

# Introduction

John Madden

*Chairman: Bartons' History Group*

As many of you will no doubt be aware, last year was the 150th anniversary of our village School. So whether you, or your children, attended that School, we hope you will find much in this issue of ***Bygone Bartons*** to interest and perhaps amuse you. In addition to Barbara Hill's (née Jarvis) account of her parents' lives, and the recollections of Dorrie Cox and Jackie Wood, we have scoured the old School logbooks and Jackson's Oxford Journal (which was published from 1753 to 1928) for some earlier stories.

Liz Jupp remembers life on North Street in the '50s - not always as idyllic as we sometimes like to think.

I do hope you enjoy reading this.

## **STEEPLE BARTON Jan 5th 1884**

CONCERT - A grand concert was given in the village school-room on Friday evening the 28th ult., which was in every way successful. The room was crowded, and the long programme which we give below was proceeded with so rapidly that numerous impromptu additions had to be made. Colonel and Mrs Porter brought with them a large party from Barton Lodge, who rendered most valuable assistance. The Rev T. F. Burra and E. Fleming Esq., were happy in their selections for the readings. We believe that a good sum was realized by the evening's entertainment for Church purposes. The following is the programme:

### PART I

Pianoforte solo, "Home, sweet home" - Miss Fleming.  
Song, "Wait till the clouds roll by" - Mr. W. Grimsley.  
Song, "The Miller and the Maid" - Miss Porter.  
Reading, "Jock and the Scotch Minister" - E. Fleming, Esq.  
Song, "Kitty Creagh" - Mrs F. P. Burnett.  
Song, "My Old Gal and I" - Mr. G. Kirby.  
Song, "The Boatswain's Story" - Langham Brookes, Esq.  
Song - Mr. J. L. Smith.

### PART II

Reading, Rev T. F. Burra.  
Song, "Norah McShane" - Lieut.-Colonel Porter.  
Song, "That's where you make the mistake" - Felix Kirby.  
Pianoforte solo, "Come gentil" - Miss Fleming.  
Song, "Blue Ribbon Army" - Mr. S. Marsh.  
Reading - E Fleming Esq.  
Song "I couldn't help laughing" - Mr. C. Marsh.  
Song "Little Maid of Areadee" - Miss Porter.  
"God save the Queen."

## **GEMS FROM JACKSON'S OXFORD JOURNAL 1860s-1880s**

It was the 150th anniversary of our village school in 2016 and the History Group spent some time researching school-related newspaper articles from the 1860s-1880s. The 'new' school building was built and given to the village by Mr A.W. Hall of Barton Abbey and it appears that the schoolroom rapidly became the venue for a variety of community events – concerts, recitals and meetings. More than once, the newspaper articles commented on the excellent lighting . This must have been novel to the residents of the Bartons as it was at a time before electricity. A common way of lighting these room on these special occasions was by limelight.

A selection of articles from Jackson's Oxford Journal appear below.

### **STEEPLE BARTON May 2nd 1868**

Concert. On Monday evening next an amateur concert under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Jenner Marshall, will be given in the National School Room, at Steeple Barton, which has been kindly lent for the occasion by A. W. Hall Esq., The programme is a most attractive one, and as several artistes of local celebrity will take part in its performance, we doubt not that the concert will be a highly successful one.

### **STEEPLE BARTON May 9th 1868**

Concert. On Monday evening last an amateur concert of a very high character was given in the School-room at Steeple Barton. The room was crowded with a delighted audience. Dr. Arne's "Cuckoo Song" was sung by Mrs. Jenner Marshall with her usual taste and effect. The performance of the pianoforte duet by the Misses Marshall was most astonishing for such young performers. The members of the Westcott and Steeple Barton Church Choirs sang the choruses very correctly, and deserve great praise for the manner in which they performed their part of the programme. Mr. Marshall, in responding, thanked Mr. and Mrs. Hall for so kindly lending them the use of their school room.

### **STEEPLE BARTON Nov 30th 1889**

ENTERTAINMENT—On Thursday 21st inst., Mr Edwards gave a most able and instructive entertainment and lecture in the schoolroom, Middle Barton. The subject was 'Britain and the British Possessions.' With the aid of a powerful oxy-hydrogen lime light Mr Edwards exhibited several excellent views of some of the most important cities and towns of our extensive empire. The lecture was much appreciated and at its close Mr Edwards received a most cordial and magnanimous vote of thanks from his audience. The room was crowded and all present were delighted with the evening's entertainment.

# The Jarvis Family

Barbara Hill

In this year of the 150th anniversary of our village school I thought it might be interesting to recount something of the lives of my mother and father, Derrick and Win Jarvis who had close connections with Middle Barton school and lived over 70 years in the village.

Derrick contributed greatly to the life and development of our village community. He was on the board and subsequently Chair of the board of Governors at the village school during the 1970s. Derrick was born in Middle Barton in 1926 and lived at The Garage with his parents, Bob and Ethel and his brother David and sisters Barbara, Diana and Clair. His Grandfather, Thomas was the Saddler and Harness maker and lived at what is now known as Saddler's cottage on North Street. His father, Bob started as a carrier and then bus operator in 1922, the first in North Oxfordshire. As a boy Derrick attended the village school as did his sisters and brother. In 1938 the school put on a production of 'Hiawatha's Wedding' and a photograph of the cast, resplendent in 'Red Indian' costume, includes Derrick and his sister Barbara.



*Back row: l to r: Peggy Hawker, Derrick Jarvis, Victor Hazell, Elsie Gibson, May Jarvis, Joan Southam, Dora Gibson, Nancy Moulder, Amy Clarke. Middle row: June Shirley, Joyce Pritchard, Peggy Shirley, Margaret Bolton, Violet Taylor, Joyce Woodley, Gloria Halsey. Front row: Eric Portlock, Violet Hazell, Barbara Jarvis, Jim Probitts, Daphne Cox, Pat Moulder*

Derrick moved on to Dr Radcliffe's school at Steeple Aston at the age of eleven as did his sisters, Barbara and Diana, although Diana and later younger sister Clair

subsequently went to the private convent school in Radford. Derrick attended the village church and sang in the choir. He was also in the Cubs and Scouts as well as the St John's Ambulance Brigade, the Green Harmonicas and the village cricket and football teams. Derrick was very keen to fly planes and, to this end, cycled to Deddington each week to train as a cadet in the Air Training Corps, together with Vic Hazell and Pat Moulder. When the Second World War broke out he was keen to be involved and serve his country. Much against his mother's wishes, he lied about his age and joined the Fleet Air Arm in time to serve in India and the Far East. While Derrick was on the aircraft carrier HMS Formidable, the ship was attacked by Kamikaze pilots but fortunately for Derrick and the rest of the crew, the bomb failed to detonate.

We think Derrick and Win met at the Crown Inn in Church Enstone and that the introduction may have been effected by Mum's distant cousin, Les Newman, who lived in Middle Barton and was later married to Jessie.

Win and Derrick were married at St Kenelm's at Church Enstone in August 1947. Early married life included a short spell squatting in airfield buildings at Gagingwell before moving to Middle Barton where they lived in a tiny home in North Street. This was an annex to what used to be called The Cottage on the Horse Common and served as Doctor's surgery and later as an antique shop and also as Willets TV shop before being demolished in 1993. The cottage itself is now known as Fir Tree Cottage. Win and Derrick subsequently moved to 22 Worton Road, one of the newly built 'council houses' before moving to the house adjoining the Garage in 1956.

Below is a photo of the annex to the Cottage on The Horse Common in 1993 before demolition, together with a photo after it had been removed.



After his service in the Fleet Air Arm Derrick returned to the family business, Jarvis and Sons, which he had entered on leaving school. Many village inhabitants have



grown up with fond memories of the Sunday School outings in Jarvis coaches to Weymouth, Wicksteed Park in Kettering and the popular 'Mystery Tours' which inevitably included a fish and chip supper. Derrick drove the bus for away matches for the football team and always carried his kit even in later years in case there was a chance of a game. The seaside and Wicksteed Park trips emptied the village with at least six or seven full coaches leaving the village very early in the morning and bringing their occupants home, tired, happy and singing, in the evening. The School log of 1938 includes an entry that the school was closed for the day as all the pupils had gone to Wicksteed Park, clearly a firm favourite for many years.



*One of the Jarvis buses from 1950s*



*Winners of the Jersey Cup*

*Back: George Hughes, Ron Gascoigne , Ian Lowdon, Mick Hazell, Alan Stewart, Jim Stevens, Pete Bauckham, John Bolton.*

*Front: Tony Smith, Bill Dempsey, Derrick Jarvis, Glyn Cox, Robin Cox.*

Derrick was a very keen sportsman, playing cricket and football in the village teams for many years and later was very proud to accept the honour of being President of the Sports and Social Club. He also played football and cricket for Chipping Norton during the 1940s and 50s, taking part in a football tour of France which was thoroughly enjoyed. He played football against Sir Dennis Compton when in India and with Chipping Norton against Sir Bobby Charlton when Bobby Charlton was based at the Bicester Garrison. Derrick also represented Oxfordshire in the Southern Counties Championship. In the late 1970s Derrick took up golf which he played until his mid 70s, He was one of the few people who can claim a hole in one on two occasions

In 1972 the Jarvis coach business was sold to Heyfordian and the garage and the petrol station sold to Ron Winfield. The family business had also included the village newsagents. Most of the family members had been ‘paper boys’ at some time or other. This side of the business was run for several more years by Derrick’s mother and father until it was eventually taken over by the Webb Family who ran the village shop.



*Back : P.Bauckham, Jack Cox. Arthur Stevens, George Hughes, Robin Cox, D Jarvis, Ron Gascoigne*

*Front: Bill Gascoigne, Derek Gardner, Ralph Millin, Jim Moulder, Sid Brock*

Derrick and Win had a bungalow, Dorne Rise, built in Jacob's Yard when the business was sold and a few years later moved to Holliers Crescent briefly before finally settling in the Beech Lawn bungalow at 27 North Street.

In 1972 Derrick took on a new role as a driving examiner, ending his career as a Senior Driving Examiner and Advanced Driving Instructor, having been the author of a manual for driving examiners which was extensively used by the driving test fraternity. On his retirement the Department of the Environment and Transport commended him on the 'valuable contribution you have made to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Driving Test Organisation'.

Throughout his life Derrick was heavily involved in the life of the village, particularly during the 1960s and 70s. This included taking part in organising the annual six-a-side football tournament, the Playing Fields Committee, Chair of the School Governors, Chair of the Parish Council and a committee member of the British Legion. He was heavily involved in the setting up of the Playing Fields soon after World War II and the subsequent development of the Sports and Social Club. He gave invaluable help to Audrey Martin when she was compiling the History of the Bartons, providing her with many anecdotes and facts about the village in times gone by.

Win had an adventurous start in life crossing the Atlantic from her birthplace of Toronto back to England aboard the Antonia in 1928, at the age of two. In 1924 her father, Arthur, on being invalided out of the Army after having rheumatic fever, had taken his family to Canada in search of work near Niagara falls. Their destination was ‘The Worville family ‘; Arthur’s aunt, Faith Worville had emigrated to Canada in 1897. Faith’s mother, Emma Stockford was originally from Duns Tew and had married William Worville of Westcote Barton in August 1875. After staying four years Arthur and his family decided to return to England.

To the right is a postcard sent by Emma Worville in 1907 to her daughter in Canada. Note the brief address – it still arrived on 4th November having been written on 24th October. The cottage depicted is where Emma and William lived at No 1 North Street, Middle Barton. Below is a photo of Easter Stockford in front of the cottage in 1913

One of five children, Win Beck had a busy and happy childhood at the heart of Enstone village life living in a small cottage. Never a dull moment in the Beck home as her father, Arthur, regu-



larly returned from Banbury market with a variety of animals. A particular favourite of Win’s being a goat which she skipped school to accompany to Oxford where she appeared on stage with it at the Oxford Playhouse, Win may have got away with her absence from school but for a photograph appearing on the front page of the Oxford Mail the next day. Music was always a big part of family life. Both Win’s brothers, John and Gilbert were keen band members and her dad was always ready with a tune on his accordion. Win cleverly used her talent for the piano to escape household chores.



Like all of her generation Win had WW II as the backdrop to her teenage years...

The Crown at Enstone, where Win's dad became the landlord, was a busy hub for the various airmen and regiments based at Enstone airfield. In particular, the Beck family forged friendships with members of The Durham Light Infantry. Win always recalled watching the flames from the Coventry bombing amongst other events but her happiest memories from that time were of the dances. Win always loved to dance.

On leaving Charlbury school Win moved on to The Oxford Secretarial School in St Giles and was rightly proud of her accomplishments in shorthand and typing, skills which she continued to use throughout her life. After an extremely brief spell at a quarry in Lincolnshire to where she was despatched by train together with her bike Win went to work for the BBC at Bagley Croft, Hinksey. Win enjoyed her time at the BBC and it was there that she got the nickname Wild Winnie alongside her companions Mad Madge and Dopey Doris. Their antics included camping out in BBC headquarters in London on VE day. When she met Derrick she was delighted when he collected her from work in his naval uniform and his green MG sports car.



*Madge and Win in 1945*

As it was soon after World War II, rationing was still in place. Win's Aunt Rose in Canada sent her white shoes to wear for her wedding day.

After marrying in 1947 Derrick and Win moved to Middle Barton. To love and marry Derrick was to love and marry football. Win was one of the WAGs, Wives and Girlfriends, to the Chipping Norton football team long before the term was even known and lifelong friendships were formed with Di Bauckham, Pat Harding and Barbara Imbert. Win's love of football continued to the end although she never truly understood why she couldn't adopt Spurs, to please Louis, husband of her granddaughter, alongside her beloved Arsenal. Indeed at the age of 80 she went, one cold and foggy evening with grandchildren, Beth and Tom, to Anfield to see Arsenal play Liverpool but never saw a ball kicked as the fog was so thick they had to abandon the match before kick-off.



*St Kenelm's , Church Enstone, August 1947 : Derrick and Win with bridesmaids Diana, Barbara and Clair and Win's sister Joyce, best man Jack Eaglestone and Win's father Arthur.*



*Four generations of the Beck family, pictured in front of the Crown in the mid 1950's. Win is on the right of the picture, holding second daughter Carol.*

Win was ahead of her time in more ways than one. Alongside raising five children, all of whom attended the village school, Win managed all of the secretarial side of the family coach business, also selling petrol and newspapers, as well as taking on the role of bus conductor, issuing tickets on the regular Banbury and Oxford runs. Later on, Win passed her PSV licence and on rare occasions would be persuaded to drive a full size bus if needed as well as her more usual mini-bus - no mean feat for someone only 5ft tall! On one occasion Win caused quite a commotion as the 48 seater bus she was driving broke down outside the Randolph Hotel in Oxford..

Win had a key role with the school as she drove the mini-bus to transport children from the outlying parts of the village and then collected the school dinners to deliver to Middle Barton school, returning the empty containers later. In the interest of economies of scale, meals were prepared at the kitchen of Steeple Aston school for several of the surrounding village schools and Win delivered hot dinners to Upper and Lower Heyford , Somerton and North Aston schools as well as Barton.

Win was always involved in village life, she was a keen member of Barton WI and an even keener participant of various Keep Fit Classes in the village, although the Keep Fit class did eventually get replaced with Monday Night Coffee evenings and meals out. Win was a determined lady and at the age of 61 eventually succeeded in learning to swim after countless years of trying but as Derrick was fond of reminding her, he had to intervene to save her on more than one occasion

Win always took care with her appearance; she always liked to look very smart with her nails carefully manicured. We often joked at her vanity but in truth we were always proud that she took such care of herself and always looked so smart.

The year of the Queen's 80th birthday was also the year of Win's 80th as well as that of the Duke of Marlborough. The Duke held a special birthday party in Blenheim Palace grounds for those in Oxfordshire whose 80th birthday fell in 2006. Win thoroughly enjoyed the occasion as can be seen from this photo.

Win had many talents including gardening and cooking and was also keen to learn new skills such as keeping up to date with computing and learning French at evening classes. The family always looked forward to her baking, especially Victoria Sponge



cakes and trifles. She usually managed to have just one piece of cake left over which would be set aside to be enjoyed by Win the following day.

Win had a great sense of fun and was always up for a challenge especially if it meant pleasing one of her children or grandchildren. If asked to go down a waterslide, regardless of her age, she'd give it a go. If the grandchild said lay down on the mat Nanny, you'll go slower she would, even if that meant shooting like a rocket down the slide. Once she'd recovered from the shock Win, as always, would come up laughing.

Anyone who knew Win knows that family was everything to her and she was immensely proud of each and every one of her five children, ten grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Each one having their own special memories of her. Family always came first with Win and she was never happier than being at the heart of a big family gathering.

Featherton Residential Care in Deddington eventually became Win's home and we can't thank Lynn and her team at Featherton enough for the kindness, love and care that they showed to Win in her final years. In Win's words : 'I couldn't be in a better place'.

Grateful thanks to the following for their help in compiling this article :

Martin Cox  
Joanne Thorne  
Christine Edbury  
Tony Reed  
Diana Bauckham  
Joyce Fawdrey

**Jackson's Oxford Journal 26/6/1869**

STEEPLE BARTON. A PUBLIC CHARITY REFORMED—In 1796, the Enclosure Commissioners for Middle Barton and Westcott Barton awarded two fields of land for the benefit of the poor of these places. These have since been let in allotments and the rents expended in coal, but various errors had crept into the management. The Charity Commissioners on being appealed to, have enacted a new scheme of management, and constituted a board of ten trustees viz:-- ex officio the Rector and Churchwardens of Westcott Barton, the Vicar and Churchwardens of Steeple Barton (which comprises Middle Barton) and appointed A.W.Hall Esq, Rev J. Marshall. Mr W.Wing and Mr H. Cole. This order of the Charity Commissioners was sealed on the 15th instant.

## North Street Life in the 1950s

Liz Jupp

To the left of Cox's shop door was a chewing gum machine which dispensed two packets with every fourth penny. My regular occupation was to lurk behind the curtains in our living room. I had the privileged position of being able to count how many pennies had gone in and to rush across, clutching my penny, when I knew that the double divvy was about to happen. Opportune as this position might be, it was probably one of very few advantages to living in the house in North Street.

It has often occurred to me, when driving past some picturesque old houses, that the reality of living in these old souls is probably not half as idyllic as we would like to think. Our house could not even claim to be picturesque, just an interesting example of its kind. My parents started married life there in 1951. My mother had spent her childhood in number 1 Washington Terrace, just behind, and my father's parents were just down the road in what would now be called the "social housing".



My parents were tenants in a residential island in the middle of Prior industry. Mrs Prior's butcher's shop to the left and her son, Percy's, haulage company to the right as you stood at the front door. They were to remain there until 1960 when sheer desperation drove them to build their own house in Church Lane.

The house was already at the nostalgic end of its life. There would only be one set of tenants after them, a family of Londoners who stayed only a short time before the house collapsed into a completely uninhabitable state.

It could claim a front garden that many other houses in the road could not, and which many modern houses would envy. My father, always a gardener, planted flowers to keep the front of the house attractive and vegetables that regularly won prizes at the village flower show. There being precious little traffic on the road in those days, I played in the front on the pavement, happy to watch Mr Prior's drivers ratcheting the diesel pump to fill up their tanks. They were friendly, funny and kind significant others in my world. It did not occur to me that the air was laden with diesel, that the ground was greasy or that the smell could be overpowering. Pollution was not a word we knew.

The house itself was small but I was unaware of that. Without a hall, the door open straight into the principal living room. This was a room dominated by doors. A fire to the right, two cupboards were set into the wall on both sides. A little further to the right a door led to the stairs to the two bedrooms. A further door led to a lean to which served as a kitchen, another cupboard and the final door to a “best” room.

All of our living took place in the one room. It was typical of the time to keep one room for best. It contained your better furniture and remained closed until visitors arrived, and even then. Without a telephone, it was impractical to give forewarning of a visit and so visitations from my mother’s family in Beaconsfield, often descending on us on a Sunday afternoon, came unannounced. It would be too late to warm a room that had grown damp, malodorous and uninviting through lack of use. In any case it was too small to hold more than a simple three piece suite in brown faux leather, which did not permit any movement around the room at all. Totally impractical for polite entertaining. The visitors were consequently obliged to sit around the central table in the living room and make do.

My mother had no kitchen. A lean-to at the rear, with a corrugated iron roof, served as a kitchen, laundry and utility room. There was no sink, no fitted cupboards, no work surfaces, no fridge or freezer, no washing machine, no running water and precious little power. A tap outside the back door provided cold water to the whole house. Without any type of water heater a kettle was generally boiled on the open fire in the living room. In addition, there was a camping Primus stove which regularly flared up out of control. One of my most vivid memories is of my mother, a flaming chip pan in her hand over a flaming Primus stove with flaming oil spilling all around. Either she was unaware of the danger or was adept at hiding a mounting panic but she gave the impression of being totally in control of the situation like a Valkyrie at the reins of a chariot. As the house did not burn down and nobody died I have to assume that luck and skill played equal parts in our survival. The principal cooking took place on a Baby Belling which was plugged in to the only power socket. For those who don’t remember these little gems, this was a table top oven, with a square hotplate at the top and the tiniest of ovens underneath. A table provided a work surface and a metal bowl served as a sink.

I have a very clear memory of burning my hand on that Baby Belling on Coronation Day. I believe that ours was one of very few televisions in the village at that time and consequently the house was full friends. I presume that under those circumstances my parents were less efficient at supervision and I managed to put my hand on the hotplate. Only just over a year old at the time, I have been informed that it is not possible for me to have such memories from that age. Yet there is a very strong memory of many people and a burned hand. I have always argued that the pain engraved the memory precociously into my mind. Who knows?

Like in most homes, washing day was Monday. My mother’s great aunt, Mary

Courtneil, who lived at number 1 Washington Terrace, would arrive early. An important day's work was ahead. My mother had the privilege of an electric copper which boiled the clothes into submission. Having survived that, they were posted through a mangle which wrung the water out. My mother would turn the very stiff handle while Aunt Mary threaded the clothes between the two heavy rollers. On one occasion, when my mother was particularly energetic with the handle, Aunt Mary's hand went through with the clothes. I distinctly remember the silence hanging, while my mother and her aunt looked at each other in stupefaction, a silence finally broken by Aunt Mary squawking "You've gone and mangled my hand!" The latter was then gingerly threaded back through the rollers to the sound of poor auntie's whimpering. There was no long term damage except for an enduring sense of distrust.

Going to bed at night was like mountaineering. As I cannot believe that the steep incline across my parents' bedroom to mine was there by design, I have to assume that it was the result of some pretty dramatic subsidence. The bed was surrounded by piles of books. As every week Aunt Mary would buy me a book from the bookshop in Chippy, I soon developed a sizeable library. "Librarians" was a favourite pastime, poor sad child. Although I must have been less than eight I regularly worked at sorting out the books, sometimes alphabetically and sometimes by subject matter. Having developed a reputation of being bookish, I received one Christmas, three copies of Lorna Doone. Too much of a good thing. I have never read it.

The house had no toilet at all. There was, I believe, something of a hole in a shed in the yard at the back, but my mother forbade me to go anywhere near it. During the day we crossed our yard and went through a gate at the bottom into the side of Auntie's garden, at the bottom of which was a fine example of a flushing toilet, cistern high up, long metal chain and newspaper cut into squares. Such an impressive machine was, in my over fertile imagination, the home of a non-specific monster, which would leap out of the pan and eat me if I could not reach sanctuary in our own garden before the flush stopped. The gate had to be firmly closed to afford me protection. This would explain my often flushed and breathless arrival home, with my skirt tucked into my knickers. At night a bucket behind a curtain served as a toilet, which my father would empty in the morning. Unbelievable in today's sterile world.

Kleptomaniac rats and mice were our constant companions. They nibbled at my books in the bedroom, ran across the beds and rustled in the eaves. My parents would lie in bed and throw books at them to frighten them away. Everyday items such as soap and scrubbing brushes would be carried away, to be reclaimed from their nests when my parents decided to have a blitz on them.

Sunday evening was bath time. A large metal bath hung on the wall beside the back door. My father would take it down and put it in front of the open fire in the living room while my mother boiled a kettle and saucepans and carried in buckets of cold

water in. I was first in the tub. The television was positioned such that when I got out, I could sit at the bottom of the stairs and watch Sunday Night at the London Palladium without seeing my parents who followed me in their turn into the same water. It never occurred to me to peep.

It is surprising how happiness can be found in the most lowly quarters. My mother and I still laugh about the mangle incident, my father falling over with the full toilet bucket, and my mother hand-feeding the mice, forbidding me to tell my father. In the middle of the village I was surrounded by kind people who were all honorary uncles and aunts. Other people filled my life with colour; Mr Greenslade in his bicycle and parts shop beside his petrol station who growled at me from the depths as I pedalled my tricycle past and then back, just to make him do it again. Ken, his assistant, always attentive and polite. Mr and Mrs Cox who never complained when I was sent to knock their door after Sunday lunch to buy a block of ice cream for our pudding. The kind Pat Baker who worked in their shop. I could go on forever.

Although we moved out of the house in 1960, I maintained a deep affection for the house that gradually became a collapsing pile of rubble. When the builders demolished it to make room for the houses that stand now at the top of Washington Terrace, my husband attempted to buy the date stone for me as a souvenir. The owner, quite rightly, preferred to keep it on site where it is now set in the wall, a testament to the ramshackle cottage which had been a home to me and to many before me.

### Jackson's Oxford Journal. 30/11/1889

**MIDDLE BARTON.** A very handsome banner has been presented to the Church mission and Temperance Hall at Middle Barton, by Miss Evill of No 1 Lancaster Gate, Hyde Park W. It is of Roman satin embroidered 'Steeple Barton Branch C.E.T.S; established 1884.' In the centre is a medallion in oils of St George and the Dragon which measures 28 inches by 19 inches. The full measurement of the banner is 43 inches by 39 inches.

*Editorial note: A few years ago the Temperance Hall (Alice Marshall Hall) banner was found rolled up in the loft of the AM Hall. The Temperance Hall was established in 1888 by Alice Marshall. Other sources indicate that the donor, Miss Evill, was a friend of Alice Marshall. Donating this Banner must have been a grand gesture by Miss Evill to her friend Alice.*



## Crime and Punishment in the Bartons

The 8th September 1866 edition of Jackson's Oxford Journal, Oxfordshire's weekly newspaper, has the following sad report from the local Criminal Petty Sessions:

"Magistrates: C. C. Dormer and A. W. Hall at Deddington 31st August 1866.

Harriet Elizabeth Lacey was charged with having on the 22nd of August, at Middle Barton, stolen four chemises and other articles, value 5 shillings, the property of Thomas Harley. Convicted under the Juvenile Offenders' Act and sentenced to 21 days' imprisonment with hard labour."

A. W. Hall was, of course, Alexander William Hall, owner of Barton Abbey, who, in the same year founded and built the new school in Middle Barton, the anniversary of which we celebrated last year. Dormer held the estate at Rousham.

In stealing four chemises (loosely fitting ladies' dresses) and other articles, Harriet received a draconian sentence from Dormer and Hall. We do not know Harriet's age but she was convicted under the 1847 Juvenile Offenders' Act so would have been no older than 15. However, she was lucky. Twenty years earlier, we find the following transportation record for a boy (from Worcester) of the same age:

"Transcript of List of Convicts embarked on the 'Elphinstone' for Van Diemen's Land 1842

Number	Name	Age	Crime	Sentence	Punishment
.....					
.....					
3997	Henry Bolam	15	Stealing a piece of velveteen	7 yrs.	Convicted and twice whipped Transportation Common thief
....."					

But even Henry was lucky -- another thirty years earlier and both Henry and Harriet could have been hanged for their thefts.

Crime, and how to deal with it, was one of the great issues of Victorian Britain. In the first place there seemed to be a rising crime rate, from about 5,000 recorded crimes per year in 1800 to 20,000 per year in the 1830s. To counter this, between 1842 and 1877 90 new prisons were built in Britain. Child crime, in particular, shocked the Victorians. Dickens' account of Fagin's gang of young pickpockets, led by the Artful Dodger, in "Oliver Twist", published in 1837, played to this popular concern.

The Victorian government responses to the rise of child crime were the Juvenile Offences Act of 1847 and Reformatory Schools, first set up in 1854. The first measure legislated that young people under age 14 (soon raised to age 16) should be

tried in special courts, not adult courts. The intent here was to start to protect children from the malign influences of adult convicts. The subsequent provision of Reform Schools was designed to break the child away from the "bad influences" of home and environment. These were very tough places, with stiff discipline enforced by frequent beatings. However, a young offender normally still began their sentence with a brief spell in an adult prison, followed by a much longer spell (maybe years) in a Reform School.

The Victorian attitude was one of punishment not rehabilitation – rehabilitation would have to wait until the twentieth century. Harriet Lacey was sentenced to hard labour as punishment – which could have been of many forms – the Treadmill, the Crank or Oakum picking or, maybe, more general labouring. The crank involved the laborious turning of a paddle in a metal box containing a sand and gravel mix where the turning resistance could be altered by the prison officer with a screw attached to the box. This is the derivation of the slang word ‘screw’ for a prison officer. 10,000 turns of the paddle a day was routine – meals and privileges could be withheld for lower numbers. Oakum picking consisted of unpicking tarred rope into separate strands for future use, providing the derivation of the phrase ‘money for old rope’.



*Crank*



*Treadmill*

The work made the hands bleed and was very painful.

There is no record of whether any of these Victorian ‘improvement’ methods were used with Harriet Lacey nor we do not know what finally happened to her for stealing Thomas Harley’s items of clothing in Middle Barton one day in 1866. In conclusion, not all the misdemeanours the magistrates dealt with had such unhappy consequences – here are a few more examples, taken from the newspaper:

“WOOTTON NORTHERN DIVISION - DEDDINGTON 28/09/1866

James Stockford, of Steeple Barton, labourer, was charged by Mary Anne Stockford, his wife, with assault on the 9th September. There being no evidence of assault, the case was dismissed.”

“WOOTTON NORTHERN DIVISION - DEDDINGTON 03/08/1866

Jos. Clarke of Wescote Barton, dealer, was convicted on the oath of PC Wm. Veasey at being drunk at Lower Wootton on the 5th of July, that officer having found him in a helpless state of intoxication, alike incapable of taking care of himself or his horse and cart, fined 5s. police fees 4s 6d, costs 8s, or seven days.

Mary Ann Davies and Mary Probett, also of Westcott Barton, were convicted of stealing peas, the property of Thomas Grantham, growing in a field at Westcott Barton, in his occupation, fined 3s, police fees 2s and costs 10s each or seven days, allowed 1 month.”

References:

Victorian Crime and Punishment <http://vcp.e2bn.org/>

National Archives Education Service – Victorian Children in trouble with the Law. [https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/education/victorian\\_children.pdf](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/education/victorian_children.pdf)

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**Jackson's Oxford Journal 15/12/1888**

STEEPLE BARTON. ALLEGED ROBBERY OF PIGS. On Monday, the 3rd of December, Mr Thomas Chadbon missed two pigs from a sty on his farm. On making inquiries, he heard that a man named George Webb of Westcott Barton, had been seen driving two pigs through Wootton. The police were at once communicated with, and the missing animals were traced to Oxford. It was there ascertained that the pigs, which were afterwards identified by Mr Chadbon, had been sold to a beer-house-keeper. Webb was subsequently apprehended at Woodstock. He was the next day taken before the Magistrates at Chipping Norton. And charged with the offence, when he was remanded for a week.

On Wednesday, the 12th inst., the prisoner Geo Webb was brought before the Magistrates, when in the course of evidence it was stated that the pigs had been found in Oxford in the possession of Mrs Perry, to whom the prisoner owed £2. It seems that he had given one of the pigs to Mrs Perry in payment of the debt, and that the other had been sold for 30s? to a man Named Henry Harris, both pigs being placed in the same sty at Mrs Perry's house.

Henry Harris deposed that on Monday December 3rd, he went to Mrs Perry's house about 4 or 5 o'clock in the afternoon. He saw defendant in the tap-room. He (defendant) had a small pig in his cart for sale. There was another down the road. Witness bought the small pig for 30s. Both pigs were black. He left the animal he bought along with the other pig in Mrs Perry's sty.

Supt. Hawtin said that on Tuesday December 4th, in consequence of information received, he went to the Walton Ale Stores in Walton Street, Oxford, and saw there along with other pigs in the sty, two black pigs. He then went in search of the pris-

oner. Witness traced him on the road, in the direction of Woodstock, as far as Camberfield Cross, and apprehended him near Shipton-on-Cherwell. Witness told prisoner he was going to arrest him on a charge of stealing two pigs, the property of Mr Chadbon of Barton and he replied 'What pigs? I haven't had any pigs.' He drove him into Woodstock and then returned to Oxford. Witness took possession of the two pigs, and put them in a place of safety. On Wednesday he showed them to Mr Chadbon, the prosecutor, who at once identified them as the pigs he had raised on his farm in the parish of Enstone. On the Thursday he handed the pigs over to Mr Chadbon. Coming from Oxford that (Wednesday) morning prisoner voluntarily said that he had bought two pigs in Enstone for £1 14s, but that they were worth only £1.

This concluded the evidence, and prisoner, who pleaded not guilty was committed in custody to the forthcoming Oxfordshire Quarter Sessions.



### A great day at the Palace

Rose Panting was a guest at the Queen's Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in July.

The invitation marked her long service as a teaching assistant at Middle Barton School – 31 years and still counting.

There were long queues for official photos at the palace, so luckily Rose posed for this picture in her garden beforehand.

Three girls at the school, Alice Mortimer, Holly Davis and Lottie Jackson, will be interviewing Rose for an article in the Dorn Free Press.

Meanwhile, Rose wishes to thank all the people who made her great day possible. Apparently a number of friends and colleagues conspired secretly to recommend her invitation to the palace, which came as a splendid surprise.

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# Memories of School Days at Middle Barton School by Dorrie Cox

as told to Denise Roberts

My real name is Doreen Cox but I am never called that, always Dorrie, but I was Doreen Gascoine when I attended Middle Barton School, from 1934 to 1945, starting when I was 5 until 11 years old, and left school completely aged 14. I am the second of four brothers and sisters. My family lived in Middle Barton, firstly in what had been the blacksmith's shop at the top of Jacob's Yard on North Street (some horseshoes are still there under eaves) and by the time I went to school we lived in Worton Road, where my two younger brothers were born.



*Dorrie aged about 6*

My first year at school was mainly spent playing with sand trays and bricks, not much teaching. My first teacher was Mrs Greenslade, wife of Ralph Greenslade who

kept a hardware shop on North Street at the top of The Dock, selling things like nails and paraffin. He also sold accumulators for 6d which were needed to run a wireless, which most people listened to only for the news. Mr Greenslade had a car which was most unusual, but no one else did - everyone walked everywhere.

I remember when I started, the school still looked exactly like the original photo of the school in 1886, not changed at all. It only had three classrooms. Mrs Greenslade took new entries (reception class) in the smaller room. The big room was divided by partition into approximately two thirds/one third. Mrs Byford (Headmistress) had the bigger space for the oldest pupils, Miss Evans had the other third for the middle group and the little ones were in the small room. I remember the windows in the large room seeming very big and high up to us little ones.

In the bigger classroom were wooden desks with lift up lids over a recess where all books were kept and always left. Each desk sat two pupils and were lined up in rows. In the small room the little children sat at small tables and chairs. The big room was heated by a Slow-But-Sure Tortoise Stove burning coke and surrounded by a metal cage for safety. Wet clothes were always hung on it to dry in bad weather.

Each teacher taught every subject, and also covered another class at same time if a teacher was away. We learnt to read by breaking words up into syllables. Duller pupils sat at the front, brighter ones at back. We gradually progressed from front to back with learning. There were no school trips, especially during the war.

We were never allowed to climb on mound in the playground, which had trees on it, even though we had to walk round it to get to the toilets which were behind it by the back fence. However we were allowed on it to have photos taken in order to get children at different levels. It was situated where the current hall has now been built.

Everyone always walked to school, usually along the banks as there were few houses. Only two families with children then lived in Worton Road – the Probitts and the Gascoines (us). Parents never took children to school, we walked there together. On arrival we lined up outside each classroom door to go in. We lined up by class, not gender. Every morning the school bell rang and often we had only got to the Bakehouse in South Street before hearing it – then we had to run fast up the hill so as not to be late, when we would be told off (but not caned).

Each day started with morning prayers in our own classrooms and we had very regular RE (Religious Knowledge) lessons.

We played outside every playtime, girls skipping and playing hopscotch, the boys playing horse and carts, although I mostly remember them running about and making a lot of noise!

Lunchtime was 12 – 1pm and everyone went home for lunch, there were no school meals. The school gates were locked at lunchtime once everyone was out. Unusually, the Gascoine family had sandwiches for lunch while most had a cooked meal in the middle of the day. Our father was a blacksmith and didn't like bending over shoeing horses on full stomach so we ate our main meal at the end of the working day. Free school milk had not yet started.

Lessons: English covered all aspects – lots of language, spelling, poetry, literature, writing, etc. We were taught letter writing properly and that we and mustn't start two consecutive sentences with the same word. Maths was called arithmetic, taught mostly from the blackboard with no textbooks. We were taught a little basic history and geography but not much.

We had regular PT (Physical Training) outside, mostly jumping up and down. If it was cold we put on coats and ran round playground. If wet, we would jump up and down inside by our desks.

We also did lots of folk (country) dancing. I remember two of the dances were called "Haste to the Wedding" and "Ruffy Tufty". We were taught knitting but I don't remember sewing lessons. We also did singing but not on a big scale. There was no science or cooking until we went to Steeple Aston School at 11 years old.

We sometimes put on plays. One particular one was called "The Golden Ball" about the reflection of the moon. My best friend Olivia Law and I were moles (see photo in Audrey Martin's booklet about the school). My mother made us costumes from her black velvet coat. The plays were only put on for the other school children and

our families, and always in the afternoons as people didn't go out much in the evenings then.

Discipline was strict and as a result no one played up much. But you were in trouble though if caught on the lawn or mound.

All children played together, both in and out of school. Out of school we played anywhere in the fields; parents didn't worry as they knew we would come home when we were hungry. My sister Francis won a book on wild flowers as a school prize and we used it to look up anything we found that we didn't know.

We were sent home from school when brook flooded. A lady in Pound Lane looked out for flooding and came to the school to tell them when it happened. There were no phones so she had to walk up to the school to tell us.

We didn't have homework from Middle Barton School, although we did when we went on to Steeple Aston school. I liked to read a lot, it was my favourite past time, and English was my best subject. I won a book at Sunday School called "Froggie's



*Dorrie and her brother Bill (recently deceased) off to school, approx. 1935/36*

Little Brother" about a boy with an invalid younger brother who he looked after. I read it and read it, and also read it to my siblings, until it fell apart. I often made up stories for siblings.

There were no school uniforms, especially during war as clothing was rationed with coupons. Most children had three lots of clothes: School clothes which were

changed into play clothes as soon as got home. We wore play clothes most of time out of school. We also had Sunday best for church.

Everyone practised make do and mend, nothing was ever thrown away. Even men's worn out trousers were made into rag rugs. We were never bored as there was always something to do, usually something useful to help adults but this wasn't considered a chore.

Ian Thomas (Queen's clothes' designer) was at school with me. He told his mum that the King had died before it was publically announced so we knew before everyone else but weren't allow to say anything until it was officially announced at lunch time.

Mr Carpenter (who lived in Sandford) was a School Inspector, and if anyone stayed away from school he would visit them at home to see why. My brother Bill had rheumatic fever from ages 11-12 and missed a whole year of school. Mr Carpenter came to our house every week because he had to fill in the appropriate forms.

Later many girls joined St John's Ambulance. Lady Mountbatten often came to visit and inspect us in the Mission Hall (Alice Marshall Hall). She took the salute during processions during the war. She gave me and Glyn a wedding present (a table lamp) when we got married.

Special Occasions:

May Day: There was a pole erected in Old John's Yard (then Constables yard), which was decorated with flowers and topped with a Union Jack and the children danced round it. Before that we would go round the village holding sticks with bunches of flowers tied to the tops, hoping that people would give us pennies.

Whitsun: Girls had a new dress and hat if they were lucky, or retrimmed an old hat with flowers.

Christmas: I don't remember any special celebrations, other than at home. There were no parties, especially during the war. We went to church of course.

War: It didn't really register very much with Middle Barton school children although a lot of regular school routines changed then. We had quite a few evacuees come to the village. Cathy Saich stayed with the Robinsons on North Street, a family of boys stayed with Doris Davies at Leys Farm. Local children were friendly with evacuees but most of them didn't stay very long as it was felt there was not much was happening where they had come from. Tina Simpson was an evacuee who stayed permanently after the war.

During war a whole school plus teachers debarked to Sandford where Mr David Wills later lived.

Also during the war I remember a man visiting the school with Horlicks tablets for



us to eat and he told us to drink Horlicks. Not sure if this was for advertising or for our welfare. Except for water and milk, the only other drink for children was lemonade crystals that you mixed with water.

During wartime holidays were cut down to two weeks as children had to go potato picking. We also picked rose hips for the WI to make into rose hip syrup for children (this was done nationally). We always had something useful to do. We also picked nettles, just the young tops which were eaten as greens. People with no children of their own who took in evacuees didn't know what to do with them so kept them occupied by making them useful. The older girls, the age group who would soon be moving to Steeple Aston School, knitted socks for soldiers

We had a Home Guard and they had a hut on Pack Lane made of straw bales with a tin roof. On the opposite side of road was large tree trunk with a wheel on one end. This was to be wheeled over the road to block it if we were invaded! Eventually, on VJ Day, both hut and barricade were burnt on the celebratory bonfire in Pack Lane, before the dancing and celebrations in the Mission Hall in the evening.

I left Middle Barton School before the war ended, and went on to Dr Radcliffe's school in Steeple Aston. We were taken there on a Jarvis bus.

I still say, despite only going to small village schools, we learnt an awful lot, doing mental arithmetic in our heads and lots of spelling tests. I still find this useful today when doing quizzes. All in all, we had very little but didn't want anything more, and had a jolly good time.

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**Jackson's Oxford Journal 13/10/1888**

STEEPLE BARTON. On Friday last, the employees of the Swan Brewery, Oxford, spent a very pleasant day at Barton Abbey, the grounds of which were very kindly thrown open to them. Fortunately, the weather was beautifully fine, and many tried their hands at fishing in the lake, not without success – Mr Money landing two pikes of 7lb and 8lb each. Sixty sat down with Mr and Mrs Hall to an excellent dinner provided by Mr Slatter at the Holt and a very pleasant afternoon was spent playing cricket and walking about the grounds. In the evening, tea was served in the pavilion after which, Mr Franklin's excellent teams drove the whole party back to Oxford, which was reached at 8pm, everyone having thoroughly enjoyed their country outing.

*To commemorate the memory of early Rhyll pioneer and  
master oysterman Jular Barnard Lock (1803-1908) and  
his wife Elizabeth Woodward Caswell (1809-1910)*

Lock was born in Middle Barton, Oxfordshire, England. His first association with Rhyll was with an ill-fated oystering venture begun here in the mid 1850s and lasting to the early 1860s. He was employed to carry the oysters with his boat the *Gannet* to Geelong from where they were destined for the goldfields.

A small settlement was built for the oystermen along the eastern shore of Rhyll. The Locks must have lived there in the early 1860s as their first child Martha was born on Phillip Island in 1861. The family moved back permanently to Rhyll soon after subdivision and settlement of Phillip Island in 1869, living in the house still standing in Zelma Drive.



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**Capita Lock's records exist:**  
 Census 1850-1860  
 Death 1860  
 Birth 1861  
 Census 1861-1870  
 Census 1871-1880  
 Census 1881-1890  
 Census 1891-1900  
 Census 1901-1910  
 Census 1911-1920  
 Census 1921-1930  
 Census 1931-1940  
 Census 1941-1950  
 Census 1951-1960  
 Census 1961-1970  
 Census 1971-1980  
 Census 1981-1990  
 Census 1991-2000  
 Census 2001-2010  
 Census 2011-2020

A native of Middle Barton, Oxfordshire, England, Lock's first association with Rhyll was with an ill-fated oystering venture begun here in the mid 1850s and lasting to the early 1860s. He was employed to carry the oysters with his boat the *Gannet* to Geelong from where they were destined for the goldfields.

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## Extracts from the School Log book

Christine Edbury

Mr. Charles Howitt was the Master, Mrs. Joanna Rymill and Mrs. Elizabeth Howitt were the Mistresses, and it was probably Mrs. Howitt who wrote in the log books.

*(I have omitted names so as not to cause any distress to any family with the exception of the awards for Needlework in 1882)*

1873:

2 June – Used new registers! (wish we had them)

18 June – First Class transferred to the Upper School, rearranged remaining children

1 July – Barton Club Holiday

2 July – Examination holiday

4 August – Several scholars absent from sickness and other causes

12 August – Thin attendance owing to commencement of harvest

13 Oct - Barton Feast holiday

10 November – Taught the children ‘Goosey Goosey Gander’

1 December – Dismissed children at 11.30 being the Hon. Mrs Hall’s Club Day

22 December – Singing and marching in the afternoon

1874:

7 January - Changed reading books of second class

21 January – Taught the words of the hymn ‘The English Child’

29 January – Taught the words of ‘Busy Bee’

17 February – Diocesan examination by Rev. E. Barber

25 February – Taught song of the ‘Snow Bird’

9 March – Very wintry morning - thin attendance

13 April – Opened School after Easter Holidays. Only five children present owing to the prevalence of measles. Closed school in the afternoon. The Master having received a Certificate from Dr. Hemmingway.

27 April – School still closed on account of measles and scarlet fever

4 May – one of the infants died of the measles

18 May – one children not admitted to school on account of there being a case of smallpox at her home

1 June – Jessie Parsons left – going to America

3 June – Amy Uckles left – going with her parents to America

6 July – thin attendance being the Anniversary of the Barton Benefit Club on 7th

14 Oct – No entries since Sept owing to the lameness of my right hand. Thin attendance it being the Village Feast. Resumed the sewing

20 November – Taught marching to the Multiplication table

1875:

10 February – Marching exercises which I still find very difficult to teach

22 February – Mrs. Rymill gave written fortnight's notice. She will resign her duties as Assistant Mistress

14 April – William Davis left to go to America with his parents

14 May – Extra singing and marching as the children were languid from the very hot weather (!)

16 July – Lady Hotham and the Hon. Mrs. Hall visited the school

3 August - School Treat at Barton Abbey. Holiday in the afternoon

20 Oct – School closed all day on account of the flood

9 November – Two admissions both very backward neither of them knowing a letter

1876:

5 June – Good attendance considering that it is Whit Monday

12 June – A few children absent in the afternoon on account of a Chapel tea

15 July – Annual examination by Rev. H.A. Pickard and Mr. Eley

1877:

13 June – Nettle rash very prevalent

28 May – Union demonstration and tea – many children absent in consequent

9 July – One admission, 5 years and 4 months old and does not know a single letter of the alphabet

5 December – Visit of School Attendance Officer – gave him the names of three children who attend very irregularly

1878:

15 January – One new desk arrived

11 February – School closed because of death in family of Mistress

25 February – Registers closed at 1.30pm and Infants dismissed at 3.15. Sewing then commenced and continued until 4.35. This is being tried as an experiment

1879:

9 June – Sent 2 boys home for their arrears of school money

12 June – Many children absent due to chickenpox

25 July – One admission. This boy has been attending a Dame School and although nearly six years of age knows nothing

15 December - 2 Girls to be paid for by Board of Guardians

1880:

1 March – Re-entered upon School duties after having been absent since January 1st from illness. During my absence the School was carried on by the Master of the Mixed School and the paid Monitor assisted by some of the older girls

6 May – Visit of School Attendance Officer

29 June – Twelve admissions. 6 children between 5 and 6 do not know their letters. (6 girls, names omitted)



*c1905 School children drilling in the school yard.  
Thatched Village Farm Barn / Langstone House in the background.*

5 July – Transferred 14 to mixed school

25 October – Serious thoughts of closing the school as over forty children are absent today with measles

1881:

2 February – Extra marching to keep the children warm

6 June – Many children absent on account of a Public Tea Meeting

5 July – Whole day holiday being the Barton Benefit Club

1882:

10 May – Received today from the Hon. Secretary of the OPS for Needlework the list of Prizes and Commendations to the Competitors of the Upper and Infant Schools. 10 prizes for needlework – S.A. Chadbon, Sarah Pratley, Mary Woolford, Susan Bayliss, Mary Howitt 2 prizes, Elizabeth Chadbon, Ellen Gardner 2 prizes, Martha Nicholls. Commended Edna Harper, Susan Proffitt, Emma Grimsley, Elizabeth Chadbon, Fanny Rymill, Marianne Kirby, Mary Howitt. Infants – Gertrude Gregory, Annie Grimsley, Charlotte Stockford, Florence Grimsley

24 October – Floods in the village – the bridges impassable, consequently no school

1883:

8 January – In consequence of Mr. Howitt's illness I took charge of the Mixed School as well as my own.

12 January – A.W. Hall Esq called here this evening and it was decided to close the school for one week

14 February – Commenced using the Domino Cards

19 March – Making slow progress with the needlework, so many of the girls having chilled hands

14 May – The Infant girls now have needlework in the afternoon and the boys write and draw during the time

11 June – The dull and backward children give great Trouble

15 October – Half holiday for Barton Feast

14 December – Lydia Brain the Assistant gave a month's notice ('she subsequently consented to return to her duties after her marriage for the present', but finally left in March 1884)

### From Jackson's Oxford Journal

#### **STEEPLE BARTON 30th January 1867**

The last, probably for the season, of our Library and Musical Entertainments, was given on the 22nd inst, to a large and delighted audience. The readings, an excellent variety, sentimental, descriptive and humorous, including Sterne's ever affecting "Story of Lefevre" and selections of poetry, by the Rev. E Marshall, Sir S. Baker's exciting "Elephant Hunt" and a melting story of "The Detection and Punishment of a Butter Stealer", by the Rev. J. Marshall. Selections from these great works of musical genius "Le Prophets" and "The Huguenots" were most efficiently given by the Misses Marshall. The part-songs were heartily encored, as were also the modestly made and successful efforts of our village vocalists in Brahms duet "Albion", "Ye shepherds, tell me" and "the Mocking Bird". The mocking bird accompaniment to the latter was particularly enjoyed. The recognition of Mr. and Mrs. Marshall in their arrangements of a popular feeling for "something by some of ourselves" was very graceful and complimentary. The audience acknowledged their obligations and expressed their thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Marshall and their assisting friends by hearty and renewed cheers. We cannot close our reports of these pleasant meetings without testifying to their excellent character. We have seen the power of co-operation for pleasure and instruction, as well as for pecuniary gain. Selections from the best thoughts of the best and wisest men of all lands, in all ages, have been read. Examples of good reading have been given far more powerful for instruction than ponderous treatises. We have been taught to harmonise sweet sounds for fireside joys, and domestic and public worship. True courtesy, unselfish consideration of, and contribution to the happiness of others, as well as true loyal sentiment, has been exhibited. A testimony has been given that there is a disposition on the part of the more wealthy and educated to benefit their poorer brethren, when they can do it without injuring them; and so long as the history of the human race abounds with deeds appealing with vivifying power to the noblest instincts of our nature, we may reasonably expect good results from their recital.

## FIRST DAYS AND RATS TAILS

Jackie Wood

At five years old in the early 1960s I can still remember insisting on going to school, on my own, on the first day, anyway it wasn't that far, was it? Just down the lane and up the hill and I would be there! Off I trotted with my little satchel over my shoulder, my clean shoes and white ankle socks not forgetting my hankie which was popped into my pocket!

I arrived at school and was ushered in to see the Headmistress, a tiny stern, scary lady with brown hair which was styled into earphones over her ears, she didn't greet me with a smile and I suddenly realised I was really, really frightened of her! Apparently, she had been expecting me to start school a week or so before, but I had been ill and Mum decided to keep me at home until I was better. The Headmistress then ordered one of the older girls to take me to my classroom. I wasn't very keen on the Headmistress, I wanted to go home! The older girl took me to my classroom; as the door swung open, I saw lots and lots of other boys and girls, I didn't know anyone, I was feeling really scared. (In the 1960s there wasn't the advantage of going to Pre-school and making friends there before going to school). The teacher, Mrs Phillips, came across, her dark clothes swishing as she moved, she seemed quite old with grey hair which came down to just above her shoulders, it was sort of in the style of a bob but it stuck out at the ends instead of going under! Her red lipstick smile greeted me, she asked if I would like to join another girl who was drawing with chalks on a small blackboard, I think her name was Mitzi, she seemed to be quite nice. After a while, we were asked to sit at our desks, I was told which desk to sit at, which was near to my 'new friend'. Mrs Phillips called all our names out, as soon as we heard our name we had to say 'here'. After this, Mrs Phillips went to her big cupboard and got out a paper towel and commenced to wipe down all the surfaces in the classroom, she then showed us her dusty hand print on the paper towel, apparently, she did this every morning. During the my first morning we made Plasticine models; when Mrs Phillips looked at the models she walked around with a jar from her big cupboard which contained sweets (they were called 'rats tails', I think they are really known as Comfits), if she liked your model, you would get a rats tail! There was an air of excitement in the classroom when Mrs Phillips' jar appeared from her large cupboard, you just hoped you would be lucky. I liked Mrs Phillips, she seemed a kind lady, so perhaps I would stay at school after all!

Mrs Phillips was regarded as a little eccentric, she would usually dress from head to tail in black but I can remember her being in a complete rose pink or lemon yellow outfit. Mrs Phillips arrived at school every morning via Jarvis Bus, she lived at Anchors Aweigh, North Aston, the windows in her house were completely blacked out so no light could get in, later in life she moved to Banbury and again all the windows were blacked out.

# 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 & 5 and the Jubilee Edition** £3.00 each  
*The first five of the series and the special Jubilee edition* (or all 6 for £12)

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