

Winster Local History Group

Newsletter No. 22

February 2002

Details for the 'missing' talk on 22 April have now been finalised. The rest of the season's programme is as follows:

25 February. Professor John Tarn (University of Liverpool School of Architecture)
'The Vernacular Architecture of Derbyshire and some Winster Buildings'

18 March: Dr Lynn Willies: (Peak District Mines Historical Society
and Peak District Mining Museum)
'The Winster Miners' Strike of 1919'

22 April: Patrick Harding: 'Wild Flowers of the Peak District'

17 June: Guided Walk round Bonsall (Peter Greaves)

MEETING DATES FOR NEXT SEASON. MAKE A NOTE!

23 September 2002: Winster Road Show

28 October 2002: AGM and Social Evening

Other meeting dates: 25 November 2002, and in 2003: possibly 27 January (watch this space), 24 February, 24 March, 28 April, possibly 19 May, and 16 or 23 June (outdoors).

Details of talks to follow in our next issue.

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The 1901 Census

You will all have seen (and maybe had a quiet laugh about it) that the launch of the on-line version of the 1901 census was a bit of a disaster, partly because the advance publicity was too good. The Public Record Office website (www.census.pro.gov.uk), which opened for business on 2 January (and then promptly shut) was designed to handle up to a million hits per day, but it was swamped by the attempts of more than that number of simultaneous users, from all over the world, to gain access. At the time of writing, there is no firm indication of when the site will reopen; a lot of midnight oil is being burnt by the contractors and the PRO.

Meanwhile, it is worth remembering that a microfilm version is already available. The Local Studies Library at County Hall, Matlock has the returns for this area. The pages for Winster will amply reward anyone interested in Winster family or local history. On the forms which make up the census returns, for each household someone is named as Head of Family. For him or her, and all the other members of that household, there are columns for: Relation to Head of Family; Condition as to Marriage; Age at last birthday (separate columns for male and female); Profession or Occupation; whether Employer, Worker or Own Account; If Working at Home; Where Born; and finally a column to indicate whether (1) Deaf and Dumb, (2) Blind, (3) Lunatic, or (4) Imbecile or feeble-minded. I suppose the census enumerators were given some official guidance as to the distinction between the last two categories. It is a salutary reminder of the rough-and-ready attitudes of a century ago to mental health and disability.

For example, one page shows that at the Angel Inn, the Head of Family was Herbert Marshall, married, age 45, publican and cab proprietor, working on his own account, born in Winster. With him were his wife Harriett, 41, from Yorkshire, unmarried sons Harold, 17, barman, and Percy, 14, grocer's assistant (both 'workers') and Nellie Barker, 14, whose Relation to Head of Family is given as 'adopted'. There is surely an interesting story behind this. Among the families in Angel Yard was that of Albert Marshall, age 40, a self-employed printer and stationer, (one of the advertisers in the Parish Magazine: see back page of this Newsletter) and perhaps a brother of Herbert next door. Albert was born in Winster but his wife Eliza, 34, was born in Kent; one wonders how they met, but the census does not pry that deeply! Their son Albert, 8, was born in Winster. At another house in the Yard were George Hardy and his family of three very young children, all born in Winster. His wife Mary Alice came from Bonsall, and his unmarried sister-in-law Ann Elizabeth Webster was living with them. She also came from Bonsall, and almost certainly was Mary's sister. A family historian, or a local historian perhaps studying courtship or migration patterns, would look for the

marriage of George Hardy and Mary Webster in Bonsall, as it was usual to marry in the bride's parish, a custom which has lasted to the present day.

Of the 30 people listed on the page, 23 were born in Winster (including all the offspring), one in Middleton by Wirksworth, one in Wensley, one in Darley Dale, and as already mentioned, two in Bonsall, one in Yorkshire, and one in Kent. How different would be the pattern today!

David Jones

Bert Boam 1909 - 2001

A great friend of the History Group, Bert Boam, died on 15 December 2001, just short of his 93rd birthday.

Bert lived the first thirty years of his life in Winster, before getting married and moving to Bonsall. His long working life began when he was still at school, when he was regularly called upon to deliver telegrams to the villages round about, since his family lived in the house at the back of the Winster Post Office. Over the years he did gardening at Oddo, farming, carting, quarrying and lorry driving, and he spent many years at Mill Close lead mine, where he worked his way up to the skilled position of shot-firer.

Bert had an amazing memory of the details of life in the old days, as well as a great fund of stories, which he told in a vivid style. He had natural charisma and could keep people entertained for hours, as he sometimes did at meetings of the History Group. In 1997 and 1998 he recorded six cassettes of his stories for our Oral History Project, and they can still be enjoyed in our book *Winster: A Peak District Village Remembers*. They give a glimpse of a society that is now just a faint memory, and we are very grateful that Bert helped to bring it to life for us.

Geoff Lester

Winster Village Model

The Village Model, which began as a History Group project, is nearly finished! Arrangements are in hand for a Grand Unveiling in the Market House at the end of March. The Market House is currently being refurbished. New permanent display boards are being made, including one featuring material supplied by the History Group.

From the Parish Magazine 100 years ago

The Vicar, Rev. W.H. Nixon, wrote: 'A Happy and Prosperous New Year to you all. It will be an eventful one for the Country and Nation as witnessing the Coronation of our King Edward VII. On account of the changes necessarily made in the Titles of the Heads of the Royal Family, we require a new set of Service Books in Church. Will anyone give these? I shall be glad to suggest the size most useful. The gift of these books would be very appropriate at this time as a New Year's offering.'

The churches continued to provide a focus for social gatherings. The Vicar announced that at the forthcoming Parochial Gathering 'the excellent Amateur Dramatic Society have very kindly promised to take charge of the Entertainment after the Tea', while the Trustees of the Primitive Methodist Chapel reported on a New Year's Eve meal that had raised £1 16s. 9d. towards the purchase of a new stove. 'The provisions were ample and over forty persons sat down to a capital supper.'

Advertisers from Winster were James Fearn of East Bank, 'Painter, Paper-hanger, Grainer, & French-polisher, Dealer in all kinds of Paints, Varnishes, Stains, Gold Paint, Japans, Picture Glass &c'. H.C. Heathcote, Chemist [operating from the Post Office], warned that 'by simply neglecting a slight cold 190,000 persons die annually' and that 'many of these could be saved by the timely use of Calvert & Son's "Derby Cure"'. Samuel Hodgkinson [whose shop is now Tor House, Main Street] offered 'Pianos, Organs, Harmoniums, and all other Musical Instruments. Sewing and Wringing Machines. Bicycles, Bassinettes, Mail Carts, etc. Jewellery, Watches, Clocks, *Musical Clocks a speciality*. Cutlery. Draperies, Men's and Boy's suits ready-made or to measure. Ladies Costumes, Capes and Jackets of which fashion plates can be seen'. A. Marshall, Printer & Stationer [now Market Cottage, Main Street] advertised 'Photographic views (cabinet size) of the Church, P.M. Chapel, New Road, Robin Hood, The Street and Market House etc. at a reasonable price'. Many of these photographs are still in circulation as postcards.

Supplied by Geoff Lester