

5.12.67

Dear Mrs Gamlin,

re: St. Anne's Park

I doubt whether I can give you any information of any value about St. Anne's as I first knew it. We were practically in the country, the reason I wished to live there. It had rather an unsavoury nickname viz "Slopers Island" as we seemed so cut off from the rest of Bristol. Only one 'bus route passing near us, some years later on.

The wood was very wild and not interfered with. Nightingales used to sing there until after the first world war. Jays and magpies and many other birds lived there. The well was cleared out in my time and they found a wooden tube running from top to bottom, to ensure clean water at the top. The tube was made out of small tree trunks, bored through and attached to one another. They are in the museum now.

There used to be a chapel at the railway end, which was said to be connected to Wick House by an underground passage. When Wick House was being repaired the builders unearthed a tiled passage in the left side of the grounds. I am told this; 'the builder refused (or was told not to) to proceed further and filled it in.' Of course you know the history of the well. It was well known in the old days and supposed to have healing properties particular for scrofula and has been visited by various monarchs.

The land I built my house on extended into the middle of the junctions of the roads and was marked by a post which was there for a long time and until the corporation got the piece of land and finished off the corner properly.

Bloomfield Road was crossed by a fence with a gate which was closed one day each year as it was a private road. No house or buildings except at lower end. Land at both sides was market garden and this was the same on both sides of Wick Road which was really only a winding lane reaching Bath Road. No houses except three or four big private houses with large gardens. Where the clinic now is, was a nice and fairly big private house called Brooklea.

There were no houses on the far side of the wood except a few at the northern end of Birchwood Road and on one side of First Avenue and Eastwood Road. Elsewhere was all open country, farm lands and lanes on both sides of Fox Lane (Broomhill Road) right up to the Bath Road.

I must add I prefer St. Anne's as it used to be.

Yours sincerely,

Signed Harry Tinzl

NEW BRISLINGTON - NOW ST ANNES PARK

In writing this short story of St Annes Park as I remember it in the late 19th Century and early 20th Century it is difficult to know exactly where to start and for purposes of interesting reading why not start at 'The Local'. Indeed, there are not many people alive today who remember the old Langton Court as it was some seventy years ago. It was at that time the country house of one Gore Langton a very prominent family of that period, though when a Beer, Cider, Porter and Spirits Licence was granted to the house I have not troubled to investigate but the actual approach to the Hotel was by means of a sloping surface from Langton Court Road to the level of what was then called Addison Road. The building was then facing South and not East as it is now. In front was a lawn on which stood small trees and conifers which ran up to a high wall overlooking another piece of land containing Monkey Trees and Brambles which ran as far as 'Addison Avenue' and this piece of land was always referred to as 'The Lawn'.

The first Landlord was one Jack Board who was looked upon with as much reverence as the 'Parson'.

The old Langton Court was surrounded by a high 15 feet wall (which was the custom in those days) and opposite in Langton Court Road was a lot of outbuildings and sheds which housed the implements connected to the farming side of the Court which was followed by the orchard and vegetable gardens as far as Newbridge Road and then there were two or three fields as far as the Railway Cutting now utilized as the Park and Pleasure Gardens. People later residing in Langton Court Road would use their back entrance as a short cut to the Langton Court (or Klondyke) or even the Post Office which was then on the corner of Addison Road and Newbridge Road. The Post Office was also a general store and it was to this part that all the business was done. The first Post Office was staffed by the Weare family and I wonder whether any of that family are now alive, of course roads were not made and during the winter the ground would be water logged and to get to the Post Office we had to traverse Arlington Road and then proceed along Addison Road to our shopping store and Post Office. Sometimes as kids we would plough through mud and water lying in Langton Court Road, pass the Klondyke and cross over an old ash tip which provided more or less dry land to the Post Office as well as the Coal Yard or shed of Johnnie Western.

I should mention that the Post Office was known as the new Brislington Post Office to distinguish it from the old Brislington Post Office.

Two things stand out in my memory Mazawattee Tea and Monkey Brand - Do you remember them?

Now let us stay in the vicinity whilst we pay a call at the Coal Shed - run by John Western. This was also a Candle, Oil and Hardware Stores as well as a Coal supply store together with a help yourself system. A really good business man if ever there was one. I remember he had a lot of heavy hand carts built for carrying up to 1-cwt coal and provided with a slotted tail board.

Everyone of course wanted coal both in and out of season and altho' it was considered expensive at the time - 9d per cwt the manner in which it was supplied to the customers was much quicker and better than todays method. Very few people were able to find money to buy more than a cwt. Remember there was no gas laid in the streets or houses until the 20th century so that coal and wood - sometimes Coal Briquettes - were used to provide heating and cooking and lighting was obtained by means of paraffin lamps or candles. Boys and Girls of those days were only too glad to held their parents and the fact of there being coal in Johnnie Westerns shed and more in the coal house was sufficient urge for us to trudge through the mud pools and ravines to get the necessary fuel.

I must not forget to mention that to the older inhabitants of the district the Langton Court Hotel of today was called the Klondyke. I am not quite sure how this word crept into our vocabulary but my knowledge is that some time during the end of the 19th century the 'Brickfields' were being worked to capacity and a number of people came down from Lancashire to find employment in the cotton factory at Barton Hill but after a while the workers left the cotton factory and took a job at the Brickfields at about the same time St Annes Station and East Depot was being planned and this also brought a number of navvies to work in the area. I may be wrong but the first time I heard the Hotel called the 'Klondyke' was by a Mrs Barraclough who lived in Langton Court Road (you all have read of the Gold Rush to the Klondyke (America) in the 1897-8 period).

It would seem therefore that with the influx of men into the district, the Hotel began to do a roaring trade and when the wives found that when their husband and lodgers had had their meal they proceeded (very much as now) to the local.

There may be some resident alive today who can give a better explanation, if so, I should like to learn it (Its never too late to learn). I hardly expect this possible especially when it is remembered that about this period work on St Annes Station and East Depot was actually in operation and the crust of the Tunnel running from Langton Court Road to St Annes Station was broken open and probably hundreds of men were imported from Lancashire (where the cotton industry was failing) and they therefore made the Klondyke their meeting place after their working hours (probably 12 to 14 hours per day). How times have changed!

As I have said before opposite the present Langton Court Hotel were a number of outhouses and sheds which no doubt formed part of the Langton Court estate with gardens and fields at the rear. When I was a boy this piece of ground was in possession of a man named Holand (or Holland) but it was not long before the place fell into decay and were afterwards pulled down for the road to be made up. The other buildings in the precincts of the then 'orchard' were taken over by a Mr Johnnie Coombs who was a Dairy man and lived in Church Road, Redfield - more about this character later. Another man I remember was a Mr King who appeared to be a general labourer or woodman to Mr Jimmy Sinnott who eventually became the squire of the newly formed estate of New Brislington.

I must now mention that the name St Annes Park is fairly recent. In my young days the Parish Church was at Brislington and to distinguish the two places it was called old Brislington and new Brislington. Then how comes St Annes to the picture? The Vicar of Brislington was a Reverend Alfred Richardson who lived in the old vicarage. He was a great personality amongst the residents in his parish. He always made a visit around the parish on horseback. It was a delight of all children to greet Mr Richardson - (Boys raised their caps and Girls curtesed when they approached him). There was always a distribution of sweets when he dismounted and those boys who were able to be first to hold the reins whilst he made a call were rewarded with a small Silver coin.

This same gentleman during the course of his ministry discovered there was a ruined Chapel situated in a dense part of the woods. Search was made and it was discovered that this chapel was visited by Queen Anne and from then on New Brislington was not and the Railway Station was named St Annes Park - Again what a pity.

It is stated and substantiated by the fact that when the Crust of the Tunnel was broken down by the workmen two large stones fell away with fatal results and there were mounted and placed at the end of the station platform.

One was referred to as the 'Pear and the other as the Potato'. At that time also a Signal Box formed part of the station premises but has now disappeared.

You have all heard the expression He (or she) has a heart of stone well there you are and I leave you to decide whether true or false.

I have mentioned the Crust of the Tunnel as being broken in but this took place before my parents came to live in Langton Court Road but I remember residents telling me that they remember the tunnel which I have described in my previous paragraph. Whether it was unsafe or necessary to give a better view of East Depot that the top was broken down I have not been able to ascertain but the cavity now remaining has always been called 'The Cutting'.

(I have departed from the original so let me go back to the Klondyke). Proceeding from here up Langton Court Road (or Cart track to be more correct) as it is today the conditions at the best of times were such that mud and water oozed out of the path as you walked and of course in those days, although footwear was cheap the families were many and no doubt chilblans and colds were numerous but the bad conditions under foot can easily be accepted for it. There were three or four deep ponds bordering the road way and as one overflowed so they supplied the others and when all were filled they found their way out to the tip on which St Annes Board Mills now stand.

The main pond was in the Recreation Ground near the point where the "Swings now stand". This overflowed to another pond where the Adult School was later built and this then flowed into a narrow ditch and was carried beyond the Klondyke, across Newbridge Road (opposite to the Fried Fish Shop) and cascaded into the woods on to the withy beds and on to the stream to the ferry where it entered the Avon (we learnt to swim in the withy beds).

When the ditch became overloaded it spread over the road down Addison Avenue, across the vacant plot called the pitch (now absorbed in Addison Road) and down the embankment on which Arlington Road now stands (see page 11)...

Another smaller pond was near the entrance to the Park (by the Post Office) and this ran into another pond on which the Post Office now stands and when overloaded this found its way across the road and down Arlington Hill to the Board mills.

When reaching the other side of the Bridge you then picked up Langton Road which took you to Wick Lane.

I should mention here that when Langton Court Road was made up and taken over by the Authorities the houses were not numbered so that most people named their house for self satisfaction (a custom still operating today). Our house was named 'Bryn Awel' and being welsh was difficult to pronounce but it distinguished the Jenkins's from the Parkers next door which was called 'Devon House' Mr Parker was from Devonshire (see what I mean).

Later the Postal Authorities decreed that houses should be numbered as they are today - odd numbers one side and even numbers the other. It should naturally follow that even numbers should start 2 and 4 but this was not so and the first (Parkers House) even number 6 and the second (Jenkins House) was number 8 (as far as I can gather this is still in operation).

When my mother made enquires about this at the time she was informed that should the Rly Coy [Railway Company] decide to build two houses on the plot of ground toward the cutting then No 2 and 4 would be available. The explanation as here stated was given to my mother by the Postal Authorities and was typical of the official mind in those days. - Have we advanced since?

I have mentioned Johnnie Coombs as residing in Redfield and he is the character last remembered in St Annes. He kept two or three cows in the fields at the back of Langton Court Road, (now Recreation Ground) but his main duty was to visit the Klondyke. Remember that in those days the pubs were open very early in the mornings and it was quite easy to have an early drink before proceeding to work. However it is not surprising to learn that he failed to gain the custom of the residents of New Brislington. Talk about hygiene!! Many times I had seen him washing his hands in the large pond prior to milking and I have no doubt after all the years that have passed there are others still alive who can bear out this statement. (Our milk was supplied by Mrs Bindon).

Dividing the fields was an iron fence or railing and running toward the big pond from about the middle of Langton Court Road was a row of 4 or 5 tall Elm Trees and from the pond across to the cutting was a similar spread of wire fence and railings with 4 or 5 large Elm Trees in between. Then running to the station and close to the cutting was another line of Elm Trees and Brambles. It was in these pleasant surroundings that the boys spent all their spare time, climbing trees, picking mushrooms, cricket and rounders, Catty, Leap frog, Bedlam, weak horses, etc. etc. Real sports in those days.

This playground (the pitch) was used for all the games before Johnnie Coombs came into the picture. The side of Addison Road nearly as far up as Johnnie Westerns was not built upon, neither was that side running from Addison Avenue to the corner of Arlington Road. There was as a result of land (looking toward the netham) available plenty of room for a football pitch and it was on this land many years ago that real footballers were trained. It is worth recording here, that the footballers of the age were named "Hargett" Andrew, Jack, Ben, Joe, readily come to mind as they all played for the club which eventually became Bristol City.

Whilst enjoying ourselves we had to look out for Johnnie Coombs who would be pottering about the old farm building, prior to going to the Klondyke for his long spell of refreshment. If any of the boozing gang saw us playing word was at once given to the Klondyke and this would enrage Johnnie Coombs who set out with his bowler hat and stick to clear us off his pastures. The move would be spotted (perhaps by the girls) and the cry would go up "Here's Johnnie Coombs" and away we would go toward St Annes Station with Johnnie Coombs in hot pursuit.

You all remember "Charlie Chaplin" era and I have an idea that Johnnie Coombs was years in advance of Charlie Chaplin. The make up of Charlie Chaplin was similar in every way to Johnnie Coombs altho as a runner Johnnie Coombs was much superior.

We were not at all sure from what position he would attack us but we had the girls to give us warning and we were always ready to give him a good run. I do not recollect any of us being caught, as we were a tough lot and knew all the tricks of the track and of course we always had 60 or 70 yards start (thanks to the girls) and I am sure Chris Chataway would not have outpaced us. We knew of an escape track and generally it was toward St Annes Station where we could slide down the embankment on to Wick Road (or Newbridge Road) into the shelter of the woods. Naturally it caused our parents many anxious moments to think that Johnnie Coombs might catch us - but he never did!

Those were the days!

Langton Court Road ended the other side of the Bridge by the Chapel and at that point eventually became "Langton Road". To us old inhabitants it became known as "The Drive" because from the Wick Road end it was the private drive for the squire 'Gore Langton'.

Of course Green fields extended all the way and it was not until later that building took place on both sides of Langton Road. As you passed the Bridge a "style" led on to a path beside the cutting which conveyed you to a high bank, down which you trod or slipped on to Wick Road and facing Nightingale Valley.

To get to the station you turned left and crossed the other bridge down a path which took you to the Booking Office.

The other way (when wet) was to walk a little further beyond the style in Langton Road and tread along an ash path which eventually became Salisbury Road.

Those people living on the East side of Langton Court Road had a nearer cut to the station across Johnnie Coombes fields, but our mothers in long skirts which were fashionable at the period could not use this shorter cut because of the steep bank to enter Wick Road, had to leave house a few minutes earlier to be sure of getting to the station on time together the kids together.

This nearer cut was to get over the railings enclosing Johnnie Coombes field, keep close to the Railway Cutting over the second field which brought you to a point by the station where the Telephone Kiosk now stands. The bank however was 12 to 20 feet high but by making good use of footholds worn in the rocky surface, you eventually reached the bottom in safety. We were properly balanced in those days and I never remember any accident happening there (although Johnnie Coombes was sometimes very near to us) It is quite possible this was an obstacle to Johnnie Coombs - but a salvation for us!

Nightingale Valley relieved you on getting down the rocky bank (Salisbury Road path) and it was then very much as it is today, although perhaps they look now more attractive (I mean the houses).

Whilst in the area of the style mentioned previously and opposite to it was another style and gate leading across the fields to a gate which brought you out to the Railway Bridge now Conway Road. If the weather was wet and we were not very well shod in those days (no rubber boots or goloshes) we could not use the fields so we had to walk further along and down a rocky and unmade track (The Cabbage Gardens) to get to the Railway Bridge in Bloomfield Road. But you still had to get to the Bath Road and this was not easy as invariably you had to pick your way through mud and water.

The Doctor also had to be visited and he Dr. Cochrane lived about 100 yds up Kensington Hill. Do you ever think of this? There were no telephones in those days and the other alternatives was to make a call at Dr. Mathers surgery in Newbridge Road and await a visit until next day. (perhaps)

Let us proceed up Langton Road (The Drive) to Wick Lane (Wick Rd) at the top of the Drive was a wide gateway which was opened to let the squire through and to keep cattle from straying into Wick Lane, adjoining this gateway there was an old cottage inhabited by the Bradford family and Mr. Bradford and his son were wheelwrights to the squire. There was also in the corner a thatched cart shed together with a pony trap and various farm implements. What a memory I have at 70 Years of age! I well remember the old man Bradford in my presence, picking up an axle, with two wheels attached and carrying it across his shoulder and bringing it to the side of the shed and placing it gently on the ground - just as heavy weight lifters would carry a dumb bell. The wheels and axle in question were those used on the Hay Wagons of that day viz 5 feet high and 6 inches wide with a similar band to be fixed on by the wheelwright.

When one realises the 'wright' of this axle and wheels it seems that in those days the man should be classed as 'Hercules'.

On the other side of the gate were two old cottages (not thatched and were apparently occupied by members of the estate) but as far as my memory goes they were occupied by 1. Mr Wide and 2. Mr Thompson. Some of these families I know are still living at St Annes Park. Mr Thompsons garden extended as far as the boundary of St Fagaus.

Passing Mr Bradfords house in Wick Lane - which was later made up and called Wick Road - you proceeded through a narrow lane with high walls and trees until you came to a large house occupied by a Mr Johnstone who had a large Market Garden running in the direction of Bloomfield Road. The walls and the large house were demolished when house building was started to complete the estate as it is today.

This Mr Johnstone I should think was a retired Army Officer who desired a quiet life. I do not think he took any interest in the neighbourhood and very few people saw him although I had seen him on one or two occasions driving in a carriage and pair. There was no respect shown to him by the children he was always referred to as Mr Johnstone. Had he treated us like Mr Richardson he would have been an ideal resident. Must I say it! yes, Mr Richardson was nicknamed by the less respectful people as "Dapper Richardson".

Whilst I am talking of Mr Johnstone there was another resident in St. Annes who was employed by him on the Gardens. This man eventually owned the Cafe and was called Matthews Cafe. Yes it was Mr Matthews! no doubt the "racing gang" will remember him as he was also a 'Bookie' in his spare time. Mr Johnstones estate ran as far as Sandwich Road (made up later) where a Mr Bryant then took up a plot of land and had a Mortar Mill and Lime Kiln built for the future developement of Sandy Park district. That was on the right of Wick Lane and as far as I take you toward old Brislington.

On the left hand side before Bradfords cottages and almost opposite Mr Johnstones main entrance was another big house kept I believe by a Mr Brotherton who was also a reclusé as far as the children were concerned. I think he was a small farmer as there were a number of cattle sheds in the vicinity although as far as my memory goes I do not remember seeing any live stock there. The house however was eventually taken over by Mr Butler (Billy Butler we called him) the son of the Butler of Crewes Hole farm. Ah! I remember now, our only way of making ourselves acquainted with the cow sheds was by peeping through the cracks in the double gate which formed an entrance to the yard.

Later a Mr Shinner(?) took over the sheds and other buildings when a full view of the place was made available to the public.

I remember he employed a "Cowman" named Ted Lewis and it was his practice when fetching in the cattle adjoining Brooklea to ride the Bull bare backed to the shed cows in front and bull behind.

Talk about the Pied Piper of Hamlyn! There were more rats in the sheds and yard than have been visualized in the story.

Proceeding along Wick Lane (still keeping on the left hand side) was another mansion of which the inhabitants were proud altho it was very rarely opened to the public - Wick House.

As a little boy of three years of age I was taken by my brother and sister to Brislington National School (St Annes and Wick Road school were not then built) and of course we had to pass Wick House. There was a private entrance to the keepers lodge (opposite Sandwich Road) and it was usual for a large St Bernard dog to be housed in an iron grill just inside the gateway which could be seen as the door opened. It looked to us small children as a prehistoric monster and we were always relieved when we had passed the door to know we should not be attacked and eaten up! But on one occasion the dog was really in the roadway and this spectacle almost frightened us to death, luckily for us a man coming along the road untied the dog indoor and we were able to proceed to school, of course we were late but I forget what excuse was given for our late arrival.

I only remember Wick House being opened to the public on one occasion when a treat was given to parents and children. It was the Diamond Jubilee of 1897 when Mrs Harding gave the party. I don't remember what the spread was but I do remember the wonderful table decorations and the lighting effects of paper fairy lights (candles of course) I also recollect the walk home and passing the large St Bernard dog, safely housed for the night. What a wonderful time we had! (Happy days)

The main entrance to Wick House was opposite the co-op at Sandy Park Road but before reaching this particular spot there was another small copse which to our tender minds contained all kinds of fairies. To us Sandy Park Road was Sandy Lane and was simply a deep ravine running down to the Bath Road. From this point there were fields all the way and immediatly passing the main entrance to Wick House was a wicket gate which led through an avenue of trees to Manworthy Road. Crossing over the road the ash path continued right down to the back of Bellevue Avenue and straight on to a wicket gate which took you to the Parish Church. If you did not care to cross the fields you would walk on to Silcock's Stores where there was another gate and a path way which took you to the old Pilgrim Inn. This was called Frys Alley and the alley leading to the Church School was 'The Alley'. Instead of taking the path and proceeding along Wick Lane you were walled in on the right hand side with stonework about 12 feet high extending to the end of the lane. I think this was the private estate of Eagle House which ran to the Bath Road and of course formed the boundary of the the Sandy Park estate.

I remember this wall being demolished and houses being built beyond the Wick Road Schools. Whilst in this direction I ought to mention that when they were planning to lay out Winchester Road the workmen discovered the remains of a Roman Villa and this of course brought many visitors from afar only to be compared to the discovery of Tut-a-kamens Tomb at a later date in Egypt. I know a good deal of pottery etc. was discovered and part of it can now be seen in the Bristol Museum.

Without more ado, I must return to New Brislington passing down the Drive (Langton Road) we reach the 'Mission Church'. This served our spiritual home and many happy hours were spent there (apart from the Sabbath Day). Altho' Mr Richardson was the Parson the services were regularly held and the duties of Curate were undertaken by a Mr Clarke who made the pilgrimage from Redfield twice every Sunday for two or three years. He was conspicuous in the neighbourhood as he always wore a black and white straw hat and carried an umbrella! He may of course had an overcoat but I do not remember such a detail. He was nicknamed by the kids as "Jonah". He was a really good man and perfectly at ease with children and adults - but he always preached about Jonah in the Whales Belly and I don't think any book has yet been published to cover the journey of Jonah, as throughly as Mr Clarke travelled in those days.

The heating of the 'Mission' was by means of a slow burning stove and apart from a few yards radius the remainder of the Hall was stone cold. The verger was Mr Wide, who lived in the cottage at the top of the Drive but later the duties were taken over by a Mr and Mrs Aitken. There was quite a large choir - 12 boys and 10 men for sure and the small organ was played by a dear old lady - Mrs Harding - who lived at St Fagans. Her husband was almost a complete invalid but every Sunday he was wheeled down in a chair and took up a position near her. This same Mr Harding read the Lessons, although it was a terrific struggle for him to reach the Lectern. Mrs Harding (as kind a lady as ever lived) was also "Weak Hearted" and whenever a solemn hymn was sung she would sob bitterly. This used to tickle the choir boys and for which may we be forgiven.

Later of course an established Minister - Mr Wheatley - was appointed and became the first resident curate. He later left and was followed by a Mr Vaughen Jones and then the Rev. T. R. F. Jefferies took over to complete the good work which the other less famous ones had commenced. I must not forget to mention the services rendered to the Mission Hall by the Nurrow family. Mr Nurrow was the newly appointed Station Master and his sons Victor and Ralph were staunch members of the choir. The daughter "Olive" followed Mrs Harding at the organ (and continued until the new Church was built in 1900?).

It was at this time that the choir was really put on a proper footing. A Mr Warfield? came to live in the district and he immediately took on the duties of Choir Master. How we sang during those weekly "Choir practices" and although it was freezing cold we had to keep warm by singing now Psalms and Hymns. Ever tried it?

Another source of disturbance for the choir boys was the escapades of one Mrs Smith who lived in Langton Court Road (I won't tell you the Number). This lady was fond of the "bottle" or glass and she used to travel to the Sandringham for her evening "bed cap". There was no street lighting in the Drive at that time and the Mission was lit by means of oil lamps suspended from the rafters. Apparently Mrs Smith over did it from time to time and on seeing the Mission lights and hearing the choir singing, she would quickly open the porch door and take a chair to the fire. It was left to the Choristers to remove her at the end of the practice and the things she said when she got outside were not "obusive" but "complimentary" and I never knew her to attend a Service. However this continued for a couple of years until the new Church was built and the Mission Hall was transported to the field through which we passed when going to Brislington School and became known as 'St. Cuthberts'. It would not be right for me to pass on my story without recording some of the names which helped to make New Brislington such a wonderful little place. The following names readily come to mind:- Head, Packer, Pick, Wreford, Shell, Sutton, Bindon, Howell, Helliker, Bonham, Reynolds, Flook, Green, Godfrey, Knowles, Ash, Webb, Greenwood, Wide, Pardoe, Franley, Hargett, Summers, Winchester, Pendock, Fry, Hale, Russ, Crease, Jenkins, Bradford, Thompson, Smith, Lawrence (Charlie) Dutton, Evans, Lloyd, Haberfield, Coombs, Urwin, Barraclough, Marsh, Rich, Godfrey, Harris, Rodway, Board, Carter, Quesnell, Warfield, Turner and Thomas.

It was not until the School was built that any major developement took place on that side of Langton Court Road (The Drive) and then houses were built and the road made up. Gas mains were laid and street lamps were fixed and the recognised lamp lighters came upon the scene. It was some time later that Wick Lane was similarly dealt with. The Police Station was built soon after the Church was completed and a Mr Carter was the first Superintendent to reside on the premises.

I remember on one occasion some youths climbed over the builders fence and whilst exploring the new building a little horse play evidently took place inside with the result that one of the boys "Jimmy Green" became locked in one of the cells and it was not until a hue and cry had been raised that the

fact was discovered and the prisoner was released. I forget the actual circumstances but the safe return of Jimmy Green was the common talk for many days ahead.

I must not forget to introduce you to the Band of Hope section which met every Monday at the Mission. It was in charge of a Mr Head who I believe was the foreman of the Brickworks. He was an ardent supporter of the "Band of Hope Union". The subject was of course, on the evils of strong drink so much so that were all, more or less, Teetotal fanatics, and to see people 'drunk and incapable' continually worried us.

We sang wonderful temperance hymns from a long roller of verses whilst Mr Head's son operated it by means of a handle. One hymn which repeated it's self was 'Dare to be a Daniel, dare to stand alone! Alas the old temperance hymns have gone out of use and the younger generation seem to prefer; Come and have a drink with me and Beer Beer glorious beer.

About this time (tho' later) the Chapel was built and then the Methodists introduced their "Good Templars" which for some reason or other caused the Church "Band of Hope" to close down it's programme. However the principle was maintained and the Magic Lantern was introduced to the Mission Children. Slides were on glass and were hand operated by Mr Head and described various Bible scenes and stories.

Later moving pictures were introduced and these were controlled by some strange contrivances fixed at the side of the lantern and was strictly "untouchable". Mr Head's son took all the necessary protection! This did not last very long as about this period "Edison" became the man to introduce the phonograph to the British public and eventually it reached the Mission and brought music into the evening life of the residents. Mr Flook who lived in Newbridge Road was the music master and about every two weeks or so with the help of his boys the whole outfit of Phonograph, Records, brushes and cloths would be placed on a table.

The phonograph was apparently judged by the size of the Trumpet altho of course the music was the main source of entertainment.

The records were tubular discs which fitted over the sleeve of the apparatus and the "pick up" was much as it is today and the sound, (or none) came via the trumpet.

Artistes were considered great in those days and who would not be thrilled by hearing such artists as Madame Pattie, Tetrazine, Clara Butt, Kennerly Rimford, Cameo, Little Tich, Dan Leno, Sarah Bernhardt and Harry Lauder to name only a few? I am sure Mr Flook's name will ever be remembered by the residents of St Annes at the end of the last century.

Now a few words about School days - When we came to live in Langton Court Road in 1894 the alternative to Brislington National School was a house in Brislington Road rented by a Miss Bradford and it was here (until I was old enough to go to Brislington School at 3 years of age) that I first became acquainted with coloured beads which were on a wire much as they are today. At 3 years of age I was taken by my brother and sister to the big school at Brislington and as I have already described the method of getting there you will realise what difficulties and fear we had to overcome.

I well remember my first teacher there, a Miss Evans who was in charge of the infants class and to me was a second mother.

Sometimes we could not get through the Drive and Wick Lane and this meant a diversion through what is now Salisbury Road, up over First Avenue, along Broomhill Road, down to the Rock and up the Hill to the school passing a house called 'England Glory' on the left and the "Brook" on the right.

This was a frightening walk to us children as at the top of Broomhill Road and looking toward the station was a clump of small trees and many ghosts and pixies were there to check our advance, but beyond this there was a nasty dark lane leading to Fox's and on the corner were a couple of Haystacks near the road to increase our mental difficulties and having passed through another over grown Lane we were in sight of the School perched on the Hill top. There was an old character living rough in those days who for some reason or other was nicknamed 'workabout' by the previous generation and whenever they saw him they would shout 'workabout' which so infuriated him that he would seize a large stick and threaten to kill them.

This of course preyed on our childish minds that we were terrified lest we should be caught and be the first victim. I wonder how many today remember 'Workabout'.? The School Mistress was named Perks and her assistant Miss Jones. The School Master was Mr Porter and there was hardly a lad of those days who did not reverence his name. He could (and did) use a cane if necessary but he was a fine tutor and built up a fine body of lads who could hold their own at Arithmetic, Scripture, Football and Cricket - His favourite position when the school bell was ringing was on the corner of the School grounds with a whistle and cane in hand. When we heard the whistle we put on the pace and if we did not respond he would wave the cane and meet us at the bottom of the steps much as the cattle drovers did, but he did not use the cane except in extreme cases.

He was, himself a good all round sportsman and never believed in all work and now play - rather the reverse. In fact in those days the appointment of a Schoolmaster was made by a School Board comprising the Squire, the Vicar, and

one or two gentlemen of the district. Names? Yes! Squire Ireland, Rev. Richardson, Joseph Cooke Hurle, Mr Chowm (Clerk to the Council and Sexton of the church) and Mr Bonville Fox. In later years this board was abolished and became controlled by the Somerset Education Authority. The boys enjoyed going to School in those days as being a church school we had an advantage over other School Boys as each Ash Wednesday we attended Church Service in the morning and then the rest of the day was a holiday.

As far as I can gather Mr Porter was able to tell us himself what playtime was allowed, and being such a keen sportsman himself he would join us on the playground and with a small rubber ball it was everyones delight to get at him, by fair means or foul to get possession. The progress of time was completely forgotten and after about 90 minutes play during which he would be bathed in perspiration he would blow his whistle assemble us in the lower yard and then say a prayer before dismissing us for the day. As long as a ball remained on the playing ground he was prepared to carry on for a long period but if the ball was kicked over the wall into Careys field a sign would go up and he blew the whistle.

In time the boys got used to this and directly one ball went over the wall another one was soon brought from a pocket and the game would continue until he was exhausted. This method of recreation continued until I left School in 1907.

I have dealt with my School days so now let me return nearer home. As I have previously stated from the top of the Drive to the Railway Bridge (apart from the Mission) was all grazing land and immediately beyond the Bridge houses commenced - primarily to house families who had come into the district when East Depot was opened and the first two on the left hand side were occupied by the Webbs and the Greenwoods. Both these men and their families were prominent in the progress of the Mission campaign. A few doors beyond lived a person whose name has long been forgotten. Her name was Mrs Fox, who to make both ends meet used her passage to the front room which became a shop. Here it was possible to purchase Candles, Bees Wax, Globe Metal Polish, Matches, Soap and all other sundries provided the order was not too heavy (and the lady heard your knock.) for her limited stock. I never remember going inside the house but there was always a strong smell of paraffin oil which was supplied from a cask at the end of the passage. But I do remember an advertisement recording the wonderful effect of 'Pears Soap'. It depicted a dirty old tramp, sat down by the side of the road, under a hedge and writing a letter to the proprietors of Pears which read thus:- "Dear Sirs, Two years ago I used your soap since when I have used no other". It was, I should think one of the first pictorial adverts ever put on the market.

This of course was followed by 'Bovril' and 'Oxo'; 'Bile Beans', 'Sunlight Soap', 'Monkey Brand' and 'Owbridges Lung Tonic'. There were no such ones to encourage Drinkers as there is today like "Beer is Best" and "Guinness of strength". I also remember Mrs Fox as keeping (to me) a large Airedale Dog to give the alarm in case she was in bed or down the garden. Another thing which puzzled me was the fact that the front door was never fully opened, but was controlled by a chain attached to the lock and a swivel at the bottom of the door. Any purchases were supplied direct through a small gap just enough for your oil can to pass through. I could never understand how the shop was restocked and it must have been carried or rolled by every of the back entrance, and this meant a journey of 100 yards or more from Arlington Road. And, why the large dog? Was it sa a companion or as a safeguard to prevent intruders getting beyond the front door and under the bed! At a later date the owner (and adverts) departed and the house was let, I think to the 'Knott' family?

But the need for a shop was still necessary cut out the walk beyond Arlington Road and to meet this the house next door was opened as a Emergency and Miscellaneous store - without adverts! Yes it was the 'Wide' family who started the new business. This proved a blessing to the children who were now able to study the luscious fruits in the window, and the prices! oh!! Oranges, (large ones) 4 @ 1d, smaller ones - Blood oranges 6 @ 1d ! Dates cut from the slab one penny per pound and seasonal vegetables and vinegar on tap. Remember however, although vegetables and fruit were cheap and plentiful coppers were very scarce and it was a job to find even a copper to satisfy our desires. Farthings were very popular in those days and two farthings would enable us to buy 3 Blood Oranges or $\frac{1}{2}$ lb of Dates.

Oh yes! there was plenty of land for kitchen gardens but after 12 hours work there was very little time for gardening by the workers.

Mrs Wides enterprise soon paid and it was not long before a horse and cart was purchased and Mrs Wide herself started a door to door service extending as far as Sandy Park which was now being developed. I recollect the Horse was called 'Tommy' which was housed in a shed at the bottom of Emery's Garden. Proceeding down the road and facing Arlington Road were two new shops built by Johnny Emery. The first one was occupied by a bootmaker named Phipps and many times have I taken our boots there to be repaired and the price was - Heeled 6d, Soled and Healed 1/3, Ladies Healed 4d, Soled and Healed 1/-. Shoes were very rarely worn - except indoors perhaps - so I cannot give the price of repairs for that commodity. Patched shoes were quite the fashion in those days and eventually with the introduction of adhesives invisible patches were often used and the price for an invisible patch was 2d or 3d - according

to size. Its strange but the 'Soles' usually outlived the uppers and not the reverse as is the case today. The other shop was taken over by a Mrs Cox and as Mrs Weare had left the P. O. business in Newbridge Road the Postal business was taken over by Mrs Cox and the St Annes Post Office was established. A drapery buisness was also launched as well as a daily paper service and it was here that my elder brother earned a few coppers each week for delivering morning papers to certain inhabitants. Evening papers were not supplied as this side of the industry was covered by the Godfey's who lived at the top of Nightingale Valley - but more later in dealing with that side of Wick Road. The present Post Office in Langton Court Road was built much later in the 20th century. Enough of Langton Court Road for the present and return to the top of the Drive and proceed toward St Annes Station. Opposite St Fagan's stood 'Brooklea'. Early in the 1900's it passed into the Land of A. J. Smith a Renowned Coal Factor of the period but my knowledge of him is somewhat limited in so far that he was a big name in the 'Non Conformist' world and was instrumental in having the Chapel built when the 'Good Templars' started their movement in the district. He eventually became Lord Mayor of Bristol and resided at Brooklea for many years. Alas! Brooklea has now disappeared.

Proceeding down the hill is Nightingale Valley. The shop at the top was let to the 'Godfreys' and it was from here that evening papers were sold. The boys also delivered papers until the business was transferred to Mrs Cox and the family then moved to Langton Court Road near the church rooms. The house was then occupied by a Mrs Jenkins, who in addition to selling sweets and tobacco provided light refreshments to those "on the road". Near the end of Nightingale Valley lived Mr Dyer who kept a couple of horses and carts for haulage and farming purposes and one of his horses was named 'Damsel' and with the days work done would negotiate Wick Road and Nightingale Valley without guidance from the Driver.

At the end of the Valley lived the Bindon family and it is good to be able to talk of Mrs Bindon who although having a large family she was also the Dairy man and supplied the district with a daily call. It was necessary for her to be up at the break of dawn and harness the pony and proceed to Hargells Farm at the end of Water Lane, Brislington to get a milk supply. On many occasions the water in the Lane would be too high for the horse and cart to get through and this meant a longer journey and turn off at the top of Bristol Hill into West Town Lane and on to Hargells. Strange to say, in spite of the difficulties the milk was always at the doors on time and it had to be laddled out from the large can direct to the jugs at each call. The measure was always a little over to allow for spilling and I never heard of a complaint about "Short Measure". Oh no, Johnnie Coombes never got the trade from the local inhabitants.

When Mrs Bindon was unable to carry on the mild supply it came into the hands of a Mr Parsons from the Barton Hill area. This Mr Parsons was a cheerful character and always wore an immaculate white coat as also did his assistant Charlie Ellis. But the thing I remember most was the beautiful horse which travelled along at about 20 miles per hour and bearing in mind the fact that many of the roads were primitive it was always a source of wonder why someone was not killed. The whole of the houses on the right hand side of Langton Court Road from the Bridge to the pond (Adult School) were built by Johnnie Emery who lived at no 18 (? 20) and it was in the "gap" that the Lime Kiln and ashes were mixed to provide the mortar. He also had a container for pitch which was at that time used for providing the 'damp course' to the houses. All the joinery was made in the shed at the top of Mr Emery's garden and this is the place where "Tommy" was kept later. The haulier was a Mr Viner who lived in the last house by the pond.

The Bootmakers shop I have previously referred to was later let to a Mr Unwin 'Johnnie Unwin'. He was one of the importers from Lancashire. One part of the shop was for the sale of sweets etc. and the other was the "Butchery". It was a treat in those days for the boys and girls to play games in the front of the shop, much to the annoyance of the shopkeeper, but he was not such a good runner as 'Johnnie Coombs' so we were not alarmed at his presence. I remember we would stand for hours with our noses glued to the glass trying to decide how best to spend a Halfpenny. One peculiar thing always remains in my memory as will other folk of that period who read my memoirs - was the standard of hygiene practiced in those days as Window Dressing was not considered necessary. The result was that thousands of flies and blue bottles from Ponds and waterways would appear to be attracted to this particular shop and although flypapers were in use the majority of the flies etc. would be flipped off by means of a roll of paper or cloth. Those injured or killed would fall to the counter where they would remain until they were swept up. Those able to do so would of course seek shelter amongst the sweets which in those days were unwrapped so that we had more sweets than papers. We therefore nicknamed the proprietor "Johnnie Fly Blow" which will stick as long as the old residents remain - and there are not many .

You may well ask why these conditons were tolerated but in those days you must remember 'Beggars could not be Choosers' and any man coming home from the Brickfields, Lysaghts or the Netham reuquired a substantial meal and it was not possible to send to Redfield or Lawrence Hill for meat so a makeshift had to be provided and 'Johnnie Unwin' was the man. I well remember him and his Lancashire dialect. He wore a butcher's apron looked more like a Barber than a Butcher but he managed to carry a stock of meat in spite of transport difficulties and the absence of a refrigerator. Should you go into the shop and ask for something he would look into every corner of the shop and would then turn to you and say 'I'm sorry, we've got it ordered but it ain't cum'. This quip was enjoyed by the inhabitants for many years. I don't think he was able to retire from the business and take a holiday on the Riviera as they do today but he filled his place amongst the not-forgotten ones in St. Annes.

Talking of Flies - do any of you remember the Fly Paper man? Well, when the summer came - and we had Summers then? this man would patrol the roads dressed up in an old Hat on which was stuck Flypapers. He would cry out 'Catch 'em alive. Don't have any flies - Catch 'em alive.' I dont think he sold many as we couldn't afford such luxuries.

Let us cross over now and proceed down Arlington Hill. When Mrs. Bradfords shop closed down the ground floor shop premises was let to a butcher named 'Davis' and was the first Butcher's shop to be opendd in St. Annes. By this time the butcher side of Johnnie Unwins was closed down.. I remember Mrs. Davis as being a fine handsome lady and she took complete control of the Cash Department. Soon afterwards Mr. Davis moved to larger premisas at Lawrence Hill (on the corner of Ducie Road opposite the Packhorse)¹/₂ Above Mr. Davis Butchery was another large room which was taken over by the C.E.M.S. as a young mens club where ping-pong was introduced together with other games and a library. The top room was reached by the stairway of the house but when the Church authorities took on the present 'Outside' stairs were made and fixed for an Entrance and Exit.

Later a Billiard Table was purchased and to take the heavy weight two iron pillars were fixed in the lower room so that it met with the requirements of the local authorities. Apart from a couple of houses following the Church Rooms, the whole of Arlington Hill was a deep rocky ravine of Sandstone and was the main route to get to Lysaghts and the bottom factory or to Redfield or Lawrence Hill.

The Brickfields lay on the left of Arlington Road and this was reached by a rough track across the field to the boundary wall of the Brickfields. For 'workmen only' a steel ladder was fixed but was not used by the public. At the bottom of the ladder was an un-made road which led to 'Tommy Matthews' Cafe. Mr. Head, whom I have previously mentioned lived in one of the houses there and the ladder was often used by him and his sons to make a quick journey to the Mission Hall. Indeed when I come to reflect it would not have been safe for a near-intoxicated person to attempt the Ladder track although of course the workmen saw no danger from that source. You may well ask what happened to the Brickfields? Well, as far as I can remember, when the cost of Bricks became too dear the Bosses had them imported from Belgium and France and the only alternative was to demolish the lot. The High Chimney Stack was dismantled and the Kilns were covered with rubble and ashes and brought up to its present level with the help of the Bristol Corporation Refuse Dept.

The other side of Arlington Road was at a higher altitude and this ran back to Addison Road and Newbridge Road and formed the embankment to flat land which I have described as the Pitch. It was on this piece of land that I have my earliest recollections of Guy Fawkes night. It was from here also that our home made kites were flown. And what a thrill it gave us kids to see our kites hovering over Bristol and controlled by someone holding a ball of string and sitting on a large stone on the 'Pitch'. Messages in the form of small pieces of paper were looped through the string and the vibration of the ~~air~~ caused these small pieces to reach the kite. I have since realized that the Kite was not over Bristol but probably hovering above East Depot!

Before I forget it there was another shop at the corner of Arlington Hill and Addison Road. The proprietor of this shop was a Mr. John Hale who by trade was a Monumental Mason and had previously resided at Redfield or Whitehall. However the business was run by Mrs. Hale and her daughter. There were many children but the shop was a miniature 'Woolworths' in so far as everything was lovely and clean and would meet any demands of the neighbourhood. There was only one thing about it they belonged to the Chapel and the majority of new Brislington residents were 'Church people'. Rather than support non-conformists they would go to Redfield, Lawrence Hill, Barton Hill and even Wells Road to obtain articles which could have been purchased at 'Hales'!

There was also another shop in Addison Road kept by a Mr. Thomas who repaired boots and shoes but who also carried on a Greengrocery business. Early in the present century the family emigrated to Canada and this added further customers to the call of Mrs. Wide.

I have mentioned Newbridge Road but some 70 years ago, there were only four houses built between Newbridge Road and the Netham Bridge. In these there lived amongst others, Mr. Murrow (Christian name Aristarchus) Station Master, Mr. Rodway - Lockmaster and Mr. Russ who was the jobbing builder. He and his two sons would take jobs, inside or out and would give complete satisfaction. How many of us would be pleased to employ such workmen today?

In the other direction there was Mrs. Weare's and a few houses beyond extending to a drive opposite the entrance to what is now Woodbridge Road, opposite was a large field which extended to the Woods and faced Butlers Crews Hole. This piece of land was excavated and large quarry stones were brought up and placed in the field where workmen cut and shaped them to the necessary dimension. This was called the 'Quarry' and was owned by a Mr. Thatcher. There was room for a Cricket Pitch with short boundaries and here the first Cricket Team in St. Annes was formed. It comprised employees of the Netham and Lysaghts and when building was commenced in developing that part of Newbridge Road the Netham Cricket Club was transferred to Farmer Coombes field and the club carried on until the 1914 war.

Passing this field we came to the Western End of St. Annes Woods which with trees and Bushes growing was enclosed by a Wire fence and extended to St. Annes Station. Some years later the road was straightened filled and tidied up to its present condition.

The woods was open on one side only, the other side (St. Annes Chapel) was strictly private and was securely enclosed with barbed wire fencing. The public portion was a delightful part to explore, and many hours of enjoyment was taken in bird nesting, Primroses, Bluebells, and Violets and other woodland flowers which were then in due season - but you had to be up early in those days to get the lion's share! Through this pathway of course you had a quick way to Blackswarth Ferry which took you over to the lead and shot works at the Netham and also to Butler's Distillery at Crews Hole. This would undoubtedly be the roadway used by Queen Anne when she visited the Chapel, - but I don't remember that. Oh! and there were Rabbits in abundance. I am a little backward now as after entering the woods and proceeding toward Blackswarth Ferry we came to a small bridge over the stream and after getting over the stile there on the right was a well, - usually overflowing and was used by the cattle for drinking purpose and it was only in later years that it was named St. Annes Well. To think that we did not realise that until later in life. Continuing further on the left was a wider space of water with a sewer pipe crossing it and over this pipe was called the 'Withy Bed?'. Instead of crossing this however we proceeded along the road where the banks widened and this was where the boys learnt to swim. Very few of us possessed Bathing trunks and in the event of girls or ladies coming along we would take cover in the Withy Bed until the signal was given and we would all reappear and carry on until the woodman perhaps Mr. Lewis came along. We couldn't run to the Withy Bed but all of us made for our clothes and disappeared into the undergrowth near by until danger was passed when we would continue our paddling activities. Sometimes Jimmy would appear unexpectedly and then we would simply stand and stare wondering what would happen next. It never happened and we were glad to dress and tell our mothers what an exciting time we had experienced.

From this point, at the back of Woodside Road, was the working side of Thatchers quarry which extended to a point near Addison Road. A lot of water lay at the bottom of the quarries and these water holes formed the centre of the 'Fisherboys' but the 'catch' would only consist of Tadpoles. These waters were also fished by the boys of Barton Hill but as they outnumbered the near Brislington boys we had to take second place and go elsewhere - I forget where that was! Eventually Mr. Thatcher gave up the quarries and it was then taken over and filled in by the Corporation as their official 'Tip'. The Board Mills now blot the landscape and the pleasure of long ago have gone. I have previously referred to Johnnie Unwin and Davis as the Butcher serving the district but shortly afterward when the population increased further supplies were required and houses were visited every day by a Butcher named Jefferies who kept a shop at Barton Hill. There were many children employed in the business and one person in particular crops up here. I refer of course to daughter Laura Jefferies who was best known to the residents with the ability to drive the pony and the speed at which the pony travels was quite as fast as the milkman (Parsons) and the speed of Laura's animal was the talk of the neighbourhood for many years and it was said at the time that Laura was the only member of the family who could drive with safety. And talking of travel brings back to mind another character who startled the neighbour with fast driving. I refer of course to Mr. Beak. It was quite early in the present century that the Motor Cycles were introduced and to be able to drive a motor cycle, much less than being able to own one was an achievement. Anyway this man Beak kept the Wagon and Horses up the Netham and was also interested in an Engineering business at Keynsham or Salford tho' I have been unable to establish the fact. It was his practice to cover the journey each day by means of his motor cycle and in those days the Sidecar was unknown - except in theory. The sound of Harry Beakes machine as he travelled via Brislington down Wick Road was sufficient to stop our games and to run across the fields to the woods from where we could see the contraption of a Motor Cycle flash by. Many times the machine would catch fire but this did not worry Mr. Beak as if the wind was in front of him the flames would blow behind him but if the reverse way he would continue to ride along and fight the flames with his muffler or his gloves perhaps his hat. I presume had he stopped, the machine would be blown to 'Eternity'. However it didn't happen but it was a sight which thrilled us all.

I wonder if any of the present residents who knew old Beak would dare to challenge my impressions. He was always referred to by the boys or girls as Beak, the Madman!

Now to return to Langton Road When the School was built the path to Conway Road was stopped, the School playground surrounded by a high wall and the land beyond as far as Conway Road was turned into a Market Garden and owned by a Mr. Ford, who employed a staff of men and women to perform all duties from early morning to late at night - Remember there were hardly any Trade Unions in those days but there was plenty of unemployment and poverty - so let us pay tribute to those organizations which founded the Welfare Estate. For many years the field on the left of Bloomfield Road was grazing ground and became - eventually - Corporation allotments. Beyond this first field was another Market Garden owned by the Mr. Johnstone - previously mentioned. I think this part was also taken over by Fords, as far as the Railway Bridge in Bloomfield Road but eventually houses were built and the Market Gardens disappeared.

I have not yet finished the tale of New Brislington.

First Avenue was approached through a rough roadway which no doubt at one time formed the link between the Langton Court and the Estate Office, which stands at the top of the Avenue overlooking the Station in front (& Corsham and Hanham at the back with a wonderful view of the River and Crews Hole). There were several Barns and outhouses in the vicinity containing farmers implements with a fenced area known as the 'Pound' until such times as the owner paid compensation for trespass. This was 'Poundage' money tho' under which clause of the Income Tax Schedule it applied I do not know. Those were the days! Do we really believe they were the Good Old Days!

There were about 6 houses in First Avenue, occupied by (to us) fairly wealthy people. I remember some of the residents as being named Waite, Pendock, Sheriff and the Revd. Beale.

Mr. Waite was the builder, or contractor connected with the Cabot Tower.

Mr. Pendock was the Govt. Inspector of Factories who played a great part in the activities of the Mission Hall. It was always the boys (not necessarily Choir boys) delight to go around at Xmas time singing Carols and after doing the rounds

of Brooklea, Mr. Fagaus and one or two other likely donors we made an effort to reserve our best presentation of music to Mr. Pendock.

Instead of having to sing 4 or 5 carols, directly the first words of any particular carol was started, up would go the lights (lamps) the door opened and we were invited inside to enjoy the hospitality of the Pendock family. When I think of it - Oranges, Apples, Pears, Peaches, nuts, dates etc. etc. - It still makes my mouth water and followed by Mince pies, Xmas pudding with as much lemonade and Stoneginger as we could get down. After this, those who were able to manage it would have a nice cup of Cocoa to protect us from the cold winter outside. There was no nonsense when we went carolling in those days. Although Jimmy Smart was the Squire I never remember Carol Singers going there.

And who can remember the Wild Rabbits that delighted to come out of their burrows in the woodland at the top of the Tunnel and scamper about the field without fear of poachers or the gun. The Rabbits have gone but the guns are still with us. In those days, as I have said before the land was and to deviate one foot from the path or roadway meant possible rebuke from Jimmy Smart who seemed to be everywhere surveying his possessions. It seemed to us kids that he used a telescope as much as Lord Nelson as he appeared at most unexpected times and in most unexpected places - but as with Johnnie Coombs there was always someone who spotted him and we soon got him into our range of sight.

We passed the Estate on the way to Bees' Tea Gardens and had to negotiate another narrow patchway where Eastwood Road now stands and these particular fields were searched regularly for mushrooms when in season. Sometimes we had a fair picking but more often than not we would reach home with one or two or quite empty and wet pants. Even early in the morning there was always a chance of meeting Jimmy Smart but in any case we had to run past the Estate Office. Whilst in the area of the 'First Avenue' I remember that when my elder brother, who delivered papers for Mrs. Cox gave up, I took over and whilst doing this small job, I was asked to be a house boy or errand boy for the Revd. Beale. I had to clean knives, and Boots and run errands besides doing any boys job in the house including picking up coal if required. Saturday morning however was my best day as he was always having something for his tailor who was in business in Park Street. He paid the car fare from Arnos Vale to the Tram Centre en route to Park St. But the journey to Arnos Vale was the worst as conditions underfoot were really bad. I believe the Basic pay

was 1/- per week so what actual advantage this was to my parents I do not know except that it kept me off the streets and in good company! I would be about 8 years of age then and although Arnos Vale was a considerable distance the prize at the end was considered justified in those days. And now having gone so far in my wanderings of 65 years ago I must mention how we spent our spare time. Some of the menfolk cultivated allotments whilst others retired to the Klondyke or stayed at home completing their education by studying Political Economy and the value of Trade Unions or reading the evening paper until lighting up time when they would go to bed to be awakened by the 6 o'clock hooter at the Cotton Factory. Most menfolk would be employed on the Railway and others at Lysaght, The Brickfields, Butlers, Netham or the Cotton Factory (hence the 6 o'clock hooter). Alarm clocks were a luxury for most people and therefore the 6 o'clock hooter served the whole community. There was I believe a recognized hour for dinner and a half day Saturday (1 O'clock) but what firms stuck to this method I would not know. It was quite common to work at least 60 hours per week which only varied when work was 'short' and the basic rate was about 16/- per week. And it is today spoken of as the 'Good Old days' What rubbish!! I wonder whether the present generation ever give a thought to what their forebears suffered in the early part of the 20th century - Remember there was very little gas in houses And Bathrooms were luxuries to be had on by the rich. The bottom factory I remember was lit by open gas jets and the incandescent burner had not been adopted and the hovels outside were not under Sanitary arrangements - many of the four legged animals were much better housed than their two legged masters.

Yes times were hard in those days but somehow or other most of us survived until the end of the 1914-18 war when conditions improved considerably.

The children at the period I am dealing with (late 19th nearly 20th Century) could leave school after they passed the 7th standard (age 13 Or 14) and they were ready to face the world and take what was coming to them. As regards the girls there was only one alternative to gentleman service and that was the Factory. There was Frys, Todds and Wills who employed several and also the Corset Factory at Redfield to absorb the remainder or perhaps the Pottery

in Feeder Road. Many however preferred to stop at home and learn dressmaking. The bottom factory of course was fed by girls and women in the Barton Hill area. The boys of course were demanded in various factories in Bristol and district as they provided cheap labour so that it often happened that father and son were used together to form a medium for future bargaining. The Educational systems of that time did not provide financial assistance as it does today so that a potential 'Prime Minister' did not get a chance amongst the lads of Brislington. The womenfolk were kept busy attending to their children (7 was quite a common numeral and families of 10 and 12 would be a normal brood). There was, however the alternative of leaving home at 13 and going into gentlemen's Service. How the thought must have struck terror into the young girls of those days when they knew they were leaving home at 13 years of age and going amongst strangers into a gentleman's house to become 'domesticated'. Early in the morning (like here factory sister) until late at night (unlike here factory sisters) perhaps one half day per week and perhaps one full day per month which would enable her to visit her parents living not too far away. Many girls were sent so far away from home that they only returned once per year to spend a short holiday with their loved ones. Wages do I hear! Yes - starting price £5.00 per year (with all found) rising possible to £12 per year if you stayed long enough, the question of working 90-100 hours per week was never considered and girls taking advantage of life with the gentry were 'Slaves' and were called Skivvies. No wonder times have changed to cause a headache and heartache to the so called gentry today. It was stated years ago 'only Donkeys and fools worked' and now they can't find the donkeys there is still a good market for fools. The boys and girls who were able to get a job in the factories (many of which were situated in Bristol) and the manner of getting there at 7 or 8 o'clock in the morning was no concern of the employees. There were no buses on the road and very few cycles and we all relied on Shanks pony. A cycle could be obtained for a couple of quid which meant 5/- down and 1/- per week for 10 months, but even then a cycle was considered to be a luxury to be enjoyed by the middle classes. On leaving School at 15 years of age, I managed to get a junior clerks job with a Boot Manufacture at Portland Square. I used to travel by foot via Feeder Road, Victoria St., High St., and the Horsefair - Wages 7/6 per week. Hours 8.0 a.m to 5 or 6 p.m according to requirements. Half-day Saturday 1.0 p.m.

What amount would have been left for mother had I been able to travel by tramcar from Arnos Court to Bristol Bridge each way - each day would have had a disastrous effect on the exchequer. Most of the lads would make similar journeys - perhaps to Bedminster and if the weather was bad we had to dry off our clothes as best we could.

I have dealt with the boys and girls of the period but there are one or two characters I cannot forget. They were not national figures in the true sense but one of the Characters was Edwin Boyles who lived in Langton Court Road - next to Mrs. Wide. He was a very tall boy at an early age and suffered from Growing pains which were prevalent in those days. He was always about when wanted and after some years as assistant gardener at Brooklea he joined the Army and became a selected youth for the Kings Company, Grenadier Guard, whereby he was able to tell us many tales of like in the Army of the personalities he had met. He was badly wounded in the 1914 war but never came back to St. Annes.

Another one was Jimmy Green who had the misfortune to get locked in the police station as I have previously recorded. He was full of devilment and always had a smile and he was so much liked that he was indirectly connected with a song popular with the [REDACTED] Minstrels who used to give concerts on Weston Sand. The song was called 'Come out Jimmy Green' True enough this was our Jimmy Green.

And now for the International Celebrity - Of course I refer to Eva Turner the operatic Singer. Her father was resident Engineer at the Cotton Factory and lived in the house opposite the cotton factory (then called Cotton Factory Lane) I think Eva started school at Barton Hill but when St. Annes School was opened she was transferred here. Eventually her parents came to live in one of the houses facing the woods. As a young girl Eva was quite a good pianist and 'voice' seemed to follow later. I have heard it said that when a local baker named Draper was delivering bread he heard a child's voice singing to her own accompaniment. Apparently this Mr. Draper was a good judge of 'Vocalists' and immediately took steps to enquire into the possible chance of Eva becoming a famous singer. And as it happened that Eva became the leading operatic figure of our time -

I have not been able to verify these impressions and I hope one day to meet her to confirm my statement. I do however remember her father who was then a keen follower of Football and was an 'ever present' when St. Annes Football Club played in the

second of Johnnie Coombs field which ran up to the back of Mr. Turners house. Her brother Norman was also one of the lads who took his place with the lads of the Village and I can see him now carrying the music case when Eva had to go to her music lessons.

What were our amusements those days? It is ~~difficult~~ for the present generation to appreciate exactly how we lived and played together in those days, but on reflection we found our enjoyment in our own way. There was the Band of Hope Good , Mr. Heads Magic Lanterns and Mr. Flocks grampphone, but I think the greatest thing in our young lives was the Annual Sunday School Sports which took place at Foxs - old Brislington followed by tea in a large marque. Later the Sunday Schools of Bristol approached the Great Western Railway regarding an excursion to Weston-S-Mare. An excursion was fixed by Mrs. Murrow the Station Master and my word how this was greeted by us all.

It meant a good deal of hard work for our parents to get us ready. We all had to wash our feet the night before and go to bed early as to be seen entering the sea with dirty feet would have caused enough scandal to blast the neighbourhood for weeks to come. Each member of the family had to turn out in their best clothes and then of course there were sandwiches to be packed overnight and tied into separate packets. Besides there were cups and saucers, milk, towels and lots of paraphernalia not to be forgotten before finally having a spread at Huntleys restaurant near the sea front.

After getting to the station we had to locate our parents who had to make sure nothing had been forgotten at home and tickets were then issued by Mr. Murrow or others of his staff assisted by our teachers who had to use every precaution to prevent us falling on the track.

Strange how the elements seemed to be against us on these days. We had to spend our time between the showers under the pier and near the concert party but when the sun shone there was paddling to be enjoyed as well as donkey rides. If you wanted to have a real bathe you had to hire a bathing machine for which the charge was ld much too dear for us and to attempt to strip on the sands would fetch out the Police Force, so what were we to do? Many of the boys when the tide was out would attempt to walk through walls of mud to reach the 'Danger Post'. Although calls would go up from the sands we all returned safely ~~covered~~ in mud and a disgrace to the Sunday School. If the weather was wet we would invade the Arcade

and test the machines or get a supply of nougat or a present to take home to the parents who were unable to make the journey. The Arcades have disappeared but I always get a thrill and recall the days that used to be. There was very little spending money for the occasion, as many parents could not find a shilling to get to Weston and any money us kids were able to save went into our Money box so that when the great day arrived we should possibly extract a few coppers and a 3d bit. Many children would carry their money tied up in the corner of their handkerchief and this when waving goodbye to those left behind would blow away en route so that handkerchief and money were gone. I knew a lot of men employed on the permanent way between St. Annes and Weston but I never heard of handkerchiefs and contents reaching the Lost Property Office. I am not suggesting these losses were confined to the children of St. Annes but there were probably 30 or 40 schools using the new Excursion Service and the loss of tears must have been staggering.

By the way have you ever been stranded at Weston without money or handkerchief if so you will appreciate what the loss of a few coppers meant to us. Our parcels usually consisted of our overcoats to keep off the rain and an umbrella for mother to keep off the sun or both. I remember also about this period (1900) the Non Conformist schools in Redfield and district used to have a sports day every Whitmonday and invariably children would be driven over in brakes and wagons to spend the day in Johnnie Coombes first field - Strange to relate this was usually a fine day. A large marquee was erected early the morning where refreshments were provided. There was the usual races with prizes for the children followed by a sit down tea and the boys and girls living in the area were not allowed to enter the field and we had to be content by climbing the trees and generally making ourselves comfortable among the branches. There was a recognized 'Ice cream cart' allowed in the field and there were one or two rivals standing in the roadway. People entering the field could not wait but made their purchases outside, much to the annoyance of the recognized contractor. I remember also there was a man selling 'Hokey Pokey'. I've never tasted it and from reports received I never want to. Ice cream was then sold at $\frac{1}{2}$ d per glass and Sandwiches $\frac{1}{2}$ d each. I do not remember the prices exceeding those figures until after the 1914-18 war. Again let me emphasize a $\frac{1}{2}$ d in those days went a long way especially if there were 7 or 8 in the family. I vividly remember something which happened at one of these functions and is worth recording.

The sports field was crowded but that did not prevent the elder lads who had come with the Sunday School from indulging in a bit of lone play with Bat and Ball (not a rubber ball but a hard composition ball) and a proper Cricket match was arranged on that part of the field where it was possible to set up the stumps (wickets). The match proceeding with the usual slogging and the ball was sent to all parts of the field until one of the batsmen named George Britton (I wonder if it would be any of the present family of that name living in the Hanham district) knocked the ball hard and high amongst the hundreds of youngsters seated in different parts of the field. On reaching the ground it actually dropped on Geo Brittons sister. Wasn't this a chance in a million? It caused some consternation and after first aid had been rendered the cricket match ceased and normal activities continued.

Our summer holidays were also enjoyed in those days although only the best of people were able to go away for a change. Free travel facilities were granted to Railwaymen and their families as they are today but very few indeed could afford to go away. Those who were able to go a way with their relations eased the financial burden somewhat but even then it was a struggle for the rest of the year. We mostly took advantage of the wonderful green fields and the woods and some of the boys would form a 'clique' and arrange to walk as far as Keynsham, Stanton Drew, Compton Dando or Pensford. Our mothers would pack up sandwiches complete with a couple of bottles of water and get away for 12 hours or so. When our water bottles were empty we searched the country lanes for spring water when a refill was made and our journey continued. This water was equal to the properties of lemonade today or so we imagined. Some lads would have a couple of coppers and this was readily spent on other beverages which were sold in some of the cottages we passed. Another favourite with the boys (& girls) was to get a soap box and fix it up on two wheels in which we could travel from the top of the drive and down hill all the way to Netham Bridge. It was enjoyable while the forward journey lasted but the return journey was exhausting as we had to haul the trolley back to where we started and after a couple of trips we had had enough for the day, so after that we would stay nearer home and take a lay down in the field - hoping that Johnnie Coombes would not disturb us.

Our haymaking came only once a year. The second field nearest the station was always put down to grass and indeed during this period we knew that trespassing was wrong ; so reaping time came and Mr. Dyers horses appeared on the day appointed. All the men from the Klondyke would lend a hand and the kids were then allowed to help turning the hay. I never remember a wet day and it was a great disappointment to us when the last load of hay was carried in. It was in the days remember, when bread and cheese was the staple diet and when mowing the field started there was always a spot reserved for the Cider Jar: In any case it was free but the men took care that the large Jar was kept out of our way but there were ways and means whereby we were able to take a 'Swig'. What about Cricket and Football in the district. Oh yes we had the 'pitch' and Thatchers quarry ground but when the two were taken over by the builders Johnnie Combes came to the rescue. The Netham Cricket Club had the first field at the back of Langton Court Road and the football was played in the Haymaking field. The Batsmen and Bowlers of that day were mainly of the Hargett family Andrew, Jack, George, Ben and Joe Hargett, with and Dave and a couple of the Netham workers to support them. The Captain was 'Ike Fry' and he was as good as the name suggests who was not from the district but was as keen as mustard to get on with the game. My recollection of Batsmanship was on the occasion provided by two members of the Bedminster C.C. named Prosser who lived in Sandy Park Road, one was 'Arthur' and the other named 'Bill'. One was a batsman and the other a wicket keeper but on this particular occasion they were batting partners. Although the Hargett attack was good these two batsmen gave the finest display I have ever seen. There was a row of High Elm Trees forming the boundary and scores of hits reached the trees for 'Six' and invariably a couple of balls were lost in the undergrowth. The Kids were then called upon to look for the hidden treasure and we rarely failed to find the ball. A mammoth score was made by the Prossers but Hargetts came to the rescue on that occasion as they did on many others. I shall never forget the manner in which the Hargetts could wield the long handle and Andrew especially was fond of knocking the ball over the boundary and down the cutting and ball after ball would disappear and more often than not the signalman on duty in the Signal Box was Mr. Packer of Langton Court Road, who liked nothing better than following the exploits of W.G.Grace, C.B.Fry, L.Brand, Jessop and other famous cricketers of the time. As I have said when the Ball

went down the cutting on to the Railway Line one or other of us kids would shout down to Mr. Parker from the bridge and he would pass the word to the workmen and platelayers working on the line that four cricket balls were lying amongst the metals and when some were located would be brought back by the quickest possible way usually via St. Annes Station and another spell of waiting would be over. If Mr. Parker was not on duty a messenger would go to Mr. Murrow at the station and one of the Porters would be despatched to search the line. I wonder if the Netham Cricket Clubs Score Box records these facts? The team as far as I can remember contained right up to the 1914-18 war when the call to Arms wrote 'finish' to all that.

Let us return to football-when the pitch closed down the St. Annes Park Football Club played in the 'mowing' field. Uprights were compulsory, but in the early days White Tape would be used for height and rarely was there any dispute whether the ball went 'over' or 'under' the tape. The fact of the matter was that the tape would be broken by the speed of the ball and the only possible solution was Goal!!

Again the Hargetts name was prominent and when it was considered there were 5 or 6 of the it conveyed everything that was best in the Football world. Then there was Spicer, Langley, Lloyd, Russ & Evans whose names have been long forgotten. Supporters were of course, very few but what staunch people they were. Two especially recorded in my memory were Mr. Turner (father of Eva Turner) and Mr. Ashmead (or Ashman). The former always smoked a cigar on the touch line and was a very outspoken figure on play and players and was no doubt equal to the 'player manager' of today. Mr. Ashmead was a real live touch-line footballer and critic. He would run up and down the line and tell the players what to do at the same time turning and twisting himself and moving his arms, legs&feet ~~AS~~ If he was really on the playing field. If he shot at goal the young lads had to keep clear of him or the results would have been fatal but we enjoyed his antics.

As far as I remember the Club did not last very long as Church life took shape and a Church Club was formed later and entered the Suburban League. Johnnie Coombes could not be persuaded to let the mowing fields but the first field was our first recognized Football Pitch, but after a couple of seasons and lack of financial support we had to give up the rental. Following this Jimmie Smith let us his field in Birchwood Road next to the 'Pound'. This was farther away and cows were grazing there up to within a couple of hours of play commencing and during the period with the aid of shovels we had to clear the ground of objectionable matter.

There was a cowshed near the entrance with an open front and over this a tarpaulin was stretched to keep out wind and rain, this also had to be cleaned out by the lads and older men before we could think of changing. What a generous man the Squire was!! Again the 1914 war came upon us and the past was forgotten. The young men of course, rushed to the colours and amongst the lads who didn't return were, Harold Rich, Harold March, Ernie Shell and Ted Lewis to name but a few.

I really ought not to close the episode without relating to one of the great events of our lives and that was 'Guy Fawkes Night'. Fireworks were very cheap, Squibs 1¹/₂d per dozen, Sparklets 1d per dozen, Catherine Wheels 20d per dozen, Rockets 1¹/₂d each, coloured lights (matches) 1¹/₂d per box and so on so that most lads found a few pennies for the occasion. And Johnnie Unwin sold the stock!! Originally the Bonfire was buildt on the pitch and about a week before hand all the Junk from houses would be collected and after dragging along old trees and bits of wood from 'The Woods' a pile reaching perhaps 20 feet would be completed. Later this function took place in Johnnie Coombes field at the back of Mr. Packers house (not Langton Court Road) but whatever persuaded Johnnie Coombes to let us do this I do not know and shall never understand.

I am nearing the end of my story and have realized that there is another personality who will live long in the memory of St. Annes folk and it would be unkind if I do not mention Mrs. Winchester who was truly a wonderfully woman, whether in sickness or in health she was always prepared to render assistance to anyone in need. In addition to her nursing abilities she was also the midwife to whom thousands of the present generation should pay homage when her name is mentioned.

There is many things I could write about but I feel I should require much assistance to fully record the happenings of the time but as all good things come to an end I must likewise cease my efforts to give you anymore 'moments for anxiety' and questioning.

A.H.Jenkins.

22.6.64. (Frenchay Hptl) Ward 2