

Introduction

John Madden

Chairman: Bartons' History Group

This has been a year of anniversaries - Waterloo (1815), Magna Carta (1215) and as I write we are approaching St Crispin's Day - Agincourt (1415). The most far-reaching of these was the Great Charter, which still today forms the basis of our legal system, and those of many other countries too. The result of Waterloo defined the course of European history for nearly a century, and has some special connections to our part of the country - see pages 23-27.

But the focus in this, the 6th Bygone Bartons (including the special Jubilee Edition), is once again on, well, the Bartons. Many of you may have wondered how 'Purgatory' got its name - we don't know either, but Chris Edbury lists the possible derivations.

Then we have a tale of immorality in Steeple Barton in the 18th century, some curiosities dug up, and a little-known connection to the famous writer of detective stories, Dorothy L. Sayers.

And last, but most certainly not least, we continue to capture as much oral history of the Bartons as possible - this time we are very grateful to Dorrie Cox for sharing with us her memories.

At our last AGM it was suggested that we include more short items, so Denise Roberts has kindly provided various snippets of information about sights of interest in the village, originally compiled for the Family Treasure Hunt in 2013.

I hope you have as much enjoyment in reading all this as we had in putting it together!



The re-enactment of Waterloo in June 2015

Washington Terrace/ 6a North Street

In the stone wall next to 6a North Street there is a date stone plaque inserted in the wall with the date 1819 plus initials JPM.



This date stone was originally attached to a house built by John Parsons, a carpenter, in 1819, who owned a row of cottages between this point and the entrance to Washington Terrace. After his death in 1870 the cottages were put up for sale and were advertised as being four substantially built and slated cottages. These eventually fell into disrepair and have now been demolished. When the current houses were being built on the site, the builders incorporated the date stone into this wall. Date stones sometimes meant a marriage, or new house being built for a couple, or being updated (old - not modern - updating). The middle initial was usually the surname, the other two initials each of the couple's first names.

Halfway along North Street is **Horseshoe Cottage**. It has a large stone millstone leaning against its end wall.

This house appears on the enclosure map of 1796, but is probably a much older house (its east/west orientation end on to the road suggests an old house – to catch the maximum daylight). At that time the owner was Mrs. S. Hindes. It was described as a homestead of 3 rods 35 perches, with land of 137 acres on opposite side of road. By 1837 it had become part of the Halls' estate. In 1922 it was still owned by Halls but sold by them to H. Boret in 1925. Boret sold to R. Jones in 1925 for £180. Mr. Jones lived in one cottage; Mrs. Jesse Stewart rented the other. There is no record of when the house was divided into two. In 1922 it was described as pair semi-detached cottages with yard, buildings and gardens. It was then known as The Smithy. Water came from a well in garden (which is still there).



PURGATORY

Christine Edbury

As I get regular enquiries about the site of Purgatory, I thought it about time I wrote down all I could find out, to either send to the enquirer or attach the document to e-mails. A 'ready to go' document so to speak.

Purgatory is the name of a small site just above the River Dorn, once inhabited as a farmstead. Only a barn and grass covered 'footings' of the farmhouse or cottages remain today. Photographs on various web sites now show the site as being very much smoothed over since these photographs were taken in the mid 1980s by Audrey Martin.



Just the barn standing, still in use, remains of cottages to the right barn and 'lumps and bumps' of cottages

There was also a deep well, now filled in

The earliest maps found so far indicating the site are the Jefferys map of 1767-8 and the Davis map of 1793. However, at our recent AGM we were very pleased to have sight of a large map of the Bartons (approx 7' x 6") currently in the possession of Sue Greenway. The map, by James Wylie, is undated but probably made about 1870 as the Mission and Temperance Hall, built in 1888, is not shown. This clearly shows dwellings attached to the barn. Further research on the map is being done.

Facts:

From the website, 'placenames.org.uk', Purgatory is described as: 'Purgatory (Place) located in the settlement of Sesswell's Barton. On the Davis map of 1797'. Purgatory, according to Catholic Church doctrine, is an intermediate state after physical death in which those destined for heaven 'undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven'.



Photographed by the Group by kind permission of Sue Greenway

The site was called Dry Grounds c1733.

We know from the Victoria County History that eight families lived at Purgatory in 1851.

Census Returns: The census returns are not very clear as to which families lived at either 'first Purg' (properly called Shepherds House) or Purgatory, so although 8 families are recorded in the Victoria County History, only the two families below have Purgatory written again their names.

1841 - No addresses are given in the census returns for 1841, although Church Lane is recorded, but it is impossible to say for sure who lived at Purgatory.

1851 - John Buckingham (aged 48), labourer, he was born in Chetwode, Bucks; his wife Elizabeth (aged 52), born at Rollright. The children were James (aged 22), Eliza (aged 20), George (aged 18), Abel (aged 11), Richard (aged 9), the older boys were all agricultural labourers. Thomas Cleaver aged 18, described as son-in-law, but this can also mean step-son. He was also an agricultural labourer, born at Wootton.

Also at Purgatory in 1851, Joseph Cleaver (aged 51), carpenter, born Steeple Barton.

His wife Phillis (aged 40) born at Deddington. Sons were William (aged 20), an ag lab; Thomas (aged 9), George (aged 7), both scholars, and Henry (aged 2), all boys born Steeple Barton.

1861 – Joseph Cleaver (aged 39), born ? Ensington, shepherd; wife Zilpah (aged 46), born Kidlington, son George aged 20, shepherd; Mary A. daughter aged 16, John son aged 9, Elizabeth daughter aged 6, son Frederic aged 3. All the children born at Barton.

1871 – Joseph Cleaver shepherd aged 47, wife Zilpah, son Frederick W. Charles Stevens, lodger aged 30, a gamekeeper, seems to be living next door.

1881 – John Proffit, a herdsman aged 31, wife Charlotte, aged 35, son Frederick, aged 10, daughters Mary Ann, Mercy and Ellen, aged 6, 3 and 11 months.

1891 – John Proffitt, agricultural labourer, aged 42, daughter in law Lucy Prestage, aged 23 ('dil' in the relation to head column can also mean step-daughter), daughters Annie, Mercy and Nellie, aged 16, 14 and 10.

1901 – Under Purgatory Lane, not farm, Joseph Hoare, aged 44, wife Selina aged 54, Alfred Mole aged 29 (step-son?), daughter Sarah aged 17 and son William aged 12. One unoccupied house next door.

1911 – Herbert Hoare, aged 32, farm labourer, born Middle Barton, wife Emily seems to be in an asylum, daughters Florence, aged 13, Mary, aged 10, Marjorie, aged 8, Gladys, aged 5 and son William, aged 3. Also at home that night of the census Marjorie Wilks, mother in law, aged 73. She may have been helping Herbert with the children if wife is away.

As we cannot get the information for the 1921 census until 2021, I looked at the voter's lists for 1915, 1920, 1925 and 1930. For 1915, Joseph Hoare is at Goffe's, Shepherds House (first Purg). No-one is recorded as living at Purgatory, although one tentative entry - Stephen and Agnes Hawkins are on the voter's list of 1930 living at Goffe's Shepherds Cottages, is this Purgatory?

Jackie (Wood) provided this information: 'Mr and Mrs Hawkins (not sure of his first name - Stephan or Steven - Stevie or Stivie!!!!) and Agnes lived at Purgatory until early 30s, they had two children Grace and Bill. Bill would bike to Oxford to work at Wards; Grace went to Yorkshire married a soldier but later returned to Middle Barton. Mr and Mrs Hawkins moved from Purgatory to a house in Church Lane, Greenways, then moved to Heath Cottage, Worton Road and then Mrs Hawkins had a cottage in the Dock. Don't quite know when Mr Hawkins died.'

From County Archaeology, Sites and Monuments Record:

Site Name: Purgatory Farm (100m west of the River Dorn); building Summary: Stone built, with possibly a Stonesfield slate roof, now a corrugated tin roof. Marked on map by Thomas Jefferys 1767-68 and the Davis map of 1793. Presumably of later 17/18th century construction.

Description: Purgatory Farm was one of 9 in Steeple Barton, and was 338 acres in 1861

Record Type: Building

Monument Type: Farm 1540-1900

Reference Number: PRN (Primary Record Number) 13142 (unique number given to all finds and sites by SMR)

Parish/District: Steeple Barton, West Oxfordshire, Oxfordshire

Grid Reference: SP 4532 2300

Theories and Suppositions:

'First Purg'. This is the local name given to the first building on the left down the lane past the church, before you get to Purgatory. This site is sometimes mistaken for Purgatory. It was the site of a farmhouse and barn, the remains of which are hidden amongst the new fir tree plantation. At one time it was called Shepherds House or Sheppers House. An article on Purgatory written in the Oxford Mail in 1978 goes to great length describing first Purg as being proper Purgatory, until right at the end the reporter realises she is in the wrong place. The house is now derelict and cannot be seen because of the fir tree plantation.

In an article in the Oxford Mail dated 1978, the reporter trying to find Purgatory, records asking a local resident, Mrs. Kettlewell, who lived at the Old Vicarage, about Purgatory and Mrs Kettlewell thought it referred 'to the sheer hell of getting up and down the lane, especially in bad weather'. However, Miss Joan Sullivan, who had lived in Barton since a child, talks about walking down the lane to 'Purg' to collect wild flowers for Mothering Sunday. She remembered the Hawkins family living at 'First Purg'. She said it was 45 years since anyone lived there. She also mentioned a place called 'Paradise', further down the track. However, this is the only reference found so far.

Geoff Stevenson was a local historian (he was a lecturer at the Lady Spencer-Churchill College Wheatley) and lived in Frances Road for many years. He had studied the area and history of the Bartons for many years for and with Audrey, and did not come up with any information about the origins of Purgatory either.

Another theory is the village of Steeple Barton shrinking because of the plague, this is probably true, but although academics refer to this, they do not give their references for the information. It is believed the people moved down to Purgatory to escape the plague. Local rumour was that the north side of the churchyard would never be used again because this is where the plague victims were buried, though again, there

is nothing to verify this and Graeme Arthur (the Vicar) certainly does not believe this.

In his book *The History of the Bartons*, George Laws mentions Purgatory when talking about the River Dorn and says '*past Purgatory, (was this a piscatorium?)*'. In the dictionary piscatorium (a Latin word) means fish/fishing. Was this the site of a medieval fishery (not a fish pond)? Did the medieval owners of Barton Manor dam the River Dorn to rear fish for the royal palace at Woodstock? Could Purgatory farm have been built on the site of a Roman building? As of this date I can find no evidence or reference for this, but there are Roman buildings recorded nearby and Roman pottery has been found in the area. (George Laws was the land agent for the Barton Abbey estate and was interested in local history. He collected a large amount of information and was in the process of writing his book, but died before it was published. Audrey finished compiling the information and had it published in 1985). I have looked through the boxes of George's notes and found only rough notes as recorded above, but sadly no indication as to where he might have got this information.

Further Research:

A coloured Tithe map dated 1849 in the BHG archives shows the areas of ownership of the land in Steeple Barton, and indicates that the land on which Purgatory is sited was once owned by the Duke of Marlborough, who subsequently gave the land to his son-in-law, the Rt. Hon. Lord Clifden. Shortly after 1849 the Hall family started purchasing more land, including the fields around Purgatory. If any Clifden archives survive there may be some information about Purgatory. Neither Audrey nor Geoff Stevenson seem to have researched this. I have contacted the archivist for the Duke of Marlborough/Lord Clifden and as we go to production, nothing has been found.

Bibliography and References:

George Laws, *History of the Bartons*, 1970s, edited by Audrey Martin

William Wing, *Annals of Steeple and Westcote Barton*, 1866

A History of the County of Oxford; Volume 11, 1983

www.british-history.ac.uk

Sheer Purgatory, article in *Oxford Mail* 1978, with photograph

Acknowledgements:

Jackie Wood

John Forster

If anyone has any further information on Purgatory or the occupants, we would love to hear about it.

Hare Cottage, Enstone Road

The Castle Family (wheelwrights and undertakers) lived in the three storied house attached to Hare Cottage for three generations and carried out their business



until 1966. Hare Cottage was then part of the workshops where coffins were made. Mr Kenneth Castle later moved to the cottage attached on east side called Kencot.

While Hare cottage was being renovated recently, three wooden panels were found bearing the names and ages of the builders working on the cottage in 1967. They are: Sony Probitts, aged 57, C. Perkins, aged 20, D. Gardner, aged 20. P. Pinfold, aged 19 and P.R. Kavanagh, aged ?13

The gates to St Edward the Confessor Church, Westcote Barton

The gates to the church incorporate the fittings from the old village stocks. There is a metal plaque on these gates engraved "In memory of Rev George H Isaacson 1901-1982)



The unusual fastenings to the gates of Westcote Barton church are thought to have been taken from the village stocks, which were situated in Fox Lane adjacent to the back of The Fox pub until they were pulled down. The stocks were doubtless put in this position so that offenders could be seen by visitors to the pub and by churchgoers on Sunday.



Never trust your Mother-in-Law's shepherd!

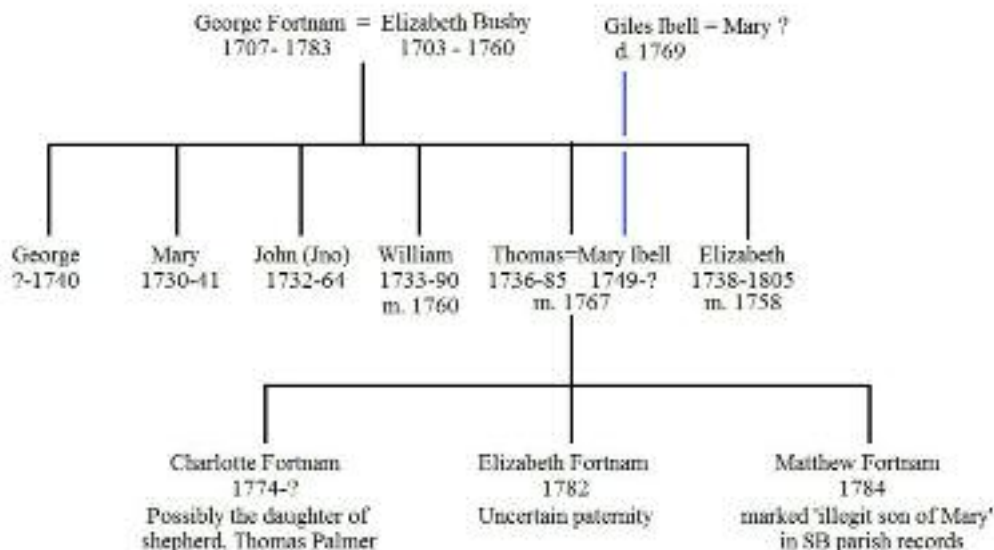
or **18th Century Divorce in the Bartons**

David Wharton

Thomas Fortnam, yeoman farmer of Steeple Barton, was laid to rest in November 1785 in St. Mary's churchyard. By his Will¹ written 5 days before his death, his long-time family servant, Mary East, inherited £25 in cash and a life interest in his home, out buildings and furniture. Less generously, his wife Mary Fortnam received only 'the sum of one Guinea of Lawful Money of Great Britain'. His Will declares the reason for this apparent lack of generosity:

*I give to Mary the Daughter of Mr Giles Ibell deceased with whom I intermarried and from whom I am divorced by a sentence of the spiritual Court on a suit commenced by me for her incontinency the sum of one Guinea.....and no more.'*¹

In his Will, Thomas Fortnam referred to his separated wife by her maiden name of Mary Ibell. In 1775, 10 years before his death, he had legally separated from her on account of her 'incontinency' or, in today's parlance, adultery. When Thomas Fortnam took his wife, Mary Fortnam, to court for adultery, he could not have realised that the testimonies of household servants would keep Oxfordshire talking for hundreds of years^{2,3}.



Three Generations of the Thomas Fortnam Family – 1707 to 1805

It had all started so well. Thomas was the second eldest, surviving son in a family of well-to-do farmers in Steeple Barton, and was baptised in St. Mary's Church in 1736.

His future in-laws, Giles and Mary Ibell, also yeoman farmers, moved into Steeple Barton sometime after their wedding in Banbury. Their daughter, (another) Mary, was born in 1749. Both families were wealthy enough to support live-in servants to help with the work and chores around the houses and farms.

The 1760s, though, was a decade of change for the Fortnam family. Thomas's mother died in 1760 and his two surviving siblings, Elizabeth and William married and started raising their own families before him. Eventually, in 1767 when Thomas Fortnam was 31 and Mary Ibell (daughter) was 18, they married in St. Mary's church in Steeple Barton. Two years later in 1769 Mary's father, Giles Ibell died, leaving his farm to his wife who continued to farm it. He specifically bequeathed to his daughter, now Mary Fortnam, £100 in trust which provided her with a small, independent income adequate to live on. It may be that Giles Ibell had already seen that Mary's marriage wasn't working too well and was providing his daughter with an escape route.

After her father's death, Mary Fortnam spent more time on her mother's farm which was large enough by then to have at least four servants: William Stockford, Thomas Bedding, John Carter a boy of 14 years, and a maid, Mary Scaresbrook in her thirties. In 1772, Mary Fortnam's mother decided to add a new shepherd as well, Thomas Palmer. It soon became apparent to the farm servants that Mary Fortnam and Thomas Palmer had taken quite a shine to each other. The details of what happened next were provided by the farm servants in their testimonies at the subsequent divorce proceedings initiated by Thomas Fortnam. William Stockford declared he had seen the two:

*'walking in the Fields and to continue out alone together for as much as two or three hours at a time and often saw them kiss each other in a lewd, amorous and indecent manner.'*⁴

Mary Fortnam seemed to take every opportunity to be alone with her new Thomas, bringing him his meals, and never missing his invitation to go and see his lambs in the fields.

In the Spring of 1773, the boy servant John Carter became seriously ill, having been kicked on the head by a horse. He was nursed back to health in a spare bedroom at Mary's mother's farm which provided Mary and Thomas Palmer the excuse to watch over the boy while he slept. Well, not quite. The teenager later declared that while he feigned sleep:

*'Mary Fortnam and Thomas Palmer lay down together on the floor by the side of the bed, and, soon after, he (John Carter) heard a noise, as if the shoes of Mary or Thomas were scratching against the floor, and heard Mary and Thomas pant and blow, during which time it is believed that Thomas Palmer was upon Mary Fortnam and that they had carnal use of each other's bodies.'*⁵

John Carter could only hear, not see, what was happening since Mary and Thomas had taken the precaution to draw the curtains around his bed.

Later, in August of that year Mary's mother and her servant left the farm for a week to visit friends leaving her daughter in charge. Perhaps remembering the earlier episode on the floor, Mary Fortnam immediately transferred her mother's bed to a spare room over the dairy where she was able to entertain Thomas Palmer overnight relatively undisturbed. The maid, Mary Scaresbrook, who slept in the room opposite, later declared that while dressing in the early morning:

*'She look'd through the Latchet Hole of her Bed Chamber Door and saw the Door of the room over the Dairy open and having watched through the Latchet Hole for some time she saw Thomas Palmer go out of the Room with only his shirt on, which threw her into a trembling as she believed Mary Fortnam and Thomas Palmer were in the same Bed naked and alone and had committed the Crime of Adultery together.'*⁶

On another evening, Thomas Palmer quietly left his bed in the manservants' room in a 'distant' part of the farm at around 11pm. William Stockford was still awake and persuaded his fellow servant, Thomas Bedding, to follow the shepherd to the dairy. They blockaded both doors of the dairy bedroom for two hours (!), hearing nothing more than low murmuring. In the morning, William and Thomas decided to confront the shepherd who confessed privately he had been with Mary Fortnam overnight. He was:

*'indeed fearful of Thomas Fortnam's anger, if he was found out, and would have to leave the farm immediately without any wages'.*⁷

William and Thomas admonished the shepherd to give Mary Fortnam up and left it at that. By the time Mary's mother had returned from her visit to her friends, her bed was back in its normal place and she was none the wiser.

The servants gossiped amongst themselves that 'this was no way for a married woman to carry on, especially with a person so inferior in the station of a shepherd'. Realising the servants knew, Thomas Palmer and Mary Fortnam seemed to have 'cooled it' and the servants, for the time being at least, kept their secrets.

However, things came to a head in the following year, in the summer of 1774, when Mary Fortnam presented her husband, Thomas Fortnam, with a baby daughter who was baptised Charlotte in St. Mary's Church. Many in the village doubted Thomas Fortnam was the real father and eventually Thomas learnt of the gossip of his wife's infidelities. He left his wife immediately and went back to stay with his widowed father on the family farm. Things became heated between the couple and Thomas

felt the need in November of the same year to publish a notice in Jackson's Oxford Journal:

*'Whereas, from the Misconduct of MARY, my wife, we have for some time past lived separately, and the crime she has committed being of such a Nature as I cannot forgive; in Order, nevertheless, that she should have a proper Support, and be taken due care of, I had provided her a Lodging and proper Accommodations in a very creditable Family, to which place she has refused to go. I do therefore give this Publick Notice, That I will not be answerable for, or pay, any debt that she shall contract. And I do hereby give this further notice, that I will prosecute, with the utmost Severity, any Person or Persons who shall harbour her.'*⁸

Why on earth would Thomas broadcast by newspaper to all of Oxfordshire the ruinous state of his marriage? Perhaps Mary had been running up the bills and expecting Thomas to pay? Perhaps Mary was now openly living with her shepherd or yet another paramour to Thomas's embarrassment? Anyway, as 1775 began, Thomas determined to permanently solve his problems by legally separating from his wife.

In the 18th century, a full divorce required an Act of Parliament, an immensely expensive procedure for a yeoman farmer. However, the ecclesiastical court under the authority of the Lord Bishop of Oxford had the power to grant a separation on the grounds of a wife's 'incontinency'. The case was heard in the Consistory Court at Oxford in autumn 1775, testimonies being provided mainly by the farm servants.

Thomas Fortnam was advised that the case might be expensive and hard to win since the servants' testimonies were entirely based on circumstantial, aural evidence. Nobody in the household had actually seen Mary Fortnam and Thomas Palmer together 'in flagrante delicto'. He was further advised, hard though it was, to seek testimony from the shepherd, Thomas Palmer, which stated that adultery had actually occurred between the shepherd and Mary Fortnam. This would virtually guarantee Mary's conviction at less cost. For Thomas Fortnam, asking the shepherd for precise details and times of the shepherd's adultery with his wife was probably a bridge too far. Neither Mary Fortnam nor Thomas Palmer was present at the subsequent trial or left any testimony.

In the end, the servants' testimonies were accepted and Mary Fortnam was found guilty of multiple acts of adultery with Thomas Palmer. For each act, the Court's near-biblical judgement was:

*'the said Mary Fortnam, being wholly unmindful of her conjugal vow, and not having the Fear of God before her eyes, but being moved and instigated by the Devil, became very intimate with and fond of Thomas Palmer who then lived in the Station of Shepherd..... they often had the carnal use and knowledge of each other's bodies and thereby committed the foul crime of adultery together, and that this was and is true.....'*⁹

The Court granted Thomas Fortnam a legal separation from his wife but he remained prohibited, of course, from re-marrying. Some of Thomas's pride must have been restored.

After the birth of Charlotte Fortnam the Steeple Barton Parish Records show two further children were born to Mary: Elizabeth in 1782 and Matthew in 1784 by which time Mary was 35 years old. Charlotte and Elizabeth have both Thomas and Mary Fortnam as parents on their baptismal records but Matthew was firmly marked as an illegitimate son of Mary Fortnam. Thomas may not have wanted Matthew, an uncertain Fortnam to say the least, as a potential claimant on his estate, 18th century property inheritance being mainly through the male line. Sadly, Elizabeth and Matthew both died in infancy. Charlotte lived on, but was never recognised by Thomas as a Fortnam. However, she was remembered by Thomas as he lay dying. Another clause in his Will states:

'I give to Mary Ibell's (his wife's) daughter Charlotte the Legacy or Sum of Five Pounds of like lawful Money' ¹

This was five times more than the sum of one Guinea which was all Thomas had been prepared to leave Charlotte's mother. I wonder what Mary and Charlotte Fortnam did with their Guineas?

Postscript

In the late 18th century in Steeple Barton, illegitimacies were not uncommon. In the ten years between 1770 and 1780, 4 baptismal entries were marked as illegitimate in the records, and two entries were missing the father. This amounts to 1 in 20 of the total baptisms in the decade. The real total, of course, is likely to be higher than just the explicitly recorded ones. Interestingly, one of these records was of an infant, Sarah, in another branch of the Fortnam family around the time Thomas Fortnam was divorcing his wife.

As time moved on, most members of the Fortnam family found their way into Steeple Barton churchyard. Some tomb memorials¹⁰ have been recorded and the grave plots for Elizabeth, George and Thomas Fortnam are B29B, B19A and B20A on the churchyard plan¹¹ displayed in the entrance area of the church. These graves are in the centre of the yard. Mary Fortnam was also buried in the churchyard in an unknown location in December 1803, 18 years after her husband, Thomas.

The 1775 divorce case brought by Thomas Palmer against his wife became well known in Oxford and Oxfordshire in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. No doubt there were many other cases of rustic infidelity across the country but few which were as well publicised or which ended up in an ecclesiastical court. Perhaps this

talked-about case of country misbehaviour gave artists the inspiration to paint such scenes as William Holman Hunt did in ‘The Hireling Shepherd’ in 1851, 78 years later:



Manchester Art Gallery. Wikipedia¹²

References

- 1 <http://documents.bartonshistorygroup.org.uk/Wills/Fortnam.pdf>.
- 2 Oxfordshire Sinners and Villains, Carl Boardman, 1993 ISBN 0-7509-0416-X pp 18ff.
- 3 Cake and Cockhorse, Banbury History Society Volume 15 Number 6 ISSN 6522-0823 pp 205ff.
- 4 Depositions before Oxford Consistory Court, William Stockford, 12 October 1775.
- 5 Depositions before Oxford Consistory Court, John Carter, 3 October 1775.
- 6 Depositions before Oxford Consistory Court, Mary Scaresbrook , 12 October 1775.
- 7 Depositions before Oxford Consistory Court, Court Judgement Autumn 1775.
- 8 Jacksons Oxford Journal November 12th 1774, pp2.
- 9 http://documents.bartonshistorygroup.org.uk/SteepleBartonBDM_1678_1995_redacted.pdf.
- 10 http://documents.bartonshistorygroup.org.uk/memorials_sb_out.pdf
- 11 http://documents.bartonshistorygroup.org.uk/SB_graveyard_map.pdf
- 12 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Hireling_Shepherd.

The Depositions may be found in the Oxfordshire History Centre, Cowley, reference OA MS Oxf Dioc pp b26 ff521 et seq.

Button found behind the Old Methodist Chapel, South Street

Chris Edbury

An old button was found by the builders renovating the old Methodist Chapel in ground to the rear of the chapel. It was given to Mrs Paige (Barn Cottage) to be passed on for identification.

I did some research and finally came to the conclusion it was probably a livery button from the Hall family of Barton Abbey. It is gilded brass and the diameter is 26mm.



Photographed by C. Edbury (the button is back with the builders/owners, but awaiting its return for a better image)

The front is decorated with a dragon, its head turned back, over a very fancy 'H'.

I looked at census returns for the staff at the Abbey with a possible connection to families around the area of the chapel who could have been 'living out' staff or just visiting family and lost the button off a jacket.

The prime candidates could be : In the 1891 census, Catherine Hall (widow of Henry) lived at Barton Abbey. Only one member of staff from the Bartons, George Grimsley, aged 18, a footman. However her son Alexander Hall lived at Barton Lodge and he had staff from the Bartons, an Albert Gardner, footman aged 16. He is living in at Barton Lodge. However, the 1891 census for South Street, shows a William Gardener (brother?), a domestic groom, aged 28 living with his family, somewhere around the area of the Dock/Chapel or just near Barn Cottage.

Less likely candidates: Other members of the Hall staff from the Bartons are Edward Luing, aged 17, a footman, 1851 census. Stephen Jepson, aged 18, footman in the 1861 census. Henry Cleaver, aged 21, groom on the 1871 census. No-one

from the Bartons on the 1881 census. 1901 census Arthur Castle, aged 19 a footman; Joseph Gibbons, aged 20 a Groom/Domestic and Victor J. Gibbons, aged 15, a garden boy/domestic.

The Hall family were brewers from Oxford, the original name for their brewery was The Swan Brewery. William Hall purchased the estate of Sesswell's Barton in the early 1820s, gradually buying up more land and extending the house several times, eventually re-naming it Barton Abbey. (A Victorian name, nothing at all to do with ecclesiastical premises). Subsequent generations were named Henry, Alexander William and Alexander Nelson Hall. The Halls remained at Barton Abbey for about 100 years, selling the estate in the early 1920s to Mr. and Mrs. Pike.

I e-mailed Jim Holmes (a descendant of the Halls) to ask if he has any knowledge of the Halls ever having livery. He only remembers a coachman (also named Hall) being mentioned. He sent a bookplate with the Hall's crest which certainly identifies the crest on the button as of the Hall family:



Scanned from original bookplate kindly donated by J. Holmes. The motto underneath A.W. Hall's bookplate reads 'nec temere nec timide'—neither rashly nor timidly

However, just as I was finishing this article, I was speaking to Denise (Roberts) about our articles for the forthcoming Barton Bygones and she remembered picking up buttons and other objects when she had a metal detecting session with Mr. Scarce, Senior, when she won a 'promise' from the Guides, about 1991.

Denise's objects were found in the field next to Steeple Barton Churchyard on the left as you go down the lane. The buttons are brass and are 26mm in diameter. Both buttons still have their metal loops on the reverse to attach to the jackets. The buttons were made by Sherlock and Co., King Street, Coventry (this is stamped on the reverse of the buttons).

Denise also did some research and found out that a large number of buttons and shoe buckles are found by metal detectorists. Apparently, shredded up shabby, worn-

out discarded clothes were used as fertilizer on the land, the name shoddy comes from this process. The fabric rots away and the metal objects are left.

In summary then, although I could not find the owner of the lost button by the Chapel, we did identify the buttons as having been used on the Hall's livery.



Further Research: I have tracked down a Halls archive (dating 1889-1931) in the Oxfordshire History Centre, Cowley. There may be mention of uniforms/livery in the documents.

Acknowledgements:

Denise Roberts

Jim Holmes

John Umney

Linda Paige

Barton China

Christine Edbury

Did you know we had china made especially to give as presents 'A Present from Barton'? These two pieces, a teapot and candlestick, belonged to Mrs. Bricknell.



Quaker Cottage, Jacobs Yard



A Quaker Meeting House was established here in 1700s. The cottage appears on the Enclosure Award. There were only five burials (from 1705 to 1749) in ground opposite, none of whom were from Barton, instead from Rousham, Lower Heyford and Duns Tew, although thirteen Barton

Quakers were buried in Banbury. In 1770-1856 it was two cottages. It was secularised in 1856. It was sold by the Quakers for £50 and by 1900 it was one house.

(Bartons' History group has on file some information regarding a disturbance about the right of way to the Meetinghouse. Two women were summoned and fined for causing a disturbance.)

THE BOY FROM COCKSPARROW HALL

The Dorothy L Sayers Connection

Denise Roberts

When we moved to Westcote Barton as a very young married couple in 1973, the two elderly ladies from whom we bought our cottage gave us this postcard as it showed our house as it was around 1929/30.



Soon afterwards I showed it to another elderly neighbour, Mr Ken Bauckham (long deceased), who told me “that’s Ivy Shrimpton on the bridge – you know, ‘er that took in (voice dropped to a whisper) illegitimates!”

I later discovered that one of the “illegitimates” taken in by Ivy Shrimpton was John Anthony, son of Ivy’s cousin Dorothy L Sayers, the well known author of detective fiction, and in particular the Lord Peter Wimsey novels. Ivy looked after John and also two little girls, Isobel and Rosemary, in Cocksparrow Hall (just out of sight in this picture), on the small hill above the bridge. If this is indeed a photograph of Ivy Shrimpton, then it follows that the little boy on the pony is John as the age would be about right, and the girl on the right would be Isobel, another of Ivy’s charges, who John always thought of as his “big sister”.

In 2005 Margaret Keeping (who was then living in South Street, Middle Barton) wrote an excellent article for the Dorn Free Press about Dorothy L Sayers and her connection with the Bartons, which began by quoting part of a letter from Dorothy to her cousin Ivy:

“Dear Ivy – I’m so glad you’ve found a cottage at last. I think it sounds rather jolly – with, as you say, the possible exception of the water-tap. (I hope it is not frozen up at this moment!) ... If the cottage is 200 years old it is probably solidly built and on the warm side – none of your single-thickness-of-brick-blown-together-in-the-night outfits. Of course it would be rather fun if it were haunted – only it might be bad for the children.”

The cottage in question was Cocksparrow Hall in Westcote Barton, at the time a thatched, stone-flagged, oak-beamed house built in 1727 with no mod cons but a big wild garden that was ideal for the children to play. Ivy apparently let the garden and grounds become a veritable jungle, which the children enjoyed as she didn’t allow them to play with the local children.

Dorothy herself had several connections with Oxfordshire. She was born on 13th June 1893 in the headmaster’s house at Christ Church Cathedral School where her father, Rev. Henry Sayers, M.A., was Headmaster at that time and also Chaplain of Christ Church Cathedral. She was therefore christened at Christ Church Cathedral, a fact of which she was very proud. Her second name, Leigh, was her mother’s maiden name, and in adult life she was much irritated if anyone left out the “L” of her name. She lived in Oxford until she was four. From then she was brought up in Cambridgeshire but later won a scholarship to Somerville College in Oxford where she graduated in modern languages with first class honours. Women could not be awarded degrees at that time, but Dorothy was among the first to receive a degree when the position changed a few years later.

One of her early jobs was as a copy editor at Blackwells, a publishing company in Oxford. Perhaps less well known is that later, while working as a copywriter at S H Benson’s advertising agency in London she wrote some well known advertising slogans such as the one for the famous Guinness Toucan holding a glass of Guinness on his bill:

If he can say as you can Guinness is good for you
How grand to be a Toucan
Just think what Toucan do.

She is also credited with coining the slogan "It pays to advertise!"

While in London in the 1920s she fell in love with a Russian poet, John Cournos, who unfortunately had no interest in marriage. Soon after, on the rebound, she entered into an unhappy affair with Bill White, an unemployed motor car salesman, which resulted in her secretly giving birth to an illegitimate son on 3rd January 1924, whom she named John Anthony. Of course to give birth to an illegitimate child at that time carried an appalling stigma, and had it become known her reputation would have been in shreds, more so as she was already becoming recognised for her writing. In an attempt to keep her good character and also to protect her elderly parents, Dorothy concealed John’s existence, even from close friends, and gave birth to him

alone under an assumed name in a “mothers’ hospital” on the south coast. She turned to her cousin Ivy Shrimpton for help. Ivy was unmarried and living in Cowley at that time, and needed to support herself. She did this by fostering three children. John Anthony was one of them; he lived with Ivy from birth and was passed off as Dorothy’s nephew. Ivy was sworn to secrecy about John Anthony’s true identity.

Two years later Dorothy married Captain Oswald Atherton Fleming, a Scottish journalist known as “Mac”, who was divorced with two children. The couple formally adopted John Anthony, who later took on the surname of Fleming, but he never lived with them. By her own admission Dorothy had no instinct for motherhood. In another letter written to Ivy in 1928 she states “I really must try to feel thrilled about him (John Anthony) but I don’t believe I ever should about any child under whatever circumstances!” She did however visit John Anthony and Ivy at Westcote Barton, frequently arriving on her motorbike, but the local story states that she never went inside Cocksparrow Hall - Ivy would bring John Anthony down to the gate to see his mother there. However, Dorothy continued to fund her son generously throughout her lifetime, paying for his education through public school, university and beyond.

John Anthony, who preferred to be known as Tony, was an academic but socially awkward boy. He won a scholarship to Balliol College, Oxford, but did not fare well with women or family life, his first two marriages ending in divorce. Tony and his second wife, Gabrielle, had two daughters, Jennifer and Gabrielle, who both died at the young age of 26 (but in different years) in unpleasant circumstances, Jennifer from a suspected drug overdose and Gabrielle from falling down a flight of stone steps at her home in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Dorothy never acknowledged John Anthony as her son during her lifetime, but did have contact with him through visits and letters, although her letters were rather brusque. A quote from a letter to him when he was aged 18 states “Sorry you find life so boring”. Although very few people knew of their true relationship during Dorothy’s lifetime, Tony himself found out when he needed his birth certificate to get a passport in the post war period, but presumably kept the secret. Perhaps this was because he regarded Ivy Shrimpton as his real mother, and when she died on 29th March 1951 at the Horton General Hospital, Banbury, it was Tony who undertook all the burial arrangements.

Dorothy L Sayers will always be remembered for her Lord Peter Wimsey novels but, as well as being a prolific letter writer, she also wrote other detective stories, poetry, plays, essays, articles, and became a lecturer on religious subjects. However, she herself felt that her best work was her translation of Dante’s Divine Comedy, a great undertaking which unfortunately she did not live to finish. On 17th December 1957

she had just returned from a day spent Christmas shopping in London when she died of a heart attack. Upon her death it was revealed that her “nephew” John Anthony was actually her son, and that he was the sole beneficiary under his mother’s will.

John Anthony himself died, aged 60, on 26th November 1984 in St Francis’s Hospital, Miami Beach, Florida. His third wife, Fortuna, survived him.

Acknowledgements:

1. Margaret Keeping for her original article in the Dorn Free Press. While living in Middle Barton Margaret started a writing group, and has since gone on to have her own novel published about the War Poet Edward Thomas. It is called “A Conscious Englishman”.

2. The post card is one of the Packer series. This and other Packer photographs can be found on the history group’s web-site at:

http://photos.bartonshistorygroup.org.uk/westcote_barton/content/0001a_large.html.

Bridge at the ford in Fox Lane

The River Dorn enters Westcote Barton in Laundry Lane (on the left just before entering Sandford-St-Martin village), runs through Manor Farm to the bridge on the Enstone Road. It then goes through Park Farm, below the Rectory, to the ford at the foot of Fox Lane. From there it flows to the Kiddington Road bridge. The next crossing, apart from the footbridge in the path from North Street past the ex-chapel (The Dock), is the ford and footbridge in Mill Lane. It then goes under two bridges at Steeple Barton, around Purgatory and out of the parish at Tittenford Bridge. At Wootton it joins the Glyme, which feeds Blenheim Lake. It is now just a small stream, although used to be larger, but still contains crayfish and the occasional trout.



Our Waterloo Veteran

Rosemary Wharton

In Sandford St Martin Churchyard there is a large tomb proudly declaring WATERLOO along its side. This is the tomb of Samuel Fortnom Cox of Sandford Park. He was a Cornet in the 1st Lifeguards when he fought at Waterloo. In 1871, (among other reforms of the Army) the sale of commissions was abolished and the subaltern ranks of cavalry Cornet and infantry Ensign were replaced with that of 2nd Lieutenant. Cox was wounded at Waterloo, but he continued his army career and proceeded up the ranks to become Lieutenant in 1815 and Captain in 1821, after which he retired on half-pay in 1829.

His parents were Samuel Cox and Caroline Fortnom. They had 9 children (4 girls and 5 boys). Their son Samuel married Emily Sheffield in 1820. After his parents died, our Waterloo veteran inherited Sandford Park, but whilst still in the Army he did not live there until he returned in 1833. He seems to have made his mark on the village and there were arguments between him and the owners of Sandford Manor as to who owned the manorial rights. He was also responsible for enclosing the village green, although locals were allowed to play on it until the early 20th century.

He died in 1849 and was buried in the family vault in Sandford churchyard. The inscription on the tomb reads:

*Sacred to the memory of SAMUEL FORTNOM COX 1st Lifeguards
of Sandford Park who departed this life the 22nd of November 1849
in the 55th year of his age
WATERLOO*



Tomb of Samuel Fortnom Cox who fought at Waterloo. Photo taken in 2005

However, not only do we have a Waterloo veteran buried in the churchyard, but his horse 'Waterloo Jack' was buried on the other side of the church wall. The remains of the horse were found after the original wall was taken down and the churchyard extended.



*Waterloo Medal of Samuel Fortnom Cox
(by courtesy of Judith and John Allan)*

Some years ago, when a distant relative of Samuel Fortnom Cox came to visit, she was upset to find the family memorials and vault completely overgrown by thorny shrubs and rose bushes. They were cleared around 2005. However, at the time of writing the bushes have regenerated. The inscription for his father Lt Col Samuel Cox, who died in 1810, is just visible, but that of our Waterloo hero remains concealed in the bushes.



The domed Cox tomb

Other Oxfordshire Waterloo Officers

According to the Register of Waterloo Memorials, there are eight other known Waterloo officers who died in Oxfordshire:

Charles Robert Bowers. Lieutenant 13th Regiment of Light Dragoons, buried in

Little Tew churchyard.

Captain Thomas Brown. 1st Footguards of Kingston Blount

Lt General W. Cowper Coles. 1st Lifeguards, died at Woodcote 27th August 1867 aged 77

Charles Dashwood. 3rd Footguards, St Mary the Virgin Kirtlington

Rev George R. Gleig. Chaplain General to the Forces. Memorial tablet Balliol College

Major W. A. Johnson. 32nd Footguards, died at Wytham 26th October 1863

John Wells. Royal Engineers died at Woodstock 25th February 1863

Captain Richard Weyland. 16th Light Dragoons died at Woodeaton October 1864



Some of the 6,000 or so men (and quite a few women) who took part in the re-enactment of Waterloo this year

Fortnom/Fortnam/Fortnum.....

These are variations in spelling of the same name and it is co-incidental that we have two articles in this issue of 'Bygone Bartons' about people who have the same name. Without research, we cannot say that they are related. Just adding to this Fortnum theme, there is an amusing juxtaposition of two gravestones by the Church door in Rousham Churchyard where some years ago 'Fortnum' could be seen lying close to 'Mason.' (Sadly, the eroded Fortnum name is no longer visible.)

How Oxfordshire changed history - June 18th 1815

John Madden

It was 8 o'clock on the field of Waterloo and the fighting had been going on for nine hours, but still the battle hung in the balance. Napoleon was being pressed hard on his left flank by the arrival of the Prussians, but he knew that if he could just break through the thin line of Wellington's "infamous" army¹ he still had a chance to save the day. So he sent in the elite, his crack troops – the Imperial Guard. They were called 'The Immortals' by the other troops, probably because they were always held back in reserve, so had a higher life expectancy. Fierce of expression, moustachio'd and tattooed, better equipped and clothed than the rest of his army, many of them sporting the famous bearskin headgear, they were a formidable force, and one that had never been known to fail when sent in to fight. To cries of 'Vive l'Empereur!' they marched down to the valley that lay between the opposing armies, and began to climb the opposite slope, behind which Wellington had hidden his men.

It is at this point that accounts of the final stage of the battle diverge. Most of the credit, and associated glory, for the defeat of the Garde has gone to their British equivalent, the Foot Guards; the 1st Regiment were allowed to call themselves The Grenadier Guards as they were said to have routed the grenadiers of the Garde. The command for them to stand up (they had been lying on the ground to avoid artillery fire) was given by Wellington himself to their colonel, with the words "Now, Maitland, now's your time!", though the words "Up, Guards, and at 'em!" were a later invention. And it is certainly true that with that opening volley, and the subsequent bayonet charge, one battalion of the Garde were thrown back in confusion.

One battalion. There were five more following close behind. Five battalions of some of the best soldiers in Europe, soldiers who had never been defeated. They were heading for the rest of the Guards Brigade – and these were running very low on ammunition, having been fighting most of the day. Even though the Allied artillery was causing considerable damage to the Imperial Guardsmen, the likelihood is that they could have reached the ridge, and penetrated Wellington's line; historians can argue about the possible consequences of this "What If?"

What stopped them? In a word: Oxfordshire. The 52nd Oxfordshire Light Infantry, to be more specific. They had seen little fighting that day as they were part of Wellington's reserve, but now they had been brought into the front line, next to the Guards' position. Their Colonel, John Colborne, seeing the French Garde advancing up the slope, decided on his own initiative to left-wheel his regiment forward, so that they lined up facing the left flank of the enemy. Once completed, they advanced, volleyed into the mass of French soldiers, and charged them with bayonets. 'La Garde recule!' – this was the shocked cry, never before heard, that went round the rest of Napoleon's army as a result. At least three battalions of his Imperial Guard

were in full flight, with the 52nd (now joined by the 71st and part of the 93rd regiments) in pursuit. The rest, as they say, is history.



More re-enactors; sadly, the 52nd was not represented this year

The 52nd Oxfordshire Light Infantry, aka ‘The Light Bobs’, having had a spectacularly successful Peninsula campaign as part of Wellington’s Light Division, was merged with the 43rd in 1881 to become the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry, then after WWII becoming part of the Royal Green Jackets, which have now in turn become part of The Rifles. Their past, along with that of the Queen’s Own Oxfordshire Hussars, is commemorated at the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum in Woodstock (www.sofa.org.uk), which is well worth a visit.

*Author’s note: I am particularly indebted to Nigel Sale, whose book *The Lie at the Heart of Waterloo* (The History Press, 2014) should be read by anyone interested in this pivotal battle.*

1. on May 8th Wellington had written “*I have got an infamous army, very weak and ill-equipped*”. The phrase was used by Georgette Heyer for her 1937 novel about the battle.

Dorrie Cox née Gascoigne

as told to Ruth Henderson

Dorrie Cox was born in 1929 in North Street, the house near the garage door with the horseshoes, her father was a blacksmith. Dorrie's mother was born in Middle Barton; her maiden name was Hilda Brain, her father Frank Gascoigne was from Sulgrave. Frank and his brother Arthur came to Middle Barton and ran a blacksmith's business from North Street, later on the brothers went their separate ways, Arthur moved to the Dun Cow pub in Steeple Aston which was near the church and Frank moved to Worton Road where Dorrie's two younger brothers Bill and Ron were born. Dorrie also had an elder sister called Frances.



Dorrie remembers the Primary School had three classrooms. Mrs Greenslade was the Infant teacher, the children used to play with bricks and trays of sand. The other two classrooms were in the front of the school and were separated by a partition. Miss Evans from Great Tew taught the middle class and the Head Teacher Mrs Byford taught the top class. The classrooms were heated by Tortoise stoves which had guards around them, these were used to hang the children's coats on when they got wet coming to school. In those days the school was locked at lunch time and the children had to walk home for lunch. Dorrie remembers hearing the bell when they were near the bakehouse and having to run to get back to school on time. The children had to line up in three lines, one for each class. The only time the school was closed was if the brook flooded but it always remained open when it snowed.

The day that world War II was declared Dorrie was nine years old and had walked to

Grimsdyke Farm, Kiddington with her younger brother Ron, who was only four, to see their Uncle Tom and Auntie Nell Brain. Her Auntie Nell was sat peeling potatoes, a large enamel bowl balanced on her lap, when she heard Neville Chamberlain's announcement on the radio, she jumped up in the air, the potatoes went flying and her wig fell off, this amused the children as they never realized that she wore one! As soon as they had had their lunch they were told to go outside where they saw three aeroplanes flying over, this was the first time they had ever seen a plane. After this they were told to go home as no one knew what was going to happen. They had walked there and back on their own.

Dorrie left Middle Barton School when she was eleven and went to Steeple Aston Secondary Modern School. They were taken by bus and did have their dinners at school. During her time at Steeple Aston there were evacuees and their teachers sharing the school, the evacuees' education was more advanced than the local children. The evacuees didn't really cause any problems except for the people who did not have children of their own, this was the reason that the school holidays were made shorter to keep the children occupied but they were given two weeks off in October to go potato picking and time off to pick the rosehips, these were made into syrup and used for the high Vitamin C content. During her time at Steeple Aston School Dorrie learnt housekeeping, cooking and gardening in addition to the three R's. In the final term at school the boys grew the vegetables in the school gardens and the girls used them to help make the school dinners. The children left school at fourteen. Children attended Sunday School at the chapel as in those days the churches didn't run Sunday Schools



Doreen and Frances with their grandmother Julia Brain

Childhood during this period was very happy, they were not at all frightened by the war, they were certainly never bored as there was always plenty to do, taking accumulators to Mr Greenslade's to be charged up to enable people to be able to listen to the Radio News, walking the cow along the road to graze the grass verges (her father kept a cow to milk for the family), helping in the garden and sweeping the grit from the sides of the road to give to the chickens. They very rarely went out of the village unless it was to visit their relations in Kiddington or go to fêtes there, in fact Dorrie's elder sister Frances was a maid at Kiddington Hall. Dory can't ever remember going into town, they could buy everything they needed in the village. During that time the only other children in the Worton Road were the Probbitts, Theo,

Nell, Eileen and Jim. The majority of the other residents were elderly.

The roads in the village were very quiet, the children could put a skipping rope across Worton Road and would only have to move it for Mr Stockford to deliver the bread in his horse and cart. The first ever car Dorrie saw belonged to Mr Greenslade, it was open topped but had a big hood on the back that could be pulled over when it was wet.



During the war nothing was ever wasted, Dorrie remembers that the washing up was done with just hot water, this was then given to the pigs for the left over bits of food, the bath water was taken to the bottom of the garden to be used for watering the garden, using bicycle pumps to water the runner beans.

Mr Gascoigne kept ferrets and used to go rabbiting at Oathill Farm on a Saturday morning, as there were a lot of rabbits under the chicken pens. He would sell these rabbits for one shilling, they would make a good meal, then on a Sunday a man used to come round the village on a bicycle with a pole balanced on it to carry the rabbit skins which he bought for 6 old pence each, they would have been sold to make warm clothes. If Mr Gascoigne ever met a man in uniform in the Carpenter's Arms he would bring them home and give them a meal, this was usually rabbit. This was how Dorrie first met her husband Glyn Cox, he was in the Air Force at the time.

After Dorrie left school at fourteen, her first job was for Mr and Mrs Gardiner the bakers, after Mr Gardiner became ill his son came home on compassionate leave to work in the bakery and Dorrie looked after the family, who lived by the Ford in Fox Lane; she worked from seven in the morning to seven in the evening, seven days a week, her total earnings were ten shillings a week (50p). When her grandmother became ill and wasn't able to look after her aunt who was disabled she was to stay at home and help her mother. When the postman was ill Dorrie would deliver and collect the mail on a bicycle from Westcote Barton, Sandford St Martin, Ledwell and the Wortons, she had to be back at the Post Office in Middle Barton by 10.30 am. In the

afternoons she would work in Cox's shop in North Street. In addition to these jobs she would help deliver the milk to Gagingwell and Enstone.

During the war the village held fund raising weeks, Warship Week for the Navy and Wings For Victory Week for the Airforce. These would include dances in The Mission Hall organized by Mrs Fleming, Whist Drives in the British Legion Hut in North Street, there would be an auction, the items being displayed in Cox's shop window during the previous week and people would donate savings stamps which they purchased from the Post Office. At the end of these weeks all the village uniformed groups would march from the village to Steeple Barton Church, first taking a salute at Church Farm Barn.

Various houses and buildings were taken over during the war, the Officer's Mess was in the house next door but one to Old John's Yard, the army also took over the cinema in North Street for a short period of time. The Mission Hall was used as a soldiers' dining room.

Dorrie remembers that one bomb was dropped by Leys Farm and another one near Duns Tew but will always remember watching the sky light up red the night that Coventry was badly bombed. On another occasion a Wellington plane crashed near the main road, her cousin Peggy Gascoigne managed to get the pilot out and he survived.

On hearing on the radio news that the war in Europe was over Dorrie remembers hearing Rita Stewart's mother shouting out of her window that the war the over, someone played a gramophone and everyone danced in North Street. For VJ Day a piano was put on a lorry for Ruby Pratley to play while it drove right round the village, then to the bonfire and fireworks on a field up Pack Lane.

The mains water came to the village in about 1951, during the war water was pumped from the canal at Heyford to Gagingwell, there used to be a pump house at the bottom of Enstone Hill, in the early days people used to have to use the village pumps or get water from the natural spring around the village.

Dorrie married Glyn Cox on the 29th March, 1952, it was a very cold day, with blizzards and snow drifts, the wedding took place in Steeple Barton church. The reception was held in the Mission Hall, it was memorable because a lot of people couldn't get home and had to stay the night. The photographs had to be taken two days later at Packers in Chipping Norton as the photographer was unable to get to the church due to the weather conditions.

Glyn Cox was born in Over Worton and went to school in Nether Worton, this closed when he was eleven, then he went to live with his grandmother in Wales. During the war he was in The Royal Air Force with the Lancaster Bombers.

As told to Ruth Henderson in November 2014

Bartons' History Group Publications

- 'The Changing Faces of the Bartons'** £8.50
by Audrey Martin
Includes pictures of people, streets, houses and events from Victorian times onwards
- 'Middle Barton School – Aspects of School Life 1866-1996'** £2.50
by Audrey Martin
A terrific read with photos and turn-of-the-century quotes from the school log-book
- 'Middle Barton – a village walk'** £0.80
Alerts you to sights you may never have been aware of before
- 'It Happened in the Dorn Valley'** £3.50
A vivid account of life in the Bartons during WW2 through the eyes of the Women's Institute.
- 'The History of the Bartons' by George Laws** £2.00
An overall history starting 1000 years ago
- 1920s prints** £1.50 each
Fox Lane, Mill Lane, North St, South St, Worton Rd and the School
- Silver Jubilee Celebrations in the Bartons (1977)** £5.00
A compilation of three films taken during the celebrations, now on a single DVD
- Barton Abbey** £1.00
An updated (2010) leaflet now in colour
- Bygone Bartons, Vols. 1, 2, 3 & 4, and the Jubilee Edition** £3.00 each
The first four of the series and the special Jubilee edition (or all 5 for £10)

All publications available from Rosemary Wharton tel: 01869 347638