

**TARRANT GUNVILLE  
& STUBHAMPTON**

*Life in a small community in Rural Dorset  
in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*

*A compilation of memories of people who  
have lived here for much of their lives*

2019

I N D E X

List of Reporters  
Acknowledgements  
Village School Centenary  
Introduction  
Our Journey Through the Village Starts  
Tarrant Gunville Sports Club  
Some Characters Remembered  
All Mod Cons  
Wartime  
Transport  
Farms  
Farms  
Services  
Appendix

## **R E P O R T E R S**

**Keith Belbin (KB)** born Marlborough Farmhouse May 1940, now at Beech End

**Sylvia Belbin** arrived 1961 to teach at the school, married Keith Belbin

**John Maidment (JM)** born Dairy Cottage, Stubhampton 1927 and **Moira Maidment** nee Belbin **(MM)** born Stephouse TG 1931

**Roy Tarbin (RT)** 1926 -2018 and **Nellie Tarbin (NT)** born Bridport, arrived TG 1952, lived at No 3 Westbury Cottages and moved to No.4 School Close

**Ella Smith (nee Toop (ES))** was born at Tarrant Hinton. She arrived in Tarrant Gunville in 1969 with her

*husband, Nigel*

**Julia Williamson (JW)** born at Netheravon, Wilts and moved to Westbury Farm as a small child in 1945, daughter of John Brown

**Eddie Brown (EB)** Ashdown Cottage arrived TG in 1985 left 2019

**Mick Greham (MG)** born Tollard Royal, Bussey Stool Lodge, Rushmore Estate and arrived TG 1947, also **Jean Greham** his wife. **Mary Greham**, Mick's mother, was born at Tollard Green House.

**David Morrow** arr 1992 Riverside Cottage

**Susie Percival** arr 1994 Cobb Cottage - left 2004, returning 2013 to Kestrel Cottage

**Chris Tatham** arr 1986 Hydeaway

**Michael Daniels** arr 1988 Old Farm Cottage (Mid century Ridout's Tea Room)

**Jane Cusack** arr 1989 Dairy House (earlier The Shop)

**Bill Masters (BM)** arrived 1983 The Forge

**Michael Pawson (MP)** arr 2004 Cottage Row

**Denise and Paul Wentworth** arr 1986 Ballard Down

**Hilary Wild (HW)** arr 1994 April Rise

**Noyna Singleton (NS)** arr 1983 at the Old Post Office

**Pat Griffiths (PG)** born and lives at Tarrant Hinton

**Jim Bulpitt** arr China Lane in 1980 and moved to Homers in 1982

**Roger Turner (JWT)** arr 2008 Saddleback House / **Avril Baker (AB)** arr 1993- 2007 Saddleback House

**Janet Harding (JH)** arr 1988 Chime Cottage

**Dianne Benfield (nee Tarbin DT)** arr 1952, Westbury Cottages

**Alan and Val Miller** Val born at Dungrove Cottage. Parents Elliot and Jean Bailey

**Joyce Billings (JB)** late of Steppington Cottage now at Child Okeford

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

These stories were collected at the beginning of the 21st century.

I was told of many interesting and amusing memories by villagers and asked if I may write them down. They were returned to the person concerned, so that they may be altered or added to as appropriate. Memories going back 80 or more years differ slightly, but I have, as far as possible, noted the consensus of memories, so please forgive me if you beg to differ !

I am greatly indebted to all the reporters for the time they gave me sharing recollections of times past, and I hope that those who follow us will enjoy the stories of Gunville and Stubhampton of the twentieth century as much as I have. And my apologies and thanks to those whose names aren't recorded !

I recommend to you Eddie Brown's 'Tarrant Gunville Parish – The Past 200 Years' which includes historical facts as well as village tales. I have found it most useful, but have not repeated his 'proper' history, so please read and enjoy.

And finally thanks to Roger Turner – my researcher. He knew where to look for information I probably would never have found ! He is also my sponsor and binder for the book. Thank you.

**Paula M Andrews**

---

**MY THANKS to Roger Guttridge** for allowing me to précis part of his article 'Motoring Mary' taken from Dorset Life Magazine No 463 Oct 2017 – and, of course, to the Editor.

*Roger is a prolific writer on Dorset – its history and people. Titles which include Tarrant Gunville in particular are Ten Dorset Mysteries (1989), Paranormal Dorset (2009) which both include a chapter on the Tarrant Gunville Vampire, the 1989 version includes the more detailed account. The Evening Echo Book of Heritage in Dorset and the New Forest (1991) has a chapter on The Dogs of Eastbury, Tarrant Gunville – a vast pack of Newfoundland dogs, resident in the 19th century.*

**Written at the time of the Village School's  
Centenary Year**

In the year of eighteen seventy four,

The school at Gunville opened its door,  
It must have filled a village need,  
By teaching its children to write and to read.  
And later on, as it came to pass,  
Pupils from Hinton joined the class.  
We'll show you their photos, spanning years,  
Most likely some horrors – and some little dears.  
The village itself hasn't changed all that much,  
Pictures of that too, to keep you in touch.  
People at work, and also at play,  
Village life's always been much as today.  
As you go homeward, just think on my dears,  
What they will make of us in the next hundred years.

Ella Smith 1974

INTRODUCTION

The route through the village has changed little over the years. Back in the mists of time it would have been chalk and flint and run along what is now the river bed from Chime Cottage to Homers. This explains why the fronts of the cottages along this stretch face onto the fields with their backs to the road. The 'river' is actually a winter borne, although two elderly women at Tarrant Hinton claimed the river was a perfectly normal river until water-pumping commenced at Stubhampton. The Environment Agency disagrees. From Chime cottage the river runs along the south-west side of the road and there was at one time a ford next Old Farm Cottage which gave access to adjacent fields. The river then crosses under the road in a culvert. Eventually a concrete post and rail fence was erected along this stretch to prevent people and cars going into the river.

Long-term residents remember the road workers, called lengths-men, in the mid-20th century as Bill Eaton, Archie Udall and Bob Rogers. They each had their own 'length' and they looked after the verges, hedges and ditches for the Council. All the work was done by hand, there being no diggers or other machinery to hasten the job. When the river was cleared, all the stones that had washed down the river in the winter were piled up on the banks. These men are remembered for their neat work.

In recent times North Dorset District Council was using the name Valley Road on electoral documents, though long-term residents say it has never been known as that. Rather the road was referred to as 'the street' or 'down the village'. It is interesting to note that when I arrived in 2006 the Blandford Post Office was adamant that there was no official road name.

At the Eastbury end of the village the road at one time passed the front of the Rectory and on to the Church. (See EB 'The Past Two Hundred Years')

**OUR JOURNEY STARTS** at the entrance to the village at Park Cottage opposite Eastbury gates and continues on this side of the road through to Stubhampton, returning on the opposite side of the road, with a few deviations along the way.

**Park Cottage** was occupied by a Mr Phillips (a policeman, possibly retired). A fence went over the river at this point, which children would climb on to cross. Ella remembers that Mr Phillips came out with a big stick and shouted at them ! (1940's)

In the early 1980s Waltie Rogers lived here. In the very wet winter of 1990 Walt visited The Forge in order to use the toilet as his was entirely under water! Waltie eventually married Joan Bailey, who lived opposite the village hall. He kept some donkeys here and also used the field between Marlborough Farmhouse and Step house, where Step house Cottage was built.

In 1989 Waltie visited Chime Cottage to meet Janet Harding and to talk about her inglenook chimney. He was happy to report that sweeping it would be no problem because it was wide. The technique he would employ was to put his back against one side of the chimney and his feet on the other- and up he would go. It seems that our childhood story book of the little chimney sweep lacks the correct ending – that he continued his career as an adult !

**The Bugle Horn** is now a private house, and no other purveyor of alcohol has been found – unless you know otherwise..... The orchard to the left of the pub went along the roadside to Eastbury gateway and pigs were kept here.

The Irish Labourers who were laying the 18” gas pipe through our parish but NOT to it, went to the pub in the evening and each bought a large bottle of cider before last orders. Many of them were said to crawl into the pipe to sleep overnight. They were paid daily because their employer believed that if they were paid a week’s wages in one go they would disappear. Roy recalls having to scrape chalk from the pub floor each evening after they left. He confirmed reports that the men frequently slept in the pipes they were laying.

Roy Tarbin worked at the Bugle Horn occasionally for a couple of hours in the evening and he and Nellie took over once a year while the landlord, Mr Fonteneau, and his wife went on holiday for two weeks. The Bugle Horn closed its doors for the last time in 1995.

#### **Landlords of the Bugle Horn**

**George Belbin**, the first of the family to live in Tarrant Gunville, ran the pub. He later moved to take up farming at Home Farm, previously known as Glebe Farm. His family appear all around the parish in the 20th century.

**Mr Judd**, remembered particularly for his wooden leg, was another landlord, and believed to be the father of Mrs Hillier.

**Mr Hillier** also a landlord. Mrs Hillier is renowned for, amongst other things, having her ironing board in the bar so that never a moment was wasted - and it was probably the warmest place in the house. Chickens frequently came into the bar to keep warm – or find crumbs. The Hilliers left The Bugle Horn to take on the Post office at Cottage Row..

**Ted Fonteneau** was another landlord (during the 1970s as far as can be ascertained ). He was a very pleasant man and people came from Blandford for a drink at the Bugle Horn. It was in his time as Landlord that Mr Geoffrey Bennett had his mishap (See Little Tarrant). He eventually left and lived in Stubhampton, finally moving to Pimperne.

**Lisa and Bernard Goswell** were the final tenants at The Bugle, and it is with them that Ella Smith worked, see School Close.

Mrs Griffiths of School Row cleaned the Bugle for many years, as well as her other duties at the village School, Rectory and Manor.

Roy Tarbin counted numerous ale-houses at one time. Bearing in mind that he arrived in 1952, these must have been the ones mentioned as existing earlier in the century.

Unfortunately the Hall & Woodhouse brewery office were unable to furnish a list of the landlords, as all paper records were in the process of being transferred to electronic ones. Possibly a little research project for the future ?

Eddie Brown's history of the past 200 years gives us an idea of the number of alehouses in Tarrant Gunville and Stubhampton from the 16th century onwards.

**The Slate Club** met in the snug at The Bugle. It was a benefit club which made payments to members when they were sick or unable to work. JM recalls that it existed in the 1930s, but no records have been found. It probably ended in the late 1970s. The men contributed 1/- a week and received 2/6 a week when they were sick. The Club had a dinner each year in the village hall. Village worthies were invited to attend and encouraged to contribute to the cost. Any money left over was spent in The Bugle on what was known as "break night". The evening usually ended with dirty jokes. One evening a comedian had been engaged, but when it was noted that he spent a lot of his time writing down the jokes and stories that others told, the Club decided to entertain themselves. Roy Tarbin, on his retirement after 11 years as Treasurer (and not renowned as a story-teller) eventually told a tale. Later someone said to him, "Well done, and I hope that I won't hear you tell a joke for another 11 years!"

The cooking was done by the ladies at the village hall, and organised by Mrs Regnart with Elliott and Jean Bailey. The kitchen was very primitive, but the ladies of the village produced three good courses. Soup was heated in a Burco boiler, meat bought from Colliers Butchers in Blandford (was cooked by Jean Bailey who lived at Everetts), and served with potatoes. This was followed by a variety of cold puddings, mainly apple pies ! Toilet facilities consisted of buckets for the ladies, and the gents was "outside" !

At the AGM On 10th March 1980 held at The Bugle with only 9 people present, it was decided with great regret to close The Slate Club. A presentation, an engraved cigarette box, was made to Mr Julian Regnart (Secretary) by the President, Mr Ronald Farquharson. The great effort Elliott and Jean Bailey had put into running of the club and the Annual Supper over many years was acknowledged with much appreciation. The Gunville Slate Club was formed at the end of the First Great War, there having previously been a Tarrant Valley Slate Club running since way back in the 19th century (See the letter plus final Statement and Balance sheet sent out by Julian Regnart, the secretary, which includes some familiar names. (Appendix 1 and 2)

## **The Rectory**

The Rector from 1927 to 1957 was a Reverend Arthur Brayshaw who was the last incumbent to live here, although it is possible that he lived at Hinton in his earliest ministry in the Tarrant Valley. He lived in the Rectory for many years, and he and his wife left many happy memories.

RWT found an Arthur Bradshaw in a pamphlet in the Church, with exactly the same dates reported above. Maybe he was in fact Brayshaw, as that is the name repeated often by villagers.

The Rectory grounds were used for the annual church fete and flower show, and some ladies remember serving teas through the windows which look on to the rear lawn. The stables were used for the display of fruit, veg and flowers, but there are no records available to report the winners.

Mr Brayshaw put on a play on the lawn, Alice in Wonderland, and as well as running the Sunday School, Mrs Brayshaw ran sewing classes in the rectory, at which girls would learn the skills of sewing and upholstery. It is estimated that these activities would have occurred in the 1950s. She also gathered the women of the village together to make the lovely tapestry kneelers, which can be seen in the Church today, assisted by Kitty Bennett who taught the art of tapestry work to the villagers.



Mr Brayshaw organised an annual Sunday School outing to Weymouth each year and gave each child 2/6; for younger readers, two shillings and sixpence, or 12p in decimal currency, which would have been a substantial sum for children at that time. It would probably have bought a threepenny ice cream, crisps, a quarter (of a pound -lb ) of sweets, a drink and biscuits.

The Tarbin girls, Pauline and Dianne, used a large hollow tree stump near the entrance to the Old Rectory as shelter in wet weather, and their school bags were held on top of their heads to shield them. It was also a good place to hide - from parents or other children. They occasionally went along to The Forge for shelter and warmth.

## The Church

**The Vestry** was a meeting of Parish ratepayers chaired by the incumbent (ie Parish Priest) and held in the church, usually in the vestry. It was the predecessor of the PCC (Parochial Church Council). The duties of the Vestry were both spiritual and secular. By the late 17<sup>th</sup> century it had become, along with Magistrates, virtually in control of rural England. It appointed Church Wardens and Sidesmen, and people responsible for the upkeep of the roads, and for the poor a constable was appointed. Further duties included the setting of rates, and payments for the reduction of vermin. Church finances were also discussed. All of these appointments and decisions were made at an annual meeting. The Local Government Act of 1894 separated the secular and ecclesiastical powers and Parish Councils were established. The Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1921 established PCCs as successors to the Vestry. The AGM of the PCC is still occasionally called the annual Vestry meeting. There is a "Vestry Notebook" for Gunville in the History Centre at Dorchester. It has Minutes of annual meetings, though not very interesting. The group must have met more than once a year to manage business, but no evidence of these additional meetings has been found. (Info - Eddie Brown April 2016)

Anthony Johnson lived at Stubhampton Manor Farmhouse in the ground-floor flat. He wasn't in fact a Canon at the time, but was undergoing training and he asked if he may assist at the marriage of Ella

Toop and Nigel Smith in 1964. The vicar and he were invited to Ella and Nigel's wedding reception; whilst the vicar declined, the young Anthony was very happy to accept !

The Greham family were living upstairs at this time.

RWT looked through church records for information about people recalled by older members of the community. He points out that the Book of Burials kept in the safe starts in 1950, and only records the people who are buried in the churchyard, so anyone cremated or taken for burial elsewhere is not recorded.

There was at one time a Mr Eccles incumbent at T G, though it is recalled that he lived in Hinton Rectory. A Mr Hankey also served our parish and Hinton, living in Hinton Rectory. It is reported that his son died in WWII and Mr Hankey erected a plaque there as a memorial to his son, which can be seen opposite the door to the Church.

## The Manor

In 1799 **Josiah Wedgwood II** (the potter) bought Gunville House now known as The Manor, and his brother Thomas Wedgwood, the photographer, moved into the remaining section of Eastbury in 1800.

**Hughes-Gibb, Col C J** who owned the Manor House during the war was said to be so mean that after a meal he returned any remaining salt on the side of his plate to the salt cellar. (Waste not, want not! ) It is regretted that no other stories have emerged of the Colonel, as it is unlikely that saving salt was his

only attribute.

“Mrs Hughes-Gibb was a tall lady who always wore a veil,” so say some of the oldest reporters. RWT reports that the only reference to this family he can find is from their memorial plaques in the Church. Is she in fact Eleanor Mary Hughes Gibb who was born 26 May 1858 and died 30 October 1947 ? It states that she lived in the Manor House for 60 years. Her husband, Col C J Hughes Gibb died 3 August 1953.

Older villagers recall **Lady Game** who died in childbirth, having already produced several children. RWT has researched the church records without success, but says there is a memorial to Ann Game, born 11 February 1914 and died 21 March 1938 (just 24 years old), and of an infant that died the same day. There was no mention of where this family lived but another villager suggests she was probably connected to the Hughes Gibbs.

Following the Hughes-Gibbs, a **Captain Stedham** is recorded as having the Manor in 1948, and started his agricultural engineering business in the stables. There is a slight discrepancy in the dates, Col. Hughes-Gibb having died in 1953. The business was eventually relocated to Blandford. Keith Belbin still owns a garden table and chairs made in the stables. Having spoken to a descendent at the Blandford business it seems that his sister in America may have memories of the Stedham's time here, but answer came there none to my enquiries. It is assumed that this would be the time that Major Roger Humphreys took it over, 1955.

**The Old Forge** has a very old Automobile Association sign on it in traditional colours of yellow with black writing. Lest we forget where we are, across the centre it states Tarrant Gunville; above this it is announced that Iwerne Minster is 4.5 miles, Tarrant Hinton 1.5, London 102. The Lower half of this circular sign reminds the driver- SAFETY FIRST. Sadly there is no date on it. On the 19th June 1905 a group of motoring enthusiasts met together at The Trocadero, London amid concerns about the harsh treatment being meted out by the police on motorists. They called themselves the Motorists Mutual Association. A week later they met again and changed their name to the Automobile Association, the AA. In 1906 the production of village name signs was commenced and by 1939 some 30,000 had been erected. I am sure ours has to be an early one !

Arthur Edward Samuel Thorne (b1880 at Hilton) came to The Forge in Tarrant Gunville in 1894, aged 14 to serve his apprenticeship. He stayed with a relation (Kate Guy) at Pimperne, from where he walked to Gunville. On Saturdays he finished work at 2pm and walked back to Milton Abbas, stopping for refreshment along the way. In 1905 he took over the Forge, having served his apprenticeship and learned the necessary blacksmithing skills.

Mr Frank Janes, who worked at the Forge on the main road in Pimperne, moved to Tarrant Gunville and took over The Forge in 1919. His family came with him, his wife, Eliza and their two children – Ella and William. When she grew up, Ella Janes worked in service for Captain and Mrs Twist at The Kennels where she met Margaret Burden from Tarrant Hinton. (The Hunt had long gone by this time.) They became good friends, and when Margaret married Nigel Toop and produced a daughter, what better name to give her than Ella. That baby girl (Ella Smith) still lives in School Close. Later Ella Janes married Les Thorne, and they produced two children, Edward and Ruth, They lived in the middle cottage of the row of three in China Lane. Mrs Janes died in 1947. (See The Shop)

The children of the village were frightened of gypsies who brought their horses to be shod, however they enjoyed watching the process. It was, of course, a conveniently warm place to wait for the school bus. Adults waited there in the warmth, too; however the smell of the shoeing was quite overwhelming, and adults were less keen to shelter when work was in progress. Another tale of the old forge was that the farm horses from Home Farm were brought down for shoeing and when the job was finished they

were turned out onto Everley Hill and found their own way home; it is doubtful whether they met many cars !

When the forge finally closed in 1955 it remained so for some time, when Major Humphries of The Manor bought the estate. The story goes that all of the equipment, including the anvil, was buried in concrete under the current floor. This had been confirmed by several villagers. It seems a very odd thing to do, as scrap metal had a value throughout the 20th century (reported 2016). In 2017 other reports say that the anvil and all the tools of the trade were taken onto Major Humphries estate and buried. I wonder if they will ever see the light of day again ? With metal detectors it should be relatively simple to find them, if a little time-consuming, but a hint of the location would be immensely useful !

**Bill Masters** bought the forge in 1981 from Major Humphreys. It was virtually derelict by this time, but had the potential to become a home. After many trials and tribulations Bill, who was a builder all his life, moved in in 1984.

At the beginning of the war, when Bill was 7 or 8 years old, he developed a large and unpleasant abscess on his leg. Happily for him his mother had subscribed to the Ranyard Nursing Association, there being no NHS at that time. A nurse came along and dressed the wound for a while, and it seems she took a liking to young Bill. She belonged to the local C Of E church and must have mentioned the boy to the Vicar, who duly turned up to visit - with an enormous box of chocolates. Well it seemed enormous at the time as chocolates were not generally available to families like Bill's. Bill thinks it must have been the chocolates which enticed him to attend the Church, which he did for several years and he feels this experience made him the man he is today, kind and ever helpful.

On 9th February 2017 Bill received a letter dated 8th February from the office of the Clerk to the Lieutenancy, County Hall, Dorchester on behalf of HM Lord-Lieutenant of Dorset, Mr Angus Campbell. The letter advised Bill that he had been nominated to attend a Royal Garden Party this year in recognition of his service to the community. His reaction was, as you might expect if you knew him, that it was a hoax. He therefore ignored it, but after a day or two of contemplation curiosity overcame him and he felt he should ring the Clerk, just in case ! And yes, it turned out to be the real thing.

Six weeks later Bill received from Buckingham Palace an invitation to a garden party on 16th May 2017 from 4-6pm . It included a host of information, a map together with a history of the development of the Palace gardens. Bill kept this exciting news to himself, and only divulged it in passing to the gentlemen whom he entertained for coffee - on a regular basis it must be added, and accompanied by chocolate rolls from a well-known British chocolate maker(no free advertising here!) The men thought it would be good if Bill spread the word of his own good news, and therefore only told a few of the spouses. Modest Bill failed to tell almost everyone.

It is reported that three members of the community of Tarrant Gunville and Stubhampton had put his name forward in recognition of Bill's kindness, thoughtfulness and practical help over a period of thirty years or so. It should be noted that Bill was a valuable member of the Friday Lunch Club team; he ran the bar with great efficiency, and on Friday mornings once a month he could be seen wheeling his trusty wheelbarrow along the road to the hall to deliver suitable beverages for the guests. This was a demonstration of his loyalty to the community, for Bill is virtually a teetotaler !! He has now retired.

The day dawned dry, if rather overcast, but this did not dampen the enthusiasm of the many guests who arrived at the front gate of Buckingham Palace, where they were escorted by armed police and Busby-topped guards. They proceeded through the Grand Entrance, and into the Marble Hall. Onward they went and out into the gardens, where two bands played alternately throughout the afternoon. They were given tea in a marquee and at 4pm the National Anthem was played, which heralded the arrival of the Queen and members of Royal Family. Bill has some lovely photos of himself in the gardens and

of members of the Royal Family to provide him with happy memories.

**Westbury Cottages** There were originally four cottages. Occupants in the first half of the century are remembered as : No.1 Charlie Bishop; Mrs Janes and her sister lived in No.2, John Maidment's mother and her sister Olive lived in No 3 at one time, next door to Nellie and Roy Tarbin at No.4 – who arrived in 1952 with their two-year- old daughter, Dianne. Her younger sister, Pauline, was born there two years later, and the family remained there until 1968 when Captain Brown sold his estate to Major Humphries. At this point the family moved to No. 4 School Close.

ES doesn't remember anything at all about the PO being in Westbury Cottages, and we can only assume the story of the window with the vertical bars taken out for a post office counter must have belonged to the beginning of the 20 century. When ES was at School in Gunville 1943-49 the Saints had the PO, now The Old Post Office.

DT recalls that this was an excellent place to live - 'opposite the village shop, next to the post office and with the telephone kiosk in the corner of the garden'.

**The Old Post Office** finally became a dwelling when David and Noyna Singleton moved to the village in 1983. They had bought the house as a working post office in 1974/75, complete with sitting tenants, Mr & Mrs Saint, who were tenants of the Eastbury Estate until this time. An electric cable came from The Cottage to the cooker and provided an electricity supply for the Saints, according to EB. The Post Office was run by Mr Saint, who delivered mail around the village on his bicycle. Later the post was brought to TG by motorbike and box side-car twice a day, and delivered twice a day to villagers by Mr Saint. It is said that there was no need to read postcards from friends and family on holiday as Mr Saint would knock on the door, hand in the card and tell the recipient all the news on it !

Mr Saint unfortunately lost his hair and this obviously caused him some distress, as he treated his bald pate with vinegar and a mystery ingredient – and his hair re-grew. If only that information was available now, there are surely some villagers who would give it a try ?

David Singleton was working as Estate Manager for the Chatsworth Estate and he and Noyna felt they should get a foot on the property ladder. They owned a caravan which they had used as a base for sailing on Scottish lochs. This became their home in 1983 in Tarrant Gunville and was parked in the drive until such time as the house was habitable. There was no toilet, no electricity supply and only one cold water tap. David's sister, Hilary Wild of April Rise, was a Wren During WW11 and his wife, Noyna, was in the ATS – but that's another story !

NS said that according to the Saints, children were not allowed inside the post office and were told to sit and wait on two wooden benches either side of the porch, which remain in place today. The outside door opened outwards in order to facilitate this 'waiting area'. Inside the inner door a wooden boarded wall ran parallel with the front of the house, and provided a background for the post office counter. This board wall was removed, turned by 90 degrees and now forms one wall of the dining room. David died in 2015 aged 97 and Noyna left the village in 2019 to live in a care home aged 96.

The Post Office then came to Cottage Row 1983 in the care of Mr Hillier (ex The Bugle) and then moved to No 8 School Close. There was an 'incident' here, and the PO finally moved to No 2 School Close in Betty Wells' care and this was the final address of the postal service in Tarrant Gunville.

**The Cottage** which one can only assume provided the electricity supply wire to The Post Office, was inhabited by Harry and Minny Bailey (no date). Prior to their marriage Minny was Harry's house-keeper following the death of his wife. Harry, who had a very productive small-holding behind the cottage, was Elliott Bailey's Uncle. Some say he welcomed the contents of residents buckets on to his plot, and therefore had a such successful small-holding with superb produce.

In 1932/3 **Downlea Cottage** was gutted by fire when the Sims lived there. (The Sims were renowned for the number of cats they kept.) JM (aged 5/6) remembers the flames and hoses when coming home from school – and being frightened. He recalls it was a Thursday, the Handley bus day. The cottage was renamed by Mr & Mrs Cooper, who lived there after the house was restored, and called it Downlea House. To avoid any further confusion, the current residents (the Boswells) have opted for Downlea !

ES recalls that a Mr Gay, the Eastbury chauffeur , and his wife lived here. They were followed by Mrs Liz Crowley. Liz, who was an artist, didn't enjoyed gardening and was heard to say that 'gardening is just outdoor housework!' Apparently she worried constantly that the house would flood and so installed a pump in the well, which pumped happily for three hours - then ran out of fuel. At times of high concern (for she was known to be a worrier) her kind neighbour, David Hall, would set his alarm at three-hourly intervals, and would dutifully go and fill up the pump, day and night. This is just one example of the friendliness in the village; this neighbourliness continues to this day.S

The village undertaker, Harry Ridout, allegedly lived here, but is this an error of memory ? A Ridout family also lived at Old Home Cottage just down the road .

**Westbury Farm** Captain Brown farmed here for many years. JW still resident in Gunville, is his daughter. It is said that Captain Brown inspected his estate from the best possible vantage point - his horse. He said this was a virtually silent mode of transport, and it was surprising how often he came across a rather shocked group of workers.

This confirms rather nicely the story in Stuart Collis' book re working on the land around this area in the 1940s. He said no-one called the land-owner 'master' or 'sir' or even 'boss', but would call out the single word 'VAN' if he was seen motoring towards them. Sadly there is no date for the change to motorised transport, but the boss became 'Van' to all the farm-workers. Which landowner this was is not known.

In 1973 Westbury Farm was sold to Mr Wallis-Jones (solicitor) and the dwelling was then called Westbury House. He obtained planning permission for housing on his land on the opposite side of the road and sold it to a builder. He retained the land on the far bank of the river from Westbury House so that he could plant hedging plants and trees, and thereby obscure the bungalows from his view !

**Old Home Cottage** - formerly Ridout's Tea Room

There was a tearoom run by Miss Ridout (very much in charge) and her sister Aggie, definitely the assistant, in Old Home Cottage. Father Ridout was for a time the local undertaker. It closed in the 1950s, so far as can be recalled. Any overflow went to Marlborough Farm (then the Parkers). Moira Maidment (nee Belbin) recalls taking a jug of cream across from Stephouse to the tearoom from the dairy at Marlborough, for which she was paid two pence. On one occasion she was given two half-crowns in error and took the money home. One can imagine how upset Moira was when her mother insisted in no uncertain terms that she had to return the money and confess her wickedness. It must have been a painful experience for Moira for her to remember it so vividly to this day !

In 2017 the residents are Michael and Wendy Daniels. The solicitor who acted for them in the purchase of Old Farm Cottage just happened to be a Claysmore boy who knew the tea room well !

Ridouts Tea Rooms, as it was then called, was a frequent destination for boys of Claysmore School, who cycled over on their half-day off, to take a very fine tea. This was the 1940s; the boys of 13 years of age and upwards were allowed to go out on their half-day unaccompanied. Michael and his brothers were among the boys who went out from Claysmore in search of food. However, although his brothers visited the Ridouts Tea Shop, Michael went to various tea-rooms around the district, but not this particular one. What a shame, it would have been a wonderful story !

A further memory is of the Ridout sisters bringing fish from their sister's fish shop in Salisbury to Old Home Cottage; and it is assumed they must have sold some to their neighbours, or why would it have been remembered?

Michael reports that one of the Ridout ladies was nurse/nanny to the Duchess of Kent of the time.

**Chime Cottage** was so-called because a previous owner had numerous clocks. Prior to that it was known, not unsurprisingly, as Corner Cottage. The owners before Janet Harding were a Mr Kevin Wissett-Warner and his wife; they stayed for less than two years. Janet arrived in December 1988 and was ideally placed to keep an eye on her mother, who came to live in Marlborough Farmhouse. Janet has been very active in village matters, W.I, The Tarrant Troupers and keeping an eye on people and on the new village hall.

The County Records Office has information on this cottage going back to 1840, when Ann Kerley lived there; she was followed by Bennett Kerley in 1880, who was a blacksmith. Not sure if he operated here in Corner Cottage or at The Forge down the lane. At the beginning of the twentieth century William Sansom lived here, and was probably a tenant of the Farquharson estate. In 1945 Corner Cottage was owned by Captain John Brown of Westbury Farm, and occupied by Joe and Mary-Ann Sansom. From 1954-62 it was occupied Mrs B Bailey and Miss Cook who were collectors of clocks, hence the change of name ; it was owned by Mrs E Moore-Stevens now, who gave a cup to the annual Horse Show in the village held at Eastbury, and which still survives today. Mr & Mrs Revell took up residence from 1962 to 1987, followed by the Wissett Warners.

**Ashdown Cottage** In 1954 the Head Teacher in the village was a Mr Willmott who was an ex-airline pilot and drove a 1930s MG Sport. He lived in a 2-bed bungalow which he built with the help of a Mr Jack Bailey. (see School Close).

The home was named after Mr Willmott's favourite football team, West Ham. The bungalow was eventually bought in 1986 by a builder called Brown, who bought it as a speculative venture and added a two-storey extension. Builder Brown also built Stephouse Cottage.

Eddie Brown (no relation) and Elisabeth bought the house in 1988 and renamed it Ashdown Cottage, which I am sure was much preferred by Elisabeth. Eddie was at one time a civil servant whose skills came in very useful when funds were being raised for the new village hall. He spent many hours completing the necessary forms involved with such a project - and it is reported that the paperwork was set out neatly on the table and held firmly in place by weights covered in fabric. Eddie spent many enthusiastic hours working with villagers in the amateur dramatic group known as The Tarrant Troupers - more of that later !

Eddie also wrote 'Tarrant Gunville Parish - The Past 200 Years', which follows the historical developments of the village. At the same time he picked up some local stories and encouraged this writer to pursue the people's stories of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Eddie, at the age of 91, left the village in 2019 to live in Princes Risborough to be closer to his sons. Within a week he had been greeted by four neighbours, been to the local Church, joined a choir which was rehearsing The Messiah, and reported that the choir will move on to 'The Fiddler on the Roof' when The Messiah had been performed at Easter!

**A Windmill is recalled between Chime Cottage and Yew Tree Cottage** One can only assume that it was used for drawing water.

**Riverside Cottage**

Submitted by David Morrow : “Brian Trickey was brought up in my house and I once queried with him the fact that my well is deep and in superb internal condition and its brick and flint still looks new. This conversation came about because during some earthworks I discovered a nearby well that had collapsed and been filled in. Brian told me that during the 1920s a drought had run most of the shallower wells bone dry, and that many were subsequently deepened and in other cases a new well was dug.

Edward Thorne reported that there was an excavation behind Riverside Cottage known as Trinkle Pit - Its purpose has not so far been discovered, nor its location.”

Mary Morrow was sadly ‘lost’ to her family and friends for quite a while before she died, but was able to stay in her home until the end, nursed by David. Following her death David was lonely on his own and decided to find a female companion.

These days the easiest way to meet someone is through the internet, and luckily David was computer-literate and was able to search out a suitable friend.

He had quite a few ‘chats’ on-line; some conversations were very interesting, but he felt on occasion that the age of his new acquaintances was not always truthfully told. (Likewise he, too, was guilty of taking 9 years off his age on occasion! )

There came a day when he made contact with Sarah who lived in Dorset in a village not far from Blandford, and it seemed sensible to meet at The Yellow Bicycle’ coffee shop in Salisbury Street at 1.30 the next day.

David thought he was in good time to greet the lady, and as there was no-one standing outside he went in. There before him sat a lady on her own who was drinking coffee. He went across and said ‘Good Morning’ and sat himself down. No messing about for David – ‘Have you ordered?’ he asked. ‘Yes’ came the reply. ‘What are you having?’ ‘ I’m having Croque Monsieur. ‘That sounds good – another Croque Monsieur,’ he immediately called to the waiter.

His opening gambit was to ask the lady how long she had lived in Durweston, to which she replied, “ I live in Blandford.” Not to be put off stroke, David asked how long she had been divorced? Horrified, she replied, 'I'm happily married!' David, full of confusion, explained he'd been on a dating site.....Then the lady said, 'There's a woman out there, she's been walking up and down for ages – maybe that's your date ?'

David went to the door – and yes, it was Sarah. who irritably exclaimed, “You are in there with another woman !” After much explanation and apologies all round, they sat and chatted for quite a while.

However, there is a sad ending to this jolly tale - they both decided they had nothing in common – and thankfully never met again !

*Thank you for sharing this story and causing our readers much mirth ! Some names of people and places have been changed for obvious reasons!*

**Homers situated at Princes Corner** Dougie Sims lived in Homers, approx 1950s. RT reports that on one occasion when he visited Dougie to deliver the Slate Club money he and his sister, Ivy, were sitting in front of the fire with their Wellingtons on and the water almost up to the top of their boots. Dougie said it happened every year. Food and papers all sat on the top of the kitchen cupboards for the duration and chairs and tables were raised on bricks! Another recollection of this family was that at times of high water Ivy would move all the downstairs furniture, food etc up to the first floor where she would sit out the flood. She was the lady who pumped the organ at Church at one time, prior to the installation of electricity.

There was another brother, Bert. (Their father Eddie Sims worked for the Belbins, and once upon a time lived at Downlea, where he kept numerous cats.) Originally there were two cottages on this site and the Sims premises (the right-hand cottage) became so dilapidated that in the 1970s it was demolished and replaced by George Wilson, builder of Blandford, and the left-hand cottage was turned into a domestic garage.

Jim Bulpitt's parents lived at the 'new' Homers with his sister Joan; without a doubt Mr Bulpitt senior's garden would have been included in the 21st century village open gardens. It was immaculate and every spare moment was spent tending the plot. Besides veg, flowers and lawns there was a goldfish pond, and Joan had an aviary at one time.

Eventually Mr Bulpitt senior died and Jim and his family moved to Homers in 1982 to be with Mrs B and Joan, converting the garage back to a dwelling known as Homers Cottage. They came from No 2 cottage in China Lane, which they rented from Eastbury Estate in 1980 and later bought. Gus Mainwaring-Burton of Tarrant Monkton had warned Jim about serious flooding in the winter at Princes Corner – but nothing happened for 12 years. Then the rains fell and Pauline Bulpitt came down one morning to find Jim's work boots floating around the kitchen. That winter, 2003/4, the water came in three times. The children took advantage of the rising water and played with speed-boats in the house. Happily they were insured and they were able to raise the whole house, by 30" (approx 76cms).

Prior to this event Jim and Pauline had taken in a lodger who had lost his home - due to VAT problems ! He seemed to be remarkably comfortable and not in the least keen to leave.

When Jim informed him that the roof was coming off and he would be exposed to the stars, the lodger obviously didn't believe him. The roof was duly removed in order for the first floor to be lifted, and lodger came down the following morning to announce that he had been frozen all night. At this point he departed. Jim and Pauline remained on site and were protected from the elements, but at one stage they could sit in bed under four duvets and watch traffic coming up the road through a gap between rafters !

Jim whose main work is a car restorer has been called upon by villagers on numerous occasions - some of which cannot be printed here ! (See Geoffrey Bennett of Little Tarrant.) 2018.

I was introduced today to Jim's new staff member at B & J Autos to whom he had sold a car, for which payment was received as follows : £150, 3 pairs of boots and an electric room-fan. Both parties appeared satisfied with the transaction.

**Kestrel Cottage, Stubhampton** was so named in the 1980's when the current occupants first lived in Tarrant Gunville. Originally it had been three cottages, reduced to two and finally to one home. In the late 1990s its name was changed to Hampton House, but happily with the arrival of the Percivals in Stubhampton it reverted to the original name of Kestrel Cottage. Or did it ? In 2013 an old name plate was found while excavations were under-way for the new drive, depicting the name 'St Martins'. Another mystery to solve....?

When growing up, DT remembers it as two cottages. (The extensions on either end had not been built.) Mr and Mr. Dowling occupied one cottage, and Mr and Mrs Fooks with their three sons the other. Dianne's mother, Nellie Tarbin, was very friendly with Mrs. Fooks, so she frequently visited as a child to play with the three boys. Mrs. Fooks' brother was Ernie Amey who was, at the time, high-up in the Farmworkers' Union. (Nellie collected the union subs from the farmworkers in the village.)

**Vine Cottage** (lately known as Vine House) was occupied by a Mrs. Johnson who had an enormous



tortoise which she kept on a long chain in the garden so that it could not wander too far should it suddenly gather speed!

Back in the 1990's, when Mr & Mrs Spooner lived at Brushers Bank, they had some turkeys in the paddock next to Vine Cottage. At the time, Jim Shephard, farm manager for Major Humphreys, had a gas banger operating to keep pigeons off a crop of peas. The problem was that every time there was a bang the turkeys went 'gobble, gobble, gobble!!' or something along those lines! The young couple in Vine Cottage soon found it all too much and were on the phone to ask for some silence!! Whether the bird-scarer was turned off was not recorded.

In front of these cottages was the Regnart chicken farm. NT worked at the egg-cleaning machine and as she grew older, DT would occasionally help. She recalls that large lorries would come up the valley road in the middle of the night to take the chickens away. She remembers her father getting up to join other village men in helping to round up and catch the chickens! "Dad tells me that it was always done at 2 am."

**Stubhampton Gate** The owners believe this was another of the valley's inns. At one time there were seven people living in the original part of the house - and the bar was also included in that space. By the thirties, according to one memory, it was known as a 'pot house' - when shepherds were moving sheep down the droves to common land they stopped at Stubhampton Gate for refreshment. The name comes from the habit of taking one's own tankard or 'pot' into the house. It would be filled for a few pence, but you weren't allowed to drink it on the premises.

Despite numerous efforts it has not been possible to identify this 'common land'. The phrase was used both by John Maidment and Ella Smith. Was this the land cleared by John Stuart Collis?

**Stepington Cottage** was at one time two dwellings. Arty Biles was one of the tenants here with his sister Miss Biles, and kept chickens in his garden, in a carefully wired pen. One morning Arty went out to feed the hens, only to find that Mr Fox had paid a visit in the night and had killed all the hens, but had left the cockerel. Arty, who was wise about such matters, knew that the fox would be back (whether for the cockerel or for more corpses it isn't known - maybe a foxy habit). Arty therefore rigged up a shot-gun with a tripwire for the fox's next visit - and waited. Arty was somewhat taken aback next morning to find that the cockerel had come out of his house to take the evening air, tripped the wire, and was found dead at the front of his house! The two cottages became one and Joyce Billings lived here until the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Stubhampton Manor Farm, Manor Farmhouse Stubhampton, The Elms, The Brambles**  
*(submitted by Charlie Regnart)*

Jill and Julian Regnart moved into the area when they bought Stubhampton Manor Farm around 1955. Prior to this it was owned by Mr Hill, who used to like a drink and regularly come back from the pub drunk, and in the effort of retrieving his keys from his pocket would drop loose change in the farmyard....this was much appreciated by a very young Mick Greham who would secretly collect said change and had it (literally) as his pocket money!

Regnarts lived for a time on the top floor of the building and Mary & Paddy Greham lived in the bottom with their son, Mick. While they were living there, the Regnarts' house was built on the side of the hill on Bussey Stool road into which they moved in 1957. It was a very contemporary design based on split level American houses Julian Regnart had seen out in the USA while researching chicken farming. This house then became Stubhampton Manor Farm and the original house was renamed Manor Farmhouse, Stubhampton. Eventually The Grehams moved into the top floor of Manor Farmhouse and the vicar,

Anthony Johnson moved in below.

A bungalow was then built at the bottom of the Regnarts new drive on Bussey Stool road into which Mary, Paddy and Mick Greham moved in 1959. Paddy Greham worked as poultryman for the new chicken business and associated buildings in Stubhampton while Mary worked up at Stubhampton Manor Farm and helped bring up the four Regnart children.

The top floor of Manor Farmhouse was then occupied by Alfie Fookes who, amongst other things, worked as the dairyman for the Belbins at Home Farm. The ground floor, after the vicar vacated, became a private school run by a Miss Hall, which had amongst its pupils the eldest Regnart child and one of the Woodhouse children of the Blandford brewery family.

In the late 1960's Manor Farmhouse was put on the market by the Regnarts for the princely sum of £2,500 and was bought by someone from Thames Ditton. The purchaser however never moved in, and after 2 years Julian Regnart even wrote to the purchaser's solicitor to notify them that slates were starting to fall off the roof. It was subsequently put on the market and bought by a lady who didn't stay long as right next door there was a double storey chicken house containing around 6,000 laying hen, by which she appeared to be haunted. One night Mr Regnart was phoned by a distraught lady complaining about the 'clucking' of the chickens. Unfortunately he had to inform her that at that time there were actually no chickens in the building!!! .....She moved pretty quickly after that! The house was then bought by the Young family, (husband John working for Humberts in Blandford) and they were followed by the Watsons who stayed until around 2003..

In 1966 the double storey chicken house, one of the first of it's kind in Britain, was built in Stubhampton along with a Woolaway pre-fabricated bungalow for the poultryman, Mick Greham and his new wife Jean. As the bungalow was built beside some large elm trees, it was named 'The Elms'.

In 1972, 'The Bridge' was built at Stubhampton Manor Farm. It was a 2-bedroom flat occupied by Jill Regnart's mother, who had moved from Boldre, nr Lymington after her husband had died.

In 1980 Mick and Jean Greham bought a plot of land in Stubhampton from the Regnarts and between 1980 and 1984 they built their current house 'Brambles'. Mick dug the foundations of this house by hand in the evening, using a light with a washing-up bowl as it's shade in case of rain !!

'The Elms' was occupied for a while by the Regnarts' eldest daughter, Caroline, before she married a farmer in Puddletown and moved away. It was then rented out to a number of people before becoming occupied by Charlie Regnart (youngest son of Jill & Julian) in 1991. In 2000, Charlie and his wife Alison moved into a mobile home on site with their newborn baby, demolished the bungalow and spent 3 years building the present brick and flint house.

Julian Regnart died in 2013, Jill Regnart moved away to a property in Downton next door to and owned by her eldest son, Christopher, and Mary Greham moved out of the bungalow at the bottom of the drive to Trailway Court in Blandford.... Stubhampton Manor Farm was sold and subsequently split into 3 properties; the bungalow at the bottom of the drive turned into 'The Lodge', 'The Bridge' was demolished and rebuilt as 'Virage'....and the main house was completely remodelled and became 'Vista'.

**Dungrove Cottage** This was the home of George and Daisy Bailey who produced Elliott and 'Toots'. Elliott and Jean lived here when they were first married and produced daughter Valerie here.

**Brushers Bank** This was originally a cedarwood bungalow built by Arthur and Sylvia Spooner in 1954. Arthur Caswell Spooner was born in 1906; his father and grandfather had a medical practice in Church Lane, Blandford and were doctors to the Farquharsons and Portmans... among others. Arthur joined the Civil Service and in 1929 became a District Commissioner for Nigeria and Ghana. He held various posts whilst in Africa, and in 1942 whilst in the Gold Coast Defence Force was appointed a temporary Lieutenant Colonel. He returned in 1945 to the Administrative Service and five years later was appointed Assistant Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. He retired in 1952. Following this he spent a period working for the Eastbury Estates in the UK. He returned to Africa in 1956 working for the Gambian government until 1959, and from 1961-63 he was employed by the Government of Northern Nigeria to run the President's offices in Makurdi and Llorin.

He met Sylvia Blest in Accra at a polo match, where they were married 1944.

On retirement he kept cattle, sheep and hens at Brushers Bank and Mr Spooner often called upon 'Bidge' to look after a sick sheep or to dock the lambs' tails. (See reports from Ella Smith.) He also raised pheasants for the Eastbury Estate here. He died in 1996.

Sylvia was employed in MI6, which may explain her living in Accra. She was required to sign the Official Secrets Act before commencing her employment and to this day has not divulged the nature of her work !

Many villagers recall Sylvia traversing Valley Road on her bicycle, complete with basket on the front, to fulfil her functions of Treasurer to the PCC and also as a School Governor. She was still using this mode of transport in the 21st century, but finding that the lorries in the lane were getting larger and larger, she decided not to be put off by them, and continued to walk from Brushers Bank to the church and the village hall, visiting folk along the way. She also walked to Ashmore to visit a friend. She was a small, slight woman, but could keep up with the best !

Sylvia showed her complete dedication to the community of Tarrant Gunville and Stubhampton by welcoming each newcomer with a small gift which could be anything that was growing at the time. Memories of a small bunch of flowers from her garden, a pot of parsley or when the garden failed, a jar of home-made jam or even a cake would be handed over with kind words of welcome.

In 2013 when Sylvia was 93, she moved to a sheltered flat in Ryan Court, Blandford where she had easy access to the town, the Church, shops etc. She continued to walk - and was spotted down by the river on more than one occasion

Jan and Katie Robinson moved to Brushers Bank in 2013. To continue the goodwill generated by Brushers Bank they have taken upon themselves to work in various capacities in the village community.

They lived in Brushers Bank for a year in order to decide how to improve/alter the single storey building for their own needs. Following many battles with the planning authority (which really weren't necessary- in my opinion) the plans were passed and they were able to convert their home into a two storey dwelling, clad with timber in the style of the bungalow, but enhanced by brick and flint work to much of the facade.

## **Bailey Cottages**

JM reported that he had said many times at the Parish Council that the village needed low cost housing in order to bring families to help maintain the life of the village.

In 2009 Planning Consent was given to Spectrum Housing Association for the erection of two 3-

bedroomed and two 2-bedroomed semi-detached cottages at the edge of the village adjacent to the bungalow named Spartae. At the time that the houses were ready for occupation the Council couldn't find any young families wishing to live in Gunville and had to re-advertise. Bearing in mind there is no school, surgery, shop or regular bus service in the village this is hardly surprising. However, most who moved into the new homes are still there 7 years later.

These two pairs of cottages were built by Spectrum Housing Association in 2012. They comprise of 2 x two-bedroom and 2 x three-bedroom homes, and were named in memory of Elliott Bailey and his wife Jean, who were greatly involved in village life. Bailey cottages stand next to Elliott and Jean's bungalow site, Spartae, which was transformed into a spacious house in 2012.

Villagers had reported to the District Council during the planning process that the whole area was vulnerable to springs in the winter-spring period, which were liable to break through anywhere. They requested that this fact should be noted during consideration of the planning application. Consent was granted, and building works began. Eventually a huge hole of considerable depth was dug, certainly big enough for a domestic swimming pool, which then began to fill with water. A pump was used to send gallons of water up the hill behind the cottages for some time, but eventually the hole was deemed sufficiently dry for the septic tank to be installed. It was an enormous blue plastic container, which one could have lived in, and was intended to serve the four homes. The next stage was to cover up the tank,. In the event, there was a very short period before the said blue receptacle rose from the ground. Eddie Brown at Ashdown Cottage happened to be coming downstairs one morning and saw from his landing window that the ground was cracking and the blue monster was making its way to the surface. In fact it was not very long before the whole container was visible from the lane.

Villagers could not help but smile, not with glee, but a certain feeling of satisfaction - we told you so ! At what we can only assume was considerable expense, the tank was moved to the other side of the plot, shuttering was installed all the way round the hole, and copious amounts of concrete were poured, making a comfortable new and, we hope, dry permanent place for the septic tank to reside. It is with great pleasure that it can be reported that it hasn't been seen above ground again 5 years later. The lesson to learn from this story must surely be - seek local knowledge before starting on a project which involves digging.

**Spartae**, originally a bungalow, was the last home of Elliott Bailey.

In 2012 Geoff and Judy Gillett bought Spartae and converted it into a very spacious house. Very soon after their arrival Judy met Eddie Brown in the road and they passed the time of day. Judy told him what difficulty lorries were having in finding Spartae to deliver building materials and apologised for all the to-ing and fro-ing, reversing and changes of gear. Half an hour later Eddie was knocking on the door - and presented Judy with a large notice saying 'SPARTAE'. Another example of neighbourliness in this lovely village.

**Barn House** was the home of Alan and Nita Mercer, key members of The Troupers. This house had been converted from a barn into a house as a holiday let in the 1970s by the Eastbury Estate.

**Marlborough Farmhouse** It is understood that this house and many more in the village were built from recycled materials following the demolition of the major part of Eastbury house in the late 18th century, particularly the green sandstone, which appears in many cottages. It is reported that the stone was sold at ten shillings a cart-load (50p in metric). Or maybe it was the Eastbury Estate recycling materials to build cottages for their workers ? More research is required. It is believed that Eastbury House was the third biggest house in the country, behind Blenheim Palace and Castle Howard.

**Visit of Betty Cummings to Marlborough Farmhouse April 2007** Betty was brought to the village, and

in particular Marlborough Farmhouse, by her son so that she could look back at childhood places. Paula thought they were Jehovah's Witnesses. A good thing she didn't say, 'Not today thank you !' It was a lovely opportunity to ask questions, as many times thoughts had drifted back in time to imagine who lived here, lit the fires and climbed the stairs... Betty couldn't answer many of these questions of course, but it was a delight to see her walk round and recall her childhood.

Betty was born at Chettle and arrived at Marlborough Farmhouse in the 1920s, having been orphaned. She came to live with her Auntie Lucy and Uncle Walter Parker. They had 4 sons – George, Ben, Willy and Arthur who was the youngest. Her comments were as follows.

Pigs, ducks and chicken were kept at the back of the house. The chickens would come in the back door, turn right and go along to the straw and feed stored at the far end of the kitchen (where the utility and loo are now).

There was an apple press and large container in the outbuilding (on the site of the current garage), into which were put apples from the orchard behind the outbuilding. The men would take their tankards and fill with "cider" from a tap at the bottom.

Betty recalled the big fireplace in the sitting room. There was always water on the boil in a kettle hanging from a hook over a fire in the kitchen (in which now sits a Stanley cooker), and also a big cauldron of food hung on a chain there.

The dining room was very dark (there would have been no side window at that time); it was here Betty's grandmother was laid out in her coffin on the table.

Betty was frequently locked on the dark staircase by her male cousins, there being a door at top and bottom. She was unsure whether the stairs started in the sitting room or kitchen.

It is understood that the Parker family moved to Cottage Row.

They were followed by Fred Belbin and his wife, May. Keith, their son, who was born in this house, reports that a horse and cart was used to bring logs into the building at the back, presumably no longer a cider 'factory'. Fred, Keith's father, lived in part of what is now Garth Cottage (China Lane) before farming at Marlborough.

In 2016 there stands an ancient apple tree near the wall in the front garden, identified as a 'Profit' or 'Prophet' apple by a man from Kingston Maurward Agricultural College at an Apple Day in Sturminster Newton, and who called it a cider apple. In the 21st century the internet cannot tell me about this apple.

I would like to think that the cider made at Marlborough Farmhouse was from that tree. There is an old photograph of the village street in which appears a large tree in the same position in the front garden as the current tree.

In 2008 during restorations, it was clear that the stairs had started in the inner kitchen at some point, although they may have started in the sitting room at an earlier date – there are stair-like steps over the right of the inglenook. It was also found that under the original stairs was a hole in the wall through which it is believed fuel for the fire would have been passed into the inglenook - from outside, or in later years through the lobby from the back door. There were signs that a wall had been removed that came from the back of the ingle towards the front of the hearth, and which could have supported a staircase. It was behind the stone pillar at the right hand side of the bressumer beam. On the other hand, access to the first floor could have been from the outside of the house – a similar arrangement was seen in an old cottage at Droop Common, where there was a 14 inch step up to the 'stairs' – a short flight of irregular steps which ran parallel to the outside wall of the house.

The addition at the back of the Marlborough Farmhouse in the Victorian era provided an opportunity

for the stairs to be either inside the house or moved from the living room (Chime Cottage opposite still has the staircase going up the side and over the fireplace.)

Keith Belbin (aged 14 at the time) recalls that it was traditional for family and neighbours to assemble at Marlborough Farmhouse to start the Christmas festivities on Christmas Eve. One year the fire was banked up in the living room when someone noticed that the wall above the fire was becoming very hot and the plaster was cracking. Firemen and their engine came from Blandford, and once the word got out about the Marlborough Farmhouse chimney fire more family members and friends came to assist. (Some of the firemen involved were as follows : Mr Timbrell, Sacky Adams (a shoe repairer), Harry Blandford, Tim Rose.) The fire was well underway and the main beam over the fireplace was alight. The firemen beat through the chimney breast wall above the fire to aid the extinguishing of the flames. Obviously the family were in dire straits on Christmas Eve, but someone fetched a load of blocks and a builder friend found the cement to put them in place. Having averted a tragedy, the party carried on in the other room (known at that time as The Blue Room). now a dining room. The firemen and other helpers proceeded to devour the Belbin family's festive food , and a good time was had by all. The fireplace was held up with a concrete beam following this fire, but In 2008 it was replaced with a second-hand oak beam from a reclamation yard, but no information was available as to its original whereabouts.

The 1970s updating of the house led to the old staircase being removed and a straight flight of steps, starting opposite the back door, was installed. The flight went up where there is now a stained glass window (to add light to the staircase), and in 2008 stairs were reinstated to their original position.

A technique used many times during the 2006-10 project was a simple knocking on walls – to see if it was hollow behind. This technique found the position of the old stairs, the inglenook, which had been bricked-up, the space at the right of the inglenook which had been blocked off and had shelves added, as had the door-frame in the sitting room, which may have been the position of a back door in the 18th/19th centuries. The technique comes highly recommended, to be followed as necessary by a crowbar !

Marlborough Farmhouse was thatched originally. The roof was replaced in 1940 with a corrugated asbestos roof, topped with a variety of styles of red ridge tile, assumed to have been lying around the Eastbury Estate. There are two stories which were passed down: one is that the Estate didn't want to pay for a new thatched roof and the second, that all the thatchers had gone to the war. Mrs May Belbin who lived here at the time was terrified that the new roof, which shone out brightly on moonlit nights, would be a target for German planes which flew over the valley. It was a good choice of material as it was still totally waterproof in 2006. It is understood that the German planes ditched their bombs over this area on their return to Germany#, so Mrs Belbin 's fears were not altogether unrealistic.

Once the roof was replaced, the remaining old timbers were cleaned up. One of the many holes drilled into these was found to contain a piece of newspaper , which was sufficiently preserved to be able to read parts of it. It is thought that the holes were filled with paper to save filling them with vast amounts of plaster, and although the holes could have been made in the construction of Eastbury, it is most likely that the timbers came from a shipwreck on the Dorset coast, which was quite a normal source of large timbers. (See Addendum )

The metal and concrete post fence opp Stephouse & Marlborough was probably erected in the 1940s. Prior to that the road had run along the edge of the river. There was a ford access to the field next to Old Farm Cottage before the bridge was built.

## Stephouse Cottage

In the 1990s Tarrant Gunville & Stubhampton entertained a choir to sing with villagers on several occasions. They all had wonderful musical times together, and the visitors were 'billeted' with local people. On one occasion (and perhaps many) the visitors would retire after rehearsals or performances to Eddie Brown's house at Ashdown Cottage, where great fun was shared – along with liquid refreshment – until the early hours. A couple of female friends turned out to be great gigglers which enhanced the mood of the gathering. These ladies were billeted at Stephouse Cottage with Laurraine and Veronica, and at about 2am they decided it was time to leave. They found the key of the house after much feretting in handbags and off they went. It was not long before they realised they had no idea where Stephouse Cottage was. More giggling ensued and they eventually decided the house in front of them must be the one. They proceeded (giggling) to the front door and the key was produced. However, they couldn't find the keyhole for ages (more giggling), but eventually, and with a deal of good fortune, they realised they were feeling down the wrong side of the door. Entry was gained and they proceeded up the stairs – one suspects rather noisily. Then a bathroom was required, and one of them opened a door – into the airing cupboard. More giggling. Finally they found their bedroom, the covers turned down to welcome them. They flung themselves on the beds, and with the greatest of difficulty stifled their giggles. They thought they had entered with such care that their hostesses would be totally unaware of their arrival. Not so – they had been heard from the moment they arrived, and the hostesses were able to regale the village with this story of their un-quiet visitors.

**Stephouse** This was the home of another Belbin, Claude, who farmed with Fred of Marlborough Farmhouse. Claude was the father of Moira (Maidment). After Claude died her mother remarried to Claude's brother, Charlie. They produced a daughter and named her Claudia.

The next resident was a lady on her own. She was the proud owner of a gold Nissan Micra A reg of 1984 which was the first ever model and which JB serviced regularly, and as it succumbed to old age his attention was needed more and more. Many a time he would return the car to Stephouse and was ordered to stay a while and join the owner in a G & T. Frequently he would have to ring his wife and request her to take him home. No comment! It is said that this lady may be the one who died in her armchair with a gin and tonic by her side. How sensible..... No-one can confirm this for sure.

**China Lane** The names of China Cottage and China Lane are assumed to be connected with the Wedgwood family, who lived in the village. Wikipedia says that much of the clay used in the factory at Stoke-on-Trent came from Tarrant Gunville at some point.

**Garth Cottage** was at one time two cottages, and Miss Woolridge lived in the second one. She was a very ancient lady who always wore black, and was described as "looking like a kipper" from sitting in the inglenook which smoked constantly. John Maidment often took rice pudding to her, made by his grandmother in Westbury Cottages. It was so smokey in the cottage that it was almost impossible to see across the room when the door was opened!

**No.1 China Lane** Joe West, the taxi driver, lived at No. 1 and he was confirmed as being there in 1981; his wife was Keith Belbin's Aunt Flo of Stephouse! Joe provided a taxi service during the war and was still there in 1957, the date of Edward Thorne's wedding.

**The middle one (No.2)** was occupied by Edward Thorne's parents.

**No 3 China Lane**, nearest to China Cottage - was occupied by Frank Giles and his daughter, Frances. Frank is remembered for his regular visits to the School where he collected food scraps (called 'swill') for his pigs. He kept chickens, too. Frances helped in the school at dinner time, setting up tables and

benches, cutlery etc for the children. She is remembered for the bucket she took every day to bring home scraps of food for Joe West's pigs and chicken– or was it really for her father's animals ?

**China Cottage** Ronald Farquharson, known as the squire, lived here with his wife, Mary, and their children and finally moved to Monkton House with their son, Peter.

Later Renara Stopford was in occupation and is remembered by Sylvia Belbin who came to the village in 1961. In 1984, when Jim and Pauline Bulpitt lived at No.2 China Lane, Renara heard the news of a birth at No.2 so she called in and asked, "What's been hatched then ?"

Renara was a very determined lady who, in her eighties, climbed onto the roof of her house in order to retrieve the jackdaw cover which had fallen from the top of the chimney. (Other tellings of the story say she went on the roof to deal with a problem with TV aerial.) This brave woman fell off, and sadly died from her injuries in hospital and didn't return to the village. This must have been in the 1980s. There is no record of her death in church records, which only record those buried in the churchyard. Renara is remembered as a rather eccentric lady and there are recollections of her pushing an enormous armchair through the village on a wheel-barrow – to where was never discovered.

Sir Brian Kenny and his wife lived at China Cottage well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Commander of BAOR. Deputy Supreme Commander Europe 1990-93 when he retired.

**Hyde Away, China Lane** This house was built on "Uncle Albert's vegetable plot." It was built by a builder, Mr Bingham, who lived in it for fifteen years before finding the upkeep too expensive. It was originally a chalet bungalow. The Tatham family bought it in 1986, and did much work on it - turning it into a 2-storey cottage of great charm.

**Ballard Down** Shirley Cottage was one of three cottages on the right of China Lane, which are now a single house known as Ballard Down, home to Denise and Paul Wentworth. It is understood that the three cottages were purchased by Fred, Roy and William Belbin in 1946 and they were used to house the Home Farm workers. The Tulitts owned Ballard Down in 1969. Farmer Rodney Belbin (Home Farm and son of Roy Belbin) was born in Shirley Cottage. Legend has it that this cottage was occupied by German ex-prisoners of war, and on one unfortunate occasion they managed to set fire to the kitchen. There are those who remember this fire and date it 1946/7. The German soldiers were re-housed in the cottage to the right of the entrance to Home Farm yard, which was used for storage in recent times, but is currently being restored to its original condition.

Rodney Belbin turned up one day when the Wentworths were making their new kitchen to ask if there was anything of his under the floor ! The kitchen is the China Lane end of the house, a third cottage at the other end of the original row having been demolished. Rodney told the Wentworths that he lived in what is now their kitchen. It is therefore assumed that the current kitchen was Shirley cottage.

The cottage that was pulled down was called Cobb Cottage and the owner at the time (KB says this was Mr Tulitt) who had lived in this house built a new house in the grounds now known as Cobb cottage, in memory of the demolished cottage.

In 2018 Paul meticulously restored the phone box between the gardens of 4 Westbury Cottage and the Old Post Office. It is intended to put shelves in to use as a village library where books may be loaned and borrowed.

## Village Hall

The village hall was of corrugated iron construction and was one of many 'wards' used on Blandford Camp during war-time. By the late 20<sup>th</sup> century it had seen better days. On 13<sup>th</sup> October 1996 fund-



raising commenced with a harvest supper which raised £225.69 to start the rebuilding fund.

David Morrow rallied the troupes and, having found a basic gang of four to demolish the old hall, the day was set. Word soon spread of this 'happening' in the village, and a good crowd assembled to assist with the task of removing the old hall. Keith Belbin sent down a tractor with bale fork on the front, the cry went up 'stand by' and a few good nudges and the hall collapsed. The whole job of clearing the site took one day. The local team was congratulated by the builders on the fine finish when they arrived to start site works.

From thereafter numerous events were held and grants applied for (and granted), and in the year 2000 a grand opening was held.

Major Humphries celebrated his 90th birthday at the hall, organised by Sir Brian Kenny, who had a water colour picture done of the Major and his dogs in front of The Manor, in honour of the occasion. The picture now hangs in the Village Hall.

**Everetts** JM says that Mr Everett was a builder for the Eastbury Estate. Molly Robertson is remembered as a great character who lived here, and her stepson owned Taylor's Port in Oporto, Portugal.

**Pitt Cottage** is reportedly named after a maintenance worker of the Eastbury Estate who lived there, and when he was needed by his employer he would hear a very loud "Pitt", and was expected to appear most promptly.

**Dairy House - The Shop** in days gone by.

A Mr William Arnold ran a shop and bakery here, the date 1840. (see EB History), and it is reported that Mr & Mrs Simms were in the shop in 1919.

So far as 20th century history is concerned we know that Frank Janes took on the forge in 1919. He came with his wife, Eliza, and their two children, Ella and William. When she grew up Ella married Les Thorne, and they lived in the middle cottage on China Lane, and in time produced Edward and Ruth. When Grandma (Eliza) Thorne died in 1947 (or possibly 48?), her son Leslie and Ella Thorne (nee Janes) his wife took on the shop, moving from the middle cottage in China Lane, and while Ella worked very long hours in the shop Les carried on farm work on the land at the back. He reared cattle and sheep on his plot which is now covered with houses. Ruth, daughter of Ella and Les is remembered as a very kind woman who delivered bread and milk around the village.

It is also well-remembered that it was a very good shop, stocking every conceivable item a housewife could want, and was available 24/7. By which I guess it means that Mrs Thorne would open her door to desperate knocks, whatever the hour.

Men called there early in the morning to collect their cigarettes, and school-children would make a visit before they climbed on the school bus – presumably to collect items such as crisps and biscuits! On display were jars of wonderfully coloured sweets to tempt young and old, which could be bought by the ounce or the quarter (4 ounces). This was in the days before pasteurised milk, and Mrs Thorne served milk from her front window. Looking at the house from the road, the 'milk window' was to the left of the front door. Valerie Belbin, young at the time, recalls a lovely grape vine grew over the front of the house. Many a time she gave way to temptation on her visits to the shop! The milk came from the Thorne's own cows, which were part of a smallholding they had on what is now Orchard Chase, and which extended behind the School, where the playing field now resides. They also kept many pigs on their holding, which were renowned for their odour and the flies they attracted !

The wife of a young Thorne, Ruth, would take in order books and deliver the weekly grocery order. The Thornes were very obliging and would get in anything required. They would also allow villagers to put items 'on the book', to be paid for on pay day at the end of the week. In the food shortages of 1953 Edward's mother, Ella, at the shop, bought a ton of sugar dated 1941. It had been stored well, was bone dry and therefore could be weighed out and sold to sugar-starved villagers.

Son Edward started keeping turkeys on the plot in 1957. His first customer he remembers vividly, was a woman from Stubhampton, who placed her order by saying "I want the biggest b\*\*\*\*r you got!" A 25lb bird was therefore put aside for her. Edward later heard that she'd had the greatest difficulty getting it into the oven!

Edward, aged 17, met Ann 15, a groom at Westbury Farm and very quickly decided that this was the girl with whom he wanted to spend the rest of his life. Needless to say his parents were far from impressed when he announced he wanted to become engaged. His Grandfather was more accepting of the ways of 'young people of today', and gave Edward a piece of land at the side of The Shop upon which he could build himself a home.

Edward was very thrilled with this gift, but suddenly realised he did not have the money needed to build. His father suggested he approach the Bank Manager, and Edward was pleased to hear he could have a loan for £x per month. However when he had worked out the final amount he would have to pay back he told the Bank Manager where he could put his loan – and I doubt it was in the safe. He applied for planning permission which was refused several times and, bitterly disappointed, Edward consulted Teddy Bourke (of Chettle). Teddy immediately said, forget the permission, put a caravan on the site and live in it. Then try again. Permission granted! So besides working for his father and getting married to Ann Fiander in 1963, he took on other jobs, or swapped his skills for others needed for his project. Those of an electrician were eventually acquired by this barter system from a qualified electrician. The result of all this work was a beautiful bungalow named 'Wessex', which had all the necessary modern services eg an indoor loo, bathroom, 3 bedrooms AND central heating. The build took from 1964 to 1969 to complete. In the 21st century it is known as Thorn Cottage.

A lady named Mrs Brown moved into a bungalow, the garden of which backed onto the Thorne's land. She complained about the smell from the pigs, the noise from the turkeys and the sound of the fans in the pig and turkey sheds – her reports to the Council were numerous. The men from the Council would appear in their suits, clipboards in hand and make copious notes. There came a time when they even put up sound sensors as Mrs Brown had complained that she could hear noise in her bedroom at the back of her home. Mrs Brown had had enough by now and took the Thornes to court, where Teddie's help was called in again. He asked a very simple-sounding question – could he and his client please see the readings that had been taken at their neighbour's bungalow. It turned out that Mrs B had taken readings for the period required and had filled in her own figures. Where the council's recorder showed readings of one point above an acceptable level, Mrs B' readings were hugely over the top. Of course the case was dropped, but Teddie Bourke was quick to remind the court that considerable expense had been incurred by his client, and Mrs B had to pay for her folly!

The Thornes left Tarrant Gunville in 1988 and the Cusacks moved in, 1989. For various reasons it was not practical for the Cusacks to continue the business, please see EB The past 200 Years, which gives a wonderful report of the shop and shopkeepers.

**Little Tarrant** (Miss) Kitty Bennett and her sister lived at Little Tarrant, (bottom of School Lane). She came from Hartgrove and was regarded as 'a lady of means', since she was not known to work! She was a founder member of the Gunville Horse Show, and gave stalwart support over many years. Miss Kitty also held a sewing group in her home where ladies met to make hassocks for the Church. The clock in the village hall was installed in her memory.

Geoffrey Bennett (This story was told to me about a Gordon Bennett\*\*. On checking, it appears that Geoffrey was known as 'Gordon' to some, although more often he was referred to as Mr Bennett ). Geoffrey Bennett, (brother to Kitty Bennett, Little Tarrant) was 'a character'. He owned a Morris 1000 which had the misfortune to have a crash with a Range Rover at Marlborough corner in about 1984. He rang Jim B and explained what had happened and that the car was not drivable. The vehicle was duly transported to the workshop at the top of Sheep Drove. Jim's description was that it was totally squashed at the front 'like a pug's face'. Geoffrey Bennett wanted Jim to repair it and wouldn't hear of scrapping the car. Jim knew of someone who had an old Morris 1000 pick-up and bought it, cut off the front and gave the precious Bennett car a face-lift. Geoffrey was thrilled to bits with the result

Geoffrey was a frequent visitor to the Bugle and wore a long, black wool coat in the winter. The fire roared in the bar and everyone had good times there. However, when Geoffrey came in he would say it was far too hot, and proceeded to throw open the windows. There was no thought of taking the said coat off. One cold and frosty evening Gordon staggered home after a congenial evening at The Bugle and sadly missed his footing as he went over the little bridge to his home, or perhaps he missed it altogether? He was discovered in the ditch next day and taken in to thaw out. Sadly he never fully recovered and died a couple of weeks later. (JB)

*\*\* (The expression 'Gordon Bennett' derives from the son of James Gordon Bennett, who founded the New York Herald. The son was given the exact name of his father, but chose to be known as Gordon to differentiate himself from his father. He worked on the newspaper, but was mostly renowned for his extreme behaviour. His favourite trick when leaving a restaurant was to pull the cloth off tables as he went by, and then throw a handful of notes to the diners who had suffered a drenching from wine or soup, or a covering of fillet steaks. Hence the saying 'Gordon Bennett' to express surprise or incredulousness. I digress.....)*

## SCHOOL LANE

**Cottage Row** Originally this had been three cottages. Mrs Blandford lived at the road end; she is remembered by several people who were born in the late 30s/early 40s, and who went to school in Gunville. Mrs Blandford was the school caretaker and fulfilled many roles. (See The School) . She also did washing for The Manor and for The Rectory. When asked how she managed the sheets when there was a water shortage, her response was, "I iron 'em neatly, fold'em up and take'em back!" Mrs Blandford's husband was almost certainly one of the orphans left by one of the big fires in Blandford in the 18th century. Those children who were too young to remember their surnames were all called Blandford.

Lucy and Walter Parker of Marlborough Farm who had a son named Benny, moved into the middle of this row. A Mr Tarr lived at No. 3 at some point.

Another occupant of Cottage Row was Group Captain Sir Gordon Pirie, who had a distinguished career in the RAF during the war and later in the borough of Westminster where he fulfilled many roles in the district and on the Council over 32 years. "In his retirement he brought his energy and public-spiritedness to village life of Tarrant Gunville." (Wikipedia)

Michael and Carolyn Pawson bought their home in 2004 from Lady Pirie who had arrived in 1967. Sir Gordon made many alterations to convert 3 cottages into one home. The oldest part of the building is nearest to the lane, and it is suggested that it was probably built in around 1750. A further two were added in approx 1780. Mr & Mrs Hillier moved to Cottage Row from The Bugle and ran The Post Office for a time, probably mid- 20th C.

The two farthest from the road were altered in 1968. The oldest part was occupied at that time by an

elderly man (Freddie Blandford – the son of Mrs Blandford, see the School). He had a 'thunder box' at the bottom of the garden so Sir Gordon thoughtfully turned the porch on his cottage into a toilet.

**Old School Cottage** This is another home which was constructed with recycled Eastbury green sandstone, but one end is likely to have earlier origins as it is built with cob. We know that Mrs Dyer, the midwife, lived here, again no definite date. Liz Hogger and her husband Austen are now resident – Liz plays the Church organ .

## THE SCHOOL

It is known that children walked to school from Stubhampton via a footpath which went from Steppington Cottage to Dungrove Farm and on behind various cottages, past the back of Marlborough Farmhouse, Stephouse, China Cottage and on to the school. This route was useful for everyone when the road at Stubhampton was flooded by springs.

In John Maidment's days at school there were two classrooms. The Headteacher was Miss Lockridge who took the senior school, and Miss Slipper was the infant teacher.

It is recalled by several that the school dinners, which came from Blandford camp, were dire (1950s). The lucky pupils arrived at school with packed lunches. Mrs Blandford from School Row was the caretaker and was also responsible for washing the dinner plates. The children walked from the school to deliver the plates to her. She also had the task of cleaning out the large metal containers (similar to milk churns) in which the dinners arrived. The school was one classroom plus a further small room. During the building of the second classroom, Miss Watson went to the village hall with the children. Keith Belbin recalls being on a rota to fetch water from The Rectory during the building project. When asked if girls were on this rota the swift response came – definitely NOT ! How times change !

A school Christmas fair was held and raffle tickets sold. Villagers were very generous with both items for the fair and for the raffle, which was drawn a week later. A concert was performed by the children by way of a big thank you to all the villagers who had supported them. ES remembers sports days in the 1940s. Sylvia Belbin (teacher from 1961-69) recalls that during her time in the school there were some very exciting sports days. And what is more the first child across the finishing line was allowed to WIN !

In this enlightened age (21<sup>st</sup> C) children do not 'win', but all are **treated** the same and emphasis is put on the importance of taking part. That is fine, but how do inept sportsmen like myself ever realise that they aren't going to be the first in any sport, but may develop other just as valuable skills ?

Although he looked in the Church, RWT found no sign of the red leather-bound book of pressed flowers recalled by ES. It was inscribed with the Hughes Gibb name and was always assumed to have been donated to the school by the family. DCC Dept of Education had no record of it in their archives either, nor had the Diocesan Board of Education.

Children left Gunville School at eleven and went to Spetisbury, travelling by bus. Those who went to the grammar school cycled to Hinton, parked their bikes at the pub, and caught the Sixpenny Handley bus to Blandford.

The school finally closed in 1977.

**SCHOOL CLOSE** The houses No 1 - 6 here were built in 1951/2, and Nos 7 - 8 in 1953.

### No.1 School Close

Here lived a photographer - Andy Duff - either a talented amateur or possibly a professional. He put on exhibitions of his work in the village hall depicting the village and surrounding area. Ella Smith at No.4 states that her husband, Nigel, would often accompany Andy on his trips, taking his camera, and also displayed some of his work. (Eddie Brown recalls seeing some of the photographs, but no-one can identify where they went.) Andy came from a flat at The Manor which he rented from Mr Stedham, for whom he worked. (KB has a metal table made by Stedham, a company now based in Blandford). Mrs Duff is remembered as another school caretaker.

**No.1 next Occupants** - The Meyricks This must be a creative address as the Meyrick family came to No.1, Ani being a graphic designer, Howard a design engineer who played the saxophone in several local bands, and daughter Polly, a talented musician and artist, who came with her friends to play at Ani's 60th party (2017).

**No 2 School Close** There was a Post Office at this house, run by Betty Wells from her dining room for some years, and AM remembers taking the Slate Club money to be paid into its account. This was the second Post Office in School Close, the previous one only lasting a short time.

**3 School Close** Ella Smith (arrived 1969) deserves special mention as besides being born in Tarrant Hinton and providing her memories of the school and village, many villagers have unknowingly partaken of the results of her handiwork. For many years she was the baker and cake-decorator extraordinaire of some superb cakes in all shapes and sizes - children's cakes, birthdays, weddings, anniversaries and a celebration cake for the Queen's jubilee, and she also baked for Home Farm Shop. One of her more unusual designs was a cake shaped like the new village hall for the grand opening ceremony in 2000. Very often the decorations on the cake were just too beautiful to eat !

She started her Tarrant Gunville career when she attended the school from her home in Tarrant Hinton, and many years later worked at the Bugle Horn. Ella has also become renowned for her recitation in dialect of humorous verses, at village concerts, harvest celebrations etc and her big, blue eyes dared you to laugh !

Ella's uncle was Jack Burden of Hinton - a shepherd for the Hoopers. When a very young child, Ella's father found Uncle Jack working hard at digging his mother's veg plot, and called out, 'You're as busy as a bee !' Young Ella was unable to repeat the comment and said something along the lines of Bidge. Henceforth Jack became known throughout the valley as 'Bidge', and undertook sundry jobs for many of the small farmers. After his father died, Jack left the Army to come home and look after his mother, leaving what he had thought would be his life's career. After his mother's death, 'Bidge' came to live in School Close with Ella. From time to time he gave a hand to the Spooners of Brushers Bank.

**4 School Close** Occupied by Roy & Nellie Tarbin who came here from Westbury Cottages in 1968. Roy & Nellie have been very active in village life, as well as working here and bringing up a family. Nellie told me the wonderful story of the beginning of their courtship (and gave her permission for it to be recorded) :-

Nellie was waiting at a bus-stop in Poole when a handsome young man came along and spoke to her. "Who are you waiting for ?" Nellie replied, "I'm waiting for my boyfriend, he's fetching chips". "Well, don't you wait for him - you wait for me!" Nellie pondered on this for some time, considering that Roy's naval uniform was far more fetching than her current boyfriend's army outfit. Their next meeting was at a Sixpenny Hop in the village hall at Winterborne Kingston and Roy said that Nellie was happy having lots of dances so he went to the pub with his mates, returning just in time for the last waltz. Roy (a quiet man, though clearly not a shy) barged in when Nellie was dancing, and was told very clearly by Nellie's partner that this was NOT an Excuse Me dance. Oh yes it is, said Roy and waltzed off with Nellie!

They had known each other from school days, as children from Winterborne Anderson (Roy) attended the Winterborne Kingston school where Nellie lived.

They arrived in Tarrant Gunville in 1952 when Roy became stockman for Captain Brown, and their first home was at Westbury Cottages. Roy seems to have the knack of saying a lot in few words. (See Football, Eastbury and also the Slate Club)

Roy Tarbin, who was 92 years old at the time of writing, fell in the river one night after the 21st birthday party of Mervyn Bailey in 1969 at the village hall. Nellie had gone home before him and was unaware that Roy was in difficulties. He had walked along the road and turned left too soon, missed his turning into School Lane, and ended up on the river bed. Party-goers on the other side of the road were suddenly aware of hands on top of the bank and a head appearing. Was it Chad (for those with long memories) ? I hasten to add that this is now a winterborne so happily there was no water in it at the time, although plenty of mud.

Another report of the incident suggests that Roy's wife was extremely annoyed with him as he was wearing a very smart new suit, and he managed to get home covered in mud. One of his daughter's had to give the suit an initial clean and take it to a cleaners in Blandford, with as little ceremony as possible so that Nellie could be calmed down and peace restored to the Tarbin household !

I understand numerous people have unwittingly found themselves in the river, particularly at times of celebration ... more stories of involuntary immersions ??

Nellie reported that besides working for Major Brown, Roy also did some work for Ronny Farquharson at Eastbury. On one occasion Roy was obviously not having a good day with a very squeaky wheelbarrow and when the Squire appeared he said in no uncertain terms, "You can tell this is a farmer's wheelbarrow - they never have oil to grease them with !"

The funeral of **Joe Robbins** of **Charmyr** took place in the Church, TG in January 2019. Nellie Tarbin was conscious of a man staring at her during the service, but no-one around could identify him. Following the service, this gentleman came across and said hello. Nellie was somewhat taken aback, but nevertheless asked who he was. He was a school-friend from Nellie's first school at Winterborne Anderson some 85 years ago, and he told Nellie he was very cross because Roy Tarbin won her heart before he had a chance ! It is doubtful whether many of us would be recognisable to school friends from so long ago , so well done Nellie !

**5 School Close** Jack and Phyllis Bailey lived here and were the first people to arrive in The Close. Jack was a cousin of Elliott Bailey and was among those villagers who worked at Regnart's the egg farm. Phyllis was a Church Warden at one time. Jack helped Wilmott to build Ashdown Cottage, and it was his pick that suddenly and rapidly disappeared down a well, which had long since been covered over. After a long day's work Wilmott offered Jack a whisky (or two) as a reward for his hard work. This was not a regular refreshment for Jack, and when he finally left Wilmott it was said that he could have been charged with 'Drunk in charge of a Bicycle'. Happily he came to no harm and Ashdown Cottage was duly completed.

**6 and 7 School Close** John Maidment and Moira lived at No.6 for a while, then moved to No.7 when it was completed as it was larger and could more easily accommodate their three girls. Currently Amy Dennis lives here and is good at gathering mainly women together to teach them new crafts, at the same time producing useful items for the wider community (see Social Life).

**8 School Close** The Triggles brothers lived at No .8 They were known as Laddy, Ginger and Cutty and had come from Tarrant Hinton where their father worked for Mr Hooper. Mrs Gertie Triggles lived in Turnpike Cottage, the gate-house on the Salisbury road on the right travelling from Tarrant Hinton

towards Salisbury. Was this their aunt - or mother ? No further memories survive of these boys and no records in the church, but with such a wonderful surname, it was not possible to omit them !

**8 School Close** 1993 Bill and Muriel Parker moved here from Marlborough Bungalow. Muriel was the Church organist for many years and wrote pantomimes for the parish as well as WI members, and again Mr Wilmott produced them. Bill Parker was a notable scenery maker and shifter! And, please keep this a secret, Bill dressed up as Father Christmas every Christmas Eve, and rode around the village with Father Christmas' grotto on the trailer behind him, stopping at the village hall so that the children of the parish could tell Father Christmas in person what toys they would like to have in their stocking. For many years Bill also traversed the valley with his trailer in the week prior to Christmas, with Muriel aboard playing a keyboard and the church choir singing carols. How lovely that was; they called at Marlborough Farmhouse in 2008/9. I suspect that the final house of the evening would be carefully selected for the number of glasses it was likely to have and the number of bottles of festive cheer which might be opened. It is quite possible also that the cook of the house would be warned of the visit as there seemed to be a plentiful supply of warmed mince pies....

Wendy Stone is remembered for her performances in the pantomimes. Again her enthusiasm was noted, but her memory still let her down. It was decided that all of her lines would be written on slips of paper and these were pinned to the most appropriate of props, thus ensuring she said the correct lines, and that she was also in the correct place !

**Eastbury** Eastbury was designed by John Vanbrugh, started in 1718 and was built at a cost of £140,000. A major part was demolished by 1782. (See Eddie Brown's 'The last 200 Years.') It is reported that the Squire's brother, Peter, ran the remaining wing of Eastbury as a country club for a time in the 20th century.

A pack of Newfoundland hounds were kept here at one point. J Farquharson the squire was living at Langton Long at the time and ran Eastbury as a kennels for the Hunt. They hunted to Bridport, changing horses on the way. Eastbury House was used as a hospital in WWII.

Most of the Eastbury Estate cottages had to be sold to cover Death Duties, and tenants were therefore given the option to buy their cottages or to vacate by the following year, 1948.

### **Bubb Doddington of Eastbury**

This gentleman inherited Eastbury from his uncle in 1720. Bubb longed to be a respected member of court circles. I doubt if the following event helped his ambitions.

When he paid his court to the Queen, upon her nuptials, he approached to kiss her hand decked in an embroidered suit of silk with a lilac waistcoat and breeches, the latter of which, in the act of kneeling down, forgot their duty, and broke loose from their moorings in a very indecorous and uncourtly manner. *This is a note from The History and Antiquities of the County of Dorset. John Hutchings. Volume III, page 455*

## **SOCIAL LIFE**

The current community meets quite regularly with a monthly Friday lunch, Church services, charity teas, Artsreach performances, coffee mornings, craft days and more. Perhaps we do things differently, but nevertheless there is a strong feeling of community in our villages.

## Weekly Dances

Mr Les Thorne played the piano for these events in the 1950's. Dennis Wareham and Sheila organised 'hops' in the village hall. The Friday night events were eagerly anticipated by all the young folk in the village, and further away. One cold snowy winter's night it was planned that Dennis would bring down his own record player and a huge collection of records. He transported these in his van. However, being Dennis, proper caution was not applied to the venture, he skidded and turned over the van - with all its contents and his wife in the snow. Keith Belbin, who usually helped unload the equipment was left wondering - what next ? (No mobile phones, you understand.) Dennis eventually appeared with all the kit, and a very happy evening was enjoyed by all.

## School Concerts

When Mr Wilmott came to the village as Head Teacher he started concerts. Worthy of special mention were the Christmas Carol Concerts held at the School. They were still going in 1969. He also became a member of The Troupers.

**Women's Institute** The WI arrived in Tarrant Gunville in March 1947. Mrs Jean Bailey (wife of Elliott) of Everetts, Mrs Ella Thorne of The Shop, and Miss Kitty Bennett of Little Tarrant were the founder members.

**Tarrant Valley Troupers** During the second half of the 20th century Alan and Nita Mercer of Barn House, together with David and Mary Morrow of Riverside Cottage and Meg and David Boswell of Downlea persuaded villagers to take to the boards. Many evenings were spent rehearsing, and there is a suggestion that there was a great deal of mirth during rehearsals, let alone the shows.

For quite a long period the village folk entertained themselves (and often their audiences) with shows and concerts in the village hall. Eddie Brown sang and could be seen treading the boards in various sketches. He remembers with great affection a sketch performed by Ella Smith and Jane Mottram (of Hartfield). He says they performed brilliantly in 'I've Lost my Husband' which naturally involved a misunderstanding of the word lost and where the gentleman had last been seen. Another performance by Ella much appreciated was a monologue about standing in the bus queue in Tarrant Gunville, which was in fact the village readers waiting for the Library van. There were numerous references to David Boswell (Downlea), who could be seen sliding lower and lower into his seat, waiting for the next jibe ! Muriel Parker (School Close) and the ladies of the WI were also involved in the entertainment of the village and Muriel's husband, Bill, was responsible for the stage sets and special effects.

*Submitted by Eddie Brown :* We were a variety group set up by Alan Mercer and Mary Morrow and I think one or two others. Alan was writer, producer and director. His sketches were brilliant. The Troopers revealed a lot of talent in the village. Wendy Stone was quite remarkable for her ad libs and for her complete lack of ability to learn a script. She caused great hilarity in the audience and great chaos with the cast who were left struggling to bring some coherence back to the sketch but at times could not help joining in the laughter. Mary Morrow was a talented chanteuse and actress. I don't think that I will ever forget her singing "Nobody wants a Fairy when she's forty". Nor will we forget her border collie coming on to the stage behind her and sitting quietly under a chair until it followed her off. David Morrow will be remembered as Chairman and as a happily villainous Mr Punch. Ella Smith was excellent in a variety of sketches bringing all sorts of nuances to her lines.

The final Variety Show in 2005 was in memory of Alan Mercer (The Barn House) who died in 2003. He had written many of the scripts, and produced and directed performances for many years. It was called



very aptly 'Thanks for the Memories'.

**Harvest Suppers** The writer attended possibly the last harvest celebration at the village hall 2006/7. Food a-plenty produced by the usual team of ladies, who are ever ready to perform this most important of functions - of feeding villagers. It is not possible to name all of the women involved because someone would undoubtedly be missed out; but suffice to say, their efforts are always appreciated and newcomers to the community are asked to join in. This was followed by music for dancing and newcomer to the village, Roger Andrews, was spotted rock and rolling with his wife. Thereafter at every break between tunes a queue formed to have the next dance. (One assumes their partners had not been trained in this skill.)

**Burns Nights** in Gunville were started by Nellie Tarbin and Eddie Brown. I was privileged to attend one during the early 21st century. The hall was full and many tables laid out for supper of haggis which was piped in, and 'neeps', following which we were entertained by local talent. Eddie Brown (a Scotsman) managed to confuse many of us with his Scottish accent. No concessions were made, and Robert Burns was recited to us with unintelligible and, I am sure, accurate pronunciation before the haggis was served. Those from 'north of the border' must have felt very much at home!

### 2017 – Sunday 23rd April – St George's Day

Villagers were given an excellent reminder of the hidden talent in this village when Eddie Brown decided to organise a St George's Day supper in the Village Hall. The menu was a traditional English meal of fish and chips, served in paper bags not newspaper, and delivered to the village hall by the local chip van, which was regretted by some of the older villagers, it being said that fish and chips tasted even better from newspaper ! Or was it that they were all young people in those days, and therefore everything tasted better ? The delicious fish and chips were brought to us by The Pilgrim Fryer mobile shop, and were followed by apple Betty, apple pie or apple crumble, produced by ladies of the village. A truly English meal – one ponders on the possibility of having roast beef and Yorkshire pudding another year ?

We were ably entertained by villagers and the musical part of the programme was provided by Robin and Shirley Bragg and Liz and Austin Hogger, all in fine voice as the ladies' fingers nimbly played an electric piano. What would Mr Thorne have thought of this 'modern' invention ? Eddie Brown sang beautifully. We were further entertained by dialogues from David Morrow, Ella Smith and Janet Harding. The poems that Ella read were - My word you do look queer, by Stanley Holloway and Retirement Home, Anon. Janet's rendition of Pam Ayre's "The Parrot", complete with dialect accents, had us laughing merrily. David Morrow, as ever, was the comedian, bringing us jokes with clever twists, and raising guffaws from some of the not-so-innocent villagers !

**Celebration of the Queen's Jubilees .....**The community gathered together to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's golden jubilee, her 50 years on the throne, in 2002. Avril Baker remembers a grand village celebration for reasons not strictly to do with the event. On the grass verge in Orchard Chase was sited a skittles alley near her home – Saddleback House) By the side of the Village Hall was a 'Petting Corner' (of the animal variety). Rodney Belbin (Home Farm) lent some animals for all to pet or pat. Amongst them were 2 cows, a pig and sheep. This attraction proved a great success and when the time came to leave the stockman asked Avril and her friend if they would walk the cows back to the dairy. The harnesses were put round their necks and a rope attached, what could be easier ? "Whatever you do, don't let go of the rope," he ordered in a very firm tone. As if they would. Avril's cow happened to be the more adventurous of the two and as they went out into the road it veered into the hedge of The Old Post Office. "Don't let go of the rope!" shouted the stockman behind them . Now Avril is a

small woman and not built for keeping control of anything larger than a dog. However, the ladies proceeded up Everly Hill with the stockman following in a vehicle containing the smaller animals ("Don't let go of the rope!" was the frequent cry). On to the Home Farm lane where he went ahead and opened the gate for the cows to go into the dairy. Sadly no medals were awarded.....

2012 saw celebrations of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee – the road through the village was closed and tables were set out in the village street for the sumptuous tea for which Gunville is renowned. Various games were played on the grass in front of Westbury Cottages, which involved some adventurous adults as well as children. Animals were brought down from the farm again, and spent the afternoon on the grass along Orchard Chase.

**2018 Film Night with a difference** In 2018 Michael Pawson organised an evening in the village hall for us to watch a film based on the life of John Stuart Collis, author, who spent his war service years in the Tarrant Valley. His writing is warm and full of country ways – he loved his time here. Much of it was filmed in Tarrant Gunville at harvest time and shows some of the locals at work -who were recognised.

After a break we were shown a BBC film made for a series called 'Country Ways'. 'The Tarrants in October', was broadcast on TVS on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October 1990. And who should this film have as it's star? None other than Elliott Bailey. I call him 'star' advisedly, for he was featured climbing a very long ladder which had three separate parts and extended to the top of the huge gateway at Eastbury where his job was to water a tree that must have grown from seed on this high point. Very attractive it looks, too.

**Book Club** is an informal gathering and books are chosen within the group and borrowed from the Library. Members then have to read the choice of the month - not necessarily to their own taste - and lively discussions ensue at the monthly meeting.

**Poetry Group** Another informal group to which members take a poem to read, and from time to time members have read their own literary attempts. These two groups have met for many years, starting in the 20th century.

**Craft Group** meets occasionally to fulfil useful tasks for the general community, such as under-the-arm cushions for breast cancer sufferers, bags for children who are suddenly taken into care so that they can take their precious and familiar items with them. Villagers also meet to learn new skills, all under the able direction of Amy Dennis (7 School Close)

**Pub nights** These occasional events are held in the village hall and greatly enjoyed, and Bar games like shove ha'penny and bar skittles entertain the younger members of the community. I can't imagine why – but I've not been given many recollections of these jolly evenings!

**The Garden Group** meet together monthly to visit gardens which are open to the public, many of them private gardens, and the tour is often accompanied by an introduction by the owner-gardener. Some beautiful and inspirational gardens have been visited over the years. Members leave time to test the cuisine at local hostelrys

**Open Gardens** event. At the end of the twentieth century approx 10 villagers opened their gardens over a weekend in May to raise money for the Church and other charities. This continued bi-annually, the last one in 2017. (There was no-one able to organise the weekend in 2019 but maybe it will be resurrected)

**Bridge Group** is a thriving weekly event which meets weekly in the village hall and has members from surrounding villages.

**Friday Lunch Club** Following the completion of the new village hall Barbara Hilton of Garth Cottage gathered together some ladies of the village to start a lunch club, catered for by a team. The charge was £3.50 per meal. The first meal was a little tricky as the ladies had forgotten to get the meal from the freezer the day before. There was a flurry of activity as containers were taken to the homes of villagers who had microwave ovens, defrosted and returned to the village hall. However, after this faltering start the meal was declared a success. The lunch club continues and many teams have been formed to lift the catering burden from the few to the many.

**Breakfast Together** This is an informal worship occasion in Tarrant Gunville and Tarrant Hinton village halls which was started in the early 21st century. Breakfast is served from 9.15am on Sunday, followed by a short Christian devotion at 10am.

**THE TARRANT GUNVILLE SPORTS CLUB** started in 1955.

**Football** The first football team recalled by Keith Belbin started its life in the paddock at Eastbury and they had a very unusual changing room – the old ice house! The village team continued to play for many years moving on to the Squire's Field.

RT was a member of the football team, apart from the many other roles he fulfilled within the village. One Saturday morning practice session Roy appeared a little late. Major Humphreys, who liked everything to be done with military precision (and was in in the football team at the time) ask him WHY was he so late, in a very firm voice. The answer came very swiftly, "Because I've been up since 6am feeding the cattle and 40 odd calves, and generally cleaning out!" I asked Roy why was the Major so cross; answer - because Roy was the keeper of the ball and they couldn't start without him !

**Cricket** John Brown of Westbury Farm donated the cricket pitch to the village in the early 1950s, and he played in the Tarrant Gunville team himself. The team made a practice area in the Squire's/Playing Field, providing the concrete strip and nets themselves. Sadly the cricket pitch is no longer there through lack of support. The club-house was part of an old Nissan hut, where the ladies of the village served tea at the matches. Nissan huts appeared around north Dorset as public buildings eg church halls, sport pavilions, though many have now been demolished. It is reported that many came from Blandford Camp where they had served as hospital wards in WWII.

**Short-Mat Bowls** It is a delight to report that indoor bowls teams from around this area are still challenging each other and a few of our villagers play weekly at Tarrant Hinton.

**Skittles** The new Village Hall has an under-floor skittles alley and a TG team regularly hosts teams from other parts of the valley as well as playing away matches. The favourite seems to be The Langton Arms, though no reason has been given for this choice.....

The WI also plays skittles against other institutes.

**Darts** Two teams were based at The Bugle Horn , and also a Shove ha-penny team.

**Tug o' War Teams** were formed in 1965/66 and practised regularly at Home Farm. At weekends they were out and about challenging other villages. One very successful year they won The Dorset Championship!

**Pram Races** (which probably started mid-century) were held each Boxing Day, and competitors started at The Bugle Horn, first downing a certain quantity of beer, then set forth along the village street and had to run to Marlborough Farm corner, where they were required to down more beer which they had

carried in the prams, before running back to The Bugle.

**Table Tennis** There were three table tennis teams in the village at one time, again no dates. In the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century a table tennis table was stored at the village hall, and this was sold to another Tarrant village.

There have been wheel-barrow races, and numerous other activities undertaken in the village street even into the 20th century.

## SOME CHARACTERS OF THE COMMUNITY REMEMBERED BY VILLAGERS

**Mr Jellicoe** who lived in No.1 of two cottages at the road end of China Lane, now forming one house (Garth Cottage), claimed to be a descendant of Admiral Jellicoe. He insisted that there was a right of way through Westbury yard, across the top of North Field and which came out on the top road. This probably means somewhere on Everley Hill or the Drove Barn road, but this has not been confirmed. It was Mr Jellicoe who turned the two cottages into one home and allegedly called it Landfall (according to Miss Bennett).

Older villagers recall a **Lady Game** who died in childbirth, having produced several children. RWT has searched the church records without success, but says there is a memorial to an **Ann Game**, born 11 February 1914 and died 21 March 1938 (just 24 years old), and of an infant that died the same day. There was no mention of where this family lived.

**Mr David Laws** is remembered as living in a small cottage quite a long way up the slope behind Tarranthead (Stubhampton), which is now used by beaters for shelter whilst having their lunch. It is accessed from a footpath on the right-hand side of the road going up to the C13.

**Sam Billings** of Steppington Cottage, Stubhampton walked his dog regularly and now and then would meet the squire, and they would stop to exchange the time of day. On one occasion SB was taken aback by Mr Farquharson's choice of outfit; he was wearing a very smart dark suit, white shirt, dark tie and explained that he had been to a wedding. What really amused Sam on this occasion was that the shirt was inside-out! (Having thought about it, one wonders if it was in fact a dress shirt with hidden fastening – much more likely!)

**Eddie Brown** At a village lunch (2016) a brief discussion took place on the effects of alcohol if taken in the day-time. Eddie's response was, "With a lot of practice I can now drink anytime!"

It is with Eddie's encouragement that this document has come about - in 2011 Eddie asked if I would like to join him at a meeting of some of the older residents of the community of T G & S. He felt they could tell us more of life in village in the 20th century, rather than just historical facts. We therefore went to **John Maidment's** house in Stubhampton (Springmead), and met with **Julia Williamson**, and of course **John and Moira**, and the **Tarbins**. It was my job to take notes of the discussions. I duly wrote up my notes in reasonable order and presented them to Eddie. I heard nothing more. Move forward to the beginning of 2016 and I was having an interesting talk with Nellie and Roy Tarbin about village characters and happenings - and I was so amused that I asked if I may write down some of their stories, in due course presenting them to Roy and Nellie to check for accuracy. I asked Eddie if he would like them to add to the notes I had taken several years before, but knowing the amount of time involved on Eddie's 'Past 200 Years', he and Elisabeth felt they couldn't start again on another another *magnum*

*opus*, but they did suggest I should press on with what can only be called 'a story of village folk'. Eddie has been involved in many village activities, including building jumps for the local horse show, quietly doing repairs for residents and at the church and generally being helpful.

When the fund for the new village hall was launched there are memories of Eddie being involved in the book-keeping, applying for grants etc. There are memories, too, of Eddie surrounded by piles of documents held firmly in place so that they wouldn't be blown away or otherwise muddled up. The devices used for this purpose were old weights (from the kitchen scales) covered in fabric. How neat and orderly !

Eddie has been involved in organising a monthly Friday lunch for some years, which is a happy gathering of villagers, many of whom form the teams that produce delicious food. He has also taken to the boards to perform both song and word on many occasions.

In 2018, to everyone's amazement, he appeared on the BBC Sunday evening programme 'Country File', which highlighted the value of a retreat in the countryside for families who had come to a crisis point. Longmead is an old farmhouse and buildings, and there are kept animals and chicken for the children and parents to care for. For many years Eddie has assisted once a week on site with carpentry and general maintenance jobs, and also been involved in fund-raising.

In February 2019 Eddie left the village to move near to his sons. It was sad to see him go, but villagers turned out for a farewell tea party, and some performed poems, prose and songs for him – hopefully recalling for Eddie his days with The Troupers. In the three months since he left he has joined two choirs, the local church and is generally fitting in with his new neighbourhood. A resident of Tarrant Gunville recently told me 'He is a saint', but I won't pass that on to him !

**Noyna Singleton** (who left TG in 2019) recalls a village visit to Brussels to see the EU building which was incredibly lavish, the decor being more suited to a palace. The following day the group went to the NATO building, which was spartan by comparison. (The person who organised this visit does not wish to be mentioned!)

**Mrs Griffiths** Memories survive of a lady from Tarrant Hinton riding to Gunville on her bike with a parrot on her shoulder, on her way to clean the Parish church. The bird is in fact a Greater Sulphur Crested Cockatoo and still lives happily at Hinton (2016) with Mrs Griffith's daughter, Pat. He is believed to be about 60 years old. Pat says that the cockatoo, called Snowy, did in fact accompany Mrs Griffiths to HINTON church on cleaning day, where he sat happily on the back of a pew supervising the task in hand. It is thought unlikely that Mrs Griffiths would have ridden to Gunville with the bird as he is quite heavy and it was enough of an effort for Mrs Griffiths to ride her bike without him. (JB & HW recall this lady)

**Keith Belbin** (born at Marlborough Farmhouse) & Sylvia made their first home in an old army hut which had been rendered on the outside, but lined with asbestos on the inside. There were three of these homes up on Furzey Down, where there is a row of beech trees still. They were neighbours of Dennis Wareham and his wife, Sheila, for a couple of years. Dennis worked for Major Humphries and played a lively part in the life of the village for quite some time.

## **The Baileys of Tarrant Gunville & Stubhampton**

George and Daisy Bailey were parents of Elliott and 'Toots', and they had two grand-daughters and three grandsons. They lived opposite Riverside Cottage and made cider ! It is assumed that this house is in fact Dungrove Cottage. Eventually they moved to Eastbury Garden Cottage, then finally to The Forge after Major Humphreys' purchase of the estate. George was gardener to the Major for some

years. Daisy is remembered in her later years standing outside The Forge and chatting with all who passed by (1960s). She was known to many as "Granny", though they were not related to her.

**Elliott (1923 – 2009) and Jean Bailey (1921 – 2003).** Elliott was born in Dungrove Cottage, his wife Jean was born in Jersey. Jean's maiden name was Drelaud, and she came to England just before the Germans occupied the Channel Islands. She joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS), was sent to Eastbury and met Elliott. Elliott left school at the age of 14. His military career started in 1942 (19 years old) when he joined the army, and this was followed by a stint in the REME. When they were married they remained in Dungrove Cottage with Elliott's parents, where Valerie (later Miller) was born.

Elliott worked for the Eastbury Estate as a gardener and it was his job as 'gate boy' to open the gates so that the Squire could ride straight through in his car. He was promoted to the steam house, there being no electricity at Eastbury House it was heated by steam generators. Maybe this job was in addition to his work in the gardens. At Christmas this work affected the whole family and his children had to wait until Elliott returned before they could open their Christmas presents. They were, however, allowed to look in their Christmas stockings to find a collection of small gifts before Elliott went off to stoke the boilers. After the war the squire (Ronald Farquharson) bought three tanks for the estate which were used for grubbing out hedges and knocking down trees. It is reported that Elliott was involved in this activity, and his children often called in to help with gathering up branches and rubbish and piling them up for a bonfire. The squire also had numerous cars, which were kept until they died and then were buried eventually along with the tanks.

Elliott and Jean moved from Dungrove to Westbury Cottages, and then across the road to Everetts. Finally they moved to the bungalow, Spartae. Elliott Bailey was a cousin of Mick Greham's mother, Mary Greham. Mick's aunt, Beatrice Bailey named Chime Cottage.

At Elliott's funeral Jim Farquharson of Eastbury Estate gave the eulogy. Elliott is remembered with affection and one of the stories of him remains. It was said that Elliott was a very calm person and it took some matter of deep concern before he became roused. When this did happen, only occasionally, Elliott would tilt his cap back off his face with great vigour - and then you could be sure you had annoyed him !

Jean is remembered for her jumble sales every year for different charities. One of her favourite ones was for injured jockeys, Jean's son being a jockey. R C Bailey, as he was known, was apprenticed at the age of 15 to a stable near Weyhill. These sales gained a good reputation in the district and people came from miles around and formed long queues at the door. Her daughter recently met someone from Winterbourne Whitechurch who told Val that her sister and husband came from Poole to visit Jean's jumble sales - they were of such quality ! Jean raised enormous amounts for various charities as well as the village community - it is sad that no-one thought to write down the results of her labours.

**Jean and Daisy Bailey and Ivy Belbin** were the ladies who 'laid out' following the deaths of village people, and Harry Ridout was at one time the undertaker. Again there are conflicting stories – he may have lived at Downlea at one time – or is he an Old Farm Cottage Ridout ?

**Mary Greham** of The Bungalow, Stubhampton Manor Farm had a wonderful sign at her front door - *'Man wanted, must have own teeth'*. Lovely sense of humour. I was introduced to her at a village lunch. She was quite frail then and moved shortly afterwards. She returned to the village hall on 12th August 2017 to celebrate her 92nd birthday. **Mick Greham's** great-great-grandmother had 13 children.

At one time there would have been 20+ Baileys in the village. There is a report that a couple named **Harry & Minny Bailey** lived at The Cottage, Tarrant Gunville, and Minny is believed to have arrived as housekeeper for Harry when his first wife died, though reporters were fairly sure that later Harry had

married her.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century newcomers to the village were warned to 'mind their p's and q's' – or at least their 'b's as there were so many Baileys and Belbins – many of them related!

**John Stuart Collis** Author b 1900 in Killiney nr Dublin (submitted by Michael Pawson)

Michael reports a book written after WW2 '*Worm before the Plough (pub 1973)*'. It was a compilation of two books written by Collis, I. While Following the Plough, pub 1946 and II. Down to Earth, pub 1947. Collis was told he was too old for the army and would be given a desk job. He thought better of it and went into farm work in Kent, and in the spring of 1941 moved to Dorset to live at Tarrant Hinton and worked also at Tarrant Gunville. This book outlines his experience of country life and country people.

He wrote about the glorious feelings of freedom out in the fields and woods, though his experience wasn't always so romantic. He talks of feeling a slight suspicion towards him – an educated outsider – and the lack of camaraderie amongst the men themselves. However, he describes this as the happiest time of his life, without money or family worries.

Elliott Bailey remembered Collis cycling up the valley on a lady's bicycle to clear a plot of scrub and woodland somewhere near the bend after Stubhampton, for the Eastbury estate. The site was for a long time known as Collis' Piece, but to date no-one can indicate its location.

**The Belbin Family** George came to The Bugle Horn and married Mary Vincent. He then moved to Home Farm. This generation of Belbins produced many children as follows, though not necessarily in this order !

William (who eventually took on Home Farm) Kathie Dorie Flo Violet Roy Claude plus Rose and Percy, both of whom died very young. Fred and Charlie – who eventually shared the dairy at Marlborough Farm, although there is some dispute here and it may be that they each had a dairy.

Moira (one of our reporters) was the daughter of Claude Belbin and was born at Stephouse. When Claude died his wife married Charlie Belbin and they produced a daughter named Claudia.

**John Maidment** was born at Dairy Farm, Stubhampton and **Moira Belbin** was born in Stephouse, Tarrant Gunville. Their introduction was probably unique; on the day of Moira's birth John (aged approx 4 years) was walking down the road with his mother, Mrs Elsie Maidment, when the wife of The Bugle pub landlord, Mrs Judd, came out of Stephouse and announced that a baby girl had arrived - Moira ! They were married in 1953 and lived in School Close before moving to Stubhampton. John clearly remembers earth closets and tin baths, and has been immensely helpful with his knowledge and memories of the village.

**Frank Janes** took on The Forge in 1919. His family came with him to live at The Forge - his wife, Eliza and their two children – Ella and William. When she grew up Ella married Les Thorne, and they produced two children, Edward and Ruth. Mrs Janes died in 1947.

**Les and Ella Thorne** (nee Janes) lived in the middle of the row of cottages in China Lane before taking on the village shop in 1948 (now The Dairy House) on the death of 'Grandma Thorne', Les' mother. An amazing fact, gleaned by Eddie Brown, (see his 'TG the Last 200 Years') was that there has been a shop in Dairy House since at least 1840. While Ella worked long hours in the shop, Les worked on the smallholding behind the shop, tending his pigs and crops, eventually assisted by Edward Thorne, their son. Les Thorne played the piano for weekly dances in the 1950's. He played the organ in Tarrant Gunville Church from the age of 14. Edward, his son, had to pump the organ for Lord Southbrough's marriage to a Rothschild in Tarrant Gunville Church. Les also played for Blandford Church. He was

regarded as talented and was offered a place in Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, , but he had to decline as he was not prepared to join the Musicians' Union !

## TRANSPORT

### Cars & Motor Bikes

At the beginning of the 20th century there were very few cars in the village; the Farquharson family were keen motorists and took part in a race from the pub at Tarrant Hinton to Salisbury 'on dirt roads'. The road round the Blandford Army camp was used as a race circuit for motor bikes, but before long it was deemed too dangerous, as there had been fatalities and several bikes and their riders had landed on the roofs of the soldiers' quarters.

There were still few cars in the village in the 1930s, the Squire's being one of them. During the 1939/45 war numerous military vehicles travelled the valley road.

Mary Farquharson, the wife of Henry, the Squire, was clearly fascinated by the new mode of transport, the motor car, to the extent that she learned to drive. It was deemed very much a man's activity at the time, and it is therefore reasonable to assume that the Squire must have been a very patient and forward-looking man. 'I believe my mother was the first woman driver not only in Dorset but in the south of England and possibly the whole country,' said Philip Farquharson to Roger Guttridge many years ago.

Mary must have been a remarkable woman and, luckily for us, kept a diary of her adventures. The first entry was on 1st July 1902 and describes a journey to Oxford for a wedding the next day, which she undertook with Marcia. This trip was not without its mishaps : the pump failed to work and after an hour of waiting their mechanic was wired. They had not even made Shaftesbury when they realised the brakes were not working and wisely decided not to attempt the hill down to Melbury Abbas. After a two hour wait five men arrived and lowered the car to the foot of the hill on a rope. The saga goes on. After brake repairs at Shaftesbury they motored on to Salisbury, where a puncture occurred. By 9pm they were on their way yet again in the pitch dark and pouring rain – in their open-topped car – to Andover, where they halted to have supper and to dry out their clothes, but at 11pm the ladies were turned out, having had but a few mouthfuls. The journey to the wedding was completed with an hour to spare, but not before they had knocked up a few cottages to ask the way, and been stopped by a policeman because one of the lamps was not working. He entered a hotel in order to write down their names – only to find the offenders had gone before he came out again. Before long they met two more constables 'who were very nice', and took them to another hotel where they managed a couple of hour sleep, setting off again at 6am. Two miles from Oxford the car's countershaft bracket broke, at which point the travellers abandoned the motor in a barn and proceeded to the wedding in a hansom cab.

None of this deterred Mary and she made numerous trips around the country, Lincoln being one of destinations, and the most ambitious being to the legendary Gordon Bennett motor races near Dublin



in the summer of 1903. Mary's diary tells us, "To see the cars thunder by was most thrilling, the speed being terrific." All journeys were of course accompanied by punctures, mechanical failures etc, but in the case of the Irish trip her mechanic, Black, left earlier in a slower 1898 Daimler, which served as luggage transport. Perhaps he was wired on more than one occasion to rescue the intrepid traveller.

## Public Transport

Victory Tours of Sixpenny Handley ran a Thursday bus for many years which took people to Blandford.

In 2011 Damory Coaches were running a bus once a week to Blandford on market day, leaving at 10.15 and returning at about 1pm. There was also a weekly bus on Tuesdays to Salisbury, which started at Broadstone and visited Stourpaine and Iwerne Minster before picking up in Tarrant Gunville at 10a.m. The return trip left Salisbury at 1.50pm, arriving Tarrant Gunville at 2.30pm The return cost in 2011 was £5.00, but the majority travelling on the bus had a Senior Citizens' Bus Pass and travelled free.

At the end of March 2016 both once-a-week services to Blandford and Salisbury were cut. Dorset County Council had a huge cut in Government Grant and had to reduce expenditure accordingly. It was considered not viable to run these services with few passengers, although in 2016 the Tuesday Salisbury service was well-used; many of the passengers had picked up the bus at Broadstone and it travelled via Iwerne Minster to Salisbury ! It is understood that there will be more cuts to various services in Dorset in 2017 onwards. Dorset Community Transport (DCT), a not-for-profit company, has taken over the routes through Gunville, and in 2016 takes passengers to Salisbury on Tuesdays, Blandford on Thursdays and Wimborne on Fridays, though this service was very little used and therefore withdrawn. The cost of these services is £5 return for all travellers – no bus passes are available.

**George Belbin** So far as can be ascertained George was the first Belbin to come to Tarrant Gunville when he took over the The Bugle Horn Inn, and also the horse-bus. Later he started farming at Home Farm, originally known as Glebe Farm.

**Mrs Dibbens** who lived in what is now the Old Post Office also ran the horse-drawn bus which ran from Tarrant Gunville to Blandford.

**Joe West** who lived in China Lane, provided a taxi service during the war and was still there in 1957, the date of Edward Thorne's wedding. Joe married Flo Belbin of Stephouse.

## Farms

RT had worked out that at one time there were 12 dairies in the parish, namely Furzey Down, Harbins Park, Dungrove, Maidment, James and Wareham had farms, but no farm name is recalled. Fred Belbin at Marlborough, Charlie Belbin at Stephouse, Farquharson Eastbury & Bussey Stool. Thorne- no farm name, Home Farm – Belbin plus Dairy Farm, Glebe Farm. Westbury was John Brown's and became part of the Humphreys' estate which included Furzey Down, Harbin's Park Farm and Drove Barn Farm in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (See EB History)

## Services

**Post** Early in the 20th century or even late 19th there had been a Post Office at No 2 Westbury

Cottages. This is confirmed by Nellie Tarbin who lived in the row of cottages and was told by the Thornes in the shop opposite that No.2 had at one time been a post office. They said that there was a special window which served as a post office. The bottom of the vertical glazing bars were removed so that post and parcels could be passed through and stamps purchased. The gap is now glazed with a single pane of plain glass and is visible in 2019, which appears to confirm that there was a post office there

The postman walked from Blandford via Pimperne, across The Down to Tarrant Gunville, then on to Chettle and Farnham, collecting letters on the way back. (This seems almost impossible and further checks will be made. Perhaps this was the route when a motor-bike and side car were used.) Happily in the 21<sup>st</sup> century postmen are equipped with red vans, but with this modern mode of transport their delivery is confined to once a day.

**Electricity** Houses were connected in 1949. Prior to that people used paraffin Aladdin and Tilley lamps for lighting.

**Water** was provided from wells in most of the houses. John Brown of Westbury Farm sank a bore hole at New Barn to provide water for his cattle, and built a reservoir near the one on the road to Everley Hill. He also supplied water to Westbury Cottages, which he owned at the time. Eastbury Estate provided water to the properties on the north side of the village street. Mains water was delivered to the village in the 1950s. (See Eddie Brown history)

## **ALL MOD CONS (or the absence thereof)**

**Toilets** were usually 'earth closets' in the earliest years of the 20thC until converted to septic tanks. Needless to say, the question had to be asked about where the contents of the buckets under the holes in the wooden plank actually went? Many say that the contents were spread in gardens, hence the productive gardens here! Another reported a man from Hinton would come and take the 'soil' away for a mere sixpence, possibly for his small-holding (1940s).

(There is a report of a 'Trinkle Pit' at Riverside Cottage – no-one knows what it was or where. Could this be the place to empty the bucket, one has to ponder ? )

**Tin Baths** Many of the older villagers recall a tin bath, kept outside hanging behind a wall and put in front of the fire on bath night, usually a Friday. One, who was a child at the time, remembers the water being brought in from the well in a bucket and put in the copper to heat.. Next it was emptied from the tap at the bottom into a bucket and finally taken to the awaiting bath in front of the fire. Then the bath had to be emptied of course. Not a simple operation !

**Laundry** – 'Whites' were boiled in the copper (a device built of brick around a copper container into which water was put and a fire lit underneath), usually in the 'scullery'. A mangle was used for extracting the water after washing; two big wooden rollers fixed to a cast iron frame with a big wheel to turn the rollers and squeeze the water out. Children enjoyed turning the handle to turn the mangle – for a while. Washing machines appeared by the 1950s, possibly 40's. Blue bags are remembered, which went into the water and helped to keep sheets etc white. They were also used to soothe bee and wasp stings – presumably applied wet. There was no such thing as a clothes drier. The best thing was a long rope extending down the garden onto which the washing was pegged – and fingers crossed for a good wind and no rain. The next best thing was a 'clothes horse' constructed from wood – a frame with bars onto which washing was hung and this was placed in front of the fire in the winter. Collars, cuffs, table cloths and even pillow cases were treated to a dip in starch liquid (a powder mixed with water). This helped to repel stains and grease and made clothes easier to clean, as well as making

household linen crisp and fresh. The clothes horse was a splendid piece of kit for turning into a tent when turned on its side – with a sheet over the top !

**Ironing** was done with metal irons (hence the name – which we still use) which were heated on the 'range'(on the saucepan heating plates) and the fortunate housewife was the one who owned two or even three if she was lucky, each being exchanged for a hot one as the one in use cooled down , thus keeping up the momentum of another washing chore. The washing was then placed in front of the fire on the clothes-horse.

**Refrigeration** - or lack of it. In the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century milk and butter were hung in the well – presumably in a bucket – to keep them as cool as possible. Eastbury had its own ice house, for which ice would be imported from much further north. It is reported that in the early days of the football team the ice-house became the team's changing room - we have to assume the ice had long gone !

## WAR TIME

**Eastbury House** was used as a hospital. There were Americans camped in the wood beyond, and on the other side of the road from Park Cottage. If you gave them a dozen eggs, through the railings, they repaid you 200 cigarettes. A fair swap, some might say!

**Air Raids** A story that is confirmed by several villagers is that during the 1939-45 war the then Rector, Mr Brayshaw, would receive a phone call from Blandford when there was an air raid alert. In Blandford, of course, they had a siren to give warning of a raid, but there was no such facility in Gunville. Instead the Rector was given a whistle and asked to ride through the village on his trusty steed (bicycle) blowing the whistle for all his worth. We ponder on whether there was a different signal for All Clear - and also whether, during a sleepless night, he was ever tempted to ride out and wake up the villagers 'just for fun'. It must have been a tempting idea.

**Home Guard** – Tarrant Gunville/Tarrant Hinton - and **Air Raid Shelters** John Maidment of Stubhampton remembers that when he was 16 he told the Home Guard officials that he was 17 in order to join the Home Guard at Tarrant Hinton. He recalls a man named Lt Barnes coming from Blandford to drill the men, which took place in the field behind the Tarrant Hinton village hall. He said Lt Barnes was a tall, thin man !

**A Fire Watch** lookout post was positioned up Sheep Drove on the LHS in an old Bournemouth tram. Fred of Marlborough Farmhouse and Charlie Belbin of Stephouse manned this look-out post, together with Jack Lockyer. Keith Belbin remembers playing there and falling off the roof - for which he was severely chastised.

Fred and Charlie Belbin dug an air-raid shelter at the top of the garden at Marlborough Farmhouse. (This garden is now divided and part of it belongs to The Barn House.)

Another air-raid shelter was built behind the school somewhere along the back wall and next to the current playing field. If they were to be dug out, would these shelters offer up artefacts buried for approx 70 years, I wonder ?

## Bomb Craters

Near Furzey Down Farm at the end of the beech avenue (which can be seen on the left of the Stubhampton to the C13 road) there are several bomb craters, assumed to have been made by bombs

ditched from German aircraft as they prepared to crash-land.

## German Plane Crashes

### Bussey Stool

This crash was part of The Battle of Britain action in September 1940. JM reported the date which was a mere two days out from the official report and indicates the very good memory of JM, who describes the crash of a German plane, saying the site was up through Bussey Stool road to the top, turn left into the farmyard, through the farmyard and on towards Tollard Green. As you face the new house the plane came down at the top of the hill on the other side of the valley. He remembers that the crash occurred in daylight. The plane, which was a German Messerschmitt 110 and had two seats in tandem, had nose-dived into a slope near the brow of the hill. John and his mates went to see what had happened. Mr Way had Bussey Stool Farm at the time, and his men took a horse and cart to retrieve two bodies. They were able to remove the rear man (?gunner) as the rear door had opened and he was easily accessible, and he was taken to a barn. The pilot was not removed for a day or so. John remembers the pilot had gone forward and his head was on the Perspex front window, and that his arm was hanging out of the side. The army had erected a bell tent and two soldiers guarded the site. A Tarrant Hinton villager says her mother was told the pilot was a woman – based on fair skin and small hands? More likely to have been a very young man, I guess. Another plane crashed between Iwerne Minster and Shroton on the same day.

### Hancock's Bottom – Everley Hill

JM remembers a crashed plane here, it was on the right past the bend in the dip as you drive towards the C13. The site is now a field next to a wooded area, but was wooded at the time. He was 13 and remembers that when he went to have a look with some friends, they were not allowed anywhere near it and the army had put a cordon round it. It was said that this was the first plane downed by the British new night-fighters, and that is probably the reason for so many soldiers guarding the site. John thinks this was either a Heinkel 111 or a Dornier, and the crash occurred later than the Bussey Stool episode.

KB confirms the crash at Hancock's Bottom, Everley Hill. Another came down at Kites Farm NNE of Blandford (near the Travis Perkins site).

*Here is the official record of the crash at Bussey Stool*

*27.09.40: Target Parnall Yate: Epr Gr 210.Bf 110D-3, Wnr.3378, S9+DH of St/Epr Gr 210 Hptm. Martin Lutz (F) killed*

*Uffz. Anton Schön (Bf) killed*

*Attacked and badly damaged by a number of pilots. Believed finally shot down by F/L. A.H. Rook in a Hurricane of 504 Sq. (Filton). Crashed at Busseys Stool Farm, Tarrant Gunville,*

*Dorset at 12.00 hrs. Hptm. Lutz was Gruppenkommandeur.*

The following comment was made by John Pidgeon in 2015, whilst writing a book about the Dorset Home Guard - "The crew were buried in the local churchyard, but have been dug up and moved to Cannock Chase where there is a German Cemetery. I think this is wrong and they should stay where their bit of war ended. The ones at Portland and Wareham are still in situ."

No trace of such a burial at Tarrant Gunville churchyard has been found, even though a recent new of survey of the Churchyard has been undertaken and records checked. RWT

\*\*\*\*\*

## *APPENDIX*

1. The Slate Club – Final Statement and Balance Sheet for Year Ending 1979
2. The Slate Club – Final letter from the Secretary to Members 11 March 1980
3. Letter from Country Wide Films Ltd to Elliott Bailey re filming 20 Sept 1990
4. Fragment of a newspaper found at Marlborough Farmhouse

TARRANT GUNVILLE SLATE CLUB

STATEMENT & BALANCE SHEET FOR YEAR ENDING 1979

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
Balance from 1978	8. 34	Printing	55
Draw	95. 50	Supper	180. 25
Sale of Supper tickets	12. 00	Hire of Hall	4. 00
Members contributions	147. 12	Entertainment	25. 00
Honorary Subscriptions	200. 50	Secretary's expenses	15. 92
Interest from Post Office	1. 76	Secretary & Treasurers'	
Donation	1. 90	Salary	11. 00
		Presentation for retiring	
		Secretary	26. 00
	<u>£467. 12</u>		<u>£262. 72</u>

55 members to receive £3. 60p leaving a balance of £6. 40p

Accounts audited and found correct.

P.W. Matthews 13. 12. 79

E. Bailey Secretary  
A. Miller Treasurer.

-----  
HONORARY SUBSCRIPTIONS:-

<u>Late 1978</u>			
Rev. Flight.	5.	Dr. Ian Wilson	5.
<u>1979</u>			
Rev. M. Flight	5.	Mr. T. Fonteneau	4.
Cmdr. Carey	3.	Mr. J. Brown	4.
Mr. Main	3.	Mr. Pearce	3.
Mr. Lewis	3.	Messrs Belbin Bros.	6.
Mr. Tyrrel	5.	Mr. Murray	2. 50
Maj. Humphreys	5.	Mr. J. Fiander	4.
Mr. Young	2. 50	Messrs Maidment Bros.	4.
Mr. R.C. Keightley	5.	Mr. Bennett	4.
Mr. Pirie	5.	Mr. R.H. Farquharson	4.
Mr. Paish	4.	Mr. Vickers	4.
Mr. Spooner	4.	Mr. Willmott	2.
Mr. Poole	5.	Mr. Dibben	5.
Mr. Wrench	3.	Mr. Wehner	2. 50
Mr. Trace	3.	Mr. Sansom	4.
Mr. R. Woodhouse	3.	Mr. Billings	3. 50
Mr. Beecham	3. 50	Mr. Clarke	3.
Mr. Wallace-Jones	4.	Mr. Cory	3.
Mr. G. Trickey	2.	Mr. Robbins	3.
Mr. J. Old	5.	Mr. J. Sansom	3.
Mr. Cruickshanks	4.	Mr. W.K. Hooper	3.
Mr. E.K. Hooper	3.	Messrs Hannam Bros.	6.
Mr. R. Adam	5.	Mr. Weeks	2.
Mr. J. James	5.	Mr. C. Collier	5.
Mr. L. Thorne	2.	Mr. Beagley	4.
		Mr. R. Farquharson	5.
		Mr. Regnart	5.
			<u>£200. 50</u>

(Re-typed for clarity)

11.3.80.

Tarrant Gunville ,  
Blandford, Dorset

Dear Member/Supporter,

My letter to Members of 13<sup>th</sup> December '79, outlining the problems facing the Club and giving notice of the delayed date of the Annual General Meeting, most unfortunately did not produce the hoped for response.

The A.G.M. was held on 10<sup>th</sup> March at the Bugle Horn and only nine people were present. The presentation, an engraved cigarette box, was made to our retiring Secretary by our President, Mr Ronald Farquharson. The great effort which Elliott and Jean Bailey have put in to running the Club and the Annual Supper could not go unmarked.

It was then decided, with very great regret, that as no way could be seen to continue the operations of the Club and the provision of the annual Supper, the Club should be wound up. The balance of £6.40, shown on the Accounts for last year, will go towards the printing and distribution of my letters, and if any sum is left it will be given to a local charity.

The Gunville Slate Club was first formed at the end of the First Great War, there having previously been a Tarrant Valley Slate Club running since back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is very sad that a term of some sixty years should have to end. The original much-needed social purpose of the Club has long since been taken over by Government action and the regular pay-in nights at the Bugle Horn have lost their attraction as increased mobility and other entertainment has become available.

It is the Annual Supper which has kept the Club going in recent years, but organizing this has fallen on a few hard-working shoulders and we are unable to find anyone to take on the burden.

Therefore, as I wrote in my letter of 13<sup>th</sup> December, it is better to end on a high note, after a most successful 1979 Supper, and a record pay-out, than to let the Club gradually wither away.

On behalf of your President, Committee and myself, I would thank you all very much for your great support in the past. I am certain we all regret the ending of yet another village activity, perhaps a sign of changing times.

Yours sincerely,

R. J. Regnart.



countrywide

Countrywide Films Ltd.  
Production Office,  
Television Centre, Northam, Southampton, SO9 5HZ.  
Telephone: (0703) 834139 or 230286.

20 September 1990  
AH/ser

Mr Elliot Bailey  
Spartae  
Tarrant Gunville  
Nr Blandford Forum  
Dorset  
DT11 8SN

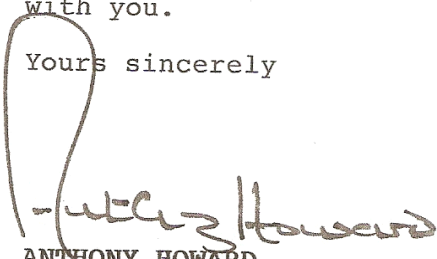
Dear Mr Bailey

It was a great pleasure to meet you and your wife and to talk. This is just to confirm that, all things being equal, I shall meet you with the film unit in the farmyard at Bussey Stool Farm at about 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 3 October 1990 to film you at work on the Estate as we discussed and to do a short interview with you about your work and about your lovely part of the world. It would be a grand bonus for us if it was possible for us to film the trees above the archway at the big house being watered - though I shall quite understand if it is not possible.

The film will be called 'Country Ways - The Tarrants in October' and will be transmitted on TVS at 6.30 pm on Monday, 10 December 1990. Countrywide Films will be pleased to pay you a £50 fee in thanks for your co-operation with this film. If you will very kindly sign the green copy of the enclosed contract and return it to us, we will post you our cheque after we have completed our filming week.

With all good wishes to you and I look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely



ANTHONY HOWARD



## TEXT OF NEWSPAPER FRAGMENT FOUND IN A PEG HOLE IN A BEAM

### AT MARLBOROUGH FARMHOUSE

*It is assumed that the newspaper is the local Bath weekly, or even daily.*

*Without a huge amount of research I suggest that this paper was produced in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is not of relevance to Gunville and Stubhampton per se, only in that it gives a flavour of what was going on at the time our cottages were occupied by workers of the Eastbury Estate.*

“ \*\* .....al (General) Rosas, Emily, and suite, arrived at ....Hotel in this city, from Plymouth, on Saturd.... (evening), and proceeded to London on Monday morning. ..ongst (amongst) the General's servants was a black slave girl.

CHRIST CHURCH We understand that on Sunday next two sermons will be preached and collections made, both in the morning and afternoon , on behalf of the fabric and services of this church And as this church affords ample and free accommodation to strangers and the poor, giving up to them nearly the whole of its extensive area, we beg to draw the attention of any who takes an interest in the church to these collections. We know, also, that more than usual expenses have been forced upon the Trustees, from the establishment of a Roman Catholic Chapel in its immediate vicinity; and as an eligible plan is preparing for the improvement of the access and egress from the church, we hope that the appeals will be largely successful. The excellent choir of the church is, we understand, mainly composed of volunteers from the congregation.

WESLEYAN MISSIONS - The anniversary meeting of the Bath Wesleyan Missionary Society took place on Tuesday last, at Walcot Chapel, in the forenoon, and, by adjournment, in the evening. The chair was taken, on both occasions, by Francis Riggals, Esq., of Bristol, and the audiences were ably addressed by the Revds . W. Arthur, S. W. Christopher, (deputed from ...rent Society), A Fillan...,

.....for the West Indies, and brother ministers.“Esq., and Rev. J Hor..rd (*Horsford?*).

*On the other side of the Fragment.....*

There is a report of a discussion, in parliament, where a gentleman called Walpole is mentioned. Various clauses are mentioned, along with the figure of twenty thousand in 1852, ten thousand in 1853 (? enlisted men) Walpole\* resisted this alteration (? to one of the clauses )....and mentions 'having to meet an emergency.' Walpole wants to know “how far voluntary enlistment to Her Majesty's army had succeeded, and the new government would have full opportunity of stopping the ballot, if it were deemed unadvisable to have recourse to this machinery.”

“This intimation diverted the discussion, in a great degree, from the 7th clause to the 16th, several members contending that it was so essential a change as to give a new character to the measure, which would leave the proposed addition to our defensive force to accident, notwithstanding the plea of urgency.

MR WALPOLE, on the other hand maintained it was only carrying out what the Government had announced from the first, namely, that the ballot should not be put in operation until it had been ascertained that voluntary enlistment had failed.

The Committee divided upon the question of filling up the blank in the 7th clause with the words “eighty thousand”, which was affirmed by 237 against 106.

Property and Income-Tax Bill Colonel SIBTHORP protested against the renewal of this oppressive and unequal tax, which he regarded as almost a breach of faith on the part of the Government.

Mr HEYWORTH, on the contrary, thought the bill ought to be extended to almost every income in the country .....view of the removal of indirection taxation.

Sir H WILLOUGHBY believed that abroad some mention existed upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer.....”

*The paper is so damaged as to make it impossible to complete the report on enlistment and taxation.*

*However, the following snippet can only served to whet the appetite for more information on a totally different topic !*

“.....17,323 dinners at the “Atheneum”..... each; and the average quantity of wine .....a fraction more than half-a-pint. This ..... on the temperance of the present age.”

It appears that the newspaper was published in Bath in the second half of the 18th century, and that the Walpole referred to is Frederick .

## THE WALPOLES

### SIR ROBERT WALPOLE

Born 26 August 1676, the third of 17 children (eight of whom died in infancy), in Houghton, Norfolk.. Died 18 March 1745 in London.

Generally acknowledged to be the first Prime Minister of GB, but this title was not used at that time. The position had no official recognition, but Walpole held great influence in the Cabinet and is generally acknowledged as the first Prime Minister. He became the First Lord of the Treasury in 1721. In 1730 he became the sole and undisputed Leader of the Cabinet.

He was “PM” from 4 April 1721 to 11 February 1742 under George I and George II. He became the first Earl of Orford in 1742

### FREDERICK WALPOLE

Born 18. September 1822 . Died 1 April 1876. Son of Horatio Walpole, 3rd Earl of Orford. He was a British Naval Officer – Commander.

Frederick was returned as Conservative politician for Norfolk North in 1868, a seat he held until his death 8 years later. He was one of two reps for Norfolk North. He wed his cousin Laura Sophia Frances, daughter of Francis Walpole and Elizabeth Knight, in 1852. He had several children, including Robert Walpole, who succeeded him and became the 5th Earl of Orford.

\*\*\*\*\*