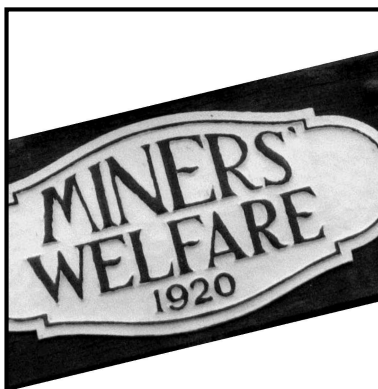


Brimington and Tapton *Miscellany* number 3

Brimington and Tapton Local History Group's Yearly History Review

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Introduction, from Doug Spencer, Chairman of the Brimington and Tapton Local History Group

Welcome to 'Brimington and Tapton Miscellany'—our annual publication, now in its third year.

Once again we feature some of the research work of our members. The popular 'Our Year in View' section presents a chronicle of local events, alongside a brief view of our activities during 2010.

We also feature an article covering the installation and dedication of a new stained glass window in the parish church. This year we have incorporated a short memory of life in Tapton City—a direct result of our reminiscences group. If you have any memories of Brimington and Tapton let us know.

As last year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our committee for their work, along with the contributors to this edition. Of course, we wouldn't be here without our members, so my thanks to everyone who supports us.

I hope you enjoy this edition. There's something for everyone. Be you the local historian of the future, catching up with events in 2010, or the 'historian' of today—interested in our varied past, through the articles within.

Doug Spencer

Addresses, other contact details, membership rates and activities may not be up-to-date.
Please check the group's website www.brimingtonandtaptonhistory.org.uk

Brimington and Tapton Local History Group

Officers and committee serving for 2010

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Other Committee members: Alan Sharp, Brian Smith and Elizabeth Pemberton.

Our meetings

All our meetings are open to non-members.

The group meets monthly during the year (except July and August) on the fourth Thursday of each month, at Brimington Church Hall, Church Street, Brimington, starting at 7.30pm. In December the group meets on the third Thursday at 7.30pm. These meetings usually comprise a talk by a guest speaker or a group member. One outdoor visit, usually a local guided walk, is held in June.

On the fourth Tuesday of every month (except December) a 'reminiscences' group meets at Brimington Church Hall, starting at 2pm.

Our other activities

Our aim is to encourage people to bring along items that help record the history of Brimington and Tapton. If you have any old photographs, documents or a story to tell about the Group's area and would be willing to share these with us, we'd like to hear from you. Please contact Doug or Marion Spencer (address above) or come along to one of our reminiscence groups.

Membership

Membership of the Group costs £8 per year (there are no reductions). Benefits include reduced admission to the group's fourth Thursday meetings and free admission to the reminiscences group. In addition the Group actively collects and copies old photographs and information from the Brimington and Tapton area. Members have free access to this growing resource. All members receive a free copy of the *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany*. For further details contact the membership secretary.

The Group is affiliated to the British Association for Local History.

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It is designed and edited by Philip Cousins.

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Comments on articles should be addressed to the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Group.

The comments expressed herein are those of the individual contributors. They are not necessarily those of the Brimington and Tapton Local History Group.

We welcome contributions to this publication, which should be with us before the end of October in each year. For details contact the Chairman or Vice-Chairman.

Front cover illustrations; left: Plate above former Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground tennis pavilion, now the Manor Rest Centre, Manor Road (Alan Sharp); centre: Joe 'ten goal' Payne; right: (top) Third class single Brimington to either Chesterfield Central or Staveley Works, issued 7 October 1955, fare 4d., (bottom) London and North Eastern Railway third class single child ticket. Note the incorrect spelling—'Brimmington' (both collection Philip Cousins).

OUR YEAR IN VIEW: NOTABLE EVENTS 2010

This section reviews the year in Brimington and Tapton. This is, necessarily, a selective view of life and events in the area during 2010. It draws on media accounts, various internet resources, meeting minutes and personal information.

Buildings, Land and Businesses

Work on the new wards at **Chesterfield Royal Hospital**, started during the late summer of 2009,¹ was completed by the summer of 2010. At a cost of around £12m the architects were the Manser Practice, with GB Building Solutions the principle contractor. As reported in *Miscellany* 2, the three wards face out onto Tapton and are an added landmark in the area. They began to take patients from 21 August, offering 96 new beds in total.²

The Chesterfield Waterside Development, on which we have reported in every edition of *Miscellany* hereto, received outline planning approval in March 2010. Billed as the ‘largest planning application ever submitted in Chesterfield’, the £300m scheme aims to regenerate the ‘run-down’ river Rother corridor. Totalling some 60-acres the scheme should create homes for around 2,000 people, along with a ‘thriving business community’. At the time of writing there has not been any development on the site, but it is hoped that construction will begin in 2011, with a ten-year completion date.³ During the year a number of large hoarding type signs have appeared. These proclaim the various areas of the development, such as ‘Station Place’—the area around the former Trebor factory site and ‘Basin Square’—around the new canal basin, which still sits isolated and unconnected with the canal. The opening of a ‘marketing suite’ at Berresford Way, Chesterfield, was announced in October 2010.⁴

We reported in *Miscellany* 2 that the successor business to Brimington Common Post Office—**‘Brimington Common News’**, had closed completely at the end of October 2009. The newspaper



business was then carried on via a small hut at the rear of the Methodist Church. This arrangement succumbed to January’s cold weather and snow, when travel and delivery by road became difficult. Business dried up as a consequence. The former premises were for sale in June 2010 at £160,000.⁵ Prior to this it had been used during the 2010 election campaign as committee rooms for the Brimington and Tapton Labour Party. The property is pictured here on the eve of that election on 5 May 2010.

There was an **arson attack** on a bungalow on Everett Close at about 1.55am on Whitsun Bank Holiday.⁶ Nobody appears to have been apprehended for the attack, which was deliberately started under a car adjacent to the property, to which the fire rapidly spread. The bungalow has been repaired.

¹ *Derbyshire Times (DT)*, 13 August 2009.

² *Royal Standard*, (the staff magazine of Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust), 2010, Issue 2, p. 16.

³ Information and quotations in this paragraph in *DT*, 18 March 2010.

⁴ *DT*, 21 October 2010. See also [on-line] last visited 1 January 2011 at URL: <http://www.chesterfieldwaterside.com>.

⁵ *Property Today*, 17 June 2010.

⁶ *DT*, 3 June 2010.

Chesterfield Football Club's new ground, on which work started at the end of July 2009,⁷ saw its first league game on 7 August 2010. The last game was played at Saltergate on 8 May 2010. The club produced two excellent commemorative programmes marking each event. So ended the saga of the Club's relocation. This included a sometimes bitter battle during the late 1990s and early 2000s to relocate near to the disused Greyhound track at Wheeldon Mill, along with other potential sites.⁸ Since inauguration of the ground there have been some reports of parking problems, Tapton included.⁹

Crewe Cottage at Tapton was for sale during the year at £499,950.¹⁰ In August it was featured as *Property Today's* 'property of the week', being described as a three-bedroom 'period cottage'.¹¹

Work on the **Hollingwood lock house refurbishment** has been undertaken during 2010. Plans to refurbish this near-derelict lock house, just outside the Brimington parish boundary, were covered in *Miscellany* 1 and 2. Initial work on site commenced on 15 March¹² and finished in early May.¹³ First actions were removing remains of the former Staveley Works station of the Great Central Railway (GCR) (closed in 1963), on the Station Road side of the canal—flattened to become a car park. Spoil from this was apparently taken to be used as in-fill for mining subsidence on the canal line at Renishaw.¹⁴ Later work included some scraping away of the embankment nearer the Lock House. This revealed the embankment as red coloured clinker. This was reported at the time of construction as having been sourced from a tip on the Staveley Works complex.¹⁵ The removal of the platform remains on the Station Road side is a sad, though perhaps necessary loss. There are few remnants of the former GCR Chesterfield Loop now remaining in the area—another recent loss being the derelict platforms of the main line GCR Staveley Central Station at Lowgates, due to the Staveley Loop road construction.



The Station Road side of the station was complete with platform edging stones and railings, some of the latter still with their former British Railways Eastern Region 'verdite green'¹⁶ paint on them, nearly 50 years after closure. The platform edgings have been saved—destined to

form a paved area in front of the new extension. Our photograph, taken in February 2008, illustrates the now vanished scene, looking towards Staveley.

The letting of the contract for the lock house conversion and extension was announced in the early autumn of 2010.¹⁷ Work commenced on site during October. By the end of year the lock house was surrounded by scaffold with structural steelwork for the extension erected.

⁷ *DT*, 30 July 2009.

⁸ For an up-to-date history of the various aborted moves see S. Basson, *Saltergate Sunset*, (2010), pp. 38 – 59.

⁹ See, for example, Brimington and Tapton Community Forum minutes, 3 November 2010, minute 0049.

¹⁰ *Property Today*, 17 June 2010; 9 September 2010.

¹¹ *Property Today*, 19 August 2010.

¹² *Cuckoo*, (the magazine of the Chesterfield Canal Trust) spring 2010, p. 6.

¹³ *Cuckoo*, summer 2010, p. 16.

¹⁴ *Cuckoo*, summer 2010, p. 16.

¹⁵ *Derbyshire Courier*, 26 September 1891, 8 November 1890; *DT*, 3 May 1890.

¹⁶ *Modern Railways*, August 1963, p. 81.

¹⁷ *Cuckoo*, autumn 2010, p. 8.

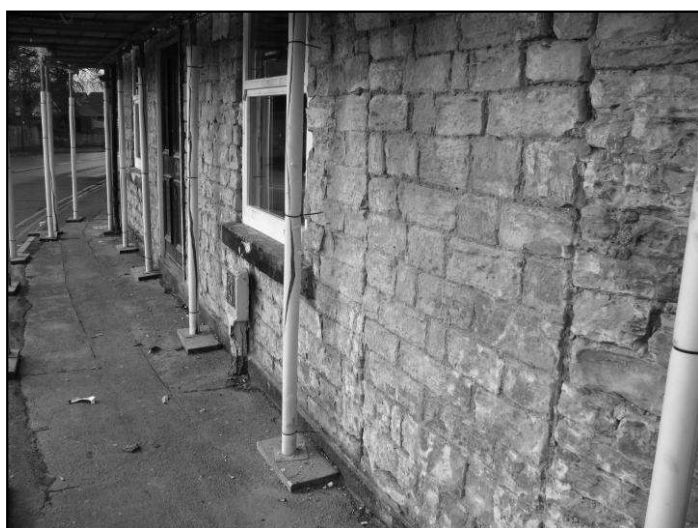
A Waterways Recovery Group helped members of the Chesterfield Canal Trust Work Party to clear **Wheeldon Mill Lock** on the canal. *Reflections* magazine carried a short article describing the work in its March 2010 edition.¹⁸ The lock had been ‘clogged up with mud’ before members of the two groups emptied it by sealing the top gate. They then climbed fourteen feet into the chamber to shovel the mud by hand into wheelbarrows.

Local plans for **enhancing the Chesterfield Canal** were presented to the March 2010 meeting of the Brimington and Tapton Community Forum. It was reported that one of the oxbow ponds, originally part of the river Rother, was to be extended. The stretch of canal from Station Road to Bilby Lane is to be designated a local nature reserve.¹⁹

*Our Town*²⁰ ran an article on the ‘successful partnership’ at **Tapton Park Golf Course**, between the Borough Council and Sheffield International Venues (S.I.V.). We reported on developments at the course in *Miscellany* 2. S.I.V. took over running the course in April 2008. A £170,000 development plan has seen improvements to the clubhouse, function room, locker room, ground maintenance and booking systems. Plans for the building of a driving range were approved during 2010.

The Vice-Captain of Tapton Park Golf Club, Andy Beardsley, was appealing for information on the history of the course in October.²¹ He pointed out an interesting link between George Duncan, who had designed the Tapton Course in 1934, and the originator of the Ryder Cup. Apparently it was Duncan who suggested to Samuel Ryder that there should be a biannual competition between Britain and America, though this is the subject of some debate.²²

On Church Street work to extend the **Brimington Surgery**, covered in *Miscellany* 2, was practically completed by late summer 2010. The builder involved in the surgery project was Robert Woodhead Ltd., from Bilsthorpe, Nottinghamshire. The two storey extension has provided rooms for GP registrars, nurse practitioners, new consulting rooms, a minor surgery room and sluice room, together with a new training/meeting room. Facilities for record filing and equipment storage have also been improved.²³



In late November scaffolding was erected around the **Ark Tavern public house**, Chesterfield Road. Work undertaken to the pub included stripping off the exterior rendering. Removal revealed the original stone construction, together with a blocked doorway to the lower right of the ground floor frontage. This doorway, which measured around 110 cms in width, is illustrated here, nearest to the photographer, in a view taken on 21 November 2010. Rendering was reapplied the next day.

The Ark Tavern is a former Methodist Chapel, dating from 1808.²⁴

¹⁸ ‘Volunteer work is the key to lock restoration’, *Reflections*, March 2010, p. 38.

¹⁹ Information from this paragraph from Brimington and Tapton Community Forum minutes, 10 March, 2010, minute 0050.

²⁰ ‘Successful partnership hits the mark at local golf course’, *Our Town*, number 111, spring 2010.

²¹ *DT*, 21 October 2010.

²² See, for example, [on-line] last visited 12 November 2010, at URL: <http://www.rydercup.com/2010/europe/history/index.cfm>.

²³ Brimington Surgery, *Newsletter*, autumn/winter 2010, p. 1.

²⁴ V. Brelsford, *History of Brimington...*, (1937), p. 47.

Brimington Parish Council added its objections to the **Core Strategy of the Borough Council's Local Development Frame-work (L.D.F.)** at its February meeting. Consultation on this, along with the original plan's possible affect, were reported in *Miscellany 2*. The March 2010 meeting of the Community Forum heard an update on the L.D.F.²⁵ The potential requirement for housing in the area has been considerably reduced to some 500. The Forum still felt that this was too much. In addition it thought that plans for the 'Staveley Works Corridor' did not include enough open land separating that area from Brimington. In September the Community Forum recommended that the Borough Council drop any proposals for development of land between Chesterfield and Manor Roads. The Forum made a further recommendation asking for concentration around social and affordable housing requirements.²⁶

Barn conversions to housing and 'new build cottage development' at **Plover Hill Farm**, were advertised for open viewing during mid July 2010. Prices ranged from £185,000 to £350,000.²⁷



The **Ringwood Centre, Victoria Street**, pictured above on 29 August 2010, closed its doors for the last time at the end of that month. Consultations on closure plans for the centre were revealed in March 2010.²⁸ *Miscellany 2* explained how MacIntyre had taken over this facility from 2007,²⁹ with plans then aired to eventually close the facility. Staff and users went out in some style with a 'well-dressing' at the Whittington Gala,³⁰ and disco for former service users, staff, parents and clients on 27 August.³¹ The facility appears to have been vacated soon afterwards.

The Ringwood Centre had first opened in November 1976 as Brimington Centre Industries.³² It was declared officially open in April 1977 by Chesterfield's MP, the then Secretary of State for Industry, the Rt. Hon. Eric Varley. The facility comprised a 'modern factory unit with 12,000 square feet of workshop floor, together with stores, offices, toilets cloak and canteen.' The building was designed to accommodate 120 people, with a further 60 at work schemes in the Chesterfield area.³³ It cost £300,000 to build.³⁴

Built by the County Council's Social Services Department, at the time of opening it was the only scheme of its kind in the county. It was originally intended that disabled people, recommended as suitable for training by a social worker, were trained at the facility in basic skills. This was so that they could enter industry on the same footing as others. In 1977 workers in the sewing section at the centre produced

²⁵ Information from this paragraph from Brimington and Tapton Community Forum minutes, 10 March, 2010, minute 0050.

²⁶ Brimington and Tapton Community Forum minutes, 8 September 2010, minute 0031.

²⁷ *Property Today*, 15 July 2010.

²⁸ *DT*, 11 March 2010.

²⁹ *DT*, 16 September 2010.

³⁰ *DT*, 5 August 2010.

³¹ *DT*, 12 August 2010 and 16 September 2010.

³² K.M. Battye, 'Brimington Centre Industries', *Sheffield and North Derbyshire Topic*, November 1977, p. 18.

³³ Foregoing based on Derbyshire County Council (DCC), *Brimington Centre Industries*, (1980), p. 3.

³⁴ *DT*, 8 April 1977.

about 10 miles of red, white and blue bunting. This was used in the Queen's Silver Jubilee visit to the area that year. The engineering section provided training on various machinery including lathes, presses and drills, CO2 and other welding. The wood-working section was making wooden clothes props, bath boards and folding bath seats. A packing section prepared the goods made at the centre. A plastic-coated aluminium telescopic clothes-prop, designed by the centre, was also made. Some clients worked at Chesterfield companies such as Robinsons, Ryland Works and Pearson's Pottery.³⁵

By around 1988 the facility was known as the Ringwood Centre. There was a manager (Brian Cox), a deputy and an assistant manager. Eighteen 'instructing staff' were supported by a clerical officer, five canteen staff, two 'service staff', a caretaker and assistant.³⁶ It is not known what the future is for this building.

A fire, starting at about 11pm on Thursday 8 April, saw the remaining platform buildings at the old **Sheepbridge and Brimington Station, Wheeldon Mill**, totally destroyed. Six fire engines attended the blaze in the wooden station buildings. Businesses affected included MF Transport, who occupied the majority of the former ladies waiting room, booking office and booking hall. Fortunately the company managed to move its vehicles to safety. Unfortunately they lost spares and documentation in the fire. John Tomlinson, described by the *Derbyshire Times* as a 'scrap metal dealer', lost 'thousands of pounds worth of stock, including five cars.'³⁷ An account of the history of this station appears within this *Miscellany*.

Mixed news from our **local parks** during the year. In July hypodermic needles were reported as being found on Thistle, Peterdale and Manor Road parks. The news made the front page of the *Derbyshire Times*.³⁸ Better news was installation of new play equipment in Thistle Park, which received a £50,000 grant from the 'Playbuilder' initiative.³⁹ This, though, had not been without its own problems. The July 2010 Community Forum heard that a proposed 'Master Plan', worked up by the Friends of Thistle Park, had not been followed.⁴⁰ There were later complaints that equipment for small children had been taken away and not replaced.⁴¹ The July meeting also heard that the Borough Council's Cabinet had agreed that the John Street play area would be closed and sold for housing, once that market had recovered. A proportion of money raised from the sale would be reinvested into improvements at Thistle Park.⁴²

An application for new fascia sign, vinyls and window graphics at the Co-Operative store on **High Street**, was submitted during September.⁴³ Conditional approval was given in October.⁴⁴ An application for change of use at number 29 High Street to a beauty parlour was made in October 2010.⁴⁵

Conditional permission was given to the planning applications to restore the derelict Grade II stable block at **Tapton Grove** in April 2010.⁴⁶ The application will see renovation of the block with two-storey extension, linked to the existing block, providing an additional 20 bedrooms and ancillary

³⁵ This paragraph based on Battye, 1977, p. 18.

³⁶ DCC, Social Services Department, *Ringwood Centre*, (c.1988), p. 2.

³⁷ *DT*, 15 April 2010. Unfortunately there are some errors within the newspaper report. The location of the buildings was incorrectly given as Whittington Moor, with the article failing to identify that the premises were former station buildings. The named co-owner of MF Transport was given as Mo Fazil. The two partners of MF Transport are Maz Fazil and Mo Akhtar.

³⁸ *DT*, 22 July 2010.

³⁹ Brimington and Tapton Community Forum minutes, 10 March, 2010, minute 0053.

⁴⁰ Brimington and Tapton Community Forum minutes, 7 July 2010, minute 0022.

⁴¹ Brimington and Tapton Community Forum minutes, 8 September 2010, minute 0034.

⁴² Brimington and Tapton Community Forum minutes, 7 July 2010, minute 0022.

⁴³ *DT*, 2 September 2010. The application reference was CHE/10/00345/ADV.

⁴⁴ [On-line] last visited 2 November 2010 at URL:

<http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/environment/planning/PlanningFullDetails.aspx?ref=CHE/10/00345/ADV>.

⁴⁵ *DT*, 14 October 2010. Application number CHE/10/00429/COU.

⁴⁶ [On-line] last visited 2 November 2010 at URL:

<http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk/environment/planning/PlanningFullDetails.aspx?ref=CHE/09/00713/LBC>.

accommodation. Work had not started on the project at the end of 2010, though this may have been due to a further two applications submitted during the year, seeking to address the conditional matters.⁴⁷

The work of the hostel established at **Brockhill Court**, Chapel Street, was featured in the *Derbyshire Times* during September.⁴⁸ Used as such since January 2009 it has housed around 80 people since that time. They are from a variety of backgrounds including the homeless, alcoholics, drug addicts and ex-offenders. A team of three full-time staff are on-hand 24 hours a day, seven days a week, having helped about 30 people return to independent living. The Hostel has 35 self-contained rooms.

The building was originally built by the Anchor Housing Association. The design provided 20 single flats, 11 double flats, three three-person flats and one disabled flat. Construction started in the late summer of 1977, at an estimated cost of £470,000, with completion expected late in 1978. The complex also included a community lounge, guest room, laundry room, quiet room, shower and warden's flat. All the flats were centrally heated and self contained.⁴⁹ At an open day in January 1980 it was revealed that the first residents had already moved in,⁵⁰ presumably indicating some delay from the initially stated finish date. Reporting the official opening, by the Mayor of Chesterfield—Cllr Mrs Margaret Anderson—in May 1980, the *Derbyshire Times* stated that the development had cost £372,431 to build.⁵¹

Brockhill Court was closed at the end of March 2004 by the Anchor Trust, as demand for the facility had significantly reduced.⁵² It is believed the property may have been purchased by JPC properties, for use in the rental market. The Bristol Foundation Housing runs the present operation—holding an open day on the premises on 30 July 2010.⁵³ They are a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity, having been constituted under a Memorandum of Association dated 30 May 2008.⁵⁴ Though Bristol Foundation Housing have a website, alongside their establishing company Connolly and Callaghan, both make no reference to the Brimington operation.⁵⁵



Right at the beginning of the year, various street-works were undertaken in the **Church Street** area to facilitate widening of pathways, a loading/parking area and, in particular, extension of the pavement at the junction of Chesterfield Road, Devonshire and Church Streets. Work is in progress on the latter in this 18 February 2010 view.

For many years the junction had been hazardous to pedestrians attempting to cross the busy road.

⁴⁷ CHE/10/00326/DOC Discharge of planning conditions 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9 and 10 of CHE/09/00713/LBC for renovations and extensions to existing grade 2 listed stable building and associated outbuildings. CHE/10/00325/DOC Discharge of planning conditions nos. 3,4,6,7,9,10,14,18,20,21,23 of CHE/09/00712/FUL - renovations and extensions to existing Grade 2 listed stable building and associated outbuildings.

⁴⁸ *DT*, 2 September 2010.

⁴⁹ Foregoing *DT*, 2 September 1977.

⁵⁰ *Star*, 15 January 1980.

⁵¹ *DT*, 9 May 1980. A plaque was unveiled marking the occasion.

⁵² *DT*, 6 June 2002.

⁵³ Information via poster in local shop.

⁵⁴ Bristol Foundation Housing Trustees report and financial statements for the year ended 31 May 2009, p. 2. [On-line] last visited 22 November 2010 at URL: <http://www.bristolfoundationhousing.org.uk/getMedia/file/Bristol-Foundation-Housing-Final-Accounts-May-2009-001f.pdf>.

⁵⁵ [On-line] last visited at URLs: <http://www.bristolfoundationhousing.org.uk/> and <http://www.connollyandcallaghan.co.uk>.

The Church

There have been some interesting and perhaps historic developments at, or concerning, Brimington Parish Church during 2010.

The Reverend Malcolm Shaw left the **Rectorship of Brimington**. His last service at St. Michael and All Angels was on Sunday 13 June 2010.⁵⁶ The Reverend Shaw had been inducted into the living in April 2005.⁵⁷ Brimington currently sits in a Mission and Ministry Area (MMA) within Chesterfield Archdeaconry. The MMA comprises Bolsover, Brimington, and the united Benefice of Calow with Sutton-cum-Duckmanton and Sutton Scarsdale. Three priests have covered the MMA for sometime. The opportunity has been taken to review how Clergy can best serve the parishes. At a meeting in early June 2010 between the various church wardens, the Archdeacon and other interested parties, it was proposed that Brimington might form a new united benefice with Calow, with a second unit being Bolsover with Sutton-cum-Duckmanton and Sutton Scarsdale. Each benefice would then have its own priest. As the Reverend Trevor Hicks at Bolsover does not leave until Easter 2011 the changes, if agreed, cannot be fully implemented until nearer this time.⁵⁸ At the time of writing (December 2010) an appointment has not yet been made to the proposed new united benefice of Brimington and Calow.

During the year there was some consultation on a **proposed change to the ecclesiastical boundary** of Brimington parish, by the Diocese of Derby. This was to alter the ecclesiastical parish so that some 'disconnected' parts become part of the Chesterfield Church Parish, resulting in a closer alignment between the Church Parishes and the Electoral Parishes. When discussed at the May Community Forum meeting that body raised no objections.⁵⁹

In the Church building an attractive **new stained glass window**, situated in the north aisle, was dedicated on Sunday 21 February 2010. A full description of the window appears in this *Miscellany*.

The Church itself was redecorated during late spring, with services held in the Church Hall from 15 April to 30 May.⁶⁰



The Church Hall saw some welcome improvements during the first week of September. A suspended ceiling and new lighting were installed. The old order is pictured above (courtesy Keith Noble); with left, looking towards the entrance and kitchen servery; right, looking towards the stage.

⁵⁶ *Celebrate and Share* (Brimington Parish Church Magazine), July 2010, p. 5.

⁵⁷ Diocese of Derby Institution of the Revd Malcolm Shaw at Rector of Brimington, Monday 4 April, 2005, Order of Service.

⁵⁸ The majority of this paragraph has been reconstructed from the Church Wardens' Letter to Parishioners, *Celebrate and Share*, August 2010, pp. 4 – 5.

⁵⁹ Brimington and Tapton Community Forum minutes, 19 May 2010, minute 0012.

⁶⁰ *Celebrate and Share*, April 2010, p. 5.

New double glazed windows ‘replacing those that have been in place for 98 years,’⁶¹ came later in the autumn. The hall was completely redecorated. Funding for the improvements was obtained from ‘Viridor Credits, Derbyshire’. Viridor Credits’ distributes some of the money that Viridor would otherwise pay as landfill tax on the rubbish it disposes to its landfill sites. The company does this through the Landfill Communities Fund. This was previously known as the Landfill Tax Credits Scheme (LTCS). Not long after LTCS was started in 1996, Viridor took advantage of the scheme and started to select and process applications for the funds it had to offer. In time, Viridor Credits was formed to handle the work on company’s behalf. This money is available for projects and communities usually within ten miles of Viridor’s landfill sites.⁶² The nearest of the company’s facilities is Erin, at Barrow Hill.

Politics

A **casual vacancy for the Brimington South Ward Chesterfield Borough Council** seat was notified in January, following the resignation of Liberal Democrat Councillor Helen Walsh.⁶³ An election was held on 6 May, on the same date as the general election, with Labour’s John Haywood elected. The same day Labour’s Toby Perkins defeated Liberal Democrat Paul Holmes as the Chesterfield constituency MP. The latter had lived in Tapton for some years (though not recently). Mr Holmes had been a member of Brimington Parish Council and a Brimington South Ward Borough Councillor at varying times in the past. Nationally the result produced a coalition government between the Conservatives (as majority) and Liberal Democrats.

Perhaps rather unusually in today’s politically charged atmosphere, a **casual vacancy on Brimington Parish Council** was not the subject of a call for election, the council being able to co-opt a member of the public.⁶⁴ The vacancy was caused by the disqualification of a Liberal Democrat councillor for non-attendance.⁶⁵

Organisations and People

Jordan Weston was ‘Young Achiever’ in Brimington **Parish Council’s Civic Duty Award** for 2010. **Roy Furniss**, a stalwart of the Brimington Branch of the Royal British Legion, was presented with the ‘Civic Duty Award’.⁶⁶

During the year the **Brimington Branch of the Royal British Legion** sadly had to disband, due to declining numbers. Their last official duty was at the Remembrance Service and Parade on 8 November 2009. The Branch was first officially formed in 1939, after some thought had been given locally to the matter in late 1938. The first meetings were held in Brimington Club. We hope to cover the later history of the branch in a future *Miscellany*, supplementing an account of the branch’s local activities published in the 1980s.⁶⁷

⁶¹ *Celebrate and Share*, September 2010, p. 25.

⁶² Information in the proceeding part of this paragraph from *Celebrate and Share*, November 2010, p. 9.

⁶³ *DT*, 28 January 2010.

⁶⁴ Stuart Yates. *DT*, 28 October 2010.

⁶⁵ *DT*, 23 September, 2010.

⁶⁶ Information in this paragraph from *DT*, 13 May 2010.

⁶⁷ This account is; L. Breilsford, *A short history of the Brimington Branch of the Royal British Legion, 1938 – 1973*, (1973), from which historical information in this paragraph is sourced.

Renewed interest in **Fred Greaves VC**, reported in *Miscellany* 2, continues. *Reflections* magazine for November 2010 ran a feature on his life.⁶⁸ The ‘Greaves VC Extra Special’ real ale was brewed for the second year by Spire Brewery. Jacksons Bakers in Chesterfield town centre produced a ‘Greaves VC Steak and Stout Pie’, in his memory. For every pint and pie sold a donation was made to the British Legion’s Poppy appeal. The commemorative activities featured in local newspapers.⁶⁹ At his death Fred Greaves lived at 48 Ringwood Road.⁷⁰

In November 2010 an appeal was made for the relatives of **Sgt Dennis Heeley** to come forward. Sgt Heeley was a member of No. 3 Group Voluntary Reserve in the 514th Squadron of the R.A.F. He was killed, aged 21, with seven young colleagues, when the Avro Lancaster MK III aeroplane they were in was shot down by German anti aircraft fire on 6 March 1945. The planes had been flying on a bombing mission, from Waterbeach in Cambridgeshire, to the Wintershall oil plant at Salzbergen. A German group—Ikarus—was to unveil a memorial to the crew on 13 November, at the crash site.⁷¹ The *Derbyshire Times* report, which appealed for information, contained some inaccuracies. The location of Dennis Heeley’s home in Brimington was given as 37 Coronation Street, with a claim that the house had been destroyed by a stray bomb in the Second World War. The location of the Heeley’s house was, in fact, 37 Coronation Road. The house was not destroyed by a bomb, but succumbed following a gale, probably in the early 1950s, which blew the gable wall down. The damage was so severe that the house was demolished soon afterwards. Today there is a gap in the numbering of Coronation Road from 37 to 41. A modern number 37 marks the spot where the demolished former 37 and 39 Coronation Road stood.⁷² The *Derbyshire Times* published a follow-up article in December, revealing that relatives had come forward and had attended the November memorial service, in Germany.⁷³

It is very sad to report the death of **Keith Ayling**, in March 2010.⁷⁴ Keith was a former Chair of the Chesterfield Canal Society and then the Chesterfield Canal Trust. Although not a Brimington or Tapton man, Keith never-the-less always took a keen interest in this area as a natural part of his leadership towards restoration of the canal.⁷⁵ Keith was always impressed with the support that the canal’s restoration received locally. He never failed to acknowledge how important this had been in the early years of the then Canal Society’s campaigns.

A former Liberal Democrat Parish Councillor, **Gillian Wilkinson**, who had represented south ward some years ago, died during the summer.⁷⁶

The death of one of our eldest residents was reported in August. Though born in Newbold, **Mrs E. Kirton**, aged 104, had been a resident of Brimington Common for some 44 years.⁷⁷

A well-known Brimington personality, **Dennis Haden**, died in November, aged 87.⁷⁸ Mr Haden, a life-long resident, worked all his life on a series of window cleaning rounds in the village and was therefore a familiar figure to many. Previously he had recounted some reminiscences of shops in Brimington to our Group which, though requiring some work, we hope to publish in a future edition of *Miscellany*.

⁶⁸ R. Griffiths, ‘An inspiration to us all – the town’s “greatest son”’, *Reflections*, November 2010, pp. 70 – 73.

⁶⁹ *DT*, 4 November, 2010 and *Chesterfield Advertiser (CA)*, 5 November, 2010.

⁷⁰ *Register of Electors*, Brimington East Ward, part 1, Qualifying date 10 October 1972, in force 16 February 1973 to 15 February 1974, p. 5.

⁷¹ The preceding reported in *DT*, 4 November, 2010.

⁷² Information from Peter Harrison, Mr and Mrs Land and Jean Crossley, November 2010. Mr and Mrs Heeley had a number of sons and daughters who included Alan, Betty, Clive, the said Dennis, Eric and Griselda.

⁷³ *DT*, 2 December 2010.

⁷⁴ *DT*, 15 April 2010.

⁷⁵ For a full obituary and tributes see *Cuckoo*, summer 2010, pp. 4 – 8.

⁷⁶ *DT*, 8 July 2010. The obituary did not mention her membership of the council.

⁷⁷ *DT*, 19 August 2010.

⁷⁸ *DT*, 2 December 2010.

Dorothy Thorneycroft, celebrated her 105th birthday at the Spinney Hop Residential Home in December.⁷⁹ Mrs Thorneycroft—who is also known as Dolly—has lived at the home for five years. She was born in 1905 at Wharf Lane, Stonegravels.

The Commonwealth Games in India, during the autumn of 2010, brought success to local table tennis star **Liam Pitchford**, 17, of Nether Croft Road. He won a silver medal following what was described as a ‘biting showdown’ with Singapore. A few days later Liam won a bronze medal in the men’s doubles after beating Australia.⁸⁰ In October Liam opened a very successful autumn fair at Brimington Manor Infant and Nursery School, which raised a total of £1,200.⁸¹ Liam was one of ten nominees for the BBC’s Young Sports Personality of 2010,⁸² but did not win the award.⁸³

The Old Taptonians Association (OTA) continues to regularly meet. A summer reunion was held at Tapton House, which was opened for the Association, enabling more than 70 members to enjoy a nostalgic tour of their old school.⁸⁴ OTA has a website at www.olddaptonians.co.uk.

There was another successful **Brimington Flower and Vegetable Show** at the end of August, despite a shortage of flowers caused by poor weather.⁸⁵ It appears that the show is now being run as a completely separate entity to the Brimington Allotment Society.⁸⁶

Miscellaneous

Football World Cup fever reached Oxford Close, Brimington during June 2010, as residents decked out their homes with flags and were duly recorded in the *Derbyshire Times*.⁸⁷

Weather-wise the 2009 white Christmas, albeit in a thaw, was followed by a prolonged period of snow and ice during January 2010. Many roads and pavements were icy from snow, with rock salt supplies seriously short over the whole country. Two typical headlines from the *Derbyshire Times* perhaps summed up the situation; ‘Misery on ice’⁸⁸ and ‘Nightmare on the icy roads’.⁸⁹

During the early morning of 27 November 2010 snow fell in Brimington and Tapton to a depth of about one inch (25 mm). The area joined the rest of the country in the earliest widespread snowfall for 17 years. This was followed overnight on 29/30 November by a further snowfall with another fall on 30 November, continuing into 1 December, by the evening of which there was depth of over 18 inches (460 mm). There were further prolonged snow showers the following day. This caused widespread disruption, with no buses running on 1 December, a restricted service remaining for some period afterwards. Temperatures struggled to reach above freezing, even during the day-time. Side roads remained treacherous. Not until Thursday 9 December did relief in the form of a thaw occur. After a brief respite colder air returned, with very low temperatures and some slight snowfall, which remained on the ground for Christmas Day. As an example, at 10am on the 20 December air temperatures in

⁷⁹ DT, 23 December 2010.

⁸⁰ For full details of Liam’s career and his medals see DT, 21 October 2010.

⁸¹ DT, 28 October 2010.

⁸² [On-line] last visited 11 December 2010 at URL:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/tv_and_radio/sports_personality_of_the_year/9220873.stm.

⁸³ [On-line] last visited 31 December 2010 at URL:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/tv_and_radio/sports_personality_of_the_year/9303271.stm.

⁸⁴ DT, 8 July 2010.

⁸⁵ DT, 2 September 2010.

⁸⁶ Brimington and Tapton Community Forum minutes, 7 July 2010, minute 0022.

⁸⁷ DT, 24 June 2010.

⁸⁸ DT, 14 January 2010.

⁸⁹ DT, 27 January 2010.

Brimington were around -7.5°C. Milder temperatures, actually more around seasonal expectations, returned from Boxing Day.

Transport and Travel

Proposals were advertised in May to construct **speed humps in Victoria Street and Queen Street**, in an attempt to try and slow down traffic speeds.⁹⁰ These measures were approved, with the roads being closed for short periods, enabling installation of these features in September.⁹¹ A 20 mph speed limit for King Street, Upper King Street, Queen Street and part of Victoria Street came into force around the same time.⁹²



February 2010 saw work starting on construction of a third platform at Chesterfield Railway Station. This involved demolition of a building used as a former base for Network Rail infrastructure personnel, pictured here on 12 March 2010. This had originally been erected in 1957 as a mess room for carriage and wagon staff based at Chesterfield Station.⁹³ This structure had itself replaced a grounded carriage body.⁹⁴

Work on the platform appears to have taken some time, no doubt complicated by the close proximity of running lines. The platform still awaited commissioning at the end of November 2010, following, it is believed, some issues with signal sightings caused by lighting columns.

The new East Midlands Train's timetable, introduced on 23 May 2010, saw an **additional six trains to London** every weekday and Saturday from Chesterfield, giving a two trains per hour service.⁹⁵ This has been made possible by stopping new services from Sheffield to the capital (and visa-versa), which were introduced from the December 2009 timetable.⁹⁶ The services have been made possible due to the support of Yorkshire Forward and Travel South Yorkshire.

In *Miscellany* 2 we reported on possible moves to **electrify the Midland Main Line** (M.M.L.). Perhaps due to the Coalition Government's spending cuts somewhat over-shadowing things, debate on this issue seems to have quietened. In August 2010 the *Railway Magazine*⁹⁷ reported that the new Government's value for money review might see the M.M.L. electrified over the Great Western (G.W.) scheme. There was some disappointment, therefore, when neither the G.W. nor M.M.L. schemes were given the go-

⁹⁰ DT, 7 May 2010.

⁹¹ CA, 13 August 2010.

⁹² DT, 24 September 2010.

⁹³ *British Railways Magazine, Eastern Region*, September 1957, p. 245.

⁹⁴ Information from Mr C. Hollis, Whittington, February 2010.

⁹⁵ *East Midlands Trains, Timetable 23 May to 11 December 2010, services between Sheffield, Derby, Nottingham, Leicester and London St Pancras International*, (2010), p. 1.

⁹⁶ *East Midlands Trains, Timetable 13 December 2009 to 22 May 2010, services between Sheffield, Derby, Nottingham, Leicester and London St Pancras International*, (2009), p. 1.

⁹⁷ *Railway Magazine*, August 2010, p. 9.

ahead in a ministerial announcement about rail funding in November. The *Star*, however, did carry an article before the announcement claiming that the M.M.L. scheme was to be shelved.⁹⁸ It now seems that it will be some time before the M.M.L. will see electrification. A more limited scheme for the G.W. and schemes in the north-west will both proceed.⁹⁹

Philip Cousins.

Sources are referenced, otherwise remarks are personal observation. Unless stated, photographs are by Philip Cousins.

OUR YEAR IN VIEW: GROUP EVENTS

Talk Programme

Thanks to the donations referred to in *Miscellany 2* we have acquired, during 2010, a much larger projection screen and a stand. This, coupled with the alterations made to our venue, has resulted in a much larger display and a much better acoustic for speakers and members alike. I would like to thank all our speakers for their time and effort over the year.

The summer 2009 break was followed in September 2009 by David Templeman's talk 'Mary Queen of Scots – the Captive Queen.' David's talk followed the life of Mary, making particular reference to the places where she was locally kept captive.

Stephen Gay first visited us in October 2009, when his varied illustrated talk took us along the byways of Britain's railway lines, with his faithful dog. Stephen showed us some fantastic views, which he had sometimes taken great lengths to obtain.

November 2009 saw our Vice-Chairman give his 'Through Brimington by Canal and Rail' talk. This comprised a journey from Hollingwood, outwards by canal, to Tapton, returning by railway. Philip covered topics including the history of the both the canal and the Great Central Railway, the plague in Brimington, the origin of Newbridge Lane and many others. The talk had its first outing at our group.

Unfortunately, due to severe icy weather, our December AGM and members' evening had to be cancelled. We held a very brief AGM immediately before the talk given at the January 2010 meeting. At that meeting John Lower, from the Chesterfield Canal Trust, gave an excellently illustrated account of the Chesterfield Canal's restoration.

Unfortunately our February presentation on the Staveley Company had to be postponed due to illness of the speaker. At short notice David Howes stepped in with a very entertaining account of Chesterfield High Street from 1840 to the present day.

Philip Riden gave a very thorough account of the history of Tapton at our March meeting. He used research currently in progress by the Victoria County History Derbyshire, of which he is county editor. The talk traced Tapton's close associations with Brimington, looked at transport, industry and topography of the former township.

Janet Murphy, from the Friends of Queen's Park, gave a lively account of the history of that park to our April meeting. Janet contributed an article to our *Miscellany 2* on Brimington cricket.

⁹⁸ Published [on-line] 19 November 2010 at <http://www.thestar.co.uk/news/Faster-train-line-plan-hits.6631971.jp>.

⁹⁹ *Modern Railways*, January 2011, p. 6 and 11.

May saw the return of Stephen Gay, with his excellent slides, describing 'Woodhead: the Lost Railway'. Members were at times highly amused with Stephen's humorous delivery, recounting his travels along this once important trans-Pennine railway route, sadly now closed.

Our outdoor meeting in June met with fine weather, for a walk around Brimington Common and down into Tapton. Led by our Vice-Chairman, the walk saw local industries, personalities and general history of the area highlighted, along with a visit to Tapton Grove, by kind permission of the nursing home. Though we did not go inside, we stopped at the front door to hear about the many families associated with this fine Georgian house.

After our summer break we saw David Templeman return in September to give us a talk on 'Two Queens and a Countess'. David covered the personalities of Queen Elizabeth I, Mary Queen of Scots and Bess of Hardwick, in an entertaining and well-researched talk.

Our October programme saw Nick Tomlinson from Picture the Past visit us. It was nice to see some Brimington photographs, which are featured on the website (www.picturethepast.org.uk), which is funded by Derbyshire County Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and the city councils of Nottingham and Derby. There was quite a bit of audience participation, which gave Nick some additional information on the photographs he showed.

Andrea Thompson spoke to our November meeting about her Grandfather's diary, which she had discovered by accident, nearly being thrown away. 'Willy Calow's diary' detailed the ordinary goings on of a north Derbyshire collier.

Our December meeting and AGM was seriously curtailed by the weather. Never-the-less a varied programme presented by our members was followed by seasonal refreshments. My thanks to everyone who contributed and turned up on such a cold evening. The AGM saw a regrettable, but necessary, increase in our annual subscription rate to £8.

Exhibitions and Reminiscences Group

For the fourth year running the Group staged an exhibition at the Brimington 'village market'. We were particularly grateful to our committee member Elizabeth Pemberton for much work she did on Brimington sportsmen, which formed the greater part of our display. So we do not lose the benefit of this research Elizabeth has contributed an article to this edition of *Miscellany*. Philip Cousins produced some information on Sheepbridge and Brimington Station, again covered in this *Miscellany*. The exhibition caused much interest, with our thanks to those members who helped put things together and staffed the display.

Philip's display on the station saw two other outings in 2010. Its first appearance was actually at a local and family history fair event at Chesterfield Library on 22 May. We attended the event with a prime spot at the Library entrance. The material's final appearance was at Brimington Library where it was displayed from September to October. Library staff commented that the exhibition was one of the most popular and talked about displays that had been staged there for some years.

Do not forget our fourth Tuesday afternoon monthly reminiscences group. This is continuing to be popular with our members. Pop along if you have any reminiscences that you want to share with us. A warm welcome is assured.

Janet Walmsley.

RECREATION GROUNDS IN BRIMINGTON

Alan Sharp

Introduction

Stranger to Brimington Resident; 'Excuse me, could you direct me to the recreation ground, please?'

'Sorry, mate, haven't a clue.'

This conversation should not surprise us as we do not use the term recreation ground in day-to-day talk. Children go to the park or the playground.

The Oxford Dictionary of English describes a recreation ground as 'a piece of public land used for sports and games'.

The First Recreation Ground

The first recreation ground in the village was that on Brimington Common, opposite the Miners Arms public house. Before 1841 much of what is now Manor Road, roughly southwards from 100 Manor Road (a little to the north of the present-day Manor Farm), was common and waste land, where villagers could graze their livestock. Under an Act of Parliament of 1841 Commissioners were appointed to survey and carry out the final enclosure of the commons. Certain land was sold to defray the cost of the survey. The rest was divided into 74 allotments, allocated to those villagers entitled to a share of the enclosure. Lot 5 was awarded to the parish and consisted of 4 acres 5 perches 'as a place of exercise and recreation for the neighbouring population'. This land is now known as Brimington Common Recreation Ground.

Anyone brought up on the Common will know that much of the 'playground' was rough, tussocky waste, but cricket and football were played successfully by various teams over the years. In more recent times effort has been made to improve the condition of the ground, but in periods of heavy rainfall the field still becomes waterlogged. Older residents will remember the swings and the 'Jazz' but now the amusements are generally for younger children, but this does not stop teenagers entering the play area.

What very few will remember is the boring for oil that took place on this recreation ground between 1919 and 1921. A considerable depth was bored and traces of oil were found but the flow was insufficient to continue and the operation closed down in 1921. This was not without incident and caused some resentment amongst residents. In February 1921 a 13 year-old boy was severely scalded on the site. He later died in hospital.

Sometime in the 1920s Mr C.P. Markham donated a hut to the Brimington Common Recreation Committee for use as a social centre. This hut was in the south west corner of the ground. At a parish council meeting in April 1930 three month's notice was given to the recreation committee to quit the hut, but later in July the request was waived. When the hut eventually disappeared is not known to the writer.

It is interesting to note the Enclosure Award Commissioner's phrase 'neighbouring population'. The Common was a sparsely populated and wild place. Was the Commissioner including the village proper in his 'neighbouring population'? It is difficult to imagine people, particularly children from, say, Wheeldon Mill, walking to the Common for a game of football or cricket.

The Search for a new Ground

In the spring of 1918 C.P. Markham had suggested to the parish that Brimington Hall might be used as a replacement for the 'Markham Club'. His scheme included the use of the Hall grounds by the Brimington Gardeners Association with some area set aside for recreational use by children. Regretfully this idea came to nothing and Brimington Hall was demolished. Had the plan succeeded it may well have provided the parish with what today might be regarded as a show-piece facility. But the scheme would not have provided the inhabitants with additional playing fields, even though the Brimington Lawn Tennis Club had courts on the Hall grounds for some years, with later hard courts.

Little wonder that the idea of a recreation ground for the village was eventually aired. On the 10th of December 1918 at a Brimington Parish Council meeting it was requested to write to the executors of the late J.J. Barrow to see if a piece of land near to Hall Farm could be sold for the purpose of a recreation ground. By January 1919, the major point of discussion at the parish council meeting was a permanent memorial to the fallen servicemen in the Great War. Among various suggestions put forward was a recreation ground.

It was eventually decided to call a meeting of various organisations in the parish and this led to the formation of a war memorial committee. At a public meeting on the 27th January 1919 to discuss the ideas for a war memorial and public park, it was suggested that the cost would be around £1000. Meanwhile in reply to their letter of December 1918 to the Barrow Trustees the reply was negative. The Trustees could not cut up either the Yeomans or Duckmanton farms for the sale of a piece of land to the parish council. In June 1919 a letter from Mr C.P. Markham to the parish council requested the council's observations on the possibility of a new recreation ground. At the July meeting of the parish council Mr Markham stated that Mr L. Barrow was willing to approach his stepmother with a view to the possible release of a field.

Incidentally, in February 1919 the parish council had accepted a piece of land from the trustees of the late Miss Yeomans at the corner of Chapel Street and Princess Street to be used as a playground for children. The final conveyance of the land was accepted in June 1919.

By early 1920 there still seemed to be little consensus between the Parish Council and the War Memorial Committee as to what form a memorial should take; public bath, recreation ground and/or war memorial. Cost appears to have been a major issue. It would seem that the parishioners of Brimington were reluctant to put hands in pockets. Many parishes in north eastern Derbyshire had erected memorials by the early 1920s. The Memorial Gates, which now form the entrance to Broom Gardens, were only completed in 1925.

The question as to whether or not Brimington would eventually acquire an additional recreation ground was resolved by an outside organisation—The Miners' Welfare Fund.

The Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground

As early as 1842 certain coalfields had formed the Miners' Association of Great Britain. Yorkshire and the East Midlands did not, however, join at this time. By 1889 the vast majority of the coalfields had formed the Miners' Federation of Great Britain and Ireland. Throughout these years the challenge had been to improve working conditions and wages.

Miners' welfare originated in Act of Parliament of 1911, dealing with conditions generally within the coalmining industry. Following the 'war to end all wars' and in the wake of working class unrest throughout Europe, Britain became part of this wave. In 1919 miners put forward demands for wage

increases, reduced working hours and nationalisation of the industry. The possible knock-on effect of this unrest to the railways and transport industry might easily have sparked a revolution in Britain.

The Sankey Commission Report of 1919 made concessions to the miners' main demands, namely wages and hours, but not nationalisation. In 1920 a second report established a fund for the purpose of providing welfare for workers in and around coalmines. This fund, founded on legislation, was, in the main, administered by voluntary and cooperative methods. As section 20(1) of the Mining Industry Act 1920, puts it; 'There shall be constituted a fund to be applied for purposes connected with the social well-being, recreation and conditions of living of workers in and about coal mines...' These many needs have all been met, to a greater or lesser extent, by miners' welfare institutes and recreation grounds.

The 'welfare' as it is most commonly known, may be a small hut with billiard table and games room or a much more imposing building, as found in many mining villages and towns. Brimington already had an Institute—The Markham Institute—generously donated by Mr C.P. Markham in 1903. Mr Markham had, of course, an interest in the mining industry being director of the Staveley Coal and Iron Company. What the village proper did not have was a recreation ground. As we have already noted the parish council and other representative groups could not agree upon what to provide as a fitting memorial to the fallen of the Great War. Whether it was frustration at this prevarication by the elected representatives or coincidence, the provision of the much needed recreation ground fell to the Miners' Welfare Fund.

A Brimington Miners' Welfare Committee was constituted following the 1920 Act. The exact date when this took place is not known. What is known is that in November 1923 the charity trust deed was 'enrolled'. A committee existed and included of the following six trustees:

Charles Ernest Tissington, Westwood Lodge (electrical engineer)
Frank Cantrell, Devonshire Street (architect)
Rawson Orwin, Foljambe Road (deputy overman)
Sam Collins, 91 Coronation Road (coalminer)
Ernest John Day, 87 Brimington Common (coalminer)
Joseph William Wells, Burnell Street (coalminer)

These represented equally the coal mine owners and the workers employed in the industry. There was also a committee of 14 members (exclusive of the trustees) who were also equally representative of the industry and workers. What is certain is that a recreation ground for the village materialised through the Miners' Welfare Fund.

The Trustees must have made application to the Fund, having agreed the purchase of 'all that land known as Mapes Field (no. 255) situated opposite Cotterhill Lane', from Mrs. Margaret Yeomans of Church Farm. The vendor agreed to sell for £600. Previously this sale would not have been possible because of the reluctance of the Barrow Estate to sell off land, but the estate was put up for sale on the 28th October 1920. Thus any difficulties regarding the purchase of land for a recreation ground were removed.

On the 4th August 1923 the Derbyshire Times carried the following advertisement:

*Brimington Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground.
Grand Opening Day, Saturday 18th August.
Tenders invited for tea tent, stalls etc.
Closing date August 4th – Sam Collins, Secretary
91, Coronation Road, Brimington.*

On the 25th August the *Derbyshire Times* carried the following report on the opening of the Brimington Miners' Recreation Ground:

BRIMINGTON'S WANT

Welfare scheme opened

A recreation ground for Brimington, which has been a long-felt want, has materialised through the Miners' Welfare Fund, and the land selected is the most appropriate for the occasion, the site being land facing the top of Cotterhill Lane. The opening of the ground took place on Saturday and a children's sports and gala and various competitions were held. In the afternoon processions were formed at Brimington Common, Wheeldon Mill and New Brimington and headed by the Staveley Military Prize Band, Scouts' Bugle Band and Jazz Band, proceeded to the field. The opening of the recreation ground was made by Alderman G.A. Eastwood, who promised a donation of £100 towards the recreation fund, and other speakers were Mr. Frank Lee, M.P., Mr. T.G. Burr, and Mr Barnett Kenyon, M.P. (chairman) all of whom gave addresses.

Mr. J. Wells, (chairman of the Brimington Miners' Welfare Committee), remarked that the £1,000 granted to Brimington had been absorbed in the purchase of the ground and erecting an iron fence all round it, and the upkeep would be dependant on the support of the people of Brimington. He also said that the recreation ground was for the benefit of all the inhabitants of Brimington and not for miners and their families only as some people had thought...'

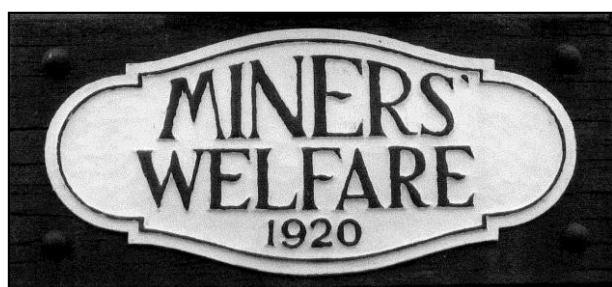
At the September meeting of the Miners' Welfare Committee a statement of accounts of the opening day of the recreation ground showed a balance of £17.16s.2d to the good, including a donation of £5 by Mr C.E. Tissington. Tea for the children cost £26, paid by public subscription.

The question arose as to the recreation ground;

'being laid out for tennis courts, bowling green, cricket pitches for practice, football and children's recreation, and Mr F. Cantrell and G.W. Savage were deputed to draw up a plan suitable for these recreations according to the accommodation of ground space, and submit these to the Committee for approval or otherwise. It was also decided to be open to the public 9am – 8.30pm weekdays and 'some hours for Sunday during September only and no games will be permitted to be played on Sunday'.

The newspaper account of the opening of the Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground referred to a grant of £1000 from the Miners' Welfare Fund. A November 3th, 1923 public meeting, held in connection with the local Welfare Committee, gave a breakdown of the grant. They had already received £630 and in March 1924, 1925 and 1926 they would receive £109 each year in addition. In purchasing the ground the £630 was already spoken for and the erection of iron railings on three sides would absorb nearly all the money due to them. The £100 donation from Ald. Eastwood given on the opening day was 'specific for the purpose of providing swings and other amusements for the children.' Apparently a Mr Cantrell, who was presumably one of the trustees, was 'drawing up a plan...to provide space for all kinds of sport...'

Documents held by the Chesterfield Borough Council show that the actual legal conveyance was completed on the 14th November 1923. What might be puzzling is that the plate on the tennis pavilion clearly states 'Miners' Welfare 1920'. This must represent the date of the welfare scheme constitution as opposed to the date of the pavilion's erection.



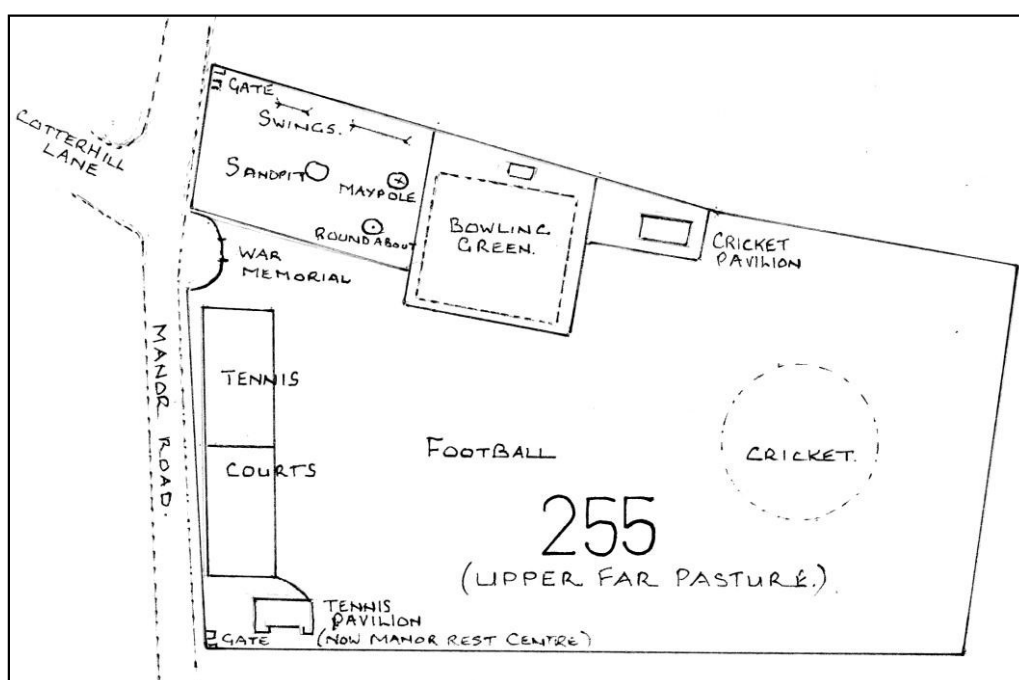
Plaque on the former Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground, now the Manor Rest Centre. (Alan Sharp)

From this point on the documentary evidence becomes rather sketchy. One must assume that the £100 kindly donated by Alderman Eastwood on the official opening day was quickly expended on the provision of the playground equipment for the children—baby swings, big swings, maypole, roundabout and a sand pit.

The children's area was in the north west of the recreation ground. I would imagine that the main interests of the men of the village would be football and cricket. The *Derbyshire Times* in December 1923 records 'In an effort to raise funds for a pavilion to be erected on the recreation ground in connection with Brimington Miners' Welfare Committee a sacred concert was given by Barrow Hill Orchestral Society and held in the Church Hall on Sunday...' A raised substantial wooden pavilion was eventually built by the cricket pitch, which was at the eastern end of the ground.

It seems to me that the provision of the Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground was realised through the enthusiasm of a small number of dedicated men because, if we leap forward to 1930—seven years from the opening—the annual general meeting of the Brimington Miners' Welfare provides disappointing reading. The Secretary mentioned that it was owing to a lack of interest among the miners of Brimington—comprising over 300—that the Committee was unable to make better headway, appealing to them, along with the public, for better support in the future. Efforts to raise funds had received little support and suffered slight losses. The Chairman emphasised the feeling of the committee as to the lack of enthusiasm by the miners, who at least might give their moral support towards the fulfilment of the scheme for the laying out of the Welfare Recreation Ground. At least the cricket club were functioning and had won the Welfare Cricket League. The football club was only playing friendlies and a few cup competitions. A bowling green had finally been laid at a cost of £200 with the hope that a bowling club would be in progress 'next summer' (1931).

Sometime in the early 1930s funds were raised for the laying of two red shale tennis courts between the memorial gates and the present Rest Centre—the original tennis pavilion. The ground continued to be used into the 1950s now under the Charity Commission and the National Coal Board. The Brimington Miners' Recreation Ground's relatively short life came to an end in 1957 when the Trustees were given permission to sell the land for £1550. The purchasers were the then Chesterfield Rural District Council (C.R.D.C.), with the purpose of acquisition being the 'provision of living accommodation'. The land is now Broom Gardens and Manor Drive.



Sketch-plan showing the layout of the Brimington Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground, in the period around 1938. Note the two gates at either end of the frontage to Manor Road, which survive. The ground appears well-equipped, certainly better than either Thistle Park, on Station Road, or the Manor Road recreation ground. It seems a pity it fell into disuse. (Alan Sharp)

Three things have survived from the recreation ground. The iron railings and their associated masonry pillars can still be seen. As already mentioned, the tennis pavilion has been modified and is now the Rest Centre. The bowling green also survives. In a separate agreement the C.R.D.C. retained the bowling green and a small adjacent area but these fell into neglect. In conjunction with Brimington Parish Council the bowling green was reinstated in 1977. A bowling club flourishes to this day with approaching 100 members.

‘Thistle Park’

Our final village recreation ground is found on Station Road—Thistle Park—or to give it its proper title Eastwood Park. It was referred to as Thistle Park at a Parish Council meeting as far back as 1938. The Eastwood family were great benefactors to the town and district. Alderman Albert Eastwood was the founder of the Eastwood Wagon Works on Brimington Road Chesterfield and purchased and donated to the town, including Eastwood Park at Hasland. Over the years the family gifted parcels of land for parks and playgrounds, the site and cash for the establishment of the technical college, hospital wings, almshouses and in 1914 Chesterfield’s first motor ambulance.

In 1932 Alderman G.A. Eastwood purchased for £600 what had been the site of one of Brimington’s numerous brickworks. This land became Eastwood Park or, as it is better known locally, Thistle Park, the scene of various village activities over the years such as fairs and carnivals as well as football.

Phipps ‘Open Holes’

I ought to briefly mention ‘Phipps Open Holes’. This area of land near Westwood, which sits roughly on the boundary with Staveley, was purchased by Alderman H. Phipps and presented to the parish council in March 1938. Not, of course, for formal recreation, this land has been enjoyed by parishioners but has more recently become somewhat annexed by Westwood—the formerly open aspect has become colonised by trees. The land was, with the parish council’s other recreation grounds, transferred to Chesterfield Borough Council ownership on local government reorganisation in 1974.

Other Informal Recreation Grounds

From time-to-time various others sites in the village, privately owned, have been used for informal gatherings.

For example, we find references to ‘Mapes field’ or ‘festival field’ in accounts of the Brimington Sunday School Union processions, which were held every Whit Monday. This field appears to have been the one chosen for the site of the Brimington Miners’ Welfare Recreation Ground.

Finally no account of recreation grounds in Brimington should go without mentioning ‘Creswick’s Park’ or ‘Field’ as it became known. On this land were held many twentieth-century events including the Brimington Hospital Committee ‘Demonstrations’ and the village feast. Up until the early 1970s the latter included a visiting fairground. As the name implies this land comprised fields fronting Chesterfield Road, next to Grove Farm—‘Creswick’s Farm’—on which is now built the estate of private houses, off Nethercroft Road.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful for research notes made available by Philip Cousins, who in turn is grateful for the co-operation of Chesterfield Borough Council for access to various deeds. Derbyshire Record Office staff have co-operated in research using the parish council records. The recollections of Peter Harrison and others were particularly useful in reconstructing the layout of the Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground.

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[On-line] www.dmm-pitwork.org.uk/html/welfare.htm and <http://www.dmm-pitwork.org.uk/html/welfare3.htm>.



Manor Rest Centre, summer 1982. The pavilion design can possibly be appreciated in this view. The Rest Centre is still in use. The plate, illustrated on page 19, can be discerned above the door. (Philip Cousins)



Though of relatively poor quality, this photograph from the 1930s shows the pavilion in use, with a tennis match in progress. (Collection Brimington and Tapton Local History Group)

SOME LOCAL SPORTS PERSONALITIES

Elizabeth Pemberton

Introduction

Brimington has had its fair share of great sportsmen during the past. *Miscellany* has covered one—Joseph Cropper—in our first issue. Janet Murphy looked at Brimington Cricket in 1887 and 1888 in our second edition.

For our group's exhibition at the 2010 Village Market I researched some of these local sporting personalities. In order not to lose this information, this article offers a summary of my findings.

Underlying the achievements of our local sportsmen of the past, we must remember that they were ordinary people. Not for them the sporting colleges of today. They had to interleave their achievements with the hard work at the collieries and metal working industries, to name but a few. Those who were lucky enough to become professionals were not paid the high wages of today's footballers. Often injury would cut short their careers.

Cricketers

William Mycroft (born 1 February 1841, died 19 June 1894)¹

William played cricket for Brimington and first class cricket for Derbyshire and Marylebone Cricket Club from 1873 to 1886. He was the son of George and his first wife Sabra Allen. George was a coal-miner and kept the Red Lion public house at Brimington.

In 1881 William was running a public house at 10 Tapton Lane, Chesterfield. He was a left arm fast bowler and a right hand batsman. William died of influenza at the age of 53 in Derby. His half brother was also a cricketer.

William Shawcroft describes Mycroft as '...one of the most feared bowlers in England.'² Mycroft clean bowled W.G. Grace on four occasions.

Thomas Mycroft (born 28 March 1848, died 31 August 1911)

Like William Mycroft, Thomas also played for Derbyshire and Marylebone Cricket Club (M.C.C.). Thomas was born in Brimington, the son of George and his second wife Elizabeth Lowcock, the half brother of William Mycroft living at the Red Lion Public House.

Locally Thomas played for Brimington and Chesterfield in 1871. His occupation is recorded as iron moulder on the 1871 census. His first class career in cricket started in 1877, as wicket keeper against Kent, scoring eight runs. Thomas was a left hand batsman and a right arm medium pace bowler. After presumably retiring from cricket he returned in 1897 to 1905 as an umpire standing in two Test matches.

Thomas died aged 63 on the 13th August 1911 at Mickleover, near Derby.

¹ See also *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany* (hereafter *Miscellany*) 2, (2010), p. 31 for a further account of William Mycroft.

² J. Shawcroft, *History of Derbyshire County Cricket Club*, (1989), p. 32. There is a photograph of Mycroft on page 33.

William Cropper (born 27 December 1862, died 13 July 1889)

Cropper is another name featuring in the local cricket scene and further afield too.

As outlined in *Miscellany* 1 and 2³, he played for Derbyshire County Cricket between 1882 and 1888. He also played once for Derby County football team in 1886. Cropper was one of nineteen sportsmen to achieve the 'Derbyshire double'—playing for the county at cricket and at Derby County Football club.

William was the son of Thomas and Mary Cropper. He was recorded as a bricklayer, making his debut for Derbyshire on the 1 January 1882 in a Derbyshire v Yorkshire match. He also played for the Northern England team at the same time. Derbyshire lost first class status in 1888 but William continued playing for the county side until 23 August 1888 in the England XI v Australians. This was his last first class match. From 1888 William Cropper played football for Staveley F.C.

It was while playing for Staveley on 12 January 1889, in a match against Grimsby Town at Clee Park, Lincolnshire, that Cropper was fatally injured. He collided with Dan Doyle the Grimsby right back after fifteen minutes. Badly injured by Doyle's knee in his abdomen, Cropper left the field in obvious distress. The collision resulted in a ruptured bowel. William died in the dressing room at Grimsby in the arms of his Staveley team mate George Hay.

William was buried in Brimington Cemetery. The fine memorial stone erected from the proceeds of subscription funds raised by the family and friends, was described in *Miscellany* 1.

John Henry Purdy (born 23 September 1871, died 19 May 1938)

Also to be remembered is John Henry Purdy, who was born on Brimington Common. He was the son of William and Elizabeth, his father being a bricklayer by trade. John made his debut for Derbyshire in the 1896 county championship against Yorkshire, taking the last wicket before close of play in a drawn match. He played in four more matches during the 1896 championship season in which Derbyshire finished in seventh position. In the last match in 1906 against Nottinghamshire Purdy took a wicket in each innings. His nephew played in the same match. John Purdy died in Ravensdale, Mansfield in May 1938.

Henry Fox Purdy (born 17 January 1883, died 17 February 1943)

Henry Fox Purdy played first class cricket for Derbyshire during the period 1906-1919. He was born at Brimington. Interestingly, his birth certificate was registered Henry Fox. He made his debut for Derbyshire in July 1906 in a match against Nottinghamshire. Henry played one game in 1907 and four in 1908. He did not play again for the county until after the First World War, in 1919, when he took part in two games against Yorkshire. Henry died in Newbold, aged 60, in 1943.

George Yates (born 21 August 1858, died 21 July 1933)

George played cricket for Brimington but was actually born in Bolsover. The son of Thomas and Elizabeth Yates, he married a Harriet Chapman in 1880. They had seven children: Ada, George H.,

³ P. Cousins, 'Memorial to William Cropper, Brimington Cemetery', *Miscellany* 1, (2008), pp. 33–34. J. Murphy, 'Brimington Cricket Club – Derbyshire cup winners 1887 and 1888', *Miscellany* 2, (2010), pp. 29–32.

Jimmy, Frank, Lily, Maud and Edith. A coalminer, he played first class cricket for Derbyshire during the 1883 season against the MCC.

John Richardson (born 17 March 1856, died 12 February 1940)

John was the son of Thomas and Ann. He was born in Duckmanton, being a bricklayer by occupation. He married Matilda Beresford in 1879. John played for Derbyshire between 1879 and 1883. He died in Brimington, aged 83, in 1940.

James Brelsford (born 1855, died 24 December 1934)

Brelsford is another great local cricket family. We begin our short exploration with James, who was born in 1855 at Brimington to James and Eliza Allaby. He was one of seven children; the family home was 6 Station Road, Brimington. James played for Brimington later making his debut with Derbyshire in the 1882 season, playing against Lancashire. He was a right hand medium pace bowler and a right hand batsman. James moved to Bowdon, Cheshire, where he was a long-standing member of the village club. He died at that place in 1934, aged 69.

Two other members of James Brelsford's family played cricket. John Brelsford (born 1868) is reputedly recorded as a cricketer. John married a Kate Orwin 1891 at Brimington. He died in 1932. We also remember William George Brelsford, who was fine cricketer.

The Davidsons

Joseph Davidson was born on 9 August 1846 and died on 3 December 1901. Joseph was a member of the team that played Derbyshire's first proper match in 1871. He only played, however, in four county games to 1874.

George Davidson, the son of Joseph Davidson who was born in Brimington, played first class cricket for Derbyshire against the M.C.C. In 1886, aged only 32, he died from pneumonia, following a bout of influenza. He died in Tividale near Tipton, Staffordshire. It was considered that he would have played for many years.

Frank Davidson (1 October 1872 to 7 June 1951), brother to George, played for Derbyshire from 1879 to 1899. He was a right hand batsman and a right arm medium pace bowler.

Some Other Players

Martin Cropper a cousin of William Cropper was a notable cricket player for Brimington, playing for Derbyshire in 1892. He was born on the 16 July 1864 at Brimington, dying on 26 October 1943 at Staincross.

Fred Cropper and Edward Hall and Fred Salmon were all accomplished cricket players for Brimington.

Football

Many cricketers also played football. Some made more of their football talents than others.



Joe Payne (born 17 January 1914, died 22 April 1975). (Pictured left, when playing for Chelsea).

Born on Brimington Common, near the Miners' Arms public house, he was best known as the scorer of 10 goals in a match for Luton against Bristol Rovers, on 13th April 1936. Even in 2010 this record stands; the highest number of goals scored by one person in league football. Payne later played for Chelsea. A plaque commemorating Joe 'ten goal' Payne is on the outside of the public house, near his birthplace.⁴

Walter Millership (born 8 June 1910, died 1978).

Walter was born in the small village of Warsop Vale in Nottinghamshire in 1910. He played both football and cricket, variously playing for Warsop Main, Welbeck Athletic and Shirebrook Town Football Club. Upon leaving school Walter worked at Warsop Colliery, but was soon approached by Nottinghamshire County Cricket Club. But their efforts to sign him were rebuffed by Walter, who wanted to further his football career. In January 1928 he was invited for a trial with Bradford Park Avenue and was signed. After a time he moved to Sheffield Wednesday captaining Wednesday during the Second World War. His career spanned nine years, 11 days. In later life he played in non-league football. In 1948 he returned to coal mining at Arkwright Town Colliery, staying there until his retirement in 1969. He died at Brimington in 1978

John and Roy Hicton⁵

Both boys were born at 49 Victoria Street, New Brimington to Horace and Daisy. They have two sisters Ann and Elaine and a brother David. John was born on 24 September 1944 and Roy on 19 September 1948. Both went to Princess Street School and Brimington Junior, then to Brimington Boys senior school. They both represented north-east Derbyshire junior schools football, then with both the seniors at Chesterfield and Derbyshire School Boys. Both got through to the last 22 for English school boys.

On leaving school John joined Sheffield Wednesday as an apprentice before progressing to the first team. He then transferred to Middlesbrough. John scored over 200 goals during his career.

The younger boy, Roy, on leaving school, joined Chesterfield as an apprentice, making his debut in the reserves as the youngest player ever at the club. He progressed through the reserves to the first team. He was one of the members of the Division Four champions side of 1969-70.⁶

⁴ For further information about the career of Joe Payne see *DT*, 22 April 2004 Letters, p. 15 and D. Bell, *Derbyshire Heroes*, (2004), pp. 96 – 98.

⁵ I am grateful to Roy Hicton for information in this paragraph.

⁶ See also S. Basson, *Lucky whites and Spireites*, (1998), p. 86.

Roy still lives in Brimington with his wife Cathy. They have two sons Richard and Grant. John lives at Walton with his wife Rosemary. They have a daughter Joanne and a son Jonathan.

The Bunyans

We should not forget the story of Charles Bunyan (Senior) and his sons.

Charles was born in 1869 in Bigglesware Bedfordshire. The son of Martha Bunyan (1845-1908), she married a John Whittamore who, according to the 1881 Census, lived in Cow Lane (now Coronation Road).

Charles married an Elizabeth Taylor in 1891 in Derby. They had the following children:

- Charles Cyril Bunyan. He was born on 7 November 1893.
- Ernest Henry Bunyan. Known as Ernie, born 1891 (died 1943).
- Maurice Taylor Bunyan. He was born 14 October 1894, dying 1967 at Drayton in Hampshire.

The 1891 census shows the boys living with their grandparents in John Street, Brimington.

Charles Bunyan Senior

Charles was an English professional football player and manager who was active throughout Europe; one of the first Englishmen to accomplish this feat. He was a goalkeeper and played for local sides—Old Horns and Spital Olympics. Bunyan played with Chesterfield in 1886 before turning professional at Hyde the following year. He was in goal for Hyde when the club lost 26-0 (!) to Preston North End in October 1887 in the F. A. Cup. This is a record which still remains in senior English football.

After playing in the Football League with Sheffield United and Derby County, Charles returned to Chesterfield in 1892. He was sacked by Chesterfield for a number of misdemeanours both on and off the pitch. He played for Ilkeston Town and Heanor Town before returning to league football. From 1896 he played for Walsall, then New Brompton before moving on to Newcastle United in 1901. In 1908 Charles became the player/coach at Brimington Athletic.

Bunyan moved to Belgium in 1909 becoming coach to Racing Club de Bruxelles, while also assisting with the Belgian national side. He moved on to Sweden in 1911 to manage Orgryte, also coaching the national side in time for the 1912 summer Olympics. He returned to Belgium to manage Standard Leige in 1912. His career was interrupted by the First World War—returning to England with his sons in 1915. He subsequently, with his sons, enrolled in the army, seeing active service, which affected his health. Bunyan's wife died in 1917, but he married Jessie Katherine Ross Dansken, having a son in 1919—Donald Dansken Bunyan.

Charles coached Anderlecht from 1919-1922. He died 3 August 1922 at Ixelles, Belgium aged 53.

Maurice and Charles Junior were also footballers.

Charles Bunyan Junior

He was an English footballer who played for Chelsea He also represented Great Britain at the 1920 summer Olympics.

Maurice Bunyan

He was also an English professional football player and a manager in Europe. He played striker in Belgium for Racing Club de Bruxelles and in France for Stade Français. Maurice was the top scorer of the Belgian First Division 1912-1914. He managed the French side Bordeaux from 1945-1947.

Following his coaching experience Maurice wrote a book 'Le football Simplette' with the help of Jules Rimet (as the title suggests this is in French).

Bob Wilson

Bob Wilson, OBE, was born 30 October 1941. A Tapton House school-boy he is a former Scotland international goalkeeper and later a broadcaster. His charity work for the Willow foundation is well known. He published his autobiography in 2003.⁷

Peter Swan

Born 8 October 1936, in South Elmsall, Yorkshire, Peter is one of seven children, all boys. He was a professional footballer whose career lasted from 1952 until 1974. He made 299 appearances for Sheffield Wednesday. Peter has variously kept the Three Horse Shoes and latterly The Mill public houses in Brimington. A match-fixing case in the early 1960s robbed the Sheffield Wednesday and England centre half of the best years of his career. He published his autobiography in 2006.⁸

Other Players

Albert Desmond Collins was born on 15 April 1923 at Chesterfield. He signed for Chesterfield in October 1941, where he played eight times for the first team. He was a left or right winger. He was sold to Halifax Town for £1,500 in November 1946, then playing for a succession of clubs. Des currently lives in St. Michael's Nursing home, Brimington and had lived for some time on Station Road at Brimington.⁹

There were, of course, other players, who still need some research. Included is Sidney Carter who lived in Burnell Street. He was born on 28 July 1916, dying on 5 September 1976. He played for Mansfield Town in the 1938-39 football Season.

Football Transport

As an interesting aside, Wetton's buses at Brimington received orders at the outset of the Second World War, from the Ministry of War Transport, that they were to convey Chesterfield Football Club to all their away matches. Fortunately the late Alan Wetton recorded an interview with Chesterfield Museum Service in the 1980s, recounting his adventures during this time. The interview is reproduced on the Club's website.¹⁰

Other Sports

Michael Rawlings, son of the one-time proprietor of the Ark Tavern public house, played badminton for Derbyshire and later emigrated to Australia. There he became that country's number one player.¹¹

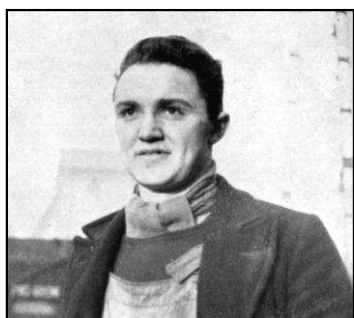
⁷ R. Wilson, *Bob Wilson, behind the network: my autobiography*, (2003).

⁸ P. Swan and N. Johnson, *Setting the record straight*, (2006).

⁹ I am grateful to Peter Harrison for this information.

¹⁰ [On-line] last visited 17 October 2010 at <http://www.chesterfield-fc.co.uk/page/History/0,,10435~964582,00.html#continue>.

¹¹ I am grateful to Peter Harrison for this information.



The *Staveley News* of January 1953 details Michael's early career (and included this picture, left). Then 21, he was employed in the Building Department of Devonshire Works. Despite playing only five years previously, by 1953 he had won his 'county colours'. He had received training from J. Neale of the Sand Spun Department at Staveley. In the 1950-51 season Michael entered the Derbyshire County Championship for the first time, winning the senior men's singles, junior singles and junior mixed doubles. In addition to his badminton activities Michael had been a goalkeeper for the Chesterfield Reserves in Central League games.

Joe Screen was another Tapton House School pupil. He was born on the 27 November 1972 and is an international speedway rider.

Arthur Hewitt (pictured below¹²) was a cyclist of some note. We end this review of local sportsmen with his recollections.



I was brought into the cycling game by a New Brimington man, the well known Henry Spowage, a turner at the old Staveley Works, in 1946.

We were all in the Staveley Wheelers Club, with the club room in a field at Longates, Staveley.

I started time trial racing early in the morning. The meeting place was at Blyth, Nottinghamshire, where we usually stayed on Saturday nights at the Bob's Box Guest House, then down to the start at Sutton Crossing near Retford, for short distance events. The turning point was unbelievably in the R.A.F. Finningley base, now the civilian Robin Hood Airport near Doncaster.

I was called up for National Service on 1 June 1950 to Padgate near Warrington, for six weeks training, then on to Gloucester for the rest of my service. I rode in many R.A.F. Cycling Association events at various stations; Bridgenorth, Filton, as well as going home to ride for my own club in Sheffield.



Some of the events were in 1950 and 1951. 100 miles time trial championship and 1952 R.A.F. five day race. I also rode a number of time trials in the West Country—Bath and Bristol and in Wiltshire. The problem was whether to ride for the R.A.F. or my home team. The Commanding Officers of most stations all wanted to have winners on their station. In May 1952 I was released and went on for some time riding in all events; 25 miles, 50 miles 100 miles and the 12-hour rides in Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, to qualify for the best all-rounder. In 1952 I won this event for Sheffield and District Cycle Traders Cup, getting it at the Grand Hotel, at their annual dinner.

¹² I am grateful to Mr Hewitt for permission to reproduce these photographs and for his recollections.

Sources

In addition to sources listed as footnotes, I am particularly grateful to the following individuals who contributed memories to my research:

- Peter Harrison for information on Albert Desmond Collins.
- Roy Hicton for sharing his career and that of his brother.
- Arthur Hewitt for sharing his cycling career with us.
- Greta Clark for sharing photographs and information of Sidney Carter.

Census and other details from www.ancestor.com.

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- Charles Bunyan Senior: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Bunyan,_Sr.
- Maurice Bunyan: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maurice_Bunyan#mw-head.
- Charles Bunyan Junior: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Bunyan,_Jr.
- Joe Payne: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Payne_\(footballer\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Payne_(footballer)).
- Joe Screen: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Screen.

Cricket Archive: <http://cricketarchive.co.uk>.

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- <http://www.chesterfield-fc.co.uk/page/PastPlayersIndex/0,,10435,00.html>.
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FAREWELL SHEEPBRIDGE AND BRIMINGTON STATION

Philip Cousins

Introduction

During the night of Thursday 8 April 2010¹ the remaining wooden station buildings at Sheepbridge and Brimington Station, situated at Wheeldon Mill, burnt down. So ended the story of these buildings, opened in June 1892. Now only the old station master's house, remnants of the track bed and the in-filled bridge at Station Road remain to remind us of the former railway use in this area.

This description and history of Brimington's own railway station draws on a much longer account, originally published in parts via the monthly magazine of Brimington Parish Church. Albeit unfinished and now in need of some revision, the account presented a much more detailed story of the station, the line that served it and the traffic on it. The circumstances surrounding closure of both the station and the line were also explored. This account is currently available on-line courtesy of the 'Disused Stations' section of the Subterranea Britannica website.² Some new research, along with revised information is, however, contained in this account.

Brief History and Construction

In 1889 the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway (M.S.L.R.—renamed Great Central Railway in 1897) finally obtained an Act of Parliament authorising construction of a line from Beighton, through Staveley, for access to the Great Northern Railway in the Leen Valley. A line from Staveley to Chesterfield was also sanctioned. In 1890 Parliament had authorised a second line from Chesterfield to rejoin the Leen Valley route at Heath. These railways were known as the 'Derbyshire Lines' of the M.S.L.R. The line serving Chesterfield later became known as the Great Central Railway (G.C.R.) Chesterfield Loop.³

Construction of the Derbyshire Lines was placed in the hands of two contractors. Messrs Logan and Hemingway were responsible for the majority of the line, including that from Beighton, through Staveley to Heath and the branch from Staveley, through Brimington, to Chesterfield. Another contractor - Baldry & Yeburg - was given work involving about 10 miles northwards from the Annesley end.⁴ Charles Liddell was appointed as engineer to the line.⁵

Logan and Hemingway's contract was let in January 1890.⁶ They agreed to complete the work in 18 months.⁷ The firm were experienced contractors, who had undertaken other work for the M.S.L.R.⁸

¹ *Derbyshire Times (DT)*, 15 April 2010.

² [On-line] last visited on 20 October 2010. For the Sheepbridge and Brimington Station at URL <http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/b/brimington/index.shtml>. The on-line account (which is minus references) is at URL <http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/b/brimington/index20.shtml>. The author retains a fully referenced version.

³ The majority of information in this paragraph is from G. Dow, *Great Central, volume 2*, (1962).

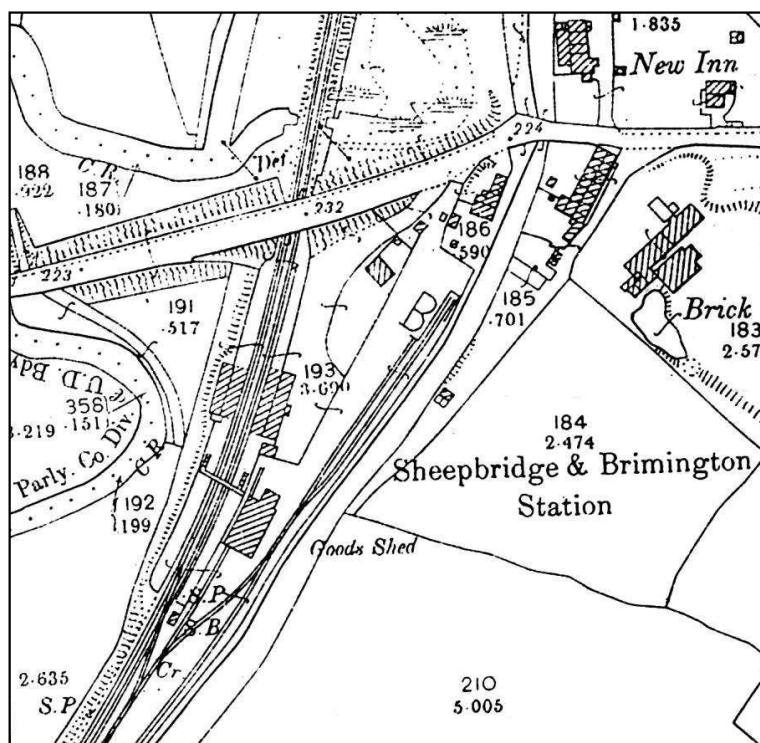
⁴ For an analysis of the awarding of contracts see R. Emblin, 'Quids Pro Quo? The Company and the Contractor' *Back Track*, February 2003, pp. 95-103, also his 'Of the Derbyshire Lines: the Constructor's Tale', *Forward* (journal of the Great Central Railway Society) No. 96, April 1994, p. 1 - 7. Emblin uses a typescript MSS in Nottingham Local Studies library by Guy Hemingway, son of one of Logan and Hemingway's partners (C. R. Hemingway) and an 'undated fragment' of the latter's unpublished MSS also at Nottingham.

⁵ Dow, *Great Central, volume 2*, (1962), p. 211.

⁶ *DT*, 25 January 1890, p. 8.

⁷ *DT*, 11 January 1890, p. 5. MSLR, *Programme of arrangements for the ceremony of turning the first sod of the new Derbyshire Lines by the Rt Hon Earl Manners, at Beighton, 7 February 1890*. (1890). (Chesterfield Local Studies and Sheffield Local Studies (Leader collection of pictures and cuttings, p. 92)). The *Derbyshire Courier (DC)*, 10 May 1890 reported that the 18 months completion related to the time from taking possession of the last part of the land required for the works, i.e. May 1890. This is at variance with the M.S.L.R.'s statement contained within the programme.

⁸ R. Emblin, 'Logan and Hemingway', *Back Track*, May 2006, pp. 306 – 310.



Extract from the 1898 (second edition) 25-inch Ordnance Survey map of Brimington showing Sheepbridge and Brimington station. The 'New Inn' is now known as 'The Mill' public house. Station Road runs right to left to the top of the extract. The up platform buildings, which survived until April 2010, are to the right of the station group. The smaller detached building is thought originally to have been the coal and lamp room. Note the footbridge, signal box ('S.B.') and goods shed. The sidings led to a cattle dock—the 'B' shaped structure on the map. (Derbyshire sheet XVII.13)

Reviewing work in early May 1890, the *Derbyshire Times* found that only two months after the turning of the first sod at Beighton, Logan and Hemingway were 'pushing ahead'.⁹ Amongst work in progress it was noted that land at Chesterfield was in the contractor's hands; a temporary contractor's line was under construction; six locomotives were at work and an American built steam navvy had recently been started, for the first time, about a mile from Beighton. A telephone network was in operation for about two-thirds of the line, with offices erected near the Sitwell Arms at Eckington, at Staveley and soon to be opened in Chesterfield. At Staveley a large part of a 'cinder tip' at the works was already being excavated for an embankment, with men at work in 'all the cuttings on the route.' Not surprisingly the construction activities provided quite a spectacle.¹⁰ In October 1890 it was reported that Logan and Hemingway had over 2,500 men employed on construction of the line.¹¹ A month later it was reported that 12 steam navvies, 22 locomotives, eight steam cranes and 2,000 men were employed at the works.¹²

As previously mentioned, the Chesterfield line was merely a branch. Naturally this caused some disappointment in the town, which was rectified by the M.S.L.R. pursuing another Bill for extension of the line through Chesterfield to Heath, which became an Act in July 1890.¹³ Work commenced on this new section, of some 4¾ miles, before construction on the original line was finished. This included the Chesterfield Tunnel upon which work started on the 1 October 1891.¹⁴ Logan and Hemingway also constructed this line¹⁵ and ultimately went on to build the London extension of the M.S.L.R., which terminated at Marylebone.¹⁶

⁹ *DT*, 3 May 1890.

¹⁰ *Derbyshire Courier* (DC), 5 April 1890.

¹¹ *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 13 October 1890.

¹² *DT*, 15 November 1890.

¹³ Dow, *Great Central*, volume 2, (1962), p. 235.

¹⁴ *DC*, 4 June 1892.

¹⁵ Emblin *Back Track*, February 2003, p. 95; *DT*, 8 July 1893, p. 8.

¹⁶ R. Emblin 'Annesley to East Leek - the start of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway's extension to London', *Back Track*, August 1998, p. 427.

By September 1891 construction had rapidly advanced; as the *Derbyshire Courier* reported, after taking a tour of the construction activities:

*‘...Brimington Station is next reached, and we see that the old road to Newbold has had to take a newer straighter course. The platforms and the “skeleton” of the station offices which are to be of wood are already up together with the signal box. The signal rods, wires, and posts are fixed in position between the Brimington station and the Midland Masbro’ branch, and gives the line a finished appearance...’*¹⁷

The work was without its hazards. In October 1890, at Blue Bank (where the canal was partially diverted), a 13 year old boy employed ‘...to grease the axles of the tip wagons...’¹⁸ used in construction works, was crushed between the buffers of two of them. He later died in hospital, having only started work at the railway two days before the accident. At the inquest into the boy’s death the coroner criticised contractors Logan and Hemingway for sending no representative, commenting; ‘...it seemed a great pity that such young boys should be employed to do such dangerous work.’¹⁹

There were no great encampments for the navvies who worked on the construction. Workers on the contract boarded or lodged along the route.²⁰ This happened in Brimington, where in May 1890, the *Derbyshire Times* reported that, ‘a number of houses at Wheeldon Mill, which have been empty for a long time, have been taken, and are occupied by the navvies...’²¹ J.H. Baker, licensee of the New Inn at the time (later the Great Central Hotel and now The Mill), apparently had ‘...many interesting recollections of the exciting times of that period...’²² The Railway Company, incidentally, did not own this public house.

‘Mails’ were run from Sheffield and Chesterfield to bring in workers from along the route, once a temporary contractor’s railway line was laid.²³

Opening

The Derbyshire Lines opened in stages, with goods activity being the first.²⁴ Coal and iron traffic was the main reason for construction of the railway, along with Sir Edward Watkin’s (the M.S.L.R.’s Chairman) ambitious plans to strike out towards London.²⁵

The station at Wheeldon Mill opened to passengers on Saturday 4 June 1892 along with the rest of the Chesterfield branch.²⁶ This opening to passengers had been delayed from Wednesday 1 June, until the Saturday, owing to the inspecting officer from the Board of Trade not being satisfied that work was sufficiently advanced on the Staveley Works and Chesterfield stations.²⁷

The opening celebrations appear to have been somewhat muted. At Chesterfield the opening seems to have been over-shadowed by the cutting of the first sod of the Lancashire, Derbyshire and East Coast Railway, scheduled for 7 June. This line had its Chesterfield station next to the Portland Hotel, in the town centre. So enthused were the town council by this event that they requested inhabitants to decorate their shops and houses in celebration.²⁸ Never-the-less Vernon Brelsford in his *History of*

¹⁷ DC, 26 September 1891.

¹⁸ DT, 18 October 1890.

¹⁹ DT, 18 October 1890.

²⁰ DC, 17 May 1890 ; DT, 18 October 1890 .

²¹ DT, 3 May 1890.

²² DT, 21 July, 1934, (death of J.H. Baker).

²³ Emblin, *Forward* April 1994, p.4, quoting C.R. Hemingway’s recollections.

²⁴ Emblin, *Forward* No. 96, April 1994, p. 3 and 5.

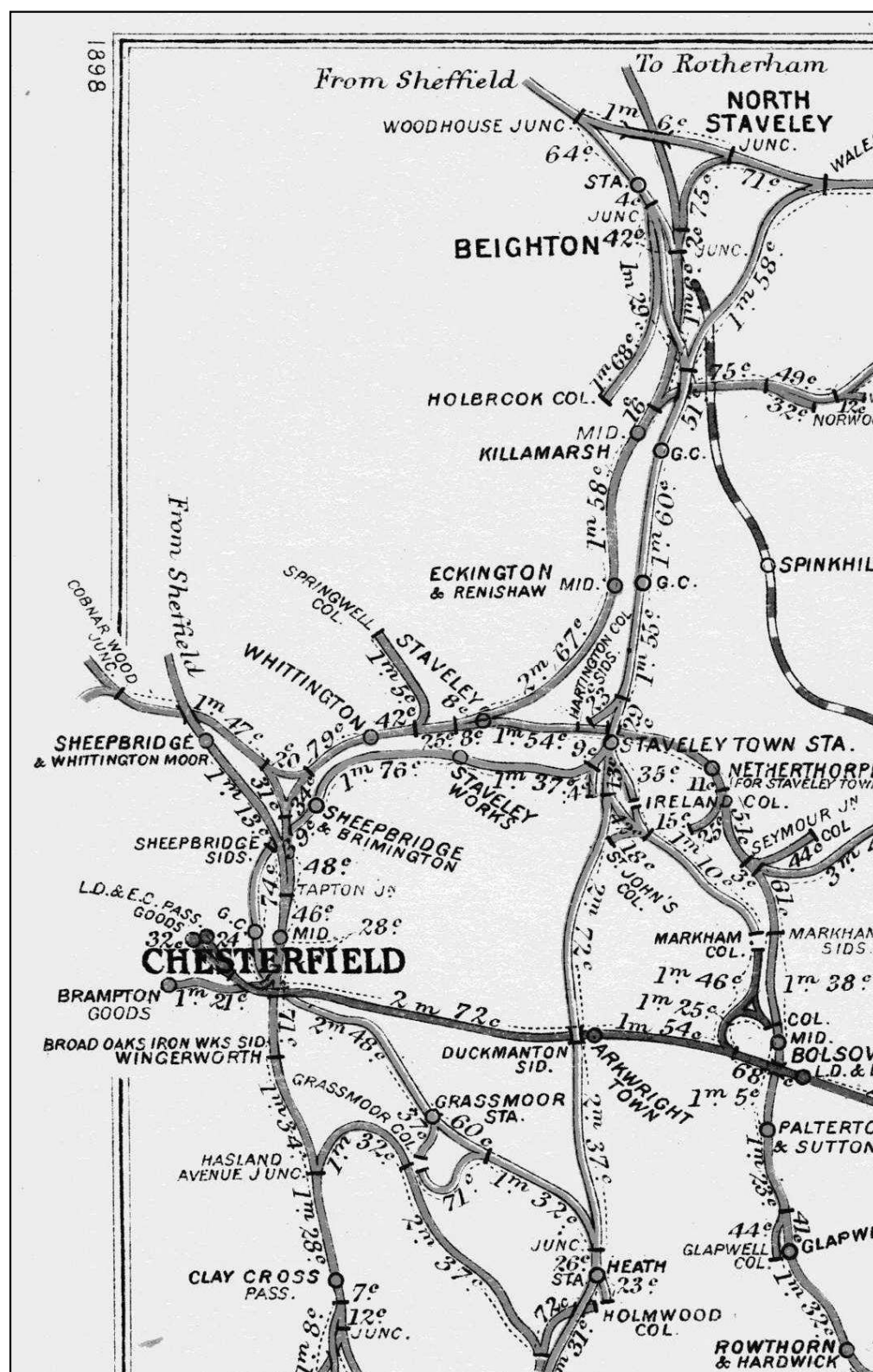
²⁵ R. Emblin, ‘Letter’ *Forward*, No. 119, spring 1999, p. 42.

²⁶ Dow, *Great Central*, volume 2, (1962), p. 232.

²⁷ DC, 4 June 1892.

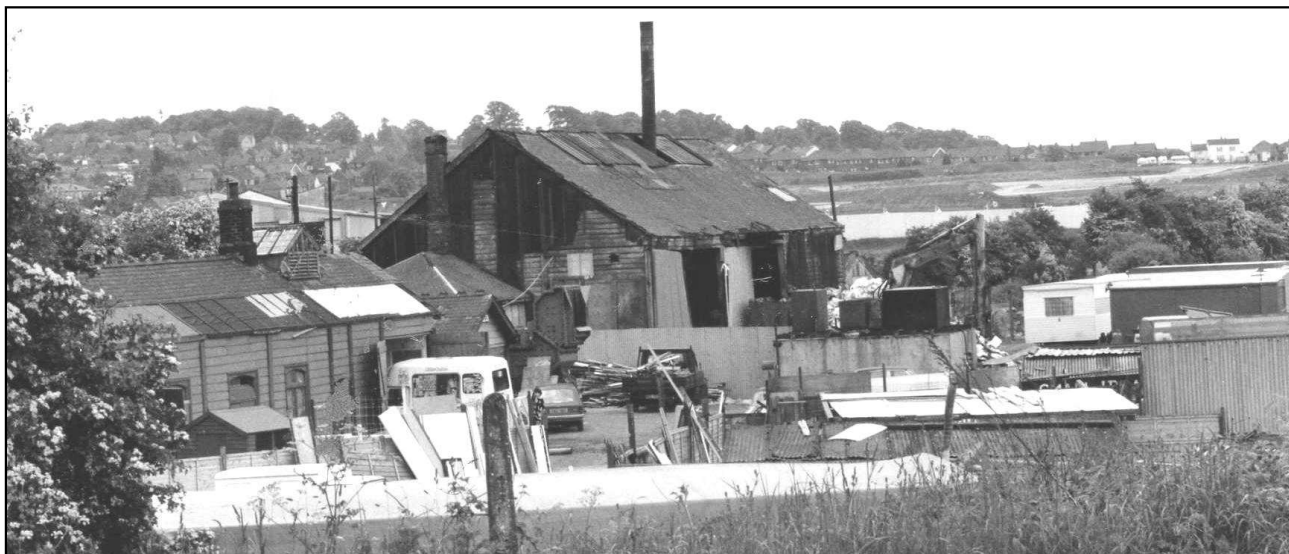
²⁸ DC, 4 June 1892.

Brimington... was able to recollect a journey on the opening day, when he ‘...travelled with scores of other Brimington residents by the first passenger train, which ran from Brimington to Chesterfield.’²⁹



Extract from the 1898 Railway Junction Diagram. Sheepbridge and Brimington Station can be seen a little above Chesterfield, followed by Staveley Works. The Great Central's (G.C.R.) main line ran top to bottom, through Staveley Town to Heath and onwards to Nottingham Victoria, Leicester Central, thence to London, via Rugby. From Sheffield Victoria the line went via the Woodhead tunnels to Manchester. Eastwards the G.C.R.'s line headed towards Grimsby and Cleethorpes. The line running left to right from Chesterfield, through Arkwright Town, is the Lancashire, Derbyshire and East Coast Railway (L.D.E.C.), which was purchased by the Great Central Railway in 1907. A connection between the L.D.E.C. and the G.C.R. was made in the Arkwright area. Some of the massive embankments there still survive. The complexity and duplication of the different railway company lines can perhaps be appreciated from this diagram. (Sheet 134)

²⁹ V. Brelsford, *History of Brimington...*, (1937), p. 66.



Station site and goods shed, May 1988. The site of the gents is marked by the roof louvers, next to the chimney, on the station's remaining up (London bound) platform building. (Philip Cousins)

The Station Buildings

A number of the Derbyshire Lines stations, were built of wood, using standard components, including those at Brimington. Gordon Biddle in his *Victorian Stations...* book said that these buildings represented ‘...some of the best wooden stations in England...’³⁰ The group that Biddle was referring to were those on the main line (from north to south) at Killamarsh, Eckington & Renishaw, Staveley Town, Heath, Pilsley and Tibshelf. The station at Beighton and those to the south of Tibshelf were brick-built. On the loop were Chesterfield, Staveley Works, and our own Sheepbridge and Brimington. The one intermediate station south of Chesterfield, at Grassmoor on the section built to enable the branch to become a loop, was of brick.³¹

Just who designed these stations is the subject of some debate. Neither company records nor contemporary newspaper reports reveal who undertook this work. The M.S.L.R. board appears to have delegated detailed supervision of the Derbyshire Lines building to a sub-committee whose minutes have not survived. The board itself mainly concerned itself in policy, finance and disputes. We do know that the buildings at Staveley station, on Lowgates, were erected by Messrs. Parnell and Co.³² This firm, from Rugby, also built the nearby goods shed and offices.³³

The division of the contracts for construction, however, appears to correspond with the distinction between the wooden and the brick stations. In fact, thanks to Robert Emblin’s research on the building of the Derbyshire Lines, it seems that the M.S.L.R. consulting engineer, Charles Liddell, who was appointed line engineer in 1889,³⁴ may have had overall responsibility, assisted by E.O. Ferguson³⁵ as resident engineer. As the work proceeded Ferguson, in turn, drew on the services of Edward Dale, a young engineer then recently appointed to the staff of Logan and Hemingway. In a memoir written in

³⁰ G. Biddle, *Victorian stations: railway stations in England and Wales 1830-1923*, (1973), p. 160.

³¹ *DT*, 8 July 1893.

³² *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 6 February 1892.

³³ *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 20 July 1892.

³⁴ Dow, *Great Central*, volume 2, (1962), p. 211.

³⁵ Emblin, *Back Track*, February 2003, p. 98, has E.G. Ferguson, but contemporary newspaper accounts generally have him as E.O. Ferguson. He resided for at time at New Brampton (*DT*, 20 November 2000).

1937 (now in Nottingham City Library) Dale recalled helping Ferguson with the designs and drawings for more than 30 bridges on the line, and for the stations at Chesterfield, Eckington & Renishaw and Staveley ‘...beside the General Arrangement (drawings) of all the platforms, awnings and goods sheds’.³⁶ Given the similarity of the stations and this statement it seems likely that Dale, at least, designed the wooden built ones, including Sheepbridge and Brimington, or adapted a scheme laid down by Liddell or Ferguson to suit each site. Dale was later described as a ‘fine draftsman and designer for brickwork, masonry, girder-work or timber structures...’³⁷

Examining available photographs³⁸ of the wooden Derbyshire Line stations, they appear to have been made up from standard elements, used in various combinations and quantities. This includes those stations with street-level booking offices (at Chesterfield, Staveley and Eckington) as well as those which had only line-side buildings, like those at Sheepbridge and Brimington.³⁹

At Brimington there were wooden buildings on both the down and up platforms. ‘Up’ describes the platforms where trains departed in the London direction—though there were never regular timetabled through passenger trains from the station to the capital. The up platform had the main accommodation, complete with booking office. To the south of the main up building stood a smaller detached building, probably the lamp room and coal store.

The platform buildings had gable-ended, glazed, ridge and furrow canopies. These were cantilevered on a central row of columns, the platform ends having decorative valances. These, like some other Derbyshire Line canopies, were bevelled off and partially re-roofed with asbestos corrugated sheets sometime after the grouping of railways in 1923.⁴⁰ Apparently the outer ends (i.e. the track side) of the canopies, which were unsupported, showed a propensity to pivot on the columns and so pull away from the building.⁴¹ The canopies were supported on elaborate cast-iron pillars and brackets, made by Goddard, Massey & Warner of Nottingham.⁴² There were the usual toilets and waiting rooms. The up and down platform were linked by a lattice iron footbridge.

Examination of various large-scale Ordnance Survey maps allows some reconstruction of what was a fairly simple station layout.⁴³ In addition, records of the M.S.L.R. in the National Archives at Kew include a set of plans of 1896 showing the internal arrangement of the station buildings.⁴⁴ A not-to-scale reproduction of part of these plans is reproduced below. The layout and designation appears to have survived mostly in this form up until closure.⁴⁵

To the south end of the station, just off the up platform was the small wooden signal box, which would have controlled points and signalling into the goods yard and on the main line. There were crossovers just in front of the ‘box joining the up and down lines, connecting into the goods yard from the down line. There were a couple of head-shunts to the south of the up line to enable access into the goods yard, particularly from the down line.

³⁶ Emblin, *Back Track*, February 2003, p. 99.

³⁷ Emblin, *Back Track*, February 2003, p. 102, quoting C.R. Hemingway’s recollections.

³⁸ See particularly the excellent K. Grainger, *Sheffield Victoria to Chesterfield Central: the ‘Derbyshire Lines’ of the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway*, part 1, (2002); A. R. Kaye, *Great Central main line north of Nottingham* (1988) and A. R. Kaye, *Great Central main line north of Nottingham volume 2*, (1991).

³⁹ For further discussion of the design of the Derbyshire Lines buildings, in particular that at Killamarsh, which survived until dismantling in 2009, see; P. Cousins and P. Riden, *The wooden stations of the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Derbyshire Lines* (forth-coming).

⁴⁰ Grainger, *Derbyshire Lines*, part 1, (2002). p. 11.

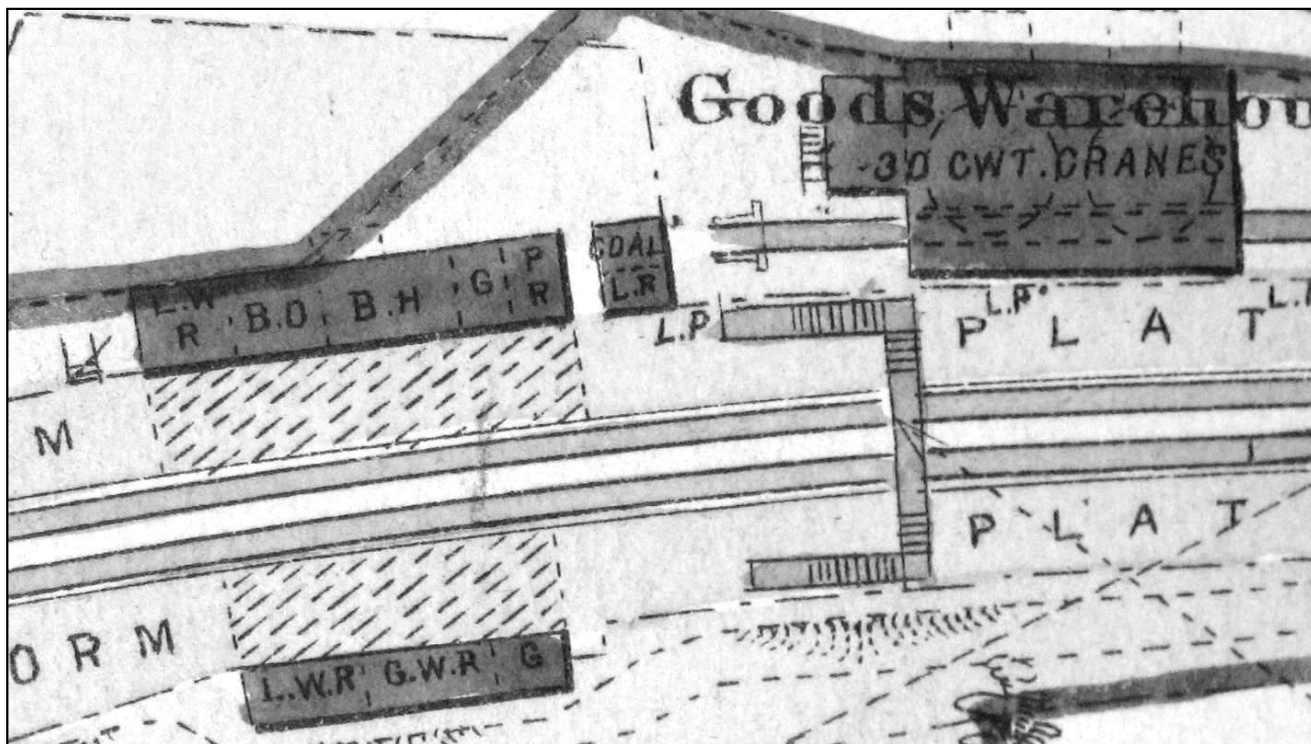
⁴¹ Grainger, *Derbyshire Lines*, part 1, (2002). p. 11.

⁴² At least at Killamarsh, where some survived until dismantling of that building.

⁴³ Ordnance Survey, 25-inch Derbyshire Sheets XVII.15, 1898, 1918, 1938 and 6-inch Derbyshire Sheet XVII S.E. 1921.

⁴⁴ TNA, RAIL 463/89.

⁴⁵ Information from Mr G. Sharp, October 2010.



Sheepbridge and Brimington station, enlargement from a 2 chains to 1 inch survey of the 'Derbyshire Lines'. On the platforms 'L.P.' denotes the position of lamp posts for the gas lamps. Note the footbridge, which was to an iron lattice design. Off the edge of the up platform (top of the plan) was the signal box. The goods warehouse is shown with its two 30 cwt maximum lifting capacity cranes. The up side platform buildings contain (left to right) ladies waiting room (L.W.R.), booking office (B.O.), booking hall (B.H.), gentlemen's lavatories (G), with P.R. as possibly the porter's room. The detached building is for coal storage and lamp room (L.R.). On the downside L.W.R. is, again, the ladies waiting room; G.W.R. general waiting room, with separate gentlemen's lavatories (G). The Ladies waiting room would incorporate lavatories. The plans are extremely detailed. Though not visible on this extract, signals are shown along with details of bridge spans and construction. The whole are colour washed, being contained in a large leather bound and embossed volume. (Courtesy The National Archive, (TNA, RAIL 463/89))

The Station Yard

The station was also equipped with a goods yard. This was approached from Station Road—very much the same as today's entrance—just after the canal bridge.

The railway already possessed some land in this area due to its ownership, since 1847, of the Chesterfield Canal.⁴⁶ By 1827 there was a 'coal wharf', wharf, wharf house and stables established on the canal side.⁴⁷ The wharf, wharf house and stable buildings comprised a joined block. This block appears not to have disappeared during construction of the railway line. Indeed the properties were probably not demolished until sometime between 1921 and 1938.⁴⁸ Part of this group is illustrated on the well-known Nadin postcard of about 1908, latterly published in 1995.⁴⁹

On the approach road, almost immediately at the entrance off Station Road, backing on to the former canal wharf, were situated a weigh machine and small office, now demolished. Passing these, the yard opened out, with the stationmaster's house (complete with garden) to the west. Two cattle pens followed shortly to the east. As described above, sidings ran from the main line into the yard. A large wooden goods warehouse, towards the end of the yard, survived until November 2001, when it was

⁴⁶ G. Dow, *Great Central*, volume 1, (1959), p. 98.

⁴⁷ Parish of Brimington rating survey 1827, Derbyshire Record Office (DRO), D636 A/PO 1 and plan DRO, D177 A/PC 37.

⁴⁸ Ordnance Survey 25-inch Derbyshire Sheets XVII.15, 1938 and 6-inch Derbyshire Sheet XVII S.E., 1921.

⁴⁹ P.J. Cousins (editor), *Brimington: the changing face of a Derbyshire village*, (1995), p. 62.

accidentally burnt down.⁵⁰ In 1896 this had two cranes of 30 cwt. capacity⁵¹ and was complete with a small office.

Passenger, Freight and Excursion Traffic



Third-class ticket issued in either 1895 or 1896. (Collection Glynn Waite)

It is not intended to give a detailed analysis of traffic here,⁵² save that, the station's situation, a longish walk of over half a mile uphill to the village centre, or a fair distance from Whittington Moor, was probably the reason for a relative lack of business. Despite this, the author has met at least one resident who, in his earlier years, would much sooner walk to the station and catch a train to Chesterfield than brave what was, at one time, a lonely walk into Chesterfield via Chesterfield and Brimington Roads.⁵³

By 1937 Vernon Brelsford is clear that both Sheepbridge & Brimington and Staveley Works stations '...are not used much locally, except as a means of linking up with more important stations for long railway journeys.'⁵⁴

On opening in June 1892 the passenger service from Chesterfield to Sheffield consisted of 13 trains up and 12 trains down each day.⁵⁵ There were special 'market trains' on Saturdays and four trains each way on Sundays.⁵⁶ All these trains called at Sheepbridge and Brimington. There is remarkable survivor in The National Archive of a copy of the new line's train services.⁵⁷ This shows the journey time from Sheepbridge and Brimington to Chesterfield was a respectable five minutes.

The extension of the branch, through the Chesterfield Tunnel to a junction at Heath with the line that ran to Nottingham, opened in July 1893.⁵⁸ This brought a change to services.⁵⁹ Fifteen trains, plus one Saturdays only, were running from Sheffield to Chesterfield, with seven running forward to Nottingham. Seven of the fourteen Chesterfield to Sheffield trains started from Nottingham. All these stopped at Sheepbridge and Brimington. On Sundays the station received five trains from Sheffield, of which three went forward to Nottingham. Towards Sheffield five trains called, three of which had originated from Nottingham.

In March 1899 the Company opened its London extension, with a brand new terminus at Marylebone.⁶⁰ In anticipation of this opening the M.S.L.R. renamed itself the Great Central Railway on 1 August 1897.⁶¹ The opening of the extension now meant that Sheepbridge and Brimington, like Chesterfield, was on a loop off the main line from Sheffield Victoria to London, via Nottingham and Leicester. Perhaps because of this position Chesterfield had very little in the way of hoped for expresses.

A return to London in 1903 cost 38 shillings and 10d (just under £2) first class. For third class it was 24 shillings, 5d (just over £1.20) - there was no second class. Not that there were any direct trains to

⁵⁰ DT, 22 November 2001.

⁵¹ TNA, RAIL 463/89.

⁵² For a fuller analysis see Cousins [on-line] at URL <http://www.disused-stations.org.uk/b/brimington/index20.shtml>.

⁵³ Information given to the author by the late Ron Cropper. Development along Chesterfield and Brimington Roads dates mainly from the 1930s onwards.

⁵⁴ Brelsford, *History of Brimington...*, (1937), p. 66.

⁵⁵ TNA, RAIL 918/320.

⁵⁶ DT, 28 May 1892.

⁵⁷ TNA, RAIL 918/320.

⁵⁸ DC, 1 July 1893; DT, 8 July 1893.

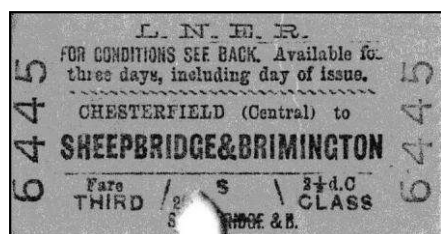
⁵⁹ Information in the remainder of this paragraph from D.L. Franks, 'Passenger services in north-east Derbyshire (part 1)', *Forward*, No. 88, September 1992, pp. 7 - 14. Franks reproduces a table from the August 1893 Bradshaw.

⁶⁰ Dow, *Great Central*, volume 2, (1962), p. 336.

⁶¹ Dow, *Great Central*, volume 2, (1962), p. 297.

London, of course. But at least the journey time from Sheepbridge and Brimington had been cut to four minutes.⁶²

The railways were grouped in 1923. Four big companies were created out of a multiplicity of major and minor players. The Great Central Railway became a constituent of the London and North Eastern Railway (L.N.E.R.).

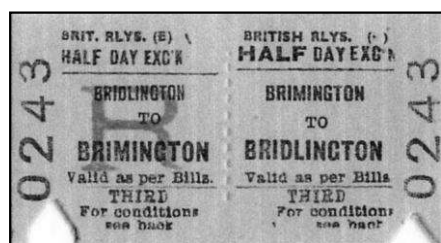


Third-class ticket issued in L.N.E.R. days, on 22 March 1946. (Collection Glynn Waite)

A big problem for passenger traffic on the loop, was that the nearby Midland line (London Midland and Scottish Railway (L.M.S.R.) after 1923), also tapped similar markets. Due to its position, next to the railway bridge at the bottom of Whittington hill, the L.M.S.R.'s station at Sheepbridge potentially served more people than Sheepbridge and Brimington. Next along the L.M.S.R. was Whittington, not so well placed in relation to the village it served, but the station at Barrow Hill was nearer the settlement than the L.N.E.R.'s Staveley Works, but the latter was well placed for the works and, from the mid 1920s, to the new village of

Hollingwood. The L.N.E.R.'s Staveley Central station, at Lowgates, was better placed than the L.M.S.R.'s Staveley Town. For comparison, in 1923, Barrowhill and Staveley Works L.M.S.R. station received fifteen weekday trains (four additional on Saturdays).⁶³ This compared with Sheepbridge and Brimington's twelve.

Burgeoning bus services, particularly from the 1920s, created further competition. It should be remembered that East Midland Motor Services, who ran extensive services in the area, were jointly owned by both the L.N.E.R. and L.M.S.R. from 1929.⁶⁴ The company's most frequent service from Chesterfield in 1930 was to Brimington and Barrow Hill. There were other operators, notably Chesterfield Corporation and more locally Brimington based Doughty's.⁶⁵



Half day excursion ticket to Bridlington, produced sometime after June 1951. At this date the station had been named plain 'Brimington'. The 'Valid as per Bills' refers to sheets produced to advertise the service, as the example on page 66 (Collection Glynn Waite)

Excursion traffic departed from the station, with at least one occasion where such traffic actually arrived there—for the Chesterfield Races in July 1911.⁶⁶ Excursion traffic was a feature for many years, even up until the year of closure.⁶⁷

Private excursions also ran from the station. There is some evidence that at least one trip was run by Brimington Club.⁶⁸ During the late 1920s it is thought that Brimington Parish Church organised a sea-side excursion.⁶⁹ Did the station's remoteness from the village perhaps stop local organisations using the facility as a start for their annual trip? Readers with any knowledge of this type of activity are invited to contact the author.

There were also workmen's trains, which were mainly for the benefit of colliers. These received much criticism for their poor conditions.⁷⁰

⁶² This paragraph based on G.C.R. *Timetable, July, August and September 1903*, p. 139.

⁶³ Bradshaw, *Timetable 1925*, p.602.

⁶⁴ T.F. Wright, *History of Chesterfield, volume IV*, (1992), p. 297.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ For a reproduction of the handbill see Cousins, *Brimington...*, (1995), p. 65.

⁶⁷ See, for example, *DT*, 14 October 1955, carrying an advertisement for an excursion to Blackpool.

⁶⁸ Unreferenced verbal information given to the author, October 2006.

⁶⁹ Information from Mrs J. Walker, January 2007.

⁷⁰ See, for example, J.E. Willams, *Derbyshire miners: a study in industrial and social history*, (1962), p. 74; 112; 449-451; 784-5.

Passenger trains were by no means the only traffic to traverse the loop. There was freight, some of which would originate from the Sheepbridge exchange sidings. These were situated a little beyond Sheepbridge and Brimington station in the Chesterfield direction, just beyond the Midland Railway bridges over the Chesterfield Canal, beyond the parish boundary.

In the line's earlier years the London and North Western Railway (L.N.W.R.) exercised running powers it had over the G.C.R. For example, in 1915 at least one weekday L.N.W.R. goods service traversed the loop on its journey from Colwich to Woodburn Junction, near Sheffield.⁷¹ This was booked to stop at 'Sheepbridge' as required. Unfortunately, we do not know if this goods train directly served the station, as no indication is given as to whether the 'booked' calling point is the exchange sidings or station, or indeed both. The Great Northern Railway also had running powers, but services appear to have been more limited. In 1915 none were booked to travel the loop. Presumably the traffic did not justify it.⁷²

These running powers were welcomed locally, as they were seen as offering more competition to the Midland Railway. This company had been seen as holding a monopoly in the area, resulting in key industrialists, villagers and townspeople supporting the various Derbyshire Lines Bills, whilst the Midland objected.⁷³

In The National Archive are a number of L.N.E.R. traffic survey documents. One gives weekly passenger and goods returns during 1928.⁷⁴ From this we see that in the week ended Saturday January 21, Sheepbridge and Brimington took £45 in passenger receipts, £6 down from the corresponding week in 1927. 'Merchandise and livestock' represented £55, £47 down on the corresponding week the year before, with minerals at £204, £91 down.

Of further interest is an L.N.E.R. station traffic index document for 1935.⁷⁵ This shows that Sheepbridge and Brimington was fourth as forwarder of glass and glassware (at 1,893 tons) on the L.N.E.R.'s network. As Sheepbridge and Brimington receipts also included Sheepbridge sidings this is not surprising. British Thomson Houston established works nearby to produce glass for the manufacture of Mazda lamps in 1921.⁷⁶ This was rail connected. The siding's connection with Sheepbridge Works would also have helped a respectable sixth place for the category pig iron forwarding of six tons weight upwards, totalling 9,400 tons.

Typically coal would be received by rail and dispatched at stations such as Brimington—one of the primary uses for the weighbridge. A coal merchant—James Henry Baker—was based on Station Road for around four years, from 1904.⁷⁷ His obituary mentions the business at Station Road, but does not indicate if he traded from the station yard.⁷⁸ In 1922 Kelly's *Directory of Derbyshire* lists a Samuel Haslam as coal merchant on Station Road.⁷⁹ Again, I do not know if Haslam was based in the station yard. Confirmation of any coal merchants operating from the station site before 1956 would be welcome. In the 1940s opencast coal was dispatched from the yard.⁸⁰

⁷¹ G.C.R., *Working Time Table* (WTT) (1915), p.124.

⁷² For an account of L.N.W.R. and some G.N.R. workings in the East Midlands see V. A. Webster, 'The "Wessie" at large; workings by the L.N.W.R. engines in the East Midlands and South Yorkshire', *Railway World*, April 1987, p. 198-202, with follow-up letters published August 1987, p. 468.

⁷³ For example *DC* editorial; 7 June 1892, and report on committee hearing; *DC*, 10 May 1890.

⁷⁴ TNA, RAIL 398/19. It is not known whether these figures included or excluded the Sheepbridge Sidings.

⁷⁵ TNA, RAIL 398/41.

⁷⁶ H.A. Price-Hughes, *B.T.H. Reminiscences: sixty years of progress*, (1946), p. 44. The siding agreement was made in September 1920; DRO, D5755/10/3/2.

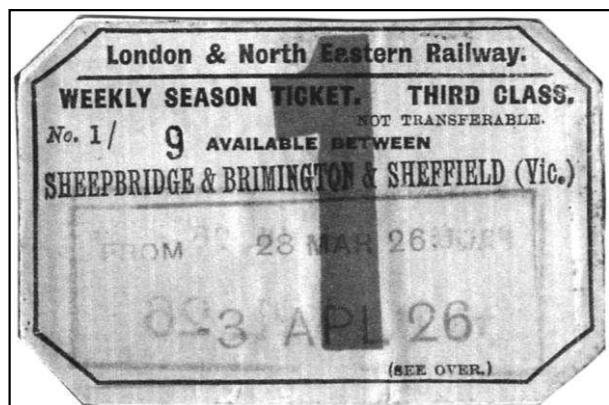
⁷⁷ Kelly *Dir. Derbys. 1904*, p. 69; *1908* p. 72. At the latter date Baker is also described as a carter. This is the same Baker described at 'Brief history and construction', above.

⁷⁸ *DT*, 21 July 1934.

⁷⁹ Kelly, *Dir. Derbys. 1925*, p. 76. Haslam has no listing in 1928.

⁸⁰ L. Ward Walters, 'Opencast mining 1942-1948', *Colliery Guardian*, 6 August, 1948, p. 193.

In 1925 it is clear that evening newspapers sold by village newsagent Mr Nash, were collected from Sheepbridge and Brimington Station, usually by one of the newspaper delivery boys, on a cycle.⁸¹ These were possibly delivered from a stopping passenger train. Livestock was also dealt with. One Brimington butcher, J.T. Holmes (who is first listed in local directories in 1895⁸²) would fairly often fetch livestock from the station to a field opposite his slaughterhouse and shop situated on the corner of Burnell and High Streets.⁸³



This weekly third class season ticket between Sheepbridge & Brimington and Sheffield Victoria stations was valid from 28 March 1926. One wonders who made the journeys? (Collection Glynn Waite)

There was also at least one delivery dray operating from the station.⁸⁴ This was used in the early 20th century Sunday School Union 'demonstrations' as a decorated float.⁸⁵ There had been at least one 'chain horse boy' employed, presumably in connection with the dray.⁸⁶

A L.N.E.R. employee survey of 1939 shows staff employed on the 31 October of that year.⁸⁷ At Sheepbridge and Brimington we find Edward Victor Norman as a class three station master on £4. 15s. 11d. per week. He paid 14 shillings 1d. weekly rent for the station master's house. Norman had joined the railway's service in 1903. Under him were Sheepbridge Sidings signal box (with two temporary signalmen) and 'Sheepbridge Station' signal box—

presumably the station box—with two temporary porter signalmen and one 'number taker'.

Second largest of the 'Big Four' created in 1923, though well managed, the L.N.E.R. had the weakest financial position.⁸⁸ This, coupled with the Chesterfield Loop being at best a secondary line on the L.N.E.R.'s second route to London (their principle 'East Coast' line being into Kings Cross), would have meant finances were tight. It was during L.N.E.R. ownership that the platform canopies were cut back. Published photographs of Chesterfield Central station in 1936, show a generally poor condition.⁸⁹ Maintenance of Sheepbridge and Brimington's buildings was therefore less than ideal,⁹⁰ though the station appears to have been painted in 1936.⁹¹

The 'Big Four', were nationalised in 1948 becoming 'British Railways' (B.R.). This body was grouped into a basically regional structure, in some areas replicating the 'Big Four'. Thus the former L.N.E.R. lines, with exceptions in Scotland and the north-east, became the Eastern Region of B.R.

⁸¹ DT, 8 August 1925, p.8.

⁸² Bulmer, *Dir. Derbys. 1895*, p. 59.

⁸³ Cousins, *Brimington*, (1995) p. 42. The oral evidence was given by the late Harry Haywood.

⁸⁴ Bulmer, *Dir. Derbys. 1895*, p. 59.

⁸⁵ Information from Mrs Land, July 2008.

⁸⁶ DT, 3 January 1920.

⁸⁷ TNA, RAIL 397/1.

⁸⁸ J. Simmons and G. Biddle, *Oxford companion to British railway history*, (2003), p. 283.

⁸⁹ *British Railways Illustrated*, December 2001, p.134-135.

⁹⁰ Letter R.J. Morton to the author, 19 August 1993; 'From the late '30s maintenance at the station presented a problem as the L.N.E.R. became increasingly impecunious - it's a wonder that the building still stands.'

⁹¹ Correspondence in author's collection from L.N.E.R. to Messrs Arundel (Contractors) Ltd., Bradford, March to October, 1936. (I am grateful to Lawrence Knighton for this correspondence).

The Station's Name

The station was originally opened as Sheepbridge and Brimington, being renamed plain Brimington in June 1951.⁹² A photograph of the signal box,⁹³ probably in L.N.E.R. days, shows part of a station name-board. This appears to be lettered 'Sheepbridge and Brimington.' The signal box looks as though it has a fairly new 'Brimington' name-board in the Gill Sans lettering style used by the L.N.E.R., perhaps replacing a longer title. It is thought that the now popular (at least at railwayana auctions) British Railway's 'totem' signs were never erected at the station. These signs were a national standard from 1949.⁹⁴

Incidentally, the name Station Road almost certainly dates from the parish council's decision to name the streets in 1902.⁹⁵ In 1901 the stationmaster's house is described as in the Wheeldon Mill area.⁹⁶

Comings and Goings

Like any other railway station Sheepbridge and Brimington would have seen a number of events, some expected, some perhaps not.

Station gardens were the subject of much competition amongst railway people. In 1950 the station won a third class award with £3 cash prize.⁹⁷

Inquests were also held at the station. Examples include one into the death of a man run over by a train on the M.S.L.R. near Lockoford Lane in 1895; a man run over at the station in 1899; and two nearby drownings, in 1933 and 1938.⁹⁸

The booking office was broken into during the night of 21 December 1919.⁹⁹ There was a suspect but he appears not to have been brought to court.

There must have been some consternation in the area in March 1918 when an aeroplane flying over Brimington came to grief near the station. The pilot was apparently '...endeavouring to land but failed to manipulate the telegraph wires, thereby causing the accident.'¹⁰⁰ Local volunteers guarded the aeroplane until the wreckage was cleared—the pilot was unhurt.

For steam railway enthusiasts some now famous locomotives would have travelled through the station. The G.C.R.'s own 'Director' class 'Butler Henderson', now in the national collection, was a frequent performer on local trains in its twilight years.¹⁰¹ L.N.E.R. A4 pacific 'Mallard', holder of the world speed record for steam, passed through under the cloak of night during the Second World War.¹⁰² The final passenger train to pass through the loop was a private excursion train from Sheffield Victoria to Marylebone on Saturday 15 June 1963. Though it did not stop at Brimington station, it brought

⁹² C.R. Clinker, *Register of closed passenger stations and goods depots...*, (1988), p. 19 and 157. R.V.J. Butt, *Directory of railway stations*, (1995), p. 209.

⁹³ It is believed this photograph is in the Great Central Railway Society's Collection.

⁹⁴ *Railway Magazine*, July and August, 1949, p. 271.

⁹⁵ Minutes of Brimington Parish Council, 10 December 1901; 4 February 1902 and 24 March 1902. DRO, D177 A/PC 1. Minutes of Brimington Parish Council, 8 April and 10 June 1902, DRO, D177 A/PC 2.

⁹⁶ Census 1902, TNA RG 13/3251, 80v.

⁹⁷ *DT*, 23 March 1951.

⁹⁸ *DT*, 12 January 1895, 6 May 1899, 6 May 1933, 19 August 1938.

⁹⁹ *DC*, 3 January 1920.

¹⁰⁰ *DC*, 16 March 1918.

¹⁰¹ G. Farsden, 'Help restore my faith in the old ABC...' letters, *Steam Railway*, September 1981, p. 23. In preservation the locomotive has most recently been displayed at Barrow Hill Roundhouse. It appears in the background of a photograph in *Miscellany* 2, p. 15.

¹⁰² K. Grainger, 'Herbert Ashton, Great Central railwayman', *Backtrack*, October 2009, p. 583.

L.N.E.R. A3 Pacific 'Flying Scotsman' to the line, ceremoniously flagged off from Chesterfield Central Station by Alderman J. Anderson.¹⁰³

Closure

In August 1955¹⁰⁴ B.R. wrote to Chesterfield Rural District Council (C.R.D.C.) stating that the '...small amount of traffic dealt with, including freight, passenger and parcels does not justify the expense involved...' B.R. intended to '...close the station [at Brimington] except for the private sidings and the retention of the facilities for dealing with guaranteed excursions on and from a date to be decided.' These 'guaranteed excursions' were special trains usually run for interest groups such as working men's clubs, Sunday Schools, etc. These could be run from closed stations, subject to need and until the station in question became unsuitable.¹⁰⁵ There is some oral evidence that such trains may have run from Sheepbridge and Brimington, but further confirmation would be welcome.

A memorandum, mainly consisting of a traffic survey, accompanied the letter from B.R. to the C.R.D.C.¹⁰⁶ This found that the service then consisted of five weekday trains in each direction, with seven on Saturdays. During the period of the winter 1954/55 timetable, there had been eight trains to Sheffield (nine on Saturdays), with nine from the city. One freight train called each day. There were no Sunday trains.

A census taken during the week ending 18 September 1954 by B.R. makes pitiful reading. On average 38 fare-paying passengers had joined trains each day, with 26 alighting. On the Saturday 18 had joined with 28 alighting. Railway employees accounted for a further 15 joining, and 14 alighting, per day, with 13 joining and 12 alighting on the Saturday. The memorandum records that only about 434 tons of freight was forwarded from the station goods yard in 1954. This had consisted 'mainly of occasional lots of old sleepers and scrap steel, whilst about 1317 tons were received there, comprising chiefly coal and old sleepers.'

Closure and withdrawal of goods facilities would 'enable a net economy of £2,950 a year to be obtained after allowing for losses in traffic.' Alternative bus facilities were good and freight could be dealt with at Sheepbridge station on the Midland line, about a mile away. There was 'no known prospect of any local developments which would materially affect the traffic dealt with at Brimington.'

A few days after receipt of the BR letter,¹⁰⁷ the Transport Users Consultative Committee (T.U.C.C.) asked if the C.R.D.C. had any objections. In turn, the council informed local members of the authority along with Brimington Parish Council.

There was no campaign to keep the station open. Newspaper coverage of the closure, such as it was, seemed to spark little or no reaction in Brimington.¹⁰⁸ The parish council raised no objections to the proposal, as facilities would be retained for dealing with guaranteed excursions. They did, however, feel that there should be an 'assurance that the platforms will be retained.'¹⁰⁹ Prominent member of both Brimington Parish and Chesterfield Rural District Councils of the time was Walter Everett. An engine

¹⁰³ *DT*, 21 June 1963.

¹⁰⁴ Letter B.R. to C.R.D.C., 11 August 1955. DRO, D260 box B78.

¹⁰⁵ I am grateful to members of the British Transport Films electronic forum for this information, particularly John Adams and Bryan Stone.

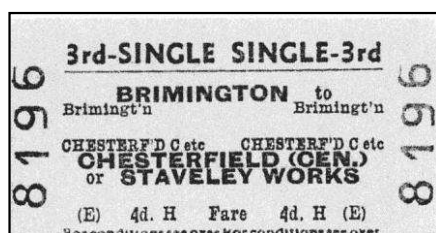
¹⁰⁶ British Transport Commission, B.R.E., memorandum, Closing of Brimington Station, 10 August 1955. DRO, D260 box B78.

¹⁰⁷ 15 August, 1955. DRO, D260 box B78.

¹⁰⁸ *Sheffield Telegraph*, 14 September 1955; *DT*, 16 September, 1955. These reported discussion of the proposals at Brimington Parish Council (B.P.C.).

¹⁰⁹ Letter B.P.C. to C.R.D.C., 14 September 1955. DRO, D260 box B78.

driver employed at the former L.M.S.R. Barrow Hill sheds, it is not recorded what his thoughts were on the closure!¹¹⁰



Two third-class tickets issued on the last day of services at Brimington Station, 31 December 1955. (Collection Glynn Waite)

The C.R.D.C. agreed in September to make no objections, supporting the parish council in its view that the platforms should be retained.¹¹¹ These views were conveyed to both the railway and the T.U.C.C.¹¹² Assurances were obtained over retention of the platforms for guaranteed excursions, until ‘costly repairs or renewals’ became due, when the position was to be reviewed.¹¹³

The East Midlands T.U.C.C. duly considered the matter. It was decided that the station would close on and from Monday 2nd January 1956.¹¹⁴ As there were no Sunday services, this meant that the last service to leave Sheepbridge and Brimington Station would have been on the evening of Saturday 31st December 1955.

That traffic had been light for some years, is demonstrated in the steady reduction of timetabled passengers trains over a number of years. Even in 1947 the station signal box was staffed on a ‘weekdays open as required’ basis.¹¹⁵

It is not known whom the ‘private sidings’ were intended for, but in any case annotations to the official mileage diagram for the Chesterfield Loop, in The National Archive, indicate that all the station sidings and the signal box were abolished in March 1956.¹¹⁶ This included the connection to up and down lines between the platform.

Whilst passenger services on the loop remained until 1963, so ended some 63 years of passenger traffic at Brimington’s own railway station.

Subsequent use of the Site

When the guaranteed excursions ceased is not known. The platform awnings and the down side buildings were thought to have been removed in 1956,¹¹⁷ certainly by July 1959.¹¹⁸ From 1956 to 1957 a Martin White appears to have rented all the remaining station platform buildings for use as a vehicle plant spares business. The office was apparently in the former ladies waiting room and booking office—the partition between the two having been removed.¹¹⁹ On the 5 September 1957 planning permission for land-use change from abandoned railway station to timber yard and sawmill was granted.¹²⁰ The latter was apparently the recorded use in 1963.¹²¹

¹¹⁰ Walter Everett had originally been a Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway employee.

¹¹¹ CRDC Finance and General Purposes Committee, minute 682, 15 September 1955. DRO, D260 box B78.

¹¹² Letters C.R.D.C. to British Transport Commission (B.T.C.) (District Passenger Manager), T.U.C.C. and B.P.C., 29 September 1955. DRO, D260 box B78.

¹¹³ Letter B.T.C. Chief Commercial Manager Eastern Region, to C.R.D.C., 11 October 1955. DRO, D260 box B78.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ L.N.E.R., *WTT* October 1947, f. 10.

¹¹⁶ TNA, RAIL 798/47, London and North Eastern Railway, mileage diagrams, Chesterfield Loop, February 1929 (with later annotations).

¹¹⁷ Information from Mrs Barfoot, June 2010.

¹¹⁸ Grainger, *Derbyshire Lines*, part 1, (2002), p. 130. A Photograph dated 15 July 1959 shows the awnings and the down side buildings removed.

¹¹⁹ Information from Mrs Barfoot, June 2010.

¹²⁰ Chesterfield Borough Council, Enforcement appeal and appeal against refusal to grant planning consent: Hopecrete Ltd, land at old station yard, Brimington, proof of evidence, (1992), p. 3.

¹²¹ C.B.C., Enforcement Appeal, (1992), p. 13.

The use of the goods shed and yard is slightly more complicated. It is believed that Sheffield based Greyhound Coaches may have rented the shed at some time in the 1950s. Previous to closure, around 1949, the goods shed had been used as a British Road Services facility, with large quantities of flour stored there.¹²² Along with the drivers, Sid Pass, the manager, was based in the small building attached to the main shed.¹²³ Mr Pass later went on to form his own haulage business. I would welcome more information on this use.

It is not known when the site was sold by the British Railways Board. The station house was let to Mr and Mrs Lord, who moved there in February 1956, after the station had closed. Apparently, they had been waiting for the former stationmaster to move. They subsequently purchased the house from B.R., but later moved.¹²⁴ Mr Lord may have been the last station master at Brimington, but latterly the post might have been a joint one with Staveley Works.¹²⁵ When the rest of the station site was sold off by B.R. is not known. The bridge taking Station Road over the trackbed was in-filled in the early 1980s.¹²⁶

Particularly from the late 1970s the site deteriorated. There were a number of planning applications for various processes, involving the then site owners – Hopecrete Ltd.¹²⁷ By 1971 a concrete works, mainly for the production of paving slabs, was in operation. Outline planning permission was granted to Hopecrete by Chesterfield Rural District Council for a factory and offices, on the old station yard site, in 1972.¹²⁸ By 1979 Blair Engineering were operating from the site. They advertised their business as large-scale fabrication and dismantling, but had retained the concrete products produced by their predecessor, Brimston Paving.¹²⁹ In 1980 a temporary five-year planning permission was obtained for infilling land to be used for car parking and storage of building supplies. 1988 saw permission granted for storage of building supplies, subdivision of the site for uses including general industry, sale of coal, logs and building materials and forming a new access from Station Road, beyond the old station yard site.

Relationships between the site and the planning authorities has been somewhat fraught in relatively recent times. There was enforcement action for unauthorised coal screening.¹³⁰ More controversial was the unauthorised stockpiling of old tyres, which resulted in further planning enforcement and eventual prosecution of the then owners in 1988.¹³¹ A year later a massive fire took place within this tyre dump, when more than 5,000 lorry and tractor tyres were reported as being destroyed.¹³² In 1990 further enforcement action followed when residential caravans on the site were removed.¹³³ By 1991 an application for renewal of the five-year temporary planning permission was refused, it subsequently went to appeal, being allowed, with various conditions.

One of the more unusual businesses accommodated on the station yard site was a moulded fibre-glass manufacturing concern. Ice cream cones for mounting on ice cream vans were amongst its products!¹³⁴

Breeze-block built, small industrial units have been constructed to the side of the old station approach road. The brick-built buffer stops to the former long siding, near where the cattle pens once stood,

¹²² Information from Mr R. Furniss, June 2010.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Information from Mrs Muriel Lord, November 2007.

¹²⁵ Information from Mr G. Sharp, October 2010. Mrs Lord believes her late husband did not hold a joint station masters post, being concerned solely with Staveley Works.

¹²⁶ Planning application reference CHE/1179/773, infilling of railway bridge, Sheepbridge and Brimington station for British Rail Property Board, was approved subject to conditions on 19 February, 1980.

¹²⁷ Information in this paragraph is mainly from C.B.C. Enforcement Appeal, (1992) p. 3 and 13.

¹²⁸ DT, 21 July 1972.

¹²⁹ DT, 27 April 1979.

¹³⁰ C.B.C., Enforcement Appeal, (1992), p. 4.

¹³¹ C.B.C., Enforcement Appeal, (1992), p. 4.

¹³² DT, 12 May 1989.

¹³³ C.B.C., Enforcement Appeal, (1992), p. 4.

¹³⁴ DT, 9 June 1994.

have been in-filled, with a car-sales standing on their site. The remaining station buildings were let to a number of tenants, including a transport business. When the author visited the latter part of the premises, in 2006, it was clear that the interior had been gutted some years ago. As previously recounted, the large wooden goods warehouse survived until November 2001, when it was accidentally burnt down.¹³⁵

The distinctive rounded edge platform copings must have been removed in recent times. Two survive as a seat on the canal side paved 'wharf' area to the east of the station site. It is believed that others may have been used in stone fronting a house, near to the Post Office on Manor Road.¹³⁶

The station site has been somewhat blighted by plans for the Brimington and Staveley bypass, which passes directly over it together with much of the track of the former M.S.L.R. in the area.¹³⁷

Until it burnt down, Sheepbridge and Brimington Station was the only remaining 'Derbyshire Lines' station still in situ. The only other recent survivor—that at Killamarsh—has been dismantled for possible re-erection elsewhere. Fortunately the surviving buildings there were the subject of a detailed written and photographic survey, together with measured drawings, to English Heritage standards.¹³⁸

Acknowledgements

I am particularly grateful to those who have contributed personal memories of Sheepbridge and Brimington station over the years. They are acknowledged in the footnotes. I am grateful to Mr F. Wood for details surrounding the steam navy photograph on page 47.

My thanks to the staff of The National Archive at Kew (to whom I am also grateful for permission to reproduce the plan of the station), the Derbyshire Record Office and Chesterfield Local Studies Library.

The two partners of MF Transport, Maz Fazil and Mo Akhtar, fortunately gave me permission to access their part of the remaining old station building to take photographs in 2006. Some of these are reproduced below.

I am particularly grateful to Glynn Waite for information on tickets and permission to reproduce examples from his collection. Glynn also enabled access to Working Timetables of the GCR and its successors, which although not extensively used in this account, underpin a fairly hefty discussion of traffic patterns in the original series of articles.

I must thank Doug Spencer, who suggested I commit some of my original research to print, resulting in its first appearance in the Brimington Parish Church Magazine. Finally, thanks to Nick Catford for facilitating its publication on-line.

Further Information

I would welcome further information on any aspect of Sheepbridge and Brimington Station. My address can be found on the inside cover of this *Miscellany*.

¹³⁵ *DT*, 22 November 2001.

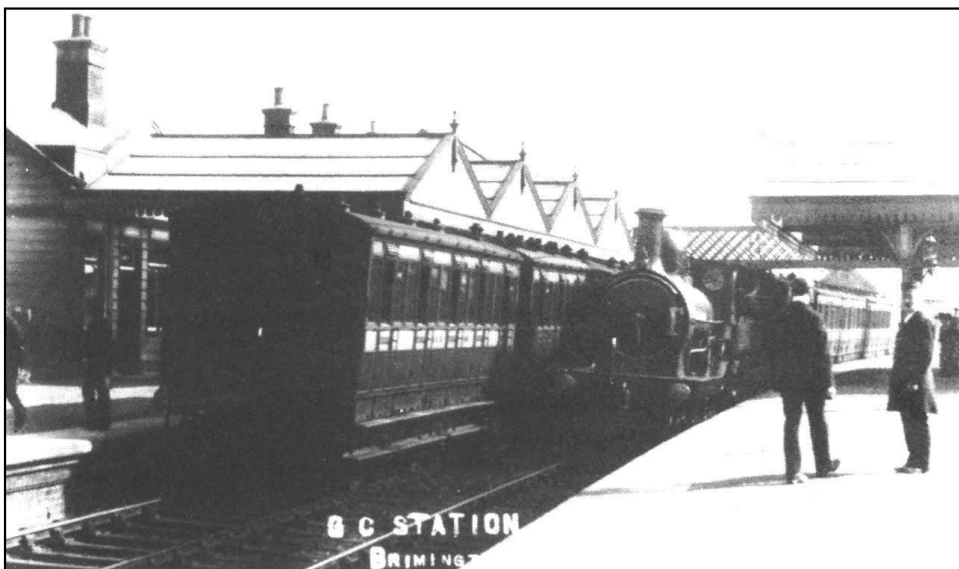
¹³⁶ Information from Mr F. Wood, June 2002.

¹³⁷ Derbyshire County Council *A619 Brimington-Staveley by-pass, environmental statement Volume 1*, (1995), p. 9.2.

¹³⁸ A. Mora-Ottoman (Archaeological Research Services), *Archaeological building recording at the former Killamarsh Central station, Derbyshire*, (2009).



A 'steam navy' at Nags Head cutting, Staveley, 1890. Though not a Brimington scene we could not resist printing this photograph of a steam navy at work creating the cutting, now in-filled, in the vicinity of the Nags Head public house, Staveley. Steam navvies were occasionally called 'steam devils' in contemporary newspaper reports. The photograph was taken by a Mr. Bowmer, who was a general dealer and photographer, with a shop on Staveley's High Street. Here the photograph was displayed in his shop window for many years. Note the spectators and the lack of any fencing on the works. The road into Staveley was carried over the cutting by an iron bridge in the vicinity of the Nags Head. On closure of the line the bridge was underpinned and filled in, along with the cutting. The iron sides of the bridge were burnt off. About 25mm can, however, still be seen protruding at the edge of the footway, opposite the public house. (Courtesy Fred Wood)



An Edwardian view of Sheepbridge and Brimington station. To the left are the up platform buildings, with their original hipped canopies. These buildings survived, albeit in much reduced circumstances, until the unfortunate fire in April 2010. The figure to the extreme right is possibly George Booth, who is shown as station master in almanacs and directories of the period. By 1912 he had been replaced by Thomas Brown Chamberlain. James Howard was probably the first station master, being replaced around 1900 by George Ramsdale, who was replaced by Booth around 1902. (Courtesy P. Sharp)



The goods shed, May 1988. Originally equipped with two 30 cwt cranes, the goods shed burnt down in November 2001. Notice the small office to the left. (Philip Cousins)



Detail of decorative terracotta finial to the station roof, 2006. A common design element on the wooden built 'Derbyshire Lines' stations. (Philip Cousins)



Inside the station buildings, 2006. Looking from the site of the booking office, towards the ladies waiting room. The platform would have been to the left of this photograph. The interior partitions had been removed by this date. (Philip Cousins)



Detail of window treatment, 2006. (Philip Cousins)



Another 2006 view, showing the probable former entrance to the booking hall, situated behind the T registration car. The doorway arrangement had been altered for some years. (Philip Cousins)

'THE PEACE WINDOW' AT ST. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS CHURCH, BRIMINGTON

Ann and Keith Noble¹

Introduction

On Sunday 21 February 2010 a new window was dedicated in Brimington Parish Church. This stained glass window was commissioned as a memorial to our daughter, Abigail, who sadly passed away in June 2007.

The window contemporarily portrays 'The Celebration of the Peace', which was Abigail's favourite part of the Eucharist service, where, in her unique way, she challenged everyone to join in. 'The Peace' is the part of the communion service where the officiating priest recites; 'The peace of the Lord be always with you'. He/she then gives thanks for the God given gifts we receive. This is followed by the congregation offering each other greetings by, for example, a simple handshake.

The Service of Dedication was enjoyed by family, friends, and neighbours, acquaintances of Abigail and members of St Michael's Church family. It was followed by a celebration buffet in the Church Hall.

The Window Design

Our original thoughts regarding a stained glass window were as a result of the many letters and cards of condolences which mentioned how they remembered that Abigail loved to meet people, especially celebrating 'The Peace'.

The process of how to start was unknown to us, but advice from the Diocesan Advisory Committee (D.A.C.) secretary at Derby and meeting Reverend John Drackley, the D.A.C. advisor on stained glass, at St. Giles Church, Matlock, provided valuable information and contact details of several stained glass artists.

We nervously contacted Mr Joseph Nuttgens² at his Stained Glass Studio, High Wycombe, who thankfully said he would be able to design and install a window.

Mr Nuttgens visited St. Michaels to measure the window, its location within the Church and to discuss the background and reasons for the window. By early November 2007, he had produced his initial design. To quote Joseph Nuttgens' original concept:

'The ideas gathered from various discussions centred around Abigail's personality, and those situations in which she gave and received affection and understanding, particularly within this church. I have summarised these into three qualities: Peace, Community and Simplicity. The design represents family, marriage, childhood and community—set within the light of Peace represented by the Dove in the tracery. I have used the disseminating rays as a way of enclosing these aspects, and as an overall structure for the design. I have tried to express the subject simply and innocently, in a way which represents Abigail's personality.'

The basis of the original design was maintained throughout the long period of responding to many objections by the D.A.C. Several modifications were made to satisfy the D.A.C., but in August 2009, The Chancellor to the Diocese of Derby granted a faculty (the legal licence) for the window.

¹ Keith Noble is a member of Brimington and Tapton Local History Group. Ann and Keith are regular worshippers at St. Michaels.

² For details about J. Nuttgens see [on-line] last visited 12 November 2010 at URL: www.josephnuttgens.co.uk.

Joseph Nuttgens then commenced transforming his design from paper to a stained glass window by cutting the pieces of glass, staining and colouring these pieces, assembling them into the lead mouldings to form the sections of the window panels. The sight of the nearly complete panels amazed members of our family when we were welcomed by Joseph and his wife Pamela at their home and studio in December 2009.

On 3 February 2010, the window was finally installed at St. Michaels. Although we thought the design on paper was good, the window within St Michaels, with the sun shining through, is wonderful for all to enjoy and contemplate.

Acknowledgements

Our sincere thanks to Joseph Nuttgens and all involved for making creation and installation of the window possible.

The process to enable the stained glass window to be installed was long and at times, frustrating, but we had support from many people for whom we offer our thanks:

- The then Rector—the Reverend Malcolm Shaw and his wife, Sandy, for their support from the initial concept.
- Phil Morris, Michael Thorpe and Catherine Hutchison, the three Church Wardens during the 2½ year period.
- For the support and encouragement of Parochial Church Council members.
- To members of the St Michael Church family for their honest comments during the design stages of this project.

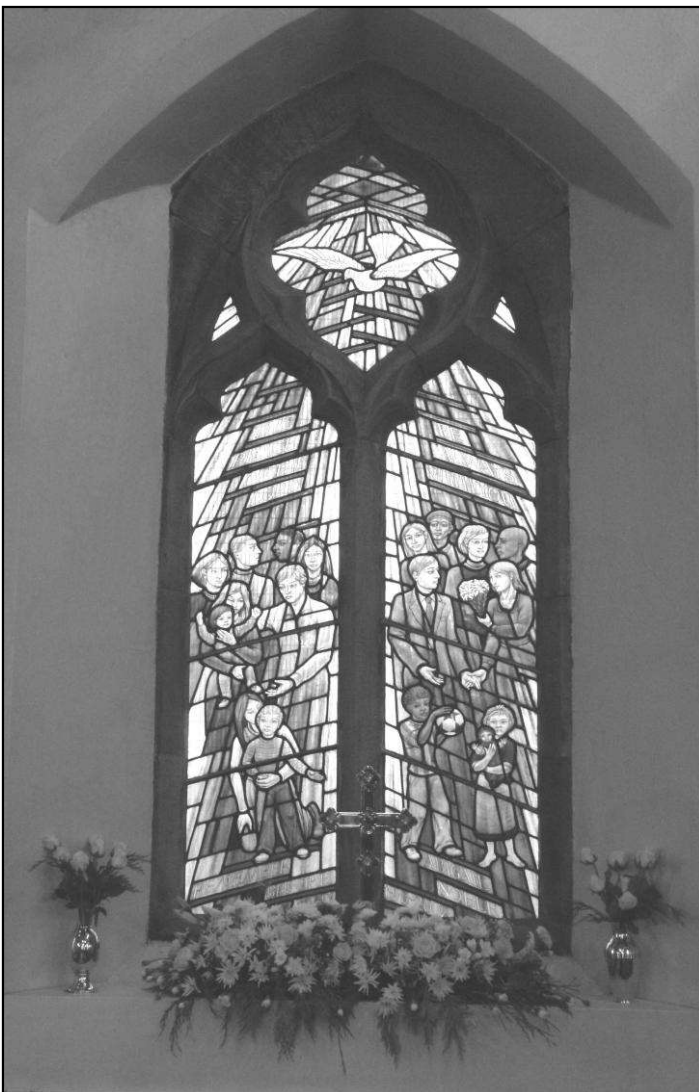
This is a slightly edited version of an article originally published in Celebrate and Share, the Magazine of St. Michael and All Angels, Brimington, March 2010.



Joseph Nuttgens at work on the window in his stained glass studio, High Wycombe.



Installation of the window.



The completed window. (All photographs Keith Noble)

MY MEMORIES OF TAPTON CITY

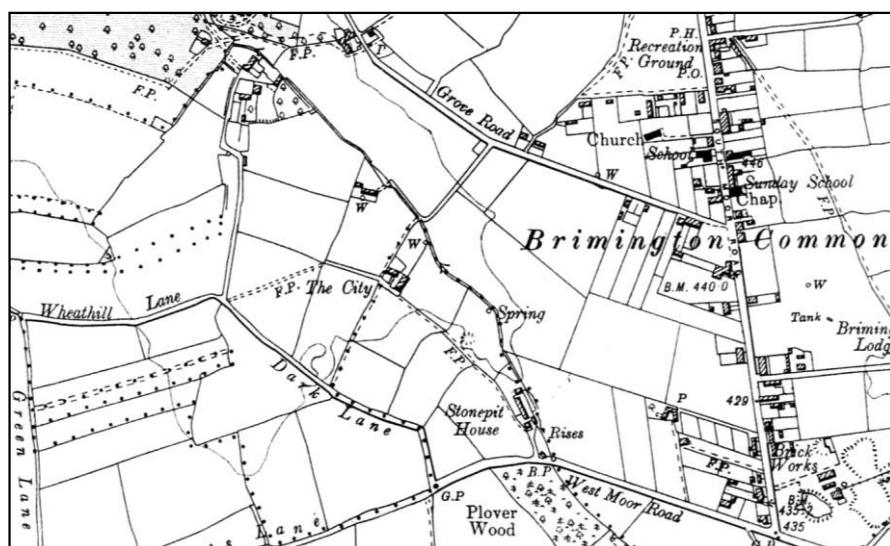
Walter Turton¹

Introduction

Tapton City was a small hamlet situated between Grove Road and Crow Lane. It consisted of two rows of properties. Row one had three properties; row two had five dwellings.

There was a small farm—City Farm—about 100 yards away. The two rows were separate, but the houses in them were all joined together to form a terrace.

My recollections of Tapton City are based in period between 1925 and 1930. Footnotes are by the editor.



Extract from the 1921 Ordnance Survey map of Brimington Common. 'The City' is clearly marked to the centre of the map. The 'W' in the enclosure in which the two groups of cottages are situated marks the site of the spring from which the properties obtained their water. 'City Farm' is situated to the north west of 'The City' though does not have a name allocated to it on this map. The depression shown on the map near 'F.P.' (for footpath) marks the site of what must have been a quarry from which material was probably obtained for Tapton City and 'Stonepit House' (see page 56). (Derbyshire sheet XXV N.E.)

The Houses

There were two sets of dwellings.

The dwellings in row one ran roughly north westerly to south easterly. In the most western of the cottages lived my Granddad Atkins and Grandma Atkins, along with their young son Wilfred.

Next door was occupied by their eldest son, my uncle Ernest and Auntie Doris, with their two daughters Hazel and Hilda. My Mother and Uncle Ern (Ernest) were brother and sister and Dad and Auntie Doris were brother and sister.

The third dwelling was occupied by Pyn and Eadie Austin. They were two well-known characters on Brimington Common at the time.

Row two had five houses in it. They ran downwards in a roughly north easterly direction. The bottom house in the row was occupied by the Turton family—Dad, Wilfred; Mum, Alice May; Harold; Walter; Eric and Mavis.

¹ Walter Turton is a member of our regular 'Reminiscences Group'. We are grateful for his account.

The remaining properties, upwards from my own, were occupied by:

- Mr and Mrs Round and family.
- The Dawson family (sons Arthur, Bob and Charlie). The two younger boys emigrated to Canada to live with their eldest sister. Arthur, the eldest boy, remained here in England and joined the regular Army, living on the Common until his death. Charlie joined the Canadian Army and was brought over to England in the Second World War. It was back here in his native country that he was killed during training.
- Mrs Lathbury and family.
- I think the Reville family occupied the top house.²

The Pass family lived in the farm house (City Farm), along with their two daughters.

This, then, was The City. A city without a Cathedral and without mains water, gas and electricity.

Water was obtained from a spring in the stream which ran right at the bottom of the gardens. These gardens ran down the hill into a valley. There was a low, square shaped, brick built wall around the spring, so it looked like a well. Water was fetched in buckets to be kept at the side of shallow stone sinks in the houses. We simply ladled the water into the sinks when required. We had a boiler, as part of a kitchen range. The boiler was at the side of the fire, from which we ladled water, once heated.

Grandad Atkins and Uncle Wilf ran a butchers business during this time. They ran this from a corrugated iron 'lean to' attached to the side of our house. Can you imagine this without water and other services? There was always an old car or van to play on, owned by Uncle Wilf.

All the toilets were earth closets and outside. These were called 'middens' and were emptied weekly by Mr Bill Sharman, with his horse and cart. He lived at Hall Farm. He would come during the day to shovel out and cart away.

Access to The City was from Water Lane, along an old cart track, which was able to take a van or car. Another access was from Grove Road—known as 'City Hill' by all the locals. This wasn't used as a cart road—pedestrians only.

With Dad a miner there was always a good fire to keep us warm. In our house there was a living kitchen and front room. Upstairs there were two bedrooms. As far as I can remember there was only one door.³

There was no electricity—paraffin lamps were the order of the day. Cooking was on the coal fired range. For shopping we mostly went to Chesterfield, walking into town via Crow Lane. We used to use the shops on Brimington Common for some of our goods, but they didn't have the range of the Chesterfield shops.

A few weeks before my cousin Hazel died we were reminiscing about the old City and she told me that Charlie Dawson came on leave to visit her at the Miners' Arms public house on Brimington Common, with one of his colleagues. It was shortly after this visit that Charlie was killed.⁴ My eldest brother Harold had always kept in touch with Charlie and Bob as pen-pals.

² The spelling of this name is as shown in the *Register of Electors*, Chesterfield Parliamentary Division, St. Helens Ward, part one, in force from 1 May 1929 to 14 October 1930, p. 13.

³ An illustration from 1939 indicates the property originally had two doors. See historical account below.

⁴ Private Charles Charlie Dawson was of the L/13399, South Saskatchewan Regiment, R.C.I.C. The son of Charles Roger and Sarah Dawson, he was killed on 6 May 1943. He is buried in Brockwood Military Cemetery. (Information from [on-line], last visited 12 November 2010 at URL: <http://wwii.ca/memorial/world-war-ii/121956/private-charles-charlie-dawson/>).

I also remember my mother taking me to school for the first time, aged five (so this would be in 1930). This was in the Infants' school on the Common. The teachers were Miss Babbs and Miss Martin. School started at 9 am and finished at 4 pm. There was no going home for dinner, we took sandwiches—there were no school dinners in those days. Mrs Hobson, who lived down Westwood Lane, played the piano for assembly and any functions that took place. We had only one break in the day—at dinner time. We played in the school yard. Games like marbles, football, and whip and top. Dancing round the 'May pole' was held inside the school.

I went to the Central Schools on Devonshire Street, in about 1931, but that was after we left The City.

I was born in The City on 20 September 1925, followed by Eric and Mavis. Harold, my eldest brother, was born at the Brickmakers' Arms public house, on the Common, in 1919. Grandad Atkins was the landlord there in the Great War.

Uncle Ern and Auntie Doris, along with their two daughters, then moved to a little cottage down the Miners' Arms lane (Anderson Lane) before moving into the Miners Arms as landlord and landlady.⁵ The rest of the family moved to a new house on North Moor Road with all services, such as running water, electricity and gas, in 1930. Grandad and Grandma were still running the butchering business at this date, transferring it to our new house on North Moor Road.

My brother Harold and cousin Hazel Atkins, along with the two Pass sisters, from the farm, were educated at Tapton House School. Harold joined the army in 1938 and was posted to Palestine. He should have returned after 12 months, but declaration of the Second World War in September put a stop to that. He was killed in action on the 20 December 1941.



Tapton City, looking towards Grove Road, painted by Wilf Ede in about 1945. Grove Road runs across the ridge, just discernable to the far distance, centre. The lower of the properties to the right may have been added to The City between 1851 and 1861. This was Walter Turton's house. The property to the front left was three homes in Walter's time—the left side being occupied by his Grandfather and Grandmother Atkins, with their son Wilfred. This is property numbered 4583 on the plan illustrated at page 57. (Private collection)

⁵ The first reference to Ernest Atkins at the Miners Arms during this period is Kelly *Dir Derbs*, 1936, p. 76. The previous edition of 1932 has a John E. Trickett at the public house.

AN HISTORICAL NOTE ON TAPTON CITY

Philip Cousins

Introduction

Following on from Walter Turton's reminiscences of Tapton City, it is worth sketching a little history of this area. It is hoped that this short account will help fill a void in information about the settlement, variously known as 'The City' or 'Tapton City'.

Many have asked; 'Why was it called Tapton City or The City?' The Institute for Name-Studies at the University of Nottingham explain the origin thus:

We have records of names of this type from the 16th century, where it is clearly ironically used for a small hamlet or group of houses. It seems genuinely to derive from Anglo-Norman cite, ultimately from Lat civitas. The name appears in places from Cornwall to North Yorkshire (though it is not what you would call common). It seems to be a member of the group of ironical names like Thousand Acres for very small fields.¹

Brief History

The name 'The City' appears on Sanderson's map of 1835² so the date of construction must be before that time. The 1841 Census indicates eight dwellings, simply noted as 'City'.³

The properties are in the township of Tapton, rather than the parish of Brimington. The Tapton Tithe map of 1849 clearly shows this, marking 'The City'.⁴ At this time the properties are described as '8 gardens and cottages', with an adjacent garden plot leading downhill, in a north-eastwards direction.⁵ All, along with some other fields in the area, were owned by Robert Cox.

The Brimington Tithe Map of 1849⁶ shows City Farm—noted as 'Cox Nether Croft and Houses'—clearly within Brimington, not Tapton. Robert Cox owned and occupied these properties and an adjacent field.⁷ We might therefore assume that Cox is farming City Farm and the surrounding fields, presumably letting out the houses at Tapton City.



Tapton City, looking towards Grove Road. This is the same view as Wilf Ede's painting on page 54. (Private collection)

¹ I am grateful to the Institute for these comments.

² Sanderson's map of twenty miles round Mansfield (1835).

³ TNA, HO 107/194/8.

⁴ Tapton Tithe Map, Derbyshire Record Office (DRO), D2360/3/150.

⁵ Tapton Tithe Award (copy), Chesterfield Local Studies 6232, f. 43. Parcels 46 and 45 respectively.

⁶ Brimington Tithe Map, DRO, D2360/3/153.

⁷ Brimington Tithe Award (copy), DRO D177 A/PC 136, f.14. Parcels 566 and 567 respectively.

As implied, the boundary between Brimington and Tapton was, at this time, the north-western edge of The City. This was not changed until the borough of Chesterfield was extended in 1920. At this time the boundary between Brimington and Tapton was regularised to the stream in the bottom of the valley—thus bringing City Farm into the borough of Chesterfield, along with the whole of the Tapton township.⁸

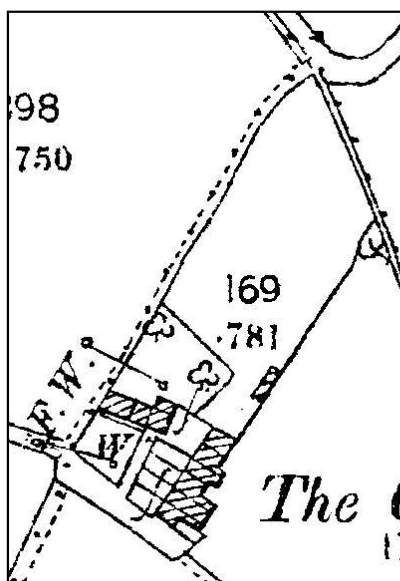
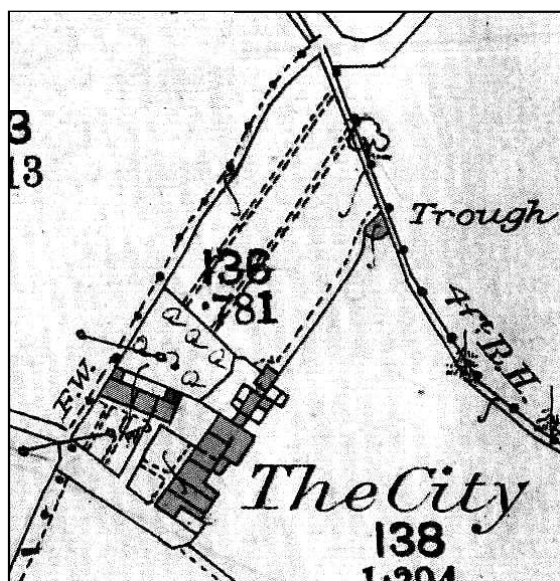
Near to The City is what is likely to have been an old stone-pit, marked by a depression in one of the fields on the way to Oldfield Farm (once called Stonepit House—see map on page 52)⁹. It is possible that stone quarried from here was used to construct at least some of the houses at The City.

The 1851 Census¹⁰ appears to indicate eight dwellings, but by 1861¹¹ there appear to be ten. This may indicate the construction of the two cottages which were stepped somewhat down the hillside, adjoining the block which ran in the north-easterly direction. This, though, is difficult to determine even by comparison of available mapping.

The 1871 Census¹² again indicates 10 dwellings. 1876 sees The City for sale by auction.¹³ It then comprised 10 cottages in about 2 rods and 23 perches of land. Amongst the other lots was what later became known as City Farm—then described as two cottages, with land. By this time Robert Cox had a newly erected farmhouse on what we now call Westwood Lane, which was also for sale.

By the 1881 Census¹⁴ the number of dwellings appears to be down to nine, seven of which were unoccupied. By the 1891 Census¹⁵ there are eight houses.

In 1907 the entire City of eight dwellings is owned by a George F. Gill.¹⁶



Far left; enlarged extract from the 1877, 25-inch Ordnance Survey map of Brimington Common. At this date there were ten dwellings. Note the trough to the bottom of the hill and the 'W', for well, just discernable to the south-west front of the block of the three cottages. By the 1898 edition (right) the south-easterly facing projection to the right-hand terrace has disappeared. There were eight properties listed in the 1891 census. Both editions appear to have anomalies to some of the internal property divisions, which reference to the Inland Revenue Field Book below clarifies. (Derbyshire sheets XXV.3)

⁸ T.F. Wright, *History of Chesterfield, Volume IV*, (1992) p. 229.

⁹ Ordnance Survey, 6-inch edition of 1921, Derbyshire Sheet XXV N.E. Stonepit House was subsequently demolished.

¹⁰ TNA, HO 107/2147.

¹¹ TNA, HO 107/2147.

¹² TNA, RG 10/3612.

¹³ Plan and Particulars of sale, accommodation and building land and houses in Brimington and Tapton, for sale by auction, 26 April 1876, John Turner and Sons, auctioneers (Derby Local Studies Library, 44446).

¹⁴ TNA, RG 11/3434.

¹⁵ TNA, RG 12/2763.

¹⁶ Tapton valuation book, 1907, DRO D5006/4/1, p. 5.

The extract opposite is a sketch plan from an Inland Revenue Field Book c.1910,¹⁷ in The National Archive at Kew¹⁸ (and is reproduced with their permission). George F. Gill was still the owner at this time.¹⁹

The table below gives some indication of the comments made by the Inland Revenue assessors when they visited the premises.

At this date some of the houses were being described as ‘...poor old cottages in out of way place...water supply bad.’²⁰

As might be deduced from the plan, the bottom property (numbered 4581) of the longer row has been made from two. This was the house occupied for a time by the Turton family. It was described as ‘two small cottages used as one. 2 rooms and pantry down & 2 bedrooms.’

Notice the associated building to the right of 4577—clearly seen jutting out to the bottom right on this sketch plan and on Wilf Ede’s painting above. The two up and two down 4577 was described as ‘very dirty’²¹.



There are some property division anomalies on the various Ordnance Survey maps, illustrated in this article. These can be clarified by studying this Field Book plan, which also gives some measurements.

The detached block of four WCs were not, of course, water closets. As described by Walter Turton they were privy middens or earth closets. It is not known whether there were actually more than four at this date. They may have been a shared facility—the assessment for 4583 refers to a ‘joint WC’ as a ‘...restriction affecting market value...’²²

The Inland Revenue Field Book, summarised below, gives details about individual house construction, conditions and number of rooms.

¹⁷ For an explanation of the purpose of these Field Books, see *Miscellany* 1, p. 19, and [on-line] last visited at URL: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/valuation-office-records.htm>.

¹⁸ TNA, IR 58/22041. Map is at assessment number 4576.

¹⁹ Inland Revenue, Domesday Book, DRO, D595 R1/1/36, f. 35.

²⁰ TNA, IR 58/22041.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

Assessment number on plan above	Occupier	Particulars, description, and notes made on inspection	Notes
4576	Harry Renshaw	'457/9/83. Block of poor old cottages, in out of way place. Brick and stone built & pantile roof. Floors of good tiles. Water supply bad. Good gardens. Formal [?] only poor condition. 1 room down & pantry & 1 bedroom'	The '.../83' is probably a mistake as other entries have 4576, 4579 and 4582 as identical.
4577	Joseph Spate	'2 down and 2 up. Stone built. Very dirty. Roof bad at back'	
4578	Mrs Castledine	'On block [in same block as] 78-80-83. Stone and pantiles. 1 down and 2 up'.	
4579	N. Hill	'See 4576. 1 down and 1 up'.	
4580	N. Harrison	'As 4578 identical'	The Tapton valuation book of 1907 has Herbert Harrison. ²³
4581	Mrs Brown	'Two small cotts. Used as one. 2 rooms & pantry down and 2 bedrooms'.	
4582	G. A.[?] Thomas	'4576 Identical'	
4583	C. Dawson	Brick and slate built cottage contain:- Living Room, 2 bedrooms. Garden. Coal cellar in main [?] flap [?]	Reference to 'joint WC'
[Not applicable] 'The City Farm, Brimington' (assessment number 153)	George Pass	'House containing dairy, kitchen, parlour. 1st floor 2 bedrooms. Old cottage house situated in hollow – in poor repair inside walls being damp & low. The exterior is in fair repair. Buildings are near house & are in poor repair. Inside – one piggery was erected by tenant. The land is in fairly good heart but is trespassed. Tenants of City cause considerable damage to hay crops by allowing fowls to run about & by throwing refuse on land. Fences are well maintained'	House was 18 feet high, of 'fair' condition, built of brick and slate. 'Kitchen' also 'fair', 14 feet high of 'stone & grey slate'

Extracts and information from the c.1910 Inland Revenue Field Books for Tapton City (TNA, IR 58/22041) and City Farm (TNA, IR 58/22005). George Frederick Gill owned all The City properties at this date. George F. Hallows owned City Farm. The 1907 Tapton Rating survey indicates that probably only Renshaw, Harrison and Dawson were still tenants at the date of the Inland Revenue Survey, just a few years later.

In 1918 the owner of The City was a William Hudson, with only one of the occupants listed in the Inland Revenue Field Book—Charles Dawson—as still living there.²⁴

We may never unravel exactly when or why the number of properties varied. Property 4583 may have been converted from smaller dwellings. The Field Book describes this as having a living room, two bedrooms and coal cellar. A former resident describes this house as having a blocked up doorway to the adjacent house at first floor level, so it is obvious that subdivisions had taken place at some time.²⁵

We also know that the sale plan of 1876 and the 25-inch Ordnance Survey (O.S.) map of 1877 show a projection to the south east rear of the bottom property (4581). This had disappeared by the next edition of 1898 (see map extracts above). Was this the tenth property? Its removal corresponds with the Census reduction from 10 dwellings in 1871 to nine in 1881 (when 4581 may still have been two houses), then eight in 1891 by which time 4581 might have been in use as one dwelling. To further add to the confusion remember property 4577 with its adjunct, clearly seen to the far right in the illustrations on page 54 and 55.

²³ DRO, D5006/4/1, p. 5.

²⁴ Tapton valuation list, 1918, DRO, D5006/4/2, p. 2.

²⁵ Information from Mrs W. Green, New Whittington, August 2008.

Reference to Ordnance Survey maps help indicate water supply arrangements to The City.²⁶ The first large-scale map of 1877 (illustrated on page 56) shows a well in the gardens to the three properties 4583, 4578 and 4580 in the Field Book extract above. A 'trough' is marked at the bottom of the hill. This arrangement is again indicated on the 1898 edition, but by 1918 the house well had disappeared along with the trough, to be replaced by a 'well' in the latter's position. This well, as testified in a number of recollections, including Walter Turton's, was actually a spring which had a brick wall round it to conserve water. In later years residents had to have separate washing days, so as not to run the spring dry.²⁷ City Farm had its own well.

At the date of the Inland Revenue Field Book assessment City Farm was owned by George Frederick Hallows, having been sold in the spring of 1907. George Pass, referred to in Walter Turton's reminiscences, was then the tenant. Amongst details given the 'old cottage house'—'dairy, Kitchen Parlour, 1st Floor 2 bedrooms' were noted as being in generally poor repair. The surveyor noted that tenants from The City were causing damage to the hay crop by 'allowing fowls to run about & by throwing refuse on land.'²⁸

Perhaps some more light is thrown on conditions in The City, when in 1897 a case of overcrowding and neglect was reported to Chesterfield Rural District Council. In a house of only two rooms lived a man, his wife and their six children. 'The house was in a very dirty condition. The children had no bed to lie on, or food to eat, and the house was horribly dirty, a picture of destitution.' It was emphasised, though, that there was not thought to be a similar case elsewhere in the parish. The occupants were known to the authorities, in particular the school board for non-attendance of the children. 'The woman went begging and selling rubbing-stones, and the man would work till he got some money, and then would go on the spree'. It was agreed to issue the necessary notices to abate overcrowding.²⁹

Though the 1901 Census³⁰ is not entirely clear,³¹ it appears to list one property with nine occupants, two dwellings with six, one with five, one having four, one with three and two dwellings with one occupant each. The predominant employment of those who worked was coal miner (four). City Farm³² was probably occupied by George Pass, with his wife, three sons, two nephews and one female, who is described as 'general servant (domestic)'. The latter may have lodged. The males of working age were all 'colliery labourers'.

Some further analysis of the various Census reveal, not surprising, the everyday occurrence of what we would now term as dire over-crowding.

Perhaps the most explicit example is from 1861,³³ when we find that one house had 15 occupants, one with 11, one with 10, one with eight, one with seven, one with six and two properties each with one person in occupation. One dwelling was unoccupied. At this date, split over the nine occupied houses, this makes a total of 63 people, of whom 45 were born in Ireland. Occupations prevalent were labourers in coal mines, ironstone miners, workers in an iron foundry and at an iron furnace. These were all dirty occupations.

²⁶ Ordnance Survey, 25-inch, Derbyshire Sheets XXV.3, editions of 1877, 1898, 1918 and 1938.

²⁷ Information from Mrs W. Green, New Whittington, August 2008. Mrs Green lived at The City from the 1930s.

²⁸ TNA, IR 58/22005, assessment number 153. There is an additional entry for 4 acres 3 roods at TNA IR 58/22041, assessment number 4508. The owner was Hallows, with W.H. Kay as occupier. The Field Book states 'included with 153'. A piece of land of 4a 3r 1p was recorded at a valuation for Tapton in 1907, with Hallows as owner, but with Charles Turner as occupant (DRO, D5006/4/1, p. 1). By a 1918 valuation this agricultural land is described as 'City Farm Moor side', still owned by Hallows, but with George Pass as the occupier (DRO, D5006/4/2, p. 3).

²⁹ Information in this paragraph from *Derbyshire Courier*, 16 October 1897. There is a similar report in *DT*, 16 October 1897.

³⁰ TNA, RG 13/3246.

³¹ The first believed entry for The City on the enumerator's form is not annotated as such.

³² TNA, RG 13/3246. The farm is listed under 'Tapton City' but there is a gap between entries for the houses and the farm, filled by the Thompson family at Stonepit House—in the Census as 'Tapton'.

³³ TNA, RG 9/2530.

Ten years later, at the 1871 Census,³⁴ the situation was a little better. The maximum number of occupants in one house was seven, three houses had six occupants, one house had five, two houses had four each, with one house having three occupants. One house was unoccupied. The Irish had evidently moved on, with only two occupants having been born in that country.

The population of The City had drastically reduced when the Census enumerator visited in 1881.³⁵ The only occupied dwellings were '1 Tapton City Houses', with three occupants, and '2 Tapton City Houses' with five occupants. Numbers 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 were unoccupied.

The 1891 Census³⁶ gives some idea of the number of rooms occupied in each dwelling. A table setting out this information is below.

Number of schedule	Number of rooms occupied	Occupants
1	4	6
2	2	8 (includes one visitor)
3	3	3
4	3	5
5	4	2
6	3	2
7	2	6
8	3	7
City Farm	4	8

1891 Census, Tapton City and City Farm: occupants and number of rooms occupied

This level of occupancy and the newspaper report sounds quite grim. But many who have lived at The City have fonder memories. For example, a different picture is given in an undated newspaper article,³⁷ predating the Second World War. Here, one of the residents, a Mrs Lathbury³⁸ says of her situation;

I have lived here so long, because it is so healthy. We all know each other and we like it here. It is grand in the summer time for we are right in the country and we overlook Chesterfield.'

At this time there were 23 residents in total, living in eight houses, the rent varied from 4 to 5 shillings, 6d. per week, rates included. The report lists the families then living at The City. These comprised the Revilles, Roberts, Leonard Ashtons, Albert Ashtons, Woods, Dants, Lathburys and Harrisons. Looking at the Register of Electors it seems likely that the newspaper dates from the period around 1935—'Dant' actually being Dannat in the Register.³⁹

Mrs Lathbury, who stated she had been living in The City for 20 years, told the reporter that 22 years previously the whole of The City had been purchased for £250;

In those days the "little house" was rented for 1s. 6d. a week, and the larger houses at 1s. 9d. a week. Later The City was resold—after it had been thoroughly repaired—for £450.⁴⁰

³⁴ TNA, RG 10/3612.

³⁵ TNA RG 11/3434.

³⁶ TNA RG 12/2763.

³⁷ Undated newspaper cutting in the author's collection.

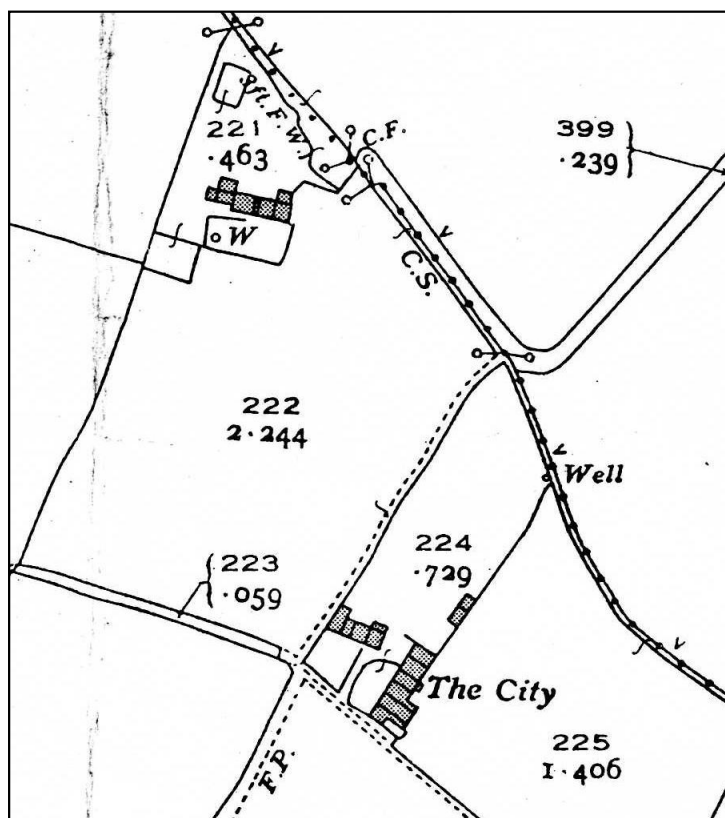
³⁸ Florence Edith Lathbury, with William John Lathbury appear in the last pre-war Register but do not appear in the first post Second World War or subsequent registers. *Register of Electors*, Chesterfield Parliamentary Division, St. Helens Ward, part one, in force from 15 October 1939 to 14 October 1940, pp. 16 - 17 and *Register of Electors*, Chesterfield Parliamentary Division, St. Helens Ward, part one, qualifying date 3 June 1945, p. 5. William Lathbury is listed as an occupant at The City in a 1918 valuation list (DRO, D5006/4/2).

³⁹ The families listed fit the *Register of Electors*, St. Helens Ward, part one, in force from 15 October 1935 to 14 October 1936, pp. 12 - 13.

⁴⁰ Undated newspaper cutting in the author's collection.

Towards the end

'The City' appears to have been under threat of demolition for some time. It was declared unfit for habitation by Chesterfield Corporation just before the Second World War,⁴¹ but was given 'a new lease of life' thanks to the hostilities, according to *The Star* newspaper.⁴² At the time of the Corporation's Clearance Order of 1939, F.J. Seaman and Sons, photographers of Chesterfield, were commissioned by the council to take two photographs of the properties. These have survived and are on the *Picture the Past* website.⁴³



The arrangement at The City depicted on the 1938 edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey map (enlarged). To the top left, note the well at City Farm (by this date still not named on the map). This well served as the water supply—although latterly hand pumped to a header tank and piped to a sink—until the house was sold in 1992 and subsequently demolished. (Derbyshire sheet XXV.3)

The Clearance Order plan shows eight houses, with an extended block of seven (possibly eight) privy middens, when compared to the c.1910 Inland Revenue Field Book plan. There are some additional structures, thought mainly to be corrugated iron, plus an extension to the north west of property 4583.⁴⁴ There are also three small squares marked as 'sump' on the plan, spaced out in a north-easterly direction, down the hill. These were cess-pits into which sinks inside the houses and grates in the yards outside were connected.⁴⁵

During the period 1938 to 1947 Mr H. Ede lived at The City with his family. He remembers how the middens comprised an earth closet and ashpit, one to each house. These were emptied every few weeks by men who arrived to shovel out the ashpits and earth closets.⁴⁶ This was usually performed at night with a horse and cart.⁴⁷

⁴¹ Chesterfield Corporation, Tapton City Clearance Order, 1939. (Copy in hands of the Brimington and Tapton Local History Group). The Order was signed on 4 July 1939. See also Chesterfield Corporation, Health Committee minutes, 21 March 1939, minute 1594 and 20 June 1939, minute 2545.

⁴² *Star*, 1 December 1939.

⁴³ [On-line], last visited at URL: www.picturethepast.org.uk. Images DCCC001178 and DCCC001177.

⁴⁴ See reminiscence of Mrs W. Green below.

⁴⁵ Information from Mr H. Ede, November 2010.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Information from Mrs W. Green, August 2008.

Mr Ede recalls how Mr Parker, a coal merchant on Brimington Common, delivered coal. A paraffin man⁴⁸ would also call, unannounced;

‘He had a van with a tank of paraffin on the back, People would queue up to have their paraffin can filled with fuel for their lamps. He also sold wicks and mantles, candles, buckets, puncture repair kits, needles, etc. His visits were quite an occasion. As there was no electricity we had battery operated wireless sets, It was my job, from the age of about nine to take the accumulators to Mr Kirby at the top of Brimington Common, leave them to be charged and bring the fully charged ones home, carrying them carefully so as not to spill the acid. That cost 6d a week.’

The property fell by some manner to Leonard Henry Ashton. When he died the property then fell to his two sons Leonard and Albert. They are first listed resident at ‘Tapton City Houses’ in the Register of Electors which was in force from 15 October 1933 to 14 October 1934.⁴⁹ The two brothers lived in separate houses with their wives and families.⁵⁰

In another reminiscence, that we hope to publish in a future *Miscellany*, Mrs Winifred Green (the daughter of Leonard Ashton) recounts some details of when she lived in The City from the 1930s. Initially her house was illuminated by paraffin lamps or candles. Later they had a gas cylinder with gas light in the kitchen and a two burner gas stove. Electric light was in use but this was from car batteries charged by a petrol engine. Unfortunately the engine blew up, putting an end to this innovation.

The end of a City

In March 1951 Leonard and Albert Ashton sold the whole property to a Mrs Rosalind Lilian Widdowson, of Hipper Street, Chesterfield.⁵¹ They received just over £457 for the property.⁵² It was later said that Mrs Widdowson had invested her life savings of £500 in The City.⁵³ This was evidently a mistake on the latter’s part, as in 1952 the need to clear the properties was revisited by Chesterfield Corporation.⁵⁴ They proposed a Clearance Order, this being confirmed at the end of January 1953.⁵⁵ The houses were declared unfit for human habitation, with demolition regarded as the only solution.⁵⁶ The Register of Electors, with a qualifying date of November 1951⁵⁷, shows a Stanley R. and Irene L. Widdowson resident at number 5 Tapton City. They were still listed a year later. Presumably these two are relatives of the then owner—Mrs R.L. Widdowson.

Not only did Mrs R.L. Widdowson sink her life savings into the purchase, with little or no chance of compensation, she also had to foot the bill for demolition.⁵⁸ Perhaps rather mischievously, a Mrs Ada Ashton, who was the wife of Albert Ashton—one of the two brothers who had earlier sold The City—commented to the *Derbyshire Times* in July 1953; ‘They can’t get us out of here fast enough. I have had my fill of the place.’⁵⁹ In the same edition it was stated that ‘...Water is piped...but...it is over nine months since it became unfit to drink by reason of excavations at Brimington. So they [the residents] walk with buckets to a farm.’ It is believed that this statement actually refers to the spring becoming contaminated.

⁴⁸ This was probably Jess Pickard, who had a general dealers on High Street, now the Post Office. Information from Mr W. Turton, January 2011.

⁴⁹ *Register of Electors*, Chesterfield Parliamentary Division, St. Helens Ward, part one, in force 15 October 1933 to 14 October 1934.

⁵⁰ Ibid. and information from Mrs W. Green, New Whittington, August 2008.

⁵¹ Morning Telegraph, 25 March 1953.

⁵² Private papers in possession of Mrs W. Green, New Whittington.

⁵³ Morning Telegraph, 25 March 1953.

⁵⁴ Chesterfield Corporation, Health Committee minutes, 17 June 1952, minute 451 and 23 September 1952, minute 1270.

⁵⁵ TNA, HLG 111/2040, Chesterfield Borough. Tapton City Clearance Order 1952, 26 Jan 1953.

⁵⁶ *DT*, 23 July 1952.

⁵⁷ *Register of Electors*, Chesterfield Parliamentary Division, St. Helens Ward, part one, qualifying date 20 November 1951, p. 5.

⁵⁸ Unsourced newspaper cutting dated ‘February 1953’ in Godfrey *notebook*, Volume XI, p. 17, (Chesterfield Local Studies).

⁵⁹ *DT*, 23 July 1952.

Notices to quit were served on the residents in March 1953. At this time 23 inhabitants in eight houses were to be moved into ‘new council homes’. The families had 28 days to quit, with demolition having to be accomplished within six weeks of their leaving. Reporting the ‘End of a ‘City’ In Ten Weeks’ the *Morning Telegraph* of 25 March 1953 ended its piece by recounting; ‘The houses have no water or electricity. A postman calls only twice a week and a dustman once every three months’.⁶⁰

In its final years tragedy struck at The City. In June 1952 Mrs G.M Brown, who was living with her parents, Mr and Mrs Turner at number 4, drowned in the fishpond at Tapton Grove, with her infant daughter. Her three-year-old son had been recovered from the pond by the chauffeur to F.S. Short, who had lived at Tapton Grove.⁶¹

The houses do not appear numbered until the first Register of Electors after the Second World War.⁶² The Clearance plan of 1939 does, however, have the properties numbered and the Census of 1871 allocates numbers. The final Register of Electors covering Tapton City, with a qualifying date of November 1952,⁶³ showing those entitled to vote, is reproduced below. This table also includes a cross reference of house numbers to the Inland Revenue plan above.⁶⁴

Name	House number	Inland Revenue plan number	Name	House number	Inland Revenue plan number
Ashton, Albert	1	4577	Hill, Irwin	6	4580
Ashton, Ada M.	1	4577	Hill, Joyce	6	4580
Badger, Annie	2	4576	Ashton, George*	6	4580
Holmes, Lilian M.	3	4582	Bagshaw, Ernest L	7	4578
Holmes, Wilfred A.	3	4582	Bagshaw, Joan	7	4578
Turner, William	4	4579	Ashton, Mary	8	4583
Turner, Alithea P.G.	4	4579	Ashton, Leonard	8	4583
Widdowson, Stanley R.	5	4581	* George Ashton was a service voter who did not qualify to vote in elections until after 1 October 1953. His name may have been placed at number 6 in error.		
Widdowson, Irene L.	5	4581			

Final listing for Tapton City on St Helen's Ward Register of Electors, qualifying date 20 November 1952.

The remains of Tapton City can still be discerned, though they are on private land and are not accessible. In 1968, some time after demolition, they were purchased by the then owner of City Farm, Arthur Moore, for £50.⁶⁵ He spent some time clearing the remnants of the houses, including the various pantries. He never completed this work. It seems as though the demolition had been pretty basic, with much rubble left on site and walls knocked down only to knee height.

The name of Tapton City did live on for sometime in the model railway layout of Theo Pearson, at Red House, Stonegravels. This was the name given to his main railway station—a terminus.⁶⁶

Returning to City Farm, George Pass died in 1927, in his 82nd year. His obituary⁶⁷ recounts Pass's long service with the Staveley Company and how, as a carter, he had been the first man to tip slag on the tip at the bottom of New Brimington. Pass had lived in the Brimington Common area since he was 21. He

⁶⁰ Information in this paragraph from *Morning Telegraph*, 25 March 1953.

⁶¹ *DT*, 13 June 1953 and 23 July 1952.

⁶² *Register of Electors*, Chesterfield Parliamentary Division, St. Helens Ward, part one, qualifying date 3 June 1945, p. 5.

⁶³ *Register of Electors*, Chesterfield Parliamentary Division, St. Helens Ward, part one, qualifying date 20 November 1952, p. 5.

⁶⁴ The cross reference is based on information from Mrs W. Green, New Whittington, August 2008.

⁶⁵ Personal papers in possession of Mrs C. Cousins.

⁶⁶ V. Boyd-Carpenter and T. Pearson, *Our railway histories, a narrative of modern enterprise*, (1945), pp. 29–45.

⁶⁷ *DT*, 20 August 1927, on which this paragraph is based.

had played an active part at the Brimington Common Primitive Methodist Chapel. He had been married twice, leaving a widow, three sons and two daughters.

City Farm was for sale in June 1928 'now in the occupation of the representatives of the late Mr George Pass',⁶⁸ but at that time failed to find a buyer after it was withdrawn at £450.⁶⁹ At the time it comprised a farmhouse, with cow-house and pigsty and five fields, of 10 acres, two roods and 21 perches.⁷⁰

The Holliday family lived at the farm for a number of years. They first appear on the 1931 Register of Electors.⁷¹ The property was purchased by Arthur Moore in 1959.⁷² He and his family did not live there until 1964, having spent sometime renovating the property.⁷³

The farm, including the house, outbuildings and fields, comprising 10.9 acres, was sold by auction in April 1992.⁷⁴ The farm house and outbuildings were later demolished. On their footprint stands a new property in landscaped gardens. This is a far cry from the former City Farm, when it perhaps retained something of the spirit of its near neighbour—Tapton City. For up until the end City Farm had no mains water, electricity or gas. That though, as they say, is another story!

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to those who readily gave memories of The City and City Farm. Particular to Messrs Turton, Ede, Jacklin and Mrs Green.

I am grateful for the co-operation received from The National Archive at Kew, including permission to reproduce the photograph I took of the Inland Revenue Field Book.

I am particularly grateful to my wife who has added some later details about City Farm.

Staff at Chesterfield and Sheffield Local Studies Libraries and at the Derbyshire Record Office have also significantly aided research.

⁶⁸ *DT*, 23 June 1928.

⁶⁹ *DT*, 30 June 1928.

⁷⁰ *DT*, 23 June 1928.

⁷¹ *Register of Electors*, Chesterfield Parliamentary Division, St. Helens Ward, part one, in force 15 October 1931 to 14 October 1932, p. 13.

⁷² Information from Mrs C. Cousins, November 2010.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Particulars of sale, City Farm, Tapton, for sale by auction, 12 April 1992 by Bagshaws. *DT*, 19 March 1992.



City Farm, Tapton, early 1992. The lower part of the property, built of rubble stone, comprised a kitchen, with pantry extension to rear and bedroom above. The taller brick-built section comprised sitting-room with bedroom above. (Philip Cousins)



Tapton City remains, 15 May 1977. The houses to the top right are at the end of Barry Road. This photograph shows one of the pantry areas to the houses on the block which ran downwards in a north-easterly direction. The stone wall construction is seen in this view. (Philip Cousins)



Tapton City remains, 15 May 1977. A second photograph of one of the pantries in the same block as that above. Note the black and red brick floor tiles. No doubt these would once have been the pride of a hardworking housewife. The black void beyond is the pantry which was accessed down some stone steps. There were niches built into the walls for storage. (Philip Cousins)

**SPECIAL
HALF-DAY EXCURSION
L.N.E.R.
(DEAN & DAWSON'S)**

TO

Cleethorpes

SATURDAY, 1st SEPTEMBER

OUTWARD JOURNEY.		Return Fares. Third Class.	RETURN JOURNEY.	
	a.m.			p.m.
Cleethorpes	arr. 1 33		Cleethorpes	dep. 9 5
Worksop			Worksop	arr. 10 43
Shireoaks			Shireoaks	10 50
Kiveton Park		4/6	Kiveton Park	11 4
Waleswood			Waleswood	11 12
Killamarsh			Killamarsh	11 17
Eckington & Renishaw			Eckington & Renishaw	11 22
Staveley Town			Staveley Town	11 27
Staveley Works		4/0	Staveley Works	11 32
Sheepbridge & Brimington			Sheepbridge & Brimington	11 36
Chesterfield (Central)	dep. 11 0		Chesterfield (Central)	11 36
Sheepbridge & Brimington	11 5			
Staveley Works	11 10			
Staveley Town	11 15			
Eckington & Renishaw	11 20			
Killamarsh	11 25			
Waleswood	11 30			
Kiveton Park	11 40			
Shireoaks	11 45			
Worksop	11 50			

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These tickets are issued subject to the Conditions of issue of Ordinary Passenger Tickets, where applicable, and also to the following conditions :-
Neither the holder nor any other person shall have any right of action against the Company or any other Railway Company or person owning, working, or using any railway, vehicles, vessels or premises (whether jointly with the Company or otherwise) upon which such tickets may be available in respect of (a) injury (fatal or otherwise), loss, damage or delay however caused, or (b) loss of or damage or delay to property however caused.

The tickets are available only by the trains and on the days specified in the Company's notices.
A ticket which covers the outward and return journey shall not be used for the return journey unless and until the outward journey has been completed.

If a ticket is used in contravention of these conditions, the holder will be required to pay the difference between the sum actually paid for the ticket and the full ordinary return fare between the stations named on such ticket.
The period of availability of these tickets will not be extended, nor will any allowance be made for return portions not used.

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FOR YOUR COMFORT if you TAKE TICKETS IN ADVANCE.**

For a Programme of Holiday Tours, write to or call at Dean & Dawson's Offices.
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50-4,000

Fancy a trip to Cleethorpes from Brimington's own railway station? Excursions were a feature from the station and others up and down the country for many years. They were advertised in newspapers and via handbills, such as this example from August 1928. These handbills were usually hung up in station booking halls via a hole in the top corner, with string threaded through. If you were interested you just simply tore one off. (Collection Philip Cousins)