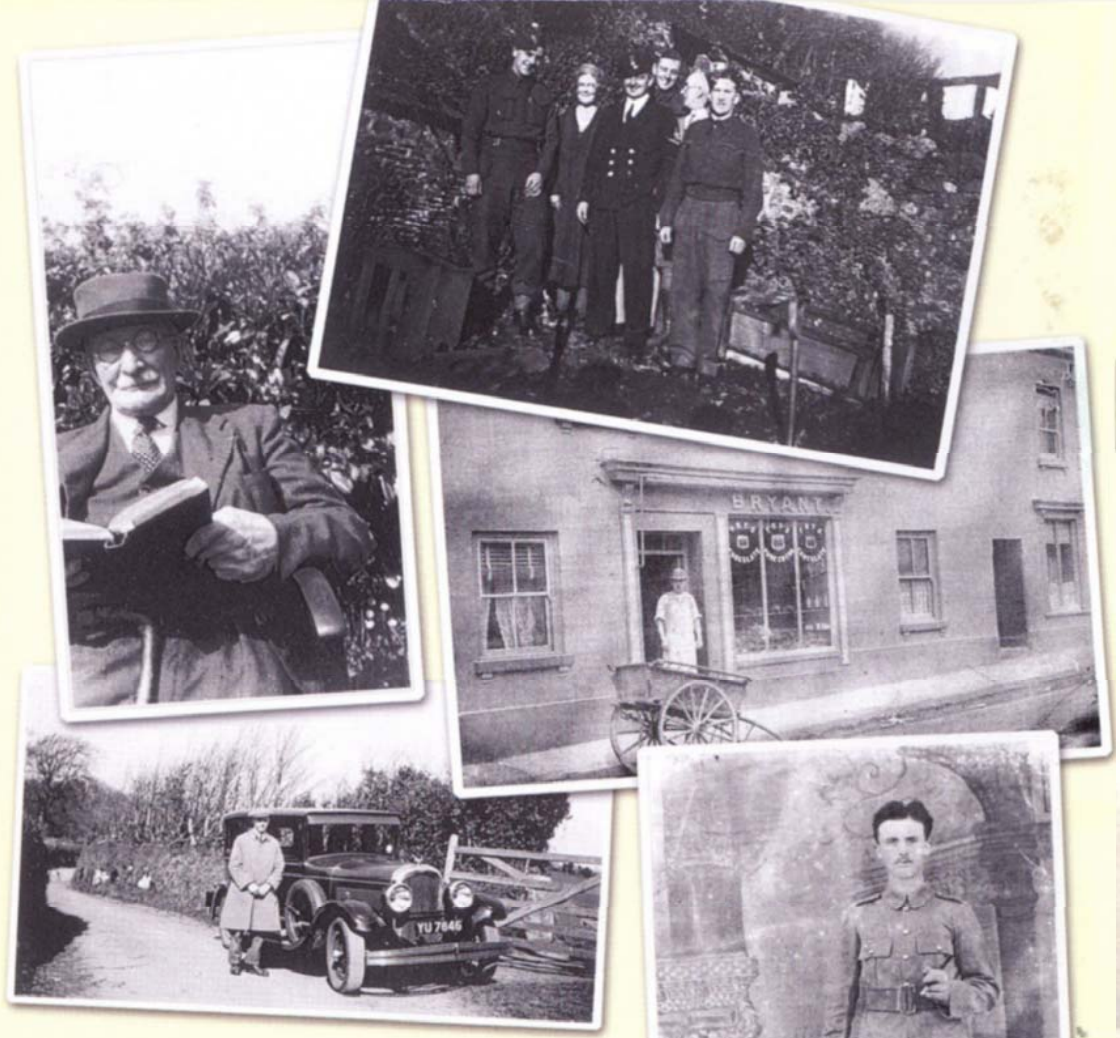

A charming book that chronicles some of the events and characters and of a bygone Ivybridge.

£3.50

Characters and Events of a Bygone Ivybridge

by Alec Rogers

EVENTS AND CHARACTERS
OF A
BYGONE IVYBRIDGE

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Alec. Rogers

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Cover picture: Billy Fry, the Ivybridge lamp lighter

ALEC NEWMAN
- Dentist

ALEC NEWMAN lived in Station Road. Anyone with tooth trouble simply rang the doorbell, which was answered by Mrs. Newman who showed the patient into a sitting room. The interval which usually then ensued was taken up with fetching Mr. Newman from the London Hotel. Not that he ever drank too much but he was a great friend of Ted Shepherd, the landlord, and was often in the bar having a chat. He was especially good at making sets of false teeth.

My mother had ordered a new set and arrived one afternoon to have the usual wax impression taken. Unfortunately the wax was far too hot and my mother writhed in great pain throwing her arms about to attract Mr. Newman's attention. When he removed the impression my mother was able to tell him why she had been making such a fuss!

The false teeth were brilliant, but it was some time before the roof of my mother's mouth returned to normal.

BILLY KNOWLES

IN 1930 to 1931 the very dangerous road from Ivybridge to Bittaford was widened. Large numbers of men with picks and shovels loaded the waste soil etc into six two-ton lorries owned by Jack Joy the Torquay Bookmaker. The road widening destroyed first the Toll House at the bottom of Cole Lane, then the cottage and Smithy at the bottom of Pallas Lane [not Pallace] of North Filham, where the Prout Brothers made farm implements as well as shoeing farm horses.

All these roadmen were watched over by the ganger Billy Knowles. My brother was walking with me in the lane leading to Davey's Cross one summer evening when we were hailed by a man leaning over the half door of a caravan. He had a flat nose and cauliflower ears and was wearing a white sweater. This was Billy Knowles, heavyweight champion of South America and holder of the Gold Belt - so he told us! He looked a formidable figure and had just returned from a training run over Western Beacon.

He was fighting in a few weeks at Millbay, Plymouth and in order to destroy his opponent he was, among other things, consuming six raw eggs each day. Evidently he should have eaten more eggs, because I heard that Billy dodged smartly round the ring until his opponent got him in a corner and knocked him out in the first round.

He ran a boxing club for the boys of Ivybridge and Cdr Davey was President. The club lasted for some time until Knowles moved on.

CARTER ALLEN'S JOURNAL

MR. AND MRS. Carter Allen lived at Ermeleigh, Erme Road, then at Beacon House, Ivybridge. Carter was a son of John Allen, owner of Stowford Paper Mill. His journal was written chiefly during the years 1939 - 1942 and is an interesting, if somewhat eccentric, record of those times. The first entry: " 'Kit Kat' chocolate crisp 2V2 pence made by Rowntree" was incongruously next to a remedy for toothache and the secret to beating the Hampton Court Maze.

The Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison, urged people to grow their own vegetables with the slogan 'Go to it'. Obviously mindful of this, Carter Allen visited the shop of A. R. Venn in Western Road and bought 19 packets of seed for 13 shillings and five pence. He wanted vegetables of the largest size. Broad bean Leviathan and broad bean Seville long pod and Red Elephant carrots, vied with flowers such as Aster Extra Giant Ostrich feather, a bargain for six pence per packet! He then paid the Plymouth Sanitary Steam Laundry, calling weekly, £1.11 shillings and 5 pence.

On April 21st 1941 Carter and Mrs. Allen caught the one o'clock train from Ivybridge. Their journey proceeded as follows: Newton Abbot 1.45, Left Newton 2.10, Exeter 2.37, Left Exeter 4.10, Wellington 5.5. There Carter purchased a tie fastener and left Wellington at 10.20 the next day. Exeter 10.54, Exeter 11.0, Newton 11.35, Newton 4.20, Ivybridge 5.7. First Class return Ivybridge/Wellington 20 shillings and 3 pence each.

There is an entry in 1941: 'Bought two vests at Salter's [Fore Street] for 4 shillings and sixpence each and eight coupons.' Page 53 records a 'simple' remedy for greenfly. Carter writes: 'I do not think this remedy for greenfly on roses is generally known, but it is the cheapest possible and has been proved most effective. Soak five or six rhubarb leaves in two gallons of cold water for a week then syringe the plants with the liquid. This simple treatment will keep all roses free from greenfly and the liquid is not harmful to pets. The soaked leaves can be placed at the base of the rose bushes. Also clears black fly.'

By contrast on the next page we learn that the narrowest street in the world is Parliament Street Exeter, only 25 inches wide. Carter makes this discovery in the weekly Telegraph of March 25th, 1939. 'It has its own lamppost and entry to houses on one side. A hundred year old story tells of

a fat man who challenged an athlete to race over a short distance if he had one yard start. The choice of ground was this street and his rival could not pass him!

Carter notes weekly payments to Daish, the professional at Wrangaton Golf Club, £2 11s 4d, to Blackler for newspapers 3 shillings and 8 pence halfpenny; Mabel the maid £1 Is 2p, and Mitchell the gardener £1 12s.

Carter and Mrs. Allen owned cottages in Erme Road, Fore Street, Blachford Road, and Highland Street - nineteen altogether and were very good landlords.

Carter includes a 1942 recipe for potato tea, but does not apparently drink any himself. There is an elaborate recipe for banana pudding, but as there were no bananas during the war it would be difficult to make.

Butter beans, on the other hand, do not require coupons and if carefully prepared make a nice meatless dish.

Interestingly, the following entry for June 1941 reads: 'For informing that we had left a light on in the dining room on Saturday evening, I gave Sgt A M Hinsey 50 Craven A cigarettes and a cigar.' The Royal Marines occupied Beaconville during the war and Sgt Hinsey obviously kept an eye on Carters black out arrangements.

The maids Mabel and Ada were by now receiving monthly payments of £3 10s and £3 6s 8d and living in.

There is scarcely a page that does not deal with payment to the Plymouth Sanitary Steam Laundry. He notes the date of his marriage to Alice on the 5th January 1893. In 1942 he pays a demand for 5s - 'my contribution to the Ugborough Vicars Stipend.' Carter owned land at Filham Moor, which was in Ugborough Parish.

He records the benefit to be derived from drinking Lucozade - 'An energizing tonic food beverage containing medical glucose carbohydrate in a most easily assimilated form. An energizing, sustaining, tonic food drink, for exhaustion, lassitude, weakness, mental fatigue, nervous upsets, morning sickness, travel sickness, nausea, biliousness, poor appetite. A valuable fluid food for invalids. An invigorating restorative for convalescence - 2s 3d per bottle returnable.'

Besides Lucozade, Carter is buying Bear Brand Empire Honey for Is 9d and no coupons. He records the cost of his local train journeys thus: By train to Cornwood, return, 5'/2d. Single 5d. By train to Wrangaton, return 7'/2d. Single 7d. By train to Brent, return 11 x/2d Single lid.

It is Plympton St Mary Warship week from January 17th to 24th- 1942, to adopt the Mine Sweeper H.M.S. Harrier. Carter does not disclose what he proposes to do about this!

I used to see Carter Allen and his wife walking with their two dogs in the

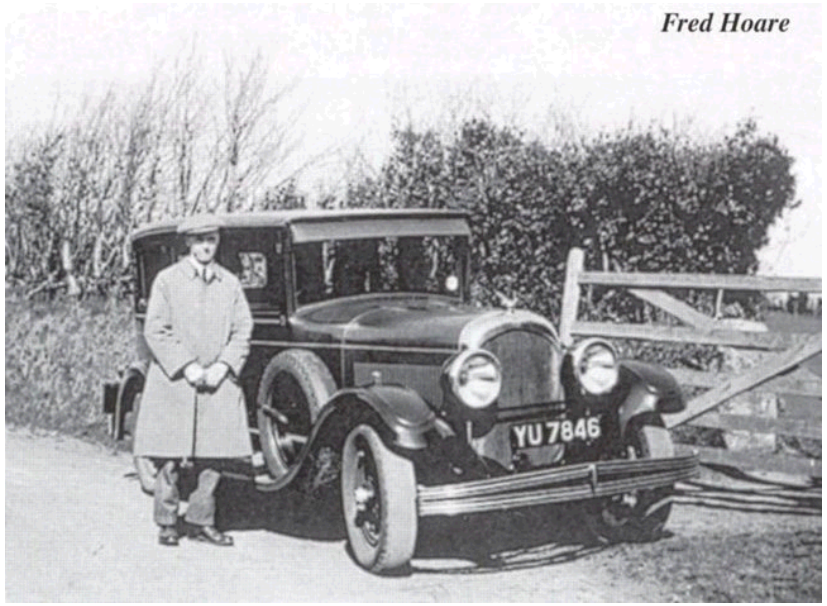
lanes here at Filham. Now I have been reading Carter's journal rescued from the bonfire by - yes you've guessed - F. G. Hoare!

As I look through it once more I see: 'Right Honourable Harold Ramsbottom lives at Kingswood Heath Leighton Buzzard' followed by the recipe for potato tea. 'Put a small quantity of potato peelings in hot water and boil for 5 minutes. Then drink'!

F. G. (Fred) HOARE.

BEFORE writing about my father-in-law Fred Hoare, it is necessary to go back to 1880 or thereabouts, to the time when Fred's Father, John Hoare, left his ancestral village of Dean Prior to begin the business of wheelwright and coachbuilder in Park Street Ivybridge.

Like all self-made men, he had an individual way of dealing with people and had no time to waste. Asked by a shopkeeper: "what size boots do you want?" John Hoare replied, "I don't know about size, I want a pair that will fit me!"



Fred Hoare

John Hoare and Elizabeth Anne Blight (aged 19) were married in July 1880 and they produced twelve children. For the benefit of modern mothers I give the dates of birth as follows: Blossom born 1881, Olive 1882, Irene 1884, Martha 1885, Charles 1888, Wilfred 1891, Fred 1892, Bob 1897, Dorothy 1899, Dick 1900, Susan 1901, Joan 1903. Charles, Wilfred, Fred and Bob, all served in the Great War. Charles was badly wounded, Wilfred awarded the Military Medal, Fred and Bob were ambulance drivers.

John Hoare was quick to see that motor vehicles would replace horse drawn transport and when his eldest son Charles reached the age of seventeen in 1905, there were already seventy four thousand motor vehicles of all kinds in Great Britain.

Charles Hoare was apprenticed to Mumfords of Plymouth, to learn the skills of a motor engineer, or as John Hoare said: "I want him to go into the petrol tank and come out at the exhaust." This attitude was more progressive than that of Robert Baber the Ivybridge sadler, who, when invited by a bystander to watch a car going by said: "That's only a flash in the pan, they will be all gone in a few years."

So the memory of the days of unremitting toil at Dean Prior faded, but details passed down by John Hoare and remembered by Fred, vividly illustrated those days when men worked incredible hours. At 6am on a summer morning in the woods around Dean Prior the cry of the senior men to their juniors would be "Come on - come on, it'll soon be dark."

Fred Hoare became a first class motor engineer and a member of the

firm of J. Hoare and Sons of Park Street Ivybridge. They owned the only taxi between Plymouth and Exeter and by the 1930s the firm also had their own 'Ivy coaches' which took Ivybridge people and others on trips all over the west of England.

Fred even made one or two trips to France. He was very popular and customers who wanted a taxi, or a coach often requested him as driver. In the 1920s and 1930s he was sometimes away for a month, taking the Vicar of Ivybridge, Col the Rev Malcolm Campbell and Dr Oldacre of Roslyn on fishing trips to Scotland. Sometimes it was necessary to take several two-gallon cans of petrol with them before they reached the desolate country in the far North of Scotland where they fished in Loch Assynt.

On one occasion, as they left the little town of Inchnadamph, an itinerant piper played them away with the well loved melody 'The flowers of the forest.' Something Fred remembered for the rest of his life.

At the end of the hunting season, Cdr Davey broke his collar bone in a fall. His Rolls Royce was kept in the Park Street garage. It was given a polish in readiness for the annual drive to an estate near Ross on Wye where he stayed with friends. The phone rang in the Park Street Office of J. Hoare and Sons: "Have Fred and the Rolls here at Beaconville tomorrow at 8.30 for Ross on Wye." Fred duly arrived and they set off. As they neared the turn off from the Exeter main road that led to Newton Abbot, Cdr Davey said: "We'll go in here Fred, I want to visit my dentist and have some teeth out." Pulling up at the dentist Cdr was in and out again in quick time and once again they were on the road to Ross on Wye.

Fred's hopes of a first class lunch paid for by his very wealthy passenger were dashed when they pulled up at a wayside Inn and had a glass of beer a piece and some bread and cheese. They continued on to Ross on Wye and in the main street Cdr Davey said, "Pull up here Fred, I can manage the two or three miles I have to go. I think my arm will stand that." So Fred, in a strange town, found the railway station and arrived back at Ivybridge at 8am the next day!

Fred was always interested in Ivybridge and gathered material, especially photographs which he instinctively knew would one day be of value to future historians. One afternoon he looked into a garden where a man was burning post-cards - views of Ivybridge etc. "Will you give them to me?" Fred asked. "Why should I?" was the reply as the man threw more onto the fire!

When Fred moved his family from 'The Green House' to 'Dunmere' in Exeter Road, he discovered a box of glass negatives in a cupboard under the stairs, and then a cardboard box with still more negatives. By permission of his twin daughters the negatives have been developed and reveal a record of events around Ivybridge in the 1880s and 1890s.

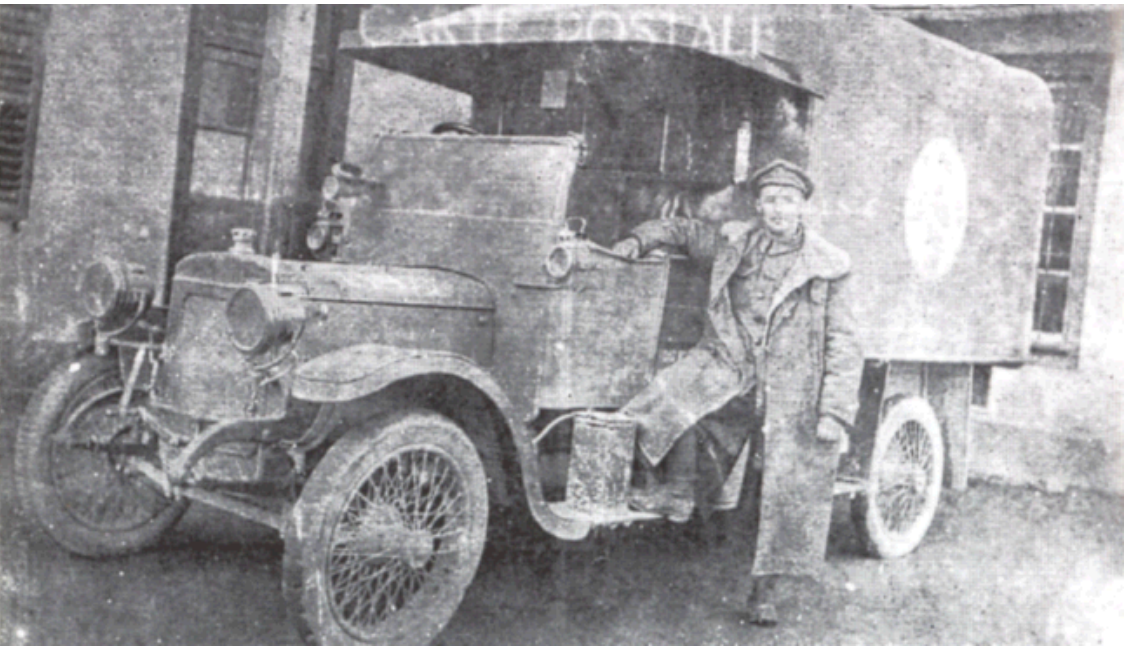
Details of the famous blizzard of 1891 are especially fine. Fred recalled that the photographers name was Sincock, who was connected with the Ivybridge builders Sincock and Blight.

Fred sang in St Johns choir and always smiled when he remembered a fellow tenor, who at the start of Matins, looked along the row of tenors and said: "Lot of dead wood here this morning!"

When he was over the age of 80 he was the bingo caller at an old folks get together. Also for years he drove Meals on Wheels to people far older than himself. Colonel Campbell recalled how in their pioneering motor days he and Dr Oldacre left the car and walked, as Fred negotiated Honister Pass with his door open and ready to jump out. Said the colonel: "If anything had happened to that laddie I would never have returned to Ivybridge."

He was one of 'Chaucer's perfect, gentle Knights' and it is a matter of great regret to me that when I have been invited to name streets in 'new' Ivybridge, and have suggested 'Fred' he has always been overlooked.

'Fred Hoare Road' how splendid that would be!



Charles Hoare with his ambulance - Western Front, 1914-1918 War.

IVYBRIDGE AND THE U.S. SOLDIERS

IT was said of the U.S. troops in Britain that they lived in unheard of comfort, remote from food rationing and with pay packets several times those of their British or even Canadian counterparts.

In London there was particular resentment at the teeming, vastly inflated staff, bulging out of Grosvenor Square - 'Overpaid and oversexed and over here!' to which was added 'and overweight.'

What Londoners did not see, were the American front-line troops, lean and tough infantrymen, training down in the West Country. Where would we have been without them?

On a day in 1944, when my parents and I were having our mid-day meal, a young U.S. soldier knocked on our door. Could we sell him a few eggs? I had a great desire to smoke some 'Camel' cigarettes so, leaving money out of the deal, he shook out four or five from a large packet, told me his name was John and ran off down the lane to rejoin his comrades. I spent the afternoon coughing, as I smoked the Camels. My first and last.

Fields on the left above Eden Cottages were full of Nissen huts, which at one time housed U.S. Soldiers. A fight broke out one evening in the Kings Arms and I was given this account by a witness: 'Someone phoned for the Military Police at the Exeter Road camp, who soon arrived. All about six foot four, they swept into the confusion inside, emerging with KO'd victims who were loaded into jeeps. Order was soon restored. You should have seen those MPs in action.'

A great friend of mine witnessed an hilarious event outside another pub. The landlord had called time and there emerged a local farm worker, about five foot four inches tall, whose name was Lester. Several pints of beer had left him in fighting mood. He walked down the street to an M.P. and began to punch him in the midriff. The blows had no effect, but the M.P. got hold of the little man by the collar and dragged him down the street to where my friend was standing. As he was pulled along, only the toes of his boots touched the pavement! "Now then" said the M.P. "Where does this goddammed guy live?", "Number ten", "O.K." Arriving at the door he opened it and pushed Lester inside.

It was about 1lpm one night and all was quiet in Filham hamlet, when I

heard loud knocking on the front door. Standing below were four U.S. soldiers who said that the lady in the cottage down the road had said that I would give them some Devonshire cider. I came down and we all went into the cellar and sat around drinking. After a time they said they had best be on their way to camp at Zion Abbey, [which was at Marley Head on the Totnes road] . When I told them that it was five miles they asked me to drive them back to camp. "We'll fill your tank up with gas," they said but I reluctantly turned the offer down. I walked up the lane with them to North Filham and saw them on their way back to camp. I stood and watched them pass by Davey's Cross and out of sight.

Many times I have thought of them drinking cider in a Devon cellar three or four thousand miles from home. How did they get n in the long road to victory? Is there today, somewhere in the vastness of the U.S.A. An 80-year-old grandfather who recalls to his grandchildren, from time to time how he drank cider one evening in a Devonshire cellar, long ago?

IVYBRIDGE CATTLE MARKET

MR. John Maye, Auctioneer, founded the firm of John Maye & Co of South Brent in 1900. Some time afterwards he bought a walled garden in Station Road Ivybridge and established Ivybridge Cattle Market on that site, which is now the Ivybridge Health Centre.

Held on the third Monday in the month the market flourished and I have seen 30 or more newly calved cows for sale on a single market day.

The auctioneers were John Maye of South Brent and Frank Pearse and his brother Walter, of John Pearse and Sons of Plympton. Mr. Maye was a very quiet man; the direct opposite of the Pearse Brothers. Clifford Gill, the well-known Holbeton farrier and farmer, entered the sale ring with a newly calved cow. "Now then gentlemen:, said Frank Pearse, "His brow is wet with honest sweat he earns whate'er he can." A quote from Longfellow's 'Village Blacksmith' very unusual in a cattle market!

On another occasion when a dealer, generally regarded as a crook, came in with a cow, Frank Pearse remarked: "I say that's a nice tie you are wearing, it's Borstal isn't it?" "Here" came the reply, "none of your bloody sauce now!" Yet another quote from the charge of the Light Brigade was followed by "Stop that cow bawling I can't compete against that." He always referred to my brother John as 'My friend the Member for Kingston.

On a hot day a perspiring Walter Pearse, who always sold the calves and pigs, was trying, with the aid of a long written pedigree, to sell three female

piglets. Nobody was interested, but things livened up when a little man said "Excuse me Walter, but one of these is a boar." Walter thrust his very red face some six inches from the onlooker, who stood his ground, having first made very sure of the sex of the piglet! Walter then looked for himself and with a "Thank you very much George," flung the pedigree in the pen with the piglets, the owner being nowhere to be seen.

From time to time during the last war an Agricultural Red Cross market was held to raise money for the Red Cross. My father purchased a magnificent cockerel from Admiral Macworth's flock of Rhode Island Reds at Broomhill. He grew into a big bird and attacked strangers who came into our courtyard and of course we called him Admiral. One morning my father was putting a broody hen into a coop, when he gave a yell of pain as Admiral attacked him in the rear! Father chased Admiral, who then flew on to a wall and crowed defiantly.

Ivybridge market gradually declined as cattle lorries made transport of stock so easy and finally brought about the closure of Modbury, Ivybridge and Yealmpton markets.

Jack Harvey, an Ivybridge lad, became a partner of John Pearse and Sons with Seymour Hurndall Waldron B.Sc. Gold Medallist, the senior partner. Ian Blackler, another Ivybridge lad, is now a partner in the firm of Luscombe. Maye. Hands Hughes. Mr. Harvey and Mr. Blackler are both fellows of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

Dick Wyatt, Sam Horton, Jack Brooks, John Simmonds, John Maye (Auctioneer), Bill Hoskins and Harry Daniels.

IVYBRIDGE DOCTORS OF PAST YEARS

KELLY'S Directory of 1906 records for Ivybridge - Dr. Cooper B.A. M.B. Bc.Camb. Physician and Surgeon and Medical Officer of Health to the Urban District Council and public vaccinator 2nd district, Plympton St Mary Union and certifying factory surgeon of Grosvenor House.

One or two stories have come down to me from F. G. Hoare. Into the surgery one morning came a man wearing a cap. "Take your cap off," said Dr. Cooper "you don't wear a cap in Chapel do you?" Much more serious was a visit to the surgery from John Hoare the wheelwright. He had received a summons for jury duty at Exeter. This was his second summons in a year, almost unheard of. He said to Dr. Cooper: "I think I've got the 'flu coming so will you give me a sick note to cancel my jury duty?" Dr Cooper replied: "You hadn't got the 'flu when I saw you at eight o'clock this morning working with your shirt sleeves rolled up." But John Hoare got his sick note. Dr Cooper knew what trouble another week away from business would cause.

About 1923 Dr. Trumper retired from the Army and followed Dr. Cooper at Grosvenor House. He was our doctor and that of our neighbour, Farmer John Tooley, and his two sisters Miss Loveday and Miss Annie. I remember being awakened at 2.30 am by Mr. Tooley: "Would I drive to Ivybridge and tell Dr Trumper that sister Loveday had died." By now Mr. and Mr. Winsor, who lived near the Tooleys, were up and dressed. I got the car and, accompanied by Mr. Winsor, set off. At night Dr. Trumper could be contacted by a speaking tube near his front door. After fruitless efforts with the tube, we roused him by heavy knocking. A light came on, a sash window was raised and Dr. Trumper's head appeared. His first question was: "Is she my patient?" We assumed that he was half asleep because he had visited Miss Tooley only a few days before. Then he said he would come.

Our next call was on a woman who laid out the dead. Mr. Winsor informed me she lived just along Western Road. Again, after a lot of knocking a light appeared under the door. Whoever was inside was not

going to open up. A man asked various questions as to who was dead, age, occupation, illness, name, address, then announced that the woman we wanted did not live there any longer!

Infuriated by this early morning game of questions and answers, Mr. Winsor, a sturdy former Petty Officer of the Royal Navy was keen to kick down the door in order to carry on the conversation, which had abruptly terminated with the disappearing of the light! We returned to Filham.

In the 1940s Dr. Steve Howard followed Dr. Trumper. The hut that served as a waiting room beside Grosvenor House was seen to have more patients as Ivybridge began to grow. I remember joining a queue, which had reached the pavement. Dr Howard inquired of a friend of mine who had at long last reached his surgery: "Are there any more out there?" The reply was that there were quite a few. "Are they all ill I wonder?" said Dr Howard. He described the state of one house he visited as being in 'primeval squalor.'

He never suffered fools gladly and was quick to reprimand those who stepped out of line. So it was with the farmer who rode on horseback to Grosvenor House on a Sunday morning rang Dr. Howard's bell and enquired when his farm man, who had been ill for two weeks, would be returning to work. Dr Howard reported the incident to his farm worker patient. "I gave him my verbal opinion," he said. This was a very clever version of what took place. "Verbal." Concerned merely with words rather than with facts. "Opinion." A belief not based on certainty but with what seems true or probable.

Dr. Howard battled on until the late 1950s and was followed by Dr. Willman and Dr. Dadge. The Ivybridge Health Centre opened in 1969.

No account of the health care in Ivybridge and district would be complete without mention of Sister Roselda Tabitha Pittwood, for many years midwife and District Nurse. At first she lived in 'The White House', then in her own house in Manor Drive. She was much loved and highly respected.

On a visit to us at Filham Farm one day she gave me this account of her longest spell of duty: 'Left home at 9am on her daily visits, at the same time driving to and fro visiting two mothers expecting their babies that day. The first baby arrived at eleven pm. She reached home at around midnight only to leave at once to the second case. Baby born about five am. Home for breakfast and then out to the usual cases and visits to the two mothers. Arrived home at about six pm after 33 hours on duty.'

IVYBRIDGE TELEPHONE EXCHANGE

IVYBRIDGE Telephone Exchange was situated on premises now occupied by a hairdressing salon. During the evenings and through the night the exchange was operated by Miss Phoebe Phillips and her father. The exchange was over the Post Office and the Phillips family had a flat on the same floor.

It was a very personal affair. Miss Phillips knew scores of numbers from memory and when Sister Pittwood came out to Filham to spend an evening with us she simply called the exchange and said: "Miss Phillips, I shall be out at Filham if anyone wants me."

Amazing things happened. One day I called the exchange and asked for Bigbury-on-Sea 319, which was my brother's number. At once I found myself plugged in to a conversation between my brother and Fred Hoare my father-in-law. I joined in and we talked for about 10 minutes. Fred's number was 2231 and mine was 2506.

When our son John was born at Longtimbers, my father-in-law went to the phone to give the good news to my mother who was staying with my brother at his farm at Kingston.

'Number please' said Miss Phillips. "Phoebe" said father-in-law "we've got a little boy up here!" "Oh! lovely," she replied, "Now you'll want Bigbury on Sea 319." The year was 1955 and this wonderfully idyllic way of communicating went on for a few more years until it became part of history.

J. GORDON BROWN

IN 1942, J. Gordon Brown came to Ivybridge to be Foreman of the Ivybridge depot of the R.A.F. in Costly Street. Soon he was joined by his wife and his son and daughter who were at school. A house to rent was impossible to find and Mrs. Brown, after a long search found accommodation where she shared a small kitchen with two other housewives. This was trying in the extreme.

She heard a rumour that my father's house 'Erme View' was vacant and she rushed over to Filham Farm. My father, never one to take advantage of anybody in trouble let Erme View to the Brown family for £1 per week (lOOp).

I first met Gordon Brown on a summer evening when he was returning home after shooting a brace of rabbits. With no encouragement from me he said that he was not short of 'this world's goods' and also forecast that after the war, our biggest enemy would be, not Russia, but the U.S.A. He wished me goodnight and we parted company, never thinking that we should be seeing a lot of each other in the years ahead.

He was a very fine organist whose services were in demand over a wide area. One evening when the choirmaster of the Methodist Church in Ivybridge was going over some difficult pieces with the choir, Gordon Brown arrived to do some repairs to the organ, which involved a lot of hammering and muttering, to the intense annoyance of the choir master.

He wrote and produced a pageant 'Britannia through the Ages' which was performed at Portal's Field, Cinder Lane. (The field was the sports field belonging to the paper mill and is now built over). This production involved a large number of people and was a remarkable affair.

He also produced a pantomime 'Robinson Crusoe' in the old Church Hall in Blachford Road. With a cast of 12, a chorus of nine and an orchestra of eight. The whole performance was conducted by Gordon Brown. In such a confined space it was not surprising that Man Friday's grass skirt caught fire, but was quickly extinguished!

Gordon Brown took his duties at the R.A.F. depot very seriously. I have seen him leaving Erme View at all hours, when there was an air raid, complete with steel helmet, gas mask and double-barelled shotgun. A reassuring figure to the people of Ivybridge, he was aware of the contrast which wartime brought about.

My parents and I together with Gordon and his wife were invited to a musical evening at 'Moordene' Exeter road. Petrol rationing meant that we walked in, Gordon carrying a cello over his shoulder. He was an organist and pianist, but certainly not a cellist and when he played an impromptu accompament to a fine contralto, singing 'Up in the garret away from the din, someone is playing an old violin'. Our hostess Mrs. Walker could scarcely hide her fury! Walking home to Filham under a full moon and slightly frosty night with Gordon and his cello, we looked like a group of carol singers.

By now a fervent countryman, Gordon consulted my father about bee keeping and discovered that the owner of two hives at South Brent was going abroad and was giving the bees away. This was good news and I drove Gordon and my father, who had been a beekeeper, to Brent one

evening to collect the two hives. Father had made two wooden slats to close the entrance to each hive. The hives fitted into the trailer and we were soon back at Erme View. There was a site ready in the garden. All was well. Grateful thanks were showered upon us and then my father made this statement with great emphasis: "Do not remove the slats until morning as the bees are all upset and if they fly out into the night they will be lost. Do not let them out until morning!!" "Understood and thanks again," said Gordon.

My parents were asleep and I was about to drop off, when I heard running footsteps coming down the lane. Then the voice of Gordon's son David shouting, "Alec, Dad's let the bees out!" On receiving this news my father leapt out of bed, dressed and ran up to Erme View. I cautiously followed. At Erme View the air was full of flying bees unable to find their hives and hopelessly lost. They were, however, able to sting anybody they bumped into, but this in no way prevented my father from telling Gordon what he thought of him!

One of the bombs that fell on Plymouth destroyed the home of two of Gordon's relatives, Uncle John and Auntie Con. I drove to Plymouth and brought them back to Erme View, where they stayed for several months. A van followed carrying the few remains of their furniture, which we stored in our barn. We told Auntie Con not to enter the barn as the furniture was covered over and parts of the floor were dangerous. The next day she got into the loft and partly fell through the floor, her legs swinging above my Ferguson tractor.

A few years after the war the Costly Street depot was demolished and the site is now part of the free car park in front of the Town Hall. Gordon Brown worked for a year or two for Farm Industries in Belmont Road. He was then persuaded to move with his family to Totnes and played the organ at the Parish Church. He directed an excellent annual production of the Light Operas of Gilbert and Sullivan, with the Totnes Operatic Society.

His son David told me that one Sunday after Evensong, many of the congregation stayed to listen to Gordon's playing of the Voluntary. It was to be his last performance. He died suddenly the next day.

The cast of the pantomime 'Robinson Crusoe', written and produced by Gordon Brown 1946.

Top Row, left to right: Reg Hosgood, George Stone, David Brown, Margaret Hoare, J. G. Brown, Joan Thome, Joe Newman, ...? Turner and Geoff Green.

Front row: left to right: Margaret Brown, Barbara house and Jill Backhouse.

JOHN PENGELLY BRYANT'S BAKERY

JOHN Pengelly Bryant and his wife Elizabeth became bakers in Fore Street, Ivybridge, in 1858. John's maternal grandparents had built two houses in Ivybridge in 1791, they were 38 Fore Street (shop and living accommodation) and 39 Fore Street (divided into two cottages 39a and 39b). John died at the age of 48 years, his eldest son Harry then took over and became the next baker at 17 years of age. Harry married Elizabeth Rogers in 1873 and they had five children. Their eldest son they named John Pengelly and the other children were all conveniently christened with single forenames: Annie, Jenny, Fred and Ernestine.

John Pengelly (known as Jack), was the eldest son and joined the Navy during the 1914-18 War, so brother Fred followed his father's footsteps into the bakery along with wife Maud (from Essex). Fred and Maud also had five children - Harry, Bill, Bob, Jack and Dick. Both Jack and Bill worked in the bakery on leaving school at the age of 14. Bill recalls that Jack was the one favoured by his father to take over the business, but Jack died during the Second World War. The terrible news of son Jack dying of enteric fever while serving in the Army caused Fred to collapse in the bakehouse with a cerebral haemorrage.

In 1930, when Bill started work in the bakery, the dough was still mixed by hand and cooked in an old-fashioned coal fired side flue oven. Bread, etc, was delivered daily to customers in the village (Ivybridge) and by horse van for country rounds. Delivery began at 6 am Monday to Friday and 4 am on Saturday. Starting at 4 am enabled the workforce to get ready in time for the Saturday football matches.

An extract from Bill Bryant's Memories, kindly loaned by the family, records the following: "Tramps, or gentlemen of the road as some would be known, were common callers at shops and homes, begging for buns, stale bread or cakes and hot water. They always held a penny in their hand, which was offered but not taken; it kept them within the law. Some came weekly, fortnightly, monthly and so on.etc. One day one said to my grandfather: "Boss, you've never refused me down the years and now I'd like to repay you." He gave grandfather a recipe for peppermint bull's-eyes. Bryant's Bull's-eyes became well known. During the First World War my

father was commissioned by Major Bailey of Highlands to send 71b tins of Bull's-eyes to France for the troops. We used to have a copy of Punch with two cartoons showing soldiers with bulging cheeks, unfortunately it has been lost. Members of the Dartmoor Foxhounds would stop outside the shop to buy them. Some preferred them cracked to prevent the chance of being choked. Sold at a halfpenny each - two hours work for about 8s 4d.

We also learn that during the 1920s Ivybridge played football in the First Division of the Plymouth and District league on the field now used by the Tennis Club. Rev'd Richard Lowndes B.A., the curate at St John's, was a keen Ivybridge footballer. On learning that the Ivybridge team was one short for an important match he ran almost to Lee Moor during the dinner hour to ask a young farmer to turn out. This was the same day that the match was played. For many years Bill Bryant and family belonged to the Mace group finally moving to 54 Fore Street on the first day of 1969.

Above: Harry Bryant.

Right: Fred and Maud Bryant with sons Jack, Harry, Bob and Bill.

M. E. PEPPERELL

THE young butcher's boy was driving along a quiet country road. It was a lovely morning and he was thinking of Browning's poem which 'Miss' had taught them to learn by heart at Ermington School -'God's in His heaven, all's right with the world.'

Suddenly this dream was shattered as a horse drawn carriage approached. Normally, in order to pass, the coachman would simply drive on to the grass verge on his side of the road. However, this was not the solution that occurred to the owner of the carriage as she lowered the window and said to the coachman: 'Get down and tell that boy to cross the road on to the grass.' Maurice Pepperell sat still, safe in the knowledge that he had the power of the newly formed Plymouth and District Co-operative Society behind him. Besides which he was a powerful young lad and was not going to allow the coachman, whom he knew well, to take charge of his horse. The coachman very sensibly climbed back to his seat, drove on to the grass and away, with his thwarted lady owner red in the face with rage.

Maurice Pepperell became manager of the butcher's shop in Fore Street Ivybidge next to the King's Arms, other butchers shops belonging to John Pearse, Thomas Joint and Alfred Hillson, in the same street. Always a keen gardener Mr Pepperell became Hon. Secretary of the Ivybridge Gardening Association. For several years a Christmas party was given to the children of Ivybridge by the Gardening Association and Mr. and Mrs. Pepperell worked hard to make it a great success. But gradually with the arrival of TV and other entertainment, the parties began to lose their popularity. One autumn evening a committee meeting was held and on the agenda was the Christmas party. A member suggested that the event had served its purpose and proposed that the day of the party was over. The secretary with a very red face, threw down the gauntlet: "No party, no secretary." I, and others, felt that this attitude was dictatorial and boded ill for the future. Put to the vote by Mr. Fred Hoare [Chairman] those in favour of no more parties, were in good majority and a flabbergasted and contrite Hon, Sec. had to be forgiven and allowed to continue as secretary.

I met Mr Pepperell in Fore Street one morning. "I'm off on holiday tomorrow", he said. I asked him where he was going and he gave the remarkable reply: "Don't know my friend!" Meeting him a few weeks later,

he was able to tell me that one of the things he did was to drive from Aberdeen to Newport, South Wales in a day. The car was an Austin 7 and Maurice, who was no lightweight, had three other well-built passengers with him. Only those of you who remember the size of an Austin 7 can realize how remarkable this feat of long distance driving really was.

During the 1939-45 war he was a sergeant in the Ivybridge Home Guard but somehow lost his stripes and was demoted to Private Pepperell. He then joined the Ugborough Patrol of Auxiliary Units [underground forces]. As there were only seven men in each patrol and there was already a Sergeant Patrol Leader, it seemed unlikely that he would ever reach the rank of Sergeant again.

REGINALD CHARLES RASHLEIGH HOSGOOD

AFTER attending Cornwood Elementary School young Reginald Hosgood was apprenticed to the village carpenter. Those were the days when, even if icicles were hanging from the workshop roof, all work was done with sleeves rolled up. "Get your coat off and roll your sleeves up" was the first order of the day.

The firm were also undertakers. I remember Mr. Hosgood telling me about an elderly villager who was dying. The 'Boss' was going away for the weekend and young Hosgood was full of anxiety as Saturday approached. Sure enough on Saturday morning he heard the Passing Bell, so he was not surprised to be told to make the coffin. (I find the Passing Bell is now generally rung after death. (1926) The ancient mode of indicating the sex of the deceased, two pulls for a woman and three for a man being still very common in 1926. Encyclopedia Britanica.)

Some of the tools he needed were in a cupboard and, not having the key, Reginald had to break the glass. He was very proud of his handiwork and having fitted a new pane of glass, all was complete for the Boss's inspection on Monday morning. He thought he might get a 'good' or even a 'well done', but all he got was: "I see you made the coffin, but you never gave it a coat of varnish!"

Mr. Hosgood had a lifetime of service in the Parish Churches of Cornwood and Ivybridge. First as a choirboy at St Michaelis Cornwood, where the Vicar the Revd E. G. Cocks, who had been a chorister at the Chapel Royal used to hold a lighted candle by the mouth of each choirboy,

to check that they were breathing correctly. Moving to Ivybridge he sang Bass in St John's Church choir and was also Church Warden for many years. With his sons Reg and Glyn he founded the firm of Hosgood and Sons.

RICHARD (Dick) SPARGO - Blacksmith

DICK Spargo was born at Pennarworthal near Penryn and not far from the inland waters of the Carrick Roads. In fact in deepest Cornwall. His forge in Costly Street was almost opposite the present day 'Spar'. He was the last of the Ivybridge Blacksmiths. A little man of frail appearance he was the opposite to Longfellow's Blacksmith, whose 'brawny arms were strong as iron bands.' I have seen perspiration running down his face as he struggled to shoe a contrary carthorse.

The shop was a gathering place for the retired, the out of work and the local policeman, who came in for a smoke while on duty. On one of the walls was a board to which Dick pinned notices of council meetings, forthcoming events and anecdotes. One of these I especially remember: A Chinaman called Can-Cum was invited to a party at a friend's house, but was taken ill a few hours before the party was due to begin. His son Willie, was told to send a telegram which read 'Can-Cum can't come, Will come when he can come', signed: Willie Cum.

Then there was a famous cross-country runner being interviewed. "You say that you only lost one race. Why was that?" "Absurdly simple. The race was to Northampton and I thought they said Southampton!"

For years Dick was a member of Ivybridge Town Council. He retained his Cornish accent and came out to Filham to see me when he was ninety years old. He was a great supporter of Plymouth Argyle and lived in Plymouth after he retired. He died aged 93.

ROBERT BABER - Sadler

THE following conversation was heard by Fred Hoare at the garage in Park Street: "I've sprained my wrist," said Cdr Davey to Freddie Emms. "Right Sir, I'll call into Baber's and get a strap for you." 'Yes, yes call in to Mr. Baber's". This crucial correction was more than justified for Mr. Baber was no ordinary Sadler. He was a descendant of the Mogul Emperors of Northern India.

I remember reading an article in the Western Morning News of February 1930. A copy of that article has been kindly loaned to me by Mrs. Baber of Ivybridge. In 1930 there were three descendants of Baber living in Devon -Robert Baber of Ivybridge and his two brothers who lived in Plymouth and Lamerton. Somerset is closely linked with this great name of the East. It is known that Baber sent three sons to live in England and one of them settled in Chew Magna in Somerset.

Baber, the mogul Emperor, was born in 1483 and died in 1530. It is certain that at his father's death in 1530 the Somerset son was firmly settled in the Manor of Regilbury.

On the morning May 6, 2002, we stood before the Baber tomb in the church of St Andrew, Chew Magna. It is a magnificent monument about 15 feet high with the Baber Coat of Arms at the top and an Indian figure above it wearing a sari. An heraldic description of the Arms would be 'Argent, on a Fess Gules, Three Hawks Heads erased of the First.' Built for Edward Baber, Sergeant at Law, it has reclining effigies of Edward and his wife dressed in Tudor costume, the colour badly fading. Edward wears a velvet Elizabethan cap. Edward's plaque on the memorial translated for me by a Latin scholar reads as follows.

> *'Sacred to the memory and honour of Edward Baber who dutifully and with dignity served the legal profession with his expertise in Common Law. Notable and numbered among the distinguished men of his generation and society, his devotion to the common good of mankind was cut short by his sudden death on September 23rd, 1578, having attained the age of 47 years.'*

Chew Magna stands in lovely countryside and is a very fine little town. Readers may recall from earlier in these notes that Mr. Baber declared that

an early car passing his shop was a "flash in the pan!" It is likely that he saw the car as something associated with mechanised farming and the disappearance of the farm horses with a large part of his business lost forever. His shop was at the entrance to Lee's Mill at the end of what is now the Co-op pharmacy. He seemed to be always there wearing a white apron and working away with one or two onlookers ever present.

As a schoolboy I used to call there to collect the Western Morning News and as I left the shop Mr. Baber always said 'Thank you Sonny'. I do not think he knew my name.

According to the 1930 W.M. News article Mr. Baber still had the Bible, which was in the family since the first Baber arrived in this country. The Lord's Prayer of those days read

"Vr Father which in Heaven art, Lord
Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom como
Thy will be done in earth, even as the same in Heaven is.
Give us O Lord, vr daily bread this day
As we forgive vr debts we pray
Into temptation lead us not
From evill make us free
For Kingdom, power, and glory thine,
Both now and ever be."

Left: Mr. Baber. Below: Mr. Baber's Shop in Fore St, Ivybridge.

STATION MASTER ROBERTSON

ALBERT Henry Robertson joined the railway as a lamp lighter before being promoted to porter, signalman and finally Station Master for 26 years. He was at Ivybridge Station in the late 1920s and on to the outbreak of the Second World War.

In a lengthy history of the Robertson family it is recorded that Albert knew nothing of his ancestors and was completely nonplussed when one day a train stopped at Ivybridge Station and a man stepped out of a first-class carriage and said: "Is your name de Lacy?" He replied: "No, Robertson." The man said: "It is the same, you will be hearing from me."

He never heard from the man again but the mystery was eventually solved when his son researched the family history. The strange truth was that Albert Robertson was of Spanish descent and holder of the title Count de Lacy.

While Station Master at Saltash and on duty one night during the war, Albert was unable to get a reply from his men on duty in the signal box on the Devon side of Brunei's bridge. German bombers were overhead and incendiaries were everywhere. He crossed the bridge to find the signal box and the two men completely wiped out by a bomb. All this turmoil was in direct contrast to the peaceful days at Ivybridge Station. I remember arriving at the ticket office early one morning and the porter saying to me: "Would you mind walking on the newspaper as I've just scrubbed the floor."

Mr. Ellis the Town Clerk of Plymouth lived at Longtimbers and planted the rhododendrons and trees, which now give great pleasure to so many Ivybridge people.

Every morning he waited in his porch until he spotted the smoke from the 'down' stopping train which was his sign to take a leisurely stroll down the drive to the waiting train. Meanwhile a porter would be blowing his whistle to hurry seven or eight girls catching the 'up' train to Totnes where they were pupils of the High School for Girls. Sometimes as they climbed the 68 steps to the platform the train would be waiting.

Albert Robertson's son and his wife were developing a poultry farm in a wood at Gara Bridge and were extremely busy. Mrs. Robertson senior often

sent a hot meal for two, neatly packed in a covered basket, which she gave to the guard of the train stopping at South Brent. Here the basket was transferred to the guard of the Kingsbridge branch Line train, which then pulled away, to stop at Gara Bridge station. Thus Mr and Mrs. Robertson received their mid day meal.

For a period each summer Albert Robertson took good care to oversee the loading of hampers of produce from the Flete Estate to the Mildmay family staying for the 'Season' at their town house in Berkeley Square. Lord Mildmay was a Director of the Great Western Railway!

The following is taken from a newspaper cutting dated 10.9.00, detailing an event hard to imagine now that Ivybridge Station is in ruins. It records the arrival home from the Boer War of Captain F. B. Mildmay M.R for Totnes. 'For more than an hour before the train was due streams of visitors converged on the station. In all manner of condition of vehicles they came from the agricultural wagon and market cart to the light dog cart or trap of the professional man. The railway officials did their best but could not prevent both platforms being crowded, and the marvel was where all the people came from. As the train was signalled there was a great shout of "Here he comes." A rush was made for the first part of the train where the Buckfastleigh bandsmen played Rule Britannia. Meanwhile the Ivybridge band performed Soldiers of the Queen in their most vigorous manner. No one heeded the discord and a little Totnes trumpeter who pluckily stuck to his solo Rule Britannia was barely heard above the din and the cheering. The bands rivalled each other in the assertiveness of their music, quite regardless of the fact that they played different tunes.

This was Ivybridge Station in September 1900.

THE BEACON WATCH AND AUXILIARY TERRITORIAL UNITS AROUND IVYBRIDGE

BECAUSE we were wearing Home Guard uniform, none of the Ivybridge people we passed gave us a second glance as we came from the London Hotel car park and walked into the Kings Arms. It was in fact, a rare assembly of men in Churchill's underground force and the patrols in the King's Arms that evening were from Cornwood, Diptford, Flete, Harford and Ugborough.

I was the Sergeant Patrol leader of Ugborough patrol and at one time

there was enough dynamite, fuses, hand grenades, time switches, etc stored in my barn at Filham, to create a lot of damage. Our underground base, built for us by the Royal Engineers, was in a wood about one mile from the Methodist Church Ivybridge. A curious position I always thought.

In the event of invasion being very near we would have gone to our base with the special food stores we had, and all the other material of a guerilla patrol. Material like cortex, an explosive fuse which, if fired in Ivybridge and connected to a mine on London Bridge, would explode in one minute. A material not to be fooled about with.

At a time of great shortage, with clothing coupons as scarce as gold dust, we were amazed when our suits of denim arrived. Here was surplus indeed. 'Suitable for a man of 5ft 8ins' the label said - just my size. I tried on the trousers which enveloped my boots and passed another twelve inches along the floor. We all fell about laughing; some of the jackets came down to the knees. Not one suit fitted.

We seldom visited the base, which was beside a path, the entrance concealed by a moss covered man-hole cover. This gave access by a short ladder, to two rooms, one of which was a store-kitchen, the other having seven bunks (each patrol consisting of seven men). It would have been a ghastly place in which to stay for very long.

After an exercise with Flete Patrol, we finished off the evening with bread and cheese and cider at the head keeper's lodge. With strict petrol rationing, I drove where I liked. Every patrol leader carried a special pass. On mine was written: 'Sergeant Rogers is on Special Duty. No question should be asked of him but should be referred to . . . .' there followed an address in the London area. Sadly, not one policeman ever questioned me!

Before joining the Auxiliary Forces I was in the Home Guard and did a watch on Western Beacon with a farmer friend, Henry Luscombe of Broadaford. Our first duty lasted from 1 am to 5 am. We met at 'Alight and Come In' Cross, each armed with our own shotgun and six cartridges. When we reached Davey's Moor gate we were in fog. Relieving our comrades of the 9-1 am patrol, we reached the top of the Beacon, now in a thick fog, and spent a dreary time there until nearly five o'clock.

This was the summer of 1940 and if the night was fine, it was an unforgettable experience to be on the Beacon, clad in great coats and gloves against the cold when during the day we were haymaking in 80°F temperatures.

To look down on the sleeping town of Ivybridge, to see the sunrise and hear the larks singing, and see the English Channel, to be there on that lofty Beacon, was to feel a deep affinity with our Tudor forebears who, from that very place, watched the Spanish Armada. We knew by then that Prime Minister Chamberlain had made a disastrous error when he said: "Hitler has

missed the 'bus." Nevertheless, he was 'That solitary little man who had done his best for England.'

As Home Guards and Auxilliers grow older it is very sad that more and more rubbish is written about their doings in 1940-1945. Recently an article appeared in The Daily Telegraph which included an interview with a former Sergeant of Underground Units. He talked of breaking in to big houses to find the bathroom, so that when the house became the H.Q. of the German invaders, they would be able to return and place a charge of explosive under the lavatory seat and blow up the first General who sat on it. What the German guards would be doing while all this was going on he did not say!

THE BLIZZARD OF 1962-63

THE blizzard 1962-63 was the worst winter in living memory, making the blizzard of 1891 trivial in comparison. My diary for that time records: '10° of frost on December 24th. Snow falling on Dec 28th. Raging blizzard on Dec 29th blocked all the lanes. The scene at Cross in Hand was unbelievable.' In the drifts toward Cole Lane a car aerial was all that could be seen of the car below. A motorbike lay on its side and towards Rutt drive entrance parts of other vehicles could be seen. All this under deep almost purple sky.

The diary goes on: 'January 7th a bulldozer cleared our lane to Cross in Hand. January 9th awful freezing gale. January 11th 22°F at 10am and 26° by afternoon. January 20th blizzard. February 1 st Snowing. Feb 5th heavy snow. Feb 6th slight thaw 33°. Feb 1 lth wild geese over Filham flying on to Ivybridge and possibly the Tamar Valley. Feb 14th Heavy rain. Feb 19th Snowing. March 5th Records show the worst winter since 1740. March 8th All snow gone from roads and fields.'

At about three pm on December 30th Jim Pearce returned home to Torr Hill to be told by his wife Vera that they had run out of bread. Jim at once set off for Ivybridge by way of Cinder Lane, often up to his waist in snow drifts. He reached the baker's, got a sack full of loaves and finally got back to Torr Hill. Thinking of his neighbours he called on the first one who examined the loaves carefully before saying: "Haven't you got any uprights?" Jim was taken aback by this. He thought that the bread itself mattered more that the shape so he replied, "If you want upright loaves you had better walk to Ivybridge and get your own!"

Here at Filham Farm our dairy cows followed a daily routine. Out in the orchard to drink after walking over the iron hard ground, then back to their stalls. Fed only on hay and dairy Cake. Some very isolated farms had dairy cake delivered by Helicopter! A small car half buried in a gateway in the lane started at the first pull of the self-starter after ten days! In April the cuckoo returned and so did all the swallows.

Erme View, Filham (just past Meadow Gate towards the Linhay Field).

THE DARTMOOR HUNT

THE Dartmoor Foxhounds and the opening meet followed by the annual Dinner of the farmers of the Dartmoor Hunt. All through the 1920's and 1930's the Dartmoor Foxhounds hunted on four days a week, under the strict discipline of the Master Cdr C. H. Davey. The opening meet was held on Stowford Lawn early in November and was a great social occasion.

From early morning at the Langham kennels, now long gone, the grooms, Sid Piper the Huntsman, assisted by his son Arthur, brother Archie and Freddie Emms, would be putting the finishing touches to horses, harness and hounds. Cdr Davey arrived from his home 'Beaconville' and the cavalcade set off.

Along Langham Levels, past Dame Hannah Rogers School, down the hill by St John's Church, turning left along Station Road, past the Cattle Market and the Council School, where the pupils lined the School wall and the Park, to watch the hounds go by.

About a hundred riders would have passed through the gates by the offices of the Paper Mill where Mr. Harold Algar of Filham House, resplendent in full hunting garb, held out a fishing net, collecting for Earl Haig's poppy fund; coins would slip through! After a rattling day on the moor, a great company sat down in the Ballroom of the London Hotel Ivybridge, to enjoy the Annual Dinner. For half a crown (121/2 p) there was a choice of beef or pork with piles of vegetables and 'second helpings' if required, and they were!

The dinner over, Mr. Wilfrid Fry, Director of Lee's Mill, (now disgracefully called Glanville's Mill) stood at the top of the stairs to watch for the arrival of Cdr Davey in the hallway below. Shortly after he appeared and seated himself beside the Chairman for the evening, none other than Mr. Sid Piper. A whisper from Cdr Davey had the Chairman on his feet to announce, "Gentlemen, drinks all round on Cdr Davey." Double scotch, double gin, double brandy, beer, cider etc, got throats well oiled to sing "For he's a jolly good fellow." Then followed speeches in praise of the farmers, the Master and Hunt servants and songs. Everybody looked forward to these reminders of days gone by, in my case, over sixty years.

Farmer Hext sang 'Annie Rooney'

We 've been engaged close on a year
The happy time is drawing near
I'll wed the one I love so dear,
Little Annie Rooney:

She's my sweetheart I'm her beau
She's my Annie I'm her Joe,
Soon we'll marry never to part
Little Annie Rooney is my sweetheart.

Farmer Jim Stevens from Cornwood, "Good enough to be on the Music Halls!", sang: 'Nobody noticed me' which dealt with several embarrassing situations in which he found himself.

Miss Kathleen Stone and her brother George, sang a parody on the poem 'Excellsior.'

The shades of night were falling fast
When through the village of Ivybridge past
A box on wheels all green and bright
And on the front two lamps alight.
A MOTOR CAR, A MOTOR CAR.

Freddie Emms sang John Peel and Sid Piper sang a song of which I only remember the first line 'I'll wait for you at the gate of Kempton Park.'

Then for me came the highlight of the evening, as Sid Piper, beating his gavel, called the noisy party to order, 'Gentlemen, I call on Mr. Tapper for a song'. At the far end of the room rose a thin ladder of a man who sang with great clarity 'The hounds of the Meynell'. I knew that it was a song of many verses because one evening at the dinner Capt. Hawker, after verse four, had said: "Good God Tapper, is there an end to this song?" '"Yes Sir," said Tapper, "but there's any amount of verses yet." The last time I saw him, he was seated in St John's Vicarage garden talking to Revd E. J. Burt for whom he did some gardening.

Jean and I began to wonder how it came about that Mr. Tapper knew this great song; some say the best of all hunting songs. In less than a week she received a photocopy of the song and details of the author and a resume of his life. The words and music were written by Mr. Fred Cotton, the well-known Master of the Dove Valley Harriers of Derbyshire. A great athlete, he could walk, dance, run, box, shoot or ride. For a bet of one hundred pounds he walked three hundred and forty miles in seven days. This was in 1881. Here is the song:

Friends, your patience I crave while I tip you a stave,
And whisper a word in your ear.
For I sing of the sound of the horn and the hound,
Which the saddest of the hearts needs must cheer.
For I sing of the hounds of the Meynell
The world cannot boast such a kennel
And a man must ride straight, if he'd not be too late
To see Reynard roll'd o'er by the Meynell.

Chorus

Then hurrah for the hounds of the Meynell,
The world cannot boast such a kennel
And a man must ride straight ifheid not be too late
To see Reynard roll'd o'er by the Meynell.

These good hounds in the chase to the best won't give place
For of good ones theyire surely the pick;
When the scent is breast high; swift as pigeons they fly,
When tis cold to the line close they stick;
For they can both find, hunt and kill, and the man who denies it knows nil.
If your mount is a hack, pray don't hunt with this pack,
Or get down you assuredly will.

Repeat chorus

Tis the first of November, the opening day,
At Sudbury Coppice they've met;
There's a scent in the cover, the knowing ones say,
There's a fox for a fiver I'll bet;
For it's Tally ho! forrard away! His line is for Potter's I'll lay;
If you're game for a lark, there are pales in the park
Take a good lot of jumping they say.

Chorus

O'er the pastures beyond they are racing like mad,
As though they were tied to his brush;
Though the fences are blind, the real good uns donit mind,
For a cropper they care not a rush.
'Twixt the best friend 'tis war to the knife,
Each vows heill be first in the strife,
And the man that is in it, will swear that each minute
Was worth all the rest of his life.

Chorus

Now the good uns sit down, for I'll wager a crown
There 'II be some wet jackets 'ere long;
From the brook they donit shrink, though it's up to the brink'
And the current runs deucedly strong.
Shake him up, catch him fast by the head
For it never shall truly be said,
That a Derbyshire man, when heis leading the van,
Of the biggest place 'ere had a dread.

Chorus

Yonder potters so snug, where we're sure of a jug
Of good beer and good bread and good cheese
Throw the reins on his neck, for you 've time while we check
To enjoy these good things at your ease.
But Ms Tallyho! forrard away! A labourer's viewed him they say'
Ere you reach Hilton Gorse, you 'II know whether your horse
Cannot only gallop, but stay.

Chorus

'Moy oyes! 'e's a winder' the labourer said,
'And 'e 's gone past 'ere ten minutes quoite;
'Is tag it were whoite and 'is coat it were red;
You'll non ketch bowd Reynolds to-night.
Moy oyes! But yo'canna joomp there
It's seven foot 'oigh very near;
There's a ditch at t'fur soide most tremenjously woide,
He's joomped it, by goy, joomped it clear!'

Chorus

Now the front rank grows small, for full many's the fall
That their numbers has thinned since the find.
Some have bellows to mend, many pray for the end,
For they 're getting most sadly behind.
But the customers sit down and ride, determined
Whatever betide
To be able to say of that glorious day,
I was there when that gallant fox died.

Chorus

The annual dinner of The Farmers of the Dartmoor Hunt was over. The stairs had to be negotiated with extra care. My brother John fetched our car from the London Hotel car park. It was an old 'Rover Pilot' and on the radiator cap was the head of a Viking. My father, Mr. Tooley our farmer neighbour and myself got in and we were away to Cross in Hand and into the narrow lane to Filham. No fear of meeting another car, ours was the only one in the hamlet where there were only two farmhouses and two occupied cottages Now there are fourteen or fifteen dwellings. What of the next fifty years!

1939-1945 WAR

CDR Davey O.B.E. was killed whilst mine sweeping in the Solent aboard the yacht Campeador. A private yacht converted to a mine sweeper at Dartmouth. She struck a mine laid the previous night by a German aircraft. There were only two survivors. Cdr Davey was aged sixty.

THE IVYBRIDGE YOUNG FARMERS CLUB

IVYBRIDGE Young Farmers Club was founded in 1938 at a meeting in what is now the Erme Primary School. In 1939, with the outbreak of war, it seemed likely that the club would have to close. This was prevented by the enthusiasm of Mr. Gillard of Cadeleigh and his daughter Peggy.

The Kings Arms in Ivybridge was the regular meeting place for the club, where serious lectures were given on farming on a war footing. It was also the venue for the occasional dance.

Mr. Kenneth'Watkins came one evening to give a talk on tractor maintenance. He had founded the firm of Watkins and Roseveare, which took over and saved from ruin, the old China Clay drying sheds at Cantrell, now called Western Machinery.

He ended his talk and called for questions. A very respected and fastidious farmer rose to ask a question about noise, which his new tractor, purchased from Mr. Watkins, made when ploughing. "It makes a noise like

this", he said, and made a loud hissing sound. He slowly repeated the noise several times until everybody wanted to explode with laughter.

At last he said: "Mr. Watkins what is causing that noise?" With a flash of inspiration Mr. Watkins replied: "Well I can only suggest that you have a snake in the radiator." It was a few minutes before the laughter gave way to the next question!

In about the year 1944 the Devon Branch of the National Farmers Union offered a cup to be awarded to the best speaking team from Young Farmers Clubs from all over Devon with the final to be held at The Theatre Royal Exeter.

Ivybridge Y.F. Club reached the final and the team members were: Jim Lapthorne chairman, Gertrude Granger speaker, John Haimes proposer of a vote of thanks and Valerie Turpin seconder.

The speakers had the same subject on which to talk for fifteen minutes -'Agriculture a way of life.' Jim Lapthorne got Ivybridge off to a good start with a joke about an old countryman out for a walk who was accosted by a motorist, keen to make a fool of the old boy - "I say, have you seen a wagon load of monkeys around here?" Came the instant reply: "I suppose you've fallen off."

The speaker did well and good support came from proposer and seconder. Then the team from Chagford came on. The chairman did very well and introduced the speaker, he rose from his chair, but for a full two minutes, he could not utter a sound. Some fool started to laugh but was quickly silenced. At last he started and made a very fine speech. The judges were Mr. Jock Currie of Dartington Hall Farm, Economist Mr. John Maude KC son of Cyril Maude the actor and Mr. George Hayter-Haines. Ivybridge won.

Victory in Europe came at last, and on the evening of that day, the Ivybridge Y.F. Club held a meeting in the Kings Arms.

Afterwards we all came out to Filham, where I drew some flares from Aux. Units stores. We went to the hill above Penquit which has a panoramic view of Ivybridge and the country around. Agile members climbed ash poles and lit the flares. A great blaze of light was followed by that total darkness with which we had become so familiar over the previous five years.

Then our eyes became aware of the lights of Ermington and Ivybridge and all around our glorious countryside. Little lights were twinkling as cottages and farmhouses joined the villages celebrating this great victory.

At Erme View, Mr. and Mrs. J. Gordon Brown, placed a light in every window. This was a night never to be forgotten.

VICTORY!

TREVOR WITHYCOMBE'S DAIRY

IMAGINE walking from a shop in Fore Street Ivybridge to encounter a herd of milking cows driven by Trevor's daughter Pat, every man's idea of a milk maid. This was the twice daily routine as the cows walked to and from the milking shed or shippen at the end of Costly Street to the fields at the end of Western Road and opposite the house known as Westbourne. Trevor owned these fields and farther on towards Woodlands he rented two more.

Trevor Withycombe was born in the house which is now the Conservative Club and when only 17 he joined the Army and fought in the 1914-1918 War serving in India and Afghanistan before going to the western front where he was wounded by shrapnel in the head and legs.

The war over, Trevor returned to Ivybridge and set up in business as a coal merchant and later a dairyman, at the dwelling and large courtyard now known as Hawthorn House in Costly Street. Two more fields were situated down a lane above St lohn's old vicarage, which formed part of a small estate known as the Chantry and now built over.

For many years the cows were led by Daisy, Pat's favourite cow who always remembered the route to the fields.

One morning in 1944 on her daily delivery by bicycle with its large basket on the front full of bottles of milk, cream etc Pat was knocked over by a jeep entering the U.S. camp at Exeter Road. Not badly hurt, she was given first aid in the camp and Trevor was informed by 'phone. Pat laughed when she recalled that Trevor's first question was 'How about the bike and the milk bottles and cream, are they smashed up?'

During the 1939-1945 War a despatch rider travelling far too fast hit the curb on the bridge and shot over the parapet into the River Erme. Trevor helped him out almost unharmed, saved by the large back pack on which he fell.

Trevor had a coal round which began in Ivybridge then went on to Ermington and Modbury. Profit from milk sales were low with new milk at one penny and scalded milk (milk from which the cream was removed) sold at a half penny per pint. The arrival of the Milk Marketing Board changed all that.

Once, Trevor was enjoying a quiet pipe when he was almost knocked over by a roll of wire netting, which fell off a passing lorry. The netting was covered all over with camouflage so, in order to free the wire, Trevor took it to the yard and poured petrol over it. When he lit the paper the resulting explosion blew several hens over the wall into the river. They got over the shock and all returned safely.

In 1968 Trevor retired. He had been a Special Constable for 45 years and it was time to hand over to the next generation.

Trevor Withycombe during the First World War.

W. W. LUXTON

W. W. Luxton carried on the business of ironmonger and plumber at 53 Fore Street Ivybridge. Besides himself there was a staff of seven. He had red hair and a quick temper. He became a good friend of mine.

My father and I used to drive to Plymouth every Thursday morning and by some means this became known to W. W. We were returning home from Plymouth one day when father said: "Stop at Luxton's, I want . . ." (I have long forgotten the item). Several customers were already being served so W.W. dealt with my father. On receipt of the order W.W. said: "So you couldn't get it in Plymouth?" My father was taken aback by this and before he could reply, W.W. continued: "You don't deny you've been to Plymouth?" My father, who was also quick tempered, had by now recovered and said loudly: "Why should I deny that I've been to Plymouth? What the devil is it to you where I've been?" Realizing that he had made a fool of himself W.W. strode off to supply the order.

My daughter Anne took up brass rubbing and found that, while black heel ball was easily obtainable brown was not. Off I went to W.W. who had recently said to me: "Call me Winston if you can stand it." I was therefore able to say: "Winston, I doubt if you stock what I want today". Came the reply: "Try me." And then: "Follow me." We went through the shop, across a small yard and into two old cottages, which were packed with goods, over to a corner shelf full of brown and black heel ball. He handed over two of each with compliments.

I organized a walk to view the three oak woods of Dartmoor in one day. Winston arranged the transport with Jerry Stafford driving. Winston and his lovely Labrador Prince, Haynes and Tom Maddock with myself as guide. Jerry left us at about 8.30 am on a lovely morning at Sourton Common a few miles from Okehampton. We walked along looking down on Black Tor Copse, Wistman's Wood and finally Piles Copse, arriving at Ivybridge around 9 pm.

Preparing for retirement, Winston moved to his farm at Tavistock, coming to Ivybidge every day in a Rolls Royce. He often had great difficulty getting away from his garage at the top of Highland Street, with cars parked up and down the narrow street.

Winston Luxton was a great character, a Justice of the Peace at Plympton and a very fine businessman of a kind now almost vanished from the scene.

WILLIAM (Bill) PEARSE
of Swineston and Woodland

SWINESTON is recorded as belonging to the Priory of Plympton in the reign of Henry II (1133-1189). Although in Ermington Parish, Bill's school days were spent at the council school in Ivybridge - now called the Erme Primary.

Every morning Bill had a walk of 2'/2 miles to school. For part of the way, across the fields, he was accompanied by his pet Billy goat. Close contact with the goat meant that Bill sometimes arrived at school with a distinct 'pong'. This upset Miss Olive Hoare, the teacher, who reluctantly sent him outside to stand in the fresh air, at the same time removing all goat hair from his clothing. In the afternoon, as Bill reached the home fields, Billy would appear, but any smells would soon merge with all the odours of the farmyard!

When I knew him he farmed at Woodland Manor and I used to give him a lift to Plympton market on the first Monday in the month. This was in the 1950's and one morning he asked me if I was watching the TV documentary on the Great War which went on for 26 weeks.

I knew that Bill had gone through the War and I believe he had been wounded. He had also described the horrors of Passchendaele which was featured on the TV screen. I said to him: "I don't know how men came home in 1918 from the Western Front with any vestige of sanity." Bill replied: "You don't know how right you are" - or words to that effect!