

## Time to start thinking about your project entry



DEADLINE for this year's *Archive Awards* for the best local history projects is Sunday August 26.

The awards will be presented at the village show on September 1 and the best projects will be featured in future issues of the *Archive*. Entries can be in any form and the only stipulations are that they are original work and have

been produced during the 12 months up to the deadline. Previous winners are eligible to try again. Entries from younger members of the history group will be especially welcome.

Send them to *Archive* editor Jon Smith at Heath House, Barningham.



BALH chairman Professor David Hey presents the award to BLHG chairman Jon Smith

## Barningham group collects its award

IT was a six-in-the-morning alarm call for Jon Smith and Sheila Catton on June 16th, but worth it.

They took a case-full of history group publications and *Archive* back issues to Manchester and arrived in time to set up a stall at the British Association for Local History's AGM and local history day.

It attracted plenty of interest, as few of the 100-odd del-

egates could resist coming over and asking "Exactly where is Barningham?", which broke a lot of ice.

There was plenty of congratulatory comment on how much such a tiny group – by far the smallest represented at the meeting – had managed to accomplish in the two and three-quarter years since it was established.

The main speaker in the

morning was Dr Paul Carter, an expert on the Victorian Poor Law, who told the fascinating story of workhouses and gave a mass of suggestions about how to track down local information about them.

The afternoon session was delivered by Professor Karen Hunt of Keele University, whose topic was the role of women in inter-war political life.

In between came the BALH presentations of annual awards, which included one to Barningham for the best local history newsletter.

We collected a scroll which will go up in the village hall.

THE BALH is holding a day conference in Northallerton on Saturday September 29th (£18 including buffet lunch) and a visit to Swinton Castle, Masham, the day after (£35 including two-course lunch). Details at [www.northyorkhistory.co.uk](http://www.northyorkhistory.co.uk)

### Northallerton weekend



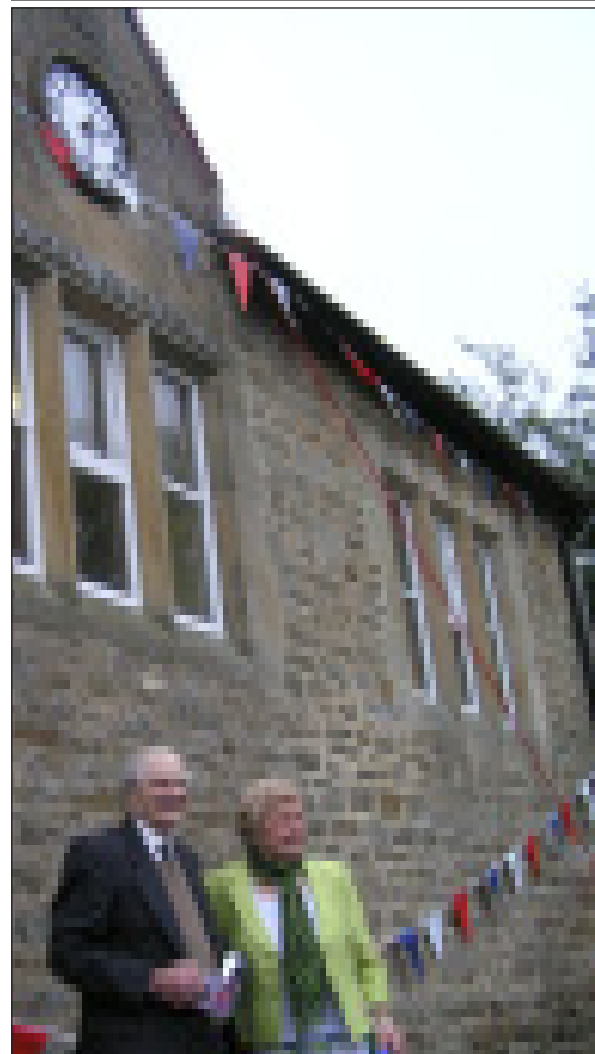
# Archive 26

THE NEWSLETTER OF BARNINGHAM LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

[www.barninghamvillage.co.uk](http://www.barninghamvillage.co.uk)



## INSIDE: THE ACADEMY BOY WHO WAS HELD TO RANSOM



Barningham's oldest residents, George Alderson and Betty Metcalf, after unveiling the new village clock during the Jubilee celebrations. See Page 2

### contents

- HOW JAMES CLOSED THE VILLAGE INN: Page 3
- THE STRADIVARIUS THAT WASN'T: Page 6
- LATEST LETTERS AND EMAILS: Page 7
- GHOSTLY GOINGS-ON AT GRETA BRIDGE: Page 8
- LOOKING BACK AT THE PARISH MAG: Page 9
- THE SCHOOLMASTER'S HOSTAGE: Page 10
- THE OLDEST MAP OF BARNINGHAM? Page 12
- CORONATION YEAR MEMORIES: Page 14
- THE PUB WITH ALL THE PIPES: Page 15
- MILBANKS' SINGING SERVANTS: Page 16
- CAUGHT GRABBLING IN THE BECK: Page 17
- MORE PICTURES FROM THE PAST: Page 18
- CURES FOR COLDS AND MUCH WORSE: Page 19
- LADIES WHO RAN THE MILBANK ARMS: Page 21
- BACCY HARRY'S LAST EXCURSION: Page 22
- THE WEDDINGS THAT WEREN'T: Page 23
- ARCHIVE AWARDS, AND ONE WE WON: Page 24

NEXT HISTORY GROUP MEETING: TUES. JULY 31st, 6pm



## The Archive

IT'S been a pretty miserable start to the summer, with hardly a dry day so far.

It's tempting to hark back to the good old days when the sun shone dawn till dusk, but it wasn't always like that – as we discovered when we first read the 220-year-old diaries of Newsham schoolmaster James Coates.

He recorded the weather every day, and much of the time it wasn't good. 1785 was so bad, in fact, that the hay harvest was abandoned and the price of turnips soared.

James' diaries have now been published as a history group book: details in this *Archive*. Perfect reading for a wet summer's afternoon!

THE response to the village clock appeal was magnificent – well done! Let's hope it lasts longer than the first one, and Barningham is still telling the time by it a century and more hence.

THE EDITOR

### cover story

**Barningham Village Hall's new clock, replacing the one that vanished about 90 years ago, was unveiled on June 2nd as the village celebrated the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Money for the clock was raised by public subscription, with donations from people in and outside the village, some in memory of former family members, friends and neighbours.**



## The Archive

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Copies of The Archive, the BLHG newsletter, are available on annual subscription (£12 for 2012). Back issues can be purchased for £2 each (see index on our website).

### minutes of the last meeting

## Old maps, older diaries and a fraudulent butler

**Minutes** of meeting, June 19 2012:

**Present:** Jon Smith (Chairman), Ann Orton (Secretary), Phil Hunt, Neil Turner, Tony Orton, Cate and Harry Collingwood, June Graham, Jane Hackworth-Young, Mark Wat-son, Sheila Catton, Ed Simpson, Beverly Peach, Ann Rowley, Margaret Taylor, Linda Sherwood. **Apologies:** Ann Hutch-inson, Sue Prytherick, Eric and Kay Duggan.

**Minutes** of the meeting held on April 17 were approved.

**Matters arising:** The village hall clock had been unveiled at the Jubilee celebrations, well-publicised in the local press. Jon and Sheila went to Manchester to receive the BALH award.

**Correspondence:** Hetherington, Pothercary, Lynda Johnson, Kidd, BALH and YVBSG.

**Finance:** There was a May/June surplus of £118.87, leaving us with a very healthy balance of £1,547.23.

**House history:** Virginia Cottage. More interesting details

from Neil including a fraudulent butler!

**Publications:** Archive 25 had been circulated and 26 was almost ready. Jon described some of the contents. He had completed transcribing the diaries of James Coates, the Newsham schoolmaster: see Page 3.

**Maps/Fields:** Sir Anthony had found a map of Barningham which dates from about 1795, which Jon plans to compare with the Tithe map we already have. Linda said there was a similar one in Gayles. See Page 12.

**Newspapers:** Ed had found lots of information about fox hunting, otter hounds and fishing, etc. Ann was researching Augustus Sussex Milbank for her Archive Award entry.

**Next meetings:** Tuesdays July 31, Sept 18, Oct 30.

**Any other business:** Jane had tried to contact Thorpe Hall without success. The gardens are open on July 1 so she would try to make contact then.

ANN ORTON, Secretary

### leftovers

## Eight years of weddings – all of them illegal

COUPLES who got married at Brignall Church in the 1930s got a nasty shock when they were told much later that none of the weddings were legal.

The church had been amalgamated with Rokeby in 1929, when the Rev A Campbell Fraser took over as vicar of the merged parishes. The merger meant that Brignall lost the right to solemnise marriages, but nobody seems to have told the Rev Fraser.

He happily presided over at least four weddings reported in the *Teesdale Mercury*: Marion Mutum of Birk House, Brignall, to George Stanwix of Winston in May 1935; Hilda White of Birk Hall, Brignall, to Herbert Watson of Langleydale in September 1935; Nellie White, Hilda's sister, to Harold Law of Evenwood in December 1935; and Margaret Hare of Trees Farm, Brignall, to Alfred Atkinson of Kirkby Malzeard in April 1936.

Then somebody realised the truth. A Bill – the Marriages Provisional Orders Act – was rushed through Parliament to put things right, and it became law in 1937.

Lord Onslow, who presided over the Bill's passage through the Lords, said he thought the matter should be publicised in case other churches had made similar errors.

What the brides and bridegrooms, legally married at last, thought about it all is not known. Does anyone recall them mentioning it?

## Barningham Local History Group Publications



### Where Lyeth Ye Bodies

A guide to Barningham church, graveyard map, memorial details and list of every known burial. £10 + £1.50 p&p

### Barningham Baptisms

All recorded baptisms, listed by date, name and parents. Vol 1: 1580-1800; Vol 2: 1800-1950. £10 + £1.50 p&p.

### Barningham Brides

All marriages 1580-1950, listed by date, groom and bride. £10 + £1.50 p&p.

### Counted

An A-Z of census returns 1841-1911, arranged so that families can be tracked through 70 years.

Vol 1: Barningham, Scargill, Hope; Vol 2: Newsham, New Forest. Vol 3: Brignall, Rokeby. £10 each + £1.50 p&p

### A Child of Hope

The 1895 diary of Mary Martin, born on a Teesdale farm in 1847. £5 + £1 p&p

### A Fleeting Shadow

The Diaries of young Newsham schoolmaster James Coates, 1784-85. £10 + £1.50 p&p.

### A Farmer's Boy

Memoirs of life in the Gayles area in mid-Victorian days. £10 + £1.50 p&p

### Aback to Yuvvin

1849 Glossary of Teesdale words & customs. £5 + £1 p&p

### Barningham Vestry Minutes 1869-1894

### Barningham Parish Minutes 1894-1931

Transcripts of meetings, with background history, index and lists of named parishioners. £5 each + £1 p&p

**The Archive:** Group newsletter. Back issues £2 + £1 p&p

**Barningham Memories:** DVD of cine film of Barningham in the 1960/70s. £8 + £1 p&p

>>> 20-25% discounts for history group members <<<

More details: see our website [www.barninghamvillage.co.uk](http://www.barninghamvillage.co.uk)

## house histories

went up to the hall minutes before the deadline for offers, by-passed the queue of 35 outside, and asked at the side door to see Sir Frederick. He was welcomed in, and, according to Neil, Sir Frederick said the pub was his if he wanted it.

There was, says Neil, "a lot of bad feeling in Barningham" as a result. Three days later world war two began.

Neil is convinced the pub has a ghost. "You can go to bed in the centre bedroom and suddenly it goes deathly cold, the door opens three times and then it gets warm again. People say they've seen the figure of a girl in a long taffeta gown rustling along the corridor."

He recalls that during the war, when the hall opposite was used as an army base, the pub was packed every night and operated as the base for a thriving black market in all sorts of goods, including petrol and whisky. The beer, however, "was like water".

## old ads

## FOR SALE BY AUCTION

NEWSHAM LODGE, Near RICHMOND, in the North Riding of Yorkshire. TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION, On the Seventh of May, 1840, at TWO o'clock in the Afternoon, at the House of Mr. Wm. Harrison, Greta Bridge, A VERY Desirable FREEHOLD ESTATE, called Newsham Lodge, delightfully situated near the Village of Dalton and Newsham, in the Parish of Kirkby Kavenfworth and Barningham, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, a short distance from the Market Town of Richmond, and adjoining the Road leading from Newsham to Richmond, comprising a capital FARM-HOUSE, with the requisite Outbuilding, and EIGHTY-TWO ACRES, or thereabouts, of LAND, in a good state of Cultivation, and capable of being made much more productive, divided into convenient Inclosures, and lying in a Ring Fence. There are upon the Estate Springs of Water and an excellent Manure Limestone Quarry. The Tenant residing at the Farm House will show the Estate, and farther Particulars may be had on Application to Mr. ROBERT BURDY HOPEWELL, near Pierfridge; Mr. THOMAS HUTCHINSON, Newsham; Mr. JOHN PEACOCK, of Denton, near Darlington; Mr. JOHN GELDARD, Wine Merchant, Newcastle; or Mr. INGLEDEW, Solicitor, Newcastle.

**Found by Jo Crowe in the Yorkshire Gazette of April 25th 1840 (and it does say 'manure', not mature in the twelfth line – they obviously had spell-check problems in those days too!)**

## The day Baccy Harry's roaming came to an

YOU don't see a lot of tramps around these days. And you certainly don't read lengthy obituaries of them in the local paper when they die.

But when Barningham-born gentleman of the road Henry Nelson went to meet his maker a hundred years ago, the *Teesdale Mercury* devoted columns to the story of his life, death and subsequent inquest.

Henry loved his pipe and was known throughout the district as 'Baccy Harry' because the only thing he'd work for was money to buy the tobacco he craved.

Born in the village in 1844, the son of stone mason William Nelson and his wife Harriet, (see *Archives 20* and *21*) he'd adopted "an out-and-out Bohemian life" as a young man, said the *Mercury*.

"He seems to have defied parental authority at an early age, and sternly to have re-

## 100 years ago

*Wondering what was going on in Barningham a century ago, we came across this story in the Teesdale Mercury*

sented yoke or service of any kind. He was habituated to the Romany life." Henry roamed between Teesdale and Wensleydale, living on what he could beg from sympathetic farmsteads and occasionally doing a few day's labour in return.

In May 1912 he turned up at Wilson House in Barningham, desperate for work, and farmer John Atkinson took him on. Henry stayed seven days; on the eighth he was found lying dead in the field opposite the farmhouse. At an inquest next day, Dr Sanders decided he'd died of heart failure; despite his love of tobacco his lungs were in fine shape. "Thus has ended an existence which, though strange even to the verge of outrage, was yet uneventful," said the *Mercury*.

About 30 people followed Henry's coffin into Barningham church the following Sunday, when Canon Gough conducted what the paper described as a beautiful service.

"Everybody seemed to have looked about him with a kindly eye," it reported. "So the ashes of the hapless and forlorn wanderer of the wind-beaten hills were returned to kindly mother earth, while his frailties are mercifully hidden in oblivion. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum.*"

Speak no ill of the dead? Worthy advice, but we fear the *Archive* would be pretty thin if we stuck rigidly to that. – Ed

## Why James shut down the village inn

*THE latest history group publication is A Fleeting Shadow, the diary of James Coates, a young schoolmaster in Newsham in the late 18th century*

AFTER six hard days working dawn till dusk in the summer of 1785, the young men of Newsham knew exactly how they wanted to spend their precious Sunday off.

A long lunchtime in the pub, a few games of cards, football or cricket on the green, a wager or two on whatever took their fancy, and back to the pub in the evening for another lengthy drinking session that, with luck, would last well into the early hours.

What they definitely didn't want to do was spend the day in prayer.

Their disregard of the Sabbath upset many of their church-going neighbours and positively horrified young James Coates, who ran a small school in the village.

He'd grown up with the revellers but had become a deeply religious young man, worried not only about about the fate of his own soul but also the souls of those around him. His childhood companions, he believed, were risking eternal damnation by spending their leisure hours in the inn rather than church. Matters came to

## james coates' diary

a head on Sunday July 24th 1785, when, he recorded in his diary, a large company of cricketers spent the day sporting "without control" while Thomas Atkinson's village pub did a roaring trade.

Among the drinkers was a bridegroom returning from his wedding at Kirby Hill, who abandoned his new wife and got spectacularly drunk before she came back later to drag him home.

It was not just the people of Newsham, either: its reputation as the fun place to be on a Sunday had spread, and young men and women were flocking

## JAMES COATES

Schoolmaster

Born at Newsham Place  
September 13th 1761

Son of Thomas Coates,  
Master builder,  
and Eleanor Coates,  
nee Firby

Died April 3rd 1788,  
aged 26

Buried at Kirby Hill

in from Barningham and other neighbouring villages. Newsham, decided James, was "the wickedest place in Yorkshire" and something had to be done.

He wrote to a local magistrate, the Rev Thomas Zouch of Wycliffe, urging action to close down Atkinson's inn and over the next few weeks raised a supporting petition which he sent to the North Riding Justices.

Atkinson, it said, "has kept a very disorderly house, with gaming and drunkenness, even to the great Profanation of the Lord's Day", and his licence should be revoked immediately.

The Justices agreed, and Atkinson lost his licence on Saturday September 17th. His customers erupted in fury.

Over the next few days there were counter-petitions (signed by many who had originally supported the closure but now had second thoughts), threats not only to remove pupils from James' school but also to kill him and the poor village constable who was expected

*A profligacy of Manners seems to reign triumphant in our Village... Every sabbath day is abused by meetings in the Public houses and Fields... People assemble at Thomas Atkinson's Public House and there in open Defiance of the Laws of God, spend this holiday in riot and drunkenness, to the no small joy of their Host, who (I am well informed) delights in telling of his Sunday's profits.*

Part of a letter from James to the Rev Zouch



## james coates' diary

to enforce the inn closure, and mass demonstrations in the village. Atkinson's wife announced that she would keep the inn open and keep serving customers, law or no law. There was, James wrote in his diary on the 23rd, "very Great Disorder in the Town," with drunkards "stachering and roaring up and down threatening what they would do to me."

He was so alarmed that he armed himself with a broadsword when he went out, but was determined not to be confounded in his mission to reform Newsham. "I am through divine Grace undaunted," he wrote. "My design is for a good End."

It got worse. On the morning of the 29th a mob who had spent the night drinking in Atkinson's set off on a rampage round the village, bearing an effigy of James which they shot at as they passed his home "uttering Oaths and imprecations alarming to every sober



Newsham Place is on the right as you leave Newsham on the road to Hexwith. It's pictured above in the 1960s before conversion. The Coates family lived in the house to the left of the long byre, which served as James' schoolroom.

Below, the building today: the house, re-christened Hilltop Cottage, and the converted byre which has retained the name Newsham Place.



Persons" before setting fire to it on the village green. What happened next we don't know. James' diaries come to an abrupt end at this point, and he died not long after, aged only 26. It seems, however, that the inn eventually re-opened: a family of Atkinsons were recorded as innkeepers in the

## Diaries that disappeared



JAMES COATES wrote at least four diaries. The first two have long since disappeared and never been recorded; the third was in existence some 30 years ago, when a selection of entries appeared in the *Teesdale Mercury*, but has since been lost.

The fourth was owned by history group member Michael Graham, of Newsham, who gave it on permanent loan to the North Riding County Records Office at Northallerton shortly before his death in 2011.

*A Fleeting Shadow* contains all that remains today: those parts of the third journal published by the *Mercury*, and the whole of the fourth journal, transcribed from the original at Northallerton.

It appears as James wrote it: we have retained all his original spellings, punctuation and grammatical constructions, odd and even baffling though they may sometimes be.

The book includes extensive footnotes, a foreword by local historian Marion Moverley, photographs and index. It is available from the history group, price £8 to members, £10 non-members, plus £1.50 p&p.

## Landlords, landladies and a ghostly girl

Continuing our survey of all the houses in Barningham and who has lived in them over the years. If you have more information about featured houses, please let us know.



## THE MILBANK ARMS

THERE has been a pub here for at least a couple of centuries, probably considerably longer, and for most if not all its existence it has belonged to the Milbanks in the hall across the road. The earliest reference we have to it is in *Baines' Directory* of 1823, when it was known as the Royal Oak and run by an Elizabeth Bowman.

She was, we think, the unmarried daughter of Joseph and Margaret Bowman, born in 1763 and buried in Barningham in 1836.

Five years later the landlord was Robert Spenceley (see *Archive 3* for a full account of his family), who was followed in the late 1850s by Ralph Hixon Goldsbrough, a shoemaker in his thirties. He and his wife Ann, who was the licensee, raised six children in the pub and remained there until the couple died in the early years of the twentieth century.

The 1861 census records



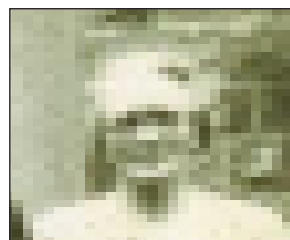
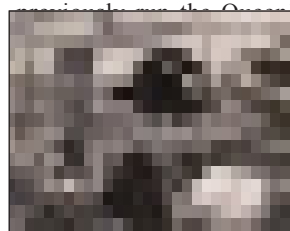
Landladies: Ann Goldsbrough, above; Mary Ann Dobson, top right; and Hannah Turner

## house histories



the pub as the Royal Oak, but within a few years it had been extensively rebuilt (the outbuildings at the back date from then) and renamed the Milbank Arms. Neil Turner, the present licensee, says the buildings were used as a farm and blacksmith's shop as well as a pub.

After the Goldsbroughs came the Dobsons, who had



Head in Barnard Castle. Head of the family was Robert; his wife Mary Ann, born in 1864, held the licence until 1939. She died two years later. The Dobsons had four children; both they and the Goldsbroughs lost sons in the trenches in the first world war.

Into the Milbank Arms moved the Turner family, and they've been there ever since.

Neil's parents had come to Barningham from Wales in 1919 (see *Archives 1 & 3*) with the Milbanks. His father Sam, who had been Sir Frederick's batman during the war (and lost a leg in the fighting), ran the village garage, bus and haulage service. In 1939 they moved from The Nook into the pub, his mother Hannah taking on the licence. She held it until her death in 1987, when it passed to Neil.

Neil says that when the pub became vacant in 1939, Sir Frederick Milbank invited offers for the tenancy and 35 people were in for it. His father was uncertain whether to apply; his mother said that if she got the pub "the first thing would be that ladies would be allowed in" – presumably it was men-only at the time – "and all the spittoons would have to go."

Despite this warning, Sam

## home cures

bruises, burns, cancer, chilblains, cuts, eruptions, fistula gangrene, inflamed eyes, pimples, piles, scorbutic complaints, scalds, skin diseases, vaccination eruptions, and ulcerated legs.

Isaac mentions that he was vaccinated against smallpox when a child. As I was interested to learn how vaccinations were performed in those early years of immunisation techniques I consulted my old friend Dr David Baird, late executive dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Aberdeen University.

He told me that the practice at that time was to take the 'lymph' directly from the pustule (the 'eruption' of Dr Roberts) of another who had recently been vaccinated and use that to induce the reaction by scarification (scratching it on the volunteer's skin).

The reaction varied from patient to patient, and the development of the pustule could be quite alarming. Presumably it was in such cases that the 'Poor Man's friend' claimed to be of real value.

Isaac relates that smallpox was prevalent in most of the villages and that people of those days did not appear to be greatly alarmed by the disease. Pockmarked faces were common.

I believe that there was some reluctance to be vaccinated because of the fear of catching complaints from the donor of the 'lymph'. Dr Baird tells me that there were reports of this having happened but they were exceedingly rare. I need not add that the techniques of preparing and preserving lymph



**Memorial to cholera victims in Barnard Castle churchyard**

today bear no resemblance whatsoever to those employed a hundred years or more ago.

Incidentally, in 1840 the first legislation to make provision for vaccination was enacted but it left its use as far as the individual was concerned purely voluntary.

Now that I am on the subject of diseases, I would like to mention rabies.

An old resident of Dalton told me that very many years ago there was an outbreak of this dreadful disease on a local farm and one of the occupants contracted it. The symptoms were so shocking that his friends finally smothered him to death between two goose feather mattresses.

Rabies is a very old disease, being mentioned by Aristotle in 335 BC, and in Britain there are many references to it in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with it assuming great prominence in the nineteenth century, with many

cases of rabies reported in man and animals.

I do not know when the Dalton outbreak occurred, but bearing in mind the very painful and tragic nature of the disease, from which only one case of recovery has ever been reported, the action taken by those friends of the desperately sick man can surely be understood.

Culpeper, to whose *British Herbal* I have already made reference, included a number of plants useful in treating the "biting of mad dogs".

I am not certain whether this is the same as rabies, but the one I like best is Houndstongue (*cynoglossum officinale*). "It is called hounds tongue because it ties the tongues of hounds; whether true or not I never tried; yet I cured the biting of a mad dog with this only medicine," said Culpeper.

MERRYN WATSON

## james coates' diary

village four decades later (the pub, on the village green, became known as the Bull).

If all we knew of James was his battle against the blasphemous behaviour of Newsham's young men, we'd be forgiven for concluding that he was a small-minded, selfish and interfering religious bigot. That would be grossly unfair.

He was a remarkable young man, passionate, intelligent, curious about everything in the world around him, enthusiastic about his garden, his pupils, and a host of pastimes that included building telescopes and experimenting with hot-air balloons.

He had, as we've seen, strong moral and religious convictions. It was a time when science was throwing up many questions about long-established beliefs, and John Wesley's methodism was encouraging theological debate and attracting followers throughout the country. James followed developments on both the scientific and religious fronts with assiduity.

But he was not just a scholar. His surviving diaries, which cover the 14 months up to October 1785, reveal someone with all the problems, doubts and dreams of any young man then or today. He fell in and out of love with remarkable frequency, worried continually about his health (with some justification, as it turned out), and harboured visions not only of establishing a



When Newsham Place was converted in the 1980s this impressive fireplace was uncovered in what had been James' schoolroom. It bears the initials TB and the date 1666. The 1673 Newsham Hearth Tax records show only one person with three chimneys (which Newsham Place possessed): Thomas Brignall, so we're fairly certain he's the man who built it.



successful boarding school in Newsham but one day making his name in London.

Apart from recording everyday life in a small Yorkshire community, James' diaries also contain great human dramas.

There was the farmer who went to the gallows; the swindler who ruined his neighbours; the wife with the secret will; the girl who married a man old enough to be her grandfather, much to neighbours' shocked amusement, and gave birth to his son next day; the scholar who drowned hundreds of miles from home.

Most harrowing is the tragic story of poor Betsy Jobling, who eloped with her true lover rather than marry James, and found herself weeks later pregnant, paupered, and a widow.

We don't know why James died. There is nothing to sug-

gest it was from anything but some natural cause: there are frequent hints that he was not as well as he wished and he was prone to headaches and other health problems.

He may well have been carried off, like many of his era, by some form of respiratory illness, perhaps what was then called consumption and we now know to be a form of tubercular pneumonia.

He left behind a unique record of life in a small Yorkshire community in the late 18th century which will interest, inform, amuse and at times bemuse the reader of today.

JON SMITH

● We're grateful to the Teesdale Mercury, the North Yorkshire County Records Office, the Yorkshire Vernacular Buildings Study Group, Marion Moverley, June Graham, Nicki Oakes, Christina Farmer and the people of Newsham past and present for their help in producing this publication. This feature first appeared in *The Northern Echo*.

*Parted with a worm 15 ins long. Bless God for it. Went to rest at 9.*

James had his problems: diary entry for April 27th 1785



## Hero Tom and the Strad that wasn't

IN *Archive 25* we told the story of Tom Taylor, the soldier who saved a number of Teesdale lives in the 1870s – including that of Sir Frederick Milbank of Barningham.

Browsing later through the *Teesdale Mercury* of 1898, we came another report saying that Tom had died in the summer of that year and bequeathed his violin to a Mr Collinson of Wemmergill.

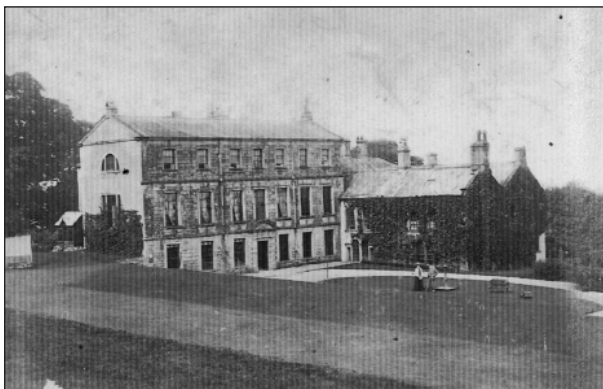
It wasn't any old violin, however. It had been given years earlier to Tom (who was apparently a musician and dancing master as well as soldier and a hero) by Sir Frederick, and, said the *Mercury* excitedly, inside its case was a label bearing the name of Antonius Stradivarius, the world-famous instrument-maker. If genuine, it would be worth a fortune.

The *Mercury* managed to get hold of it and rushed it round to the appropriately-named Mr Piper, a local musician and expert on such things.

To everyone's disappointment he announced that it was a very good violin, but not a Stradivarius. He could tell because Stradivarius used a special varnish he'd invented, the secret of which died with him, and this violin didn't have it.

Tom's instrument, he said, was probably a French copy made a hundred or so years earlier.

Did Sir Frederick know it wasn't a real Strad when he gave it to Tom? He certainly never got to know Mr Piper's verdict: the baronet too died in 1898, just a few weeks before



## Hooping it up at the hall

MADGE Embleton emailed us from her home in Ripon asking for our *Where Lyeth Ye Bodies* book and copies of *Archives* that mentioned East View in Barningham, where she lived in the early 1950s.

Madge's parents were Ben and Edith Cole (nee Beadle) and the family lived in News-ham before moving up the road. She hopes to attend the Cole reunion at the end of June – see below.

She followed up her email with a letter enclosing this photograph of Barningham Park. "I don't know anything about it," she says. "I think it came from my mum."

Judging from the way the couple on the lawn were



dressed – we've enlarged that bit of the photo above – we think the picture was probably taken in the Edwardian era, round about 1910?

If you look closely at the photos, you'll see what the pair were doing at the time: there are croquet hoops all over the lawn. Anybody hazard a guess who the players were?

## Coles get-together at Smallways

A REMINDER that the Cole family are holding a reunion at Smallways Inn on Saturday June 30th from 10.30am, and will welcome anyone who has family links or who recalls Coles from the past.

There have been Coles in the Newsham and Barningham area for well over a century, and families linked to them include the Watsons, Dents, Elgeys, Butlers, Peacocks, Beadles and Carters among many others.

Details from Barbara Matley (nee Cole), telephone 01244 531394, mobile 07595 900155, email [barbm11@btinternet.com](mailto:barbm11@btinternet.com)

## Cures for coughs, colds... and cholera

THERE were no chemists in Gayles or its surrounding villages in Victorian days (or ever since), but there were one or two in Richmond and villagers making regular visits to the market town would have experienced little difficulty in obtaining their drug and patent medicine requirements there.

Folk and herbal remedies were very much in use at the time and publications such as Robinson's *New Family Herbal* and Culpeper's *British Herbal* were to be found in many homes.

Isaac Coates (on whose memoirs this feature is based) relates that at the height of the Asiatic cholera epidemic in Barnard Castle in 1849, in which 143 people died, his father Samuel was anxious to visit Romalldkirk fair but to get there he had to pass close to the stricken town on the Startforth side of the Tees.

He was strongly advised to smoke a pipe of tobacco as he rode by the town, and this he did despite the fact that he was a non-smoker. In Isaac's words, he "came through all right".

Cholera is a very acute infection caused by a curved bacterium or 'comma bacillus' contracted from food or more often drinking water contaminated by human faeces. It was, therefore, not the pipe-smoking that protected Samuel but his avoidance of water and food from the cholera-infested town.

A large number of the houses in Barnard Castle closed, and their inhabitants fled. Isaac tells of seeing many people passing his home on the Richmond road, carrying what they could, determined to put as much distance as possible between them and the unfortunate town.

Many years ago (*this was written in the 1970s – Ed*) an old lady told me that she had heard of a woman who, looking across Barnard Castle Market

**An early ad for Chlorodyne, claimed to cure just about everything**

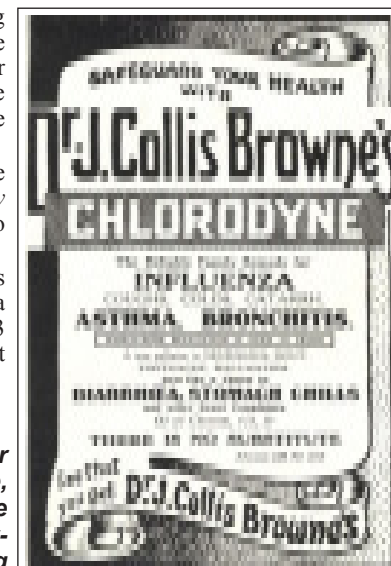
### home cures

*From the BLHG book A Farmer's Boy about life in the Gayles area in mid-Victorian days*

Place on market day during the epidemic, sighted no one except a nervous individual standing at a yard end.

The epidemic lasted six weeks before fading away as rapidly as it had appeared. The black flag which had hung over the church tower during those anxious and ill-omened weeks was at last hauled down.

A patent medicine was one that did not disclose its ingredients; such medicine flourished in the nineteenth century. Dr J. Collis Browne's Chlorodyne first made its appearance in the early 1840s and, much advertised, was widely available at chemist's shops including those in Richmond. Its advertisement made quite



remarkable claims, including that of being the only specific for cholera: "Is admitted by the profession to be the most wonderful and valuable remedy ever discovered; is the best remedy known for coughs, consumption, bronchitis, asthma; effectually checks and arrests those two fatal diseases – diphtheria, fever (typhus) – croup, ague, acts like a charm in diarrhoea and is the only specific in cholera and dysentery, effectually cuts short all attacks of epilepsy, hysteria, palpitation and spasms; is the only palliative in neuralgia, rheumatism, gout, cancer, toothache, meningitis, etc".

I feel sure that there must have been a bottle in the medicine cabinet at Isaac's home at Town Farm, Gayles.

Another patent medicine that deserves mention is Dr Roberts' ointment known as 'the Poor Man's Friend'. Its use was recommended for

## picture gallery



## Kids, cars and cricketers

● Above: Three children (playing conkers?) and two more pushing a pram beside Newsham village green, c.1926

● Right: Sam Turner presenting the Maude Cup to Barningham cricketers in 1957: can anybody put names to other faces?

● Below: Outside the Morritt Arms at Greta Bridge sometime, we guess, in the late 1940s when the A66 still ran past the front of the inn. There's a horse and cart coming round the corner. Can anyone identify the cars?



## Field barns – ‘icons of our environment’

### letters & emails

Email us at [history@smithj90.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:history@smithj90.fsnet.co.uk)  
family on your website caused a momentary *frisson* of interest) so please consider this a donation from a well-wisher. I loved the Radio Tees feature about the clock accessible from your website, by the way.

As a further aside, I notice that the BLHG's terms of reference include Brignall and Scargill to the west/south-

west, Rokeby to the west and Hutton Magna to the east. Greta Bridge itself seems excluded and I wonder why that is.

Lastly, I have a cutting from another edition of the *Teesdale Mercury*. What interested me was the work of Ed Simpson into local field barns, which, as an outsider, I consider to be an integral, if not iconic, part of the Teesdale environment. I would very much like to see the book that is intended to be the culmination of this research.

I have also more recently read about the North of England Civic Trust's 'Heart of Teesdale Heritage' project which includes Barningham village and the northern part of the civil parish within its area of interest.

I have been wondering whether any of the field barns researched by Mr Simpson have been suggested to NECT for inclusion in their list of locally significant buildings (although in my view every single one of them should be!)

I look forward to hearing about the replacement of the village hall clock and hope you are able to do so in this Diamond Jubilee Year.

GEOFF HETHERINGTON  
Bexleyheath, Kent

● Greta Bridge is certainly within our area of interest and we'll add it to the list of places we cover on the website. We'll look into the NECT suggestion. Ed is still researching barns, and the full results of his work will appear in book form when they're ready. – Ed.

## Was my ancestor killed racing for the Milbanks?

I AM searching for any information on a man by the name of Anderson.

He was said to work as a jockey for a Lord Milbank. The story goes he was riding in a big race (jumps and water) when the horse threw him and rolled on him. He was killed.

His son William (born 1862) recounted the tale to his grandson but it is not known how true it is. William and his sister Betsy (born 1868) were born in Snape, Yorkshire. William went to the States in the late 1870s and raised his family there.

So far my research points to Betsy being illegitimate so the above may be a cover-up. The information came in a letter from William's grandson in America in 1992. He was 81 years old at the time, so the facts may not be quite right!

Betsy married my mother's uncle Thomas Bullock. Although William is not a direct link, his story in America is interesting so I became side-

tracked in searching for him in England. I have a copy of Betsy's marriage certificate which has a line drawn through the columns for father and his occupation, and have asked for copies of birth certificates for a Betsy Anderson, birth registered Bedale 1862, and one for a William Anderson in 1868.

I hope to hear from you if you can provide any more information.

VAL POTHECARY  
Shrewsbury  
[terry.pothecary@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:terry.pothecary@tiscali.co.uk)

● The Milbank family had strong links with Thorpe Perrow near Snape in the 19th century and there may be some connection through them, though neither Anthony or Ed-die Milbank have heard of any racing tragedy of the kind Val mentions. We've found a William Anderson born 1862 and a sister Elizabeth born 1868 living at Carlton near Skipton, in the 1871 census returns. They may be the people Val is after. – Ed.



## Ghostly figures at Greta Bridge – and a new cousin

Lynda Johnson from Washington DC was in our area again in May for the Dickens Centenary Conference at the Bowes Museum. Back home, she sent us this letter.

THE reason for my return visit actually began seven years ago when my parents brought my sister Janice, nephew Robert and myself to Barningham to visit the village where my grandmother Agnes Robinson was born and raised.

My mother was a British war bride and married my father, an American soldier, after the war ended in 1945. In 2004 we all travelled together as my parents wished to show us my mother's English heritage.

We had visited Barningham before in 1973, when my mother made her first trip home since her marriage and we met my great-aunt Mary, who is now buried in the churchyard.

In 2004 we stayed at the Coach House at Greta Bridge and while there had a ghostly experience. Both Robert and myself saw ghostly apparitions – mine was Charles Dickens (who stayed nearby in 1838), Robert's a young girl in a long dress and bonnet, suspended in mid-air.

We told our host, Peter Gilbertson, about what we had seen and heard and based upon this he wrote a fictional story about Dickens and his infatuation with his sister-in-law Mary Hogarth.

He published the story, called *Two Days in Teesdale*, and it was released at the conference at the Bowes Museum.

It was a great conference and during my stay I also became aware, through the Barningham

### letters & emails

ham history group archives, that my great-great-grandfather Henry Robinson had an affiliation with the Yorkshire schools in that he was a shoemaker and servant at the Academy in Barningham. I found it quite amazing that I should have any connection to the schools.

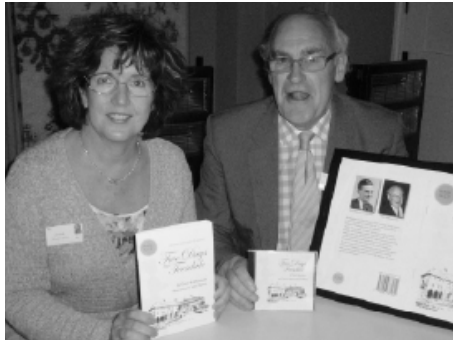
That wasn't the only extraordinary thing that has happened recently: I attended the conference with a newly-discovered "cousin".

My grandmother had never married and my mother had never known her father, which bothered her all her life. She even mentioned it to me just before her death in 2008.

I began searching for my grandfather as we always knew his name was Todd. Among my mother's papers I discovered an old birth registration which listed his first initial.

I entered that initial and last name into the Ancestry website and up popped his name and I was able to find his family.

I discovered that my mother had three half-sisters (she would have loved to have known that she was not an only child) and one of them had a daughter living in Penrith.



Lynda with Peter and his book

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE TEESDALE MERCURY

I got in touch and we met for the first time for a few hours last summer. Here is the amazing thing about us: her name is also Linda and she is a pharmacist, as am I.

So my grandfather had two grand-daughters with the same name and jobs, though raised continents apart.

Though one of us is a year older, we also have birthdays only a day apart. We share physical characteristics and enjoy so many of the same things – it is like discovering that I have a new sister.

She was so kind to spend the week with me and attend the Dickens Conference and it was a week we shall always remember.

I have loved Barningham and the surrounding Teesdale countryside so much from the moment I first saw the area in 1973. And now I have a new cousin who lives not too far away from Teesdale so I hope to share many other adventures with her.

Finally, a special thank-you to Sue Prytherick for all the help she gave me in helping start my initial search to find my mother's family. I consider her a dear friend.

LYNDA JOHNSON

## Shocking attack on a toll collector

### court stories

*A random selection of crime snippets we've come across recently*

JOHN Tunstall didn't have the easiest job in the world.

He lived on the top of Stainmore and worked for Sir Richard Tufton, who had the right to tolls paid on every animal sold at the annual Brough Hill Fair.

Collecting the tolls was a task "frequently attended with difficulty and some danger," as John found out on the first

day of the fair in 1867. He was on duty as a toll collector when a group of men tried to gallop past him without stopping. He managed to halt one of them, Henry Hall from Hutton Magna, but was struck

on the head with the butt end of Hall's whip, knocking him to the ground, unconscious and bleeding heavily.

Hall was apprehended and brought before Kirkby Stephen magistrates accused of assault. His claims that John hit him first were rejected by the court, and he was fined £2.

*Report in the Westmorland Gazette, November 16 1867*

## Trio face the magistrates for grabbling in the beck

YOUNG Richard Kirtley had just lifted the sixth trout of the day from Nor Beck when he looked up and saw Acting Sergeant Slack getting out his notebook.

Richard and his mates Ralph and Henry Chilton, all of them Barningham boys in their early teens, had spent the morning of June 16 1895 at the beck. "I asked the lads what they were doing, and they replied they were grabbling for trout," Sgt Slack told Greta Bridge Police Court when the trio were summoned for fishing illegally.

He had told the boys they would be reported with a view to prosecution, and took possession of a handkerchief containing five trout about six inches long, the property of Sir Frederick Milbank, who owned the brook. He ex-

plained that it had taken five months to bring the matter to court because proceedings could only be taken by the Fishery Board and approved by the local Watch and Finance Committee. There was the added complication, he said (no doubt having to consult his notebook at this point) that the boys had been wrongly summoned under the Larceny Act, when it should have been under chapter 71, section 22 of the Salmon and Fresh Water Fisheries Act.

The magistrates agreed to the summons being amended and decided not to fine the three offenders. But they did have to share the costs of the case – ten shillings between them.

*Report in the Teesdale Mercury, November 25, 1895*

## Shock at the end of a Sunday afternoon nap

IT was a hot summer Sunday, and it wasn't surprising that after lunch farm servant Arthur Warilow fell asleep on the grass outside Smallways Inn.

When he awoke a couple of hours later he found someone had stolen his watch and chain. That someone, he suspected, was 35-year-old

John Connor from Wycliffe, who had been around earlier in the day. Confronted by the police, Connor confessed, produced the watch and said he'd been "partly drunk" when he took it. He was bound over for two months and ordered to pay costs.

*From the Teesdale Mercury, June 29 1910*

## Wounded pony forced to work

JOHN Tennick, of News-ham, was charged yesterday at Greta Bridge Police Court with working a pony whilst in an unfit condition.

Inspector Cape and PC Buchanan gave evidence as to the condition of the animal, there being four wounds on the back. Fined 10 shillings.

*From the York Herald, September 18 1884*

## Tramp told a lie

ON Thursday a tramp named James White was committed for 21 days by magistrates at Greta Bridge for entering the workhouse under false pretences. He said he had no money and he had three pence.

The man was also insolent and kicked the workhouse master.

*From the Darlington & Stockton Times, June 19 1897*





the pipes

## Who ran the pub before Eric took over?

THESE photos were taken outside the Pipes in Newsham in the days when it was called the Dun Cow.

The name of the licensee above the door in the photo above is John Allen. The 1911 census records a 59-year-old farmer of that name in the village, living in a five-bedroomed house with his wife Alice and three young daughters – is that Alice on the left with one of them? Many pubs were run by wives, although licensed in their husbands' names.

John was the grandson of another John Allen, born in 1800, who lived in Newsham from at least 1841 until his death in 1877. He too was listed as a farmer at first, but in later life became the local tax collector. Not, perhaps, the most popular man in the village.

The picture on the right looks as if it was taken a bit later, maybe in the 1920s or 30s judging by the hairstyles



and dresses. The licensee then was Joseph Butler. There was a farm labourer of that name at the time of the 1911 census. He was 39, originally from Cambridgeshire, with a wife Sarah and four children.

One of these was also called Joseph, born in 1901, and it seems possible that he was the owner of the Dun Cow when the photo was taken (the ages of the children pictured don't fit in with the previous generation).

We'd like to compile a list of all the landlords over the years. If you can help us to fill in the

## Servants who sang for the schools

SERVANTS at Barningham Park in the 1890s probably didn't have much say in the matter when middle-aged spinster Minnie Milbank decided she wanted to form a choir.

From butler to kitchenmaid they were summoned to rehearsals, carefully trained, and then toured round the district giving concerts to raise funds for local village schools.

The *Teesdale Mercury* of April 28th 1897 reported one such gathering at Dalton schoolroom, when ten servants, plus Miss Minnie and her mother Lady Alexina, performed a programme of more than 20 items.

They included concertina and piano duets, readings and songs. A rendering of *John Peel* by the butler, Joseph Leggett, was "rapturously received and brought the house down".

Time to revive the Milbank choir? Over to you, Eddie.

## History project shows us HOW

HUTTON Magna, Ovington and Wycliffe, backed by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant, have produced a fascinating couple of volumes full of stories and photographs about the history of the three villages in what they call 'the HOW triangle'.

We've got copies if you're interested.

### old ads

LOST, a Sack, containing empty, between Barnard Castle and Newsham, on Tuesday night. Information to Clarkfon, Newsham.

*Teesdale Mercury, 1912*

## Day we beat Barningham in the cricket cup final

PURELY by good fortune, I have found your web-site and wonder if I can be fortunate in locating an old friend, Alan Smith.

In the late 1940s I worked at Glaxo in Barnard Castle with Alan and also knew his brother Geoff, the fellow who made a very big name for himself in the gardening programmes, very well. Their father Freddie was head gardener at Barningham Park.

Alan and I played cricket together for Glaxo and that is when I got to know Geoff, as he was an associate member and a very good fast bowler.

Alan, too, became very well known nationally, as, when he left Glaxo (in 1956?) he was running the Stockton Old-fashioned Dance Club and they won the national first prize several years running on the *Come Dancing* TV programme.

From that, he became a judge on that programme, though by that time I had moved down to Folkestone in Kent and started up as a toy shop owner. I retired 37 years later in 1996. I then moved to Tenterden, where my wife Joan and I still enjoy retirement. We greatly admire folk like you who keep up the interest in village life, etc.

Back to Barningham. I well

### letters & emails

remember playing for Cotherstone against Barningham (about 1950?) at Barningham in the final of the Villages Cup (the George Maude Cup). We were captained by Lt Col Leveson Gower (a lovely fellow) and we won! Alan's parents moved to Darlington, where his father was killed when he was knocked off his cycle in front of his own house. Very, very tragic.

I realise that, alas, Geoff passed away, but can you tell me if Alan is still about?

PETER KIDD

Tenterden, Kent

[peterjoankidd@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:peterjoankidd@yahoo.co.uk)

● Sadly, we've had to tell Peter that Alan, too, has died. We've put him in touch with Geoff's widow Audrey, who lives in Kettlewell. We've also sent him the photo below of the Barningham cricket team in 1950, which we published in *Archive 10*. Freddie Smith is the umpire, top left; Geoff is on the far right of the second row.



from the parish mag

**90 YEARS AGO:** Empire Day was loyally observed by the teachers and scholars. Mr J G Nicholson, representing the Rector (absent through illness) and the other Managers gave a highly instructive and patriotic address. All then marched to the Green, where the Union Jack was saluted and the National Anthem sung.

—July 1922

**75 YEARS AGO:** We are all most thankful, I am sure, that the Coronation has passed off without any untoward happening to cast a gloom. Only the weather – British weather – was ungenerous. The rain and fog, however, could not damp the high spirits of the people everywhere.

—July 1937

**50 YEARS AGO:** Congratulations and best wishes to Mr and Mrs Fawcett, of Moor Lea, on celebrating their Diamond Wedding. Her Majesty the Queen sent them, through her Private Secretary, a letter of congratulation.

—July 1952

**35 YEARS AGO:** Mrs Bulmer was presented £52-15-0d subscribed to by the Parishioners and friends on her retirement as Church Cleaner. She has sent a letter saying "It has always been a pleasure to look after the Church."

—July 1967

**20 YEARS AGO:** The very grateful thanks of young people and parents were expressed to Mrs Doreen Powell, Mrs Greta Brass and Mrs Jennifer Turner on their retirement as leaders of the Youth Club at Barningham, when a floral tribute was given to each of them.

—July 1992

## Why the Academy held Alfred to ransom

LITTLE Alfred Vivian, lost and bewildered, stood sobbing quietly on the platform at Kings Cross.

Eighteen hours earlier, as dawn broke on June 1 1854, he had been hauled from his dormitory bed at Barningham's Academy boarding school, carted unceremoniously to Richmond station, and put in a third-class carriage on the first train to London.

All seven-year-old Alfred had with him was a ticket pinned to his collar with his name on it and his mother's address near the Oval in Kennington.

Nobody told his mother he was coming, nobody was there to meet him when he arrived twelve long hours later, and he hadn't any idea where to go or what to do.

"He was found crying bitterly on the platform," the High Court of Justice in London was told later as it learned of the extraordinary events that led up to Alfred's traumatic journey.

Eventually someone noticed the boy's distress, took pity on him, and led him to the station inspector's office. The ticket was examined, the Oval address discovered, and a porter was summoned to take him to his mother.

Alfred's ordeal had started long before. His mother Anne had been deserted by her husband sometime around 1850 and in 1851 she was living in Lambeth with their six children. Their father Joseph, a master carpenter, was in Bethnal Green and not long afterwards he disappeared – to Australia, it was thought.

Anne was left to bring up the children. She had enough money from annuities to manage, and decided to send two of her sons, 14-year-old Richard and his young brother Alfred, to become pupils at the Academy.

Their arrival was greeted with enthusiasm by Thomas Grainger Coates, the 74-year-old one-armed schoolmaster

Report in the York Herald, June 15 1854

### the hostage pupil

who had been running the Academy for a quarter of a century. He was renowned as a martinet whose pupils lived in awe of him, and probably some fear as well. "He ruled them with a rod of iron," one pupil recalled years later in the *Darlington and Stockton Times*, "and thrashed his pupils so hard with his one arm that had he possessed two he would have knocked the life out of them."

Times were becoming hard in the 1850s for 'Yorkshire' schools like the Academy, struggling in the wake of Dickens' damning revelations in *Nicholas Nickleby* – the number of pupils fell by half between 1850 and 1860 – and every extra scholar was very welcome.

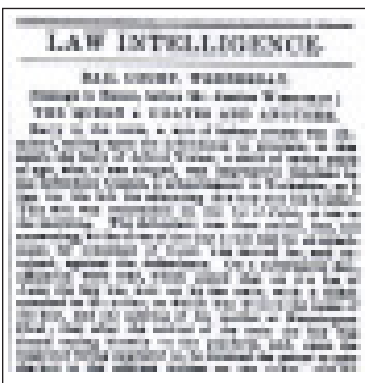
Early in 1854 Anne Vivian became worried about reports of Richard and Alfred suffering from "a certain eruptive disease" which they had caught at the school, and travelled to Barningham armed with medicines. They didn't work: Anne caught the disease herself (it was never identified, but seems

to have been a fairly minor complaint) and eventually decided to take drastic action.

Without consulting Coates or his wife Sarah, Anne took the boys away to a local hotel – possibly the Morritt Arms. Coates had already given her a bill for £22 of school fees and she sent him £10, saying that was all she had to hand and, anyway, Coates should be paying her for the cost of her medical treatment and inconvenience.

The schoolmaster was having none of it. The next day Coates, his assistant George Clarkson and a labourer called Nicholson made their way to the hotel, where they found that the boys had bolted themselves inside their bedroom. As Coates hammered on the door demanding to be let in, Richard leapt from the window and escaped just before Nicholson arrived with a ladder, climbed up to the room and grabbed young Alfred.

Their mother, distraught, begged for his return but Coates was adamant: no money, no son. He dragged the boy off before the Rev William



Eric Lience behind his bar in 1954, showing his pipes to four of his customers: can anybody put names to them?

## The man who put the pipes in the pub

WHEN Eric and Connie Lience took over the Dun Cow Inn in Newsham in 1954 the village not got a new landlord and landlady with a highly appropriate surname, but also one of the biggest collection of pipes in Britain.

Eric had just retired as an estate agent in Bridlington, and had been collecting pipes and other smoking ephemera for more than 20 years.

His collection, which was soon spread over the bar walls and hung from the ceilings, included items from all over the world and dated back to the earliest days of tobacco smoking.

Among the curiosities in his 200-strong pipe collection were a 16th century long-stemmed churchwarden pipe made of iron (which must have been well-nigh impossible to smoke once it had heated up), a three-and-a-half-foot long pipe that had once belonged to the Shah of Persia, a pipe



carved into a miniature steam train that blew smoke through its funnel, and another daringly shaped like a chorus girl's legs.

Despite being surrounded by pipes, Eric wasn't a heavy smoker. "Two ounces of tobacco a week at most," he told a *Northern Echo* reporter who called by and took the photos

above. It was only a matter of time before Eric decided he might as well go the full distance, and changed the name of the pub to The Pipes Tavern, which it remained until its closure in the mid-1990s.

Steve Thompson, the pub's last landlord, lent us the pictures, together with others over the page.



## LOOKING BACK: TWO TALES FROM CORONATION YEAR

THE Coronation was over, the Queen was crowned, and back she went to the Palace in the royal coach.

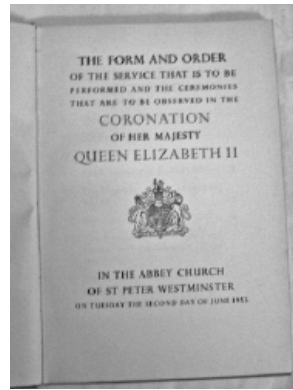
But when she arrived she hit an unexpected problem. Loaded with crown, mace and sceptre, she couldn't get out of the carriage.

Step forward Sir Mark Milbank, Deputy Master of the Royal Household, waiting to welcome the Queen home. She gratefully handed him the mace and sceptre and, freed of en-

### Why Sir Mark took the mace

cumbrances, climbed out. "He became the first person to handle them after the Coronation," says his son Anthony, who still has his father's beautifully-printed copy of the official Coronation service – that's it on the right.

Sir Mark was promoted the next year to Master of the Household, a position he held until 1967.



## Free beer – but not everyone was happy

EVERYTHING seemed to be going really well as the people of Gayles made plans to celebrate the Queen's Coronation in 1953.

They called an initial meeting the previous October, gathering in the Bay Horse and electing a committee under the chairmanship of Robert Marwood. There were eight women members and six men, including Mr T Douglas who was elected honorary secretary and treasurer.

They agreed that there should be sports and a children's tea on Coronation Day, and that all 27 eligible children should be given a souvenir, "preferably not a mug," recorded Mr Douglas in the minutes.

A public fund would be opened to pay for all this, letters would be sent out to "certain people" (Major Cradock of Hartforth Hall and the Mil-banks of Barningham) requesting donations, and small private functions and raffles would be encouraged.

The committee gratefully accepted Mr Delaney's offer of his private room at the Bay

*Linda Sherwood, who's transcribing the Gayles Parish Meeting minutes book, sent us details of how the village planned to celebrate in 1953. Not everything went smoothly.*

Horse as a committee base, and he also offered the use of the old building next to his garage at the pub for future use as a village hall.

The group met again in December and decided to give each child one of the specially-minted Coronation Crowns, which had a face value of five shillings (25p) but were being sold at 5s 6d (27½p) apiece. The group ordered 35 of them.

All went well until the next meeting, in March 1953, when the treasurer reported that they had managed to raise £36 4s 9d so far, and a debate began about what they should spend it on.

It was agreed that £14 should go on prizes, £10 on the Coronation Crowns, and £5 on tea.

That left a little under £8. How about lemonade and ices for the children? suggested someone, and this was approved. There was still enough

left, suggested someone else, to give all the adults a free drink, too – a pint of beer or cider each.

All but one of the committee thought this was a good idea. The dissenter was the chairman, Mr Marwood, who said he was firmly against spending funds on free drinks and stuck his heels in. It went to a vote. He lost, promptly announced he wanted nothing more to do with it, and walked out.

The committee, presumably rather taken aback, asked Frank Herring to take over as chairman. A few more pounds were raised, enough to give gifts to all the pensioners as well as the children, and the Coronation celebrations went ahead as planned – including free beer or cider for all the grown-ups. Whether Mr Marwood turned up we don't know.

A fortnight later the committee met again to wind things up.

There was still £2 19s 9d in the kitty, and it was agreed to hand this over to a new committee to organise a sports day the following year.

### the hostage pupil

Fitz-william Wharton, Rector of Barningham and a local magistrate, and demanded an order approving his action.

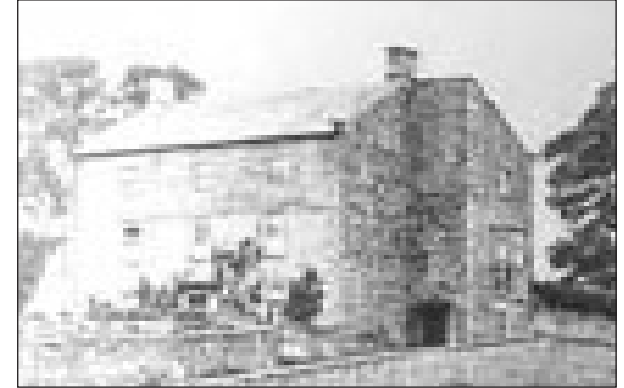
The Rector was understandably nonplussed. He promised Alfred that he would do his best to make sure no harm came to him, but said he had no powers to act in such a situation. Frustrated, Coates took the terrified youngster back to the Academy and locked him up.

Anne went to the top. She employed Old Bailey barrister John Walter Huddleston, the man who not long afterwards won fame by prosecuting William Palmer, the Rugeley Poisoner hanged in 1856, and who ended up as Baron Huddleston, one of the foremost judges of his age.

Huddleston issued a writ of *habeas corpus* against Coates, demanding the release of the boy. The Press loved it. 'Detention of a Child by a Schoolmaster' shrieked the *Yorkshire Gazette*; 'Schoolboy Held as Ransom' was top of the page in the *Westmorland Gazette*. Even the much more sober *Morning Post* devoted a column to the story.

In the dying days of May 1854 the case came before the Court of Queen's Bench, part of the London Central Court, which ordered Coates to deliver up the boy to his mother within four days, by the morning of June 1 at the latest.

The deadline passed, there was no sign of the boy, and the court sat again. Enough was enough, the judges decided crossly. Coates and his wife were declared in contempt of court and the pair of them were ordered to be brought to



Barningham Academy in the 1800s: today it's a private dwelling, re-named Newby House

court, under arrest if necessary, to explain what they were up to. Unknown to the court, the Coates had been to their lawyer, a Mr Kirby, who told them they hadn't a leg to stand on.

At the last minute, with great reluctance, they decided to release the boy and bundled him off by train on the morning of June 1.

They made out affidavits explaining what had happened, saying they'd asked Kirby to warn Alfred's mother that her son was on his way. He wasn't the most efficient of solicitors, and the letter wasn't sent until far too late.

Mrs Coates disputed claims that Alfred was despatched empty-handed. On the contrary, she claimed, she put him on the train with plenty of food: a rhubarb pasty, a seed cake and two large pieces of cheese – plus nine pence to buy ale on the journey. She'd even offered him sandwiches as well, which he'd refused.

A few days later the judges met to decide what further action, if any, to take. Mr Huddleston argued strongly that the Coates should be pun-

ished, because Alfred hadn't been restored to his mother by the deadline set by the court. Mr Kirby contended that the Coates had done their best, and the boy had been delivered back home, albeit a little late.

After taking all the statements from both sides home to consider, Mr Justice Wightman delivered his decision on June 14. The contempt of court order was discharged, and each side would pay their own costs.

Thomas Coates died the following November, and the Academy passed into the hands of George Clarkson: it finally closed down in 1875.

We don't know what became of the Vivian family. There's no record we can find of Joseph having arrived in Australia, though that doesn't mean he didn't go there. The rest of his family are missing in the 1861 census, but ten years later an Anne Vivian who may be Alfred's mother surfaces, aged 69, in Torquay, living in style with a nephew and seven servants including a butler.

Of poor little Alfred we can find no trace.

