

## Award for history projects

THE *Archive* is inviting you to enter for a new award for original local history projects carried out during 2009-2010.

Projects can be written, visual, audio or any combination of the three, and of any length – the only requirement is that they add to our knowledge and understanding of what Teesdale life was like in the past. They don't have to be academic: they could be a family history, recordings of older residents, research into old documents or simply drawings of buildings: the choice is yours.

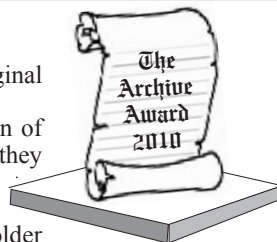
Entries can come from individuals, groups or families, and the judges will take youngsters' age into account when making their decision.

The deadline will be towards the end of August and the award (a trophy and small

but useful prize) will be presented at the village show in September. There'll be something for runners-up, too.

The winning entry – and maybe others, too – will be featured in the *Archive* and on our website. More details later, but start planning now!

● *No, of course Jon can't enter.*



## Any more for the Whitby trip?

WE'RE planning a coach trip to Whitby on Saturday October 2nd, when those interested can join a tour of the town's museums and archives and everybody else can have a day at the seaside.

The museums tour is being organised by the British Association of Local History and will cost £8 a head. Cost of the coach depends on how many are going altogether, but will probably be about £12 per person if we fill it.

We need to know fairly soon how many places to book on the tour and how big a coach to order, so if you and/or your family fancy a day out (worth it for the fish and chips alone) please let Jon Smith know as soon as possible.



**The Archive is a regular record of the activities of Barningham Local History Group, including members' research and updates on information in its publications such as the guide to churchyard memorials.**

**Copies are available to group members and non-members for an annual subscription of £10. Back issues can be purchased for £2 each.**

**Contact Jon Smith, Tel: 01833 621374, email [history@smithj90.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:history@smithj90.fsnet.co.uk)**

**See our website [www.barninghamvillage.co.uk](http://www.barninghamvillage.co.uk) for more information**

### OLD RECIPES

#### Pickling pigeons

FROM Barningham Hall Recipe Book, 1691  
*Take your Pigeons, bone them, turn them inside out to season them with pepper, salt, mace, & cloves. Shred some sweet herbs & lemon peel. Then turn them again and tie up the necks. Boil them in water and salt and whole pepper and any other spice you please and a shredded onion.*

*When they are boiled enough make a fresh pickle of water and spice and white wine, do not put your pickle on till it be cold, if you keep them long putt vinegar on them instead of white wine.*

● If you have old recipes, please contact Kay Duggan who is compiling a booklet of them.



# Archive 6

ANNALS OF THE BARNINGHAM LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

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

April  
MMX

INSIDE: HOW BRAVE MISS CASH BROKE THROUGH THE SEX BARRIER

## Barningham in 1831: Ten things we didn't know till now

AMONG the finds rescued from the Rectory skip (you may as well get used to stories starting like this, there'll be quite a few of them in the *Archive* over the next few issues) was this document, the 1831 census enumerator's summary of his findings.

Not many papers from that census have survived and finding one like this is unusual, if not rare. The enumerators summarised their findings in these four-page documents (called Formula No 1) and copied them into an official schedule which was sent off to the government. Statistics from all over the country were totted up and published, but much of the detail was ignored and most schedules were subsequently destroyed.

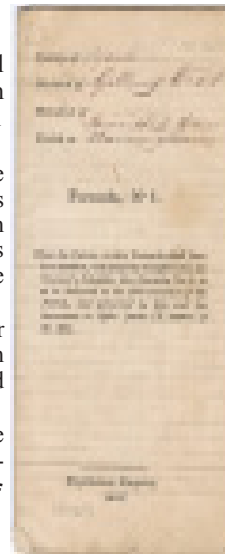
The Formula, the only original evidence of what the enumerator had found, was supposed to be passed to the local churchwarden with instructions to look after it forever. Many were never handed over and most of the rest have been lost over the past 180 years.

Barningham was lucky: it had a conscientious enumerator, village overseer Andrew Bowman, who handed the document over to the rector, Robert Plunkett. He filed it away, and it lay unnoticed, buried among other papers, until it was found among debris cleared from the rectory attic earlier this year.

The 1831 census (they called it a Population Enquiry at the time) wasn't nearly as detailed as later censuses: it didn't, for example, list personal information about each inhabitant, not even their names.

But it did enquire into how many houses there were, how many families lived in them, how the population was divided into men and women, and crucially what they all did for a living.

**The front cover of Barningham's Formula No 1**



Some of this information can be found in the government's census abstract published in 1833.

It's now available online and if you have a look at [www.histpop.org](http://www.histpop.org) you'll find that there were 396 inhabitants (186 males, 210 females) in 85 different families living in 77 houses. You'll also discover how the families were employed (54 in agriculture, 16 in trade, 15 others). But  
*Continued on Page 3*

### INSIDE

LAST MEETING'S MINUTES – Page 2

MISS CASH'S BREAKTHROUGH – Page 4

RISE & FALL OF THE P.M. – Page 5

THE PARK HOUSE DISASTER – Pages 8-9

1841 CENSUS TRAIL – Page 10

LETTERS & EMAILS – Pages 11-12

NEIL'S NOTES – Page 12

WARTIME MEMORIES – Page 13

HOUSE HISTORIES – Pages 14-15

THE ARCHIVE TROPHY – Page 16

**NEXT HISTORY GROUP MEETING: TUESDAY APRIL 6th, 6pm**

# Rectory rescue, plans for prizes, and maybe a trip to the seaside

**Minutes** of the meeting held in Barningham Village Hall on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2010.

**Present:** Jon Smith, Ann Hutchinson, Neil Turner, Greta Carter, Louise Ferrari, Ted Andrews, Janet Wrigley, Phil Hunt, Tony Orton, Ann Orton, Sue Prytherick, Diane Metcalf, Sheila Catton, Elaine MacDermott + Katy and Jamie.

**Apologies:** Beverley Peach, Eric and Kay Duggan, Robin Brooks.

**Minutes** of the previous meeting were agreed. Matters arising were covered on the agenda.

**Treasurers Report:** Eric Duggan was away but supplied a report showing income from the month from *Archive* subscriptions, publications sales, donations and meeting subscriptions of £207. Expenditure on printing, resources and annual group subscription to the British Association of Local History totalled £194, leaving a balance of £626.

The chairman detailed benefits from the BALH membership, including receipt of regular local history newsletters, reductions on books, public liability insurance, and the chance to join association outings. A BALH trip was planned to Whitby's museums, library and archives on October 2<sup>nd</sup> and it was agreed that we should hire a bus to take members there if there was enough interest. The estimated cost was £20 a head, and anyone wanting to go should give names to Jon as soon as possible.

**House Histories:** Neil Turner led a lively discussion of Banks House, Heather Cottage, and other village properties and their occupants.

**Publications and resources:** Archive 5 had been distributed. The A-Z Census booklet was now available, £8 to *Archive* subscribers.

**Website:** Jon had put lots of old photos on the site and would love someone to leave a message on it! He gave details of a free website showing the Yorkshire Film Archive: the address is [www.yfaonline.com](http://www.yfaonline.com)

**Recipes:** Armed with one of our new books, Kay Duggan was making good progress with the old

## THE MINUTES

English in the 1691 recipe book. Several old recipe books have been received as a result of our appeal, and it was suggested that we could have a cooking evening to try them out.

**Parish Minutes 1894-1931:** Being transcribed.

**Film Projects:** No progress

**Land girls:** No progress

**Oral heritage:** Jon and Ann Hutchinson were hoping to interview George Alderson soon.

**Guest Speakers:** There were various suggestions made, Tony Orton and Jon to investigate.

**Rectory Documents:** The Great Skip Rescue! Jon had compiled as complete a set of parish magazines as possible from about 1895, available for members to borrow, and there were duplicates awaiting anyone who would like to have them.

Lots of other fascinating documents were found, some on parchment, including a list of Glebe land field names from 1806 (does anyone want to research this?), a valuation of Barningham Township from 1817, a rare census summary of 1831 (see page 1), a copy of churchwardens' accounts 1732/1819, and letters from Canon Gough with details of the rector's famous salmon of 1892.

More about these documents will appear in forthcoming *Archives*. The originals will be given to the Records Office at Durham.

**Any other business:**

Jon thanked Greta for the loan of interesting papers relating to Fountain Cottage.

The tale of the Newsham pheasant, picked up from the *Flyer* and featured all over the world, had earned money which Jon would like to see used to fund prizes for a history competition for adults and children.

The Village Hall Committee is investigating the dedication inscription on the north wall of the hall and hopes to have it restored.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April, 6pm.

ANN ORTON, Secretary

## HOUSE HISTORIES

when war broke out in 1914, was wounded in France, and came home to die in 1917. Hezekiah died in March 1923, Ann five months later.

The new gamekeeper and tenant of Grouse Cottage was Cecil Lee, son of postman Richard Lee of North View. Cecil, married to Edith (nee Hare), had three children: Audrey (now Mrs Porter, of Barnard Castle), Bernard (later a gamekeeper at Rokeby), and Arthur (who, according to Neil Turner, married a German).

Next were Norman and Ina Walker, parents of Greta (Carter) and Muriel. Norman was a shepherd, and the house was re-christened Heather Cottage.

It passed in the 1960s to gamekeeper Bob Usher, his wife Mattie (nee White, from Haythwaite, always known as 'Tot') and daughter Mary; then came Mike and Lyn Shields; Bill and Ann Bell and family until the late 1990s; Brenda Askew; Brian and Louise Waite; and Wayne Green, who lives there today.

## BANKS HOUSE

THIS was a two-bedroomed cottage until 1979, when it was extended to link with the barn next-door.

It stands at the end of Shaw Lane, and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century came with a handful of acres – it was known as Banks Farm until around 1960 – though it seems that by 1900 the land was being let out rather than farmed by the occupier, and it was all sold off around 1940 (a couple of fields have been added in recent years).

We can't identify anyone who lived there until 1911, when the census recorded the Longstaff family: John, 45, his wife Christiana, 42, and their five sons – John, 12, Herbert, 8, Ernest, 5, George, 3, and two-year-old Christopher.

Ernest died, just 16, in 1922; the rest we have yet to trace, though we are in contact with a Kenneth Longstaff who is the son of one of the other boys (see letters in *Archive 5*).

By the 1930s the house was occupied by Christopher ('Kit') Smith, his wife (a Birtwhistle, though we're not sure which one) and their nine children. Kit was something of a jack of all trades: his advertisement in the parish magazine of the time offered his services as a mason,



Banks House 1978



Banks House 2010

builder, chimney-sweep and tombstone-cleaner. They left before the outbreak of war, and Ralph Chilton, an unmarried retired farmer, moved in from Bragg House with his cousin Beattie. They later moved to Elim Cottage, where Ralph died in 1948, Beattie in 1953.

Next in Banks House was another family of Smiths (no relation to Kit): fire officer Sidney and his partner Marjorie Cox, who moved from Pear Tree Cottage and brought six children up in the house. It still had no electricity or even running water: the children walked each day to the stream at the end of the lane to fill buckets. It wasn't until after Sidney died in the 1960s that Marjorie was able to lay a water pipe down to the house (it runs somewhere under the Heath Cottages field) and connect to mains electric.

Marjorie sold the house in 1979 to yet more unrelated Smiths, Jon and Joan, who also bought the next-door barn and the fields behind from Malcolm Rainy-Brown of Manor House and built additional rooms in the gap between.

Ann and Gareth Cordey bought it in 1993, and sold it a decade later to the present occupants, Gill Cox and Bill Tibbett.

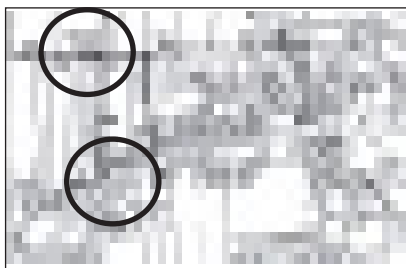
● *Next: Woodbine, Ivy, Holly and Rose.*

## HOUSE HISTORIES

## Keepers, shepherds and lots of Smiths

ONE of the group projects is to create a data base of all the houses in Barningham, with details of their history and who has lived in them over the years.

Buildings we've discussed in recent meetings include Heather Cottage and Banks House, which we look at in more detail below. If you have more information or amendments, please let us know.



### HEATHER COTTAGE

FOR many years this was the home of Barningham Estate gamekeepers, and known as Grouse Cottage: it changed its name when a shepherd took over the tenancy in the 1960s.

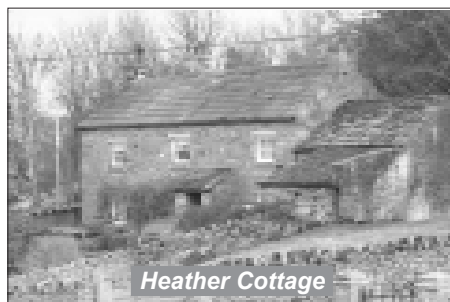
It may have started life as two adjoining cottages and it's believed there used to be another on the western side, which fell into disuse and was demolished half a century ago: there are signs of foundations in the field where it stood.

The earliest occupant we know of was the splendidly-named Hezekiah Birtwhistle, who arrived in Barningham and took on the gamekeeper's job in the mid-1870s. He was born in Gargrave, near Skipton, in 1849 and brought with him his wife Elizabeth and two young sons, Henry and Joseph.

The Birtwhistles had moved around a bit before settling down here: Henry was born in Hartlepool, Joseph in Baldersby. By 1877 they had a sister, Winifred, and four more children arrived over the next ten years: Mary, Paul, Lilian and Charles. Then tragedy struck: Elizabeth died after the birth of her seventh child and Hezekiah was left to bring them up alone.

It was six years before he found someone to share the burden: Scottish-born Ann Sayer, the 44-year-old widow of a herdsman who had died in Barningham

**Hezekiah Birtwhistle, pictured in 1906**



Heather Cottage

ten years earlier and left her with four young children of her own, Eleanor, Robert, David and Jessie. Ann was scraping a living as a cook when Hezekiah proposed to her in 1893. She accepted, and for a time there were eleven youngsters crowded with them into Grouse Cottage.

As well as being the local gamekeeper, Hezekiah doubled up as the village postmaster until the end of the century, when he handed the job over to Thomas Shepherd (see *Archive 2* and Page 8 of this issue). By then Henry had started work as a gardener and left home. Joseph joined the Scots Guards, fought in the Boer War, and died of fever in South Africa in 1900; the rest of Hezekiah's offspring moved away. In 1901 only Charles and Jessie remained at home.

Jessie married Robert Gazer in 1911, and the pair of them moved in with the Birtwhistles for a time. Lilian married a Richard Jackson at Barningham in 1913 and the year after Eleanor, who had become a housemaid at the hall, married Joseph Jamieson. Other girls married Kit Smith of Banks House, Richard Jackson of Crooks House and William Nicholson of West End. Robert Sayer joined the Royal Scots Fusiliers

### 1831 CENSUS SECRETS

*Continued from front page*

further detail wasn't recorded by the government statisticians of 1831, and would probably have been lost for all time if we hadn't rescued the Formula from the rectory skip.

Here, then, are ten things nobody's known about the Barningham of 1831 since, well, 1831:

**1** More than half the 186 males, 95 of them, were under the age of 20.

**2** Three of the other 91 were classed as being "wholesalers, capitalists, clergy, clerks, professional or other educated men". These were almost certainly the rector, his curate and the schoolmaster.

**3** Two were classed as "male servants", probably at the hall (which at that time was used just as a hunting lodge in the shooting season, and the rest of the year left in the hands of a skeleton staff) though this category also included anyone retired or "Males diseased or disabled in Body or Mind".

**4** There were no adult females working as domestic servants other than on farms.

**5** A total of 92 adults were employed in agriculture. Twelve of them – eleven men and one woman – were recorded as "Agricultural Occupiers, 1st Class". These were defined as people who occupied farmland and employed one or more farm labourers or servants. Some were working farmers, others were landowners who left it to their employees to do all the work.

**6** A further 33 men and four women were "Agricultural Occupiers 2nd Class", who were farmers employing nobody outside their own family.

**7** And 43 workers – the Formula doesn't identify how many were men or women – were farm labourers working for those in Class 1 – which works out as roughly four labourers per Class 1 employer.

**8** Altogether there were 49 farms or other forms of agricultural smallholding.

**9** Twenty people worked in "trade or handicraft", which would have included innkeepers, shopkeepers, joiners, wheelwrights, masons, blacksmiths, cordwainers and dressmakers.

**10** There were an awful lot of children in the village, probably not far off 100 aged under 12,

the age when most left school (if they'd gone at all – it wasn't compulsory).

By 1841 the population had shrunk from 396 to 337, with the number of families down from 85 to 77 – though the number of inhabited houses stayed the same. Eight dwellings that had been in multiple-family occupation became homes for just one; three more stood empty.

The number of families involved in agriculture fell from 54 to 48 but the number of people recorded as employed in trade or manufacturing went up considerably, from 16 to 29: they included four joiners (with four apprentices), five shoemakers (plus one apprentice), six schoolteachers (one a professor of music), two butchers, two innkeepers, two blacksmiths, two masons, a grocer, a tailor and a dressmaker.

Barningham was clearly becoming a place where people went to retire. In 1841 there were 21 "of independent means". Some were retired labourers, but there was a fair smattering of the well-to-do, including several elderly spinsters and one retired master mariner – most employing domestic servants, young girls who were doubtless happy to escape a life working in the fields.

### FROM THE PARISH MAG

**120 YEARS AGO:** "The Scargill Services: Miss Goldsbrough kindly instructs on Tuesday evenings an admirable little band of singers. Miss Beatrice Simpson and Miss Johnson have been good enough to undertake on the harmonium; we hope, therefore, that the people of Scargill will appreciate the efforts made to make the afternoon services attractive, and attend regularly, for the congregations have been very small." – *April 1890.*

**90 YEARS AGO:** "Mary Todd, one of the oldest inhabitants of Barningham, passed away on March 14, at the age of 72. The daughters, who have so faithfully and affectionately watched over and tenderly nursed their mother through a long and most trying illness, gathered round the grave when she was laid to rest by the side of her husband." – *April 1920*

**70 YEARS AGO:** "Easter was notable for lovely weather, and large attendances at Communion and the ordinary services. At Sunday School the children were presented with prettily coloured Easter eggs." – *April 1940.*

## The day Miss Cash broke through the parish sex barrier

TEN men made their way to Barningham's half-yearly parish meeting on the evening of October 3rd 1910. It was always men. No woman had ever set foot in a parish meeting, or in the vestry meetings which preceded them, even though the 1894 Local Government Act had given both sexes the right to attend, vote and stand as councillors.

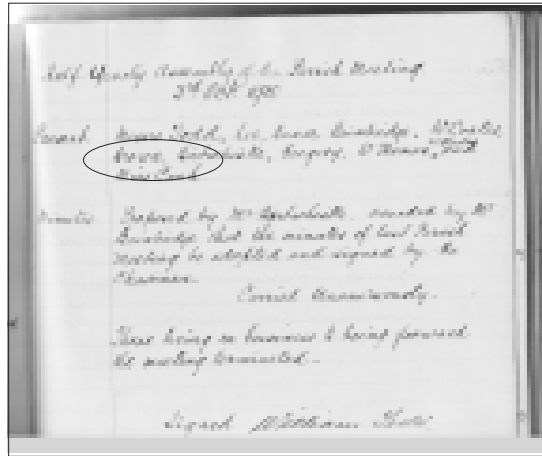
So it must have come as an almighty shock to chairman William Todd and his nine fellow members when they arrived for the meeting in the village schoolroom and found Miss Cash was joining them. We don't know anything about Miss Cash, the first woman ever to breach what had until then been an exclusively male bastion, but she must have been someone of considerable nerve and determination.

What persuaded her to go where no woman had ever gone before is uncertain, but she may well have been prompted by the rising tide of suffragettes' action in their battle for women's right to vote.

How her ten male companions reacted is unrecorded, but they clearly decided to escape from the situation as fast as possible. They approved the previous meeting's minutes by a unanimous vote (presumably Miss Cash put her hand up with the rest), decided that there was nothing else worth discussing, and went straight home (unless the ten stunned males went round the corner to the pub to recover). The meeting can't have lasted more than a couple of minutes.

Miss Cash was probably a bit disappointed, but evidently felt she had made her point because she didn't appear at any future meetings. Male supremacy reigned again until September 1913, when five women – Miss Cocker, Miss Atkinson, Miss Alderson, Miss Armstrong and Mrs Thomas, wife of the parish clerk – turned up at a public meeting to discuss establishing a Lighting Fund for the village.

Six other women attended another special meeting the following January, when the parish sent a petition to the promoters of a planned new railway to Hutton Magna, pleading that it be extended at least as far as Newsham, but no female ventured into the full parish meeting that April.



**Parish meeting minutes, October 10 1910:  
Miss Cash joins the men**

Then war broke out. Suffragettes nationally abandoned their campaign for the duration. Mrs Thomas and Miss Cocker put in a token appearance at the brief half-yearly meeting in September 1914, but after that no woman played any active part in parish meetings for another half-century apart from Lady Milbank, who came along to a couple of meetings with her husband just after they arrived in the village in 1919 – she consented to be a school manager – and Miss Elsie Gough, the rector's daughter, who turned up at a meeting of the lighting fund-raising committee.

Why were women so reluctant to get involved? No doubt there was a feeling that parish business was traditionally 'man's work' and there must have been plenty of household

## Memories of a wartime childhood

SYLVIA MACDONALD  
recalls growing up  
in Barningham in the  
1940s



I WAS born in The Nook and went to school until I was 14. The head teacher was Mrs Ethel Smith, who lived in Sharon Cottage. The big girls had a name for her, Fanny – she was a little fat lady with a hairnet, navy/white dress and black wellingtons.

When the school dentist came you had to go down to the Reading Room for treatment and during the war every Thursday night there was a six-penny hop held there as well. We used to go off on singer tournaments and won money: I think the shield is still in the school. The last one we went to was at Richmond and the late George Smith and me fell onto the platform. Wintertime we had a fairly long slide in the girls' yards, and we spent many happy hours sledging down Johnny Bainbridge's hill opposite the village shop. At Christmas we got some lovely bunches of holly on the Low Lane. I remember one very cold winter the large pond at Park House was frozen over and even the Rev David Cook was skating.

Summer holidays were spent up on Barningham moor playing hide and seek and trying to catch bullheads in the beck. The moor got a lot of visitors who would come up and play games and music and have great fun. Sometimes on a summer Sunday the Salvation Army would come and play some fancy tunes.

There was a moor gate which the kids including myself would open for cars and they would throw pennies out or a bag of toffees. On a very hot day the tar would have melted and got on our best shoes and white socks. Then we were in trouble when we got home.

The pennies we fought over to pick up at the gate were saved up for our one and only day a

### Tell us a story...

DO you have memories of Barningham in the past, or know of someone who has? The *Archive* welcomes contributions. Contact Jon, 01833 621374 or [jon@smithj90.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:jon@smithj90.fsnet.co.uk).



**Sylvia, left, with sister Brenda and brother Lloyd in 1936. Behind them is Sharon Cottage, demolished in the 1960s. It was replaced by Curlew House**

year to the seaside at Redcar on Maude's bus. We lived all day on the beach with our boiled eggs and tomato sandwiches. Sometimes my dad would take us to Redcar for the day. I always remember coming back, mam and I would ride home in the dicky seat.

We would love to go nutting to North Wood, Round the World or Cow Close. We climbed trees like monkeys. There was a big tip which we were always raking over to see if we could find some treasure.

As kids we spent a lot of time in Barningham Park, playing in the ice house, sitting on great big moss cushions gathering sticks and sometimes rasps. We had to keep our eyes open for old Grandad Powell, the head gamekeeper, because he always moved us on.

● Sylvia, sister of Brenda, Neil and Trevor Turner, has lived in Bowes since the 1950s.

## LETTERS &amp; EMAILS (cont)

(which I think has since changed its name). She later moved to South Wales UK in 1951/1952 and got married.

A couple of years ago I came up and stayed in Barningham and went to see Sir Anthony Milbank who confirmed that Newsham House belongs to them.

While I was there I went to the house and a very kind lady who lived there was good enough to show me and my friend her home (I was bowled over by her kindness) and was very grateful.

She thought the house was used during the First World War by the Army as their HQ but I have not been able to get any information on this.

Any information about Mary or Newsham House would be much appreciated

JACKIE GOODE, *South Wales*  
jgoode26@googlemail.com

## FROM THE VESTRY MINUTES

## Mr Leggett's errant horse

*Special parish meeting, held in the Barningham National Schoolroom, Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1896:*

*The Chairman read a communication from Inspector Wilson of Startforth police relative to an obstruction of a footpath in Barningham by a horse owned by Mr G. Leggett, Black Horse Inn.*

*Sir Frederick Milbank remarked that he desired an amicable enquiry into the matter. Having made some observations relative to the dangers and responsibilities when animals were allowed to roam on the village green and footpaths, he moved that the overseer be instructed to take proceedings against Mr Leggett.*

*Mr Stubbs (Master of the School) observed that he had noticed the danger to scholars attending his school when horses were wandering on the green and footpaths & were running as they sometimes did when children were crossing the green to and from school.*

*Discussion followed, and the resolution*

## NEIL'S NOTES

## The day we got switched on

BARNINGHAM had electric street lights from the 1920s, powered by a generator at the Hall. It was a doubtful benefit, because Mr Leggitt, the butler, would switch it off before he went home at 9 o'clock and the streets were in darkness just when lights were needed.

The generator was turned off at the outbreak of war in 1939 and it was 1951 before mains electric arrived in the village and we got lit up again. It was installed on August 27th, and the first place to be switched on was the pub. My mum, who was very proud of how clean she kept the rooms, was horrified when the lights came on and she saw all the cobwebs on the ceilings.

**Canada caravan** My O'Neil lived in a caravan in the field opposite Banks House during the late 1940s. His wife worked at West End and (allegedly) impoverished John George Nicholson (see *Archive 2*). Stan Atkinson had it later on the Canada allotments, and later a Miss Pritchett lived in it. She went bald.

The fields 'round the world' were mostly named after famous battle sites. There used to be a tank on the Canadas providing the village with water, which smelled awful. Eventually they investigated and found dead sheep in it. They'd been falling into it for years.

## Shot into action

THERE was a lad in the village some time back who used to drive me mad. When he bought penny sweets he could never make his mind up and when he got older he would sit all night over half a pint, and never speak a word.

One night I got so sick of this that I loaded a starting pistol and shot at him three times. He went as white as a ghost and ran out. He came back half an hour later, saying he'd "had an accident" and needed to get changed. I couldn't shut him up after that.

● *Quite what this has to do with local history I'm not sure, but it's too good to ignore. – Ed.*

## PIONEERING MISS CASH

heads who disapproved of, or even forbade, wives and daughters getting ideas above their station.

The relatively few middle-class women who might have had the time, inclination and confidence to attend parish meetings were already busy with other organisations – the church, Sunday schools, sewing circles, jumble sales, waifs and strays committees (the parish magazines of the time were full of them) – and the tedium of parish meetings cannot have seemed an attractive alternative.

Working women – farmers' wives, agricultural workers, domestic servants – had homes to run as well, and it took a doughty labourer's wife with six children to tell her husband he was staying home at night to look after the kids while she went off to debate who should be the new assistant overseer.

So the parish meeting remained in the hands of the men, who in time also found better things to do. Attendances fell steadily over the next 20 years and eventually the parish meeting petered out. No meetings were held between 1931 and 1968 when, ironically, it was the women, in the shape of the village WI, who prompted its revival.

## Decline and fall of the Parish Meeting

THE 1894 Local Government Act was intended not only to give women a voice in local affairs, but to encourage more people of both sexes, rich and poor, to take part in the democratic process. In Barningham, at least, it proved a dismal failure.

For centuries most local government had been in the hands of vestry councils. Many of these – including the one at Barningham – had been largely dominated by the local squire, rector, schoolmaster and landowners. The 1894 Act took away their secular powers and handed them over to the new parish meetings, whose membership was open to all adults of either sex.

It was heralded as the dawn of a new era in municipal organisation, and Barningham's enthusiasm for the new body was reflected by the attendance at its inaugural meeting on December 4th 1894, when 33 people crowded into the village schoolroom. It was more than had attended any vestry meeting in the previous 25 years, and probably the most that had ever been to one.

Attendances at vestry meetings in the years 1885-1894 (the only years we have attendance lists for) had ranged from 16 to 24, with an average of 21 – about 30 percent of the adult males

## Attendances at vestry and parish annual meetings 1885-1924

	VESTRY		PARISH		PARISH		PARISH	
	1885	23	1895	20	1905	13	1915	6
	1886	23	1896	19	1906	16	1916	12
	1887	24	1897	21	1907	10	1917	7
	1888	23	1898	19	1908	15	1918	9
	1889	20	1899	16	1909	13	1919	7
	1890	16	1900	14	1910	18	1920	6
	1891	22	1901	12	1911	19	1921	8
	1892	16	1902	19	1912	12	1922	9
	1893	21	1903	18	1913	14	1923	8
	1894	19	1904	8	1914	13	1924	7
Average attendance over decade	21		17		14		8	
% of eligible males per meeting	30		27		25		14*	
% of them attending at least once	77		75		57		50*	
* Estimate								

## PARISH MEETINGS

eligible to attend (the 1891 census recorded 69 men aged 20 or more in the village). Over the 1885-1894 decade 53 of them, 77 percent, attended at least one annual meeting of the vestry.

Then the parish meeting took over. Its first annual meeting in March 1895 attracted 20 parishioners, but the number dropped steadily over the next 30 years. At the turn of the century it was down to a dozen or so; by 1904, the meeting's tenth anniversary, only eight people made an appearance for the annual meeting in April, and the half-yearly meeting the following October was abandoned when only the chairman and the clerk turned up.

The average number attending annual meetings in the first decade of the new arrangement, 1895-1904, was 16.7, a quarter fewer than the number at the last vestry meetings. The figure fell to 14.2 in the following ten years and to 7.9 the decade after.

By the 1920s the average number had fallen to only a sixth of the eligible males and fewer than half the men in the village turned up even once. No meetings at all were held in 1928, 1929 or 1930. One was called in 1931 but after that the parish meeting went into self-imposed abeyance until 1968.

The decline in attendance isn't really surprising. Even before the 1894 Act the vestry meetings had lost many of their ancient powers – the right to appoint constables, to oversee local sanitation or control the upkeep of local highways, for example – and the new parish

## Matters arising... 37 years later

THE next time the parish meeting met was on March 14th 1968, in response to calls by members of Barningham Women's Institute who wanted a forum to discuss maintenance of the village green. How parish affairs were conducted in the intervening 37 years remains something of a mystery.

It is difficult to imagine that there was nothing of sufficient importance in all that time to require a decision by the parishioners, but it seems that such decisions, if any, were made on their behalf by people (the lord of the manor, the rector and the district councillors?) who felt no

meetings no longer had any say in church affairs. Bit by bit their importance waned as more power passed to the new rural and district council, and eventually the 1925 Rating and Valuation Act got rid of parish overseers of the poor. This ended much of the parish's influence over local rates, tax collection and poor relief, and without that, there wasn't much left for Barningham Parish Meeting to do.

There were occasionally problems that attracted a reasonable gathering – rubbish being tipped in the beck at the moor end, horses frightening children on the green, flagstones vanishing from the road beside the rectory – but the agenda for many meetings was profoundly dull. Often it consisted of little more than approval of the previous minutes, the re-election of the chairman (a suggestion that there should be a different presiding officer each year was defeated early on, and for the next 70 years only resignation or death introduced a new occupant to the chair), and the appointment of overseers, assistant overseers and school managers (usually a shuffling of roles among existing post-holders).

Apart from the occasional brief debate about who should keep the parish bull and a "hearty vote of thanks" to the chairman for his services during the past year, on many occasions that was about as exciting as it got.

Eventually Barningham decided that it might as well not bother. Deprived of its *raison d'être*, in 1931 it went into a lengthy sulk from which it took almost 40 years to recover.

need for formal public debate. One decision that perhaps should have been made by villagers was who had the Bull Acre, the parish's only asset.

In 1931 it was in the hands of Henry Chilton, who was allowed to use it in return for keeping the fences and gates in good repair, paying any rates and tithes, and providing the services of a parish-approved bull for which he could charge two shillings for each cow it serviced. In the 1940s the field passed to Newby Jackson of Wilson House, who later transferred it with the rest of the farm to Dennis Lowes. By the time the revived parish meeting considered the question of the Bull Acre in 1968, they agreed with

## LETTERS &amp; EMAILS

## Coates connections

THANK you for the copy of the graveyard book. My great-great-grandfather was Samuel Coates, born 1798 in Kirby Ravensworth, whose brother was John Coates of Park House in Barningham who died in 1867.

John was the father of six sons and two daughters: Isaac (died at 30), Thomas (died at 26), John (died at 48 – his burial is mentioned in the book as the 'worst moment at a funeral', when the grave collapsed), Mary (died as a young child?), William (died at Hawsteads, aged 40), Isabella (died at 21), George Robson (died at Park House, aged 45), and James (emigrated to Canada in the 1920s and lived to be 94 years old).

William had three children from his first marriage – Charlie, Evelyn and Frederick Joseph – who all died in childhood. My great-great-grandfather's elder sister married a Richard Alderson of East Hope. Another brother, Thomas, farmed at Long Green and his son Isaac, married to Martha, lived at Shin (?) House, Barningham and died at the age of 97.

JUDITH COATES, *Hove*

● *Richard Alderson died in 1860, aged 50. His son Richard, unmarried, was still farming at East Hope until the 1890s. Isaac and Martha lived at Shaw House; she died in 1904, he in 1919. – Ed.*

## My Grandpa Thomas

THE schoolmaster who recorded the great Barningham blizzard of 1900 (*Archive 4*) was my grandfather, William Thomas (I was named after him). Neil Turner showed me the story when we called in at the Milbank Arms recently. Everyone has been so helpful and we appreciate that a great deal.

We're trying to find out more information about the family, and are pursuing the whereabouts of one of William's daughters and a son called Henry. We know that he went to sea as we have his old sea chest, with places that he journeyed to, and that during World War Two he held the very high position of head of salvage on the Clyde with the Liverpool Salvage Company. There are many avenues to explore and it

is becoming exciting as we have never known anything about Grandpa's family. If anyone has any information we'd be very grateful.

TOMMY & HELEN HOWAT

*helenhowat@btinternet.com (Scotland)*

● *William Thomas, village schoolmaster and clerk to the parish meeting for many years, was living in South View in 1911, aged 52, with wife Louisa and family. He resigned as parish clerk in 1919 after 22 years' service. There's no record of him dying or being buried here – did they all move away from Barningham? – Ed.*

## Feline chastisement

DURING your researches into the annals of the parish, have you encountered any reference to cat whipping in Barningham church?

Edmund Bogg's book *The Wild Borderland of Richmondshire* (1909) says: "The Church of St Michael's was erected nigh the site of the first fane of piety, in 1816. Here, in the old days, the sexton was paid a certain sum yearly for 'cat whipping', that is to say, for chasing them out of the churchyard wherein, cat-like, they were wont to congregate for anything but purposes of worship.

"The practice points the radical change which has come over human thought since the days of the Egyptian Dynasties, when pussy was not only held sacred but worshipped."

Unfortunately this is the only reference to Barningham in the book, a treasure of high Edwardian hyperbole (it describes the Meeting of the Waters as "Greta the graceful Bride running to meet her ampler lord of Tees").

ROBIN BROOKS, *Park View*

## Does mum ring a Bell?

THIS is a long shot, but I'm doing my family history and wonder if anyone can help.

My grandmother was Hannah Bell, I think she may have been a maid. Her daughter Mary Bell, my mum, was born in 1921 and adopted as a child by a Mr and Mrs Pearson who lived at Newsham House. I have a picture of her outside the house aged about eight and I believe she went to Dalton school.

She had a child and later moved to The Nook

# Schoolmaster Coates, the Lambs and some unexplained babies

NEXT stop for the 1841 collector was Barningham Academy, one of the many 'Yorkshire schools' that flourished in the 19th century.

It was founded in 1780 by Mark Newby (hence its name Newby House today, though it was for a time known as The Terrace) and when he died in 1827 his son, the Rev George Newby, leased it to Thomas Grainger Coates.

Coates, born in Aldbrough, was 56 when the 1841 census was taken, a gifted and zealous schoolmaster according to Merryne Watson "but very much a martinet" whose pupils lived in awe of him. There was a popular jingle of the time that ran

They're clever folk who live in Barningham

Old schoolmaster Coates is a boy for larning 'em!

Coates advertised the Academy in the London papers, offering places for children of either sex and any age at 20 guineas a year. Schools taking girls were uncommon, but Coates was helped by his schoolmistress wife Sarah, who put herself down as aged 40 but was actually a good ten years older.

They had a daughter, Mary, who was married to Gilmonby-born George Clarkson. Both were in their early twenties in 1841 and the pair of them, plus George's 15-year-old sister Eleanor, were working as assistants at the school

There were thirteen scholars, nine boys and four girls. The boys' ages ranged from 11 to 20, most in their early teens; there was one girl of 20, one 15, and two just eight.

None was local. The 1841 census doesn't say where they came from, just that they were not Yorkshire-born, but it's a fair bet that most if not all came from far away, probably London. What they thought of Barningham and what

## BARNINGHAM ACADEMY ROLL-CALL, 1841

George Brent, 20	Mina Marshall, 8
William Gibson, 13	John Moyle, 11
Thomas Harding, 13	John Murray, 14
Eliza Harriot, 20	Edward Norton, 13
Edward Harris, 11	Henry Stewart, 12
Sarah Knight, 14	Ellen Thomas, 8
Joseph Latchford, 13	

## THE 1841 CENSUS TRAIL Part 4

*Continuing our journey up the village in the footsteps of the census form collector*

kind of life they lived (many spent years here without a break – there were no holidays) has to be imagined. It cannot have been happy for many of them.

The Coates had a 17-year-old domestic servant, Mary Sleigh, who lived in, and there was also an unexplained girl of 15 called Margaret Alcock, listed as "of independent means".

George Clarkson took over as headmaster when Thomas Coates died in 1854. Sarah died in 1863 and the Clarksons gave up the Academy not long afterwards. In 1871 were living off their savings and property in Straw Cottage. They had no children, but living with them was Margaret Tomlinson, an unmarried 21-year-old servant. Ten years later the three had been joined by a five-year-old girl of the same name, presumably her illegitimate daughter.

George died in 1888. In 1891 Mary was still living with the elder Margaret, now described as her "adopted daughter and companion", but the girl had either died or moved away. (Who was her father? Could it possibly have been George?) Mary died in 1893 and there the Coates/Clarkson/Tomlinson records end.

Our census collector went back across the green to a row of cottages. Margaret Gore, a 75-year-old of independent means, lived alone in one. Next-door were the Lambs: agricultural labourer William (in his sixties and apparently widowed), his son William (a 25-year-old cabinetmaker), two young women and a baby.

The women, both recorded as servants, were Ann Lamb, 20, and Jane Lamb, 18. The baby, nine months old, was called John Lamb. Whether the younger William was married to Ann and the baby was theirs, or Ann and Jane were his sisters, one of whom had an illegitimate child, we don't know. Nor are we likely to find out: by the time of the 1851 census all the Lambs (and old Mrs Gore) had gone.

● *Next issue: Sowerbys, Scraftons and beyond.*

## PARISH MEETINGS

Dennis that there was "negligible demand" for the services of a bull and abandoned the requirement that one should be kept. They decided the field should be registered as a charity and let out at an annual rent, accepted an offer from Dennis of £12.60 to cover the time he had used it, and from April 1970 it was rented to Hilton Nicholson for £5 a year.



*A transcript of the Parish Meeting minutes book from 1894 to 1931 is now available as a BLHG booklet, from which these notes and tables have been taken. It's £4 to Archive subscribers.*

## New meeting, but the same old faces

A TRAWL through the attendance lists for Barningham parish meetings soon reveals that nothing much changed after 1894 as far as opening them up to people of all walks of life was concerned. The people who turned up in the 1920s were much the same as those who ruled the vestry meetings 50 years earlier.

An analysis of those present at the last vestry meetings (see the list below) shows that the regular attenders were overwhelmingly land-owners, farmers, Barningham Estate employees and tradesman, plus the village schoolmaster and the rector. These made up 166 of the 197 names recorded at the ten annual meetings between 1885 and 1894.

In the first ten years of the new parish meet-

ing, 137 of the 161 names recorded were from this group. Between 1905 and 1914 they made up 119 of the total of 130; between 1915 and 1924 the figures were 70 out of 82.

Only four members of what would have been called 'the working class' – all farm labourers – turned up more than once at vestry meetings, and the number fell to two between 1895 and 1904, one between 1905 and 1914, and one in the next ten years. In the first 30 years of the parish meeting's existence not one farm labourer or other unskilled worker figured in the top 20 attenders at annual meetings.

As far as extending democracy among the people of Barningham goes, the 1894 Act seems to have been a total failure.

## Top Twenty attenders at vestry and parish meetings 1885-1924

Figures in brackets are number of attendances at annual meetings over each decade

VESTRY 1885-1894	PARISH 1895-1904	PARISH 1905-1914	PARISH 1915-1924
EG/WW, rector (10)	EB, gamekeeper (10)	WT, schoolmaster (10)	DA, farmer (10)
RG, innkeeper (10)	RL, hall coachman (10)	DS, farmer (9)	RL, farmer (10)
JA, farmer (9)	MA, farmer (9)	JB, farmer (9)	JB, farmer (8)
MA, farmer (9)	TC, farmer (8)	WT, landowner (9)	SG, rector (6)
TC, farmer (9)	WC, farmer (8)	JA, farmer (8)	WT, schoolmaster (6)
RL, farmer (9)	RL, farmer (8)	HB, gamekeeper (8)	HB, gamekeeper (5)
DA, farmer (8)	TP, hall gardener (8)	RL snr, farmer (7)	HC, farmer (4)
JB, farmer (8)	EG, rector (7)	RL jnr, farmer (7)	LG, indepndt means (4)
GS, farmer (8)	GA, innkeeper (6)	MA, farmer (6)	GB, joiner (3)
HB, gamekeeper (7)	JB, farmer (6)	JL, farmer (6)	RJ, farmer (3)
WC, farmer (7)	JRB, farmer (6)	TP, hall gardener (6)	?P, clerk (3)
TP, estate gardener (7)	WT, schoolmaster (6)	JA, farmer (5)	JA, farmer (2)
JB, farmer (6)	JT, land-owner (5)	TA, farmer (4)	MA, farmer (2)
GB, farmer (6)	RN, joiner (5)	GA, innkeeper (4)	RC, farmer (2)
TS, farmer (6)	WC, farmer (4)	RL, postman (4)	TS, postman (2)
TS, farm labourer (6)	WH, mason (4)	HC, farmer (3)	?S, indepndt means (2)
JN, joiner (5)	RL, postman (4)	WC, farmer (3)	WT, land-owner (2)
JT, land-owner (5)	WL, haulier (4)	SG, rector (3)	WC, famer (1)
RL, postman (4)	BM, shopkeeper (4)	JB, farmer (2)	FM, landowner (1)
BM, shopkeeper (4)	WT, land-owner (4)	WT, land-owner (2)	TP, hall gardener (1)

## THE DREADED TELEGRAM

THE death is announced on the Italian front of Private T. Shepherd, postmaster, Barningham, at the age of 34 years, of the Duke of Wellington Regiment. He joined the army in March, 1917, and went out to Italy twelve months ago. The last letter received from the deceased soldier by his widow was dated the 26th October. He was then well. On the 21st November she received a telegram through Colonel Henry, who has lately been staying at Barningham Park, stating that Private Shepherd had been killed on the 27th October. She has not yet received any official notice from the War Office. Two children, aged 8 and 3 years, are left. The late Mr Shepherd bought the business at Barningham from Messrs Burn and Son, grocers. Mrs Shepherd's sister's husband, Private S. Sissons, of Barnard Castle, has been missing since April.

WE featured Barningham postmaster Thomas Shepherd in *Archive 2*: this cutting from the *Northern Echo* of November 27th 1918, reporting his death – only a fortnight before the war ended – was sent to us by Dave Charlesworth who runs the Teesdale historic postal service website. Private Sydney Sissons was also killed in action in 1918.

Thomas' widow Florence kept the shop going, under his name, until 1922, when it was taken over by an R. H. Graham – see the ads below from the parish magazine.

**Thomas Shepherd.**  
FAMILY GROCER,  
GENERAL MERCHANT,  
AND DRAPER,  
**BARNINGHAM.**

Above, 1922; below, 1923

**R. H. GRAHAM,**  
Grocer and Provision Dealer  
TOBACCONIST.  
**BARNINGHAM.**

## PICTURE SPECIAL

## Time for a cuppa as Park House rises from the ashes

THEY went to bed early at Park House Farm on the night of Friday November 16th, 1928. They usually did: John and Sarah Brown, their daughters Annie and Mary, grand-daughter Ivy Brass and farm hand Herbert Giles. By eight o'clock they were all fast asleep.

It was Herbert who was woken an hour later by the smell of smoke. He leapt from his bed, discovered fire raging through the house, and raised the alarm. Everyone escaped ("little short of a miracle", said the rector in the next parish magazine) but the farmhouse and almost everything in it was totally destroyed. Mrs Brown and the children stood terrified outside, shivering in their night-clothes, as their barefoot father led his horses to safety from the stables and then battled with Herbert to save £500-worth of wool from the smoke-filled granary.

Neighbours arrived to help, but there was little they could do as the house burned to the ground. Someone managed to make a desperate telephone call to Darlington Fire Brigade, but (said the *Teesdale Mercury* in its report the following week) "as there was no arrangement with them they were unable to come. No call was sent to the Barnard Castle Brigade who, however, owing to the distance of the pond at Barningham Park from the fire, would not have been able to do much in the absence of a near water supply."

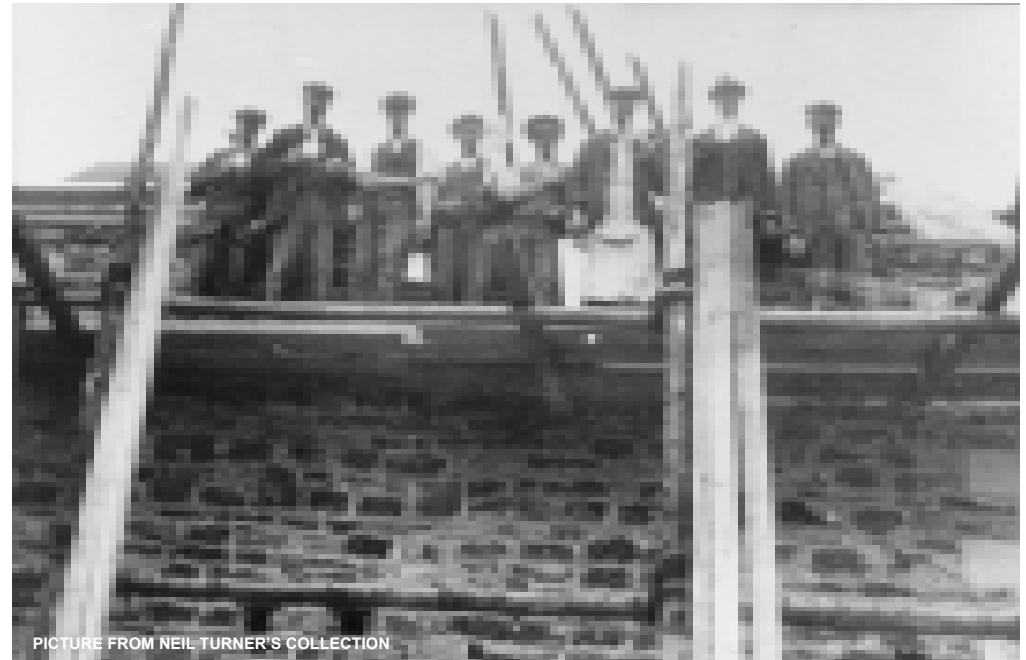
The brigade from Catterick Camp did turn out, but it was one o'clock before they arrived at the scene, "by which time the building had been gutted and only the charred remains were to be seen."

The cause of the blaze was soon identified: men's clothing, rain-soaked during the day, had been left to dry before the kitchen fire. It ignited, setting fire to the kitchen furniture and then spreading to the rest of the house.

"We understand," said the *Mercury*, "that the building was insured, but the furniture not", and the following week the paper published a letter from an opportunistic Barnard Castle insurance man urging farmers to take out policies to avoid the Browns' fate.

Meanwhile the people of Barningham, led by the rector, had opened an appeal fund to help the family, and many villagers contributed. A year later the house

If you have old photographs of Barningham and its people in the past, we'll be happy to feature them. Contact Jon Smith. You can view pictures at our website [www.barninghamvillage.co.uk](http://www.barninghamvillage.co.uk)



PICTURE FROM NEIL TURNER'S COLLECTION

had been rebuilt, and the picture above shows workmen busy on the last stages of its reconstruction.

The man in the centre in the white apron is Charlie Brown (no relation to the farmers), Barningham estate joiner for many years, but the names of his seven companions we don't know.

They did have a fine array of hats. And tea, then as now, was clearly an essential part of a builder's equipment.

● *The Browns were beset by tragedy. Seven years earlier their son George, only 21, shot himself in the Park House stables. A daughter Hilda, who had married George Brass, died after giving birth to Ivy in 1925. Annie died, unmarried, in 1932. Mary and another girl, Ada, we don't know about. John and Sarah retired to South View in 1939; she died in 1946, he ten years later.*

**The Fire.**  
The disastrous fire which occurred at Park House on the night of Friday, November 16th, caused dismay throughout the district. Apparently all was well at 8 o'clock and at 9.30 the house was absolutely burnt to the ground. It is little short of a miracle that no life of any kind was lost, and this was due to the remarkable bravery and common sense of Mr. Herbert Giles, who was the first to awaken and realise the nature of the tragedy. Absolutely nothing in the house could be saved and our hearts ached and still ache for Mr. and Mrs. Brown and their family. Fortunately we are being given an opportunity of showing the extent of our sympathy in a very practical manner, and I am sure that the response will be most generous.

**How the parish magazine reported the fire in its issue of December 1928**