'The whole school went primrosing".

1864, March 26th; "One boy and his infant brother, after repeated but ineffectual warnings, expelled for uncleanliness".

In October 1864, Mr. Owen the Master, died, and Mr. Joseph Samuel Evans took over, with his wife as teacher. Among his first entries are; "Commenced dismissing girls before boys; commenced home lessons; first lessons in Geography and Etymology; inkwells cleaned". On December 8th, 1864 he recorded; 'Wet. Opening of the Clifton Suspension Bridge. Poor school". On January 9th, he commented; "Re-opened regular school. There was one last week for those who did not wish for a fortnight's holiday but their attendance was not reckoned in the Government school year".

Other entries that year; "Mrs. May called to ask if Alice May may come to school in the place of her sister Emily" – "Mrs. Hurd wishes her son not to play with the other boys" – "Mrs. Ollis complains of some children calling her daughter Rosina wrong names in the street" – "Punished two boys for writing immoral words" and "Boys employed in weeding the playground during playtime".

In 1866 he wrote; 'The Governess, (the Master's wife) visited the parents of the 3 Mortimer children who have gone to the British School in consequence of an unpleasantness arising from Clara going to CHAPEL yesterday". There are other instances of children moving from one school to the other as the rivalry between the schools continued.

Other entries that year; "Many children absent in consequence of bread being given away at the Church" – "An afternoons holiday to have the schoolroom scoured"- "School closed earlier than usual so that the room may be prepared for a magic lantern show".

In March 1871 the Baptist (British) School closed, and 30 children were admitted and 14 more a week later. Also in that year two parents complained of having to pay 2d a week school money.

Holidays last century were shorter than nowadays. There was often only one week at Christmas, sometimes less than a week at Easter, a week at Whitsuntide and two or three weeks harvest holidays, though many other unofficial half or whole day holidays were given, for anything from Royal occasions to "washing the schoolroom". Often the schools took holidays at different times, and children from one school would attend another if their regular one was closed. Annual Grade examinations took place in February and also a "Scripture" exam and even at one time a drawing exam. In the 1870s there were Public examinations to which "all parents and friends of the school" were invited. Children often left after passing standard 4 at age 13, to the Master's disappointment.

In June 1872, Mr. Sidney Birt became Master, and "found the school in a very backward condition".

"Admitted 3 boys from the Infant School. None of these boys, though 7, can write their own names or write the capital and small letters. How they can be able to pass in February I know not!" He had a curtain fixed to separate the boys from the girls, and wrote, 'The children club together to buy a football. Sufficient is raised."

"Received Arthur Cooper after being employed by the G.W. Railway for 12 months."

The British School had obviously re-opened and closed again for in January 1875, "Received notice that the British School was closed." There were several admissions, including the two sons of the British School master.

In 1879, Mr. George Edward Wheeler took over the school and was to remain for 40 years, over a similar period to that of his colleague at the Infants School. Local residents remembered him being referred to as Gaffer Wheeler and pupils were said to stand in awe at his voice. A former pupil recalled this rhyme:-

"Down Bath Hill there is a school,
And in that school there is a stool,
And on that stool there sits a fool,
His name is Gaffer Wheeler."

Mr. Wheeler found the boys "backward in all subjects." Up to now the boys and girls had been taught separately but he

decided to run a mixed school, with himself, one certificated teacher, one pupil teacher and a sewing mistress.

Sometimes children left the school and attended another because they were punished for being late. Some were caned, another kept in for 3 hours after school. This led to the following entry in the Log. "If this is the way in which children are to run from one school to another, there is little hope of having a good school in the place." If children arrived after the registers were 'closed' they were not marked present and were punished or sent home.

In 1880, Mr. Wheeler stopped using the cane as punishment for lateness because the parents complained, but found "a great deterioration of discipline in the school." One of the managers called and informed him that he was to use no corporal punishment whatever, but to punish children by making them "stand on a stool or something." He also had great difficulty in getting regular payments of school fees. If he sent children home for their money often they did not return until they were visited by the School Attendance Officer, when they did return, but without the money. If he called several times the children were sent to another school! The Attendance Officer complained that when he visited the parents they only laughed at him! School fees continued to be charged at Bath Hill until 1891, after which the attendance was much improved!

For 1882, December 1st, he recorded; 'The attendance has been low this week owing to the recent floods. Many parents have been out of work and are consequently unable to pay their children's school fees." In June 1887, a week's holiday was given in honour of the Queen's Golden Jubilee. For 1889, November 29th, the Log recorded; "Mrs. Hudson called to say that her son must not be pushed to work as his brain is very weak."

In 1890, Mr. Harvey put a "flushing apparatus to the offices." The Medical Officer of Health inspected the work later and was pleased. However the lavatories continued to give periodic annoyance until "modern" equipment was installed in the 1930s.

In December 1890 he commented "cold weather makes the children's fingers stiff and the writing is not good. "The schoolrooms were heated by open fires, but were cold and draughty. In 1877 we were told that 'The man from Bristol came to put in new windows but went away having done nothing," and in 1864 a boy left, the reason being that he frequently "catches cold from the draughts in the schoolroom."

In 1892 a long period of illness among the staff caused an advertisement to be placed in The Schoolmaster for an assistant. No replies were received, though the annual salary offered was £36! Six months later another advertisement offered £40, still without result!

On, October 30th 1893, Mr. Wheeler wrote 'The rector, the Reverend Gray, who was ill from the 24th inst. died last Saturday evening. He took great interest in the schools."

In 1894, after some years of very crowded classrooms, the new Infants School in Temple Street was opened and at Bath Hill the gallery was taken down. There had been mention in the past of the gallery being unsafe.

In the same year Mr. Wheeler's son, also George, aged 14, started as a monitor, and 10 years later joined the staff as a teacher. Mrs. Wheeler, who had helped occasionally and given sewing lessons, was called in to help teach. In 1900 their daughter Gertrude E. Wheeler became a monitress. A real family affair!

On March 8th 1895 there were 279 children present. There had never before been so many on a Friday afternoon, so they were dismissed at 4 o'clock! 1899; "As there is great difficulty in getting all teachers to teach the same style of writing from the blackboard the Vicar has given permission for Copy Books to be used." (From here comes the expression of blotting ones Copy Book; a dire offence!)

An entry for July 1900 is an unwitting comment on contemporary standards of hygiene "A lavatory with 3 basins has been put up for the use of such children who need to wash their hands before such lessons as drawing or needlework." In August 1900 it was noted "To those children who have never been absent and never late since February 1st a medal has been given by the Vicar". Where are those medals now? Innovations came in 1901; "Drill will be done every Friday morning from 11.20 to 12.00."

At the end of the Boer War the children sang the National Anthem and gave three cheers for the King and Queen. A half holiday was given.

Attendance improved in 1905, when Mr. Dorey became the School Attendance Officer. "April llth; A very wet morning: 300 children present." In 1908 began regular inspections by the Medical Officer of Health, but not everyone approved .Another complained that her daughter caught cold through having to partly undress for the Medical exam!

By 1908 there were 347 pupils being taught by 8 teachers. An Inspector's report in 1909 says that 'The large main room, in which 3 classes are taught, needs to be partitioned. The large classroom also needs a partition .In the main room the fresh air inlets are inadequate. There is no drinking water for the children. Proper lavatory accommodation is required. The boys closets have no doors and are totally inadequate for 175 boys. The girls closets are not screened from view. The cloakrooms are wholly insufficient for 347 children. The playground should be put in proper order. The lighting of the main room might be improved." Little was done.

The Drill Hall next to the school was used as a 'Manual Instruction Centre' from 1912 until the opening of Broadlands School in 1935. Mr. Percy Bray was the first instructor. For a short time boys from Saltford came by train to the Centre for classes but they transferred to the centre at Corston, which was nearer.

Boys from the school had lessons in gardening in the Labbot and later in Charlton Park. Girls went to the old Bridges' School for cookery lessons.

Mrs. Wheeler died in 1919 and in the same year, at 65, Mr. Wheeler retired. The new Headmaster was Mr. Hugh Mansey. A further unsatisfactory report on the buildings by the Inspector in 1921 resulted in the walls being panelled with asbestos sheets to hide the dusty, rough, stone walls, and matchboard screens erected. The old stoves and open fires were replaced with new "radiating stoves". The old stoves had been giving trouble due to blocked stove pipes, causing the school to be very smoky and necessitating the fires being left unlit. In December 1920, temperatures of 33, 39 and 46 degrees were recorded in the school!

Just before this refurbishment, "the school bell came crashing down as it was being rung for afternoon school. No-one was hurt but a desk was broken." Just after the alterations, "plaster came crashing down from the ceiling, injuring 2 children." Three similar occurrences are noted in 1927. Each time children were slightly hurt.

In 1928 Mr. George Mycock, still remembered by some Keynsham residents, arrived to stay until his retirement in 1952.

A severe winter in 1928/29 caused many difficulties. Gales blew in some windows, temperatures stayed below 45 degrees, and the water supply was frozen for over a week. Gales the next winter caused the school to be closed for a week for repairs to be done, and in the summer of 1931 the ceiling was still falling, and the Head complained of the inkwells being used as ashtrays at an evening Parish Meeting! More repairs and improvements were done in the next few years. In 1937 new modern lavatories with independent flushes were installed, and new desks.

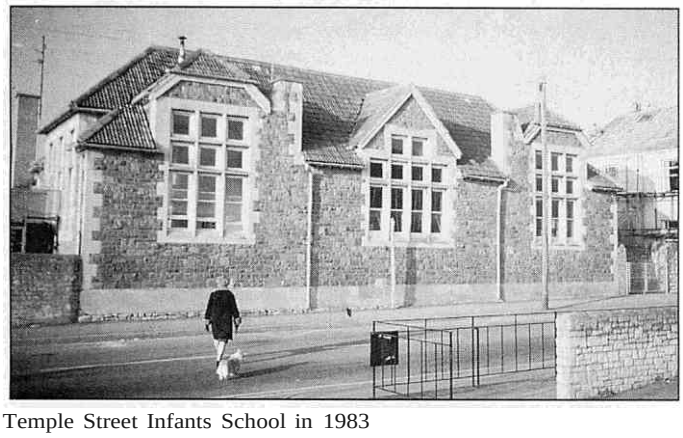
1934, September 26th; "Broadcast of the launch of the Queen Mary," was heard by the children.

In 1937, after years of complaint about the condition of the "yard", the wall between the boys and girls playgrounds was removed and the surface tarred. In the same year the inside of the school was decorated, the rafters being painted cream instead of dark maroon. 'The improvement of lighting was apparent!"

TEMPLE STREET INFANTS SCHOOL

There has been some discussion as to the early history of the Infants School. The present Temple Street Building dates from 1894, although the school log book started in 1864.

When the new school on Bath Hill opened it had one class of infants. In 1864 an Inspector remarked that the school should have "a distinct and separate Infants' Teacher". The Infants were then formed into a separate school, but they were still housed in the same building. In October 1865 they had two classes and an attendance of 70. By 1880 they had a third class, and 84 children on the registers, though sometimes less than half that number actually attended. Children from the Infant department were transferred to the 'mixed school' after the results of the inspection in February.



Temple Street Infants School in 1983

The first Infant Mistress in 1864 was Matilda Parsons, but she stayed less than a year and was succeeded by Maria Shapton Wakefield, who remained until 1873. Next came Alice Shrives followed by several temporary Mistresses.

The early Log Books of the Infant School have frequent references to the weather and to the uncleanliness of the children. Some were sent home to wash, there being no facilities at the school, or "sent to wash at the spring". In March 1865, the Log recorded; "A parent called to ask that her child might not be taught Arithmetic".

In December 1866, during a measles epidemic, "Mr. Murdoch called to say that his daughter was dying and wished to see her governess." Miss Wakefield left the school in charge of the monitor to make this sad visit. Within six years, four more pupils died, three from illness and one found drowned. Another boy drowned in 1884 on his way home from school. In 1886 two died of whooping cough and in 1891 a child was burnt to death at home.

In May, 1868; "A mother complained that her son, who was not five, could not read the Psalms, and his father wished him to." In November 1869; A boy "was punished for telling a lie. Sent to his mother for dry bread for his dinner but she sent him butter." In April 1871; "Some of the children had buttons cut from their clothes during school hours." Later other clothes were stolen.

When Miss Birt took temporary charge of the school in 1872, she found the children "backward in reading and writing. Only one child could write the word bread." Several temporary mistresses about this time commented that the children were "backward in all subjects." There was no lighting in the school. A dark, thundery May afternoon in 1874 proved "too dark to sew."

In January 1880, Miss Mary Ann Barrow from Devon took charge and was to remain until her retirement in 1921. She too found the children "backward in all subjects" but thereafter the inspectors' reports were increasingly glowing in their praise of the school and its happy atmosphere.

Sometime between March 1884 and March 1886, Miss Barrow married a local builder and became Mrs. Harvey, but her entries in the Log give no hint. It is from the Rector's annual entry of the Inspector's report, when he usually also entered the names of staff, that we learn of her change of name. Mrs. Harvey was almost never absent during her 41 years at the school, with two exceptions: two absences, each of less than a month, recorded in the Log as "an indisposition" and "sickness" respectively, marked the birth of her two children. Her daughter, Miss KM. Harvey, was a pupil teacher at the school in 1915 and lived in the area until 1989 when she moved to a nursing home.

Miss Barrow wrote an annual list of lessons in the Log. In 1884 this included lessons on various plants and animals, kitchen furniture, the seasons and shapes, and such activities as "paper folding, bead threading and stick-laying". The only physical activity was "marching", which was very formal and often imposed as a punishment.

In February 1894, the Infants were "transferred to the Lesser Public Hall to make room for an influx of children admitted from the British School which has finally closed." The Hall was probably the Drill Hall adjacent to the School. It must have been a great relief when in October of the same year, 'The children left the Public Hall and assembled in the new Infant School on Dapps Hill: 119 present." The new School was opened on 29th October, 1894 by Miss Ireland, the daughter of Squire Ireland of Brislington.

Miss Fussell taught at the School from 1903 to 1926. She used to cycle over from Warmley.

Mrs. Harvey retired in 1921, and was succeeded by Miss Frances Brown who remained until 1940.

EFFECTS OF WAR ON THE KEYNSHAM SCHOOLS

World War I seems to have passed the schools by with little effect. Some pupils at the junior department were allowed to go out to work during the War. In July 1918 there were American soldiers "being entertained" in Bristol and many children stayed

Keynsham children watching a Women's Suffraget March (prior to 1914). Note the children's clothing

Schoolgirls. Note the clothing and the hairstyles

away from school to go and see them. The only real annoyance to the infants was the disruption caused by the "preparations for the Peace Celebration Sports!"

World War 11 was a different matter. In September 1939, children from London, with their teachers, were evacuated to Keynsham. They came from Smeed Road Infants School and St. Vincent's R.C. School, with their teachers Miss Tidman and Mrs. Grice.

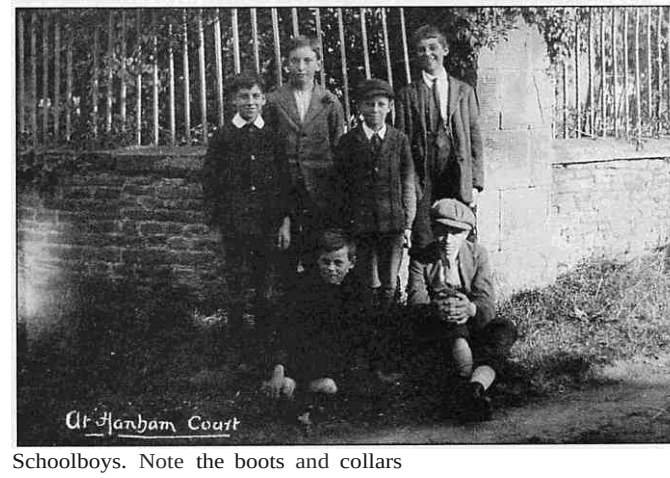
In normal circumstances this would have caused crowding in the schools, so imagine the problems when, at the same time, the Temple Street building was closed and converted to a Casualty Station! The infants moved to the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel schoolroom. The two headteachers, Miss Brown and Miss Tidman complained of cracks in the floor. Mr. Snelgrove, the County Inspector, could not justify the expenditure of £50 on linoleum to cover the floor and suggested that the children should fill the cracks with paper during handwork lessons! Temperatures ranging 32 to 48 degrees were recorded during most of December and in January 1940 the school was closed for a week because of the low temperatures.

At first both schools ran a "double shift" system, whereby the local children were taught in the mornings and the evacuees in the afternoons. Then alternative accommodation was arranged for the London children, and normal school hours were resumed. Thus began the use of other buildings in the town which continued to some degree until the opening of Chandag School. The Bethesda Methodist Chapel became a temporary school for the London children, on condition that there was no sectarian teaching! The Social Service Hut in Avon Road, the Co-op Hall, the Fear Institute, and even the Church were used for lessons in ensuing years.

After Easter 1940, the Keynsham infants transferred to the Baptist schoolroom with 126 children. A new door was made in the Chapel wall so that, in the case of air-raid, some children could run to the 'field' to take shelter under the walls, though some were to remain in the building and some could go home if they lived close by.

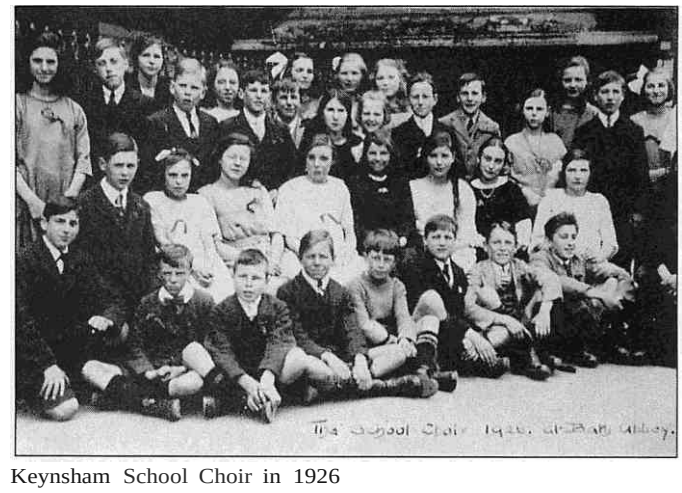
At Bath Hill staff pasted strips of paper on the windows to prevent flying splinters of glass, in case of attack. Later the windows were covered with cellophane and wire mesh. The children were trained in "air-raid positions".

From July 1940 the air-raid siren became a familiar sound



Schoolboys. Note the boots and collars

Keynsham School garden site



Keynsham School Choir in 1926

almost daily until the end of that year. The Headmaster of Bath Hill, Mr. Mycock, has recorded the exact times of each sounding of the warning siren and of the "all-clear" or "raiders passed", which occurred in school time. The last recorded alert was on March 26th 1941.These alerts lasted from a few minutes up to around 2 hours, sometimes as many as 3 times a day. On one occasion in January 1941, the alarm sounded at 7p.m. one evening and the all-clear did not sound until 5.45a.m. Often during this period children were late for school because they overslept, having been awake at night if the siren had sounded. Children living close to the school were "dispersed", presumably to their homes, when the warning siren sounded and usually returned after the "all-clear". Also in 1941 sand bags and a stirrup pump and hose were delivered to the school, and the building "blacked-out". In May 1943, when gas masks were issued, children would go to the "mobile gas van" to have their masks checked.

Three students from Southlands Training College, London, did their teaching practice at the school, because their College was evacuated to Weston-super-Mare!

In August 1943, there were 261 children on the registers, of whom 20 were evacuees. In 1945 there were still 29 evacuees and a shortage of staff was making teaching very difficult.

School meals, or "school feeding", commenced during this war period. The school premises having been considered unsuitable, arrangements were made to use the Baptist schoolroom but at first some children were sent to Broadlands School for their meals. From then on the line of children walking up or down Back Lane at lunch-time became a familiar sight in the town.

The end of wartime, in May 1945, was truly a red-letter day. Mr. Mycock recorded in red ink "V.E. Day. National Holiday." The next day was also a holiday and in September the same year there were another two days holiday to celebrate V.J. Day. It was not until January 1946 that the Temple Street building was re-converted and the infants resumed their schooling there.

CHEWTON KEYNSHAM

Kelly's directory, 1875, lists a school for 50 children entirely supported by Mr. Thomas Warner. The school was built complete with a stable for the Master's horse!

In 1853, Mr. Warner mortgaged 'the greater part' of Chewton Keynsham, including the schoolroom and offices. On his death in 1883, the estate passed to Sir Thomas Courtenay Theydon Warner. In 1897 he sold the whole estate excepting the School, intending to appoint a committee to run it, but since the introduction of School Boards and the financing of schools through the rates, his idea was not popular. The children were transferred to Compton Dando and the school stood empty. It was bought for £150 by Mr. Bush of Keynsham who offered to let it to the Vicar of Keynsham as a mission Church at a rent of 25 shillings a quarter. In 1936 he gave the building to the parish of Keynsham, and it continues in use as a Church.[29]

SALTFORD SCHOOL

Just below Salltford Manor House were three ancient cottages, known as Gray's Cottages. One of these was the original village school.30

In the mid-nineteenth century, there was a school on Queen's Square, known as the Queen's School. The square was the school playground. From the 1835 Report there seem to have been two other schools in the village.

At the end of the century a 'Ladies' School' was run at 'Elm View' by Miss. K Pocock, from 1884-1887. In the 1940's and 1950's, Mr. & Mrs. Percival ran Hillcrest School at The Batch, Saltford, for about a dozen pupils. There was one upstairs classroom and in the lounge downstairs, where there was a piano, singing and percussion lessons were held. Playtime took place on the lawn in the garden. If it was too wet the children trotted along the footpath to Cox's Close and back. Telling lies was punished by washing the mouth out with soap. There may have been other short-lived private schools, but for most Saltford children the Church School provided their education.

Two educational charities were founded, one in 1847 by three daughters of the Reverend Thomas Slater, the late Rector of Keynsham and Saltford, and by the Reverend John Wightman, the Rector, and the Rectors of Corston and Burnett, and the other in 1864 by Admiral Benedictus Marwood Kelly. These are recorded on tablets in Saltford Church.

Mrs. Ann Collyer who, with her husband, was largely responsible for the building of Saltford's Primitive Methodist Chapel in 1865-6, was the school's teacher from 1861 to 1875.

In 1874 the original school was pulled down and rebuilt by Juliana, widow of Admiral Kelly. The present building bears an inscription to record this fact. Mrs. Kelly did many charitable deeds in the village. In November 1880 she gave all the girls a warm cloak, and every summer all the children went to Mrs. Kelly's field for their annual treat.

The Log Books start in 1875. Throughout it is clear that running a small school was not an easy task. Numbers fluctuated greatly from day to day and from season to season. Ill health and bad weather often took their toll, and helping in the fields took precedence over schoolwork!

In 1876, when the teacher was Jane Gould, the annual Inspector's report read; 'The children are neat and orderly and have greatly improved in attainments under the new Mistress." A second set of reading books, an account book and a urinal were deemed necessary!

However in 1877 the Inspector's report was highly critical. Poor standards of work, exacerbated by shortage of reading books, resulted in reduction of the Government grant. In 1880 the school did not pass inspection in Geography and Grammar. The infant work was so poor that the grant of the following year was disallowed.

The situation can not have been easy, therefore, when Agnes Gabb took over the school at the end of 1880. She took on Ada Hancock as monitress and gave her lessons in the evening. Ada apparently lived in the school house, as she was on several occasions punished for not learning her 'home lessons' by being deprived of her tea and supper! Her work did not improve, however, and in May 1881 Ada was still "refusing to learn her lessons" and wanted to give up, stating that she did not like school work! Her class proved to be "dreadfully backward."

The pupil teacher, Margaret Hodgson did not have good control of her class. However in November 1881 Miss Gabb left the school in the charge of the pupil teachers while she went to Bath to consult her doctor about her throat. Mr. Fenwick, the Rector called and discovered her absence, and sent the children home at 3.35p.m.

In January 1881, there were approximately 60 children on

roll, but an average attendance of 24. In December that year a concert was held in the school to raise funds to enlarge the building, numbers having almost doubled since the beginning of the year.

The 1881 Inspector's Report was still unsatisfactory. Spelling and Arithmetic were especially bad and the grant was reduced by one-tenth for 'deficient instruction', and payment withheld for infant needlework. Some of the infants were but three years old!

In March 1882 the registers were found to be inaccurate. The pupil teacher had answered 'present' for absent children, presumably to improve attendance figures upon which the grant depended. Shortly afterwards Miss Gabb resigned!

Jeremiah and Elizabeth Mahoney then took over the school. An early comment made in the Log Book by the new master was: 'The children are very disorderly and know nothing of the standard subjects for the year." Of 15 infants of 5 years old only one knew the alphabet. A week later 4 knew it!

In July 1882 the children were urged to buy their own Home Lesson books, Copy books, pens and pencils which were no longer to be supplied free. This must have caused real hardship to many families. In subsequent months there are several references to children being without these items. At this time with 96 children on roll a new classroom came into use.

In 1882, inspection only produced a 47% pass and again the grant was reduced but the following year 78% passed and the report was much better. The next year it was announced that children who passed in all subjects should pay only half fees for the second half of the year, provided that their attendance was good. This probably only saved the parents a few shillings, but was enticement enough.

In 1884 William and Charlotte Simpson took charge of the School. The standard of the work and the average attendance continued to improve.

At this time Mr. Fenwick the Rector or Mr. Coffin the curate, visited almost every day, frequently taking the arithmetic lesson. Mrs. Fenwick inspected the needlework!

In November 1886 it was discovered that two boys had obtained the answer books to the school arithmetic books! The new Rector, the Reverend Robberds decided that all the arithmetic books should be changed, but the parents agreed to withhold the answer books and the old books continued to be used, the new Rector helping both with arithmetic and reading. In 1888, when the school was in financial difficulty, a meeting was held to discuss the possibility of having a School Board, but like Keynsham, the meeting decided against it.

Learning must have been dreadfully dull. Few pictures were used, other than those drawn on the blackboard. The poems listed for recitation included The Sale of the Pet Lamb', 'Llewellyn and his Dog' and The Last Minstrel'. In 1891 the Inspector suggested that pictures should be used to brighten the infant's lessons, children should be given marks of merit for good work and musical drill should be taught. He also stated that hats and coats should be hung in the porch instead of round the classroom!

The report in 1893 stated that the main fault of the school was poor discipline and as the infant room was only about 15 feet square the grant would be withdrawn if the accommodation was not improved. That year the grant given was £56-15s-6d.

By 1897, Mr. Simpson was having difficulty running the school. He was often ill and trying to teach 5 standards unaided, though in the previous year there had only been 5 children in the 4th standard (that is of 11 years of age) and none above that. The Simpsons stayed until 1902 in which year the school was modernised and enlarged, by the Reverend C.R Ward, to contain 108 children.

Saltford School, with Mr. and Mrs. Simpson, about 1900

The early part of this century saw a gradual improvement in the standard of the school, especially after the arrival of Mr. Reginald Quick in 1913. The inspector's report in 1913 was excellent. 17 children were given prizes in 1914 and 33 in 1915. Mr. Quick was described as being careful and painstaking. By 1917 there were 91 children on the registers with an average attendance of 86.

1914, November 2nd; "A child belonging to the party of Belgian refugees being entertained by this village was admitted. Her name is Marie Louise Smits."

In April 1917, Mr. Snelgrove, county inspector, visited the school to discuss the conversion of a pasture, by the path leading to the Church, into a garden where the pupils could grow vegetables in the national interest. A wet summer that year often prevented lessons in the garden, but a good crop of brassicas pleased the inspector.

On 1917, November 7th, Mr. Quick recorded; "School closed owing to the King's visit to Bath."

In 1918 planting in the garden started on the last day before the Easter holidays and during the summer the timetable was sometimes changed in favour of urgent jobs in the garden.

That Autumn, in accordance with a scheme being practised in the county, pupils spent two afternoons a week picking blackberries . In three weeks they picked 255lbs of blackberries.

At the end of October 1918, a 'flu epidemic resulted in the school being closed for three weeks. The remainder of the winter cannot have been easy, for in November there were problems with underheating stoves and an overheated caretaker as a consequence! She said it was not her fault, and indeed even after Mr. Quick had given coal from his cellar, and the teachers had tried to light the fires, the stoves still gave problems.

The 1918 annual report was excellent and the children were given a half holiday. In May 1921, the School won first prize in the Mid-Somerset Music Competition. The monitress, Evelyn Smith, was appointed pupil-teacher and allowed to attend the Girls' Blue School in Wells on alternate weeks. In 1922, the school having been recommended by an inspector, a student from Winchester Diocesan Training College came to do her teaching practice.

In 1919 the boys started attending lessons at Corston woodwork centre. By 1922 the gardening lessons had progressed to budding and grafting of roses and fruit tress, but in July a horse got into the garden and did much damage to onions and carrots.

In 1923, Mr. Quick left to become headmaster of Camerton School and later that year Miss M.E. Hockey took over the headship. Numbers had dwindled; in March 1924 there were only 59 pupils on roll. Not all staff lived in the village; a railway strike in 1924 caused teachers to be late. By 1925 a field was being used for organised games and the effect of these was evident in the self-disciplined way in which the older children moved in free-movement lessons.

Saltford School in 1919

In 1925 the school was decorated and the Head asked for boards on which to display children's work, but the managers forbade it! In 1928 gas was installed, 1929 saw a new playground. School milk was introduced in 1930.

In 1931 pupils won prizes at the Rotary Exhibition for drawing, needlework and knitting, and prizes were also won in a national competitive for painting and composition. After 1926 occasional mention is made of pupils passing entrance examinations to schools in Bath.

With the onset of war in 1939 the School received just over 100 evacuees from London, and like Keynsham, worked the double-shift system, with Saltford children having lessons in the mornings and evacuees in the afternoons. Local pupils had games or nature walks in the afternoons. Use of the W.I. hut for the evacuees was arranged for 2/6d a week.

On 15th July, 1940, there was an air-raid warning and all children were sent to sit on the floor of the Kelly schoolroom. Not until September 1940 were windows protected against blast The wearing of gas-masks was practised every Monday morning. The start of the school day was delayed until 9.45am. because children were losing sleep due to air-raid warnings at night.

By July 1941, some evacuees had left the village and all pupils were combined into one school, with the Headteacher, two assistant teachers and Mr. Crompton, a London teacher. In Autumn 1941, the children were given a weeks holiday for potato picking and also picked blackberries and rose-hips. In March 1942, the school was closed as there was no fuel due to war conditions. In the early summer of 1942, during frequent air-raid warnings, the school was closed and used as a rest centre by day and night. Rather belatedly, a blast wall was built in the school.

As in Keynsham, the children were given holidays to celebrate the end of war in 1945.

7

Faith and Folklore

M Whitehead

Some time after Keynsham Abbey was abandoned, there fell to the cloister floor a carved stone face; that of the ancient pre- Christian symbol of the Green Man depicting vegetable fertility. There he lay buried until over four hundred years later, archaeologists from the Bristol Folkhouse Archaeological Society brought him into the light once more.

"Green Man" carved head from Chapter House of Keynsham Abbey

Today, a glance up at the beautifully restored roof bosses in the south aisle of St. John' s Parish Church will show another example of this pagan symbol, probably of Celtic origin; a symbol around which is woven the rite of greeting the returning spring and hoping for abundance of crops. A close look at the carvings on the 17th century wooden screen in the chancel shows more recent representations of this figure, one in each corner. So despite the strength of puritanism in our area old superstitions died hard!

Another boss in the south aisle with a black face and red tongue appears to represent the devil. See plates 1 and 2.

Despite momentous changes and upheaval in the religious life of this land over the centuries, folklore is still inextricably interwoven with faith fourteen hundred years after Pope Gregory sent instructions to St. Augustine on what to do with the existing heathen places of worship. Pope Gregory sensibly realised that to deprive the people of all former festivities and pleasures would not be conducive to evangelism. It would take another one thousand years before the Puritan ethos would dramatically change a way of life which until then, combined worship and pleasure.

Many of the early saints replaced the functions of earlier intercessory deities and a continuance of pagan or semi-pagan customs can be seen in mummers plays, maypole dancing well-dressing, church ales and many other activities and pastimes .. The Christian church festivals of Christmas, Lent, Easter, Lammas, Harvest, etc., all have their root in pagan beliefs and practices.

Pope Gregory the Great recommended church yards instead of cemeteries so that worshippers would remember the dead in their prayers as they walked past the graves on the way to church. There were no headstones until the 17th century. Only clerics or important laymen had slabs or tombs, such as are stored in the South Porch of St. John's. The ordinary folk were buried in shrouds, and carried in the parish coffin , being removed at the moment of burying. Keynsham has a parish bier which is kept at the cemetery at Durley Park. In 1678 an attempt to revive the dying wool trade resulted in a law decreeing all to be buried in woollen cloth or be fined £5, a law not rescinded until 1814.

The churchyard was the meeting place of the parish. Ritual dancing, trade guilds, quoits, archery, wrestling and ballgames were all acceptable in the churchyard. Significantly most of these activities took place on the north side of the church. Between the 17th and 19th centuries particularly a belief was in vogue that the northern side was more suited for the burial of strangers, paupers. unbaptised infants, violent deaths and suicides

It was usual to have a large stone rood (crucifix) in the south side of the churchyard and a record of one in Keynsham exists

in a will dated 24th December 1532 when Thomas Abbot of Chewton desired to be buried "in the est churchyard before the holy Rode." The east end of the church would have significance in Keynsham with the abbey only a stones throw from that side resulting in the rood being placed between church and abbey. When the Abbey was dissolved, the inhabitants of Keynsham lost an institution, which provided employment, managed the town, and helped in the maintenance of the church. It was unlikely that the King and later the Bridges family, would do as much. The upkeep of a large parish church became an increasing burden.

A Bath and Wells Diocesan Deposition of 1583/4[2] gives details of a case between the church of Whitchurch and Keynsham in which John Harvey, malster deposed that 'The chapple of Whitchurch" had always been annexed to Keynsham and "by reporte of other old men ...the inhabitants of Whitchurch did burye all waies at Kainsham tyme out of minde." He further stated it had been the custom for the past fifty years (i.e. since the dissolution) that the inhabitants of both places contributed to the repair of the parish church. Robert Batten of Keynsham, a weaver agreed with this.

The case also refers to the churchwardens of Keynsham going to Whitchurch in the "Christmas holidaies at hogling time" when they were given money or bread, cheese, beer bacon etc., towards the reparation of the church at Keynsham which was the "mother" church to a number of surrounding villages over a wide area and he himself had gone from house

Font, St. Mary's Church, Saltford

to house in Whitchurch "a hogling." The precise derivation of this expression is not known but is perhaps a corruption of holiday or holy collecting. Other witnesses gave similar details for Publow and Brislington both attached to Keynsham. Long Depositions in 1625 show that wrangling over payments for the upkeep of the church was still going on.

One deponent, Thomas Abbott said that up to 30 years ago no rates had been made for repairs of the church but, the parishoners had contributed yearly "as everie one pleased which was yearly collected by the Churchwardens of Kainsham parish for the tyme being ... itt creditablie reported that the reason which they first made rates to repayre the church ... was that the peoples charitie growing coald and the voluntarie contribution ... grew lesse and lesse so that the parishioners were compelled to make rates to repayre thiere parishe church which was as like to fallin to greate decaye for want of necessarie reparations."

Reference was also made to payment of dues for the provision of bread and wine for Holy Communion, erecting seats within the parish church and maintaining the pavements of the church.

The mention of seats is a reminder that up to the second half Of the 15th century there were no pews in most churches except for stone benches around the wall for the old, weak and infirm. Hence the term "the weakest go to the wall." There were no pulpits before the mid 14th century. Pews were introduced as sermons became more common.

Records of churchwardens' presentments[3] at the annual visit of the archdeacon are extant for Saltford and Keynsham, and the following Saltford extracts show us a glimpse of the sins of omission and commission!

In 1554 the churchwardens complained that the "altar is not set upp also the chauncell ys in decaye by the default of the parson and parishoners."

1557 John Christopher Edward Lacye and John Gyles presenteth that our church walls and the churchyard yeare are in grate decay culps parishioners.

In 1568 they lacked their quarterly sermons.

1603 Mathias Averill doth much absent himself from the church and namelie on Easter Daie last.

Robert Tibbett and Richard Sturridge have not exhibited a copie of their register books unto the Lord Bishop on the year past. Then they sent it to the court by one Stanly.

1605 John Hill and Thomas Goodhyne want a carpett for the communion table, the rite of the decrees of consanguinity and affinity, a cushion for the pulpitt.

Wilsheere, parish clerk, that he cannot write or reade.

George Goodhinde and Henry Phelps have disorderlie used prophane talke in the churchyard.

1615 Richard Day, Wm. Milward, Ed. Goodhinde and Wm. Belsten for playing at cards in the time of divine prayer on St. James Daye last. Wm. Milward and Thos. Tibott for abusing each other in the churchyard a moneth sithence.

1629 That upon a certain sabbathe day happening about Christmas last one Thomas Burges then of their parish but, since in Gloucestershire ... at the time of morning prayer came drunk into the church at Salford aforesaid and behaved himself very ruddlie and indecentlie, sitting neere the minister and disturbing him as he was reading prayers, belching as if he was ready to vomitt and using other gross absurdities in the sayd church in soe mutch that the churchwardens were compelled to put him forth of the church and for that he was often tymes whiles hee lyved in their parish over taken with drinks.

It is easy for us today to encapsulate a period of immense upheaval in a phrase like "the Reformation." Henry VIII did not make the church Protestant. The Latin Mass continued and when the abbey was dissolved ample provision was made for the canons, two of whom at least became parish priests in nearby churches. It was not until 1549 in Edward VI's reign that the Prayer Book in English made the Reformation a fact.

In 1559 the Act of Uniformity ordained that every person attend their parish church or be fined 12d. Contemporary accounts give instances of many reasons used as excuses for not attending church. We are not told of the reaction of ordinary folk to what must have been a bewildering and turbulent period full of contradictions but they appeared to accept it.

Unfortunately the only churchwardens accounts for Keynsham prior to the first extant minute book of 1770 is the transcription by Canon Ellacombe of Bitton of those accounts between 1632-1639 which record the saga of re-building the church and tower;[4] (the original accounts have vanished) The accounts stop abruptly in 1639 with a note by Ellacombe to the effect that no receipts entered until 1651 owing no doubt to the political troubles of the day.

The frequent changes in religion affected some peoples' loyalty to the state church. As seen by the Depositions, people lost their charity and buildings began to fall into decay and dilapidation. At the end of the 16th century Keynsham was described by Leland[5] as a "poore towne". If this is seen in relation to the attempted suppression of all forms of enjoyment and the fact that this was a strongly presbyterian area it is understandable. Until the Reformation ordinary folks had something like six weeks holiday a year! After that they had virtually no holidays (until Bank Holidays were introduced) with the exception of Good Friday, Easter Monday and Christmas.

In the absence of churchwardens accounts for the late 16th, 17th and early 18th centuries we can only surmise that the people of Keynsham were no different from any other village and indulged in some of the colourful pastimes that took place in the churchyard. In 1615 a presentment was made by the churchwardens on the playing of bowls in the churchyard on Sundays.

Undoubtedly a good deal of drunkenness and disorder accompanied midsummer festivities, feast days and church ales before the Reformation and after. The latter were held to raise money for the upkeep of the church and many places had a specially erected church house for these activities. The only clue to Keynsham possibly having a church house is in the deeds for the site upon which Victoria Methodist Church is built, where it states in an indenture of 1767 that the house or tenement was lately called the Angel Inn, which was demolished to make way for the church in 1886. The term could also denote a church house .

After an attempt to suppress Sunday sports James I ordered a declaration to be read from every pulpit in favour of certain sports to be used on Sundays after Divine Service. Sometimes known as the "Book of Sports" it was reissued by Charles I in 1633after a renewed Puritan attempt to prohibit Sundaygames. These activities were very much frowned upon and discouraged and as Keynsham was a strong presbyterian area a constant struggle to banish them went on.

Although folklore in our area is thinly documented we have a detailed description of a case of witchcraft in Keynsham in 1607. When the parson of Keynsham fell sick and was "like to die" the physician asked to treat him refused and accused Agnes Hatton of bewitching him. This prompted others to make similar accusations and the unfortunate Agnes was committed for trial.[6] The marginal notes tell us that she was found guilty and no doubt paid for it with her life. The minister was more fortunate, he was still alive eighteen years later.

The year 1607 had weather of great extremes with the people still recovering from the effects of the plague and of the famines in the last quarter of the 16th century. Thus with the population greatly reduced and too poor to maintain adequately such a large structure it is not surprising that when at 6 o'clock on the evening of l3th January 1632 a tremendous storm unleashed its energy over Keynsham, the tower situated at the east end of the north aisle of St.John's came crashing down and "great was the fall thereof'. The bottom stage of this tower still stands now used as vestry for storing music etc. There is no need to quote the famous brief of King Charles I obtained in January 1633 to enable the parish to collect money from all over the country. A copy of the original which is held to be the earliest in existence is framed and kept carefully in the church. The effect of such a disaster upon our small community must have driven all national and other concerns to the back of their minds as they strove to grapple with this calamity.

The extremely detailed and fascinating churchwardens accounts of the rebuilding are a valuable source of contemporary working practice and a glimpse of the many people mentioned by name and trade. They were indebted to Mr. John Harrington of Kelston for the certificates to secure the Letters Patent and "paid him £20 for his paines" which was a large sum in those days. Part of the church must have been quickly made usable As the minister Samuel Tillie (1625-39) was able to take a funeral in February, five baptisms in March and a wedding in April.

Apart from decay it is also highly likely that the weight of the bells -there appear to have been six at this date including the Sanctus Bell- contributed to the fall of the tower. Church bells were important especially in N. Somerset in the life of the community generally. The churchwardens had to seek permission to rebuild the tower at the west end of the church. 'To Edwards of Saltford to goe to four ministers for to certifie under their handes the convenience of removing the tower to the West end of the church -6d." The people must have been glad when their bells pealed out once more from the impressive new tower and assured each other that it would be a long time before this one fell down.

The churchwardens accounts show regular payments to the bellringers; feast days in the church calendar, the King's birthday or George Ill' s coronation 1762 (they received 15/-d) to celebrate a great battle or the end of a war. A knell was tolled for funerals; one toll and a pause signified a man, two tolls a woman. Then would follow the number of tolls which gave the age of the deceased, tolled in sets of twenty.

This bell was last heard in Keynsham around 1930 and was then rung by Dick Harris of the Forresters Arms. A curfew used to be rung but we have no information on how long that practice was kept up. Another bell known in Keynsham was the Pancake Bell, apparently Dr. Harrison paid a guinea to the ringers for this one. The Breakfast bell was rung each Sunday morning and the 'Tatie Bell" as soon as morning service ended to warn servants and housewives to put the potatoes on to boil. The servants could of course only go to the afternoon or evening service but were expected to attend.

An extract from the Daybook of James Bridges Solicitor[7] tells

of a visit to Thomas Bilbie' s bell foundry in 1731 to see the two new treble bells to make the peal up to eight. "18th August, 1731. I was present with a Churchwarden of Keynsham and 30 more of the parishe at Thomas Bilbeis at Chew Stoke and saw 2 Treble Bells to make 8 to our peale Caste and threw our shilling into the metal Yt ran to the Treble & they were Cast at Two of the Clock in the afternoon in about 5 minutes. Bothe weigh 19 hundred and 18 pounds, treble 9 hundred and ninety and half." Tradition maintained silver added to the mixture improved the sound, but the reverse is in fact the case, however, the small quantity of silver in a few shillings would not affect such a large quantity of metal. This extract confirms the existence of six bells at this date. The weights quoted by James Bridges are apparently a puzzle as experts consider them to be inaccurate.

The clock was the gift of Mrs. Ann Tilly (was she related to the Rev. Samuel Tillie?) in 1729 and was last restored between 1975 and 1977 due to a very generous gift from a Keynsham lady. The clock face adds to the tower's attractiveness. While those living underneath might not always appreciate its chiming many townspeople are sad when it is temporarily out of action.

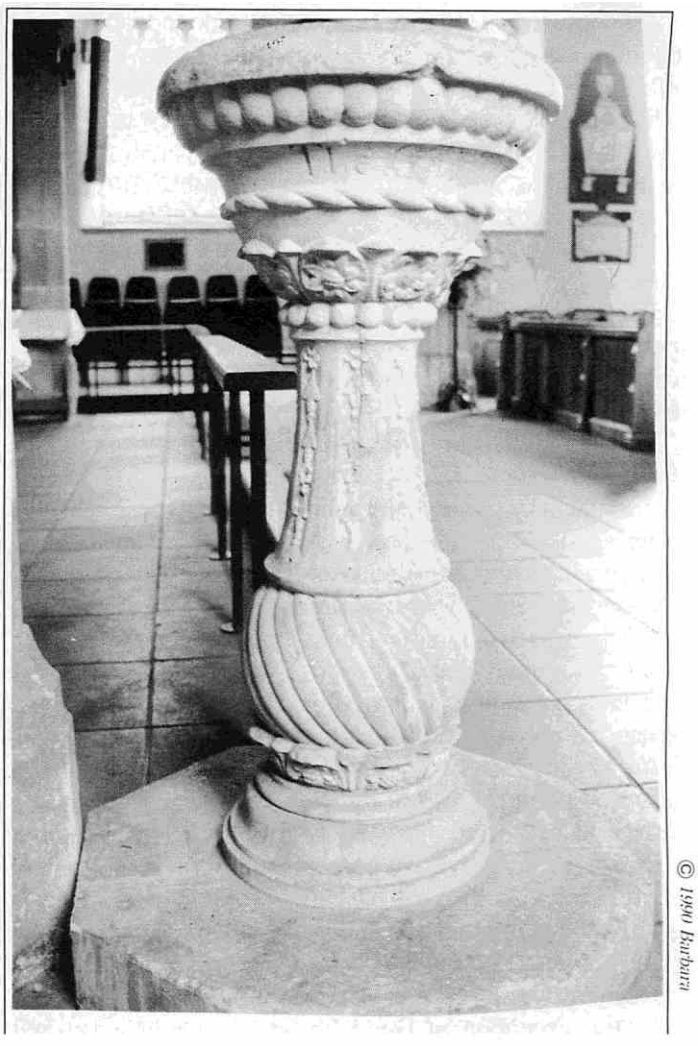
The tower was nearly completed when the Civil War broke out. Now dissent began to manifest itself with the prominence of Quakers in particular. There have been Quakers in Keynsham since this period and a Book of Sufferings exists as a manuscript.[8] In 1655 Robert Wastfeeld was brought before the Justices for "going to the Steeple House and speaking the truth." Robert Wastfeeld (or Wastfield) was imprisoned at Ilchester along with Christopher Holder who "spoke to the priest in Keinsham Steeple House." In 1657 Tobias Daniel of Keynsham was sent to Prison for going to the Steeple House and exhorting the people there after worship had finished. In 1660 several Keynsham Quakers were imprisoned for meeting and refusing the Oath of Supremacy and Abjuration. Between 1654 and 1663 household goods were seized in distraint for non- payment of church rates.

There are lists of goods seized in distraint for non-payment of rates, and when ten men from Keynsham and Saltford were tried in 1660 they were so vociferous and articulate the Judge threatened to have their mouths "sewed up" if they did not keep quiet.

In 1663 John Pinkard was committed "to llchester Jayle brought by Matthew Mabson baliff on a warrant from John Warne, Sheriffe of the County, att an attachment from the Barons of the Exchequer to the Suite of Thomas Codrington, priest of Keinsham, a persecutor in Oliver Cromwell's days and in the time of his former powers for not paying tithes. That this priest Codrington hath been for the Common Prayer and Bishops, and against then for Presbytery, but now again is against Presbytery, and in appearance for the Bishops and Common Prayer."

Thomas Codrington was minister at Keynsham between 1639 and 1675. He was influenced by Harington of Kelston who came to hear him preach on 11th August 1653. He survived the Commonwealth and Restoration by conforming at each change. He must have liked it here as he was thirty-six years minister of St. John's.

With the restoration of the King in 1660 the Bridges family returned to Keynsham and re-assumed their sole responsibility for the upkeep of the chancel of St. John's.[9] They gave many items for the adornment of the church. For nearly two centuries they appointed the vicars and ultimately filled the chancel with



Font, St. John's Church, given by Harry Bridges

their monuments.

The altar was restored to the east end and railed again, the Royal Coat of Arms appeared in the majority of parish churches and can be seen now as an organ screen on the south side of the chancel in St. John's.

Music was gradually reintroduced to the church and although to date we have no 17th century records, its use in the parish church can be assumed. It was probably in this century that an organ was introduced as General Vestry Minutes – extant from 1744 – mention in 1755 "the old organ loft" at the west end of the church.

Contemporary accounts of "goings on" in churches up and down the country make entertaining reading.[10] People were brought regularly before the church courts for non-attendance at their parish church and their excuses were many and varied.

In 1662 the Prayer Book was re-issued, the intruded ministers were removed- known as the Great Ejectment -and from this date the "church" and "chapel" divide began to manifest itself. Persecution of dissenters was rife but only served in the majority of cases to strengthen their faith.

It was not until the Act of Toleration was passed in 1689 after William of Orange came to the throne which enabled dissenters to register a meeting house as a place of worship with their local bishop[11] that they could meet openly. Registrations for Keynsham date from 1689 and name the people who registered. Unfortunately Bath & Wells Diocesan papers destroyed by fire covering the last twenty years of the 18th century means a subsequent gap for us. We know that a preaching house for

Methodists was here in 1775.[12] It is also mentioned in correspondence between a Miss Mary Bishop who ran a boarding school in Keynsham and Rev. John Wesley. The above registrations show the beginning of the Baptist community in Keynsham.

The history of the local Methodist and Baptist churches has been written in two recent books.[13]

The second generation of Quakers in Keynsham did not emerge, whether through persecution or dispersal it is difficult to say, although a small Quaker presence has remained to the present day.

Glimpses of daily life in the parish of Keynsham are recorded in the Vestry Minutes [14] from 1744 which met in the vestry of St. John's several times a year. Regular entries tell us the churchwardens were very busy keeping order. One item in 1747 refers to a game which was universally played in churchyards called "Fives". This game entailed tossing a ball against the church wall between buttresses which naturally resulted in regularly broken windows which must have made it rather chilly for worshippers!

One of the major annual expenses of the churchwardens right up to the restoration of 1863 was for repairing windows. The Boucher family, followed by the Fears, were employed for over one hundred years as glaziers. It was obviously a very lucrative business. The last glazier mentioned, Samuel Fear, was the father of John Nelson Fear who founded the Fear Institute.

In October 1747 it was "ordered that proper methods be taken to prevent the playing of fives and all other games in the churchyard." However, as only two months later it was "ordered that the holes be stopped that was dug in the churchyard for preventing fives playing and gaming ... and ordered that such as shall presume to play at any sort of game in the churchyard for ye future be proceeded against at the expense of the Parish as the law directs" can we conclude that someone tripped or injured themselves and complained bitterly?

The Churchwardens Accounts extant from 1770 [15] are pretty mundane listing the items necessary from time to time for the church such as a new surplice and prayer book for the ministers reading desk. Even a chamber pot for the vestry which in 1776 cost 8d and in 1794 cost 1/8d!

The Vestry Minutes in 1748 ordered that "gaming be prevented in the churchyard." This was obviously ineffective as fourteen years later it was ordered that "the Churchwardens do use their utmost power by law or otherwise to prevent ye abominable practice of gaming in the churchyard." The above brief examples demonstrate the use of the churchyard for all forms of recreation and the constant battle by the authorities to keep it clear. The churchyard could have been the stage for the Keynsham Mummers Play or perhaps the village green or even in the Bridges mansion house (to the east of the church) by special invitation! A copy of this play was rediscovered in the British Library in 1970. It had been witnessed on 27th December 1822 by a Mr. Joseph Hunter. A copy of the words obtained by him from the players that day is among his MSS collection. Mummers plays are thought to be of Saxon origin, but we have no idea when our play was first performed. The theme of death and resurrection had been christianised by the addition of St. George and the dragon or Turkish Knight. The Keynsham play was revived in 1971 and is performed on St. Stephen's Day (Boxing Day) each year.

The most infuriating element in reading through what was minuted over a period of two hundred years is what was *not* reported as being said! A statement as in 1748 that "ordered Mrs. Bridges and M. Bull en who were elected Churchwardens and having resigned owing to opposition against their being sworn into office be sub-stituted for Peter Buck and William Lydyard". Is this a hint at a row over appointing female church- wardens?

Detailed minutes in 1755 concern one William Thomas an Innholder "who was possessed of the old organ loft" and wished to demolish it along with the pews and replace it with a new family pew "in order to make the said Parish church more uniform and commodious." The term "possessed" refers to the custom of paying rent for pews to provide the church with a basic regular income. This began with the introduction of pews in the 14th century. It has more or less died out in very recent times It was not confined to the established church although it was in the Parish churches that the large and elaborate pews with high sides, even fireplaces in some instances, became common in the Victorian era and represented class distinction to a nicety. Their removal from St. John's in 1861 caused a furore.

The plans of William Holder obviously caused an uproar as two years later almost to the day it was minuted that "many disputes have arisen about pulling down the two old galleries, erecting pews and 2 new galleries in the room thereof." This was apparently in connection with paying the workmen. Some cooking of the books perhaps?

Similar extracts from the Saltford Vestry Minutes are set out in the fascinating material collected by the late Mr. Percy Sims in his "A History of Saltford Village" published by him in 1976. Even the upsurge of dissent and nonconformity with its work ethic and emphasis on moral rectitude could not stamp out superstition and folklore. The Parish Church is dedicated to St. John the Baptist, we can only conjecture whether the custom of nailing a sprig of St. John's Wort over the door of your house as a charm against witchcraft and evil on his feastday was ever in use locally.

Legends peculiar to Keynsham are connected with the great Mr. Handel. George Frederick Handel (1685-1759) was in the employment of James Brydges, First Duke of Chandos from 1717-1720 at his newly built residence "Cannons" in Middlesex.[16] James was a cousin to the Keynsham Bridges and frequently visited Bath where he had some lodging houses built. Handel also visited Bath several times including the year 1751 when he came to take the waters hoping to cure his failing eyesight.

Stories and legends abound in connection with Handel. The organs he is credited with visiting and playing are almost as numerous as the beds Queen Elizabeth I is said to have slept in! However, while no written evidence has been located to substantiate the Keynsham connection, there is a very real possibility that he visited Keynsham naturally being shown around the parish church. Sad to say he could not have played or heard the organ as the Vestry Minutes plainly testify to there being no organ during this period. A letter in the Chandos papers (now in the Henry E. Huntingdon Library, California) written by Lady Caroline Bridges, who was granddaughter to the first duke, on 13th August 1751 described a visit by Henry the second duke to Keynsham thus:

"We were received at Keynsham with great rejoicings ringing of bells bonfires squibs serenades dancing staring gaping etc. The church is a very fine one for a country parish and wt surprized me excessively there is about 14 of the common

people that sing in the church all of Handel' s anthems and *without any instruments* sing just as I ever heard them in my life & some of them with very fine voices. The minister of the Parish and his wife are young people very polite & well behav'd & were often with us." The minister must have been Obadiah Hughes, Lady Caroline was about twenty-one.

This letter does indicate a possibility that Handel had visited Keynsham previously and perhaps he conducted the choir practice and so inspired the singers with enthusiasm!

Alas, the legend handed down that the noise of the brass battery mill (which could certainly be heard all over the village) inspired Handel to compose either the Harmonious Blacksmith or the Hallelujah chorus from "Messiah" has to be laid to rest. These compositions were written some considerable time before he is believed to have come here.

Two other tales told of Handel giving the church a peal of bells, and being so taken with the organ he persuaded the Duke of Chandos to remove it to "Cannons" are also quite spurious. We have already discussed the bells, and the origin and erection of the organ in Cannons is clearly and authentically documented. The brass plate with its rather crudely inscribed inscription S. Johns Church Keynsham. G .F . Handel 1750. is also a puzzle .Apart from the form of writing which is not similar to 18th century writing, analysis of the brass indicates 19th century origin, although it would require a more exhaustive analysis to conclusively prove this point. Apparently there were two plates in existance both of which disappeared after a burglary early this century. One was discovered in a saleroom, purchased and presented once again to the church. Such a momentous occasion as Handel visiting Keynsham would certainly survive in folk memory and it is highly likely that the plates were made by the brassworkers in the 19th century at the brassmill to commemorate the historic event.

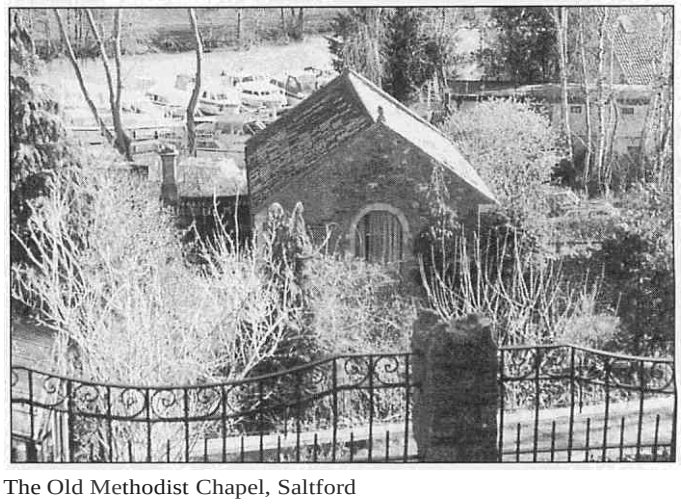
The earliest known reference to music in the parish church apart from the above letter, is in 1764 when the Vestry meeting "ordered and agreed that the sum of 40s. a year which has been paid for several years to the singers is unnecessary and that the same be deferred and no longer payable to them on any account of pretence whatsoever". Had their enthusiasm waned? In 1777 they ordered the Churchwardens to "pay the usual payment of 40 shillings per annum to the Company of singers for their encouragement in the practice in the said parish church." Payments continued to the singers until 1848 by which time they had risen to £2.10.0d!, with no mention whatever of an organ until 1854 when a bellows blower was purchased for 10/d and G Cantle was paid 5/-d for blowing the organ. In 1876 £3 was paid for "music books for the choir" and £1 for tuning. It is hoped that future research on the organ in St.John's will bear fruit at some later stage. The firm of Vowles repaired the instrument in 1874 for £5.10.0d so it is quite apparent one already existed, as it was at this date it was removed from the west end to the south east chapel which is now the choir vestry. While Handel's compositions were influencing the sphere of music another force was making an impact on the life of the country and further afield. John Wesley (1703-1791) an Anglican priest who was very unwillingly, the means of founding the Methodist Church was riding the length and breadth of the land.

His impact on Keynsham led to the erection of the first chapel in 1803-07. [17]

Two further chapels were built between 1860 and 1861 when breakaway factions from the main Wesleyan Society were formed, Zion Primitive Methodist Church facing the end of Albert Road and Bethesda United Free Methodist Chapel. At Saltford a Primitive Methodist Chapel was opened in 1866 in The Shallows which is now a private dwelling. The congregation would undoubtedly have been brassworkers from the adjoining mill.

Zion Primitive Methodist Chapel (now demolished)

Bethesda United Free Methodist Chapel



The Old Methodist Chapel, Saltford

The effect of a large proportion of Keynsham inhabitants becoming non-conformists added to the existing dissenting congregations, meant the majority of voters on the Vestry Committee could block any proposals for a rate for the upkeep of the parish church. This is borne out by Joseph Leech who published accounts of his visits to Anglican churches in the Bristol Tunes entitled "Rural Rides of a Bristol Churchgoer and

came to Keynsham in 1844. He was not impressed with the dilapidated appearance of the church, an overgrown churchyard miserable congregation and an anonymous visiting clergyman who arrived and departed apparently without communicating with anyone. The books on the reading desk were falling apart and the signs of decay were very evident. He ends his account by informing us "there is no organ, the choir consisting of a double bass, two wind instruments and the children of the Charity Schools." A very different account from a century before!

On the other hand in 1843 a visit of a very different kind was paid to St.Johns by Sir Stephen Glynne whose chief interest was ecclesiology. [18] He was impressed by St John's and wrote a detailed architectural description of it, which included the following "the horrible arrangement of the white washed pews and gallery across the nave cannot fail to disgust all who appreciate ecclesiastical propriety". Even the pulpit and screen were white washed over! A gallery stretched across the middle of the nave leaving an open space westward while eastward was "encumbered with frightful white pews used for divine service". The churchwardens accounts record regular payments to Mr. Harvey for "liming the interior of the church". A more stark contrast to the colour and richness of pre-Reformation churches cannot be imagined. He concludes by lamenting the bad state of the interior, the fine roofs growing daily more out of repair and the arches leaning very much outwards.

His visit to St. Mary's Church, Saltford in April 1850 is very brief and to the point with no comments on its state of repair. He calls it "a poor small church mostly of debased character" which today would be an injustice.

All this reflected the apathy and dullness besetting the Church of England during the latter part of the 18th century and first half of the l9th century. In 1851 a Census of Religious Places of worship[19] was taken and the figures returned the attendance at each church or chapel on Sunday 30th March thus placing on record the pattern of church and chapel going. In some instances however, the attendance figure seemed in excess of the known capacity of the building. All the figures appear to have been "rounded up," as in the case of Saltford Parish Church which had a total of two hundred at the afternoon service, the only service held that day as the Rector, Edward Whitehead was ill.

However, as a result of the Oxford Movement and the shock-waves felt by the Census results which gave much lower figures of attendance than was imagined, revival was stirring in the Anglican church. Restoration of buildings became a passion of our Victorian forefathers.

Keynsham was not left behind. In 1861 a Faculty was obtained from the Court of the Bishop of Bath & Wells, which details proposals practically to dismantle the building; renew the roofs, raise the nave walls and completely refurbish the interior. (For details of the work see the History of St. John's). A newspaper report of the re-opening of the church on May 27th 1863 is a lovely piece of contemporary journalistism The schoolroom in Station Road (demolished when the By-Pass was built) was used for services while the work was done.

In 1861 the Vestry Minutes record the perambulation (or Beating the Bounds as it is sometime called) of the Parish on May 17th together with a list of the men and boys present. This appears to be the only local record of what was usually an annual event in most parishes.

The vicar who organised the work, the Rev. G. Robinson must have been much loved by some of his flock as the Bath & Cheltenham Gazette in January 1861[20] reported "A New Years presentation was made to the Vicar of the Parish of Keynsham of a beautiful timepiece and clerical robes. The inscription on the timepiece read 'Presented to Rev. G. Robinson MA Vicar of Keynsham by the ladies, Sunday School teachers and poor of the parish as tokens of their affection for and appreciation of his labours amongst them during the last six years".

However, his relations with the bell-ringers were not all sweetness and light as a letter written by him to the Keynsham Ringers together with a revised set of rules for their behaviour shows in 1875 [21] The revised set of rules has a few subtle differences from the set drawn up by the Ringers and submitted to the Vicar by Mr. Lyne through Mr. Fox .No Beer or Smoking or bad language to be allowed in the Belfry ...The scale of fees was not to be exceeded and access to the Belfry must be kept at all times for the Vicar and Churchwardens. The bells to be rung on the following days the Churchwardens direct . ..That there shall not be more than 2 practices a week . . .

In 1875 a town cemetery had to be found as the churchyard was now full. Copies of the original documents[22] between 1875- 6 record much controversy as various sites around the town were considered . Fears that contamination to the town's water supply would be a result of any of the sites under review being used had to be satisfactorily settled. Finally, the site at Durley Hill was agreed upon. The land was purchased for £875. We have a transcript of the sundry expenses incurred with setting up of the site etc. A loan of £2,000 was advanced from the London Assurance Corporation on the Security of the Poor Rates of the Parish.

The last quarter of the 19th century saw an influx of business and professional people into Keynsham brought by the railway and the desire to "live in the country". Large houses were built to accommodate big families with servants. A sharp dividing line still existed between church and chapel resulting in shops and services in the town being patronised by one or other group of people even down to the undertaker.

Folklore lingered on. Women used to visit the well on Hawkeswell field which was supposed to have water that helped failing eyesight, in fact the properties of the water would have done anything but that. Several people are recorded as wart curers, and an 'old girl' who lived by the slaughter house (top of Bath Hill by clock-tower) was described by some as a witch. A number of stories about ghosts survive to this day which have been declared to have been seen or heard by various people, such as the Roman soldier at Fry's (Cadbury Schweppes) factory, the lady in the Red Cross house in Charlton Road, the old Bethesda Methodist Chapel (now a carpet shop in Temple St) the now demolished Flanders House which stood on Bath Hill Even a canon from Keynsham Abbey has apparently been seen gliding across the by-pass, part of which crosses the abbey cloisters. Footsteps are still heard regularly walking along the Batch in Saltford. No doubt there are many other stories of strange happenings in our area.

Up to the last war the various denominations while maintaining good relations, still carried on their own services and activities in a separate fashion, the Roman Catholics building their church in 1936. We had to wait until after that before a gradual emergence of the Local Council of Churches led to a harmonious relationship being established.

Despite the enormous decline in churchgoing the Festivals of the Church Calendar are celebrated by the mass of the people, even if in a purely secular fashion. Lent, Easter, Harvest,

Christmas and Mother's Day are all opportunities for lucrative business turnover. Any suggestion of disassociating these festivals from secular life would no doubt meet with howls of opposition. If they have no other effect, they at least remind us that the church and people's faith is still very much alive .

Today, gazing on the north side of St John's Parish Church you can observe some worn consecration crosses and higher up the animals and gargoyles remind us of the folklore inevitably woven into the mediaeval masons' art but, this is where we came in …

8
Law and Order
Barbara J Lowe

TIIE POLICE

The English Police system originated in that of the Saxon Tything. A Tythingwas probably a group of ten free men (over 12 years old) with their dependents, each being surety for the good behaviour of the other, and headed by a Tythingman to represent them at local Courts. This was "View of Frankpledge". Ten Tythings constituted an Hundred , headed by an Hundredman who presided at the Hundred Courts which were held twice a year (for important business) in the open air, at a stone or tree or ford, because a building might be bewitched. These courts for "Canesham, Wellowe and Bathford" Hundreds were held under an ash tree on Odwood Downe 1. A Shire was a group of Hundreds with the Shire-Reeve (Sheriff) responsible, under the Monarch, for keeping the Peace within it. The Assize Court was inaugurated by Henry II in lieu of trial by battle for property disputes. These courts were abolished on lst January 1972 and the High Court (civil) and Crown Court (criminal) replaced them.

Towards the end of the 13th century, Manorial Courts, held by the Lord of the Manor, largely replaced the Hundred Courts, although ours was still held in the early 19th century. The Court Baron was a civil court, held within the Manor, which concerned land held of the Manor, and in which free tenants (the Homage) were the judges, and the Steward the Registrar. The Customary Court Baron dealt with the rights of Copyholders (customary tenants who held a copy of the Court Roll). Copyhold tenure was abolished in 1922. The Court Leet was the petty criminal court, which was a court of record with a "view of Frankpledge", the Steward of the Manor being the Judge, and suitors to the court, the Jury. This too was abolished in 1922. There was also a Court of Pie Poudre (dusty feet) at the time of fairs and markets, to settle casual disputes on the spot. The latter was usually held in the Tolsey House or Market House, close to the market site. Keynsham's was repaired in 1728.

Under an Act of 1361, Knights of the Shire became Justices of the Peace (J.P.s) who met at Quarterly Sessions to administer affairs of the Shire.[2] By 1565, Somerset had over 30 J.P.'s, each of whom was empowered to commit to prison until the next Quarter Sessions, persons who were accused of theft, manslaughter, murder, violence, rioting, participation in unlawful games or disturbing the Peace of the Realm.[3] Sir Thomas Bridges would have been Keynsham 's J.P. at that time. In Quarter Sessions, which were held in various parts of the Shire in rotation, two or more J.P.'s had immense power, for apart from sentencing for the aforementioned crimes, they could order rates for the repair of bridges , roads, prisons etc, licence traders and fix wages. Quarter Sessions were abolished on 1st January 1972, the administrative duties transferred to local authorities and the jurisdiction to Crown Court J.P.'s (Magistrates), appointed by the Crown, now sit with the Judge in Crown Court.

Constable (comes-stabuli – master of the horse) was formerly a high military office and only in the thirteenth century did it become concerned with law enforcement. The Constable was then an unpaid officer of the Tything or Manor who was elected annually along with the pig-ringer, the ale conner and the hayward, and was responsible for making periodic reports to the Court Leet. In the Tudor period he became the, still unpaid, Parish Constable, selected at Quarter Sessions from a list of those considered by the Parish to be qualified for the office. Refusal of the office meant a fine and possible period in the stocks. Duties such as reporting all crimes, serving summons as instructed by warrants from Court, arresting wrongdoers, maintenance of armour and mustering of soldiers as necessary, branding and torturing vagrants (of whom there were large numbers after wars, the Dissolution of the Monasteries and cottagers who had lost their strips of land after inclosure), and, after the Elizabethan Poor Law, moving paupers out of the parish if they were unable to prove their right to be there, made the office very unpopular with the wealthy, who often paid a poor man to deputise for them.[4] .This was still being done in Keynsham as late as 1844 when William Green deputised for Charles Headington and in 1846 when Jacob Strange (a thatcher) deputised for Henry Hurd.[5] Interestingly, in 1674, Robert Wastfield of Brislington was discharged as Constable of the In-Hundred of Keynsham because he had already been elected Tythingman of Brislington. John Saunders of Chewton Keynsham was then sworn in as Constable.[5]

Rewards offered for information on crime created wrongdoing, and thief-taking became a profession. Although there were prescribed harsh punishments for minor offences, most went unpunished, but there were savage punishments for serious ones. Those convicted of High Treason were drawn on

a sled or hurdle to the place of execution, hanged until half dead, then quartered alive (a noble man was beheaded). Witches were hanged or burned, female poisoners were burned alive, male poisoners were boiled to death in water or lead, rogues (wandering, idle, disorderly persons) were pierced through the ears and perjurors were put into the pillory and a "P" burnt on the forehead. (Pillory held the head and arms, standing.) Many were gaoled for debt, often in damp basement cells, without light or food unless they could afford to buy candles and victuals from the Keeper. On September 4th 1649, prisoners whose worldly goods were less than £5 were released, and from then a criminal (but not a debtor) had to be fed. In 1659 Keynsham's Constable Sheppard took £8 from felon William Clarke, but was later ordered to return the money less the costs for maintaining Clarke in Ilchester prison.[5] (Most of those in prison were awaiting trial.)

Under the ancient "Sanctuary", if a criminal reached the Church porch or the Priest's house, he had time to decide whether to surrender to the King's Peace or abjure (leave) the country. (This was abolished in 1624). If a criminal (murderer or robber, but not one guilty of treason) could read a few verses of the 51st Psalm (Miserere Mei Deus), he could claim "benefit of Clergy" which enabled him, like any criminal clergyman, to be tried in an ecclesiastical court. A layman could have this benefit only once and was then branded on the thumb.[6] (Benefit of Clergy was abolished in 1827). In 1619, Robert Ford, a tanner of Keynsham and Elizabeth Taunton escaped the normal punishment for producing a bastard child (imprisonment for him, flogging or House of Correction for her), because they had already been punished by ecclesiastical laws. Moral offences, Testamentary matters, defamation and brawling in Church or Churchyard were dealt with in Church Courts. Punishments included excommunication, being "sent to Coventry" including refraining from selling to, buying from and eating or drinking with the person, public denouncement in Church, and, in the case of defamation, public apology in Church.

Only one complete Manor Court Roll for Keynsham is extant and this is of Michaelmas (13th October) 1562.[7] All the members of Keynsham's three Tythings (North, South and Middle) were present. At the Court Leet, "all was well" in the South Tything, but in the North and Middle ones, six tapsters, three brewers, three bakers, two butchers and one fisherman were "in mercy" for selling their wares and thus breaking the Assize. (Acts of 1548, and later, 1604, controlled the killing, dressing, selling and eating of flesh in Lent and on days commonly accepted as fishdays. These were not repealed until the mid-nineteenth century.)

The Lord of the Manor; with the inhabitants, was responsible for providing and maintaining archery butts, pillory; stocks (which stood in front of Keynsham Church and Saltford House, respectively); Cucking stool or tumbril, for scolds (by the river. The Abbot had right of Tumbril but we have no later record of its use here); whipping post; cattle pound (top of Bath Hill in Keynsham, south of the Church in Saltford); and maintaining standard weights and measures. In 1628, absentee Ann Whitmore and Keynsham folk were in trouble for not repairing and setting up the archery practice butts (in the Hurne Lane area) for the previous eleven months. From 1558, every male between 15 and 60 years old had been required to provide himself with armour appropriate to his social position.

Somerset Quarter Sessions records have survived substantially since 1607, when Keynsham is mentioned in connection with the Agnes Hatton witchcraft charge (see chapter 7). The following year, Marie Abbott of Keynsham, wife of Thomas, gave evidence of a highway assault near Brislington. (Brislington Common was the scene of many highway robberies, especially before it was enclosed in 1780.) Saltford's first mention is in reference to a petition against the expulsion of John Cox in 1612. John was a fuller who had lived in Saltford for 38 years but was turned out of the mill by landlord Thomas Shute and so became homeless and destitute.

Robert Burges, who had been Constable of Keynsham Hundred, was forced to apply to Quarter Sessions held in January 1615 at Wells, for reimbursement of funds he had personally had to pay towards the "provisioning" of Queen Anne of Denmark when she visited Bath and Bristol in 1613. He had been unable to induce his neighbours to even discuss rating themselves. Sir Thomas Bridges and Francis Baberwere deputed to fix a proper rate and enforce payment thereof and also to bind such as refused to pay to the next Sessions or otherwise certify their names to the Clerk of the Green Cloth (the Green Cloth was a court of justice held in the counting house of the monarch's household).

Quarter Sessions also dealt with alehouse licensing problems. In 1630, William Saunders was bound over for being in contempt for selling beer after all Keynsham's alehouses had been suppressed. We already had too many licensed inns.

Even Constables of the Hundred occasionally managed to get into trouble as did Samuel Moggs in 1637 for refusing either to do his share of work on the highways or pay rates in lieu (see Chapter 4). Mr. John Harrington J.P. was desired to investigate and settle the matter. The following year, a dispute arose over the office of Tythingman in Saltford, and this was settled by ordering the owners of 15 tenements there to perform the office in turn as by ancient custom.

Constable Robert Bagnall of Keynsham presented a petition at Bath Assizes in 1642, regarding a Commission of Array (to impress men for military service in defence of the Realm) issued by Charles I to the Marquis of Hertford for mustering trained bands and imposing arms on all who were able to find them, which had been voted illegal by both Houses of Parliament.

In 1655, the County was divided into police districts, each under a major general, furnished with a body of troops. This experiment failed and was abandoned after a few years.

Swearing was a crime punishable by a fine which varied according to the rank of the offender. The oaths were not what we would expect today. In 1650, "God is my witness", or "upon my life" cost an "inferior person" 3s 4d, and a Duke, 30s, with double for a second offence.

Many misdemeanours carried the death penalty, but despite the severe punishments, the temptation to steal sheep and poach game was great. The right of shooting game birds was restricted to landowners (but not yeomen with less than £100 a year). Thomas Browning, a grover (woodman) of Keynsham, was caught red-handed, in 1657, carrying a birding-piece on Ann Popham's land and pursuing "sigeens" (? pheasants) on the road. Charles II introduced gaming laws because game was getting scarce. This was due to inclosure and disafforestation diminishing cover, and to the "fowling piece" now being a gun rather than the former crossbow, thus making the killing of birds much easier.

In January 1671, 'The Angel" in Keynsham, the house of Thomas Handwitch (site near present Victoria Methodist

Church) was the scene of a violent pub brawl in which one man suffered a broken head and another a broken leg. In another recorded brawl, William Pinkard beat and wounded William Barrell, both Keynsham men.

Following the 1662 Quakers' Act, severe penalties were imposed on them for meeting for worship. Imprisonment was usual, but three offences warranted Transportation. The 1672 Declaration of lndulgence relieved their plight, but persecution persisted. In 1698, Edward Atwood, Quaker of Saltford, was prosecuted by William Keate, the Rector, for tithes. He was first tried in the Court of Common Pleas (ordinary civil actions by subject to subject), then imprisoned, had six cows, two horses and a mow of hay seized, but the prosecution was proved false and his property reinstated. Then the Rector took Atwood and his son to the Ecclesiastical Court for non-payment of Easter offering and tithes for hen eggs, and both men were excommunicated.

This was a time of political and economic disturbances, with rioters, smugglers and a large underworld, which defied government. Local anger was focused against swindlers and bullies, and the Parish Constables were not effective enough. So to encourage law and order, an Act of William III, 1699, allowed the award of Tyburn Tickets to people assisting in bringing a felon to justice. The tickets exempted the holder from certain obligations for some years.

In 1703/4, to cut the number of rogues and vagabonds, all able-bodied men without visible employment or means of subsistence were liable to serve in the army.

Strict laws, too, controlled trading in salt, beer and wool. One law controlled the number of looms a weaver could have, and at an Assize in 1728, Henry Bonner, a Keynsham weaver, was indicted for keeping more than two woollen looms and so forfeited 20s a week. He was later acquitted because Keynsham was proved to be a market town, and weavers in market towns were allowed more than two looms. This reaffirmation of Keynsham's Market and Fair Charter of 1307, apparently reminded Thomas Whitmore, Lord of the Manor, and the Parish of their duties. So Keynsham's Market House was repaired (its site was probably opposite the junction of High Street and Charlton Road), a Market Bell hung, and a new weighing beam, ropes and a set of iron weights purchased. It was demolished for road improvements in 1822.

The availability of cheap gin (Geneva) in unlicensed "dram shops" was responsible for much drunkenness and brawls. A tax was levied on the gin, but when this did not reduce the problem, the tax was increased to an excessive £1 a gallon. This had quite the opposite effect in that it was ignored completely, so was repealed in 1743.

Brutal spectator sports contributed to the general brutality of the age. Animal baiting, public whippings and hangings were part of the excitement of life, so punishments for crimes were equally brutal.

The family of Hix or Hicks has long lived in this area, and folk-lore tells of a cattle drover named Jack Hicks who lived in Courtney Road at "Smisby" (demolished). He was hanged, reputedly for sheep stealing, at Burnett Cross and buried in a now sadly depleted copse off Manor Road playing field. Cominey Road was formerly called "Jack Hicks Lane" and there were once crossroads at the top of Burnett Hill (see chapter 4). Another version of the story has him buried at the cross roads. There is usually some truth in these old stories, so it is not too surprising to find that the Select Vestry Minutes for Keynsham of April 1753 list the expenses paid to 3 men for 3 days and 3 nights to guard the body of Hix; to 3 men for digging the grave, and to 6 people to carry the body of Hix from the place of execution to the place of interment (both unspecified). (Notice the number 3 - to ward against evil). Keynsham's Constables were in attendance from first to last because these were the days when body-snatching (for scientific research) was a lucrative business and it was particularly important to guard the bodies of executed persons. Also, a body is supposed to emit luminous light and criminals are said to have cut off fingers or thumbs to use as torches! It is interesting that, fifty years later, William Dowder, aged 22 years, late of Langford Budville, who was taken from Exeter Gaol to be hanged at Ilchester in February 1804, was buried inside Keynsham Church. He had feloniously assaulted John Pring on the King's Highway at Langford Heathfield in the previous October and stolen six shirts, other goods and money from a knapsack.[10] The cost of bringing the body to Keynsham must have been considerable, and one wonders whether William's parents were Jonathan and Elizabeth Dowdle who ran the King's Arms at Keynsham at this time, perhaps having moved here from Langford Budville.

Riots and disorder were still part of the way of life. The theft of 5s from a shop or 40s from anywhere, carried the death penalty, but, in practice, this was reserved for the more serious offences like Highway Robbery. The road between New Bridge and Brislington was a favourite stretch for this and local news- papers record many such robberies. For example, in 1747, the London Stage was robbed at Brislington Common by 3 men,[11] and in 1762, John Goodenough was robbed on the highway near Keynsham (he mistakenly accused an innocent person and had to publish an apology) [12]. In 1766, Dr. Woodward was robbed of 1 guinea and 10s as he travelled in a post-chaise between Keynsham and Saltford. Also in 1766, Samuel Budd robbed the waggon of Daniel Merreweather at Keynsham, and at Bridgwater Assizes was ordered to be whipped at Keynsham on the following Tuesday and be imprisoned for 2 months. Whipping was carried out by the Constable. The offender's hands were tied to the tail of a cart and he was led through the town, being whipped (above the waist, until bloody) as they went.

One feels a little sorry for a solitary highwayman, who, calling himself "Young Turpin", stopped a post-chaise and four carrying 3 ladies and 3 gentlemen. He thrust a large pistol at one gentleman's chest but withdrew it after being requested not to alarm the ladies. After collecting 30s, he shook hands with the gentleman and wished them all goodnight. Four months later, the same "young Turpin" attempted to rob a party returning from Bath Races, but the chaiseman knocked him off his horse, secured him and took him to Bath, whence he was conveyed to Ilchester Gaol. His real name was Beer.[14]

In 1777, the Westminster waggon was robbed of two pieces of Wilton cloth whilst it was waiting overnight at Keynsham, and Thomas Maggs was stopped near Keynsham and robbed of 4 guineas and some silver.[15] In fact, conditions were so bad in this area, and policing so inadequate, that nine prominent local inhabitants (including Edward Lyne) placed a notice in Felix Farley's Bristol Joumal on 14th September 1782 ..."Whereas various felonies have been committed within the parishes of Brislington, Keynsham and Whitchurch, and the inhabitants plundered of poultry etc. as well as their walls and fences wantonly destroyed by evil-minded persons- we have agreed to establish a fund for the prosecution of such offenders and

hereby invite all other inhabitants to give their assistance."

In 1790, there was a riot in Keynsham against spinning machinery[16], and three years later, against the tolls on Bristol Bridge, nevertheless, by May 1800, our only convicts for execution were David Williams for stealing 2 heifers and John Heddington for a burglary at Keynsham. Both were later reprieved. Unrest and petty crime continued, so in April 1805, W. Belsten was paid to put up the stocks in front of Keynsham Churchyard, presumably replacing older ones. These new ones needed repair in 1820 and were removed in 1823 when road alterations were carried out in front of the Church (see chapter 4). Saltford's stocks, in front of Saltford House, were repaired in 1832.[18]

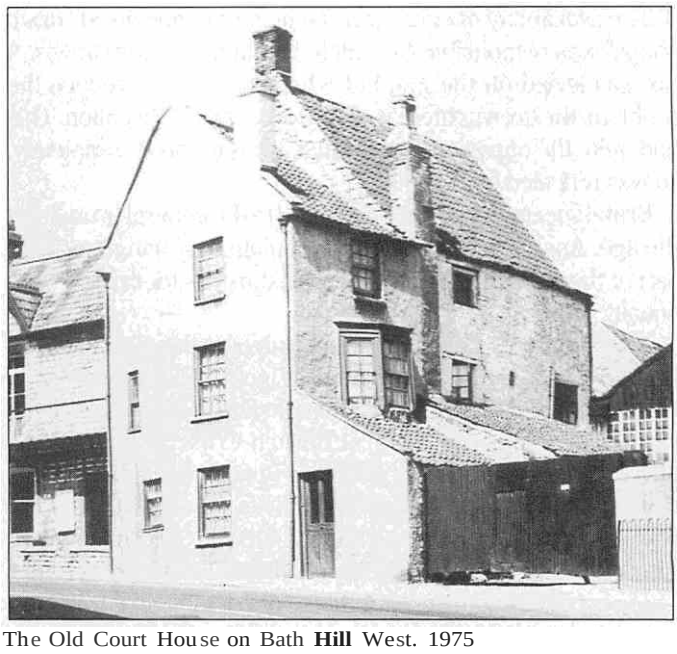
Conditions in the early 19th century were especially poor. Agriculture was depressed and industrial development was passing Keynsham by. Local felonies were varied and encompassed manslaughter (prize fight between colliers): assault (Heather Short on Caroline Cantle who was unfortunate enough to be assaulted by Sarah Adams some years later). Heather Short was given 21 days or 5s fine with 6s 6d costs: disorderly conduct (Widow Williams in the King's Arms. The latter had become a Poor House by 1821 and Widow Williams was transferred to Cole's tenement, another Keynsham Poor House): orchard robbing (young James Ford was flogged for his second offence): unlawful games (a woman was given 2 years for playing dice at Bath Races): wilful damage (to Church Monuments by John Hollister and John Ollis): and James Harris (19) absconded after having been balloted for, and had received a warrant to serve in 2nd Somerset Regiment of Militia.[5]

The old Parish system still operated, with unpaid J.P.'s, Constables and High Constables, and paid Watchers and Deputies. Notice was now being taken of the principle of preventing crime by removing its causes, which had been instigated by Henry (and John) Fielding of Glastonbury. Between the end of the 18th and the early 19th centuries, 17 committees sat to consider the question of law and order in London, and eventually, in 1828, recommended the creation of a Police Force under the direction of the Home Secretary. In 1829, Robert Peel's Force was formed for the Metropolitan districts.[3] This was a period of national unrest, and Radical politicians toured the countryside urging the discontented to agitate for Parliamentary Reform as the only means of alleviating their distress. Rioting throughout the country followed the rejection of the Parliamentary Reform Bill by the House of Lords in 1831. Saltford felt it necessary to swear in 5 extra Constables. In Bristol, from Saturday 29th October to Monday 31st October, there was severe rioting. Sir Charles Wetherell, Recorder, was due to arrive at the Mansion House, Queen Square, Bristol, to open the Assize, so in view of local unrest, troops, including a troop of the 3rd Dragoon Guards from Keynsham, were placed on standby. The Saturday was peaceful enough, but on the Sunday, the troops were withdrawn and rioters set fire to Bridewell, the new gaol, Lawford's Gate prison, the Cathedral Library, Bishops' Palace and Mansion House. There followed sacking and looting of houses in Queen Square, drunkenness, and the deaths of 12 rioters as buildings fell upon them. £300,000 worth of damage resulted. On Monday the troops were recalled, with reinforcements from Keynsham, and groups of Constables, armed with staves, patrolled the streets with the result that the rioters dispersed. Young men from Keynsham walked to Bristol on the Sunday night, either to join in the rioting, or to see what was happening. One, James Williams, was arrested after his return. He was brought to court in January 1832, accused of helping to destroy the gaol and stealing prison property, 2 blankets and a pair of shoes. Several witnesses gave evidence on William's behalf. John Berry, a blacksmith also arrested that night, swore that Williams did nothing to destroy the gaol. William Green, the Constable of Keynsham, said he found the blankets and shoes under some ashes when he went to visit William's mother, with whom the accused lived. George Bayley of Keynsham, who went with Williams to Bristol, swore that Williams had done nothing at the gaol and had picked up the bundle on Bristol Bridge, where a great many Irish people were carrying away their loot. Joshua Andrews swore that Williams was an honest, industrious young man. Christopher Wiggins, an auctioneer's son, said he had met Williams going to Bristol as he returned after the gaol had been attacked. James Evans, foreman to the Surveyor of Roads, said Williams, who had worked for him for several years, was a very steady, civil young man. Williams was very fortunate in his friends for their testimony contributed to his acquittal on both charges. The five charged with him were found guilty. Altogether, 81 were found guilty and 4 were hanged.[19]

As a direct result of the Bristol Riots, J.P.'s were empowered to conscript men as Special Constables on the occasion of riot or threat of the same.

The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 required boroughs (only) to elect a Watch Committee responsible for the appointment of Constables to be paid out of the Rates. Keynsham and Saltford were not affected by this, so our Constables remained unpaid.

In 1836, questionnaires were sent to all unions or parishes enquiring into local crime. The only return to survive for Keynsham Union is that of Marksbury, and here the main crimes were the theft of sheep and turnip greens by people from Bath, local poaching and one arson attack on a hayrick by a vindictive pauper who was later executed. The return suggested that a nightly patrol be carried out nearer Bath and Bristol because "Pensford and Keynsham require watching".[20] From a report in Felix Farley's Bristol Journal of 18th April 1837, about Richard Ogden being fined 1ls 6d (or 7 days in House of Correction) for "wantonly and cruelly ill-treating 2 asses in Bristol Road", we learn that, at this period, J.P.'s were



© Barbara Lowe 1980

The Old Court House on Bath **Hill** West. 1975

meeting at Chandos House (off Station Road, destroyed 1962). We do not know when Keynsham's Manorial Court House became disused as a Court House, but we know it was leased out in 1637, 1672 and 1706 without the right of holding court.[21] This Court House was probably the one on the north side of Bath Hill East which was demolished in 1977 but which was leased to Samuel Harris in 1757 for 99 years on condition that he kept the room there called the "Court Room" clean and fit to hold Sir T. Whitmore's Courts Baron and Lect. The Magistrates also met at the Old Manor House because sale deeds of 1889 mention "A Magistrates' Room". Petty Sessions were held at local inns ("Lamb and Lark," Keynsham, "White Hart", Brislington, "Rising Sun", Pensford) for some years before Keynsham's Police Station was built in 1858.

General unrest and the growth of the Chartist Movement led to the introduction of a Bill for policing rural areas. The County Police Bill of 1839, empowered J.P.'s to establish a police force for either the whole County or part of it, with 1 Constable to 1,000 population. The cost was to fall on the area concerned, but the Bill was not compulsory so was widely ignored - especially by Keynsham!

In 1839, Henry Smith complained that he had been forced to move into Bath because his former house, 4 miles from Bath, had been persistently broken into, robbed, damaged and he himself, insulted.

Eventually, in 1842, an Act required J.P.'s in Quarter Sessions, to set a table of fees and allowances to Constables for service of summons, warrants etc., and advised that there should be a lock-up house for prisoners before commitment, instead of the then practice of taking them to an inn or beer shop. At this time, Petty Sessions took the place of Courts Leet.

Lists of Constables in Keynsham and Saltford have survived for 1842 to 1872. For example, in 1842, a list of names of 20 people suitably qualified to serve, was submitted from vestry to J.P.'s in Quarter Sessions for selection. From Keynsham, John Cantle, William Bason, George Chappell, Henry Carter, William Belsten the younger, and from Saltford, William Bookman and William Greenwood were sworn in for the year 1843.

One of Keynsham's five unpaid Constables, Charles Lewis, was assaulted in February 1847 by Thomas Lane and others, in execution of his duty, so the Parish paid for the prosecution. Yet still we had no paid Constable.[17]

At this time, much local crime involved stealing food - apples, wheat, bread, ducks, cheese, chicken – also clover hay and faggots of wood. Stealing half a quartern loaf of bread warranted 14 days hard labour: stealing 4 ducks, 6 weeks: a silk purse containing 2s, 18 months: trespass varied from 2 weeks to 3 months: and sheep stealing, 18 months.

In February 1850, there were no JP.'s resident within 2 miles of Keynsham with 2,500 population and numerous depredations and felonies were committed in the Parish. Mr. Parker, of Lodge Farm (Chandos Lodge) was attacked by 3 ruffians with cudgels, William Frankham and Henry Strange trespassed on George Norman's land in Saltford in search of game, Joseph Strange and Henry King damaged a grass field and several people were in trouble for non-payment of rates. So Keynsham's Constables were increased to 7, but another year passed before the Parish agreed to appoint one paid Constable. In April 1852, it was proposed to build a lock-up in a central position in Keynsham. The open space between the churchyard and the "Black Horse" (present electricity showrooms) was deemed suitable, and Mr. Morgan's plan was accepted for a building to accommodate a Constable and 3 prisoners in distinct cells.[17] Whether or not this was built is not recorded, but by the end of 1855, Bristol Watch Committee were tired of rendering assistance to Keynsham by committing prisoners to a Police Station belonging to Bristol City.

The County Police Act of 1856 compelled counties, as well as boroughs, to establish police forces, but the ratio of 1 Constable to 1,000 population was relaxed. The Home Office supervised local management by J.P.'s in Quarter Sessions. So in May 1856, Somerset County decided that their Police Force needed 1 Chief Constable, 4 Superintendents, 8 Inspectors, 30 Sergeants, 100 first class Constables and 169 second class ones. The County was divided into 14 Police Districts, and Keynsham Petty Session Division with Saltford (plus 14 other parishes) came within the Chewton (Temple Cloud) District. By October, the strength of the force was 135, the full strength being reached in February 1857 after pay increases had been made. Keynsham and Saltford were served by Benjamin Paget and George Hookway as Constables.[5]

Keynsham's Victorian Police Station on Bath Hill East, 1898

Police uniform consisted of a great coat, frock coat, 2 pair trousers, stock and clasp, cape and top hat, one wooden truncheon in a leather case (which hung beneath the coat tails), one lanthorn, a pair of handcuffs, one button stick, one brush, a warrant card and a Regulation Handbook. There was an embroidered breast badge for both the frock coat and the great coat. Later, leggings were issued to Constables. Inspectors and Superintendents bought their own uniform. The Sergeants and higher officers were recruited from existing Police Forces, but Constables were newly appointed. All had to be under 35 years of age, 5ft 7in or more tall, fit, strong and able to read and write.[3] Amusingly, there was much consternation about an "injudicious" instruction issued by the Chief Constable directing that Constables, in cases where footmarks came into the evidence, should cut out the footmark and preserve it for production at the trial. Rates were fixed at $1\frac{1}{4}$d for ordinary County expenses and $1/2$ d for the cost of the Police Force.

Rear Admiral Benedictus Marwood Kelly, of Saltford House, in February 1857, wrote to the Clerk of the Peace for Somerset, complaining of the dangerous and unprotected state of the district, situated as it was between Bath and Bristol which were vigilantly watched by their own police, thus driving out all the miscreants to commit their depredations in our area. There had been an attempted break-in at his house and Mr. J.R Grant had been severely beaten and injured by highwaymen on Brisling-

ton Common and his servant dangerously stabbed. On enquiry at Keynsham Police Station he found there were only 2 men to guard a district of several parishes and he himself had only once seen a policeman during the 9 months he had lived in Saltford.[22]

A Somerset Constable of 1860

Men named Butler and George were charged with the attack on Mr. Grant and detained in Keynsham Lock-up. When Keynsham's P.C.50 went upstairs to check on the prisoners, he thought they were firmly handcuffed and asleep. In fact they had freed themselves of the handcuffs and managed to escape through the window. George was recaptured by some clever police tactics and committed by Keynsham Magistrates. On the following Monday week, George was charged with robbing Mr. and Mrs. Dymock, whilst in their gig, on the highway near Bath, and was remanded until the following Friday. He was kept in safe custody in the lock-up at Keynsham, but between 6 and 7 a.m. on the Friday he again contrived to escape. Keynsham's poor, new, P.C.50, although provided with leg irons, had neglected to use them on the prisoner, and, as before, he got out of the window, dropped into the garden below and got clear of Keynsham. P.C.50 was in the next room to the prisoner when he escaped. However, this time, George could not denude himself of the handcuffs, so when he tried to cross the White House Ferry near Hanham, the ferryman spotted the handcuffs and refused to take him over. A crowd gathered and the prisoner was detained whilst the police were summoned.[23] This affair was made much of in the press and P.C.50 must have had a very red face.

The Diary of Superintendent Everdell of Chewton District refers to this saga and also comments on the difficulty of getting J.P.'s to hear cases, often making Constable and prisoners wait for many hours whilst they continued with their normal domestic routine.[3] Both Constables and prisoners had to walk everywhere and could be many hours on the road, for there was no other form of transport available until 1865 and then only in special cases. Police Officers were frequently injured in the performance of their duties, as was Sergeant Elms when he was beaten at Saltford by a party of Irish Reapers who were given into his custody for highway robbery. Four were apprehended at the time and 3 others shortly afterwards at Bath.[24]

Petty Session Records mention a variety of crimes but, rather surprisingly these included local counterfeit charges. James Evans offered a counterfeit shilling to Sarah Chappell at Keynsham, another to Emily 0llis of Saltford, but was discharged for the offences. Mary Wiggett offered one to Rachel Ruddle at Keynsham on the same day, but as she had 85 others in her possession, plus a counterfeit half-crown, she earned 3 months hard labour. A list of names of 28 Somerset people for Transportation via Leicester survives for December 1856 to January 1857, but, by this time Transportation was dying out and was abolished by July that year. Penal servitude was substituted. Previously, convicts could be released after as little as 3 years of a 15 year Transportation sentences for good behaviour, but now a fixed term had to be served. A system of supervised employment for convicts, with subsequent conditional pardon was tried, but failed.

During the first half of 1857, lands were purchased for new police stations throughout Somerset. On 8th January, the Justices agreed to purchase a quarter acre of land at Keynsham for £75.[25] The plans were almost identical in design and accommodated between one and three constables. Trouble was encountered in raising loans for building, but in July £30,000 was borrowed from the West of England Insurance Company at 4%. Most stations were ready for occupation in late 1858, but until they were, police business was carried on in private dwelling houses with Constables in lodgings. In Keynsham, the old Court House on Bath Hill West (Plate 1.) was used as a Police Station until the new one was built on Bath Hill East. (Efforts to trace the plans for the latter have failed. The plans 1858 to 1889 were held by the Clerk of the County of Somerset in 1960 and cannot now be located.)

Conditions of service and pay were introduced- a Sergeant 23s weekly, a 1st class Constable, l9s, and a 2nd class one, 16s weekly. By the end of 1857, Constables on duty from adjoining beats met at prearranged times and places. This was a useful means of communication and worked very well. Police Constables now had extra duties, such as attending certain races, regattas and other entertainments. At the end of the year, the Weights and Measures Inspectors were dismissed and the duties taken over by the Police. Improvements, too, were ordered. Iron turn-up beds were to be provided in the cells[5], and gaol traps in the doors of the lock-up cells.

In 1861, improved plans were made for police stations, size and layout being dependent on whether for Inspectors, Superintendents or Constables. At this time, Keynsham's had accommodation for 1 Sergeant, James Schollar, and 1 Constable and their families, and prison cells. Petty Sessions were held in Keynsham, so the station needed a magistrates' room, a large assembly room, enclosed yard, stable and shed for a cart. Until these facilities were built, it is probable that the room in the Old Manor House was used.

Nationally, there was rioting against the price of bread and

meat. Locally, most trouble was caused by petty crime: there were more counterfeit shilling cases (1year hard labour now): several cases of drunk and riotous behaviour in the streets (7 days or 2s6d. with 6s 6d costs): assault (14 days): G.B.H. (£5 or 2 months hard lacour): and stealing (3 fowls earned 1 month and lead 2 months.)

In 1864, there were two Coroners' inquests in Keynsham. One involved the manslaughter of Daniel Gage by fellow pauper George Tanner, an epileptic. Tanner was sent to Gloucester asylum. The other was the very sad case of 3-week-old Alfred Jones who died of an overdose of Godfrey's Cordial which contained opium.

In 1866, Keynsham's Police Sergeant was John Webb and John Fry was constable. Unfortunately, in May 1868, the Coroner had to hold an Inquest at The Talbot Inn, into the death of Sergeant Webb. He and Constable Fry had gone to Saltford to arrest Thomas Jackson, but the latter struck Webb a severe blow over the left eye and threatened both men with a poker. He was eventually secured with the assistance of Messrs Carey and Cousins. The next day, Webb complained of pain in the front of his head and although Mr. Lodge, surgeon, attended him, he died three weeks later of a brain haemorrhage.

Few changes were made to police uniform or equipment — truncheons now had looped leather handles, and, in 1875, a helmet replaced the top hat. In 1877 whistles replaced rattles, and the following year the blue and white armlets were discontinued.[3]

The Local Government Act of 1888 created administrative counties from the ancient counties and set up popularly elected committees for each area. Prior to this, the J.P.'s in Quarter Sessions were in administrative control of the Constabulary. The Act changed this form of administration and created the Joint Standing Committee which took control. Magistrates formed half the committee and County Councillors the other half, so JP.'s still had a role to play.

Superintendents were allowed to use dog-carts after 1895 and these were not superseded by motor cars until 1921. Some mounted police had been used since 1880 and in November 1898 the mounted branch was formed.[3]

Communication between police was by letter (the postal service was thoroughly reliable then) and later, telephone. The first station to have a telephone was Weston-super-Mare in 1904. Keynsham's Police Station number was 20, later becoming 2121. Keynsham now had 2 Constables and 1 Sergeant, and by 1906 the Constables were provided with bicycles. Train travel was only allowed for conveying frail prisoners a long distance. After 1914, police were allowed one rest day a week.[3]

Saltford was covered by Keynsham Police, and in 1909 residents tried to have a Constable stationed in Saltford, but this was refused on the grounds that there were already 4 Constables and 1 Sergeant patrolling the village.[18] Sergeant John Salmon and 2 Constables were stationed at Keynsham, the other 2 coming from Weston, Bath.

During the 1911 coal strike several members of the Somerset Force were sent to the Rhondda Valley for 3 months to help the Glamorgan Constabulary.

A number of the Force joined the fighting services in World War 1, some becoming Army Drill Officers. A Special Constables Act empowered J.P.'s to appoint Special Constables to assist with the extra war-time duties.[3]

In August 1914, there were traffic problems caused by hundreds of lorries passing this way en route from London to Bristol Docks, to assist with food and materials for the troops. The Police were also involved in seizing large numbers of horses for military purposes from Bath and the surrounding areas. Their work also involved requisitioning property, particularly that of German subjects living here.

Police also undertook communication duties, and Keynsham Constables were expected to cycle through the town displaying a card reading "Air Raid" when such danger threatened.[17] Early in 1918, airships were seen flying low over the Avon Valley and Bath.[26] Newspapers do not say whether or not these were enemy craft but they are likely to have been friendly Naval Blimps. The War Office warned of the possibility of messages being dropped from planes. They would be in weighted canvas bags with spring clips. Anyone finding one was to open it at once and contact the police.[27]

Police vigilance, too, was necessary at times of food shortages. At one time, potatoes were used in bread-making and villagers were encouraged to grow potatoes. The Government fixed a maximum price for certain foodstuffs to combat profiteering and Black Marketeering. Locally, in November 1918, there was a petition to prevent rabbit coursing in Hawkeswell, presumably because of the food shortages. There were ingenious cases of fraud concerning foodstuffs. For example, Black marketeers sold a tea substitute made from black and whitethorn leaves, boiled and dried on copper plates and coloured with logwood, verdigris and Dutch pink.

The culprits were heavily fined. Other crimes at this time sound more familiar to us:- riding bicycles without lights, neglecting to keep a danger- ous dog under control, keeping a dog without owners name and address on its collar, robbing henhouses and stealing apples.

After WW1 there were massive unemployment queues for the new "dole". There was a rail strike, unrest in the coalfields and, on 30th August 1919, London Police suddenly went on strike over an increase in their war bonus. The Police Act of that year stabilised conditions of pay and service. It was the birth of the modern Police Force.

In 1920 there was a national coalminers strike and there were 750,000 men on the books of the Labour Exchanges. Large numbers of Special Constables were sworn in and additional police force recruiting became necessary. Radstock miners caused trouble and Specials from Keynsham were sent there.

Between 1920 and 1922, the 14 Somerset Police Districts were regrouped to form 7. On June 20th 1920, Weston (Bath) Division and Temple Cloud (Chewton) Divisions were united to form the new Weston Division.

The increase of road traffic led to the passing, in 1930, of the Road Traffic Act, and, mainly to enforce the new regulations, the Road Traffic Department was formed. This was composed of 1 Sergeant and 14 Constables (2 Constables to each of the seven Somerset Divisions). This year also saw the introduction of ten-week training courses for new recruits to the Police Force.[3]

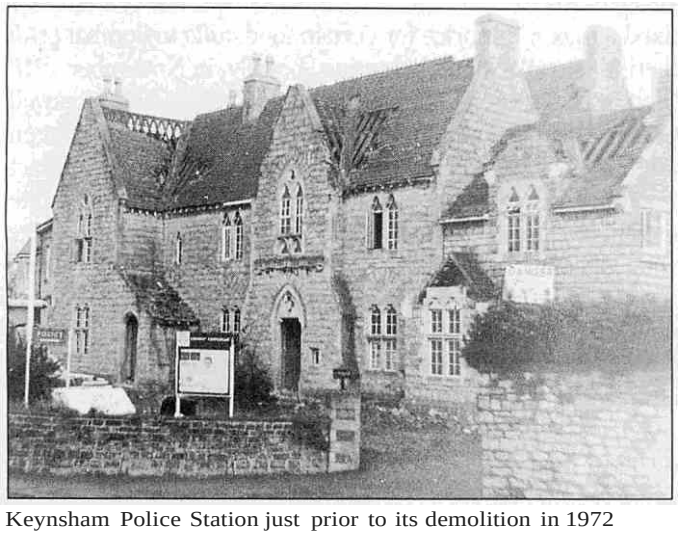
The Criminal Investigation Department came into being at the end of 1932. Three Sergeants were first selected, later, the strength was increased to 5 Detective Sergeants and 5 Detective Constables. The scientific aspect of C.I.D. work was being developed and a forensic laboratory was established by Bristol City Police of which the Somerset Constabulary made use. Meanwhile, successful research was being carried out into the development of latent fingerprints.[3]

During World War 2, some Somerset Police Constables were drafted to Bath and Bristol. Air- raid precautions, billeting, guarding vulnerable points and various war duties needed

more manpower- Police First Reservists, large numbers of Police War Reservists, Womens' Auxiliary Police Corps, and Special Constables. The Police Stations at Radstock and Whitchurch were damaged by air-raids and the northern section of the force was heavily stretched.[3]

Rationing continued until well after the war, as did the Black Market. Keynsham and Saltford were not innocent of this, an example being the discovery of 5 sheep skins in a lane near Stanton Prior. The owner of the sheep could not be found and the Police appealed for the public to inform them of any offers of Black Market mutton!

The history of local police since 1946, and the changes wrought by the 1974 Local Government Reorganisation, when Bristol, Somerset, Bath and Staple Hill Police amalgamated to form Avon and Somerset Police, are beyond the scope of this publication. Sufficient to say that Keynsham's handsome Victorian Police Station and Magistrates' Court were demolished in



Keynsham Police Station just prior to its demolition in 1972

1972 to provide parking spaces for the new Police Station and Courts. It is a matter for great concern and regret, that this year, 1990, Keynsham's Magistrates' Court will close, and after over 800 years, Keynsham will lose its ancient right to hold court. Keynsham has lost its identity in all respects. What remains now of our once rich heritage? Some of us tried to save it.

FIRE FIGHTING IN KEYNSHAM
by Trevor Whitehead

In the eighteenth century the job of fire fighting, particularly in small towns and villages, was often haphazard and disorganised. It was administered by the Parish Vestry, the parish church was the place where a fire engine (if any) and ladders, buckets and small implements were kept, and the churchwarden was the person in charge at a fire.

The earliest known reference to a fire engine in Keynsham is in the Churchwardens' Accounts of St. John's Church in 1776: 'To people who played the engine. In liquor- 5 shillings." The engine had to be pumped by hand, which was hard work, and the volunteers were usually paid in liquor rather than in money. In the following years there are regular annual payments of 5 shillings for "exercising" the engine, but it is not known how frequently it was used at an actual fire. It certainly needed repair from time to time as the following extracts show:

1789: "Ordered that Thos. Derrick be paid £l 1s 0d for repairing the engine."

1821: "Paid for carriage of engine to Bristol to be repaired 4s 0d.
Paid Arthur Britton for engine repairs £213s 6d.
Horse and cart for conveying engine from Bristo l6s 0d."

1869: "It was resolved that the Overseers do repair the Parish fire engine and procure a proper place wherein to keep the same."

The latter resolution was making use of the recent (1867) Poor Law Amendment Act which empowered the Vestry to pay expenditure on the fire engine out of the Poor Rate.

The following newspaper accounts of fires refer specifically to the engine. On 15 March 1873 the "Bristol Observer" reported a serious fire in the large stone building occupied by The Keynsham Lime, Paint & Colour Company at the foot of Dapp's Hill. The fire brigade of the Royal Insurance Company was summoned from Bristol and their large horse-drawn engine arrived "in about 25 minutes". (Bristol was still protected by insurance company fire brigades as the municipal brigade was not formed until 1877.) The newspaper report continues: "In their efforts the Royal brigade were to some extent assisted by the Keynsham parish engine, which was worked under the direction of Mr Harvey .. ." By strange coincidence another destructive fire occurred in the same building in January 1875. ". . . the small parish engine was brought to the spot, and the assistance of a number of villagers obtained, but the small quantity of water which could be thrown upon the building by the use of the parish engine proved quite abortive."

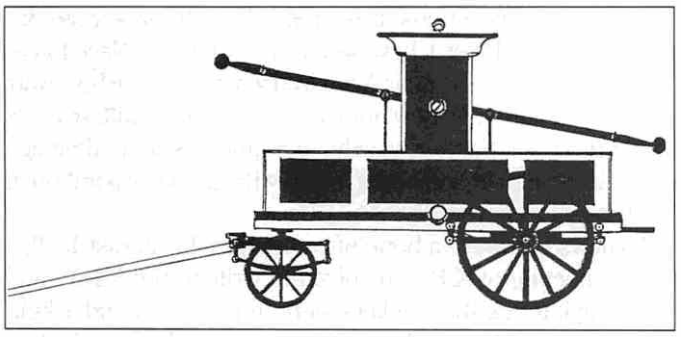
In 1883 the General Vestry decided to obtain some information regarding "extingteurs". This was because they thought that the supply of water in the village was really insufficient to operate the fire engine. The extingteur was a type of portable chemical fire extinguisher which had recently become popular.

Following the passing of the Parish Councils Act 1894 the administration of local government, including the maintenance of fire fighting equipment, became the responsibility of Keynsham Parish Council. In April 1895 it was proposed that the parish should provide a proper place for the fire engine, and the space near the weighbridge was suggested. (As it was no longer in the care of the Vestry the engine had to be removed from the church.)

The question of where to house the fire engine came up at regular intervals, and had been considered back in 1863. At that time it was suggested that the engine be kept at the Police Station, but it is clear that nothing was done. A visitor to the church commented indignantly in the mid 1870s "I found that the beautiful porch is thought worthy of no better purpose than to shelter the fire engine. Is not the parish wealthy enough to find some shed to cover this useful machine without desecrating the parish church?". On 21 May 1895 the Council reported "We had the old engine out for trial and inspection and we found it in much better condition than we anticipated". (They obviously did not normally take such close interest in it!) "We are of opinion a small expenditure upon it would make it a fairly good engine for the Parish of Keynsham". So they resolved to put it in proper working order and to have it tested at least once a

quarter. The repairs cost 17s 6d. The engine keeper, Mr CA Harvey, was to receive a quarterly payment of ten shillings which the Council considered "not an unreasonable remuneration as it took 12 hands to work the engine". The Council rented a shed in Station Road from Mr E. Harvey to house the engine, and it remained there for about ten years.

At the beginning of the twentieth century Keynsham was still without an organised body of fire fighters. The first recorded mention of this subject is in the Minutes of a General Vestry meeting held in April 1877 when "it was agreed to take such measures as desirable for the establishment of a Fire Brigade and procuring a Fire Engine." In fact no action was taken on either of these points, and the matter is not heard of again until July 1904: "It was agreed to take steps with a view to the establishment of a Fire Brigade."This time steps were taken, a full report prepared, and in October the report was submitted and adopted. At the next Parish Council meeting on 18 November 1904 it was moved, seconded and carried that a brigade to be called KEYNSHAM VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADE be set up. It was to consist of one officer and six men, proper rules were



Keynsham Fire Engine after the reconstruction of 1905. (Drawn by Trevor Whitehead)

Keynsham Fire Brigade about 1906

to be drawn up and uniforms provided. A retaining fee of 10 shillings per quarter was agreed plus 2 shillings for refreshments atthe monthly drill.The Chief Officer was Mr. Warburton and the six men were Messrs. Belsten, Harris, Headington, Hicks, Lacey and Stokes.

The new brigade's principal equipment comprised two pumps -the old manual fire engine, now nearing the end of its useful life, and a small hand pump. The latter was of a type manufactured from about 1848 and was similar to the stirrup pump used so effectively during the Second World War. (It was estimated to be worth £2 15s 0d) .By the end of 1906 considerable progress had been made, and the brigade was now installed in premises in Charlton Road at an annual rent of £4 10s 0d.

Unfortunately the precise extent of the premises is unknown, but it was obviously inadequate as the Council agreed in February 1909 to "the erection of a shed at the fire station to cover the fire engine." A pole with a bell attached was erected outside the fire station which could be rung by members of the public to call the firemen. That bell is now preserved in the present fire station.

An interesting photo taken about this time shows the firemen in their smart uniform including brass helmet. This photo also confirms their pump as being a typical 18th century parish engine, probably dating from about 1770. Certainly that exact type of engine, with transverse levers, was being made between approximately 1690 and 1790. From the photo it appears to be a "Second-size Engine" which, according to an advertisement issued in 1774, would have cost £34 0s 0d. The maker claimed that it could discharge 100 gallons per minute and the jet of water could reach a distance of 40 yards. It would originally have had solid wooden wheels, which may have been replaced by spoked ones in the 19th century.

Between 1782 and 1906 the parish records contain no less than ten references to the repair of the engine, and back in 1877 there had been talk of procuring a new one. The inability of this old machine to cope with anything other than a small fire is clearly shown by the newspaper report of 1875 already quoted, but in 1905 it was once again repaired and "modernised". Mr C.H.Rogers was paid £10 for work which entailed removing the wheels from the engine and fixing it to a new four-wheeled horse-drawn carriage. seats for the crew were added in 1906 and a brake was fitted in 1909.There was nothing unusual about the age of Keynsham Fire Brigade's pump. This sort of fire engine, i.e. a very old manual mounted on a new chassis, was very common in small towns throughout Britain in the early years of the 20th century. However, by the middle of 1908 the state of the engine was again causing concern. The Minutes of 5 June 1908 record that it "had that evening been tried and had not worked satisfactorily. Because of the age of the engine it seemed desirable for no further money to be expended thereon and permission be granted for the Captain of the Brigade to endeavour to obtain by subscription sufficient funds to purchase a new engine." The sum required was estimated to be about £230, but the idea of requesting subscriptions proved to be unsuccessful. In August 1910 it was suggested that the engine should be disposed of, and at the November meeting of the Council a letter from the Keynsham Town Ratepayers Association was read which stated that they would be pleased to hear that the engine would be consigned to the scrap heap. Even at this stage nothing was done, and the years of the Great War passed by before it was resolved that the engine be sold. The last mention in the Minutes is on 16 April 1919 and the ancient machine was presumably sold for scrap.

For the next ten years the Brigade functioned without any mobile appliance, but a motor lorry was available on hire to transport firemen and equipment to fires in the rural area. Fires in the town were tackled by using hose attached directly to a hydrant, and a hand cart was used to carry the hose, fittings and tools. Towards the end of the 1920s two events occurred which greatly increased the efficiency and the morale of the Fire Brigade. In April 1928 the Brigade moved into what can be described as their first "proper" fire station. This was located at 65 High Street and was an old coach house. The property had

been bought by the Council in 1923 with the intention of using it as a fire station, but in fact it was rented to Chappell Bros. during the following five years. The conversion of the premises was carried out by Thomas Bros. in 1928 at a cost of £273 4s 0d and resulted in Keynsham having for the first time adequate accommodation for a fire engine. But there was no fire engine -only a hand cart!

In October 1926 there were suggestions that Keynsham ought to have a new fire engine, and in 1929 the Brigade was motorised. The new equipment consisted of a Ford lorry chassis with bodywork built by Mullett's (Bristol). This could accommodate the driver and officer in front and four men on each side. Locker space was provided for hose and gear and a 40ft ladder was carried on a centre gallows. The chassis was also equipped to tow a trailer pump. The pump, supplied by Merryweather, was mounted on a two-wheel trailer. This combination of trailer pump and towing vehicle was favoured by Brigades which could not afford to purchase a purpose-built fire engine from one of the major manufacturers such as Leyland, Merryweather or Dennis.

During the 1930s this equipment served the area well, until the ultimate in fire appliances arrived in Keynsham. In 1939 the Urban District Council purchased a brand new Leyland limousine motor pump, registration No. EYD586. The Chief Officer was Mr. Bailey, and the complement of firemen was 13, including Messrs. Guyan, Bateman, Harper, Palmer, Parsons, Pearce, Rayson, Robbins, Taylor, Woodman and three Hardings. At last the firemen could ride to fires in enclosed comfort! But the Second World War was fast approaching and the name of Keynsham Fire Brigade was not to exist for much longer. It finally disappeared in August 1941 when Keynsham fire station became just one of many in No.17 Fire Force Area of No.7 (South Western) Region of the National Fire Service.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT
By Barbara J. Lowe

Underlying all the changes made in policing and fire-fighting were the changes in local government, especially those in the 19th century, which made it possible for professional policemen to replace unpaid Constables because of the changes in the way local finance was raised and administered. In 1894, Urban and Rural Districts were created (outside London) and Keynsham Rural District Council was established to govern the surrounding villages of Saltford, Newton St. Loe, Kelston, Stanton Prior, Marksbury, Burnett, Whitchurch and part of Brislington. Keynsham and Saltford had their own Parish Councils which assumed responsibility for maintenance of fire-fighting equipment, housing , footpaths, Mortuary facilities, pest control, street naming and house numbering, water supply, street lighting, drainage, sewerage, and also recreation facilities etc. The minutes of these Parish meetings make interesting reading. In June 1895, the Keynsham Parish Council enthusiastically established a recreation ground with swings and seats in Mr. Wiltshire's field. It requested tenders for lighting the new roads (Albert, Rock and Cox's Lane) from both the Electric Light Company and the Keynsham Gas company, accepting the electricity one. It also made a survey of local charities and traced 13 of them. However, tussles soon arose with the Rural District Council (RD.C.) over some matters. Drainage and sewerage were very sore points. Late in 1896, Somerset County Council arranged an enquiry into Keynsham's drainage without first holding a local one. New drains had been laid c.1874 and the parish considered them satisfactory. Both the Local Government Board (L.G.B.) and R.D.C. proved that a drainage scheme was imperative and the Parish resented being unable to arrange its own affairs. The R.D.C. then applied to the L.G.B. for a provisional compulsory order for the acquisition of land for sewerage disposal. The incensed Parish Council cried for the formation of an Urban District Council. Eight months later, the R.D.C. suggested a continuation of the Parochial Committee for the purpose of considering any necessary drainage. The sanctioning of a loan from the L.G.B. for the provision of sewerage treatment helped the situation and suitable sites were inspected, the Horse Ham one being deemed suitable.

The first drain tackled was from the Liberal Club (Bath Hill West) to the River Chew and a pipe was laid in the summer of 1898. April 1900 saw the installation of a large drain from the back of the Church, through Back Lane, to the side of the school on Bath Hill. (Contractors obliterating the ancient right-of-way, Back Lane, in 1988, broke into this still-in-use drain and the fumes from it caused two workmen to be overcome and sent to hospital. What a pity the Parish minutes were not studied before work began!) Objections arose regarding the sewerage discharge into the River Chew so a new outfill was placed near Chew Bridge (the one near Avon Mill which was washed away in the 1968 floods). As new housing estates were built, so more problems arose. Saltford wisely kept quiet about its drainage and in 1909 sensibly resolved to join with Bath Corporation in the disposal of sewerage.

Bye-laws too, were a bone of contention. In August 1899, a special meeting of K.P.C. resolved to write to the R.D.C. and L.G.B. saying that the bye-laws were unnecessary and asking for Keynsham to be withdrawn. When this failed, they asked for the rules to be modified and they submitted detailed amendments. The L.G.B. would not entertain most of these. Saltford Parish Council, in April 1902, also considered the bye-laws "utterly inapplicable" . The bye-laws were enforced, so, once again, K.P.C. cried for a U.D.C. and, in March 1903, appointed a sub-committee to investigate the matter. One hundred copies of the sub-committee's report were to be printed and application made to S.C.C. for a part of the parish to become a U.D.C. The Parish Meeting was approached for a further mandate of approval in view of the probable increase in rates which would result. The outcome is not recorded, but an application was made to the R.D.C. for a larger representation and the formation of a properly constituted parochial committee. In 1898 the Rev. Houlston had suggested that streets should be named but the council considered that the time had not yet arrived for this. In 1904 Bristol Post Office made the request but it was 1907 before street name plates were provided. During the 1920's various new roads were named and other names altered. It was 1931 before council houses were numbered in Saltford.

In 1919 the Addison Housing Act compelled local authorities to survey housing needs in their areas, and to provide any necessary houses with the aid of a government subsidy. Before W.W.I. most houses had been for rent but after the war building costs were higher making private enterprise building for rent no longer profitable. There was also now a minimum standard for housing. Keynsham's first Council Houses were at Pittsville (St. Ladoc Road area) and Saltford built 8 new cottages between the Mission Hall and Tunnel House, both in 1921.

Another K.P.C . responsibility was the provision of cemetery and mortuary facilities. Land at Durley Hill was purchased in

1876 and the two chapels there were in course of erection in 1885. There were problems, however, for the question of mortuary facilities arose in 1906 and again in 1909 when the provision of a mortuary was deemed desirable. By 1913 the problem was still unresolved and it was decided to ask Inn Landlords to store bodies for burial at 10s 6d a case! Only Mr Oram, of the New Inn, consented to receive dead bodies.

Over a number of years, grave digging had disturbed Roman remains in the cemetery, but in 1922, Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society undertook archaeological investigation, the work being supervised by Dr. Bullied and Father Horne. Although it was suggested that the hexagonal room of the Roman Villa be preserved by the erection over it of a market- cross type building, nothing was done. In 1924, Messrs Fry's were given permission to lift the Roman pavements and invited to house the remains on condition that they stayed in Keynsham. In 1928, the Council agreed to fill in the site of the Villa but to remove the stone walls to facilitate grave digging and provide stone for the boundary walls!

By January 1931, application was again being made for U.D. status for Keynsham, but again, the S.C.C. refused. In January 1932, Keynsham suggested that Saltford should join them in the formation of an U.D. combining the two districts, but Saltford resolved to oppose any such application. The Ministry of Health announced a local enquiry but by March 1933, they too had rejected Keynsham's application. In May 1933, S.C.C. suggested that the two parishes of Keynsham and Saltford be amalgamated as a single unit within Bathavon R.D. Both Keynsham and Saltford rejected this idea, in vain. There was, however, a Local Government Act in 1933, and eventually, in March 1936, S.C.C. approved, in principal, the removal of Keynsham and Saltford Parishes from Bathavon RD. to form Keynsham Urban District.

Elections for the new Council took place on 8th March 1938, with 37 candidates for 10 seats in the West Ward (Keynsham town) and 9 candidates for 5 seats in the East Ward (Saltford and part of Bath Road). The first meeting took place on 4th April in the Board Room of the Poor Law Institute at Keynsham and H.S. Radcliffe, J.P., High Sheriff of Somerset, was elected Chairman. He had previously been Chairman of Saltford Parish Council and a member of S.C.C. During W.W.I. he had been Chairman of the District Food Committee. Mr S.G.F. Price agreed to act as Temporary Clerk. An advertisement was approved for a full time Clerk and Finance Officer at a salary of £350 p.a. There were 70 applicants for the post and 7 were interviewed on 13th May. Mr George Ashton, then deputy Clerk and Accountant of Whitefield U.D. Lancashire, was the unanimous choice.

Meetings were held on the 2nd Wednesday in each month, at 6.30 p.m., and at the 2nd meeting on 14th April, Health and Housing, Works, Rates and Valuation Committees were formed.

Air raid precautions were discussed and Major Chappell became Air-Raid Officer. Discussion took place regarding new Council Offices. Bathavon R.D.C. had leased 16, High Street. Keynsham P.C., from 1895, had met at the Police Station. Later they met at 31, High Street (then the Gas Co. offices) and then, in 1936, at 11, Station Road. Purchase of 9, Wellsway was under consideration. Now, for the new U.D.C., Mr Keeling suggested the use of a site at the bottom of Bath Hill, on the main road where a car park could be provided. Another site adjoining the telephone exchange was considered. By 14th July 1938 they were meeting in the Church Rooms. After the war, meetings were held in the old Library (formerly the Liberal Club) on Bath Hill West, until the new Council Offices and Library were built in the 1960's.

Mr. B.J.V. Nicholls was the 2nd Chairman of KU.D.C. and E.A Cannock (of trimobile fame) was the 3rd.

9
War and Peace
Michael C Fitter

WORLD WAR I, 1914-1918

George Steiner wrote 'In Bluebeard's Castle' (1971, p 33). The butcheries of Passendale and the Somme, gutted a generation of English moral and intellectual talent ... [and] eliminated many of the best from the European future.' Mr. Percy Baker who was born at Ham's Cottage, an old house sited on the town's rugby field complex, and who was a boy who took his turn in fetching water from the nearby spring for the family's use, can well represent the local inhabitants of his generation who still grieve the loss of their beloved kindred from the family meal table.

The late Mrs. Gwen Newman recalled how as children they were given a day off school to wave off their uniformed fathers and brothers in the Somerset Light Infantry, who led by a band, marched through the village to Keynsham's railway station, to embark for France. Some never returned, others came back maimed.

It was probably late August 1914 that a convoy of makeshift army lorries drove down Bath Road for Avonmouth and 'the front'. Seated on the wall of the Elms, the home of Mr. Seymour Smith, young Hettie Scears (now Mrs. Wilson) and her friends threw apples to 'our boys'. Further along the road, at Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee drinking fountain at the top of Bath Hill, a youthful Gwen Glover (Mrs. Newman) with her friends from Brick Town area, also cheered on the departing Tommies'. Mr. Frank Bees who was 8 in 1914, tells his version of the delightful events of one winter's morning. 'Early in the day, with the snow on the ground, a convoy of troops was passing through the village. Among them was the young Tom Godfrey of the local haulage family. He was therefore able to drive, and was in the 'Army Transport' section. He was driving a 'Peerless' waggon, one of the earliest types, which was very crude looking. It had solid rubber tyres, coiled front springs and chain driven rear wheels. Tom told his C.O that if they pulled into Temple Street where he was born, he was sure they would all get a drink of tea. So the street awoke to the sound of a convoy of lorries, and soon afterwards, everywhere, jugs of hot tea were brought out to the cold troops.'

After a short period in the trenches, Edward Loxton was sent back to this country for training as an officer. As Lieutenant Loxton, his final posting was to Mesopotamia, where he was when the war ended. He commented, rather surprisingly, 'I never fired a shot in the whole World War.'

Earlier, a Keynsham lad in The Somersets' had a wonderful deliverance. After a battle disastrous for the English, victorious Turkish soldiers were walking over the battleground, killing off injured enemy soldiers. By the time they arrived at our man on the ground, they were arguing so violently among themselves about the booty they were collecting, that they passed him by unnoticed. He lived to survive the war and return home.

Something of the horror of trench warfare is reflected in the words of Mrs. I. Andrews when she wrote that, The family of Mr. & Mrs. J. Wilcox, my grandparents, lived at 86, Bath Hill. They had four sons and three daughters. The four sons all enlisted as early as possible in the Somerset L. Infantry in WWl. Henry was invalided out. Frank had a leg shot off. Jack, a crack shot sniper, was killed in a sortie into enemy lines, while George suffered from trench feet on the Somme'.

Mr. R Headington recalled that his father, Wm. G. Headington served in the S.L.I. in WW1 and survived being blown up and half buried. He returned home in 1918 and worked with difficulty for six years, until he was too ill with his head and legs shaking all the time from shell shock. He died soon afterwards.

Mr. Bees remembered that at Bristol Temple Meads Station, the old museum section, which was then part of the LMS line, had one whole length of the platform reserved for receiving injured soldiers. Fleets of ambulances drove them to hospital. Mrs. Newman stated that during the war, nurses were trained at the Keynsham Workhouse complex, in the isolated building on the far side towards Conygre Farm.

One of the most widely remembered local events was the arrival of thousands of mules in Keynsham and Saltford, as an assembly point, prior to their despatch to the front for pulling gun carriages. Miss M. Fairclough recalls them being driven at night from the Goods Station to Conygre Farm, past her home in 16 Avon Rd. where she was born. Mr. Bees, referring to the farm as a 'Mule-ing Station', said, The fields below Wellsway were so thick with aninmals that you couldn't see a blade of grass.' Mr. L.Ellis remembered how the mules used to get out at night, and were pursued by mounted soldiers who would arrive shouting and making a great din to get the animals out of residents' gardens and back to the farm. Mrs. Newman mentioned the tragic outbreak of anthrax and how hundreds of carcases were burnt in a lime pit near the allotments at the end of Park Road. She added that soon after that, the mules were all gone.

Among the soldiers caring for the mules were farriers and blacksmiths. As Mrs. F. Bees explained, The soldiers naturally were billeted locally and quite a few married local girls. We called these soldiers 'mule-eers'.

Because a large number of men left Keynsham and Saltford for active service, this necessitated the local women filling their places on the land, and in the shops and factories. Gwen Newman described how her mother, Mrs. Glover, was a part of a young gang of women who swept and tarred the roads from Keynsham to Hallatrow. Mr. J Sticker, recalling those road surfaces, said that when he passes the old site of the old Lamb and Lark Hotel [now Gateway] occasionally he still finds himself half closing his eyes against the stinging powered stone dust blown up from Bath Hill.

Elderly residents speak of the shortage of food then, and of walking to Bristol for a pound of dripping. With a shortage of coal, people were told to 'put away the poker' until the end of the hostilities. Gas street lighting was dimmed by covers with but a small hole in them. Despite daily prayers in Bath Hill School for the village's fathers and brothers, there was a heavy loss of life and many tears and much grief. Yet I was told by an elderly lady that this very suffering produced a wonderful community spirit. 'If neighbours were in trouble, you did not wait to be asked to help, you just called in to offer sympathy and support.' To facilitate a victorious and speedy end to the war, even if it did unexpectedly drag on well after Christmas 1914, local factories were involved in munition work. There was Torrence's at Bitton, and the Tagent Tool business, now a garage on Bath Road, Keynsham, beyond Ellsbridge House. On Bristol Road, the garage of Mr. Cannock senior was producing intricate metal parts for our early flying machines. Miss Fairclough believed that the Avon Brass Mill went over to making brass shell cases,too.

Sometime after the Armistice, which came into effect on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, a Thanksgiving Service was held at St. John's Parish Church, Keynsham. Despite the fact that many women had served gallantly overseas as nurses and drivers, this was to be an all male event. The Keynsham R.D.C. was invited, so as a Councillor, Mrs. H. Crease was determined to go, and go she did and rightly so.

The men of Keynsham and Saltford died for a better, fairer world. We salute the memory and the sacrifice of the 53 Keynsham men, and the 17 Saltford men, who fell in the First World War.

When the war started Mr. John Scott Parker of Upton House, Upton Cheyney, was farming at Pipley Valley. Too old for active service, his offer to help was accepted by the Directorate of Grave's Registration and Enquires. The number of deaths in the trench fighting was appalling. He was given the rank of lieutenant, later Captain, and was made responsible for locating and extending such English cemeteries as existed in the war zones. There he organised the facilities for the individual burying of thousands of servicemen, and the provision of named tombstones, and the later care of the cemeteries. Touring the battles zones, he pursued this demanding and often dangerous work right through and after the war. When King George V visited the cemeteries in 1922, Captain Parker was involved with the royal visits. He was awarded the O.B.E. in 1924. Mrs. Susan James is his daughter.

His work helped bring to fulfilment the famous words of the soldier-poet, Rupert Brooke, written on leave in 1914, prior to his death the following year.

'THE SOLDIER'

'If I should die, think only this of me.
That there's some corner of a foreign field,
That is for ever England …'

Peace Celebrations in Temple Street, 1919

WORLD WAR 11, 1939-1945

ON ACITVE SERVICE

So many Keynsham and Saltford men and women served in the army, the navy and the air force, that one hesitates to mention individual servicemen. Probably the greatest number were in the various army regiments, particularly the Somerset Light Infantry, each person with a story to tell. For many exservicemen, the events of the war are now a closed book, full of painful and horrific memories.

Not least is this true for Keynsham born G.J. Howes, then a medical orderly, who was captured by the Germans near Dunkirk at the time of the evacuation, and who with his fellow servicemen were taken across Europe to a Polish farm for the duration of the war. Cold and hungry, and under the supervision of German guards, he commented that 'It was the British Red Cross food parcels that kept us alive.'

A young local lad, Driver L .Hall, RASC, endured the continuous horror of the Death Railway in Burma under the Japanese tyranny, and lived to return home. Another local serviceman, Lance-Bombadier C. Wiggins, was also captured by the Japanese at the fall of Singapore, and was taken to Korea to work in a munitions factory during the war.

His brother Philip volunteered for the navy and was torpedoed off Scandinavia, and lived to recall his adventures. Another Keynsham man went to Canada, then to the U.SA, there to train English fighter pilots. He was surprised indeed to meet a young pilot officer from Keynsham among his trainees.

Sapper 'Bill' Williams, third son of the well known SLI Recruiting Colour Sergeant, Henry Williams, was in the Oxford and Bucks LI. Later after serving in Ireland and on Salisbury Plain, under General Montgomery he was in the D Day invasion force in Normandy. He fought through Caen, Rouen, Amien, Antwerp and into Hamburg. Later back in Keynsham he wrote that he had been in 'the hell, not the glory, they call war.'

In the famous battles in North Africa, Egypt, Palestine, France, Holland, Belgium and Germany, some individual local men can proudly say, 'I was there.'

OCCUPATION BY BRITISH AND AMERICAN SOLDIERS

By the irony of fate, as Keynsham and Saltford saw their sons rally to the colours, soldiers from other parts of the country, such as Private H. Wakeling (later 'Major') came to be stationed locally, many at the large Rockhill Farm complex. Others slept at the Drill Hall, or were billeted nearby in such places as the R.C. Presbytery.

The Fear Institute was 'Commandeered for the duration' as the YMCA, for the sole use of troops stationed here. There they could relax over a meal, with games and music. One visiting U.K Officer found his future wife there, serving in the canteen, and after the war took her to his south coast home. Some residents offered the hospitality of their homes.

From mid 1943 onwards, prior to the D Day Invasion of France on June 6 1944, considerable interest was aroused by the arrival of United States servicemen in Keynsham. 'Over paid, over sexed and over here,' was the popular phrase used to describe them. Actually the soldiers were billeted in barracks in Pixash Lane, with one wing for the white soldiers, and another for the coloured soldiers. Among their duties was the guarding of the extensive munition stores at Burnett Point.

Generally they made a good impression on the local population, with their cheerfulness and generosity, and there were naturally a number of local romances. One resident described them as 'hotstuff and said, 'the girls ran after them and the Americans were mainly to be seen in the High Street walking out with our girls. 'and believed' that there was at least one marriage.' Their presence ended as suddenly as it started once the invasion of France commenced.

ON THE HOME FRONT

With many local men away on active service, and women too, the remaining members of the fairer sex were again pressed into the war effort. In a long low building at the rear of the present Social Security Centre on Wellsway, ladies, including Miss.J. Knight, issued ration books. While Land Army girls were busy on nearby farms, a lady 'postman', Miss J Cannam, delivered the mail. On Avon Rd. above the car park, was a 'Mother and Baby Clinic', while in the park, below the Drill Hall, the large WVS hut became 'The British Restaurant', where shop and council office workers had their lunches, by courtesy of a small staff of women, led by Mrs. G. Newman.

The Fire Service and the Police Force both recruited local women in their ranks, partly on telephonist, office and siren duty. They are represented by Miss Delia Wiggins and APW. Isobel Ollis. Torrences and the Tanget Tool Company were again producing munitions. Part of the Polysulphin Works was used to assemble aircraft parts, with two 12 hours shifts working day and night continuously. It was taken manned mainly by women, but also by lads, and by men who had failed the service's medical examination. Two blocks at Fry's were taken over by B.A.C. for building planes.

LOCAL BOMBING

Keynsham and Saltford in 1940 were far smaller than today, with a Keynsham population of 5,000 being only a quarter of todays 20,000 plus. Being so close to Bath, and especially near to Bristol, many of the Luftwaffe's bomb loads intended for those cities, fell on local soil. As Miss Fairclough said, 'There was heavy bombing all round Keynsham, particularly in the fields to the sides of Charlton Road. One crater on what is now the Federated Homes Estate, was large enough to put a double decker bus in. Despite this, the village was largely unmarked, as the large housing estates were not in existence then.'

The first stick of high explosive bombs-fell in a line from Avon Rd. along the Chew River in the park towards the church, causing little damage. Another 'stick' fell near Uplands Farm where the last bomb just missed the underground ammunition dump at Burnett. On another occasion a bomb hit a Fry's building and bounced out again, without exploding. These are just a few examples of the widespread but fortunately largely harmless bombing.

In addition to the H.E. bombs there were the incendiary devices which fell thick and fast locally. The March 20 1987 edition of the Keynsham Chronicle refers to 'a direct hit on 54 High Street by a 500 lb petrol/ oil bomb' then goes on to state that really it was on number '59 High St. on the night of August 19 and 20 1940'. The property, sited next to Oxfam, belonged to Mrs. BM Carter, who lived at 54 but also owned 59, the blitzed house, Oxfam being no. 57. Axe wielding firemen forcibly entered the premises, rescued the occupier, doused out the blazing piano and brought the fire under control, by which time the roof was reduced to a shell.

Meanwhile, at the far end of Stockwood Vale, was a detonating area where unexploded bombs were set off. Further still along the valley was a decoy system of supposedly lit-up houses to mislead German bombers and draw their bomb loads away from Bristol. Mr. E Loxton, who farmed at Queen Charlton, recalled that nearby residents dubbed it 'Fairy Land.'

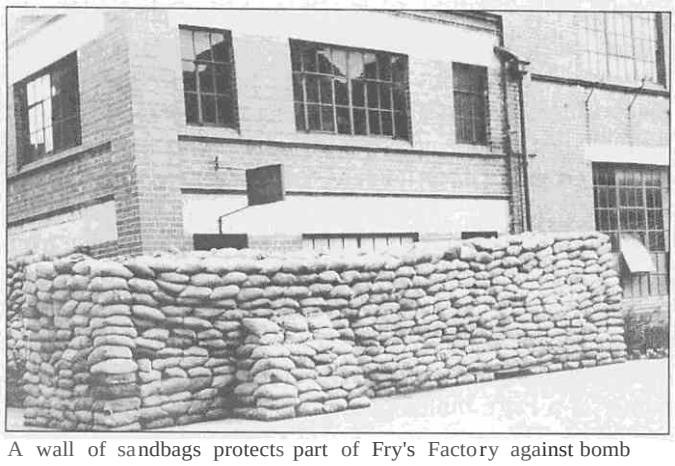
CRASHED PlANES

Two planes crashed locally. One hit a field at the top of Wellsway, opposite Uplands Farm, above the incline down to Chewton Keynsham. It was one of ours and sadly there were no survivors. The Chronicle of Aug. 28 1988 specified that it was, 'A Wellington bomber ...the weather conditions were good ... the pilot [was] W/0 Harvey ... the wreckage was gutted by fire ... the crew of six were all killed ... the cause of the accident remains obscure.' It crashed just after midnight.

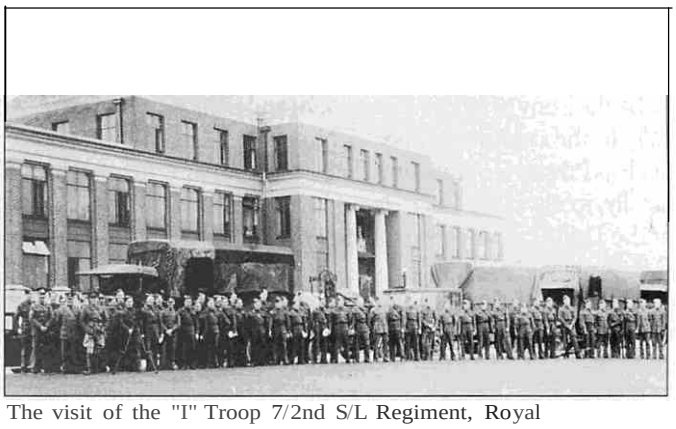
The other plane was a small British fighter, which crashed in daylight on the then allotments in the field beside the Hawthorns Residential Home. As it roared overhead, it narrowly missed a school full of London evacuees at Bethesda chapel, who dashed out to see it, and who on their return were caned for disobediently running out.

FRY'S - MORE THAN JUST CHOCOlATE

With its extensive buildings and a large work force, the factory was highly mobilised for the war effort. They had their own Home Guard, a Decontamination Group in case of a gas attack, a First Aid Unit, a Mobile Canteen and so on. Part of their playing field was ploughed up to support the 'Dig for Victory' campaign to produce one's own food. We have already noted that B.A.C. had taken over two of Fry's blocks for aircraft production.



A wall of sandbags protects part of Fry's Factory against bomb blast, shrapnel and machine gun bullets in September 1939

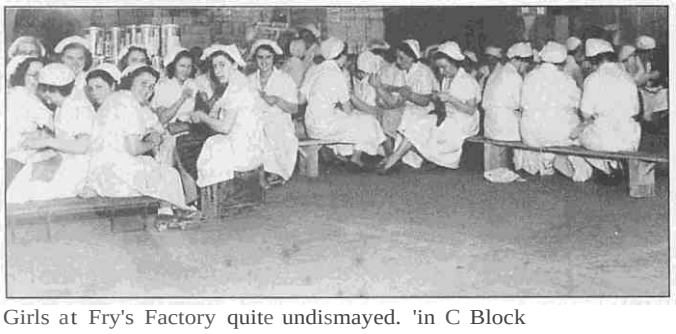


The visit of the "I" Troop 7/2nd S/L Regiment, Royal Artillery, to Fry's, Somerdale, Keynsham, on 2 November 1939

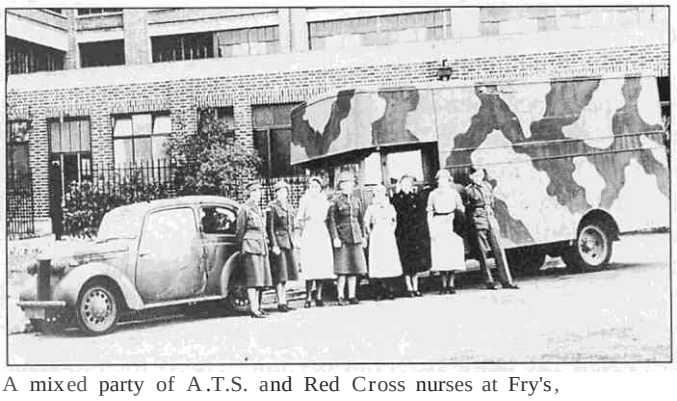
Fry's famous chocolate train, linking the factory with the mainline railways, is carefuly hidden from marauding German fighters

During the war, a few men join the many girls on the steps of

Fry's for what they record as, 'War Savings Week, Dinner· hour and pictures'



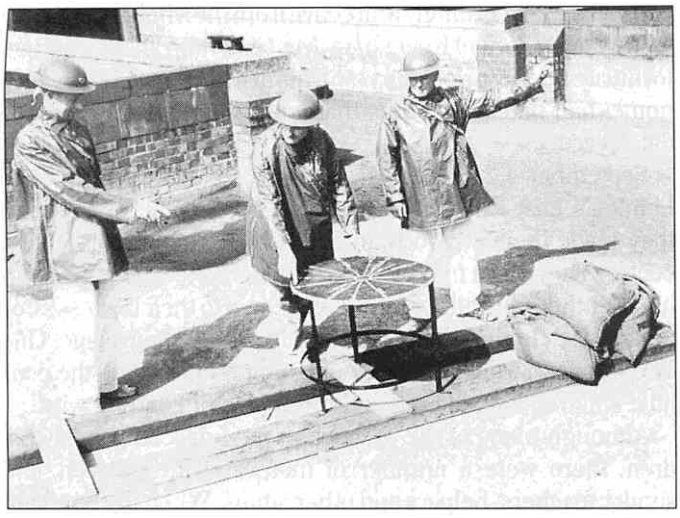
Girls at Fry's Factory quite undismayed. 'in C Block Shelter during a raid, August 1940



A mixed party of A.T.S. and Red Cross nurses at Fry's, circa 1941

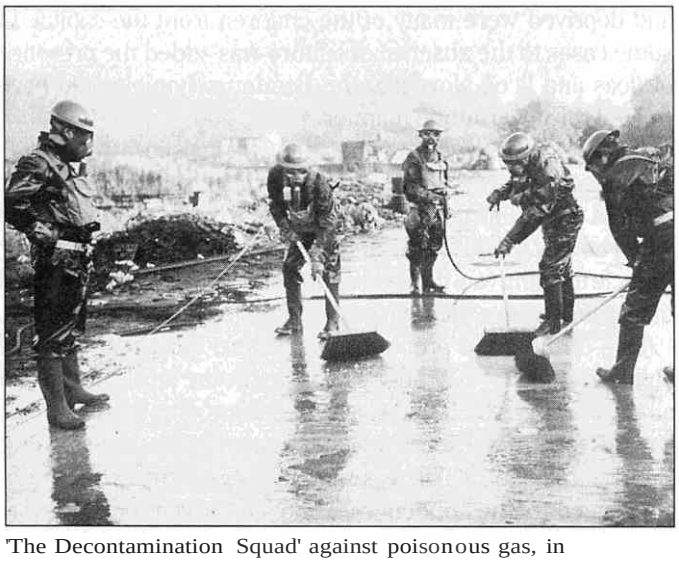
The visit of Queen Mary to Fry's Chocolate Factory at Somerdale. Keynsham. on January 19. 1940

The words on the van say it all. However, note the widely used dipped head light attachment on the nearside and the spokes on the wheels



It was important for the Observer Corps to forward information on the height, direction, speed and number of the approaching Luftwaffe

Gas masks were provided free for the whole civil population, and this Fry's photo shows them being assembled for issue to the workforce. A girl is trying one on. For some they had a claustrophobic effect



'The Decontamination Squad' against poisonous gas, in practice at Fry's in November 1939

'Loading "V.R." Chocolate, May 1945, specially made for children of occupied countries'. This was pre the fork lift truck and computer age

UNIFORMS

In the High Street, uniforms were to be seen everywhere. There were individual servicemen home on leave, ARP wardens, firemen, policemen, Red Cross members, the WVS and St. Johns Ambulance Brigade volunteers. At night fire wardens guarded shops and homes against incendiaries, while ARP workers shouted, 'Put that light out', to any householder foolish enough to put on a light without first drawing the blinds.

Every home had a supply of candles and if possible a paraffin lamp in case the lights went out. Every family also grew as many vegetables as possible. For a long period from June 1940 to April 1942 when Bath was attacked, the night skies were frequently swept by searchlights such as those sighted at today's Hurran's Garden Centre, while blazing Bofors guns were pulled through the village on the Bath and Bristol Roads. When the Luftwaffe approached, anxious citizens sought shelter below the staircase, while others huddled in the box-like Morrison shelters in a downstair's room.

THE HOME GUARD

At first they were armed only with pick-axe handles and in pairs they would cycle up to the top of Charlton Road to watch over the village from their 'look out post'. At the end of Lockingwell Rd. a hardened tarmac mound became a 'defence post', with a supply of home made 'Molotov cocktails' at hand. The Drill Hall was Headquarters, where men paraded, received weapon training and were sent out on their nightly guard duties. This was particularly the protection of the Burnett 'dump', an ammunition complex to which they would be driven by the regular army in their lorries. The Commanding Officer was Major W S Scammell, M. C., LLB., a solicitor living at 9 Priory Road, Keynsham.

Gradually the Dad's Army image was replaced with the issue of proper uniforms, together with increased proficiency in the use of their newly issued 303 Lee Enfield rifles. Every six weeks targets at 100 yards distance- were set up on the slopes of Stockwood Vale. Accuracy in throwing grenades (without detonators) was practised in the park near the Drill Hall. On occasional Sundays, army lorries would take the local men to

the official Weapons Training Range at Kingston Seymour.

Each member of the Home Guard was responsible for his rifle and bayonet, (there were no machine guns locally) which he kept at home. One large family where father drank too much on a Saturday night, 'if he could get it' and who could then become aggressively dangerous, took to hiding his eighteen- inch bayonet before he returned home.

The age range was extensive. At one end a fifteen-year-old lad, related to a corporal, put up his age and was accepted .In the middle were men in reserved occupations or of limited health , while at the top end were World War One veterans who trained the raw recruits, led by Major Scammell, and Major F.W. Tennant. He lived at Chandos House, 17 Station Road, Keynsham. The Keynsham Company consisted of three sections, comprising nearly a hundred men.

Mr. M J Whittock , one of the younger members, recalled that because of their main occupations and the long shifts that they worked, the number on parade varied night by night. On average, members did an all night duty once a month, in a spirit of good companionship, with no bullying or shouting. They were finally disbanded in 1944.

OTHER LOCAL WARTIME ASSOCIATIONS

Because of the heavy bombing in Bristol and Bath, the local Red Cross were obviously involved, in addition to preparing vital food parcels for prisoners of war. The Women Voluntary Service, had a responsibility for food and emergency cooking for the local populace if required, in addition to knitting extra clothing for the troops.

A small group of responsible men were part time volunteers in the Observer Corps monitoring the approach of enemy aircraft from local high points as part of a national network.

Mac Hawkins in his excellent book, 'Somerset At War, 1939- 45', (Dovecote Press, 1988), refers to the part time war service of the manager of Edward Wiggins Blds.' Mr. R N. Willey of Keynsham, the leader of 2/6 Rescue Squad, received the George Medal for his outstanding work of rescue at the Circus Tavern (Bath). Willey had constantly put himself at risk by tunneling his way to victims that had been buried under the table, when their house had collapsed on them.' [p. 68.]

THE NATIONAL FIRE SERVICE

Mr. S. F. Holburn, recalling his work in the NFS, commented that Keynsham's fire service, with its single old fashioned engine and a few part time firemen, was quickly upgraded into a large station with seven engines and appliances, full time drivers and firemen, with many additional part-time volunteers numbering before D Day some 70-80 men. They were supported by two female wireless operators, positioned above the old fire station in the High Street, a site later demolished and developed by Currys. The extra engines, and the hut with its bunks and canteen for its full time members on their 24 hour duty, were in the car park of the Lamb and Lark Hotel, (at the rear of Ronto's), almost opposite the fire station. They saw duty both in Bath and Bristol following the air raids there, in addition to dealing with local outbreaks of fire.

EVACUEES

Prior to the outbreak of World War II it was feared that the large cities of Great Britain would be heavily bombed, and London particularly. Accordingly a directive from the Ministry of Health to the Town Clerk of Keynsham, Mr. G. Ashton, instructed him to initiate a door to door survey of his district to ascertain which homes had 'habitable rooms' that could be utilised to accommodate evacuees.

September 1,2,3 and 4 saw train loads of evacuees from London's East End arrive at Keynsham Station, from where they made their way to Bath Hill School, the local reception centre. They were met by W.V.S. volunteers, who provided a meal for them and either introduced them to their hostesses, or took parties to their billets in various parts of the village. One WVS worker, Miss M. Fairclough, commented that 'the poor little children looked tired and frightened out of their wits'.

Although many of the evacuees were unaccompanied children, there were a number of mothers with children, and sundry teachers, helpers and other adults. When the bombing started in earnest in 1940, many more young people were evacuated here. However, when the raids were thought to be over, a number returned to their beloved East End of London. It came as a great shock to the local families to see how poor and deprived were many of the children from the capital. In some cases to the absence of culture was added the presence of fleas and lice.. Normally the London schools would have treated this in a routine manner.

Once it was dealt with, the hosts and their visitors were better able to settle down. Some of these poor little mites had never been in the countryside before, and one 8 year old exclaimed when he saw a field for the first time, 'it was a miracle'. Another miracle to many was the satisfaction of seeing cows milked , and of learning where the milk really came from.

One of the great problems was where this great influx of children could go to school. Accordingly, the local church and all the chapels which had spare meeting rooms were pressed into this form of war service. Mention has already been made of Bethesda Chapel, which was completely given up to the educational needs of the Londoners. The Victoria Methodist Sunday School hut at the rear of the church (long before the days of the Key Centre), was used as a school room for Roman Catholic children, run by four Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, who came down with the children from London.

Naturally there was some resentment from the local school children at the swamping of their territory by alien Londoners, with their distinctive accent and turn of phrase, and foreign form of behaviour. An early but ferocious snowball fight near the Lamb and Lark Hotel, between the native children from Bath Hill school, versus 'they evacuees' from Bethesda, typified the early relationships. But as time went on, the two groups began to understand each other better, and a friendlier relationship evolved.

In the warmth of the home, many fond friendships flowered. More than one set of residents sought to adopt the child who had became one of their own. Now 50 years later, some still continue their happy association. Hostesses received some small weekly financial help to feed and care for their charges, while the WVS kept a watching brief on unaccompanied children. Mothers with children were accommodated in the large houses in Priory Road, The Avenue and in Milward Lodge.

With regard to the number of evacuees here, the minutes of the Keynsham UDC record that the Minister, 'decided that the UDC should accommodate 2,200 evacuees of whatever description. 805 were received between 1 and 4 September 1939, divided as follows; 368 unaccompanied children including

teachers and helpers, 434 accompanied children and 3 expectant mothers'.

The minutes record that in October 1939 Keynsham agreed to the transfer of 50 children, plus helpers and teachers, from Long Ashton. In the same month there were 2 cases of scarlet fever, one of diptheria and several cases of impetigo among the children. There was complaint also of numerous cases of scabies and verminous heads and many households refused to take evacuees until the infestations had been dealt with. 'Miss. Fairclough wrote, 'I believe Hamleaze House in Stockwood Vale was used for the impetigo-scabies sufferers.'

The number of evacuees remaining in residence in December 1939 were;

Unaccompanied children	307
Accompanied children and mothers	45
Teachers and helpers	27
Total of	379

On June 11 1941 the number was up to 391, but in June 1942 it was down to 272; in 1943 it was 182 and by February 1944 it was only 139.

After the cessation of hostilities, a number of families chose to remain in Keynsham, and are now long standing members of the community. Among these are the Crouches, the Fishers, the Fords, the Kilburns, the Lerpiniers, the Olives and the Smiths.

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

Wall tablets in the local churches, together with the record in the Town Hall and at the Park Gates Remembrance area, enumerate the names of the 43 Keynsham servicemen and the 6 Saltford men, who made the supreme sacrifice for their God and their Country.

In their memory we echo the familiar words of Laurence Binyon, in his, 'Poem for the fallen',

> They shall not grow old, as we that are left
> grow old, Age shall not weary them, nor the
> years condemn. At the going down of the sun
> and in the morning
> We will remember them.'

Postscript

The World Wars brought changes to Keynsham and Saltford greater than those brought by the Dissolution of the Abbey in 1539. After World War One nowhere in Britain escaped the effects of loss of manpower. The shortage of men was apparent even during the War. The Feoffees complained that walls had to go unrepaired because there were no skilled men to mend them.

When peace came the shortage of men was reflected in the population figures for Keynsham. In 1921: men - 1,797, women - 2,040; a difference of nearly 12%. Ironically, by 1921 there was also a shortage of jobs, as the economic effects of the war and the peace were felt.

Unemployment here in the 1930's was never so acute as in South Wales or in the North East of England. In 1931 in the Keynsham Rural District there were 259 unemployed males out of a male population over the age of 14 of 4,689 (some of these would be over the working age). Higher rates of unemployment nearby (for instance in the North Somerset collieries) made people here anxious for their jobs.

The building of Fry's and the employment the completed factory gave were a vital element in the measure of prosperity Keynsham and Saltford enjoyed between the Wars . Fry's was by far the biggest ratepayer in the town. The prosperity Keynsham and Saltford had can be seen in the number of properties built here in the 1930's, compared with towns of similar size, such as Radstock and Midsomer Norton .The development of a large factory brought an influx of new people to the town, who brought new ideas and new ways. The old social groupings, in which the same names had occurred over many decades, were beginning to dissolve. The Second World War gave tremendous impetus to this change. The War caused more disturbance to the civilian population than any previous event. With the British economy totally mobilised for war everyone's life was effected. The war shifted people around. Many never returned to live here; meeting, marrying and living away. It also brought people to the town, some of whom stayed.The contact with evacuees, the contact with servicemen, combined with the common stresses of wartime life, broke down the barriers between social classes which had still been a feature of Keynsham life in the 1920s and 1930s.Some people feel that the rapid development in the 1950s and 1960s changed Keynsham; in reality it had already changed, and by 1945 was on the threshold of another phase in its history.

Acknowledgements

The Society would like to thank all the following especially Mr. Terry Cornelius of Saltford, who first suggested we should produce the book, and who has masterminded its production. Dr. Joseph Bettey, Mr. Bill Bowen, Mr. Tony Brown, Mr. Edward Cannock, Mr. Len Coggins, Dr. R U. Dunning (Editor. Victoria County History of Somerset.), Miss Mary Fairclough, Mr. Eric Jordan (Keynsham Cricket Club), Mr.Andy King, Mr. Bert King, Mr. F. Neal, Mr. Newman, the owners of the houses photographed in the book, Miss Felicity Premru, Sergeant Stanton (Avon and Somerset Police) , Miss June Smith (Librarian Keynsham library), Mr.and Mrs. F.Vine, Sir John Whitmore, and many residents of Keynsham and Saltford.

Bibliography and Sources

REFERENCES

Abbreviations

B.L. British Library
B.RO. Bristol Record Office
C.S.P.D. Calendar of State Papers Domestic
C. Chancery Proceedings
G.RO. Gloucestershire Record Office
I.P.M. Inquisitions Post Mortem
KS.L.H.S.A Keynsham and Saltford Local History Society Archives S.RS. Somerset Record Society
S.AN.H.S. Proceedings of the Somerset Archeological and Natural History Society

P.RO. Public Records Office
W.RO Wiltshire Record Office

.

CHAPTER 1

1 Genealogy of the Bridges Family by Mrs Connie Smith KS.L.H.S.A
2 Burke's **Baronetage and Peerage**.
3 Pococke, Richard. "**Travels through England**". 1750/51.
4 Ellacombe's copy of the Church wardens accounts held at St. John's Church.
5 For the Civil War period in Somerset see:
Barnes, T.G. **Somerset 1625-1640**. 1961.
Wroughton,John. **The Civil War inBath and North Somerset.** Bath.1973.
Underdown, David. **Revel, Riot and Rebellion**. 1985.
Underdown, David. **Somerset in the Civil War and Interregnum**.1973.
6 C.S.P.D. 1637-1638. p.551.
7 P.RO. Account of Requisitions. p.28. Accounts for Somerset.
8 P.RO. p 28. 175 Assessments. Somerset, 175. p.28.
9 Clarendon MSS Vol. 22 no. 1704 quoted in S.RS. Vol. XVIII **Sir Ralph Hopton's Narrative of the Campaign in the West** 1642-44.
10 See Underdown **Somerset in the Civil War and Interregnum** p.62 etseq.
11 Archaeologia Vol. 14 p.121.
12 ibid p.l28.
13 Bath Council Book No. 1. 1643-44.
14 A Full Relation of the Taking of Bath. 1645. 15 ibid.
16 Harington, Rev. H. **Nugae Antiquae** Vol. II p.278.
17 Bath Chamberlain's Accounts 1647.
18 C.S.P.D. 1645-47. p.439.
19 Bath Council Book No 1. 1646.
20 Besse, Joseph. **An Abstract of the Sufferings of the People called Quaker**s. 1733.
21 For the Monmouth Episode see:
Earle, Peter. **The Monmouth Rebels**. 1977.
Wigfield, W.M. **The Monmouth Rebellion.** 1980. Little, Bryan. **The Monmouth Episode.** 1956. Muddirnan, I.G. **The Bloody Assize**. 1929.
22 B.L. Harleian MS 6845. Nathaniel Wade's Narrative.
23 Historical Manuscripts Commission 5. Report 1. App. p.326. Ellacombe MS.
24 Coad, John. **A Memorandum of the Wonderful Providences of God to a Poor Unworthy Creature.**
25 Account by grandson of Andrew Gifford, printed in front of a copy of Western Martyrology, Library of Baptist College, Bristol.
26 Wade, op. cit.
27 **Memoirs and Travels of Sir John Rereby, Bart**. 1904.
28 Ellacombe MS.
29 Lord Jeffrey's warrant to Edward Hobbes, Sheriff of Somerset, Quoted in Muddiman, op. cit.
30 Journal of George Wansey. W.RO. 314:1.
31 **The Monmouth Rebels**. 1685. S.RS. Vol. 79.
32 John Hicks' letters to his wife. Quoted in Muddiman. op. cit.
33 Overseers Accounts Keynsham; now in S.RO.
34 Constables' Presentments quoted in S.RS. Vol. 79.
35 James Bridges' Memorandum Book. B.RO. 35989 (32).
36 Baker, Muriel. **The Life and Circumstances of James Brydges, 1st Duke ofChandos.**1674-1744.1949 .
37 Life of Alexis Soyer. Reference in KS.L.H.S.A
38 Deeds in KS.L.H.S.A
39 Further details and sources see:
White, Elizabeth. The Whitmores and the Manor of Keynsham' **S.AN.H.S.** Vo1.129.
40 Deeds in KS.L.H.S.A 41 ibid.
42 ibid.
43 Minutes of Society of Antiquaries. Nov. 1788.
44 Deeds in KS.L.H.S.A
45 I.P.M. Edward I. 1295.
46 S.RS. Vol. VI
47 I.P.M. Elizabeth I. 1601.
48 S.RS. Vol. II.
49 Flower v. Flower. 1807. Society of Genealogists Library. Uncatalogued Abstract of Title.
50 Gerard: Particular Description of the County of Somerset. S.RS. Vol. 15.
51 Feet of Fines. 16 and 17. Elizabeth I.
52 Goulstone,John. The Goodhinds of Saltford Notes, Wills and **Redegrees**. Published privately by Pratten, 9 Bedford Grove,

Alsager. SI7 2SR
53 P.RO. C2 Fl2/4.
54 P.RO. C21 G5/15.
55 P.RO. C22 847/6.
56 P.RO. C8 287/25.
57 S.RO. DD/SOG 953.
58 Felix Farley's **Bristol Journal**. 1806. Cited in Sims, Percy. A
History of Saltford Village. 1976.
59 Rodda, F.S.T. **Kelly College School Register**.
60 Kelly Estate Papers. S.RO. DD/DP Box 109 G/1062.
61 Charles IBrief. Keynsham Parish Church.
62 Cox. Magna Brittanica.1727.
63 The Typographer. ed. Brydes, Sir S. and Shaw, S. 1789-1791. Vol.I.
64 Overseers of the Poor Accounts and Vestry Minutes. Now at S.RO.
65 Reports of Select Committees Parliamentary Papers 1803/ 4 XIII, 1821 IV.
66 Extensive Documents in care of Wansdyke District Council now at S.RO.
67 Feoffees Documents in care of Wansdyke District Council now at S.RO.
68 Booklet Keynsham Charities. 1895. KS.L.H.S.A
69 KS.L.H.S.A
70 Quarter Session Records. S.RS. Vol. 23.
71 Saltford Overseers of the Poor Accounts. S.R.O.

CHAPTER 2

WORK

1 KS.L.H.S.A
2 Felix Farley's Bristol Journal. 24 Oct 1777.
3 KS.L.H.S.A Sale Particulars of Park House Farm.
4 KS.L.H.S.A Duke of Chandos Survey. Photostat from Huntington library.
5 Whitmore Deeds-Apley Estate Office
6 KS.L.H.S.A Details of deeds for Temple Street.
7 Farms so far identified are:
Beech Farm, Broadlands (Culvers), Chandos (Lodge), Conygre Cottage, Dapps (Oak), Ellsbridge (Withies), Downfield, Eastover, Elm Park (Chewton), Grove (Stockwood), Greenhill (Charlton Road), Garston (The Elms), Heath (Brislington Common), Hams, Hicks Gate, Lays, Milward, Mill House, Manor (Chewton), Mulberry Park (Presbytery Cottage), Parkhouse, Redlynch, Rook Hill, Rock Hill, Rook Hill House (Folly Farm), Stockwood House, Stockwood, Stidham (Steadham), Uplands (New Barn), Wick House, Warners (Chewton), Westfield (Westover).
Other un-named farms:
Stokes-bottom of Charlton Road, 2 farms situated in Bath Street, Steel Yard, Glenavon appears to be a modern name.
8 Enclosure Award Saltford Mead 1851. S.RO.
9 KS.L.H.S.A Sale of Manor 1889.
10 Feoffees Accounts in care of Wansdyke District Council. Now at S.RO.
11 Letters and Papers of Bath Society. Vol. III and IV.
12 Stratton, J.M. Agricultural Records.
Kendall, S.G. Farming Memoirs of a West Country Yeoman.
13 Street, AG. Farmers Glory. 1939.
14 North Wansdyke Past and Present No. 1. Memoirs of Alfred Paget of Elm Farm.
15 Weaver, F.W., 'Keynsham Abbey', S.A.N.H.S. Vol. 53. 1908, pp.l6-63.
16 Weaver, F.W., Somerset Wills. S.RS..Vol. 4, pssaim. 17 Rogers, KA, Warp and Weft, 1968 pp.23-5.
18 S.RO. DD/Pot 151.
19 Somerset Quarter Sessions, SRS. Vol. 23. p.95.
20 Latimer, J. Annals of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century, 1893, pp 81-124.
21 Gloucester Journal, 8 Oct. 1728.
22 Collinson. History of Somerset. 1791. Vol. 2, p.400.
23 Rogers, K A, Wiltshire and Somerset Woollen Mills. 1976. p.l7-18.
24 Day, Joan. The Albert Mill Survey', BIAS Journal 7.1974.pp.l0- 17.
25 Keynsham Parish Vestry Minutes. 1810.
26 G.RO. D1628.
27 S.R.O. DD/PO.
28 Atthill, R, Old Mendip.1964. p.58, and personal communication.
29 S.R.O. Land Tax Assessments.
30 Bristol Oracle. April l749.
31 Thorpe's Map of 5 Miles around Bath. 1742.
32 Felix Farley's Bristol Journal. April 1765.
33 Attwood, B., The BIAS Paper Mills Survey', BIAS Journal. 1970. Vol. 3. pp.ll-21.
34 Billingsley, J. A., A General Survey of the Agriculture of Somerset. 1795. p.l13--4.
35 White, J. W., Flora of the Bristol Coalfield. p.l65.
36 Ellacombe, H.T., The History of the Parish Bitton.1883. p.227.
37 Felix Farley's Bristol Journal. Sept. 1725.
38 S.RO. Land Tax Assessments; Bonner & Middleton's Bristol Journal. July 1784; Bath Chronicle. August 1843.
39 Day, Joan, The Last of the Dyewood Mills', Industrial Archaeology. 1966. Vol. 3/2, pp.119-126.
40 Day, Joan, The Albert Mill Survey', BIAS Journal. Vol. 7. 1974. personally by the late Dr. KC. Barraclough.
41 Keynsham Parish Vestry Minutes and Poor Rate Assessments.
42 Kendall. Notes relating to Steel mills, deposited at Keynsham library.
43 Day, Joan. Bristol Brass: a History of the Industry. 1973, passim.
44 1705 Lease of Downe Mill to Brass Company partners, from Mrs Whitmore's Titles at Keynsham. KS.L.H.S.A
45 Friends House Library, Norris MSS 10, 'Some Account of ilie pp.l0-17.
46 Avonvale Iron Company Share Certificate, copy by courtesy of Dr. Hugh Torens; Bristol Directories, 1890s.
47 S.R.O. DD/Pot.
48 Translation of Swedish records conveyed Family of the Darbys', by Hannah Rose.
49 Keynsham-Parish Church Registers.
50 Day, Joan. 'Continental Origins of Bristol Brass', Industrial Archaeology Review. 1984. Vol. 7/1. p.32-55.
51 Boyce, B. The Benevolent Man. 1967. p.l31.
52 Day, Joan. The Bristol Brass Industry: surviving structures and their Associated Remains', Historical Metallurgy. 1988. Vol. 22/1. pp.24--41.
53 Copy of Agreement with Brass Company, KS.L.H.S.A
54 Day, Joan. Bristol Brass. pp.136-143.
55 ibid.
56 Davis, G.,'Coalmining in Newton St Loe', BIAS Journal. 1977. Vol. 10. pp.27-34.
57 Southway, M. 'Kingswood Coal', BIAS Journal. 1971 Vol. 4.pp.l5--23.
58 Davis, G., Lecture notes and personal information.
59 Bonner & Middleton's Bristol Journal. Oct. 1781. Keynsham Weekly Chronicle. 15 Feb. 1969.
60 Bristol Gazette. July 1833.
61 Philosophical Transactions, 1719. Vol. 30. pp.401--404.
62 OS 2 1/2in. 2nd Edition 1905. Sheet VII, NW & SW. Surveyed in 1882, revised in 1902.
63 Keynsham Parish Church, Churchwardens accounts as copied by Ellacombe, 'St John's Church'.
64 Interview notes from members of the Keeling family.
65 Keynsham Weekly Chronicle.
66 Day, Joan. The Albert Mill Survey', BIAS Journal. Vol. 7.

67 Directory entries; Personal notes from G. Watkins and M. Fairclough.
68 Directory of Bristol Industries. 1937. p.80. Personal information from G. Watkins.
69 Nabb, H. The Bristol Gas Industry. 1987, passim. B.RO. Gas Works Deeds. Mining Journal. Dec. 1957.
70 Smith, C. Ted has 70 years of railway history', Keynsham Weekly Chronicle. 24 Sept. 1970.
71 Lamb, P.G. Electricity in Bristol. 1981. passim 'Electric light at Godalming' Southern Beam. March 1950.
72 Electrician. Oct. 1889. Vol. 23. p.619.
73 Bath Weekly Chronicle and Herald. 19 Feb. 1949.
74 'Bristol Veterans at Home', SWEB Magazine. 1950.
75 'Ancient Mill becomes Dream Home', Evening Post 25 Feb. 1961.
76 Notes from Frys' archives.
77 Patent No. 514. AD1730; Notes from Frys' archives.
78 Wagner, G. The Chocolate Conscience. 1987. pp.15-16.
79 Fry's of Bristol, c1950. Visitors handout The Home of the Frys, Centenary publication. 1928. Notes from Frys' archives.
80 Bettey, J.H. Trades and Working Conditions in Bristol', BIAS Journal. 1983. Vol. 15. pp.5-7.
81 Wagner, G., op. cit. p.16.
82 Williams, I. The Firm of Cadbury 1831-1931, pp.5--100.
83 Wagner, G. op. cit. p.ll-12. J. S. Fry & Son. 250th Anniversary leaflet.
84 Fry's Works Magazine, Vol. 3.
85 The Home of the Frys', centre-piece; Fry's Works Magazine 1928. Vol. 5, pp.99-102.
86 Bywaters, H.W. Modern Methods of Cocoa and Chocolate Manufacture. 1930, passim.
87 The Home of the Fry's', Fry's Works Magazine, Vols. 1-5. 1928.

PLAY

1 Smith, Maynard H. Pre-Reformation England. p.459.
2 Quarter Sessions Records. S.RS. Vol. 24.
3 Keynsham Inns.
From 1841 Tithe Map:
1 The Black Horse later Railway Tavern, now S.W.E.B.
2 The Crown Inn, Bristol Road.
3 The Victoria Anns 6/8 Bristol Road (demolished).
4 The White Horse near present Pioneer (demolished).
5 The King's Head, now Milward Lodge, Bristol Road.
6 The Fox and Hounds, Bath Hill (demolished).
7 The Rising Sun, Bath Hill (ceased as an Inn and later demolished).
8 The Green Dragon, Avon Road (demolished).
9 The Lamb and lark, High Street (demolished).
10 The Trout, Temple Street.
11 The Ship, Temple Street.
There was no mention of the New Inn, The Royal Oak, the Talbot, the Wingrove or the Foresters Anns though there were buildings on all their sites by 1840.
By 1901 the following are also listed:
12 London House Inn, Temple Street.
13 Talbot Inn, Bath Road.
14 Wingrove Hotel, Bristol Road (demolished).
15 New Inn, Bath Hill East
16 Royal Oak (now London Inn), High Street
17 The Pioneer (called Great Western until 1880).
18 The Wheatsheaf, site of Kwik Save (demolished).
19 The Three Horse Shoes, Temple Street (demolished).
4 Bath Chronicle, 29th March 1866.
5 ibid.
6 KS.LH.SA
7 Bath Chronicle, 26 April 1866.
8 Sims, Percy. A History of Saltford *Village*. 1976. p.9.
9 ibid p.89.
10 KS.L.H.SA Lyne Documents.
11 Newman, Gwen. 'Money Comes Slowly'. Transcript of talks given on Radio Bristol. KS.L.H.S.A
12 Bath Chronicle. 5 August 1773.
13 ibid. 1 July 1816.
14 Bristol Times and Mirror. 25 March 1901.
15 KS.L.H.S.A Town Band.
16 ibid. Choral Society, Amateur Operatic Drama Society.
17 Reminiscences of Mrs Winifred Allen, Mrs Edith Fewell, Mr Sydney Leech.
18 Sims, op. cit p.22.
19 KS.L.H.S.A Lacrosse Club.
20 Reminiscences Mrs Diane Canberry.
21 Whitt:ington, David. 'Keynsham Rugby Football Club. The First 50 years', 1923-1973.
22 KS.L.S.H.A, and reminiscences Mr Neal.
23 Keynsham Cricket Club through Mr Eric Jordan.
24 Reminiscences Mr Hubbard.
25 Reminiscences Mr King.
26 Reminiscences Mr Bowen.
27 KS.L.H.S.A
28 KS.L.H.S.A
29 ibid.
30 KS.L.H.S.A

CHAPTER 3

The author gratefully acknowledges the help of Mr and Mrs Frank Vine for their help in the Saltford section of this chapter.

Works consulted:

Pevsner, Nikolaus. The Buildings of England: North Somerset and Bristol 1985.
Deeds and copies of Deeds in the KS.L.H.S.A

CHAPTER 4

1 Rymer, Foedera XIV. 629.
2 Bird, A Roads and Vehicles. 1969.
3 S.RS. Vol. 27 and KS.L.H.S.A
4 Gloucestershire Quarter Session Records. 1629.
5 Keynsham Churchwardens' Accounts 1632-8. Copy at St. John's Church
6 Ellacombe Manuscripts.
7 G.P.O. Booklet. Brief History of the Post Office.
8 Latimer, John. Annals of Bristol in 18th century. 1893.
9 Sims, Percy. A History of Saltford Village. 1976.
10 Sparkes, lvan. Stage Coaches and Carriages.
1975. 11 S.A.N.H.S. Vol. 53.1907.
12 Clew, KR The Kennet and Avon Canal. 1968.
13 Allsop, Niall. Images of Kennet and Avon.
14 KS.L.H.S.A Whitmore Papers.
15 Bridges, James. Day Book. B.RO. 35989 (32).
16 lbbetson's Guide to Bath. 1793.
17 Keynsham Waywardens' Accounts. 1760--1800. S.RO.
18 Felix Farley's Bristol Journal of the appropriate date.
19 The Bristol Times and Mirror of the appropriate date.
20 Felix Farley's Bristol Journals of l June 1805, 21 July 1827, 6 April 1806
21 Avon Navigation Minutes of 10 Oct. 1795.
22 Chandos Estate Maps, Huntington library, California. Copies in Keynsham libarary.
23 Keynsham Vestry Minutes. Transcript KS.L.H.S.A
24 Bath Chronicle. 21 June 1821.
25 Kelly's Directory of appropriate date.
26 Copeland, John. Roads and their Traffic 1750-1850. 1968.
27 Barber, Ross. The Dramway. Avon Indust. Buildings Trust 1986. 28 Sims, op. cit (Brunel papers).
29 Somerset Quarter Session Records.

30 S.RO. Q/RUP/277.
31 Highway Board Minutes for Keynsham District.1863-69.
32 Bath Chronicle of appropriate date.
33 Verbal. Mr. Edward Cannock.
34 Saltford Parish Minutes. S.RO.

CHAPTER 5

1 KS.L.H.S.A.
2 Records of Keynsham Union are at S.RO.
3 Pamphlet. A Commemorative Study of the First 150 years of Keynsham Hospital1837-1987. KS.L.H.S.A.
4 Fuller, Margaret. West Country Friendly Societies.
5 Bruce-Perry, C. Bristol Medical School. Bristol Historical Association Pamphlet.
6 Bradley-Fox, B. Brislington House. 1805. KS.L.H.S.A.
7 Bruce-Perry, C. Voluntary Medical Institutions of Bristol.Bristol Historical Association Pamphlet.
8 Felix Farley's Bristol Journal.

CHAPTER 6

1 Local Studies Section, Keynsham Library.
2 KS.L.H.S.A.
3 Felix Farley's Bristol Jownal, 4 Jan. 1766.
4 Whitehead, Millard and Jackson. A History of Methodism in Keynsham. 1986.
5 ibid.
6 Felix Farley's Bristol Journal, 2 May 1806.
7 Bristol Gazette and Public Advertiser, 9 July 1812.
8 KS.L.H.S.A.
9 ibid.
10 ibid.
11 Felix Farley's Bristol Journal, 6 Jan. 1827.
12 ibid. 25 Sept. 1832.
13 KS.L.H.S.A.
14 Felix Farley's Bristol Journal, 7 Jan. 1837.
15 KS.L.H.S.A.
16 Local Studies Section, Keynsham library.
17 Leitch, Russell. The History of Keynsham Baptist Church.1985.
18 KS.L.H.S.A.
19 ibid.
20 Miss Mary Fairclough.
21 ibid.
22 Keynsham Union Records. S.RO.
23 Leitch, op. cit.
24 Whitehead, Millard and Jackson, op. cit.
25 Martin, G.C. Adult School Movement. 1924.
26 KS.L.H.S.A.
27 ibid.
28 Log Books of Bath Hill, Temple Street and Saltford Schools.
29 KS.L.H.S.A.
31 Mr David Cox.

CHAPTER 7

1 Lowe, Barbara et al. 'Keynsham Abbey: Excavations 1961-1985. S.A.N.H.S. Vol. 131. 1987.
2 S.RO. D/D/cd 17.
3 S.RO. D/D/Ca 27, 40, 134, 142, 194.
4 Copy held by St. John's Church.
5 Leland, J. Itinerary. Ed. Toulmin Smith. 1907.
6 Copy held KS.L.H.S.A
7 B.RO. 35989 (32).
8 S.RO. DD/SFR/8/1 and 2.
9 Allen, F.A (Compiler). History of the Parish Church of St. John the Baptist, Keynsham.
10 Bettey, J.H. Church and Community. 1979.
11 Copy held KS.L.H.S.A
12 Myles. Chronological History of Weslyan Methodists.
13 Whitehead, Millard and Jackson. A History of Methodism in Keynsham. 1986.
Leitch, Russell. A History of Keynsham Baptist Church. 1985. 14 S.RO. S/9/1/1.
15 ibid.
16 Baker and Baker. Life and Circumstances of James Brydges, First Duke of Chandos. 1949.
17 Leitch, op. cit.
18 Notebooks in Clywd Record Office, St. Denial's library, Hawarden.
19 Copy of Keynsham return KS.L.H.S.A 20 KS.L.H.S.A.
21 KS.L.H.S.A
22 KS.L.H .S.A

CHAPTER 8

1 Parliamentary Survey of the Hundreds of Canesham, Bathford and Wellowe, 1652. P.RO. E317. Somerset No 4.
2 Bird, Roger. Osborne's Concise Law Dictionary. 7th ed. (For all legal information regarding Courts etc).
3 Avon and Somerset Constabulary. A Brief History of the Police. 1974.
Somerset Constabulary Centenary Booklet, 1856-1956.
4 Dumpleton, John. Law and Order. 1970.
5 Somerset Quarter Session Records of relevant date.
6 The following volumes of Oxford History of England: Clark, Sir George. The Later Stuarts'. Vol. 10. 1955. Williams, Basil. The Whig Supremacy'. Vol. 11. 1962. Watson, J. S. The Reign of George III Vol. 12. 1960.
7 Transcript of Court Roll of 1562. KS.L.H.S.A
8 Somerset Assize Records of relevant date.
9 Wells Assizes 1728.
10 Somerset Quarter Session Records. Indictment Book. 1804. 11 Bath Weekly Chronicle. 6 Dec. 1747.
12 Felix Farley's Bristol Jownal. 13 Feb. 1762.
13 Bath Weekly Chronicle. 20 August and 4 Dec. 1766.
14 ibid. 29 June and 5 Oct. 1775.
15 Felix Farley's Bristol Journal. 10 May 1777.
16 Rogers, Ken, Wilts and Somerset Woollen Mills. 1976.
17 Keynsham Parish Minutes of relevant date. Copy KS.L.H.S.A
18 Saltford Parish Minutes of relevant date. S.RO.
19 little, Bryan. The City and County of Bristol. Chapter XI.
Somerton, W.H. A Full Report of the Trials of the Bristol Riots. 1832.
20 Return from Keynsham Union. Parish of Marksbury. P.RO. HD/73/8. Pt.2.
21 Whitmore Estate Papers. Apley Estate Office.
22 Somerset Clerk of the Peace Records. 1857.
23 Bath Weekly Chronicle, 12 and 26 March 1857.
24 ibid. 29 July 1858.
25 ibid. *8 Jan.* 1857.
26 ibid. 5 Feb. 1918.
27 ibid. 8 Aug 1914.

Index

This is a book about the people of Keynsham and Saltford; wealthy and influential; poor and ordinary. It covers many aspects of their lives; work, leisure, schooling, health, beliefs and homes. It is an attempt to show how they lived their lives as the tide of national events swept over and around them from the Dissolution of Keynsham Abbey in 1539 to the end of the Second World War.

Price £5.95 ISBM-0-9512153-0