

## University to host a day of conflict

TEESSIDE University will host a day school organised by the Centre for Regional and Local Historical Research and the Cleveland and Teesside Local History Society on Saturday March 9th.

There will be six speakers, talking about military, religious and social conflict in the region. Topics include the Battle of the Standard, sedition in 18th century North Yorkshire, and fears of a Napoleonic invasion.

Cost for the day is £12 (£6 for the unwaged). There's a free car park nearby.

More details can be found on the web at [www.ctlhs.org.uk/Programme.htm](http://www.ctlhs.org.uk/Programme.htm). To book, contact Jennifer Dobson 01642 384689, [j.dobson@tees.ac.uk](mailto:j.dobson@tees.ac.uk).

## Jane delivers Spring lecture

HISTORY group member Jane Hackworth-Young will be delivering the 2013 Spring Lecture at the National Railway Museum, Shildon, on Saturday March 23rd at 2.30pm.

Her subject (which won't surprise those of us who know Jane's enormous enthusiasm for her famous ancestor) is 'Timothy Hackworth, Wesleyan Railway Pioneer'. All welcome. Admission is just £2: book by March 15th on 0191 2132205.

## Dalton Dakyn talk

STUART Hopper talks about 'The Rev John Daykin of Kirby Hill – the man and his legacy' at Dalton and Gayles village hall on Friday April 12th, 7.30pm. All welcome.



This is John Thomas Bainbridge, Barningham farmer and butcher, pictured on his rounds sometime in the early 1900s. Great-granddaughter Bridget showed us the photo while on a visit here from her home in Holland, and wonders if anyone can identify the house in the background?

## Were you ever a dib-dib-dibber?

IAN Finlayson, a member of South Moor Local History Group, is researching the Boy Scout movement in County Durham and would welcome information and photos of scouting activities between 1907 and 1960.

If you can help, contact him on 01207 284344. The *Archive* would like to know, too, if there have ever been Scouts or Guides groups in our area.

## A chance to meet Ann again

ANN Hagen from Connecticut, whose great-grandfather was a methodist minister in Barningham, is visiting us again this month.

She was last here in 2011 and after returning to the States met a sister she didn't know existed (see *Archive* 25). Ann's on the left in the picture of them both.

She'll be staying with the Ortons at the Old Chapel, and they're planning an evening together when friends can

### diary dates

**Thurs April 4, 7.15pm:** Chris Lloyd talks about 'Rockcliffe and the Railways' at Darlington Railway Centre and Museum (01325 460532).

**Sat April 20, 9.45am-4.30pm:** Unlocking Your Past: Cleveland, North Yorkshire and South Durham Family History Society family history day at the Scotch Corner Hotel. Details: [www.clevelandfhs.org.uk](http://www.clevelandfhs.org.uk).



renew their acquaintance with Ann while she's there. Contact Ann Orton on 01833 621024 for date and details.



# Archive 32

THE NEWSLETTER OF BARNINGHAM LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

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

iii  
MMXIII

INSIDE: PASSENGERS' 17-HOUR BATTLE IN THE BLIZZARD



On the look-out: members of Barningham's war-time Observer Corps. See Page 3

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NEXT HISTORY GROUP MEETING: TUESDAY MARCH 26 6pm



## The Archive

I'M delighted to report that I'm becoming redundant.

Well over two-thirds of this *Archive* is the work of other people. John Hay produced a five-page feature on an inventive rector; Janet Paterson and Ann Orton provided two pages of Mattie Coates' memories; Linda Sherwood a report on Newsham in 1841; June Graham the story of Newsham's phone box.

There are pages based on emails from a bus enthusiast in Swaledale, columns of letters from as far away as Texas, and where-and-when-was-this? photos from members. My contribution has been smaller than ever before – and that's how it should be. Please keep the contributions flowing. The more of you who produce material, the better the *Archive*.

ON Page 14 we tell of a bus leaving Darlington for Barn-ingham at 11pm on a Saturday night in 1933. Those were the days... It did take 14 hours to get here, mind.

FINALLY, a welcome to our new members this year. We've now got 90 households receiving *The Archive*. Can we reach a hundred by 2014?

JON SMITH, Editor



## The Archive

Barningham Local History Group, Heath House, Barningham, Richmond, North Yorks DL11 7DU  
Tel: 01833 621374 email: [history@smithj90.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:history@smithj90.fsnet.co.uk) website: [www.barninghamvillage.co.uk](http://www.barninghamvillage.co.uk)

Copies of The Archive, the BLHG newsletter, are available on annual subscription (£12 for 2013).

Back issues can be purchased for £2 each (see index on our website).

# The Academy, a Rector, and a tour of Gayles

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday February 19 2013:**

**Present:** Jon Smith (Chairman), Ann Orton (Secretary), Phil Hunt, John Hay, Linda Robinson, Sheila Wappat, Neil Turner, Carole Bates, Tony Orton, Dick and Val Parker, June Graham, Cate and Harry Collingwood, Trevor and Pam Sheard, John Prytherick, Jane Hackworth-Young, Ann Rowley, Beverley Peach, Margaret Stead.

**Apologies:** Margaret Taylor, Janet Paterson, Sheila Catton, Mark Watson, Eric and Kay Duggan.

**Minutes** of the meeting on December 18 were approved.

**Matters arising:** The official opening of the lime kilns had taken place on January 14 (see back page). The annual social occasion had again been very successful. Thanks were given to Jon and Sheila for hosting the event at Heath House.

**Correspondence:** Martins, McDonalds, Atkinson, Byers, Hay indenture, buses.

**Finance:** There was a healthy balance on January 24 of £1317.54. This included the annual subscriptions and would be partly offset by printing expenses during the year.

**House Histories:** Newby House. We had already cov-

## minutes

ered much of its history as an Academy but Jon and Neil brought us up to date on its more recent occupants.

**Publications:** Jam Letch & Jingle Potts, a booklet about field names and farming development, was now available at £10 or £8 for members. Archive 31 was distributed at the beginning of February and 32 would be out shortly.

**Research:** John Hay had been researching the Rev Wharton and gave us a brief outline of the article which appears on pages 8-12.

**Transcriptions:** Linda had finished transcribing the Tithe Apportionment Schedule, dated 1841, for Newsham (see Page 12). It now had been indexed and tied in with the Tithe map.

**Oral histories:** Janet Paterson and Ann Orton had visited Mattie Coates, whose father and husband milled at Dalton. They were able to record about 90 minutes of her fascinating memories (see Pages 17-18).

**Dalton visit:** Jon, Phil Hunt and Ann Orton were guest speakers at a history meeting at Dalton and Gayles village Hall on February 1 talking about Barningham local history group, the railway that

*Continued opposite >*

## Barningham Local History Group Publications

Where Lyeth Ye Bodies\* Guide to Barningham church, graveyard map, memorial details and list of all known burials.

Barningham Baptisms\* Listed by date, name and parents.

Vol 1: 1580-1800; Vol 2: 1800-1950. Barningham Brides\* All marriages 1580-1950, listed by date, groom and bride.

Counted\* 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.

Jam Letch & Jingle Potts\* History of Barningham farms, fields and field-names.

A Child of Hope\*\* The 1895 diary of Mary Martin, born on a Teesdale farm in 1847.

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.

Aback to Yuvvin\*\* 1849 Glossary of Teesdale words & customs.

Barningham Vestry Minutes 1869-1894, Parish Minutes 1894-1931\* Transcripts of meetings, with background history, index and lists of named parishioners.

The Archive\*\*\* Group newsletter. Back issues available.

Barningham Memories 1 & 2\* DVDs of cine film of Barningham in the 1960/70s.

\* £10 each + £1.50 p&p

\*\* £5 each + £1 p&p

\*\*\* £2 each + £1 p&p

20% discounts for history group members

More details:

see our website [www.barningham-village.co.uk](http://www.barningham-village.co.uk)

**W** Hereaf Abraham Scott, aged near 30 Yearf. 5 foot 9 inchef high of a dark Complexion, with dark Brown-Hair, a little Scar under hif Left-Noftril, another on hif Under-lip, of a small Body, with small Legf, in a dark Brown-Coat, and Waitfcoat of two Colourf, the Brest of Green and White-flowerd Damask, and the Back of Blue and White-Birdein, Breechef the fame of hif Coat, a Pair of large Copper-Bucklef at hif Shoef. He came from Kefwick in Cumberlاند on the 14th of June laft, and wrought labouring Work in Rookby-Park near Greta Bridge; and on the 13th Infant, after he had got hif Wagef, went off at Night from Mr Tho. Laytonf, Innkeeper at Rookby, indebted to feveral Perfonf, and took a Mare from the Door, with Saddle and Bridle, and went the London Road. If any Perfon can give an Account of the faid Abraham Scott, fo that he may be fecurd, and give Notice thereof to Mr Dennif Berry in Barnard-Caftle, or to Mr Tho. Layton at Rookby, fhall receive a fufficient Reward. -- Thif Notice if given that all Perfonf may beware of the faid Abraham Scott.

From the Newcastle Courant of January 6th 1739

## cuttings

## Bakehouse is burnt down

*From the Leeds Intelligencer of January 3rd 1775:*

Thursday se'nnight, between eight and nine at night, an alarming fire broke out at a common bakehouse at Barn-ingham, near Greta Bridge, which, in a short time, entirely consumed the same, and greatly damaged two other houses; notwithstanding the activity of the inhabitants, it was with great difficulty at last overcome.

## Landlord jailed

*From the York Herald of April 25th 1877:*

At the Greta Bridge Police-court yesterday, Robt Metcalfe, landlord of the Four Alls Inn, Ovington, was commit-

ted to Northallerton Gaol for one month with hard labour, for violently assaulting Sarah Dent, his mother-in-law, at Gutter Houses, Scargill.

## Drunk while driving a trap

*From the Teesdale Mercury of December 30th 1896:*

Mrs Elizabeth Guy, News-ham, was charged at the Greta Bridge Police Court with being drunk in charge of a horse and trap.

Defendant said she would not tell a wicked lie. She did take a little refreshment, but she was not drunk.

Inspector Wilson said he had had several complaints regarding Mrs Guy, and on the Saturday following the date in question she was so drunk that the constable had to take her home.

Fined 40s, and costs.

**Stories found using the websites**  
[www.teesdalemercuryarchive.org.uk](http://www.teesdalemercuryarchive.org.uk) and  
[www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)





**The Abbey Bridge toll booths, pictured c1900**

Cottage. There's like a bench where he could sit on it, lift the lid up for whatever he had to leave, and he'd lie on there for a bit and rest until he had to walk back. That used to happen when dad was first at Dalton Mill. The postman used to walk to and back from Richmond every day, he'd need a rest. Hazel Braithwaite's dad, Isaac Braithwaite, he was postman once over, I was postwoman once over, I did it for three weeks.

Mary Blackburn was postwoman when the old shop was on, we used to go and sort letters out in the shop where Mrs Dent was. Well, Mary got tired of it or summat and I would have it but it cost me more in insurance than it gives in wages – eighteen shillings.

You had to go all round the village, down to Gayles Fields, up the low fields, then back up to Dalton Mill, Throstle Gill – I used to go like a ruddy greyhound up to Crumma and from Crumma over the ruddy fields to Dousgill and back down low moor, and that was nearly every day, five days a week, for eighteen shillings.

I'd be about eighteen, just after the war. There wasn't much wages in them days.

### **mattie's memories**

We thought nowt about walking all that way. Dad's mam, Granny Parnaby, lived in the Greyhound, which was a pub at one time, and mam used to take butter and that down there into that cellar, and when we were bairns mam used to stand in Barney at the Butter Cross and sell butter and eggs on a Wednesday, one and three-pence a pound.

I remember when my dad was taking pigs into Barney and riding with him on the horse and cart, over the toll bridge, I think it was a penny for walking and maybe three-pence with a horse and cart. It makes you wonder how they survived in those little round things.

I can remember them coming out, there was a brother and sister, they had a big iron gate they put over on a night to stop anyone going over. A lot of us used to go round by Thorsgill and down over the bridge at the bottom of the bank at Barney rather than pay. Our neighbour, Norman Wilson at Throstle Gill, he'd never pay to go over there, he'd go Thorsgill. They'd never pay to do that, they were farmers!

## **The day the Mill went under the hammer**

DALTON Mill and farm was sold by auction in 1907, as the *Teesdale Mercury* of June 19th that year reported:

"The lot comprehended a freehold messuage or dwelling-house containing kitchen, sitting-room, scullery and pantry, and two bedrooms on the first floor, and the usual outbuildings, together with the water mill equipped with three pairs of stones, three stalled stable, two four-stalled cow-byers, cart-house, two piggeries; and also several closes of rich old meadow and pasture land, containing about 15 acres. There is a good bed of freestone on the farm.

"The Auctioneer pointed out that the competitions of big mills had seriously affected small corn mills, though, situate as the property was in a capital agricultural district, the mill was capable of doing an increasingly large grinding business.

"Last year the land alone was let for £29 for six months, and, though the entire property had not in recent times been let as a whole lot, yet they had had a total rent offered of £45. In the year 1891 the entire property cost £850 as a purchase.

The first bid on Wednesday was £400, which figure was rapidly carried to £640, the competitors being Messrs Robert Littlefair, William Hedley, William Hutchinson and Nicholson. The last bidder was Mr Hutchinson, Galgate, Barnard Castle."

## **Where's this?**

*This picture was taken locally in the 1980s, says BLHG member June Graham. Does anybody know where – and whether the stones still stand?*



### **minutes (cont)**

< From opposite page

nearly came, and Penny Readings. The event was very well attended.

**Next meetings:** Tuesdays March 26, May 7, June 25, August 27, October 15, November 19 and December 17.

**Any other business:** Jane said that the Heritage Lottery Fund was now giving grants of up to £10,000 to local history groups.

**Guest speaker:** Sheila Wappett of Gayles gave us an illustrated tour of the village and history of her family. It was very interesting and informative – many of us had no idea there was so much hidden up those side roads!

ANN ORTON, Secretary

## **Welcome to new members**

ALL but one of our 2012 history group members has renewed their subscription for this year – thank you!

We've gained some new members, too. Welcome to Phil and Lynda Clarkson in Australia, Bridget van der Pol in the Netherlands, Janet Arksey of Malton and closer to home Sheila Wappat of Gayles and Pam Sheard of Dalton.

### **cover story**



## **Waiting for the invaders**

OUR front page photo was taken in Barningham about 70 years ago, fairly early during the Second World War.

The men were members of the local Observer Corps, a team largely made up of civilian volunteers whose job was to man observation posts in the area – watching out for aircraft and, of course, enemy parachutists.

The four pictured are Edgar Lee of Church View, Willie Todd of Fairview, Sam Turner of the Milbank Arms and their commanding officer, a Colonel Gilmore. They're wearing ex-police helmets (the letters P, L, I and E were often erased to leave just OC).

There were women ob-



servers, too: the picture above shows Amy Etherington (Sam's sister-in-law) and Hannah Brown of Hill Top coming off duty in 1943 after a spell at an observation post beside the road to Greta Bridge.

● Photos from Neil Turner's collection.

## letters &amp; emails

## Ancestor was a farmer at Gayles Hall

I'D like to purchase a copy of *A Farmer's Boy* which I saw on your website.

I'm interested in it as it's about someone's life around Gayles and Dalton. I have an ancestor who was a farmer living at Gayles Hall in the nineteenth century – Robert Byers (1770-1855) – and information about people and the area at that time would be very interesting.

Robert was the cousin of my great-great-great-grandmother, Anne Byers, who was born in 1800, and married at Romaldkirk in 1818 to Thomas Wrightson.

Robert Byers was married twice – his first wife Jane Stagg died two years after the marriage and there was one child Joshua (1798-1867) who joined his uncle John Stagg in a timber and lead merchants' business at Stockton on Tees.

After John died in 1844 the business became Joshua Byers and Son. Joshua was a wealthy and prominent citizen, being a JP and twice Mayor of Stockton.

Robert Byers' second wife was Ann York and there were three sons. Two of these, plus Robert and Ann, all died between 1848 and 1855.

ALAN WADE  
Stratford-on-Avon  
[alan.a.wade@talktalk.net](mailto:alan.a.wade@talktalk.net)

● *The 1841 census records Robert (then 71) and Ann at the hall with sons Robert, Stephen and John. In 1851 Robert jnr was running the 300-acre farm, employing five labourers.*



*The McDonalds in 1915: see letter below*

## Getting somewhere in my hunt for McDonalds

THANKS to your publications, I'm making progress in my search for information about one of my ancestors, Robert McDonald, born 1823 in Barningham.

Robert was my paternal grandmother's grandfather, making him my great-great-grandfather.

He was the son of another Robert McDonald, born 1787 in Manfield) who in 1810 was married in Barningham to Annis Alderson, born in Hope in 1792.

They had nine children, the first six christened in Barningham: Elizabeth (1811), Richard (1815, died 1894 in Darlington), Alexander (1818 and buried in Barningham churchyard nine days later), Thomas

(1820, who sailed for Australia with his wife and family in 1852 and died there in 1901), Robert (1823, who died in Barnard Castle in 1902 though I haven't traced his grave), and another Alexander (1826, who emigrated to Canada, married an Irish woman and died there in 1885).

The other three children were born after the family left Barningham and moved to Startforth and later Bowes. They were Isabella (1828), John (about 1831) and Margaret (1834, died in Darlington in 1911).

My great-great-grandfather Robert's marriage certificate shows he was a farm labourer who married a Jane Ann Robinson of Cotherstone in 1853

## Childhood memories of life at the mill

*JANET PATERSON and ANN ORTON recorded 85-year-old Dalton-born Mattie Coates as part of our oral history project. Here's an excerpt from Mattie's memories.*

I WAS born at Dalton Mill in 1928. My father went there in 1916 and there was five of us in family, three girls and two boys, and I'd be the youngest.

Dad was only a tenant in those days. I got married in 1950 and we bought it in 1955, my late husband and myself. We had it for forty years. Dad survived until he was 95 and he lived down there nearly all his life.

Dad was the last miller. The mill wheel ran off the beck, we used to dam the back up and it used to run through long channels and down underground onto the water mill.

The wheel was 32 feet in diameter, it was a marvellous thing. When it was switched on it used to rock the house because it was sixteenth century, Dalton Mill.

I went to school down at Dalton when I was five years old. We used to go across three fields and jump over the walls. I did all my schooling there, when we were 14 we finished school. It was for five to 14 in them days.

There was only the infants and the other class, there was a glass partition between the infants place which was nearer to Gayles and the other one where the bigger ones were, after you were eight or seven you got into them. The 11-plus exams were on the go then. The infant teacher that I had was Miss Shaw, she lived at Yellow House in Gayles. She lodged



*Dalton Mill today: Photos courtesy of Tini Cox*



*Mattie, parents Mary and Isaac Rutter, and nephew Geoffrey, pictured c1950*

### mattie's memories

there and then she married a builder called Shaw in Richmond, and other head teacher was Miss Robinson and she was from Richmond.

Later on when I was about 18 or 19 they had a kitchen built on and I applied as a helper. The cook we had then was Mrs Lowes from Barningham who lived in The Hollies, Nancy Gill's mother. She was also a JP at Greta Bridge. We worked for years together. I was there until I got married in 1950. There was a new head

teacher then, Miss Newey who lived in Hodgkin House here, and the infant teacher was a Catherine Telford. Miss Newey was a damn good teacher... there were about 30-odd children going then.

When I was young you had to be seen and not heard. You had to do as you were told. We had to just sit there and that was it. Otherwise... They want to bring those days back, they do.

There used to be bits of dances in the village, in the school because we had no village hall then. I remember going to dances, mum used to play the piano and dad the violin.

We had a bus service from Barnard Castle, George Maude they called him, and it used to be half-a-crown return from Barnard Castle to Richmond.

The postman had to come from Richmond and he had a shed in the garden at Lilac





Newby House in a photograph taken around 1890

the property to the Milbanks. In 1891 the house was known as The Terrace, occupied by Thomas Chilton who farmed the nearby fields.

By the turn of the century it was the home of another farmer and local butcher, John Thomas Bainbridge, who remained there until 1939 when he and his wife moved to Park View. In their place came Hughie Watson from Minskip and his Barningham-born wife Myra, who farmed both the Terrace fields and the Glebe fields to the north of the church. Hughie and Myra had three children, Doreen, Elaine and Lewis (father of history group member Mark Watson) before buying and moving to Glebe House in the 1960s.

Neil Turner recalls playing in The Terrace as a child. "There was a pump in the middle of the kitchen floor, and when they took it out they

### house histories

found a well underneath, 35 feet deep," he says. "It rested on a large slab held up only by some rusty old iron bars. Anyone using the sink had to stand on it, not knowing what was underneath – it could have gone anytime."

The Watsons were followed by a family called English ("the wife was an artist," recalls Neil), another whose name Neil's forgotten ("but he dressed up covered in ties for the jubilee in 1977 and called himself the King of Thailand") and then Tom and Judy Peace.

They bought the house in the 1980s and re-named it Newby House before selling it in 2004 to the current owners, David and Margaret Heslop.

David, as befits a man with one of Barningham's finest cellars, chairs the village wine club.

This building, in the north-west corner of the Newby House gardens, was once an inhabited cottage but is now used for storage



### from the parish mag

**90 YEARS AGO:** Mrs Holmes arranged a most successful Fancy Dress Dance in aid of the Waifs and Strays Society, a deserving and popular object. The costumes were all very attractive and prizes distributed in happy manner by Mrs Gjertsen to Mrs Newby Jackson, Miss Armstrong, Miss Thompson, Miss Olive Kirtley and Mr Ward.

– March 1923

**75 YEARS AGO:** The heartiest congratulations of all my readers, I am sure, go to Rokeby Hall at this time, and to the Morritt family, in their great joy at the birth of a son and heir to Mr Robin Morritt. May this little child be spared to grow up and worthily to do his part in the years to come.

– March 1938

**60 YEARS AGO:** In memoir: Frank Alderson. His passing takes from our parish one who was respected and liked by us all. His quiet and quizzical humour often concealed the shrewd and capable farmer that he was. His lands lay on the moor's edge and it was an appropriate and happy thought that his ashes were scattered on the moors he loved.

– March 1953

**50 YEARS AGO:** I am glad to say that Mr Blades is back again after his injury and has resumed his duties. Very many thanks to Mr Dennis Lee for having come to our rescue during Billie's absence, and also to the many members of the congregation who quickly stepped into the breach.

– March 1963

**20 YEARS AGO:** Very best wishes to Mrs Greta Brass, Robert and her family who have moved home from Barningham to Barnard Castle.

– March 1993

### letters & emails

in Teesdale Registry Office (I assume in Barnard Castle). I know he eventually became a head gardener at the Bowes Museum in later life.

From 1861 all census records show them living in and around Barnard Castle so I am not surprised that I can't find any burial records in Barningham.

Interestingly I don't seem able to find any reference to them in the 1841 or 1851 census, but I do know they at one time lived Pittington.

My father was named after the McDonald side of the family as McDonald was his middle name. His mother was named Jane Elizabeth McDonald and her father was Thomas McDonald, Robert and Jane's oldest son born in 1857, who was a gardener at the Bowes Museum in the period 1910-1920.

So far I have found that they had five sons: Thomas, Robert, Richard, John and James. My grandmother married George Ferguson and hence the con-

nection. The photograph (opposite) shows my great-grandfather Thomas, his wife Agnes, and the children: Jane Elizabeth (my gran), Thomas William resplendent in his army uniform, Edith May and Mary Agnes. Thomas William, known as Billy, enlisted for the Great War in 1915 (he became a sapper in the Royal Engineers) so I think that's when the picture was taken.

The family are a slippery bunch to track down as they often got listed under Macdonald and even Donald and McDowell.

I still have much research to do but it is certainly going to be interesting!

KEVIN FERGUSON  
Texas, USA

kevinf2349@hotmail.com  
(born in the North-east but a US citizen since 2009)

● Kevin first contacted us in October 2011 – see Archive 21. The christenings he mentions are in the Barningham Baptisms Volume 2 – all under the surname Macdonald. – Ed.

## On the trail of the Martins

ON the Martin Family History Society website I saw that Barningham LHG had published a booklet of notes by Mary Martin of Hope – can you send me a copy?

My great-grandfather was Francis Martin, one of five children of Edward James Martin, born in Redruth in 1809. He married an Ann Jackson from Northallerton and in the 1830s was working as a carver and gilder in High Row, Darlington. Francis married Eliza Pilkington, daughter of a watch and clock maker, and their children, including my grandfather William Adiel Martin, were all born in Darlington.

FRANK MARTIN, Trowbridge, Wiltshire

## More links to the Marriners

THERE was a farmer called Robert Marriner living 40 years ago at Hutton Fields, whose daughter Edith married Robert Garth and lived in the house just vacated by Mary Collard. After Robert died in 1975 Edith moved to Grove House on the A66 with her son Robert and daughter Margaret.

MARIAN LEWIS, Hutton Magna

## High praise for the on-line Mercury site

I WRITE to express my thanks and admiration for the on-line Teesdale Mercury.

I have been extensively investigating the family trees of my wife's family, both her father (surname Wightman) and her mother (surname Wimpenny). Both of these turned out to have major roots in the Barnard Castle area and since the discovery of the website I have been able to find out much more.

The obituaries, in their splendid style and complete and accurate information, have been particularly useful in order to confirm my earlier research, and the anecdotal reporting of village occasions have been illuminating and entertaining.

The whole enterprise was a mammoth task and I would like your history group to forward my appreciation and thanks to all concerned. Please convey this to anyone who might be cheered and encouraged!

It is a wonderful resource. Several of my family are very envious, and wish a similar exercise had been carried out in their area of interest.

Thank you all.

DAVID GAZARD  
Bradford-on-Avon

● The website with all the Mercury pages from 1855 to 1955 is at [teesdalemercuryarchive.org.uk](http://teesdalemercuryarchive.org.uk). Access to it is free. Work is about to begin on adding the next 50 years' papers: if anyone would like to help, contact Jon Smith.

## letters &amp; emails

## Can anyone help with my Atkinsons?

MY great-great-great-great-grandfather was George Atkinson (1733-1815), christened in Barningham.

He was the son of George Atkinson and Elizabeth Hart, and all their children were born in the village.

The younger George had a son Thomas who married Jane Pickering, and Thomas had a son Joseph, born in 1808, died in 1903, from whom I'm descended.

I would be interested if anyone has any information on the family.

JAN TATESON  
Spalding, Lincolnshire

● *We've sent Jan copies of our books listing births, deaths and marriages. They include details of many generations of Atkinsons who lived here from the 1500s into the 20th century. — Ed.*

### old ads

**FIVE POUNDS REWARD!**  
LOST, at Barningham, BROWN LEATHER PURSE, containing about Sixty Poundf. Finder kindly return to J. T. BAINBRIDGE, Butcher, Barningham, or INSPECTOR GATENBY, Startforth.

Teesdale Mercury, 1900

**WANTED**, for two or three monthf, GENERAL SERV-  
ANT; must be strong and trustworthy. Apply, Miff Simpfon, Woodfide, Barningham.

Teesdale Mercury, 1904

**BEEES.** Swarmf (daily expected)  
For Sale. Apply, at once, to Gardener, Barningham Rectory.

Teesdale Mercury, 1908

## How Newsham got its kiosk—and made a shilling a year

WE'VE told the story about how Barningham got its phone box in the mid-1920s after complaints that the postmistress was listening in to calls made from inside her shop (see *Archives 2 & 30*).

Newsham had to wait another 14 years, and even then there was a wrangle over its cost.

The Post Office offered to install a kiosk in the village in 1938. It was one of many being erected in rural areas under a scheme known as the Jubilee Concession, a spin-off from celebrations in 1935 to mark the jubilee of George V's accession.

"The kiosks are being established for the benefit of inhabitants and to afford call office facilities outside the business hours of the Post Office," explained Mr H Hine, the traffic and sales superintendent for the Middlesbrough Telephone Area, in a letter to Newsham parish meeting.

He clearly wasn't enthusiastic about coughing up for a phone box that was probably going to make a loss for his organisation.

"The kiosks are provided without financial guarantee, irrespective of the amount of revenue to be derived, and having regard to the fact that the rental value of the kiosk circuit is approximately £23 per annum, it will be appreciated that in most rural areas kiosks are unremunerative," he said rather sniffily.

Most villages offered a free site for their kiosk, and Mr Hine was less than happy when Newsham demanded a yearly

### phone boxes



rent of two shillings for the right to put a kiosk on village-owned land. "I regret the department cannot see its way to pay this," he said. One shilling was the best he could do.

The parish meeting accepted the offer, together with a promise that the Post Office would pay for the erection, maintenance and (if necessary) removal of the kiosk, and the cost of lighting it up at night.

The phone box duly went up in 1939. It was a K6 kiosk, designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott to commemorate the jubilee, and 60,000 of them were installed across Britain. Over 11,000 remain and they are the most visible examples of the eight red kiosk types installed by the Post Office between 1926 and 1983.

More than 2,200 of them are listed with English Heritage. Is Newsham's among them? And does the village still get its shilling a year?

● *Thanks to June Graham, who uncovered all this in the parish meeting minutes.*

## 'Home' for hundreds of unhappy boys

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

### NEWBY HOUSE

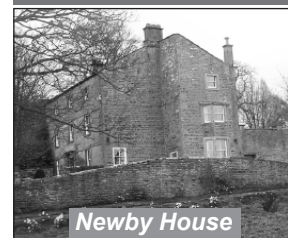
ONE of Barningham's most imposing houses, Grade II listed, sitting alone high on the south side of the green and possessing what is possibly the village's longest cellar.

It began, we think, as a two-storey building back in the late 1600s, either one house or two adjoining cottages. Its first recorded occupant was Thomas Newby, born in 1701 and steward to the Milbank family who probably owned it at the time.

By the time Thomas died in 1771, however, the house, a nearby cottage and fields to the south had passed into his family's ownership. His young son Mark decided to radically enlarge the building and turn it into a boarding school, one of many in Yorkshire catering for the unwanted offspring of far-away parents.

Mark widened the house, added an extra floor, and underneath it all built a vaulted cellar that ran not only the full length of the building but further out under the ground to the north. He covered over the extension to create the humped terraced

### house histories



driveway we see today (there are metal covers on the surface down which, for many years, coal was poured).

Mark turned the new upper floor into dormitories for his scholars, but he had no intention of allowing them to wander round his new home.

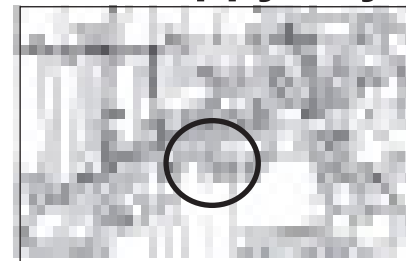
Instead he put a small doorway in the north-east corner of the house which led the boys along a long corridor at the back to a second staircase up which they climbed to bed. They spent their days in a school room some distance

from the house, on or near the site of what is now the village hall. They were probably fed there, too. Mark opened the doors of Barningham Academy in 1780, and it proved a resounding success. When he died in 1827 his son George leased it to Thomas Granger Coates, who ran the school with his wife Sarah and a rod of iron until his death in 1854.

The school was taken over by Coates' assistant, George Clarkson, who saw the writing on the wall for such establishments. They were declining fast, not least because of the bad publicity they received from Dickens' revelations in *Nicholas Nickleby* of the appalling conditions such Yorkshire Schools pupils endured.

George moved out, handing over to a Lancashire schoolmaster called Thomas Hough. He wasn't a success. Pupil numbers declined from 32 to 1871 to just one in 1881, and the Academy closed its doors soon afterwards. The school house had already disappeared, its stone used in 1875 to build a new village school nearby. Hough got a job as the local registrar of births and deaths, and went to live in Staindrop.

Somewhere along the line — we're not sure when, but between 1838 and the late 1880s — the Newby family sold



The southern gable end of Newby House, where there is evidence of an old lower roof line dating back to before the rebuilding of 1780





Jack Stapleton's last buses, seen picking up in Barnard Castle in the late 1940s. In front is a 1937 Bedford 26-seater, behind it a 1932 32-seat Dennis Lancer. History group members in their 70s or older may well remember going shopping on these buses. The hoarding on the right has an

optimistic advertisement for 'Cheap Rail Travel', but the popularity of buses meant the writing was on the wall for local train services. ● Picture courtesy of the Omnibus Society.

● If you have pictures or memories of old buses, please get in touch with the Archive and tell us.

## Bus passengers' ordeal in the snow

JACK Stapleton set off from Darlington at 11 o'clock on the night of Saturday March 4th 1933 with a busload of passengers bound for Newsham and Barningham.

It was snowing heavily, and it got steadily worse as he fought his way through Melsonby, Eppleby and Caldwell.

Eventually, just short of Hutton Magna, the bus came to a halt in a snowdrift. Happily there were shovels in the bus, and Jack and his passengers started digging.

It took them until four in the morning to clear a way for the bus to reach Smallways, where it skidded into the verge and

*TEESDALE had one of the worst snow storms in memory 80 years ago this month. Among the victims was a Stapleton's bus*

### old buses

came to a standstill, "its front wheels pointing to the sky," the *Teesdale Mercury* reported the following week. "It was impossible to try to right the bus."

Jack sent one of his employees, Billy Sanderson (the man who'd testified for him in court six years earlier) to Newsham to bring coffee for the starving passengers, but not long after he'd set off Mrs Ada Cole, landlady of the Smallways Inn,

appeared on the scene.

She'd been woken by the passengers' voices and promptly took them inside, lit the pub fires, and rustled up breakfast for them all.

At ten o'clock a snowplough arrived with a gang of snowcutters, but it wasn't until two in the afternoon that the bus finally got back to its garage in Newsham, and four o'clock by the time the final passengers from Barningham, a Mrs Hooper and Sam Turner, reached home.

Sam, of course, was one of Jack Stapleton's rival bus operators.

## Fears for family trapped high up on the moor

From the *Teesdale Mercury*, March 8th 1933: SOME alarm was caused in Barningham on Tuesday morning when it became known that nothing had been heard of Mr and Mrs Jefferson and family, of Byres Hill, an isolated farm owned by Sir Frederick Milbank on Barningham Moors, for many days. Within a very short time of the news reaching him Sir Frederick organised a relief expedition of estate workmen,

and he and his son, Mr Mark Milbank, set out with horses and suitable equipment and crossed Barningham Moor with great difficulty, plodding through deep snow and drifts a distance of three miles.

Happily, on reaching the dwelling after a lot of digging and strenuous work, the party found the occupants of the isolated homestead hale and hearty.

## We plough the fields and scatter...

*JOHN HAY investigates the inventive talents of the Rev William Fitzwilliam Wharton, Rector of Barningham 1840-1874*

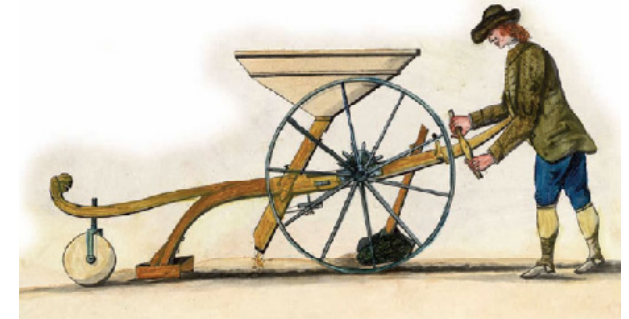
BETWEEN the eighth and eighteenth centuries, the tools of farming basically stayed the same and few advancements in technology were made.

The US farmers in George Washington's day had no better tools than had the farmers of Julius Caesar; in fact, early Roman ploughs were superior to those in general use in America eighteen centuries later.

In England Jethro Tull invented his seed drill in 1701, together with the horse-drawn hoe and an improved plough.

His seed drill would sow seed in uniform rows and cover up the seed in the rows. Up to that point, sowing seeds was done by hand by scattering seeds on the ground. Tull considered this method wasteful since many seeds did not take root. The first prototype seed drill was built from the foot pedals of Jethro Tull's local church organ.

However the ready availability of labour in the South and East of England meant there followed a period of fallow technical advancement in terms of efficient plough design. The early 1800s saw demands



Tull's Seed Drill of 1701

### our inventive rector

from Britain's fast-growing population for bread, making the country an importer rather than an exporter of grain.

The Corn Laws, which were introduced in 1815 to control a potential fall in grain prices after the French Wars, had forced prices up and encouraged agricultural investment, but only resulted in social unrest as the price of grain and therefore bread were artificially inflated.

Despite the high corn price, the 1820s were again a time of agricultural depression.

By the 1830s farmers were using new artificial fertilisers produced by Justus von Liebig (1803-1873) and John Lawes (1814-1900) and modified animal feedstuffs, which began to push up productivity to new levels.

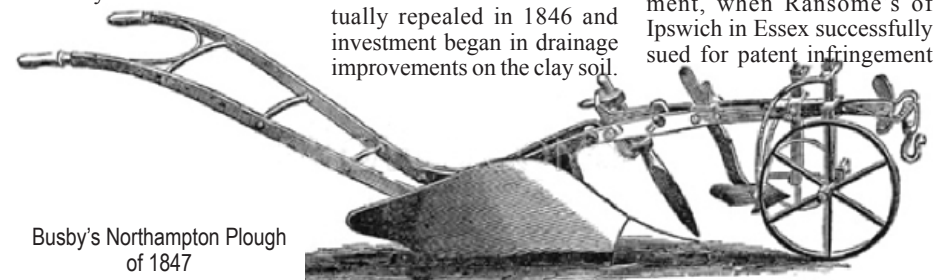
The corn laws were eventually repealed in 1846 and investment began in drainage improvements on the clay soil.

The period 1850 through the 1860s are regarded as the golden age of farming.

Although labour was still in plentiful supply, the efficiency of the farm machinery was realised as a key element in the economic production of grain and a Mr William Busby of Newton le Willows, near Bedale, began to win prizes for improved ploughs, hoes and a two horse drill for corn or turnips.

Plaudits abound in the programmes and reports of the Great Exhibition of 1851, the Paris exhibition of 1855 and medals and cash prizes are awarded at the Royal Society of Agricultural shows in 1847, 1848, 1849 and 1864.

William Busby was obviously adept at improving and then manufacturing, existing agricultural implements, although his enthusiasm occasionally exceeded his judgement, when Ransome's of Ipswich in Essex successfully sued for patent infringement



Busby's Northampton Plough of 1847

## A family of 'professional rectors'

THE Cambridge University Alumni Records list William F. Wharton, as entering Christ's in 1828 at the age of 18, leaving seven years later with a BA and an MA.

He came from a family of what one may describe as 'professional rectors' in Gilling West, with connections to the Wharton family in Westmorland and via his mother the Hon. Charlotte to the Dundas family at Aske Hall. The Gilling West history lists three successive rectors at Gilling from the Wharton Family.

William came to Barningham as the Rector in 1840 (although Burke's Peerage and Baronetage mistakenly has the living in the other Barningham in Suffolk) and finally resigned in 1873 to live abroad, dying at Mentone on the Mediterranean coast of France in 1893.

His young wife Agnes, nee Blunt, the daughter of a rector in Hampshire, established a considerable household of six servants at the Barningham rectory following their marriage in 1859 (see *Archive 4*). Agnes continued to live abroad and died in Switzerland in 1904 aged 72. The couple had no children.

The Rector was obviously a man of considerable character and knowledge and served on the Bench at the Greta Bridge Assizes, lectured to the farming community on the techniques of

field preparation, and was vigilant in the preparation of movement orders relating to cattle plague in 1865 and foot and mouth disease in 1870.

In 1856 he was active in helping to set up a fund requesting that all classes of the town and neighbourhood subscribe to the establishment of an institution for the training sustenance and protection of hospital nurses. The person in charge would give her name to the fund; henceforth to be called the Nightingale Fund.

It cannot be said that the Rev Wharton neglected his parish. In 1850 he established the Cow Club, an early form of insurance for the smallholders to protect their cattle. The club was a success and included subscribers from most of the surrounding villages, only folding after the Second World War when the number of smallholders dramatically decreased (see *Archives 4 & 25*).

Mary Martin, in her 1895 autobiography, records that in Scargill in the 1850s there was "a small building used as a day school and for public worship. The Wesleyan Methodists hold divine service every Sunday afternoon and the Rev Wharton holds divine service every alternate Sunday evening."

### our inventive rector

From the same paper: "John Harrison of Ravensworth and Thomas Harrison of Glebe Farm Barningham, present a combined plough and presser which ploughs and then prepares the seed bed. Priced at £6 10s."

And from the *Teesdale Mercury* 1850, reporting on the *Farmers Magazine* annual meeting: "Awards to Mr Busby... by the Society at Norwich, 1849: five horse hoes, a light horse hoe, a very light horse hoe, a horse rake, and a set of undulating harrow drills for corn, invented by the Rev. W. Wharton, rector of Barningham, and manufactured by the exhibitor (to this implement

was awarded the silver medal at the Society's meeting at Norwich, 1849); a two-horse corn or turnip drill, invented by the Rev. W. Wharton, rector of Barningham, and improved and manufactured by the exhibitor."

The Rev Wharton appears in numerous *Mercury* articles as the inventor or improver of various implements, including a response to an appeal from the Royal Society in 1849 "for a cheap and simple corn drill for use by small farmers... the appeal has been well responded to by Mr Busby, who brought out at Norwich, a drill on an entirely new principle, the invention of the Rev W F Wharton of Barningham... in the Judges' words 'quite aston-

in 1853 and levied a charge of five shillings on each plough sold by Busby. This at a time when a plough sold for between £4 to £6.

However, lingering in the background of Busby's technical advancement there appears a Svengali figure, who is actually the source of many of the ideas and improvements.

From the *Teesdale Mercury*, July 1864: "The RSA show in Newcastle: A Scotch double mould board or ridging plough; improved by the Reverend W F Wharton to allow plough land to be ridged and three times split for the same horse power and depth that it could be once ploughed by the ordinary plough. Priced at £4 5s."

## Pride of the Road excites bus lovers

THIS picture we printed in *Archive 16* has got Reuben Frankau quite excited.

Reuben, from Swaledale, loves old buses. So much so that he belongs to the vintage-bus-lovers' Omnibus Society, knows just about everything there is to know about early bus services in our area, and is writing a history of them all.

Someone told Reuben about our photo of a bus belonging to the Hutton Magna-based J. W. Stapleton company in the 1920s and he came to Barningham to see it.

The bus, he says, is the earliest Stapleton bus he's tracked down so far. "It's a Fiat, probably a first world war surplus lorry with a passenger saloon built on.

"The registration number seems to be J6700, allocated to Durham, and it was 'spotted' operating in the Darlington area in April 1922. Bus-spotters have been around longer than many people realise!"

J6700, more elegantly known as 'Pride of the Road', was one of the first, if not the first, to run regular services between Barningham, Newsham and Darlington.

John William Stapleton – known as Jack – set up his bus company after the first world war. By 1934 it was based in Newsham and he had at least two buses running three services from Barningham – to Darlington via Hutton Magna, and to Barnard Castle via Smallways and via Wycliffe. Others services ran from Hutton to Barnard Castle and from Greta Bridge to Caldwell.

The company was taken over in 1950 by J H Maude, who were in turn later taken over by Burrells. Jack died in 1955, aged 59.



old buses

Pride of the Road, c1920

## Rivals in court as owner denies number switch

RIVALRY between Teesdale bus operators was fierce in the early days – and in 1927 it led Jack Stapleton to court.

He was accused of using one of his buses – almost certainly The Pride of the Road pictured above – without a hackney carriage licence.

PC Cameron told Barnard Castle magistrates that he saw Jack in Newgate with the bus, a 14-seater Fiat painted red and yellow, but discovered that its licence plate belonged to another vehicle, a 20-seater Guy.

A few days later he came across Jack at the wheel of the Guy – which had the licence plate that he'd seen on the Fiat. Jack denied switching the plates.

Jack suggested that PC Cameron hadn't actually seen the Fiat in Newgate, and was relying on information given to him maliciously by rival operators. The officer stoutly rejected this, and produced two witnesses who backed him up.

One was Robert Etherington, who told the court he'd definitely seen Jack driving the Fiat in Newgate. Questioned, he admitted being a driver

for a rival bus operator, Sam Turner of Barningham (they later became brothers-in-law) but insisted this had nothing to do with it.

He was followed into the witness box by George Maude, who said he too had seen the red and white Fiat. It was true that his brother ran a rival bus service, but that was irrelevant.

Jack told the magistrates that his Fiat was in fact painted green and grey, and on the day in question it had been in his garage at Hutton Magna. It was derelict and hadn't been used for months since the crank shaft had snapped. It was only long after the alleged offence that he got a replacement part, and he produced a dated bill in court to prove it.

The bus he was driving in Newgate, he insisted, was the Guy, which was red and yellow.

Two defence witnesses, Henry Harker and William Sanderson, backed him up, and the case was dismissed.

The rivalry didn't diminish, of course: in fact, we suspect things probably got rather worse after all that.



# Tithe book reveals who was who in Newsham, 1841

LINDA SHERWOOD, investigating a document that lists all the properties in Newsham 172 years ago, gives a taste of what she's found so far

A CHANCE encounter led me to uncovering an original copy of the Newsham Tithe Apportionment 1841, which should more properly be referred to as the 'Instrument of Tithe Apportionment of the Rent Charge in lieu of Tithes in the Township of Newsham, in the Parishes of Kirby Hill, otherwise Ravensworth and Barningham'.

The document is a book made of pages of Shaw & Co's stationery and bound in brown parcel wrapping paper, being approximately one by two foot in size when closed.

The handwriting is beautiful and legible in the main. Thomas Bradley was the person who constructed the schedule by surveying. The document was endorsed by the Tithe Commissioners on November 2nd 1841.

What do its pages tell us? Once the document is matched with the Newsham tithe map it will give us a true picture of land ownership and occupation in Newsham over 170 years ago.

The information will be produced as a publication in due course but a few snippets below will give you a taster:

1. Not only was Ralph Simpson occupying Earby Hall and a school house, he also rented a number of acres of agricultural land – this really

## newsham 1841

was "boy farming".

2. Unsurprisingly, Mark Milbank was by far the largest land-owner with 2,097 acres. The Quakers Society, who owned 115 acres, were the joint fourth largest land-owner with Mrs Ann Chambers who owned a similar amount.

3. There were three public houses (whose location will be confirmed by the tithe map) in addition to the Smallways public house which was run by John Coulthard and owned by John Todd. George Nicholson owned and ran a pub; Cuthbert Boldron leased his pub from James Thompson and George Walton leased his from Solomon Swetnam.

4. Other village facilities are mentioned. Thomas Sawyer

and Ann Wilkinson ran a shop owned by Jonathan Rutter, whilst Stephen Graham and others ran a butcher's shop leased from Thomas Rountree. William Bland and son ran the corn mill which was rented from Mark Milbank.

5. Robert Atkinson owned and occupied a schoolhouse which had a room over it. George Heslop rented a schoolhouse from Mark Milbank.

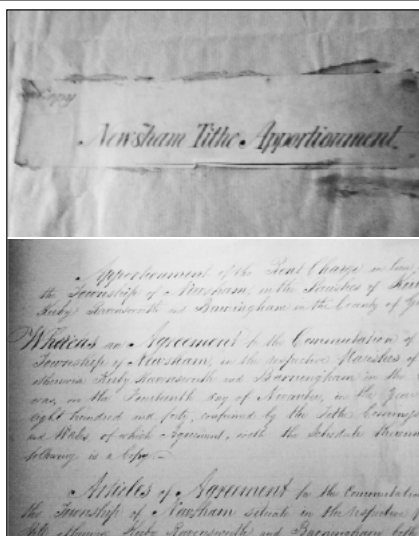
6. Thomas Ford and John Kay rented a carpenter's shop from Thomas Beckett.

7. There were two blacksmith's shops – Henry Lonsdale rented his smithy from John Humphries and William Hind rented his from Mark Milbank.

8. The workhouse was in the west of the township.

9. A lot of the field names are graphic, eg 5 days mowing but the origins of others such as Tenterkykes Reins are less obvious.

The next task is to index the information and match it with the map in preparation for publishing through the group.



The 1841 map and associated list of properties was drawn up as a result of the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836, when the whole country was surveyed. Three copies of each map and list were made at the time, one for the Tithe Commissioners, one for the diocesan bishop and one for the parish clerk. The history group has published details of the Barningham survey in its book Jam Leach and Jingle Potts. –Ed.

## our inventive rector

ishing as there was nothing in its appearance to recommend it'."

His ground-breaking (no pun intended) lecture to the Staindrop Farmers Club meeting in 1867, on the planting of turnips and the use of certain ploughs to achieve an effective result, was marred by considerable controversy in that several farmers objected that the ploughs purchased did not work.

However, the Rev Wharton responded by quoting from a letter from a satisfied customer, the Rev Hill in Shrewsbury, who said "In answer to your letter respecting the plough I purchased from you... first rate implement... confident that it economises both time and horse power."

This is the first and only indication that the Rev Wharton actually sold his ploughs.

The *Farmers Magazine* and the *Teesdale Mercury*, from 1849 onwards and throughout the last half of the 19th century, reported on, in addition to the successful results of the various agricultural shows, the Agricultural Society meetings and dinners at Richmond and Barnard Castle, and the Rev Wharton is usually on the top table with Lord Vane and the Earl of Zetland.

With what was obviously a considerable technical knowledge regarding agriculture, it is surprising that no record exists of any patents attributed to W F Wharton nor that he sought them.

The public records from 1893 onwards, which regulated the attribution of patents, are too late and a search of the *London Gazette* only

## GALGATE STREET, BARNARD CASTLE

### PIGS, PRIME PRIZE BLOOD PIGS FOR SALE

MR TARN begs leave to announce that he if instructed to sell by Auction, on WEDNESDAY the 10th day of MAY, 1865, in Galgate Street, Barnard Castle, the following superior lot of PIGS, from the justly celebrated stock of the Rev. W. F. WHARTON, of Barningham Rectory, comprising from 30 to 40 head, from six month to fix week old, including boar, breeding fow, and store pigf.

The whole of the above are of the prize winning strain of Blood; Pedigree will be given at the time of Sale if required.

Mr Tarn respectfully solicits the attention of breeder and feeder of Pig to the above Sale, as a rare opportunity if afforded of purchasing animal combining Blood and Bone. Sale about half-past one o'clock or immediately after the Auctioneer's Monthly Cattle Sale if concluded.

Hayberrief, April 17th, 1865.

references John Harrison of Ravensworth and Thomas Harrison of Glebe Farm Barningham, patenting their combined plough and presser in 1862.

However as the Rectory was next door to the Glebe Farm, it is inconceivable that the Rev Wharton did not take a considerable interest in the development of the new plough.

Despite the lack of evidence of any income derived from patent licence, when William died the probate record shows "Effects £4,800", in today's values in excess of £300,000, which suggests that William had some other income in addition to his stipend.

The *Farmers Magazine* welcomed all the efficiency improvements in the plough and other implements and that export of the improved ploughs and drills to the USA, was taking place.

At the same time FM is recording several successful

trials in this area of a new plough from the USA. The agricultural committee, including the Rev Wharton, are lavish in their praise on both plough and inventor, although other UK trials had concluded the plough was nothing special.

No agricultural function, reported in the *Mercury*, seemed to be complete unless the Rev Wharton was on the top table in his role as a vice president, judging and advising.

This did not preclude him from competing at the shows, so the 1855 report reads "Rev W F Wharton, Barningham, prizes for two years old heifer – 10s, Cow and calf – 5s, and a yearling filly for the field – 5s."

Nor was the activity restricted to cattle... Mr Tarn begged to announce in 1865 that in Galgate Street "the celebrated stock of the Reverend Walton would be for sale, being 40 head of prize winning strain of Blood; boars, breeding sows



## A ton of coal did the work of 40 horses

MENTION of steam ploughs got us wondering how they worked, and we found out on a fascinating website [www.steamploughclub.org.uk](http://www.steamploughclub.org.uk).

You positioned two engines, one each side of the field, and hauled a plough up and down between them using a steel cable, up to 800 yards long. Using this method you could plough 20 acres a day – twenty

times as much as a traditional two-horse plough – for the cost of a ton of coal. The steam plough could cut deeper and work land impossible to plough by other methods.

Steam ploughs survived to the 1920s. Some came out of retirement during the second world war, and the last ceased work in 1960.



and store pigs; pedigrees to be given at the time of sale.”

The *Mercury* carries reports of the philanthropic activities of the Rev Wharton. He chaired the meetings of the Guardians of the Teesdale Union every fortnight, which controlled pauper relief, supervised the local workhouse and distributed cash relief... “*Barnard Castle district; out door relief, 313 persons relieved at a cost of £29 17s 6d. Workhouse; Number of inmates 104.*”

Such was the esteem that was felt for the Rev Wharton that in November 1873 a testimonial was proposed and a subscription, limited at the rate of 5s per person, raised over £62 which was to be used to purchase a silver salver.

The meeting at the Witham Hall heard that the reverend gentleman was inclined (as so many kind friends had testified their respect for him) to leave the money to be

### our inventive rector

spent in the improvement of the district. The Chairman, however, was having none of this and a salver was commissioned from Newcastle and presented to the Whartons with a book containing the names of all the subscribers and with the Wharton crest on the cover.

Meanwhile the threat from the USA was growing.

Cyrus McCormick invented a mechanical reaper in July, 1831. By 1847, he began the mass manufacture of his reaper in a Chicago factory and founded what eventually became the International Harvester Company.

In 1872 he produced a reaper which automatically bound the bundles with wire. In 1880, he came out with a binder which, using a knotting device invented by John F. Appleby, a Wisconsin pas-

tor, bound the bales with twine.

Seed drills, removing the need for seeding by hand were successfully developed in Great Britain, and many seed drills were sold to the United States before one was manufactured in the States in 1840. Seed planters for corn came somewhat later, as the machinery to plant wheat successfully was unsuited for corn planting.

In 1837 John Deere (1804-1886) invented a steel plough which prolonged the life of the working parts in contact with the soil and in 1856 John Fowler invented a steam plough.

The development of extensive railway networks in both Britain and the USA and steamships ploughing across the Atlantic, allowed US farmers, with much larger and more productive farms, to export hard grain to Britain at a price that undercut the British farmers.

American grain helped ordinary people in the towns but it meant a depression in British farming.

The golden age of English agriculture, with the wealth of improvements to the ploughs and the protection of the corn laws, started to come to an end.

Farms employed less labour in an effort to compete and a rapid outflow of population, from the predominantly arable counties, to the towns, ensued.

Between 1873 and 1879 British agriculture had wet summers that damaged grain crops. Cattle farmers were hit by foot-and-mouth disease, and sheep farmers by sheep liver rot.

The poor harvests, however, masked a greater threat to British agriculture: growing imports of foodstuffs from abroad.

Large amounts of cheap corned beef started to arrive from Ar-

### our inventive rector

gentina and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 together with the development of refrigerator ships (reefers) in 1880 opened the British market to cheap meat and wool from Australia, New Zealand and Argentina.

No country seemed exempt from the vagaries of economic fluctuations and a worldwide economic recession called “The Long Depression” began in 1873 and ended around 1896.

It hit the agricultural sectors hard and was the most severe in Europe. Even the United States, which had been experiencing strong economic growth fuelled by the Second Industrial Revolution in the decade following the American Civil War, was hard hit but recovered with its broad industrial base intact.

By 1900 half the meat eaten

in Britain came from abroad and tropical fruits like bananas, were being imported on the new refrigerator ships.

In the expanding UK towns, bread became more affordable. In the larger English farms that remained, there was the first serious shift into agricultural machinery. After 1879 farming income remained at a low ebb and did not start to recover until the later major European conflicts in the 20th century demanded that grain be again resourced from our own countryside.

The Rev Wharton had retired in 1873 at the age of 63 and was living out his retirement in the South of France. His Alumni record describes him as “living much abroad”. I wonder if he saw what was to come and very sensibly decided to spend his latter years in the sun.