



Early 1900s

During lockdown I have continued sorting Congresbury History Group documents and photos. Following my lockdown articles on Station Road, Broad Street and the Ship & Castle I thought I would do something on High Street / Brinsea Road.

This is not a definitive history. It's just an attempt to rekindle memories and provide a bit of diversion during this difficult period.

If anyone has any additional information it will be gratefully received

Chris Short
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HIGH STREET AND BRINSEA ROAD

Bailey's Store

On the corner of Broad Street and High Street stands the substantial building known as Bridge House where currently Debbie Fortune, Estate Agents have offices.

Mrs Browning had vivid memories of the great flood of 1887, and how the water was washing over the counter of Mrs Wilkins' grocery shop which was then at Bridge House.

By the early 1900s Mrs King had taken over the running of this shop, which continued to sell provisions. Her husband William was a carrier who stabled his horses on the opposite side of the road in a yard belonging to the Ship and Castle. The 1902 Kelly's Directory shows him as a carrier to Bristol on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays passing through Cleeve, West Town, Flax Bourton and Long Ashton before reaching the Hope and Anchor, Redcliffe Hill. Later his business was sold to Mr Jim Gill.



Mr & Mrs King – early 1900s

Mr Job Crew then acquired the shop and about 1920 his daughter Alice was running this shop and his son-in-law Mr Thomas Gosling was operating his wheelwright, carpentry and building business from the yard adjacent to the house.

Mr Thomas Gosling had initially set up his business in Smallway, then moved to buildings adjacent to the Spotted Horse where he had taken over the license from Mr Job Crew. Then

came the move to Bridge House where he was joined in business by his son Frank, who recalled how he had to be up at 5.30 am to carry the buckets of water to the steam engine which operated the saws, in order to "get up steam" for the men to start work at 6 o'clock.

Amongst the employees at Bridge House were Mr Harry Palmer and Mr Hubert Weaver who joined the business from school and remained until retirement. One afternoon, when lads, these two decided that a visit to the cinema, then held one day a week in the Memorial Hall, was preferable to work. When the lights went on at the end of the film, they discovered that they were sitting next to Mrs Gosling, the boss's wife!

Reg Bailey

In 1921 the Goslings moved to a site in Brinsea Road, and Mr W R "Reg" Bailey bought Bridge House.

Bailey's store became a well-known village landmark recalled as follows by Ray Atwell:

"Before he moved here Mr Bailey would come to Congresbury Fair and lay out his harnesses for sale near the cross. You had to go down a step to go inside his shop where the road has been built up so many times. When you went in the bell on the door would ring until you closed it. You looked around and the shop was absolutely full of all sorts of things to do with farming. If a farmer wanted anything Bailey's was the place to go.

There was a big pair of scales on the counter where they used to weigh up nails or staples. Just inside the door there were pigeonholes each full of different size nails, half an inch up to six inches long.

When Mr Bailey went there farming was by hand. You could find in his shop reap hooks, two pronged forks, and yokes and mole traps hung on the wall. If a farmer went into an iron-mongers today and asked for a bundle of 50 spars they would wonder what was meant 'cos they're not used today. A spar is a piece of withy stick about a yard long, which is split in two and bent over like a big hair pin. They were used for thatching hay mows (ricks).

Mr Bailey originally lived in Bridge House, but later moved to a house next to the Memorial Hall. This meant that every room in the house was used for stores. He also had some big sheds out in the yard, and he rented the Ship and Castle yard, where he kept a lot of wheelbarrows and rows of barbed wire and fencing.

Although he had all the old implements, he kept up to date. He had a lot of items you'd find in a milking parlour today. But if a stranger went into that shop, they would think it was a museum of old farming implements. It's a pity that when Mr Bailey retired, they didn't turn it into such a place."

The contents of Bailey's were sold by auctions on the 28th of August and 11th September 1975.



Bailey's during the 1950 flood.

On the opposite side of the road is

The Memorial Hall



Ladies and children outside the hall in 1923. What was the event?

In April 1919 it was decided that the building of a Memorial Hall would be a fitting tribute to the 24 local men who had died in World War One. A memorial committee was subsequently formed and from that was selected a building committee.

Twelve months later, some £2,200, (about £100,000 today), of the estimated build cost of £3,000 had been raised through fetes, donations, subscriptions and loans. This was enough to commence construction. Working to plans drawn up by Congresbury architect and builder George Wear, village men did all the hard graft and just one carpenter working with a 14-year-old boy, did all of the extensive woodwork.

The hall was unveiled on the 7th December 1920, with around 600 people from the Congresbury area in attendance.

Dr Pearce

To the right of the Memorial Hall (second house down) is Lingfield, which was until the late 1960s, the home and surgery of the village doctor, Dr Pearce. His waiting room was in a lean to / conservatory and the consulting room inside the house. His wife generously left the paddock behind the house to the village and this is now part of the Millennium Green.

On the other side of the street is

The Old Rectory /Silvercraig



The Old Rectory in 2014

The Old Rectory, formerly The Rectory, was where the Dean and Chapter held court and according to the Parish Magazine for August 1951 was, sometime before 1900, the home of

the curate of Congresbury church. This Grade 11 listed building has a mid-18th century facade, but the rear of the building suggests a 17th century date. It is now split into two houses, called Silvercraig and The Old Rectory.



Memorial Hall, left, and right The Old Rectory /Silvercraig then the Methodist church.

Methodist Church

In 1878 the Methodists built the current chapel in High Street, with 150 seats and a meeting room beside it. A new porch was added to the chapel in the 1990s.



The current Methodist chapel in High Street c1910.

Fernbank



Fernbank January 2021

In 1875, the Sheppy milling family acquired a large plot of land in the High Street, for the building of their new family home, Fernbank. The adjacent Methodist Church was built on their land and with their support, commemorated by a plaque in the church, and evidenced by a note written by Maurice (Andrew Sheppy's grandfather).

Wool Shop

Just after the Methodist Church in the High Street is a shop front now blocked up.



The shop window (Date unknown). To the right is Fernbank and the Methodist church.

Here between about 1929 and 1969 was a wool shop run over the years by the Misses Marjorie and Dora King and their mother. The girls were the daughters of Mr William King previously mentioned. Dora knitted ladies suits and in later years the sisters sold drapery and handicrafts. For about 18 months after the closure of the shop Mr Andrew Sheppy ran a taxidermist business here.

Yeo Bank



January 2021

Harold Carter who died in 2005 and was a previous owner of Yeo Bank said that it was once a coach house and cottage for the coachman and the gardener of Yeo Meads, which in 1814 was called Yeo Bank. Around 1925 it was altered into a "dower" house following the death of the owner, whose widow then moved in, leaving the son to inhabit what is now Yeo Meads.

The present Yeo Bank's windows are distinctive and have been dated as Regency -were they removed from Yeo Meads at some time and used when the cottage / coach house was turned into the "dower" house? Yeo Bank has been considerably altered and extended, probably, several times. but parts have wattle and daub construction according to the present owners, suggesting a much older building than it appears from the outside.

Harold Burnell Carter and his wife Mary were members of Congresbury History Group. I didn't realise his illustrious background (which I have included in the appendix), until the day he invited me in to his office at Yeo Bank, where I was amazed to see a desk full of original documents from Sir Joseph Banks and others from the 18th century.,

Yeo Meads (Formerly Yeo Bank)



Early 20th century post card.

A house is shown in this position on the parish map of 1739. At the rear is a 300-year-old Cedar of Lebanon suggesting that part of the house at least existed at the end of the 17th century.

Yeo Meads can also be traced further back in maps and documents. Going backwards using the land tax, annual returns 1832 back to 1766 but with gaps.

In 1832 William Danger is shown as owner of a property called "Youngs" paying 6s 4d tax. In 1819 and 1818 the property on which William pays 6s 4d is described as "house & land." William first owned this property in 1814 - and the parish registers also show a son baptised in 1814, with other children later on, but no Danger previous to 1814. Thus William Danger appears to have moved into the village in 1814, probably buying Yeo Bank as Yeo Meads was then called and the land he is shown as owning in 1840.

Previous to 1814 the only land called "Youngs" on which 6s 4d tax was paid belonged to R B Simmons. Simmons is shown on Plan B of Congresbury Enclosure maps as owning Yeo Bank (now Yeo Meads) and land, dated 1816, but surveyed some time before. A square building is in the appropriate place for the house plus a long narrow building alongside the road and another rectangular building which could be what is now Yeo Bank.

This "Youngs" on which 6s 4d was paid can be traced back to 1767 when it was named "Young Millards" and belonged to Samuel Simmons who paid 4s 9d that year, in the only year when the rate was 3s in the pound, as different from the usual 4s in the pound. Thus the 4s 9d is the equivalent payment of 6s 4s in other years. In 1766 (the earliest surviving Land Tax return) Samuel Simmons paid 6s 4d for "Millards".

In 1736 and 1739 a Mr Jones is shown on the de Wilstar maps of Congresbury Manor as owning Yeo Bank which is then shown as just a rectangle in the appropriate place. Clearly part at least of Yeo Meads existed in 1736, but unless early deeds exist it is unlikely to be traced any further back by documentary methods.

On the opposite side of the road is

Chestnut Farm



A map circa 1739 shows a building on this site.

In 1840 this building was owned by William Henry Temple Brigstock Esq and occupied by William Edwards. It is recorded as a house and court. In the first half of the 20th century Sidney H Atwell was the farmer at this address.

The Plough



The Plough and corner shop circa 1906.

The name reflects the fact that at one time this was a smallholding.

Legend has it that a Saxon stone lies beneath its floor. Parts of the building certainly date back to 1816 when it was owned by the Governors of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Large areas of Congresbury, from the 16th century until 1921, were administered for the benefit of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Bristol, by the Governors, who were Bristol City Councillors. The Governors awarded Joseph Naish the property under the 1816 enclosure act.

The building is thought to have been a bakery at one time. However, by 1859 it was certainly a pub, Richard Walter being the landlord. John Nash succeeded Richard Walter in 1861 and became owner in 1866. John died in 1892 and his wife, Ellen, ran the pub until her death in 1903. She advertised "Good accommodation for cyclists". Her daughters sold the pub after her death to Samuel Taylor, who was certainly landlord in 1906.

By 1910, Reg Atwell had taken over and was there when the pub was sold in 1912 to The Bristol Brewery - Georges & Co. Ltd.

Corner Shop

On the corner of Mill Lane and Brinsea Road is now Somerset Podiatry Clinic.

Fred Hunt recalled that early this century a shop here was run by a Mrs Wear. By the 1920s a Mr Potter had taken over and his shop is described by Ray Atwell: "It had two windows and two doors. The left-hand door led to a shop selling sweets, tobacco, and groceries. The other door led to a haberdasher where caps, towels, buttons and silks of all kind were sold. Inside you could walk from one shop to the other."

Following the Potters came Mr Curtis, then Mr Pike and finally until the 1970s Mr and Mrs Louis Newman ran the shop selling the same things.

When Mr Curtis has the shop there was a severe fire reported as follows in the Western Daily Press on 1st September 1936

'An early morning fire yesterday at the drapery store of Mr Curtis, Congresbury at one time threatened to involve three adjoining cottages Fortunately Clevedon fire brigade ... succeeded after three hours in preventing the flames from spreading beyond the place of origin, which with its contents was burnt out. Mr A. G Atwell of the Plough Inn saw the flames first at about 4am and the occupants of the cottages were unaware of their danger until aroused. In one of the cottages was Mr A Cox, a cripple unable to walk, and he had to remain in his house until carried out by villagers.... Mr Cox was very grateful, "It was a narrow escape", he added "five minutes more and I would not have been alive today."



The aftermath of the fire.

Apple dealers



Apple dealers circa 1910.

Just past the podiatry clinic, on the same side of the road, was the building, now a garage, featured in the fire photo above. T & J Moor apple merchants, once traded from here.

Shoemaker

On the same side of the road towards Langford is a semi-detached cottage called The Cottage. In the 1920s this was the home of Mr Charlie Champion, shoemaker. His little workshop was in a room to the left of the front door. He always wore a little black cap "Like the Pope's" on the top of his head and he is said to have always had a mouthful of nails.

Spotted Horse



The Spotted Horse c1990s.

The General Directory for Somerset dated 1840 shows the landlord as one John Tinklin. In March 1886 Job Crew became tenant landlord.

Five months into the new century the owner, John Allen, sold the pub to Messrs Berryman, Burnell & Co. Ltd., brewers at Shepton Mallett and Mr Tom Gosling, who was Job Crew's son-in-law, took over as landlord. Mr Gosling was also a carpenter.

In about 1914 the landlord was a Mr George London, a retired Police Inspector. He was 6'2" and 22 stone - an enormous man. You wouldn't want to argue with a man like that!

Bert Lovell was the landlord of the Spotted Horse in the 1930s, and he had a petrol pump in the forecourt. He also hired out a bullnose Morris car for five shillings (25p) a day, this included a full tank of petrol which had to be re-filled on return with R.O.P. petrol at 10d (4p) per gallon. Mr Lovell also had a small wooden hut at what is now the entrance to Park Road where bicycles were repaired.

The pub was demolished in 1999 and is now a row of terraced houses.

Ticknells

Opposite the site of the Spotted Horse is the firm of R Tincknell and Son Ltd. They occupy the site of the blacksmith's forge which belonged to Mr Ted Ford. Mr Ford shod the horses for Walter's mill, and would go up to the mill by eight in the morning to complete his task before the men arrived for work. He employed several men in the 1930s and could make everything from bands for wheels to gates and railings. Ray Atwell says that he had a pile of horseshoes in his forge and could remember every horse they came from. Also, that whenever an apple tree was blown down he would make skittle pins from it using his lathe.



Ted Ford – right. Probably 1950s

Coffins

On the opposite side of the road between Ivy Cottage and the former Goslings' timber yard was a shed where in the 1930s Mr Reg Day made coffins. Mervyn Davies related how as a child he and his friends would go to watch him at work. Didn't they have fun in those days!

T Gosling & Son, Sawmills

Past the footpath leading to Cadbury Farm Square stood the former estate yard of the Bristol Municipal Charity Trustees which in 1921 became the site of the business headed by Mr Thomas Gosling and described as "English and Foreign Timber Merchants and Sawmillers". Thomas was also a builder until World War Two.



OS Map 1921-43. Goslings sawmill indicated by a yellow star.



Goslings – about 1965.

As the business expanded, new buildings were erected, a Robey engine was installed to operate the saw benches used to convert the round timber purchased from the local farms and large estates, and the payroll expanded to some 30 employees.

Transportation of timber was initially by horse-drawn carriage, then came steam engines, and in 1934 the first Fordson Industrial tractor with winch was purchased. The timber waggons are remembered by Trevor Hamlin: "When I attended Congresbury school in the 1930s Goslings sent their cart-horses up over the "Rhoddy" every morning about schooltime to collect milling timber in the Cleeve and Brockley areas. One of their men "Buster" Martin rode on the waggon, which consisted of a long pole which went over two axles close together at the front. "Buster" sat at the back warning the traffic past. Before returning to Congresbury about 4 or 5 in the afternoon with a load of some 8 or 9 trees the axles were separated one near the front and one close to the back."



Gosling horses at Honey Hall.

Mr Evan Davies (father to Mervyn) was blacksmith at the Gosling works. He made and shod the shoes for the carthorses, repaired machinery and chains and produced gate iron work.

Prior to the last World War hurdles were constructed by the firm for use in penning animals on Fair Day and at other times. The main function of the business, however, was the conversion of round timber into coffin boards which were despatched by rail as far away as Bolton, and hardwood planks supplied to the National Coal Board for use as pit props, and the Bristol Port Authority for use on the docks.

In 1941 came a further expansion and the purchase of another larger band saw which was electrically driven by a Ruston Hornsby engine. By this time Mr Harry Palmer was a qualified 'saw doctor', Mr Hubert Weaver specialised in making gates and the more complex carpentry, and Mr Bill Cottrell was in charge of the new bandsaw.

Dolebury Warren (Churchill), and Simshill (Wrington) were purchased by the business in 1950/1 and there five employees were engaged in forestry work, which involved

reafforestation of some 60 acres at Churchill, an unusual enterprise at that time as such work was then mainly undertaken by the Forestry Commission. Both properties were later sold, the part of Dolebury containing the iron-age hill fort being acquired by the National Trust.

The business T Gosling & Son (Sawmills) Ltd no longer exists,

Wheelwrights

Towards Langford on the other side of the road is a house called The Lawns. In the 1930s Mr Bert Poultney ran a wheelwright's business from a shed at the right-hand side of this house, whilst to the left of the house is an outbuilding where Mr Clifford Holder began his garage business.

Another wheelwright, Mr Oliver Day, had business premises in the 1870s at the rear of Yew Tree House and from 1886 to 1891 Mr Tom Gosling was his apprentice.



Mr Oliver Day's wheelwright business at Yew Tree House.

Appendix

Royal Society of Arts

An extract from

https://www.rse.org.uk/cms/files/fellows/obits_alpha/carter_hb.pdf

HAROLD BURNELL CARTER, BVSc, DVSc (Hon), FRSE, AM

3 January 1910 – 27 February 2005

Harold Burnell Carter died on 27th February 2005. His working life, though centred around a single theme, led him into two successive careers, in animal science and historical scholarship. The theme running through Carter's life-long work was the Merino sheep as a producer of fine wool. The reason for this interest lay in the fact that Merino fine wool had long provided the backbone of the economy of Australia of which Carter was a native son. Typically, over 50% of Australia's export earnings from the 1830's to the mid-20th century came from the sale of Merino wool. By the 1930s, as Carter began his work, major influences were about to affect the viability of this economy, including, as the most apparent, the rise of synthetic fibres. To the young veterinary graduate, Harold Carter, there was a clear need for scientific investigation into the biology of wool to sustain its economic value in world markets. To this idea he devoted his life's work.

In 1970 Harold Carter retired from the ARC. to the village of Congresbury in Somerset where he lived with his wife, Mary, for the remainder of his life. It was not, however, one of idleness. From this base he developed his second working life - that of science historian. Carter's interest in Merino origins had begun long before his arrival in the UK in 1954. It was an integral part of his larger quest. In his view the key to the future of the Australian Merino lay as much in its past as in any other scientific aspect of its study. On arrival in Edinburgh this interest continued. It's first fruit came in 1964 with the publication by Angus and Robertson Ltd of Sydney, of *His Majesty's Spanish Flock*. It was a significant achievement. The writing had involved assembling, transcribing and mastering a vast number of original writings, mainly in the form of correspondence. This he combined with detailed scholarship of trade, politics, diplomacy, war, agriculture, manufacture and much else that surrounded the activities of the men and women who in the late 18th century were, for the most part unwittingly, enacting the birth of the Australian wool economy. Prominent amongst the players were King George III of the United Kingdom, and, above all, the figure of Sir Joseph Banks. Arising from his research for the writing of *His Majesty's Spanish Flock*, Carter had located a large collection of the letters of Joseph Banks in the Sutra Library in San Francisco. It unlocked the task that would occupy him for the rest of his working life and culminate in his Banks biography, *Sir Joseph Banks, 1743 – 1820* by Harold B Carter, 1988, British Museum (Natural History). To serve this work "The Joseph Banks Archive Project" had been established within the British Museum (Natural History) at Cromwell Road, Kensington, London with Carter as its founding Director. In addition to the Banks biography, *The Sheep and Wool Correspondence of Sir Joseph Banks 1781- 1820* edited by H B Carter, was published by the Library Council of New South Wales and the British Museum (Natural History) in 1979. These and related publications, however, he saw as by-products of his larger task – the ordered assembly into one location of more than 15,000 items of correspondence and other papers relating to the 55 years of Banks' working life, for use in historical investigation. To this and to his own original research and writing much of the present recognition of the significance and influences of the life of Sir Joseph Banks can be attributed. In 1996 Harold Carter was awarded an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Veterinary

Science by his Alma Mater, the University of Sydney and in 1999 he was created a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in recognition of his contributions to wool science and to the historical background to Australia's wool economy. In the Foreword to the 2007 edition of *The Australian Merino* by Charles Massy (Random House, Australia), Ken Ferguson concludes, "There is little doubt that Harold Carter was the most important figure in establishing the post-war biological research facilities for the wool industry in Australia and leading the research on the histology of the wool follicle." In his lifetime Harold Burnell Carter had indulged the energy and optimism of youth for a public good in which he truly believed. As a young man he revelled in his work, its outdoor nature, the land and the animals he lived among, and a camaraderie with the people with whom he worked shoulder to shoulder. Never apparently hurried, he worked inexorably. Four hours per day was, he said, a day's work; and, indeed, to be with him was to experience calm efficiency. Yet, as his travel diaries and personal memoir record, there were times when he worked, hard physical and mental work, for most of a 24-hour day and for days on end. His scientific data records are extensive and meticulous. His historical work was likewise based upon thousands of hand-typed transcriptions of original letters (of Banks and his correspondents and others) meticulously filed and indexed. In the latter decades of his life, on his retirement to Congresbury and the home, Yeo Bank, that he shared with Mary his wife, Harold Carter became an apparently more secluded figure. Yet the evidence of his correspondence and activities in historical research show him to have remained as energetic and engaged as throughout his life. Mary, his wife, survived Harold Carter by three years less a day.

Richard Carter