

Winster Local History Group

Newsletter No. 21 October/November 2001

This first newsletter of the 2001/2002 season is long overdue, partly because I have been busy with other commitments, and partly because of a shortage of material. **This is your newsletter!** Please give some thought to making a contribution to future issues, thereby sharing your knowledge with others.

Since the last issue of the newsletter in June, we have had our AGM and social evening, and also the first of the winter talks. A reminder of the rest of our programme: unless otherwise stated, all meetings will be in the Burton Institute, Monday evenings, starting at 7.30pm.

19 November 2001. Graham Barfield (Wirksworth and District History Society)
‘A Transport Revolution: How the Cromford Canal and High Peak Railway expanded Local Industries’

25 February 2002. Professor John Tarn (University of Liverpool)
‘The Vernacular Architecture of Derbyshire, and some Winster Buildings’

18 March 2002. Dr Lyn Willies (Peak District Mines Historical Society and Peak District Mining Museum)
‘The Winster Miners’ Strike of 1919’

22 April 2002. To be announced.

17 June 2002. Meet at Bonsall. Peter Greaves will lead a guided walk round Bonsall (followed by a pub visit?)

Winster Local History Group:

Chairman and Newsletter editor: David Jones, Buxton House, East Bank (650178)

Secretary: Geoff Lester, Orchard Mine Cottage, East Bank (650090)

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From the Parish Magazine 100 years ago (1901)

September: The vicar reported that a collection had been taken to enable members of the church choir to go to the seaside. 'We propose joining the Primrose League Excursion to Blackpool on Thursday next the 5th inst when thanks to your kindness we hope to have an enjoyable day.'

On another matter he was less happy: 'I have been asked by several parishioners to make an appeal in this issue of the Magazine for the better ordering of the Churchyard. In several cases of late, flowers, laid by loving hands, have not only been disturbed, but ruthlessly thrown away, graves trampled upon, and sometimes strewn with straw, and fowls allowed to roam at will. The fault lies I fear in the fact that insufficient thought is given by many to this sacred spot, and children are allowed to play at will among the graves.'

Now, this kind of haphazard treatment of God's acre does not redound to our credit as a parish. Strangers comment on the noise often heard made by children at play and also upon the fact that the Church is locked. I should like its doors to be always open to the stranger and the prayerful, but it cannot be so long as so little regard is paid to the sanctity of the building and its surroundings.

May I hope that parents will forbid their children from playing in the Churchyard and that a proper sense of decorum may prevent the precincts of God's house being used as a place for gossip or its graves for seats.'

'Hospital Sunday', 11 August, was also reported, when members of the Winsters' Oddfellows' and Foresters' Clubs, in regalia, the Darley Dale Ambulance Corps, in full uniform, and seven members of the South Darley Friendly Society - 180 in number - marched behind the Birchover Prize Band from the Bowling Green to the parish church, 'where an appropriate sermon was preached by the vicar'. House-to-house collections along the route amounted to £12 2s. 3d., which were to be donated to the County and Darley Dale Hospitals.

October: The Report of the Diocesan Inspector of Schools found that 'The general quality of Repetition was satisfactory. In the Scripture Subjects a few children answered very well, but too many of the remainder lacked readiness. A satisfactory tone prevails. A few good pictures would be a help in the Infants' Class. I have classed the school as "very fairly good."' In response the vicar commended the 'very satisfactory report' but regretted the fact that 'few, if any, of the fathers and mothers of the children of Winsters ever instruct their children in Religious matters at all'.

Llewellynn Jewitt and how the Water came to Winster

Llewellynn Jewitt (1816-86) is often labelled 'the noted antiquary of Winster', but in fact he was born near Rotherham, and spent only about twelve of his seventy years at Winster Hall. He grew up in Duffield, and, after many travels (London, Plymouth, Oxford, Derby), came to Winster in about 1868. He lived here until 1880, when he returned to Duffield, to stay there for the rest of his life.

A very public-spirited man of prodigious energy, Jewitt was responsible for the establishment in 1871 of a good public water supply for the village, traces of which can still be seen today. At the time, there were only one or two wells in Winster (one of them at the Hall, so he had no personal interest), and water for the villagers had often to be fetched by cart from three miles away, particularly in the summer. With the help of the local vicar, the Rev. H. Milnes, Jewitt set up an influential committee, which included many of his important and aristocratic friends. He persuaded The Duke of Rutland and Mr Thornhill of Stanton to make available to the project the millstone grit watersheds of their estates, but in the event only the Stanton water was used. A pipe was laid from Stanton Moor to Winster, and connected to eight 'public fountains or taps in the streets and alleyways'. The cost of the project was about £1000, which was raised entirely by subscription. The ever-generous Mrs Brittlebank gave £300 and Thornhill himself £50, both remarkably large amounts. Jewitt also contributed, but the amount is tucked away in a subscription list which may no longer exist. Local people who had no money offered their services digging and laying the pipes, and these contributions in kind were apparently also recorded.

After the formal opening in the morning of 21 December 1871, a public luncheon was given at the school, attended by about 100 guests, and presided over by Jewitt. Wines were provided by Mr Burton of the Angel Hotel, and one gets the impression that the supply was more than adequate. At this jolly occasion, an unbelievable number of toasts were made: The Queen; the Prince of Wales (who was ill at the time); the Army, Navy and Volunteers; the Bishop and Clergy and Ministers of all denominations; the Houses of Lords and Commons; 'Success to the Free Gift and Supply of Water to Winster'; the Health of the Chairman; the Visitors; and finally, the Ladies. Each toast was replied to at great length, sometimes by more than one person, and there were frequent bursts of laughter, cheers and applause. The health of the Prince of Wales (the future Edward VII) gave rise to particular concern, and in the newspaper report (two full columns in The Derbyshire Times) there is a curious reference to troops being pulled back from the colonies, in view of the need to defend from attack wealthy places such as

Liverpool. More than one opportunity was taken to have a go at various political bogey-men, but in spite of the serious moments, the report paints a clear picture of a well-earned celebration to mark the completion of a worthy enterprise.

David Jones

The deeds of your house - are they already in the bin?

When houses change hands the title is recorded at the Land Registry. This means that old deeds are no longer of any use in establishing ownership. As a result many deeds are being lost or thrown away.

This is a regrettable situation, because old deeds, even if they are worthless in terms of the law, contain a lot of valuable historical information. Winster Local History Group is concerned that information about our village (field names, occupations, family ties, etc.) may be lost in this way.

For this reason we have made an arrangement with the Derbyshire Record Office in Matlock, which is willing to keep your old deeds under safe and secure conditions. They will be catalogued by the Record Office in the normal way, and made available for consultation by anyone working on local history. They will remain your property, and you yourself will be able to see them simply by filling in a request slip.

You may find yourself in one of these situations:

- You already possess the deeds of your house
- Your solicitor asks if you want to keep your old deeds or whether they should be thrown away
- Your mortgage is paid off and the building society asks if you want them to continue to look after the deeds (at a price)

Under these circumstances please get in touch with one of the History Group Committee officers (see front page of this Newsletter), and we will arrange for them to be deposited at the Record Office and for a receipt to be issued to you. Alternatively you can get in touch with the Record Office direct.

Act now or when the situation arises. Don't let the history of Winster be thrown in the bin!