

Some Notable Wiltshire Quarrymen



Free Troglophile Association

SOME NOTABLE WILTSHIRE QUARRYMEN

"They say that the Dead die not, but remain
Near to the rich heirs of their grief and mirth."

Rupert Brooke.

Roger J. Tucker, B.A., A.C.P.

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Cover: A group of quarrymen outside

Pictor's Monks Quarry, 1891.

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original text.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

These accounts of the lives of quarrymen are as complete and accurate as present information permits. For any omissions or inaccuracies the writer submits his apologies. If any reader can offer authentic corrections on matters of fact or, further information-about any of the men in this account, about other quarrymen or quarrying in Bath, Wiltshire, or Somerset Bath Stone mines, the writer will be pleased to hear. Loans of photographs or supplying of names of men appearing herein will be welcomed.

R.J.T.

FOREWORD

This is not the story of all the quarrymen who toiled beneath the pleasant hills of North Wiltshire. They lie in tranquil churchyards, rarely a stone raised over to mark them. Consider the monument which they have left behind them - the vast caverns hollowed out by sheer physical effort. Consider the heritage of beautiful buildings in this country and beyond the seas, built of the stone won by the Wiltshire men. They deserve their rest, quietly awaiting the trumpet call of God, promised them in their small chapels, where they were exhorted to follow a life of simple faith and diligent industry. They deserve not to be anonymous or forgotten. Forgotten they will not be, and, this little account should help in that; anonymous some must be, for even their names are no longer on people's lips, but those herein shall be their representatives. This account tells of some whose stature made them memorable or-who were relatives of those still alive. To them was the fortune, others were equally worthy. There is no wish here to seek out unpleasantness, to write that one man thought little of another, but to narrate a history and attach to it any interesting anecdotes. Thus it is an appreciation from one who admires the achievements of these men, written in the hope that others may be led not only to reminiscence but also to a heightened feeling for the positive achievements, and for men of character.

R.J.T.

2024 Note

Original text was scanned, OCR, and then saved in MS Word. Illustrations inserted as scanned. There was an index, however it is impossible to insert this as it was and in any event it is irrelevant to the page layout after digitalisation. A lot of wage information etc is given in 'old money', pounds, shillings and pence, usually written as £ - s - d. There were 20 shillings to a pound, so two shillings is 20 pence today's money, and twelve pence to a shilling. So 240 old pennies to a pound, or one pence of today is 2.4 old pennies. Also, the text has been reproduced as faithfully as I can as it was in 1978, (originally written 1971), obviously this date should be born in mind when digesting the content, the above foreword by Roger Tucker (R.J.T.) its author is obviously no longer relevant but is included anyway. I am unaware of the copyright situation of the document and have digitalised it in good faith for private use only. My greatest fear being that its content would eventually become lost.

Roy Fellows, January 2024.

PREFACE

Many of those who read this account have already read 'Box Stone Mines', and for them certain knowledge may be assumed, but for those whose reading of the present account is their first acquaintance with the Wiltshire Stone Mines a brief introduction follows. Further information may be gleaned from 'Box Hill', the narrative poem at the end of the account.

'Some Notable Wiltshire Quarrymen' concerns only quarrymen who worked in the quarries of North Wiltshire; (quarries were also worked at Chilmark, near Salisbury, where Chilmark Stone was dug). Though the workings are termed 'quarries', they are vast underground headings. In the areas where the stone is found, the hills are perforated, and are, as it were, supported by the pillars of stone left unhewn. Millions of tons of stone were removed using solely hand tools. The industry was at its peak in the period 1880 - 1905 approximately. Bath Stone has been exported to many parts of the world. Only one mine is now worked - by machine methods which lack the need for the old craftsman's touch - though there is no lack of stone elsewhere. It is sad that Bath Stone is more expensive than concrete, than which it is aesthetically far more pleasing. A stone famous for so many years should grace more of our modern buildings and motorway bridges.

RJ.T. October 1971

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

The first edition of this book was received with very generous praise by its readers. Such has been the demand, that a second edition is a necessity, if those who seek a copy are not to be disappointed. As this also will be a limited edition, it has been my aim not to alter it so radically that first edition holders will feel it incumbent upon them to acquire a copy. This new edition is intended for those who have no copy at all. A mere reprint was not possible, not only because of the additional information now obtained but also, principally because of the sad deaths of Bert Hiscocks and Stan Sheppard. Since Bert's unique account occupied so important a place in the first edition, this second edition shall be known as the 'Herbert Hiscock's Memorial Edition'.

RJ.T. December 1978

OWEN BISHOP (1873 - 1965)

When the name of Owen Bishop is mentioned, one half expects to be told of some further enterprise which he undertook at some time or other, for indeed he was a man of some business acumen. Owen Bishop seems to have been able to triumph over his environment. Many others born in similar humble circumstances did not even reach the position of gauger, passed their days without making any great mark, and died forgotten. This is not to be the case with Owen Bishop who stood head and shoulders above most of his contemporaries.

Owen was a Box Hill man, born in 1873 to William and Charlotte Bishop, in one of the houses near the (now former) Post Office. His father was a quarryman who, amongst other jobs, used to lay trolley roads, and worked in the mines from the age of 21 to 70 years. He started with Pictor and Sons, but at the 1887 amalgamation was transferred to the Stone Bros. section. Owen himself did not start in quarrying as his first job. He said that at the age of 12 he was shepherd to 250 sheep at Hazelbury for 3/6d. per week (this seems a rather heavy responsibility for a boy of 12 years. Perhaps he was not alone, but an assistant. However, it would be in keeping with the legend which has grown around his name if he were single-handed at the job).

In 1887 at the age of 14, he started in the quarries as a stone chopper. When he was 18, Mr. George Hancock, manager and a director of the Bath Stone Firms Ltd., saw him chopping stone and said he would make a good quarryman. This was a very true prophecy, for Owen Bishop became one of the most successful Bath Stone quarrymen of all time, and was with the firm until he retired in 1949, a period of 62 years. (A large fall which he cleared in Clift Quarry became known as Owen Bishop's Fall).

When he started quarrying in Clift Quarry, he dug stone at 3d. per foot. He also worked in Copenacre Quarry, but chiefly in Spring Quarry. His brother, Fred Bishop, was also a quarryman who is remembered for his skill in sharpening saws. His sister married Ted Smith, who for some years was the chief ganger at Clift. Owen Bishop did a lot of work around No.6 Spring Shaft. He had become a ganger and, at the peak of his career had eight cranes and over forty men working for him. It was at this time, he said that he used to send out a total of about 7 to 8,000 cubic feet of stone per fortnight. One man who worked for sixteen years was Henry Witchard (1883 - 1965), who survived his former employer by less than a month. Owen's cranes were not far from Bert Hiscocks' cranes, and Bert recalled that they had many an argument.

Owen said that he made a comfortable living, which indeed he should have managed considering the scale of his stone enterprise. He confessed to undertaking private contracts outside the firm, but did not say whether any of these were in connection with the stone industry.

Certainly he had undertakings outside the industry, and seems to have been able to make a success of them. They included being the licensee of the 'Hare and Hounds at Pickwick, a hire firm for coaches and horses, farming at Gorse Farm in partnership with one of his sons, Wilfred (who, born 14.6.1897, died in 1967; his other son, Reginald, born 17.12.1895, worked in the County Office at Trowbridge and became Chief Clerk), and general contracting work. Someone spoke with some envy of the occasion on which Owen had contracted to remove some mixed rubble from near the Pickwick Road - Bradford Road junction, and had made a profit against all odds.

Owen Bishop may also be fairly described as a 'quarry architect' in as much as he is credited with major construction works in several quarries. It was he who put down the vertical shaft of Brown's No.4 Quarry (possibly by enlarging an earlier air shaft) near where Hawthorn Post Office is now. The owner hoped to find the good stone which Yockney's had, but degree of realization of this hope can be seen in the title given to the quarry, 'Brown's Folly', a title probably borrowed from the construction of that name on the hill near Kingsdown. Following the common practice of linking headings to trial shafts in order to use the latter as air shafts, Owen Bishop had this to do at Elm Park Quarry. He pulled out the long heading which is one of the right-hand branches at the bottom of the slope shaft. He did not reach the shift at the first attempt, on re-surveying they found he had missed by the small margin of one foot. The heading was widened, and the shaft found on the right hand side of the track. During the, Second World War, Owen Bishop put down a vertical shaft, in the fields towards Staffords Farm, to Pickwick Quarry, to enable ammunition to be brought up and down more easily.

When he retired, he had no pension, but said that those who had little were given a small pension. He had his reputation and 'a wealth of memories, which led him to say, "If I could have my time again, I would still choose to be a quarryman." But he regretted the fact that the industry was declining, something which he blamed on the lack of men to take a real interest in the stone, as he and some of his contemporaries had done. He considered that his greatest honour was to have shown Queen Mary round Spring Quarry. The late Frank Davis put Owen Bishop and Bert Hiscocks together as two gangers who had a nose for stone and could be guaranteed to find good stone. Owen was also considered expert at shoring ceilings, something in which he took pride.

At over 90, much more frail, he still stood upright and could get about on his own.

So-he retired after a long and active career, widely respected. It is almost inevitable with a man of success that he makes some enemies. One or two described Owen Bishop as a 'slave driver' and disparaged what he did. How true these accusations were, we cannot now, tell *quot homines tot sententiae* it is all some time ago, motives are hard to detect. Frank Knott (1878 - 1967), who remained his friend until his death, said that Owen Bishop could never settle down - he had to be trying some new scheme or other. It was Frank Knott who happened to call round on the day when Owen Bishop was taken ill and had been taken to Devizes Hospital (an unpleasant shock for the visitor) from Tuddenham House, Paul Street, Corsham, where he had lived for some years. His wife Emma had died about four years previously at the same age that he had himself reached, after they had been married for over sixty years.

Owen Bishop, Freemason and man of talent and achievements died in hospital on the 17th July 1965, and was buried a few days later next to his wife on the hill in Box Cemetery, which lies along side the main A4 road.

EDWARD GEORGE HISCOCK (1877 1967)

When Ted Hiscock died late on the 18th November 1967, a few days before his ninetieth birthday, there ended the life of one whose career in the stone quarrying business went back some seventy years, spanned two firms and the Golden Age of the Bath Stone industry. Born on the 12th December 1877, he started work under-ground with Marsh & Son and Gibbs at Copenacre Quarry in 1897, and later became foreman there in Marsh's time. After Marsh had an accident and died in-1907 the firm went bankrupt. Ted could not understand why this was, for the firm had a wonderful trade.

When the Bath and Portland Stone Firms Ltd. took over the Quarry in 1910, Ted remained till around 1912, when he went to Combe Down. There he remained until the outbreak of the First World War. Trade became quiet then, and the firm wanted him to come to Corsham, but he chose to join the armed forces. He spent four years in the army and received 2/6d. per week pay.

He came to Clift only after the War was over, from fighting in Egypt. There were seven or eight cranes working when he be-came foreman at Clift, and the 1,000,000 cubic foot of stone which had been in stock when war broke out, was a good business proposition. Ted spent the rest of his career at Clift.

He retired at the age of 60 years in 1937 after he had worked in the quarries over a period of 40 years and 9 months. He could have continued longer (which would have been welcomed when the Second World War started, at which time no fit quarryman was turned-away on grounds of age. A man in Ted's position could have attained a good position on safety work), but he did not get on with the new quarries manager who, he said interfered with him. (Presumably this was the late Mr. Frank Davis, which is surprising in view of Mr. Davis' ability to get on with people). Perhaps the personalities just clashed, and Ted found it difficult to work under a younger man with different methods and ideas.

So he retired, and continued to live, until his death in the, house on the A4 road at Clift a house built some 100 years ago for the Clift foreman. For a while, he and his son owned the garage a few yards down the road towards Box. When I saw him in 1965 he explained that he had had a stroke some months previously, which had not only affected him physically, but had also affected his memory. He apologised for the fact that he could then remember so little of the large amount of information and stories which he had acquired during his long, time in the quarries. During his illness, he had been fortunate in having a housekeeper who had looked after him so well. Without her, he said, he would not have recovered even so far from his illness. And he lived another two years after that time. His wife Ellen, whom he married on the 14th February 1901, died on the 8th March 1946 and he lost a son, John Harold, on the 21st January 1951. So he is survived by only son.

HERBERT HISCOCKS (1883 - 1976)

Part of this account of the life and times of Bert Hiscocks has a unique quality - it was written by Bert himself in 1960., As far as possible, this stands as it was written, and further information is added.

Born in the village of Neston, and in this same house I am here writing these few notes from 71 Elley Green (in re-numbering to No.7 was given the number 13). Some 77 years ago I was born here - on 14th August 1883 - my father, Harry Hiscocks, being a Ganger at the Spring Quarry practically his life through. He died at the early age of 48 years. (His father Jimmy Hiscocks, also was a quarryman).

'I am his second son, well-known as 'Bert', and started work underground also at the, Spring Quarry at 12 years of age with my Old Dad.! (Bert's elder brother, Augustus (1881 - 1972) worked at the Neston Glove Factory, but also worked in the quarries for a while under Bert, as did his younger brother, Jesse (1885 -'1975. Augustus married 1st August 1908, Emily Agnes daughter of George Mumford, quarryman. Both brothers emigrated to Canada.(1911-1913).

And at almost 16 years of age, I began to think I was qualified enough to take on a more efficient job as a full-blown Quarryman. So I write to 'Bath Offices,' for to take over a crane of my own as a full-blown Ganger, and the report came back to tell methey appreciated my good will and spirit, but I were to eat a bit more pudding under my Father's care a while longer, as at 15-15-years of age being rather young to take over the duties of a Crane as Ganger. Not for a moment did they doubt my ability, but in the near future "be considered", ' ..(This was in the first half of 1899).

'Anyway my Father took me on in co-partnership with him. And it was at that time, or soon after, when we dug stone at 3-1/2d per cubic foot at the Spring Quarry that "Wotty" Sheppard spoke of in his remarks.' (For a time, too, Bert worked for George Reeves.(1853 - 1932), and was his foreman. George Reeves owned two cranes in Spring Quarry, and made a friend of his foreman. The friendship between the two families endured in a way that will be mentioned later in this account).

'I was called at the outbreak of the First World War. In the conflict three years done in France, I returned to the Spring Quarry six months after the war ended. When I left France Mr. Chaffey wrote out to me to quit the services and return to my job at the Spring Quarry which I did do in the end, and stayed under Bath and Portland till my retirement at 67 Years of age as a Foreman, Boss and Inspector of Ceilings.

In 1928, after the First 'World War, I. was asked to visit France and Belgium on a pilgrimage to the Fallen Soldiers by the British Legion of whom I have been a 'Standard Bearer' for close on 30 years (an office which Bert did not give up till 1967). At the Town Hall of St. Omer (North France) the Pilgrimage led us to a Banquet of the French Legion. Whilst at the Banquet the French Burgomaster said they were, so pleased to welcome us about 30 strong, and could do no less. But they conferred on us the Freedom of the City of St. Omer by proxy, with the Medal and Ribbon of the French Legion, and the Medallion of Friendship. (This recognised their war-service as legionaries).

'Both in quarrying stone and roofing and general blasting operations which my work in that capacity has been a life long period of years (at different times Bert did all jobs underground),

I can say that I have been fully interested in them all, with a free hand from my employers knowing I knew my job.' (In Spring Quarry on one occasion Bert lifted from its nest on the clay bed a block of

550 cubic feet. This huge block had to be cut up to permit its removal from the Quarry. He said that it was a feature Spring Quarry that the large blocks were to be found there, and that there were other workable beds. He took out the Corngrit which was used in the Wiltshire County Offices at Trowbridge. On these grounds Bert asserted that the Bath and Portland Stone Firms Ltd, established themselves on the yield of Spring Quarry).

On the outbreak of the Second World War, along with the other quarrymen, Bert assisted on the conversion of Spring Quarry for government use, and was in charge of a safety gang inspecting ceilings. He still had the notebooks which as an Inspector he had to keep.* Therein, are listed the men over whom he had charge, many of them well known and remembered local quarrymen.

Others he picked from the army because their knowledge would be useful. There were no accidents in any sections under his supervision during the War, because of careful inspection. In 1943, he finished with ammunition at Spring Quarry, and was transferred to Brocklees Quarry, - otherwise known as 'Goblin's Pit, where he was Inspector of ceilings and working on ammunition also. There he remained until his retirement in 1951. (*Now held by Author.)

When the ammunition was removed, thought was given to re-starting quarrying operations. Bert was given the opportunity to take over either Brocklees or Clubhouse Quarry. He declined both, considering the beds 'Of the former too hard and rough, and those of the latter too shallow except for ashlar work. In the end, Mr. Harris, a Canadian, took charge of the Brocklees Quarry to convert it to the impregnable strongroom which it is today, a repository for valuables or important records. Bert remained as security guard for about three months before retiring.

'It was Happy Days - hard work, little money. (For years, Bert earned less than £1 per week). But we are still alive to tell the tale, and pleased to say both me and my wife (he married Kate, daughter of Alfred Job Gibbons, stone- sawyer at Box on 5th August 1922) are well so far as old age will allow. From Mr. Chaffey to Mr Davis now Works Manager: "I would be gratefully obliged if anyone has put a more creditable service than 'Bert' Hiscocks of the Spring Quarry in 56 years of Service." And in my final remark, I would like to state the thanks due to Mr. Chaffey and Mr. F. Davis, whom I worked under during that period of Service, as my Works Managers of the Bath and Portland Stone Firms Ltd.'

Now it is over eighteen years since Bert Hiscocks wrote his autobiography. But both the account itself, and letters which he wrote years afterwards, show not only a steady hand, but also very creditable spelling and grammar for one who left school at twelve years of age - perhaps a lesson for present times. He belied his age in appearance and voice, and at eighty-eight preferred to ride a bicycle than to walk, finding his thirteen stones weight easier to balance a wheel. At one time he rode a motor cycle before a serious smash. George Reeves, mentioned earlier, had ten children. His third daughter, Mrs. S.G. West (1879 - 1974) and her husband, Mr. Gordon West (1884 - 1976) maintained a lifelong friendship with Mr and Mrs. Hiscocks. It was only difficulty in travelling which prevented the two families from visiting each other more often since Seend is several miles from Elley Green, and too far even for Bert on his bicycle. When someone did provide transport, it was an occasion of great happiness for both sides.

From his own words, Bert enjoyed his life's work, and could look back on it with Satisfaction. Though at the time of his death he had been retired altogether for over twenty five years and it was thirty

seven years since he had dug stone at Spring Quarry there are few people, in the area who have lived there any time worth counting, who have not heard of him, and there a few who have any real knowledge of quarrying in the Corsham area from whom the mention of the name 'Bert Hiscocks' does not draw some such remark as, 'Ah, yes, he was an excellent quarryman'. Some of his cranes still stand in the unconverted areas of Spring Quarry, a silent remembrance of past busy times. The gallery which he was working, besides its official name, would be known by the quarrymen as, "Bert Hiscocks Road". Knowing the quantity of good stone still to be won, it must be a little sad for the craftsman quarryman to reflect that the stone 'is out of reach' that the ways they dug out by hand are the working place for people, many of whom will give little thought for those who toiled for eighty years in the making of the present roads and storage galleries.

Rightly proud of his work, 'Bert' Hiscocks was humble about his autobiography and about the drawings which he did (one, of which appears here). He used different coloured ball-points, and one of his later drawings was of the Severn Bridge which he visited on a coach trip. He accepted the difficulties of old age with an enviable philosophy, and evinced a gentlemanly courtesy - rather welcome in our present cruder times.

Soon after their Golden Wedding anniversary on 5th August 1972, Mrs. Hiscocks had to go into hospital at Chippenham, where she spent her remaining days until her death in November 1974. Some time after their Diamond Wedding anniversary in December 1972, Mr. and Mrs. West went into old people's accommodation at Devizes. Unfortunately, they spent their last days apart, such is the sadness of life. In the winter of 1972/3, Bert underwent a serious operation, and made a good recovery.

Later, I was saddened to hear that he had 'lost his faculties' and was in Roundway Mental Hospital at Devizes. I felt it a duty to visit him, though it would be perfunctory, as he would not know me. I had difficulty locating his ward, as there was another Bert Hiscocks. It was a sunny day and the doors to the rectangular courtyard were open. He was outside, and a nurse took me to see him. I was apprehensive. How pleased he was to see me, he was perfectly sane. How pleased I was to find this.

We sat together in the sunshine. He made perceptive comments on other patients who passed by or approached us. Some, he said did jobs for small payment, but at the age of ninety, he did not need nor wish to undertake work again. He explained that he had fallen heavily, striking his head. (He was obviously badly concussed). "I went to another world, and had some wonderful experiences. wouldn't have missed them for anything, but I decided it was time to come back to reality. So I did."

He took me to look at the walls of the building, pointing out the varying hardness of Bath Stone used in the layers. In the soft layers many initials had been carved. I mentioned to him that those unaware of his quarrying past might think examining stones of a building and commenting on them to be signs of insanity, in the circumstances. Of course such a judgement would be wrong. 'He was kept there only because he would be better cared for than even his kindly neighbours could manage.

He was appreciative of his fortune, but wished to be nearer to his home. Promised old peoples housing at Corsham seemed to be something never to be realised. (Wrote eventually to the local Council on his behalf and was able to give him grounds for hope). I visited him several times at Roundway, but found him missing at my last call., he had gone, at last to Corsham, where he was the first and senior resident at Hungerford House, Beechfield Road, where he had first choice of room.

Both at Roundway and Devizes, he was proud to tell of the book (Some Notable Wiltshire Quarrymen) which he and I had written 'jointly'; and I was pleased at his joy. It is therefore very fitting that this edition should be his memorial.

The last time that I saw him was when I took him out on Monday, 1st November 1976. A few days earlier he had had chest pains, but the Matron declared him fit to go out. He had a happy afternoon, visiting the Neston Club (where he was ushered to his former seat and given a whisky), and old friends, Stan Sheppard (Neston) and Ernest Sheppard (Greenhill). He had tea with Jack and Flo Dancey at Box Hill.

He left me, cheerful from his experiences, as he walked into Hungerford House. A few days later he had to remain in bed. He died on 13th November 1976, and was later cremated at Bath.

TOM WHITTLE, (1878-1970)

In a sense, Tom Whittle should not appear in this account at all, because he was never a quarryman.' However, he worked much of his life underground, and was a character on the quarrying scene worthy of the latter's best traditions. The later parts of this account become the more remarkable when it is realised that Tom had lost a leg many years ago in Bristol when he was run over by a brewer's dray. He was, in fact, a Bristolian, not a Wiltshire man."

Tom worked for forty eight years for Agarie Ltd., the mushroom growers, having obtained a good job with them when they started operations in 1914. There were two reasons for this. First he was an older man and therefore considered more steady. Second he had previous experience in mushroom growing. At the time when Agarie started, Tom for some time had kept the Barge Inn at Bradford-on-Avon, and also worked with a mushroom firm at Bradford-on-Avon, Phelps plus a Frenchman ("who went a bit potty").

There are some interesting facts connected with Tom's time at the Barge Inn. At that time, on weekdays, public houses were open from 6.00 a.m. until 11.00 p.m. Isaac Jones the well known local quarry master had trouble with his men who used to spend too much time in 'The Barge' He used to ask Tom to help by getting rid of the men, but that was 'a bit of a job'. Although the public houses were open only from 12.-30 2.30 p.m. and 6.30 -10.00 P.M. on Sunday it was permissible to demand a drink-at any time after 6.00 a.m. if you had walked three miles, but only one pint.

Bradford-on-Avon is about three miles from Trowbridge, and Tom suffered under this regulation with chaps from Trowbridge. Perhaps a gang of eight would turn up, and he could not get rid of them. Eventually the police solved his problem. They measured the distance from the Barge Inn to Trowbridge. It was just under three miles, and that ended the matter.

When Tom started work with Agarie he gave up his job as licensee. As the firm were at Corsham. when he started with them in 1914, he used to cycle from Bradford-on-Avon to Corsham. If the roads were too bad, he used to walk (a distance of 5 - 6miles) to start work at 6.00 a.m. Quite often he was still there at 9.00 p.m. In 1923, Agarie Ltd. began mushrooming at Bradford-on-Avon and by 1924-5 finished at Corsham. The men used to travel back and forth as the need arose. The move to Bradford-on-Avon suited Tom, as he no longer needed to travel.

They grew their mushrooms in the Bethel Quarry (where mushrooms are still grown today). During the Second World War the Admiralty took over Bethel Quarry, put up dozens of props and paid workers an extra 4d. an hour danger money. As soon as the firm were able to use the quarry again Tom had these artificial pillars removed and broken up, on the grounds that the ceilings had been tested by the quarrymen while they were working the stone, and left only if safe; that they had remained safe for 50 - 60 years and were unlikely to fall then. And this view is borne out not only by the absence of falls in Bethel, but also by the paucity of roof-falls in the old workings as a whole. It is said that more accidents occurred during conversion work than at any other time.

Tom continued working until he was nearly 84 years old (1962). Even in retirement he kept active. In 1967 he fell and broke his remaining leg, which brought him six months in hospital. Despite prognostications to the contrary, Tom walked again even if not so strongly as before. He remained independent - continuing to live on his own (his wife died a few years ago) even though he could only use the ground floor of his house, 235 Winsley Road, Bradford-on-Avon.

This house is near the Rising Sun Inn where Tom would go each night for a drink. After he had had the broken leg his daughter helped him there, and some of the regulars give him a hand back. His meals were brought by his daughter who lives opposite his house, and since the road was fairly busy, there was plenty to watch during the day. So here was a man of ninety-two who triumphed over disability in his youth and old age who preserved general physical fitness and mental faculties after a very long and hard working life for he was still interested in the events of the day and prepared to discuss them. Though there were hopes that he might make the hundred, like some other quarrymen he seemed strong until the nineties but then faded, almost unexpectedly. He died during December 1970.

JACK CAINEY (1892-) 14 Greenhill, Neston

Jack Caine, born 3rd January 1892, cousin of the late Bert Caine who worked at South Wraxall Quarry, ended his working life at the Neston married families' camp in 1960. He began it working with the horses at Eastlays. He travelled in most quarries with the horses, but, never worked in Clift, though he sometimes took through horses for shoeing.

In fact he had had a more tenuous connection with quarrying before. When he left school at the age of thirteen (1905) he did the lad's job in Spring Quarry, carrying the water for 6/- a week. When short time came and they docked his pay, he left and went to work for Davis the oil merchant. A full grown man was lucky to earn 25/- a week at this time. After a year or so at this work, he went to Bath and Fortland to work with the horses. Henry May, brother of Alfred ('Roughie') May (the father of Albert May) was sub-contractor in charge of horses. Jack Caine worked with the horses for a while, then worked at the face, before returning to work, with the horses again. It was a question of chopping and changing as the need arose. Jack recounted a remarkable account of an incident which happened during his time with the horses. One day at Copenacre Quarry he had two horses to bring to the surface. He brought up the first in the horse box and was therefore ready to bring up the second. While he was checking the first was secured in the top, Willie Newman who worked the engine house at Copenacre (and later at Sands Quarry) looked over the shaft and said "Thee's needn't bother to go and fetch thee 'orse. He's seen his mate on the top, and come to look for him." The horse, Duke, had walked up the middle of the shaft, and only at the top used the steps because there was a wheel in the way, Jack reckoned Duke was a good horse.

When Jack Cainey was married at the age of twenty-one on 24th March, 1913, his was one of the first, if not the first motor wedding in Neston. Harry Hancock's brother drove him to the wedding. Jack, now a widower, has lived in his present house since 27th September 1915, but at the time of his marriage lived at 3 Brockleaze Buildings.

Jack's father, the late James Caincy (1864 - 1932), drove the heading through for Harry Hancock from Pictor's Monks under the Corsham - Melksham road to meet the Good's Hill Quarry workings, but flooding made it impractical to complete the heading. The heading passes under the air shaft near Good's Hill Quarry but stops short, of the workings. So Jack followed in a family tradition and when the war came along, joined the many other

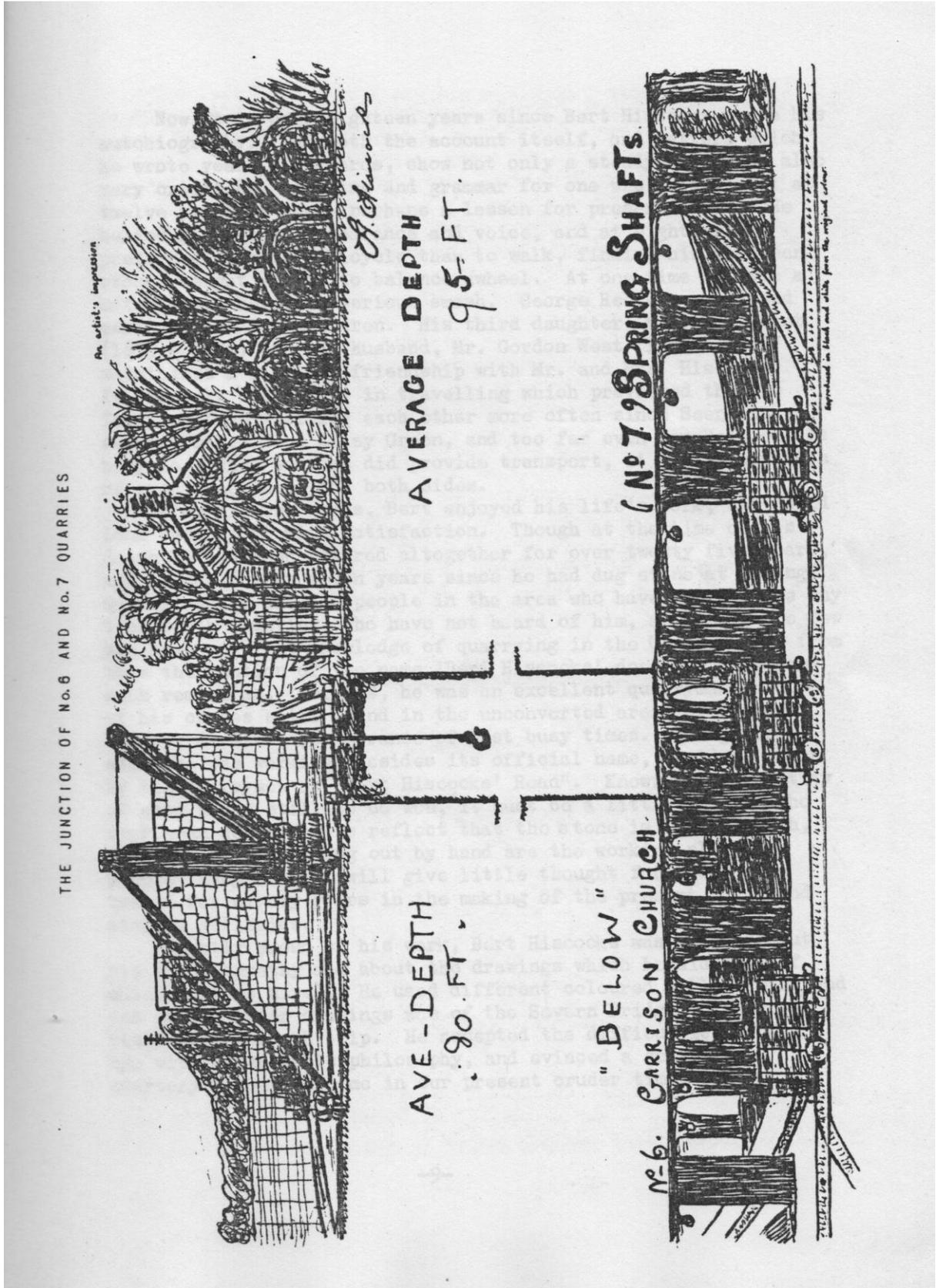
quarrymen who worked for the government. From May 1940 to 11th December 1951, he worked on security at the now filled-in No. 6 Shaft. This was "the best job of my life. It was in a way a lazy job, not a young man's job, but it was a comfortable, secure job. Money is not the only thing. It was only about £3 per week but you know where you were." His next job was his last. When he left security, he worked at the families camp where he earned his best money - £8.14.0. per week. In his retirement, he is still active and fit, takes an interest in what is going on, and is proud of the success of his family.

STANFORD W. SHEPPARD (1902 - 1977) 44 Bakers Corner, Neston

Stan Sheppard was one of eleven children of whom three sisters now survive. He was the youngest but one and the last son. Though he could not claim a working life spent entirely in quarrying, even underground, his was an interesting career connected in some way with the quarries almost all the time. His great grandfather, William Sheppard, his grandfather David (1838 -), (who married his wife, Mary, at Corsham Parish Church on 13th March 1859 and lived at Wadsmick) and his father, Frederick George ('Jimmy') Sheppard (1861 - 1940) whose wife, Annie Elizabeth, had her last child at the age of 47, were all quarrymen. These Sheppard's are apparently unrelated to Ernest (Cherry) Sheppard and the late Walter (Wottie) Sheppard of Greenhill.

Stan Sheppard started his working life in the gardens at Neston Park. After a while, he left to help his father who had undertaken the contract to dig the reservoir for the Neston Glove Factory. His father had had no education, but took on the contract to build a reservoir 291 in diameter by 61 deep to cart away the rubbish and build the walls. Stan said that although he had had more schooling, he could not have priced and carried out that job. (Jimmy also built two houses at Elley Green, in one of which he subsequently lived, and a bungalow, at Corshamside).

When the work was completed, Stan went to work for Bath & Portland cutting ashlar. His father used the thirty pounds profit which he made to buy some pigs. He was not so lucky with these and lost them all within three months. While Stan was cutting ashlar, the foreman came to say a collection was being made for a man who had been unfortunate enough to lose one of his pigs. No one seemed to worry about the man who had lost all his pigs.



Frederick Sheppard was a quarryman under Yockneys for between forty and fifty years off and on. When he was working underground, the boys used to be sent to take him his dinner. On such occasions they wore their best clothes, not out of respect for father nor certainly for the clothes, but

because they were afraid that if he saw them in rougher clothes, he would find them a job to do. Frederick Sheppard's only accident occurred when the top of his finger was sliced off. When the quarrying work was slack, he worked for a while at the Chippenham brick kiln where he earned about-one pound a week. Reg Barnett, a friend of 'Jimmy' Sheppard was out of work at the time, and came to see if he liked the idea of joining 'Jimmy' in a job; But after looking round, he decided that it was too much like hard work.

Stan Sheppard was about twenty-one years old when he first started working underground in Yockney's No.7 Quarry. He and his friend Norman Cole both worked for Fred Sheppard, who, unlike some others gained a measure of success 'with the stone', i.e. when he was a quarryman. His father retired somewhere around 1930, about the same time as Strenwick's of Corsham took over that quarry from Yockney's. Stan and his two mates were the only gang there after Strenwick's took over.

When the government took over the quarries, there were various good jobs to be had. One day, sometime around 1936, Reg. Barnett approached them and suggested they left Strenwick's and went to government work for more money. He would see that all was right with Strenwick's. So they left, which virtually stopped Strenwick's quarrying. They had given no notice, rather in the tradition of the old quarrymen, and had not been with the government many days under B. & P. when they were summoned by one of the officers who had been approached by Mr. Bill(?) Jack(?) Gibbons of Strenwick's, complaining of their departure.

They said they always left without notice, and although the atmosphere was not too pleasant for a while, they kept their jobs. The first job Stan Sheppard did for Bath & Portland was putting concrete posts in fields to obstruct potential aircraft invasion. Then he went to Sumsion's Monks (Park Quarry) on clearing muck. After this, he went to No.7 Quarry with Reg. Barnett. When the latter moved to take over charge of safety under the government at the Ridge Quarry, Stan Sheppard and his mate Norman Cole went with him.

After one to two years, Stan went to Pickwick Quarry where. he served under Jack Dancey (Norman Cole went to Monkton Farleigh Quarry). Here arises a story of the kind one expects to hear of Jack Dancey. Smoking underground was forbidden, especially of course where ammunition was concerned, and a breach of the regulation could cost the job. In addition, a man should not absent himself from his section except, at permitted times. Sometimes there were periods of slackness, which would be ended by the alarm signalling that ammunition was arriving, or should be sent but. On one particular day, Stan Sheppard was desperate for a smoke. Taking advantage of a slack time, he quietly nipped up the slope and went discreetly past the office where Jack Dancey was ensconced. He found a quiet corner, smoked his cigarette, and began to return. As he came towards the office, out came Jack Dancey. "Here it comes," thought Stan Sheppard, "I'll get my cards for this." Jack Dancey approached.

"That one went down well didn't 'er?"

"Yes", admitted Stan.

"Now, don't you go telling everyone, but if you need a fag again, just you come up here." Never a word more was said about it, but this was Jack's method. He let others act similarly to Stan

Sheppard, provided that they worked hard when the pressure was on. In this way he obtained the best from his men.

The work at Pickwick was directly under the government. When Stan became dissatisfied with the money, he went back to Bath & Portland at No.7 Quarry under Albert Barnett, and stayed there for the rest of the war. After the war he helped remove some of the materials which had been stored during the war.

In 1949, they were released to return to quarrying which soon was to start. Frank Davis, who had supervised the Bath & Portland men during the war, was made manager. Stan Sheppard was one of those who did not think the money offered at the time was sufficient. Others who went back improved their terms later. Instead, Stan went back to Spring Quarry under the government clearing rubbish on the surface. When this ended, he went to Wandsdyke Brocklees Quarry which was then a fairly new venture in private security. Stan was safety man there and did other odd jobs. - 'Strawberry' Cousens was security guard.

Later a rumour went round that the place was not paying its way and was to close. Not long after, four 'police' had their cards'. Stan Sheppard was given the chance to stay on. In view of the uncertainty he asked for time to consider. When the others heard, 'Strawberry' Cousens told Stan that if the latter chose not to stay, he would be pleased to take his place. Stan decided to go, 'Strawberry' Cousens took his place, and is still there now, under Bath & Portland, who took over the venture.

That was in 1955. In that year, Stan took his last job back with the government. He spent seven years on ammunition and when that ended, he became gardener at the S.P.E. (School of Preliminary Education) Officers mess. Though he could have continued he elected to retire at 65, and was delighted when the Officers presented him with an inscribed watch on the 22nd May 1967. In retirement he cared for his own garden, grew many vegetables, and helped from time to time on the Neston Estate, when asked, until an arthritic hip brought this last to an end. After an operation, he was able once more to pay some attention to his garden. Early in 1977, he became stricken with illness. Knowing that there was no hope, rather than be a burden for an uncertain period, he bravely took his own life.

FAMILY HISTORIES

As the foregoing accounts must suggest, quarrying was the work of several members or generations of the same family, sometimes the concentration was increased by marriage. And the village communities did tend to marry within themselves. Obviously relationships often grew out of one quarryman bringing home one of his workmates. So what is to follow is not unique, but perhaps exceptional in degree. Two families had almost all the male members working in the quarries. Even more than the histories, which are incomplete, that tables of genealogy will emphasize this.

Barnett and Light (Neston area), Dancy and Pinnock (mostly Box). These names are the ones which will occur most frequently, though there are, of course, other connections.



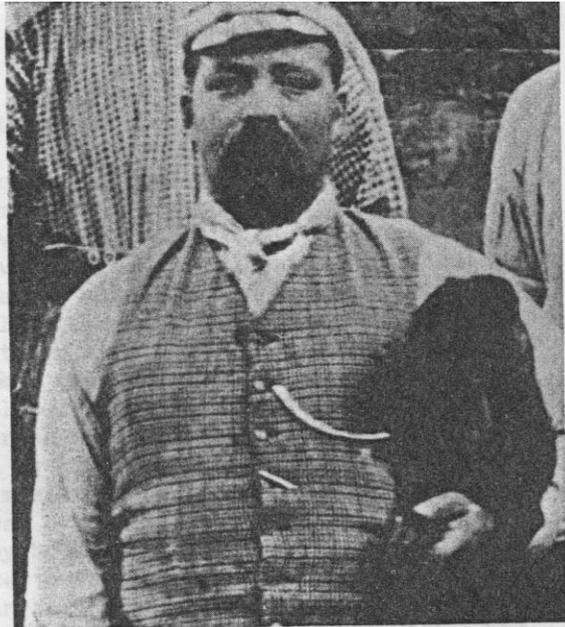
Mr. Jack Dancey working at Hartham Park Quarry. c.1950.



Mr. David Dancey Clift Quarry, Box. c.1890.



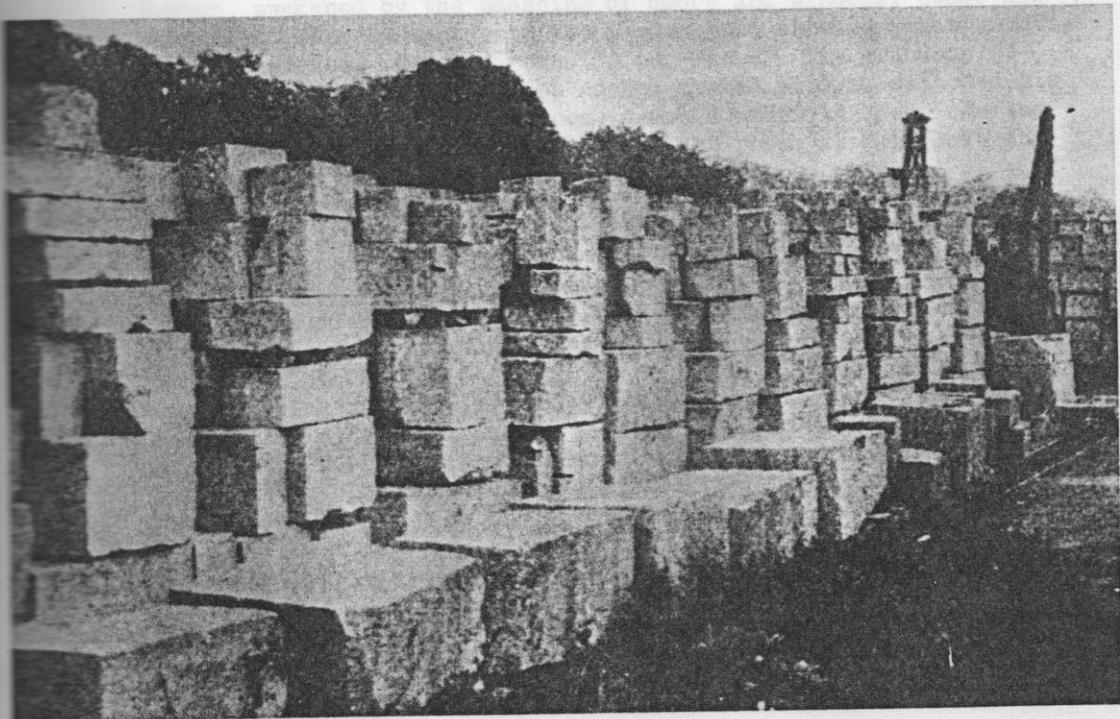
A Group of Quarrymen at Copenacre Quarry, Pickwick. c.1930.



Mr. Richard Slatford

Mr. David Milson

Clift Quarry, Box, c.1890.



The vast stacking ground at Spring Quarry pre 1930; Corsham Down Stone.

BARNETT AND LIGHT

This is the less extensive of the two accounts, but one may doubt little that there are other family connections which have escaped view so far.

Little mention is made here of the Hiscocks side of the family since that has been dealt with separately. It is sufficient to say that Bert Hiscocks and Herbert Barnett were cousins. Our story starts with Tom Barnett and his brother, for this is as far back as we can go at present. And this is some way, for Tom and his brother who was probably older must have been born 1820-1830.

The brother had four sons, George, James (1849-1936), John and Luke, all of whom were quarrymen. Here the information ends; almost no evidence of further generations has come to light.

James had a daughter Florence (born 1882), and was himself remembered as a kindly old man.

George Barnett had one foot half cut-off when a block of stone fell from the shears. Unpleasant as that was, there were occasions when stone slipping from shears caused more than just that injury.

Tom Barnett had two sons and two daughters. The sons, Charles (1855-1934), and Fred (1857-1932) were both quarrymen. The two daughters both married quarrymen - Harry Hiscocks (1862-1910) and Fred Light ()

Charles Barnett spent all his working life in the quarries. He had five sons, Albert, Reg, Arthur, Walter, Herbert. Albert told the story of his father, that on one occasion he dropped a half-sovereign by a pillar and it could not be found. Later, as waste was deposited in filling up the exhausted lower beds, it was covered by several feet of rubble. Albert made a mental note of that pillar, and when the War Department moved in to convert the quarries to war service, he advised them to look out as they removed the rubble. The half-sovereign was found against seemingly impossible odds. Charles Barnett died at Moor Green.

Albert Charles Dyke ('Tyke') Barnett (1877-1965) 1 Greenhill, Neston, started work in the quarries at the age of ten. As a boy he was paid four shillings for a 56 hour week. Later he owned a crane. He said it was possible to make good money as a ganger, but one struck bad patches of stone sometimes. He had worked as much as a month without money as a result. He worked for the Yockney and Hartham Park Stone Company Limited, and spoke well of them. He said they always paid 21d. more per foot of stone cut than other firms, and gave each employee a joint of meat at Christmas. During the 1939-45 war, he was general foreman for the government at Yockney's (No7 Quarry), and retired from the BAC at the age of 68, in 1945. He died in January 1965. Albert Barnett was one of the great quarry men remembered by many long after he had ceased to work. (See also reference to 'Prehistoric Frog', under Wilfred Light).

Reginald Ernest (1880-1956), Arthur William (1892- ? and Walter Thomas (1894-1927) were all quarrymen. All three predeceased Albert by some years. Arthur was apparently one of the best choppers ever to work in the quarries, but he left to become a regular soldier. Reg had a daughter Louisa Anna (born 1919) and two sons. It was he who went to work with Tom Carter, on the day that the latter was killed in Spring Quarry, Monday 2-7th August 1934.

The older Barnetts, including Albert and Reg, worked on the conversion of Pockeredge Quarry for mushroom growing. One who had worked in the silver mines in Canada used his knowledge of explosives to blow up unwanted stone in the clearance works.

The men on this work felt that they were entitled to 'perks' and used to acquire a few mushrooms. As production was at first on a small scale, an impression was made on the crop, and the firm were rather disappointed at the results (although they did not know why). Tom Whittle was appointed to watch the place on Sundays, when no work took place. One morning he discovered a break-in. The manager of the firm put the police onto the matter, but though he decided it was Reg Barnett, he refrained from pursuing further action. Reg Barnett was in charge of safety at No.7 Quarry after its conversion. When he moved to the Ridge to take charge of safety there, Albert Barnett took charge of safety at No.7 Quarry.

Herbert Barnett (born 1896) of No.8 Westwells, was the sole survivor by 1965. He did not start by working in the quarries, although he went down often with his father. He worked at the Neston Glove Factory, but left when trade grew slack. He worked at Spring Quarry, then at Moor Park. When Mr. A.W. Sheppard, the quarry owner went bankrupt, Bath & Portland took over the quarry. Mr. Barnett much regretted what happened to Mr. Sheppard as he considered him "one of the nicest men you could meet".

Herbert Barnett worked at South Wraxall Quarry which also was owned by Mr. Sheppard. It was in the time after Bath & Portland took over the quarry that Mr. Barnett almost met his end (c.1929). A pile of blocks on which he was standing, toppled and he was thrown among them. He escaped with a broken collar bone.

Mr. Barnett told a story of an incident in Spring Quarry. One day when he was coming up to lunch, some small shears rattled mysteriously. As they were returning, from lunch, some bigger shears suddenly rattled. This was far more frightening, because they were of a type so heavy that a man with both his hands could lift only one jaw. So they went round to Albert Barnett's heading to see if all was well with him. He said it was. "Well", they said, "There are devils all round by us." They had checked their ceiling and found it to be sound. But when they tapped Albert's ceiling, it was obvious that it was just about to fall. So they stood back, brought down the ceiling, and found it to be good stone. From this, Albert earned his best ever pay. . Was the rattling of the shears connected with the shifting ceiling? The implication is that, it was.

Later on, Herbert Barnett became under-foreman at Elm Park Quarry, but when the Second World War occurred, he worked for the government underground. When he retired at the age of seventy, he was still an employee of the government at Spring Quarry.

Frederick Barnett (1857-1932), No.7 Shaft, Corsham, brother of Charles Barnett, was for many years foreman for the Yockney and Hartham Park Stone Co. Ltd. On his retirement, he continued to live where he had worked. His job was to check the stone, and amongst those under him were some of his nephews. His son, Gerald Clayton Barnett, was born in 1895. Charles Barnett Fred's brother, was a ganger under his supervision. Fred himself and his wife Annie, were both in the Neston Parish Church Choir in 1873.

Wilfred Light (1880-1967), 45 Bakers Corner, Neston, was nephew of Charles and Fred Barnett. He started in the quarries at the age of twelve, for 4/- per week. After twelve months this was increased to 5/-, and after two years to 6/- per week in No.7 Quarry (Yockney & Hartham). After three years he worked for his father, Fred Light who had three cranes. Some people had luck with the stone, Fred Light did not. That is why, when Wilf Light was 25 and trade was declining, he left his father and apprenticed to the glove trade at the Neston factory. When he married in September 1905, he was earning only 10/- a week as an apprentice.

During the years of the Depression, he returned to quarrying at Park Lane Quarry. At quarrying, he did picking, making chog holes, squaring-up blocks, and general quarrying. He said that he was able to square blocks without the use of a squaring tool, and at the age of 15, could wield a fifteen pound axe. On three occasions when they were working in No-7 Quarry, they pulled out a block of 120 cubic feet. Fred Barnett, foreman, said that the block could not be brought up intact so it was sawn into two.

Here we have a remarkable story connected with these two branches of the family. There is an incident which has become legend among quarrymen in the Corsham area. It seems incredible but it was first told to the writer by quarrymen at Monks Park Quarry. It was repeated to him by both Albert Barnett and Wilf Light.

On one occasion, when they sawed one of these large blocks in half, they found a frog in a cavity in the stone. Albert Barnett's account says that he found the frog, which was very thin, but when he put it in a pool, it swam away. Wilf Light's account states that Albert Barnett was there when the live frog was found it could not open its mouth, nor could it swim. He adds further information that on two previous occasions when they were sawing, having seen blood on their saws, they found that they had sawn a frog in half. As this refers to times around the beginning of the twentieth century, there is little likelihood now of investigating it further, especially as none of those present at the time is still living.

Wilf Light's father and uncle were both lay preachers and sometimes used to preach underground. Wilf himself remained a strong chapel man, and at the time of his golden wedding in September 1965, he still attended the Corshamside Gospel Hall regularly in his hand-propelled invalid carriage (he had an artificial leg). His wife was for many years midwife in the parish, and both were well-remembered on their golden wedding day. They both believed firmly in the Christian life. To speak only the truth about people was very important to them; one should try to see the best in people, and not speak ill of them.

DANCEY AND PINNOCK

Under this heading will come several other quarrying families for the family tree is extremely complex. To some extent it has been possible to obtain a more complete picture than with the Barnett-Light account. As there is no logical sequence in which to trace this history, it has been done alphabetically.

The account starts with three brothers - Henry Dancey (1829-1915), a stone worker in a mason's yard, Jacob (Jake) Dancey (1826 -), a mason, and George Dancey (1837-1922), a quarryman.

Wherever we move from here, the complexity will soon occur. Let us take the oldest of the last generation quarrymen, Tom Dancey, and follow his side first.

He was the son of George Dancey whereas the other last generation quarrymen are grandsons of George Dancey's brothers. George Dancey had a crane in Copenacre.

Tom Dancey (1878-1970), Hill View, Box Hill, Box, Wilts. was born on 28th December 1878 and died July 1970. He worked for sixty-four years in the quarries from the age of twelve to seventy-six years. In his early days he worked in Noble's Quarry where the ganger of the time was Harry Greenman (who comes into this account later). He started with the trolley horses, but later became a ganger. He worked at Clift, Copenacre and Spring Quarries, but spent most time in Clift where he was a ganger for thirty years. Consequently, his foreman for years was Ted Hiscock. During his long career from 1891, he worked under six different managers of Bath Stone Firms Ltd., and Bath & Portland Stone Firms Ltd.

When he started, the hours were 6.00 a.m. to 5.30 P.m. for payment of 2/6d. per week; when he ceased work at the age of seventy-six years, he was working for the Admiralty at Copenacre. He had been in government service since 30th September 1939, when all men were told to cease quarrying and to report to the mouth of the tunnel at Corsham on the following Monday, to clear debris from the quarries for the conversion work. One of his wartime tasks was assisting on the overhaul of the Monks Park slope shaft c.1943. The lowest price he could remember for the digging of stone was 3-1/2d; per cubic foot. Then it was increased to 4d. per cubic foot. Many quarrymen used cubing books to calculate the size of blocks, but he always did calculations in his head.

One Easter Monday, he took George Shell, Mrs. Shell, their son and his wife through from Clift to Corsham and received 2/6d. for his trouble. Tom married Mary Wilkins (1872-1942). Her brother was Walter Wilkins, a quarry-man who went to Wales c.1922-3. He was later killed in the pits there. Their son, Alec Dancey (1905-1968) who was not a quarryman, married the daughter of Richard (Dick) Slatford (1864-1958) who worked in Clift all his working life, and was a close friend of Ted Hiscock. Tom Slatford (-) his brother, a bachelor was a mason.

Both Slatford brothers were keen cricketers. In the Wiltshire Times and News, 12th May 1889 is the report of a match at Box 'to start the season', between Rev. G.E. Gardiner's XI and Mr. G. Northey's XI. In the latter team were R. & T. Slatford. Doubtless this was not exceptional. Dick Slatford's manager at Clift for some years was David Milsom (1856-1927), The Rocks, Box Hill. Dick worked until he was between seventy and seventy five years old.

Alec Dancey's daughter married David Diffell, not himself a quarryman but whose father and grandfather were both quarrymen. Fred Diffell (1849-1929), lived at Monk's Lane and worked in Spring 7 Quarry. John Charles (Jack) Diffell (1886-1944), worked with him for a while as a picker. He is more remembered as a worker at Northern Monks Park, and appears in several photographs taken there. One of these, a view of the Monks Park Slope Shaft, was used in the book "Box Stone Mines". Jack worked also on the Copenacre security conversion. Thomas Diffell (1833-1911) and James Diffell (1859-1929) of Atworth, both quarrymen, were related, but not closely.

Fred Diffell's sister married a Mr. Lucas. Bill (Dappy) Lucas (-) was their son. He worked in Clift, Copenacre, and Spring. The story is told of him that on one occasion when he was walking

underground to work from Box to Corsham because it was raining, he put down his lamp and moved some distance from it. The lamp went out and he could not find it in the dark. At work his foreman assumed that he was unwell, his wife assumed he was working late. In the end, however, they guessed some misfortune had occurred. On making enquiries they found that Bill Lucas had been seen entering at Clift. A search was made and he was found. Whether this experience had any permanent effect is not known, but certainly his faculties declined in later years.

Tom Dancey's sister married George Sumner. John Sumner (1873-1952), Vale View, Box Hill, was also a quarryman, and worked for years with William J. Dancey.

We return now to the three brothers and consider the second, Jacob (Jake) Dancey. He was a mason, but two sons were quarrymen. William Dancey (1853-1919) Mill Lane, Box, worked in Clift Quarry.

His brother, David Dancey (1855-1919) had a crane at Kinnock Is (Moor Park) , when Mr. W. Sheppard owned the quarry. He worked at another of Sheppard's quarries - Brown's NO.4 - just before the First World War. In early years, he had worked at the Barn Quarry (Box Hill), and was working at Copenacre in 1891 under Marsh, Son & Gibbs.

David Dancey's son, Sid Dancey (1882-1971), Tying Cottages, Box Hill, was one of the oldest surviving quarrymen at the time of his death on 1st January 1971. He started work in Clift at the age of fourteen. In 1914, when he had had eighteen years work underground behind him, he joined the forces for the period of the war. During his quarrying career he worked also at Pickwick, (Hartham), Spring, Moor Park, Wraxall and Elm Park. He worked on conversion work at Monks Park, but not at the Ridge.

Sid Dancey's grandfather on his mother's side was a cousin to George Mould (1829-1900). George Mould was the first occupant of the house in which Sid was living, after it had been built for quarrymen by Robert Pictor. His autograph, scratched on one of the window panes of the back room, remains, though the man has now been dead as many years as he lived. George Mould was a celebrated local character. Tying's Quarry, of which the entrance and hauling-way lay behind his house, was often called Mould's or Mouldes Quarry. His work in the quarries was that of driving the steam engine which hauled the trucks at Clift Quarry. The engine sounded, as it came along, as if it were the Flying Dutchman, but when it came into sight, it was in fact only crawling. A man at Marsh, Son & Gibbs, a rival firm, once said that the engine needed repairing every few weeks. It was legend in 1893, that if George Mould, though very old, were discharged, he would soon die. In connection with his love of his engine, two stories are told. Once he went to Bournemouth on an excursion with the other men. On arrival at the sea shore, he became enraptured and, looking up at the cliffs exclaimed, "Ah! If only I had my oll engine here, and could run stone up In down them cliffs for ever, I shouldn't want to go to Heaven." Another incident had occurred on the way. After there had been a considerable stoppage, he put his head out of the carriage window and shouted, "If I had my oll ingine here, I'd pull 'ee along faster than this." Whether he died in harness, so to speak, or how long his retirement preceded his demise, we do not know. Such characters are too few today.

One of Sid Dancey's sisters married Arthur G. Tinson (1881-1963). He was at Spring No.6 during the First World War. For several years he had worked for Owen Bishop who described him as "a very good chap". He was still at Spring on security during the Second World War, but for years before, he

had worked at Yockney's No-7. It was there that he encountered some of the exceptionally deep beds which every quarryman desired. It was always possible to cut a large block, but stone from narrow beds could not be joined together. More money was made from the deep beds. Arthur's son, Bert Tinson, from 1952-6 combined the work of licensee of 'The Quarryman's Arms' with an underground job for the government. When he relinquished the Quarryman's he kept only his government work.

Sid Dancey's other sister married John (Jack) Pinnock (1891-1963). This brings in another whole family with whom we will deal chronologically. Jack's father, William (Bill) Pinnock (-) was one of four brothers who were all quarrymen. The other three were John (Jack) Pinnock (1845-1928), Frederick (Fred) Pinnock (1863-1950) and Charles (Charley) Pinnock (1866-1927).

John (Jack) Pinnock (1845-1928) worked at Kingsdown. Though a successful quarryman, he could not write. At his re-marriage as a widower on 26th April 1913, he made his mark instead of a signature. His son James Pinnock (1872-1930) was also a quarryman. William (Bill) Pinnock (-) was a ganger at Spring Quarry. His sons William Pinnock and Jack Pinnock. were both quarry-men. William was killed during the first World War. Jack (1891-1963) worked at Elm, Park, Moor Park, Clift and Spring. His son William (Bill) Pinnock (1913-1967) worked at Spring and Monks Park. He decided to give up quarrying, and went to work for the Admiralty. After only a short time there, he became ill, and died soon afterwards.

Frederick- Pinnock (1863-1950) worked at South Wraxall and Monkton Farleigh. At Monkton Farleigh he was a ganger. One of his men was killed in 1882 during quarrying operations underground, and he was called to the inquest as a witness. He married on 31st January 1884 and died at Semington 24th May 1950 and was buried at South Wraxall. His son Sidney Pinnock (1885-) was also a quarryman. Albert Charles Pinnock (1892-1948) was a son also.

Charles (Charley) Pinnock (1866-1927) was a general quarry-man who worked at Moor Park.. He collapsed and. died at the top of the slope shaft of Moor Park on 8th June 1927. His home was near his work, for he lived at No.8 Westwells, where Herbert Barnett, who married his daughter, now lives.

Once again, we go back to the beginning, to the third of the original Dancey brothers - Henry Dancey (1830-1915). He was a stone worker in a mason's yard. Sometimes he used to cut ashlar outside the Lovier Hill Quarries. He could neither read nor write.

He had two sons - William John Dancey (1868-1933), Albion Terrace, Box Hill, was a quarryman, and later a ganger. Jack Dancey worked for him in Pickwick Quarry. On Pay-day (Thursday), he used to leave early, to collect the money for the men. Jack and the others used to meet him at Box later and collect their money. One day in June 1933, William J. Dancey was involved in a fatal accident with a car. He was the fourth husband of a lady who was in succession wife of a Mr. Simpkins and mother of Jack Simpkins (both quarrymen); wife of George Smith (-1896), quarryman killed in Earn Quarry, and mother of Frank 'Codger' Smith (1896-), not a quarryman, but who joined the army with Jack Dancey; wife of a Mr. Benjamin, and mother of two sons (not quarrymen), and finally of William J. Dancey. There were no descendants of this marriage, but she outlived them all, except him.

The other son of Henry, Harry Dancey (1870-1930) 3 London Terrace, Box Hill, was a mason, and is mentioned in Kelly's Directory of 1911 as a stone mason, together with Albert Sheppard (whose family business still continues by the A4 road). He had two sons and two daughters. One of the sons became a quarryman whose story follows.

Jack Dancey (1897-) 1 London Terrace, Box Hill, was the last of the Dancey's actually working in the Wiltshire Stone Mines. The Danceys worked long, and Jack was retired against his will. He was still reckoned one of the best workers, but there were redundancies and the oldest had to go first. Today, he still seems very fit and cheerful, and helps on the farm near his home. Jack Dancey started in the quarries at the age of thirteen carrying water and doing odd jobs. This was in Clift Quarry, where his first ganger was David (Dave) Milsom (1855-1927), a short chap, commonly known as 'Eight Foot'. Milsom himself was following a family tradition, for his father, John Milsom was a quarryman. Jack Dancey worked for Dave Milsom until 1914 and the war. He started at 8/- Per week, and by 1914 was up to 10/- per week. He was paid fortnightly - sovereign or two half-sovereigns, which he handed to his father, and he received in return 1/6d. to spend on himself.

While he was at school, his brother, two sisters and he, had to go to Box School on a Sunday morning for Sunday School. Afterwards they had to line up outside the school and march to Box Church for Morning Service. And these were not the end of religious observances for the week. Then the Great War started, Jack joined the army. He spent some time at Prior Park first, then went to India where he completed his training. He came back to Mesopotamia, then went to Egypt (where he swam the Suez Canal) and eventually Salonika. He started at, 7/- per week, which was later increased to 10/-. He returned home in April 1919 with the first batch - those who had joined up in 1914. He returned to Clift for a while where he worked on ashlar work. Later, he went from quarry to quarry, withersoever the best money was. One of the gangers for whom he worked was Tom Dancey. Tom used 'to cuss flashes and moan, if the stone came out with a crack in it, but he soon got over it. And he paid well.' Jack worked at Pickwick (Hartham- Park) Quarry before and after the 1939-45 war, and at Monks Park after the war. During the war, he was engaged on ammunition storage, mostly at. Pickwick. He used to check storage of ammunition at Elm Park and Brocklees when those places were busy. After the war he helped bring out the money which had been stored in Clubhouse Quarry. Jack was supplied for this work by Bath & Portland who had to supply labour.

His first post-war job for Bath & Portland was helping to clear Moor Park Quarry ready for the men to return and machines to be tried out.

During his later years after 1958 when Pickwick closed, Jack worked at Monks Park Quarry. Often during the summer months, he was selected for the gang to go to Clipsham Quarry in Rutland. This is an open quarry which is only worked in the summer. His wife used to go with him and was responsible for cooking for all the men. There is some dispute in the family whether it was Jack's good quarrying or Flo's good cooking which was the greater factor in his selection. He was retired, unwilling, in 1966, and was presented with a gold watch to mark his services over a period of fifty-five years in the quarries. In 1970, Jack was asked to work for Bath & Portland at Clipsham. Trade has improved it is true, but another factor is that not everyone wants to spend three months up there. Although the money was good, Jack finally decided to decline the offer. Our story does not end here. Jack's wife, Florence, was a Greenman, from yet another quarrying family. Brothers William Isaac

Greenman (1848-1931) 2 Mill Lane, Box, and Henry Greenman (1841-) Box, were mason and quarry-man respectively. Of Henry Greenman's three sons, George Henry Greenman (1866-1941) 9 Market, Place, Box, and Isaac (Jack) Greenman (1869-1945) 2 London Terrace, Box were both gangers. Florence was Isaac Greenman's daughter. Harry Greenman senior was a ganger in Noble's Quarry. Sometimes Isaac Greenman had so little money left after paying his men that he could only give his wife 1/6 for the whole week's housekeeping. The third son, Harry Greenman, was a quarryman who died sometime after the First World War.

Finally we come to two links which firmly connect our two sets of families. Herbert Hiscocks' wife Kate had a sister Ada who married Isaac (jack) Greenman. This is the greater link, for Bert's mother was Lucy Dyke, whose sister, Sarah Dyke, married Charles Barnett. The second link is through the Pinnock side. Charles Pinnock's daughter married Herbert Barnett, who lives in the house where Charley Pinnock lived.

And to keep loyalties young, I'll write those names
Golden for ever, eagles, crying flames,
And sat them as a banner, that men may know,
To dare the generations, burn, and blow
Out on the wind of Time, shining and streaming

Rupert Brooke.

JOHN HORTON (1847-1886) Westwood Lane, nr. Bradford-on-Avon

In the ensuing account, the reader may be led to wonder how John Horton fits into the concept of the Wiltshire quarrymen outlined in the introduction to this book. May he be assured that John Horton exemplifies not only many of the good qualities mentioned there, as will be seen, but also the underlying capacity for primitive violence which was prevalent among some of the less intelligent quarrymen. A full social history is not the purpose of this book.,

John Horton, up to November 1885, had worked for Mr. William Godwin at Westwood Quarry. As a workman he had always borne a high character. His employer and all his fellow workmen spoke very highly of him, and were regretful at the fate which be brought upon himself. He was, in fact, his master's right-hand man. The Wiltshire Telegraph described him thus: 'Of medium height and average build, Horton possessed a well built frame, he was looked upon as being equal in bodily strength to any two ordinary men, and he had a nerve of iron. He was, withal , of a very willing disposition, ever ready to lend a helping hand to either of his mates; while if his master wanted any job done that required the exercise of tact and strength, he had only, to use his own words, to mention it to Horton, and the work was satisfactorily executed. Apparently he was always a kind father to his children, and by his plodding industry he showed a real desire to fulfil his duties as a

father. 'He was, however, a strong-minded, determined man, and of violent temper when provoked though, generally speaking, quiet and well-disposed when not under the influence of drink.'

It was this mole which brought about his downfall. As the Wiltshire Telegraph of 6th February 1886 said, after his execution, "the annals of Wiltshire have rarely been stained by so foul a crime as the one thus expiated and seldom has such a painful scene been witnessed as the trial at our last assizes, when the accused stood charged with the murder of his aged father, the chief evidence against him being that given by his own children. A crime of this nature was probably never more clearly proved. The trial disclosed a sad depth of moral depravity, and plainly showed that drink and immorality led to the horrible tragedy. Horton beat his father to death under circumstances of exceptional barbarity, and the cold-blooded ferocity with which he did it was proved only too conclusively by the fact that he afterwards walked two miles farther and killed his paramour by similar means."

John Horton was his father's only son, he lived all his life in the parish of Westwood, about two miles from Bradford-on-Avon. His wife had died some years earlier, leaving eight children. During her last illness, she had been nursed by Charlotte Tarrant (otherwise known as Lindsey) 'a woman who has not always borne the best character.' After the Wife's death, a relationship grew between her and John Horton, and she lived with him until 17th October 1885.

Norton's father, Edward Horton (69), lived at Lower Westwood between a half and one mile further from Bradford. Of him, the Wiltshire Telegraph said, "The history of the elder Horton's life will bear less investigation than that of his son. It transpired in evidence that he had been a man of very loose morals. He had, it seems, been married no fewer than three times, and his last wife died only in the fall of last year. He had, it is said, treated his wives by no means well, and there are rumours to the effect that the death of the last one was hastened, if not brought about by his cruelty. In his case also drinking habits are said to be one of the causes of this unhappy state of things."

The events which led to the execution of John Horton took place on 20th November 1885. Charlotte Lindsey had from time to time visited the old man, which was a cause of friction between father and son. On 20th November they quarrelled in the Three Horseshoes Inn, Bradford-on-Avon. William Stokes, the landlord saw Edward Horton enter at seven o'clock, and John Horton about half-an-hour later. They remained about an hour discussing various matters. They quarrelled for much of the time about the woman Lindsey. At one point their altercation reached so violent a pitch that Inspector John Chey who was passing, entered and told them to desist or leave the place. They quietened down. At half past eight or nine, Edward Horton went into the taproom.

By half past nine he was at his home where his grandson, John Horton (the younger) found him sitting by the fire. This John Horton, the eldest son, who was over twenty, and a cowman, lived with his grandfather, and they both slept in the same bed, a fact which brought him in full face to the subsequent events. Edward Horton, who told the young man he had spoken with his father, but made no mention of a quarrel, went to bed at about 10.30 p.m. , and the grandson at nearly 11.00 p.m.

John Horton had been summoned some years previously for damaging his father's furniture, but the Bench did not hear the case, as they allowed a mutual amicable settlement. So John Horton the elder had an unblemished record. At about 11.45 p.m. Edward Horton, awakened by the smashing of doors and windows, awoke his grandson. Then he went onto the landing and shouted "What's up?"

no-one answered. He said; "That's our Jack." The grandson, hearing his father's footsteps coming up the stairs, snatched his trousers, ran into the next-room, and hid under the bed. He saw his father push his grandfather into the room, then he left the house, having as his only clothing his trousers. .

In a nearby field, he "dapped" on his trousers, and waited till he saw his father jump through the hole he had made in the door, the top of which was, 'hut' or smashed in, and, disappear in the direction of his house. He had heard his grandfather shout, "Murder! Murder! My leg is broken!". Inside the house, virtually everything, crockery and furniture, had been smashed to pieces; two clocks both reading 11.45 were broken. Upstairs, the old man was lying on the bed; the room was covered in blood. He ran to fetch help from neighbours who, thinking it just another of their quarrels, refused at first to come, but were persuaded. In their hearing, the old man said, with difficulty, "I'll summons thee in the morning."

They went to Bradford to fetch a doctor. As they passed the Barge Inn, they met John Horton the elder coming from Bradford going towards home. They said "Goodnight", he replied, and passed on. Dr. Highmore, summoned at about ten minutes to one, came immediately. He found a compound fracture of the, left leg, badly lacerated hands, a scalp wound about three inches long on the right side of the forehead, several severely smashed ribs and torn flesh, general bruising, and swelling at the throat.

The doctor ordered his immediate removal to the Workhouse, but the old man died at about 2.00p.m before this could be effected. In view of his age, and the nature of the injuries, it was surprising that he had survived so long. He was in fact still a field and road labourer.

The reason why the neighbours going to fetch the doctor had met John Horton coming from Bradford soon became clear. He had gone from his father's house (a house on which he, incidentally, paid the rent. His own house was one built in 1881 for his father who sold it to him for £40 because of financial difficulties) to a house at Torey (or Tory), Bradford-on-Avon, where Charlotte Lindsey had moved. From her own dying statement it transpired that he had hammered and shouted at her door for nearly half an hour, before breaking in the door with a large stone, entering, the bedroom, where he dragged her out of bed, beat her on the head, face and body with a large knobbed stick, and finally left her for dead with the remark, "Now I have done for thee." Solomon Hedges, a neighbour, heard a 'rumpus' at Lindsey's door at 12.40 a.m. followed by a cry of "Murder!", got up saw someone running away from the house, and Lindsey sitting on the doorstep bleeding.

Dr. Lovell of Bradford was called, and the woman lived till the night of Monday, 23rd November, succumbing eventually to frightful injuries to the head. It was because of her condition that on Saturday it was thought necessary to take her statement before a magistrate.

Caroline Horton (13), daughter of John Horton, said that her father came home after they had gone to bed; at what time she did not know, but he woke her up and asked for a clean shirt which she gave him in place of the one he was wearing. He had on his quarry clothes. Both went to bed, and she did not see him till nine o'clock in -the morning, when he came from his work for his breakfast. The dirty shirt, on whose ,wrist bands she observed blood, was in the boiler where the dirty clothes were usually kept.

Her father had eleven other children, and was always very kind to them.

So John Horton returned coolly to work. At half past seven, John Meade of Bearfield, who worked with him, saw him at work in the quarry, and asked him, "What have you been up to?" Horton replied "Have you heard of it?" Meade said he had heard that he had been to Torey and beaten Charlotte Lindsey. "Our old man got it worse than she", answered Horton.,

"It is a thousand pities you ever had anything to do with it. I expect the police will be up directly." Horton agreed that this was likely, but they had not arrived when the two men left the quarry together at one o'clock, Meade remarked on this, and Horton said, "A good job if they don't," adding that he did not expect he would have to go to prison when they heard both sides of the question, but it might cost him £10 to get out of it.'

P.C. Alfred Bailey, stationed at Bradford, was sent to search for Horton on the Saturday morning, and arrested him near his home. Then he charged him with assaulting Charlotte Lindsey and cautioned him, Horton replied, "Ain't I charged with assaulting my old father as well?"

"Not at present."

"Because I gave both of them a good hiding, and if I had done my duty, I should have done for the pair of them, I was so provoked."

At his house a bloodstained mattock was found, which Horton admitted he might have used - he did not know what he was doing - but not intentionally on his father. When he was told by Inspector Grey that his father was dead, and was charged with having caused the death, Horton replied, "Then I shall swing for that."

An inquest was held on Tuesday 24th at the New Inn, Westwood, before Mr. Sylvester and a jury whose appointed foreman was the Rev. William R. Wallin. It did not take long to bring in a verdict of wilful murder against Horton. At the Petty Sessions on the 25th, similar verdicts in respect of this crime and the murder of Lindsey were foregone conclusions, and Horton was committed to the next Assizes.

At the Assizes held on 12th January 1886, no witnesses were called for the defence, and, despite an eloquent appeal by Mr. Matthews for the defence for a manslaughter verdict on the grounds of Horton's previous record, testimonials of his good qualities and his intention only to smash the furniture, the jury returned a verdict of guilty in respect of the murder of Edward Horton. He was sentenced to death.

'Horton's demeanour during the whole of the time he was in prison was one of utter callousness At first, after his condemnation, he was inclined to hope that an effort would be made to get a reprieve, but upon its being pointed out to him that, even if successful, he would have to stand his trial for the murder of Lindsey, he gave up all hope of his life being spared, and seemed quite resigned to his fate.'

On Monday, 25th January, John Horton the younger and one of the daughters came to visit their father. During a technical delay of their admission to the prison, 'having already fortified themselves, it is said, with a quart of gin tot' as soon as they entered the town, they manifested considerable indifference to the impending fate of their father, conversing freely and with great coolness upon it with persons whom they met. 'They entered an inn near the prison, where they

discussed the nature of Edward Horton's injuries, and inquired how executions were carried out.' Indeed, to such an extent did they dwell upon the horrible incidents of the murder, that the landlady checked the conversation.

When they got inside the gaol Horton seemed overcome for a while at the sight of his daughter and shed tears, but recovered his composure. 'He said that they need not trouble themselves about him, for he should die happy', whereupon the daughter observed that he might not say that when the time came; to which he replied "Oh yes, I shall. I don't care. I shall die happy." He declined the offer to see any other of his children. Horton never denied his guilt, but maintained he did not intend to kill; after he had beaten his father, he went to Lindsey's house to give her due beating, because she was the cause of his father receiving a punishment. He said that as she had not answered the door, he had broken it by means of a large stone outside, - 'as much as I could lift with my two hands. I threw it at the door as she was come to open it, and the latch of the door hit her in the head, and that's what killed her' (not reconcilable with Charlotte Lindsey's statement). His intentions not to kill were largely believed in the neighbourhood because on the Saturday morning he had seemed quite unaware of the results. The motive seems to have been entirely jealousy at Lindsey's association with his father. The prisoner said of his father, that there was not a bigger blackguard in the parish of Bradford, and that as long as he could remember, the old man never came home without a black eye on a Saturday night'.

After his condemnation he slept soundly every night except that following the visit of his children. He had an astonishing appetite, gained over a stone in weight, and seemed in no way affected by his ordeal.

To the last, Horton maintained his remarkable composure. He slept soundly and had to be wakened at six o'clock on the morning of his execution. The execution, performed by Mr. Berry of Bradford, took place within Devizes Gaol at 8.00 a.m. on Monday, 1st February 1886. The prisoner had eaten a hearty breakfast and drunk a pint of tea. He had lost his conversational mood, had no messages for friends, nor thanks for good treatment in prison. He promised to co-operate with the executioner and kept his word. Berry said 'that he had never executed a man whose muscular system was more largely developed.' Mr. Berry's renown was such that it led to his being commemorated in a folk song.

So died John Horton, but there was yet one strange feature to emerge from the case: John Horton the younger was engaged to a daughter of Charlotte Lindsey. The marriage planned for shortly before Christmas was postponed till the publicity aroused by the case should have diminished.

Sonnet - William Wilkins

(He worked years in the quarries; signed his name with 'Box Hill 1888)

Wilkins, bestir thy bones within the tomb!
Arise, shake off the dust of passing years.
Within those messy mines' unpierced gloom,
Nor voice, nor footsteps now we hear.
Return to us, match once more thy power
Gainst yielding rock unseen since World's first dawn,
Where in thy life thou passedst the working hour,
Rewarded but by sound block sweated-sawn,
A craftsman's skill is rare in present day
Who sees with pride his all-made finished task,
And earns his place in the chronicler's page.
Let us then not our heritage betray,
And no more than transient cheapness ask,
Let Peer nor Baalim not o'er us rage.

RJ.T. (1971 revision of 1962 original)

Sonnet - On the Death of Herbert Hiscocks

(13th November 1976)

Thou'rt gone, old warrior, to fairer climes
All griefs and pains of life new past in sleep,
And retest, so, beyond the arm of time.
A life of fourscore-ten leaves few to weep
Of those familiar to you; nor must
We wail, when, life's work ended, ripely called,
A noble soul takes leave, returns to dust:
Such loss us grieves, but leaves us not appalled.
What's left to us is that we cannot see;
The voice forever still'd we shall not hear;
The smile, recall, the wisdom, all are gone.
For him will come the joys of life to be;
For us shall stand, for aye, the mem'ry clear,
Undying; what he was, what he had done.

RJ.T.

BOX HILL

Oh pleasant hill o'er pleasant vale,
Where Time's rich garner lies-concealed,
If years could speak, what then their tale?
Did Roman soldiers weapons wield
To drive th'unwilling indigenes,
That they might win the better rock
To build at Bath great bathing schemes?
When Saxon Aldhelm's bishop's frock,
Flowed out behind him on his horse,
As down he flung his glove to ground
Did he perceive himself the source,
Of treasure in our times still found?
A thousand years since Aldhelm died,
Malmesbury, of his stone firm made,
On that same stone has still r'elied
For man's work on its colonnade.'
In later years, a manor house
At Hazelbury crowned the hill,
Here Henry Croc his ground allows
To monks and nuns, while stone's there still
Monks and monasteries fade away,
Succeeding trees have come and gone;
Only stone, hid from light of day,
And Gods green grass last on and on.
Comes after age, another man;
Brings Victoria's reign Brunel,
Genius who will gain his plan,
Drive through Box Hill his great Tunnel.
By his work, treasure more was found;
And transport given near at hand,
For Hartham, Monks Park, and Box Ground,
Took it o'er, and beyond this land.
Ah fair hill, what changes are yours! -
Your fullest age sixty years since,
When near two thousand were the force.
From that time on, decline begins,
Along your now deserted ways,
Are grown self-planted, sturdy trees.
Ivy-clad cliffs their gentle heads raise
Above the hum of many bees.
How diff'rent then, when loaded carts
Bore stone along, down Quarry Hill,
Stone so cherished in other parts.
Down that steep cart track, near the Box rill,
Drawn by-horses faithful and proud,
Went many a hard-toiled-for prize.
Quiet houses re-echoed loud
The grating wheels, the drivers' cries.
Oh sweet hill, what vistas we see
All round us at hand and afar

Hillocks, houses, and hostelry;
Colerne's tall tower, slender spar
Above the horizon's soft haze,
Catches our eyes, stirs dreams,
As o'er vales and pastures we gaze,
Of what was, what is, and what seems.
Oh! dear hill of summer sunsets,
Starry nights and clear dawns recalled,
Mem'ries once felt that none forgets;
Where each year buds verdant unfold.
Bless'd be now your mellowed cream stone,
Your crinkling leaves and shady glades.
All these are the scene and the home
Of those whose renown never fades.

R.J.T

Bristol 21.1.1971

A greatly extended version of a 1961 short poem, but keeping the 1961 setting.

Note

Box Hill, alas, is no longer just as in the poem. It has suffered various ravages of vandals and 'progress'. The hillocks, grass-grown on stone tips have been bulldozed partly to fill old hauling ways. Permission was given for the tipping of building rubble in addition - in 1963 and 1966. Two great hauling ways and other lesser examples have been completely obliterated. An additional justification of this was safety. How much danger had those hauling ways caused in the sixty years since they were abandoned, or indeed in the one hundred and twenty years or so since they were opened?

Parents in 1950 controlled children imbued with wander-lust; why was this not possible in 1960 or in 1970? If we accept the danger there is, every cliff, cave, machine, river, what-you will, would be barred to the public.. Surely civilisation and beauty are not of no value?

People have to great trouble to bring their rubbish to the Lower Hill Woods. Will this make a land that we are proud to own? Even underground many visitors have seemed eager only to despoil and defile a considerable historical relic.

The Cotham Spelaeological Society has already gone to trouble, and will make further efforts to remove unnecessary spurious daubings. May all who visit Box Hill and its mines be mindful that much still remains worthy of preservation. What ills have so far occurred have angered a number of local people.

On the positive side, Mr. Hancock, one landlord of the Quarryman's Arms', the hostelry to which reference is made in the poem, set up an interesting small museum of quarrying instruments, which is partly in store at present.

Thanks to the support of national legislation, the Parish Council, the R.D.C. later, the District Council have been able to act to reduce further acts of destruction. The legislation would have been far more effective fifteen years ago, but even now constant vigilance is required, since the law does not change the heart of man.

RJ.T.

Sonnet - To Jack Dancey on his Attaining Eighty Years

(13th September 1977)

Fourscore years hast thou, old friend, o'ercoming,

Triumphed; now thy laurel wreath induing,

Count them each a blessing, long life summing.

Yet discount their toll, by strength accruing,

When at six thou stirst thy sleepy cattle

And thy swine in noisome sties a-sprawling.

Each day bright or dull mayst thou do battle,

Zest for toil 'gainst heat and cold a-calling.

Many do exult, well-paid, in idleness,

Living beneficiaries of others,

Draining England's life's blood, selfish traitors.

Proud those self-sufficient, they shall caress

Our wounds, virtuous as best of mothers;

Rightly, too, of slothful drones beraters.

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The late Albert Barnett, Herbert Barnett, the late Owen Bishop, Jack Cainey, the late Frank Davis, Jack and Flo Dancey, the late Sid Dancey, the late Tom Dancey, David Diffell the late Edward Hiscock, the late Herbert Hiscocks, the late Frank Knott, the late Wilfred Light, Albert May, the late William D. Pinnock, Ernest Sheppard, the late Stanford Sheppard, Herbert Tinson, the late Mrs. S.G. West, the late Tom Whittle, and the late Henry Witchard; Bob and Chris Bater, A.E. McR. Pearce and Doug Stevens.

Front cover photograph names

Left to Right

(1) William Shepard (185-1927) 2? William Lodge Elisha Harlett

(2) Freddy Poulson 3? Tommy Morris?

(3) 5?

GLOSSARY

Of Technical Terms used in the Text

ASHLAR Stone cut into slices, so to speak, larger than bricks, but rather like breeze blocks of a size suitable for house building.

BED Layer of stone underground between two other layers and separated naturally from them.

BLASTING Explosives were rarely used in Bath Stone mining as they are calculated to damage stone. They were used to clear a block which had snapped during removal where a saw could not be inserted to clear the remains, and to clear rough rock.

FOREMAN Official of the quarrying company concerned who inspected the stone sent to the surface. He was responsible to see that no money was paid for unsound blocks of stone. He would reject any stone which was damaged or not properly squared.

GALLERY An area cleared of stone and leading to a working area.

GANGER Man in charge of at least one crane and the men working the stone round it. If he owned more than one crane, he would not work full time with any one gang. He would receive the money from the firm for the stone sent out, and would allocate, to each of his men his share. Piece work rates applied.

PROPS These are relatively rare in the; Bath Stone mines because of the hard ceiling beds above the stone being worked, and the stone pillars left unhewn. They are used where the ceiling beds are unsound and are larchwood where stone, is being worked, and of brick in government converted Quarries.

SHAFT Shafts are sunk to try for good stone (Trial Shafts) -to ensure good air circulation (Air Shafts), and to remove stone. These last are of two types, vertical shafts and slope shafts (ca.45 degrees).

SHEARS Equipment rather like gigantic tongs. These grip the stone and the weight of the stone, through the scissor action, creates the grip.

SHORING Ceilings are shored where the condition demands it. Long props from the ground are used, shorter props from ledges cut in the wall, oak wedges, and some times a complete wood or steel channel (or a combination of both) across the passage.

SQUARING Stone sent to the surface had to be cuboid so that cubic content could be checked easily. No block with chunks protruding nor a corner missing, would be passed. All unusable stone had to be removed.

STONE CHOPPER Man who did the work of squaring the block with a heavy axe. It was not mere brute force but skill also which was required to avoid waste and produce a clean result. Big pieces of waste stone would be sawn off. The chopper cleaned the faces of the block.

TROLLEY Low truck on which the stone was transported underground and to the railway loading wharf along the tram roads. Some quarries never had rails laid down, but only carts. Both were originally horse drawn, but later drawn by steam or diesel locomotives.



Inscription from lower level gallery at Brewer's Quarry Rudloe. Reads "Fletcher, champion at Box, beat Simpkins Jan. (or Jun) 23rd 1894 "Forty pound bet". In the corner is Fletcher's autograph.