



# Campden and District Historical and Archaeological Society

Regd. Charity No. 1034379

## NOTES & QUERIES

Volume III; No. 1

Autumn 1999  
ISSN 1351-2153

Price: £1.00p.  
(Post free: £1.50)  
(members: Free  
(extra copies: 50p.)

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### From The Editor

Our third volume of *Notes and Queries* begins with this issue. Like previous volumes it will consist of six issues and this time will take us into the next century. It is a sobering thought that without the introduction of the Gregorian Calendar, mentioned in the account of the Old Christmas Day Sermon, we should be still awaiting the year 2000 well into next January!

The astonishing story behind the name 'Burnt Norton' is told by a present day member of the Keyt family. Once again we are indebted to someone prepared to share the results of work on family history. However there can be few if any amongst the readers of this issue with so unusual an ancestor. (If there is, please can I have an article?)

Allan Warmington concludes his study of Combe and its connection with Bordesley Abbey and begins a fascinating 3 part report on farming 160 years ago based on a farmer's account book. As members will know, the current theme of the research group is the fields and farms of Campden and district. Many of the results will be published in these pages as they are completed otherwise their publication could be long delayed. In addition it is already clear that a single final book would be extremely varied in content and very lengthy - which is to the credit of the research team.

Information received following the question - who was Simon White - posed in our last issue has provided a glimpse of another of the many stoneworking families who have lived in Campden over the centuries. Other snapshots of the town in the past are contained in an excerpt about burgage plots and a summary of the trades and professions of people listed in an eighteenth century directory. Finally, another website is included - will members and others please continue to supply their favourite local and general history sites for inclusion.

## The Old Christmas Day Sermon in Chipping Campden

Jill Wilson

In his will dated 6<sup>th</sup> April 1793, John Freeman left a sum of money to provide a fee for a sermon to be preached on Old Christmas Day in perpetuity. This custom still continues after two hundred years (although it is now preached on the nearest Sunday) - and the half guinea (53p) payment to the Vicar also remains unchanged! Half of his estate was left to a kinsman and the remainder to charitable purposes. Why, however, did he include a bequest for a sermon on Old Christmas Day amongst his benefactions?

To find out we must look back some 40 years when John Freeman was about 35 years old and already embarked on his life's work of teaching; he was a Campden schoolmaster for more than 60 years. In 1752 a change took place in the calendar that brought Britain into line with Europe. The arguments for and against changing the date had raged for years and he was without doubt well versed in the reasons put forward on both sides. The whole problem dated back to Roman times when Julius Caesar had corrected the chaotic Roman calendar by introducing the *Julian Calendar*. This provided for a year of 365 days with a leap year every 4 years.

The addition of one day every four years was, however, fractionally too large. As centuries passed it became obvious that the calendar was once again diverging from the true seasons, but this time it was moving ahead. Using records and observations over the intervening centuries scholars calculated a revised system which involved first missing out a few days and then omitting the leap year in any century year that could not be divided by 400. Pope Gregory introduced the new calendar into the Catholic lands in 1582. Over the next century most Protestant countries adopted the Gregorian calendar so by 1700 practically the whole of Europe used the same calendar, but England still stood firm by the Julian.

This caused commercial confusion and still produces misunderstandings for historians. For example it is often said that Cervantes and Shakespeare died on the same day; true the date was the same but Spain used the Gregorian and England the Julian system.

Why did Britain stand against Europe? Apart from European politics and the very human dislike of change was the belief that the Julian calendar was somehow God's time. The Julian calendar was in use at the time of Christ. His birthday and other set dates of the Christian calendar were based on it. To reform the calendar could mean celebrating on the wrong day. It seems very probable that John Freeman was of their number and so long after most people had forgotten the change he left money to make sure that the original Christmas Day was still observed because in 1752, England had come into line with Europe. In September, September 2<sup>nd</sup> was followed by September 14<sup>th</sup> and crowds gathered saying "Give us back our 11 days!" Somehow it seemed to the poor and uneducated that their lives had been shortened by 11 days, they'd lost 11 days pay and been scandalously treated.

Another introduction was less controversial. The civil year for tax and legal purposes had always started on 25<sup>th</sup> March. (This too is a trap for historians!) From 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1753, New Year's Day was legally as it is today for almost all purposes. Taxation remains based on the old system. However, 25<sup>th</sup> March had been renumbered by the loss of 11 days and so our present income tax year starts on 6<sup>th</sup> April.

## The Infamous Sir William Keyt

Roger Keyt

Some time during the Civil War John Keyt (pronounced Kite) of Ebrington raised a troop of horse at his own expense in support of King Charles I. As a result of this action, on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1660 John Keyt was created Baronet by King Charles II. On Sir John Keyt's death in 1662 his son William inherited the title and became the 2<sup>nd</sup> Keyt Baronet. Sir William's son died just 35 days before he did and so the title was passed on to his 13 year old grandson William Keyt, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Keyt Baronet, probably the most colourful of our ancestors and certainly the most infamous!

On Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1710 Sir William Keyt, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Baronet, a man described as being of '*very considerable fortune*' and '*a very desirable match*' married Hon. Ann Tracy at Toddington near Broadway, '*a worthy nobleman's daughter . . . of great beauty and merit.*' Ann brought to the marriage The College otherwise known as The Mansion House, which stood on the opposite side of Old Street in Stratford-upon-Avon to Holy Trinity Church. After their marriage Sir William and Lady Ann lived in The Mansion House, which was convenient for Sir William who had many business interests in Warwickshire. In 1722 Sir William, a Tory and a Jacobite, fought and won the election to represent Warwick in the last Parliament of George I, and did so again in 1727, the first Parliament of King George II. Not long after the first election Lady Ann took an innkeeper's daughter named Molly Johnson as her personal maid. Molly was described as being '*a tall, genteel girl with a fine complexion and seemingly very modest and innocent.*'

Whilst he was still the member of Parliament for Warwick Sir William and Lady Ann, together with Molly Johnson, moved to Hidcote House which Sir William's uncle Sir Francis Keyt had built in 1663. By this time Sir William had become very attracted to Molly, a situation which had been noticed by the servants and in due course the housekeeper told Lady Ann saying the information had come from the butler, a man named George Heron. Lady Ann challenged Sir William about this situation with the result that '*the very next night Sir William went to the servant's apartment and ran his sword several times through the bed where the butler used to lie, who for some reason had changed his lodging and happily escaped his destruction.*' By now the affair was out in the open and so Sir William suddenly told Lady Ann that he was leaving her and that as Hidcote House was too big for her he was demolishing the whole of the east wing.

Sir William then went to live in Norton House with his two eldest sons John and Thomas Charles, and with Molly Johnson who by then had become his mistress. He also took with him a man named Henry Clark who had been his gardener at Hidcote House and who now became his steward. Whether Lady Ann continued to live at Hidcote House with her six other children or whether she moved back to her parents is unclear, though we do know that she was in the habit of visiting both Toddington and Stanway as another member of the Tracy family who lived at Stanway wrote in their 1723 - 1725 diary '*Saw Lady Keyt's equipment pass through the yard on the way to Toddington.*'

Norton House, Sir William's new home which the Keyt family had bought from William Fiennes, Lord Saye and Sele, in 1716 was '*an handsome box with extensive gardens, planted and laid out in the luxuriant taste of the time*' which, from its position on the Cotswold Hills above Weston-sub-Edge commanded magnificent views over the Vale of Evesham. After he

moved here Sir William built a whole new mansion house next to the original farmhouse and then because his mistress remarked '*what is a kite without wings?*' he had two wings added to the building. The total cost of this building work was said to be about £10,000 [equal to about £610,000 in 1999] and it seems that from then on Sir William's debts mounted and so he took to the bottle for consolation. He started to keep an open house, but this only added to his plight as he was seldom without company and within a few years his situation had become desperate. In 1727 he mortgaged The College, a barn and two closes in Old Street to a Joseph Woolmer for £650, and in 1734 he mortgaged them again for £994, eventually selling for £1,300 [equal to about £95,000 in 1999] in 1740.

By now his eldest son Thomas Charles was at Oxford University and Sir William was living more and more '*a life of extravagance and licentiousness*' and had become known as a '*notorious evil liver.*' He had also taken on a twenty year old dairy maid named Blowselinda who was '*a fresh coloured country girl . . . with no other beauty than what arises from from the bloom of youth.*' It wasn't long before Molly Johnson noticed that Sir William was making advances to Blowselinda and so Molly packed her bags and went to live in Chipping Campden where she ran a small sewing school. When Thomas Charles qualified from Oxford he spent most of his time at Stoneleigh in Warwickshire with his friend Lord Leigh, and even Sir William's new love Blowselinda left her job at Norton House. Suddenly Sir William found himself to be very alone and became so depressed that he drank himself into a frenzy for a week. On the evening of Friday 4<sup>th</sup> September 1741, he took the two candles that his butler George Heron had lighted as usual and set on the marble table in the hall and he went upstairs with them, something he did quite frequently. However at about 8.00 o'clock one of the housemaids came running down the stairs shouting that '*the lobby is all in a cloud of smoke.*'

The servants immediately ran upstairs and forced the door and found that Sir William had set fire to a pile of best linen which had been a legacy to his son Thomas Charles from a relation. While the servants were busy trying to put out the fire Sir William ran and shut himself in the adjoining bedchamber and by the time the door to the bedchamber had been broken down the room was burning with such fury that everyone had to turn and hurry from the house. George Ballard, an antiquarian from Weston-sub-Edge wrote '*to my no small affliction I saw the greater part of that beautiful house in flames, which was the most terrible sight I ever beheld; for before I came within view of the house, it seemed to me to be like Mount Etna, the force of the fire throwing up incredible quantities of smoke and flame a most prodigious height in the air . . . before 12 o'clock every part of that delightful house that was combustible was consumed and reduced to ashes.*' Despite the efforts of Sir William's servant Thomas Whitmore to save him he perished in the fire. Next day all that was found of Sir William was '*his hip bone and vertebrae with two or three keys, and a gold watch which he had in his pocket.*' On Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September Sir William's remains were taken to St Lawrence's Church in Weston-sub-Edge for the burial service which was taken by Rev. Thomas Bell and his remains were later taken to be interred at St Eadburgha's church in Ebrington.

In April 1774 the tragedy was reported in The Gentleman's Magazine. As a result of the fire Norton House became known locally as 'Burnt Norton' and today it is shown as Burnt Norton on all Ordnance Survey maps. In 1901 - 1902 extensive alterations were carried out to Burnt Norton by Sir Guy Dawber, especially on the north-east facades, the main entrance being moved from the south side to the north-east side. the interior of the house was re-

modelled and modernised at the same time. Norton House was then used mostly as a holiday place by the family until in 1936 the Earl and Countess of Harrowby occupied it.

More recently the gardens provided the inspiration for T.S.Eliot's *Burnt Norton*, one of *Four Quartets* written after a casual and chance visit there in 1934, when he apparently thought it belonged to a Birmingham businessman. During the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War Burnt Norton was used by a girls' school known as Tudor Hall. When the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl and Countess of Harrowby moved to Sandon Hall near Stafford in 1959 a boys' school leased it for 13 years. Lord Harrowby died in 1987 and Burnt Norton was passed to his eldest son, the 7<sup>th</sup> Earl, who is believed to have begun further renovation work in 1998.

### **A Museum Website**

The Corinium Museum, Cirencester, and the Cotswold Heritage Centre, Northleach, may now be found on:-

[www.cotswold.gov.uk/museum.htm](http://www.cotswold.gov.uk/museum.htm)

### **The Inns and Alehouses of Chipping Campden and Broad Campden - another Inn.**

**Celia Jones**

When I was researching for the book *Inns and Alehouses* I consulted the 1851 Census in the Society's archive, which had been taken from the Internet, and which, it transpires, was incomplete. Recently Allan Warmington has borrowed Margaret Haines's copy of this census on microfilm and found some missing pages. In the process he found another inn in Campden in 1851. This was the White Hart which was next to the Red Lion in the High Street. The census shows William Smith aged 57 and his wife Hannah aged 47, beershop keeper, at The White Hart. The census also establishes the existence of The New Tarriff Inn next to, or possibly behind the present estate agent's, Andrew Greenwood's. This confirms more or less what I was told but could find no records for, that The Tarriff Inn was possibly in Cutts's Yard. The census shows James Roberts, aged 66, as a woollen draper, tailor and brewer at that inn. Interestingly, the landlord at the Red Lion at that time was a Thomas Roberts, aged 70, also a tailor, and probably a brother or relative of James. Running inns was in the family.

The census also lists nine lodgers at the Red Lion who were working on the railway tunnel as brickmakers and railway miners. Perhaps the railway construction explains why Campden needed so many inns.

If the book runs to a second edition we will include this information.

## A Note on the White Family

Jill Wilson

In the last issue of *Notes & Queries*, (vol. II no. 6, p.65) I asked the question, who was Simon White? I am indebted to Sir Howard Colvin, Saint John's College, Oxford, for information about members of the White family which makes it clear that this was another of the important local families of masons which over the centuries have become skilled in the use of local limestone and have been employed elsewhere. Sir Howard sent a quote from *Oxoniensia* (vol. xiv, 1949, p. 64), (taken from an article relating to the identity of a William Byrd) part of which reads as follows:-

Let us go back for a few moments to the building of the Canterbury Quadrangle at St.John's College in 1632-36. Upon the failure of the local masons, Maud, Smith and Davis, and later of Hill, to fulfil their contracts, the harassed author of the accounts for the Quadrangle records how in 1634 he took horse and went to London 'to bargain with masons of all sorts.' He returned with John Jackson and other craftsmen, including Robert White. Immediately upon their coming to Oxford, Jackson sent White to Chipping Campden to get additional masons, perhaps because White was himself a native of that town. White returned with, among others, two men, probably kinsmen of his own, Abraham White and his son Simon. Abraham died just after the completion of the work on the Quadrangle at the end of 1636, but both Jackson and Simon White settled in Oxford and remained there until their death. Now the entry of Simon White's baptism in the Campden register in 1619 is of interest. He was christened Simon Byrd White.

It is clear from the above that the Simon White who was baptised in 1619 was not the mason who made the columns for Alcester in 1618, but he could well be the same man as the Simon White mentioned in the Churchwardens' Accounts in 1646 - 48. However, as is so often the case, every additional piece of information leads on to more and delving into Rushen further White family details can be discovered.

Robert White appears as a member of a Campden jury in 1632, enquiring into the death of Nicholas Riland, according to Percy Rushen's *History*.

The Churchwardens' Accounts show that Abraham White was paid for a wide variety of jobs between 1626 and 1636, the year of his death. The work involved carriage of stone, supply of lime for graves, help about the bells, mending pinnacles, work with lead and other tasks. With this diversity it can be wondered if, in today's terms, he headed a small firm of building contractors. One reference is to a payment to 'him and his sons.'

It is a matter of conjecture as to whether he was a son or other relative of the earlier Simon White; the above excerpt indicates that one of his sons was named Simon. Yet other contemporaries were 'John White the Mason' who is mentioned in 1637 in the same accounts and Richard White who received payments between 1632 and 1667.

There is clearly more to find out about the Whites who appear to be yet another of Campden's families of masons.

## The Land at Combe and the Dissolution

Allan Warmington

The previous article, 'Bordesley Abbey and the land at Combe' ended with a reference to its tenure by "Owld Mr Sheldon". This Mr Sheldon was a rich and well-known Worcestershire gentleman to whom we will return in a moment. But first let us look at some further details of the medieval holding of Combe.

The monks of Bordesley held the 'grange' of Combe in *frank almoin*, an ecclesiastical form of tenure that released the land from any obligations of homage or service to a superior lord (other than spiritual duties such as the offering of prayers). However, they seem not to have resided there continuously, as had been contemplated in earl Hugh's grant to them. It is not known whether, or for how long, any religious house (a cell of Bordesley for instance) may have been established at Combe. It is clear that they did not always reside there, for in the early fourteenth century the abbot seems to have leased the 'manor' of 'Cumbe next Campedene' to one Adam de Hervynton for 10 marks a year. This lease was confirmed by a local Inquisition in 1342, where it is again stated that "the abbot of Bordesley holds the manor of Cumbe from the heirs of Ranulf, formerly earl of Chester, in *frank almoin*".<sup>1</sup>

The use of the term 'manor' in these documents is anomalous. For it appears that the Cistercian abbeys in this area (Bordesley, Hailes, Flaxley, Stoneleigh, etc.) unlike the much earlier foundations, did not usually hold their outlying lands as manors. The manors held by the abbeys of Worcester, Evesham, Pershore, Gloucester, Winchcombe and other old Benedictine establishments were based on villages with a resident population of peasants tied to the land, whose rents and whose labour services on the Abbot's demesnes provided the basis for much of the monastery's revenues.

Cistercian landholdings, on the other hand, were often on vacant land or recently cleared land in ancient forests, or were part of the donor's demesnes. Such land was usually termed a 'grange' rather than a manor, and was worked by the lay brothers themselves, or by hired labourers. In some instances a small established population of free tenants could be in conflict with the new grantees when an abbey came into possession of one of these granges and might be dispossessed.

It is clear from Hugh de Kyvelock's charter that Combe was held as a 'grange' in this way, and it is generally referred to as such. Whether, as has generally been assumed, there was an established population there immediately before its grant to the abbey cannot be established for sure; if there was they may possibly have been removed to another part of Campden and remained under the lordship of the earls of Chester. More likely, perhaps, Combe (being then mainly woodland and rather poor hill-top land) was not settled at that time. Possibly, therefore, the use of the term 'manor' in the fourteenth century lease documents can be seen as implying that Combe was seen locally as virtually independent of Campden.

The grant to Adam de Hervynton does not seem to have been an isolated one. Rushen<sup>2</sup> refers to other tenants of Combe: Henry de la Rever in the early fifteenth century and Rob Jefford of Weston later in the same century. And, as we have seen, the Abbot leased Combe to 'owld Mr Sheldon' during the sixteenth century.

E.A.B. Barnard<sup>3</sup> has supplied a good deal of information about this last lease. It appears that sometime in the early 1530's one Raffe (or Ralph) Sheldon was granted a lease of Combe

with all its appurtenances, by the then abbot, John Beoley (or Day) for a term of at least twenty-five years. Ralph, whose main capital messuage was at Beoley, died in 1546. He was succeeded by his son William, who bought the manor of Beoley, Weston Park, near Little Wolford and other property. He became a member of Parliament for Worcestershire, but is perhaps best known for his support for the first English tapestry weaver, Richard Hicks of Barcheston, near Shipston.

Bordesley Abbey was dissolved in 1534 and its lands taken over as part of his demesne lands by the king. At this time the Sheldons profited by purchasing many monastery lands and goods. They did not, however, purchase Combe outright, for that was granted in 1553, by letters patent, to Thomas Smyth, a favourite of Henry VIII, and his second wife, Katherine<sup>4</sup>. Smyth had recently inherited the lordship of half the manor of Campden and was later to acquire the whole.

This purchase of Combe led to an incident that resulted in a suit brought by William Sheldon against Smyth in the Court of the Marches of Wales, and later by Smyth against Sheldon in the Star Chamber - an incident graphically described in the papers analysed by Barnard, though what exactly took place is lost among all the allegations made on both sides. Smyth maintained that Sheldon was aggrieved by his purchase of Combe and swore to make it a "dere purchas" by selling all the wood and thorns growing there. Sheldon on the other hand maintained that his lease, which was not yet expired, allowed him to take all wood and thorns for the mending of hedges. He said that on or about 5th April 1553, in the course of normal business he had sold some bushes and a tree, and his men were cutting thorns to repair hedges when Smyth came up and took away some of the undergrowth which he had no right to do. Smyth's allegations were that Sheldon had gone up to Combe with a party of 'seditious and troublous persons', including some well known Campden names, and had proceeded to 'cutt downe, fall, stok, roote up, wast and spoyle' the most part of the wood. Smyth says he thereupon sent two servants to ask Sheldon peaceably to desist until they could discuss the matter, but they were thrown off the land.

There are many other allegations and reported encounters, both sides alleging that the other had assembled large crowds of men intending to wound the other. A number of witnesses appeared, including Nicholas Balbye of Campden and William Isodd of Childs Wickham (one of the earliest references to the Izods in the district). However the result of the suits is not known and it is not clear how long Sheldon remained in possession of Combe after its purchase by Thomas Smyth. William Sheldon died in 1570, the same year as Vicar Ralph Smyth, and was succeeded by his son, another Ralph.

The Dissolution as we have said took place in 1534, during the reign of Henry VIII and his *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1535 includes the following items under its description of the Bordesley estates :<sup>5</sup>

Cumba Grange and Welnesford [*Welford on Avon*] in Gloucestershire:

and from the income of the demesnes belonging to the said grange in the hands of the present lord, per annum           £20. 0s. 0d.

Item from the lands of the demesne in Welnesford           4s. 0d.

Total                       £20. 4s. 0d.

Another document quoted in the *Monasticon* (Roll 30 of the Deeds in the Augmentation Office of 1695 - Accounts of the King's Ministers in the time of Henry VIII) says<sup>6</sup> :

the former monastery of Bordesley.... in the County of .... Gloucester :

Combe the revenue from the Grange                      £20. 0s. 0d.

Childs Wickeham, Rector                                      £20. 0s. 0d.

It was, as we have seen, in April 1553, that the new lord of Campden, Thomas Smyth was granted Combe Grange. Once the Sheldons had departed it was united with the rest of Campden and became virtually part of Westington - although it has always been farmed directly by the lord of the manor (or, during this century, by the owner of the estate) and, as we have seen from Cranfield's note quoted in the last article, memories of the old dispensation still persisted at least into the seventeenth century.

### Notes

1. Record Society *Inquisitiones Post Mortem for Gloucestershire* 1342, pp.298/99: Combe.
2. P. Rushen *The History & Antiquities of Campden* 2nd Edn p.14
3. E.A.B.Barnard 'Old Days in & around Evesham' Nos 706 to 709, *Evesham Journal April 1936*. I am very grateful to one of our members, Mrs Dorrie Ellis, for passing these articles on to me.
4. Rushen, op cit. p.13
5. Dugdale, *Monasticon* Vol V. p.413
6. Ibid.

## A Reference to Chipping Campden's Burgage Plots

from *Town Records*, John West; Phillimore (1983)

p.86

'A distinctive feature of most mediæval boroughs is the characteristic shape and uniform size of the burgage tenements which line the High Street. Similar at first to the manorial crofts and tofts of any mediæval vill the earliest tenements are unmistakably the ploughland strips of an agrarian settlement. They have the flattened, elongated 'S' bend of the open-field furlongs, lined along the street with house or shop on a narrow street frontage. In many modern market towns such as Burford or Chipping Campden in Oxfordshire [sic!], they provide long secluded gardens at the back of every house; in busier towns the crofts have been overbuilt with outbuildings and back-to-back shops. The oldest croft is usually an acre or half-acre strip; at Charmouth in Dorset the Abbot of Ford's charter of 1320 provided burgage plots measuring 20 perches (110 yards) long and 4 perches (22 yards) wide at an annual rent of 6d.'

It is interesting that as recently as 1983, Campden's burgage plots were still sufficiently intact, even though much divided, to be commented on in this way. The most recent County Plan includes the intention to preserve the remaining layout even though a small number of more recent buildings have cut across the croft & toft lines.

**Bailey's British Directory**  
**or the Merchants' and Traders' useful Companion, for the Year 1784**  
**Vol. III Northern First Edition**

This 'useful companion' to modern historians names and gives the occupations of people - and has been used to compile the following summary of the professions, businesses and trades in Chipping Campden in 1784. It can be seen in which ways the town supported the surrounding district with services and supplies such as banking, medicine, mercery, groceries, watches and clocks, shoes and millinery. Local agriculture could call on many supporting trades including breeches, gloves (essential for hedgers etc), farm equipment etc. In addition rope, malt and thrown silk were manufactured within the town.

Attorney at Law	3
Banker & Currier            1 / Banker & Mercer 2	3
Brazier & Tin-plate worker / Tinman	2
Breeches-maker & Glover	1
Carpenter	3
Cooper	2
Cornfactor	1
Fish-monger	1
Flax-dresser	2
Grocer/ & Chandler/ & Tallow Chandler	4
Maltster    2 / & Corndealer            1	3
Milliner	1
Plaisterer	1
Plumber & Glazier	2
Rope maker & Ironmonger	1
Sadler & Collar-maker	1
Seedsman & Nurseryman	1
Shoewarehouse / Wholesale Shoe Warehouse	3
Silk Thrower	1
Shopkeeper	1
Smith	1
Stone Mason	1
Surgeon & Apothecary	3
Tanner	1
Watchmaker	1
Wheelwright	2
Woolstapler	1

Total            47

## **Work on a Local 19<sup>th</sup> Century Farm**

### **Part 1**

**Allan Warmington**

Mr Richard Maisey recently lent us a small 160 year-old notebook which had come into the Bennett family from a forbear, Reuben Mitchell of Ebrington. It was kept by a farm foreman or manager on a farm then apparently called Norton Farm. The book is entitled "Expences incurred upon Norton Farm commencing 1st October 1836" and it runs from that date to the end of September 1837. There are 36 double pages of accounts, mainly (on the left hand side) of cash payments to employees and (on the right hand side) of payments received by the foreman. At the back of the book are a further seven or eight pages of "sundry payments". The book gives a fascinating glimpse - though so far only a glimpse - of the organisation of a local farm in the first half of the nineteenth century.

There are few clues as to just where this farm was. The only field names mentioned are "Attlepin", "Wildernes Piece" or "Wildernes Ground", "The Long Ground", "Lower Rouf Ground", "Barnett's Hill" and "Barn Ground". Given the name "Norton Farm" one would have expected it to be Middle Norton Farm or Norton Grounds Farm, but I understand from Mr David Leadbeater that these field names are now on Attlepin Farm, which is partly in Mickleton parish and only partly in Norton (Weston-sub-Edge detached). This is confirmed by other local farmers, and also by Mr Michael Bossom, archivist of the Harrowby Manuscripts, who tells us that names and areas have changed substantially since that time, and that the Attlepin area seems to have been known as Lower Norton in the nineteenth century.

However, the area that was in Mickleton Parish was not purchased by the earls of Harrowby (from a Mr Brett) until 1863.

So who was farming the area in 1836? The Harrowby papers seem to indicate that the land was from time to time tenanted by Mr J.R. Griffiths, the Campden solicitor, and the internal evidence of the accounts seems to confirm this. Much of this needs further research into the Harrowby and the Griffiths papers.

To give an fairly typical example of what the book contains, let us examine what is recorded on page 6, for part of December 1836. Firstly we will deal with the outgoings. The foreman and compiler of the book seems to have been Charles Aston, and the men mentioned on the left-hand page below are five of his six or seven most regular workers. Charles Aston's wage was 13s. per week throughout the year, except for four weeks of harvest work when he paid himself 24s. The low wages of three of the other workers is at first surprising, but it is explained by reference to the 1841 census of Campden. In 1841 Charles Aston was described as an agricultural labourer and was living in one of the thatched cottages in Littleworth. It is not clear whether he was still working on Norton Farm or whether by then he had left or been replaced. His family in 1841 included two sons, Anthony and George, aged then 17 and 16 respectively. So in 1836 they were at most 13 and 12 years old. Yet they were paid (at 4s.0d and 5s.0d a week and 2s. 6d a week respectively) for 57 and 56 weeks work during the year (presumably 4 or 5 weeks of which were in respect of a period before this book starts). George Ray is paid even less, and he is paid (at 2d or 3d a day) for 293 days during the year, or almost 49 weeks. George, in the 1841 census is also living in Littleworth and is only 10 years old. So, if the census is correct, he was no more than six when the book was compiled.

*CADHAS Notes & Queries*

One wonders what jobs such small boys did on the farm. Perhaps they were employed looking after animals - unless this wage was paid by Charles Aston mainly as a subvention to support a poor neighbour.

December		£	s	d	December		£	s	d
3	Setled with Anthony Aston for 6 weeks work at 4s. per week	1	4		1	Rd of Mr Griffiths	1	10	
				14		Rd of Mr Griffiths	5		
3	Setled with George Aston for 6 weeks work at 2s 6d per week		15		17	Rd of Mr Nathaniel Eden for 7lb of mutten at 5 per lb	2	11	
3	Dieu to Self for 4 weeks work at 13s per week	2	12		02	Rd of Jos Butler for Mutton	1	11	
3	pd William Keley for 4 days work at 16d per day		5	4	24	Rd of Wm Keley for 19lb of Mutton at 2½d per pound	3	11½	
3	Setled with Jos Butler for 4a 1r 14p of stubble Baging at 2s per acre		8	8	Do	Rd of Mr Griffiths	2		
				27		Rd of Mr Griffiths	1		
10	Setled with George Ray for 2 weeks work at 3d per day		3		Do	Rd of John Booker for 2 lamb skin	7	6	
	Total	5	8			Total	10	6	3½

The 1s 4d a day (or 8s 0d a week) paid to William Keeley is the normal wage paid to adult workers, nearly all of whom are employed casually. The only regular adult worker Aston employed wholly on a day wage was John Weakfield or Whakefield, who was paid 1s 8d a day (or 2s 8½d at harvest time) and worked for 49½ weeks during the year. It is an interesting fact that usually when men worked for whole weeks their wage appears to have been paid from three to five, or even six, weeks in arrear. One would have thought this would have created considerable hardship. It may however indicate the low importance of cash in people's lives at that time.

Altogether there are 59 people recorded as having worked for at least one day on the farm during the year, most of them taken on for just one or two spells of say four to six weeks. Several of those working for just one or two weeks during the year are women, including William Keeley's wife, Elizabeth, John Wakefield's wife, Sarah, and Joseph Butler's wife, Susan, all of them paid 6d to 8d a day. Most of the casual labourers lived in Campden, and their names can be found in the 1841 census. However, two workers, John Castle and Thomas Haines, lived in Mickleton and others no doubt in Aston or Weston Subedge.