

## **Historical local information on Owslebury**

- 1 Owslebury School 1927 – 1936
- 2 The War Years - 1939 – 1945
- 3 Interview with Mr George Harfield
- 4 Harking back to when the 1st World War (1914 - 1918) came to the village
- 5 Transcription of a letter from the Clerk of the Council at Winchester Rural District outlining the background of Owslebury's Water Supply
- 6 Nurse Harfield Remembers
- 7 Memories of G.G.Pierce - Part 1
- 8 Memories of G.G.Pierce - Part 2
- 9 Memories of G.G.Pierce - Part 3
- 10 Agricultural Riots - Owslebury - 1760 – 1832
- 11 The Owslebury Lads
- 12 Owslebury Population 1841 – 564
- 13 Water Supply to Owslebury
- 14 Village Ponds - 1800 - 1900's
- 15 Longwood House - or Rosehill
- 16 Owslebury School : June 1841
- 17 Owslebury School - Diocesan Record 1881 – 1904
- 18 Owslebury Resident 1896 – 1988
- 19 Memories of Owslebury School
- 20 Owslebury in the 1800's
- 21 100 Years of Cricket
- 22 Christmas at Owslebury and Marwell in Days Gone By
- 23 Murder in Owslebury

## 1. Owslebury School 1927 - 1936

---

On Monday May the Twenty First a service was held in St Andrews Church to commemorate one hundred and fifty years of Owslebury School, a very moving and simple service - a Welcome Read by the present children of the School. To the prayers written and read by them.

When the vicar read the Poem, I remember, I too remember - during a Remembrance service everyone was stood during the two minutes silence the weight on the clock broke loose and came crashing down, that was about Nineteen Forty Three, and when my brother was the organ blower during the long and boring sermon he dropped off to sleep.

The organist rattled the notes for him to start pumping, but he was sleeping peacefully away.

The vicar had to come down from the pulpit and pump the organ himself - "well he only got thirty-seven and halfpence a quarter.

I remember when Nurse Rook came to inspect our hair - we used to call it the nit hunt.

One boy who remains nameless, when it came to his turn put two wood lice in his hair - he was a bit disappointed because she left them there.

Later in the New School as the children served tea and biscuits I compared the New School with Central Heating and inside toilets, to the old school with outside toilets.

Bill Bridle the Blacksmith's job once a week was to empty the buckets.

He smoked Afrikander mixture in his pipe, it had a lovely aromatic smell.

I remember the old coke burning Tortoise stoves, sometimes they were hot and sometimes they were not.

The older boys used to tell the younger ones, that if you put your finger on the Tortoise's tail it would run up the Chimney.

I remember the Infants Classroom with the Harmonium in the corner and Miss Gurman who when no one owned up to doing something naughty, looking over the top of her glasses and saying "thats Mr Nobody again" and the Noahs Ark with the animals inside, and when they

were brought out one by one the children calling out their names.

I remember the dirt playground", it was not tarmaced till nineteen thirty four.

The entrance to the boys cloakroom was up an alleyway between the school and the School House, the entrance into the School was halfway along the wall.

There was a tank in the Cloakroom which held about three gallons of water, there was a very chipped white enamaled cup, well it was white once, on a chair for drinking.

The water was also used for washing hands.

There was no soap just a lump of chalk, no towel you dried your hands by rubbing them on your clothes.

The new cloakrooms were built about the same time as the playground was tarmaced.

The juniors classroom had a small open coal fire, there was an iron saucepan they used to boil water in it on the open fire.

The older girls used to make Cocoa, for the children who brought their lunch to school.

It was halfpenny a cup.

The teachers who taught while I was at school in the juniors were Miss Hooper, Miss Smith, Miss Mathews, Miss Rolls and Miss Parnel.

After Mr Peirce left there was a School Mistress a Miss Willowby.

Mr Peirce went to teach at West Wellow and Miss Willowby came to Owslebury.

The school house was refurbished whilst it was unoccupied.

She was here under a year and then Mr Mathewa became the Headmaster.

Since the end of the war fourteen small diary farms have gone out of milk.

When the War started all farm work was done by horses, there was hardly a tractor and

when the War finished there was hardly a horse left on the farms.

The cost of shoeing a Draught Horse was eight shillings (forty pence).

Whilst I was enjoying a cup of tea in the school a young boy came and sat down and asked me what life was like when I was at school - well Ben, I hope this will help you understand what it was like.

Once again thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make the celebration such a happy event.

**F Bliss**

## **2. The War Years - 1939 - 1945**

---

On Sunday 3rd September 1939 war was declared on Germany.

1940: At a time when invasion was expected the ringing of Church Bells was forbidden.

This order issued 13th June 1940.

Bells to be rung as a warning of threatened invasion only.

Owslebury bells were so rung, this, as it turned out, the warning was issued by mistake - on Saturday 7th September 1940.

Bells first allowed to be rung again on Sunday 15th November 1942 after a victory at El Alamein.

The Church suffered no damage from air attacks.

A small number of bombs were dropped in the district - Morestead, Marwell (a land mine), Baybridge Down.

One V I (flying) bomb fell in the Parish early on Wednesday 12th July 1944, close to Longwood House (then occupied by American troops).

During this one week in July, a good many flying bombs were seen and fell in the surrounding districts.

Before D Day (Tues 6th June 1944) when an attack on Normandy was launched, the woods were packed with our troops, and there was much activity on the roads, with convoys passing to the coast.

On the night of Monday and Tuesday 5th-6th June, thousands of gliders, drawn by transport planes, passed overhead with navigation lights on.

The whole picture presented was unforgettable.

On the following evening also, from 7.30 - 8.30 there was another airborne force in the sky above the village, heading S E out to sea.

A special service held on Tuesday evening 6th June, was attended by over 500 people, the notice had been very short.

In 1943 -1944, a Victory Garden Show and Fete was held on August Bank Holiday, in aid of the Red Cross and St Johns' Ambulance (Agricultural fund).

This was run by a Committee chaired by E W J Stern.



Left To Right: Doris Harfield, Peggy Derrick, Lil Guy (Marsh), Carrie Thatcher

In addition to the show, there were sports and sideshows and sale of produce.

A dance was held at the Parish Hall.

Other events were held during the week.

A sum of £152 18s 3d (£153.91p) and £16 22s 2d (£162.11p) was sent to the Red Cross as a result of this effort.

During the war years, the village received many evacuees from Southampton Portsmouth and London.

Acton County High (boys) took over Morestead House in November 1940, remaining until August 1943.

The Field behind Morestead House now called the Allotment Field was used by the school for vegetables etc.

When Morestead House was sold in 1971 the old schools desks were still in the house.

The air raid shelter used in the war is still there today.

The Rev W Sargeant offered the vicarage as a hostel for the school and in the autumn of 1940 it was requisitioned by the RDC, the rental being fixed at £80 p.a; plus the rates.

Rev Sargeant removed first to Yew Tree Cottage, Baybridge and later to a house next to the stores at Hilly Close.

The Rev F E Barker resided at the cottage known as Old Wells Cottage until, on the return of the school to Acton, the Vicarage was de-requisitioned on 12th Sept 1943.

The rental was £90 p.a. Mr George Thompson, Headmaster of the evacuated portion of the school and Mrs Thompson were in charge at the Vicarage, which, at times has as many as 25 occupants.

The (old) school was heated by two big 'tortoise' stoves, and oil lamps hung from the ceilings - this was the only form of lighting available.

Toilets, as with most other rural schools, were still just earth closets.

'Real' milk was delivered to the door, in churns, by the local Farmer, he would ladle the number of pints required straight into your jug.

During the warm weather the housewife always 'scalded' the milk, to prevent it from going sour.

On the school ceasing to occupy the Vicarage, the vicar received (Feb 1944) £33 2s 9p in respect of compensation for damage.

Baybridge House was also used as a hostel for Acton County High. From Sept 1943 to Nov 1944 Morestead House was occupied by Portsmouth Northern Secondary Girls School, who used the house merely as a hostel, being conveyed by bus to Winchester daily.

City children, - used to all 'mod cons' of the day - were brought here as evacuees, - almost every house in the village boasted at least one.

Village life - with no running water in the houses - no gas - no electricity, must have seemed very strange to these "townies".

One still regularly visits her 'stand-in' Mum of those war time years, others, passing through the village, have paused in their journey to 'stand and stare' at the old school, and in conversation with residents, reveal that "I went to school here during the war".

A village drama club was formed in September 1944, under leadership of the Vicar.

Many troops were stationed in the Parish during the war.

The East Surreys at Marwell, in the earlier part of the war, the RASC at Longwood.

Afterwards, other units at Longwood - British troops up to the end of 1943, then U.S. troops, coloured U.S. troops arriving there just before Christmas 1943.

In the summer of 1944, white U.S. troops followed them, until the early part of 1945.

One U.S. soldier married in Owslebury Church but not to a local girl.

The small airfield at Marwell was used as an emergency landing ground, and the hangers were turned into workshops (Cunliffe Owen, Southampton).

The through road (coming out close to Deeps Cottage) was closed to traffic in June 1942, a private road being made by Hurst Cottages and coming out opposite Marwell Manor.

The private road followed an old bridle path in part, on the Parish's boundary.

The public were not allowed to use this private road, except by "pass" and there was a great deal of feeling on this account.

This private road was thrown open to all traffic in the winter of 1944-5, but by the summer of 1945 the original road had still not been restored to use.

During the latter part of 1942, the Vicar regularly took services for a half company of Dorsets who were acting as Police at Marwell, before the arrival of the Royal Air Force regiment.

The Home Guard (formed in 1940) held a few church parades at Owslebury Church, the first on Palm Sunday (which was a National Day of prayer).

On V E day, May 8th 1945, a special thanksgiving service was well attended and the Church flag was flown from the tower, the first time for several years.

On 9th May, Sports, Whist Drive and a Dance were held.



### **3. Interview with Mr George Harfield**

---

*Mr. George Harfield was interviewed between January and February 1962. George was the eldest of 18 children, born at Baybridge to Joseph and Lucy Sybilla. He died in 1970 aged 98. This interview has not been altered in any way, a true 'countryman' talking. Known by EH who confirms it is just how he talked!*

I was born at Baybridge in that little house close to the chapel where the Glasspool's live now.

Mr King, nicknamed the "sergeant major" was my school master. He was helped by another teacher with yet one other to look after the infants. There were more children in one class then than there is goes to the school altogether now – in the children's room the seats went back in tiers, but it's altered now an the school looks more like a picture house.

We were in school at nine o'clock and if you wanted to go out hard up – and if you weren't back quick the sergeant major went out the door after you.

Mr King would come in about 10 o'clock in the morning. She'd say "Thomas, are you ready for your medicine?" "Yes, please". She'd come back in with a little glass, that held his medicine and a biscuit or tow. He was taking no medicine – it was whiskey.

He had two boys and tow girls – Bertha, Carey, William and Gilbert. When he died I believe Mr Peirce took over.

The school hours were 9 – 12 and 2 – 4, no dinners laid on, no glasses of milk and a map book across your head if you didn't do your work. The examinations were held at the school, no going into Winchester to be finished off. There was the Infant's class, 1st Standard, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th, leaving at fourteen years of age, although you could leave anytime once you had passed the 3rd Standard. In those days you had to pay 2d a week. If you stayed away for just a day or so nothing was said.

There was a headmaster named Whitchurch but he didn't stay long, after Mr King. Followed by Mr Peirce and a Mr Howe. Then Mr Matthews. We only had candles in the school for lighting.

*How did people get on with finding the money for the doctor?*

Well, there was a good many people had it from the parish but you could soon go in and see the people who had paid themselves for their medicine, it was half a crown a bottle, was always done up nicely in paper with their name on it. This is the third generation of the Dr Roberts' that I have been under – the present Dr Michael's grandfather was the first – Dr

George.

I left school when I was 11 years old or just after and I went and got a job with old Mr Farmer Anstey. I worked for him at Lower Farm for five years and six months. Firstly I was sheep minding and then I went to the stables as under carter in the head team. I had a good wage – three shillings a week! – and when I was 14 years old was often put in to do a man's job.

It was hard work and many's the time in the summer I've been walking across these footpaths and when I've pulled my socks off at night they've been smothered in blood and if they had to do it today what would they do?

Mr Anstey's flock was about 150 ewes and a few tegs, that was the time when we sheared by hand. I see in the paper t'other day it was a four handed job and they don 1,704 of them in one day but it wasn't done properly it was a "back off".

When I started sheep shearing we had three shearers paid at 3/6 a score and then walk perhaps 7 – 8 or 9 miles to get to the work. I walked over from Baybridge once to close over by Fareham Asylum that's 12 miles there and back. From the Ship its 13 miles – there were four of us went and we had a hard days shearing being paid 4/6 a score then.

When I was man enough to take two horses to plough and I could get more money. I went to work at Owslebury Farm and was there three years, leaving to work for Mr Russell at Baybridge. My brother worked on the Longwood Estate but left to work in Morwell gardens. Mr Dunlop who was one of the stewards asked my father if he had another son who could take Frank's place.

My father said "Yes", "George, who has worked for Mr Russell through the summer". I went there for 12/- a week. We used to do a lot of hours day work making what they call faggots 4/- a hundred. Copse faggots about 4 feet long and put into bundles for firewood. In those days if there was no work in you, you could soon go and they'd get another nipper.

When I looked after the horses at Lower Farm I used to get up about 4.30 – 6.00a.m. I worked along with a man Mr Gilpin who lived in the house on the left as you turn into Lower Farm. We used to go to Botley Mill five days a week with barley – some of the finest barley ever you could set eyes on – what they can't grow today. The harvesting, the dung carting – everything was done with the horses.

I've been up and down that old track what goes down through the farm and when we've done we've been plastered from head to foot with mud. I'd like the little devils to have to do it now. Mr Anstey was the manager for old Squire Standish and he rented Lower Farm.

### **Sheep**

The most as ever I did shear was 50 in a day and that wants doing. It takes about 9 – 12 minutes to shear a sheep. You had to be on the move all the time when shearing those "Hampshire Downs". The wool was tied up in the fleeces except the lambs wool – that was bagged up loose. I've been shearing lambs when they're not been much bigger than a good sized cat. The wool was taken to the Corn Exchange in Winchester.

'Work', well I don't see as works done today its what I calls "properly messed about" – farm work that is.

Making hurdles was a job in itself. Years ago in Coney Park and other places, I bought the wood and worked on my own. All that you had for making hurdles was a little hook, a little hatchet for trimming and an old hurdle frame. I still have mine out in the shed and its thirty, forty, fifty – over fifty years old.

My average for making hurdles, if the weather was right was nine a day that was in day hours and if you could do that you hadn't go to go to sleep. You had to split your own stuff, get the rod between your legs, hit it and make four spars. Hazels were the best wood and this Coney Park wood was lovely, it was so white.

The last bit of wood I bought in Coney Park – I gave £2.10.0 an acre for it and now I suppose you wouldn't get it under £20. Look at the price you get for the jurdles. I was getting about 10/- a dozen and when I first started it was but 3/6 or 4/- a dozen.

The man that taught me – he was a big fellow, a tall man, if you didn't do anything right he wouldn't turn mad and start swearing at you – he'd say "What you go a different way of doing that now", if he see you putting a rod in wrong. George Fletcher – we worked together in the woods for eight or more years and we never had an angry word.

The last lot of hurdles I made after I was 81 was for Col. Harrison at Morwell. I made about 8 dozen for him that year. He stood and looked at them and you should have just heard how he did praise that up and how wonderful – how wonderful t'was to do it. Well there's heart in it! When the sheep left the down there was not money in hurdle making so I packed it up.

I've been and cut hard then of a night about eight chain long and a chain wde and that was

over  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre of ground. 7/6 an acre done by hand and t'was done.

### **Shackles**

Some had iron shackles but I'd sooner have the wooden ones what you make with the hazel. When you get your shoe in and your handle in you puts it over the shoe and fasten it on to the end. If you get an iron shackle they get their leg down and hook it off.

The Bow Shoes we used to get 2d a dozen for those and 2d a dozen for to point them. They were 5" long and were used to hold the hurdles up.

In those days there thousands and thousands of loads of stones picked off the fields – a shilling a load. The loads used to be put down in heaps – at the lower end of Crabbs Hill – and at Baybridge. The roadmen in those days broke the larger stones. Mr Winkworth had a crook on one ar, I was always given to understand he done that firing off a gun on a Sunday. Working with him was Old Billy Mannering – lived at the lower end where Mr Sutcliffe now lives. I can remember that old land from Baybridge up to Green Hill when he laid it down with old rough stones, nothing to roll them in.

Walter Brown had a 'shop' at the Chestnuts before he moved to Lane End. His wife used to be school mistress up here and Carry Pethick was a teacher with her. They left to go to Lane End school just as I was about.

Mr Trod worked at Ivy Cottage, he was a good blacksmith. I've been coming across these fields in the morning in the winter, I used to get up to the stable about six o'clock or soon after and you'd see a light in his shop.

No fire whatever or anything like that, when you have bacon smoking in the chimney.

All the servants were brought up from Morwell and Longwood to go to church. Everybody seemed to go to church. I used to go to that church, I used to come up in the morning and do my horses, back home to breakfast, wash and change, back up to church and when the coachman and grooms used to go and get their horses to put them in the carriage shafts and harness them I used to go out then and give my horses their dinner. Home to dinner and then in the afternoon time I had to go back and do them again. That was twice to Owslebury and then at night I had to go back to rack up about 7 – 7.30 (rack up – last feed at night).

As you goes in the church there was a gallery and that's were the organ was and that's where the Sunday school children was. There was pews in there just on the left hand side

as you go in the church there was a 'horse box' you might say, which belonged to Farmer Anstey, paid so much a year for it. There was plenty as had their own seats and then up in the vestry there was the Longwood seat on one side and Morwell on the other.

You never saw work done on a farm on a Sunday unless it was to do with cattle. You wouldn't see a woman hardly pick up a thimble and put it on her finger.

I've been at it – 7/6 an acre. My wage was 2/- a day. I've been and pulled over ½ acre and by working so hard I could almost double my money. When I had several children and the wife, I used to fatten two pigs a year.

There was four if not five cottages on that old bank on the left hand side going down and I can mind when they were all occupied. The last woman that was there was a Mrs. Parker. They were very old cottages, at the back of them it was mainly blocks of chalk with flint in front. Of course there was only one room downstairs with a little pantry at the back and one bedroom upstairs with perhaps a little one as well.

Mr Russell had four farms, the Off Licence, Lower Whiteflood Farm, Baybridge Farm rented from Dpress? Elm Farm rented from Mr Stephens of Blackdown. He had six horses to do the lot and I'll gamble that there weren't so much couch on they four farms as there is on one acre of some of them now. You can't get the couch out of the ground with the tackle they use today.

I said to my daughter the other day. Those hedges across there. I can remember the time when they were trimmed each year, but look at them now. There was no barbed wire and its that that spoils the sport for hounds today. A horse when he's hunting today goes five miles when he went one years gone by. There's some get off their horse and take their coat off to lay over the wire.

When I used to go shandyng grass seed, 1216 of clover and a little trefoil and rye grass.

As the Club day was on a Monday, so on the Sunday, Odd fellows and Forresters joined together and had a church parade with the Shawford and Compton band and two banners a flying and people come five or six miles to see it and the church packed out.

One year the dinner would be held at the Cricketers and the next at the Shearers, the two clubs went together. There was also the fair with all manner of things, swinging boats, roundabouts, shooting galleries, a real proper day. On the Monday they used to parade the

village and visit Morwell Hall and Morwell Lodge and all round. I can tell you we used to pay 2/6 for the dinner and there was everything on that table you could think of up to a rabbit pie, lovely beef, pressed beef, mutton, everything was on the table that was required including a pint of beer. It was a jolly nice day. Shouldn't be surprised if the last club day wasn't before the last war.

Garland Day was the 1st of May, and it was made much of 'Maym, May – Garland Day, Chimney Sweeper's Holiday'. The children would go round collecting flowers and making them into a garland.

### **Changes at the Ship**

It used to be thatched and when the thatch was removed, I gamble it was that thick (indicating 2 – 2'6" thick), and there was only just the Tap Room. Old Mr Norgate and his wife used to keep it, he used to have to go down the cellar and he had a little benzolene upstairs and the odd wag used to blow it out.

### **Shearers**

was burnt down on a Saturday night. There's a well the other side of the hedge. That well used to stand inside the house.

### **The Cricketers**

When I first remember that a man by the name of Sam Smith had it. He was carpenter for old Squire Standish.

There used to be a pub next to Col. Wilson's house but that was before my day.

There was a pub at Hurst Common. Where my sister lives at (now White House) Baybridge – that was a pub. Over at Whiteflood there was a pub. My grandfather's father kept it.

And then at Holt Farm, those two cottages that stood there one was a pub, before my time. Old Squire Long bought these tow places because his men used to get in tehre drinking. The last people that kept the pub went by the name of Salter, from there they went to Upham to live.

Down in front of Elm Farm there was another farm, with barns, outhouses and the whole lot was burnt down. Man named Pope kept it.

Mr Bunny was the undertaker, you should see the coffins he made. They were black all round and polished. He use to cover a big area and if going to Baybridge, or further afield he would take his horse and van. The horse he had was blind.

## 4 Harking back to when the 1st World War (1914 - 1918) came to the village

---

Taken from 'Owslebury Youth Organisation' - Newsletter No.33. April 9th 1960

A fine warm August Bank Holiday brought to the village the knowledge that war had been declared with Germany. The village Constable had already served mobilization notices to the Reservists who had left to rejoin their Regimental Depots, assuring their folk they would be back before Christmas.



WW1 Camp at Hazeley Down - to see a larger image click on the picture above.

Rumours were widespread, but one that became fact was that the War Office had requisitioned a large part of Hazeley Down from Mr J Best with the view of building a camp. The Royal Engineers with loads of building material moved in, and with the aid of local civilian labour, a vast Camp came into being to be known as Hazeley Down Camp.

Then came the Troops, the Field Batteries of Artillery of the Welsh Division. The village now echoed with a strange tongue, as the Welsh speaking Gunners quickly made friends with Owslebury folk and the Inns, "The Cricketers" "Shearers" and "The Ship" rang with the melodious singing of the Welshmen.



Gunner Mark Hammond -  
111 Heavy Battery, Royal  
Garrison Artillery. An  
Owslebury man who was one  
of the Hazeley Camp soldiers.

Soon the Batteries limbered up en route for Southampton and Ypres. Now came more Artillery to take over the Camp and again a strange tongue was to be heard in the Village, but this time the drawl of the Canadian Prairies and Backwoods. These Gunners were part of a Canadian Division which distinguished itself at Vimy Ridge.

With the departure of the Canadians the Camp became an Infantry Training Centre, and the Reserve Battalions of the following Regiments arrived: 14th London Regt. (The London Scottish), 15th London Regt. (Civil Service Rifles), 16th London Regt. (The Queens Westminsters) and the 20th London Regt. (Royal West Kents). The village now heard the skirl of Pipes and the Bugles of the Rifles as these Troops carried out extensive infantry training night and day in the locality.

The tempo of the War moved on to the carnage of Infantry in the Somme Battles, and weekly drafts left the Camp, en route to Shawford Station and Flanders, and to many a soldier, Owslebury was the last of the country he saw that he died for.

The night before these drafts left there was always cheerful parties at the Cricketers when the late Mrs S White and her brother Fred played the piano and violin for the troops. When at length the Infantry left the Camp they were replaced by a "White Russian Battalion" and Portuguese Infantry, more strange tongues for the Village.



## What is left at Hazeley?



Hazeley Cross with wreaths  
in place

A granite Cross, erected by the men of the London Regiments to their comrades who did not return. A Cap Badge of the Canadian Artillery worked in concrete, and a Gun Park where Mr P Best now houses his farm implements.

## 5 Transcription of a letter from the Clerk of the Council at Winchester Rural District outlining the background of Owslebury's Water Supply

---



Original letter dated:  
6th June 1961

Dear Sir,

I apologise for not replying earlier to your letter of the 17th April but I have been making investigations concerning the water supply in the Parish of Owslebury.

Following the passing of the Public Health Act, 1875, the then new Winchester Rural Sanitary Authority investigated the question of the provision of a water supply for the Village. At that time, there were three or four wells in the Village and some five or six soft water tanks but in dry weather the supply was very limited.

In 1880, the sanitary Authority decided to sink a deep well and provide a large storage tank with machinery for the raising of the water into the tank. Furthermore, it was also decided to lay water mains and fix standpipes through the Village. It was hoped by this means there would be a constant supply of water for the Village and adjoining neighbourhood. The latter to pay a water rate for their supply which would help pay for the working expenses.

The machinery for the raising of the water comprised a large windmill fitted to the brick tower and the mill contained 72 fans. The well from which the water was pumped was 284 ft. deep. It was hoped that the supply tank would hold a three months supply for the Village. The Sanitary Inspector for the District at that time (a Mr. D. Denham) was appointed General Superintendent of the Waterworks on the 4th December, 1880, and a Mr. R. Ansty was appointed to supervise the oiling of the machinery at a wage of £15 per year. On the

18th January, 1881, during a severe snowstorm, the large mill wheel with its fans was smashed with only 2 ft. of water in the tank and urgent repairs had to be effected.

During the following summer it was found that when the springs were low there was a definite water shortage and it was decided that something would have to be done to supplement the wind power upon which the water supply depended. The Sanitary Authority then decided to hire a steam engine for that purpose, a Mr. Standish offering to supply a man and engine at 10/- per day.

In November, 1881, several of the large fans in the mill wheel were again blown away and from that time onwards until about the latter part of 1882 there seemed to have been constant trouble with the machinery and with water shortage from the well. In fact, on the 23rd June, 1882, there was 3 ft. of water in the tank and the well itself was dry. Strangely enough, at Longwood House the Earl of Northesk had a well 260 ft. deep with a good supply of water and this well was situated only about one mile from the Owslebury Waterworks.

On November the 19th 1881 the Sanitary Authority decided to employ Dean & Smith to provide water either by wind or steam with more continuous pumping. This arrangement went on until November, 1884, when the Sanitary Authority was advised to sink a 4" borehole. By December the 8th the bore had reached 53 ft. in depth (27 ft. below the well at Longwood) but strangely enough no water was found. Progress in boring was very slow due to considerable layers of flints which had been encountered but by January the 19th the men carrying out the boring operations had penetrated the seal of flints and had reached 113 ft. without finding much water.

On January the 31st the bore had reached 137 ft. in rather soft chalk but seams of flints were still being found at intervals of roughly 2 ft. Boring was finished on March the 4th and the well had then reached some 200 ft. The yield of water from this bore was, to quote the official report, "one quart of water per minute". After working for five months the supply had only just doubled. At that time there were apparently 42 cottages and 2 farms to be supplied with water.

The two farms had water laid into the dwellings and the cottagers obtained their supply from the standpipes in the Village street. The rather haphazard arrangement of steam plus wind continued until March, 1915, when the pumps gave out and flooded with 80 ft. of water in the well and no means of raising the supply into the storage tanks. The District Council then consulted with other firms of Water Engineers and on September the 20th 1915 a small vertical petrol oil engine of four horse power complete with all equipment plus

rising main for the sum of £215 was installed.

This arrangement continued fairly satisfactorily by means of judicious pumping for many years and the supply was under the control of a Joint Water Board comprising five members of the Winchester Rural District Council, four members selected by the Parish Council and a Mr. W. Bridle who was the Village Blacksmith in charge of the Waterworks. In 1948 water mains were laid covering Owslebury Village, Baybridge and those parts of Morestead south of Hill Farm. The supply was made available to consumers in August, 1949. In 1951 an extension to cover the Hensting Lane area was undertaken and water was made available early in the following year.

The old wind pump building was, of course, demolished in 1958 and the reservoir some 30 yds. away has also now been filled in.

I hope this information will be helpful to you.

Yours truly,

R. W. Partington

Clerk of the Council

## 6 Nurse Harfield Remembers

---

This article was dictated by Nurse Harfield for her grandson - who had to complete a school project on village life! She refers to children he would have been at school with



Nurse Harfield (nee Mabbitt) District Nurse and Midwife - Twyford and Owslebury 1900's.

The Grandmother of Richard and David Harfield was District Nurse in Owslebury from the 1920s to the 1960s, and lodged in one of the houses at Marwell (where Emma Hall and Angela Read lived).

These are one or two things that we have heard her tell of life in the village at that time.

Before her marriage she lodged at Marwell and her district was Fishers Pond almost to Upham - Morestead - through to Lane End - Longwood - Owslebury. All this was covered BY BICYCLE.

She would be fetched out of her lodgings at Marwell by the father, who had sometimes had to walk, or run, from Longwood or Morestead, to Marwell to get the 'Nurse' because the baby was coming. She cycled - summer and winter - to get to the mother. Sometimes the father would come in a farm cart, and the precious bicycle will be put in the cart, and she would be taken to the patient.

(Very occasionally she had a pony and trap sent for her). Perhaps she would have just delivered a baby, by oil lamp and candles, and a knock at the door sent her post haste on the bicycle from perhaps Longwood to Fishers Pond to another baby case. She often said they used to come in pairs, as far apart as they could, in distance.

When she married she moved to Homelands (on the Cricket Down), where Richard and David's father was born. Things progress a little, a car was purchased and the bicycle, although used for day cases, was not quite so important as she was taken and fetched in the car.

During the last war, 1939 to 1945, when people were being sent into the country from bombed areas, Homelands became a small private nursing home, and she was in great demand. Babies were born by oil lamps, in use at night, as no electricity was available.

From 1918 to 1958 Nurse Harfield delivered 330 babies in her district, over half of which were born without running water or electricity in the houses.

Tilley lamps were used and there was a water pump which drew up the water from rain storage tanks. Water was boiled on oil stoves, and if you are lucky you had a small type of oven called a Hestia - under which you put two oil stoves and kept on pumping and pumping if you didn't want your cake to sink in the middle!

Most of the village cooked on oil stoves unless you had enough money to buy a modern 'Calor' cooking stove, some of the bigger houses had Raeburn type stoves. Most people worked for farmers or the 'gentry'.

There was 'The Squire' (the last as such) of the village, Major Standish, who owned and lived at Marwell House with his six children, nanny, footman, butler, kitchen maids, etc.

There are still one or two of the old servants living. In Owslebury New Churchyard you can see the grave of the 'Nanny'.

She started with the Standish family at 13 years of age and was with them still when she died, having looked after the children's children, etc of each one of the six.

In the old churchyard, there is a large grave with the Standish names on it.

(They always went to church from Marwell by horse and carriage).

## 7 Memories of G.G.Pierce - Part 1

---

There have been improved road services, cars, buses, electricity, radio, T.V, not to mention the huge changes to agriculture.

Young people today know nothing of the joys, and sorrows, of candle light, paraffin lamps, and of having to fetch drinking water from the village pump.

Bath night in a tin bath in the kitchen, walking ten miles (five each way) to get a hair cut, getting lost in the dark, the only transport dog carts and pony traps.

Fetching a bucket of water from the village pump was a daily chore for children.

One bucket between two small children, most in their boots by the time they reached home. Men and boys carried two buckets with the help of wooden yokes across their shoulders.

The pump was a meeting place for the exchange of gossip.

In winter it was wrapped in straw to prevent freezing. If it did freeze a fire of straw was made to thaw the ice, and a stamping of feet while waiting to thaw.

Milk, was fetched from a nearby farm, in white enamelled cans fitted with lids.

Children bowled the lids down the hill, with the cans following! It was easier for them to swing a can of milk over their heads than a bucket of water, clothes were ruined, the handle would break, and explaining things at home was often tricky!

Another chore for children was to collect firewood, which for most was an enjoyable way to spend time, and at home it had to be graded into logs, or kindling wood.

Cleaning and trimming lamps was an elaborate business.

Most of the room was in shadow, even with the lamp lit. Turned up to high, the flame smoked and discoloured the glass. The ceiling got quite black from oily smuts. With all our 'mod cons' do we not lose some of these kindlier old-fashioned pleasures?

In the days of piped water, and cattle troughs, [ponds](#) are no longer needed, and many have been filled in – there are now no carthorses to drink their muddy waters. At one time they

were a favourite hunting ground for children with jam jars and nets, looking for frogspawn, newts and sticklebacks.

These expeditions often took place dressed in our Sunday best, and returning home to the wrath of parents – filthy.

As a change from pond activities we attended, occasionally, a local pig killing. Done by a wizened cottager with a knife, and it was a noisy, bloody business.

Most farm labourers kept a pig then, and the farmer often gave them pig food. Home cured meat was a great standby for cottagers. High wages have made pig keeping less essential than it used to be, (that or 'elf and safety!)

Nothing from the pig was wasted, women would gather to assist in cutting up the carcass, salting, curing, and disposing of offal.

Chitterlings, critlings, pig's lard, trotters, and the head, which was made into brawn, it was compressed in a pot and flat irons used to weigh it down. There was a village 'pig club', its members paid a shilling (5p) a week and if their pig died the owner received compensation.

When ponds and pigs palled on us children, we would visit the blacksmith's shop, where, if lucky, we were allowed to pump the bellows. It was like blowing the bellows for the church organ.

The reek of the burning hoof as the hot shoe was pressed on it, the Smith's language when the horse would not 'bide still', all conjured up a sort of Sunday school picture of hell with the blacksmith as the devil.

Today, many village smithy's have gone the way of ponds and pigsties – no longer needed, no longer used. Tractors and garages have largely replaced carthorses and Smithies, and the clanging of the hammer on the anvil a distant memory.

#### Village Hall

Many village halls were built in the 1900's. Before that the schoolroom was used for all meetings and social occasions. Parish Halls, etc. were often built courtesy of local squires, and 'gentry', and became the centre of communal life, - unless you were a regular at the 'pub'.



Trips to town were infrequent, radio and TV unknown, and villagers made their own entertainment. Dances were popular, and villagers came from miles, often on foot, bicycles, in traps or wagonettes, by moonlight, starlight, or pitch-blackness.

Condensation trickled down the walls from the heat of the lamps, and dripped from the roof.

The orchestra, usually a piano and a fiddler jingled out, Waltzes, Valetas, Boston Twosteps, Lancers, barn dances, and at the close of the year Roger de Coverly. No drums, no crooning, no microphones, no jazz!

Sometimes the servants from the big houses came (Marwell – Longwood House), Occasionally the Squire's lady came and brought her daughters, they danced divinely over the nail studded boards. They never stopped long.

Concerts were held from time to time with a repetitive quality about them.

The sexton sang 'The Ballad of the Mistletoe Bough' – verse after verse, with everyone joining in the chorus.

The gamekeeper sang 'The Old Rustic Bridge by the Mill'.

The schoolmistress sang 'A Perfect Day' and 'Mother Macree'. The Parson followed with some nonsense called 'From Wimbledon to Wambledon'.

We all knew what came next.

Whist drives, with incredibly old packs of cards, the light being so inadequate and unevenly shed, that some would ask their opponents to arrange their cards for them! Dances, concerts, whist drives, political meetings, magic lantern shows, cricket club suppers – these were the big occasions for the hall.

Most winter evenings it was simply the 'Working Men's Club'.

A major event the purchase of a large billiard table for £30, and its erection on concrete foundations. Billiards, auction bridge, whist, dominoes, draughts, chess and ping pong (table tennis) – played through the winter months.

Some men just sat around the fire sleeping or talking after a hard day's work in the field.

Today, village halls, electrically lit and quipped with all mod cons are still the focal point of village life, and credit is due to those who seek to hold the village together.

## 8 Memories of G.G.Pierce - Part 2

---

### Roads

Before the First World War all the 'roads' were very rough. Ruts and puddles were filled in with flints rolled in by the steamroller, if one was available.

If not, then they were gradually crushed in by the steel rimmed wheels of farm wagons and carts. Lanes and side roads were little more than tracks, deeply rutted by cartwheels.

Village women went stone picking in the fields and were paid so much a bucketful by farmers, who sold them to the district council for road mending.

Flint knappers, with their rounded hammers were expert at breaking them into the right size. Flints were used in house building.

The Church vestry when built, was faced with flints to match the rest of the building.

Pocketknives had an instrument attached for removing stones from horse's hooves. Those who used horses never went out without it.

There was no 'left or right' to keep to – you used the track made by other vehicles. Meeting another head on meant drawing into the hedge if possible, or back your horse and cart back to the nearest gateway.

The language was! – If neither would give way.

Cycle tyres frequently gashed by flints – you always carried a repair kit. Very few cars came through the village; no one here owned one until around 1914. A Studebaker, with big brass lamps and a high seat for the driver.

A little later on the Parson bought a Trojan car with solid rubber tyres. Before, all trips were made by horse and cart. A carriers van used to take two hours to travel five miles to town, because the owner of the van stopped at nearly every house to leave or collect parcels and have a chat. Men had to get out and walk up the hills (and we have many!).

A waggonette seated seven as well as the driver, and passengers were equipped with waterproof sheets and rugs for the journey. Bread, meat, and groceries were delivered by cart and horse. In winter they carried candle lamps, which only showed how dark it was.

People walking in the dark carried candle lanterns with them. There were no streetlights and few houses. Outlines of familiar barns, trees, poles, etc. kept one from getting lost in the dark.

Footpaths were used much more than today, because they saved not only distance but time. It was easy to stray in the dark especially in the fog, stumbling around until a familiar object was felt, even a patch of broad leafed garlic proved to be a guide to reaching home.

### School

The Headmaster played a more important part in village life a century ago.

Children now, only receive part of their education in their village now, then schooldays were completed in their village. Now, parents themselves are better educated than they were then.

Before the First World War some villagers were unable to read or write, and many of them would bring their old age pension papers, wills, insurance claims, hedging and thatching accounts, friendly society contributions, pig club money to the headmaster to explain and check for them. He was often secretary or treasurer – or both – to cricket and football clubs as well as, working men's club, the slate club, the Oddfellows, possibly church warden, parish councillor, even if able – the church organist!

Today, many residents tend to use their village as a dormitory, and travel outside for their daily job.

Today improved buildings, lighting, heating, water, sanitation, textbooks, transport, school meals, medical and dental treatment have all contributed to the health of village children.

In the 1900's some children living in outlying farms and cottages had to walk over two miles along muddy tracks and lanes in all weathers to get to school.

Facilities for drying clothes were non-existent. A cupboard full of slippers for those whose boots were wet through. The smell of steaming garments; some of them 'sewn on for winter' was an integral part of the classroom smell on rainy days!

On dark winter days the school closed at 3.30pm as it was not possible to see to read and write, and children had a chance to get home before dark.

The oil lamps, which hung suspended by chains, were rarely lit unless there was a party in school in the evening.

The classrooms were unevenly lit by coke stoves with iron guards around them.

At lunchtime the children clustered around them for warmth and ate doorstep sandwiches with home cured bacon.

When the Squire had a pheasant shoot or partridge drive there were irregular absences among the boys who took the day off to go beating.

More than once the school attendance officer would ride round on his bicycle to round up boys misemployed in this way, and send them back to school.

There were always seasonal absences for haymaking, harvesting, and potato picking.

There were only two classrooms in the infant's room, children were sometimes admitted at the age of three. In a larger room the Headmaster and his assistant taught standards 1,2,3,4,5 & 6, about sixty children,

(All from the village, and not as now) side by side with no partition or curtain to separate them. It must have composed considerable strain and technique on the teachers.

As for the children, if they didn't like their lesson, they'd listen to another!

The playgrounds were small squares of dirt and flints surrounded by iron railings, and contained corrugated iron lavatories – of which the less said the better! Ball games would have meant broken windows. Marbles, chase games, skipping, hopscotch, cut our hands and knees on the flints and got dirty until the bell called us in.

The Inspector sent children and staff into a frenzy of activity, one headmaster sent the boys out to turn the signposts around which meant that particular inspector failed to reach the school at all!

## 9 Memories of G.G.Pierce - Part 3

---

How did children amuse themselves then?

No radio, T.V, buses, cars or cinema no ready made entertainment.

There was little organised sport for children then. Two highlights in this village, the Sunday school treat, and the Friendly Society's church parade, with banners, followed by an outing.

Children mostly, made their own amusement, and yet time flew by. Seasonal games like tops, marbles, hoops, kites and conkers, some still played today. Bowling hoops and spinning tops are no longer safe on our roads, and have died out with time.

Tops were cracked through the village streets, round and fat like turnips or mushroom shaped, steel tipped with grooves to receive the string of the whips.

A skilful tug would get them spinning, and then they were lashed along the dusty 'roads' – occasionally one would crash through a cottage window!

The village blacksmith made our hoops, and mended them when they broke. Girls had wooden hoops, the boys steel ones. Racing through the village, the hoops would strike sparks from the flints in the road.

We made pop guns out of elder by pushing the pith from the stems and ramming in wads of chewed paper which we then ejected with a hazel stick.

Peashooters from cow parsley stems and shot came from ripe elderberries. Hazel, we used for bows and arrows, spears and daggers.

The spears were peeled in patterns. We burnt our names on the hilt of our daggers.

Our first cigarettes were made from dry stem of "old mans beard", it made our eyes water and burnt our tongues! We made pipes from large acorns, for tobacco, using ripe dock seeds. We found we could smoke more if we dampened the weed.

We had an armoury in the middle of the huge unkempt hedge, along with a torture chamber, a larder, a conference hall and, a private room for the leader. We were at times quite homesick in later years for that mysterious green hedge.

In many places today hedges are yielding, in the name of progress, and economy to barbed

wire. I have yet to hear of anyone who has been homesick for barbed wire!

(These memories of a village childhood by G.G. Pierce will no doubt stir heart and minds of boys of long ago)

#### Memories of Church

include the taste of the varnish on the pews and crawling from one end to the other – and underneath them! Nearly everyone in the village attended church regularly. Church and Sunday school, and no saying, 'I don't want to go!'

One Sunday, the Squire went to read the lesson from the book of Habakkuk. He couldn't find the place and went redder and redder and dropped his monocle.

His daughters were giggling, but trying to keep straight faces in their family pew in the Chancel. Eventually, the Vicar went across to find the place for him.

The Church had, before electricity, an organ that had to be hand pumped. On one occasion, the lad pumping, fell fast asleep during the sermon, the last hymn was announced, the organist tried, but nothing woke the sleeping lad who was supposed to be 'pumping'.

Eventually, the Vicar came and pumped the bellows so that the hymn could be sung! The poor lad couldn't sit for a week!

Children were asked, "What are Cherubim's?" – "White owls" came the reply. "What are Seraphim's then?" "Brown owls sir". "What do we mean when we say 'To Thee Cherubim and Seraphim continually do cry'?" Back came the answer "Please sir, it means that the white owls are always screeching, and the brown owls are always looking around the throne of God!"

At times our Sunday school classes were rather unruly, and the Vicar's wife asked the policeman if he would stand outside the window to help keep order! Cricket

The heavy roller has been pulled out of the weeds in the hedge. The motor mower has gone round and round the outfield, throwing up the grass before it. Nets have been placed around the matting.

Bats have been oiled, the pavilion thatch repaired, the side screens freshly painted and wheeled into position

The village cricket team turns out all in white today; most have cricket boots, and some caps. They wear two pads to go in to bat, and use batting gloves.

Things were different 100 years ago; there were no motor mowers in most village grounds only the table was mown with a hand mower. The outfield grass grew long and lush.

Some times men pretended the ball was lost, waiting until the batsmen were well launched into a run, the ball was snatched up, hurled at the wicket – and a man would be run out.

Sometimes cows were turned out to graze in the field. They kept the grass down, but left other hazards which ruined many a pair of trousers.

Downland pitches, the grass though not so long was thick, and balls did not travel the ground easily.

Consequently, most batsmen were big hitters, and aimed foursquare. One fast bowler who took a very long run discovered, after he had delivered several balls, that he had been stepping over a partridge which was sitting on a net full of eggs in the long grass.

Another fielder, walking backwards near the boundary to catch a high ball fell over a sow with a litter of pigs which he had failed to notice before.

In those days it was difficult to get eleven men out properly dressed for cricket.

The parson, schoolmaster, squire and his friends would be in white. Some villagers wore grey flannels and white shirts.

Some put on their best blue trousers with belt and braces. A few wore gym shoes but only one or two had cricket boots. Batting gloves were despised. Very few batsmen wore pads, some wore none.

One of the worst combinations to meet at cricket was the father who umpired and a son who bowled “How’s that father?” “Out my son”.

Would become notorious for miles around. Today, teams are often made up of families with cricket in their blood. Some of these families go back generations.



The pride and affection villagers had was that it was theirs through communal efforts.

The wicket, outfield, pavilion, screens, mower and roller all had their histories and all marked the efforts of the community to foster the game. Suppers, whist drives, dances, fetes, jumble sales, raised money so that repairs and improvements could be made.

This generous, co-operative spirit is still apparent in village cricket today, wives, and daughters provide the tea. This is no cup of tea and a bun but a serious sit down job!

Strawberry jam, wasps and honey, smiling faces and brown arms, swifts screaming over the thatch, the church clock striking, these are the unchanging, and unforgettable things of Hampshire village cricket.

Memories of G.G Pierce

## 10 Agricultural Riots - Owslebury - 1760 - 1832

---

Referring to the last labourer's revolt, when farmers had in a mob, rebukes were issued but no prosecution.

There was however, one exception, a small farmer – John Boyes – of the Parish of Owslebury. He had thrown himself heartily into the labourers cause.

A number of small farmers met and decided that the labourers wage ought to be raised. Boyes agreed to take a paper round for signature. The paper ran as follows:

“We the undersigned are willing to give 2/- (10p) per day for all able bodied married man, and 9/- (45p) per week for a single man on consideration of our rents and tithes being abated in proportion”.

In similar cases, as a rule, the farmers left it to the labourers to collect signatures, and Boyes, by undertaking the work himself made himself a marked man.

He had been in a mob which extorted money from Lord Nothesk's steward at Owslebury, (Moses Stanbrook) and for this he was indicted for felony.

But the jury – the chagrin for the prosecution – acquitted him. What followed is best described in the report of Sergeant Wilde's speech in the House of Commons 21st July 1831.

“Boyes was tried and acquitted but he (Mr Wilde) being unable to account for the acquittal considering the evidence to have been clear against him, and feeling that although the jury were most respectable men, they might possibly entertain some sympathy for him in consequence to his situation in life, thought it was his duty to send a communication to the Attorney General stating that Boyes was deeply responsible for the acts which had taken place.

That he thought that he should not be allowed to escape and recommending that he be tried before a different jury in another court”.

The Attorney General sent him (Mr Wilde) to come into the other court, and the result was that Boyes was tried and convicted.

In the other more complaisant court, Farmer BOYES and JAMES FUSSELL (Crabbe Hall, Owslebury) described as a 'genteel' young man of about twenty, living with his mother, were found guilty of leading a riotous mob for reducing rents and tithes, and sentenced to seven years deportation. FUSSELL'S sentence was commuted to imprisonment but BOYES was sent to Van Diemens land for seven years.

It is known that John BOYES did not return.

### **JOHN BOYES TRIAL – SPECIAL COURT**

The Times – December 20th 1830

### **WALTER LONG (Marwell) in court.**

Winchester, Wednesday December 29th 1830

### **Robbery of LORD NORTHEK'S steward (MOSES STANBROOK)**

WILLIAM ADAMS – 35 years,

WILLIAM BARNES – 42 years,

JOHN HOARE – 19 years,

JAMES FUSSELL – 29 years,

WILLIAM BOYES – 24 years,

JOHN BOYES – over 40 years,

NICHOLAS FREEMANTLE – 30 years,.

### **Destruction of winnowing machines at Rosehill (Longwood House) £5 taken.**

GRACE NOTT (maid)

MOSES STANBROOK (steward)

RICHARD PEEL (employee)

MARWELL: £5 taken after demanding £12-14-0d (£12.70p). Local wages 8/- (40p a week)

100 persons gathered on Owslebury Down. Judge summed up against the prisoners especially JOHN BOYES, but the Jury acquitted all but ADAMS and FREEMANTLE.

Notes taken from "Owslebury Remembers" published in 1994

'Crabbe Hall' – Corner of Crabbe Hill (garden of 'Holly Hatch')

E.H.

## 11 The Owslebury Lads

---

On the thirtieth of November,  
Last 1830  
Our Owslebury lads they did prepare  
All for the machinery,  
And when they did get there,  
My eye! How they let fly;  
The machinery fell to pieces  
In the twinkling of an eye.  
*CHORUS: Oh! Mob, such a mob  
Never was seen before,  
And if we live this hundred years,  
We never shall see more.*

Then to Winchester we was sent  
Our trial for to take,  
And if we having nothing to say,  
Our counsel we shall keep;  
And when the Judge he did begin  
I'm sorry for to say,  
Some they transported for life  
And some they cast to die  
*CHORUS: Oh! Mob, such a mob  
Never was seen before,  
And if we live this hundred years,  
We never shall see more.*

Now to conclude and  
To finish my new song,  
You gentleman all around me  
You think that I'm not wrong  
If all the poor of Owslebury  
For rising of their wages  
I hope that all their enemies  
May live to want for places.  
*CHORUS: Oh! Mob, such a mob  
Never was seen before,*

*And if we live this hundred years,  
We never shall see more.*

“The Owslebury Lads” – A song that appears with others in a recording “The Painful Plough”

## 12 Owslebury Population 1841 - 564

---

1886

There was discovered in a coppice (called The Well Coppice) belonging to the Beech Grove or Blackdown Estate, the remains of very ancient buildings – which was supposed by archaeologist who examined them to be of Roman origin. Hundreds of flat stones of various shapes which formed the roof of the building were removed to BEECH GROVE HOUSE, which can now be seen forming paths in the kitchen gardens, and back premises, as well as in the front doors of adjoining cottages.

1884

An old man J Batchelor well remembers the male population of the Parish being turned out to drill on Owslebury Down in preparation for Napoleon's (1st) threatened invasion. The weapons were stored at Beech Grove and Blackdown.

1884 Report

The road from Baybridge to Marwell was made about 39 years ago (around 1850). Nothing but a track existed formerly over Owslebury Down.

in 1860

Owslebury had 3 Blacksmiths, 3 Carpenters, 1 Maltster, 4 Shoemakers and 2 Shopkeepers. One Farmer practised as a horse and cow doctor.

Local grown wheat was ground at the windmill situated behind Old Mill Stores. Flour sold to villagers for bead making.

Snippets in Church Guard Book 1800's – onwards.

E.H.

November 2007

## 13 Water Supply to Owslebury

---

**This article written by Norman Hanby for the Twyford Waterworks Trust Newsletter No 35. Published in October 1998**

The bleak looking building known at Twyford as the Rectifier House stands on the wrong side of Bridleway 20. It used to house the transformer and mercury arc rectifier which provided D. C. power for the W. H. Allen pumps installed in the main building by Southampton Corporation, in the late 1940s.

It also provided a home for the pumps which delivered water to the village of Owslebury. One of these pumps had electric drive, the other was driven by the Pelapone engine which is still in position in the building.

There is a five stage a centrifugal pump which could supply the high head needed to reach Owslebury and it has recently been overhauled by the Warsash cadets, in conjunction with Bob Ansell and Kevin Rumary. It is now ready for reinstallation and it is hoped to put it to work as part of a pumping demonstration

From the pumps in the Rectifier House, the water for Owslebury was delivered into a 4 inch water main laid along Bridleway 20 which skirts the western perimeter of the works and then swings eastward to emerge into Mare Lane.

At the junction with Mare Lane a bulk supply meter was installed and from this point onwards the main and the water it carried was the responsibility of Winchester R. D. C. until 1974 when both the R. D.C and Southampton Corporation handed over their water supply functions to Southern Water.

Opinions vary as to the date when water from Twyford was first supplied to Owslebury. Chatting with Waterworks staff, who have been concerned with the supply in recent years, I have encountered two views. One view suggests that the main in Bridleway 20 was laid in 1937 or 38.

The other suggests that it was laid after the 1939 - 45 war.

I understand that before the supply was brought in from Twyford, Owslebury had a supply of its own, pumped by a wind driven pumping unit in the village.

Readers may perhaps have personal memories of the old wind driven supply and may also have taken note of the laying of the main in Bridleway 20 as far as Mare Lane and then on to the village.



## 14 Village Ponds - 1800 - 1900's

---

Morestead Ponds	Morestead Crossroads
Manor Farm, Morestead	private, ornamental
Bottom Pond Farm	concreted over
Staggs Lane Staggs Lane	now partly overgrown
Pond Cottage	whole of present garage area
Boyes Farm	inside gates – concreted over
The Old Farm	in front of present house
Great Hunts	on boundary-side of road
Marwell	left of Hurst cottages – near car park
Marwell Woods	somewhere in the middle
Greenhill	along bridleway – on Mr Trigg's land
Elm Farm	between (old) cowsheds and coach cottage garden
Coney Park	In the woods
White Flood Farm	Large – directly opposite house
Main Road	opposite Parish Hall (small)
Recreation Ground	where water runs across the road and floods
Lower Whiteflood	opposite house
Longwood Dene Farm	convenient for the steam engine to re-fill
Lancing Farm	convenient for the steam engine to re-fill
New Warren Farm	convenient for the steam engine to re-fill

## 15 Longwood House - or Rosehill

---



Longwood House - 1800's Click on the picture above to see a larger rib cage

Information on Longwood House extracted from the History, Gazetteer and Directory of Hampshire & IOW Published by William White in 1859.

Rosehill, formerly called Longwood House, an ancient mansion in a park of about 100 acres, 5 miles SE of Winchester, is the seat and property of the Earl of Northesk, and Baron Rosehill of Scotland, whose father, the late Earl, was a distinguished Admiral, the third in command at the battle of Trafalgar, and obtained this estate by marrying the daughter of the late William Henry Ricketts, Esq;

He was the seventh Earl of Northesk, and changed the name of his seat from Longwood to his secondary title. About the beginning of the last century it was the seat of Lord Carpenter, a distinguished general who rose from the ranks to the top of his profession and a peerage.

In the late 1920 – 30's, the then Duke and Duchess of York, together with Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret, were often visitors at Longwood House for weekend shooting parties.

The Royal Family was at Longwood House the weekend before the Abdication of King Edward VIII. The following week, the Duke of York became King George VI. Young relatives of staff working there were often smuggled in to see the Royal Party.

A Methodist Chapel was situated by the Dower House; the 'big' house had its own Roman Catholic Church in the house itself. The house had in its grounds, a very fine cricket pitch, which rivalled any for miles around. Here, the village team played alternately with the Marwell Hall ground.

Owslebury was surrounded on all sides by troops preparing for D. Day. Longwood itself had many troops under canvas in its woods, and was requisitioned in WWII for American troops, and left a virtual ruin, after they, and other troops billeted there left.

Marwell – out of bounds to villagers until the end of WWII was an airfield. Here American planes, Airacobra and Tomahawk after arriving in crates at Southampton Docks, were assembled, Spitfires were repaired.

Planes were flown out of Marwell by ATA (Air Transport Auxiliary).

Out of 600 of these pilots over 100 were women. By 1944 over 2,000 aircraft a month were coming out of factories and repair units. Marwell was one of many used.

Longwood was demolished in the 1970's. Thieves and vandals had stripped the building of valuable material, and it was deemed unsafe.

## 16 Owslebury School : June 1841

---

Owslebury School First Established in (confirmed records) 1823 Original bills are in Church Records.

Mrs. Alice Long endowed £14 a year out of an annuity of £30 left for the School and the poor, in payment of her usual subscription to the Parochial School, and subject thereto to the purchase of fuel, blankets, clothing, or provision for the benefit of the deserving poor.

Gilbert White's Hampshire: also records the above information.

Church Records: These record the building of the School as being 'commenced in the Spring of 1840\* but, owing to incomplete records (presumably lost) the actual opening of the School is not recorded, - in any place.

Item	£	s	d	* £ today approx
To building School House at Owslebury per estimate 1837	£191	10	0d	13752.00
Increase in price for timber	10	0	0d	720.00
To tank built in wash house	6	17	0d	476.00
Pipes, drains	7	0	0d	504.00
To 12 yards of digging to privys, and preparing foundation for shed walls		12	0d	43.00
147 feet of reduced brick and flint work	7	0	0d	504.00
3 yards of brick paving		10	6d	36.00
134 feet of slating	1	17	6d	126.00
262 feet of flint walling	9	16	6d	648.00
50 feet triangular brick coping	1	15	0d	117.00
To cast iron boiler, door frames and grate in wash house	1	12	6d	110.00
To fixing kitchen grate		13	0d	50.00
Topping up fireplace in School room and cementing		7	6d	27.00
2 grates for bedroom and wash house		10	0d	36.00
Fixing for bedroom and wash house		10	0d	36.00

Pump - fixed complete	5	0	0d	360.00
House sink, with lead pipes, drain & small cesspool		15	0d	65.00
Painting 4 extra doors, frames & rafters	1	10	0d	108.00
To carpenters work for Privys & coal shed as per	13	9	4d	965.00
Total	260	15	10	£18683.00

## 17 Owslebury School - Diocesan Record 1881 - 1904

Mr Howse, Board School Master, lodged with the HEATH family at Boyes Farm. This was his way of teaching the children their alphabet.

A	is for	Alan – a cricketer bold
B	is for	BLACKMAN and BLUNDER in the cold
C	is for	COUSINS who sang us a song
D	is for	DENNET who never does wrong
E	is for	EMMANS who lives down the bottom
F	is for	FROUDE and FREEMANTLE who caught him
G	is for	GLASSPOOL, GALPIN and GUY
H	is for	HARFIELDS and HEATHS passing by
I	is for	Ink we put in our pots
J	is for	Jenny who made a big blot
K	is for	KNIGHT of carrier fame
L	is for	LEE who does just the same
M	is for	MEAD, MARTIN and mice
N	is for	NORGATE who rides around on his trike
O	is for	Owl who lives in the oak
P	is for	PAGE who goes skipping along
Q	is for	Queen we all love so well
R	is for	READ and RANDLE down at the dell
S	is for	Sis, for Sally and Sidney
T	is for	TRODD we know as the Blacksmith
U	is for	up, for under, and useful
V	is for	Victor who lives by the pond
W	is for	Walter with a long way to walk
X	is for	mark, when you can't write your name
Y	is for	YOUNG, who farm's by the crossroads
Z	is for	Zebra who lives in the zoo

1894 – School log book – Weekly average attendance 64.6

October 5th

15 pupils left the Parish this Michelmas

October 19th

Admitted boy aged 8 years, knows his letters, that's all.

Girl aged 6 knows nothing.

November 16th

The Master was instructed to write to Mrs F, threatening proceedings if her son Gerald did not attend at once.

From '150 years a Village School' 1990 - E.H

## 18 Owslebury Resident 1896 - 1988

---

Mrs Sadie (nee MILLS) SHOWELL writes for the book: "150 Years a Village School"

In 1896, I came to Owslebury as a very young child with my parents to live in Chalk Pit Cottage, the then Police House for the village, for my father JAMES MILLS was the newly appointed policeman for the village. I recall the constant fear my mother lived in, that one of us children would come to an untimely end by falling over the Chalk Pit.

On reaching school age, I started at the village school, at about the same time that Mr G W PIERCE came to the school as a very young, unmarried schoolmaster, he was assisted by MISS MAY GURMAN.

The schoolhouse was about half its present size (The OLD School House), whilst the site of the houses now known as The Sycamores, Restholme and West View was the schoolmaster's garden. We had in the village two windmills, and a Blacksmith's shop, and how we children loved to lean over the door of the Smithy and see the sparks fly, and smell the odour of burnt hoof.

Under the tuition of my old school master, my daughter passed a scholarship, which, because for lack of transport for us, meant a move back to Winchester, but now, in the evening of our lives, my husband and I have returned. There are many alterations from early days, and I sometimes wonder if we are not fast becoming a 'dormitory' village, and the rural atmosphere is fast disappearing.

SIDNEY SHOWELL (husband) age 71 Mrs Sadie (nee MILLS) SHOWELL writes for the book: "150 Years a Village School"

In 1896, I came to Owslebury as a very young child with my parents to live in Chalk Pit Cottage, the then Police House for the village, for my father JAMES MILLS was the newly appointed policeman for the village. I recall the constant fear my mother lived in, that one of us children would come to an untimely end by falling over the Chalk Pit.

On reaching school age, I started at the village school, at about the same time that Mr G W PIERCE came to the school as a very young, unmarried schoolmaster, he was assisted by MISS MAY GURMAN.

The schoolhouse was about half its present size (The OLD School House), whilst the site of the houses now known as The Sycamores, Restholme and West View was the



schoolmaster's garden.

We had in the village two windmills, and a Blacksmith's shop, and how we children loved to lean over the door of the Smithy and see the sparks fly, and smell the odour of burnt hoof.

Under the tuition of my old school master, my daughter passed a scholarship, which, because for lack of transport for us, meant a move back to Winchester, but now, in the evening of our lives, my husband and I have returned.

There are many alterations from early days, and I sometimes wonder if we are not fast becoming a 'dormitory' village, and the rural atmosphere is fast disappearing.

SIDNEY SHOWELL (husband) age 71 8th October 1966

# 19 Memories of Owslebury School

---

G.W. PIERCE - headmaster - Extracts from school log book



Mr G W Pierce with the school at the old school entrance. Click on the image above to see a larger picture.

## **May 2nd 1905**

Commenced work at school today, being in charge of all standards. G W PIERCE. MISS MAY GURMAN in charge of infants.

## **April 27th 1906**

Five children admitted today making a total of 82.

## **Nov 1st 1907**

School will be closed this afternoon for opening of Parish Hall by CAPTAIN FABER MP

## **1908**

H.M.I.'s report "Discipline / Attendance thoroughly good. High standard of work.

## **Oct 1909**

"Pound Day" children collected 23lbs of Potatoes, 32lbs of onions, 27lbs of rice for RHCH.

## **May 19th 1910**

School closed tomorrow afternoon for funeral of late King.

## **July 15th 1912**

The school will be closed tomorrow as the Headmaster is taking 50 children to Winchester to review Royal Procession.

## **June 2nd 1913**

Re-admitted HARRIS children, living in a caravan at Cheesefoot Head, more than three miles walk from school.

## **Jan 12th 1915**

The King and Lord Kitchener visited Cheesefoot Head today to review troops. Upper class taken.

## **Sept 17th 1915**

I resign charge of the school having enlisted in the Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry for

duration of war.

**Jan 10th 1916**

I am acting Headmistress, temporarily DAISY PIERCE

**Jan 28th 1919**

I resign my duties in charge of school DAISY PIERCE

**Jan 29th 1919**

I resume my duties having been de-mobbed from H M Forces G W PIERCE

**March 13th 1925**

School closed, choir competing in Winchester Music Festival

**March 17th 1925**

School successful in winning four diplomas and Challenge Banner

**March 17th 1926**

School Choir won highest marks in Unison songs, and Folk songs and Challenge Banner. Won third year running.

**Feb 11th 1927**

Bird and Tree Festival held this afternoon 3 o'clock, Parish Hall. The winning team DORIS HALL, DAVID LIVINGSTONE, REGINALD HALL, ERNEST HARFIELD, ALEC PURNELL, ROBERT BETTRIDGE

**Feb 14th 1927**

School choir won the Challenge Banner for the fourth year in succession.

**1928**

Again awarded Hampshire Challenge Shield for Bird and Tree. School awarded Inter County Challenge Shield for Bird and Tree 1927

**June 11th 1928**

Bird and Tree Festival 3 o'clock Parish Hall. Winning team were: ERNEST HARFIELD, EDWARD REED, MAY TUFFS, CHARLES EDWARDS, EDITH FREEMANTLE, MAURICE DERRICK, ANTONY HUTCHINS, AMY BETTRIDGE, EVELYN DERRICK

The schools list of achievements under the headship of G W PIERCE is endless and it was a sad day for the village when he left Owslebury School.

May 2nd 1931: A gloom was cast over the whole village, where MR PIERCE had been a friend to both rich and poor, they were held in high esteem by everyone.

MRS STANDISH (Marwell Hall) presented them with a solid silver tea set, and a set of W.H. Hudson's Nature Volumes.

Daily Herald - Saturday 23rd March 1940: The village school master who threw aside text books, and encouraged pupils to talk in class, has given his last lesson.

King George V decorated MR G W PIERCE nine years ago for his work in rural education. This upright, bright eyed man of 60, after teaching in rural schools for 48 years.

MR PIERCE encouraged his pupils to observe and comment on happenings of that time, and used to march his classes out into the fields and lanes to learn the history of their own Parish.

***(From Owslebury School, MR PIERCE went to West Wellow).***

## 20 Owslebury in the 1800's

---

Interview with G W Pierce – Head Master 1905 – 1931

This little village, before the advent of the motorcar, electricity, or mains water, was a very remote part of the Hampshire countryside.

Set high on the Hampshire hills, it is exposed to the elements on all sides. In the 1800's there was a baker's cart, which called twice weekly, and the village boasted two small shops, and its own bakery.

(Mr BUNDY's bakery was on the roadside by Pitcot Lane).



Chestnut House

There were six wells, each worked by a treadmill (there is still one in existence here today at Chestnut House).

The village had its own mill (the windmill was in the field behind "Old Mill House") and here was ground flour for the housewife, also pig meal – for almost every villager had a pig in their back garden!

There were two forges, one of which was a double one.

Most of the farm implements were made in the village by the combined efforts of Blacksmiths, Sawyer, and Wheelwrights. Children's iron hoops were made by the Blacksmith, and their 'tops' by the Sawyer.

The village also had its own Shoemaker – not always made to measure!

The school, along with houses and gardens were made of flints; many of these collected by children who 'skipped' school to earn an extra penny or two to help the family.

In 1834 7/2d (approx. 35p) was paid by the Church Warden for picking 22 loads of stones for

a wall and fence!

The first car owned in the village belonged to MR PERCY COBB owner of Old Mill Stores, and was the village taxi.

MR AUSTIN DOVEY also owned a vehicle which was used to take villagers to Winchester. Before that, it was the carriers' cart, with old worn out horses – it would take two or three hours to get back from Winchester stopping at every house on the way.

Many of us used to walk. AUSTIN DOVEY was the first to have a motor as a carrier.

When the old horse died a collection was made around the village to buy another old horse, villagers couldn't afford to buy a good horse, so they were worn out before they started.

JACK KNIGHT, WILL LEE, BOB BUNNEY (carriers). WILL LEE lived at Pond Cottage; he was the Sexton and Gravedigger.

I remember staying with MRS FROUD, whilst I went to visit our house.

The house was in a shocking state, no one had been living in it, and the windows were full of holes, stones on the floors inside. The kitchen grate was covered in rust, stone floors, no back garden, the door opened onto a yard. (Old school house)

Farm labourers earned about 14/- a week.

They had a piece of land from the farmer, who ploughed the potatoes in for them, and most farm workers kept a pig.

There was a pig club, a kind of pig club insurance, they paid 1/- per pig and if the pig died, they'd get the value of the pig out.

When the pig club closed, we had an outing, some men had never been outside the village, and we took them to Portsmouth by boat via So'ton.

We had lunch at Lowman's and some of the men called the waiter "Sir". We lost one man – he didn't catch the boat back!

E. H.

## 21 100 Years of Cricket



Longwood House  
1800's



Owslebury Ladies Cricket  
Team 1908



This photo was the last season at which the club played at Longwood. 1908 saw the Club playing on their own pitch at Owslebury Down. The ground was given to the villagers by the then owners of Longwood



1958 Owslebury Cricket  
Team



2004 on 'The Down'



David Harfield in action

Village cricket here dates to the 1830's, and is second to Broad Halfpenny Down – the birthplace of cricket. A newspaper cutting of 1840 held, states:

“The Cricket Club possessed two strong teams, and played courtesy of landowners at Marwell or Longwood”

(Lord Tennyson played for the village while a guest at Marwell).

There was no Longwood road, then, it was all “Owslebury Down” with just a cart track to

the village itself from Longwood.

In 1906 the owner of Longwood gave the present ground to the village for cricket, and enthusiastic cricketers began preparing a cricket pitch, which took then two years to make playable.

**George Pierce writes:**

“ I was secretary to the Cricket Club and we had to raise £80 (on the then wages) to make the table and build the Pavilion”

In 1906 also, a Football Club was formed and had their own ground courtesy of the local landowner, opposite the Cricketers Inn (now Northwood House).

Having lost many players in W.W.1 the Club was disbanded, and did not form again until the 1950's, when, without a ground, they sought permission to play, until then, on part of the cricket ground.

**Cricket Minutes 1909:**

“A vote of thanks be recorded to Lord Northesk for his kindness in lending his ground. A vote of thanks be recorded to Mr Dunlop for his work in preparing the pitch for the season". The Committee accepted a tender of £44-15-0 from Mr Tithecot to erect a Pavilion on the Recreation Ground. (Money rasied by suppers, dances, whist drives etc. No mean feat in those days!)

**In 1910 the minutes state:**

“The Pavilion has now been paid for”.

It was eventually thatched at a cost of £2-10-00!

**Cricket Minutes – 16th March 1911:**

“It was the wish of members present that a vote of thanks be passed to Mr Lucas for the gift of trees for the cricket ground in memory of King Edward VII, also for the addition to the Pavilion”

**Mr George Pierce (famed headmaster of Owslebury School) wrote in 1960:**

“Amongst our famous men of the village was the Captain of the Cricket Club, Mr R McDonald Lucas, an Architect to the Borough of Southampton.

He designed the railways and the Bargate. He built Baybridge House, but spent most of the winter in France, where he wrote a book on cricket”.



**2004**

David Harfield in action. Fond of 'sixes' and wicket taking! David's Grandfather, Harold was one of the 18 children born at Baybridge. All the boys were cricketers and grandsons still continue playing for the village.

1908 - 2008 – 100 years of cricket here in the village on our Recreation Ground

E.H. November 2007

## 22 Christmas at Owslebury and Marwell in Days Gone By

---

G.G. Pierce writes of 1900 – 1930's

Although there have been many far-reaching changes in the past century, Christmas celebrations have been altered little.

Villagers take a pride in maintaining the old order of things as far as possible.

Many villagers who in the past used to go along the lanes and hedges to collect holly and mistletoe find today that town's folk in their cars have beaten them to it!

Carol singing is still a traditional style in town and country alike, although' it is torches now rather than candle lanterns. One of my earliest recollections is of tramping several miles with other children and our schoolmaster to sing carols and collect for Dr. Barnado's.

We use to be invited into the Squire's hall at Marwell, and our eyes would goggle at the vast rooms, and all the guests in evening dress.

They used to fill our box for us and send us home with pockets full of sweets and fruit, which kept us going in the long walk home in the dark.

Before the Welfare State there was much poverty in the village, and villagers could call at the Hall (Marwell) where the Squire distributed rabbits, blankets, coal, bread and beef to the needy. Farmers and others a little higher up the social scale would have a brace of pheasants delivered to their door.

There was also a local charity, (the Alice Long charity) the funds of which were used to buy groceries for needy widows in the district.

(The villages 'poor houses' were situated at the bottom of White's Hill). Wives usually survived their husbands and there were several old widows invited to tea on Christmas Day.

After tea my father read extracts from a Christmas Carol to them.

They used to say it was lovely, though two of them were stone deaf and one or two more would drop off to sleep while he was reading!

Very old people will tell you when 'they' were young; there was nearly always snow and skating at Christmas. Many Hampshire people will remember the storm, which blew up on Christmas night 1927. It had rained all day with a high wind.

In the night it changed to snow and winds reached gale force. The next morning huge drifts filled sunken lanes (the village had no tarmac roads then!) and covered cottages to a depth of fifteen feet.

The blizzard continued for another day, and although the downs and fields were almost bare, deep drifts built up against hay rick's and buildings.

Many hamlets and villages were completely cut off, and food was dropped by aeroplane to isolated houses. It wasn't until February 6th that the last snow disappeared.

Indoors we find that some of our old-fashioned games stand up feebly against T.V. "Old Mother Somebody's Dead" and other games are treated withering scorn by the young today.

Christmas pudding and turkey have not lost their appeal!

The religious meaning of Christmas is still very much alive (when written in the 1950's) in the hearts and minds of villagers, though Church attendances have fallen off in many places.

Christmas cards no longer, in many cases, have any bearing on the meaning of Christmas. Reunions, generosity, and thoughtfulness for others are as strong as ever.

Extract of G.G. Pierce. - E. H.

## **23 Murder in Owslebury**

---

**Hampshire Chronicle**  
**Tragedy near Winchester a young girl's death**  
**Saturday July 14th 1917**

The County Police of the Winchester Division are faced with a tragedy which, so far, is enveloped in mystery. It concerns the death of Vera May

Glasspool, aged 15 years and three months - her birthday was in April - whose parents are working class people residing at what is known as Baybridge, an outlying part of the parish of Owslebury, and between five and six miles south east from Winchester.

The name Glasspool is a rather familiar one in the Owslebury district, but there are three distinct families, and this one does not appear to be related to the others. The Longwood Estate, the property of Mr C.F.G.R Schwerdt, and formerly owned by Earl Norfolk, extends in this direction to Baybridge.

Scattered about the Estate are many hundreds of acres of woods - in fact the woods are among the chief glories of Longwood. The land lies high, perhaps 100 feet or so lower than Cheesefoot Head, the highest point in this part of Hampshire. Away to the North East is a magnificent panorama of the lovely county towards Tichboume and Alresford. On the South East, or Baybridge, side are the wide rolling downs typical of many parts of Hampshire; beautiful beneath the bright sunshine of summer's day, but somewhat lonely and unfrequented.

The road from Morestead to Corhampton and the Meon Valley passes a little North of Baybridge, which is really nearer the traceable end of the old roman road going through Winchester, Owslebury Church being pretty well a mile beyond, almost direct south. Up to two or three weeks ago the father of the girl - an elderly man - was employed as a woodsman on the Longwood Estate, but was discharged, owing to a reduction of the Estate hands and has since been in casual employment as a labourer.

There were nine children, of whom two had died. There is one son in the Army, one in the Navy, and another a lad at home - a fourth died under sudden circumstances about a year ago. Two daughters are married, a third, Daisy, is in service at St. Cross, Winchester and Vera May was the fourth daughter, and the youngest child but one. She was born at Baybridge, and till she was 13 years of age she attended Owslebury School. Ten months ago she obtained a situation as a scullery - maid at Longwood House (Mr Schwerdt's) and this was her first regular employment. She was a rather pretty girl, with fair, curly hair, and what would be termed a fine girl for her age.

Baybridge is some mile and a half from Longwood House. Last Sunday afternoon she was allowed, in the usual way, to go home and see her parents at "Rose Cottage", and returned quite safely. Then on Tuesday of the present week it was her "afternoon out" and she left between three and four o'clock, intending, as was understood to go again to her home. She passed out of the lodge gates on to the Owslebury Longwood-road, and as far as is yet ascertained, this was the last time she was seen alive.

Turning to the left - towards Owslebury - it is an exceedingly picturesque road under trees on both sides for about one third of a mile. It then emerges on to downland across which - turning again to the left - the girl was accustomed to go to Baybridge. May (by which name she was generally known) never reached home on Tuesday afternoon, nor did she return to Longwood House.

Her fellow servants sat up till eleven o'clock at night, and some went along the road to see if they could ascertain anything. She was still missing on Wednesday morning, and enquiries were made at her home as to whether she was there, this was at 10 o'clock. It is said the mother had a premonition that ill had befallen May, and about 12 o'clock midday the father and Mrs Morris, a married daughter- living at home, her husband being in the Navy - started to make a systematic search of the woods and

neighbourhood generally. About three o'clock in the afternoon they were in the Owslebury Longwood road, near to the point where the girl was in the habit of turning off across the down to her home. Mrs Morris says she felt an irresistible impulse to search a copse, locally known as "Feather Bed", which is on the right hand side of the road - opposite to where the girl should have turned off.

It is, as stated, a copse, disconnected by a few yards from the main wood. On the road side the trees are of beech, elm and pine. On the inner side it is chiefly a growth of hazel wood, with weeds underfoot. Entering from the road-down what now appears to be a sort of footpath, though it is said this has mainly been caused by walking over it since - Mrs Morris went for some 35 yards, and was horrified to see the body of her sister on the ground in front of her. It was lying in a space that was fairly clear for

a yard or two, though there were no signs of any struggle - a small branch near by is bent, but it is quite probable this has been caused since Wednesday, at any rate there were no signs of scuffling on the ground.

Near her head was a pool of blood which had come from a wound in her throat - not exactly a cut throat, but this was the only blood on the ground or the undergrowth. She had been carrying a mackintosh, and the sleeves of this mackintosh when found were tied loosely around her neck, and there was some blood on it. There was nothing conspicuous about her dress more than a disarrangement which may have happened if she had fallen. Her hat was a yard or so off.

Whatever occurred evidently took place on the spot for her body had not been dragged. Mrs Morris ran out and gave the alarm to her father - who is unfortunately deaf - and assistance having obtained, the body was removed to a lock - up hut near the keeper's cottage along the road down which she had come. Just about 24 hours had elapsed from the time she had passed out of the lodge gate, because it would not have taken more than 10 minutes or a quarter of an hour to walk where the body was found.

A post mortem examination was made by a medical man on Thursday, and though the result has not been publicly made known we believe it is hoped there has not been any violence beyond the injury from which death resulted. The police, under Supt. Smith, have the matter in hand, and though diligent enquiries are being instituted there has been no definite clue as to what happened. A careful search has been made, but no knife or cutting instrument has been found. Speculation, of course, has been rife.

It has been asked if there are camps in the vicinity, though it does not follow that has any bearing on the matter. Hazely Down Camp would be nearly a mile and a half away, and there is no other camp within about three miles. The inquest was opened yesterday morning before T.H Woodhant Esq. Deputy County Coroner and after the evidence of one witness- Mrs.Morris - it was adjourned till Thursday afternoon next at three o'clock when it will be resumed at the parish hall, Owslebury. The funeral of the deceased has been fixed to take place at Owslebury at

three o'clock on Monday afternoon.

## **The Inquest**

The inquest was opened at half past 10 yesterday (Friday) morning at the Keepers cottage, Longwood, before T.H. Woodham Esq; acting as deputy for Henry White Esq County Coroner.

The lock up house where the body was lying is a few yards down a green road, and the deputy coroner, addressing the jury, said it would be more convenient they should have the formal "view" before proceeding to the keepers residence to take the evidence. The following were then sworn as the jury; Mr J.M.Livington, Mr.Frank Glasspool, Mr.G.E.Harfield, Mr.G.Guy, Mr.H.Meritt, Mr.E.W.Chandler, Mr.C.W.Palmer, Mr.R.E.Wade ,and Mr.C.R. Anstey.

They then went to see the body, and afterwards to the keeper's house.

The Deputy Coroner said they had to open an inquest on the body of Vera May Glasspool, Who met her death under circumstances which would necessitate very careful inquiry. That being so, he only proposed to take formal evidence of identification that morning, and they should be compelled to then adjourn the inquest to someday next week to enable enquiries to be made.

Edith Agnes Morris was then called, and having been sworn, she was allowed to be seated while giving her evidence she deposed: I am the wife of Arthur Lewis Morris, and live at Baybridge. The body the jury have just viewed is that of my sister, Vera May Glasspool: She was single.

The Deputy Coroner: What was her age :

Witness: Fifteen last April.

Q: Was she living with her father?

A: No, Sir.

Q: Who was she living with?

A: Mr Schwerdt.

Q Was she in service here?

A: Yes, Sir.

Q: What as? A: Scullery Maid.

Q : At Longwood House?

A: Yes, Sir.

Q : When did you last see her alive?

A: On Sunday evening.

Q: Where was that?

A: She came home to my father's house. The witness explained that she was residing with her parents while her husband was away on service.

Q: Was she apparently then well, and in her ordinary state of health?

A: Yes, Sir.

Q Did she leave to go back to her situation?

A: Yes.

Q: About what time did she leave, about quarter past nine in the evening?

A: Yes, Sir.

Q: Well, now coming to Wednesday last something happened. Tell us, were you looking for her?

A: Tuesday was her afternoon out, but she did not turn up at home.

Q: You last saw her when she left to go back to Longwood house on Sunday about 9.15 p.m.?

A: Yes, Sir.

Q: You expected her to come down again on Tuesday, as that was her afternoon out?

A: Yes, Sir.

Q: She did not come?

A: No, Sir.

Q: Then you made enquiries, or you were told that she was not at Longwood House ?

A: Yes, Sir on Wednesday morning.

Q: And I think you and her father went searching for her, is that it ?

A: Yes, Sir.

Q: I think that your father is old, and rather deaf?

A: Yes, Sir.

Q:What happened?

A : I found her, and went back and told my father to come.

Q: How did come to see her, were you looking about in the wood, and did you see her lying under a tree?

A: Yes, Sir.



Q You were actually looking about in the wood for her, were you?

A: Yes.

Q: You saw her lying under a tree?

A: Yes.

Q Did you go up to her and find she was dead?

A: Yes, we both went.

Q: How far in from the road was she?

A: Not many steps.

Q: Could you see the body from the road, or did you have to go into the wood to see it?

A: We had to go in a little way!

Q: What made you look in the wood for her, What gave you an idea she would be in the wood?

A: We thought as she had come out something must have happened to her.

Q: And that is why you were looking in the wood?

A: Yes, Sir.

Q: Did you notice any wound on her when you saw the body.

A: Yes, Sir.

Q: Where?

A: In her throat.

Q: Was there blood on her clothes?

A: There was blood on her Mackintosh.

Q: Did you notice if any was placed over the wound in her throat

A: Her Mackintosh.

Q: Was it tied or looped in any way.

A: No, Sir.

Q: Had she her Mackintosh on in the ordinary way

A: No , it was thrown over her.

Q: Had she her arms through the sleeves?

A: No, Sir.

Q: Did you notice her clothes were disarranged or torn?

A: Her clothes were turned up. The witness was asked if she knew whether her sister had been lately in the habit of walking out with any one and she repeated words deceased had made use of when at home on Sunday.

The Deputy Coroner: Did her mother tell her she was a foolish girl to do anything of the sort?

A: Yes, Sir.

Q: As far as you know she was not keeping company or walking out with any one?

A: No, Sir.

Q: she never made any complaint, or told you any story about anyone ill-treating her?

A: No, Sir.

Q: Are you sure of that.

A: Yes, Sir

The Deputy Coroner, addressing the jury, said he did not propose - unless they wished it - to go any further that day. It was evident they would have to probe the matter to the bottom, and at the present stage it was not advisable to proceed further. He therefore proposed to adjourn the enquiry

He should take the adjourned enquiry at the parish hall, Owslebury, which was more convenient than the cottage where they had met that morning, because he was afraid it would probably be a long sitting.

He was anxious to suit the convenience of the jury, and probably the afternoon would be better than interrupting their business in the morning. Subject to anything very pressing on either of them, he proposed to adjourn till next Thursday afternoon, at three o'clock at the Parish Hall Owslebury.

The date and hour suggested apparently suited the jury men and the Deputy Coroner bound them over in their recognisance's of £10 each to appear accordingly.

The proceedings occupied less than half an hour.

Supt, Smith (Winchester) attended on behalf of the police, but beyond the deputy Coroner and Jury the only others present were Mrs Morris and another married Sister, and a Soldier brother, who had got leave .