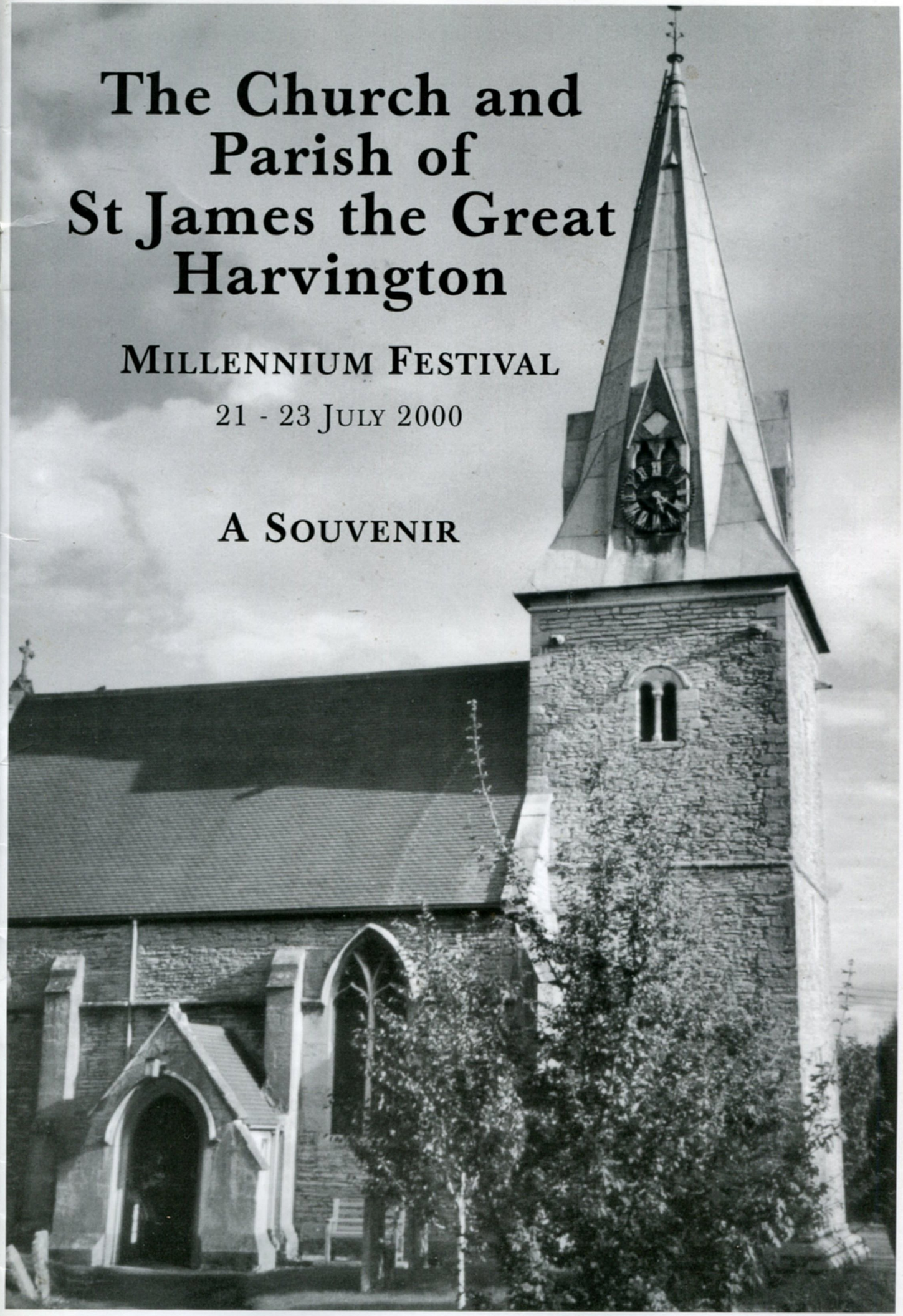
The Church and Parish of St James the Great Harvington

Millennium Festival

21 - 23 July 2000

A Souvenir



The Church and Parish of St James the Great

HARVINGTON

A Souvenir Booklet of the

MILLENNIUM FESTIVAL

21-23 July 2000

THE GREEN BARN PRESS

Introduction

In the early months of 1999, we who became the organisers of the Exhibition were asked by the Rector, the Reverend Ann Hadley to examine the contents of the numerous boxes which had been brought down from the bell tower during the time when the ringing chamber was being created and the bells re-hung. Much of this material proved to be of little interest or value and was destroyed, but enough remained to prompt the suggestion of putting it on display for people to see.

From this, the idea grew of creating an exhibition to mark the Millennium - an exhibition which would embrace the development of both church and village. It would be the church's contribution to events taking place in this special year and it seemed fitting to do it as near as possible to St. James' Patronal Festival which falls on 25 July. With the approval of the Rector and the Parochial Church Council, we began.

It was decided to approach the Archives Office in Worcester about the possibility of borrowing back for the occasion the Elizabethan registers which were deposited with them for safe keeping many years ago. The knowledge that we could do that was our starting point.

It seemed desirable to try and show what happened in both church and village chronologically, together rather than separately, because it was fully recognised that, until the end of the nineteenth century, the two were indivisible. There were many serious gaps - long periods of time for which we had no written or pictorial evidence but, with help from many kind subscribers, we found enough material to make what people obviously felt was a very interesting display. We invited the school, the Baptist church, the Women's Institute and the Pre-School to add mini-displays of their own and we were grateful for their interest and their contributions.

We greatly appreciated, also, the help we received from numerous other people: those who organised the transport and arrangement of furniture, acted as stewards, served food and drink, did the flowers - and we were delighted when the Harvington Singers, under the direction of Martin Horton, undertook to make an occasion of the Sunday evening by singing a full Choral Evensong with the new Archdeacon of Worcester as guest preacher. This proved to be a wonderful end to a weekend which had begun with a fascinating talk by the County Archivist, Tony Wherry and had been well attended and enthusiastically received by many visitors.

It was after that, in response to the comments and requests of a lot of people that we decided to try and preserve the memories of a successful weekend in a commemorative book. We were told that it seemed a shame to let all that information (and effort) be dissipated and forgotten. We trust we were right in thinking that you, the people of Harvington, would welcome the result.

Sue Coley & Jess Fairs
September 2000

ALL PROFITS FROM THE SALE OF THIS BOOK WILL BE DONATED TO
ST JAMES' CHURCH FABRIC FUND

The information and pictures contained in this book have been compiled from many sources, including the recollections of village people past and present. Whilst every effort has been made to check for accuracy, it must be recognised that errors may have occurred. Apologies are offered for errors and omissions.

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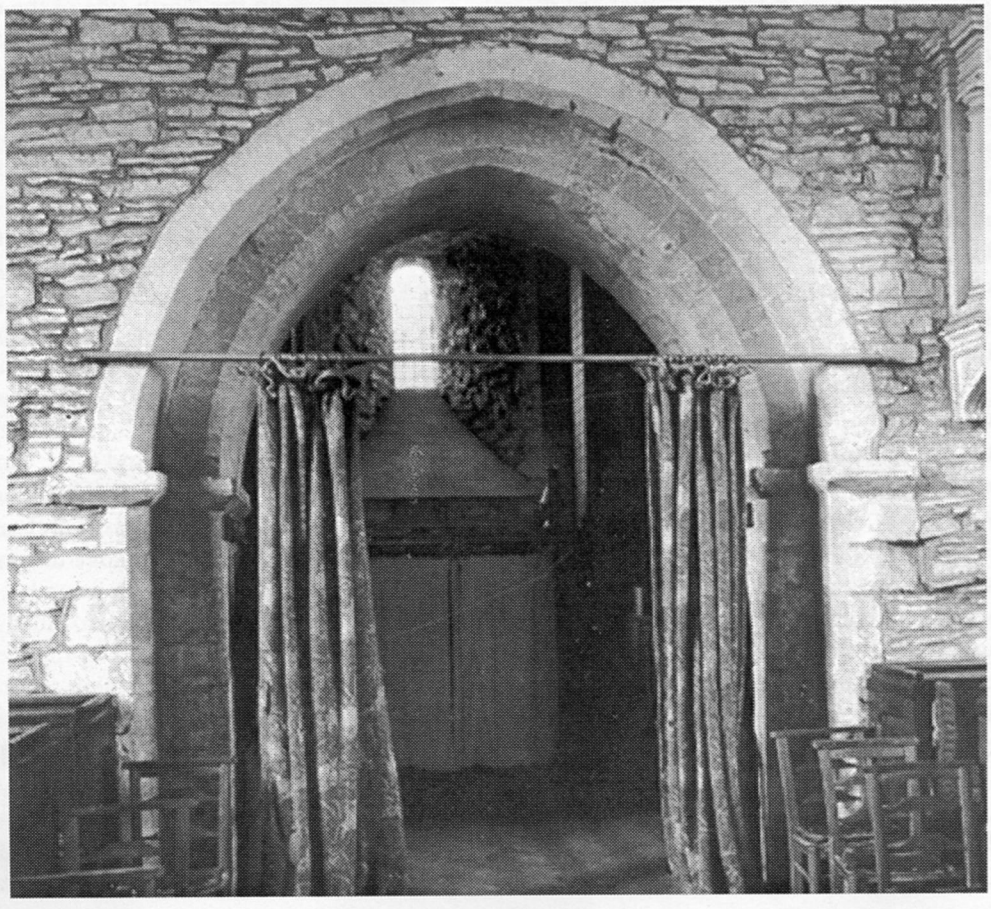
The Church

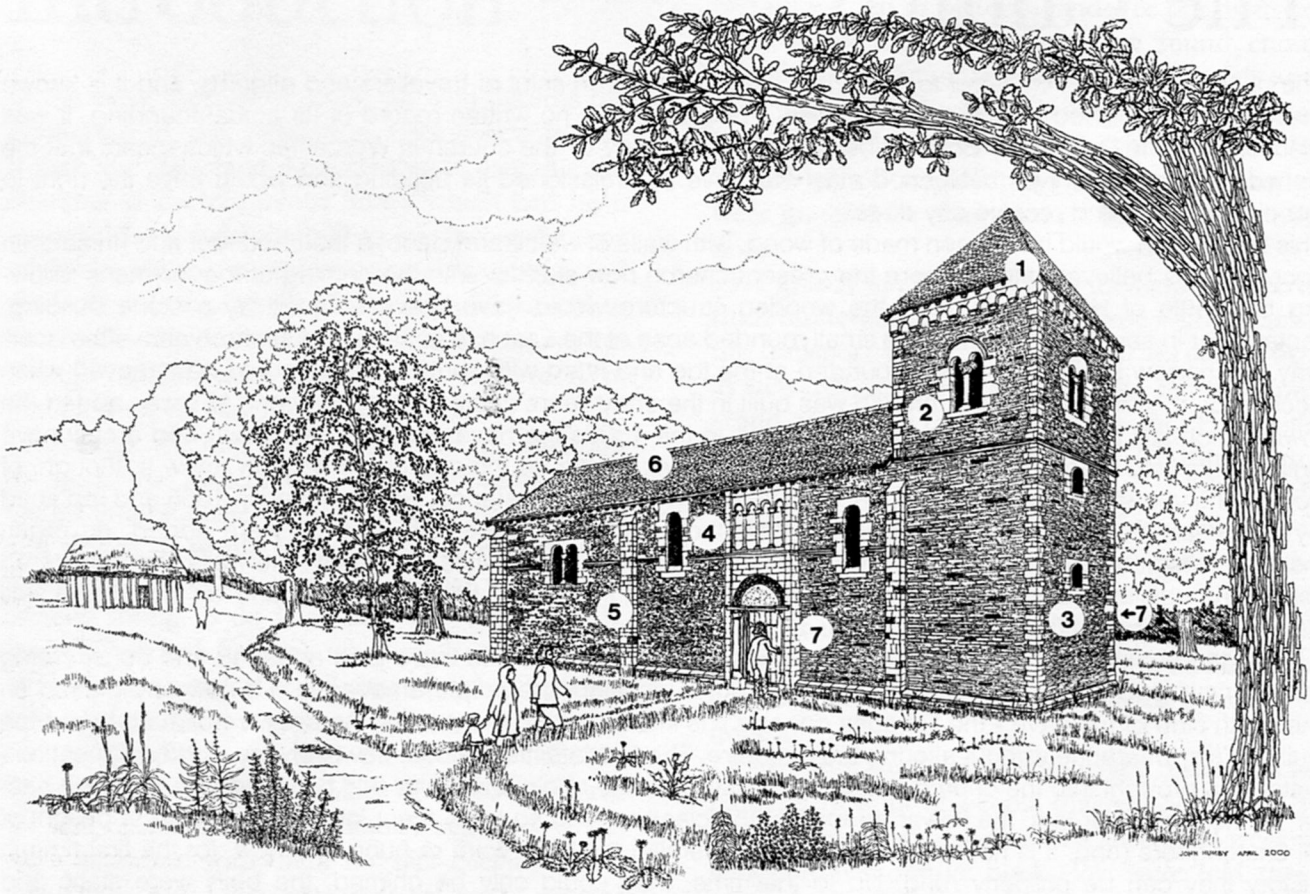
The parish church is dedicated to St. James the Great, patron saint of travellers and pilgrims, and it is known that it was established in Anglo-Saxon times, though there is no written record of its actual founding. It was mentioned in the Domesday Book as being in the patrimony of 'the church in Worcester' which meant that the Benedictine monastery of that period may well have commissioned its building and would have the right to appoint its priest and receive any dues.

This first church would have been made of wood, with walls of wattle and daub, a thatched roof and an earthen floor and, it is believed, stood where the present church now stands. With the coming of the Normans following the Battle of Hastings in 1066 the wooden structure would have been replaced by a stone building, rectangular in shape, probably with a small rounded apse at the East end, a semi-circular arch above the doorway and narrow splayed windows, rounded at the top and fitted with shutters which could be removed when necessary. It is thought that this church was built in the early years of the 12th century and to it was added the tower which still stands today. Some years later, in the 1300s the nave was knocked down and a new nave built, longer and higher and having a very fine chancel, giving us the church as we now know it, though, of course, the years have seen some changes. The East window, for instance, was removed in 1855 and replaced by the present one. Pews replaced the open bench seating; a spire and a porch were added, an organ installed, vestries built etc., but the main structure has changed very little. Originally, the walls were plastered inside and out, but the plaster was removed round about the turn of the last century and by that time a wall had been built round the churchyard.

The 20th century saw the old graveyard around the church filled and more land acquired and consecrated for the 'new' graveyard; the War Memorial was put in position, the pulpit removed and a new one placed on the North side of the nave - the list goes on, and it is impossible to mention all the details which changed the building's appearance without altering the structure. The two latest additions, however, are worthy of mention:- water was brought into the church and a sink installed in the choir vestry and this has made life so much easier for the coffee servers, the flower arrangers, the cleaners and so forth, then, in 1998, to the great delight of all churchgoers (and, it is hoped, to the village generally) the bells were re-hung and now, for the first time in history they can be properly rung. Up to that time, they could only be chimed; the bells were static and hammers striking them produced the sound. Now, thanks to the foresight, interest and energy of a number of people (particularly the Bells committee set up for the purpose), a new ringing chamber has been created in the tower, ringers recruited and trained and the bells actually rung. We are fortunate in possessing a very fine set - we are told by people who know that they are bells to be proud of.



Taken in the 1950s, this shows the Norman archway into the Tower (at that time the choir vestry) and the Norman window, one of the earliest in the church. The curtains did not protect the congregation from draughts - hence the arch is now enclosed!



WAS THIS WHAT OUR CHURCH LOOKED LIKE ONCE UPON A TIME?

An architect friend, John Humby, has drawn this for the exhibition, basing his ideas on other early 12th century churches in the area and also on his own extensive knowledge of church architecture.

The tower looks much the same as it looks today but the top is different (1) - no spire then, of course, and the shallow roof topped with stone tiles. Notice the narrow, round-headed windows; those in the tower still look down on us when we approach the church today.(2) Remember that windows like this were splayed inside to increase the intake of light - look at the one in the bell tower now.(3)

Note that the doorway, with its typical Norman semi-circular arch, has been given greater importance by means of simple decorative stonework additions. There are single cushioned shafts (4) either side and mock arches (known as blind arcading) above.

Note how shallow the buttresses are. (5) Because the walls were strong and massive - a Norman feature - with little interference in their surface caused by the insertion of windows, they did not need to be strengthened by means of buttresses as later architectural styles did (look at the buttresses on the outside of the church today).

John has supposed that the simple, box-like nave and chancel were both the same height and width.(6) When they were demolished and rebuilt in the 13th century, the nave was widened and the chancel lengthened and lowered so that the profile of today's church is not the same as this.

John has also assumed that this doorway, (7) which is on the North side of the church, was the main entrance as it is today, but it might equally well have been the doorway on the South side (< 7) where the choir vestry is now situated. One reason for thinking this was the fact that the South door would have given easiest access to the occupants of the Manor just across the churchyard. In addition, the South side of a church was generally favoured because of it being the lighter, sunnier side - and it was certainly the place where people wanted to be buried, being away from the darker, North side and the possibility of unfavourable spirits.

If our church did look like this, how long did it take to build? - and who, exactly, built it? At the Domesday survey in 1086, there were 93 people living in Harvington and there can't have been very many more a few years later when the work was done. Who did it? and how was it organised - and at whose instigation. Wouldn't you love to turn the clock back and see how it happened?

ELIZABETHAN PEW TOPS

At the time of Elizabeth I, oak open bench seating was put into the church. It is worth studying the original pew tops on view in the church today, remembering that, where possible, the carved texts related to the part of the church where the seat was situated.

POINTERS

In order to draw visitors' attention to features of the church which might otherwise be overlooked, we decided to print bold-type information panels which we called POINTERS and these were posted on the walls, arches etc., so that they could be easily read and understood, thus inviting closer inspection.

East Window

Until 1855 there was a 13th century window behind the altar, rather in the style of those in the nave but with three 'lights' not two. To many people it seems a great pity that the governing body of the church at that time (with Canon Winnington-Ingram in the chair and, presumably, providing the motivation) felt it was necessary to replace it but it has to be said, in fairness, that the whole of the East wall was considered to be in a very poor state of repair by then. The old window was taken out and the stones (the tracery) taken to the garden of the Rectory, the Winnington-Ingram's home. We are told that the major part of the wall was rebuilt, but it does seem as though the bases of the image brackets were kept in place judging by the roughly-cut stones either side of the window. They would have had statues on them and above each a stone hood, one of which has a more identifiable shape than the other.

There were two particular times in history when these statues may have been removed - the first, during the Reformation when many things which were seen as Roman Catholic were removed; second, during the Commonwealth when the powerful Puritan beliefs wanted all ornamentation and images stripped away. It is not known when this happened in Harvington, but it is very unlikely that it was late enough to be the work of the enthusiastic Victorian restorers; we attribute many of the changes in the church's appearance to them but not this one.

Above and to the left, at the far end of the East wall, is a curious half-circle shape cut into one of the stones. What is it? we ask - and why is it there? If you could climb up and feel inside you would find that it is not solid stone; it splays outwards and this leads us to believe that it was once the top stone of a small window, used in a much earlier building - very early Norman, or even, perhaps, Saxon? Certainly it should not be in its present position and we have to let our imaginations supply an explanation as to how it got there. It seems to bear out the story of extensive rebuilding of the entire East wall.

Piscina

The small stone recess to the right of the altar is known as a piscina and was used, in earlier days, for washing the sacred vessels after the Mass or Communion, the water being led away down the small hole in the centre of the basin. This one is considered to be a very fine example of its kind and the small divided shelf near the top is a most unusual feature.

A piscina can always be identified by its small drainage hole. Without this, usually set in its shallow basin, a niche such as this would be used as a cupboard and called an aumbry. In that case, it would have had doors or a curtain across.

For such a simple, unpretentious church, St. James' is unusual in having two piscinas (the other is to the south side of the chancel arch) and its position and style are very intriguing. A piscina usually indicates that there was an altar nearby, but if that is the case, where was it?

List Of Incumbents

This list (on vellum), which hangs on the wall to the right of the altar, was given to the church in 1934 by the widow of Canon James Davenport who had been Rector here since 1908. A scholarly and conscientious man, he had painstakingly studied and transcribed the ancient parish registers (some of which were on view at the Exhibition) partly out of personal interest, partly in order to have a complete record in case they were ever lost to the church. In his day, the records were still kept in church in the chest which was provided for the purpose, but nowadays they are lodged for safe keeping in the Archives Office in Worcester

Sedilia

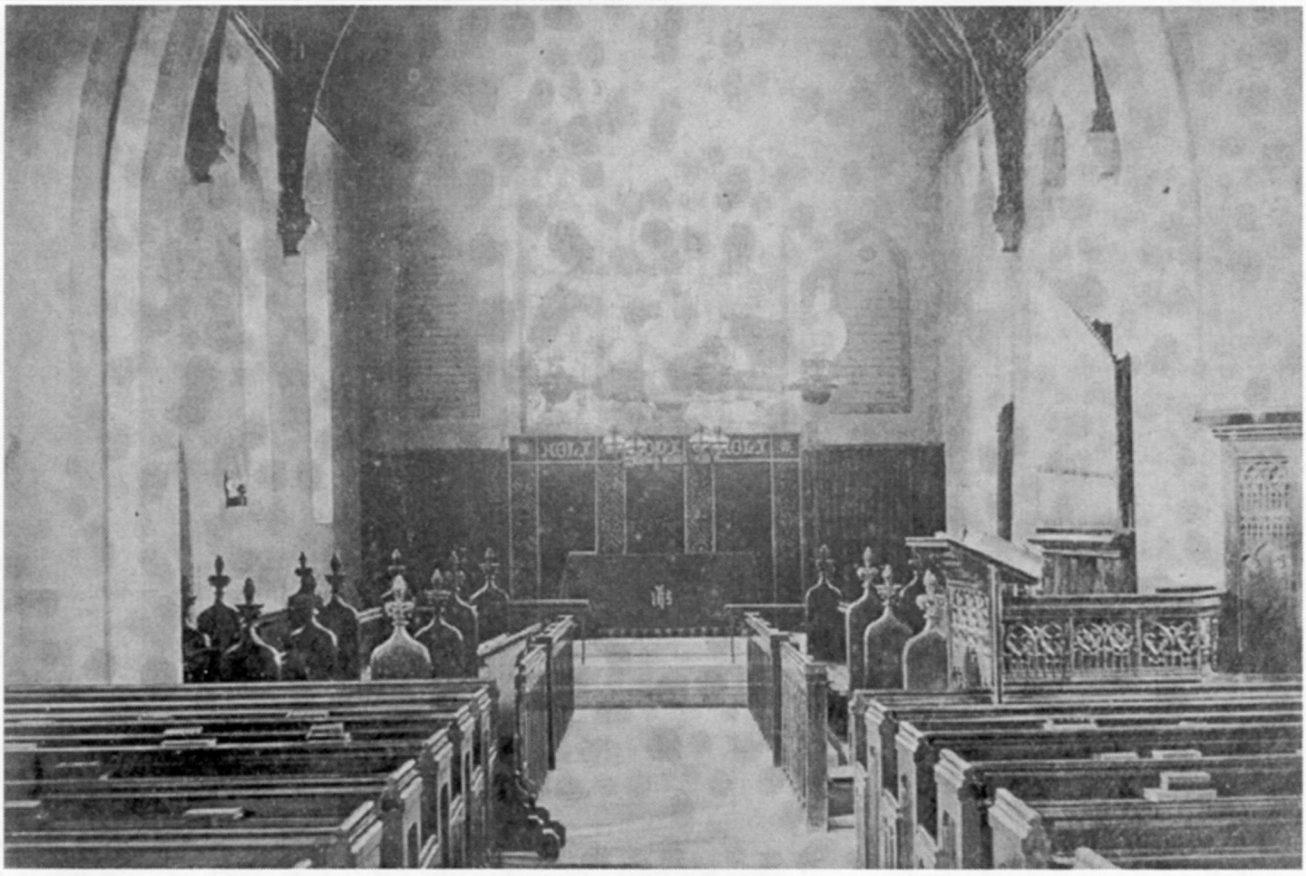
In many churches along the wall to the right of the altar, there can be seen one or two stone seats, usually cut into the wall itself and often with attractive stone carving above. They are called sedilia and were designed for use by people (curates) assisting at Mass or Communion. St. James' never had anything so elaborate, but it is thought that there was a single seat below the end window. The stone below the window sill is obviously in-fill and a simple seat could have occupied the space about 3 – 4 feet down.

The Chancel Arch

Until well into the 19th century, possibly during 'The Great Restoration' of 1855 when many changes (considered at the time to be improvements) were made to the church, the top of this arch was filled with boards and plastered over. Up to that time, we are told, there was a Rood Screen and it seems likely that it was removed at the same time as the opening up of the top of the arch.

Rood screens were a common feature in churches and were usually narrow wooden walkways behind a cross bearing the crucified Christ and flanked by the figures of the Virgin Mary and the 'beloved disciple', John. This group comprised 'the Rood'. Often, a narrow staircase built into the angle of the wall would give access to the walkway or, failing that, a ladder or a series of iron rungs set into the wall. These would enable the appropriate person to climb up in order to cover the figures during the period of Lent as the church prepared itself for the approach of Holy Week and the events of Good Friday. On Easter Sunday morning, the veil would be removed when the Resurrection was celebrated.

Deep indentations in some of the stones either side of



The Chancel in 1894. Although the photograph is badly foxed, it is still possible to see that the walls were plastered, with the Ten Commandments on boards each side of the altar. There is a double-decked pulpit on the right and organ pipes can be seen behind it. Oil lamps hang from the ceiling.

the arch can probably be linked with the presence of such a screen, though how it was reached is not known.

West End of Church

When you, the visitor, face the tower (West) you are looking at the oldest part of the church. It is believed to have been added to the Norman style nave in the early 1200s and the arch leading to it, which is almost semi-circular but beginning to show a slight move towards the pointed (Early English) style, confirms that date. It is called Norman-Transitional because, historically, it lies between the two styles.

Looking up, you can clearly see where the roofline of the earlier Norman church was and you can trace the width of it in the irregular stonework running downwards from it. This was the width of the early church. Imagine it with narrow, splayed windows like the one which faces you as you look ahead of you into the bell vestry. How dark it must have been - tall, narrow, box-like, with candles providing the only lighting. Then imagine living through the period when, sometime in the 1200s it was decided to pull down the nave, leave the tower as it was and rebuild the main part of the church wider, inserting the windows which you see now. Imagine the stunning effect on the peasants, coming in here after their small, mean wooden homes. By that time there would have been glass, not coloured of course in a simple place like this, but letting in light. The chancel was lengthened at the same as all this happened and that, too, must have seemed like heaven compared with what went before. Above you is a blocked-up doorway. We believe it was once a musicians' gallery with simple folk playing the instruments of the day - hautboy, viol, flute, sackbut - and coming onto it from the tower. Farther up still is a small, round-headed window which, before the rebuilding, looked out along the roof of the original church. It is in the tower wall and was intended as an exterior light.

When you stand inside the bell vestry remember that it was only in September 1998 that the new ringing chamber (above your head) was completed and the fine set of bells were hung so that they could be chimed properly for the first time in their history 'releasing for the first time a sound for which they had been designed but had never given; it was like opening a time capsule from 1947' (quoted from *The Ringing World* November 1998.)

When you leave the church, try to remember to turn round and look back - the round-headed windows in the tower are very old, early Norman in style with more than a suggestion of Saxon workmanship about them. Who knows? - local Saxon workmen may well have been employed (probably as slaves) by their Norman masters, to work on this tower.

The Font

Our font can hardly be said to be the most attractive

ever seen but it is, in fact, of very early origin and therefore of considerable interest.

The drum or tub style was used in Anglo-Saxon times before 1066 or may have been the work of local craftsmen even when the Normans were building *their* early 12th century churches, so it may be that we have here a font which was made at that period. The fact that it is unadorned adds to that assumption - we don't know. It's another of the tantalising mysteries of this simple but fascinating church of ours.

The Porch

The porch to which the path leads and which seems to us nowadays the natural entrance to the church was only built on in 1855 and we have no way of knowing whether it replaced an earlier one or not. Up to that time, we have reason to believe that the main entrance was on the other side, the South, but that doorway was blocked up as this one was made more important by the addition of a porch. Later, in the 1960s a vestry was built encompassing the South door and, there again, we have no way of knowing whether there was an earlier porch or not, though sadly it seems unlikely.

It would be nice to think that there *was* a porch on the church in mediaeval times because porches were of great importance. It was in the porch that much of the business of the village took place, bargains were made and sealed and oaths sworn. The first part of the marriage service took place here; penitents stood long hours dressed in white so that all might know of their penance. Many old porches today retain their stone seats built along the outer walls showing that they were regarded as places on which to rest.

View down the church in the 1950s. The pulpit on the right was removed (plus a section of the rotten floor below) and a new oak pulpit built on the left in 1969 by T.V. Wheeler and Sons Ltd, the Harvington builder, for the grand total of £81.



Because the church with its Rector, churchwardens and clerk were at the head of the village administration - there were no Parish Councils until 1894 - the church porch was the obvious place for announcements of a secular nature and this is still found to be the case. Notices that have nothing to do with church life can often be seen occupying a place on the notice board in the church porch.

At the same time that the porch was added, the wall was put up and a gateway made, thus 'hiding' the church in a way which would be considered undesirable today.

St James' window

There were three men named James mentioned in the New Testament as friends and followers of Jesus - His brother James, James the son of Alphaeus, and James, brother of John. This church is dedicated to the latter, known as James the Great. He and his younger brother, John, were called by Jesus to follow him early in his ministry. The sons of Zebedee, they were called by Jesus in the course of time, Boanerges - the Sons of Thunder.

They were close to him - indeed, John became known as 'the beloved disciple' because of Jesus' obvious affection for him - but both were at the Transfiguration and with Jesus in his last night of agony in Gethsemane. After the Resurrection, James became an ardent and energetic apostle of Christ, teaching, preaching, spreading the Gospel as he had been instructed. Sadly, he was the first of the apostles to suffer martyrdom - he was beheaded at the command of Herod Agrippa in A.D. 44.

In the course of time, he became associated with the idea of pilgrimage. The church of Santiago de Compostella in N.W. Spain became the second most popular place of pilgrimage after Rome itself and was dedicated to James the Great. In the memorial window, which is next to the pulpit, James, on the right, is seen with his pilgrim's staff and water flask while above him is the pilgrim's emblem, the scallop shell.

It was during the Revd Davenport's time (July 1923) that the Misses Penney (who lived at Cedar Lodge and were later to give the land on which the Village Hall is built) undertook to have the stained glass put into this window in memory of their parents. A design was drawn up by Messrs Shingley & Hunt and duly submitted for approval but here they ran into trouble. The donors felt that the light-coloured beard of St. James suggested that he was an old man, far older than his brother, John, and so strong was their objection that the Church Council took up the matter with the designers. The Minutes Book shows the reply they received from a Mr John Stallard and, as the window was duly installed and graces that wall today, we can safely assume that the Misses Penney and the Church Council were completely satisfied with the result.

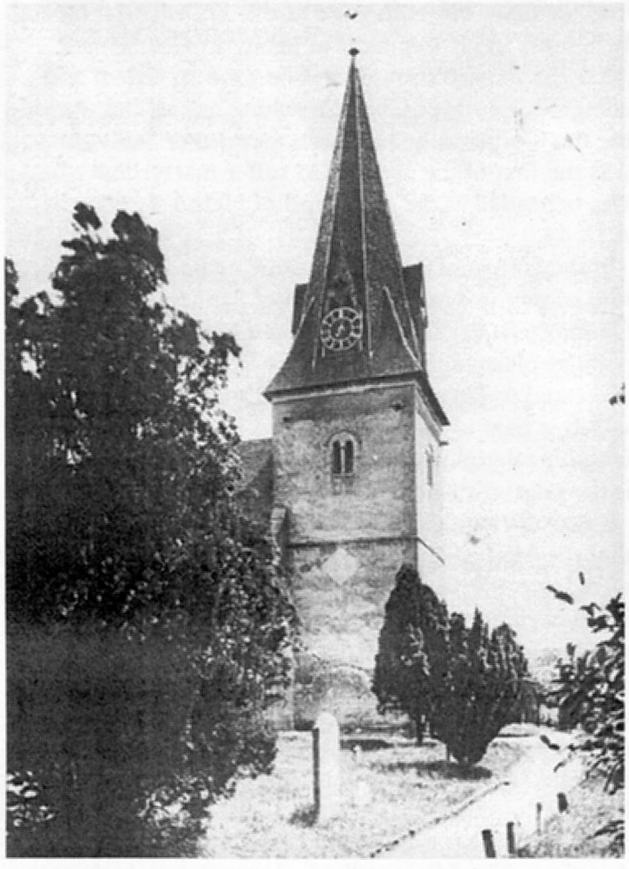
CHURCH INVENTORIES

One inventory on display was a copy from 1900 of an inventory made in 1552 and reads:

Harvyngton The Inventarie of all the goodes jewelles and ornaments wtin the churche of Harvyngton taken bie Thom^{a}s Hobbyns pson there Thom^{a}s Kempe and Willm Pkes churchewardens and John Willes and John Hale prishenors the viiith daye of Auguste in the sixte yere of the raigne of o^{r} sov^{r}aigne Lord Kinge Edward the Sixt.

In p^{r}mis on chales silv^{r} & gilte w^{t} a patten of silv^{r} & gilte
Itm on other chales of silv^{r} w^{t} a patten of silv^{r}
Itm ij crewett of silv^{r}
Itm a crosse of copp
Itm iij belles in the steple
Itm a cope of bleue felvett brodered w^{t} gold
Itm iiij peare of old vestament w^{t} albes to the where-of one of fustyen 1 of saye and the third of sylke
Itm a hold water pott of led
Itm ij irons to sett light upon

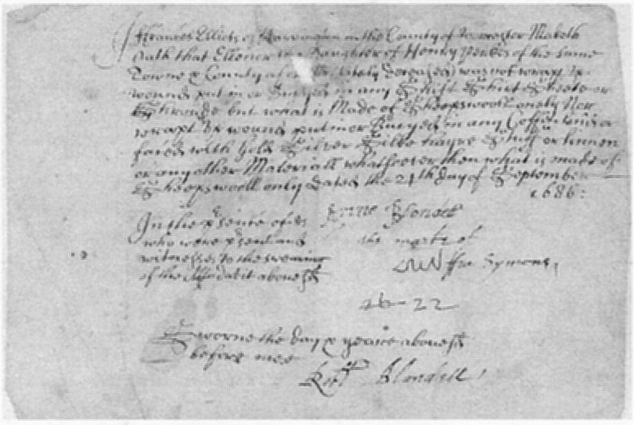
Thomas Kempe, whose name appears here, was a member of the Kempe family named again in connection with the registers and pew tops.



The church tower in 1900. There is still some plaster on the walls (finally removed in 1902), and the steeple has its wooden shingles which were replaced in 1947. Does the lozenge show where there was a clock before the steeple was added?

BURYING IN WOOLLEN

By an Act of Parliament of 1667, the use of any material other than wool in the dressing or wrapping of corpses or the lining of coffins was strictly forbidden, the penalty for disregarding same being set at £5. This measure was an attempt to shore up the declining wool trade.
The fine could be imposed on: The estate of anyone not wrapped or buried in woollen; the householder in whose house the dead person had died, if the injunction was not complied with; all persons connected with the funeral; ministers neglecting to certify the non-receipt of an affidavit swearing to observance of the Act; and the Overseers of the parish for neglecting to levy the penalty in the first place.
The Act was not repealed until 1814 but had been widely and totally disregarded for many long years before that. An example of the Certificate is given below and others were on display.



I Francis Elliots of Harvington in the County of Worcester Maketh Oath that Valentine Abell of the same Town and County (late deceased) was not put in wrapt wound up or Buryed in any shirt shift sheet or shroyd other than what is made of sheeps-wool only: nor put in wound up or buryed in any Coffin lined or faced with any stuff silk hayr Gold & Silver hemp flax or any other Materiall whatsoever other that what is made of sheeps-wooll only. Dated the 16th of August: Anno: 1683

REPORT ON THE CONDITION OF THE SPIRE: 1946

This recommended that the oak shingles should be stripped off and the whole spire covered with copper (which was done in 1947). However, it is interesting to note that the Architect was asked to consider taking down the spire and returning the tower to something like its original appearance before the addition of the spire in 1855. 'After giving further thought to this I feel inclined to suggest that such a form of restoration would be open to criticism on antiquarian grounds, for to go back to such an ancient style would be to create somewhat of a sham'. He goes on to say that it could be restored to its fifteenth century appearance. What would the reaction be today to such a suggestion!

PLOUGH SUNDAY

When the majority of people in the village earned their living from the land, Plough Sunday (held at the start of the ploughing season) and Harvest Festival were of particular importance.



FORM OF SERVICE

FOR

Blessing the Seed at the Time of Sowing.

(Subject to permission by the Bishop.)

As many as may desire shall deposit some grains of seed in a vessel conveniently placed for that purpose near the entrance of the church.

HYMN.

We plough the fields and scatter,
The good seed on the land,
But it is fed and water'd
By God's Almighty Hand;
He sends the snow in winter,
The warmth to swell the grain,
The breezes, and the sunshine,
And soft refreshing rain.
All good gifts around us,
Are sent from Heav'n above,
Then thank the Lord, O thank
the Lord,
For all his love.

He only is the Maker
Of all things near and far;
He paints the wayside flower,
He lights the evening star;
The winds and waves obey him,
By him the birds are fed;
Much more to us, his children,
He gives our daily bread.
All good gifts around us
Are sent from Heav'n above,
Then thank the Lord, O thank
the Lord,
For all his love.

We thank thee then, O Father,
For all things bright and good,
The seed-time and the harvest,
Our life, our health, our food.
Accept the gifts we offer
For all thy love imparts,
And, what thou most desirest,
Our humble, thankful hearts.
All good gifts around us
Are sent from Heav'n above,
Then thank the Lord, O thank
the Lord,
For all his love.

Blessing the Plough - Plough Sunday, early 1950s. (photo: A. Hughes) and (left) an official service sheet from 1944.

MARRIAGE WITH FOREIGNERS

In 1947 the Archbishop of Canterbury issued guidance, particularly aimed at women wishing to marry German prisoners-of war. A licence could be granted provided there was: a statement from the Officer in Charge of the prisoner of war camp [there was one up Leys Road] that the War Office memorandum has been seen by both parties; that the girl's parents, although she be of full age, approve; that the parties concerned understand that no assurance can be given to the legality of the marriage in Germany. The Memorandum said that 'On marriage to a German the woman, if British, will, as the law stands, lose her nationality and will become an alien in British Law' and the man in question would not be released from the camp. No undertaking would be given that the man would be allowed to remain in this country when, in the ordinary course of events, he would be due for repatration. In fact, at least two marriages were contracted locally and the people concerned stayed in the village.

The note to the Bishops also says: 'With regard to Poles, Balts, and the like, where they have a State, certification from the Consul is still obtainable; but where (as it usually the case), they have become stateless, nothing can be done beyond accepting the word of the man that there is no previous marriage or impediment. Many of these Stateless persons are hoping to become naturalised and some at least have already lodged their applications.'



THE CHOIR VESTRY

Above is a view of the south side of the church in 1955. The choir vestry was built in 1961 by the village members of the Church of England Mens Society. On the right you can see Tom Wheeler, the local builder giving instructions to the Rector, Chris Johson, whilst John Bull works on the right.





A cutting from the Lindon Yew at Hereford, estimated age 4000 years was planted 5 December 1999.
(photo: Dick Fairs)

CELEBRATING THE MILLENNIUM



A generous gift for a special year - spring bulbs by the thousand - from the Horticultural Society.
(photo: Diana Huggins)



One of the main displays boards at the Exhibition, July 2000.
(photo: Sue Coley)

The Early Registers

Out of about 14,000 parish churches in this country, only 800 still have their original registers – and we are one of that number. They were started in obedience to an edict by Thomas Cromwell in the reign of Henry VIII. Some of our early registers and other contemporary books were displayed (on loan from the Worcester Archive Office).

THE FIRST REGISTER

This was started in 1570 by the Rector, Thomas Ferryman; the bottom of most pages are signed by the Parson and Churchwardens of the time. One of the first pages is signed *by 'Tho. Feriman: parſon. Jo. Kempe G. Strikeland Churchwardens'*. These Churchwardens were responsible for the putting in of the pew tops which are on display in the church. The first register includes the the following notes, presumably made by Ferryman himself. There is reference to a visit to Worcester by Elizabeth I. It is interesting see that consistency of spelling was not a great strength, even among those who had obtained enough education to be ordained. Thomas's spelling of his own name is a good example.

A perfecte Register of Christeninges Mariages and ffuneralls wch have hapened in the pishe of Harvington in and sithence the 28th day of March in the yeere of o^{r} Lorde god 1570 beinge the day and yeere wherein m^{r} Thoms fferiman Was Inducted into the Parsonages there Ao Dm 1575. Junii 11°. The abovenamed m^{r} Thomas fferyman came to Harvington to reside after that he had served the Reverende ffather Nicholas the then Bishop of Worcester as ordinarie Chaplin in his howse by the space of 4 yeares and upwardes All wch tyme he had of the sayde Revende ffather Dyet for him selfe his wife his man his wives mayde and kepinges for 2 geldings.

Ao p^{r} deo Aug 8°. Elizabeth the renowned Queene of England came to the Cities of Worcester and there continued in the Bishops palace one whole weeke

A^{o} dm 1576. April 18°. Nicholas the above named Bishop of Worcester departed this life in the Castle of Hartleburie and lyeth buried in the Quyer of the Cathedrall Church there as by a seemely monument it is to be seene.

A^{o} Dm 1577 Comp. Aug. Jan 13° William feryman Citizen of London and father to the above named Thomas departed this life and lyeth buryed in St Katherine Cree Churche in London in wch parishe he then inhabited Mr Dr Lewis then Reader in Paules churche p [faded] his funerall.

THE DEATH OF QUEEN ELIZABETH I

Thomas Ferryman also made these notes in the first Parish Register. He was obviously relieved that James' accession did not cause any civil unrest. He also records the death of John Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was present at the Queen's death and who crowned the new King.

Moro Elizabeth Q Regina : A^{o} Dm 1602: Compat: Aug: 24° die Martii the most famous and Renowned Soverainge Queene departed this life after Shee had governed this Kingdome in peace and much happiness 44 yeares compleated and fower monethes

Initium Regni Ta Coli Regis : Eadem die et A^{o} James the Sixt of Scotlande was proclaymed in London Kinge of England and wth all possible expedition the same was likewise proclaymed in all partes of the Lande without resistance. Blessed By god who vouchsafed to grante him so peaceable an entrance into his rightfull inheritance and long and many yeares mai he raigne and rule in the llande to gods glorie.

Coronaco Jacobi July 25° James aforesaide was crowned in the minster at Westminster by John Whitegift Archbishop of Canterbury

Moro To: Whitegift Archiepi Cantuar Februarii 29° Ai Dm Compat: Aug. 1603 John Whitegifte the above named Archbishop of Canterburye after he had satte on that Sea 25 yeares and upwards in favo [?] wth 2 mightie princes Elizabeth and James, and servante of the people for his wisdome, learninge and great humilitie yelded his sowle.

Thomas Ferryman's own memorial tablet can be seen on the back wall of the church, to the right of the arch.

'THE DREADFULL FYRE'

In one of the early registers are details of a collection made 'Aprill ye 10th 1695' for the victims of 'ye Late Dreadfull fyre at Warwicke' which at the time was in the Diocese of Worcester. It is interesting for us because it is one of the first times that people's occupations are mentioned in any of the arish Registers. Amongst them you will see

Thomas Dyer *blacksmith*
Thomas Perks *husbandman*
Elizabeth Heydon *a servant*
Titus Knight *shepherd*
Thomas Pilkington *yeoman*
The total collected was £2. 7s. 2d. (approximately £2.36). Some of the servants gave 6d (2½p) which represented a good proportion of their wages of £26 a year.

VOLUNTEERS FOR THE YEOMANRY

Other registers included a book of preprinted sheets from the Marriage Register for 1755 - 1812: many parishioners were unable to write their names and had to make a 'mark'. A further book on display contains a summary of births, marriages and deaths from 1734 until about 1812. On the inside of the back cover is a list of Volunteers for the Yeomanry, 1803 (during the period of the Napoleonic Wars). It reads

In the year 1803 the following persons, being Inhabitants of Harvington, generously offered their services as Representatives of the Parish, in the Army of Defence, and therefore are here recorded with honours.

Volunteers in the Yeomanry Cavalry – for Worcestershire under the Honble Col. Cocks
George Baylis
William Warren
John Marshall jun^{r}

Volunteers for the Infantry
John Marshall jun^{r} who afterwards became a member of the Yeomanry Cavalry in the same year
Henry Harris
Richard White
Job Jones
Richard Robins

OTHER BOOKS DISPLAYED

THE BOOK OF HOMILIES was first published in 1562. The title page reads 'Certain Sermons or Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches, in the Time of Queen Elizabeth of famous memory: and Now thought fit to be Reprinted by Authority from the Kings most Excellent Majesty'. It is dated 1676. It includes sermons on the Salvation of All Mankind, Against Swearing and Perjury and An Exhoration to Obedience. Judging by the book's fairly pristine condition, it does not seem to have had much use.

SERVICE BOOK 1763 The following inscription appears on the inside front cover:
'June 1763. This Book was presented to the Parish Church of Harvington in the County and Diocese of Worcester by J. Arnold Minister., Jonathan Norris, Thomas Partington Churchwardens'

The title page is missing, so we have no idea of the actual printing date of the book, but it includes a proclamation dated 8 October 1751 by George II and includes 'A Form of PRAYER with THANKSGIVING to Almighty God; to be used in all Churches and Chapels within this Realm, every Year, upon the Twenty-second Day of June; being the Day on which his Majesty began his happy Reign'.

THE CHURCH CHEST

The 70th Canon of 1603 (i.e. 60 years later than the order to keep a register) provides that a register book shall be kept in every parish and orders that the safe keeping of the said book shall be the responsibility of the churchwardens who, at the charge of the parish shall provide 'one sure coffer with three locks and keys, whereof the one to remain with the minister and the other two with the churchwardens severally so that neither the minister without the churchwardens, or the churchwardens without the minister, shall at any time take that book out of the said coffer'.

Our coffer is 5 ft 8 in. long by 2 ft wide and stands 2 ft 4 in. high. It is divided into two compartments; the smaller one on the left, 2 ft 5 in. long, has one lock, doubtless for the rector; the larger one has two locks to it for the churchwardens. This is 3 ft 3 in. long. Each compartment could be opened separately from the other. Fixed at the back of the chest and running partly through one compartment and partly through the other is a smaller chest 3 ft 3 in. long and 7 in. wide. To this inner chest there are three locks of different makes, two of the locks being in the part running through the smaller left-hand compartment, and one in the other part. All three keys were required for the opening of this inner chest, neither party being able to open one side without the other, but each able to have access to his own part.

Thus the order of the Canon was obeyed but the curious thing is that the oldest register 9 in. wide cannot have been kept in this section which is 7 in. wide, unless it had a flexible cover formerly and was tied round with string, instead of the stiff cover which it has now. (The last cover was apparently supplied by the British Museum at the instigation, and expense, of the Revd Waugh 1895-1908)

The records are now in the safe keeping of the Archives Office at Worcester. The coffer can be seen in the church to the left of the altar.

The Village and its Development

EARLY NAMES

AD 709	Herverton *and* Herefordinne
799	Hereford
802	Hereforde
964	Herefordtun
1086	Hervertona *and* Herefortun
1277	Herwerton
1240	Hervorditun *and* Hertertun
1249	Herefortun
1275	Hertortone
1508	Hervington
1542	Herfortun

We cannot know for certain how and when Harvington came into being but we believe that the earliest settlers were of West Saxon origin and part of the great complex of peoples under the supremacy of the Kings of Mercia. At the time of the Domesday Book (William the Conqueror's great survey) it was recorded as having a watermill, and a church which was apparently founded by the Benedictine monastery at Worcester. This later became the head of the Diocese of Worcester and remains the patron of St James' church to this day.

Little else is known about the workings of the village until the registers of baptisms, marriages and burials of the late 16th century start to tell us what people did for a living, when it becomes clear that it was always a poor, working-class agricultural community relying on mixed farming to provide a livelihood for its people. There were no landed gentry, no squirarchy, few families of substance and, often, no resident Rector to provide a glimpse of a higher standard of living, so life was hard for most of the inhabitants. Fashions in farming came and went but, until the rapid development of the village after the second World War, the principal means of making a living was by work on the land. Clearly, that is no longer the case and the present evidence of affluence and the wide range of occupations would be as astonishing to Harvingtonians of the past as any of the modern features of our times. We are left to wonder what the future holds for this very ordinary, but tantalising, place in which we live.

THE DOMESDAY SURVEY

Known to us as the Domesday Book, this survey was compiled on an order dated 1086 from William the Conqueror as a means of assessing the resources of his newly-conquered realm. It was always his intention to use the findings as a means of raising revenue - his revenue which would be used by him for 'running the country'. It is a most carefully compiled document executed in amazingly quick time (two years) by his teams of commissioners, who asked a pre-determined set of questions concerning amounts of land, cultivated, shrub, forest etc., the existing boundaries and ownership, and the potential for increased revenue. Part of the entry for Harvington reads:

The church of Worcester holds Herefortun with Wiburgestoke [the whereabouts of which is not now known] and here are three hides that pay taxes. In demesne there are three carucates and twelve villeins and three bordars with fixed carucates. There are four men servants and one maid and a mill worth ten shillings and twenty four acres of meadows. It was worth twenty shillings.

The demesne was land which was for the exclusive use of the lord of the manor and was worked for him by his villeins or serfs, who were not free men. A portion of his land was used, at his will, for the upkeep of his villeins, who cultivated it when their work for the lord was completed. A bordar (or cottar) was the lowest rank of villein, holding one acre and a cott(age). The tax - Danegeld - was two shillings per acre of cultivated land. The words 'hide' and 'carucate' appear to have been interchangeable, both meaning a measurement of land of about 120 acres, subject to tax.

Details of boundaries from Domesday entry: the first line of type is Anglo-Saxon

Diſ ſyno oa land ġemæra to Þeforoþa. æreſt andlanġ auene. þ hiċ
Theſe are the land boundaries at Hereford. Firſt, along Avon, whence it

cumeð to piſtaneſ bryċġe. ⁊ þonon æfter þam broce þ hiċ ċymeð to
cometh to Wiſtan's Bridge, and thence after the brook, whence it cometh to

heopan hylle. of þam hylle þ hiċ ċymeð piþ cæſtra pællan. ⁊ æftep
Sycamore hill. From the hill, thence it cometh againſt Cres-well, and beſide

þam ſice to hunigċ hommeſ ſtreote. ⁊ þæp eft innon auene.
the drain to Huningham ſtreet, and there again into Avon.

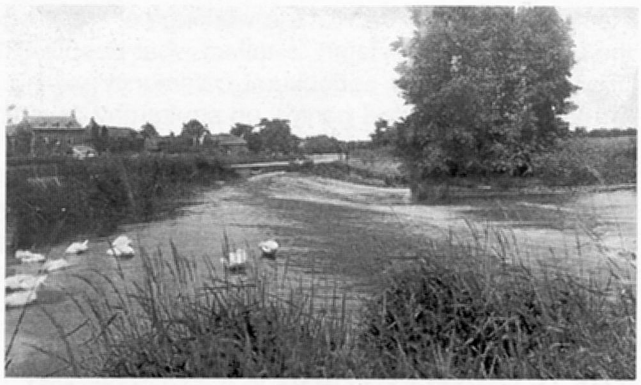
We all know the Avon, but where was Wistan's Bridge? Is 'the brook' the county brook that divides us from Abbot's Salford? Is Sycamore Hill now called Harvington Hill? Where was Cres-well and the drain to Huningham Street? Any ideas?

THE MILL AT HARVINGTON

Domesday records that there was a mill here, serving this Anglo-Saxon settlement of some 93 souls. It can be assumed that it was at the river because it would be water-driven, windmills only coming into existence in the 12th century. Some years later, in 1143, the mill was granted by Prior David (of Worcester) to one William Rupe at a rent of 17 shillings and 'thirty stiches of eels' (a stich being 25). There was some litigation involving mill (or mills, by this time) in 1294 and again in 1311, usually between the 'church at Worcester' and its tenants, but then, in 1549 after the Dissolution of the Monasteries, both mills were sold by the Dean and Chapter at Worcester to one George Willoughby, lord of the manor of Netherton. There are references in more recent history to a paper mill, a corn mill and a flour mill and the ruins of the latest structure can still be seen on the island in the river, a sad reminder of more glorious days, but little is known in the way of recorded fact for inclusion here until we come to the acquisition of the property known now as The Mill at Harvington, by the Greenhalgh family in 1988. The story of their sensitive reclamation of the old flour mill and bakery is one of foresight and good taste so that the village now takes pride in the delightful appearance and the excellent reputation of this prestigious hotel, both of which do credit to its ancient history.



The corn mill, with the mill pond in front, photographed in 1920.



Harvington weir, early in the twentieth century, with The Mill on the left.



The Mill House in the 1980s, before it became the country hotel, The Mill at Harvington.

THE RIVER AVON

Little is known about the river in its early days other than some of the names by which it was known, varying from Antona to Avena (709), Avene and Eefene (845) but, in the reign of Henry 1 it is on record that Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick was 'mynded to have passage for bootles (?) from Tewkesbury to Worcester for transporting of merchandise for the advancement of Warwick'. The river was very different in appearance then, being a 'narrow, sluggish stream , deep and shallow in turn and never to have borne a boat of any burden'. In time it was cleared and sluices constructed (one at Harvington) and thus made eminently usable for barge traffic from Bristol to Warwick, with sugar, oil, wine, tobacco, iron and lead being brought up to Warwick and corn, flour, coal and cheese being exchanged. It is thought that about 400 craft a year, carrying an average of 30 tons each, used the river. The barges were about 35 feet long, flat-bottomed or nearly so, sometimes steered with an oar and often with a square sail on a mast fixed for'ard. There was no horse-towing path; if necessary, haulage was done by gangs of men.

By the 1800s the scene had changed; canals had 'taken over' and roads had improved sufficiently to be a great challenge to river transport, but it was the railways which dealt the death blow. Despite many local attempts to retain the river's importance, less and less traffic used it, it fell more and more deeply into disrepair and, finally, after the owners of the toll rights had sold out to the West Midland Railway, no effort was made to maintain it. In 1878 The Great Western Railway proposed that 'the Avon should be abandoned' and its fate, for the time being, was sealed. In 1949 the Lower Navigation Trust was formed and in 1962 the river was opened up for use as far as Evesham. But it is the work of the Upper Avon Navigation Trust, under the directorship of a Harvington resident - David Hutchings M.B.E. - which is a matter for great pride in this locality. Accounts of the work carried out by teams of workers (many of them volunteers, many servicemen, many prisoners from local gaols) the setbacks and triumphs and the final remarkable achievement, make fascinating reading and make us proud, when we see the clean, attractive river flowing past The Mill at Harvington that this restoration took place here, on our most famous boundary, and its architect lives in the village.

THE MANOR HOUSE

In the early Middle Ages, the next most important building in a village after the church was the Manor House, and Harvington has a fine example. It is thought that it is the oldest house in the village, parts of it being early 14th century. The building and its adjoining lands were, like the church itself, owned by the Dean and Chapter of Worcester cathedral (and then by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners) and, in its early days, it seems likely that the Rector would live here - certainly the Rev. Moses Hodges occupied it for many years during the 17th century, when it was referred to as the Parsonage House - but then came a long period when it was let out to farmers, men of substance who were of importance in the village but never 'squires' in the accepted sense of the word. It should be remembered that many of the Rectors never lived in the village, their homes being elsewhere in places of more importance to them and their parochial duties here being carried out by (ill-paid) curates who certainly did not live at the Manor.

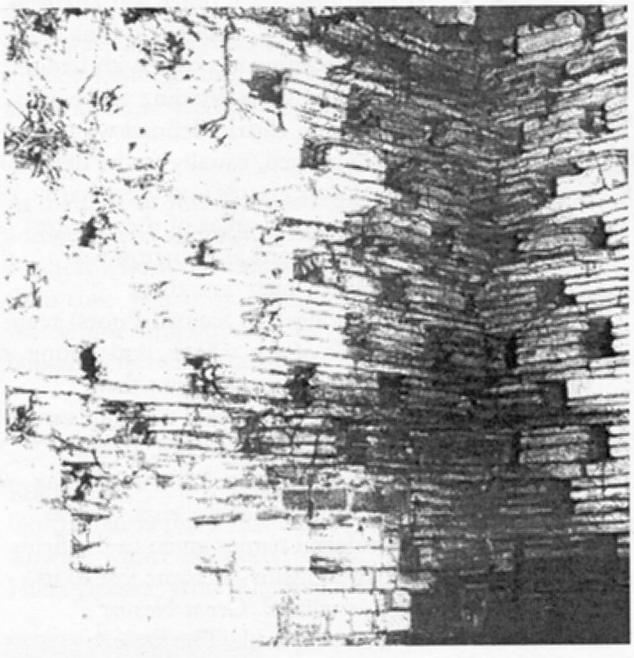


Manor Farm in about 1958.

From 1904 three generations of the Bullock family lived here and then the property passed into the possession of a Mr Brown who sold it to John Byrd (together with the lands comprising Manor Farm) in 1956. In 1986 he, in turn, sold the house and garden to a speculator named Lloyd who built an estate of 6 expensive houses on part of the land before selling the Manor to its present owner in 1987.

The house has an intriguing feature in that part of the upper floor appears to be hung by iron straps from the principal tie beams of the roof. The derelict Pigeon House or Dovecote which stands about 50 yards from the Manor is thought to be contemporary with the house itself. It is built of rubble masonry lined with stone compartments and was roofed with stone tiles - a fine example of its kind before time took its toll. These dovecotes were introduced into this country by the Normans and were exclusively for the use of important places such as monasteries and the houses of the upper classes. They were a source of revenue and a means of subsistence during the winter months when they provided fresh meat. They were always built near the main dwelling house so that the 'master of the family may keep in sight all those who go in and come out'. Dovecote-breakers were guilty of theft and heavily punished.

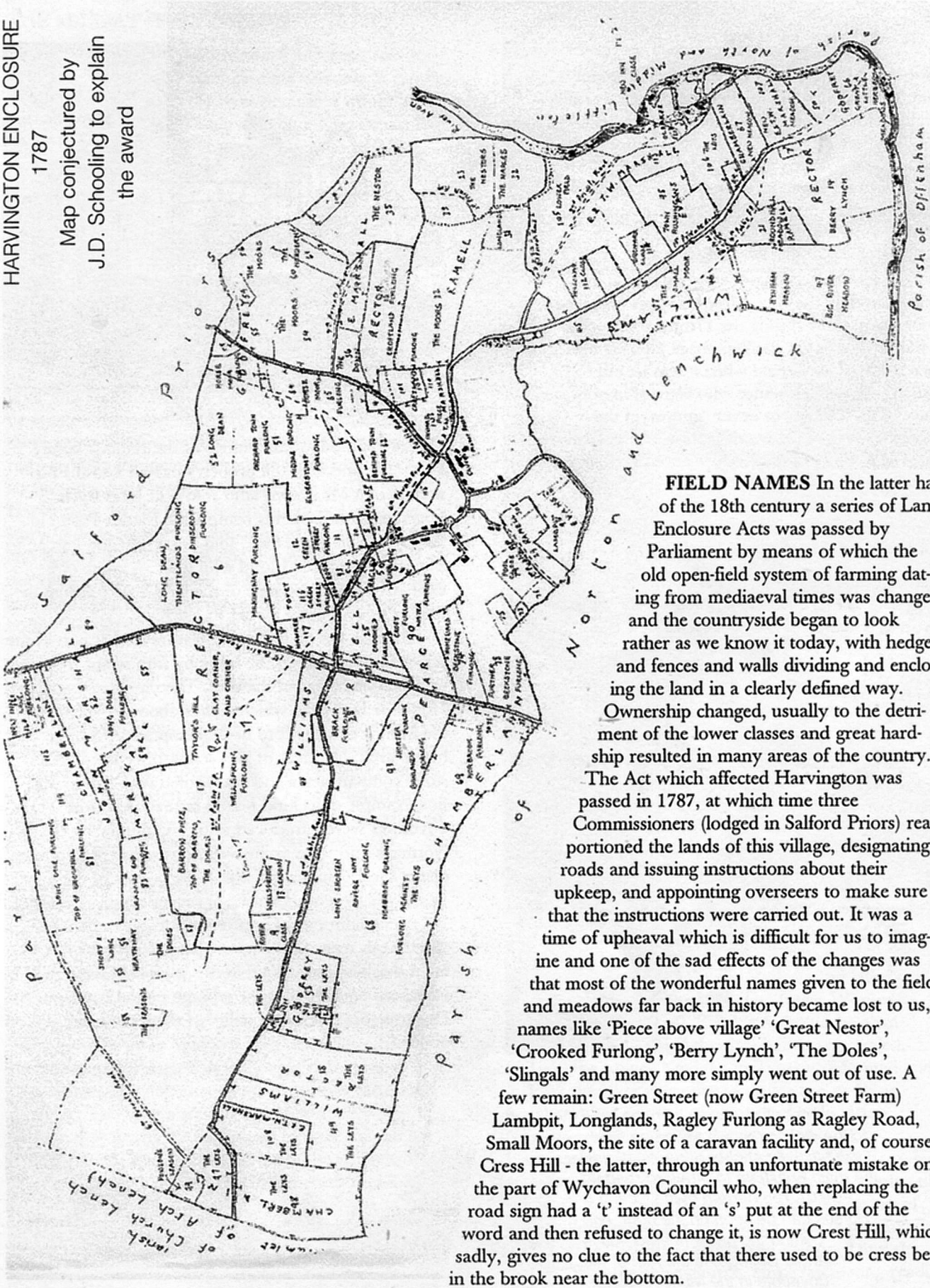
The interior of the dovecote.





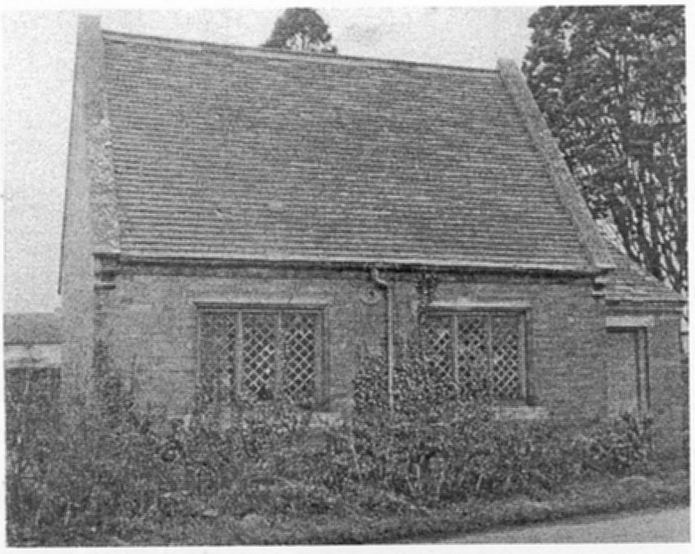
The corner of what was then the road to the station (known at Station Bank, now officially Anchor Lane West) and the main Evesham to Stratford road, in 1910. The garden of the Coach & Horses can be seen on the right, and behind the half-timbered house (Candle Cottage) is the roof of the dovecote in the Manor grounds.

HARVINGTON ENCLOSURE
1787
Map conjectured by
J.D. Schooling to explain
the award



FIELD NAMES In the latter half of the 18th century a series of Land Enclosure Acts was passed by Parliament by means of which the old open-field system of farming dating from mediaeval times was changed and the countryside began to look rather as we know it today, with hedges and fences and walls dividing and enclosing the land in a clearly defined way. Ownership changed, usually to the detriment of the lower classes and great hardship resulted in many areas of the country. The Act which affected Harvington was passed in 1787, at which time three Commissioners (lodged in Salford Priors) reapportioned the lands of this village, designating roads and issuing instructions about their upkeep, and appointing overseers to make sure that the instructions were carried out. It was a time of upheaval which is difficult for us to imagine and one of the sad effects of the changes was that most of the wonderful names given to the fields and meadows far back in history became lost to us, names like 'Piece above village' 'Great Nestor', 'Crooked Furlong', 'Berry Lynch', 'The Doles', 'Slingals' and many more simply went out of use. A few remain: Green Street (now Green Street Farm) Lambpit, Longlands, Ragley Furlong as Ragley Road, Small Moors, the site of a caravan facility and, of course, Cress Hill - the latter, through an unfortunate mistake on the part of Wychavon Council who, when replacing the road sign had a 't' instead of an 's' put at the end of the word and then refused to change it, is now Crest Hill, which, sadly, gives no clue to the fact that there used to be cress beds in the brook near the bottom.

THE READING ROOM



The Reading Room was built, opposite the school, in 1887 at the expense of the Revd Winnington-Ingram, for use by the men of Harvington. Various documents connected with the use of the room were displayed, including the rules of the Working Men's Club (the room was *lent*, but not *let* to them). After the Rector's death, Mrs Winnington-Ingram gave the Reading Room to the Rector and Churchwardens in trust for the Parish 'for the use of those inhabitants of Harvington who by the payment of such sum as the Rector of Harvington for the time being might fix might have the privilege of using the room as a Reading Room'.

In the School Log for the year 1886 are two interesting entries:

Aug 25th The Rev Ingram visited this morning and inquired who had broken the Reading Room window.

Aug 26th All the boys' pockets were searched for catapults this afternoon, none were found.

In a letter of 1928 to the Charity Commissioners it was suggested that the Parish Council takes over the Trusteeship of the Reading Room. It continued in existence, though not in its later years in use, until 1965 when it was sold, then demolished and a group of houses built on the site.

THE GRANGE, one of the Village's most sizeable and gracious houses, with its open outlook and its 'ha-ha' is thought to date from the early part of the 18th century and, like so many of the substantial properties in the area, was owned for many years by a branch of the Bomford family. Some 13 years ago, the nearby farm buildings were sold for development and were imaginatively converted to dwelling places. Grange Lane possesses several attractive black-and-white timbered properties, one of which, Yew Tree Cottage, rivals the Manor for the title of the village's oldest house.

At the foot of Shakespeare Lane stands **'THE LIMES'**, parts of which are understood to be 15th century with later additions and alterations and known in earlier times as The Homestead. It was a working farm and the Misses Stratton who were the last people to run it as a farm can be well remembered by older villagers. They supplied milk from cows which were brought in twice a day from their grazing across the road, up the hill beyond Bank House, at which times the busy Stratford traffic had to be stopped. When the property was sold in the 1970s the house and outbuildings were separated, the adjacent barn being converted into a dwelling house.

FIRBANK

On the left is the house in 1896, and right in 1958. It was at one time the home of the distinguished local artist, Sam Towers whose daughter, Hilda, married Ralph Brazier of 'The Close', Station Road. An original flower painting by Hilda Brazier, who inherited a large measure of her father's talent, hangs on the wall in the village hall.





HOP FIELDS

Hops were grown in Harvington for a number of years from the 1890s to the mid 1920s. There were two large hop fields down Anchor Lane. Special trains brought hop-pickers from Dudley: they lived rough in barns and outbuildings.

Harry Hodgkinson in his father's hop fields in Anchor Lane, early 1920s. (photo: Bernard Hodgkinson).





In the picture above, Mission Workers are in the hop fields in 1905. Below, wartime volunteers, presumably village ladies, in 1917.



THE POST OFFICE

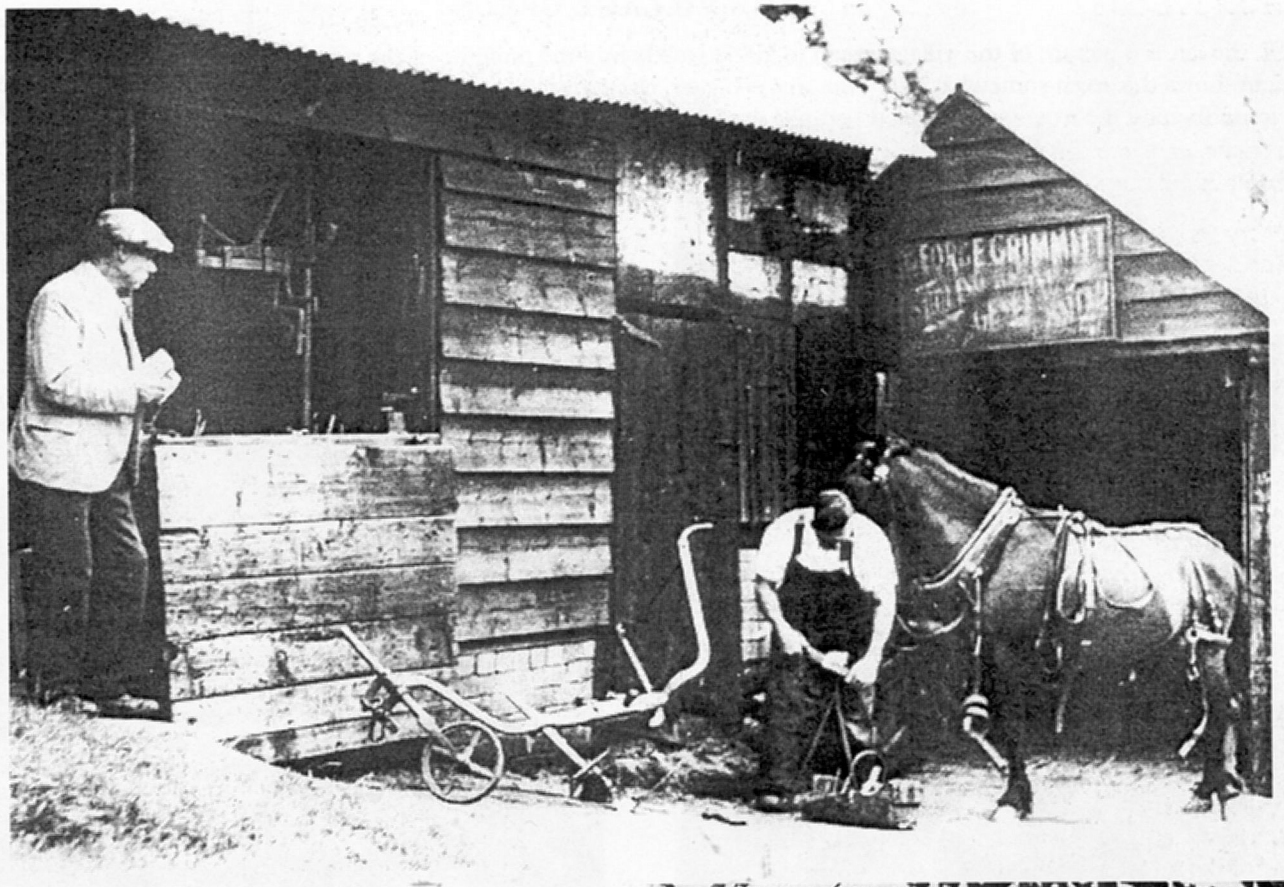
The first post office, opened in 1888, can be seen below in 1900 (Cotswold View in Village Street); it was also the Telephone Exchange. It was opened by Mr & Mrs Cook; the latter, a teacher, was a noted local historian. In 1955, the Post Office was just down from the church (now James Cottage). You can just see the notice and postbox on the right. It then moved into the shop that was in Bredon View on village street (below, right). A new automated telephone exchange had been built next to Bredon View, but in the course of time this became obsolete and was demolished. The house which replaced it is also the home of the present-day Post Office.





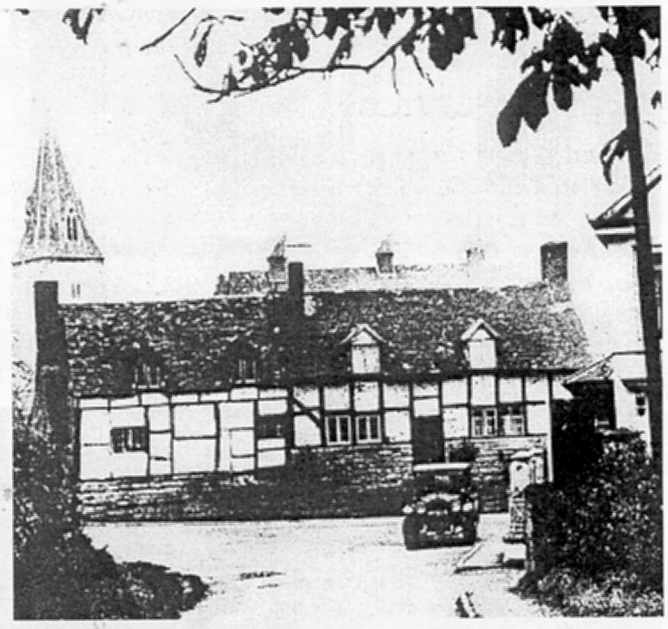


photo: Denis McKenzie



BLACKSMITH'S CORNER

George Grimmitt at work in his blacksmith's shop in 1930. Below you can see the shop at the end of the row of cottages which can be seen face on in the picture on the right. They were demolished in the 1930s to improve safety on the corner, and George Grimmitt continued working in the new smithy, the small red-brick building which still stands at the corner (now used as a garage).





Behind the smithy was once a cider mill (or press) worked by a pony. It is known to have been still in use in 1929 and it is said that cider was carried to Mr Stratton at The Limes in two milk pails strung from a yoke. The Limes stands at the end of Shakespeare Lane and can be seen in the centre of the photo on the left.

THE VILLAGE GREEN

On the left is a picture of the village green in 1907, well before the building of the village hall. The photograph on the right shows the green somewhat later - the tree is bigger, electricity has come, and there is a signpost to the Station. Pool House (behind the tree) was so called because there was a pool where the village hall now stands.





VILLAGE STREET





Thatched cottages in Village Street, looking up from Grange Lane towards the school. Those in the picture on the left no longer exist, having been demolished in 1930 to make way for Glebe Cottages, which were built further and higher from the road. Poplar Cottage can just be seen on the far right. Those in the photograph of about 1910 on the left can still be seen today, amongst them Dream Cottage.





On the left is a picture of more thatched cottages in Village Street, opposite the entrance to Grange Lane, taken in about 1910. They were demolished after the Second World War to make space for the first council houses to be built in the county after the war. On the right, the scene today.

THE STATION

Until the line was axed under Dr Beeching in the 1960s, the station was an important lifeline for the village, with trains to Evesham in one direction and Birmingham to the north. Much of the local produce, particularly plums, was loaded here for distribution to far away markets. Crates of racing pigeons were sent down the line to be released at the station at a given time - always an exciting thing to watch. Margaret Duncan can remember being put on the train in charge of the guard at a very early age, to be handed over safely to her aunt at New Street station, Birmingham. After the closure of the line the station house was converted to a private dwelling and, later, a house was built under the bridge.





(above) The station in 1912 and below, a longer view. (below, left) The house under the bridge. (photos: David Hutchings)



THE VILLAGE HALL

Built in 1931, the village hall is owned by the Parish Council on behalf of the village and is managed by a committee made up of a representative from each of the village organisations, under an elected chairman. It stands on a site donated by the Misses Penney who lived at Cedar Lodge opposite, and was built on or near a pool from which nearby Pool House gets its name.

The building cost £1087 of which the Women's Institute (at whose insistence the Parish Council eventually agreed to build a hall) raised £153. A grant was made by the Carnegie Trust but the remainder was taken as a loan from the National Council of Social Services, being finally paid back in 1936.

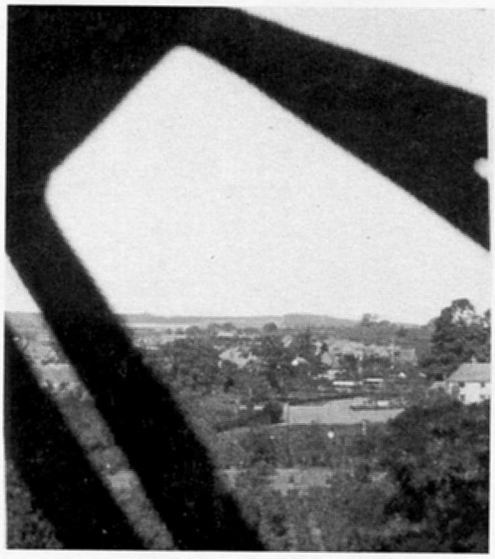
The scene of many well-loved activities in the past (older residents recall the dances and whist drives and pantomimes), the hall is still well-used and enquirers who do not have a regular booking can experience difficulty in finding a free evening or weekend. It is, as it was, an excellent village asset and a credit to all who maintain it as such.



The village hall today (photo: Michael White)

VIEWS FROM THE STEEPLE

These four photographs were taken from the church tower in the 1930s. (photos: Bernard Hodgkinson)



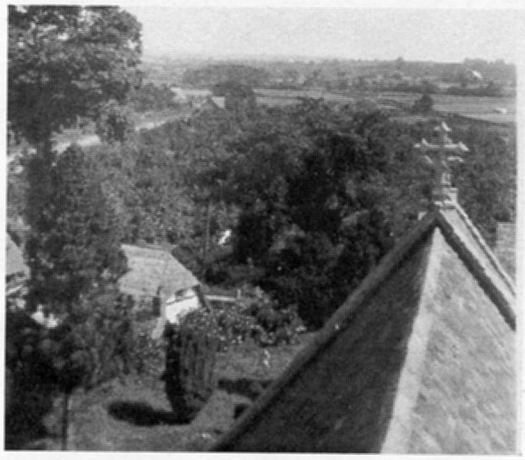
NORTH: The house on the right is The Close; fruit grows where St James' Close now stands.



SOUTH: The view to the river. The footpath between the 'new' churchyard and the Manor grounds is clearly defined and obviously much used.



WEST: Looking over the hop kilns towards Norton.



EAST: Candle Cottage appears below the roofline, with Cress Hill and the view to Abbot's Salford.

'MAIN ROAD'

The view on the left shows the entry to the bottom of the village on what was then the main Evesham to Stratford road; on the right is the view further up towards Blacksmith's Corner. The picture on the left probably dates from the end of the nineteenth century, that on the right from the 1930s; most of the houses are very little changed today.





THE SHAKESPEARE INN, which stood at the top of Shakespeare Lane, is believed to have begun as an 'outdoor' in the second half of the 19th century, being granted a licence in 1912, when there was a bar and smoking room and a lawn at the back where families could sit (right). Little remains of the original building which has been incorporated into the property which stands on the site.



THE GOLDEN CROSS stands at the crossroads often referred to as Harvington Cross. It is believed that there has been an inn on the site for very many years, though the current building is Victorian. The view on the right dates from around 1912; on the far left of the picture you can just see the start of Leys Road.





The picture on the left was taken at the back of the Golden Cross in about 1910. Six of the men are carrying churchwarden's staves and the brass band comes from Bishampton. What was the occasion? Had they been beating the parish boundaries, perhaps involving the churchwardens from Norton and Atch Lench?

THE COACH & HORSES can be seen below probably at the turn of the nineteenth century. Its exact date is not known, but parts of it are thought to be older than the main nineteenth-century building with which we are familiar. At one time, on the site of the present skittle alley, was the undertaker's workshop. The building was red brick until about 1950. On the right, in a picture from a little later, it still had its splendid inn sign. Crossing the road from the church to the pub was very dangerous as the road between was the main Evesham to Stratford road. Life became easier after the 'old' bypass was opened in 1976.





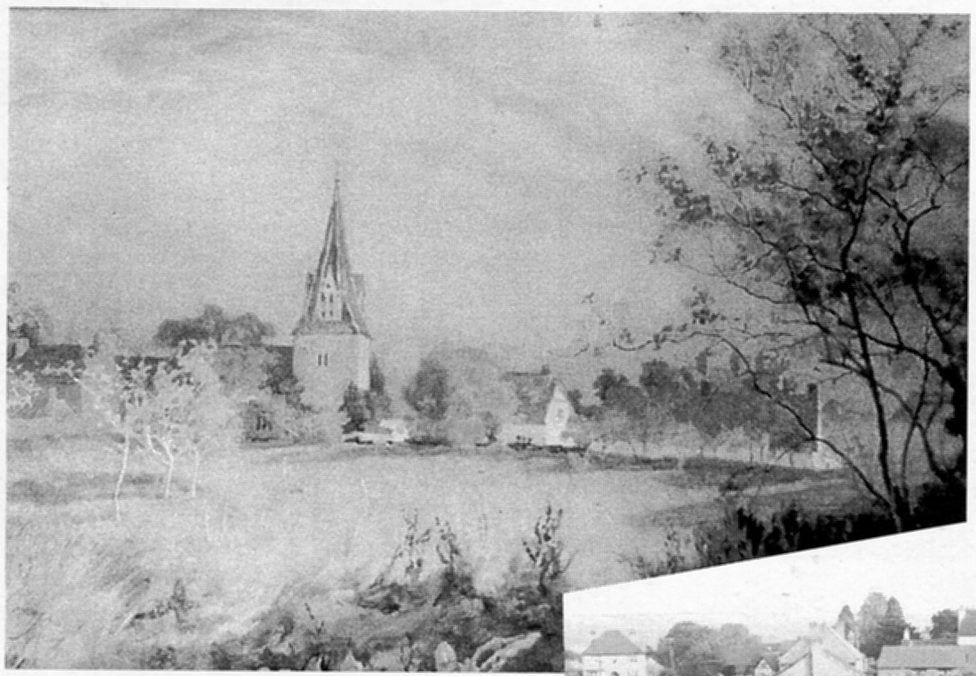
LATER DEVELOPMENTS

After World War 2, the village grew rapidly with a number of private developments as well as public housing changing its appearance, not for the better in the opinion of many of the older inhabitants

The acquisition of the land on which to build ***Ragley Road*** in 1947 involved the village in a long-drawn-out controversy. It was glebe land, rented out as allotments and both church and tenants were volubly reluctant to have its use changed. The uproar was then prolonged when it was suggested that the 'spare' land should be used as a children's playing field - another contentious subject which has never been satisfactorily resolved.

Myatts Field (1963) was named after Charles Myatt, a market gardener and good citizen, being a generous benefactor and a staunch churchman, serving as churchwarden for many years. The son of an innovative and farseeing father, he continued to develop ways of improving local produce, concentrating especially on asparagus, rhubarb and strawberries.

In 1950 ***Brookdale*** was built and Leys Road began to assume greater importance, which was further helped by the building of ***Orchard Place*** (1965), so-called because of the orchards which it replaced.



This view across to the church was painted in about 1900 by Sam Towers, a renowned local artist. A coloured version is currently on sale as a greetings card.



(right) A very similar view, photographed in 1965, before the building of St James' Close. On the far left you can see Croftlands at the top of Anchor Lane, recently demolished.



The opposite side of the road to Croftlands, again in 1965, the year these houses were built. The house on the right is now the Rectory. The signpost still points to Harvington Station, though the line was closed that year.

1980 saw the building of ***Blakenhurst*** and ***Hughes Close***, followed by ***St. James' Close*** (1987). By this time, also, numerous houses and bungalows had appeared along Station Road (now apparently mis-named since the closure of the station in the 1960s) as had ***Walnut Close*** on 'Dalkeith' land. Several barn conversions had also taken place, in old Village Street and at The Grange and Shakespeare Lane. ***Manor Park*** was built. In 1989 ***The Rowans***, again on Leys Road, filled the available space there.

When ***Eric Newing***, a well-known figure in the village and correspondent for *The Evesham Journal* died in 1999 and left generous bequests to the community, the Parish Council decided to commemorate his name in the newly-built and highly controversial development of public housing on the old Beoley site at the crossroads opposite The Golden Cross. In 2000 ***'Croftlands'*** at the top of Anchor Lane was demolished and is being replaced by 3 executive type houses, whilst the ***Black & White*** garage site has been sold and plans submitted for the building of private houses.

The Leys, renamed Brookdale in December 1965.





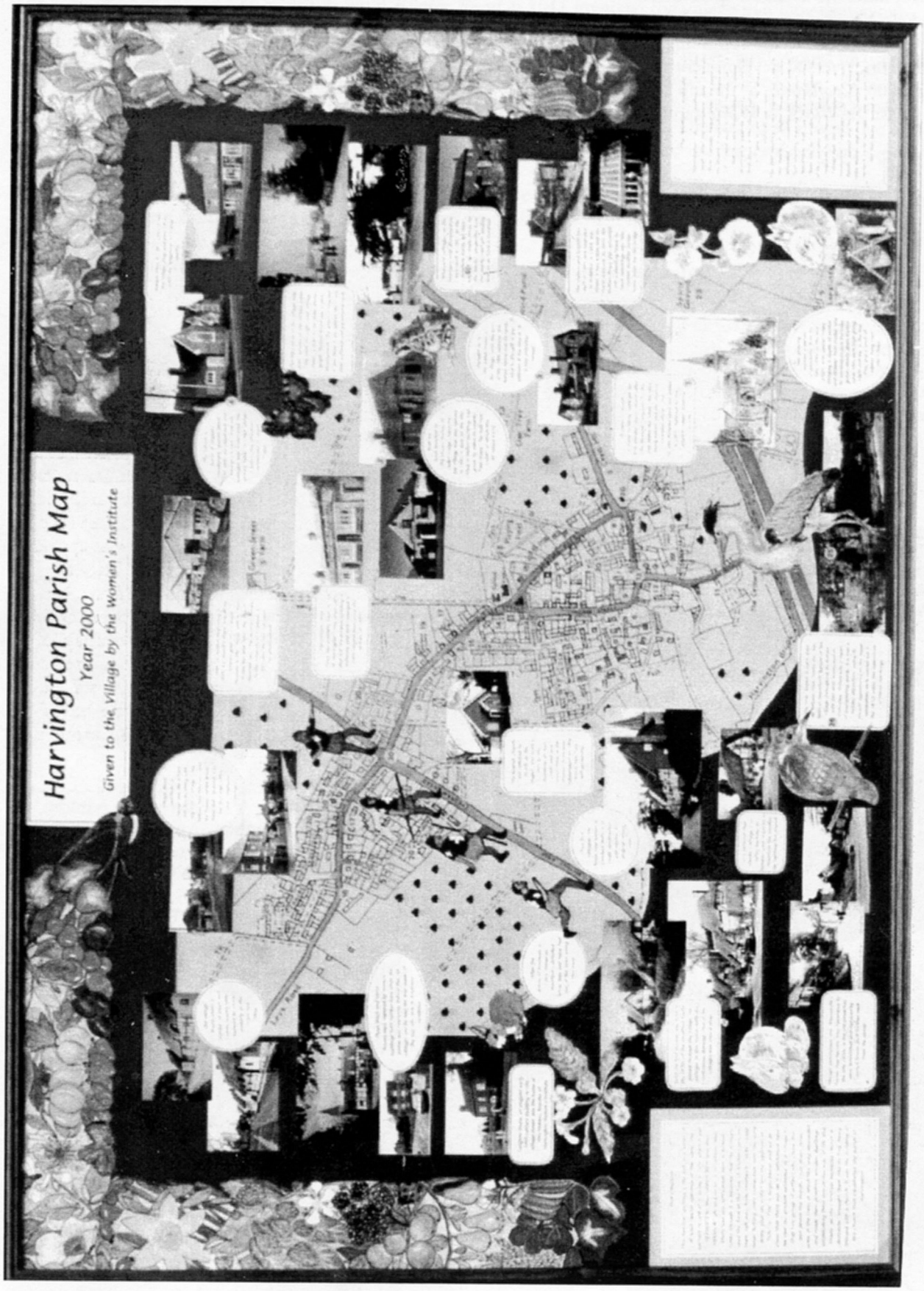
The Coach & Horses with newly-developed St James' Close behind. (photo: Brian Brazier).



Barn conversion off Village Street: Before (left) and ready for sale. (photos: left, Brian Brazier, right, Dennis McKenzie)



The Harvington Parish was compiled by members of the Women's Institute and presented to the village to mark the Millennium. (see page 47).



People

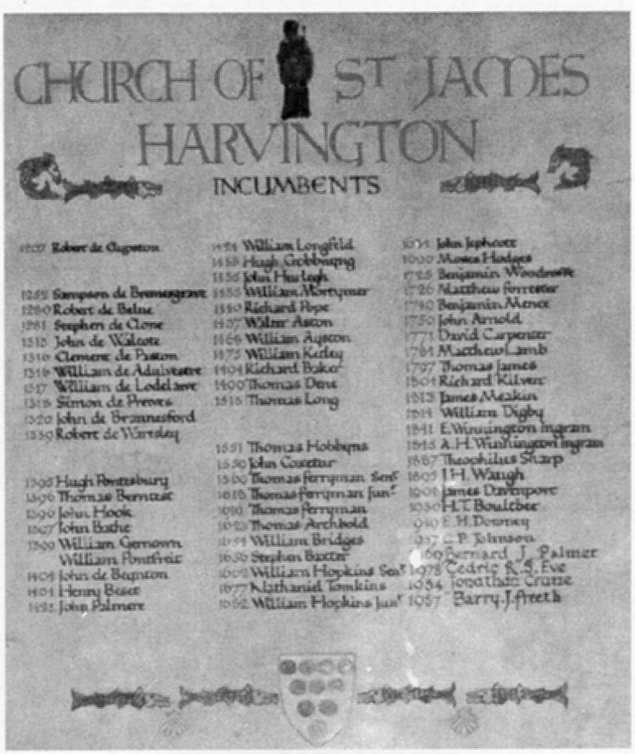
We do not know much about lives of the earlier inhabitants of the village, though we do have some information on the incumbents at the Parish Church. The earliest mention of people's jobs is in the register of 1695, when we find husbandman, yeoman, shepherd, blacksmith, servant. By 1824, labourer, shoemaker, farmer, carpenter, papermaker, butcher, wheelwright, gardener, tailor, miller, gloveress and maltster all appear. The first mention of market gardener appears in 1886 and a commercial traveller in 1901. A 'scrapbook' of information and pictures follows which perhaps gives a flavour of some of the incumbents and the people of the village.

THE INCUMBENTS - WHY A RECTOR?

The incumbents have always held the title of Rector. This is because, prior to the 18th century Enclosure Acts, they were entitled to receive tithes from all the tenant farmers in the village as part of their income. (Vicars were not entitled to this right, the tithes on property going to the patrons of the living.) Tithes, which represented one tenth part of the donor's income, were paid in kind - actual produce of the land. Animals, poultry, eggs, crops, vegetables, fruit, wool, hides, hay - all these can be found in old tithe lists. After the Enclosure Acts the tithe system came to an end and the Rector was allocated land which he would either farm himself or let out to tenants for cash rent. It can be seen therefore, that to hold a living as a Rector, and not necessarily have to live in the parish concerned, was very lucrative and it was a system much abused in times past, especially in the 18th and the early part of the 19th centuries. It accounts for the fact that many of Harvington's Rectors did not live here, the work of the parish being left for ill-paid curates.

The list which hangs in the chancel gives the names of the incumbents from 1207 onwards (it is interesting to note that the earlier ones have Norman-French names), but sadly, we know little or nothing about most of them. One or two stand out: the Ferrimans (father and son) whose memorial can be seen on the west wall of the church; John Jephcott who was conspicuous by his absence, being Rector of All Saints Evesham, Harvington, Tredington and Alvechurch as well as Canon of Worcester cathedral all at the same time; Moses Hodges who married Jephcott's daughter and serviced this parish well for many years and is buried in the church; Thomas James, who was once headmaster of Rugby school and whose picture is the earliest we have of any of our clergy and the Revd Arthur Henry Winnington Ingram, who has been made the subject of a separate entry in this book.

The Revd James Davenport was Rector from the turn of the last century to 1930 - a time within the living memory of older village inhabitants - and witnessed many changes including the installation of electric lighting, as well as contributing substantially to our knowledge of the church's history by painstakingly transcribing the Elizabethan registers which formed an important part of our recent exhibition. After him, more people will remember those rectors whose names appear on the list. Many of them lived in what is known nowadays as the Old Rectory off Grange Lane, but, in the 1960s, this was sold and the modern house at the junction of Station Road and Crest Hill became the home of the incumbent. From now on, of course, it will be the home of the man or woman who will be the incumbent not only of St James' Harvington, but of Church Lench, Rous Lench and Abbot's Morton - a joint benefice. Time marches on.



THE HARWARD FAMILY

This family were of some importance in the village in the 16th - 18th centuries, when they occupied the Manor, and their memorials can be seen in the floor of the aisle. A copy of an Inventory of the belongings of Kemp Harward, who was, amongst other things, a churchwarden, was on display. It is headed: *A True Inventory taken of all the Goods & Cattle and Chattels of Kemp Harward of Harvington Gent taken by the whoso named and subscribed this 13th Day of September 1675* and amongst the items valued are

In the Hall one table and stools	0 - 13 - 4
In the new Kitchen brass & Pewter and other materials belonging	10 - 0 - 0
In the upper Rooms Beds & Furniture	12 - 0 - 0
Things in the old chamber	1 – 0 – 0
Four Cows	12 – 0 – 0
Four Pigs	2 – 0 – 0
Corn and Hay	12 – 0 - 0

It is signed by Kemp Harward and John Wills(?).

1619: THOMAS FERRYMAN'S WILL

Thomas Ferryman's will was 'proved' at Worcester in 1619. As well as decisions regarding his money and goods, it contains an inventory with valuations. Amongst his bequests was 'to every poore Cottage within my parishe of Harvington Twoe shillinges'. You can see further extracts from the Will and inventory below – he leaves his wife Magdalen 'her own ornamentes and wearing apparrel'!.

. . .I doe humbly desire both the love and furtherance of the said Deane and Chapter [of Worcester] and also the good favour of my Lord our Referend Bishopp to whom I acknowledge my sellf to have bin euer much beholdinge . . I doe commend my well-beloved and well deservinge wief Magdalen Ferriman to his Care and Chardge for her Dyett her lodginge, and other necessaries, such as shal be fitt for a woman of her sorte, and Condiciion . . Item I give and bequeath to my said wief the summe of One Hundred Markes of Currrant Coyne, and all such beddinge and furniture for the same, Linnen, houshold stuffe, and other Implementes as are hereafter in this my last will specified – That is to say, One ffeathebedd wth twoe bolsters, twoe pillows .. . the second best Couerlett The second best Curtens and vallance, sixe pairs of sheetes whereof iii paire to be of flaxen and te other of hempen . .The little Truncke. The breade boxe, her owne ornamentes and wearinge apparrell . . .

And to every servant that shall dwell with mee at the time of my decease Three shillings. All the rest of my goodes and Chattells moveable and unmoveable reall or personall wheresoever, and in whose handes soever remaininge I give and bequest to my welbeloved sonne Thomas Ferriman.

THE INVENTORY (A LI WAS A £)

Imprimis one Mare and a Nagge priced at 4li
" ?? Kine and a yearleinge bull priced at 22li 10s
" welue olde Sheepe and five Lambes priced at 4li 5s
" his Plate and Money in his purse 140li

It sixe ffeatherbeddes sixe flockebeddes, eight ffeather bolsters, ffower flocke bolsters, Thirteene pillowes, eighte Coverlettes, Nienteene peire of blankettes ffower peire of Curteins and vallances, one other peire of curteins, one Carpett and two dozen of Quishions priced at 40li 7s 4d

It ffower Dosen and Nien greate platters, three Dosen of Lesser plattes three doxen of fruite Dishes and plate three Dosen of saucers, ffowerteene Counterfeit Dishes, one flaagon, two basons and yowrs one dosen of Candlestickes wt Chamber pottes spoones and other small pieces of pewter priced at 8li 10s

It five spittes, two drippinge pannes one warminge panne one paire of Rackes ffower peiore of Aundyrone, two yron grates, two fryinge pannes one gredyron, three fier shoves, with pott hookes and Linckes price at 3 li

The total value of Thomas Ferryman's goods is given as 389li 15s 6d

REVD ARTHUR HENRY WINNINGTON-INGRAM

Henry Arthur was Rector here from 1845 to 1887 and much of what happened in both church and village at that time can be attributed to him. He and his wife came to live in what we now call 'the old Rectory' off Grange Lane. It is not known whether that house was already called the Rectory but its new occupant started immediately upon extending and improving it, so that it became a very substantial house indeed, with stables and outbuildings adding to its upper-class appearance.

The church also underwent many major changes; the East wall was virtually re-built, the 13th century window taken out and the present one installed; pews were put in, replacing the open bench seating; the sanctuary and altar were raised; a North porch was added, as was the high wall and the gate; a spire was added to the tower, roofed with oak shingles . . . the list seemed endless. The Rector was an energetic man, clearly ambitious for his church and exercising considerable power and influence. A scholarly man himself, he was interested in a wide variety of subjects - he was a geologist, an astronomer, an antiquary and a poet. He was also a generous man, with a great sense of public duty. Whether he was popular or not is not easy for us to assess. He was certainly very strict. He would visit people's homes on Monday mornings enquiring why children had not been at church the previous day. This was inevitably followed by some miscreants being caned at school later in the day! It would seem that he loomed large in the life of the village. We have a picture of himself and Mrs. Winnington-Ingram hosting a tenants' gathering in the grounds of the Rectory. By this time, of course, the old system of paying tithes to the Rector had long gone (see Incumbents) but the Rector 'owned' much of the land in the village (known as glebe land) and this was rented out to numerous tenants - hence the photograph. It is known that he was wealthy is his own right, too, so he would certainly have fitted into the 'landed gentry' class - a very remarkable man.

A photograph of the Revd A.H. Winnington-Ingram was on display at the exhibition. On the right is a picture of him with his tenants. Other items on display included conveyances connected with the Reading Room and School.



GEORGE SAVAGE (1878-1968)

George was one of Harvington's most famous characters who, for more than 60 years held the offices of village clerk, verger, sexton, and gravedigger. He sang in the church choir and was regarded as a pillar of church where he was present at nearly every baptism, wedding, confirmation and funeral that took place for a period of some 50 years. The following is a record of some of his memories put together from the notes of the late Steve Cook.

George was born in one of the four cottages which now make up the lovely property called 'Crooked Walls' just below the church. He was the youngest of five children. His father was a builder but in the year of George's birth, father, sister and one brother died in a diphtheria epidemic which swept through the village - a frequent and dreaded occurrence. There were 12 deaths in all on that occasion. He recalled that his mother had been left to bring up the remainder of the family on a parish pension of 1 shilling and an allowance of 1 loaf of bread per week. Poverty generally was crippling and there was no welfare service; disease was rife.



George Savage's mother.

The family had to move from their cottage which was needed for a workman and the mother rented the smaller of two other cottages at Longlands. Down there was a corn mill and the young boy, George, saw waggons and horses every day, which he loved. An old man from Bidford rented the 'eeling' on the river and sold his catches every day at 'so much a pound', transporting his wares on a little donkey.

The land was used for 'all corn and cattle food' and George could remember two old men who wore smocks. Arable farming was still the norm, with rickyards full of corn and hay; stockyards held cows and a few farmers also kept pigs and bullocks which were fattened up (most cottagers had their own pigs, of course). He remembered the introduction of plums as a staple crop in the late 1880s adding to the well-established apple and pear crops from which cider and perry were made in the cider mill behind the blacksmith's shop.

He associated the introduction of hop-growing in the 1890s with the fact that the lands previously held by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners were split up in 1893 enabling Mr. Ernest Bomford to buy the 'Mill Ground' onto which he brought a firm from Herefordshire to give instructions in the wiring of hops. At this time, the normal agricultural wage was 2 shillings a day [10p], but Mr. Bomford paid 2/6 [12½p], attracting workers from Bishampton, Cropthorne, Fladbury and the Lenches - and they walked here to earn it. The hopfields were in production from 1896 to 1924, the owner at that time being one Mr. Griffiths.

George had a number of jobs; he was employed grinding corn from 1896-97; he worked as a 'beater' at Wood Norton when needed; he planted trees; he worked as gardener and odd-job-man at the Rectory and finally became self-employed as a grower until a few years before his death at 90 years of age. His wife, Winifred with whom he lived in one of the cottages in Grange Lane, died in 1926, so he was a widower for many years. Typically, when he died he bequeathed his cottage to a kind neighbour.

He was highly regarded by all the village and the church and its people loved him. Still today, those who knew him speak of him fondly and with admiration.



The induction of the Revd Ernest Downey, in the 1950s, with the choir, the organist and churchwardens. George Savage is seated to the left of the Rector.



The Revd Chris Johnson makes a presentation to George Savage to mark his retirement from the post of Verger, which he held for over forty years.

THE CHURCH FETE

For many years this was held in the garden of the Rectory, where all these photographs were taken.



(left) The garden at the back of the old Rectory in about 1900.





1907: This photograph was loaned by Mrs Muriel Alvey, whose mother is 'second tambourine from the left'.



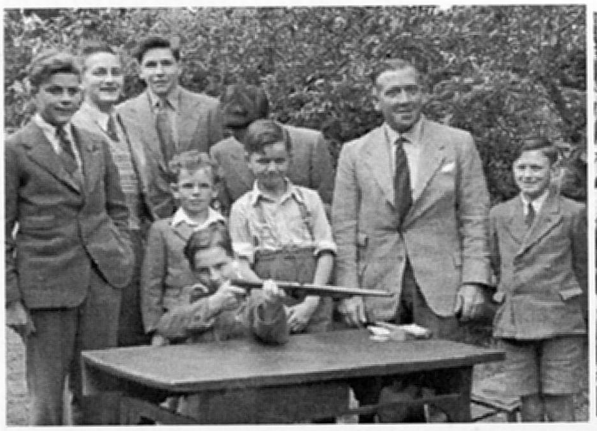


1907: Three more photographs, lent by Mrs Margaret Duncan, whose mother was one of the children under the charge of Miss Pickering. All four pictures were sold as postcards.





The formally dressed ladies above, supervising a table in the tea tent in the early 1900s contrasts with the more casually dressed visitors to the tea table in the 1950s. (photo: A Hughes)







More photographs from the 1950s with some recognisable faces. The picture of the fancy dress group came from Mrs A. Hughes.



Possibly 1925





The Football Team *seems to have been very successful in the 1920s and 1930s. The Rector in the 1932-33 photograph is the Revd H. Boultbee, who was our incumbent at the time.*
(photos: Mrs Muriel Alvey).

The authors would be glad to hear from anyone who can accurately identify all the members of any one of these teams.



In June 1934 a large company of the British Legion paraded in a field near Harvington Cross, then marched through the village to the old churchyard for a standard dedication. Here.the procession led by the church choir passes Dalkeith in Village Street.
(photo: A. Hughes)



This charabanc near Llanberis Pass in the late 1920s may well be one from the Black and White garage and contain Harvington people.
(photo: Mary Lowe)



'Granny' Hughes retires from her many years of service to St James', 1950s. To her left is her son, Joe, who took over as verger after George Savage.
(photo: A. Hughes)

Sunday School in the 1950s, with Miss Mellors.

Again, can anyone name all the children in this photograph?



CHILDHOOD MEMORIES - Harvington in the 1930s by Helen Ediss

My memories of childhood in Harvington are very pleasant. It was a much smaller community then; everyone knew everyone else and the gossip was usually about everyone else's business.

The village was self-contained with a baker (who made lardie cakes on Thursdays), a family butcher, two general stores, a blacksmith, a Post Office, a cobbler, and an oil man who delivered paraffin for the lamps (electricity didn't come into the village until later). We fetched milk from the Misses Stratton at 'The Limes' but there was a milkman who delivered milk by means of pony and trap. There was also a local coalman who filled his bags from the station sidings. A village carrier would bring anything from Evesham (including medicine from the doctor's) for a small charge.

There were three public houses - The Golden Cross, The Coach & Horses (where the landlord was also the local undertaker) and The Shakespeare. All the pubs were used by the gipsies (they were not 'travellers' in those days) in the summer months and they used to have fierce tribal fights (usually about horse deals) at which the village policeman was always in evidence and would often join in the skirmishes.

Then there was the District Nurse on hand for any First Aid and she was often referred to instead of going to the doctor's.

As children we were never bored, playing games in season - whip & top, hop scotch, hoops, marbles, skipping and numerous ball games. Suddenly, everybody would be doing the same thing - it was as if somebody had given a signal.

A ritual on Sunday evenings after church was for families (Dad, Mum and children) to go for a walk around the fields and rights of way, stopping more often than we children liked for the adults to chat with other families - topics were usually the weather, market prices and local affairs.

Very few people had cars. Apart from the local shops, a weekly call was made by an Evesham grocer who took your order and delivered your goods later in the week. Other itinerant traders also called at various times.

We had dances at the Village Hall from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. - very daring - with a licensed bar from 10 p.m. onwards. Coaches would come from neighbouring villages and music was supplied by small local bands.

The bus service was good. There was the Stratford Blue, the Midland Red and a little brown bus called The Reliance. The fare to Evesham was 4 pence (old pence, of course) single. One could get to Cheltenham direct and to Gloucester by changing in Evesham. The last bus left Evesham at 10.30 p.m., but he waited for the picture houses to 'turn out.'

The train service was well used by regular commuters and by fishermen, with additional 'special trains' on Sundays. Pigeon fanciers sent their birds by train in baskets which were unloaded at Harvington station, the birds released and the baskets returned to Birmingham and stations up the line on the next train. There were quite a lot of freight trains including a Fyffe bananas train which brought fruit from Sharpness docks to be distributed throughout the Midlands. In the 1940s I, with several other young mothers, would take our babies in their prams (coach-built, not pushchairs and buggies) on the train, travelling in the guard's van, with help to lift the prams in. At Evesham we pushed the prams across the line and, on returning, with all our purchases in the well of the pram, we repeated the process with no disturbance to the sleeping little ones. Life seemed very simple in those days.



Village Street, 1920. This photograph was loaned by Mrs Margaret Duncan, whose grandmother is second from the left.

WEDDINGS AT ST JAMES' CHURCH



(above) The wedding in June 1934 of Sheila Hodgkinson, whose family lived at 'Dalkeith' and Michael Yates of Evesham. Sheila, an outstanding sportswoman, died tragically of TB at the age of . (photo: Bernard Hodgkinson)

(below) Late 1920s: Winifred Coley marries Seymour Lovell.





1940: Fred Wright and Hilda Canning. (photo: Hilda Harrison)



1950s: Ann Coley and Robert Morgan on a very wet day in January



1966: Ann Hughes arriving with her father - and leaving with her husband. (photos: A. Hughes)



1980s: Debbie Coley leaves the church in a tractor-drawn trailer after her wedding to Northamptonshire farmer Peter Morton



1996: Keith and Cathy Davies come down the aisle.

MEMORIES OF HARVINGTON by Mary Lowe

Since the exhibition, we have obtained material from Mary Orton (Mrs Lowe), one of the grandaughters of Mrs Elizabeth Mansell of Avon Bank, Cress Hill. Owing to her mother's illness, and later tragic early death, Mary spent a great deal of time in Harvington in the 1920s, attending the school, along with her brothers, before she went to live in Cheshire. Mrs Mansell, although so small at birth that she could be put in a quart pot, and it was feared she would not survive, died just short of her 90th birthday in 1947, when she was the oldest inhabitant of the village.



The Mansell children of Avon Bank: Florence (Mary Lowe's mother), Alice and Agnes. The identity of the small boy is not certain: it could be Eustace Mansell, who lived down Station Bank where this photograph could have been take at the end of the 19th century.

As a small child, I spent a great deal of my days with my grandmother who lived at Harvington. We used to come by train from Leicester, mostly at night, and I remember the stationmaster, Mr Burkinshaw, used to meet us with his lantern lit by candles. He was a very tall man with a big grey beard and I used to be scared of him. The signalman was named Sid Ashmead and he lived in one of the cottages at the back of my granny's house.

The Rector was Mr Davenport (who wore a black straw boater in the summer) and I think he must have suffered from asthma as he used to wheeze so much in church I used to think he was going to die (I was only about five years old). During the service I could never understand how the Rector was on the one side of the church during prayers, but when we stood up afterwards he would be on the other side in the pulpit. The pews seemed very high and I was too small to see over the top, so I used to try and get to my feet quickly to see how it was done, but somehow he always seemed to be there first. The church was lit by lamplight and had a musty smell (central heating was unheard of) but I think there was a coke stove.

At one time I went to school in the infants and the teacher was a Miss Ludlow; I think she had only been recently married and lived in a new house down Station Road [she married Reg Prudden]. The headmaster was Mr Chatterley and his wife also used to teach there.

Sometimes my grandmother used to send me to the post office, run by the Cook family, and also to the butchers near the Golden Cross - I believe their name was Bayliss [Jane Parry's grandfather]. The people who kept the Shakespeare Inn in those days were named Ludlow, and they had a daughter named Ena [later Ena Foat] who I used to play with. Eventually they left and went to Salford Priors to manage the Bell Inn. The Coach and Horses was owned by Mr Bromley who had four sons, and a lady we used to call Aunty Lil. Her surname was Mansell and she lived down Station Bank [now Anchor Lane East]and I think it is her son Eustace who is buried in the churchyard.



The Mansell family with the girls now grown up. Standing from left to right,Alice,, Charlie, Agnes, Florence, with in front Elizabeth (mother) and Mrs Miller (Elizabeth's aunt). A family tragedy is recorded in the parish magazine of April 1929, the deaths within two weeks of Florence (aged 43), Mrs Miller (91) and Charlie (40).

I seem to remember there was a garage opposite the Golden Cross where they began to run trips by charabanc. If I remember, it was called the Black and White Coaches, but of course this is nearly eighty years ago, so I could well be wrong. The blacksmith's forge was opposite the bakery and if I am correct, he was called either Grimmet or Grimshaw [actually Grimmet].

At the top of Station Bank there was a dairy at the Manor House and my granny used to send me there for milk and the lady used to wear a white cotton bonnet which tied under her chin with ribbons.

The rectory was a large rambling place and when the Rector died everything had to be sold and my grandmother bought a black marble clock from there which has been passed down through the family; my son and his wife have it now and it sits in pride of place on the sideboard of their home.

We are grateful to Flossie Glennon (nee Ludlow) who filled in much of the information which appears in square brackets.

The School

The school, correctly entitled Harvington C of E (controlled) First School was built in 1849 thanks to the energetic influence of the Rev. Canon A. H. Winnington-Ingram, Rector at that time and a man who firmly believed in the value of education. The original building had only one classroom and a house for the headmaster (or mistress) but, in a fairly short space of time, a classroom was added for use by the infants and, gradually, it was extended to accommodate the increasing numbers of children. In its early days, there was only one teacher, who coped with all ages, but this changed in the course of time, particularly with the introduction of the pupil-teacher system. The school log books record the consistently poor attendance as children stayed away from school to work in the fields or were kept at home suffering from the numerous illnesses, such as measles, scarletina, mumps, diptheria and scarlet fever which regularly struck them low. A pump in the school yard supplied the only water, earth closets were a constant worry and needed a great deal of attention to reduce the health risk; the Rector (and his wife) visited regularly, the latter dispensing food and clothing to the poorest children, the former maintaining strict discipline both in school and out and stressing the importance of regular attendance at church. Inspections were frequent and thorough and the school was always closed for a whole day before an inspection so that a comprehensive cleaning-up could take place. Adherence to the timetable and plan of work was very strict, any slight deviation having to be recorded in the log book. Heavy snowfalls are recorded in most winters - very different from today one feels, and the school was closed for quite long periods of time because of the cold.

Over the years the school has been extended, the latest addition being the Nursery unit catering for pre-school children which opened in September 2000. The school today enjoys an excellent reputation – one of which the village can be extremely proud; how fortunate we are that it has such a long and interesting history.

THE BUILDING OF THE SCHOOL

On display was a contemporary copy of the original minutes of a Parish Meeting held on 29 January 1846. A transcription of the main business follows:

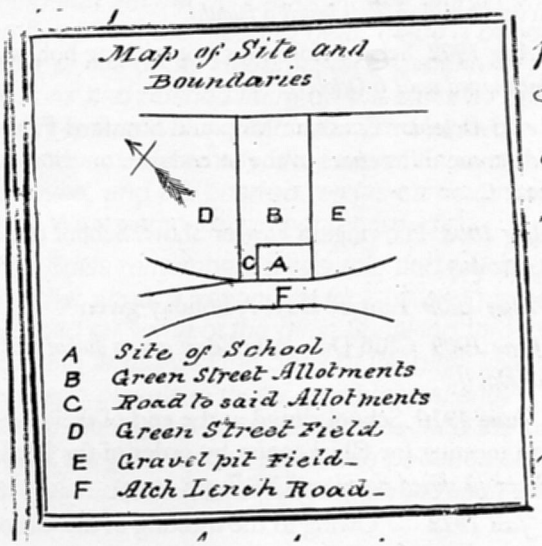
It was proposed . . . that, whereas the sum of money raised by the sale of certain houses and tenements to defray this Parishes share of the cost of the building of the Evesham Union work house appears not to have been wholly expended and that the surplus thereof remaining to the Parish after all claims upon it have been discharged is now in the hand of the Poor Law Commissioners of England and Wales and amounts to 300£ or thereabouts this surplus be laid out in erecting a school and Schoolmaster's house for the purpose of educating the poor of this parish upon a site to be given over by the Revd Winnington Ingram into the hands of Trustees or a trustee to be held by them or him for the use above-mentioned for ever. And further that, if owing to more money being raised from other sources towards liquidating the cost of the said buildings a surplus should remain out of the sum now appropriated by the Parish for this purpose the said surplus be invested in the funds and the Interest therefore be applied annually towards the endowment of the said school. And also that a copy of this proposition be written out and forwarded to the Poor Law Commissioners and their sanction to the immediate appropriation of the above stated purposes be humbly requested.

The above proposition was agreed to unanimously.

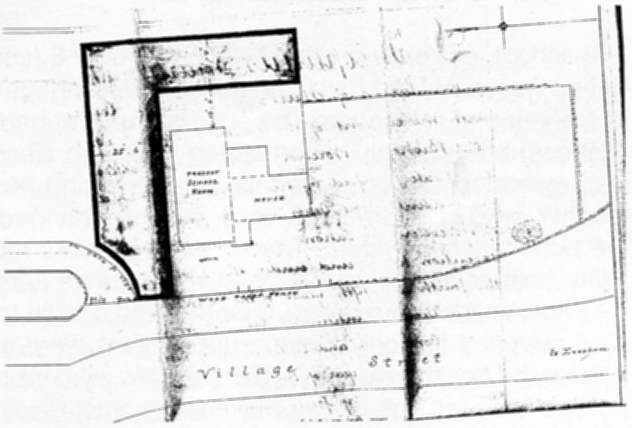
Conveying the Land, 1848

One of the original conveyances on display covered the transfer of Glebe Lane to the Minister and Churchwardens of Harvington for the building of the school. There is a small site plan, and it is described as 'bounded on the South and West by the road leading from the said village of Harvington to the Village of Atch Lench on the South and South East by a Field called Gravel pit field belonging to Caroline Edwin of Sheriffs Lench and in the occupation of John Hall of Breforton on the East and North East by a field called Green Street part of the Rectory Farm occupied in allotments'.

The buildings were to be used 'as and for a School for the Education of children and Adults, or children only of the labouring manufacturing and other poorer



classes in the parish of Harvington aforesaid and as a residence for a School Master or Mistress and for no other purpose, which said school shall always be in union with, and conducted upon the principles and in furtherance of the ends and designs of the incorporated National Society for promoting the education of the poor in the principles of the Established Church.'
It was signed by the Rector, the Revd Winnington-Ingram, representing the Diocese, the owners of the Glebe Land. On the back of the document is a statement from 'William Brown, Clerk Vicar of the parish of Norton and Lenchwick, Henry Blackhall Clerk perpetual Curate of the parishes of North and Middle Littleton and South Littleton and John Marshall Clerk Vicar of the parishes of Saint Lawrence and All Saints in the Borough of Evesham being three beneficed Clergyman of the Diocese of Worcester' confirming that the land is indeed in Harvington and does not exceed one acre.



Extension to the School, 1891
Also on display was a conveyance of further Glebe Lane with a very clear map showing which was the schoolroom and which the Head Master or Mistress's house at the time.

THE SCHOOL LOG BOOKS

Two of the School Log Books were on display covering the time from the opening of the school in 1872 until 1972. In the early years they give a vivid picture of problems caused by illnesses that are rare today - diphtheria, measles, scarlet fever etc - when the school often had to be closed. They also give a view of life in an agricultural community, with pupils being absent during the fruit picking season - and in the end special holidays were given at peak harvesting times. The school was also closed for major village events such as the Flower Show - the current pupils might like to think up a few extra holidays now.

26 Feb – 2 March 1872 *S*everal children admitted. Children beginning to keep good order. Progressing fairly. Behaviour quiet & obedient. Mrs Ingram *[the wife of the Rector]* visited the school, examined the work of each child and heard the children sing.

3 - 7 Dec 1877 Many alterations have been made to the school premises. Girls and Infants playground enlarged and gravelled. Good sanitary improvements made. Four of our little ones belonging to this School have died *[in a diphtheria epidemic]*.

1 - 5 July 1878 Attendance very poor - pea-picking still and haymaking.

28 Aug 1891 School was closed this afternoon for the Harvest holiday *[this lasted a month]*.

21 Aug 1902 School closed for hop-picking holiday *[which lasted until 6 October]*.

10 - 13 October Evesham Mop and Stratford Fair made some differences to the attendance on these dates.

5 Aug 1908 Harvington Flower Show. School closed for one day.

24 May 1909 Empire Day. A holiday given.

3 June 1909 Club Day. A holiday given *[what was Club Day?]*

14 June 1910 School closed at the end of the afternoon meeting for Chickenpox by order of the Medical Officer *[it stayed closed until 27 June]*.

25 Jan 1912 Owing to the meeting of the Croome Hounds this morning at the Golden Cross Hotel, no meeting having taken place for seventeen years secular work commenced at 9.5.

6 Jan 1926 A half-holiday given this afternoon. Schoolroom required for the Women's Institute Social.

25 March 1945 Dr Murray M.O.H. visited school 11.30 - 12.0 for innoculation against diptheria.

8 & 9 May 1945 Two days National Holiday to mark the end of hostilities in Europe.

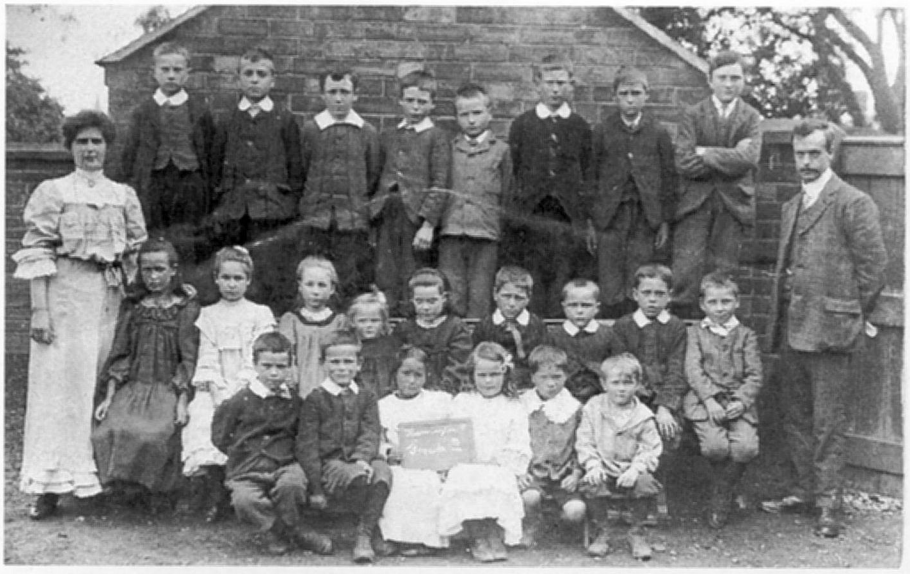
12 Nov 1963 Mr Wheeler found a dead rat, several hedgehogs and dryrot under the floorboards near the stove *[in Infant Classroom]*. He also investigated the water supply and found that someone had turned off the water underground.

27 April 1967 A open evening and meeting for parents was held this evening. A large number of parents was present and it was agreed to form a Parent Teacher Association.

18 Feb 1972 Owing to power cuts which prevented the school being heated or the dinner cooked, the school was closed for the day.

Memories of School

Les Bailey does a wonderful impersonation of the Revd Boultbee coming into the classroom on his weekly visit and intoning 'Good Morning children'. It actually has to be seen and heard to be appreciated



Harvington School with Mr & Mrs Chatterley, 1902. (photo: Margaret Duncan - her mother is the little girl in white seated second from the left in the middle row.)

Memories of School

Margaret Duncan remembers, *and it remains a grievance even now, that she was summoned to Mr Chatterley's office one day and roundly ticked off for having been overheard saying something derogatory about his wife. The tale came from the daughter of Mr & Mrs Austin, who kept the butcher's shop and she 'always had it in for' Margaret, but this tale was pure fabrication. Margaret stood in front of the irate headmaster and never said a word - 'you didn't answer back in those days' and doesn't know to this day what she was supposed to have said! Can anybody offer a solution?*

THE SCHOOL PUNISHMENT BOOK

This gives details of punishments meted out to pupils between 1902 and 1907. There is then a long gap until it starts again in 1941 and finishes in 1947. The following is a small selection of misdemeanours and the outcome.

1902			
May 5	Alfred Layton	*Impertinence*	Four stripes
May 26	Frank Cook	*Pinching girl*	Four stripes
July 7	Lavinia Ward	*Deliberately blotting book*	4 stripes
Aug 13	Fredk Harris	*Smoking*	6 stripes
1903			
Jan 29	Fred. Canning	*Incessant Talking*	Four stripes
July 22	Albert Large	*Quarrelling*	Three stripes
1903			
Jan 8	Fred. Widdus	*Bad Language*	Six stripes
Sep 22	Geo Withers	*Climbing through window*	Three stripes

THE COST OF EDUCATION

'School master required at a salary of £1 18s [£1.90]per week' - This is nothing to do with the Prices and Incomes Board but an advertisement which the Managers of Harvington School placed in the press early in the 20th century. An Assistant Teacher was also employed at the School. She received 7/6d [37 1/2p] per week. Of course in those days the school was all-age and the village children spent the whole of their school lives under the same roof; not as long as it would be today for they left at thirteen This made the school much larger and extra help, in the form of a pupil teacher was paid for at the rate of 2s [10p] per week. The late Mrs Cook of Cotswold View was a Pupil Teacher at the school at the turn of the century.

In those days part of the building was let to the 'Master' for £10 a year. In 1916 the accommodation proved too little for the 'Head's' family and he moved to Fair View. The School house was then let to the County Constabulary and became the house of the village policeman at a rent of £14 per annum.

Memories of School

Hilda Harrison tells the tale of her brother Phillip Canning and some of his pals (including Phillip Ludlow, Flossie Glennon's brother) who, obviously feeling that the frequent appearance of the cane was becoming too much to bear, made a bundle of four or five of the Headmaster's favourite weapons and pushed them up the chimney of the open fireplace which the classroom boasted in those days. Unfortuntely, they weren't completely destroyed, and the charred remins came tumbling down. What came next is not recorded.

Helen Ediss remembers a tale told and enjoyed by her father about a very novel trick he and his pals practised on some of the girls. Sneaking through forbidden territory to the back of the girls' lavatories (earth closets in those days) they silently opened the night-soil doors and attacked the bottoms of the girls seated there with bunches of nettles. Helen doesn't know what the end result was. No doubt her father did!



Mr Chatterley's class, about 1926 : Back row, l to r*: Ernie Ward, Laurence Blotheridge, Georgie Finch, Sid Bishop, Phillip Canning, Bert Best, Jimmy Jenkins.* Centre*: Bill Orton, Tom Robbins, Arthur Ashmead, Nell Clark, Rosie Best, Fred Joiner, Tommy Brewer, Derby Prowlin.* Front: *Bessie Fowler, Enid Brewer, Gwen Lane, Dorothy Mansell, Connie Smith, Emily Holder, Marjorie Beech, Flossie Ludlow.*

Memories of School

Flossie Glennon (nee Ludlow), who lent the photograph of Mr Chatterley's class, recalls that earlier, the fact that the teacher Miss Ludlow (later Mrs Prudden) was her aunt did not mean that she was spared the cane!

HARVINGTON SCHOOL IN THE 1930s

contributed by Helen Ediss & Muriel Alvey

The school consisted of three classrooms - Infants, Juniors and Seniors. The total number of pupils would be approximately 70. The headmaster was Mr. Chatterley. He taught the Seniors, classes 4,5,6 & 7 in one big room heated by a large coal fire. Classes 4 and 5 were taught together and would then do written work (with some variation) whilst classes 6 and 7 would receive verbal teaching - and vice versa. His wife, Mrs. Chatterley, taught the Juniors, classes 1, 2 & 3 in an adjoining room, separated by sliding doors. These, which had top panes of glass, were opened up for Assembly which often had the Rector visiting. (There was another coal fire in this adjoining room). The infants were taught by a young lady, Miss Sillery in a smaller room off the cloakroom.

School hours were 9 till 12 and 2 till 4, with the infants leaving at 3.30. All the children went home for dinner (not lunch, in those days) and were not met and accompanied by parents. They walked alone or with their friends and, when heading back to school were reminded by the bell to 'get a move on'. Station Road in those days was referred to as 'back of the town'. Both morning and afternoon saw 'playtime' - a short break when all the children went out into the yard and played the traditional games which involved large numbers and which had been handed down for generations.

Mr. Chatterley taught music and, as he was also choirmaster at the church, he often incorporated practice in school for the church anthems. Once a week he took the boys for drawing, while his wife took the girls for knitting and needlework - week about. The senior boys and girls in their last year went into Evesham one day a week for woodwork and cookery; they travelled on the service bus, unsupervised!

For the purposes of discipline, there was the cane, plus pokes in the back and the ruler.

There were regular visits from the District Nurse who came, principally, to examine heads for lice (Nits!). There were also regular visits from both doctor and dentist, the latter being regarded with great fear. There were chipped enamel mugs in the cloakroom for swilling mouths out after inspection

It was all a far cry from today!

Memories of School

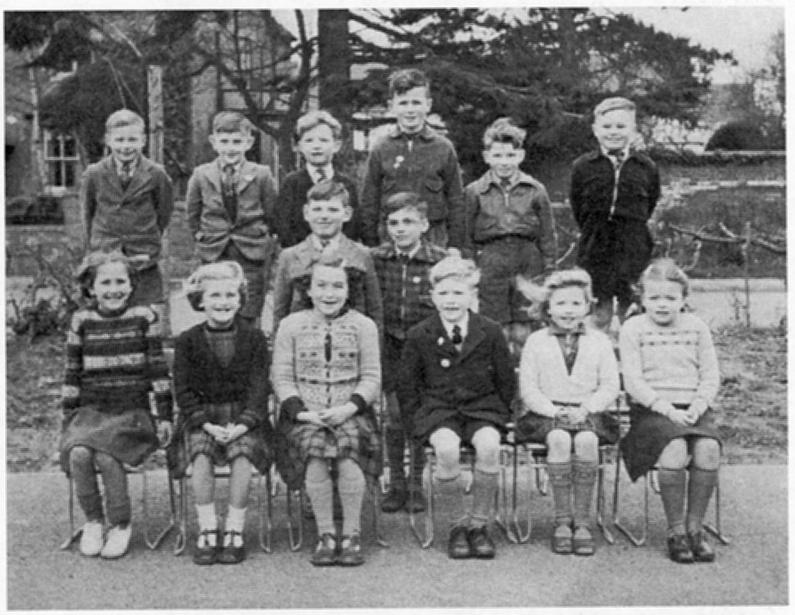
As Helen and Muriel remember above, the 'top class' travelled to Bengeworth for woodwork and cookery. Many of the present villagers have tales to tell of the walk from the bus and back, on the return journey carrying what they had made. The girls remember using the old Dundee marmalade jars as stew jars, with string tied round the necks as handles. Imagine children today being sent off from school unaccompanied in this way. Wouldn't there be howls of protest? Flossie Glennon remember the Scottish teacher at Bengeworth who threatened to report her to Mr Chatterley for some unspecified misdemeanour. Unfortunately for the teacher, it was Flossie's last day at school!

The periodic visits of the school dentist are remembered with some horror. The solution to all problems, it seemed, was to take out the offending tooth and then (can you believe this?) throw it out of the window! The hygienic process was completed, as Helen and Muriel have said, by rinsing out the mouth with water from a cracked enamel mug. Oh, those good old days!



Harvington School pupils, about 1950.
We are grateful to Ian Attwood for taking the time to get most of the children identified.

Back row, l to r: Ian Attwood, Peter Addis, Mervyn Marshall, Phillip Haywood, Rodney Thompson, Leon Alvey.
Middle row: Peter Hemming, Graham Finch, Pat Belton, Pat Hartwell, John Ashmead, Michael Wagstaff, John Langley.
Front row: Christine Blotheridge, Gill Hartiss, Zoe Cook, Wendy Metcalfe, Elizabeth Brewer, Anne Hughes.



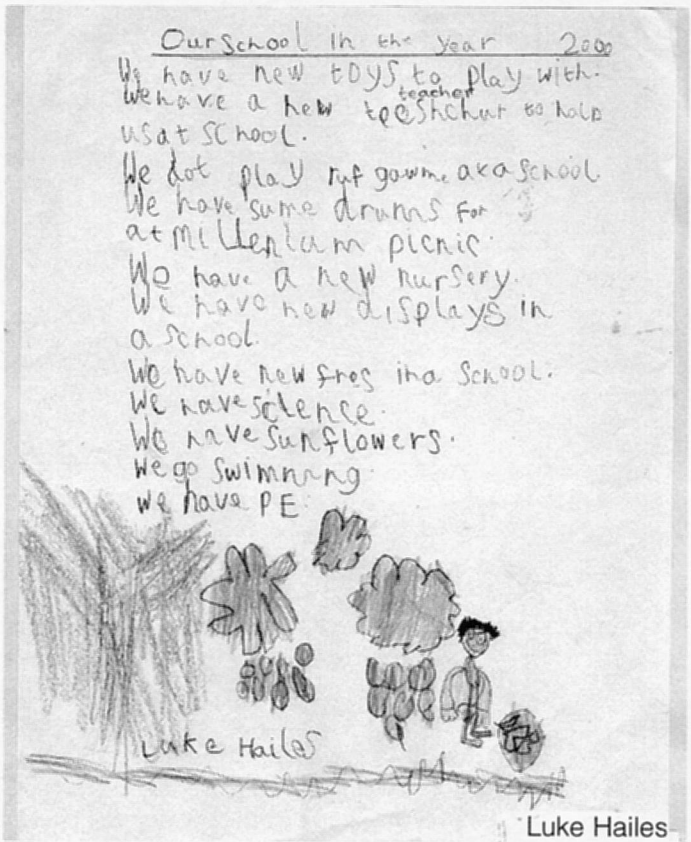
Back row, l to r: David Ward, Stanley Cole, Richard Wheeler, Peter Hudson, Kenny Blotheridge, Gordon Ludlow.
Middle row: Jimmy McGee, Andrew Ashmead.
Front row: Brenda Taylor, Lynn Moss, Jennifer Hartiss, Richard Cadwallader, Shirley Belton, Jane Baylis.



Back row, l to r: Anthony Haywood, Alan Newman, ?, Chris Robbins, Peter Knight, Ivan Clark, Kevin Ward, Mick Addis, Colin Newman.
Second row: Maurice Hartwell, Rex Shailer, Fred Simmons, Maureen Wright, Margaret Bishop, Joyce Taylor, ?, Eileen Hall, Ken Cresswell.
Front row: Anne Walker, Stella Beasley, Shirley Walden, Molly Beasley, Linda Ashmead, Jean Bromley.

Memories of School 2000

Below is a small selection of memories of current children which were displayed at the Exhibition. Other pupils' work included that from Chloe Mason-Brown, Alex Buettner, Stephanie Clements, Alistair Connell, Kieran Court, Lauren Donovan, Michael Diston, Ciaran Grant, Harry Greenway, Charlotte Hargreaves, James Jeacock, Jessica Lawson, Lauren Smith, Rebecca Visor,

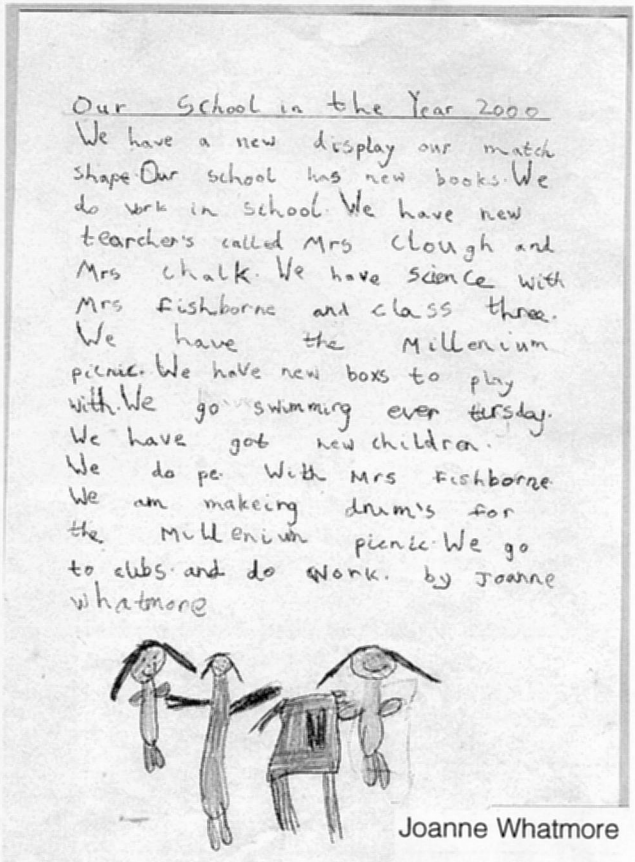


Our School in the year 2000

We have new toys to play with.
We have a new teacher shelter to hold us at school.
We dot play rut gowme aka school
We have sume drums for at Millenium picnic
We have a new nursery.
We have new displays in a school
We have new fres ina School.
We have science.
We have Sunflowers.
We go swimming
We have PE

Luke Hailes

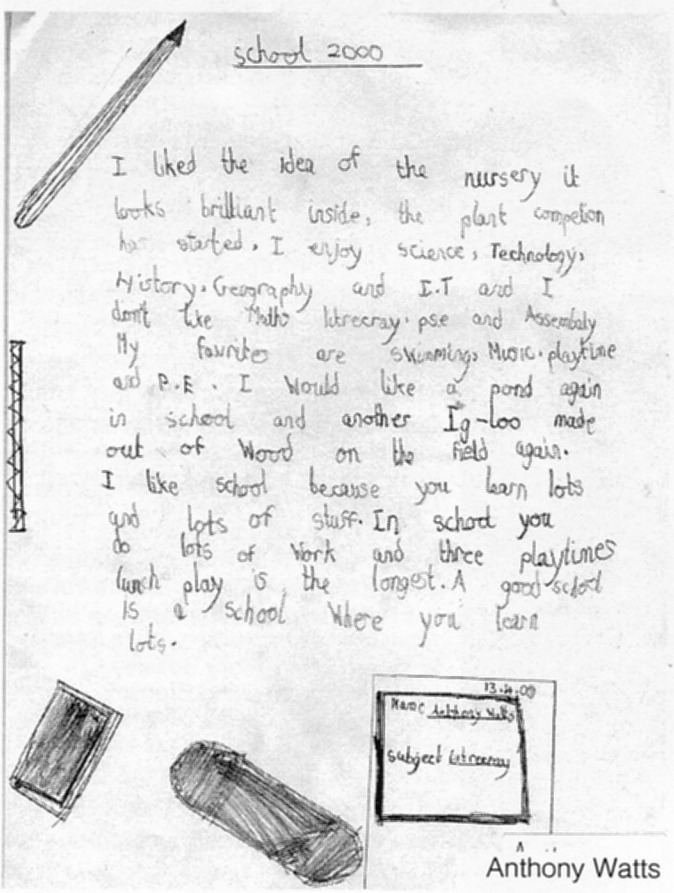
Luke Hailes



Our School in the Year 2000

We have a new display our match shape Our school has new books We do work in school We have new teachers called Mrs Clough and Mrs Chalk We have science with Mrs Fishborne and class three. We have the Millenium picnic We have new boxs to play with We go swimming ever tursday. We have got new children. We do pe With Mrs Fishborne We am makeing drum's for the Millenium picnic We go to clubs and do work. by Joanne whatmore

Joanne Whatmore

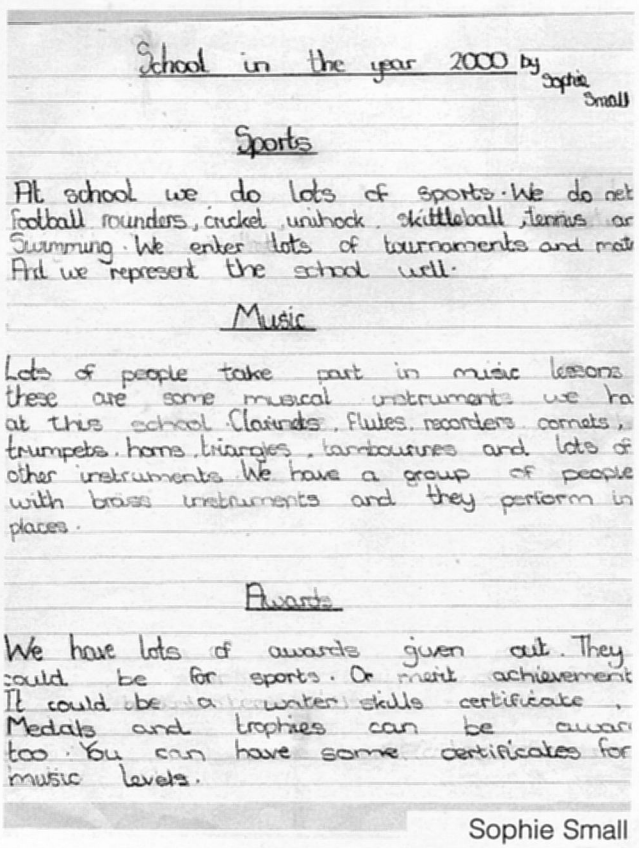


school 2000

I liked the idea of the nursery it looks brilliant inside, the plant competion has started, I enjoy science, Technology, History, Geography and I.T and I dont like Maths literacy, pse and Assembly My favrites are Swimming, Music, playtime and P.E. I would like a pond again in school and another Ig-loo made out of Wood on the field again. I like school because you learn lots and lots of stuff. In school you do lots of work and three playtimes lunch play is the longet. A good school is a school where you learn lots.

13.11.00
Name Anthony Watts
Subject Literacy

Anthony Watts



School in the year 2000 by Sophie Small

Sports

At school we do lots of sports. We do net football rounders, cricket unihock skittleball tennis or Swimming. We enter lots of tournaments and mat And we represent the school well.

Music

Lots of people take part in music lessons these are some musical instruments we ha at this school Clarinets, Flutes, recorders cornets, trumpets, horns, triangles, tambourines and lots of other instruments We have a group of people with brass instruments and they perform in places.

Awards

We have lots of awards given out. They could be for sports. Or merit achievement It could be a water skills certificate, Medals and trophies can be awar too. You can have some certificates for music levels.

Sophie Small

The Baptist Church

We were delighted when Mrs Liz Nunn responded to our invitation to contribute to the Exhibition by compiling four display boards which told the history of the Baptist church in Harvington. On the next two pages we reproduce the information and pictures as they were seen on 'the day'.

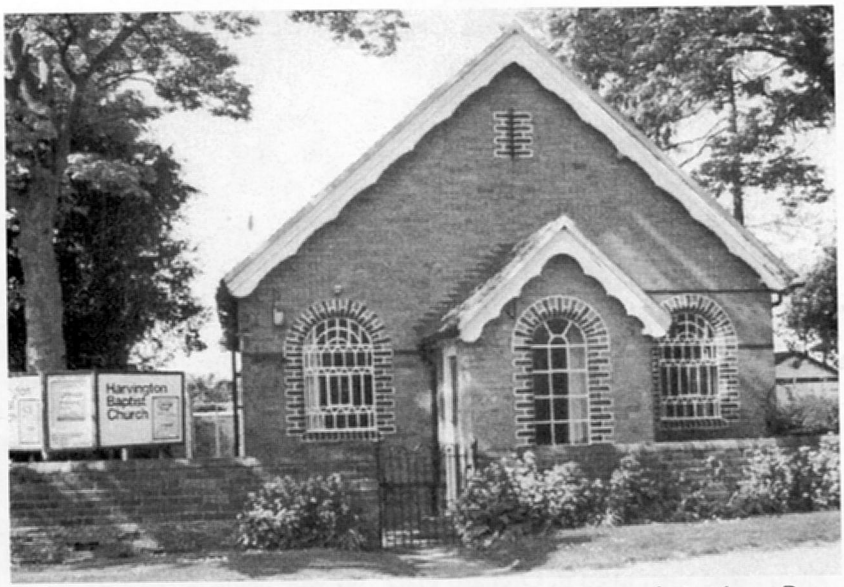


photo: Anne Bawn

Before the opening of the Mission Hall in Harvington, Baptists and other non-conformists had to meet in homes or travel to Alcester or Evesham to Churches there. Alcester Baptist Church records show the following becoming members: 1686 Thomas and Elinor Pearse of Harvington; 1708 Titus Knight of Harvington; 1711 Mary Pearse and Lydia Knight of Harvington

1829 Atch Lench Baptist Chapel opened. Hemming Bomford had bequeathed his house for the use of a minister and the adjoining land for a site for a Chapel. His three sons had the Chapel built. Atch Lench was a small village but the Bomford family and others who joined with them had a very significant influence in that village and the surrounding area for more than a century and a half!

1843 Dunnington Baptist Chapel was built.

1846 Stock Green Baptist Chapel opened. This tiny Chapel is still alive and worth looking out for!

1878 Dunnington had a new larger Chapel built to accommodate the growing congregation. William Houghton who had long been a devoted Sunday School teacher at Dunnington gave £100 to the building fund. He was a baker at Harvington who had begun business in a very small way, delivering his bread in a little cart drawn by a dog!

At last in 1886 HARVINGTON 'MISSION ROOM', a building for the use of Non-Conformists was opened. Mrs Bomford of Pitchill, gave the site and Mr Thomas White of Evesham contributed generously to the Building Fund as did MrW.W.Brown. At first it was not attached to any special church, but after a time it was linked up with Atch Lench, a number of members belonging to the Atch Lench Church worshipping there regularly. James Always of Harvington is mentioned as one of these.

1914 Tuesday 12 May A meeting was held of the Congregation of the Mission Room and it was unanimously decided to form a Committee of Management consisting of 16 members, 'male or female of full age who are regular attendants at the Services and supporters of the work.' The Chairman would be the Minister of the Atch Lench Baptist Church. On 5 January 1915, the following were elected to serve on the Committee: Mr C. Skinner, Mr Mason, Mr C. Ludlow, Miss Bartlett, Mrs J. Brookes Mr G. Brookes, Mr Westbury, Mrs Westbury Mr Bartlett, Mr Brewer, Mr Roberts, Mr Pratt, Mr Davis?, Mrs Mason, Mrs Salisbury, Mrs Pratt.

Minutes of meetings which took place over the following years were not very informative and over quite long periods non-existent until in January 1968 Peggy Prudden took on the responsibility of Secretary. Peggy was, as many of us remember with great affection and respect, an excellent secretary. The Minutes detail the different discussions which took place and challenges faced. Peggy held the post of Secretary with only a one year break until she went to be with the Lord in February 1999; her place has been taken by her equally excellent daughter, Janice Chilvers.

Over the years, it was a consistent concern of the members of the Baptist Chapel to encourage children in the village to read and understand the Bible and the teachings of Jesus. This concern was shared by the congregation at the Parish Church and for many years the Sunday School was a joint venture.

1968 Sunday School Anniversary Services. 'The Rector presided in the afternoon and our Minister in the evening. The Primary children said and sang their pieces admirably under the training of the Misses Jennifer Brewer and Wendy Hyde. Adrian Brewer played the organ, Gillian Prudden and Paul Heritage distributed the hymn books and received the offerings, Julie Plum, Jane Ashmead and Gillian Prudden sang a hymn; Jennifer Brewer, Bryan and Terry Prudden, David Jones and Adrian Brewer with the Rector and Mr Bunday presented a 'T.V.Session' entitled 'The Weekend That Shook The World'. Good congregations at both services encouraged the young people.

1976 Linked with Evesham Baptist Church. It was decided that it would be appropriate if the Chapel was linked in this way rather than to Atch Lench. The Minister at Evesham, then Rev. Hagen took the Chair at meetings of the congregation.

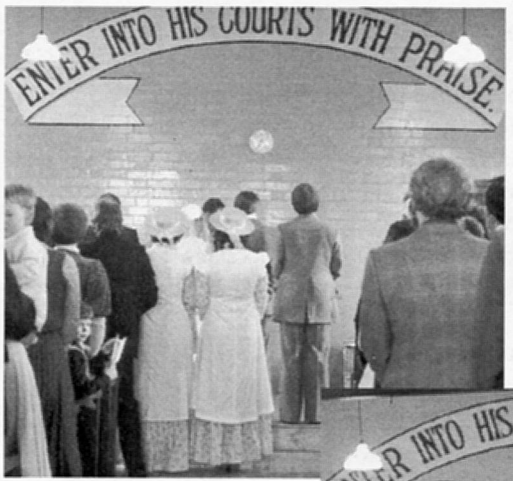
A new wooden floor was laid in the Chapel. It was a considerable undertaking and was supervised by Mr



Sunday School Party – helpers include Mrs Cowley , Mrs Brewer, Elsie Stevens, Mrs J. Roberts, Mrs Timms, Mavis Brewer, Jean Bailey, Hilda Brewer, Peggy Prudden, Rev Johnson, Ray Brewer

Herod who then lived in Orchard Place, his wife being the organist at the Chapel for many years.

1979 Chapel registered as a Place of Worship which meant that Marriages could take place in it, in the presence of a Registrar. On 14 April Gillian Prudden and





(above) The first wedding to take place in the Baptist Church was that of Gillian Prudden to Stephen Bradley in 1979. (right) The wedding of Janice Prudden to Colin Chilvers in 1984. Note the original ceiling and text.

Stephen Bradley were the first couple to be married in the Chapel.

1980 A kitchen and toilets were added to the building. Mr Herod again played a major role in this project together with Michael Gibbons.

1986 Centenary Celebrations and the status of the Chapel changes to that of an independent Baptist Church. Over a hundred members and friends joined in a cheerful weekend of celebration. Ceiling lowered!

1987 Church leadership taken over by an elected Deaconate after Rev. Hagen of Evesham Baptist Church announced that he was no longer able to oversee the Harvington Chapel. The first members of the Deaconate were: Hugh Nunn *Chairman*, Peggy Prudden *Secretary*, Les Bailey *Treasurer*, Peter Clements, Chris Spencer.

The pews were sold and replaced by chairs.

1991 Central heating was installed.

1994 The Harvington Youth Project started as an exciting new joint venture with the Parish Church. James Nicol was appointed as leader working part-time on a Nursery in the village to supplement his income

1995 James and Jayne were married greatly to the benefit of the Youth Project.

2000 All change with the Youth Project. James embarked on a PGCE course at Warwick University in September 2000 after six years of excellent work with the youngsters of the village. The Project started with much prayer and the Lord answered those prayers wonderfully. We have every confidence in Him to continue to do so as we ask for His guidance to find the right successor. The really good news is that James and Jayne love living in the village and have no plans to move away!

(below) Millennium Fun Evening with Pete McCahon.



The Women's Institute

The Women's Institute, although seen as a typically English organisation began, in fact, in Canada in 1897 and its foundation owed much to a Mr Erland who was the leader of the local Farmers' Institute and helped the early enthusiasts become inaugurated, choosing a motto 'For Home and Country'.

The movement came to Britain in 1915, the first branch being started at Llanfair-p.g. after which others were quickly founded, encouraged and actively helped by the Board of Acriculture who, clearly, saw the potential offered by capable and hardworking women in a country at war. A Lady Denman who had been chairman of the Agricultural Organisation (a sub-committee of the Board of Ag.) felt that this new movement should be independent and self-governing and, with the energy and foresight for which she became renowned, organised the first Annual General Meeting on 16 October 1917. By this time, there were 137 Institutes in existence, 60 of whom sent representatives. A constitution was agreed upon and Lady Denman became the first National Chairman. (Some time later Denman College was named in her honour and quickly developed into the very fine educational facility it is today.)

In Harvington, a branch was formed in 1924 at a meeting at the home of Mrs Hawkes, Langton House in Old Village Street. Sixty women attended, a committee was formed with their hostess as President and and activities began. At the first monthly meeting 84 women enrolled but then the membership settled down to an average attendance of 70 or so over the next 10 years. It was not easy to house such a large number and various venues were tried - schoolroom, both pubs, Reading Room, members' homes - and meeting times varied between afternoons and evenings, but inevitably agitation for the building of a Village Hall grew apace, the WI. also toying with the idea of an Institute Hall. In 1926 the minutes record their regret (and annoyance) that no woman had been invited to serve on the newly created Village Hall Committee - obviously somebody was taking notice but there was a long way to go. Meanwhile, at National level, it had been decided that 'Jerusalem' should be adopted as the W.I. anthem, and minutes record that it was duly sung at every meeting from thereon.

The activities of the new and popular Institute make fascinating reading. First, there were the lectures and demonstrations chosen in line with the declared aim of the movement which was to educate and broaden the minds of countrywomen whose formal education had probably been lacking. A few chosen at random illustrate the point: Practical cookery - how to make a meal for 8 people at one shilling and fourpence a head; the value of sunlight physical exercises; glove making; the art of entertaining; Adam, Eve and others; household jobbery; loose covers for chairs; needle woven jute matting floor rugs; slippers from old felt hats; names and their origins; home nursing; the history of folk songs; should women wear trousers?; recipes with left-overs; care of the eyes; dovecotes; the life of Samuel Crompton; spring cleaning (by the vicar); peoples & customs of Russia; travels through China & Japan; stool-making from syrup tins.



Langton House, Old Village Street, where the inaugural meeting of the Harvington Branch was held. (photo: Dennis McKenzie)

Then there were outings - by charabanc - paid for through a Thrift Club, Mrs. Hawkes having started the



This photograph comes from a scrapbook for 1965, which was entered in a national competition. Standing, from l to r: Lucy Bayliss (Vice-President), Jean Bailey (Assistant Treasurer), Mabel Robbins (Vice-President), Miss Morrow (Asst Secretary), Joyce Wheeler, Marge Shailer, Pam Walden. Seated: Heather Mann, Mrs Crump (Secretary), Pam Agate (President), Miss Osborn (Treasurer), Wyn Haywood.



W. I. 75th Birthday Celebrations 1990





(above) Jean Bailey greeting Mabel Robbins. (above right) Part of a historical display compiled by Jess Fairs (seen left) and a collection of members' craftwork assembled by Peggy Prudden (seen right)

scheme and being willing to collect monies at her home at a given time every week. Their journeys ranged far and wide and the members are to be admired, not only for their enterprise but for their stamina. Fund-raising was always high on the list of activities - whist drives, barn dances, social evenings, light suppers. Classes on practical subjects were extremely popular, with First Aid courses being frequently arranged and obviously well attended. Many of the classes were connected with 'making do' but others were for fun, especially country dancing. Excellent work (and fund-raising) was done for a variety of charities, and Christmas parties were given for children (of all ages) and for old people. Amateur dramatics were popular; a choir was formed and acquitted itself well in Federation festivals.



(above) Ready to serve 80 strawberry teas in 1990 (with Eileen Johnson and Joan Robinson on the far left. The teas are still a major fund-raising event each year. (right) The W.I. Working Party during the Tidy-up Campaign: from l to r: Edith Maybury, Sheila Wolstenholme, Loretta Carn, Joan Robinson, Sheila Lewis, Norma Bruce.

The Institute was a force in the village, motivating, organising, supporting. This was seen very clearly in the matter of the building of the Village Hall but this has been written about elsewhere and it is sufficient to say that, once the hall was opened in 1931, the W.I. became firmly entrenched and for many years it enjoyed great success. Then interestingly, the minutes record that 'we must find ways of improving our W.I.' indicating that the monthly meetings were not quite as popular as they had been. Numbers dropped in the years before the Second World War, revived in the 1950s and dropped again in the 1960s and 1970s, presumably reflecting the changing role of women in society.

At National level, the organisation accepted that it had to find new ways of appealing to women who no longer had to look to it for education but who still valued the contribution it could still make to village life. Gradually, the W.I. sought to lose its 'jam and Jerusalem' image' and be seen to be better informed about current affairs and topical issues, but the fact that communities could always look to its members for help with fetes, fairs, charity events - activities which inevitably included catering and the provision of home-cooked food - meant that, in most villages, this remained the way in which the W.I. was seen.



Harvington W.I. has had its ups and downs and has been perilously near to closing on more than one occa-

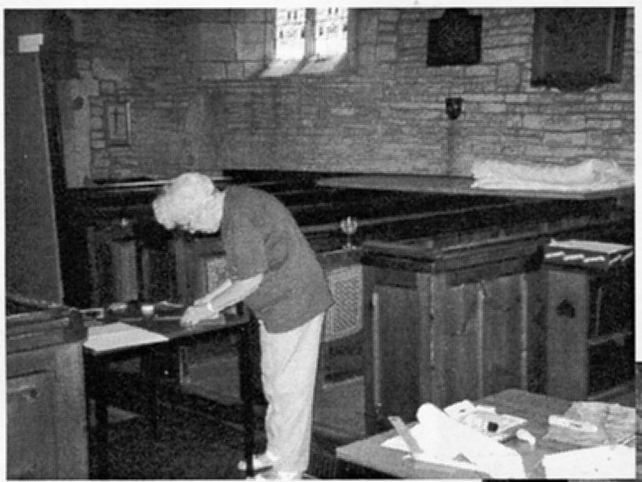
sion especially when members have felt resentment at paying a yearly subscription to a distant, faceless organisation with which it feels no empathy, but still it continues to exist and currently has a membership of 36. Its members can still produce excellent cakes and preserves, they still make a lot of money during the month-long Strawberry Teas season which means that good speakers can be afforded, they still send a member to Denman on a generous bursary, but, above all, they still see the monthly meeting as a place to meet, to make friends, be with friends and to enjoy all that that means. The W.I. has also just produced an excellent Village map to mark the Millennium which it has given to the village, thereby providing proof, if any were needed, that Harvington W.I. is still alive and kicking! The map was the centrepiece of the Institute's 'corner' in the Exhibition - its first public appearance. It now hangs in the Village Hall.



Some of the members of the map team, with Dennis McKenzie, Chairman of the Parish Council.

We are greatly indebted to the late Mrs Marjorie Bailey (who has been referred to elsewhere in this book) for her summary of the W.I. Minute books covering a period from 1929 to 1980 which she compiled at the end of 1979 The actual books are housed in the Worcester Archives Office and access to them is not easy, so her notes which are in the keeping of the W.I. are invaluable. For these and for other material of hers which we have used, we are extremely grateful and we wish to put on record our admiration for her work in connection with the history of a village which she obviously loved and in which she played a very important part.

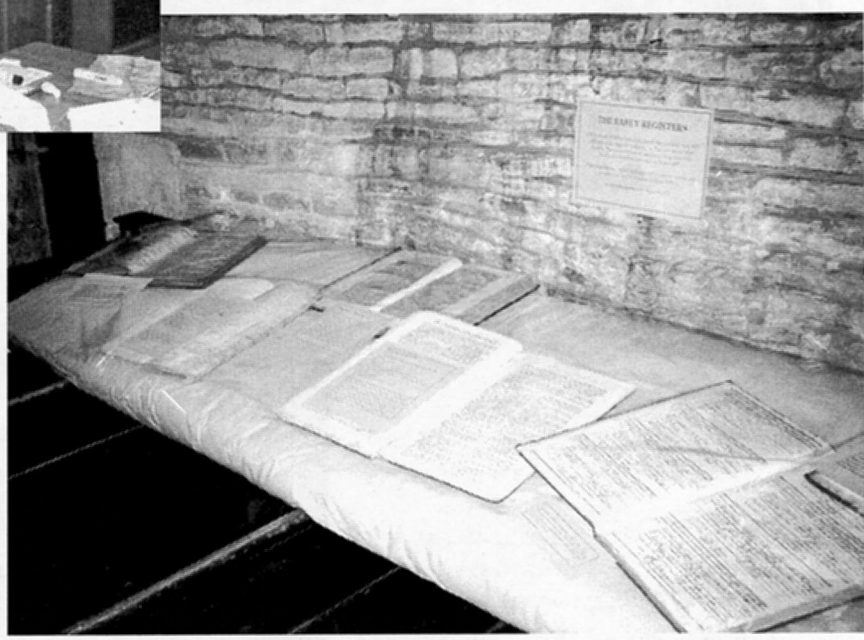
and finally . . . an Exhibition scrapbook



(left) Setting up: the quilt lying on the table at the back was used to pad the display board for the early Registers (to protect their spines) which we had borrowed back from the Worcester Archives (below).

(below, left) The organisers hold a last-minute conference noting what else still has to be done.





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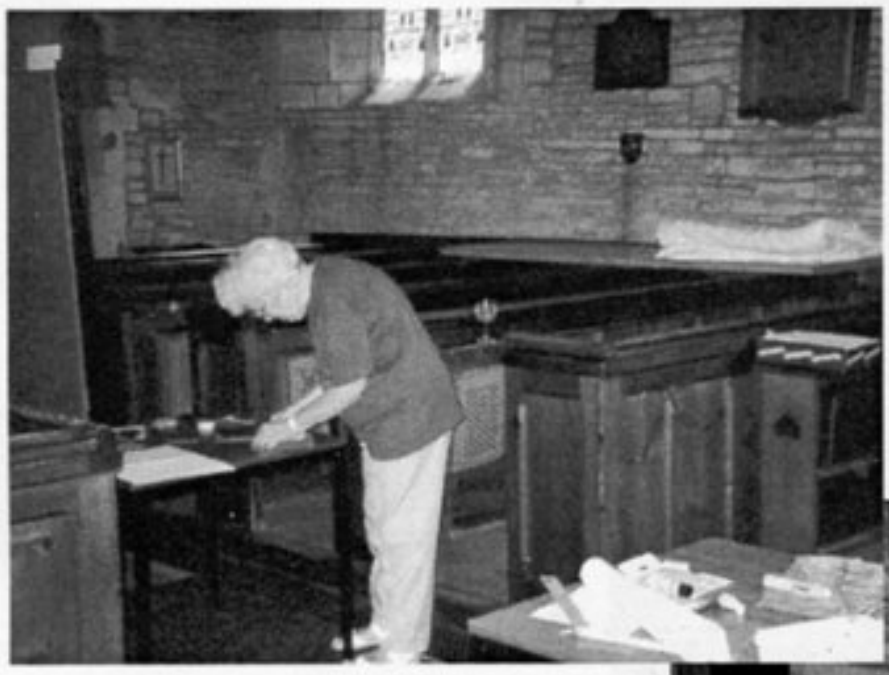

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(below, left) The organisers hold a last-minute conference noting what else still has to be done.



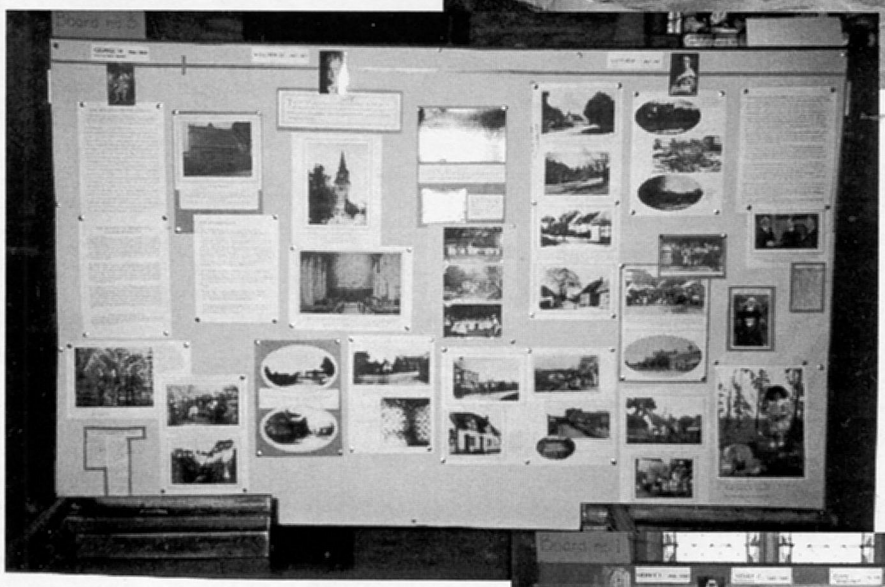




(left) The Revd Ann Hadley seems to be admiring the school display on the pulpit, out of our sight.

(below) A display table, which included one of the late Mrs Brazier's scrapbooks.









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THE MILLENNIUM FESTIVAL of the Church and Parish of St James the Great, Harvington, was held over the weekend of 21 – 23 July 2000. It included an exhibition in the church which showed what happened in the church and village chronologically, illustrated as far as possible with written and pictorial evidence. Other mini-displays came from the school, the Baptist church, the Women's Institute and the Pre-School.

In response to the comments and requests of many people, the organisers decided to try and preserve the memories of the successful weekend in this commemorative book; they were told it would be a shame to let all the information (and effort) be dissipated and forgotten. This is the result . . .

The ripples created by the Exhibition are still being felt and we begin to wonder how far they will spread. First, there was contact from a lady called Lowe who, after visiting the church and seeing the display boards, put us in touch with her mother-in-law Mary Orton, whose grandmother Mrs Mansell lived at the foot of Cress Hill, where Mary spent substantial periods of time during her childhood. Mary lives near Chester now, but visited us recently, a visit which resulted in her writing a contribution to this book.

Then we received a letter from Billingshurst in West Sussex from the the husband of a descendant of the Cook family who were connected with the village for many long years and some of them are mentioned in the text. One fascinating piece of information (or family speculation) concerns Cotswold View, at present up for sale. It is thought that it was built on the proceeds of a big win on a horse called Playfair by one John Cook who was thereafter nicknamed Johnny Playfair. He sounds as though he could have cut quite a dash in Harvington!

We should be glad to hear from anyone who can comment on, or add to, any of these statements. The writer of the letter mentioned above is eager to gather as much information as he can and we should be happy to pass it on to him.

ALL PROFITS FROM THE SALE OF THIS BOOK WILL BE DONATED TO
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