

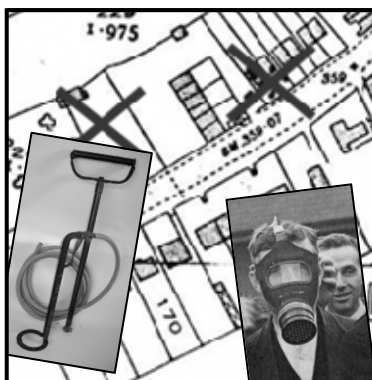
Brimington and Tapton *Miscellany* number 5

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 the fifth edition of *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany*.

This year we've been able to publish two articles reflecting on what life was like around the time of the Second World War. They present a different perspective. Peter Harrison, as a young boy, was initially interested in military hardware. Sybil Jackson remembers what life was like centred on the home and work. We are extremely grateful to Peter and Sybil for sharing their memories both with us and future generations. We've two further articles which build on the war-time experiences, both giving accounts of the night that bombs really did drop on Brimington. Finally, Elizabeth Pemberton has contributed an article on a notorious 19th century murder.

We remain grateful to our contributors and to you, our reader and supporter.

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 2012

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Other Committee members: Philip Hinchcliffe, Elizabeth Pemberton (retired December 2012), Alan Sharp and Brian Smith.

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 7.30 pm. In December the group meets on the third Thursday at 7.30 pm. 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 2 pm.

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), though it is anticipated subscriptions will need to be increased in 2014. 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* relative to the year that their subscription covers. For further details contact the membership secretary.

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

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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: Montage of images including Sybil Jackson, two penny farthings and a 'snob' (to the top); centre: Montage of images from Peter Harrison's life in wartime Brimington article, including a stirrup pump and a gas mask; right: Illustrations from The Illustrated Police News... Saturday 3 September 1881.

OUR YEAR IN VIEW: NOTABLE EVENTS 2012

This is, necessarily, a selective view of life and events generally in the Brimington and Tapton area during 2012. It draws on media accounts, various internet resources, meeting minutes and personal information.

Buildings, land and businesses



Number 50 and 52 Church Street opened as an 'Indian and Bangladeshi restaurant and takeaway' called the '**Chutney Spice**' on 25 January 2012. Work is underway on the conversion as shown in the left photograph, taken on 12 November 2011. The conversion is seen completed (right) in a view taken on the 17 September 2012. Prior to this the two former houses had been empty for a number of years. Church Street, in this small area, now has the said restaurant, a house at number 48, 'Jamil's Indian Takeaway' at number 46 followed by Wong Lee's Chinese takeaway at number 44. Between the Brimington Pharmacy at number 54 Church Street and the Red Lion public house, is a small sandwich shop, though this does not open at night.



Also on Church Street, the premises of **Club Taxis** was for sale from the summer of 2012. Club Taxis took over a former vacant shop premises, converting them into their 'new telecommunication centre', on which work began in late autumn of 2004.¹ At this time a walk-in taxi booking office was not part of the planning approval, but this was allowed around a year after the initial permission. A price guide of £220,000 was advised by the agents, who described it as 'A substantial detached two storey commercial building with retail frontage and parking 1,189 sq. ft., 110.46 sq. m' approximate internal area.'² An outbuilding incorporated a back-up diesel

generator, no doubt important in the event of any power failures when taking bookings. The property included off-street parking for six vehicles at the rear. At the date of this photograph (17 September

¹ [On-line] last visited 27 November 2004 at URL: <http://www.club-taxis.co.uk/New%20Features/new.htm>.

² [On-line] last visited 22 September 2012 at URL: <http://search.bothams.co.uk/detailsLite.aspx?chainid=1041&propertyid=467157379#>.

2012) a notice in the window advised 'Brimington office closing due to relocation. Offices still open at Holywell Street, Chesterfield Town Centre...and High Street, Staveley. Look out for our new office opening soon!!!!' The premises were still advertised for sale at the close of 2012.

The **Corner House**, public house, on High Street, was closed and up for sale in 2012. Following a planning application submitted in autumn 1997,³ the premises were opened in July 1998⁴ as a public house, being upgraded and converted by local builder Keith Bannister. For many years this had been the village centre's newsagents, closing as such on Saturday 3 December 1994 (then known as Smith's News). From the next day the business transferred to the then Spar Shop at 72 High Street.

The Spar Shop High Street premises were extended into the adjacent property in 1996, but by that time was trading as '7 days'.⁵ As **number 70 – 72a High Street** it was sold at auction on 28 February 2012. The shop, which had apparently closed (in some haste) around 2010, was a general store, being branded 'Life Style' at its closure. It sold general groceries, newspapers with off-licence, also trading as a video and DVD rental facility. The auction catalogue described the premises as 'Three storey terraced property currently arranged as a retail unit to the ground floor and residential accommodation to the upper floors'.⁶ The sale realised £65,000.⁷ The shop had not reopened by the end of 2012.

The **bridle-path diversion at Tapton Golf Course**, mentioned in *Miscellany* 4,⁸ had not been fully resolved, with Brimington Parish Council receiving information on the diversion at its February 2012 meeting.⁹ The bridle-path (number 14) diversion was not officially sanctioned until the January 2012 borough council planning committee meeting,¹⁰ though the diversion had still not been put into effect by the end of 2012.



February 2012 saw the future of the **The Spinney** elderly care home in Brimington (pictured above on 5 March 2012) being announced as under review.¹¹ The county council outlined plans to replace 20 care homes with apartments for the elderly, involving closure and demolition of some of the sites, across the

³ *Derbyshire Times* (DT), 23 October 1997.

⁴ J Hirst, (2005), *Chesterfield pubs*, p. 13.

⁵ *Chesterfield Advertiser*, 1 November 1996.

⁶ [On-line] last visited 23 September 2012 at URL: <http://www.pugh-auctions.com/Lot/Leeds/20120228/234>.

⁷ [On-line] last visited 23 September 2012 at URL: <http://www.pugh-auctions.com/Auction/Leeds/20120228>.

⁸ *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany*, (hereafter *Miscellany*) 4, pp. 7 – 8.

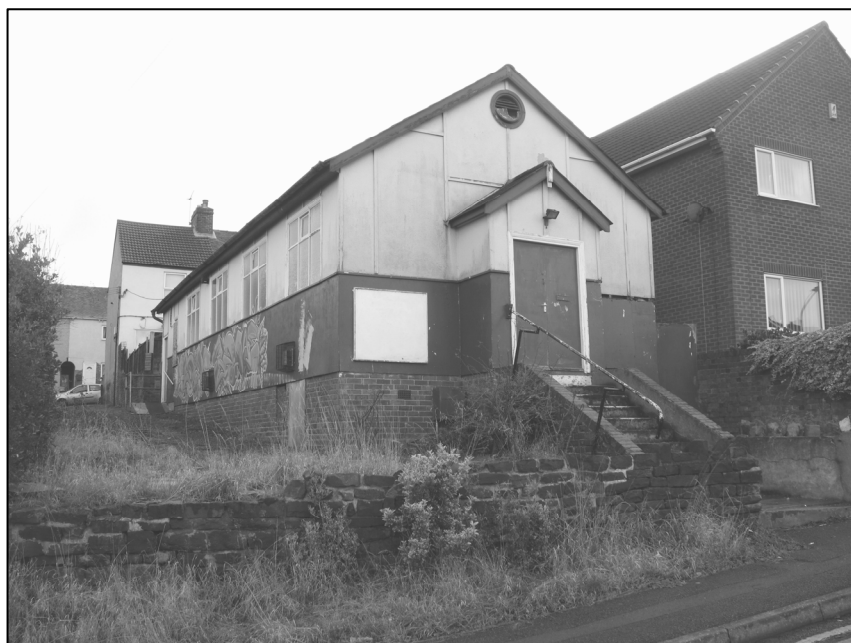
⁹ DT, 1 March 2012.

¹⁰ Chesterfield Borough Council, Planning Committee meeting 9 January 2012, minute 0089.

¹¹ DT, 16 February 2012 and 23 February 2012.

county. Detailed consultation on the future of The Spinney (sometimes referred to as ‘The Spinney Hop’) commenced in April 2012. The home provided 37 older peoples’ places in 2012.¹²

Patrick Hinds House was sold by auction on 29 February 2012 for £150,000.¹³ The property is on Chesterfield Road, at the junction of Devonshire Street and was said to produce a yearly income around £16,180.¹⁴ As recounted in *Miscellany* 2,¹⁵ Patrick Hinds House is a recent name – believed to have been called after one of its now previous owners.



The premises of the **Bethel Apostolic Church** were sold by auction in July 2012, realising £53,500.¹⁶ The auctioneers were Blundells Ltd. Little is known about the history of this church. An enquiry to the national body in July 2012 did not solicit any response, though their website was then still listing the Chapel Street premises as an active church, describing it as the ‘Chesterfield Apostolic Church’.¹⁷ When photographed on 21 November 2010 (left) the church appeared not to be in use, though it is not known when services were last held. When sold the

premises were described as ‘Bethel Apostolic Church’, with vacant possession; ‘church hall of approximately 1000 sq. feet,’ measuring 38’6 x 19’1, with a W.C., kitchen and rear lobby.¹⁸ Ordnance Survey mapping evidence indicates that the premises were constructed sometime after 1918 and before 1938, when they were marked as ‘Hall’.¹⁹ They were certainly present in 1938.²⁰ There are no contemporary directory entries to help fill in the story. In 1981 the congregation was described as ‘The Brockhill Pentecostal Church...’²¹ The building was registered for solemnizing marriages on 25 October 1988, then being known as the ‘Bethel Apostolic Church’.²² The builder, who had purchased the site and building, erected fencing around it in mid September 2012. At the close of 2012 a notice was posted ‘... to the local community’, on the newly erected gate to the Chapel Street entrance, from the owner.²³ This indicated that he was intending to apply to Chesterfield Borough Council for a change of use to ‘single family dwelling’.²⁴

¹² Care Choices and Derbyshire County Council (2012), *Derbyshire care service directory 2012/13*, p. 44.

¹³ [On-line] last visited 3 March 2012 at URL: <http://www.copelands-uk.co.uk/property/view/unit-1,-2,-2a-flat-2c,-fl-2d>. One of the flats was excluded from the sale, having been previously sold on a long leasehold.

¹⁴ *Property Today*, 2 February 2012.

¹⁵ *Miscellany* 2, p. 5.

¹⁶ *Property Today*, 12 July 2012.

¹⁷ [On-line] last visited 4 August 2012 at URL: <http://www.apostolic-church.org/Church-Finder.phtml>.

¹⁸ [On-line] last visited 23 August 2012 at URL: <http://images.eigroup.co.uk/propertyauctions/535/15185/6afec720-3562-4e06-ac60-9db49a4f7623.pdf>.

¹⁹ Ordnance Survey, 25-inch to 1 mile, Derbyshire sheet XVIII.5 editions of 1918 and 1938.

²⁰ Information from Mary Webb, Brimington, August 2012.

²¹ *The first hundred years of Mount Tabour Methodist Church New Brimington*, (1981) (no pagination).

²² *London Gazette*, 16 November 1988, p. 12839.

²³ Michael Walker, of Brimington Road, Tapton.

²⁴ The posted notice gave, incorrectly, the former purpose of the building as ‘congregational church’, but correctly identified the building as Bethel Chapel.

The former Manor Rest Centre has been refurbished and is now known as the **Manor Centre**. The centre held an open day on 3 March 2012, when it was officially re-opened by the Mayor and Mayoress of Chesterfield.²⁵ The history of the building is tied-up with that of the former Brimington Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground, chronicled by Alan Sharp in *Miscellany* 3.²⁶

Plover Hill Farm, the subject of a previous report in *Miscellany*,²⁷ has continued to be marketed during the year. The property consists of a conversion of barns into two, three and four bedroom properties.²⁸ By the end of June only four properties in the development were remaining for sale.²⁹

Both **Tapton Manor** and **Crewe Cottage** were advertised for sale in August 2012. The former was on offer in region of £535,000, while the later was at £475,000.³⁰ Both are listed Grade II. The mistaken claim that Tapton Manor had 'roof timbers from broken up ships of the time' was made.

Another listed building of note advertised for sale in 2012 was **24a High Street, Brimington**, which together with its other half, 24, formerly consisted a building known for many years as 'The Farm'. This Grade II brick built property has a date stone of 1763 on it.³¹ Number 24a was on offer at £200,000.³² The two buildings were extensively renovated in the mid 1990s by local builder Keith Bannister, from near dereliction. A picture of the property being refurbished appears in *Brimington: the changing face of a Derbyshire village*.³³ Included is an illustration of the underside of a lime-ash floor, with rushes laid onto the top of the joists to contain the mixture.³⁴

Not actually in Brimington, **Ringwood Farm**, has been for sale during the year, on offer at £695,000. Despite having an extensive range of barns, the property is without land.³⁵ Separately, the owner of part of the land from the former farm applied to convert some fields from agricultural to equestrian use, improve access and other works.³⁶

The Crematorium was in the news during the year. 60 solar photo-voltaic cells were fitted over two roofs during late 2011, providing 8,000 KWh's for free electricity. This is expected to reduce annual energy costs by over £800.³⁷ Essential works on the cremation plant were carried out, as three of the units had reached the end of their life. Mercury filtering equipment was also installed, so as to reclaim the toxic substance released from vaporisation of tooth fillings. The *Derbyshire Times*, in carrying the report, helpfully identified that 16 percent of mercury pollution in the country comes from tooth fillings via cremation activities! The works saw the standard week-long wait for funerals double.³⁸ In May 2012, Chesterfield Borough Council applied for consent to make an opening to the side elevation of the Crematorium Lodge.³⁹

²⁵ DT, 1 March 2012.

²⁶ A. Sharp, 'Recreation Grounds in Brimington', *Miscellany* 3, pp. 16 – 22.

²⁷ *Miscellany* 4, p. 9 and *Miscellany* 3, p. 6.

²⁸ *Property Today*, 5 April and 17 May 2012.

²⁹ *Property Today*, 28 June 2012.

³⁰ *Property Today*, 30 August 2012, p. 2 for Tapton Manor and p. 8 for Crewe Cottage.

³¹ Department of the Environment, (1977), *List of buildings of special architectural or historic interest, Borough of Chesterfield, Derbyshire (Chesterfield and Brimington), tenth list, 26 September 1977*, p.32.

³² [On-line] last visited on 20 September 2012 at URL <http://www.frankinnes.co.uk/buy/property/4-bedroom-semi-detached-house-in-brimington-s43-for-gbp-200,000-ref-1905336/>. The property was first listed in July 2012.

³³ P. J. Cousins (editor), (1995), *Brimington: the changing face of a Derbyshire village*, p. 77.

³⁴ *ibid.* Unfortunately the top and bottom of the illustration were transposed.

³⁵ *Property Today*, 24 May 2012 and 5 April 2012.

³⁶ DT, 26 April 2012. Planning application reference CHE/12/00163/COU. Another application, DT, 9 August 2012, reference CHE/12/00411/FUL.

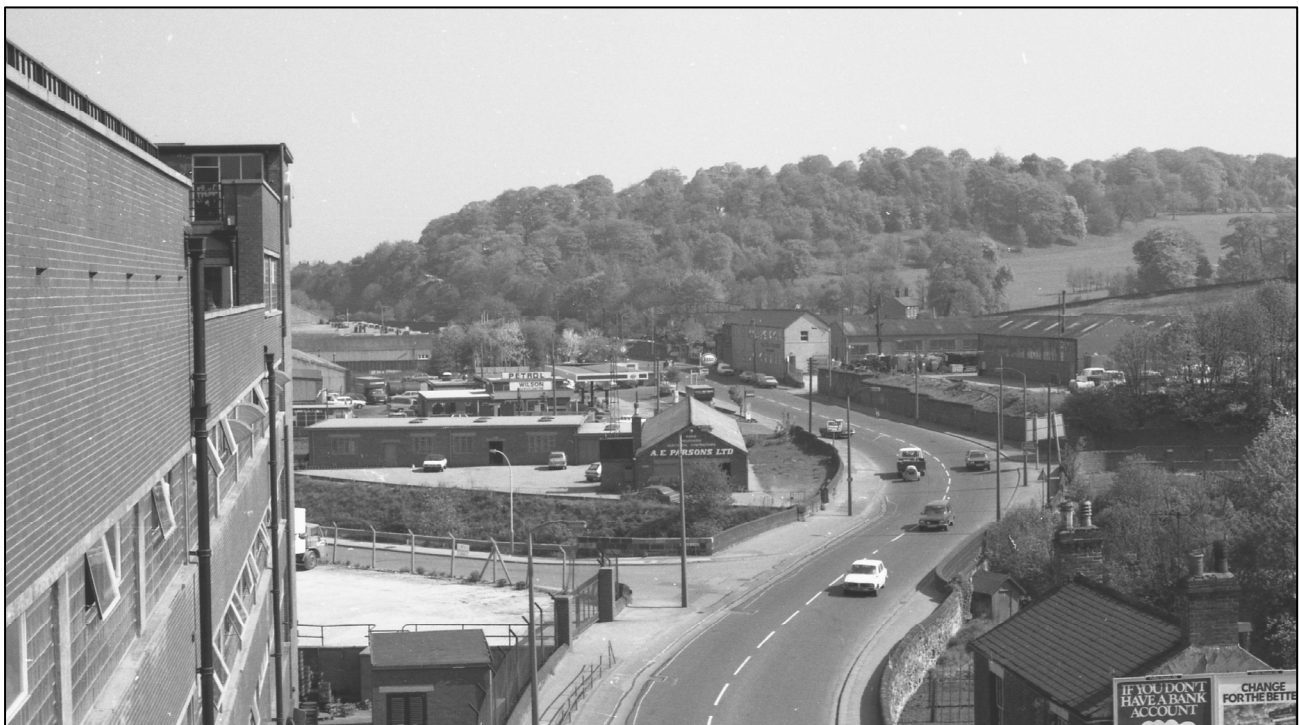
³⁷ *Our Town*, Number 119, spring 2012.

³⁸ DT, 19 April 2012.

³⁹ DT, 31 May 2012. The application was coded CHE/12/00274/FUL.

There have been important developments along the **Chesterfield Canal** during the year. On Saturday 26 May 2012, what was billed as the first ever public trip in to the new Staveley Town Basin, started from the Mill public house at Wheeldon Mill.⁴⁰ Over the weekend of Saturday and Sunday 30 June and 1 July 2012 a two-day canal festival marked the official opening of the basin, where it was possible to book boat trips to and from Hollingwood.⁴¹ In October 2012 it was announced that Wheeldon Mill Lock was to receive new gates in the next twelve months, as the present set were no longer watertight.⁴²

The county council identified 14 sites across Derbyshire ‘that could be cultivated by groups of green fingered gardening enthusiasts.’⁴³ One of the sites is land at Wheeldon Mill, bounded by Brimington Road North/Station Road, the canal, river Rother and Newbridge Lane (i.e. opposite the Mill public house, immediately adjacent to the canal car park).⁴⁴



The **Chesterfield Waterside** project, which has featured in every edition of *Miscellany* hereto, received a major boost in April 2012.⁴⁵ The project has secured £2.4m of funding from the Sheffield City Region Local Enterprise Partnership. This will enable restoration of part of the existing canalised river Rother and creation of a new waterway towards the already constructed basin,⁴⁶ on the site of the old Trebor works. The view above, believed to be from the late 1970s, shows an area likely to be transformed over the coming years. Taken from the now demolished Trebor factory we are looking over towards Tapton House. The white car is crossing Tapton bridge over the river Rother, which for many years was the boundary between Chesterfield and Tapton township. The Esso garage in the centre was then the ‘Wilson Servicentre’, who were also Mazda dealers. Beyond, over the main A619, is the Chesterfield area depot for Severn-Trent Water Authority, next to this was a remnant of Hooton and Green’s scrap yard, just before the railway pedestrian over-bridge.

⁴⁰ *DT*, 24 May 2012.

⁴¹ For a full review of the weekend’s activity see *Cuckoo, the magazine of the Chesterfield Canal Trust*, summer 2012.

⁴² *DT*, 25 October 2012.

⁴³ *Derbyshire First*, December 2012.

⁴⁴ [On-line], last visited 16 December 2012, at URL:

http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/images/Land%20at%20Brimington%20Road%20North%20Chesterfield_tcm44-215863.pdf

⁴⁵ *DT*, 19 April 2012.

⁴⁶ *Miscellany* 2, p. 3.

A book on **Trebor**, written by Mathew Crampton⁴⁷ (nephew of one of the firm's founders John Marks), dispelled the myth, largely worked up by the *Derbyshire Times*, that sweet manufacturing on the now demolished Brimington Road site had been carried out '...for more than a century.'⁴⁸ A *Derbyshire Times* article, which again retold this myth (unfortunately started sometime ago by the same newspaper), related to an initiative by an American company, Iconic Candy, to revive Regal Crown 'Sour Cherries' boiled sweets.⁴⁹

The newspaper ran a feature on the book's publication,⁵⁰ but earlier your editor had entered the fray with a letter pointing out the newspaper's errors,⁵¹ recounting that Messrs Robertson and Woodcock, as they were then known, already knew of Chesterfield. The *Derbyshire Times* of 28 July, 1939 had reported that the company had purchased five acres of land in Sheffield Road – opposite the B.T.H. (much later Dema Glass) recreation ground – for a factory. The Second World War scuppered the Chesterfield plans.

Trebor's Brimington Road⁵² site is connected with the Chesterfield Brewery Company, who constructed a brewery there in the 1850s. After the brewery closed in 1935 George Kenning Ltd., of Clay Cross, were said to have purchased it for a proposed garage,⁵³ but they presumably leased it.⁵⁴ The *Derbyshire Times* in March 1939⁵⁵ reveals that car radios were produced at the old brewery, by William F. Brown Radio Ltd., in conjunction with Kennings. Brimington resident Gerald Sawyer has also contacted us pointing out he can remember the former brewery building, under Kennings, producing remoulded tyres in the immediate pre-Second World War years.

Mathew Crampton's book confirms that the brewery company offered the disused premises on lease in early 1941; a few months later the sweet manufacturer decided to purchase it.⁵⁶ Manufacturing eventually started in April 1942.⁵⁷ Confirming the 1942 production start date is a *Derbyshire Times* report from March 1945.⁵⁸ This states that nearly 100 girls in the district were employed at the Brimington Road site. The report marks a thank you event at the Odeon ballroom for the workers, who had been employed for 'the past three years.' The newspaper reports that output was mainly for NAAFI and army contracts. 'Tons' of sweets were being produced, which went into jungle packs for troops on the Burma front. Sweets had also been supplied to soldiers in western Europe and Italy. The company intended to stay in Chesterfield and expand.

The rest is, as they say, history – well chronicled in the book – which recounts that it was announced the Chesterfield factory would close in 2003,⁵⁹ though does not state that production actually ceased in 2005,⁶⁰ marking the closure of the final Trebor factory purchased by Cadbury.

Chef Heston Blumenthal, visited Chesterfield 'once home to Trebor, makers of Refreshers and BlackJacks' in 2012 to record part of his Channel 4 Television series 'Fantastical Food'. The episode was first transmitted on 27 November 2012. Heston took over the Assembly Rooms in Chesterfield Market

⁴⁷ M. Crampton, (2012), *The Trebor story*. ISBN 978-0-95611361-1-4.

⁴⁸ *DT*, 2 February 2012.

⁴⁹ *DT*, 2 February 2012.

⁵⁰ *DT*, 12 July 2012.

⁵¹ *DT*, 16 February 2012.

⁵² For a history of this concern see J. Hirst, (1991), *Chesterfield breweries*.

⁵³ Hirst, (1991), p. 44.

⁵⁴ Crampton, (2012), p. 38.

⁵⁵ *DT*, 10 March 1939.

⁵⁶ Crampton (2012), p. 38.

⁵⁷ *ibid.* p. 39.

⁵⁸ *DT*, 30 March 1945, from which this paragraph is sourced.

⁵⁹ Crampton, (2012), p. 132.

⁶⁰ Information from I. Atkinson, Newbold and D. Gregg, Brimington, August 2012. It is thought the final date of production was 4 March 2005.

Hall to make 'his own Willy Wonka-inspired giant sweet shop.' Though some ex-Trebor employees were featured, the company's products were not extensively covered, but the site's history was briefly mentioned, with Hestor visiting the flattened location of this once thriving concern.⁶¹

The first part of Chesterfield's Local Plan – *The Core Strategy* was published in early 2012, writes Cllr Terry Gilby. This sets out the broad principles for development in Chesterfield up to 2031. This was due to be considered at a Local Plan public examination in January 2013. The Strategy aims to ensure there is an increase in good quality housing and jobs and that derelict land is brought back into use. In line with the Regional Strategy and national population forecasts, it is proposed that sites should be identified for 7600 homes over the twenty year period, across the borough.

A new initiative is called Green Wedges – to stop one community merging into another. The Strategy identifies green wedges to be preserved throughout the borough. In Brimington the need for green wedges has been identified between Brimington and Tapton and to the north of Brimington.

Two further parts of the Local Plan were published in November 2012 and residents, businesses and other interested parties are presently (January 2013) being asked for their views on these two documents, which will guide the future development of the borough, again for the period 2011 to 2031. The Borough Council wants to hear resident's opinions on the proposals and any alternatives.

The first of the two documents is *The Local Plan: Sites and Boundaries*. This sets out how particular areas of land across the borough are to be used over the next 20 years. It sets out specific sites for development as well as those that should be kept as open spaces. In line with the *Core Strategy*, sites are identified for 7600 homes over the period. In addition potential sites are shown for shops, offices, businesses and green spaces.

In identifying sites for housing one of the key factors was regeneration. New housing is one of the ingredients for regenerating an area. Young families move in which increases a demand for school places, existing shops become more viable and new traders are attracted. The eastern part of the borough, in particular the former mining villages, are considered to be in need of regeneration. As a consequence major housing sites have been proposed for Duckmanton, Mastin Moor, Barrow Hill and Poolsbrook. This will also provide new housing close to where thousands of jobs are to be created at Markham Vale, over the next decade. Other major sites identified are at Brimington, Chesterfield Waterside (the area along the A61 corridor) and Holme Hall.

The second of the two new documents is *The Staveley and Rother Valley Corridor Area Action Plan*. This document, was published in early November 2012. It sets out ideas for the former industrial land between Staveley and Brimington which includes the former Staveley Works site. The plan sets out in detail how the land could be developed to create 2000 new homes and 30,000 square metres of land for commercial use. It is recognised that new infrastructure is required in the form of highways etc and also how this infrastructure could benefit surrounding communities. The plan also proposes new open spaces and wildlife sites along the river Rother and Chesterfield Canal.

The proposals that relate to Brimington apart from those within *The Staveley and Rother Valley Corridor Area Action Plan* are as follows:

- Possible Housing sites include the former greyhound track at Wheeldon Mill, The former Ringwood Centre on Victoria Street, Pondwell Drive and east of Manor Avenue.
- A possible site for a children's play area has been identified in the Coronation Road/King Street area.

⁶¹ Quotations in this paragraph from [On-line] last visited 12 December 2012, at URL: <http://scrapbook.channel4.com/bookmarkBar/50a218b4e4b096591980f512>.

- The document asks whether play areas such as Queen Street should be retained.
- Land north of Gregory Lane and west of Parkers Wood are identified as possible sites for a wind turbine.

The editor offers his thanks to Councillor Gilby, who is a member of our group, for this contribution.

Early options (published in June 2009) originally contained controversial plans for house building in the Brimington area – reported in *Miscellany* 2.⁶²

As highlighted above Chesterfield Borough Council and Chatsworth Estates (who still own the majority of the site) are working together on proposals for the **former Staveley Coal and Iron complex**. In March 2012 a regeneration masterplan was published by Chatsworth Estates.⁶³ Commissioned from Capita Symonds, the plan sees an ‘appropriate mix of uses’ for the 200 acre site, including residential, business and leisure.

The *Derbyshire Times* announced the end of production at the last remnant of the once mighty Staveley Coal and Iron Company on the Staveley complex, in August 2012.⁶⁴ The article also featured the masterplan. Closure of the plant, accessed from Hall Road at Staveley, brought an end to centuries of industrial enterprise in the area. At the time the newspaper ran the report, the owners, American company **Covidien**, had ceased production. The plant was being decommissioned with a final closing date set for the end of 2012. Manufacturing para-aminophenol (commonly used in the pain-killer paracetamol); the company explained that it was more economical to produce the product at an existing plant in America.



There was a minor furore⁶⁵ in late spring after 11 **brown tourist welcome signs** were replaced at key points on roads at the borough boundary. The new signs were minus a direct graphic of the ‘Crooked Spire’, but feature the famous landmark’s spire as a swirl across them. A decision was taken towards the end of 2012 to apply the spire to the signs. One of the old brown signs appeared to have escaped the chop when photographed in May 2012 at the old (i.e. pre 1974 local government reorganisation) boundary on Brimington Road at Tapton. Many residents will still remember when the borough boundary signs used to welcome visitors and remind

residents that Chesterfield once styled itself as ‘The Centre of Industrial England’.

The Ringwood Centre, on Victoria Street having closed in August 2010 (as chronicled in *Miscellany* 3⁶⁶) was first preliminary advertised for sale by informal tender, in summer 2012. The site then comprised a building of 20,290 sq. ft., occupying 2.4 acres, with a further 3.67 acres of open space. The accommodation comprised entrance lobby, offices, toilets, kitchen, store (1,569 sq. ft.); central hallway, offices, toilets, amenity area (1,568 sq. ft.); open plan meeting/dining area (1,908 sq. ft.); assembly rooms and offices (13,714 sq. ft.); ancillary block including kitchen, dining, toilets (1,531 sq. ft.). The site was billed as a ‘development opportunity for employment (B1/B2) and/or residential uses subject to

⁶² The editor is extremely grateful to Cllr Gilby for the foregoing. Terry is one of the Brimington North Ward members of Chesterfield Borough Council and is also Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Planning on the council.

⁶³ Capita Symonds (2012), *Staveley works area: regeneration masterplan, March 2012*.

⁶⁴ *DT*, 23 August 2012.

⁶⁵ See, for example, *DT*, 19 April 2012.

⁶⁶ *Miscellany* 3, p. 6.

planning permission'.⁶⁷ By early November 2012 the 'for sale by informal tender' notices at the property had been removed.

A memorial tree, crafted by students at Chesterfield College, from metal, was unveiled at **St. Michael's Nursing Home** in October 2012.⁶⁸ Over time the tree will be adorned by memorial leaves, acting as wind-chimes. The home, at 9 Chesterfield Road, was established in 1990 and specialises in the care of older people, with accommodation for up to 39 residents.⁶⁹

The county council made a contribution of just over £11,000 towards the end of 2012 for fencing and a footpath at **Henry Bradley School**, Princess Street. The sum represents 75% of the cost of the work, which is designed to improve security and the site in general. The remainder of the sum is met from school funds.⁷⁰

Work started on clearing the former **John Street/Heywood Street play area** in late spring 2012 for housing. Despite a planning application⁷¹ the April parish council meeting heard that plans to build six houses on the site had been withdrawn.⁷² The clearance works rapidly petered out. By the end of December 2012 the site was still largely derelict, with clearance not completed and construction not started.

Transport

Withdrawal of school buses in the area, due to cuts by Derbyshire County Council led to a front page article in the *Derbyshire Times* in March 2012.⁷³ Up to 2,200 pupils at 47 Derbyshire Schools are to lose bus subsidies as a result. The newspaper announced that some results are to be reviewed, however, as a result of concerns raised by schools. Routes affected include Brimington to Springwell Community College. TM Travel was to run four commercial services between Springwell College, Brimington, Mastin Moor and Barrow Hill to replace the lost services, but the flat fare of £1 was double that previously paid by pupils. An almost £1m saving is set to be delivered as part of the school bus review. During the summer Brimington, Hollingwood and Barrow Hill Labour Party announced that the county council had relented on the Springwell bus services proposals. All students from Brimington, Barrow Hill and Hollingwood, who choose to go to Springwell will receive free transport to and from home. Free travel to Brimington Junior School for Brimington Common pupils has been withheld.⁷⁴

The **service 78** operated by Doyles, along Station Road, reported in *Miscellany* 4,⁷⁵ was altered from 27 May 2012, to run into Inkersall, not Hasland. The route then commenced from Farndale Road and Hartington (Staveley), running into Inkersall, into Chesterfield Royal Hospital, before running via Piccadilly Road into Chesterfield Station forecourt. Thence to Cavendish Street, before travelling to Whittington Moor, then to Wheeldon Mill, before terminating at Hall Road Brimington. Journey opportunities are somewhat reduced from the former 78 in the Station Road area. The May revision allowed a maximum of five journeys each way, compared with the eight to Chesterfield and seven return, with no Sunday service.⁷⁶

⁶⁷ Information in this paragraph from [on-line] last visited 23 August 2012 at URL:

http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/business/corporate_property/estates/premises_for_sale/ringwood_centre/default.asp.

⁶⁸ DT, 1 November 2012.

⁶⁹ [On-line] last visited 8 December 2012 at URL: <http://www.suncarehomes.com/index.php?node=st-michaels-nursing-home>.

⁷⁰ *Derbyshire First*, December 2012.

⁷¹ DT, 8 March 2012. Application reference CHE/12/00072/FUL.

⁷² DT, 3 May 2012. For further details on the site and a photograph see *Miscellany* 4, p. 3.

⁷³ DT, 1 March 2012. From which this paragraph is based.

⁷⁴ Brimington, Hollingwood and Barrow Hill Labour Party [bulletin], summer 2012.

⁷⁵ *Miscellany* 4, p. 14.

⁷⁶ Foregoing from, Derbyshire County Council, (2012), *North east Derbyshire public transport timetable March 2012, amendment number one*, 27 May 2012.

This service was later⁷⁷ transferred to another company – DW Coaches, of Thanet Street, Clay Cross – when Doyles lost the contract. The route was also slightly revised. The service is supported by the county council. All this is a far cry from, for example, 1973. At this time Chesterfield Borough Council Transport Department's service 36, which ran from Loundsley Green to Brimington, via Chesterfield, managed a roughly hourly service, including Sundays.⁷⁸

The **electrification of the Midland mainline** (MML) was announced by the then Transport Secretary Justine Greening on Monday 16 July 2012.⁷⁹ The announcement had been widely leaked over the proceeding weekend, but was greeted with almost universal enthusiasm. The plan will see the line electrified from Bedford to Sheffield, at a cost of some £800m, as part of what is termed a Southampton-Midlands/Yorkshire 'Electric Spine' network. The plan is part of a £9.4bn High Level Output Specification, which also indicates other work on the UK's rail network. Work is due to be completed by 2019, but planning details and an official start date have not been finalised.⁸⁰ It is difficult to predict what the effect will be on the railway infrastructure through Tapton and Brimington (if indeed electrification will cover the 'old road' via Barrow Hill). Despite all the ups and downs over electrification this is, in essence, what many industry insiders had predicted – that the MML would be part of a rolling electrification plan.⁸¹

Miscellaneous

Controversial plans to retire **Chesterfield Market day's horse-drawn refuse collection service** were announced at the beginning of the year. Money saved was to give market traders an annual rent-free week. The Brimington link is that the owners of Ben, the market horse, live in Brimington. During 2012 attempts were made to secure funding for the service.⁸²

January 2012 saw the jailing of a **fake tobacco manufacturing gang** who had set up a factory 'capable of making up to 650 million counterfeit cigarettes and five million pouches of fake hand rolling tobacco.'⁸³ The fake tobacco premises were at **Tapton Business Park, Brimington Road**. The fully equipped factory was closed down before it went into production, following a raid by H.M. Revenue and Customs in September 2009. Ten defendants were sentenced at Nottingham Crown Court on 31 January 2012.



The **Queen's Diamond Jubilee** was celebrated over the weekend and subsequent holiday of 2 to 5 June 2012. There were no street parties in Brimington or Tapton, but a number of schools and organisations celebrated the event. Relatively few shops and businesses were decorated. The *Red Lion* and *Butchers Arms* public houses did put on a good display, the latter being illustrated here. Both the parish council's community centre and the parish church were decorated with bunting and flags, along with local schools and the Manor Rest Centre. The parish church held a service of thanksgiving on Sunday 3 June, led by the Rural

Dean, the Rev'd Helen Guest. There was a parade with uniformed organisations being present.

⁷⁷ 28 October 2012.

⁷⁸ Borough of Chesterfield Transport Department, (1973), *Timetable and route map*, 4 February 1973, pp. 87-88.

⁷⁹ *Derby Telegraph*, 19 July 2012 and *DT*, 19 July 2012.

⁸⁰ Information in this paragraph sourced from *Modern Railways*, August 2012, pp. 6 – 11 and *Rail*, 25 July to 7 August 2012, pp. 6 – 13.

⁸¹ *Miscellany* 2, p. 10.

⁸² See, for example, *DT*, 23 February; 9 February, 2012.

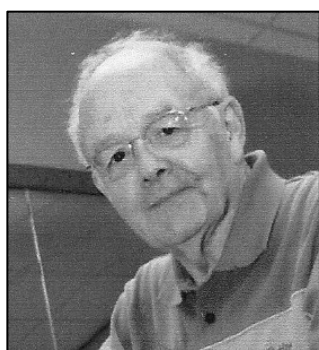
⁸³ *DT*, 2 February 2012.

The November 2012 **Service of Remembrance** was unable to parade to the Broom Gardens memorial gates to observe the last post and the laying of wreaths. Apparently there was no police cover to allow the parade to observe the ritual. The general arrangements for the event attracted some criticism. An open letter from the parochial church council, addressed to the parish council, was published in the December parish church magazine.⁸⁴

People and organisations

The death of **Mr Derrick Cutts** of Newbold occurred in January 2012. Born at Brimington, Mr Cutts went on to found (jointly) the construction company Barcu, from which he retired in 1984.⁸⁵

Mr Brian Denman, who will be remembered for his long association with teaching at Tapton School, died in February 2012.⁸⁶ Mr Denman was originally appointed games master at the school in the early 1960s, also teaching English and history. He went on to become head of the school during its closing years, before retiring in 1983.



David Leonard Martin Vinson, for some years headmaster of Brimington County Secondary Boys' School, then the successor Brimington/Hollingwood School and Westwood School died in May 2012, a few days before his 80th birthday. Mr Vinson succeeded Desmond Kelly as head at Brimington in the early 1970s. He is largely credited with turning round that establishment, culminating in his appointment to the headship of the combined comprehensive school formed from the Brimington Boys' and Hollingwood Girls' schools. The history of this combination was summarised in *Miscellany* 4. A memorial service was held at Sheffield, where a large number of his former colleagues were present. Our picture is courtesy of Alan Sharp. Mr Vinson lived at Beauchief, Sheffield. He was a local Methodist preacher.

Following a complaint about the Markham family burial ground at Tapton, raised in the letters column of the *Derbyshire Times* in September 2011, a complaint about **C.P. Markham's grave** was aired in February 2012.⁸⁷ Charles Paxton Markham was interred not at Tapton, but in Staveley Cemetery, so that smoke from the Devonshire Works would drift over his grave.⁸⁸ One Brimington resident replied that he had obtained quotes to rectify the situation, but the same issue of the *Derbyshire Times* contained a letter asking for a more measured view of Markham than one simply based on his benevolence and capital enterprise.⁸⁹ Readers may remember that this mirrors a similar spate of letters in 2009, reported in *Miscellany* 2.⁹⁰ There was a later claim that, unlike his father, Markham was not hostile to unions.⁹¹ Your editor joined in the correspondence,⁹² pointing out that Markham's ethos was more complicated than simply listing his benefactions. Markham had, in fact, gone on record as saying he thought that unions '...are the greatest curse the country has' when giving evidence to the coal commission in late 1925.⁹³ Though he had, earlier that year, acknowledged unions had helped highlight poor living conditions.⁹⁴

⁸⁴ *Celebrate and Share*, December 2012, pp. 34-36.

⁸⁵ *DT*, 19 January 2012.

⁸⁶ *DT*, 1 March 2012.

⁸⁷ *DT*, 16 February 2012.

⁸⁸ J. Hammerton, 'The story of a great industrialist', *Staveley Story*, (no date), p.19. There is a reference to the same effect in the minutes of the Staveley Coal and Iron Company, following Markham's death in 1926.

⁸⁹ *DT*, 1 March 2012.

⁹⁰ *Miscellany* 2, p. 12.

⁹¹ *DT*, 8 March 2012.

⁹² *DT*, 15 March 2012.

⁹³ *DT*, 5 December 1925.

⁹⁴ *DT*, 26 September 1925.

The **Markham family burial ground** on Tapton Golf Course, was restored during 2012. A ceremony was held 100 years to the day on which Rosa Markham was the first person interred in the ground. A number of Markham family members were present to mark the restoration, along with the Mayor of Chesterfield and others. The £11,000 project, which started in September 2011, has been funded by the family, with contributions from the borough council, who own the site, and Sheffield International Venues, who lease the golf course.⁹⁵



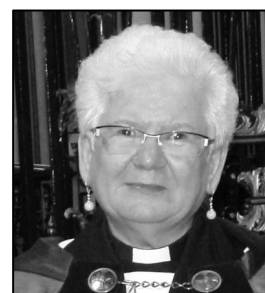
The nearest the **Olympic torch** passed to Brimington and Tapton on its way through the region on Friday 29 June 2012 was Calow (Top Road) and then to Chesterfield via Hady Hill. This is not as far as away as one might imagine – the historic Tapton township boundary being a few yards to the south of Dryhurst House. One Brimington resident did carry the flame, though at Bolsover, where the day's procession started. 80 year old **Kaylet Smedley**, is pictured left (courtesy of Elizabeth Mulcahey), carrying the torch and the Olympic flame. She has been the chair of the Derbyshire branch of the Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research Fund since 1968, which she started following the death of her son from Leukaemia. The branch has raised over £1m since.

A constant fundraiser for many years, she remains a vigorous organizer for the branch.⁹⁶ The Manor Road, Brimington, resident was awarded the British Empire Medal in the Queen's Jubilee Honours. Mrs Smedley was also chosen to be amongst recipients of the Queen's Maundy Money at a service in Derby Cathedral in 2010.⁹⁷ She has further raised money for charity by showing the Olympic torch at various venues during the year.⁹⁸ The route of the torch in Derbyshire is marked by 11 milestone markers, including Calow.⁹⁹



Mary Webb (pictured here, courtesy Keith Noble), received the Church of England's Bishop's Badge at a service in Derby Cathedral on 23 September 2012. Miss Webb, who has lived in Brimington since 1938, has been active in many church offices at Brimington, including Sunday School Teacher, Parochial Church Council Secretary, Mission Group Secretary, Deanery Synod Representative, Reader, Choir Mistress and Organist. Her Father, Tom, was a Church Warden at St. Michael's.

The Rev'd Helen Guest, (pictured right, courtesy of Keith Noble) – a former curate at St Michael's during the period 2002 to 2005 – was collated and installed as an Honorary Canon at a service in Derby Cathedral on Sunday 16 September 2012, by the Bishop of Derby. The Rev'd Guest is Priest-in-Charge of Killamarsh, Assistant Curate of Renishaw and Rural Dean of Bolsover and Staveley.¹⁰⁰



⁹⁵ Information in this paragraph from *DT*, 3 May 2012.

⁹⁶ Information about Kaylet Smedley's work with the Leukaemia and Lymphoma Research Fund from [on-line] last visited 1 July 2012 at URL: <http://www.london2012.com/torch-relay/torchbearers/torchbearers=kaylet-smedley-647/index.html>.

⁹⁷ Information in this paragraph, except where separately referenced, sourced from *Celebrate and Share*, September 2012, p. 17; *DT*, 5 July 2012 and 21 June 2012.

⁹⁸ *DT*, 23 August 2012. See also an article about the Smedleys in *DT*, 13 December 2012.

⁹⁹ *DT*, 6 September 2012.

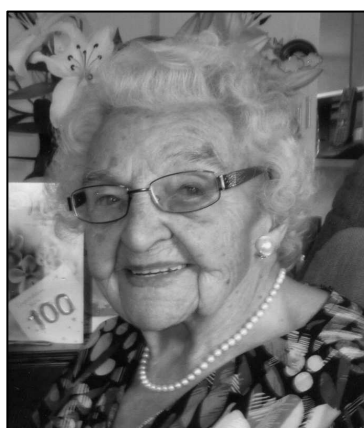
¹⁰⁰ Paragraphs sourced from *Celebrate and Share*, November 2012, p. 8. Mary Webb is 90 years of age.

Pamela Wright received the parish council's 'Civic Duty Award' at the annual parish meeting in early summer. Mrs Wright and her husband, Peter, were founder members of the Brimington Bowling Club, Pam was secretary for many years. She has also served as a Manor Infants' School Governor and supports the Community Forum and various other organisations. Mrs Wright hosts the 'World's Biggest Coffee Morning' and Bowling Competition in aid of the Macmillan Cancer Support, each year.¹⁰¹

Liam Pitchford, whom we have covered in previous issues of *Miscellany* and who is England's number one table tennis player, was chosen to represent Great Britain at the Olympics in May.¹⁰² Mr Pitchford, who lives on Nethercroft Road, had a useful pen portrait of him in the *Derbyshire Times* of 26 July 2012. He was unfortunately knocked out in the first round of the men's singles against Portugal, but nevertheless gave a good account of himself.¹⁰³

Enid Pullen unveiled a plaque commemorating the charity work of her late Husband **Jim Pullen**, OBE, in May 2012.¹⁰⁴ Jim, who died in 2011, was mentioned in *Miscellany* 4.¹⁰⁵ The plaque is positioned on the Co-operative department store in Chesterfield, where Jim did much of his collecting.

An old Tapton School pupil, **Air Vice-Marshal Peter Turner** CB, died at his home in Cambridge in late spring 2012.¹⁰⁶ He had a distinguished career in the RAF and later as assistant bursar at Wolfson College, Cambridge.



Mrs Vera Knights died at the end of November 2012.¹⁰⁷ She had celebrated her 100th birthday in the summer of 2012.¹⁰⁸ Mrs Knights (pictured left, courtesy of Glenda Cooper) has found herself acknowledged in a number of footnotes within this publication, as she has proved a very reliable source of information on Brimington of yesteryear.

Killamarsh born – but latterly a Brimington resident – **Fred Greaves**, V.C., was amongst the latest tranche of 12-shortlist of people nominated for the county council's 'blue plaque' scheme, in the autumn of 2012.¹⁰⁹ He has been nominated by a Killamarsh resident. The nomination was ultimately unsuccessful.¹¹⁰

Brimington's **Gary Ricketts** won the gold medal in the 2012 world arm-wrestling championships, 100kg category. The 44 year-old beat a Brazilian in the semi-finals and a Russian in the finals, held in Brazil. He has been three times British champion.¹¹¹

Barrow Hill made its debut on the London Stage during 2012, thanks to the efforts of Brimington Common resident **Jane Wainwright**. This was Jane's first full length play, which was sponsored by OffWestEnd.com's 'Adopt a Playwright Award'. Barrow Hill ran at the Finborough Theatre in Earls Court. The play centres on an 86 year-old woman, who discovers that her local Methodist Church is

¹⁰¹ This paragraph sourced from *DT*, 24 June 2012.

¹⁰² *DT*, 24 May 2012.

¹⁰³ *DT*, 9 August 2012 and 16 August 2012.

¹⁰⁴ *DT*, 17 May 2012.

¹⁰⁵ *Miscellany* 4, p. 11.

¹⁰⁶ *DT*, 19 April 2012.

¹⁰⁷ *DT*, 6 December 2012.

¹⁰⁸ *DT*, 23 August 2012 and 9 August 2012.

¹⁰⁹ *Derbyshire First*, October 2012; *DT*, 4 October 2012.

¹¹⁰ *Derbyshire First*, December 2012. See also *Miscellany* 2, p. 12 and *Miscellany* 3, p. 11.

¹¹¹ Information in this paragraph from *DT*, 27 September 2012.

planned for conversion into a block of luxury flats. Jane took Barrow Hill Methodist Church as inspiration. Her mother plays the organ there.¹¹²

Peter Harrison, a member of our local history group and contributor to *Miscellany* privately published (in a limited edition) a well-crafted book *In memory of a brother: Flight Sergeant James Arthur Harrison RAFVR 'Curly', 27 December 1920 – 6 November 1944*. . . The book also gives an operational history of 619 Squadron of the RAF.

Lynn Knight saw a paperback edition of her book *Lemon Sherbert and Dolly Blue*, which follows the fortunes of a family in the Wheeldon Mill area, published in 2012.¹¹³ Our secretary, Janet Walmsley, caught Lynn at a signing session staged in Waterstone's bookshop, Vicar Lane, on Saturday 5 May 2012. Janet writes the following about her encounter.

After *Miscellany* 4's report on the publication of *Lemon Sherbert and Dolly Blue: the Story of a Accidental Family*, I decided that I would like to read it, as it was set primarily in the Wheeldon Mill area of Brimington. Unfortunately, having searched bookshops in Chesterfield for weeks, I couldn't find it anywhere. I had almost given up until I spotted a sign in Waterstones' window advertising a book signing by Lynn Knight from 10 am to 1 pm on the Saturday. I was rather disappointed when a quick check in my diary found that I was working that morning in the shop where I help out my nieces. As the shop did not close until 1 pm I thought I would miss her. I went to buy a copy of the book at Waterstones and a very helpful sales assistant asked if I would like to leave the copy for Lynn to sign, although she thought the author might still be in the shop by the time I could reach Chesterfield. 'How do you want her to sign it', the assistant enquired. 'To Brimington and Tapton Local History Group, please,' I replied. I then had to spend another five minutes telling the assistant all about us!

Saturday, 5 May arrived and I duly turned up at the shop at my expected 1.15 pm. As I entered the shop I was pleased to find Lynn Knight was still there, along with a pile of books (and some edible goodies). As I approached she looked up and smiled greeting me with a 'Hello'. As if we were old buddies; I replied 'Hello Lynn' – only afterwards did I stop to think that I was maybe a little forward. Anyhow she did not seem to mind, as I told her my name, introducing myself as the Secretary of our local history group. 'Oh yes, I have signed the book for you,' Lynn replied. Lynn said that her publisher had told her about the article in *Miscellany* and would very much like to see it. So, I produced my copy for her perusal,



along with a copy of the 2012 programme, which I told her she could keep. Lynn thanked me. Glancing at the programme she appeared very impressed remarking; 'I know some of these people; you do very well.' I also explained about the exhibitions and other activities we do. 'Would you mind if I take a photograph of you for our archives,' I ventured. 'No that's fine,' she replied. So I duly took the photograph you see here, with Lynn nicely posed with *Miscellany* 4. I thought it was then time to leave her signing more copies of the book, for sale later in the shop, the customary 'Thank you. . .'. Lynn replied; ' . . . it's been very interesting [talking to you]. Good luck to you all for the future.' So with that I went to the counter to pick up the book, duly signed.

¹¹² Information in this paragraph from *Reflections*, September 2012, p. 66.

¹¹³ *Miscellany* 4, pp. 11-12.

I found the book very interesting. I think, however, that it is not a book that you can put down and pick up at any time. Due to the sometimes complicated family, it is very easy to lose the thread of who is who. This is a book about people, not so much about places. Never-the-less I would highly recommend it.

Co-incidentally the former corner shop on Station Road, Wheeldon Mill, where Lynn Knight's book is largely based, was advertised for sale in 2012. Number 220 Station Road was for sale with offers invited around £100,000.¹¹⁴

Philip Cousins with contributions from Janet Walmsley and Councillor Terry Gilby.

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

OUR YEAR IN VIEW: GROUP EVENTS

Talks programme for 2012

Our fifth season began officially in January with an illustrated talk on 'Brimington: the changing face of a Derbyshire village', by Philip Cousins. This talk was the one which effectively launched our group five years ago. It was the title of a book Philip edited and produced for the Parish Council to mark its centenary. The talk was itself designed to launch the book of the same name.

February saw the welcome return of David Templeman. This time his talk was about 'Mary Queen of Scots – from Sheffield to Fotheringay: the final journey.' March saw the return of Philip Riden from the University of Nottingham. He presented 'Transport and trade around Chesterfield before the railway age.' This looked at the range of goods carried by different modes of transport and the impact this trade had on the prosperity of the town. Janet Murphy told members about the story of Spital Lodge at our April meeting. Her talk – 'Scandal, Suffragettes and Soldiers' – was, as the title suggests, wide-ranging.

It is always a delight to welcome Stephen Gay to our meetings. The May meeting was no exception, as we followed Stephen and his dog Wrawby along various closed railway lines. His talk featured some stunning photography around the country. Included on the journey was the Whitby to Scarborough and the Somerset and Dorset railways. We also looked closer to home; Woodhead and the Hope Valley both featured. June saw our customary guided walk, led by Philip Cousins. This time it was a short walk along the canal from Wheeldon Mill to Blue Bank Lock. Various industries in the area were touched on. Naturally transport featured along with milling, pottery and the 19th century murder of a Cutthorpe man.

Our talks programme resumed in September with Peter and Maeve Hawkins sharing their interest in the Lowca Works at Whitehaven. Peter described the history with Maeve identifying how they had undertaken their research. In October we welcomed Darrell Clarke with his 'The Arkwrights: spinners of fortune' talk. Darrell traced the origins of the family, focussing on their impact on the Derwent valley. Richard Arkwright patented the basic machines used in cotton spinning and is widely credited with inventing the 'factory system'. November's meeting was part two of the Hollingwood story, by Philip Cousins. This took a more general look at the Hollingwood area. Included were Ringwood Hall, the Canal Tavern, Staveley works with a brief look at the Hollingwood estate itself. Philip used research by Cliff Williams to tell a little more about the Hollingwood Common canal tunnel. Also featured was an unusual story about water pumping from the canal for the locomotive sheds at Staveley (Great Central) and the use of the lake at Ringwood for the same purpose.

¹¹⁴ *Property Today*, 16 August 2012.

December's AGM saw the usual reports from the committee. Elizabeth Pemberton retired at this meeting with a vote of thanks placed on record for her work.



We were pleased to welcome County Councillor Walter Burrows (Brimington Division) and his wife to our meeting. Cllr Burrows has generously awarded part of his community fund allowance to our group. The sum (£600) has been used to purchase a scanner and digital projector. In the photograph above, holding the cheque is Cllr Burrows (right) with our Chairman Doug Spencer (left), surrounded by a small part of our appreciative audience. Treasurer and membership secretary Marion Spencer is stood next to Cllr Burrows with committee member Alan Sharp behind him. Peter Harrison, now the contributor of two articles to *Miscellany* and a speaker at our group (and elsewhere) is stood immediately behind Doug, to the left. After the official presentation Philip Cousins used the digital projector to talk about Sutton Scarsdale Hall. Finally, he presented some readings from a largely forgotten Chesterfield author and poet's novel *Miner*. This was illustrated with contemporary images of the subject portrayed in the reading – Chesterfield town centre. The novel was written by Frederick Boden (born 1903), whom Philip also gave a brief biography of. Boden depicts the life of a young miner in 1920s Chesterfield. It helps dispel some of the more rose tinted views of 'the good old days'.

All the committee hope that our members and visitors have enjoyed the programme for 2012. We look forward to another varied year in 2013. My personal thanks to everyone for your support.

Janet Walmsley.



Exhibitions

We again staged an exhibition in the Church Hall (by kind permission of the Church) on the day of the village market. Our theme for 2012 was local farms, which saw the work of two of our members, in particular Elizabeth Pemberton and Brian Smith, exhibited. Part of the exhibition is seen left, receiving the attention of visitors.

The exhibition was extensively revised, appearing in Brimington Library from September, where it was retained into December.

We are grateful for the staff at the library for the opportunity to display part of our group's research work.

Photograph and report: Philip Cousins

Reminiscences group

We are a small band of six or seven, who meet on the fourth Tuesday of most months (with the exception of December), at 2 pm in Brimington Church Hall. We would welcome more people to come and join us.

In 2012 we have had several people call in for help with their family history, bring photographs to scan, or written word to donate. In 2013 we will be continuing to record and transcribe local people's memories, as we hope to publish more in *Miscellany*. Sybil Jackson's memories, published in this edition, are an example of what we hope to continue doing.

We will also continue looking at local farming and agriculture. As a result of this our two exhibitions staged this year both focussed on farming, perhaps a largely ignored aspect of community and economic life. At the turn of the 2012/2013 year we started studying copies of the Brimington part of the National Farm Surveys of England and Wales – the originals of which are kept in The National Archives. We hope that this will further extend our knowledge of agriculture in the district.

If you would like to join us on the fourth Tuesday of the month please just come along. Alternatively, for further information please contact Marion Spencer at the address given inside the front cover.

Our thanks to everyone who has contributed so far to our work.

Marion Spencer

Publications

This edition of *Miscellany* is our fifth. All other editions remain in-print. It is our aim to keep these available as long as possible. Modern publishing technology means that we virtually print on demand (with a small stock in reserve).

The standard of reproduction and relatively low cost would not be possible without some 'in-house' assistance. I would particularly like to thank our Chairman, Doug Spencer, for much work. It is he who sees our copy through to eventual binding and finishing. As mentioned in *Miscellany* 4, there are also our proof readers. I am extremely grateful to all our contributors who have enabled us to present a varied content. My thanks to everyone who contributes to what I hope is a pretty good standard for a small society publication. We trust that our readers will find our contribution towards understanding the area's past of interest.

Philip Cousins

'WHAT MORE CAN I SAY' – MEMORIES OF BRIMINGTON

Sybil Jackson

Foreword

We are very pleased to be able to publish this reminiscence about life in the area during the 1930s. The account has been penned by Sybil Jackson, transcribed by Marion Spencer and edited for publication by Philip Cousins. Illustrations, unless stated, are from Mrs Jackson's own collection. Any footnotes are by the editor.

Reminiscences such as this are important, as they help to document what life was really like. For more about what it meant to experience the brightly lit fair, when electricity was still novel in Brimington's dimly lit streets, or when milk really was freshly delivered to your door, read on . . . and enjoy.

Introduction

I came to live at number four Queen Street, Brimington when I was one year old, in 1927, with my parents Harry and Lois Pike, my sister Audrey and my brother Geoffrey. This is therefore my account of what life was like in the Brimington area, mainly immediately before the Second World War. It covers the same period as Peter Harrison's recollections published both in *Miscellany* 4 and in this edition, though from a different part of the village and from my perspective.

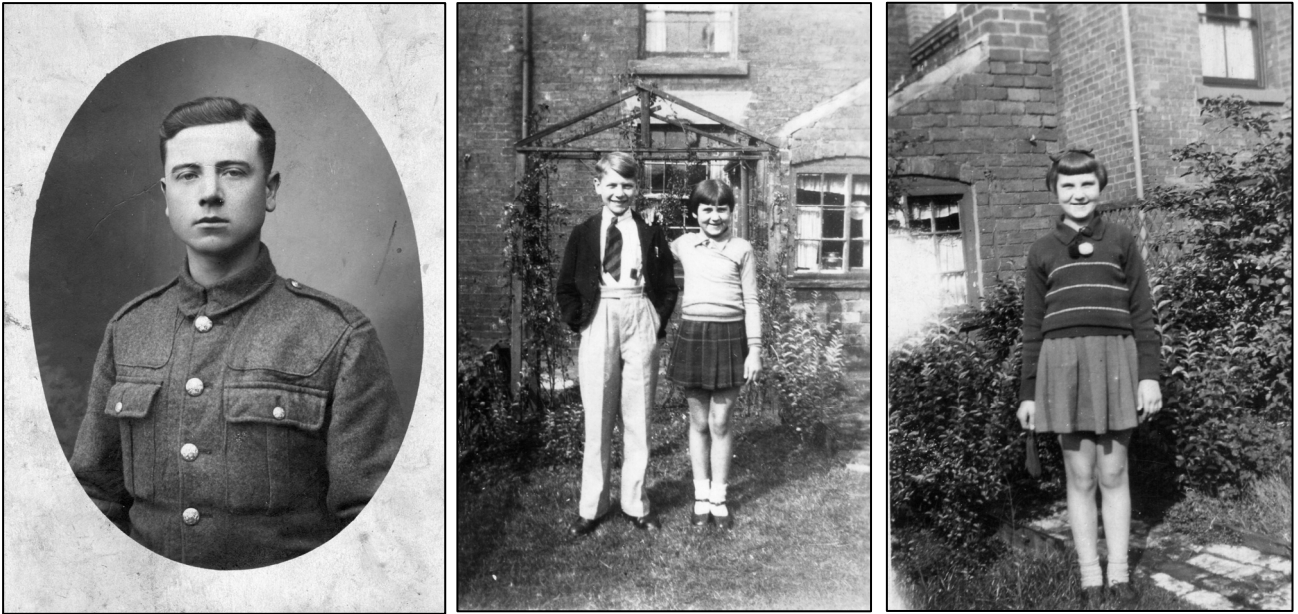
My family and home life

My Father worked at Markham's Broad Oaks Works, at the bottom of Hady Hill. He was an engineering fitter. I well remember the children's Christmas parties organised each year in Markham's canteen. This was just across the road from the works offices and is now a club.

We moved to Queen Street from Holland Road, Old Whittington. This was near to my Mother's sister, who lived on Whittington Hill.



An Edwardian postcard view of Queen Street. Though probably dating nearly 30 years earlier than our move to the area, little had changed in my time. Our house is to the extreme right. In the distance is a milk cart, with churn on the back. I explain more about this on page 35. The process of carrying milk by cart, from door-to-door, had not changed by the middle to late 1930s.

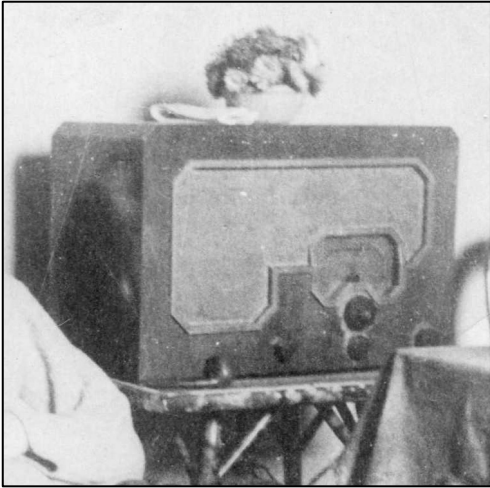


Above, left: my father in his First World War uniform. Centre: My brother Geoffrey and I, stood at the back of our house on Queen Street. I would be around seven at the time. Right: again, pictured at the rear of our house, I would be 12 when this photograph was taken. Behind me is the single storey kitchen extension.

Dad served in the First World War. He didn't finally come home for some time after the War had finished. With three children to care for on her own and not much money, the move must have been agreed between another of my Mother's sisters, who lived at Brimington (on High Street, next to Brimington Club). At that time auntie owned her house and the one adjacent. She lived in one and rented the other to a Mrs Humphries. Auntie also owned two houses in Queen Street – renting one to my Mother.

It was a cosy house. Two rooms up and down and a small kitchen, but no bathroom. The two bedrooms were quite large. There was a sitting room and a living room – the latter where everything seemed to happen. The kitchen, which was at the back of the house and juttied out as a single storey, had a sink on one side, next to a boiler, where a fire was lit under it. When the water was heated, we would boil all the household's white clothes and linen along with a 'dolly bag', in a vessel sat above the fire. The dolly bag was a blue coloured bag, which contained a blue chemical. When this was squeezed in the hot water it gave a slightly blue tinge to the whites. After being rinsed and rolled through the hand-operated wooden mangle, these whites would look lovely and clean. With the creases that the mangle had made, they looked quite a picture when hanging out on the washing line. We had a big brown pottery dolly tub which stood under the mangle. With a wooden 'peggy leg' in the tub, we'd swish the soaking clothes round. Mum would say; 'give the "peg leg" a turn as you go past.' The 'peggy leg' was a wooden stick with a handle at the top. At the bottom were three legs, sticking out at a slight angle. These would turn the washing.

We did not have electricity. Even by the time I left home in 1950, electricity had not been installed. In the centre of each of the rooms was a gas light. This had a glass shade on it, in the centre of which was a mantle. To turn the gas on and off there were two chains, which hung either side of the shade, attached to the gas valve, which we used to turn accordingly. You held a match (or taper) up to the mantle to light it. The mantle was very delicate, so that lighting the gas mantle was very much a job for the grown-up. Think about that. We couldn't, as children, simply turn the light on when it went dark.



Our trusty radio – they were always called wirelesses then – pictured in 1946, took pride of place in our sitting room. It brought good news and bad during the War, as well as entertainment and music. Reliable as it was the accumulators (batteries, which were housed in the back) could sometimes give up in the middle of something interesting. We took these to be recharged to Dora Evan's father in Queen Street. He used to charge these and many other house-holds, in his garden shed. Presumably we paid him!

The living room had flowered wall paper, a large table and chairs, sideboard and a couch. On the floor, in front of the fire, was a 'peg rug', which Father had made from bits of old material. There was a big chair, where Father sat, with a small table next to it. On this table sat our wireless. Sometimes the battery (we called them accumulators in those days) would run out; usually as we were listening to some interesting story. 'Who's going for a battery?', would be the familiar question. With a groan someone would run down Queen Street to Mr Evans for a fully recharged one. And so with new battery connected we'd turn the wireless back on, only to hear the end of the story. Groans all round.

We mainly used the living room. This had a large fireplace, with an oven to one side, where most of the cooking was done. There was a hot-plate on top and a boiler to the right, where most of our hot water was heated. In the centre was the fire-grate, an ash-pan at the bottom to collect the ashes, and fire bars above. These bars could be lifted out with a tool, kept on the tiled hearth, along with a brass poker, a brush with brass handle and a small brass shovel. All these were kept hanging on a brass stand. This stand was made by my Father. Newspaper and sticks were used to light the fire, slowly adding small pieces of coal. If there was not much wind outside to draw up the flames via the chimney, a piece of newspaper was

placed over the bottom of the chimney. This resulted in a definite roar – flames would appear, sometimes catching the newspaper, setting it on fire, pulling it up the chimney. This was potentially quite dangerous, especially if the chimney was thick with soot. The still burning newspaper might set this soot on fire, resulting in a chimney fire – you would see flames coming out of the chimney pot. To stop this happening and fires in general getting up the chimney it was important to have the chimney swept regularly. Each year Mr. Shardlow, who came over the fields and lanes from New Whittington on his bicycle, with brushes, swept our chimney. He would push the brush up from the fire place, attaching wooden rods as he progressed. It was our job to watch from the outside of the house for the brush coming out at the top of the chimney. Mum's job, of course, was cleaning up. There was a shelf above the fireplace, with a thick brass pole underneath, with brass knobs at the ends, also made by Father.

The sitting room was our best room; except for Christmas it was little used. In it was a settee and chair, piano and fire place – in which was a gas fire. At the side was a gas cupboard in which there was a penny slot meter. You basically placed a penny in the slot, turned a handle and this connected gas to the house. After you had used so much gas the penny would run out and the gas was shut off. You could load more than a penny in the meter, though, which was better as you could find yourself in the middle of doing something, only to be plunged into darkness when the penny ran out. You then had to remember to turn everything off and relight it once gas was restored. In those days a penny lasted quite a long time.

My Mother would black lead the fireplace till it shone. This was cream, which came in a tin. You put this on with a cloth, then with a small brush, Mother would rub very hard to cover every bit of the cast metal fireplace. A lasting shine would be achieved by finishing off with a clean cloth.

All this seems hard to contemplate with today's central heating. Yet fetching coal for and lighting the fire, ashing-out and black-leading was an everyday occurrence in most houses up and down the country.

Early years

We had a carefree life, going to local schools in Princess Street and at the Central Schools on Devonshire Street. Lovely summer days playing in fields and lanes with a group of boys and girls. Football and cricket (to please the boys); skipping and ball games for the girls. During the year, different games were played, 'biff bat', 'shuttle cock', 'snobs', 'marbles', 'rounders', 'kick-can', 'whip and top', and 'conkers' in the autumn.

I remember that winter always seemed long, cold and hard, with snow knee-deep. I never remember not going to school due to it snowing.

Calling in home to see if tea was ready, the sight and smell of newly baked bread and tea cakes, were what I fondly remember. Sometimes Mum might be making some bread. She did this in a big earthenware pansion on the table. Half-a stone of flour, yeast, salt, sugar and water all mixed together – pounding away at the dough.

Travel outside of Brimington in my school days was very rare. I don't even remember my Mother travelling much outside the village either. A journey to Chesterfield in those days was seen as a special occasion.

Traffic was very sparse too. I remember the East Midlands Motor Service's number 9 bus came down New Brimington to Barrow Hill. These were single decker buses, complete with conductor. I don't remember the colour of the buses, but I'm told the livery was an attractive off yellow (described as 'chrome yellow') with chocolate bands.¹ Later in my life, when I made regular journeys to Chesterfield, this service was very useful for us, as all other buses went down Ringwood Road in the Staveley direction, or off to Brimington Common.

The 9 started from the bus stands on New Beetwell Street – now approximately the site of the modern coach station enquiry office on Beckingham Way. On departing from Chesterfield, the bus went down Tontine Road, before turning left on to Markham Road. Then it turned left and through the network of streets behind the Derbyshire Times, to eventually meet Corporation Street. Then a sharp right turn, passing the Hippodrome on the left. The Hippodrome is marked by the cutting which takes the inner relief road under Corporation Street. Just before the Station Hotel was Felkin Street, where the bus would take another sharp left. This would meet the bottom of Tapton Lane. There was a public house near here, the 'Railway Inn', which was on the corner of Felkin Street and Tapton Lane. This would be where Doughty's bus would stand. Next was a right turn and bus stop, in front of Willetts sweet shop. Then it was down Brimington Road, passing Eastwood's Wagon Works, the Skull and Cross Bones bridge and on towards Brimington. At this time (the years before the Second World War) this was quite an isolated stretch of road. Most of the houses along Chesterfield Road at Tapton, beyond Swaddale had yet to be built. In Brimington the bus turned down High Street at the Three Horse Shoes public house. It then made its way down past the Congregational Church, on to Princess Street, Victoria Street, Station Road (Hollingwood) and then to Barrow Hill. I didn't catch Doughty's as much as the East Midland's service, which was much more convenient for me.

School days

I was happy at school, but alas, many of my school friends from those happy days have died. Three of whom are still with me are Mona and Gordon Land and of course Peter Harrison (the bane of my life!).

¹ PSV Circle (1988), *Fleet history of East Midland Motor Services Ltd, part one 1920 – 1955*, p. 5. There was also an East Midland's service 99 which ran down Princes Street.

It's Peter who has reminded me of the day I got him the cane. This was when the boys were playing football on their yard at the Devonshire Street schools. This was separated from our yard by a fence, through which was a gate under an archway.² No boy was to pass through this gate, which was on the top playground. The boys' ball came over into the girls' part. With delight we hid the ball, I won't say where...not just yet. 'Throw the ball back' they pleaded. The answer of course was a firm 'no'. One boy was very brave, running on to our yard. This was Peter Harrison. We shouted and repeated with mischievous delight about this. Out came Peter's teacher and marched him for his hand caning. It's something that today's children would find hard to believe – that we had strictly enforced separate schools and playgrounds. And that someone would get the cane across his hand for merely retrieving a football is really hard to contemplate.

I still don't believe how shy I was in those days. Peter recently told the story of where the ball was hidden to my grandson Thomas, who just could not believe his Nana would do that. Thomas's imagination ran away with him as with eyes opened wide at the kind of pants we wore! I think it was Peter's revenge from all those years ago.

School holidays and leisure

During the school holidays (Easter, Whitsuntide, in August and at Christmas) the boys showed their skills making trolleys made of wood, four wheels and some rope. Pram wheels with rubber tyres were a luxury. A piece of wood nailed on the back for a brake and away we raced (on the back) with a good driver down the lanes.

The August summer holidays were perhaps the most enjoyable – four weeks off school and it never seemed to rain (though I'm sure it did). In my childhood it was a fairly quick walk and you were out into the fields – no Peterdale Road estate at this time. We were allowed to wander most places; across fields, playing in the hayfields – all no doubt familiar to many generations of children.

One favourite was Westwood where we could be all day playing games. A group of us would gather with sandwiches and bottles of water or Lemonade, if lucky. Then we'd saunter along passing Miss Ranyards sweet shop on High Street, noses to the window (this shop was somewhere near where Devon Drive is now). It was a big decision what to buy for those with money. Into the shop we all trooped, eyeing the bottles of assorted sweets. Would it be a half penny or a whole penny worth of sweets? 'Fish mixtures' (boiled sweets in small fish shapes) lasted longer, so did 'bulls eyes' and 'gob stoppers.' Liquorice sticks and laces, 'little gems' (small coloured squares with a sweet fruity filling) and 'kali' with all different colours. Too many to remember.

If 'Butcher Holmes', whose shop was on the corner of Burnell Street and High Street, was slaughtering as we passed, we would stop and listen to the terrible noise of the cattle. The big wooden doors would be closed, but we could hear and see the blood coming out under the door, trying to imagine what was on the other side of the big door.

Next to be called on was my Auntie. She lived next door to the club on the High Street and had a large orchard, down her garden, with apple, pear and plum trees. A few apples from her and off to Westwood we went.

² See P. Harrison "A Kid for Cott. Lane" – growing up in Brimington during the 1930s and the war years', *Brimington and Tipton Miscellany*, number 4 (2012), p. 28, for a plan showing the school-yard arrangements.

On arrival in Westwood we would play some games, then sampling our food and drink, whilst having a rest. While the boys played football we girls would gather some bluebells or other wild flowers to take home to Mum. Home by teatime hungry and tired, but after a plate of stew and new bread we were out again until bedtime.

The arrival of the fair in Brimington during August was always a special event for us. Every year the rides and side stalls would arrive in a fleet of lorries and steam engines during August to park on 'Creswick's field', off Chesterfield Road. There was no horse-drawn equipment in my school-days. With the attendant caravans and all the rides and side-shows the field would be full. The steam engines provided electricity for the rides, which, along with the side-shows, were brightly lit. This was a real difference from what we experienced in the home, with our gas lights and also on the streets – which were dimly lit, again by gas. We would sit on the stone wall – which is still mostly there, though now has houses behind it, on the Nethercroft Road development – watching progress. First the caravans would park up; then work started on erecting the different amusements. 'Roll a Penny' stall and the candy floss stall I remember well. It would be Dad's job to try and knock off the coconuts from their stands on the coconut stall, with the balls you paid for. The 'Noah's Ark' roundabout would be assembled – this went very fast. There were the swing boats and the 'switch-back', where you tried to walk along a wooden pathway, while it suddenly lurched backwards and forwards.

We always felt low when returning to school after the summer holidays. Four weeks of doing just what we wanted, then the reality of another year at school. There was no homework for us at either the Princess Street school, where I attended until I was seven or the girl's school on Devonshire Street.

Compared to today's children our pleasures were quite simple. With a ball we could do all kinds of tricks; bouncing, throwing and catching. Likewise a skipping rope, or a cotton washing line from Mum, made a long rope which would stretch from one side of the road to the other. Two ropes together turning alternately was called 'French skipping', though this was more difficult. A bag of marbles or snobs were carried around ready for a game.



I'm around seven here, with my brother Geoffrey and our dog Trixie.

The game of snobs required two elements. There were squared off stones, smooth on two opposite sides, with two notches cut into them on all other faces, measuring about half an inch across each side.³ The second element was a round stone, rather like a marble. Without going into a long description the game comprised throwing up the various snobs and catching them on the back of your hand – a skill which I was very good at.

We also collected cards from cigarette packets. These would be swapped if we had two the same. Whole sets of cards were kept in an album together. I well remember the subjects; footballers, cricketers, birds, flowers, movie stars, famous people. I still have my brother's cards and stamp book which he collected.

Mum also cut a number out of a newspaper every day for a year, saving this in a pot. I cannot remember the title of this newspaper, but just before Christmas she would send these coupons in and receive an annual for me and my brother. Mum would save these as presents for us. My sister would paint and colour pictures from the same newspaper, entering these in a competition, which she hoped would win

³ One of these snobs is illustrated on the front cover.

her a prize. At Christmas we had simple gifts. A toy, books to read and colour, apple, orange, nuts and a selection box. Geoffrey would be in trouble with Mum, for opening his box before lunch.

New Year's day, during the morning, the Mummers would come round and stand in the yard, a boy covered in an old sackcloth was the Tup, another would be the butcher and start by saying, 'Up comes me and our old lass short o' money and short o' brass. Pay for a pint and let us sup and we will act our Derby Tup'.⁴ After collecting money from us and the neighbour they would wish us a happy New Year and hurry on to the next house.

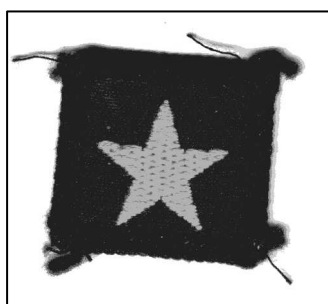
Things seemed to be arranged around the seasons in those days. Easter was usually the start of better weather – we were allowed to wear white ankle socks and black ankle strap shoes.

September and October, though autumn months, always seemed to be fairly warm, but suddenly it would be back to woollen socks, strong shoes or boots, woollen gloves and hats, with the onset of winter. The first snow of winter was eagerly awaited – in my school days it always snowed every winter. I remember waking up to find the patterns of snowflakes on the window panes. Everything outside would be so quiet, with everything covered in snow. My first thought, at seeing this, would be to get out the sledge, but I would soon be brought to my senses, Mother would call us down for breakfast, where we'd sit in front of a warm fire. Although there were fire places in the bedrooms normally we couldn't afford to have a fire in them, unless we were ill. Mother must have been up much earlier, preparing the fire and making sure we had warm things to put on. Then, with our Wellingtons on, it would be out to school, which started at 9 am at both Devonshire Street and Princess Street.

Though the snow would be knee high and might stop for weeks, life carried on. There were no school meals in those days. It would be a walk back home for lunch, then back up to school, finishing at 4 pm. After tea, we would settle down to read or draw, before bedtime.

When snow was on the ground winter holidays and Saturdays was spent either snow balling, or sledging down Holmes field, coming out at the bottom of the field near the allotments covered in snow.

We had children's shows in the Church Hall; one was called 'Gloops'. All I remember is someone in white, dressed like a Bear. You had to pay to get in.



One of my Brownie badges, which were sewn on the sleeve of my uniform.

At about seven, I joined the Brownies. We had sixes (teams) within each Brownie pack, each had a badge – pixie, gnome, elf etc. I was in the elves – one of my badges is illustrated to the left. Later I was a Girl Guide, which I enjoyed. Like the Brownies, Guides were divided into teams (patrols), but were named after flowers. I was a poppy; others included pansy. Both Brownies and Guides met in the Church Hall. One leader I remember was Miss Dodd, whose father had a sweet shop next to the Ark Tavern public house on Chesterfield Road.

I remember going on a ramble to Pudding Pie Hill, up near Wigley. We sat on the corner eating sandwiches. I wonder if the seat is still there?

Church

Sundays were quiet days, taken up with church. There was morning service, Sunday school and evensong to attend. I worshipped at St Michael's Church where my brother, Geoffrey, was a choir boy.

⁴ See P. Cousins (with material from P. Harrison), 'Some observations on the Derby Tup and the Brimington Mummers' plays', *Brimington and Tupton Miscellany*, number 2 (2010), pp. 17 – 28.

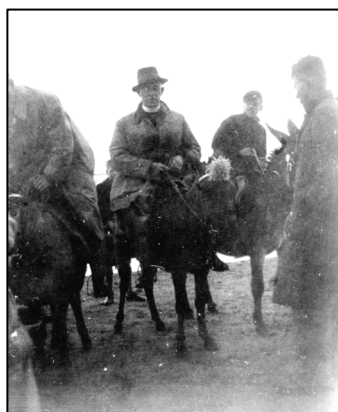
Mr Hector Cappendale was choirmaster in my brother's days. In the 1930s there were no girls in the choir. Male singers sat at the back of the choir stalls on both sides, with boys at the front, again on both sides. I often wonder how the ladies, who now sit on the front choir-stalls, manage to sit in the space made for the very small boys who used to sit there.

The old National School, across from the Church, in Church Street, was used for small children at the Sunday school. Here the Sunday school teachers would tell Bible stories to the youngsters. Though I cannot remember much about the old National School, I do remember that it was very small, with a few wooden seats and not much room for anything else. Much later, well after my school days, the building was used by a Brimington man for a workshop, who made things out of wood. My Father visited him if he needed any odd pieces of wood.



A church procession heading up Manor Road. My brother Geoffrey is to the extreme right of the photograph, which must date to around 1934/35. Richard Bramwell is the middle gentleman in the group of three behind the boys, with Peter Drury to the right. Mr Fox is to the left. (Photograph J.S. Walker)

Religion – attendance at either church or chapel – was a strong feature of life in those days. Processions around the village held by the church and the chapels on some Sundays, were a memorable event. These were separate – there was a definite division between church and chapel. The processions would feature banners, led by a band. There might be a house to house collection, with a stop in various areas for group hymn singing. The route for St Michael's church was along Church Street and the adjoining roads, then up Manor Road to Brimington Common. Whitsuntide heralded a big procession in Chesterfield, with many different denominations taking part. There were banners and bands, a march with lorries and carts carrying children and adults from different churches and chapels from Chesterfield and the surrounding districts.



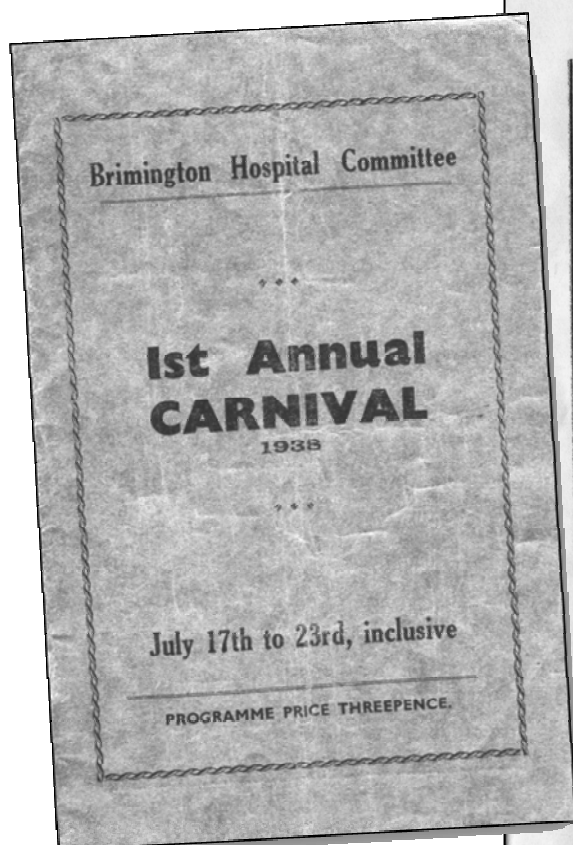
In the summer we had a trip to the seaside from Church. I remember walking down to Staveley Works station, on the London and North Eastern Railway, on more than one occasion. All the children and parents were carrying buckets and spades and sandwiches. A good time had by all, paddling and making sand pies, riding on donkeys, candy floss. Being in the choir Geoffrey had 1s 4d to spend. I have a photo of Father Moore on a donkey complete with raincoat and Trilby hat at Skegness.

Not a very good photograph from the family's 'box-brownie' but it does show that the sun didn't shine every day! It also shows Father Moore, then the curate at St. Michael's, on a donkey at Skegness.

As described by Peter Harrison, dances were held in the Church Hall with Mr and Mrs Lowe on Piano and Drums. Boys on one side of the wall and girls on the other. Imagine the anticipation on both sides of the room glaring across at one another. Fortunately we had a chaperon of Ladies who kept order.

Grand carnival week

In 1938 we had our first village carnival week, organised by the Brimington Hospital Committee. Events were held in the village from July 17th to 23rd.



After many years of organising a 'demonstration' the Brimington Hospital Committee decided to hold a carnival week in 1938. The committee raised money for the Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Royal Hospital. The front page of the programme, printed in Brimington by Allens on Heywood Street, is pictured above. The inside page features a photograph of the first carnival queen – my sister Audrey – and her attendants. Unfortunately the next year was the last time the carnival was held.



There was a competition for a Carnival Queen. My sister Audrey entered and I remember her coming home very excited saying; 'I won'. She had a very busy week attending all the functions which were held.

The first day started with the 'annual demonstration', then in its 52nd year. This comprised an outdoor meeting in the afternoon on 'Creswick's Park' (now the Nethercroft Road etc. housing development), with speakers including the Rector of Brimington, George Benson (the area's M.P.) and others. There were processions from various areas of the village, led by brass bands.



Possibly a float in one of the Brimington Hospital Carnivals of the late 1930s (maybe even the first event in 1938). This photograph, shows the Brimington Linen League's 'Maypole' float on Manor Road. The Linen League raised funds specifically for linen at Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Royal Hospital. Mrs Marriott is at the treadle operated sewing machine, perhaps emphasising the league's main purpose. (Photograph J.S. Walker; collection P. Cousins, the late A.E. Buckley)

All day and every day something was happening. Monday saw another procession assembling in the evening at Victoria Street. My sister was met by the parish council and the hospital committee. It ended in Creswick's Park where my sister was crowned by the chairman of the parish council, Mr. Hinch (who had the butcher's shop on Church Street). There then followed a dancing display by pupils at the Girls' Central School (Devonshire Street) and a gymnastic display by the Staveley Coal and Iron Company's Gymnasium Club. On conclusion of the event the procession reassembled and went to the War Memorial to lay a wreath.⁵

Afterwards there was a 'Carnival Ball' in the Church Hall attended by the Carnival Queen and attendants.

Other events that week comprised:

- A ladies' comic cricket match; pillow fight competition and gentlemen's sack football match on the Tuesday in Creswick's Park
- Carnival Sports heats on Wednesday, again in Creswick's Park
- A 'competition and fun night' in the Church Hall on Thursday
- A whist drive in the Church Hall on the Friday, with the top prize of a ton of coal.
- On the Saturday there was another grand procession from Manor Road Recreation Ground to Creswick's Park. There were competitions for decorated floats, costumes, carnival bands and even a best decorated house. On arriving at Creswick's Park, my sister distributed the prizes before sports were held, following the heats on Wednesday. There was another gymnastics display by the Staveley Company's Gymnastic Team, then an obedience display by an Alsatian Dog 'Ranger of Ellesmer.' The day was rounded off by 'Cooper and Ward's Concert Party.' There were side shows such as 'Punch and Judy', ventriloquial shows, clairvoyant 'Madam Jenny', darts, cocoanut shies, roll a penny. Teas were available in a marquee.

⁵ A description of the event, with photograph, is given in the *Derbyshire Times (DT)*, 22 July 1938.

The 'competition and fun night' in the Church Hall, included a fancy dress competition for all children in Brimington, where 30 or more entered. The hall stage was full of children dressed in different costumes. I can't remember who won. My mother entered me in one competition for 12-16 years old – a beauty competition. I was very shy, but remember walking on and off the stage in front of some ladies. When I heard the results I was amazed to find I had come first, winning a wooden ink stand shaped like an owl. I still have it, minus the pot ink well. I remember the dress I wore. Mum made it by hand, no sewing machine in those days.

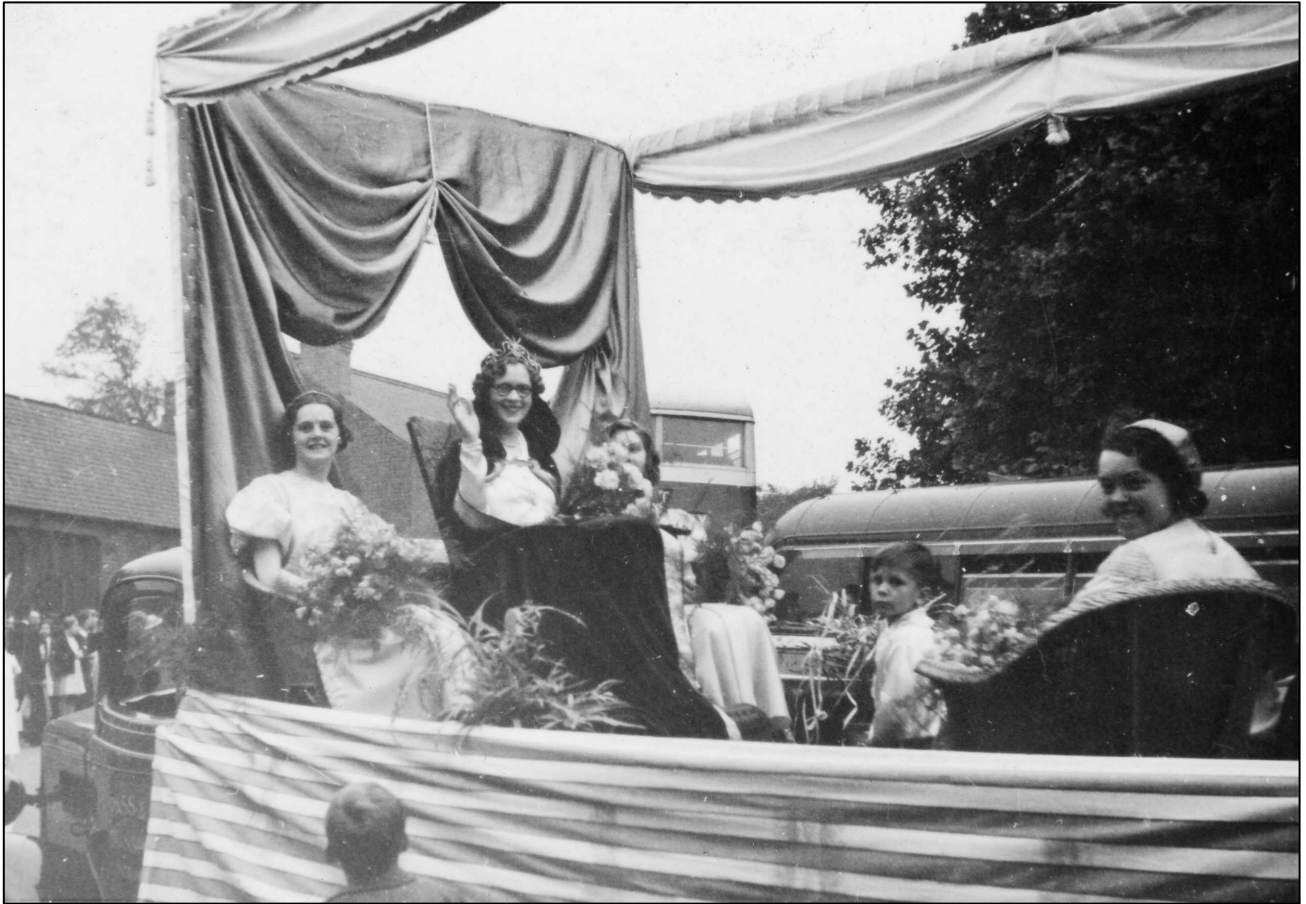
Next year the Carnival was held again, with a similar range of activities. My sister was one of the four Carnival princesses. A programme I have from the second carnival shows that it was similar to that held in 1938. The introduction, written by 'The Committee' tells us that the previous year's event had raised £90 for the Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Royal Hospital – 1939's target was £100. The event had '...proved so popular and financially successful...that every effort should be made to make the Hospital Carnival Week an annual event...' But the clouds of war were hanging over us and the event was never held again.



The crowning of my sister by the Chairman of the Brimington Parish Council, T.W. Hinch, at the 1938 Hospital Committee Carnival. Left to right are Ada Dolby, Dorothy Green, my sister, Mrs Thompson and Ida Fox (Photograph J.S. Walker)



My sister makes her acceptance address at the 1938 Hospital Committee Carnival. Though the page boy Jackie Herberts looks a little distracted, I believe that my sister spoke very much from the heart. We knew how much local people needed the Royal hospital as our Father had been very seriously injured in an accident only a few years earlier at Markham's Broad Oaks works. He spent some time in hospital and never fully recovered. This photograph was used in a Derbyshire Times report on the event. (Photograph J.S. Walker)



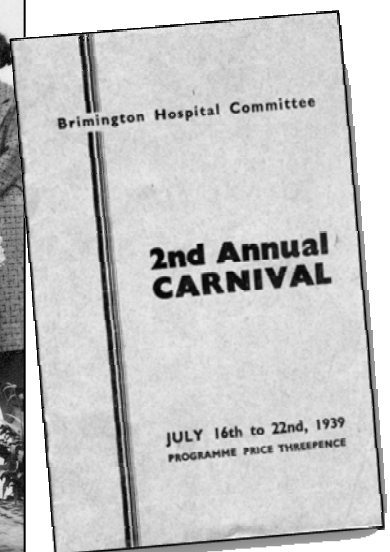
A wave to the photographer and the crowd from my sister, as the 1938 carnival processes on its way around Brimington. Seen here at the corner of Church Street and High Street, part of the old National School can just be seen to the left. Behind the lorry on which she is sat with the others, is a single deck and double-deck bus. The lorry may belong to the Pass family of Hedley House. (Photograph J.S. Walker)



My sister at the Carnival Ball, held in the Church Hall on Monday 18 July 1938. Others in the photograph include Mrs Witham and her daughter Betty (to the bottom right), who lived on Pondwell Corner. (Photograph J.S. Walker).



My own contribution, as described in the text, was to enter in a beauty competition, which I won. Some of the competitors for this and of the fancy dress are pictured here. I am fourth from left on the middle row; next to me on the left is Dorothy Marsh. Also on this row are first from right Pamela Hodson and second from right Dorothy Knowles. On the front first from left is Dorothy Bilinger followed by Vera Kimmons; second from right is Margaret Murkin. (Photograph J.S. Walker)



Avis Booker was the Queen for the second, but unfortunately, last carnival. She is seen here to the right of my sister, who is third from left. Geoffrey Yates was the page boy. Other princesses are (from second left to right) Ida Fox, my sister, Joyce Nicholson and Rosie Rodderick. At the back third from left is Mrs Mitchell and second from right Mrs Elcock. The girl in the front row is Betty Straw. Any thoughts of a third carnival were scuppered by the Second World War. Afterwards things changed. Hospitals became part of the National Health Service. It was no longer necessary to pay for treatment or be part of a contributory scheme if you needed a doctor or a hospital patient. Hospital committees, which weren't just a feature in Brimington, but also elsewhere, were, thankfully, no longer needed to help ensure a community had a decent hospital. (Photograph J.S. Walker)



The 10th Duke of Devonshire (1895-1950) addresses the crowds at the 53rd and last annual hospital committee demonstration on Sunday 16 July 1939. My sister is just in this photograph, to the right. The 1939 Carnival week, like that of the previous year, featured a range of events. (Photograph J.S. Walker)



The 1939 Carnival Committee and others associated with the event, in a group photograph taken on the stage in the Church Hall. Amongst those I can identify are back row, sixth from left, the Rector, Father McQueen. To the left of him is Frank Lowe, who used to play drums at dances held in the Church Hall. W.T. Holmes (who kept the butcher's shop on the corner of Burnell and High Streets) is fourth from right on the front row, next to my sister. (Photograph J.S. Walker)

Self sufficiency

I remember Brimington had good shops in the period just before the Second World War. We were largely self-sufficient.

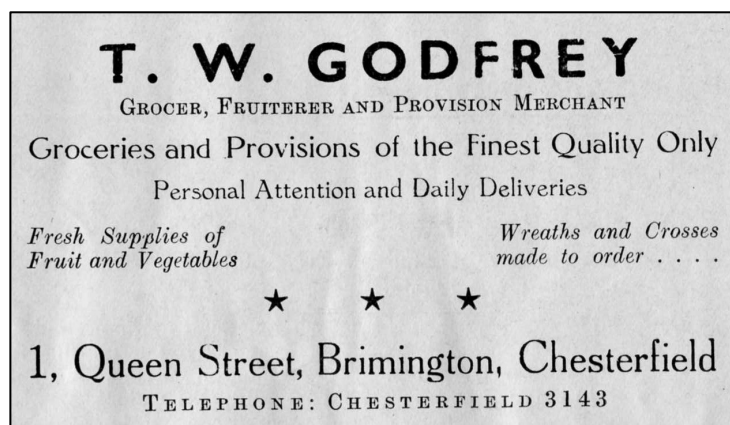
Hinch's shop on Church Street – he sold bread baked on the premises, meat, sausage and pork pies. There were plenty of butchers in the village for fresh meat. In many ways the village was self-sufficient; shops for bread, newspapers, a chemist and cobblers for shoe repairs. We used Johnny Dodd's for school shoes and school wear. He was on Chesterfield Road next to the Ark Tavern. Shentalls (for general provisions), was on the corner of Devonshire Street and Chesterfield Road. Woodheads, who were on Church Street, near where the doctors' surgery is now situated, had branches in other villages, along with Hunters, who sold teas, and were situated just about opposite Woodheads, on Church Street. Wakefield's were well-known for groceries. They were situated where the road now goes down to High Street from Ringwood Road.

Brimington was also well-served for public houses and beer offs (off-licences), where you could take a jug and buy a pint of beer to take home. There were plenty of chip shops, where we bought 'a penny worth' and asked for some 'fish bits' – really the bits of battered fish from the bottom of the frying range. These were wrapped in newspaper, with salt and pepper. Piping hot, we'd walk home eating them – wonderful.

In summer we had Johnny Yeoman coming round with his horse and cart, which was so heavy with his weight that it tipped down at the back. He carried a large can of beautiful yellow ice cream, which he made at his premises on Church Street. A half-penny for a small cornet, or a large one would cost a penny. Johnny Yeoman would also fill a cup or dish, plus a wafer. I remember him shouting; 'Ice Cream –bring your pots and have a lot.'

<p>FOR QUALITY PLUS VALUE</p> <p>SHOP AT— HUNTERS TEA STORES BRIMINGTON.</p>	<p>For all kinds of Foods for Dogs, Cage Birds, Pigeons, and . . . Poultry</p> <p>Try A. WAKEFIELD 1, RINGWOOD RD., BRIMINGTON</p>	<p>LADIES— Book your HOLIDAY PERMS. at Ethel Randell's High Class Hairdresser 29, Princess St., BRIMINGTON Also at 33, Bamford Street, New Whittington PERMS FROM 10/-</p>	<p>Misses Ranyard Confectioners & General Dealers HIGH STREET, BRIMINGTON</p>
<p>G. E. Brown Coach and Bus Proprietor Reasonable terms for Private Parties to all parts 4, Church Street, BRIMINGTON Tel. . . . Chesterfield 2898</p>	<p>J. W. CUTTS HAIRDRESSING ROOMS. 21, HIGH STREET, BRIMINGTON. HIGH CLASS TOILET SPECIALITIES</p>	<p>Ices—Ices J. YEOMANS We Specialise in Ices Why not try one to-day ? Large or Small Parties Catered for CHURCH STREET, BRIMINGTON</p>	<p>Miss N. Bowyer Ladies and Children's Hairdresser 15, Heywood St., Brimington PERMS. FROM 8/- MacDonald Perms. a Speciality</p>
<p>J. S. WALKER PHOTOGRAPHER. WEDDINGS & OTHER GROUPS TAKEN BY APPOINTMENT Films Developed and Printed Agent and Finisher for Granville Free Films THE PINES STUDIO, CHESTERFIELD RD., BRIMINGTON</p>		<p>A. DARKIN High Class Fish and Chip Saloon Ringwood Road, Brimington Wet Fish Sold Daily Eating on the Premises</p>	<p>Have Nothing but the Best in New Boots or Repairs You will get them at J. T. JESSOP High Class Boot Dealer & Repairer 32, PRINCESS STREET & RINGWOOD ROAD, BRIMINGTON Finest Workmanship and Materials Guaranteed 29 years in Brimington</p>

You might get just a little impression of how self sufficient we were in the village, from these two pages taken from the 1938 Hospital carnival programme. J.S Walker who is advertising, took the nine photographs above and that of the choir on page 27. He was well-known in the area. The Pines is now number 22 Chesterfield Road.



An enlargement of T.W. Godfrey's advertisement from the 1939 Carnival programme. This was literally our local shop – being just across the road from where we lived.

We had milk delivered to our door every day by a local farmer (I cannot remember who). There were many others who did this in other parts of the village. It was normal for people in Brimington to get their milk like this. But this wasn't delivered in bottles or cartons. Milk jug ready, we'd wait until the farmer knocked on the door. He'd then fill our jug from half pint or one pint measuring cans which hung on the side of a larger churn. No fridge, straight in the cool pantry, where all things like butter, bacon, lard, dripping and bread were kept. We had, of course, to buy milk daily, but not on Sundays.

Dripping was collected by Mum from a beef or pork joint. This was kept in basins, to be spread on hot toast. There were no toasters then. Homemade bread was placed on the end of a toasting fork and held in front of the fire. Spread with the dripping it was delicious. Our kitchen in Queen Street had a range, with oven on one side and fire on the other. Bacon sausage and eggs for breakfast, with Mum cooking on the fire, would be ready for us. Dad had a friend on the allotments, at the back of Princess and Queen Streets (now part of a housing estate), who kept pigs. This friend would let us buy some pork which was hung down the pantry wall. Mum would take a large knife and cut off slices. Into the pan they would go, where they would sizzle and splash in the fire making flames jump up. A pan of stewing meat and onions was always in the side oven cooking. If we had a cough in winter Mum would strain some into a cup for us to drink, which she called 'beef tea'. Mum made cough liquid with hard liquorice stick, which was cut into small pieces and soaked in hot water. Another medicine was elder flower. This saw the flowers of that shrub steeped in hot water, then strained into a cup which to drink. Horrible! We didn't cough after that. Another remedy was butter, sugar and vinegar. This was given on a spoon, by mouth. Butter was covered in sugar, with vinegar on top. I'm not sure what good this was supposed to do, but the idea was that the butter provided the grease, sugar to help make the whole palatable, with the vinegar for the bite.

Dad kept chickens on his allotment. This meant we had new laid eggs. He would fatten one of the chickens up for Christmas day, which he plucked in the kitchen sending feathers all over.

Shoes were mended by Dad – a practice probably unheard of today. He would buy a piece of leather and cut it to size with a special knife. He would place the shoe on to a shoe hob, where the leather was nailed on, trimmed and filed smoothly. New heels, with studs round the back to make them last, would also be another repair made.

Dad also kept pigeons on the garden as a hobby. Some were racing pigeons which he would put in the basket and cycle down to Staveley Works station, put on the train and then make his way home. Later in the day, Dad would sit in the garden, cap over his eyes, pipe in his mouth looking in the air for a sight of them settling on the roof. This was our time to disappear, as any noise we made would not have aided Father in his task of getting the pigeon down from the roof. As soon as Father was able he would scoop up the bird, take the ring from its leg and register it in a clock. This logged the time the bird had taken from release to fly home. Only then could we breathe again.

The War years

Suddenly our lives changed, when in September 1939 war was declared. I remember my Mother crying when hearing the news on the 'wireless'. Possibly she was remembering the First World War, when, as a young girl, she saw her four brothers going to war.

The next six years (my teenage years) were spent in blackout and rationing. No streets were lit and lamps on vehicles were shielded so much that you could hardly make anything out in the dark.

Gas masks were issued to everyone, which we had to learn how to use. When we put these on they smelled of rubber. When you breathed, the sides of the mask made a noise. They were certainly not pleasant things to wear. The masks were contained in a cardboard box, with a long string, which we hung round our necks at all times. Babies had a special mask, which totally enclosed the infant.

Dad made wooden frames covered in black material to fit the windows. These had to be fitted at night before he lights went on, or the Air Raid Warden came knocking on the door shouting; 'put that light out'. We practised what to do in an air raid. If we could not get home when the warning siren sounded we had to shelter with someone near to school. I went with Irene Wilkins who lived on Hall Road (the Methodist Chapel is there now). A little later into the war we only went to school part-time. Girls attended in the morning and boys in the afternoon. The following week things were reversed. It was a wonder we learnt anything at all. No wonder I had to go to night school later.

Air raids became normal routine, sometimes during the night or day. Mum was very afraid at these times, but we children didn't realise how serious it could be. Sitting at night in darkness during a raid and not being able to do anything, just listening to the drone of the plane's engines overhead. Mother would say; 'Does it sound like one of ours'. Dad would try to make light of it, saying; 'It could be ours love, keeping guard'. Or maybe he was remembering being in the trenches in the Army during the 1914-1918 War.

Bombs were dropped around Brimington – from Whittington and Brimington, Hollingwood – aiming for all the works and railways. Sheepbridge, Markham's Engineering and Staveley works were targets. Lives were lost in Chesterfield when a German plane made an early morning raid on workmen on their way to early morning work on Derby Road. The raider machine gunned the workmen. Possibly the aircraft was on its way home, maybe losing his way from a night bombing raid somewhere.

When the blast furnaces were charged at Staveley works, the heat and flames lit up the sky for miles around. During a blackout it was very dangerous if a German plane came over. I was told a roof was fitted over the furnaces during the war. I believe a warning light was installed at the furnaces to tell when an air raid was imminent.

One night after night school, an air raid sounded, I was walking down Brockhill, it was pitch black and everywhere was quiet. A voice rang out; 'What are you doing out? Where do you live?' This was the air raid precautions warden on his rounds. He would be looking for any lights showing and getting anyone off the streets during a raid. I was told to go home. Looking over towards Sheffield I could see red flames all around and hear the engines of planes. This was the raid on Sheffield, where many lives were lost and enormous damage done to buildings. It was a long sleepless night, but we had to be up next morning for work. I think they called it the 'British spirit'. This was a phrase we heard constantly during the War, along with 'Your country needs you', 'dig for victory', 'idle talk, ears are listening' and 'Make do and mend'.

My work friend Betty invited me on holiday with her parents to Yeovil, in Somerset, to visit her Aunt. Quite an adventure for me, not having been so far away before. A crowded train, standing all the way in

the corridor, soldiers sitting with their kitbags on the floor, either coming or going back on leave. Halfway the train separated. Betty and I were on the half ending up near the south coast, unfortunately my friend's parents were on the other half. Thankfully the guard put us right, reuniting us with her mother and father. On arrival it was after midnight. The next day, after a night's sleep, Betty and I went a walk over some fields. We saw a very low plane coming over, so low we could see the pilot. A man shouted; 'Get down you girls' and flung us to the ground. This was something quite different for us, not realising the danger. When we arrived back at Betty's aunty all the street windows were blown out, with most of the houses damaged by a bomb. On returning home we certainly had a story to tell.

I remember looking over the wall into next door garden where Mr William Randall and his wife Margery were playing on the lawn, with their sons Billy and Johnny. Mr Randall was a soldier on leave. My abiding memory is of him in khaki trousers, bare and bronzed chest – fine looking man – happy to be with his children in the sunshine. Little did I know he would not be coming home again. He was killed in Italy, whilst on action, age 28 years, in July 1943. His grave is in Syracuse War Cemetery, Scilly.

One man living on Princess Street was a 'Conscientious Objector'. He refused to go to war. He wasn't very high on our list and had quite a bad time locally.

To work

I left school aged 14. This was the normal age that girls left at the time. Some girls did get scholarships to Netherthorpe Grammar School and Tapton House School. Three of my friends were 'paid for' to continue their education at Netherthorpe. My sister and my brother both won scholarships for Tapton House School. Money did talk in those days.



A professional photograph taken by my uncle Sydney Whire, who had a photographic studio on Whittington Moor called 'Arthur's Studio'. Aged 17, I had made the blouse myself.

My first job, at 14, was at George Broomhead's, a gentleman's outfitters at the bottom of Low Pavement (opposite to where John Turner's shop was on the corner of Vicar Lane). Between 14 and about 15 ½ years old I studied, privately (we had to pay), short-hand and typing. This was something I needed for my second job. I first attended Miss Eastwood, who lived on Ringwood Road, for this private tuition. Then, when she gave up, I attended a Mrs Eastwood – actually Miss Eastwood's sister-in-law – on Brimington Common. I later studied at the Technical College, when I was old enough to attend.

At 16 I changed my job, working for Chesterfield Corporation, at the Town Hall's Health Department, for the Medical Officer of Health – Dr Stirling, who interviewed me. No one under 16 could be employed at Chesterfield Corporation. My work involved experience in some different jobs, such as children's dental hygiene, school clinics, with doctors, nurses and midwives and in baby clinics. My friend Kathleen Walker worked in the Town Clerk's department. Each morning we had to use a side entrance at the Town Hall as soldiers generally paraded all over the road.



The former Corporation Maternity Home (opened in 1922) in its final guise as the Eastwood Medical block, at Chesterfield Royal Hospital. Pictured in April 1984 the hospital closed at the end of that month. (Philip Cousins)

One experience was working in the Corporation's maternity home office. At this time the maternity home was in the grounds of the Chesterfield and North Derbyshire Royal Hospital on Durrant Road. By closure of the hospital in the 1980s it had become the medical block. The maternity home also incorporated a private clinic run by Dr. Duthie and Dr. Isabelle McKay. Though I was now an 18 year old, I wasn't really ready for ladies in labour and anxious fathers pacing up and down. In those days we were told to 'get on with it', which I did. Matron was very strict. Striding down the corridor in her uniform and white cap, she was quite a formidable figure. Once a month Matron did her bit, by inviting some of the men stationed in town (mostly officers of course), to an evening dance and buffet at the Hospital. In she would come and say; 'Miss Pike and Miss Rodburn, I hope you can spare an evening on Friday to help entertain the troops, along with some of the staff nurses.' Could we say 'no'?

My work at the maternity home was also my first experience with death. As everyone was busy I was told to escort a gentleman down to the Mortuary. He had come to 'collect' a stillborn baby. In a daze I checked the tiny label for the name, I saw this small face no bigger than a teacup. There was a little bonnet on the baby's head and it was wrapped up tight in a blanket. A nurse had placed a flower on top of the wrapped body. I made sure the man left, locked up the mortuary, ran upstairs and 'got on with it.' This sad occasion made such an impression on me that it is the first time I have ever said anything about it.

As teenagers we were made to grow up quickly during the war. On another occasion we were asked to volunteer a few hours some evenings to help out at the 'Kit Bag Club'. This was on Low Pavement opposite the Market Hall. Its purpose was to make sandwiches, tea and coffee for the soldiers stationed in and around Chesterfield. Not having much money, it was a place to sit, eat and drink when away from camp. We cut and buttered bread, made various sandwich fillings, mashed tea, made coffee, washed up and tried to have a word or two with the lads – not a difficult task in those days.

Entertainment was the cinema or dancing – both very popular. If you missed the last bus, it was a long walk home. One night, on walking through town, we came across a policeman standing guard by a broken shop window. He was on his own. Not having mobile phones in those days, the policeman asked if we could go and phone for help from the police box outside to the Punch Bowl public house on Holywell Cross. A good turn done, but we had missed the last bus and had to walk home. We were in a group for company. Coming round the Skull and Crossbones bridge at Tapton was a bit scary. Sandbags covered the bridge on both sides of the road, piled high with just enough space in the middle

for a bus to go through. These were placed here ready for any invasion. A quick dash through to the other side and we were on our way. Walking down Tinkersick on the way home, we would sit on the small stone bridge for a rest, a small stream running through, shining in the darkness, before making our way up the hill on Chesterfield Road and home.

Like any teenager during the War, what to wear was a problem because of clothing rationing. We had coupons which had to be surrendered against a determined amount of cloth or clothes. To overcome rationing we found that net curtaining was not rationed. At Chesterfield market Kathleen Walker and I found some pink net – not too see-through – which we purchased, creating a home-made blouse each. Next in-line were sandals. We brought some innersoles, which were sewn together to a depth of about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch. Red leather was stitched on which made the straps over the instep and around the ankle. We then bought some 'Rhino Sole' which was spread on the bottom and sides, making a thick rubber sole. This was then left to set. Kathleen was a life-long friend. I went to school with her and she worked with me for Chesterfield Corporation, at the Town Hall. She, though, worked in the Town Clerk's Department. Well-pleased with our effort, we floated to the dances at either the Victoria Ballroom, Odeon, or the Co-Operative Hall, in our new attire. 'Make do and mend' it was called.

One song which was played at the dances we attended was called 'Silver Wings in the Moonlight'.⁶ I remember the verses:

I'm not jealous of your other love
I heard her say.
Then they kissed a fond adieu.
And he went on his way,
Now there's a light that's shining in her eyes;
Every time she gazes at the skies.

Silver Wings in the moonlight,
Flying high up above,
While I'm patiently waiting,
Please take care of my love.

Silver Wings in the moonlight,
Silver bird in the sky,
Many times has he told me,
He loves both you and I.

So I must share him with you,
What can I do, it just has to be,
I'll never keep him from you,
Honest, if you won't keep him from me.

If you love him like I do,
Take him safely, and then;
Silver Wings in the moonlight,
Bring him homeward again.

I think of this as tribute and reminder of our pilots in the War – including the Battle of Britain – flying over, night after night, with someone, somewhere, praying the same thing.

The image shows the front cover of a '1942-43 CLOTHING BOOK'. The title is in large, bold, sans-serif capital letters. Below the title, a block of text reads: 'This book may not be used until the holder's name, full postal address and National Registration (Identity Card) Number have been plainly written below IN INK.' To the right of this text is a royal coat of arms crest. Below the text, there are several fields for handwritten information: 'NAME' (with 'HARRY PIKE' written in cursive), 'ADDRESS' (with '4 QUEEN ST. BRIMINGTON.' written in cursive), '(TOWN)' (with 'CHESTERFIELD' written in cursive), and '(COUNTY)' (with 'DERBYSHIRE' written in cursive). Below these is a box for the 'NATIONAL REGISTRATION (IDENTITY CARD) NUMBER', which contains the handwritten number 'PCQC / 130 / 1'. At the bottom, a small instruction reads: 'Read the instructions within carefully, and take great care not to lose this book'. In the bottom right corner, there is a small circular emblem with 'N. R.' and 'M.F.' inside, and the text 'Page 1' below it.

The front of my Father's clothes rationing book for 1942-1943. Though rationing did mean that everyone usually had a fairer share of what were very limited resources, you still had to buy the actual goods. In poorer homes being able to afford new clothes had always been a form of rationing. Inside the book were coupons, which were torn out and surrendered against your purchase.

⁶ This was originally sung by American Freddie Slack, Recorded 1943, and written by Hugh Charles, Leo Towers and Sonny Miller. [Online] last visited 7 March 2012 at URL: http://www.authentichistory.com/1939-1945/3-music/11-Separation/19430000_Silver_Wings_In_The_Moonlight-Freddie_Slack.html.

During the summer, we had two weeks off work. One year my friend Kathleen Walker and I decided to earn some money by working on a farm in Lincolnshire. This comprised potato picking and carrot weeding at Mr Sparrow's farm. That week we found out what work meant: out in the country, standing in a field with many others, including Italian prisoners of War. We needed the next week to recover.



Audrey in her W.R.N.S. uniform at
L.C.M.S.O Staines in September 1944.

My sister Audrey was in the Women's Royal Naval Service (W.R.N.S.), stationed in various places. One time whilst at Windsor, she obtained a weekend pass and came to meet Kathleen Walker and me while we were on holiday at Brighton. When Audrey came home on leave, my Mother would send her into Chesterfield shopping. At that time everyone had to queue up at the market stalls and shops, but when they saw her in uniform, someone would shout; 'Come to the front love. We can't keep the Navy waiting'. Audrey would be served with whatever was available. So she soon had all the shopping she needed. A queue meant there was something in the shop, maybe it wasn't what you wanted, but you knew someone would want it. I am sure that is why we are so good at queuing – we had so much practise in the War. Lo and behold if you tried queue jumping during the War. The 'lynch mob' (really anyone else in the queue) would be out with shopping bags and fists. Later, my sister was in the Victory Parade through London. This made Mum and Dad very proud of her. She told us she was picked as a marker, which, we were told was at the back and end of the row. Being tall Audrey was able to take big steps when they turned round corners.

The end of the War

Victory in Europe day was on Tuesday 8 May, 1945. This and the next day were declared public holidays. I caught the bus into town with a friend to celebrate, on the Tuesday. The buses during the war were changed in order to get more people on. Seats were placed lengthways on either side of the bus leaving more space down the middle for us to stand, like sardines in a tin.

We arrived in town to the noise of everyone singing and dancing on the streets. Everything was lit up after six years of being in the dark. It felt too good to be true. This went on all night, shouting, dancing, pubs open, lights shining, loud music, nothing seemed to matter anymore. Soldiers, sailors and airmen were everywhere, throwing their caps in the air celebrating, knowing that soon they would be going home.

In Brimington there were services at the Parish Church and the chapels. The parish church was also illuminated.⁷

Later it was Victory in Japan (V.J.) Day. Kathleen and I were on holiday in Blackpool, when we got the news. That evening we went to Blackpool Tower Ballroom thinking it would be safer inside than out in the street, knowing what happened on V.E. Day at home. We had a fabulous time and enjoyed every second; dancing and singing. The floor was crowded; the balcony was full of people throwing balloons and streamers down. Some were sitting on the floor – they probably couldn't stand up for various reasons. Night turned into day and we were still celebrating.

⁷ Due to the auspices of the Derbyshire and Nottingham Electric Power Company. DT, 11 May 1945. On the Sunday another service was held at the parish church, with a parade from Eastwood Park. DT, 18 May 1945.

This we thought was really the end. Soon everyone would be home and back to normal. Many families were lucky to have their men and women home, but some had only memories to help them through. Some children didn't know or remember their fathers. Six years was a long time for children to remember. It took a few more years before everyone came home, some having lost everything including families.

Prisoners of war came back with terrible memories and injuries. Those who suffered at the hands of the Japanese came back looking like skeletons, due to the awful treatment they suffered. There was talk of this being the war to end all wars. Everything would be better in the whole world in the future to come.

What more can I say?



My Mother, taken at Mablethorpe, probably just after the Second World War.



My Father, centre, with group of his workmates at Markham's in Chesterfield. Taken in the early 1930s, before his accident in 1935. Unfortunately I don't know the names of the others in this photograph. His accident occurred when an incorrectly slung load on the German gantry crane, which was a well-known local landmark, fell and hit him.



My good friend Kathleen Walker and I on holiday in Blackpool, just after the end of the Second World War. The '85598' would be the number of the photograph 'snapped' by a commercial photographer. Having taken your photograph he gave you a note with a number on. Later you would visit his shop, looking for the photograph, using the number as a reference. If you liked the picture you could then purchase it.

BOMBS OVER BRIMINGTON AND OTHER WARTIME RECOLLECTIONS

Peter Harrison

Foreword

In February 2011 Peter Harrison presented a talk to the Brimington and Tapton Local History Group, reviewing experiences of life in Brimington during the Second World War. The talk was supplemented with information from Philip Cousins. Like Peter's previous talk – 'A Kid from Cott. Lane' – (published in *Miscellany* 4) the talk was recorded. Thanks to the generosity of Peter that recording has been transcribed, with editing for publication undertaken by Philip Cousins. The results are presented herein.

The talk (and therefore this article) has a history in itself. Originally Peter had been researching his memories of war-time Brimington, supplementing these with some research and reconstruction on where bombs were dropped on the village. Co-incidentally, whilst undertaking other research at The National Archives, Kew, Philip had identified a file relating to the bombing incident that Peter recalled. The two strands were brought together, originally as a short talk, with the researchers as co-presenters. This was programmed to appear for two years running at the now traditional local history group members' December presentation evening. On both occasions the weather intervened, resulting in the talk not being given. Subsequently the talk was programmed as part of the local history group's evening talk calendar, being much enlarged at this stage. The talk was judged a success and has subsequently been given to other local groups.

For the purposes of this publication the two segments of the talk have been disestablished and presented separately. What appears below is, firstly, Peter's account. This is followed, in a separate article, by a reproduction of a report in the *Derbyshire Times*, which appeared reporting the event. Finally is Philip's contribution – the result of research in The National Archives, supplemented by Peter's knowledge of the night that bombs really were dropped on Brimington.

Introduction

'Brimington at war' sounds quite dramatic. In reality Brimington during the period of the Second World War, and the period immediately running up to it, was a quiet village; a nice village. So this article and the talk, on which it is based, might well have been very short, had it not been for the night that war really was visited on us locally.

Brimington was naturally affected, like most other communities, with the loss and sacrifice of local people in the services. There was also rationing, black-outs and the like. I will not be describing this aspect of war, concentrating instead on the more unusual aspects visited upon this generally quiet village. But I will dispel some myths that have grown up about the period and describe the day that an 'impossibility' happened; when flying bombs flew over Brimington. Impossible, because people said it was so. Then there was the day when Brimington was attacked by enemy forces (take that with a pinch of salt!).

Like my previous reminiscences, I must emphasise that this is what I remember and know; not what others know or remember. Some people might think; 'He's seen something that I did,' or I remember things differently, or were closer to the actions recounted. If you were, then we would be glad to hear from you! So, what follows is what I remember as interesting events and cannot be regarded as the comprehensive account.

'If War should come'

We start off our journey through the 1939-1945 war years. Actually, we need to start in 1938, as war-fever was really rampant in that year. Everybody thought 1938 would see the start of hostilities. The newspapers said there was going to be a war; my Dad said there was going to be a war. And if my Father said there was going to be war, I believed him.

Then Mr Chamberlain – the Prime Minister – came home on the plane from Germany. He waved what I thought was a piece of toilet paper in his hand. Mr Hitler had signed this piece of paper and there was going to be peace. But Mr Chamberlain was wrong. The piece of paper was pretty much worthless as the German military might went on to invade further Czech lands in Europe. After that we were all being told that war would come. So England really was getting itself ready for war.

Before the war started, everybody had been given a gas mask to protect us. By common consent not only would we be bombed, but the bombs would have gas in them. I used to carry my gas mask around in a little cardboard box. In what must have been the autumn of 1938 we all had to attend the Central Schools on Devonshire Street to be issued gas masks. I remember we attended as a class to the girls' school via the front Devonshire Street facing entrance porch. This was the first time I have ever been in this part of the school; so rigid was the demarcation between girls' and boys' schools, explained in my *Kid from Cott. Lane*. As far as I can remember most people in Brimington had to attend and pick up their gas masks from the Central Schools. After a quick explanation and fit we then had to wear them for around five minutes to get used to the mask. Some weeks afterwards an adaption to the mask was issued – an additional filter, green in colour and about an inch long. This was taped to the existing filter. Presumably it counteracted another form of gas. So, that settled the gas question – we were prepared.

But what settled the bomb question? The Government did what all governments have done, when they could not really do anything about it. They just gave us a lot of advice. That advice was get in the cellar in the event of a bombing raid. So that was fine. You would not be dead in there – you might be buried alive, but you would still be alive! The next best thing, if you could not get into the cellar was to get under the stairs. And the next best thing after that (I'm sure that someone of my generation will know what's coming), was to get under the table! How could a grandma, two people and eight children get under a table? The government never explained that!

At the pictures we were shown films of people in the south and in London. People digging trenches in Hyde Park, with paper being glued on to the windows to protect from glass splinters, if bomb blast shattered them. Best of all the House of Commons being *really* protected; with heavy sand bagging around all the entrances. We were intrigued to see people putting shelters up; family shelters – steel things in the back garden. What we did not know was that we had to buy them – they didn't give them away. I lived in Cotterhill Lane at the time. As there was nobody in Cotterhill Lane that could afford to buy their own shelters, the men decided to build their own.

As I've described in my 'Kid from Cott. Lane', the house that I grew up in and nearly all the houses – mostly terraces – are long gone. But in one of the houses was a lady called Ada Cantrill. The area is shown on the map accompanying this article at page 50. Mrs Cantrill owned two fields at the back of Cotterhill Lane² and it was on one of those fields that Mrs Cantrill gave permission for an air raid shelter to be built for all the women and children in Cotterhill Lane. All the men got together and dug a massive hole. Half the men were miners and the other half had been in the trenches in the First World War, so I knew that they must have known what they were doing. But there was nothing to put on the

¹ *If War Should Come* was the title of a film produced in September 1939, by the GPO Film unit. Shortly afterwards the film unit was renamed The Crown Film Unit, operating under the Ministry of Information.

² These were known as Top Pingle and Upper Croft.



Up and down the country the autumn of 1938 saw preparations for possible war, which manifested itself, for me, in the issuing of gas masks at the Central Schools in Devonshire Street. Things were, perhaps, a little more sophisticated in Chesterfield, which had access to its own Borough police force and transport department. Here in September 1938, probably along Langer Lane, we see an Austin Borough police van promoting the need to enrol in the ARP accompanied by one of the transport department's Morris Commercial Dictators. The latter is suitably adorned with a notice encouraging a visit to the bus for gas mask fitting. Note, presumably, the driver of the bus atop the vehicle near the loud speaker. This and the view below were both taken on the same day. The bottom view (with another) accompanied an article in the Derbyshire Times on 16 September 1938, headed 'One hundred leaders wanted – appeal to Chesterfield tradesmen and businessmen for ARP work'. The caption to the article read; 'Buses which are touring Chesterfield with gas masks, with which the public are invited to be fitted.' (Both collection Philip Cousins)



This view shows the actual fitting of gas masks and gives some indication of what they were like. I always remember they smelt of rubber and when you breathed out made a sort of blubbling noise as the air escaped between your checks and the seal on the mask. We used to think this very amusing as kids. To the left of the boy is Sergeant Basnett of the Borough police. This force only operated in the Borough of Chesterfield. In Brimington we relied on officers from the county constabulary.

top. A gentleman called Jim Richardson came to the rescue. He lived at Manor Avenue and was captain of the cricket team. More importantly he was a parish councillor and the head of the wages department at Staveley Works. So, they asked Jim, who kindly had a large load of railway sleepers delivered. These were put on the top of the excavation, with earth piled on that. Result? We had the most marvellous shelter anybody has ever seen. It was big enough for all the children and women to go in. Then it was condemned. Why it was condemned? I never did find out. Possibly it was due to the wooden roof, when it should have been steel. I don't know. So Brimington's first air-raid shelter – public air-raid shelter – is now under Uppercroft Close!

For anybody living at Uppercroft Close, it's still there. Well, it could be! After checking old and modern maps it is evident that there are no houses on the site of that shelter. But if there is ever a hole in the road leading up to Uppercroft Close, you've discovered the exact location of Brimington's first public air-raid shelter!

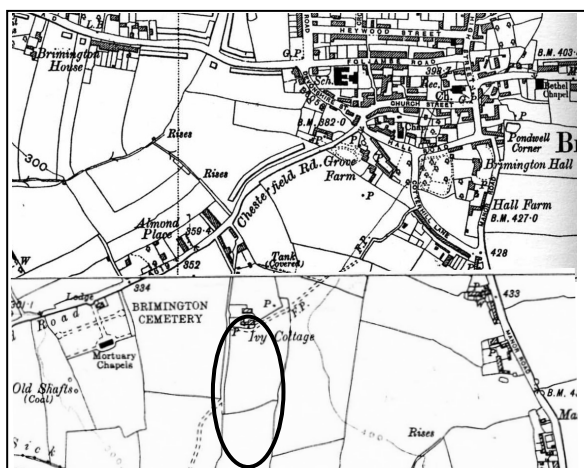
Aeroplanes over Brimington

It is, perhaps, hard to believe today that if you heard an aeroplane in my youth, people would rush out of their houses to have look. At that time, in the years immediately before the start of the Second World War, you would actually be able to hear an aeroplane. Brimington was then a quiet village. Traffic was a fraction of what it is today. Where I lived on Cotterhill Lane you could actually have played cricket in the street, being rarely disturbed.

One occasion I particularly remember was when I was out in Cotterhill Lane with my friends. We did not really hear the plane, but we could certainly see it. We saw a Tiger Moth, painted yellow, circling round and round. I did not know it at the time, but since becoming interested in military history, I now understand all aeroplanes coloured yellow, before and during the war, were training aircraft. This meant that they could have a pupil pilot. Yellow was rather like the L (for learner) sign on road vehicles. All pilots would give any yellow painted planes plenty of room. I later discovered (as I flew one) that every pilot in the air force would have flown the Tiger Moth as part of their training. The instructor would always say to trainee pilots; 'It doesn't need you, this aeroplane'. They were right. Even if you took your hands and feet off the controls a Tiger Moth would fly itself. It is such a good plane to fly that it only needs a pilot to take it up and take it down – a marvellous machine. There were hundreds of them, with hundreds still being flown today.

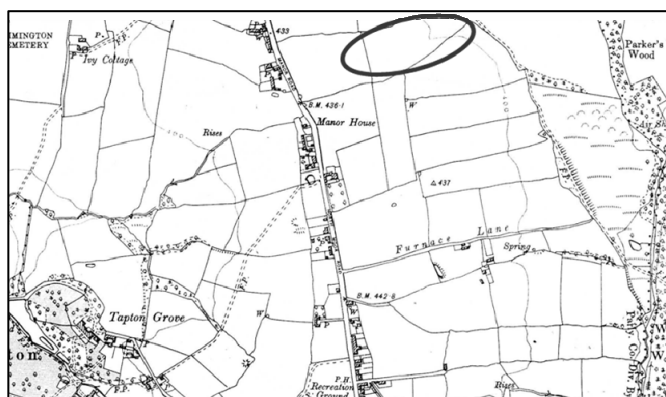
As we were watching we could see the Tiger Moth flying around the village. One of the older lads said; 'It's going to land'. How he knew I do not know, as you could not tell that the plane was preparing to land. The Tiger Moth only had a fixed undercarriage, no brakes, no radio communication and you had to swing the propeller, by hand, to start it. Daft as my friend's comments sounded to me, the plane came down lower and lower. We all started running over towards Jubilee Walk, to where we thought the plane was going to land. And guess what? It did land, at what we called Goodwin's farm. Just as we arrived into the middle of the farm field, it landed there. That field (shown on the map) slopes and then there is a really big dip. A Tiger Moth can land in a very small space. The plane turned round and came back up towards the house, turned into the wind again (as you always had to take it up into the wind), and the pilot got out. This was the first aeroplane we had ever seen on the ground, so we were really excited. We did not know whether to rush towards the pilot or the aeroplane. But the pilot started talking to some men who had rushed up from Chesterfield Road and to Mr Goodwin. After studying his maps, the pilot got back into his aircraft and started to take off. I do not think that the engine had been stopped (if it had it was quickly started). He taxied the plane about 20-30 yards around the field, then manoeuvred it back again, getting right up to the edge of the field. Then the plane took off. I have often wondered if we were one of the first people to see an aircraft land and take off in Brimington, but I am not sure about this.

At this stage it is worth dispelling a myth that seems to have built up around this incident. In 2007, just after I came back to Brimington, someone told me that they had heard I lived in Brimington during the War. Of course, I said that I had. This fellow then asked if I knew anything about an aeroplane landing in Goodwin's field? This chap said he had been told that this was a German aircraft; that it had landed in Goodwin's Field and then taken off again! I was very amused at this. If this had been true Brimington would have been in the national newspapers! I was able to tell this gentleman that there was an aeroplane that landed in Goodwin's field and that it took off again, but that the pilot spoke with a very broken English accent because he was Polish! So I hope that any myths have disappeared forever that a German aeroplane landed in Brimington.



It was an exciting day for us when a Tiger Moth landed in Goodwin's field (circled). This illustration comprises two parts – at a reduced scale – of the 6-inch to 1 mile Ordnance Survey series. The top half is a 'provisional edition', styled 'revision of 1914 with additions in 1938'. These maps were presumably part of a rather hasty revision in preparation for the Second World War. The additions mainly comprised drawing in newer streets and blocks of houses. Little attempt was made to remove things that had been demolished. Brimington Hall, for example, was much reduced by 1938. One wonders what the Germans might make of these maps and their fantastic detail, particularly at the larger 25 inch to 1 mile scales. The Brimington large scale map was certainly up-to-date, as can be seen on page 50. (Derbyshire Sheets XVIII S.E., 1938 edition (top) and XXV. N.E., 1921 edition (bottom))

The propaganda peddled out by the government, particularly during the first part of the Second World War misled us into believing that the Fairey Battle, which did crash land in Brimington, was the ultimate war plane. As schoolboys we knew this as the aeroplane that was faster than any other. I think, though, the people that were peddling this sort of thing were reading from a First World War file. What we did not know was that this plane was absolutely slaughtered in the battle of France, when used by the British Expeditionary Air force. The German Messerschmitt was 100mph faster, but we did not know this then. The loss culminated on 14 May 1939, when 71 Fairey Battles took off and only 31 returned. All those young R.A.F. men were flying in an obsolete plane that as youngsters we hero worshipped. The plane crash-landed in the field where the ring is marked on the map below. This was just to the south of the Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground (this was built on in the 1950s by the Chesterfield Rural District Council, for Manor Drive). The ground was surrounded by spiked iron railings, so we would squeeze through these to stand and look at this aeroplane. It wasn't a training aeroplane, it was an operational aeroplane as it had guns on it and consequently there was an armed guard to stop us getting anywhere near.



The field in which the crashed Fairey Battle landed is marked on this reduced extract from a 6-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1921. The 'Manor House' is roughly where number 100 Manor Road now stands. (Ordnance Survey, 6-inch map Derbyshire Sheet XXV. N.E.)

The only other aircraft I remember crashing in Brimington was near Cow Lane, around the site of the later built Brimington Boys' School (now the Junior School). I am not sure if this was before the war. If it was during the 1939-45 war it was in the very, very early part. I have been told it was a Fairey Battle but it was definitely not. The crashed plane had two engines and it was painted silver. Knowing more now about the R.A.F., indicates to me that it was a 'flying classroom' - an Avro Anson.

Finally, if anybody does say that they saw the R.A.F.'s 617 Squadron flying over Brimington, at rooftop height, in formations of three or in singles, it is true. I actually saw them, flying over Brimington to reach the Derwent Valley, in order to practice low level flying as a prelude to what is termed the 'Dambusters' raid, but was officially known as 'Operation Chastise'.³

Flying bombs

Many people have said that to see flying bombs over Brimington was impossible – absolutely impossible – because they were such small aeroplanes (unmanned of course) and half the size of the R.A.F.'s Spitfire. Secondly, they would not have had the fuel to get from France to Brimington. Additionally, the flying bomb, or V1 as it was called, needed a fixed ski-site to take off. As these were situated in northern France the V1 could not reach Brimington. I did actually see three V1s over Brimington, but for many years no one believed me.

When I spoke to R.A.F and Army servicemen after the War about seeing V1s over Brimington they just laughed at me. If somebody had told me what I know now and said they had seen a flying bomb over Brimington I would have laughed to. As I said, it was just impossible. When I told the servicemen the date that I saw V1s over Brimington – 24 December 1944 – they nearly went into hysterics, as in December 1944 the whole of France was in Allied hands. Therefore there would be no possibility V1s could reach Brimington. All the ski-sites also pointed to London, with a few pointing to Bristol and Plymouth. The Ministry of Information told the Londoners that the threat of the V1 was now finished. But nobody told the Germans.

The Germans had developed an air-launch system, which involved slinging a V1 underneath a Heinkel 111 aircraft. The aircraft would leave Holland, fly very, very low, over the North Sea, before reaching the river Thames. Here the aircraft would climb to 2000ft (perhaps more of a stagger with the weight), dropping the V1 before the aircraft was spotted on the radar. The V1s would then continue on their way, with their in-built propulsion system. The Argentinians undertook a similar process with the Exocet missile in the Falkland Islands conflict.

The Government counteracted this method of launching the V1, by bringing all the guns from the south coast, deploying them in the Thames estuary. And that stopped the Germans at that little game. But the Germans decided to attack Manchester on 24 December – the only time any inland town or city was attacked in the north of England by the V1. That was the day V1s came over Brimington, on one single raid.

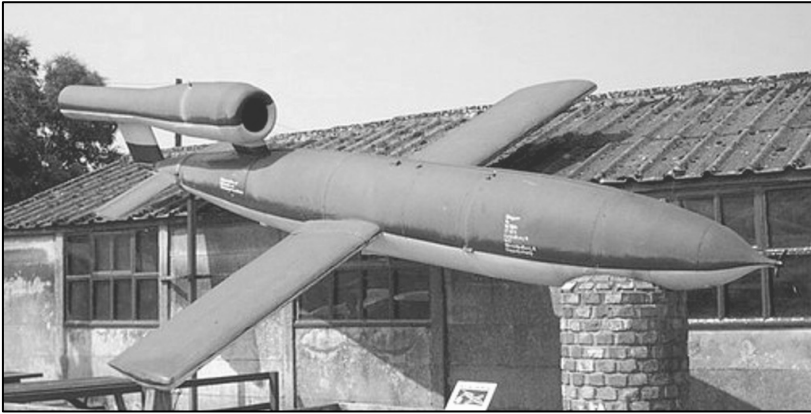
The V1s were released around Skegness. If you want to plot a line from there to Manchester you will see that this passes, more or less, over Brimington.

A contemporary chronicler set-out what it was like to be under a flying bomb.

It was coarser, louder, more blatant than the regular pulsation of ordinary aircraft. It flew on a course from which there was no deviation, the long flame of the exhaust gave the whole structure a fiendish kind of life.

³ The use of the Derwent Valley dams was more limited than recently credited. For an accurate account see B. Robinson (1994), *The seven blunders of the Peak*, pp. 91-97.

No one who dwelt beneath its flight path will ever forget the sound of the “Devils’ organ pipe”, as made by an approaching flying bomb, or be able to communicate the sense of half-ashamed relief when it continued on its journey before the electrifying sudden silence when its motor stopped, followed 11 seconds later when the war head dissolved in a shattering explosion.⁴



The ‘Devil’s Organ Pipe’. A German V1 pictured at Eden Camp Modern History Theme Museum, Malton. The ‘ram jet’ is on the tail section, to the top left of the flying bomb. (Doug Spencer).

You will find the scars and pits on the moors around Manchester; that is where a lot of the bombs, thankfully, dropped short of their intended target. Never-the-less bombs fell near Manchester on that day.

The V1’s propulsion system was known as a ‘ram jet’. This was really a sort of pulsating jet. Every time the propulsion system fired the bomb went a little bit faster. If it was dropped off at Skegness, by the time the flying bomb got to Brimington it would be doing over 400mph.

I could hear the V1s coming, then flash, they had gone. If you reckon up the distance over the moors from Brimington, it equates to about two minutes flying time. So, if those engines had stopped two minutes earlier, we would have ended up with V1s on Brimington. The destruction was immense. For example, one hit Stockport, another at Oldham, with 27 people dead that day.

Despite the denials, I always knew that I had seen flying bombs. By this time I was an apprentice engineer at Staveley works (on the ‘old works’). I knew a man from Barrow Hill, though not very well. His family had gone to the Manchester area to stay with friends and a flying bomb dropped straight on their house. This must have been at Oldham. That is why I always knew it was a V1, as the chap from Barrow Hill was told it was a flying bomb and not a normal bomb.

For some time, the only reference to V1s in the area that I had seen was in the *Reflections* magazine, a few years ago;

‘During the last December of the war Heinkel IIIIs, operating from Holland launched Fieseler Fi 103 V1s or ‘doodlebugs’ against Manchester (the so-called Vergeltungswaffe or revenge weapons) though none reached the city. ‘Several fell on the bleak moorlands of the Dark peak where surviving craters mark where they harmlessly exploded.’

I have, however, become aware of more references, including reported crash-landings of V1s at Beighton, Buxton and Chapel-en-le-Frith.⁵ There were others in Yorkshire and other counties.

As discussed above, whilst none of the V1s reached the city centre itself, one fell within the Manchester Civil Defence area. Others did fall in the greater Manchester area, with death and destruction in their wake.

⁴ R.A. Young, (1978), *The flying bomb*, p. 10.

⁵ R. Collier and R. Wilkinson (1982), *Dark peak aircraft wrecks* – 2, pp. 150 and [On-line] last visited 23 May 2012 at URL: <http://www.chrishobbs.com/beightondoodlebug1944.htm>.

Enemy forces attack Brimington

From a deadly serious note to one of a lighter nature – when enemy forces attacked Brimington. It happened in 1943, on a beautiful hot summer's day; one of those days when it was hot by 9 o'clock in the morning.

I lived in the now demolished stone cottage next to the remaining stone cottages on Cotterhill Lane. That morning I came down from my bedroom, which I shared with my brothers, to be greeted by Mother saying; 'There's some soldiers in the garden.' She had been up to get vegetables from our garden plot early that Sunday morning, so had spotted them.

I said; 'Soldiers?' She quickly retorting; 'Yes, soldiers!' My Mother certainly was not having her youngest question her! So, straight away, as it was military related, I was off up our garden. I walked up our garden path, but couldn't see a thing. Then a voice said; 'Hey, Pete!' I was somewhat astounded at this, looking around. At the right hand corner of a hedge (this is now in the rear garden of number 21 Top Pingle Close) was a soldier. I walked up to him to discover it was one of the fitters that I was working under at Staveley works. I knew he came from Eckington. 'What are you doing here, Tom?' I said. 'We're the enemy, we're attacking Brimington!' was his reply. Tom was a Sergeant in the Home Guard. He was leading a patrol which was obviously concealing itself just behind the hedge from our back garden – some twelve men in all. Tom said; 'Have you seen any other soldiers?' 'No,' I replied. 'Well, go down and have a look around the area and see if you can see anything,' was his reply.

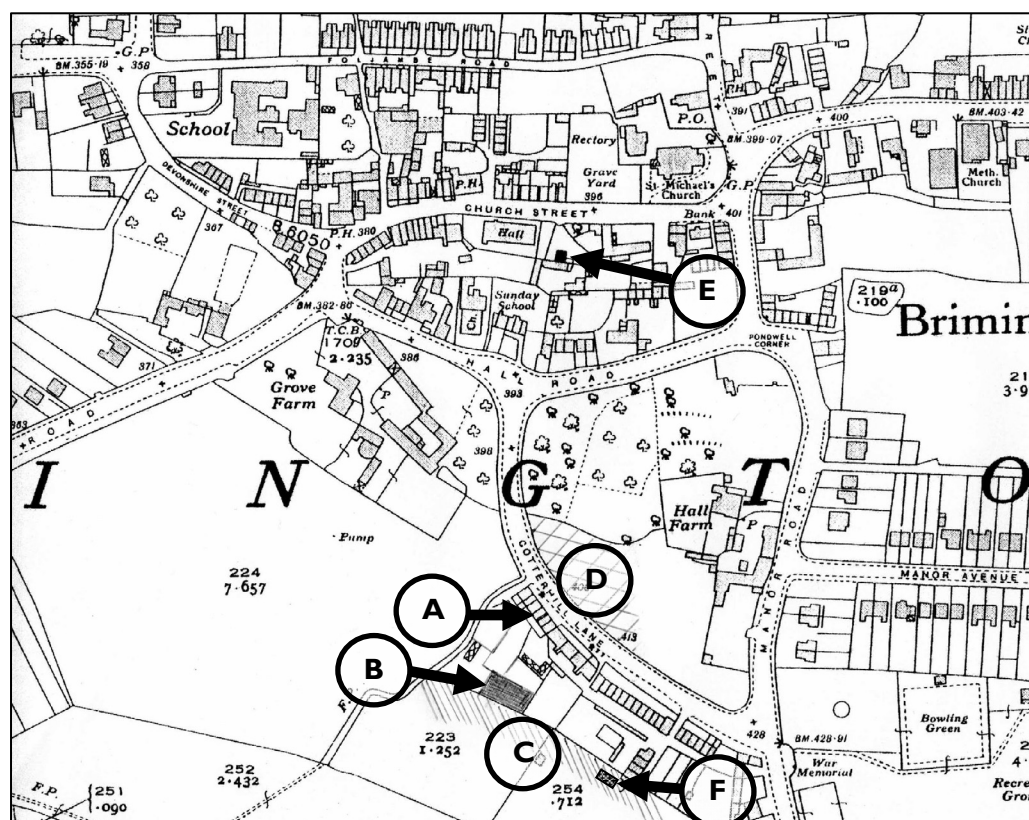
I could have told him to 'get lost'; it was Sunday, you see. But, as I served under him in my apprentice role, that really would not have done me much good. I spent more time with Tom, at work, than I did my own Father. Respect for your elders and discipline in the world of work was an everyday feature. You never used any cheek, you never answered back and you did the work as quickly as you could. When you got to work, the same sort of discipline continued on from school – it would possibly be a clip over the ear if you didn't do as you were told. Naturally, then, I did not even give it a thought, not to co-operate with Tom. As I went back through the house, Mum asked; 'Did you see them?' 'Yes,' I replied, 'I work with them! They're all from the old works. I've got to look round to see if there are any soldiers in the lane. It didn't take long to find the others. Pretty much opposite our house was a stone wall, about 6 feet high. This backed on to a small field adjacent to Sharman's farm (Hall Farm, demolished in the 1960s). Over this wall there were 10 soldiers, all pointing their guns, all waving at me. I never said anything to them, quickly running back through our front door, through the living room, back up the garden path to Tom. 'Yeah, there's some soldiers in Sharman's field,' I reported to him, explaining just where this was, as Tom's patrol were not Brimington lads. After a quick discussion one of the lads asked; 'Eh Pete, does tha' live here?' After answering 'Yes' perhaps there came the inevitable reply; 'Well, go and ask your mam if she'll mek us a cup o' tea, I've not had owt since five.' Back down the path and back down again to Mum. My Mum quickly organised a few neighbours (Mrs Beet and my aunty). 10 minutes later we had 12 cups of tea ready. These were all being drunk by the people who were 'attacking' Brimington, sat on a wall, complete with a round of toast. The 'defenders', on the other side of Cotterhill Lane, got nothing. They could not see each other, of course, because of the cottages in between.

My Mum and the fellow tea mashers were profusely thanked, before the soldiers made a tactical retreat, back up the footpath. And so ended my part. To complete the story I have to depend on somebody else. The next day as soon as I got to work I went up to Tom and asked him what happened. 'Oh, we won,' He said; 'We took their headquarters.'

Tom's 'invaders' must have circumnavigated the defending troop assembled in Sharman's field, reaching the 'defender's' H.Q, possibly by a route near Manor Avenue. The H.Q. being defended that day was near the Church Hall. There was an old brick building that the National Fire Service had taken

over in the war as their headquarters. That hot sunny day the Army had taken it over to defend as their H.Q. If Tom's troop captured it the battle would be won and that is what had happened. Of note are the defenders. They were troops from Hardwick Hall – paratroopers, the airborne division. So there you had the much derided Home Guard defeating members of what would become one of the crack regiments of the British Army.

This story gets rid of another myth that I have been asked about a few times; 'Did I know about the day when parachutists descended on Brimington? What I can say is that I was there when paratroopers defended Brimington, but they did not arrive by parachutes – they came in lorries from Hardwick Hall, where they were stationed in the park-land.



An annotated reduced scale extract of the 1938 Ordnance Survey large scale map of Brimington showing some key points from the day when the Home Guard defeated the paratroopers, referred to in the text. A is my house, with our garden arrowed B and shaded. The area where we came across the Home Guard is hatched C. Thanks to my undercover intelligence, relayed to the Home Guard, they were able to circumnavigate the defending Paratroopers in the hatched area of 'Sharman's field', (circled D) to capture the National Fire Service H.Q. - arrowed E and highlighted in black. The site of the air raid shelter referred to on pages 43 and 45 is arrowed F. (Ordnance Survey, Derbyshire Sheet XVII. 15).

When the War really came

Though, of course, war was declared in 1939, it really came to Brimington overnight on 12/13 and 15/16 of December 1940, during the blitz of Sheffield. I am not saying that war did not come to individual families. Already there were people being called up, men volunteering for the services, daughters in the Land Army, etc. Brimington as a whole knew there was a war on, of course. But the war came close to us when attacks were made on the city. Quite a few people still remember that first night – the first night you never got any sleep. You could hear the bombs, the planes and the guns going off.

Brimington did not suffer any casualties. We certainly were not suffering like Sheffield did, but it was very, very frightening. All the noise, especially from what we call landmines, which were large bombs that come down in a parachute. Instead of penetrating the ground the blast goes sideways. So intense was the force that you could feel the vibrations in Brimington. Yet Sheffield was eight miles away.

One bomb of note in that period was at Duckmanton school. This was the result of a German aircraft from the Sheffield raid of 15 December releasing a mine. The school, then fairly new, was destroyed, with much damage to around twenty houses in the vicinity.⁶ The school was rebuilt during the War, lasting for many years. My wife taught at that school in one of the old War-time classrooms.

After the Sheffield blitz we became increasingly aware of the threat of bombs over the area and of stray aircraft. Looking back now I sometimes wished I had kept a diary, which might have helped with dates. Due to war-time restrictions newspapers did not report where bombs dropped (if they reported things like that at all). Unless it suited the censors, you would simply get a headline and story about a bombing raid in the Midlands or north Midlands. You really could not tell where the raid had been. This was sensible, of course, as you would not want the enemy knowing how successful or unsuccessful they had been. But this means it can be quite difficult to pin down the date of attacks.



The site of Doe Lea and Bramley Vale Infants' School is marked today by 'Old School Close', just to the bottom right of this photograph. The wall in front of the house, with the two gate posts (circled), are all that can be seen of the former school, devastated in a bomb attack. Before houses were built on the site the empty yard, where once there had been a thriving school, was a stark reminder of the war. (Philip Cousins).

Another enemy casualty – always a stark reminder to me – was Doe Lea and Bramley Vale Infants School. The photograph shows just a couple of gate posts. Forget the house behind the wall and focus, for a minute, on the wall in front. That wall is a school wall, with the stone posts marking the site of a gate to walk through. Whenever I cycled or later motored past this wall and gate it was always a stark reminder of what the country had gone through. Because behind the gate, for some years, was just a bare school yard with nothing in it. The building completely disappeared. To visit this area today, you will need to pass over the M1 at junction 29. Just after the dual carriageway, turn right into the old Mansfield Road at Doe Lea. The gateposts are between North Street and the aptly named Old School Close.

More locally a couple of bombs were dropped near the Lockoford Inn public house at Tapton, once Lockoford Farm. Where the houses are opposite, on Lockoford Lane, was a crater, the result of one of the bombs, of some 12 - 15 yards wide and about 8 feet deep. This was the biggest I had ever seen around Brimington and Tapton. The houses opposite the public house were later built right on top of it. Another bomb dropped straight in the farmyard. The bomb must have been the same size, but because it hit the yard, not just a soft field, it did not penetrate the ground, creating a smaller crater.

⁶ P. Kettle, (1995), *The history of Sutton-cum-Duckmanton endowed school, 1693 – 1936*, pp. 65, 71, 74-75.

In March 1941 Tupton was bombed, with 11 people killed. Perhaps surprisingly, Staveley works was never subject to a mass bombing campaign but there were bombs dropped occasionally at different times during the war. For example one night my brother, who like me was employed at the works, was hospitalised. One of the men he was working with, a young man called Knights (from a Brimington family) died of his wounds in hospital, after being admitted at the same time as my brother.



Much nearer to home were the two bombs dropped at Lockoford Lane. As described in the text, one dropped in the farmyard to what was then Lockoford Farm, now the Lockoford Inn (right). The other made a large crater on the opposite side of the road, where the third from left houses stand. (Peter Harrison).

Fire watchers

Fire Watchers came about at the beginning of the war. Everybody over 16 and under 60 had to have a wartime job, besides their normal job. Employment would include the National Fire Service, Air Raid Precautions, Observer Corps, the Nursing Services and the Home Guard, the latter formed after the Dunkirk evacuation. I was a cadet in the Air Training Corps – that counted as well.

At the beginning of the war, the air raid sirens used to go off at the threat of a raid. But the Government found out everybody was stopping work and seeking shelter without a German aeroplane anywhere near. This had serious implications for production. As a consequence the warning system was altered. Amber and red warnings were introduced, with the sirens not being activated until there was a German plane in your vicinity.

Fire watchers came about due to the threat of incendiary bombs. These caused fire as opposed to blast damage. In order to spot these and the fire associated with them it was necessary to have people watching for this danger. Complexes that had staff on duty 24 hours a day generally did not need specific fire watchers, but in some areas, on buildings and in streets without that type of surveillance, fire watchers were needed. At Staveley works, for example, there was no problem as people worked throughout the night. Public buildings, however, needed fire watchers. Churches had them, streets had them – we had our own on Cotterhill Lane – all big streets had them.

I did undertake fire watching, sometimes when I should not have been doing so. I had a friend called Kirby. His family still live in Brimington and he worked as an apprentice at Portland Garages, in Chesterfield. Fire watchers always slept in the Portland Hotel when they were on duty. They weren't up in the attics, they were down in the cellars. Here were three beds, where I remember sleeping one night – I would be about 17 at the time – one New Year's Eve 1944. This was quite late in the war. If there had been a raid we would have been out on the roof watching for fire.

There were numerous fire watching posts around town. The Town Hall was a marvellous place, but anybody up there would have to fire watch assiduously; flat roof, one incendiary and the Town Hall would have burned through and the whole lot would have gone up. At another post, infamously, a man was murdered whilst fire watching at Eyres – in another bedroom set up for rest between duties. This did make the *Derbyshire Times* (in 1941). A workmate of the murdered man was convicted and sentenced to death, but on appeal this was commuted to manslaughter.⁷

Every fire watching team would be issued a stirrup pump. That went in a bucket, you put your foot on the stirrup, started pumping. Millions of these were made; a few thousand were used during the war to put out little fires or incendiary bombs, the rest were used for watering the garden! You could also buy these stirrup pumps.

Bombs come to Brimington

Then bombs came to Brimington. I will always remember that night. I could not remember what date this happened, but thanks to work in The National Archives, by Philip Cousins, I now know this to be the night and early morning of the 27 and 28 of August 1942.

A man called Mr Purcell woke me up. I do not know if he was ever appointed or if he was a self-chief fire watcher – knowing Mr Purcell I think he would be self-appointed. He lived in Cotterhill Lane in what we called twelve house row, at number 33 – a little further up than my house.⁸

I will never forget how I was woken. My Father's name was Mick; I had a brother called Ralph and everybody but me and my Mum called him Lammy. First thing I heard was Mr Purcell hammering on our door shouting; 'Mick, Mick, Lammy, Lammy: get up, get up, we're surrounded by fire!' I don't know what he was hitting our door with but he was nearly breaking it down.

That last remark '...We're surrounded by fire!' must have made me wake up much quicker. In retrospect I do not think that I have ever woken up as quickly as I did that night. I opened my eyes and looked out of the window towards Pondwell Corner. We had no black-out in the bedrooms – though we had electricity and a lamp-holder in the bedroom, we never actually had a lamp in this, as the only time we went in our bedrooms in those days was to go to bed. Normally I would look straight out over to Pondwell Corner and it would be completely black. This night it was a reddish purple. I remember thinking that Mr Purcell was not exaggerating. So, I was out of bed, downstairs, dressed and out of that front door, even before Ralph and my Dad. I was straightaway looking over towards Pondwell Corner, but there was nothing. The hue was just a reflection from the field next to Grove Farm, now the Nethercroft Road estate, off Chesterfield Road. When I saw the field by Creswick's Farm (Grove Farm), I just stopped in amazement, because this entire field was on fire. Worse still, all the houses fronting Chesterfield Road, next to and across this field, looked as though they were also on fire, as I could not see them through the red glow. The field was full of a multiplicity of little pinpoints of intense light – fire and light as this was an incendiary bomb attack. You could see from the reflections in the sky that there were more fires down Chesterfield Road, towards Chesterfield. It was as though the whole of Cemetery hill was burning. As described in Philip Cousins's article, incendiaries did not just comprise one single element, but a multiplicity of elements including 'fire pots'.

It was clear that Mr Purcell had done a good job. Within what seemed only seconds, not minutes (I had been on my own for just a few seconds), my Father, brother and all the men were out of their houses. Stirrup pumps arrived – I think Mr Purcell told somebody to bring a stirrup pumps – spraying, buckets

⁷ For full details of this crime see J.J. Eddleston (1997), *Murderous Derbyshire*, pp. 176 – 185.

⁸ For a description of Cotterhill Lane, see P. Harrison, 'A kid from Cott. Lane...', *Brimington and Tapton Miscellany*, number 4, (2012), pp. 19 – 47, particularly the map at p. 34

of water and soon bucket-hand chains. Somebody – I don't know who it was – shouted; 'Don't forget the warning'. He was referring to a government warning that the Germans were using a new type of incendiary. If you put water on this new type of bomb it exploded. Somebody else shouted back; 'Bugger that!' and without any further debate, over the walls they jumped, from Cotterhill Lane.

I couldn't go, however, though it seemed like half of Cott. Lane were there by that time. Anyone not involved in the fire fighting stood by two small trees at the south east corner of the field, adjacent to Jubilee Walk. Except for two small pieces (one near the trees where we were stood and where Nether Croft Close is now) the whole field was alight. Then the same voice who had shouted the warning loudly announced; 'I don't know why we're bothering, it's only Alec's grass that's getting burned.' This, of course was true. Alec Creswick was the farmer at Grove Farm; whose field it was. But the nearest incendiary in the field was right against two trees, near where we were standing. Consequently it was wise to fight the fires, in case it spread, so the fire here was the first to be put out.



An interwar view of the approach to the centre of Birmingham, from Chesterfield Road. Creswick's field is to the right, with their imposing farm, house right. Note the almost complete absence of any motorised traffic, the reason why you could hear aircraft so easily. (Collection Peter Harrison).

The whole episode was over in ten minutes to a quarter of an hour maximum; then everything was back to normal. All the flames died down. All that remained were small bits of red where the incendiaries were burning. The blackness of the night descended once again. My Father came back with Ralph and all the men started drifting away. There were still voices in the field, though, but because it had gone dark we could not see who they were, or what they were doing. I think it was my brother Ralph who commented; 'Silly buggers. They're picking up pieces of metal as souvenirs.' As soon as souvenirs came into my head I made another attempt to go into the field. But, like the first attempt, I still did not get anywhere. There was a vice holding the scruff of my neck. It was my Mum's hand. That is why I had not been able to nip over into the field from the start or move from the minute she arrived – about two minutes after me. I know what she was thinking – my Father and brother might be stupid enough to go over fire fighting, but she was not having her youngest and dearly beloved going too.

The next day, though, I was in the field as soon as possible. I found there were two craters in Creswick's field, but they were surprisingly small, about 7 feet across and 8 inches deep. I started picking up smallish pieces of metal, until I had handfuls – there were no big pieces – taking these pieces home. Mum, was not too keen to see what I had gathered. 'What you got there?' she said. 'I've got them out of

Alec Creswick's field,' I answered. Mum replied that she did not want them in the house; she did not want anything German in the house. Still keen on retaining them I countered; 'They're souvenirs. They'll be alright in years to come.' Anyway, I never saw them again and it was not my Mother who threw them away as the police came for them. They called on all the houses in Cotterhill Lane, everywhere. And they demanded – not asking – demanding, under some wartime regulation, that everything German must be handed over. So, I never saw them again and have no physical evidence of that night, when the sky really did come alight with bombs dropped on Brimington.

Over the next couple of days, by talking to the other lads down Chesterfield Road, we pieced together what had happened.

The first incendiary bomb dropped was in the vicinity of we would now call Lansdowne Road. At the bottom of Cemetery Hill, at that time, there was a field that never had any crops in it as it very poor for cultivation. It was not meadow-land, it was just really rough ground.

The next one was in the area of Downlands, again, off Chesterfield Road, approximately across the road from the Cemetery gates. The crater there was exactly the same size as the one in Alec Creswick's field.

The third bomb landed in front of a bungalow that used to stand in the land where Brackendale Close and the houses built on it is situated. At that time a family called Hollingworth lived in the bungalow. One incendiary dropped straight in the cold frame which was in the front of the bungalow. Mr James Hollingworth, who was nearing his ninth birthday at the time, remembered the night well. He told me, at one of the talks we gave about the incident, that the incendiary landed in the front garden of the bungalow. He can remember a very slight haze, as the bomb exploded about 10ft down. A 'massive' lump of clay was blown out as a result of the impact. What looked like white powder was around the area, with little white flames. Mr Hollingsworth's father, who was an A.R.P. warden, was already attending a fire further up Chesterfield Road (at number 36), returned home when told about the incident. No action was required, however, as the flames extinguished themselves. The only damage the bomb did was a crack the bedroom window top-light.

Next, fourthly, was the incendiary at the house still called 'Thornleigh'. The Fisher family lived there, whom I knew very well. Norman Fisher was an instructor in the Air Training Corps. I first believed that something actually dropped on the roof of this house and damaged it. Later, thanks to The National Archives file examined by Philip Cousins and Mr Hollingworth's recollections, it appears that one of the incendiaries fell near to the outside toilet. Mr Hollingworth remembers the green paint on the door being scorched.

Bomb number five dropped near to the Haigh's house on Chesterfield Road. This caused a crack going right from the top of the front door jamb to the front bedroom. Mr Hollingsworth⁹ told me that his father had recounted that the footings to the house had been affected by the impact. The mains water and gas pipes had both been fractured, with the escaping gas on fire. Mr Hollingworth senior used a piece of moistened clay to cover the gas pipe, thereby extinguishing the flames. Later on Dulcie Knowles lived in the house (number 36 Chesterfield Road). She was a well-known music teacher, specialising in the piano, teaching my own children. On one occasion when visiting her I asked if there was ever any permanent damage to the house when that bomb dropped. The shock on her face was immediately evident. Nobody had ever mentioned the bombing incident to her. Again, at one of the talks we have given to explain the event, a relation to the occupants, told me that the family were evacuated, for a time, as a result of the damage done that night.¹⁰ Presumably this was the only family ever evacuated as a result of bombing in Brimington!

⁹ I am grateful to Mr Hollingworth for this information.

¹⁰ Information from Mr A. Thomlinson, August 2012.

The sixth bomb, I believe, landed at the rear of houses on Chesterfield Road near to Creswick's field.¹¹ A family called Smith lived in the house nearest (number 1). I believed that this was where the most damage was caused – mostly to the green-house, which appeared to us kids as completely vanished.

The seventh and eighth bombs landed in Alec Creswick's field. As illustrated on the accompanying maps, the seventh and eighth landed in the area of what is now the Nethercroft Road estate. The last one – the eighth – was about 50 yards away from where I lived.

This was a significant event to us children at the time. It really brought home the war to us. But memories become dimmed and the event is now largely forgotten in the village.

When I originally thought of compiling the talk on Brimington in the war years, I mentioned to someone that I might well talk about the incendiary bombs. He replied on the lines; 'that I will not have much to talk about as there were only two small incendiaries dropped in Alec Creswick's field'. It just shows how people can be wrong. Two craters in Alec Creswick's field, but there were far, far more than two incendiary bombs, I can assure you.

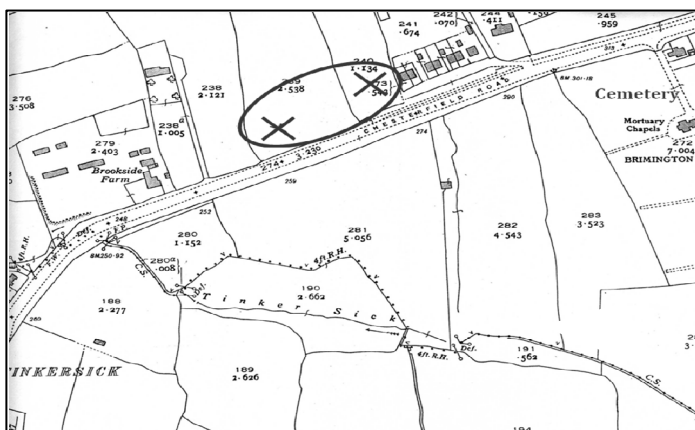
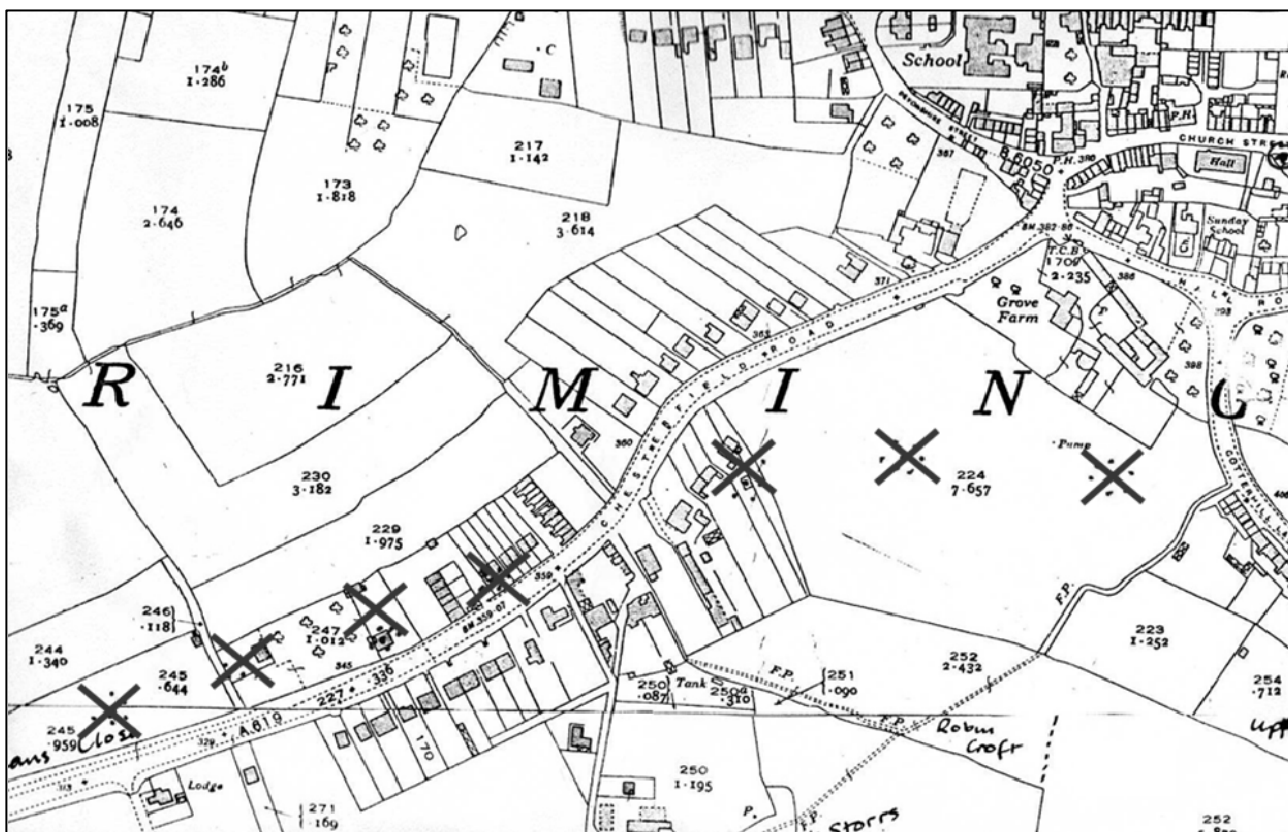
Conclusion

I have mixed feelings about the war years in Brimington. When the war started in 1939 I was in my last few years at school. By the time the war had finished in 1945 I had started work. Too young to be conscripted into the services during the war, I later served from 1945 – 1948 in the Fleet Air Arm. The run up to the war was of great interest to me and most of my friends. We were interested in the military, so anything aligned to this was of interest to us. Military technology was at the forefront of development, of course. So this was an additional attraction. In many ways our interest in those early days was a little detached. The horrors of war were really unknown to us, though we were aware that the First World War had seen many lost lives and injuries. My own family had suffered losses, Father had served as a soldier in the First World War, been wounded twice and then was badly gassed in 1917. Locally we had the War Memorial at the top of the road, fronting the Miners' Welfare Recreation Ground. As war went on and I became older, an appreciation of just what it meant increased, particularly when one of my older brothers went missing on an air operation over Germany, in the service of the R.A.F. He was never found. Two other brothers were seriously wounded.

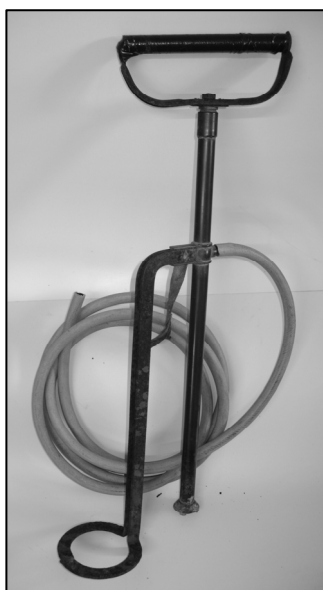
I have not mentioned rationing, but in many ways it did not affect us as much as some others. Of course the staples, such as butter, tea and sugar were harder to get, but as we were not a rich family some of the more expensive things we could not have afforded in any case. Clothes? Well, until I left school I did have many that I had started out with. It was normal to inherit serviceable items from my brothers. I probably think, too, that it was the women – for me my Mother – who took most of the brunt of making rations last, or supplementing our diet. And, of course, it was my Mother who would be doing most of the queuing in local shops too.

So my recollections, selective as they are, end here. I hope that I have been able to paint an, albeit, short picture of life in Brimington during those years, seen particularly through my selective eyes. I also hope that I have been able to set the record straight on a number of things, including indentifying just where those incendiary bombs dropped on that night in August 1942, when war really did come to Brimington.

¹¹ Official accounts are at variance with this. See the account below, page 71-72.



The eight Brimington incendiary bombs, plotted using my personal recollections of the event and the fact that we, as youngsters, were keen to find out what had happened! Bomb number one is left. There is some discrepancy between where I believed it hit. There are two possible impact points – both within the ellipse. Lansdowne Road now runs in the area to the left hand cross. There is will undoubtedly be some minor discrepancies in where the bombs actually dropped against my recollections. Perhaps the major ones, regarding bombs one and six are discussed in Philip Cousins's article. The last two bombs hit Creswick's Field (parcel number 224 on the map). (Ordnance Survey, 2- inch map Derbyshire Sheets, 1938, XVII.15 and XXV.3 (reduced scale)).



A genuine Second World War issue stirrup pump. The hose is much lighter in colour than the black one which would have been used at the time. Thousands of these stirrup pumps were used up and down the country. Many saw extensive use in green-houses, if the truth were known! They were simple in operation. You just stood on the round piece, inserting the slightly shorter round pipe into a bucket, pulled back and forth on the top handle and water came out of the hose.

WHAT THE PAPER SAID: THE 'DERBYSHIRE TIMES' REPORTS THE BRIMINGTON AND STAVELEY BOMBS

Philip Cousins

Introduction

The local newspaper, the *Derbyshire Times*, reported the Brimington and Staveley incendiary bombing raid that occurred on the 28/29 August 1942. This comprised a page one article in the edition of 4 September 1942. It is reproduced below, in full.

Reporting restrictions of the time would refer the reader to general areas, hence the reference to a 'north midland' town and village in the story, though anyone local to the area would have little difficulty in readily identifying the town and village as Staveley and Brimington. Real personal names are also given, certainly for the Brimington part of the story, though we have not been able to verify this for the Staveley raid.

'Little Damage and no Casualties – Bombs on North Midland Town and Village' (Transcribed from the *Derbyshire Times*, 4 September 1942, page one)

Bombs which fell on the outskirts of a North Midland town on Friday caused only minor damage to property, and no casualties were reported. Fires which were started were fortunately all in the open and were dealt with by warden, fire parties, and occupants of houses, many of the latter not staying to change their night attire. "It was," said the tenant of one house, "a case of all hands on deck; we did not think of anything but tackling the incendiaries." Incendiaries were scattered thickly over a newly-ploughed field, and these were all dealt with in the space of minutes. An adjoining field of standing corn was entirely unscathed. An explosion which occurred in soft ground hurled masses of clay aside and uncovered a deposit of coal.

GIRL BLOWN OFF BED

"It's thundering and lightening," said 13-year-old Evelyn Whitworth to her parents who, dashing into her bedroom after an explosion had rocked their house, found she had been blown off the bed. A bomb had exploded in their back garden, fracturing a service gas pipe and damaging drains alongside the houses. Plaster was showered down inside, but not a pane of glass was broken. Incendiaries fell around a greenhouse, which was undamaged.

Mr. Mansell and his next door neighbour, Mr. Moncaster, had their gardens torn up by an explosion, and a dividing fence demolished. There was minor structural damage to both houses, plaster and walls showing signs of the visitation, but here again no windows were broken. "It's put paid to my red cabbage," said Mr. Norton, who found a crater in his garden where previously had stood a fine crop of vegetables.

TREK BACK HOME

In a roadway a bomb damaged a gas main and telephone cable, and as a precautionary measure a number of houses in the vicinity were evacuated, a local rest centre being put into commission. With daylight there was a trek back to homes, but for many the excitement spelt a sleepless night.

In an adjoining village high explosive incendiary bombs were dropped, but little damage was done and there were no casualties. The curator at a cemetery put out several incendiary bombs in the cemetery. In the early morning, he, along with several fire watchers, were not far from where an incendiary bomb fell on the footpath between two houses, one occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Haigh and the other by Mr. and Mrs. Watson. Although considerable damage was done to the gable ends of the houses and much plaster fell in the rooms, the only pane of glass broken was in the door of one of the houses.

BOMB ON LAWN

No one was injured. A gas main under the footpath was slightly damaged. Mrs. Allen, who was staying with her daughter (Mrs. Haigh), had a narrow escape. She had only just got out of bed when a large quantity of plaster fell. In another house Mrs. Watson and her husband were in bed at the time, not having heard the sirens, when there was a terrific explosion and a great deal of light, but, apart from damage to the house and falling plaster, they escaped injury. One bomb fell on the lawn in front of Mr. and Mrs. Hollingworth's bungalow, and made a huge crater not far from the bungalow. No damage was done. Mrs. Hollingworth said her husband was fire watching on the road at the time, and she was looking out of the front window, when there was a deafening report and a great deal of fire in the field adjoining the bungalow. Several H.E. and incendiary bombs dropped, but they were all promptly dealt with by the fire watchers, and soon put out, no damage being done. Several bombs were also dropped in nearby fields, but apart from the craters they caused there was no other damage and no casualties.



Ringwood Avenue, Middlecroft, Staveley, looking towards Chesterfield Road, December 2012. The house to the left is number 11, with number nine adjoining. It is in the latter's back garden that one of the eight Staveley Urban District area bombs landed. The garden of number seven also suffered a similar fate. (Philip Cousins)

Number nine Edward Street, the first house from the photographer, in the second block of semi detached houses, suffered a bomb in the back garden, with nearby number three Westwood Avenue the next property visited by the raid. The attack ended with a bomb dropped in a grass verge to the Division Street end of what is now 'The Bungalows' on Chesterfield Road. Fuller details of the Staveley attack are in the next article. (Philip Cousins)



BOMBS OVER BRIMINGTON: THE OFFICIAL STORY

Philip Cousins

Introduction

Coincidentally to Peter Harrison's obviously first-hand experiences of incendiary bombs dropping on Brimington, I was undertaking some work at The National Archives, Kew (TNA). Here I first pulled a file covering investigations into the events at Brimington,¹ It quickly became apparent that the Brimington event was accompanied by a second tranche of bombs dropped in the then Staveley Urban District Council area. This led to examination of a similar file for Staveley.² Both files are fairly slim, with that relating to Staveley also containing information relating to Brimington. This includes a plot of the bomb sites. A joint summary report also appears in both files. The contents of the files give the official story behind the events of 27/28 August 1942. As alluded to in Peter's account, the surviving bomb plot reveals a few discrepancies in the site of Brimington bombs one and six. This is more fully explained below.

As revealed above, the *Derbyshire Times* did cover the event as a page one news story; 'Little Damage and no Casualties – bombs on north midland town and village', in its 4 September 1942 edition. Eyewitness accounts of the event are recorded, with the actual names, certainly for the Brimington event, being given. Brimington and Staveley are not directly named, due the need for secrecy. There might be serious consequences if the enemy had been able to judge the success or otherwise of its raids.

This article will examine the contents of the TNA files, giving some background about why these files exist. Whilst concentrating on the Brimington element, some information about the Staveley event will also be given. The article ends with extracts from both files, particularly references to the bomb sites in Brimington.

The 'Bomb Census'

The series in which the Brimington and Staveley files sits at TNA deals 'with observation of and research into allied and enemy bombs, bombing methods and effects, fire prevention and air raid damage both in the United Kingdom and in enemy occupied territories.'³ The files, like many others, were created by the Ministry of Home Security, Research and Experiments Department.

Those requiring more details about the service undertaken by this department are referred to the on-line catalogue of The National Archives.⁴ Briefly, however, it was recognised that the study of bombing and its affects would significantly add to intelligence on enemy bombing tactics and the equipment used. The service became known as the 'bomb census'. From the early autumn of 1940 it operated on a limited basis in Liverpool, Birmingham and London. In March 1941 work was expanded at the behest of the Air Ministry. After this date incidents were investigated more thoroughly. By September activities had been expanded almost across the entire UK. Headquarters staff, at Princess Risborough, were supplemented by much local assistance, including the police and civil defence services. Area technical officers were appointed in order to give advice, training and support to these local bodies. The area

¹ The National Archives (TNA), HO 192/180.

² TNA, HO 192/181.

³ [On-line] last visited 16 August 2012 at URL:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue/displaycataloguedetails.asp?CATID=7747&CATLN=3&accessmethod=5&j=1>.

⁴ The majority of this paragraph is sourced from [on-line] last visited 16 August 2012 at URL:

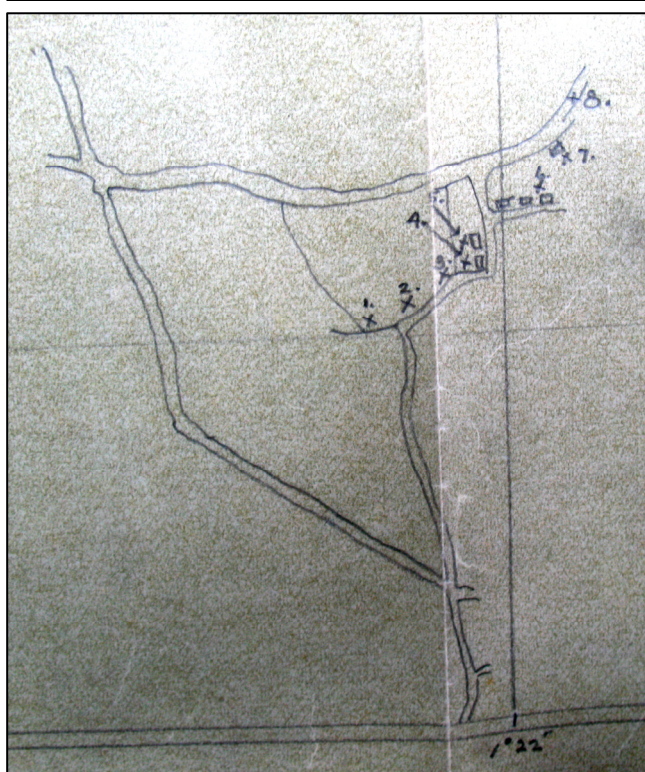
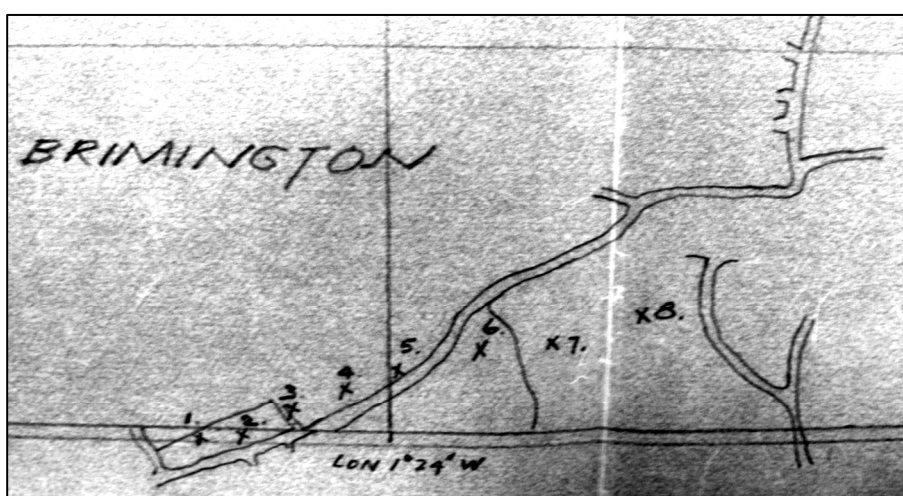
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue/displaycataloguedetails.asp?CATID=7753&CATLN=3&accessmethod=5> and
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/maps-bomb-census-survey.htm>.

officers, in turn, worked under a regional structure. Work expanded, culminating, for our part of the story, in the allocation of appropriate work to sections, in March 1942.

Location of the Staveley and Brimington bombs

Before examining the files in some detail, the casual reader may be interested in confirmation of the impact sites from official records. As readers will have gathered, all the bombs were incendiaries.

Unfortunately the official bomb plots in the TNA do not appear to hold maps for either Chesterfield or Staveley.⁵ These series of maps are generally an alphabetical sequence of 6-inch Ordnance Survey (OS) maps, onto which are noted impact sites. The Staveley file, however, does contain a tracing, in pencil, which is taken from a 6-inch OS map.⁶ As perhaps indicated in the extracts below (which are not to scale), this can only be regarded as rough tracing.



Bombs plots from the tracing contained within the Staveley Urban District file at The National Archives. These two illustrations are not to original scale. The relative difficulty in ascertaining the exact sites of the bombs from these tracings might be gathered by examining the maps on page 46. It was from maps of that type that the tracings here would have been derived. The Staveley U.D.C. tracing is the bottom of the two. (Courtesy TNA, HO 192/181).

⁵ These are in series TNA, HO 193.

⁶ Derbyshire sheet XVIII. S.E.

The tracings, coupled with the files' incident reports, reveal that Peter Harrison's initial identification of the first impact – in fields where Lansdowne Road, at Brimington, now runs – is possibly not correct. It now seems likely that the first Brimington bomb was dropped further up towards Brimington. There is more discussion at the end of this article regarding other discrepancies. More detailed plots were later made of some of the sites, aiding clarification.

The Staveley Urban District Council bombs are more readily identified, as detailed plots were later prepared for bombs four to eight in this tranche. These show that bombs four and five dropped in the rear gardens of numbers 9 and 7 Ringwood Avenue, respectively. Bomb number six dropped to the rear of 9 Edward Street, whilst number seven embedded itself in the rear garden of 3 Westwood Avenue (one of a block of three houses). Bomb eight ended up in a grass verge on Chesterfield Road, near the junction of Division Street, opposite number 1 'The Bungalows' (these properties were not built until after the Second World War). Bombs one to three had dropped in what were then fields, to the south east of this small inter-war council estate.

The files

Both files at the TNA relating to our incident are of foolscap size, fairly slim, with a heading slip marked 'Ministry of Home Security, Research and Experiments Department'. The Brimington file has a reference RE/B13/19/1. The Staveley file is RE/B13/20/1. The Brimington file cover is illustrated below.

The RE series of files in TNA comprise a series of technical reports and assessments of air raid damage, along with War Damage (Earth Movements) Main Committee and Air Ministry Incendiary Panel papers. The 192 series relates to the Number 3 'North Midland' Region of the Research and Experiments Division. The series in TNA runs until 1948. Other events investigated include those in a variety of communities, including the east coast (Cleethorpes, Mablethorpe, etc.).

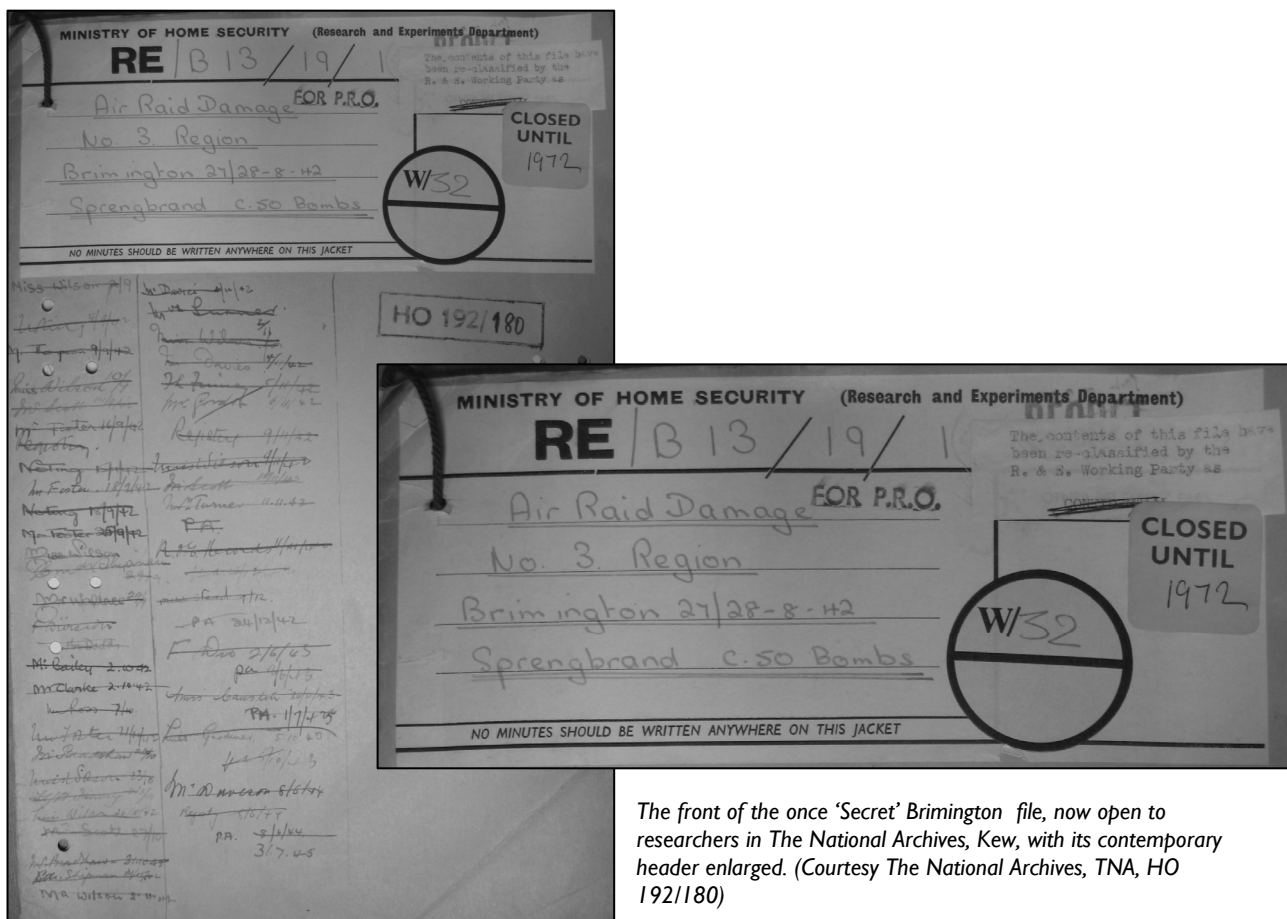
The event is officially described as occurring on the night/early morning of 28/29 August 1942. Incidents were submitted on a BC4 form. The original BC4 forms are not on either file, though a summary report, which is contained in both the Brimington and Staveley files, refers to them. These BC4 forms were gathered together into an alphabetical series and have been deposited in TNA.⁷ An index sheet at the commencement of the file, in which the Brimington and Staveley BC4s should be present, shows the entry as crossed out, with no BC4 forms on file. The heading slip to the top outside of both the Brimington and Staveley bombing files reveal that they were classified as 'Secret', being closed until 1972.

The Brimington file is titled 'Air raid damage. No. 3 Region. Brimington 27/27.8.42. Sprengbrand C.50 bombs.' The front cover header label of the Staveley file appears to have replaced an earlier version (or that from another file). It is headed 'Air raid damage. Region 3. Staveley 27/28.8.42. Firepot damage.' Both these titles indicate that the bombs were incendiaries – as experienced by Peter Harrison and reported on in the *Derbyshire Times*.

The Brimington file contains a mix of typed and handwritten documents. The majority of the handwritten ones appear to be telephone messages received by Princess Risborough about the event. These comprise a pre-printed header box including the 'In Message Form' title. An example is shown on page 64. The Staveley file contains none of these handwritten messages. It mainly comprises a series of reports about both bomb tranches. As described above, the Staveley file also contains four tracings and one drawing.

⁷ TNA, HO 198/7.

The front of the Brimington file reveals that during its life (started 2 September 1942, finally put away ('P.A.') on 31 July 1945) some 46 departments or people looked at it. During this period it was also put away five times. Every single form is numbered with presumably an incident number (7712). The Staveley file appears not have been through as many hands. It simply indicates it was put away on 8 June 1943, was seen by someone in August that year, finally being put away on 31 July 1945.



The front of the once 'Secret' Brimington file, now open to researchers in The National Archives, Kew, with its contemporary header enlarged. (Courtesy The National Archives, TNA, HO 192/180)

The Brimington file opens with what must be a record of a telephone message to 'Young, Nottingham' from presumably a telephonist at Princes Risborough Control Office, dated 29 August at 12.35 hours; 'H.S.W.R., No. D25 dated 28/8/42 . . . reports at Brimington 8 bombs were dropped apparently with the combined HE and 1.16 type etc. Please ascertain and report by phone whether they were phosphorous or fire pots'.

The reply from Nottingham, came on the 31 August at 1605 hours; 'In reply to 7712 – HSWR report Brimington No. 16 – 50kg bombs 1B/HE. These were all Fire Pot 1B/HE'. In another hand the message is marked 'Miss Williams. For attention of Comdr. Shipman.' and dated 31/8. It is not known who Commander Shipman was, but it is interesting to note that even at the height of war good administration prevails with records kept of messages and who was to see what. Particular reference is made, in the first message, to the need to ascertain if the incendiary bombs were of the more usual 'fire pots' or if it contained phosphorus. This is referred to in Peter Harrison's account above, where one of the men prepared to fire-fight the bombs on Creswick's field was all too aware of the need to be careful in case the bombs contained phosphorus, which would further ignite if water was used.

This is perhaps further emphasised by a report in the *Derbyshire Times* shortly after the bombs had been dropped.⁸ This records that one Alfred Elliot, supported by the Fire Guard Officer Mr J.T. Dronfield

⁸ Derbyshire Times, 11 September 1942.

had given ‘demonstrations and instructions’ on dealing with ‘new types of incendiary bombs’ at Brimington Common schools. Present were the local fire guards who then numbered ‘13 efficient groups’, members of the Womens’ Voluntary Service under their leader Mrs A. Symonds, senior wardens A. Kendall and W. Stewart and the senior fireguard Mr J. Nind.

The third message in the Brimington file is from ‘Black, Brimington’, to Commander Shipman on 2 September. It records that a ‘Mr Fariday’⁹ had just returned from Derbyshire ‘...with very valuable information’ on the incendiary devices. As it was expected it would be two to three days before Fariday’s report reached Princess Risborough, Black forwarded information in advance, by phone. This recorded that; ‘From observations the secondary effect of 16 bombs checked up illustrates that their effects have been in the past over-estimated. . .’ From the Staveley UDC event file we learn that a Black is probably from Region 9 at Birmingham. Presumably he had expertise in incendiary devices.

Brief No. 188. A.R.P. 7712

IN MESSAGE FORM

DATE: 29-8-42 Time at which receipt of message was completed: 12.35 Telephone's Initials: [Signature]

ADDRESS TO: Mr Young Nottingham

TEXT OF MESSAGE: H. & W. 12 HQ 25 dated 28/8/42 (T.O. 0.0615) reports 'at BRIMINGTON 8 bombs were dropped apparently of the Combined H.E. and 1.16. Type etc' Please ascertain and report by phone whether these were phosphorus or fire pots.

TIME OF ORIGIN OF MESSAGE: Occurrence Number:

ADDRESS FROM: [Signature]

The first paperwork in the Brimington file is a message to Mr Young at the Nottingham office of the Ministry of Home Security, Research and Experiments Department, dated 29 August, 1942. He was to report, by telephone, whether the incendiary bombs were ‘fire pots’ or phosphorus. Fortunately for those putting out the bombs with stirrup pumps they did not contain phosphorus. All the forms are numbered; good administration prevailed even at the height of war. A few days earlier the Germans had launched a massive air raid on Stalingrad as part of their offensive against the Soviets. (Courtesy The National Archives, TNA, HO 192/180).

Despite Black’s insistence that ‘reports will be forwarded as soon as possible’ the next paper in the file – a typed ‘brief’, dispatched the next day – makes it quite clear that reports on the eight bombs dropped at Brimington must be submitted ‘...in accordance with “Notes on Reporting Damage by Sprengband C.50 Incendiary Bombs”...’ a copy of which was apparently enclosed.

The Staveley file contains a reply to W.H. Black, Senior Regional Intelligence Officer at Region 9, from what appears to be R. Fereray ‘Technical Intelligence Officer at the Research and Experiments Department’s Birmingham Office. He indicates that whilst carrying out an Air War Analysis Section (A.W.A.S.) investigation he found that incendiary bombs of the 50 Kg H.E. type had fallen in close proximity to houses ‘causing little or no damage and for this reason thought the incident might be of interest.’ The A.W.A.S. had drawn a ‘6-inch plot’, but Fereray also prepared a plot showing the bomb’s impact at Staveley.

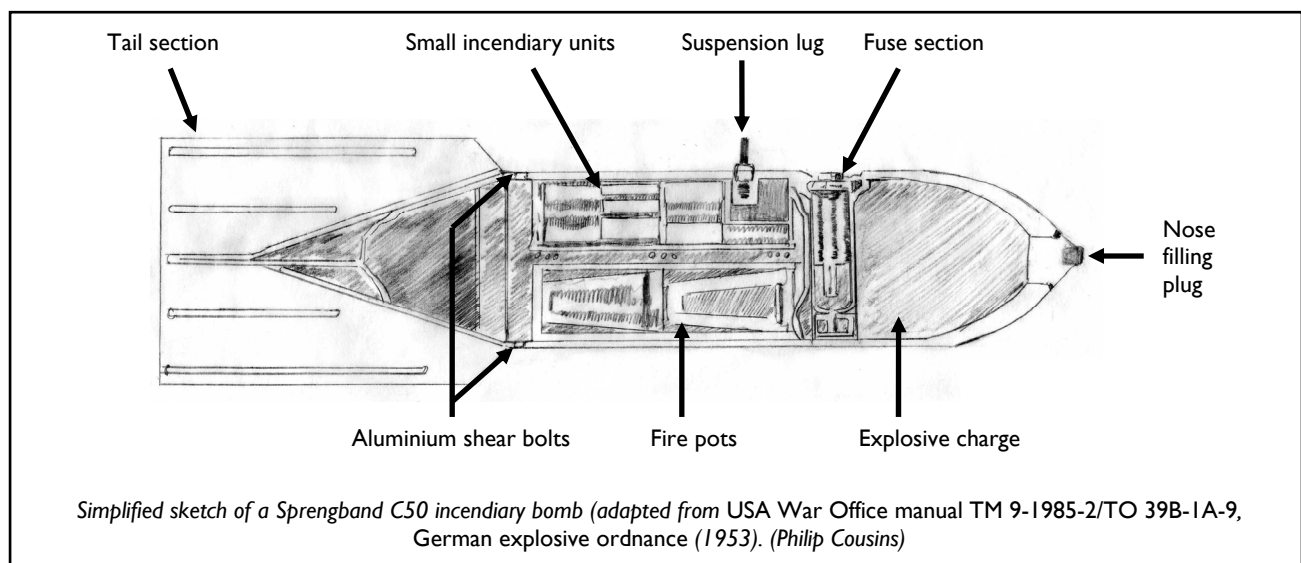
Within the Brimington file, we have the first identification of the official type of bombs dropped on Brimington and Staveley that night and early morning in August 1942. So what was a Sprengband C.50 bomb?

The ‘C.50’ related to the overall weight of the bomb at 50 kg. The bomb itself consisted of a nose section containing 20kg of TNT explosive. The bomb was in two sections, with a steel diaphragm just after the fuse pocket. Near the fuse was a device which incorporated a delay pellet and detonator to

which was connected a silk bag with black powder in it. This was the expelling agent for the remaining contents of the bomb body. These comprised six ‘fire pots’, which themselves carried an incendiary substance. Also contained were 67 small triangular metal elements, blown out over a radius of 100 yards. The detonation of the black powder also sheared some aluminium screws which secured the base-plate of the bomb (near the tail section), allowing the incendiary elements and fire pots to be expelled. About one second after expulsion from the aircraft a delay element fired the TNT charge in the bomb’s nose.

⁹ There are a number of different spellings of this person’s name in the various papers. His signature seems to indicate he was Fererary. See also footnote 12.

The effectiveness of this bomb was inevitably defined by the aeroplane crew's accuracy, particularly regarding distance from the target. Getting the height wrong could therefore have implications on the spread of the fire pots, the triangular elements and the effectiveness of the TNT charge. An important part of the bomb was, therefore, its ability to spread its contents – the incendiary units and fire pots. It is this spread which would account for Peter Harrison's recollections of fire-watcher Mr Purcell's initial reaction of being 'surrounded by fire.' In addition the fortunate lack of action required by Mr Hollingworth senior, at his bungalow on Chesterfield Road, appears to have been caused by the bomb being dropped too low, burying itself about 10 feet down – not having correctly shed its various elements. The bomb length was 2 feet 4 inches, the tail length 1 foot 4 inches, with a diameter of 8 inches. The total weight was about 75 lbs.¹⁰ A simplified diagram of this bomb appears below.



Both the Brimington and Staveley files next contain a 7 September 1942¹¹ report to 'The Chief Adviser' at Princess Risborough, from a Mr Freeston of number three, north midland region. This included a report on the bombs which dropped in the Staveley U.D.C. area, 'which was the second stick of eight bombs'. The Brimington references in this report are transcribed below.

The final paperwork in the Brimington file is a report on 'raid at Staveley... at 0115 hours. 27/28.8.42'. This relates to the whole incident, including the Brimington tranche and does not appear on the Staveley file. The report was submitted by 'R. Fereday, Technical Intelligence Officer'¹² and dated 5 September 1942, but was retyped on the 28 of that month. No reason is given for this, presumably it was corrected at some stage, but that it was retyped and dated during this period must say something for the strengths of war-time administration! The report reveals that a '6" plot of bombs' along with field book notes and B.C.2 and B.C.4 'in duplicate' were also tendered. Fereday's report of the 5th reveals that a red warning was sounded at 0045 with a white at 0149. On the night there was 'little' cloud with nil wind. The moon was between full and three-quarters, with only mist 'in patches on ground, clear above.' The report records that all the 16 bombs were dropped within 2500 yards of the Staveley Works complex, by an aircraft flying from the south-west. There appeared to be two groups of eight bombs; '...the distance between the last bomb of the first group to the first bomb of the last group being approximately 2000 yards. It was concluded that the possible target was Staveley works, then of approximately 170 acres. It

¹⁰ For further information about the bomb see [on-line] last visited 31 September 2012 at URLs: <http://www.warbirdsresourcegroup.org/LRG/sprengbandc50.htm>, http://www.ne-diary.bpears.org.uk/Bck/BSeq_02.html. A scanned copy of the USA War Office manual TM 9-1985-2/TO 39B-1A-9, German explosive ordnance is available at [on-line] last visited 3 December 2012 at URL: <http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/ref/TM/pdfs/TM9-1985-2-German.pdf>.

¹¹ The Brimington version has handwritten corrections. These appear as corrected in the typescript Staveley file's version.

¹² The name is typed. It is presumed that Fereday and Fereday are same the person.

is also recorded that certain parts of the works were 'exempt from Black-out restrictions...', though both the police and the Royal Observer Corps (R.O.C.) had informed the report's writer 'that during periods of alert a perfect black-out is maintained.'¹³

Mr. W.E. Turner reported from the R.O.C. post, which was approximately one mile north-east from the works. Between 01.00 hours and 01.08 hours the post had observed 'a hostile aircraft... from the south-west at a height of 12-15000 ft.' This had turned away to the west south west, 'flying for a distance of approximately five miles, passing over Chesterfield, when it turned again, flying to the North East in the direction of the Post whilst on this run released its bombs.' In this run, Turner reported that the aircraft had 'rapidly lost height, being at 5,000 ft. when the bombs were released.' After the release the raider commenced to climb and turned away to the north-north-east 'going out on that course.' Turner further commented that shortly before the R.O.C. post had identified the aircraft a plane had passed over, but 'owing to the noise from the works was reported by them as unidentified but thought it was probably the same plane.' At the time of the attack it was stated that the lower parts of the district, including the works, had a mist hanging over them – ground visibility being 20-200 yards.

Inspector Shimwell, of the Derbyshire police, who was stationed at Staveley, briefly commented that he was outside at the time of the incident. He had heard the aircraft approaching from the south west. Though Shimwell did not hear the bombs dropping he 'saw the glow from them' along with the noise of the aircraft turning away to the north-north-east. Poor ground visibility was further confirmed by the Inspector.

It is now reasonably well known that a series of air reconnaissance photographs were taken over the U.K. by the Luftwaffe in the autumn of 1939. This included Staveley works on the 3 October of that year. From this detailed target charts were prepared – the Staveley Coal and Iron Company's works being target GB 7074. The works were described as 'Important ironworks in the midlands with extensive by-products. Basic iron processing and munitions plants.' The plant is described, with its elements identified on detailed charts.¹⁴

The story, though, does not end with Fereday's report, which must have interested others. A 'brief', dispatched on 15 September 1942, within the Staveley file,¹⁵ reveals that the final four bombs dropped at Staveley 'affords the opportunity for an endeavour to reconstruct the trajectories of the fire pots and incendiary missiles ejected from bombs of this kind.' A revisit was required with more information to be gained. A scaled plan produced for the first visit was attached to the brief.¹⁶ Instructions included identifying marks on roofs or walls, cause of window breakages, whether missiles entered through open windows, how the bombs functioned and methods used to extinguish them. Further plans were to be produced 'with precision'. All the Brimington and Staveley bombs were re-assessed in this report. Most of the correspondence and reports in the Staveley file were from Region nine of the Research and Intelligence Unit, based at Newhall Street, in Birmingham.

Technical Intelligence Officer C.W. Hope from Region nine was duly dispatched and reported details on 22 September 1942, through W.H. Black, to Commander Shipman. The details of this report, as they refer to the Brimington bombs, are extracted below. Of note is a comment regarding souvenir hunting. Five unignited fire pots and 38 small incendiaries had been handed in, with the police endeavouring to recover more. This, of course, accords with the efforts, recounted by Peter Harrison, to recover some of the fragments for souvenirs, along with subsequent police action to recover them. The report included various plots and plans of the impact sites and the scattering of the bomb's contents. Extracts from some of these are illustrated in this article. The investigation was also supplemented by photographs, but

¹³ See p. 36 above for a differing perspective on this.

¹⁴ I am grateful to Mr F. Wood, Brimington, for this information, which included a copy of the Luftwaffe documents, a transcription and undated (c. 1970) cutting from *Steel News*.

¹⁵ The Staveley file begins with a letter to Shipman from the Research and Experiments Department's Birmingham office.

¹⁶ This appears to have survived in the file.

these, unlike the plots and plans, have not survived in either of the Brimington or Staveley files. They were later described by Black as ‘rather poor films’.

Official reports of the Brimington bombs

What follows is a transcription of three reports contained across the Staveley and Brimington files, with some discussion, where required. The first is a transcription of a table which appears at the front of the Staveley file. The table appears as a second appendix to a concise report of the incident, the first appendices in the report being for the Staveley bombs. Though undated, it was possibly compiled as a result of the further investigations required after the initial reconnaissance. A brief report, which prefaces the tables, observes that all the bombs exploded and ignited, with the possible exception of number three at Staveley, where the ploughing of a field destroyed all evidence. All the incendiary units were ‘quickly extinguished by smothering with earth.’ It was noted that evidence of the Staveley incident was sparse ‘probably due to the potato crop having been lifted in the meantime’.

Bomb No.	Surface Struck	Distance from Buildings	Behaviour of incendiary units	Damage	Comments
1	Field, outcrop of shale.	—	One ignited missile approx. 220’ from crater.	—	One field freshly ploughed, marks destroyed
2	Field.	—	Evidence that 2 firepots smothered with earth at 30’ and 25’ from crater. Also scorch marks indicating scatter of incendiary missiles.	—	—
3	Garden	40’0” approx.	No reliable evidence.	No reliable evidence.	—
4	Garden	50’0” approx.	Firepot struck brick gable end of house approx. 26’0” from crater and 15’0” above ground level. Fell in angle of lean-to W.C. Marks in orchard indicated firepot at 70’ and small incendiaries up to 80’	Fire scorched door and frame.	Fire extinguished with stirrup pump.
5	Garden just in front of entry between pair of semi-detached houses.	—	Firepot extinguished with earth. Found in hedge at approx. 18’ from crater. One missile burned out on canopy over front door.	Both corners of houses badly cracked, have to be rebuilt. No glass damage. Evidence bomb fractured and ignited gas service to house.	Approx. 2 minutes delay before H.E. portion exploded
6	Brick paved drive between bungalow and semi-detached house.	—	Incendiary Unit burned out on pantile roof of bungalow approx. 41’ from bomb and 12’ up. One firepot penetrated rolled asbestos sheet roof of garage approx. 150’ from bomb and 24’ up. Extinguished on floor with sand. Another firepot broke slate roof of house approx. 225’ from bomb and 28’ up. Lodged on party wall. Extinguished with stirrup pump.	Three window panes broken in bungalow.	—
			Stated number of Incendiaries missiles extinguished in front of house. All evidence removed.		

Bomb No.	Surface Struck	Distance from Buildings	Behaviour of incendiary units	Damage	Comments
7 & 8	Field	—	—	—	No information obtained.

'Appendix two' transcribed from a report on the Staveley and Brimington bombing event, contained at the front of the Staveley file. This extract is for the Brimington bombs only. (TNA, HO 192/181).

There now follows extracts from two reports, accompanied by photographs of the possible sites (or as near to the crater site as is accessible from a public highway), taken in the last few years. For a full plot of the sites (as remembered by Peter Harrison) readers are invited to study the map on page 57 and the tracings at page 61, or the accompanying extracted file plots below. There needs to be some caution exercised, though. As discussed previously, the tracings shown at page 61 are fairly difficult to transpose to a larger scale.

The report extracts, which are all *italicised*, comprise the following:

- 'Freeston' – the report as submitted by Mr Freeston, dated 7 September 1942. This appears in both the Brimington and Staveley files at TNA.
- 'Hope and Black' – the report submitted by C.K Hope and W.H. Black, dated 22 September 1942. This is the reassessment of the bomb sites, their impact and spread of incendiary elements and fire pots, undertaken nearly a month after the event. This report appears only in the Staveley U.D.C. event file.

The extracts are followed by any necessary discussion or supplementary documents. Apologies are due for the variation in the illustration quality of the latter. This is due to their age and consequent difficulty in copying.



BOMB NUMBER ONE – in the area between Lansdowne Road and Oak Close (Chesterfield Road)

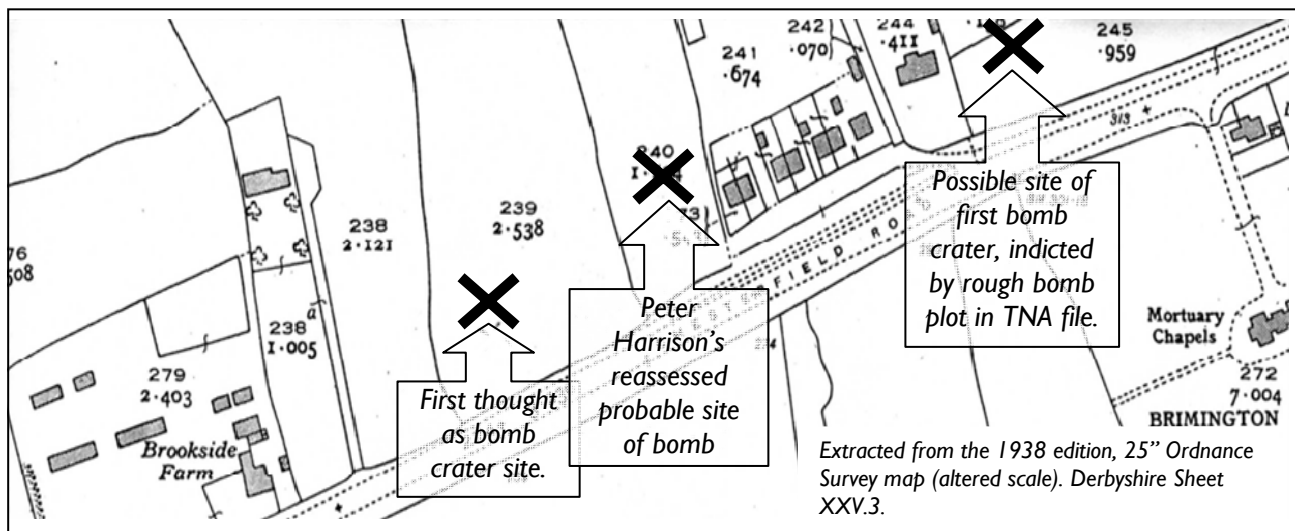
Freeston:

'Struck a bed of very hard shale, and the fire pots from this bomb were found burnt out in a coarse grass field on the opposite side of the main road, approximately 75 yards from the crater.'

Hope and Black:

'Fell in a field striking outcrop of shale. Some of the contents of the bomb were thrown right across the road and fell in the Cemetery and fields on the other side. One unburned small incendiary was picked up about 220'-0" from the crater, but as one field had been freshly ploughed the marks had been destroyed.'

Peter Harrison originally thought the impact site was where Lansdowne Road now runs. Examination of the impact plot tracings, in the Staveley TNA file, show that the first bomb's crater is probably indicated in the field to the east of Oak Close (near to Windy Ridge). This places the impact point roughly opposite the westerly boundary of the cemetery. Peter now thinks that the field marked below as '...reassessed' (i.e. the middle field of the three marked) was probably the impact site.



indicating small incendiaries to the S.W. of crater.'

This view, looking from the Cemetery gates shows the bungalows at the top of Downlands. The bomb fell behind the stone wall, approximately to the centre of the photograph.



reliable evidence of incendiaries or damage.'

BOMB NUMBER TWO – in the area now known as Downlands

Freeston:

'Struck heavy clay land although not many yards from bomb No. 1. The firepots and small incendiary units were found burnt out very close to the crater.'

Hope and Black:

'This also fell in a field and there was evidence that two fire pots had been smothered with earth and about 30'-0" and 25'-0" from the crater. There were also small scorch marks

BOMB NUMBER THREE – now Wikeley Way (Brackendale Close)

Freeston:

'Struck heavy clay and exploded the whole contents of the shell below the clay; the incendiary units were burning and smouldering underground at 1900 hours on the day of the incident. . . Caused a crater. . . but the Incendiary Units were trapped beneath the clay and burnt out there.'

Hope and Black:

'Fell in garden about 40'-0" West of bungalow, but gave no

This was the incident recounted by Mr J. Hollingsworth and in the *Derbyshire Times*. Here the impact had thrown a large piece of clay out of the ground, with the bomb sitting around ten feet below the surface

level. The bomb crater was practically where the tree is. On the photograph, the house behind is on Brackendale Close. There is no large scale separate tracing of this event in the TNA files.



"Thornleigh". One Fire Pot from this bomb struck the brick gable end of the house about 56'-0" from the crater and about 15'-0" above ground level. This Fire Pot fell in the angle of the lean-to W.C. and scorched the door and frame; this was extinguished by Stirrup Pump.'

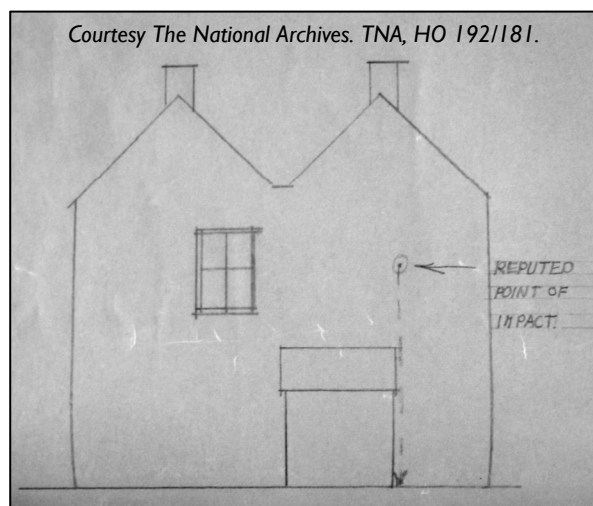
BOMB NUMBER FOUR – 'Thornleigh'

Freeston:

'Struck the garden soil and hard shale here, again, the incendiary units travelled approximately 30-40 yards, one firepot dropped near the outside W.C. door but only scorched the outside paint of the door and the frame.'

Hope and Black:

'Fell in garden about 50'-0" North of house called



'There were marks in the orchard which pointed to a Fire Pot 70'-0" from crater and small incendiaries up to 80'-0". A sketch of this is attached.' [Not included with this article].

This report is much as remembered by both Peter Harrison and Mr Hollingsworth. The damage and expelled fire pots were traced on a large scale plan, complete with elevations, one of which is shown here. The extract (left) shows where the fire pot impacted on the brick gable end of the house, dropping downwards towards the lean-to W.C. As reported above, the bomb crater was in the garden, to the north of the house.



BOMB NUMBER FIVE – 34 (right) and 36 (left) Chesterfield Road

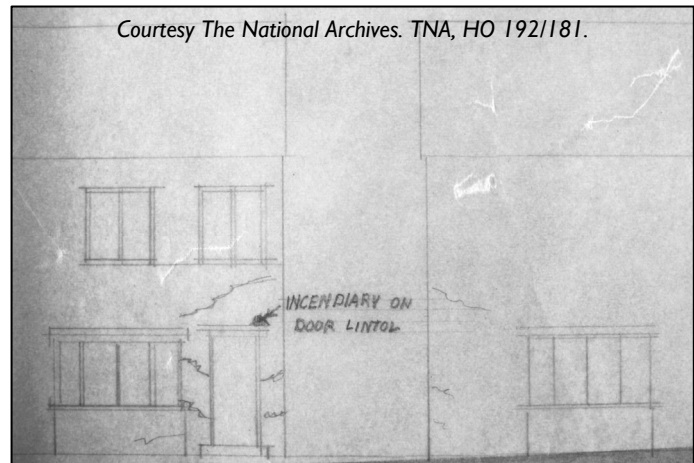
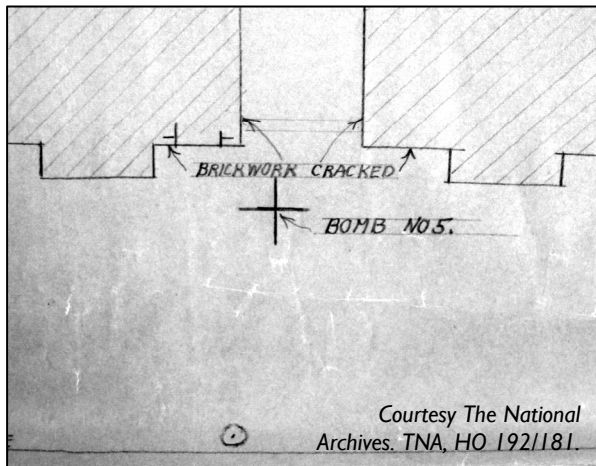
Freeston:

'Fell on a 4" rough concrete path near the front doors of two houses, this pierced the underground gas pipe and ignited the escaping gas which was quickly extinguished. No fire occurred and the damage to the houses was not extensive.'

Hope and Black:

'Fell in garden just in front of entry between pair of semi-detached houses. Both corners of houses are badly cracked and will have to be rebuilt. No glass was damaged. One Fire Pot had been extinguished with earth in the hedge about 18'-0" from the crater and one small incendiary had burned out on the canopy above the front door. A sketch is enclosed. There is evidence that this bomb broke and ignited the gas service to house and there was about two minutes delay before the H.E. portion exploded.'

The comment about damage to the house reported by Freeston needs to be measured against that which might be seen in bombing raids elsewhere. Hope and Black give a more measured account. Extracts below, from the large scale plans accompanying their report, indicate the damage sustained due to the fire pots and incendiary spread. The position of one of the former is shown as a circle to the bottom centre of the left hand illustration. An incendiary landed on the door lintel of number 36. This bombing incident was covered at some length in the *Derbyshire Times* report. Freeston reports only one casualty from all the Brimington and Staveley bombs – here at bomb number five; ‘a woman slightly scratched on arm by falling plaster.’



BOMB NUMBER SIX – (south side of Chesterfield Road, behind now demolished bungalow, number 9)

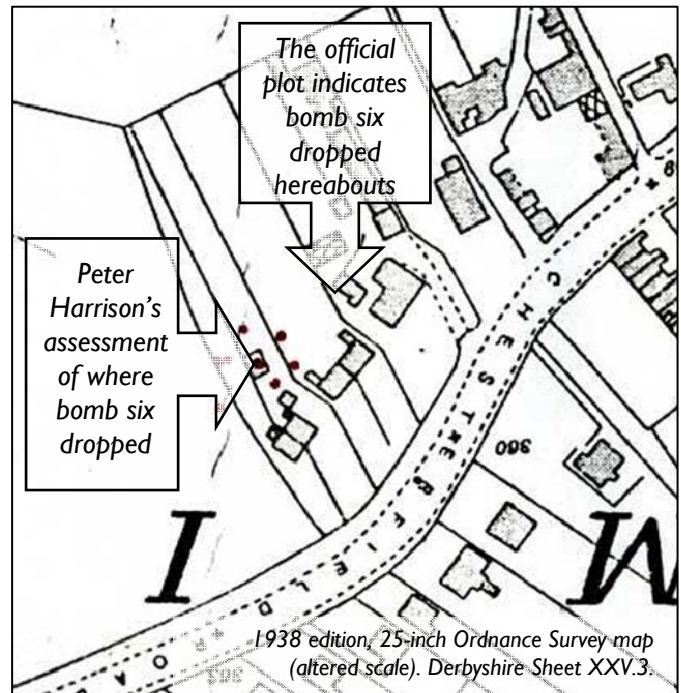
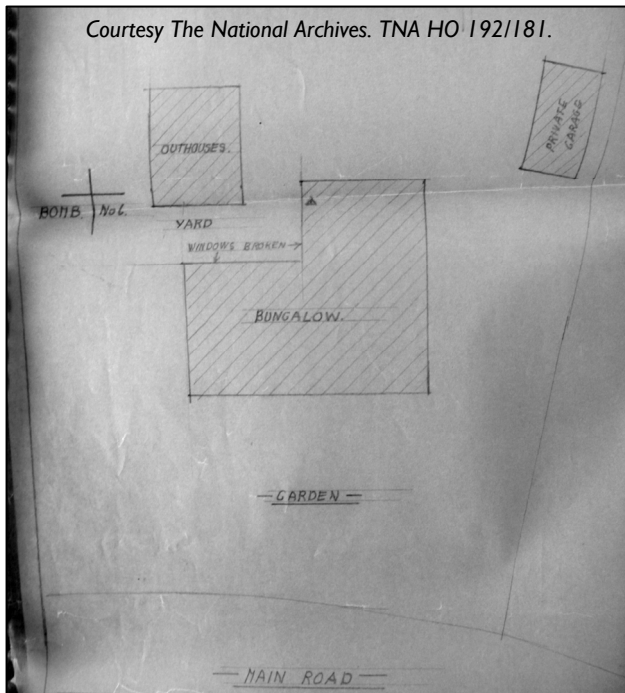
Freeston:

Fell on 4" rough concrete path at the rear of two houses again, very small trace of incendiary were found and no fires were caused, broken windows to the rear of one house and greenhouse glass was the only damage.'

Hope and Black:

Fell on brick paved drive between bungalow and semi-detached house. Three window panes were broken in bungalow. One small incendiary burned out on pantilre [sic] roof of bungalow about 41'-0" from bomb and 12'-0" up. One Fire Pot fell on rolled asbestos sheet roof of Garage about 150'-0" from crater and about 24'-0" up. This was extinguished with sand and the floor of Garage. Another Fire Pot broke slate roof of house about 225'-0" from crater and 28'-0" up. This lodged on party wall and was extinguished with Stirrup Pump. It was stated that a number of small incendiaries had been extinguished in the yard in front of this house but all evidence had been removed.'

The two reports are more problematic than the others here, as they vary both between each other and that of Peter Harrison's recollections. An extract from the official plot is below left, compared with the 1938 edition, Ordnance Survey (O.S.) map (25-inch to one mile) of the area. In order to make a comparison the map is shown with the south at the top. The plot clearly shows the bomb landed in the garden of a bungalow on Chesterfield Road, now demolished and replaced by St. Michael's Nursing Home (i.e. number 9, the white two-storey block on the photograph above). The dropping of the bomb in the area shown on the plot below, would explain why the greenhouse referred to in Freeston's report was damaged. This greenhouse was the hatched rectangular building visible under the arrowed box in the O.S. map.



On the official plot extract above, the small triangle to the top left of the bungalow shows the impact of one of the ignited small incendiaries. Other parts of the plan sheet, not reproduced here, show that another fire pot broke the slate roof at number 7, Chesterfield Road.



BOMBS SEVEN AND EIGHT

Freeston:

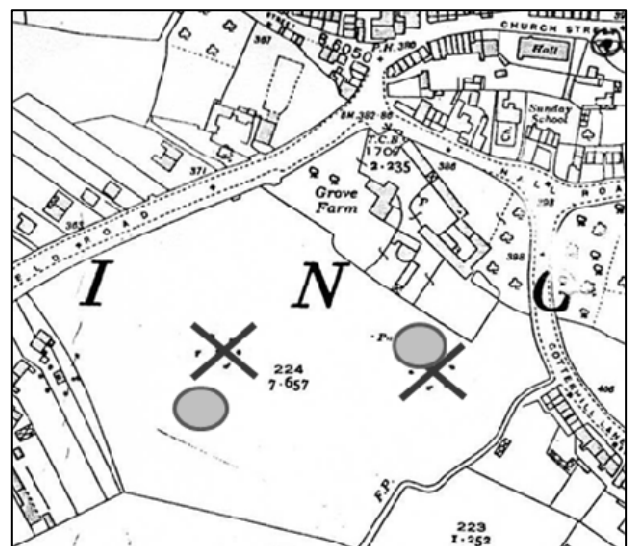
'Fell in field where the incendiary units were scattered close by the craters.'

Hope and Black:

'Fell in a field and no useful information could be obtained, except that the contents appear to have been thrown in a S.W. direction.'

These were the two bombs remembered so well by Peter on that night and early morning in August 1942. There are some minor, though not important, differences between the initial tracing plot, shown on page 61, and that remembered by Peter. The photograph above shows Well Spring Close. The final bomb fell hereabouts. The reduced scale 25-inch Ordnance Survey map (right) shows the original craters plotted by Peter as 'X', with the circles representing the sites noted on the official (though fairly rough) 6-inch plot (at page 61).

Bomb number seven fell in the area now represented by Headland Road and Headland Close.



Conclusions

The two files in The National Archives give an interesting insight into the extent that bombs were studied during the war years. They also reveal that, as part of this, good administration was required.

Though there are some mistakes in the documents (including one notable howler in the Brimington file message of the 2 October, where 'flower pot' is crossed out to read the correct 'fire pot') a high standard of administration appears to have been largely achieved. Nor did the demands of war preclude the retyping of a final report of the 5 September, on the 28 September 1942. Standardised procedures were formulated and expected to be achieved. This included the numbering of forms and incident numbers.

Information in the Staveley file supplements the Brimington information. It commences with an undated raid summary for both Brimington and Staveley. Included are tables giving distance of bombs from buildings, crater depth, incendiary and fire pot spread and any damage sustained. The investigations appear thorough. Due note of the possible importance of this raid was highlighted early on in the investigations. The Brimington and Staveley raid was spotted as one where examination and more detailed recording might reveal further details than those originally reported. Care was then taken to plot the expelled agents from the bomb – the fire pots and incendiaries – for their spread and effectiveness. For the Sprengband C50 was a two part bomb, containing a high explosive charge along with expelled incendiary elements and fire pots.

The overall conclusion must have been that the bomb was not as effective as originally thought. It is clear that the expelled fire pots and incendiary elements were not spread as effectively as feared.

Apart from the low lying mist, this must have been a near perfect night for bombing. That mist seems to have been localised and probably saved Staveley Works from an attack. The conclusion of one of the investigating officers is that the works were the intended target.

Today, we know that there was a successful conclusion to the Second World War, albeit with much loss of life and property. When the blitz hit Sheffield in December 1940, witnessed by Brimington residents and others, there must have been real fears on where it would all end. Earlier it had been London, other cities and towns were to follow.

The files in The National Archives reveal something of the administration and research that was waged against Germany during the war. What they do not reveal, however, which Peter Harrison's graphic account does, is the real horror that must have been felt on that occasion in late August 1942, when Hitler's bombing raids became a direct reality for Brimington residents.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to The National Archives at Kew for permission to reproduce the file illustrations contained in this article and for facilities whilst researching.

My special thanks to Peter Harrison. Without his recollections it would not have been possible to have fully identified the sites where the Brimington bombs fell, or, indeed, to have filled in enough details to enable publication to the present level. It is Peter who has made the whole exercise worthwhile.

A NOTORIOUS BRIMINGTON MURDER OF 1881

Elizabeth Pemberton

Introduction

Murder is an horrendous crime, especially when it involves children. This is a true story of such an event, which visited an ordinary family in Brimington. Though it dates from 1881 we can all still sympathise with the story.

We are perhaps used to the sensational headlines of today's tabloid press. We may think that some of the sensationalism and thirst for news of all sorts, from crime to celebrities is relatively new, but certainly in the former case this is not true. For the press of the late 19th century could be just as sensational as today's.

The example studied here covers a locally notorious crime, now largely forgotten – that of the murder, after sexual assault, of a young Brimington girl in August 1881. The crime was, as would be expected, widely reported in the contemporary press. It has been ably chronicled by the late Geoff Sadler¹ and more recently by Michael Posner.² The latter account focuses, in particular, on events around and following the perpetrator's conviction and execution. The account here brings together a brief account of the crime, together with contemporary engravings from *The Illustrated Police News* – a 'popular' Victorian newspaper, with which many may not be familiar.



The front page of the *The Illustrated Police News*... Saturday 3 September 1881 (number 916), which covered the murder of Eleanor Windle. Other events included a murder at Swansea, 'shocking death of a lad'; a goring to death by a cow, 'A Dangerous balloon trip' and others. The top centre illustration features an alleged assault on a boy by a member of the Salvation Army.

The Illustrated Police News – Victorian populist press

The Illustrated Police News, Law Courts and Weekly Record was published from 1864. According to the British Library it '...was the first, and most long-lasting, Saturday penny newspaper that combined two hugely popular Victorian genres: the police newspaper and the illustrated journal.'³

George Pukess, a London publisher who had specialised in the publication of 'true stories' of crime, accidents and domestic disaster, on establishing the newspaper obviously hit on a successful format. Primarily reporting on stories drawn from the London Police Courts, the *News* also covered events in the provinces – but most were mainly concerned with what today we might associate more widely with the tabloid press. It gained some notoriety during the 1880s 'Jack the Ripper' crimes, when its sensationalist stance and illustrations quickly found a ready market amongst fearful Victorians. Steve Jones has written about the *News* in some detail. Those further interested are particularly referred to his account.⁴

¹ G. Sadler, (2003), *Foul deeds and suspicious deaths in and around Chesterfield*, pp. 143 – 152. Michael Posner, (2012), *Derbyshire Murders*, pp. 9 – 14.

² M. Posner, (2012), *Derbyshire murders*, pp. 9 – 14.

³ [On-line] last accessed 16 October 2012 at URL: <http://newspapers11.bl.uk/blcs/IllustratedPoliceNews.htm>.

⁴ S. Jones, (2002). *The Illustrated Police News: Victorian Court Cases and Sensational Stories*.

The Illustrated Police News had a popular look about it. Its front page comprised artists' impressions with headlines; these were then covered more fully inside. The mid 19th century abolition of newspaper taxes allowed the *News* to thrive and subsequently expand. It perhaps reached its zenith in the 1890s, when it comprised twelve magazine sized pages and an increasing range of topics. The *News* ceased publication in 1938.

The Brimington murder

'Beware of Strangers and Say "NO"'. That is what we relay to children nowadays. Whether this advice was routinely given to children in the 1880s I do not know, but if it was, it might have helped to save the life of an innocent six year-old girl.

I will set the scene on what we now call Chesterfield Road, in the 1880s. The area would not look like it does these days with a continuous line of traffic. The housing estate of Wikeley Way and Lansdowne Road would have been green fields or farm land. Right the way from the home of the victim – Eleanor Windle, of Almond Place – the road to Chesterfield would have been thinly populated, with only a smattering of houses. There was, of course, no motorised traffic in those days. Ponies and traps, horse and carts and, of course, one's own two feet, was the order of the day.

What follows is a summary of that fateful day of 20 August 1881, drawn mainly from Geoff Sadler's and a number of contemporary newspaper accounts.

It must have been an ordinary day for Eleanor. She had left her home on Almond Place (apparently locally known as Stone Row) and was out with friends walking towards Tinker Sick picking blackberries. On the way they met a tinker with a cart, one Alfred Gough. Tinkers were, perhaps, a product of the day. They were originally mobile tinsmiths, but the term was later transferred to travelling people, generally marginalised and mainly of no fixed abode, who would sell a variety of goods.

Gough, a former soldier, now reduced to a meagre living hawking toys in return for rags and bones, appeared with his hand cart, walking towards the village. He had what must have seemed an attractive array to children, of toys, paper flags and small parasols, the latter made from pieces of coloured wallpaper. Eleanor was attracted to these and told her friends she needed a halfpenny from home to make a purchase. She went off with Gough on her own – not quite a complete stranger, as he would have been familiar in the area. This was the last time Eleanor was seen alive by her friends.

Gough led her along a narrow track leading up to Oak House (opposite Brimington Cemetery) – only about 200 yards from Eleanor's home at Almond Place. This was known as Johnson's Lane, as at the time this was the surname of a brother and sister who lived at Oak House. Miss Harriett Johnson (a retired school mistress) was outside her house. She saw Gough exposing himself to the young girl. After some attempt to catch-up with the two (armed with a broom hastily retrieved from the house) she was outrun. Unfortunately Miss Johnson did not report the incident, later remarking that things like that were far from uncommon on Johnson's Lane. Miss Johnson was the last person to see Eleanor alive. By around 1 pm Eleanor's parents realised she was missing, some two hours after the incident with Miss Johnson.

The village was searched all that fateful Saturday afternoon, but no trace of the little girl was found. The service of the bellman (town crier) was employed. The search continued all night with willing helpers in all directions of the village.

Later it became known that Gough had been seen, by a number of witnesses, pushing his hand barrow, without the child, through the village in a hurry. At around 11.30am a Sarah Cantrell had passed Johnson's Lane, observing Gough placing something into his cart which had seemed quite full.

Around 45 minutes later Elizabeth Neal, who was heading for Brimington Common, had exchanged some rags for one of Gough's parasols, noticing that his barrow contained a bundle covered in black cloth. This, she said, was about a quarter stone in weight. Neal saw the hawker later, after 1.20 pm, but this time he did not stop – he had his coat off and was pushing his cart in hurry. A little later – but before 2 pm another witness saw Gough pushing his hand cart along a road which is almost certainly Private Drive. The witness – Sarah Thorley lived in one of the lodges to Ringwood Hall. Having a good view of him she was able to determine that his cart looked heavy and that it was taking some pushing. Michael Posner recounts how later Gough recounted that he had the body of little Eleanor Windle concealed in his cart when he visited the *Miners Arms*, on Brimington Common, and partook of a glass of beer.⁵

That evening Alfred Gough returned to Brimington. When he reached the Toll-bar on what we now know as Ringwood Road, he halted to obtain a glass of ginger bear from the keeper Charles Brown. Whilst at the toll house Gough was met and questioned by William Windle (Eleanor's Father) and later by Police Constable Wright. Gough's answers seemed evasive, but not having sufficient evidence he was not detained and allowed to travel on to Chesterfield, where he lodged. The search continued, with Windle and the P.C. visiting Johnson's Lane, where they discovered an area where plants had been disturbed.

The next day Charles Brown, the toll Keeper, searched hedgerows on the road towards Staveley. He eventually searched a small plantation on the road to Hollingwood (again, presumably what we now call Private Drive) called Hoole's Plantation. Here he found evidence that a cart had been manoeuvred near to a hedge. On climbing over railings into the plantation, after a short search, he found a small bag. Then, after another search he found the body of Eleanor Windle, beside an old spoil bank. She had a length of sacking wound twice round her neck. A small piece of the coloured wall paper, such as that used by Gough in his toy parasols, was retrieved from the road.

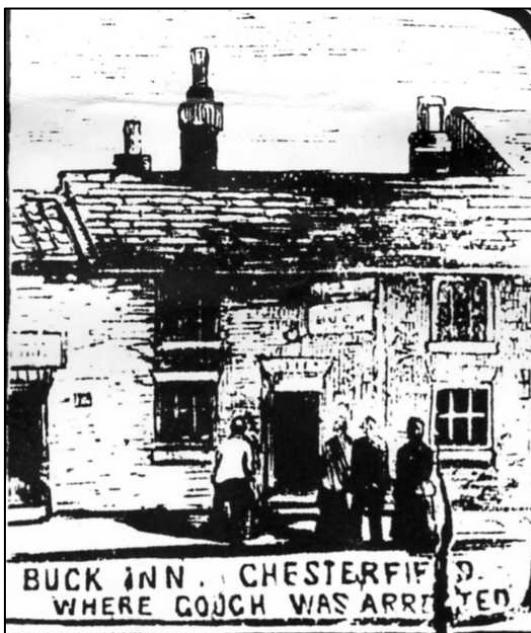


How The Illustrated Police News... of Saturday 3 September 1881 depicted the possible scene when Eleanor Windle met her brutal murderer Alfred Gough (left, inset). Henry Brown, who was later to discover her body, is pictured right.

⁵ Posner (2012), p. 13.



Charles Brown discovers Eleanor's body in Hoole's Plantation (note the incorrect spelling). Or at least how The Illustrated Police News... of Saturday 3 September 1881 depicted the sad scene.



Gough was eventually arrested in the Buck Inn on Holywell Street, Chesterfield. The ...News depicts the property.

The police were rapidly summoned. The evidence against Gough being overwhelming, investigations soon led to his arrest at the *Buck Inn*, Holywell Street, Chesterfield, where he was drinking alone. Gough denied all knowledge of meeting any children, though confirmed he had been in Brimington. He was detained at Marsden Street police station. Meanwhile Mr. Knight from Staveley Works used a trap to remove the body. It was examined by Doctor Bradley. He discovered that the child had been strangled by the piece of sacking which was twisted round her neck and tied in a knot.

Gough's appearance at Chesterfield magistrates on the Monday morning brought a large and angry crowd outside the offices of Messrs Shipton & Halliwell on West Bars, where the hearing was held. The inquest was held the same afternoon at the *Red Lion* public house, Brimington. Mr. C. F. Busby, the coroner, was away on holiday, but came back immediately. Superintendent Carline was present on behalf of the police. The jury consisted of Messrs John Lingard (foreman) John Wakefield, Joseph Cropper, John Hazard, Thomas Heywood, Thomas Turton, John Calow, James Cook, John Ashmore, Thomas Deakin and John Barber. The jury was sworn in and then processed to Almond Place where the body of the child was seen by the jury. The Coroner said; 'Gentleman this is a call which will require a great deal of careful attention on your part.' Dr Walker reported that the child had been killed by strangulation to the neck and that a sexual assault had undoubtedly taken place. The doctor was unable to say if the child had been raped. Brown gave his account of the discovery of Eleanor's body. The inquest was adjourned until the Friday. A lot of the villagers had gathered outside the *Red Lion* to show their support.

Brimington Cemetery was the scene of Eleanor Windle's funeral on the Tuesday, at 5 pm. Newspapers report on the sad event, which despite heavy rain was attended by a huge crowd. The coffin was followed to the grave by members of Eleanor's family, her teachers and school-friends.

The planned resumption of the inquest on the Friday, at the *Red Lion*, was switched to the Municipal Hall at Chesterfield – the authorities fearing trouble. The evidence included statements from Eleanor's playmates, her brother and others. The evidence against Gough was confirmed. Perhaps the seal on this was made by a fellow lodger of Gough's, who said that the accused had commented to him; 'I have done wrong, and I shall never be happy anymore.' Did Gough actually make this confession? We will never know, but he did furiously deny it.



The house where Eleanor Windle lived, at Almond Place.

Not surprisingly the jury returned a verdict of wilful murder. There was little doubt that Eleanor Windle, aged just six, had been assaulted by Alfred Gough near a hedge in Johnson's Lane. She had then been strangled by him, Gough concealing her body in his cart, transporting her through Brimington, towards Hoole's Plantation, where he left her.

After committal at Derby Assizes, Alfred Gough, aged 36, was found guilty of Eleanor's murder, before the Grand Jury at Leicester, in November 1881. His sentence of death, by hanging, was carried out at Derby prison on the 21 November.

I have been told that for some time afterwards the attentions of hawkers in the village, selling toys for children, was not particularly welcomed and that indeed some hostility was shown towards them.



The Red Lion at Brimington where the inquest into the death of Eleanor Windle was held and adjourned. It was reconvened at the Municipal Hall in Chesterfield. All the above illustrations appeared in the Illustrated Police News... for 3 September 1881. They were 'reproduced from sketches made expressly...' for the paper.

Postscript: the Windle family

Eleanor Windle was born in 1876 at Brimington, the daughter of William Windle and Harriett Pass. They had been married on 9 August 1874. This was William's second wife. His first wife was Hannah Leech, whom he had married in 1861.

Williams' children were Alice (born 1887); Arthur (born 1880) Ernest Henry (born 1867); Alice (b. 1867); Francis (b. 1868); Walter (b. 1863); Alfred (b. 1880); Albert John (b. 1877) and Frederick William (b. 1864). They lived at Almond Place, the three storey row of houses running at a right angle to the main A619 Chesterfield Road. The houses, which number six in total, have an elegantly carved date stone on the Chesterfield Road gable proclaiming their name and date built – 1854. Eleanor's Father was employed as a foreman at the Staveley Coal and Iron Works.

Conclusions

We can only guess at what sort of emotions would have overwhelmed the Windle family and what effect that day would have had on them. We know from contemporary newspaper accounts that Windle had fainted when told of his daughter's death. He had also tried to attack Gough during the identification at Chesterfield.

As Geoff Sadler has remarked; violence in 1880s Chesterfield and district was an everyday fact of life. Just a few months later, in January 1882, another shocking case rocked the area. Known as the 'Chesterfield Kicking Case', a husband kicked his wife to death. Brimington saw another murder in 1886 when a butcher on his way back to Cutthorpe was beaten and murdered on the canal near Blue Bank.

In our own times violence and murder seem rife. As in Victorian times we too seem to have an inquisitive media, sometimes bent on sensationalism. What we cannot escape, though, is the real tragedy, sense of revulsion and loss that the murder and sexual assault of a young innocent child brings – whether in our own or other times.

Sources

Contemporary newspapers consulted have included *Derbyshire Times* September-November 1881 and the *Illustrated Police News*, *Law Courts and Weekly Record*, number 916, 3 September, 1881.

Census for 1881 (TNA, RG 11/3455) 3435 Folio 64 page 39.

Marriage evidence: 1861 vol. 76, page 715 1874 vol.7b, page 877 and 1881 [all on-line].

G. Sadler, (2003), *Foul deeds and suspicious deaths in and around Chesterfield*, pp. 143 – 152.

Michael Posner, (2012), *Derbyshire Murders*, pp. 9 – 14.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the editor for sourcing the illustrations within this article and for the captions.

MURDER OF ELEANOR WINDLE.

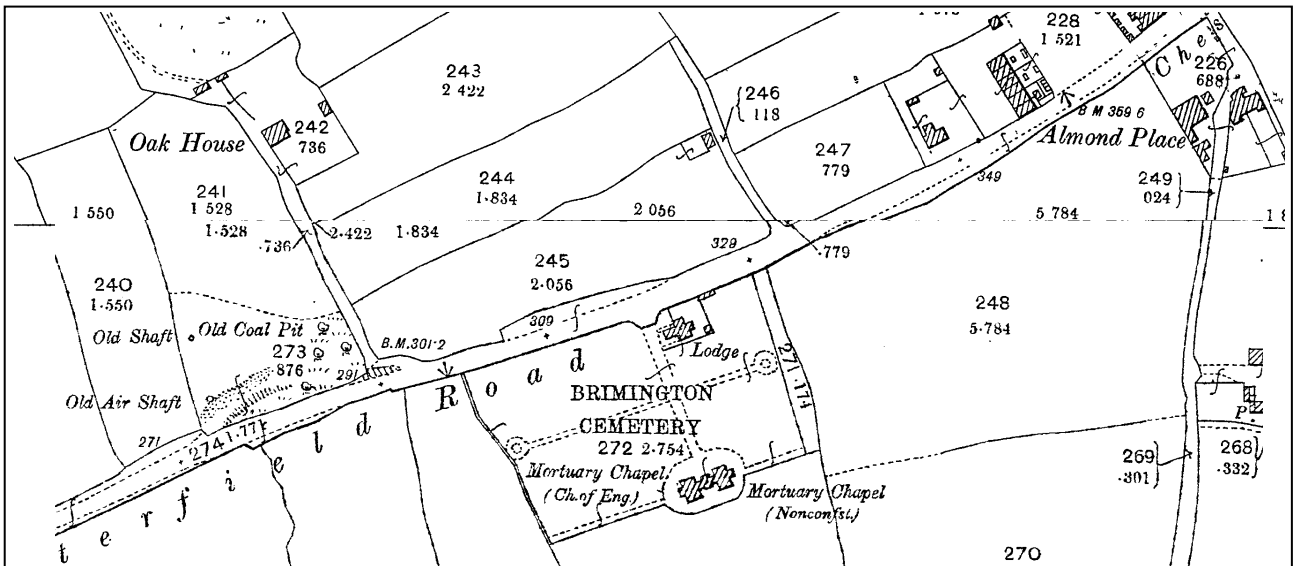
Very few events in the history of Brimington have caused more excitement and anxiety than the disappearance of a little girl aged six years, named Eleanor Windle, daughter of Mr. W. Windle, one of the class leaders in the Wesleyan Society. On Saturday morning, August 20th, she was seen with a man named Alfred Gough, a hawker of toy windmills, &c., in Johnson's lane near the Cemetery. At noon she was missing, and after the family and friends had searched the neighbourhood during Saturday and Sunday morning, she was found in Hoole's Plantation, near Ringwood, cruelly murdered.

The circumstantial evidence is very strong against Gough, who has been committed for trial at the Derby Assizes.

We have since heard that the prisoner has said, "Never mind, it will soon be over; if it comes to the worst, it's only an 8 foot drop." If such is the case, it is quite time another law was put into force,—hanging is too good for such like villains.

No punishment in the Army is dreaded so much as the "Cat," and we are inclined to think that if twenty-five lashes of the "Cat" was administered in such like cases every three months, together with hard labour for life, it would prove more effectual than hanging.

The 'Brimington Tract Society' published The Brimington Quarterly Messenger, of which some copies survive. This extract is from the October 1881 edition (number 22), which summarises the events. Note the views expressed by the publication as to Gough's sentence.



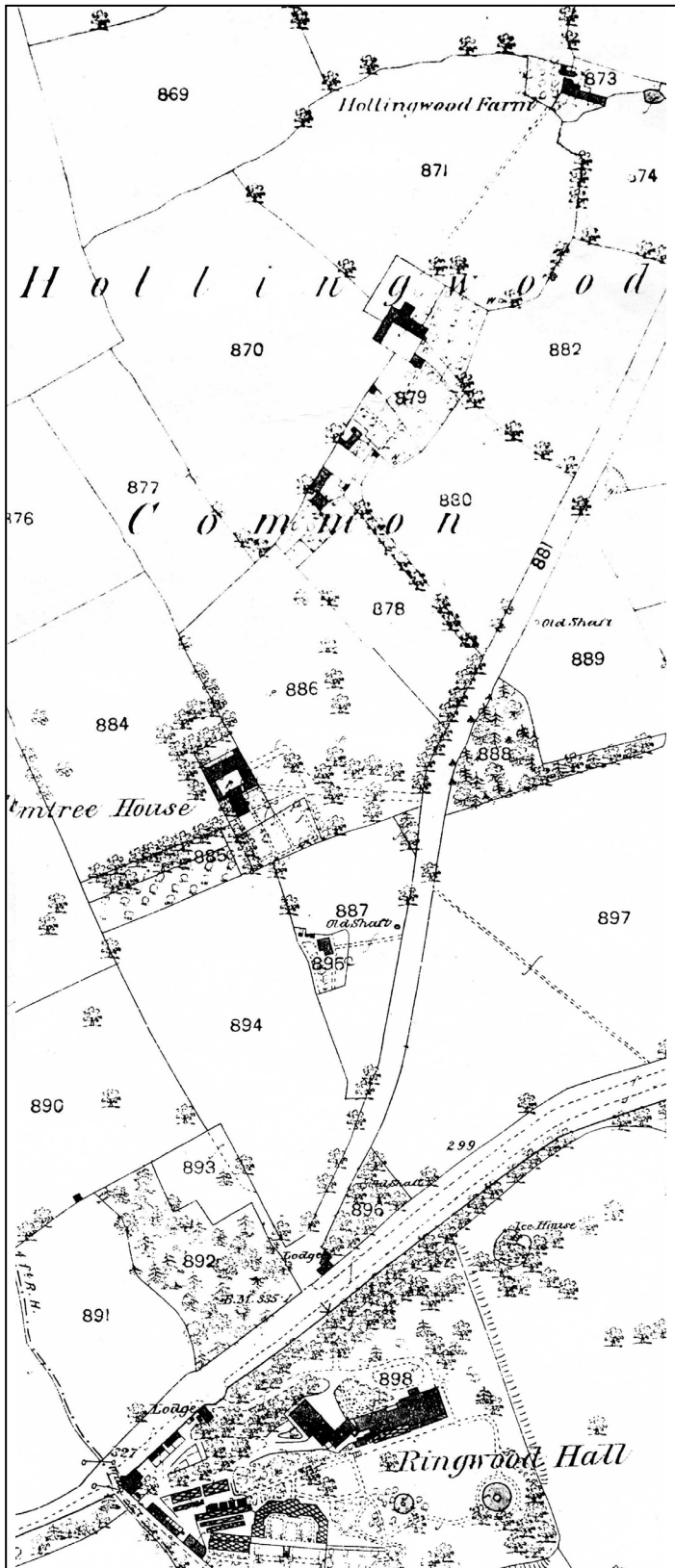
Reduced 25" to one mile second edition Ordnance Survey maps of 1898, showing the private road – Johnston's Lane to Oak House. This lane eventually led through to Wheeldon Mill Plantation and thence to what we now know as Station Road. The proximity of Almond Place can be seen. (Derbyshire sheets XVII.15 and XXV.3)



An October 2012 view of the lane leading to Oak House. It is along this lane where Eleanor Windle was murdered. This was known as Johnson's Lane in 1881, but is now known as Oak Close. (Philip Cousins)



Chesterfield Road, in October 2012. The lane where it is believed Eleanor Windle was murdered is between the house on the far left and the centre property. (Philip Cousins)



Almond Place, pictured in October 2012. (Philip Cousins)



Private Drive, Hollingwood pictured in December 2012. (Philip Cousins)

Reduced 25" to one mile first edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1876, showing the road to Hollingwood – the road off which Gough hid Eleanor Windle's body in Hoole's plantation, which might be the wooded area in plot 888. Today this road is known as Private Drive. Note the lodge at the top of the road, which had disappeared by the next map edition of 1898 and had possibly disappeared by the time of the murder. This lodge appears to have guarded the road which was a private one, complete with a possibly gated entrance, down to Staveley works – hence the name Private Drive. Sarah Thornley lived in one of the lodges in the area, but we do not know which one. But wherever she lived, she reportedly had a good view of Gough's activities in the area. (Derbyshire sheet XVII.15, 1876)

ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF MISCELLANY

Philip Cousins

Miscellany Four Errata

Unfortunately working late into publication deadlines introduced a number of errors into earlier printed editions of *Miscellany* 4. This was entirely the fault of your editor, not the proof-readers. An errata slip was provided with earlier printings, later copies being altered. For the record the full errata is set out below:

Page 53, paragraph three: under 'Francis R. MacGinnis', for '...disguised...' read '...distinguished...'

Page 54, final sentence to top paragraph: for '...Lurgahamia house...' read '...Lurgahamoa House...'

Page 55, paragraph three, first sentence: for '...Castellany...' read '...Castleblaney...'

Page 55, final paragraph, penultimate sentence: for '...welfare of educated families...' read '...welfare of evacuated families...'

Page 66, final paragraph, heading: for '1042 Squadron of the A.T.C....' read '1082 Squadron of the A.T.C....'

Some Brimington Doctors (*Miscellany* 4)

Mike Burdett writes to point out that Dr Leary lived at Windy Croft off Chesterfield Road, not Oak House (which is next door). The road leading to both properties is called Oak Close (see page 80, this *Miscellany*).

The co-authors of the original article were particularly grateful to the O'Daly family, who contributed their recollections. Since original publication Mr H. O'Daly has written to point out that the surgery and dispensary at Sutton Lodge were purpose built, not an outhouse adaption. There were benches not chairs in the waiting area and that the central bench came up from the discontinued church formerly at Sutton Lodge.

Mr O'Daly also writes that his family are sure that Doctor MacGinnis died at Derby station whilst on the way back from visiting his son in at a German university (see footnote 70 on page 53 in *Miscellany* 4), though he was no doubt buried in Ireland. This is the reason Francis O'Daly took over the practice after the sudden death of MacGinnis.

Again, thanks to Mr H O'Daly, a further qualification to pages 56 and 57 is required. Dr O'Daly and his wife (Elizabeth) retired to Chesterfield. After his wife died he moved to Leamington Spa where he remarried. On the death of Dr O'Daly's second wife he returned to Chesterfield, where he died in 2000 and is buried at Brimington cemetery, beside his first wife.

'A Kid from Cott. Lane' (*Miscellany* 4)

Research towards Sybil Jackson's article, in this edition, revealed that we incorrectly had one of Peter Harrison's teachers as Furnihough, not the correct Fearnough.¹ Mr Fearnough is listed in the *Derbyshire Times* report of the first hospital committee carnival and also the programme, as the recorder during the sports held on Creswick's Park.

¹ *Miscellany* 4, p. 31.