

In Our Age

Living local history

Issue 30
Autumn 2013



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Barton Yard
Page 3



St. Martins School
Page 5



A Michaelchurch Childhood
Page 6

Court Hairdressers: A. G. Evans My First Job

The Court Hairdresser, A. G. Evans of 8 High Street, Hereford, once catered for county ladies who expected to be presented at Court, their coiffure topped by a tiara. Elaine White's mother, May Evans, started the hairdressers alongside a dress shop and gentleman's club above Marks & Spencer (now Boots). When her father, "A.G." (Alex Gilbert Evans) took over he moved to No 8. An ex-Household Cavalry guardsman, A.G. was a strict disciplinarian who would send home any employee improperly dressed. They included their 1934 apprentice Noeline, the girl with the beautiful voice recalls Elaine, and her long-standing friend Myrtle Bateman (nee Prince) who later taught hairdressing at Hereford College.

Elaine, who went on to become a beautician at Harrods and Claridges, started out at A.G.'s, her hair dyed regularly and experimentally in every



No 8, High Street, Hereford, home to A. G. Evans' Court Hairdressers

colour under the sun except blond.

It was a busy place with Marchants the grocers and Rogers Café nearby. But in the occasional slack periods A.G. would instruct the girls to look busy and run up and down the stairs. This boosted trade in A.G.'s barber's shop at the back of No. 8, according to

Elaine: the customers, mostly soldiers from Bradbury Lines seemed to enjoy the girls' performance as they perused their favourite section in *Woman's Own*: the Problem Page.

A.G., who also ran *Maison Lilian*, the hairdresser's shop over Sunderlands in St. Peters Square, managed

by Miss Proctor, enjoyed a reputation for creating fine wigs. He liked to use the long black plaits sold by the Spanish girls who attended Belmont Convent. (Could these have been the children evacuated to Hereford from Bilbao during the Spanish Civil War? See issue 22 at herefordshirelore.org.uk)

Sign up for 2014

Welcome to our Autumn issue. I hope you can join again for 2014 – see details on the back page. In Our Age is blessed with a very loyal readership whose membership fees really do keep us going! If everyone renews their membership on time, it will keep us going till 2015 - what would be brilliant is if every member could find someone else to join, then we would make it as far as 2016!

We're delighted to be supporting a couple of new reminiscence projects: *Chewing The Cud*, which is creating a memory bank (and film) of your market memories. And *Telling The Story*, another Lottery-funded initiative to collect and publish people's stories about the First World War.

Meanwhile I hope you enjoy reading about Elaine White's Court Hairdresser (above), more Market memories (opposite) and Gladys Christopher's recollections of life in Michaelchurch Escley.

Mark Hubbard, Chairman, Herefordshire Lore.



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Chewing the Cud: IOA's Rosemary Lillico interviews Matt Davies whose father Jim ran a mower business in the Market for over 40 years (photo: Rick Goldsmith). Rosemary and Julie Orton-Davies have volunteered to help with *Chewing the Cud*. Right, Julie reflects on what she gets out of volunteering.

Front cover. Beauty and the Beast. A Miss World contestant meets a champion Hereford. (Derek Evans Archive)

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A Hub of Activity

Before its successful move to Roman Road in 2011, Hereford Market was a rich source of memory and anecdote. From the ringing of the morning sale bell to the emptying of the final pen, the Market was, as **John Matthews** of Bartonsham Dairy recalled, “a hub of activity and finance”. The film-making and reminiscence project, *Chewing the Cud*, is capturing the spirit of the times.

Filming and story collecting for Catcher Media Social's project *Chewing the Cud* started in October.

“We have tales of romance, conflict and competition,” said Marsha O'Mahony afterwards. “There were stories of triumphs and sadnesses, market stalls losing their roofs in a gale, runaway animals, the Queen's visits, the busy Miners Fortnight, and missing pigs (the animals escaped at Kingstone on their way to market when the truck doors were left open).”

While filming began at the Roman Road Livestock Market, IOA's Julie Orton-Davies and Rosemary Lillico were helping out at the city's Museum. Proving that neither age nor experience was a barrier to taking part, Rosemary even took a turn at film directing: “I was really nervous at the beginning but I've had a magnificent time.”

The Market film, based on people's stories, will be developed over the coming months with other volunteers learning about filming, interviewing, research and reminiscence work from Rick and Julia Goldsmith at Catcher Media Social. Check out progress at www.facebook.com/chewingthecudhereford and the project website www.chewingthecud.net

Get in touch - You can call or email Jo Henshaw (07788 643184 or 01432 266611; joannahenshaw@btinternet.com) or write to In Our Age (address at the bottom of the page). *Chewing the Cud* is funded by the National Lottery's Heritage Lottery Fund, Herefordshire Council's Museum Service, the Cargill Community Partnership and the NFUM Community Giving Fund.



A fleeing foal causes panic amongst prospective buyers at Russell, Baldwin and Bright's Foyre Oaks Pony Sale. Colonel Harry Llewellyn, left in the trilby, brought the animal under control. Harry Llewellyn, father of Roddy Llewellyn, captured the nation's imagination when he won Britain's only Gold Medal on Foxhunter during the 1952 Olympics. He later set up the Foxhunter café chain. (Photo: Mike Charity)

Improving Jack

The Chesford Grange, Barton Sidings, Hereford around 1956 as Jack Cornes, in hat and glasses, receives his retirement presentation from mayor John Gooding, like Jack, a Hereford engine driver. The Chesford, built 20 years earlier, was Jack's final engine and is pictured the year before the Barton

Shed, behind, received a new roof. Close by are members of Jack's 'self-improvement' classes run by the driver at Hereford Station on Sundays. (Thanks to **Jeffrey Lloyd**, Will Savage, Ian Broome and Jack's granddaughter, Geraldine Woolcot who chipped in their memories on Facebook.)



(Photo: John Davies)

Out of the box

Julie Orton-Davies explores the benefits of volunteering

My decision to join *Chewing the Cud* offers me the opportunity to realize my treasured childhood memories of visits to the Old Cattle Market with my Mum, with its animals and cheapjack stalls.

As regular as clockwork every Wednesday the city was besieged by cattle lorries and congestion in High Town, full of busy shoppers. Who were these strange people with their funny accents and swagger?

Happily this scene has epitomized, throughout the centuries, the essence of Herefordshire, where farmers mixed and mingled with the city folk once a week, only to disappear into a puff of smoke when business was done.

Volunteering allows you to step out of your box, follow your interests, meet talented people and feel good about yourself.

From My Album



An aerial view of the former Cattle Market with a steam train pulling up Western Way and the controversial lime trees (cut down earlier this year) visible along Edgar Street. (Photo: Donovan Wilson)



Sceptical audience: market people listen to John Arlott, the BBC's voice of cricket, speaking in support of local Liberal Frank Owen, behind, during the 1957 by-election. Owen lost to Conservative David Gibson-Watt. (Photo: Derek Evans Archive)



Coronation Day: children from St James, Hereford prepare to party. Lucy Vearer recognized family members Florence, Doreen (later Prior), Cyril and Gordon Jennings. The green outside the scout hut has been a meeting place for almost 900 years according to historian David Whitehead who reveals a reference to the "tree under a rough [row] ditch" back in 1154. (Derrick Blake)



Sheep sales: Reg Dudman from Blakemere caught these three potential buyers at Hereford Market. Do you know who they are?

School yard: St Martins School in South Wye with head Mrs. Brookes and Dianna (later Francis) Blake and Colin Summers amongst the pupils. (Derrick Blake)



Smashing time: "The Market cheapjacks used to shout," recalled auctioneer **Graham Baker**. "One old boy who sold crockery would smash a plate on the floor to get everyone's attention." And **Christine MacIntyre** remembers stallholders selling china, including Royal Worcester, and juggling pieces to attract buyers. "They'd always be there trying to turn a bob by buying something cheap enough to sell in another market, even the next day," remembered **Tom Wheatstone**. (Photo: Derek Foxton)

Child of the hills

Gladys Christopher still lives close to where she was born. She looks back on her early days with Julie Orton-Davies.

I was born at New House, Michaelchurch Escley in 1916, the only child of Thomas and Emily Phillips Maddy. My earliest memories are of helping (and hindering) on the farm, milking cows, feeding calves, pigs and hens, collecting eggs, hoeing swedes and mangolds. And haymaking.

Father and mother would take the horse and gambo (a two-wheeled flat cart with sticks in each corner to hold the loose hay). Father would put me on the gambo with a small pike for me to help load the hay. We'd take the hay into the barn, father unloading it while mother and I placed it around the hay bay for winter feed.

I helped to pulp roots, cut

the chaff, which our horses, Darkey, Fanny and Jessie had with the hay - there were no bales then. And no tractors either: the horses did our farm work, took us to market and to visit friends. They had to be shod with iron shoes, to prevent any grit going into the hooves, by Bert Davies our blacksmith. He moulded the iron for the shoes, heating it in a big coal fire in his smithy and, when it was red hot, taking it from the fire with tongs and fashioning it into shape with a large hammer on an anvil. He would let it cool before fitting it on the horse's foot.

Mother kept a lot of poultry and we would take our eggs, butter, dressed poultry and surplus garden vegetables to Abergavenny market on a Tuesday in the trap pulled by Fanny. Fanny would be stabled at the Greyhound



Baptists in the morning, Methodists in the evening: Gladys with her hens.

Hotel. We'd stand at our stall until the produce was sold then do our shopping at Mr. Cadles'.

Mum and Dad went from New House by pony and trap once each week to see my grandparents, William and Jane Broome at No 3 Castle Terrace. Sometimes I stayed there on holiday from school. Grandfather's garden was below the old school and he grew some sweet gooseberries

and big raspberries.

After he died (I was five) I still went to Granny's. She always took me to Baptist Chapel, on Sunday morning (Rev. Davis was the minister) and in the evening to the Methodist Church.

I left school at 14 and helped father on the farm until, in 1941 I stayed at Rotherwas Munitions Factory.

Next time: Wartime secrets.

Country Living: Geoff Nicholls recalls cider making at Netherton Farm on the Malvern Hills.



Geoff and sister Dorothy.

The orchards had lots of different types of apple including 'Tom Put' and we earned pocket money picking apples off the ground. Bulmer's or Weston's would collect a lorry load while the remainder of the crop was kept for our own cider. Cider making was usually on a Sunday morning. The round stone trough or mill was swished out with pond water and about ten full sacks of apples emptied in. The stone, hinged to a pole in the middle, was pushed round by a horse, and the mash was then shoveled on to a horsehair blanket. The ends were folded over and the blanket laid on the bed of a large press. More blankets were

added until the mill was emptied. The apple juice was pressed out then carried across the road into the cider house where a row of large barrels was waiting to be filled.

When the juice was fermenting a hole in the bung at the top of each barrel was left open for the cider to breath, a strong-smelling froth oozing out and down the sides. Cider was regarded as part of the wages and, though not all the staff enjoyed the taste, Mr. Harford the carter did. Each morning he filled a stone jar and carried it on his horse. This was repeated after dinner.

At harvest time Mr. Harford's father's job was to scythe a track round the cornfield, wide enough for the pair of horses pulling the binder. He would work with a smaller jar of cider strapped to his left leg in a harness. After about an hour it was emptied; he'd walk back, refill and then carry on scything.

More from Henry Moss and his wartime years on the Callow in our next issue.

In The Munitions

Women At War In Herefordshire

To mark the **10th anniversary** of its publication, Herefordshire Lore is republishing this unique reminiscence of the women and men who worked at Royal Ordnance Factory, Rotherwas.

Price: £10 plus £2.50 p&p.

In The Munitions,
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Peterstow

A one-time landlord of the Yew Tree (the 'Yootry') at Peterstow decided to attract more custom by hiring a wireless. His son, **Don Williams**, recalls "a huge horn over a rectangular mahogany box stood on the counter." The Yootry then was a simple cider house with its own cider orchard where the Hampton, Middlesex scout troop camped out each summer and the house pig, a Large White sow, was stabled by the front door. "She never objected to my sitting on her bristly back," recalls Don. The wireless was not a success. "There was a loud high-pitched whining which went on for hours": no-one knew how to disconnect it. Don's delightful recollections are taken from his booklet, *Recollections of Troy* £2.99 plus £1 p&p from the Trojan Museum Trust 01865 390124.

Veteran Voices

The names of relatives who worked at ROF Rotherwas continue to arrive. **Esther Roberts** remembers her aunt Winifred Townsend, an overlooker in No.3 shop in 1916, and Jack Bray who helped with the injured when the factory was bombed; **R.K. Ruck's** aunt, Edith Wheale; Alice Preece, **Alison Preece's** mother-in-law; **Jackie Ratcliffe's** mum, Phyllis Williams; **Sue Fisher's** mother, Gladys Jones; Ivy Powles, **Jackie Bishop's** mum, who lied about her age (she was 17) and became an inspector in 1940; **Janet Lloyd's** father, examiner William Powell; Mrs Maybury Jones' mum Lily Hodges, a supervisor in Empty Shell 1; **Philip Jones's** mum, Peggy Jones. "The names of her friends were added [to the Memorial] but her's was left off. It was the only time I saw my Mother cry," writes Philip. We are campaigning for all the names left off the Rotherwas Memorial to be publicly listed: keep sending them in by letter (note the new address) or email.

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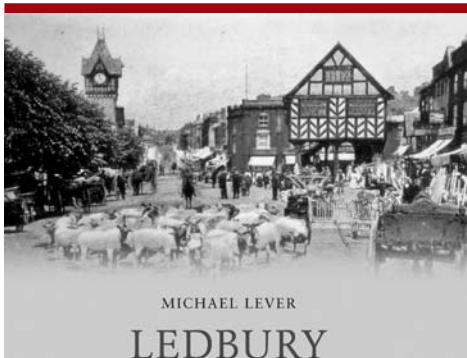
Hereford to Romania

Many years ago regular reader **Doug Emery** stumbled on an abandoned school room in the attic of The Laurels, Park Street, Hereford where he was working. East Sussex couple **Liz and Peter Stephens**, researching Peter's family, discovered this had been Miss Mary Jeynes' Boarding school for Young Ladies' in 1876. Five years later a distant relative, Alice Blunt, attended the school. Born in Kustendje (now Constanta on the Romanian seaboard) while her father worked on the Black Sea and Danube railway, Alice eventually returned to Kustendje, marrying a high-ranking official and bearing seven children. Alice died in childbirth in 1903.

RMTC, Hereford

Rank driver Alan Smith, left, was based in Hereford with the 13 Reserve Motor Transport Company in June 1940 before leaving for service in Egypt.

Does anyone have any information about this time asks his son, **Brian**. (betandbrian.bridlington@gmail.com)



Ross and Ledbury

Readers are spoiled for choice over which town to visit with two new publications, *Ledbury Through Time* (Michael Lever, £14.99), and *Ross Through Time* (Emma Cheshire-Jones, £14.99, both from Amberely) writes reviewer **Rosemary Lillico**. Ledbury looks little changed over the years, apart from the refurbishment of the shops that is, and with its Tuesday and Saturday street markets, this is still very much a market town. When it comes to

Ross, who ever noticed the beautiful sundial on the Wilton Bridge? It's been there since 1712! So with bus pass in hand, why not visit both of these delightful market towns and see what they have to offer?

Thankful Knill

Rural communities that needed no war memorial because all their folk survived were dubbed Thankful or Blessed villages, according to the 1930s historian Arthur Mee. Herefordshire had three, writes **Clare Wichbold**: Knill, Pipe Aston and Middleton on the Hill. "Remarkably, the latter two were doubly thankful – no one died from there in WW2 either."

MILK Herefordshire

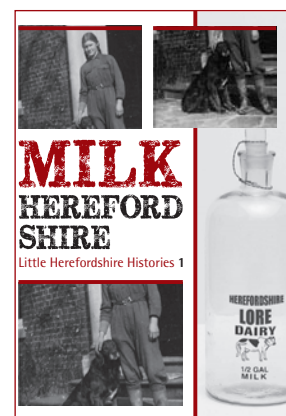
The first of our Little Herefordshire Histories, MILK, is out soon. In the words of our readers, and illustrated with their photos, MILK tells how Herefordshire's dairy people produced and delivered the milk, fresh on our doorstep every day.

For years the white stuff has been a source of health, wealth and happiness. There were Milk Bars and school milk monitors, Milk Races and Milk Cups; there was full-fat milk and local cheese in the Butter Market



From the left, Billy Matthews, Winnie Jones, Linda Jones and May Matthews who used to deliver milk around Tupsley. (Photo: Tony Rosser)

and scores of local dairies such as White House Farm run by sisters May Matthews and Winnie and Linda Jones. The IOA team will be out and about selling MILK soon.



New address

Royal Mail charges for PO boxes have soared so we've changed our address. Future meetings and our postal address will be: Castle Green Pavilion, Castle Green, HRI 2NW. Our phone and email remain the same.

Telling The Story

Tales to be collected about the First World War

Robert Bellamy, was 18 when he quit the family farm at Kings Caple for the Barracks in Harold Street, Hereford to join the South Wales Mounted Brigade, Field Ambulance in 1914. "We thought we should be away about a month. Instead it was four and a half years," he told Herefordshire Lore in 1989. Robert served in Egypt with the horse-drawn field ambulance (where he had his appendix removed, without anesthetic). He almost died on the journey home.

"We were coming back from Brindisi in Italy after the Armistice. We were put in trucks to come up to Le Havre, about forty in each truck with all our kit, rifles and the damn lot. It was terribly cold and we were absolutely perished, you know? Some of the fellows died on the way up from Spanish flu."

Weak but alive Robert took the Southampton train to Fawley Station. "My sister met me, and my father was there as well - he hadn't seen me for about two years. But he got on the train and went to Ross!"



Boy soldier Arthur Reed was born in 1900 and signed up to fight with the Kings Shropshire Light Infantry in 1914. He survived the war, married Lilian and worked as an engineer at Rotherwas. He died in 1970 leaving behind a son and four daughters. This picture was published in Age to Age in 1997. Was he a relative of yours?

The Herefordshire Lieutenancy Office will be marking the First World War with special events such as Remembrance parades. Tell them about any events you organize: they'll be listed at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/fwww

How did your relatives fare in the First World War? IOA readers are sharing their own family histories with Herefordshire in the Great War: Telling The Story 1914-18, a Heritage Lottery project which will combine such resources as the Hereford Times's archives, Herefordshire Archives, Libraries & Museums and Herefordshire Family History Society with Yarpole and Leintwardine local history groups and school children to mark the war. Co-ordinator Sarah Chedgzoy: "Telling The Story will feature major exhibitions in 2014 at Hereford, Leominster and Ross and we are looking for memories and memorabilia from readers. We want your stories!" Call Sarah on 01432 260731 (schedgzoy@herefordshire.gov.uk)

The BBC will feature National Filling Factory, Rotherwas in its coverage of the First World War. BBC Hereford and Worcester's Nicola Goodwin is already putting in the research. If you've got a story tell, contact Nicola at nicola.goodwin@bbc.co.uk or 01905 337270 or call in at the BBC office in Broad Street, Hereford.



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