

Newspaper cuttings: Great Ayton news

The late Tom Kirby kept copious files of newspaper cuttings, mainly from the *Darlington & Stockton Times* (but not always with the source identified) relevant to Great Ayton. In 20010-12 Malcolm Race went painstakingly through the files and selected the more important entries. These were transcribed by Peter Morgan. This section is about village news.

20 April 1925

VILLAGE AMENITIES

Keen controversy has been aroused in Great Ayton by the Parish Council's decision to permit a "round-a-bout" proprietor to assemble and operate his amusement machinery upon the High Green. As ever, the reintroduction of things old enough to be new, has created a small but determined opposition, who assert that the Green in question is not common land, and, therefore, that the Council have gone beyond their powers. On the other hand, the majority, including, for once in a way, the older inhabitants, asserts positively that the Green is common land, and cite as evidence supporting their view the unquestionable fact that the Green has been similarly employed on many occasions in the past. Whilst there appears to be some little doubt as to the jurisdiction of the local body, there does not seem to be any adequate reason why amusements should be forbidden the village, provided, of course, that the majority of the villagers are not oppose thereto. Nothing like the recent enterprise of Redcar is threatened, and the unbiased observer cannot but admit that the High Green is not so beautiful that round-a-bouts thereon will constitute an act of vandalism. If the opposition are really concerned to beautify the village they might usefully consider a scheme for improving and protecting the Low Green, which is much the more picturesque and possesses many more natural advantages

21 January 1926

TRAFFIC RIVALRY

The various inducements held out to the public by the rival transport concerns plying for hire between Stokesley and Middlesbrough have their humorous side. For a time the active rivalry was restricted to the Corporation 'bus service and the other 'bus service run by private enterprise. Now the Railway Company have joined in the fight. The Middlesbrough Corporation did not display much originality in pressing upon the public notice its claim for patronage. It was content to make a bald announcement of the reduction in fares. The private bus proprietor went one better in his reply by inviting the public "to patronise the local firm and ride in comfort." This slogan was adroitly phrased, for the good people of Ayton seem pretty well agree that the privately owned buses "beat to a frazzle" the buses on the municipal service. The Railway Company, in their first announcement of a reduced fare, used handbills. Now, to provide a perpetual reminder, they have erected a boarding of considerable dimensions in an old world garden in a central position in Great Ayton, and not only have the fares between Great Ayton and Middlesbrough been reduced, but, if the posters proud words or justify, passengers "ride in safety and comfort". Thrifty inhabitants of "Canny Yatton", nowadays, go to bed each night wondering whether, on the morrow some new service will announce kindly intentioned of conveying passengers free of charge, and giving a prize that those who collect the largest number of tickets.

26 March 1926

CARLING SUNDAY

The exact origin of the custom of eating grey peas, or carlings. two Sundays before Easter is lost in obscurity. There may be a smattering of truth in the legend that Carling Sunday is the anniversary of a providential escape from starvation of the inhabitants of a north-eastern coastal town. These good people, it is said, were in the throes of a famine, and were saved by the timely arrival of a vessel carrying a cargo of carlings. The custom dies hard in rural areas; there are very few families who do not include carlings in their mid-day meal yesterday. The country taverns also provided a supply for the consumption of their customers. Formerly, proprietors were suspected of adding; an unnecessarily large quantity of salt and pepper thereto for the purpose of ensuring that their customers should have a thirst commensurate with the greatness of the occasion. This tradition however, has now been exploded by placing

the necessary condiments on the counter. whence the customers may use such quantities as may suit their particular palates. Carling Sunday is of hoary antiquity; it would be pleasant to be able to think of it us having the prospect of a future no less long. Probably, however, it will die out as have many other such customs, unless, in the course of time, some energetic society of antiquarians, discovering it in the last stage of inanition, keeps it artificially alive as a cult for people with long hair.

19 May 1926

STRIKE STORIES

As in the war, so in the strike there were instances of rural solidarity where normal phlegm was such that the most exciting news did not penetrate the thickly crusted hide. One old toiler of the land, acquainted with the first news of the strike calamity yesterday, was overcome with dire amazement. Not within eight miles of the nearest village gossip, his decrepitude would not allow him to go far from his own barnyard. All the time this vertebrium of Britain's back-bone had slept and ate in blissful ignorance of the tragic cloud hanging over the industrial world. So long as corn grew, cocks crowed, and hens laid or lied, he was satisfied. To villages which permitted such ignorance the arrival of newspaper vans was the eagerly-awaited event of the day during the conflict. Primitive humour was rife, as was found by an owner of a home-made manure-cart labelled by some rural humourist "For Food Only." The wife of a "black-legging" railway worker was, however, being unconsciously libellous when she complained of her husband being "pestered to death with them there pick-pockets.

24 June 1926

EASY AIRCRAFT TESTS

Many residents are surprised that the North of England, possessing, as it does, so many natural advantages admirably adapted to the testing of aircraft, is so repeatedly ignored by the bodies governing contests. Less than a decade ago aircraft were in infancy. The aeroplane of today is popularly, though wrongly, supposed to have obtained something approaching perfection; whilst the improvement of scientific instruments, the broadcasting of weather forecasts, and other technical improvements have all tended to make the task of aerial navigation much less difficult. Driving a motor car, indeed, has been affirmed to be harder than air piloting. It is, then, at first sight surprising to find that the conditions governing modern air contests are much easier than those that the pioneer pilots were called upon to undertake. For instance, In the King's cup Race, which is to take place at Hendon next month, in no single case does the selection to be flown total in distance to hundred miles, whilst the compulsory halts over the 5 sections total 21/2 hours. In the early days of aircraft contests, the section flown were as far apart as London and Harrogate. But the truth is that these short speed trials are not reliability tests, but popular displays of agility. The stamina of planes is now tested in much more formidable ways.

8 July 1926

A NEW ISLAND

Hans Andersen, in one of his fantastic stories of children, depicted a submerged island upon which cattle graze and roamed the liberty. The village of Great Ayton enjoys the doubtful privilege of possessing an almost equally curious Island. The silt washed down from the neighbouring moorlands into the beck which pursues its course through the village has been allowed to accumulate until a wide expanse of luscious grass almost blocks the scheme's progress. Recently the unusual spectacle of cattle grazing in midstream was witnessed. The local authority, after discussing the question of cleansing the beck, has solemnly preceded to measure up the "island" and estimate the cost of its removal. It is extremely doubtful whether the appeal of the Vicar in the Parish Magazine for the clearing of the stream will carry much weight. Possibly it may prevent the schemes being brought into operation, at any rate in the near future. Rightly or wrongly, some of the local Councillors resent the interference as a slight upon the fulfilment of the trust with holes in them by the electors.

18 August 1926

THE FARMER AND THE BOOKIE

In an age when a universal scarcity of money prevails, most bookmakers do not despise quite modest wagers. Certain individuals, however, puffed up with pride, and not recognising changed times, still refuse to accept anything less than a "dollar." For example, at Redcar last week one backer wanted to invest a shilling on "Simon's Shoes," at the long odds of 10 to 1. The penciller to whom the bet was offered sarcastically told the punter to "take it away and have a drink with it." As the punter was not possessed of an impenetrable hide, and was an abstainer into the bargain, he resented the snub and declined to have a bet on the race. His sentiments, after his selection had won, towards fielders in general, and especially this individual, can be better imagined than described. Another instance of the attitude of certain bookmakers occurred on Saturday. A well-known local farmer had been inveigled into Tatts, by racing friends who promised to find him a winner. "Slip Knot" was the horse selected for the plunge, and the agriculturist produced two half-crowns from a capacious wash-leather purse for investment. He, too, was gratuitously insulted by the question, "Can you afford it?" To this he made no reply. But after the "All right" had been signalled he proceeded to collect his winnings. Carefully counting it over, he calmly asked the astonished bookie. "Now then, cau thoo afford it?"

23 September 1926

PROFIT FROM THE HUMBLE COCOANUT, FAIR FINANCE

Incredible as it may sound, in an age of universal industrial depression, and the incidental shortage of money, it is impossible to acquire a more gilt-edged security than that held by amusement proprietors. As an example, the modern switchback, which has largely ousted from popularity the old horse round-about, may be cited. The initial outlay for a machine of this description, with its ornate, upholstered cars, and fine organ, may easily be within the region of £20,000. The incidental expenses, including coal for the engines, wages, tolls, and so on, must reach in the aggregate a tremendous sum annually. Yet these machines are veritable gold mines to their owners. Each machine has on an average ten cars with a seating accommodation for sixteen passengers, which number during "rush hours" is frequently exceeded. As the fare is 2d per head, roughly £1 10s is received for each ride. At a modest computation, the number of rides may be calculated as thirty to the hour. At an event like Stokesley Show, where the rush hours last, continuously from 2 till 11 p.m., the takings may easily reach £500. The "Black Cats," "Aeroplanes," and similar devices are also paying propositions.

The higher value of the prizes given the larger the profit is, as speculators naturally patronise the device giving the best prizes. Admitted that the awards are worth considerably more than the two pence charged for the purchase of a "town" or "country," the proprietor declines to set the machinery in motion until the full complement of tickets is sold. Thus, his large margin of profit is assured. Cocoa-nut shies, too, show an enormous profit. Four "shies" are allowed for sixpence. On Stokesley Show night, a solitary "nut" brought the proprietor exactly ten shillings before falling to a well-aimed shot.

8 October 1926

A VILLAGE FEUD - Insult from Stokesley

Much heat has been engendered in Great Ayton by an utterance from Councillor Robert Armstrong. The councillor is one of Stokesley's representatives on the Rural District Council. At a recent meeting of that body, moved by indiscreet candour, he affronted the working men of Great Ayton by affirming that they had "less backbone than a herring." Those in the habit of dissecting these intriguing creatures for breakfast might observe that anyone who had more backbone than a herring would be nothing but back-bone. However, the calumny, if such it be, was promptly refuted by Councillor Johnson, of Great Ayton. The incident has recalled the old feud which used to exist between these, two places. Years ago it was no uncommon occurrence for a "Yattoner" to be stoned out of Stokesley or vice versa. When the residents of the two parishes became less bellicose they were content to indulge in ridicule, the Stokesleyites considering Aytonians to lack wits entirely. This gave rise to the retort that "Stowsla larnt all it knows frae Ayton feeals."

October 1926

THE DURHAM OX

All over the north (and further afield) there are signs swinging outside country inns purporting to represent the Durham Ox, or, at any rate, bearing his name. The Durham Ox was calved in 1796, and questions are often asked as to why he was immortalised during the succeeding generations by his name still remaining outside many an inn in agricultural districts. The great ox was by Charles Colling's famous Shorthorn, bull "Favourite" (number 252), out of a non-pedigree black and white cow which Colling had bought at Durham Fair for £14. When he had reached five years old he was such a size that a Mr Bulmer, of Harmby, purchased him for .£140 for the purpose of exhibiting him to interested rustics, to whom a fat beast or huge turnips was as much attraction as are picture houses to-day. The Durham Ox weighed 3,024 lbs at this time, and was so laden with flesh that a special road van had to be constructed to convey him from place to place to be shown to admiring crowds on payment. For five weeks did Mr. Bulmer tour him in the north, and evidently he proved a considerable "draw," for one John Day bought him and the van at Rotherham for £250, and a few weeks later declined to accept £2.000 for his bargain. For six years he was toured through the main parts of England and Scotland, and that is how his name became famous over such, a wide area, and why inn signs were changed to do honour to him. In 1807, when at Oxford, the Durham Ox dislocated his hip-bone, and had to be destroyed, though this did not take place till April, when he was probably losing flesh through pain. The weight when dressed and cut up was:—The four quarters, 165 st. 12 lbs.; tallow, 11 st. 12 lbs: hide, 10 st. 21 lbs. At ten-years old he had weighed 34 cwt. He proved a great advertisement to the Colling's Shorthorn herd, they being the pioneers of Shorthorn breeding.

9 October 1926

THE MELL SUPPER

Harvest Home in Years Gone By -The introduction of the modern self-binder has resulted in yet another old Yorkshire custom fast becoming obsolete. Fifty years ago the corn was sheaved by hand, and tied into "stooks" by the women of the villages. Children of tender age were also hired by the farmers to make the "bands" with which the "stooks" were bound together. The "bands" were made from plaited straw. The ingathering of the harvest was an occasion for great rejoicing, entirely absent in these matter-of-fact days. The late Mr Richard Blakeborough, in his "Yorkshire Wit, Character, and Folk Lore," records that in the Bedale district the last load of corn was known as "The Widow," and was led home in triumph with songs of joy. A farmer of those days provided a "mell" supper to celebrate the safe gathering of his corn. The "mell" supper guests were his labourers; it was an ample repast, washed down with much home-brewed ale. The evening was given over to merry-making and invariably ended in a dance. Up to a few years ago this delightful custom was still observed in some Cleveland dales; but it has fallen into abeyance.

20 October 1926

ORCHESTRAS AND ORGANS - STRAINS OF THE PAST

Church music in Great Ayton appears on record for the first time in the churchwardens accounts for the early part of the XIX th century. When it provided itself with an orchestra not unlike the delightful group of church musicians described by Hardy in "under the Greenwood tree". A subscription to this end would not appear to have found a great deal of favour, however, with the parishioners; it only realised £9.0s 6d. However, there was sufficient to purchase a violincello for £4.05s., bow bag and case for £1 9s 11 1/2d, and a clarionet for £2 2s. Under the leadership of a choirmaster with the old world name of John Longstaffe, so assiduously did the choristers practice that next year the churchwardens had to meet a bill for £1. 4s. for "candles for the singers". During his 2nd year of orchestral existence, a 2nd clarionet was acquired. The upkeep of the instruments appears to have drained church finance heavily; charges for " new strings fiddles", " new reeds for wind instruments," frequently appear. Once annually the choir made merry, sums ranging from 2s 6d to 7s were expended on tea for the womenfolk, whilst the men were regaled upon ale, read, and cheese at a cost of from 15s to 18s. But all good things have an end. Mr John Rigg, of Manchester, gave the 1st organ, played by a handle, to the parish in 1840. The Rev J Ibbetson, then the vicar, considered the tunes too lively, however, and had a new set foot in. One of the clarionets which figured in the first orchestra is still possessed by Mr Watson Johnstone, one of the churchwardens. The last chapter in the story is a renovation about to take place in the present organ.

21 October 1926

A TASTE FOR DEATHS - MORBID TASTES

Visitor's unseemly Conduct was recently the subject of forcible remarks from the foreman of a jury at an inquest held on the victims of a recent air disaster. It was asserted by this worthy Juror "that there was a good deal of carnival spirit about." Many people are imbued with the morbid curiosity about anything appertaining to death, especially if a fatality is the result of murder, suicide, or accident. Little more than a year ago all Cleveland and Tees-side was shocked by the terrible drowning tragedy which occurred within the vicinity of Great Ayton. It is no exaggeration to say that hundreds of people put in an appearance with cycles, motorcycles, and cars. Many of them brought food and sat round the grim natural amphitheatre awaiting with ill suppressed excitement the location and recovery of the unfortunate boy and girl victims. Similarly, the Ingleby Greenhow murder attracted scores of people to the locality. So great was the influx of spectators attending the internment of the victim that not a tithe of them was able to gain access to the tiny church. This curious morbidity is strong in country people, especially the older generation. In most rural communities that are to be found " old inhabitants" will proudly boast that they have not missed a " burying" for the last 40 or 50 years.

5 November 1926

GUNPOWDER PLOT RHYMES

Guy Fawkes in the Villages - one custom identified with the celebration of the "glorious fifth" which has largely fallen into disuse in the North Riding, though still religiously observed throughout the West of Yorkshire, is the eating of Parkin. No housewife in Wharfedale would dream of allowing the festival to pass without providing a supply of Parkin, which is another name for gingerbread. There are many local versions of the old doggerel rhyme. At Cleasby the village youths include a reference to a local character who sold treacle toffee, which, for some unaccountable reason was known as "Tom Trot." The Great Ayton boys once had a rhyme of their own, sung around the bonfire they built on the Low Green. This had reference to a certain " Awd Grimey," and ran as follows:

Awd Grimey sits on yonder hill,
Ez black ez ony crow ;
He ewsed ti weear an awd black cooat
Wi buttons down befoor.

Just who the original Awd Grimey was, or why he sat upon a hill in preference to sitting by his own fireside, and why it was expected that anyone's coat should button behind, are matters too deep for any but, the rural mind.

9 November 1926

KING LOG

Not the least unusual of the later fuel stories is that which occurred at Great Ayton last week. A huge oak tree was to be felled at the junction of the roads leading to Middlesbrough, Stokesley, and Guisborough. The workmen engaged upon the task consulted long and earnestly; at length they reached a decision that the doomed monarch was to fall in the field wherein for centuries it had stood. But wind and the mass of "topwood" combined to render this scheme abortive: the mighty hunk fell plumb across the highway, an insurmountable barrier to traffic. 'Bus traffic was perforce diverted to Stokesley, and passengers accustomed to dropping off at their own doorstep had to complete the journey on foot. Long detours were necessary on the return journey. Industiously applied "cross-cuts" and axes speedily dismembered the tree, and, needless to say, the "all clear" signal was given almost in record time.

10 November 1926

THE WASSAIL CUP

Vessel Cuppers and Rabbit Skin;
They hav tweer dolls put in a box,
Deck't round wi' greens an' flowers.
They say it's vargin an' her son,
An' this they sing at 't doours,

So wrote the Cleveland poetess, Mrs G. M. Tweddle, in her poem on the old customs of wassail cup singing. There was nothing so romantic about the youth who visited Great Ayton on Saturday, chanting in nasal tones: "God rest yer all a merry, gentleman" He disdained the traditional symbols of the crib, the Holy Babe, and His mother.

He sought, instead, to purchase rabbit skins. Despite the disappointment it caused the children, doubtless he reaped a goodly harvest from many householders. Throughout Cleveland folk cling tenaciously to the belief that ill-luck will attend those who turn away empty-handed the first wassail cup singer, known locally as the "vessel cupper." In some parts of the county donors of alms to the "vessel cuppers" are allowed to pluck from the holly and evergreen decorations of the "crib" a leaf which is held to be an infallible cure for toothache. Whatever the shortcomings of the "vessel cuppers" may be, they are inseparably associated with Christmas, and general regret would be felt if the custom fell into abeyance.

1 December 1926

A RIVAL TO JET? An Unfashionable Native Stone

A contributor to a recent newspaper predicted an early return to popularity of English jet jewellery. However welcome the fulfilment of this prophecy might be to Cleveland generally, and to Whitby especially, it seems extremely unlikely to materialise. The introduction of foreign jet, which could be sold cheaper, was responsible for the decline of this once important, industry of Cleveland, in whose hills jet is still to be found in considerable quantities. There are many old miners residing in the district who were employed in the local jet mines; but of the highly-skilled craftsmen who "turned" and polished the raw material into ornaments very few survive. Some few years ago a promised boom in English jet led to the opening of mines on the hills above Kirkby-in-Cleveland and Ingleby Greenhow. But the demand for the jet mined was not sufficient to warrant the continuance of the project, and it closed down forthwith accordingly.

3 December 1926

THE FOX'S BAD NAME

The ancient saw about giving a dog a bad name and hanging him applies also to the fox. Rural poultry-keepers are prone to ascribe all raids upon their hen-roosts, many of them made by marauding stoats, weasels, rats, and other vermin, indiscriminately to the "thief of the woodlands." Often it happens that the poultry fund of a hunt is called upon to meet claims for worried poultry when Reynard is completely clear of all offence. Recently a nocturnal raid was made upon a Cleveland hen-roost, from which several valuable birds were stolen. The pullets were decapitated, and the heads were left upon the hen-house floor, seemingly irrefutable evidence of the ravages of Reynard. Unfortunately for their little plot, the human rascals who were to blame had suffered a moment's forgetfulness. The circumstantial evidence which they had carefully faked for the owner of the fowls was nullified by the prompt discovery of a discarded poker. Quite clearly it had been used to force an entry, and then had been thrown down and overlooked. Master Fox was guiltless. With all his clever-ness he has not yet learnt how to use an emergency jemmy on a chicken-house door.

6 December 1926

BACK TO WORK IN THE CLEVELAND MINES

After a post-war slump lasting over five years, the long hoped-for revival in Cleveland's mining industry seems destined to arrive with dramatic suddenness. Throughout the affected area the recent indications of an early resumption have received a joyful welcome. Out of all patients with doles and idleness and attendance on "boards", and worst of all, with the general shortage of money contingent upon an unprecedented industrial depression, the men are cheerily hopeful of being fully employed early in the New Year. The Cleveland Miners' And Quarryman's Association is giving practical aid to its members, all of whom are being equipped with new pairs of strong boots with which to return to their work. The secretaries of the local branches have been actively engaged during the past few days enrolling the applicants for the gift. The only obligation contingent upon the gift is that the recipient pledges himself to pay the arrears of his Union contributions and to assume for membership when he returns to work.

14 December 1926

STOKESLEY'S SIGNS

To those unacquainted with Stokesley's history as the former capital of Cleveland, the number of its 'pubs' would appear to be out of all proportion to its size. The number of fully-licensed premises in this quaint old town is no less than a dozen. Even this total is three short of the number which existed a century ago, as the Chequers, Race-horses, Black Swan, Bull and Punch Bowl, George and Dragon, King's Head, and the Masons Arms no longer exist. Four of them have, however, been replaced by the New Inn, White Swan, Queen's Head, and Black Horse. By a freak of progress the site of the Black Swan, an old-time posting house, is now occupied by the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel. Of the dozen which survive, no less than seven exhibit birds or beasts for their signs—Greyhound, Bull and Dog, Golden Lion, Bay Horse, Black Horse, and White Swan. The Bull and Dog is in all probability a survival of an age when every county town had its bull ring, in which bulls were goaded into frenzy and then baited by dogs. So far from being regarded as a degrading sport, it was a popular pastime with high and low, rich and poor alike. Indeed by an ancient Act of Parliament, no butcher was allowed to expose for sale bull beef which had not been publicly baited. The original owner of the Greyhound no doubt adopted this sign out of compliment to the old school of Stokesley sportsmen, many of whom kept running dogs.

2 February 1927

WORTHY INDEED

The death of Mr Worthy Pearson has meant a loss to Great Ayton. Early in life he experienced a tragedy, to a less courageous individual conceivably fatal. Qualifying for a clerical career on the then N.E.B., he commenced at Middlesbrough Station. Destiny, assisted by his own youthful folly, militated against his remaining in this sphere. Instructed to take a message to the goods station, he attempted to board a moving train; but he was crushed between the carriages and platform. So severe were his injuries that for months his life hung in the balance.

After three years' convalescence he established a business on the High Green. He must have been known to successive generations of Teessiders who at Bank Holiday vacations dropped in for a "Gazette" and to exchange a word of greeting. During the Whitsuntide reunion at the Friends' School his shop was besieged by old scholars visiting their old friend. In spite of physical infirmity he was one of the mainstays of the Great Ayton community. He had many interests. The local show; the Choral Society, the Parish Church, have all by his passing lost an able and helpful friend.

5 February 1927

THEATRE SLEEPING VAN

The old type of travelling theatre, which performed a useful service in bringing recreation and amusement into the lives of rural communities is rapidly becoming obsolete. The "films" are largely responsible for its decline, most villages now possessing at least one "picturedrome", or other barbarously named Kinema. One of the last of the old "gauffs" was that which closed down at Great Ayton some years ago. Whilst admitting that the repertoire these travelling thespians very largely consisted of melodramas of the "Mariah Martin" and "Face at the Window" type, it was by no means unusual for these companies, many of whose members possess quite striking merits, to produce a really good play. The Arts League's excellent work for the past 8 years in bringing good dramatic work to the villages is now to be facilitated by a new enterprise. Early in March a motor living van, complete with bunks, bathroom, and other modern conveniences, is to start from London with a company. After touring the Southern Counties, Ireland is to be visited and later the Lake District. Presumably it is in this vehicle the players will come to Tees-side this Spring

12 February 1927

"WHO SAID RATS?"

The official "Rat Week" sponsored by the Government has no doubt resulted in a temporary depletion of the ranks. With such rapidity, however, is the rat propagated that constant warfare against him is imperative. No place in which food is stored is free from his ravages. Farmsteads are favourite haunts, and there are few farm buildings or stacks which do not accommodate a colony of rats. At a recent threshing day on a Cleveland farm no fewer than 354 were bolted and killed from one stack. At another organised rat hunt on a Great Ayton farm the casualties reached 60. At this hunt, after the ferret had been badly mauled and temporarily put out of action, the rats were flooded from their strongholds to meet their fate at the teeth of the eager terriers. One demented creature sought sanctuary in the legs of a 'ratter's' trousers. There he was strangled by an hysterically unwilling host, who experienced a hectic five minutes before solicitous friends evicted the carcase of the intruder.

These figures become insignificant when compared with the "bag" of Mr Harry Selby Lowndes, the Master of the East Kent Foxhounds, who, some years ago with the aid of his team of terriers, destroyed in four days 1,218 full grown rats

2 March 1927

STOKESLEY PANCAKES, Old Stokesley Customs

The glamour which formerly surrounded Pancake Tuesday in Stokesley has, like the fame of its fairs and hirings, passed away. Beyond the delightful consumption of pancakes at the mid-day meal, nothing now remains of the once, important festival. The school children, for instance, no longer devise a pretext for getting the schoolmaster out of doors, which are then effectually barred, while the following doggerel is chanted by the juvenile plotters:—

"A holiday, a holiday we crave.

A holiday a holiday we'll have ;

If you don't give us holiday there you must stay.

For this is our legal barring-out day."

They did so almost as a matter of routine fifty years ago. In all probability the pedagogue was not averse to a respite thus extorted. At any rate, it was granted without demur, and was spent by the boys playing whip top, and the girls "burney ball," a local term for rounders. Treacle goes with pancakes, in the Stokesley region, and it is told, in the old town, how one tradesman laid the foundations of a successful business by his enterprise in securing a monopoly of the treacle trade on Shrove Tuesday. He had obtained a full stock in good time for the great event. His competitors were less prompt. Consequently when a spell of bad weather blocked the roads other supplies were prevented reaching the town, and he was the only tradesman able to supply the popular requirements in the whole district. So great was the rush on his shop that he had to employ two men to run off the syrup, whilst he chatted pleasantly with his customers, and sold them other goods in which he dealt.

30 March 1927

Country Funerals - HEARSES & COFFINS

The plumed hearse of the Victorian era, with its team of caparisoned horses, and its accompanying bodyguard of professional mutes, owed some, at least, of its decline from public favour to the satire aimed at it by Charles Dickens. Except in rural areas the old horse-drawn vehicle, is now being gradually replaced by the modern motor hearse. However near the church yard may be a village funeral without a hearse lacks status. In Bilsdale one of these sombre carriages is maintained by the Parochial authorities. No regular driver is employed, and it is by no means unusual for a person at the last extremity to nominate some old crony to guide his last earthly journey.

The parish hearse is less curious than the parish coffin which is still extant at Easingwold. Years ago when the meagre wages of agricultural labourers did not permit of the luxury of a separate coffin the parochial authorities provided one for indigent parishioners. When a death occurred in the village, the coffin was taken from the church, in which it is still stored, to the home of the deceased, and the body was placed therein until the funeral service was concluded. Then the body was tipped, sans ceremony, into the grave, and the coffin was replaced in the church to await another death. This grisly relic is pointed out to visitors as one of the most interesting relics in Easingwold's quaint church.

3 June 1927

THE HIRING PENNY

A Lincolnshire farm hand has been sued for breaking a verbal contract with a prospective employer. In his defence the man urged that as a "hiring penny" was not paid to him the contract was not a binding one. The custom of bestowing a "hiring penny," or "fest," as it is termed, is regarded in some parts of Yorkshire as inseparable from a hiring of farm hands. Whilst the average agricultural labourer would look upon a written contract as so much waste-paper, there are very few who would break a verbal contract once the hiring penny was paid. The "penny," so-called, is usually paid to servants engaged at the local statute hirings. Further those, employees who "stop on" do not consider that their re-engagement is ratified without the receipt of "fest." The actual sum varies according to the status of the servant, a raw recruit receiving a few coppers, and an experienced man 2s 6d to 5s. If, for any reason, the hiring is repudiated, no self-respecting farm servant dreams of retaining his hiring penny, however,

insignificant the sum may be. The return of the "hiring penny" is regarded as sufficient notification that the servant "isn't coming."

10 June 1927

GREAT AYTON CARNIVAL

In spite of the railway company's Whitsun boycott, Great Ayton still retains its place in the sun. Few villages of its size can boast of more enterprise. Not by any means, the least pleasing of its annual events is the Carnival, the third of which is to be held to-morrow. Already the village is donning its carnival attire, and from house and shop gaily-hued bunting flutters in the breeze. To-morrow will witness the invasion of the village, by a motley-garbed crowd. Pseudo Tom; Mixes Charlie Chaplins, Kings and Queens, and all the miscellaneous company of a carnival are expected to put in an appearance. Jazz bands will enliven the proceedings, even if they produce more noise than harmony.

Mr A. K. Cumbor, to whom Great Ayton is indebted for the inauguration of the Carnival, is to be congratulated upon the response to the ambitious programme which he has arranged. A musical festival is also included, in which many well-known Northern choirs and vocalists are to compete before Mr Gavin Kay. A massed procession is to tour the village, and a carnival dance will conclude the day. In the expectation of a harvest from visitors, a round-a-bout proprietor has assembled his machinery on the low green, the use of that "holy of holies," the High Green, being again "verboden." A fine day is all that is required to assure the success of Ayton's day of revelry.

13 July 1927

THE MODERN SHEPHERD

Motor Cars for Shepherds. The motor tractor and petrol-driver threshing engines are now included in the equipment of most farms. The motor car has now invaded another rural sphere, and if the innovation becomes popular in the North the old drovers who may be met in the vicinity of local cattle-marts in charge of droves of cattle and flocks of sheep, may find their services dispensed with. In Southern districts shepherds engaged in the moving of their flocks from place to place are now provided with a two-seater car. The driver, who is incidentally the shepherd, occupies one seat and his faithful dog another. The latter rounds up the sheep in front of the car and then jumps up beside his master. Future artists who record pastoral scenes, will perchance depict be-goggled and leather-coated motorists in place of the shepherd picturesquely attired in the rustic smock and armed with a crook.

7 March 1928

GREAT AYTON PROPERTY SALES

There was a fairly large attendance at the Royal Oak Hotel, Great Ayton, on Thursday night, last week, when Mr. H. A. Richardson conducted a sale of freehold property. The first lot consisted of a freehold dwelling-house in Melbourne Terrace, containing front room, kitchen, pantry, two bedrooms, etc. Bidding for this lot commenced at: £70, and at £90 it was withdrawn. A building site adjoining, and containing 204½ square yards, was sold for £64 to Mr. E. Small, of Great Ayton. Mr. W. Lowther Carrick, Stokesley, was the solicitor for the vendors.—At the Buck Hotel, on Friday, Mr. J. C. Jefferson offered four dwelling-houses at I Levenside, Great Ayton. There was a large attendance, the first offer being £300. Finally the lot was knocked down for £415 to Mr. J. T. Coupland, Middlesbrough. Mr. Herbert Outhwaite was the solicitor in the matter.

9 June 1928

LARGE CROWD ATTENDS VILLAGE FETE

Glorious weather was associated with the Great Ayton carnival and gala, which was held on Saturday. The event aroused a great deal of interest, not only in the immediate district, but throughout Cleveland and in various Tees-side and Skerne-side localities. The opportunity which presented itself of spending a pleasant afternoon amidst delightful surroundings combined with the enjoyment of an excellent entertainment was eagerly seized upon by a large crowd of visitors, who made the journey by bus, cycle and car. The proceedings commenced with a massed procession of the competitors in fancy dress. This was marshalled on the picturesque village green, the parade being

headed by the Great Ayton Prize Silver band. The cavalcade was a motley one, in which pseudo "Tom Mixes" rubbed shoulders with swarthy "Indian Rajahs," and "Petrol Pumps" with "Chocolate Boxes." Prizes were offered for clubs having the largest muster, and such well known organisations as the Middlesbrough Wheelers and Cooperative Clubs were represented.

An innovation this year was a "Donkey Grand National," the eleven competitors taking part in the procession. The event, which was, of course, decided on the field, produced a good deal of amusement. The race was run in heats, and in one particular heat the runners (the term is really a misnomer as they were never out of a walk) showed a marked preference for feeding on the fences which had been erected on the course rather than racing.

The audience acted as adjudicators for the concert party competition, the first prize going to a really clever little troop of juvenile artistes from Darlington. The event, which was in aid of the Great Ayton Flower Show, was organised by Mr. A. K. Cumbor, the enthusiastic and energetic secretary to whom the village is indebted for his indefatigable efforts to brighten the life of the community. The total proceeds of the day, including a dance with which it concluded, and with the income derived from an effort which brought the appreciable sum of £20, amounted to over £70. After meeting all expenses in connection with the event, the Association has a substantial nucleus for the show fund,

FANCY DRESS SECTION.

Judges: Major C. Bolckow. Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Whitwell. Mr. and Mrs. C. Bulmer, Mr. and Mrs. Mitchinson, Mr. and Mrs. Dobbing.

Largest muster in fancy dress: Middlesbrough Co-operative; 2, Middlesbrough Wheelers.

Most effective show : Middlesbrough Wheelers; 2, Darlington Concert Party.

Ladies' fancy costume: Miss Wright, Great Ayton, "Early Victorian": 2, Miss Audrey Kemmick, Darlington Concert Party, " Russia."

Ladies' comic costume: Mrs. Harpham, Middlesbrough Co-operative, "Squaw"; 2, Mrs. Smith, Middlesbrough Co-operative, " Jazz."

Ladies' advertising costume: Miss D. Snell, Great Ayton, "Birds' Custard Powder"; 2, Miss J. Howe, Darlington Concert Party, " Bovril."

Gents' fancy costume: G. Richardson and J. Sunley. Guisborough, "Bear"; 2, R. Lowe, Middlesbrough Co-operative, "Rajah."

Gents' comic: R. Jewson, Middlesbrough, 2, A. Alexander, Middlesbrough.

Gents advertising: A. Pearson, Middlesbrough, "Gypsy Chocolates "; 2, E. Howe, Darlington, "Pratts' Pump."

Juvenile advertising: Audrey and Muriel Dunning, Great Ayton, "Twink" and

"Northern Echo"; 2, E. Watson, Great Ayton, "Players' Cigarettes"; 3, Mary

Watson, Great Ayton, "Rinso."

Juvenile comic: M. Snell, Great Ayton, " Registered Letter"; Ruby Simpson, Great Ayton, "Fire"; 3, Jennie Cook, Guisborough. "Save the Babies."

Juvenile fancy: Dorothy Howe, Darlington, "Wembley Doll"; 2, Doreen Nelson, Middlesbrough Co-operative. "Prince"; 3, Harry Elgie, Great Ayton. "Robin Hood."

Local schoolgirls: Dorothy Harrison and Gwen Ridley. "The Dolly Sisters"; 2, Mary Elgie, " Red Riding Hood."

Local schoolboys: Arthur Hoggart, "Red Indian": 2. Richard Bulmer, "Strolling Minstrel."

Best costume worn by donkey rider: W. Scaife, Great Ayton, "Cowboy."

DONKEY GRAND NATIONAL.

Starter, Mr. J.F. Whiwell, Judges, Dr. Murray and Major C. Bolckow;

Messrs. J. Stevens' and J. Readman's "Double Chances" (W. Stevens); 2, Mr. Jasper Hood's "Poethylyn" (H. Kitching). Won by a short head.

16 June 1928

OVERCROWDING CHARGE

Herbert Lumbsdale, Arthur Street, Great Ayton, and James Henry Allenby, of Mount Pleasant, Great Ayton, driver and conductor, respectively, of a motor bus, were charged at the Middlesbrough old police court on Monday with overloading a public vehicle. It was stated in evidence that an omnibus which was licensed to carry 30 passengers, when stopped in Middlesbrough had 49. Defendants pleaded that one of the vehicles had broken down, and, as a

consequence, they were trying to accommodate a number of people who had to return and contract tickets. Lumsdale was fined £4, and Allenby £2.

3 February 1929

Mr Henry ("Cherry") Watson, Langbaugh Terrace, died on Tuesday. He was checkweighman for many years at the Roseberry Mine and was also for some time steward of the Great Ayton Working Men's Club and Institute.

16 March 1929

Death of Mrs Oxendale, wife of Mr Arthur Oxendale, manager of the Great Ayton Gas Company. She took a prominent part in the work of the Women's Adult School, the Mothers' Meeting Society and the Mothers' Union.

16 March 1929

For the 21st successive year, Sir John and Lady Fry entertained OAPs of the village. 85 invited to "a substantial repast provided at the British School by Mr Frank Dodsworth."

16 March 1929

Death of Mrs Mitford, wife of Mr Stanley Mitford, popular landlord of the Royal Oak. Aged 58. The Mitfords had been at the Royal Oak for 12 years. She was a familiar figure at race meetings. Also a skilful whist player.

19 March 1929

Death of Robert Spaven, who was for over quarter of a century a rural postman. Resigned from the Post Office during the war to take over the managership of one of the Middlesbrough branches of John Sinclair, the tobacconists. For some time took a great interest in village life and served on the parish council.

30 March 1929

Farm sale

The disposal of the farming stock of Mr William Martin, who is retiring from Airyholme farm to a smaller holding, took place last Thursday. A great of interest was shown in the sale and there was a large attendance.

30 March 1929

Death of Mr William Small (66). For the past 30 years he resided in Great Ayton, where he was engaged in business as a produce merchant. Until he retired from this occupation a short time ago, through ill health, he regularly attended the principal markets in the district in which he became well known and highly respected. He was closely identified with the Primitive Methodist Church and in addition to being a local preacher held several offices in connection with Great Ayton Chapel Sunday School and Christian Endeavour Society.

30 March 1929

DEPARTURE OF A POPULAR MASTER

Whilst regretting the severance of his association with Great Ayton and district, the good wishes of a large circle of friends will be extended to Mr.T.D.Mossdrop in the new venture which he is undertaking. During the nine years he has been master at the Great Ayton Friends' School Mr Mossdrop has earned the approbation and esteem not only of his colleagues and the scholars, and those immediately connected with the sphere of his duties, but also of the members of the village community with whom he came into contact. Mr. Mossdrop, who is leaving Great Ayton in order to take up poultry farming near Newark-on-Trent, is a native of Bridlington. He was educated at Kingswood School, Bath and later at the South Eastern Agricultural -College, Wye, where he took the BSc. in Agriculture, and the

N.D.A. In addition to these degrees, Mr. Mossdrop is a Fellow of the British Society of Agriculture, and a silver medallist in Poultry Husbandry. His first appointment was to the Knaresborough Grammar School, where he remained for two years, leaving to take up the important position of Agricultural Adviser in East Anglia to the Sulphate of Ammonia Association. During the war he enlisted in the ranks of the Special Brigade of the Royal Engineers, with which he served in France. Subsequently he was awarded a commission, and was transferred to the Royal Army Service Corps, serving with the latter in East Africa. Upon his demobilisation he was appointed to the staff of the Great Ayton Friends' School. Mr. Mossdrop has always taken a deep interest in the science of agriculture, in which he has had a great deal of practical experience, and upon which subject he is a recognised authority. When the Agricultural Discussion Society was formed in Great Ayton, he was elected chairman, and never failed to take his students to the lectures, and the discussions which followed. The introduction of the study of agriculture into the curriculum of the Great Ayton School resulted in Mr. Mossdrop in successive years taking parties of students to Denmark and Holland to study the farming methods of the two countries, the tours proving of immense value to the scholars.

Mr. Mossdrop has been closely identified with the public life of the village, and it was largely through his efforts that the Ayton Branch of the British Legion was formed. He has been chairman of the Branch since its inception, he was also a prominent and enthusiastic worker for the Bi-Centenary celebrations of the birth of Captain Jame Cook, and the large number of villages in Holland possessing museums suggested to him the formation of the Cook Museum for Great Ayton, and it was principally owing to his efforts that the nucleus of this interesting feature of the village came into existence.

The museum was opened last Easter, and two thousand names now appear in the visitors' book, and at a low computation another thousand visitors have not gone to the trouble of recording their visit; convincing proof of the interest shown in Mr. Mossdrop's enterprise.

In addition to his other activities, Mr. Mossdrop has for seven years been honorary secretary of the British School, and of the Thomas Richardson Trust.

The end of the term "pop" on Tuesday night was made the occasion for the bestowing upon the departing master of several gifts consisting of the following articles:—Dinner set from the boys; six-piece silver cruet from the teaching staff and the girls; cut crystal biscuit barrel from Mr and Mrs Dennis; a bound copy of "Poultrycraft" from the Natural History Society; and a pipe from the fourth Agricultural form were handed to Mr. Mossdrop by Mr. Stapleton and Michael Abankanovitch.

The photo copy fades out at this point.

6 April 1929

GREAT AYTON RATEPAYERS - ANNUAL MEETING

Mr. Thomas Winn, presided over the annual meeting of Great Ayton ratepayers on Wednesday night last week, the attendance being very small. The charity statement was presented by Mr. Watson Johnstone and disclosed that during the year the following charities had been distributed;—R. N. Simpson's coal charity—38 tons of coal amongst seventy-five recipients; Elizabeth Bulson's flour charity—17 stone of four amongst eighty-six recipients; John Coulson's bread charity—236 loaves of bread amongst fifty-nine recipients; William Young's apprentice charity—£2 10s to one apprentice. Mr. Edwin Johnson observed that as he had had several enquiries as to the distribution of the Ley charity, for the information of those who had asked him, as well as himself, he would be glad if Mr. Johnstone could enlighten him as to its distribution. Mr. Johnstone expressed surprise at this question being raised by his fellow charity trustee. The power of distributing the Ley charity was vested in the Church Council and had nothing whatever to do with the Parish Council or the ratepayers. A detailed statement of its distribution was tendered each year to the Charily Commissioners. Mr. Johnston thanked Mr. Johnstone for his explanation, but said he was still of the opinion that it would have been infinitely better if the donor of the charity had vested the Parish Council with its distribution. It was alleged that a retired independent individual had received five bags of coal from one of the charities, and the action of the Parish Council in making the gift was strongly criticised.

Mr. Winn said that the charily trustees drew up a list of proposed recipients, which was submitted to the Council as a whole, and they either confirmed or deleted from the list. If anyone knew of a needy case, he or any of the other Councillors would be glad to have it stated privately, and he assured the ratepayers that every case which came to their notice would be given every consideration. It was decided to again light the village during the

winter months. Mr. J. Headlam raised the question of the discontinuance of the village branch of the North Riding County Council library. Mr. Winn gave a lengthy explanation of the incidents leading up to its being discontinued, which was largely a question of accommodation for the books and their exchange. Mr. Johnson alleged that Mr. Winn alone was responsible for it being discontinued, an assertion which Mr. Winn strenuously denied. Mr. Winn said that for six years he, with the co-operation of Messrs. Kirkby and Davison had acted as librarians but after the charges made against him he definitely declined to so act in the future. A heated discussion followed, during which Mr. Dodsworth was heard to say that every effort should be made to retain this amenity of the village, and that he, as a Parish Councillor, would go so far as to say that accommodation would in the future be made for the books, and for their exchange in the Parish Council room. Mr. Robinson expressed the opinion that through the laxity of the Parish Councillors in attending the meetings they were responsible for the library being discontinued; and as Mr. Winn had resigned they should find someone to take his place. Mr. Dodsworth: Certainly not. It is up to the users of the library to secure a librarian. It was decided to re-organise the library in the parish room. Mr. Frank Suggitt drew attention to the unsatisfactory condition in which the pavements had been left after the water mains had been put in. Mr. Winn said that with that he agreed, and he had approached the Surveyor, who had promised to put them in position as soon as the earth settled. He thought that a letter from that meeting would strengthen their hands and it was ordered that such a letter be sent. The Clerk (Mr. W. H. Martin) read the attendance at the council meetings, of which 23 had been held. These were as follows:- I. H. Loft, 22; W. Sellars, 20; A. K. Cumbor, 18; F. Dodsworth, 18; T. Winn, 18; W. Johnstone, 17; T. Johnson, 11; A vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Winn for the able manner in which he had conducted the meeting, the vote being carried unanimously.

4 May 1929

RURAL AMENITIES

Modernising the Villages -The domestic amenities and adjuncts to health and hygiene so long enjoyed by town residents are gradually being extended to rural areas. The task of laying down the mains for supplying Great Ayton and Stokesley with water has now been almost completed. Astute owners of property appreciating the increased value to their holdings have, in the majority of cases had taps and other conveniences installed. A decided minority have warded off the "evil day" until compulsion to furnish an adequate water supply is applied by the local authorities—a short sighted policy in the extreme—as the cost of subsequent installations will, in all probability be materially advanced.

During the past week the representatives of the company which is to furnish the two places with electrical power have been busily engaged in the solicitation of orders for the installation of fittings. The latter are to be purchased on the instalment system, a large proportion of the householders having availed themselves of the concession. It is anticipated that the installation will be completed early in June.

5 May 1929

GREAT AYTON

In accordance with custom, Great Ayton Wesleyan Methodists organised a series of interesting events for the Whitsuntide weekend. The Sunday School anniversary services were held on Sunday, and were conducted by Mr Rotherham, who in the morning preached to a large congregation, which included the Scouts and Church Lads Brigade encamped in the district. The afternoon and evening services were devoted to the children, who contributed to miscellaneous programs of recitations, dialogues and special singing, in which they were led by the choir, under the leadership of Mr AE Ingram. On Monday afternoon a jumble sale was held, and proved a great success. Another program was given by the children in the evening, an especially pleasing item being at the "Building of the Lighthouse," which was very effective and pleasing to the congregation.

9 May 1929

SEARCH REWARDED

The Biblical instruction that reward is contingent upon earnest search was well illustrated by an incident, which occurred in a Cleveland village yesterday. Passers-by in the main street were curiously interested in the spectacle of a well-known resident, equipped with a saucepan and a bucket, diligently engaged in the task of cleaning out one of

the street grates. Bucket after bucket of water was taken up, and carefully poured into the channel, the watcher evincing almost as eager an expectation as a prospector engaged in gold washing. The grate emptied of water, the amateur prospector went down on his knees, and plunged his bared arm into the slimy deposit at the bottom of the "trap." After one or two unsuccessful gropings he rose with flushed but triumphant face, clutching a handful of obnoxious looking "sump" in which was embedded the two shilling-piece which had dropped between the bars of the grate.

23 May 1929

WHITSUNTIDE

A record crowd of visitors was attracted to Great Ayton at Whitsuntide. Various companies of Boy Scouts and Church Lads' Brigades were encamped in the locality by Saturday, and the hills, during the weekend, re-echoed to the sound of the bugle and the roll of drums. On Monday the influx began at an early hour, and the crowded conditions of the local bus services gave an early indication of the proportions which the crowd obtained later in the day. Hundreds more appeared by train, car, motor and cycle, and the slopes and summits of Capt Cooks Hill and Roseberry Topping were thronged throughout the day. Situated on the main road to Redcar, the village received a large amount of the race traffic, the responsibilities of the police being manifestly increased. The heavy stream of vehicles was handled in a very skilful manner by Sgt McCallum and PC Atkinson, who, by diverting the race-going traffic and many of the buses by way of the cemetery, relieved the congestion in the village. There were remarkable scenes as the hour for departure drew near. At various points in the village lengthy queues of weary holidaymakers waited with ill-concealed impatience as heavily laden buses spread past, it being impossible for the drivers to accede to imperious signals to stop. Only by running to a late hour were the bus proprietors able to transport their heavy loads of passengers to Teesside.

23 May 1929

GREAT AYTON FRIENDS' SCHOOL – OLD SCHOLARS GATHERING

The annual summer re-union of the Great Ayton Old Scholars' Association at the Friends' School again proved to be a great attraction to former scholars, eager to renew their association with the school and the village. The proceedings commenced on Saturday, when the school cricket team met Stockton Grammar School, the victory of the local school giving much satisfaction. The members of the Association who had assembled in large numbers by Saturday night were welcomed by the Headmaster. Mr. H. Dennis. The induction of the president of the Association, Mr. Arthur Douglass of Bootham School, York, who is shortly to assume the mastership of the Friends' School, Wanagui New Zealand, then took place. To Mr. Douglass belongs the distinction of being the first President to be adorned with the ornate silver pill gilt enamelled symbol of office. Miss Elsie Peart, last year's tennis champion, on behalf of the school, accepted the silver challenge cup presented by Old Scholars of the Ayton and Rawdon (Leeds) Schools. The annual *terza* by the old scholars followed, and the entertainment of the staff to supper.

Sunday was devoted to various religious and musical services, the annual pilgrimage to Fern Deep and Captain Cook's monument taking place in the afternoon. A strenuous day was inaugurated on Monday, the chief items in the morning's programme being the hockey and football matches between past and present scholars, in both of which the former proved successful. In the afternoon, prior to the cricket match between teams representing Past and Present, and in which the latter again won the day, the meeting of the Committee was held.

Mr. Allan Maughan, Blyth, the secretary, in his annual report, announced that the membership of the Association in March last was 414. Forty-five new members had been enrolled, compared with twenty-five in the previous year, but the losses had, unfortunately, more than nullified the gain. Sympathetic reference was made to the deaths of Mr. G. H. Braithwaite (President 1909-10), Mrs. Sarah Bell, and Miss Edith Kirby. There was a gain of four life members, the total number of which was eighteen. Of the twenty-three scholars leaving at the end of the July term fifteen had joined the Association. Mr. Maughan also expressed the appreciation of Mr. Cons, who had left the school, and welcomed Miss Wells as his successor on the Committee. Synchronising with the winter re-union at Great Ayton, a successful dinner had been held by a number of old scholars at the Penn Club, London, and it was hoped to make this an annual event.

The total subscriptions amounted to £43 17s. 7d., and a further sum of £3 5s. towards the reduction of the mortgage on the tennis courts, which had been reduced from £75 to £45. The interest on the life subscription account was £2 16s. 4d., and in spite of the large reduction of the mortgage by careful and judicious economies the Treasurer was able to show a credit balance of £23 19s. 3d. It was decided to make a further grant of £22 10s. towards the reduction of the mortgage, leaving a balance of £22 10s or less than one-quarter of the original amount of the mortgage raised three years ago.

The report was adopted, and Mr. Maughan was cordially thanked for the satisfactory statement which he had presented. In the evening the annual *terza* was held, followed by a supper and dance, the re-union 'being generally considered to be one of the best yet held.

29 May 1929

GREAT AYTON MEETING

A large and enthusiastic meeting in support of Councillor Hinks was held at Great Ayton. Mr. Thomas Winn, head-master of the Edward Kitching Council Schools, presided.

Alderman T. Crooks, Darlington, and Mr. H. Wren, of London, spoke.

Councillor A. K. Cumbor said that Capt Dugdale had asserted at a meeting held in Great Ayton that he was in favour of private enterprise, but when he was asked if he was in favour of Hunts paying compensation for poultry worried by foxes, had evaded the issue that the question was a non-political one. Alderman Crooks, in reply, said that Councillor Hicks was in favour of such compensation being made.

Councillor Cumbor: "In those circumstances Mr. Hicks shall have my support."

1st June 1929

GREAT AYTON - PROTEST AGAINST OVERHEAD POLES

Much resentment has been occasioned in Great Ayton by the proposal of the Durham Electrical Company to erect wooden poles for the carrying of the overhead cables. The opposition to the Poles which it is rightly claimed will disfigure the rural charms of the village, has been accentuated since it became known that through the intervention to Mr Lowther Carrick, metal standards were to be erected in Stokesley instead of poles. The Great Ayton Parish Council met to consider the question last night, when the following resolution was passed: " That the Great Ayton Parish Council strongly object to the proposed erection of wooden poles for electric lighting, on the grounds that they will disfigure the rural aspect of the village, and request that these be substituted by the erection of metal standards throughout the village." Copies of the resolution are being forwarded to the Company concerned, the Ministry of Health, and the two candidates for the Richmond Division, and the County Council.

1 June 1929

A DOUBLE BEREAVEMENT

Deep sympathy is felt in the Great Ayton district for Mr. Stanley Mitford, of the Royal Oak Hotel, and his only daughter (Mrs. Stevens) in the double bereavement which they have sustained in the course of a few weeks. It was only as recently as March that Mrs. Mitford, wife of Mr. Mitford, died after a few days illness, and in the early hours of Friday morning, the death took place of Mr. Arthur Stevens, the husband of Mrs. Stevens. Mr. Stevens, who was thirty-four years of age was the only son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Stevens, of Great Ayton. He served during the war the Grenadier Guards, and at its close set up in business as a coal dealer and haulage contractor, and at the time of his death he had established a large and successful connection. The funeral of Mr. Stevens, who in addition to the widow leaves a little son to mourn his untimely death, took place on Sunday afternoon, when the large and representative attendance testified to the sympathy and respect shown to the bereaved family. The principal mourners were Mrs. Stevens (widow), Mr. Edward Stevens (father), Mr. Mitford (father-in-Law), Mrs. McNeil and Mr. W. McNeil (sister and nephew), Messrs. George, and W Stevens (uncles), Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Suggitt (uncle and aunt), Mrs. Bell (aunt), Mr. S. Stevens (uncle), Messrs. James and John Stevens, Frank, Arthur and Ernest Suggitt. (cousins), Mr. and Mrs. O. Harrison (uncle and aunt, Croft). Amongst others present were Mr. C. Boagey (Redcar), Mrs. Johnston (Redcar), Mr. and Mrs. W. Johnston, Mrs. Page and Miss Page (Middlesbrough) Mrs. Etherington (Hurworth), Nurse Taylor (Bishop Auckland), M. Dodsworth, H. Lee (Great Broughton, Stokesley R.D.C. surveyor), T.

Y. Durham (Stokesley), T. Durham, junr., R. B. Gamble (Stokesley), Fred Johnson, Edwin Johnson. A. Cumbor, J. Fletcher, R. H Barker. Watson Johnson, H. T. Bean, D. J. Tingle, H. Heavisides, T: Robson, D. Stockton, T. Cockerill. A. E. Ingram, E. Small, J. Smith. J. Hodgson (Easby). The many beautiful wreaths which covered the coffin included a handsome cross of lilies sent by Mrs. Stevens, the others being sent by Mr. and Mrs. Stevens (parents), Mrs. McNeil, Mr. Mitford," Stanley" (son), Mr. and Mrs. Hutchinson and Mr. and Mrs. Powells, "Oswald and Hilda," "Charlie and Alice." "Annie," "Frank," "Artie and Annie," "Will and Daisy," "Willie." Mrs. Page, "Nellie and Madeleine." "Aunt Alice and family." Mr. and Mrs. Rickerton, "Grace and Elsie, and "Uncle Jack and Aunt Edie." The undertaking arrangements were carried out by Messrs. Harbottle

8 JUNE 1929

POLLING DAY ACCIDENT

An alarming mishap occurred at Great Ayton on polling day, Thursday, 30th ult. Several young people were sitting on the fence by the Leven, which flows through the village near the polling station, when the rail broke without any warning, precipitating them into the stream some distance below. Apart from a drenching and minor bruises, however, the victims luckily escaped serious injury.

11 June 1929

SUNDAY SCHOOL TRIPS

Sunday School Anniversaries, as a recent note emphasise, are red letter days in the calendar of the juvenile community. Even more important are the chips which follow as an almost natural sequence. During the next few weeks thousands of rural children will be taken to the seaside, town dwellers having a dual choice of the latter and the country for their outings. Much of the discomfort attendant upon rural excursions however picturesque it may have been, has been eliminated by the penetration of the motor bus into secluded areas. Formerly the farmers placed their rolleys, to which were yoked well groomed horses, gaily decorated with ribbon rosettes, and glittering "brasses" at the disposal of the Sunday School officials, one or two of whom took charge of each clamorous load of mischievous youngsters accommodated on temporary seating with roped protection. Nowadays they are packed into motor buses and whisked to their journeys end in a fraction of the time occupied by the ponderous slow-moving farm horses.

11 June 1929

BURIED BY FALL - Miner's Escape From Serious Injury

An alarming experience with a remarkable escape from serious injury and even death, befell at Great Ayton miner, Ralph Elliott, of Gribdale Terrace, yesterday. The accident occurred about 11 a.m. when Elliott, who with several other men was engaged in the filling of shale from the tip at the Rosebery mine bank bottom, had ascended the tip in order to release the shale. A mass of the stone, weighing about 5 tons, presumably disturbed to by the recent rains, suddenly broke away from the top of the tip, and rushed down towards Elliott. He made strenuous efforts to avoid the rush, but was overtaken and partly buried, only he is head and shoulders being left clear. With commendable promptitude, the unfortunate man's mates rushed to the scene, and by their efforts were successful within a few minutes in releasing him from his dangerous position. Elliott was then removed to the nearby house of Mr William Sayer, one of the men employed on the work. Dr Murray, who had been summoned, was quickly on the scene, and attended to Elliott's injuries which consisted of general bruising and shock. Elliott was afterwards conveyed to his home in the Rosebery mine's ambulance.

15 June 1929

Mention that the Rev. T. H. Stanley had been appointed pastor of Great Ayton Congregational Church.

1 July 1929

An interesting survival of an old-established religious custom was witnessed yesterday. This was the observance of Camp Meeting Sunday, when a series of interesting services was held. The holding of camp meetings appears to be the monopoly of the Primitive Methodist body, who year by year make perambulations of the various Cleveland villages in their efforts to spread the gospel.

4 July 1929

CHALLENGE TAKEN UP - Great Ayton and Provision of Modern Improvements

A lively exchange of words took place at a meeting of the Great Ayton Parish Council on Wednesday.

Mr A. K. Cumbor proposed among other improvements the provision of six seats for the use of residents and visitors, and the erection of a ladies' convenience. Mr Winn observed that Mr Cumbor, who had only within the last 18 months been elected to the Council, appeared to be very anxious to spend ratepayers' money.

Mr Cumbor said that his object in proposing the amenities to the village which he had done was to modernise Great Ayton. The improvements he desired were not luxuries, but essentials.

Mr Winn contended that the improvements could only be brought into existence at the expense of the ratepayers.

Mr Cumbor: Not necessarily. If you will provide one seat at your own expense I will give another.

After some little hesitation Mr Winn accepted the challenge of Mr Cumbor conditionally upon the Parish Council providing four other seats to be placed on the two greens, and in the bye lanes, and which it was decided to do.

6 July 1929

GREAT AYTON

The work of erecting the standards which are to bear the cable carrying the electric current to Great Ayton has now been commenced. It was anticipated that the fittings would have been installed by this date, but the controversy which arose between the local Parish Council and the Company supplying the power, regarding the question of metal standards, has considerably delayed the installation.

17 August 1929

Parish council provided a complete first-aid outfit for use in urgent accident cases and agreed to form a class for instruction in first-aid, following two recent accidents in the village. Mr F.W. Kirby was appointed instructor; he was one of the Great Ayton Mines ambulance team which won the Donald Bain Challenge Shield some years ago. Classes expected to start in September. Other villages in the district being invited to take part.

26 October 1929

UNUSUAL FATALITY AT GREAT AYTON - DEATH CAUSED BY A HARE.

The inquiry into the death of Mr. Oliver Jackson, boot and shoe maker of Marwood Cottages. Great Ayton, which took place from injuries received on Sunday night, was held by Mr. W. Lowther Carrick, at the Buck Hotel, Great Ayton, on Monday afternoon. A jury of seven was empanelled, of which Mr. W. Bell was elected foreman. Mr. Nixon, of Middlesbrough, watched the proceedings on behalf of the owner of the car involved, Mr. Percival John Jones, of Newcomen Terrace, Redcar.

Prior to commencing the investigation, Mr. Carrick said that he felt the holding of that inquest very keenly. He had known Mr. Jackson for many years, and they would all recollect that at the very last inquest to be held at Great Ayton Mr. Jackson had been the foreman of the jury. He little thought at that inquest how soon they would all be met together under such melancholy circumstances. He was sure that they would all join him in expressing sympathy with the widow and relatives of the deceased.

John Jackson, hairdresser, Marwood Cottages, identified the body as being that of his brother, who was sixty-eight years of age. For his years the deceased would be considered a very active man, and he was also a perfectly steady man.

Henry Thomas Bean, grocer. High Street, was the principal witness. He stated that at about half-past three o'clock on Sunday afternoon he and deceased were walking along the Easby road in the direction of Great Ayton. They stopped to converse with some friends, and when they had parted from these friends they heard some boys call out : "Look out, there." They saw a young hare coming along the road, which passed a motor-car travelling in their direction. The car was proceeding very steadily, and was on its own side of the road. The hare was running along in front of the car when deceased exclaimed: "Let's have a go at it. Tom." Witness threw his walking stick at the hare, which would then be about fifteen yards in front, of the car. Immediately afterwards, deceased also threw his stick, but with such force that he overbalanced, half turned, and staggered on to the car, and then "tipped," and fell straight on to his head. The car, the driver of which made every effort to get clear of Jackson, stopped in a little more than its own length. The wheels of the car did not go over the deceased. Witness at once went to the assistance of his companion, who was unconscious and bleeding from the ears. In his opinion there was no blame attached to the owner of the car.

The Foreman: Do you think he saw the car approaching?

Witness: yes, we both saw it; but, I think deceased, in his excitement, forgot about it. Dr. Murray said that in response to a message he at once went to the scene or the accident. Deceased, who was laid by the roadside, was unconscious and bleeding from both ears, and he had a large bruise over the left eye. He ordered his removal to his home, where he died in his presence at about half-past five in the evening. In his opinion death was due to a fracture of the base of the skull. Mr. Nixon intimated that his client was quite prepared to give evidence if the jury considered that it was necessary that he should do so. Mr. Bell observed that the evidence which had been given was quite simple and straightforward and there was no need for Mr. Jones being called.

Mr. Nixon said that his client, who was innocently involved, felt his position very keenly as no one liked to be concerned in an accident which resulted in the death of a fellow creature, and on behalf of Mr. Tones he would like to express sincere sympathy with the relatives of the deceased. The Coroner, in summing up, said that it was a most remarkable accident. They would all agree that it was impossible for the driver of the car to avoid it. He thought that under the circumstances the only possible verdict was that deceased died from a fracture of the base of the skull, received in a motoring accident. This verdict was accordingly returned.

16 November 1929

To inaugurate the electric lighting of the Village Institute, a whist drive was held on Tuesday night.

29 May 1932

ROYAL OAK DAY

So long as the youth of this country remains unchanged, so long will the customs, legends, lore and traditions be religiously observed and preserved. Especially is this so in regard to customs which possess historical association such as Guy Fawkes and Royal Oak Days. "There was no diminution in the fervour of the observance of the anniversary of Charles II's concealment in Boscobel's revered oak yesterday. Oak trees were ruthlessly raided by Royalist enthusiasts, and nettle beds were scoured to find hefty stinger with which to inflict punishment on the few who failed to wear the emblem of loyalty. Years ago it was the custom in many parts of Cleveland for children to issue the poetical ultimatum to village pedagogues:-

Royal Oak Day, twenty ninth of May,
if you deean't give us holiday,
We'll all rum away."

The tightening up of the educational standards was responsible for the falling into abeyance of this demand, but the wearing of oak sprigs is as popular as ever.

May 1932

The position of Great Ayton, resulting from the abnormal rainfall of Saturday night and Sunday morning, was not nearly as serious as on the occasions of the floods of the two past years. The village was, however, badly inundated

in parts, the low green being completely submerged, while the river Leven overflowed its banks, a stretch of the main Stokesley road, approximately one hundred yards in length, being under water. Motor traffic from the direction of Stokesley was diverted via Mill Terrace, but this did not entirely eliminate the difficulties of progress. As a further stretch of waterlogged roadway near the Wesleyan Church had to be negotiated. With quite an awe inspiring rumble, a dense volume, of water from the higher reaches of the Leven poured over the waterfall near the Friends' School, providing amateur photographers with an interesting subject.

2 February 1935

GREAT AYTON IN DARKNESS

Whilst Great Ayton felt the full force of the gale, no serious damage was caused. The worst mishap was that which befell the wooden pavilion on the football ground in Monkabecque-road, the front and one end being blown out. Following a vivid flash of lightning during the thunderstorm, which lasted for several hours, there was an interruption of the electric light current and the village was plunged into darkness. Fortunately the defect was speedily rectified.

23 March 1935

GREAT AYTON RATEPAYERS - DISCUSSIONS AT ANNUAL MEETING - NEED FOR CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND

At the annual meeting of the Great Ayton ratepayers Mr. T. Winn presided. The Clerk, Mr. W. H. Martin, said that during the year 33 meetings of the parish council had been held. Seven of these had been subsequent to the death of Mr. Watson Johnstone, who had attended 19 out of a possible 26, whilst only four had been held after Mr. T. F. Cumbor had succeeded Mr. Johnstone, all of which Mr. Cumbor had attended. The other attendances were as follow:—J. Bickerton 31, A. K. Cumber 31, J. W. Long 29, T. Winn 28, Mrs. Hood 26, and Edwin Johnson 21. Mr. Winn moved the levying of the same rate as last year for street lighting. The cost of lighting each lamp, he said, had been reduced from 28s. to 25s. Next year he hoped there would be a further reduction which would enable the Council to either reduce the lighting rate or create a balance for the provision of further lamps if building operations continued. At present the Council had under consideration the erection of a lamp standard in the vicinity of the Parochial Hall and another near the Village Institute.

CHARITIES STATEMENT

Mr. Winn then proceeded to present the charities statement. He said that the total income from the R. H. Simpson coal charity was £25 7s. 9d., from which 18 tons of coal had been distributed among 131 recipients, leaving a credit balance of 2s. 3d. There was also a credit balance of 15s. 9½d. accruing from the Elizabeth Bulson Four charity after the distribution among 115 recipients of 231 stones of flour. £3 had been received in connection with the William Young flannel charity which had enabled the trustees to distribute 12 parcels of drapery. No grant had been made from the William Young's apprentice charity, which was in credit £1 7s. 7d.

Two hundred and eighty-four loaves of bread had been distributed to 71 people from the John Coulson bread charity, the credit balance in this case being three pence.

Mr. Edwin Johnson, who acknowledged the honour, was elected a life member of the Postgate Trust.

Mr. S. Johnson asked what action the Council proposed to take in connection with the woodland footpaths caused by the felling and leading away of timber. Mr. Winn said the owners, Messrs. Bradley Bros., had been communicated with, and if any obstacle remained to the right of way the Council would take further action.

Mr. Frank Suggitt raised the question of a recreation ground for children. The Chairman expressed the opinion that as the village was already in possession of two greens, the children would hardly appreciate a recreation ground. To properly equip and maintain such a ground would mean an addition to the already heavy rates. Mr. Baldock, who supported Mr. Suggitt, said the high green was hardly suitable for the playing of football and cricket, and moreover, it was dangerous for small children, bordering, as it does, the main road. The low green was too far away for children, whose homes were at the other end of the village. (A Voice, "Bairns can't get on the low green for goats.") (Laughter.) Mr. Baldock thought a central recreation ground ought to be provided.

PLAY GROUND A NECESSITY

Mr. J. G. Readman said a playground was a necessity. The Parish Council said that children had a perfect right to play on the High Green, but they (the council) provided seats for grown-up people, who drove the children away. Very frequently parents were caused anxiety by their children straying away from their homes because there was no place for them to play. Mr. Winn said that the only suitable place he knew of was the present football field. If the ratepayers wished it, he had no doubt the Parish Council could rent it, and turn the footballers off. No action was taken.

The annual discussion on the condition of the Monkabecq and Frankfield roads came up. The responsibility for making up the roads, Mr. Winn said, rested with the owners of the property in the locality. When approached 80 per cent, of them had declined to incur the cost of making up the roads.

Mr. A. K. Cumbor voiced a strong protest against the proposed action of the United Bus Company in raising the tariff for contract tickets. Mr. Cumbor said it was a shameful state of affairs if the country was always to be at the mercy of these mergers, and there ought to be more competition in road transport. He also condemned the attitude of the United Company towards local employees who had been transferred to the Durham area, strange drivers being put on the local routes. He thought a strong protest ought to go both from the Parish Council and the Stokesley Rural District Council.

A vote of thanks to Mr. Winn for presiding terminated an enjoyable meeting

29 March 1935

GREAT AYTON - An Improvement

A decided and much-needed addition to the amenities of the village is being effected by the relaying of a stretch of the footpath in, the High-street with concrete flags. The old blue whinstone pavings had not only been worn to an uneven surface by the ice of successive generations of Aytonians, but they were disturbed during the process of installing the water mains. Several accidents of a minor character have resulted from pedestrians tripping over the projecting edges of the old pavings.

SEVERE THUNDERSTORM

Though Great Ayton experienced only the fringe of Sunday's storm, the village was not so fortunate on Monday. Following a fine morning, ominous clouds overspread the afternoon sky and within a short space of time an unusually violent thunderstorm was raging. Particularly vivid flashes of lightning had not died away before shattering peals of thunder followed. A torrential downfall of hail and rain accompanied the storm, and fell in such quantities as to render the street gullies quite incapable of coping with the torrent, which quickly overspread the highway in several places. Several feet of a brick wall were washed down in Station Road, in which locality twenty chickens were drowned at Mr. R. Robson's Neatstead Farm. Several houses in various parts of the village were inundated. The plight of many holiday-makers was particularly pathetic. Their light summer garments were quickly reduced to sodden, shapeless raiment, which clung to shivering bodies in a decidedly discomfoting manner. Many of the visitors were enjoying the breezes of the hills when the storm broke upon them without the least warning. Though the moors were quickly evacuated, no shelter was available, the unhappy tourists being drenched before they could reach sanctuary, which a large number sought at the railway station.

11 May 1935

Newcomers to Second Division

It is unusual to consider that the Great Ayton club is more dependent upon the services of the veteran players than upon those of the younger members. Jack Harrison, the captain, "Plumber" Wilson, Willie Bell and Jack Wilks, in the North Yorkshire and South Durham League, and "Jos" Robinson, his kinsman "Kiddy" Robinson, Mr. Winn, the skipper, and "Sandy" Harris, in the West Cleveland League, may all be regarded as having reached the sere and yellow stage. "Plumber," who hails from the Darlington district, has for more years than he cares to remember,

played with several Skerneside clubs, with Grey Towers (now Nunthorpe) and latterly with Great Ayton. He is still going strong, and declines the acquaintanceship of Anno Domini.

Wilks, whose forte is bowling, made a welcome "come back" on Saturday against Normanby Hall. He was never really well all last season, but in the match referred to he took five wickets for 21 runs. Willie Pell, who is master of the Marwood School (incidentally Great Ayton have three schoolmasters and a woodwork master in their elevens), like Wilks, was never fit last season. Indeed, for many weeks he was an absentee, but last Saturday he bowled as well as ever.

In the West Cleveland League match against Preston, which Ayton won by 101 runs and one wicket, "Jos" Robinson had a great day with the ball. Mr. Winn, who is headmaster of the Edward Kitching Council School and is the captain scored a round dozen and at the end of the innings was not out. "Sandy" Harris, still another member of the scholastic profession, had also a great day. Sharing the honour of being not out with his captain, Harris bagged his half century in the opening game of the season.

11 May 1935

GREAT AYTON

Great Ayton had its day of loyal celebration; many of the householder had risen at an early hour to impart a touch of colour to their homes, flags and bunting fluttering the breeze which tempered the sunshine. Thereafter, attired in their "Sunday best" they gave the day to the King. At the Parish Church a service was held. The service was jointly conducted by the Vicar. Rev R. M. Kettlewell and the Rev. F. Gillson, Pastor Greenfield and Mr. J. A. Pettit representing the various nonconformist churches. The service in all its aspects was an impressive one.

As the congregation poured into the main thoroughfare of the village, the bells of the church rang out a triumphant peal. From the church it went to the High Green where Lady Fry and Mrs. A. E. Kitching planted two silver birches, one for the King and one for the Queen. Then the procession reformed and a dense throng of people saw seven trees, one for each of the Royal Family, planted on the Low Green. The "planters" here were Mrs. Hood, Mrs Besly, Miss Mary Kitching and Mr Edwin Johnson. The children were not forgotten either and the three elementary schools had, by ballot, elected a representative to plant a tree for the school. The children who had this distinction conferred upon them were Ivy Simpson, Gene Martin and Leslie Wilberforce. The interlude for the mid-day meal was followed by the marshalling of a motley procession on the Low Green.

Sir John Fry's park was over-run by this fantastic cavalcade without let or hindrance. Indeed the genial owner of Cleveland Lodge, abetted them by providing tea for hundreds of children and old aged people. They also further enhanced the pleasure of their jubilee guests by giving them a roving commission in the gardens and hot houses. The tea, too, was rendered more palatable to the juveniles by the fact that they drank it from souvenir mugs, the gift of Mr. A. E. Kitching.

The villagers were accorded the opportunity of a three-fold wind up to a great day, a laborious pilgrimage to Cook's Hill for the bonfire, a dance in the Parochial Hall, and a firework display on the High Green. Hundreds availed themselves of the latter, for which the youngsters appeared to have found a new supply of energetic enthusiasm. There was an unrehearsed and hectic moment when, one of the fireworks rather ran amok and set fire to a wooden spouting on one of the adjacent dwellings. For a moment it looked as though a bon-fire would take place in the locality, but a prompt scaling of a ladder and beating by a cap extinguished the blaze.

When the last rocket soared into the sky there ended for a large number of Aytonians, a memorable day of fervent thanksgiving and enthusiastic loyal festivity.

4 November 1935

Sir John Pease Fry is to preside over to-morrow's meeting at Great Ayton in support of the candidature for the Richmond Division of Capt. T. L. Dugdale. During the years the Rt. Hon Herbert Samuel was fighting his various Liberal campaigns in Cleveland Sir John (whom you see here) proved to be a valuable aid to the erstwhile member for the division who for some time resided at the latter's Great Ayton residence, 'Cleveland Lodge. Latterly, however, he has transferred his allegiance to the Conservative cause, and he is sure to have something



interesting and informative to say at to-morrow's gathering. Other speakers will be the member himself and Mr. Barnard Wright.

2 November 1935

GREAT AYTON PLEASURE FAIR

Mr. J. Murphy brought a pleasure fair to Great Ayton, the first the village has had for some considerable time, over the week-end, the Low Green at the western end of the village being the site. The fair opened on Friday night and closed down on Monday night. The first two nights were fine, but the fair closed in a drenching downpour. Unfortunately, from a variety of contributory causes, the fair did not meet with the financial support it deserved, business being very poor.

There was a nice lay out of good, clean amusements. The tenants were J. Murphy, Noah's Ark; C. Shipley, shooter, striker and sheets; J. W. Smith, round games, electric clocks and shooter; L. Nicholls, round games; Cliffe Payne, darts and round game; C. Mapplebeck, shooter; Gamble Girls, sheets; and Wheatley's Roma, the Living Doll and Night Life in Paris shows.

It may be that in this depressed area the enterprising Mr. Murphy had not selected an opportune time for his visit, which followed close on the heels of the Mills Circus at Middlesbrough, which a large number of the local residents visited. It is to be hoped that he will not be discouraged by this debacle, but will come up smiling to "Canny Yatton" again.—T. K.

29 November 1935

A Great Ayton Kingfisher

Bird note in this column last week has prompted a Great Ayton resident to tell me of the kingfisher which is daily seen in the village. The metallic hued bird comes upstream to the wooden bridge near the Unionist Club premises. After perching on the bridge for a few moments it makes a sudden swoop into the stream, grabs a minnow and flies off.

5 July 1935

GREAT AYTON BOY'S ALARMING EXPERIENCE

An alarming experience befell a 12-years-old Great Ayton boy named Alan Suggit on Monday night. The boy in a venturesome spirit was riding a bicycle close to the edge of the river Leven when he overbalanced and fell a distance of between six and seven feet. His clothing having become entangled in the machine he was quite unable to extricate himself by the ropes lowered to him. It was not until his grandfather, Mr. J. R. Suggit, and a Middlesbrough camper named Ernest Hount descended into the stream that the boy was taken from his position after having been immersed in the water for nearly half an hour.

14 December 1935

PROPERTY OWNERS "TERRIFIED" STATEMENT AT GREAT AYTON COUNCIL ROAD REPAIRS AT 15/- A FOOT

Mr. Edwin Johnson presided over the monthly meeting of the Great Ayton Parish Council. The Clerk (Mr. W. H. Martin) reported that an offer of 15s had been received for the scrapped sludge cart and it was decided to accept the same. The Council received a complaint of a nuisance arising from the tipping of night soil on a field in the Guisborough road, and it was decided to report the matter to the Stokesley Rural Council's sanitary inspector.

A discussion followed on the cleansing of the Mill Race, the present condition of which caused flooding, and the putting into repair of the sluice boards. Mr. T. F. Cumbor announced that one of the part owners of the race had agreed to contribute one half of the cost of carrying out the improvements conditionally upon the other owner bearing a proportionate share. A deputation consisting of the Clerk, Messrs. A. K. Cumbor and J. W. Long were

appointed to meet the owners. Some warm passages marked a lengthy discussion on the question of the bad repair of Romany and Monkabecq roads and the flooding in those particular localities.

"A DISGRACE "

The discussion was opened by Mr. T. K. Cumbor, who described the condition of Romany road as being a disgrace to the village. Mr. J. Bickerton observed that if he lived in Romany road he would resist payment of his rates until the road was repaired. Mr. J. W. Long: "As a parish councillor you have no right to make such a statement."

Mr. Winn said it was a question of withholding rent not rates.

The Chairman: "The owners of property in the vicinity have been approached and asked to repair the roads. The estimated cost of 15s per foot has terrified them. If Mr. Bickerton owned a house there he would not be in such a breakneck hurry to get the work carried out."

Mr. Winn said that 80 per cent, of the owners had repudiated liability in the matter. The only remedy the Council had was to ask the Rural Council to request, the County Council to put the Private Streets Act into operation. This would entail legal procedure and costs. In the event of the County Council taking action the repairs would be carried out and the owners of the property could be legally enforced to indemnify the Council against the cost. This would probably mean that some of them would have to sell their houses. It was agreed to ask Mr. Potts, Clerk to the Stokesley Rural District Council, to meet the owners at a meeting to be convened and to explain the legal position to the parties concerned.

BUS COMPLAINT

On the motion of Mr. A. K. Cumbor it was decided to ask the Rural Council to investigate the overcrowding of the 1-15 p.m. bus ex-Great Ayton to Middlesbrough. Mr. Cumbor alleged that a bus had been withdrawn from the Guisborough service as a result of which passengers boarded the Great Ayton bus at Marton Moor to the discomfort of local passengers. The allotment holders are to be notified that from April 1930, the rent of the allotments will be reduced to 7s 6d per full garden and 4/- per half garden. The tenders for the supplies and allocation of the Christmas charities were considered in camera.

25 November 1936 Northern Echo

GREAT AYTON'S 17th CENTURY BENEFACTORS Buying Cloathes for the Poore £6 10s. PREACHING BEQUEST

During the next few days Great Ayton Parish Council will allocate; the various charities bequeathed to the village by, in the majority of cases, long dead benefactors. Insignificant as is the sum available for the provision of seasonal cheer, amounting to some £50 in all, the history of the benefactors and the objects of the several charities provides a subject for interesting research into the archives and records of the village.

The largest of the charities is that bequeathed in fairly recent times by Robert Henry Simpson, who was a churchwarden from 1884 to 1900 inclusive. Mr. Simpson capitalised a sum sufficiently large to produce £25 annually, to be expended in the purchase of coal for "the deserving poor of the village irrespective of religion." A condition of the gift was that the graves of the donor and his parents should be kept in good condition, an obligation which is faithfully discharged by the Parish Council.

A LORD MAYOR OF LONDON?

History is reticent regarding the identity of Elizabeth Bulson, who left a parcel of land in the parish of Falsgrave, Scarborough (later sold for some £300 by the Charity Commissioners), which provides annually the sum of £16 for the purchase of four. From the rent of a garth and house at Great Ayton John Coulson directed that an annual sum of 35s should be disbursed in the form of bread. A local legend is in existence to the effect that Coulson was a Lord Mayor of London.

It is quite possible that there is more than a smattering of truth in this legend, as the Coulson family was certainly an influential one. Christopher, the father of John, was a native of Newby, near Stokesley, from whence he migrated to London and became a dyer in a large way of business. In the reign of Charles I he purchased the Manor of Great Ayton, which had been granted to Sir David Foulis of Ingleby Manor, by James I. From the Coulsons it descended by marriage to the Skottowes, of which family Thomas made himself responsible for the education of Captain Cook.

In turn their descendants sold the Manor to Mr. Henry Richardson in 1801. To revert to the Coulson family, Christopher, who died 1641, left the sum of £6 10s "to some godly and reverend minister for 13 sermons to be preached yearly at the parish church of Seamer." John had the appointment of the ministers, one of whom had to preach in the morning of Easter Day.

John died in the latter part of the 17th century and was buried in the aisle of All Saints', Great Ayton, the inscription on his tombstone being as follows:

Here lyeth interred the body of John Coulson who departed this life 22nd day of July, 1674, and who was the owner of the Manner (sic) of Great Ayton, and the privilege.

For nearly 200 years the charity he had left to the village was applied to the, relief of the poor rate. In 1855, however, the Charity Commissioners intervened and diverted the money to its intended purpose.

FOR "THE POORE OF GREAT AYTON "

In a curious old will dated 1678, William Young (he spelt his own name Younge, and that of his wife, Elizabeth Young) decreed that his executrix should pay from specified properties

"to two of the most substantial men and the churchwardens and overseers: of the poore of greate Ayton, the sum of foure poundes, forty shillings on the foure and twentieth day of June and forty shillings on the five and twentieth day of December, to use of the poore of greate Ayton, for the buying of them cloathes, and to be ymployed by them (the trustees) yearely for the putting of a poore man's child belonging to the said town of greate Ayton, apprentice."

At the death of his wife, the benefactor decreed that the *"heires of my unckle George Young"* (to whom the property reverted) should increase the amount "to six poundes yearely." In default of such payment being made *"the two substantiall men and the churchwardens and overseers of greate Ayton shall enter upon and enjoy all the said lands and premises until the said six poundes and all arrears unpaid shall be paid."*

The Loy Charity, of which the Vicar and churchwardens are the dispensers, was the gift of Mrs. Mary Curry, wife of Mr. Henry Jackson Curry, the Stockton estate and land agent, who died 1904. Mrs. Curry left the interest upon £500 in memory of her parents, Dr. Augustus and Hannah Loy, to whose memory and also that of Mrs. Curry there are stained glass windows in the parish church.

1 January 1937

CAPTAIN COOK RELICS ENDANGERED

Commendable presence of mind on the part of Constable Hodges and Mrs. Craig undoubtedly saved from destruction a number of Captain Cook relics at Great Ayton. Mrs. Craig, who is caretaker of the museum inaugurated above the old Captain Cook schoolroom, told a "Whitby Gazette" representative: "I saw smoke issuing from the building, and at once rushed up to the museum. Immediately I opened the door I was almost overpowered by the smoke and flames which poured out. I at once sent for Constable Hodges, who, with Messrs. T. Moon and J. Brown, climbed into the attic above the museum. By cutting away the beams, which were well alight, and pouring down water, they were able to control the outbreak without calling the Fire Brigade. It was most provident I saw the smoke when I did, as within a short time the whole building, which is very old would have been in flames. "It is thought the fire was caused by hot soot from an adjoining chimney dropping down into the attic. It was very fortunate the fire occurred during the day-time, for had it broken, out during the night, the lives of several elderly people who occupy the Postgate building would have been endangered.

January 8 1937

VILLAGE ENTERPRISE – WOMEN'S INSTITUTE FOR GREAT AYTON

Thursday will mark an important epoch in the history of Great Ayton Women's Institute. On that day a long cherished ambition on the part of the members will be realised by the opening of the new hall by Mrs Edward Shaw, of Kirbymoorside. The imposing building, which will prove a distinct acquisition and addition to the many amenities already possessed by the village, occupies a site adjacent to the main thoroughfare, and within a short distance the junction of the Middlesbrough and Guisborough roads. Built by, and to the designer the local firm Messrs. Robson Brothers, the hall is with the exception of the brick boiler house, entirely constructed of wood. External strength and

resistance to storm is assured by the stout weather boarding. An internal lining throughout of Cellotex will ensure an even temperature in all seasons. 50 feet in length by 25 feet in width, a light and airy room has been fitted with a maple floor for the benefit of dancers. Without any possibility of overcrowding, there is ample accommodation for 250 people. A further 50 may be accommodated in the supper room, which is separated from the main hall by means of sliding doors. The supper room has been equipped with an electrically heated boiler, Sinks, and other conveniences, the water supply being drawn from the Tees Valley mains.

Cloak room accommodation is provided on both sides of the entrance lobby, at the eastern end of the building, both rooms being equipped with washbasins. At the western end of the building a permanent stage, 14 feet in depth, has been erected, with commodious dressing rooms on both sides. Central heating is distributed by a number of radiators placed at regular intervals throughout the building. For emergency exits, the doors being pleased with hammered glass, and fitted with easily operated "panic" bolts, have been provided. 10 pendent electric lights provide artificial illumination, the light being admitted through a series of spacious windows. The red asbestos roof, beneath which run the ventilation air ducts, and which is also lined Cellotex, is supported on seasoned oak beams, reinforced with steel straps. The interior decoration is an effective scheme of stained oak, and the external decoration, chosen with aesthetic taste, to harmonise with the rural surrounding is in subdued green, relieved by the white paint work of the Windows. The approach to the building, which provides accommodation for a score of cars, has been macadamised, as have also the side paths. The plumbing and heating work has been trusted to Mr Alan Bean; and the electrical installation to Mr Ralph Whitworth; whilst Mr E Watson has been responsible for the decorative work - the whole of the work having thus been carried out by local craftsmen, a tribute to the capabilities of the village.

22 January 1937

GREAT AYTON WOMEN'S INSTITUTE - OPENING OF A NEW HALL

Thursday last was a memorable day in the history of the Great Ayton Women's Institute, the members of which, together with those from several neighbouring localities, witnessed the opening of their new Hall. The opening ceremony was performed by Mrs Edward Shaw, Kirbymoorside, who was supported by Sir John and Lady Fry, Mr and Mrs H Dennis, Rev RM and Mrs Kettlewell, Mrs Hood (president) Mrs Ballmer (secretary), Mrs W Pearson (treasurer), Mrs Debenham, Mrs Pickersgill, Mrs Routledge (Marton), Mrs Lee (Marton), Mrs Palmer (Eston), and Mrs Townsend (Guisborough).

In introducing Mrs Shaw, Mrs Hood outlined the reasons for the building of the hall. The Great Ayton Women's Institute, she said, was very ambitious regarding drama, but the higher of Paul's for the necessary rehearsals had, in the past, been very considerable. Now that they had their own Hall, she hoped that not only would drama classes be formed, but to classes for general improvement. The debt on the Hall would, she hoped, have the whole sum effect of making them all pulled together, as every member should feel she shared the liability.

Mrs Shaw, in declaring that the Hall open, said she was a great advocate of drama, and such a beautiful building, set in such charming rural surroundings, should have a great effect for improvement upon the already high standards attained by the Great Ayton members. The building to, was admirably adapted for the purpose of co-operative work, and she hoped that at the 1938 exhibition there would not only be individual but co-orporative specimens sent from Great Ayton. In taking up handicrafts, she urged the members not to overlook what she termed "mindicrafts" but to organise lectures and other similar functions for their improvement. Now that the Institute movement was approaching its 21st birthday she had heard it said that it had outlived its original purpose, and was on the decline. So far from that being the case, the movement was performing a great work, as it had all was done, in the development of rural life. In conclusion, she would leave them with the 3 words -- judgement, courage, and determination. Optimists had visions and pessimists nightmares, and she wanted the Great Ayton members to be the optimists.

At the close of the address, Mrs Shaw was presented with a bowl of hyacinths by Miss Patty Newton, Mrs Dennis presenting Mrs Hood with a bouquet.

A short address on the need for better feeling between the nations of the world was given by Sir John Fry. Others who spoke were Mrs Dennis, Mrs Stapleton, Mrs Pearson, Mrs Dixon and Mrs Bulmer. The dedication hymn "Bless

This House" was sung by Mr O Carlton, Stokesley. D was afterwards served to a large number of members and guests.

In the evening, a very enjoyable party was held, over 200 members and guests being present. With dancing and a pleasing programme of games and competitions, arranged by Mrs H Dennis, Mr Stapleton and Mr JH Scott, a very pleasant evening was spent. Amongst the many amusing and interesting competitions were those for the couple with the longest married record, the prize for which went to Mr and Mrs Hunter, with 46 years. Miss Edna Briggs claimed the distinction of owning the oldest dog, a veteran of 14 years. After much arbitration, Mr Mewse was adjudged to be the wearer of the longest watch chain; whilst Mrs Elsie Nicholson easily won the competition for the Lady with the ruddiest tresses. A happy party dispersed at midnight, after the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and the National Anthem.

22 January 1937

GREAT AYTON

A meeting was addressed at Great Ayton on Thursday, last week, by Major J. B. Pennyman, the Ormesby representative to the Stokesley Rural District Council. Major Pennyman expressed the opinion that war was a very remote possibility, but that was no reason for not preparing for any eventuality which might result from an outbreak of hostilities. It was quite unlikely, he said, that any part of the Stokesley rural district's area would be subjected to attack from the air, or that it would suffer any damage, with the exception of that from a stray marauding machine, which might discharge its bombs. Tees-side would, however, with its heavy industries and armament factories and with a river to guide them, prove an attractive target for enemy aircraft. Major Pennyman sketched a grim and harrowing word-picture of the teeming bewildered and terrified populace fleeing from bombarded Tees-side in their anxiety to find a safe sanctuary. It would be for the tending of these refugees from a ruthless attack from the air that the rural areas would have to provide. He described in detail the housing accommodation which could be required, together with the constitution of the various staffs necessary to adequately deal with such an emergency, their qualifications, duties and equipment. After a lengthy discussion, several of those present volunteered for service. Mrs. Hood (Chairman of the Parish Council), Messrs. G. S. Craig and Thomas Pearson were appointed to canvass the village and to recruit further volunteers. The names of the volunteers will be submitted to the official organiser, who is to visit the Stokesley rural district area. Votes of thanks were accorded to Major Pennyman and to Mrs. Hood, who presided.

12 February 1937

ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING

The treasurer disclosed that a debit balance of £9. 17s. 2d had been converted into a credit balance of £10. 1s. 11d., this being the first occasion upon which there had been a credit balance since 1925.

19 February 1937

GREAT AYTON

The consideration of plans for the celebration of the coronation was resumed at Great Ayton on Friday night last was a in the absence of Sir John P Fry, Mrs Hood presided over a long session into which a good deal of acrimony was introduced without much progress being made. On the motion of Mr W E Kitching, supported by Mr Leo Addison, it was decided that in the event of souvenirs for schoolchildren being provided from outside the committee, the scheme should be extended to include all children from the age of one day to 14 years. Mr Winn expressed the opinion that official programs which had been suggested as souvenirs would prove unsuitable for very young children, a statement to which Mr Kitching retorted: "that is your opinion, but you are only one man." More warmth was engendered in the discussion which took place on the provision of a playing field as a permanent memorial of the event. Mr Winn said that it was his experience that where men forgathered either on a football field or a cricket field, boys would persist in being there. The Thornaby playing fields have proved definitely to be a failure and the same thing would happen at Great Ayton. If the funds had permitted he would strongly have supported the provision of a bathing pool, but a playing field was quite unnecessary. Mr Edwin Johnson, who was a strong advocate of the playing field, described Mr Winn as being "a fossil who had been left high and dry". Mr A H Dixon said the playing fields in Liverpool had proved to be a fiasco, a statement which drew from Mr A K Cumbor the retort that

"Liverpool was not the only place in the country, and that in other places they have proved to be a huge success." The discussion being closed, Mr Edwin Johnson made the request that it should be placed on the agenda of further meetings for consideration, and that he differed from Mr Winn in regard to the Thornaby playing fields which were always crowded with children.

The representatives of the local band intimated that unless they were paid £10 they would accept an engagement from another place. They were asked to retire, and upon their doing so it was decided to treat privately for the services of the band. It was announced that Sir John the Fry had generously promised to contribute a similar sum to that which he made to the Jubilee celebrations, towards the provision of a tea, and it was decided to entertain the children and those who had attained the age of 65 years. It was further agreed to accept the offer of Sir John to allow the celebrations to be made in the grounds of Cleveland Lodge. It was also decided to provide prizes for the decorated houses and business premises and to have a fancy costume procession. The committee decided that there should be no fireworks on this occasion (voice: "no, we are better without them, they set the house on fire on the occasion of the Jubilee") it is also decided to hold a dance in the evening. The following subcommittees were appointed. -Children's sports: Messrs Winn, Bell, E W Ashe and the teachers of the various schools: --adult sports: Messer's W E Kitching, Leo Addison, S Stockdale, J A Pettit, J G Readman, J W Brown, T Whitbread W Radcliffe and Wallace; - dance committee: Messer's T F Cumbor, J Bickerton, J G Readman, Mrs Sigsworth, Mrs Arnold Dixon, Messrs. Fred Waddington and A Robinson: -tea committee; all the ladies of the general committee; procession and decorations committee; Messrs. John Ogden, A Shaw, Rev R M Kettlewell, Pastor Greenfield, Messrs. Frank Dodsworth, W H Thistlethwaite, R S Williamson and S Fall; -financial committee; Messrs. A K Cumber and W H Martin (secretaries), J W Long and T Winn (Treasurers) and the conveners of the subcommittees.

In aid of the church funds, sermons were preached at the Rose Hill Methodist church, Great Ayton on Sunday last, by Mr Joseph Taylor, of Thornaby. In the evening, under the presidency of Mr T F Cumbor, a most enjoyable sacred concert was given by the Male voice choir under the leadership of Mr J H Scott. The delightful programme of local items was provided for the occasion, amongst contributing individual items being Messrs. R Thomson, H Kitching, W Tomlinson, O Carlton and J Wilkes.

26 February 1937

Death of Mr Thomas Antill in his 83rd year. One of the very few remaining whinstone set makers. Half a century ago and even less, these sets were in great demand as pavings for footpaths and streets in both town and country. Latterly they have become decreasingly popular and the demand has gradually fallen away. It was as a set maker that Mr Antill came to Great Ayton over half a century ago, where he was employed in the local quarries. So successfully adept was he at what was rightly regarded by the old timers as a trade, that he was frequently sent to make sets from the rough-hewed whinstone in places as far distant as Scotland and Wales. When the whinstone slump set in, the late Mr Antill was employed in the local ironstone mines by for some years had lived in retirement.

26 February 1937

GREAT AYTON

A freak Barred Rock Chicken, which has since died has been hatched at Great Ayton. The chicken, which was one of normal chicks hatched out at the poultry farm of Mr T. H. Dixon, was also quite normal, with the exception of having four distinct legs and feet. In addition to the usual legs and feet the bird had two more perfectly formed though not so well developed, growing from the hind part of the body between the fully developed limbs.

18 March 1937

Property sale at the Royal Oak: Lots included :-

The site of the old gas works, which, since the installation of electricity in the district, have been dismantled, and the old corn mill which is no longer in operation. This lot, which included a cottage in addition to the gasworks site of 1,108 square yards and the mill, realised £275.

Four cottages in Mount Pleasant, let at an annual rent of £51.11.4, were sold for £428.

Two cottages in Arthur Street were withdrawn at £320, having failed to reach the reserve.

22 April 1937

Diphtheria Concern

At the first meeting of the recently elected parish council, concern was expressed at the prevalence of diphtheria in the village and the danger arising from people whose homes were affected attending dances and other functions. Mr. E. Johnson promised to bring the comments of the council before the Health Committee of Stokesley Rural Council.

15 May 1937

A NOVEL CONCERT

The reputation and ability of Mr John Donne as a producer of amateur theatricals was enhanced and demonstrated on Thursday and Friday nights last week, when he, in connection with the coronation festivities, gave the residents of Great Ayton and district a glimpse of the music-hall of another age. Mr Noel Kitching, who entered into the spirit of the entertainment with enthusiasm, made an ideal chairman, announcing the various items from stage with all the fervour of the old-time chairman. Before crowded audiences, the lengthy programme was opened on both nights with exhibitions of dancing performed by the children of the Dorina School of dancing, under the direction of Miss Wright, who also contributed an individual item. Mrs Arthur Simpson made an ideal "Florrie Ford" her boisterous singing of "I am a fair, fat, and forty" and "down at the old Bull and Bush" being much appreciated, the audience responding with a gusto the invitation to join in the choruses. Mr Will Kitching was in characteristic mood in his songs, "why am I always the bridesmaid?" and "the charladies' ball." "The Gypsy's Warning" with Mrs T Harbottle, correctly attired in Romany apparel, was produced with much success. Mrs Harbottle being supported by the Misses Joan Sigsworth and Margaret Ogden and Mr Harold Kitching. "Little Willy's Wild Woodbines" was sung by Mr Stan Keen, who also contributed a step dance with ease and agility. In marked contrast to the levery of Mr Keen, Mr Will Ingledew appeared as a dignified Victorian singer of the ballads, "Asleep In the Deep" and "There's a Land". The interval was reached with an elaborate and ambitious production in tableau form of Mr Arthur Sullivan's song, "The Lost Chord" -- with Mary Robson as soloist "off". In this tableau the grouping of living statuary was very effective and impressive, the posing of the artistes being especially good. The second half commenced with the highly amusing sketch, "Maggie's Dilemma". The whole cast was good, Miss Muriel Pickersgill, Miss Joan Bell, and Messrs. Len Orford, Claude Carter, and Eric Smith doing well, the 2 1st names lady is being very clever in their interpretations of the parts of " Maggie" and "Bertie De Vere." An outstanding feature of the program was the performance of Miss Janie Ingram, who impersonated Vesta Tilley. She captivated her audience with her singing of "Burlington Bertie" and "Following in Father's Footsteps," and was deservedly encored. An improvised version of "Love's Old Sweet Song" was successfully staged. Mr James Blakeborough, the soloist was supported by Miss Emily Pearson as his wife, and Mrs Elsie Peart, Edna Robson, Joan Sigsworth and Betty Swainson were "dream dancers." "Gene" Stratton and Paul Robeson were impersonated by Mr Frank Mye, who sang "Lily of Laguna" and "Ole Man River". Mr Arthur Jackson gave pleasure with his monologues, "The Night Watchman's Story" and "Spotty"; and Miss Dolly Anderson sang "Sally" and "Sing As We Go". The entertainment concluded with its secular and appropriate National Tableau. Mr Dunn was responsible for the production, being assisted by his daughter Mrs Blakeborough, and Mr James Blakeborough, Mrs Harbottle and her sister, Mrs Warley, were the accompanists.

May 1937

Choir Success

Great Ayton Male Voice Choir won the Sir Paul Latham Challenge Cup for male voice choirs at Eskdale Tournament of Song at Whitby.

22 May 1937

GREAT AYTON

Coronation celebrations were resumed at Great Ayton on Saturday. In the afternoon, a lengthy cavalcade of mottled Gan pedestrians and decorated vehicles and cycles was Marshall on High Green. Preceded by the "state coach" of

the Carnival "King" and "Queen" (Mr P Horobin and Mrs S A Kirby), the procession toured the village. Returning to the High Green, the ceremony of crowning the May Queen (Miss Margaret Ogden) was performed by Miss Mary Kitching. A maypole which had been erected on the Green was plaited by the children of the Marwood School. Mr John Ogden having been responsible for the revival of the picturesque Mayday revelries. Sir John Fry, Mr and Mrs Noel Kitching, Miss Mary Kitching, Dr Murray, and the Rev RM Kettlewell, who officiated as judges, made the following awards:-

Adults: fancy costume - W Metcalfe; 2, Miss Joyce Hall; 3, Mrs W Metcalfe. Comic costume -- be M Cockerill; 2, Mrs A Jackson; 3, GH Martin. Advertising - Mrs TF Cumbor, 2, Miss Jennie Wilson; 3, Miss A Cumbor.

Children: fancy costume - June Anderson; 2, Betty Metcalfe; 3, Iris Tweddel. Comic costume: Ivor Foster; equal 2, Jose Cockrell and Joyce Dobbing; equal 3, Claris Wright and Dorothy Brown. Comic - R Cansfield; 2, Dennis Cumbor; 3, B Bailey. Advertising -H Bailey; 2, Howard Williamson; 3, Joan Wilson. Decorated cycle or Pram - W Bickerton; 2, Jackson 3, Winnie Bulmer. Tableau - Johnson Brothers; 2, T Peart; 3, Exors. Of SRW Moody. Horse-drawn or mechanically propelled vehicle: A Suggitt.

The postponed coronations sports were decided on the Grange grounds on Tuesday night. The following were the results -

50 yards handicap, Girls -- Betty Aherne; 2, June Heaviside; 3, Betty Brown. Boys - Cliff Tanfield; 2, Alf Robinson, 3, W Featherstone.

70 yards handicap, Girls - Mary Horner; 2, Betty Featherstone; equal 3, Kathleen Bailey and Betty Metcalfe. Boys - Robert Chapman; 2, Arthur Bailey; 3, Peter Ward.

100 yards handicap, Girls - Jesse Barthram; 2, Jean Baines; 3, M Suggitt. Boys - W Thomson; 2, W Johnson; 3, James Robinson.

Skipping; -Junior girls - M Horner; 2, Chris Johnson; 3, Esme Kirby. Senior girls - Rita Heaviside; 2, Jean Barthram; 3, Jean Baines.

Three legged race: Juniors - May and Harbottle; 2, Craig and Petch; 3, Shaw and Bradley. Seniors - Ward and Parker; 2, Pearson and Ridley; 3, Dawson and Thompson.

Potato races: Junior girls - Marjorie Horner; 2, Betty Featherstone. Senior girls: P Hodgson; 2, Jean Baines; 3, R Heaviside. Junior boys - H Williamson; 2, Peter Ward; 3, Keith Burton. Senior boys: W Ward; 2, J Booth; 3, -- Chapman.

Egg and Spoon races: Junior girls - Doris Brown; 2, Kathleen Hodson; 3, Betty Lowther. Senior girls -Margaret Ogden; 2, Mary Carter; 3, Ruby Higgins. Junior boys - K Burton; 2, A Bailey, 3,-- Johnson. Senior boys - W Simons; 2, R Pearson; 3, Herbert Carter.

Long jump: girls -- Rita Heaviside; 2, Ruby Higgins; 3, Mabel Ridley. Boys -- Harbottle; 2, Booth; 3, Dawson.

Slow bicycle races -Girls Rita Heaviside; 2, Phyllis Robson; 3, M Parker. Boys -- W Ridley; 2, Derrick Brown; 3, T Wilson.

Essay competitors; Junior girls -Jean Baines; 2, Ida Booth; 3, Dorothy Clarkson. Boys -- A Howe; 2, Albert Harbottle; 3, Charles Grayson. Senior girls: Margaret Biggins; 2 Esther Johnson; 3, Margaret Ogden. Senior boys -- Arthur Clarkson; 2 Arthur Lumsdale; 3, Herbert Carter. Senior girls:-Lena Simpson; 2, Margaret Dale; 3, Christine Johnson. Junior boys -Kenneth Pearson; 2, Roland Chapman; 3, Derrick Newton. Senior girls- Winifred Bulmer; 2, Mabel Ridley; 3, M Sigsworth. Senior boys -Albert Harrison; 2, Allan Simpson; 3, D Chapman.

Messrs. S Johnson, T Pearson, and W Stevens were the judges for the sports; and the other officials were Messrs. Winn, Ashe, Noel Kitching and W Bell. Miss Mary Kitching and Mrs Ashe adjudicated in the essay competition. Prizes were distributed by Mrs kitching.

26 June 1937

Great Ayton Coronation Matters

At the final meeting of Great Ayton Coronation Committee on Friday of last week, Sir John Fry presiding, it was reported that the subscriptions of 5 shillings and upwards amounted to £52. Those of smaller amounts totalled £11 2s. A profit of £28 had resulted from dances, and eight guineas from the concert organised by Mr. John Ogden, the total receipts being £95 8s. The children and aged residents were entertained to tea at a cost of £22. £40 17s was disbursed as sports and procession prize money. Incidental expenditure including £5 for the band, printing and postages, required £21, leaving a surplus of £12. A proposition was made that the surplus be contributed to a new motor ambulance fund. An amendment that a commemorative seat be provided for the Village, made by Mr. J. Bickerton supported by Mr. F. Waddington, was lost.

26 June 1937

The children attending the Parish Church and High Street Methodist Church Sunday Schools had their annual 'outing' on Wednesday. A special train was required to transport the 300 children, who were in many instances accompanied by parents and friends, to Redcar. Though dull the weather remained fine and it was a tired but happy party who disembarked at Great Ayton, where each child received a stick of rock. The various schools were closed for the event.

July 1937

Cricket Record

A record aggregate for the Great Ayton ground - 513 runs - was established in the Great Ayton versus Blackball II match on Saturday. Blackball scored 256 and Great Ayton 257 for 6 (Noel Kitching 143). Great Ayton won by four wickets.

13 July 1937

COOK'S HOUSE ALTERED - ALLEGED VANDALS OF MELBOURNE - AYTON COTTAGE

A piquant reference to Captain Cook and his cottage which was transported from Great Ayton to Melbourne, appears in "this News Review." The reference which is of peculiar interest to Cleveland, and especially to Great Ayton, is as follows : —

CAPTAIN COOK REJECTED

"Ever since the first British settlers started drifting into Australia, a couple of centuries, ago, the name of Captain James Cook, the one-time haberdashers' apprentice, who blazed the Empire's trail for Britain, in the Pacific, has been honoured and respected by Commonwealth citizens. Amazed and indignant, therefore, were honest Australians last week when gallant Captain Cook's name suddenly became the cause of unseemly controversy between Melbourne City Council and the more outspoken Commonwealth newspapers.

"One of Cook's greatest admirers is 80-year-old -T. A. Heyman, sculptor member of a distinguished Danish family, renowned for his patriotic and charitable works in Australia. Recently Mr. Heyman offered a valued Cook memorial to the City of Melbourne, and had it accepted by an apparently grateful council '

"To his chagrin, the council last week became extremely diffident over the memorial, declared itself unable to find an appropriate site for it.

The reason for this affront remained obscure until a Sydney newspaper discovered that the subject of Captain Cook "was a sore one with the Parks and Gardens Committee.

VANDALISM

"Melbourne is also the site of Captain Cook's original cottage, on which the committee recently committed 'the unbelievable vandalism' (vide an indignant weekly journal) of making drastic internal alterations so that the stable at the rear became part of the sleeping quarters.

"When this was disclosed, letters from prominent and angry citizens showered down on the Council building.

"Badly rattled, the Parks and Gardens Committee, rather than cause fresh trouble, left Sculptor Herman's memorial lying in a South Melbourne stonemason's yard.

".At this slight on his six-foot. 22cwt. granite masterpiece, showing the bewigged Captain Cook at the top and his gallant 'Endeavour' at the base, the artist last week declared: 'Melbourne cannot have my memorial now anyway. If New South Wales cares to accept it as a Sesqui-Centennial gift. I shall be only too willing to donate it."

27 March 1937

DOUBLE TRAGEDY AT GREAT AYTON - 2 MEN DROWNED IN EFFORT TO SAVE CHILD

Father of Child a Victim - Poignant Scenes At Funeral

A drama of tragedy and heroism without parallel in the history of the village was enacted at Great Ayton on Thursday evening last week. In the turbulent and solemn stream of the River Leven, which flows through the village,

stole and by the recent rains and snow into a mass of tumbling, foam-flecked water, 2 men lost their lives, whilst those of several others well endangered. The tragedy commenced with the innocent prank of a little boy, Brice, the 8-year-old son of Mr Joseph Percy Petch, butcher, High Green. Together with his brother and other village children, he was playing on the banks of the River, upon which lays some sections of pavement cubing. Rolling in one of these to the edge of the stream, he pushed it in, overbalanced, and was hurtled headlong into the rushing water. His terrified brother, Donald, rushed to his home, which is close by, and gasped out to his father that "Brice was in the beck". Before the distracted parent could get to the scene, Harold Johnson, a local postman, who had been told that a child was in the River, without a moment's hesitation plunged into the icy water. Within a minute to Mr Petch, too, was on the scene, and he dived in. At the spot where the 2 went in, there is weir, over which the River rushes with tremendous force to cause an eddying whirlpool. Strong swimmers as the 2 men were, they were handicapped by their clothing, and was soon being tossed to and fro and whirled round by the tumbling waters. By this time the general alarm had been raised, and the 1st to make an attempt at rescue was Mr J Grayson, a local blacksmith, who, however, was unable to assist either Petch or Johnson, whose arms were interlocked. In the meantime the child had been washed to the side of the stream and was pulled out by Clive Johnson, an employee of Mr Petch. After some little time, during which unavailing attempts were being made to rescue the 2 men, the force of the water washed them apart, and Johnson, who was of slender build, was washed downstream. Amongst the crowd who had gathered on the banks of the River was Mr George Ewart Wilson, a Great Ayton plumber. Obtaining a rope, which he tied to his wrist, he instructed those on the banks to hold the other end whilst he went in after Petch. Going into the water, he was dashed with considerable force against the reinforcing wall of the bank, and was momentarily stunned. Undeterred by this experience, he again entered the whirlpool, and, getting under the water, succeeded in securing a hold on the leg of Petch. Calling to those who held the rope to draw upon it, Mr Wilson was making progress with his burden when the water again swept Petch from his grasp. Exhausted though he was from the buffeting he had received, the 3rd and heroic attempt was made by Mr Wilson, and this time he and 1st victim were hauled to the bank. Johnson had, meanwhile, disappeared in the undercurrent downstream. Running down by the side of the river for a distance of 75 yards, George Featherstone, a labourer, saw a hand and arm of Johnson emerged from the water, and he waited to midstream and got a hold on the trousers of the 2nd victim, but he too was swept away. It is summarised that Johnson would be washed into what is locally known as the Dotterill, a point in the course of the river where it flows behind dwelling houses. A message had been sent to Mr Charles Sanderson, a cycle agent who lives at the entrance to the Dotterill, 150 yards downstream, to keep a look out for the man. He told Mr Fred Simpson, a labourer, of the occurrence. The body again rose to view, and Simpson, throwing off his overcoat and cap, plunged into the stream. In a moment he too was washed off his feet and it was only with the aid of Mr Sigsworth another butcher that the body of Johnson brought ashore. Artificial respiration was applied for an hour and a half by relays of ambulance men, under the supervision of Mr Noel Kitching, C.C., Sgt Johnson, Constable Hodges, and Drs. Murray and Bland, but without response on the part of either Petch or Johnson. The child, however, revived.

Petch was a married man, 35 years of age, with 5 children, the eldest being Brice. Johnson, who was single and 26 years old, was the only son of a widowed mother. Mr Petch took an active part in the life of the village. At one time he was well known in agricultural shillings as an exhibitor of Clydesdale horses for his father, the late Mr Thomas Petch. He had been a member of the ambulance Brigade and of the male voice choir and was regular in his attendance at the Wesleyan Methodist church. Johnson had served with Royal Garrison Artillery and had played football for the regimental team, and was an enthusiastic playing member of the Great Ayton Football Club.

THE INQUEST

An inquest was held on Saturday morning at The Buck Hotel, to which the 2 men had been taken on the night of the tragedy, by Mr L. G Appleby, deputy coroner, who sat without a jury. Evidence of identification of Mr Petch was given by his brother Herbert Smith Petch, a farmer, Of Whitegate Farm, Newton under Roseberry. George Ewart Wilson, Plummer, residing At High Green, Great Ayton, said that on the night of the previous Thursday he was proceeding to his home from work. It would be about 5 o'clock. Someone called to him that there were 2 men in the river near Waterfall Terrace. He went back to the other side of the river, after asking whether there was a rope anywhere near. A boy told him there was a rope hanging near the Beeches, the home of Captain Thomas. He got the rope, and gave it to someone, asking them to hold it. He sent to those on the Bankside: "I am going to try to get him" (Petch). Witness proceeded: "I fastened the rope round by wrist. It would have been suicidal to have gone in without the rope. I dropped down the walls side, and made a move to get into the current, but was banged back by it against the wall. In the swirl of the water I was washed back to the side. I dived under the water again, and caught hold of a leg. I should say it was the ankle. I made my way back to the Bankside, pulling the body with me. I got the body

nearly to the wall when it whipped out of my grasp. I do not know whether it was the extra swirl of water, but I lost hold of it."

"I got up to the top again, and got my breath. Then I entered the water again, and got hold of some other part of the body. I pulled the body to the bank, and that time we were pulled out"

Mr Appleby: "you would be very exhausted then?"

Witness: "I don't remember. All I remember is someone punching me in the back."

Dr Murray: "that was to try and get you to breathe."

George Featherstone, a labourer, Waterfall Terrace, graphically told how he was about to have his key, when 2 of his little boys came into the house and told him there was a boy in the beck." I rushed out and shouted 'there is a child in the river'. Harold Johnson was coming along Waterfall Terrace, which the newspaper in his hand. He dropped the newspaper, jumped over the railings, ran across the Iron bridge, took off his coat, and dived into the river."

"2 or 3 seconds later Mr Petch, the father of the child, came running down, and, without speaking to anyone, he, too, dived in."

"I saw Petch and Johnson struggling in the water. The current was so very strong as a whirlpool -that it turned Mr Petch upside down, with his legs in the air." "The boy was being washed round like a cork. I did not see what happened to him, because Johnson went down in the 'bottom wash.' He went downstream, and was water for a distance of 75 yards. I ran down the road this distance, then I saw his hand and arm come up. I went in to get him out and succeeded in getting hold of his trousers. The current was so strong that I was lifted clean off my feet and lost my grip. Mr Featherstone

Dr Robert Murray, High Green, told of receiving a message that someone was in the beck with a request that he'd go at once. He went straight away, and arrived at the Riverside as Wilson was about to go in. Petch was being whirled around, and when his body was brought to the side he helped to pull him out. They started artificial respiration immediately, and kept it up in relays for about an hour, but there was no sign of life. Petch was black in the face, and, in the opinion of Dr Murray, was quite dead when taken from the water. Death was due to asphyxia, following drowning.

A verdict in accordance with the medical evidence was returned.

Joseph Jenkins, labourer, Levenside, identified the body of Harold Johnson as that of his nephew. John Sigsworth, butcher, High-Street, said that he saw Fred Simpson take off his coat and we in after Johnson, whose body they saw coming down the river. The body came to the surface near where they were standing, and he went in and assisted to bring it to the bank, where the Ambulancemen, together with Sgt Johnson and Constable Hodges, began artificial respiration.

A verdict of "accidentally drowned" was recorded.

In his summing up Mr Appleby said: "I must take this opportunity of expressing my sympathy with the relatives of these unfortunate men who have made the greatest sacrifice of all. They have laid down their lives for another, and that is, in a measure, consolation. I also wish to put on record my appreciation of the noble and untiring efforts of so many of the people of Great Ayton, including the ambulancemen, the police, in particular Sgt Johnson and Constable Hodges, also Mr Noel Kitching, who superintended the ambulance, who, along with others, did heroic work."

Continuing, the coroner said he had visited the scene with Inspector Nelson and Mr Kitching, and they had suggested that offence should be erected for about 15 yards on the Waterfall Terrace side of the river, to prevent a recurrence. They also suggested that 2 lengths of rope should be kept at houses, for use in cases of accidents in the river. He hoped the suggestions would be brought to the notice of the proper authorities of the village. Herbert Petch, brother of one of the victims, on behalf of himself and relatives expressed sincere thanks "to all those gallant men". "Words are inadequate at a time like this" he went on. "We feel everything possible was done to save their lives. I would like to extend sincere sympathy to Johnson's mother. I understand he was her only boy, and what he did was, I think, quite outstanding from the point of view bravery." "I would like to enquire whether there is not some fund to whose notice is gallant deed may be brought. If so, perhaps consideration will be given to the mother of this boy."

Joseph Jenkins, labourer, of Levenside, Great Ayton, uncle of Johnson, said: "only 13 months ago his mother lost her husband. Now she has lost her only son and support. I hope she will be looked after by the villagers of Great Ayton."

The Deputy Coroner said that doubtless Press publicity would be given to those remarks.

THE FUNERAL

Beneath grey and weeping skies, singularly appropriate to the sad occasion, the last phase of the tragedy was with this on Sunday afternoon, when the 2 victims were buried. Undeterred by the cold wind which drove the stinging rain and whirling clouds people from a wide district assembled to pay their last tribute. The 1st funeral was that of Mr Joseph Percy Petch. The hearse containing the cowering was driven to the grief stricken group from the Buck Hotel, where the body had lain since the tragedy. They stood with loud and their heads, whilst women unrestrainedly gave way to their emotions. The High Street (ex Wesleyan) Methodist Church was crowded, many

being unable to gain admission is the body of Mr Petch had twice, in the course of its last journey, to be borne within a few feet of the place where he lost his life. Owing to a ministerial engagement, the Rev Percival Brook was unable to conduct the service, which was taken by Pastor Greenfield. At the close of the initial portion of the service, has to Greenfield referred in affecting words to the tragedy which had overtaken the widow and mother of Mr Petch. Mr Petch's death, he said, was typical of his life. He died in trying to help another and in life he was always willing and ready to give his help where it was most needed. He also expressed his sympathy with the mother of Harold Johnson.

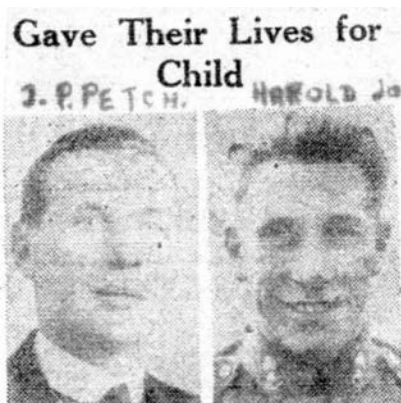
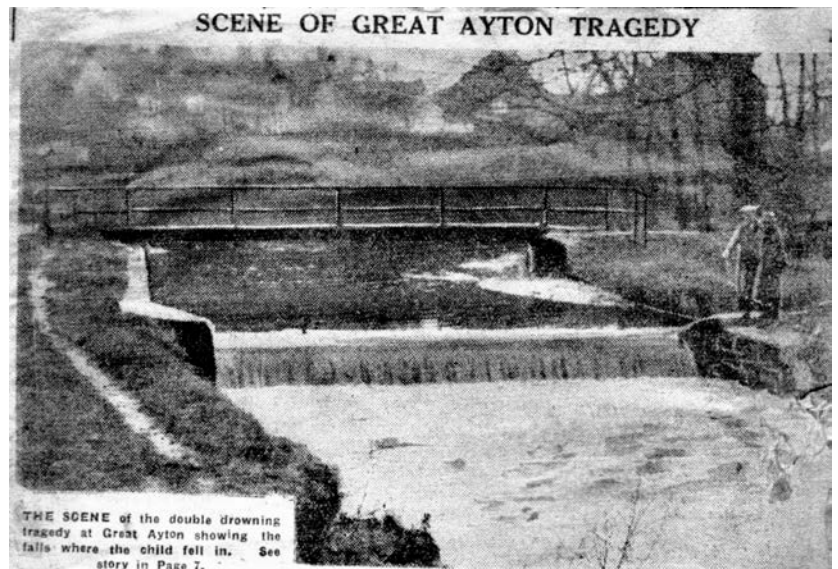
The family mourners were Mrs Petch (widow); Mrs Petch (mother); Mr and Mrs HS Petch (brother and sister-in-law); Mr WH Martin and Mrs Martin, Mr R and Mrs Martin, Miss F Petch (brother-in-law and sisters) Mr E Lynas (Father-in-law) Messrs. A Petch, Stokesley; H Petch, Knaresborough; Isaac Petch, Mr Hugill, Guisborough; R Shield, Monkseaton (uncles) Mrs JG Hodgson, Mr and Mrs Alfred Todd, Middlesbrough; Mr and Mrs J Jones, Mr and Mrs WH Jones, Mr A Jones (all Middlesbrough), Mr and Mrs Newton, Whitby; Mr E Lynas, Middlesbrough; Mr and Mrs J Hicks. Easingwold; (uncles and aunts) Mr and Mrs Stanley Petch, Redcar; Mr and Mrs A Bark, Sheffield; Miss Emily Barker, Leeds; Mr J Smith, Stockton; Mr and Mrs H Wilson, Yarm; Mr and Mrs G Smith, Cropton; Misses M and C Smith, Middlesbrough; Mrs Verity, Dr C Robinson and Miss Robinson, Barnard Castle; Mr and Mrs GR Garbutt and Miss E Garbutt, Scugdale; Mr and Mrs F Blair, Hemlington; Mr and Mrs J Donaldson, Busby; Mr and Mrs JG Robson, Great Ayton; Mrs A Osborne, Mrs G Jones, Mr a Newton and the Misses Newton, Whitby; Mr E Jones (cousins) Mr and Mrs E Lynas (brother-in-law and sister-in-law); Messrs W and E Lynas.

Immediately in front of the cortege walked the Members of the Male Voice Choir, 7 members of the choir, Messrs. Frank Readman, John G Readman, Fred Robson, William Suggitt, George F Pearson, Thomas Husband and Wilfred Featherstone, officiated as bearers, carrying the coffin shoulder high.

Other members present included Messrs. JH



1. E. Swales, Stokesley. 2.F.W. Parker. 3. Fred Johnson. 4. Norman Honeywell, Hutton Rudby. 5. Albert Leaybourne, 6. John Readman jr. 7. Daniel Stockton, 8. Wm. Stevens, 9. J.W. Hague, 10. T. Kirby jr. 11. Syd. Fall J.H. Scott. 2. W.E. Kitching. 3. Pastor Greenfield. 4. Frank Bottomly (undertakers) G.F. Pearson. 6. T. Whitbread



In the above picture Jimmy Carabine is showing to me (T. Kirby) the exact location of the tragedy. This picture was taken by Bill Rogerson, at that time photographer to the Middlesbrough Evening Gazette.

Scott (conductor), WE Kitching (secretary) R Shore, G Featherstone, T Whitbread, W Sanders, S Keen, Harold Kitching and Eric Smith. The choir, at the graveside, under the direction of Mr Scott sang, by request of the widow, the hymn, "Jesu Lover of my soul."

GENERAL MOURNERS

included in the exceptionally large number of general mourners the following organisations and bodies represented; Meat Traders, Messrs. Eve it does and WC Matthews (president and secretary respectively, of the Middlesbrough and District Butchers' Association), J Lowther, John Hague, Norman Wilson, John Sigsworth, Fred Johnson, and Fred Parker (all of Great Ayton), Robert Farrow, E Swales, W Benson, W Peacock (all of Stokesley) E Myers, H Moore, R Smith (all of Great Broughton), Norman Honeyman, Hutton Rudby); Reuben Holburn, Swainby; S Cordingley (manager, Middlesbrough and District Hide and Skin Company); Stokesley Station Farmers' and Butchers' Auction Mart Company, H A Richardson. Stokesley Auction Mart Company, Mr WA Holmes. Great Ayton Parish Council, Mrs Hood, Messrs. J Birkerton, AK Cumbor, TF Cumbor, Edwin Johnson, James W Long and Thomas Winn. Stokesley rural district Council, Cllr John Ogden and Mr Clifton Walker, sanitary inspector. Hospital Committee, Mr C A Armstrong. Others present were Dr Murray, Messrs. G Dedman, Stainton in Cleveland; George Hicks, Hutton Gate; RS Craddock, Mr and Mrs F Dodsworth, Mr and Mrs B Chambers, Messrs. RS Williamson, JR Coulson, Stokesley; E Kitching and P Farrow (Farrow and Kitching, Stokesley). R Booth, Redcar; R Sonley, Newton; G Slater, Guisborough; GE Garbutt, Great Broughton; F Baldock, S Fall, Cllr Noel Kitching, JJ Wood, Saltburn;?????????????Messrs. E Harbottle, W Harbottle, J Grayson, Mrs Bottomley, the Misses Grayson, Messrs. Harold Fletcher, Jack Fletcher, V Harrison, JW Bairns, Mrs Whitfield, Cropton; Messrs. WH Thistlethwaite, W Wilson, A Frankish, Middlesbrough; A Liddle, Lonsdale; D Stockton, Mrs Pickersgill, Messrs. Henry Tindale, Herbert Tindale, W Wood, GE Wilson, S Hugill, JR Suggitt, E Suggitt, F Suggitt, W Martin, Loftus; Mr and Mrs Maurice Hodgson, Messrs. W Garbutt, Cass, Thornaby; Wilson, Thornaby; Dr Ritchie, Thornaby; Mr and Mrs HE Foster, Messrs. W Carter, Little Broughton; Cooper Atkinson, Hutton

Rudby; and J Hodgson, Miss Emily Pearson, Mrs Greenfield, Mrs Hodgson (postmistress), Mr and Mrs J Leybourne, Middlesbrough; Mr and Mrs James Stevens, Mr and Mrs Leighton, Messrs. W Stevens, AE Ingram, JH Donaldson, Henry Donaldson, JJ Farndale, A Howe (stationmaster), E Lack, E Wilson (Richmond, late police sergeant at Great Ayton), J Carabine, Eric Carabine, Norman Bradley, J Dunning, Mr and Mrs A Jackson. Messrs. DJ Tingle (who presided at the organ) J Barthram, H Whitfield, C Kell, T Clarke, Easby; E Allen, Thomas Pearson, DH Pearson, H Weldon, JT Cullingworth, T Moon, S Stockdale and Mrs Craig. Mrs Petch's staff was represented by Messrs. Clive Johnson and John Readman.

FLORAL TRIBUTES

Included in the mass of floral tributes were those from: "Hilda (widow). Children and Father," "Mother and Florrie", "Sisters and Brothers", uncle Alf., Aunt Rachael and family", "Mr and Mrs HE Foster," "great Ayton butcher's," Ethel and John", "Edwin and Sadie," "JH Dawson and family" "Doris and Ernie," "Friends' School", A Baker, "George Nellie and Marion" are "Mr and Mrs Martin and Stuart", "uncle George and family," "John and Emma," Mr and Mrs Leighton," "All at Easingwold," Mr and Mrs C H Schumm, Mr and Mrs RS Williamson, "uncle Will and family," "Mrs Pearson and Em." W Weddell and Company, Redcar; Mr organ, Mr and Mrs James Blakeborough, "Stanley and Doris", "Stokesley and District Butchers' Association" "Mr and Mrs Ernest Jones and family" "High Street Methodist Church", Joyce, Fran, John and Clive, (Mr Petch's staff), "Dora and John Bell," Stanley and Connie" "Albert and Babs", uncle William, Albert and Raymond," Great Ayton Male Voice Choir," "Winnie and Stanley," Mr and Mrs R Barker, "cousins of Acklam," Uncle R A Petch", "Uncle Robert and cousin Muriel," "Thompson and Mary."

The funeral of Mr Johnson took place 2 hours later. In the vast gathering gloom of a wintry afternoon, the voice of the vicar, the Rev RM Kettlewell, pronouncing the solemn and beautiful words, "I am the resurrection and the life," were heard with almost painful distinctness. Every pew in the parish church was taxed to capacity, whilst dozens stood in the aisles. The Coffin, born at shoulder height, past to and from the church through a guard of honour of the officials and members of the Great Ayton United Football Club, of which "Obber," as he was affectionately known, was a playing member. A tragic figure the widowed mother of the dead boy. Only a year ago, on another Sunday, and on just such another snowy day, she had stood supported by the loving arm of her now dead son at the open grave of her husband.

"To the King, eternal, immortal, and invincible," pronounced the vicar, when far out on the fringe of the large crowd of people voice struck up "Jesu lover of my soul," the hymn being taken up until it swelled on the wintry air into a deep volume of sound.

The chief mourners were Mrs Johnson (mother), Mrs Sales, Kent; and Mrs Wilson, Bournemouth (sisters), Mr and Mrs J Jenkins, Mrs J Johnson and Mrs Teasdale, Mr and Mrs P Johnson, Dormanstown (uncles and aunts), Mr Maurice Pearson, Mr and Mrs Raymond Pearson, Mr and Mrs A Jenkins, Stokesley; Mr and Mrs J Johnson, Mr and Mrs W Johnson, Stokesley; Mr FW Pearson, Mrs Mudd, Pinchingthorpe; Mr Cook, Guisborough; Mr Fawns,, Guisborough; Mrs Cook, Redcar; Mr G Fryer, Harrogate; Mr J Fryer, Catterick Camp, Mr Thomas Pearson, Mrs Thatcher, Thornaby; Mrs Fryer, Mrs Thatcher, Thornaby (cousins), Miss P Atkinson, Mr and Mrs Low, Eaglescliffe, Mrs Hutchinson, and Mrs Marley, Eaglescliffe.

The large number of general mourners; Mr Fawcett, Messrs. JW Downing, ??? Mrs Hodgson (postmistress) ????? Johnston and Bridges (representing Great Ayton Postal staff) Messrs. AK Cumbor, G Bailey Jr.; J Hodgson, R Davison, S Fall; J Hoggart, T Ridley, JH Scott, WE Kitching, Harold Kitching, Mr and Mrs J G Robinson, Messrs. C Sanderson, W Burton, J Sigsworth, A Shaw, J Dunn, J Thirling, N Wilson, Edwin Johnson, H Swallwell, G Slater, R Wilson, J Topham, J R Suggitt, J Hague, H Whitfield, W Farndale, J Simpson, S Hugill, A E Ingram, J Headlam, Alfred Pickering, WH Martin, R Martin, Arnold Dixon, TH Dixon. Rev F Gillson, Mr and Mrs J Dixon, Messrs. GE Wilson, S Stockdale, B Johnson T Winn, JW Long, Cllr Ogden, Cllr Noel Kitching, Dr Murray Messrs. B Wilson,, J J Farndale, H Snell, R Dunning, T Peart, Miss Emily Pearson, Mrs Spaven, Mrs Chambers, Miss E Bennison, Miss Madge Bennison, Mrs Reversley, Mrs Ward, Mrs Cullingworth, Miss Betty Pearson, Messrs. Nelson Gardner, W Stevens, V Harrison, F Dodsworth, JR Coulson, J A Armstrong, A Wilson, Henry Dixon, J Swallwell, Alfred Stockdale, Mrs Wilson, Mr and Mrs R Parker, Mrs Fall, Mrs Clarkson, Miss Brotton Mr C Carter, Mr and Mrs A Jackson, Messrs. G Mayfield, J Johnson, R Stockdale, JW Baines, Harold Shaw, D Bogg, W Garbutt, Mrs Metcalfe, Mrs A Simpson, Mrs JR Stockdale, and Mr L huntingdon, Stokesley. The oak Coffin was borne by Messrs. Maurice Stockdale, George Brown, John Brown, Arnold Gutteridge, John Williamson, and Fred Swan.

The wreathes included those from "mother, sisters and niece Kath", "Jack Jenny and Elspeth", "Mrs Petch and family" "Mr and Mrs Farndale and family, Buck Hotel". Mr and Misses C and E Grayson, ". Middlesbrough Postal Staff," Mr and Mrs AE Kitching, Ayton Firs; Mr Ogden and Mr and Mrs James Blakeborough. "Staff of Great Ayton Postal Office," "A Friend," "Mr and Mrs TH and Mr and Mrs A Dixon," Mr and Mrs C Sanderson and family," "Great

Ayton United Football Club," " cousins Mabel and Lucy," Great Ayton British Legion," Mr and Mrs Dawson and family," The Neighbours" and "His???"

November 1927

Drowning Tragedy Aftermath

Captain T.L. Dugdale MP presented Mrs Petch, widow of one of the drowned men, the Royal Humane Society's bronze medal and certificate and to George Ewart Wilson, who endangered his life attempting to rescue the two men, a bronze medal and certificate. To Clive Johnson, an employee of Mr Petch, who actually rescued the child, he presented the society's Vellum.

Mrs Johnson, the widowed mother of the second victim, was presented in her home with a bronze medal and certificate by Capt. Dugdale.

NB: In October 1937 it was reported that £553 had been raised by a fund for Mrs Johnson, the mother of Harold Johnson who died in the tragedy in March 1937.

At the inquest, the coroner and jury recommended that fencing should be provided along Waterfall Terrace.

26 June 1937

Great Ayton Enterprise

So rapidly has the building of new houses proceeded in Great Ayton during recent years that the present sewage disposal works have become incapable of coping with the additional work placed upon them. At a public inquiry held in the early spring a scheme for reconstruction of the works was submitted to an inspector of the Ministry of Health by Mr. H. Wynne Potts, Clerk to the Stokesley Rural Council. The scheme of Mr. Potts having met with unanimous approval work has now been started on the reconstruction. The original works, which were laid down in 1898, consisted of one settling tank, from which the sewage afterwards flowed over two acres of filtering beds and into the adjoining River Leven. A story, probably apocryphal, is still told in the village that so efficiently did the filtering beds perform their work that an official who visited the locality drank a glass of crystal clear water filtered from the sewage.

The Reconstruction Scheme

Under reconstruction scheme provision will be made for 8,000 persons, an increase of 20 per cent, on the present population, and as the new works will only occupy half of the site, there is ample room for further development as the village grows. Settlement tanks, having a capacity of 48,000 gallons will be installed, from which the sewage will be pumped onto filters and distributed by the medium of rotary distributors. The storm flow meanwhile will not be pumped, but will pass through a storm tank into the Leven. The sewage, after passing through two filters, six feet in depth, and having a diameter of 46 feet, will pass into humus tanks with capacity of 12,000 gallons, and thence to the river. The sludge accumulating in the settlement storm and humus tanks will be pumped and treated on the land. Installed in the main pumping house will be two centrifugal electrically driven pumps, one for raising the sewage the filters and the other for the sludge.

A Shilling in the Pound

The pump for raising the sludge from the humus tanks will be contained in a separate house. Mr. Arnold Brookshank, M.Inst. C.E. Inst. W.E., The Exchange, Bradford, is the engineer. The general contracting work has been awarded to the tender of Mr. George Graham, Huddersfield. The Adams-Hydraulic Company of York, are the contractors for the pumps, iron work and distributors. The works are being constructed under the supervision of Mr. R. H. Pratt, of Saltburn-by-the-Sea, who has been appointed Clerk of the Works. The approximate cost of £4,600 will be met from a 3% per cent, loan made by the Public Works Board repayable over a period of 30 years. The redemption and working expenses will, it is estimated, represent a rate of 1s in the £ on the parish over the redemption period.

17 July 1937

GREAT AYTON FANCIERS' SUCCESS

The Great Ayton exhibitor Mr. R. P. Harbottle, met with several successes at the Yorkshire Agricultural Show. His team of birds won first prizes in the classes for Exhibition Sussex Utility White Wyandotte, Bantam (Frizzle). Utility Sussex, Exhibition White Leghorn and Exhibition White Wyandotte. Second prizes were won for Exhibition and Utility Sussex, Heavy Exhibition. Utility Ancona. A.O.V. Light Exhibition. Utility Leghorn and Leghorn A.O.C., With a 1937 kitchen White Wyandotte cockerel, Mr. Harbottle also won the Silver Challenge Cup, the silver Centenary medal, and the Pluvex silver tankard.

24 July 1937

GREAT AYTON

An automatic machine for the delivery of penny and half-penny stamps has been erected near the post office at Great Ayton. The machine will be greatly appreciated, especially by those who leave much of their correspondence to the week-end, the post office being closed from Saturday afternoon until Monday morning.

September 1937

No Mortuary

At an inquest at Great Broughton a member of the jury made the point that there was no mortuary accommodation in the whole of the Stokesley Rural District. (There are references in other cuttings to inquests being held at the Buck and the Tile Sheds in Great Ayton. In one case of a fatal accident the report says the body was taken to the Buck to await an inquest!)

15 October 1937

GREAT AYTON - No Place like Home

Strong as the homing instinct in racing pigeons is well known to be, the experience of a Great Ayton fancier is worthy of note. In 1935 Mr. James Stevens of High-street, had a pigeon which flew all stages to Lepuy, in France, and returned to its loft on every occasion. In 1936 it flew all stages to Nevers, but from the latter race point it failed to put in an appearance. On a recent day Mr Stevens was agreeably surprised to see his bird alight on its loft, from which it had been absent for considerably more than a year.

10 December 1937

AIR RAID PRECAUTION LECTURE

Mr Clifton Walker, sanitary inspector to the Stokesley Rural District Council gave an instructive and informative lecture in the Lecture Hall, Great Ayton, on Friday night, to a fairly large audience. The lecture "the first of a series promoted by the" Raids Precaution Committee of the County, and Mr. Walker dealt in detail with the various gases which would probably be used in the event of an aerial attack, the features of which they could be recognised, their effects, and the methods to be used for counteracting and minimising such effects. He emphasised the fact that, even in the unlikely event of war. it was highly improbable that a rural locality would be the object of attack from the air, though in the Great War bombs had been dropped on the moors of insular areas by fugitive Zeppelins. It was, however, most desirable that the volunteers should familiarise themselves with their duties, as in the event of an attack from the air. Great Ayton would, in all probability, be called upon to deal with refugees from Tees-side. Though the satisfactory number of 110 volunteers had enrolled in Great Ayton, it was desirable, in order that the squads required could be brought up to full strength, that more people should come forward. A vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. Walker, on the motion of Mr. Edwin Johnson, chairman of the Parish Council.

18 February 1938

Anniversary of a Memorable Snowstorm

Yesterday was the 38th anniversary of one of the most memorable snow, storms in the history of Cleveland and many interesting and unusual experiences have been recalled. The snow, which started to fall in the early morning, was whipped into something approaching a tornado by the fierce wind which sprang up. In a very short time virtually every road in the district was rapidly becoming blocked. One of the most unusual incidents associated with the storm was that which took place at the village of Great Broughton, from which the funeral of the octogenarian, Mr Thomas Kirby, was to take place.

The funeral cortege had started on its half-mile journey to the churchyard at the neighbouring village of Kirkby-in-Cleveland. Mid-way between the two villages so intense had the gale and blinding snow become that the horses drawing the hearse and mourning coaches were both unwilling and unable to face the fury of the storm. The cortege had perforce to return to its starting point. Just outside the village, the hearse which was returning to Stokesley, became engulfed in a snow drift and was not extricated until the following day.

On the morning of the Friday, the day after the storm, the whole countryside was hidden under a thick mantle of snow, which had piled up to a considerable height. Early in the morning a gang of men set to work to clear the road from Broughton to Kirkby in order that the postponed funeral might take place.

ALARM AT GREAT AYTON

At Great Ayton, the storm was responsible for causing much anxiety and alarm. A party of men employed in the local quarries failed to return home at the usual time, and a search party headed by the still living Mr. Edwin Johnson made an arduous journey through the snow to the quarry workings. It was feared the men had been entombed by a fall of rock. After a prolonged and unsuccessful search had been made in the workings, the men were discovered safe and sound in a cabin in which they had taken shelter. One of the search party, Mr. Edward Wilks, exhausted by the ordeal from the effects of which he never recovered, his death taking place shortly afterwards.

18 February 1938

Robert Wilson died at 82. Came to Great Ayton as a boy. For a short time was employed at Aireyholme Farm of the late Mr James Pierson, a breeder of Cleveland Bays. But went to work in the quarries and mines. Worked there till he was 70 when he retired. Keen sportsman.

25 March 1938

GREAT AYTON PLAYING FIELD PROPOSAL REJECTED

By the narrow margin of two votes Great Ayton on Wednesday night rejected the offer for the acquisition of a playing field. The rejected offer of Mr. Noel Kitching to contribute the sum of £100 towards the £200 demanded by the Stokesley Rural District Council for nearly three acres of land in Monksbecque Road area, was responsible for Mr. A. K Cumbor, one of the leading supporters; of the scheme, leaving the platform of the Parochial Hall, in which the annual assembly of ratepayers was held.

Mr. Edwin Johnson, another enthusiastic advocate of the playing field, who occupied the chair, stressed the necessity of the provision of playing fields for the protection of children. Mr. Noel Kitching, who was invited to the platform, said that, in his opinion, the two village greens at Great Ayton were, as recreation ground, very much over rated. The space at the disposal of children on the High Green had been very much reduced by the erection of seats notice boards, and other obstructions. He was afraid that, at a previous meeting held to discuss the question, red herrings had been driven across the trail, in order to influence people against the scheme.

Mr. T. Winn, who opposed the purchase of the ground, said that the cost to the parish during the eighty years, over which it was proposed to repay the loan raised to meet the balance of the purchase price, would be £367, and not £100. By purchasing the land the Council would make themselves responsible for making up the road, and by so doing the Great Ayton Rural Councillors were not being consistent. They had been parties to the compounding of the rates, and yet were supporting a scheme whereby the Stokesley Rural Council were relieved of the responsibility of bearing the cost of making up the road.

A good deal of noisy discussion followed, into which personalities, were introduced. Upon a vote being taken, thirty-six voted for the purchase of the land, and thirty eight against.

Mr. A. K. Cumbor had previously presented the street lighting account which was overdrawn to the extent of £8 11s. 5d. The expenditure during the 1937-8 season totalled £210 11s. 6d. of which £87 15s. 6d. had been paid for current. £44 7s. 1d. for new lamps, £48 16s. 3d. for loan charges and way-leaves, and £29 12s. 8d. for maintenance. In order to liquidate the overdraft and to meet the expenses for 1938-9, the ratepayers approved the sum of £180.

The charities account was presented by Mr. T. F. Cumbor in the absence of Mr. J. W. Lone. The income from the R. H. Simpson coal charity totalled £24 17s. 2d., and 13 tons 4 cwt. of coal had been distributed amongst 127 recipients, at a cost of £23 19s. 6d. The income from the Elizabeth Bulson flour charity was £17 3s. and 101 recipients had been provided with 164 stones of four, at a cost of sixteen guineas. The John Coulson bread charity had produced £1 15s., which had provided 164 pounds of bread for forty-six recipients. Sixteen parcels of drapery had been purchased on behalf of the same number of beneficiaries, at a cost of £3, the amount of the income from the William Young floral charity; whilst two grants of £1 10s. each had been made to apprentices from the same donor's apprentice charity, the credit balance of which was 7s. 7d.

A brief resume of the Council's activities was given by Mr. H. W. Martin, clerk. He said that, as a result of the Council's protest against the deviation of the Stokesley to Middlesbrough bus route, the United Automobile Services had undertaken to run two buses daily to Queen's Square, Middlesbrough. Mr. Winn expressed doubt regarding the statement that the complaints had been very numerous, but Mr. A. K. Cumbor said that, excluding Great Ayton there had been three hundred signatories to the petition to the Traffic Commissioner to have the original route restored.

23 April 1938

Dr John Theodore Waldie of Great Ayton, late house surgeon at North Riding Infirmary, married Miss Gwen Brunton of Prissick House, Marton (daughter of Mr and Mrs Frank Brunton).

7 May 1938

The historic hall at Great Ayton was included in a sale of property in the Parochial Hall. The hall, outbuildings and land, consisting of more than six acres, failed to reach the reserve and after some spirited bidding was withdrawn at £1300. Ayton House, the one-time residence of the late Waynman Dixon, with three-and-a-half acres of land, was also withdrawn at £1500.

The land, five-and-a-half acres and kennels thereon on which Mr Harold Pease at one time kept a pack of harriers, was sold for £530. Two grass fields in Easby Lane were sold for £340. The Hall farm, of 72 1/5 acres, with a range of outbuildings, was sold for £200.

21 May 1938

One of the last of the old whinstone quarry workers, Thomas Watson, died within a few weeks of his 85th birthday. He was born at the Buck Hotel. From his early youth he had worked in the whinstone quarries and was in the employment of three generations of the Bradley quarry-owning family. When the quarries closed Mr Watson became a surface worker at the ironstone mines and retired from active occupation after reaching his 72nd birthday. He had been a widower for 30 years.

21 May 1938

GREAT AYTON - Death of Mr. Thomas Watson

By the passing at Great Ayton of Mr. Thomas Watson, one of the last of the old whinstone quarry workers, and virtually the oldest born Aytonian, has been removed. Mr. Watson, who was within a few weeks of his 85th birthday, was born in the Buck Hotel, which at that time was in the ownership of the family. From his early youth he had worked in the whinstone quarries and in this connection he was in the employment of three generations of the

Bradley quarry owning family. When the quarries closed Mr. Watson became a surface worker at the ironstone mines and retired from active occupation after reaching his 72nd birthday. For over 30 years he had been a widower, and had made his home with his only daughter, Mrs. Parnaby. The family mourners at the funeral were: Mr. and Mrs. W. Watson. Mr and Mrs. Harold Watson, sons and daughters-in-law; Mrs. Parnaby, daughter; Mr- Pinkham (Middlesbrough). Mrs. Flintoff (Stockton-on-Tees); Eric Watson (Bilsdale) Miss Grace Parnaby. grandchildren; Mrs. Sewell (Middlesbrough), niece.

28 May 1938

Sidney Rolfe (19 years 10 months), ticket clerk at the Great Ayton depot of the United Bus Company, fell into a ravine known as The Valley and The Tips, the walls of which rise perpendicular to a height of 60 ft. His body was taken to his home. An inquest was held at the Tile Sheds.. Uniformed drivers and conductors acted as bearers at his funeral and another party of conductors, drivers and garage staff walked in front of the cortege and formed a guard of honour at the Parish Church gates.

10 June 1938

Resignation of Arthur K. Cumbor (and Parish Council)

The resignation was announced of Arthur K. Cumbor from the parish council, of which he had been a member for ten years. At the time of his election he was probably the youngest councillor in the county. He had been chairman of the parochial committee, the Burial Board and the Parish Council. He holds the unique record of having served as secretary to the Jubilee and Coronation celebrations committees within the space of two years and was a member of the parish council when the body, with a solitary exception, dissociated itself from the official recognition of the Captain Cook Bi-centenary celebrations. He was a keen advocate of a playing field scheme for Great Ayton. His resignation, following the report by the ratepayers, of the generous offer of Mr Noel Kitching in connection with the provision of a playing field, is not without significance. He is the third member to have resigned office (others were T. Winn and John Ogden).

8 July 1938

AMBULANCE HALL COMMENCED

Following the recent acquisition of a new motor vehicle by the Great Ayton Division of the St. John Ambulance Brigade, building operations have now been commenced on an ambulance hall. Hitherto the ambulance has been garaged at The Grange, and drills have been carried out in a disused workshop. The new hall, which measures fifty-eight feet in length and twenty feet in width, will provide not only accommodation for the vehicle, but provision has also been made for a drill hall, cloak and store room, and storage for equipment. The work is being carried out by Messrs. Robson Brothers. The building is being constructed of rustic red bricks, made at the Comondale brick works, and will be roofed with Staffordshire Rosemary tiles. Lighting will be obtained from no fewer than twenty windows, and electric light and Tees Valley water is also being installed. With the exception of a concrete garage floor, all the floors will be of wood. The site selected is a central one in Addison Road, and the building has been designed to harmonise with a sylvan background and the surrounding dwelling-houses. The approximate cost, including, the purchase price of the site, will be in the region of £700, and the redemption of a loan to cover the cost of the building will be met from the proceeds of events organised by the members of the Division and from voluntary subscriptions. It is interesting to learn that the curtaining material for the twenty windows will be provided by women supporters of the cause. It is hoped to have the hall ready for an official opening early in September. The building, when completed, will prove another addition to the amenities of the village and will be the realisation of a long-cherished ambition on the part of the Brigade members.

19 August 1938

Redcar Races weekend; on Monday, 909 motor cars, 99 buses and charabancs, 108 motorcycles and 318 pedal cycles were counted passing through Great Ayton from the West Riding. On Tuesday, when the racing moved on to

Stockton, the number of cars fell to 508, motorcycles to 63, buses and charabancs to 80 and pedal cycles to 244. Commercial vehicles, on the other hand, rose from 106 to 155.

19 August 1938

RACE TRAFFIC AT GREAT AYTON

The appreciable increase in the volume of motor traffic passing through Great Ayton on the occasion of Redcar races is shown by the statistics taken at this week's road census. Situated as it is, virtually the whole of the West Riding traffic bound for Redcar passes through part of the village which it skirts by taking the Guisborough road at the west end, where it passes over the stone bridge.

On Monday the number of motor cars reached 909, motor cycles 108 buses and char-a-bancs 99, whilst 318 pedal cycles were enumerated. On Tuesday, when the racing army moved on to Stockton, the number of cars enumerated fell to 508 motor cycles to 63, buses and char-a-bancs to 80, and pedal cycles to 244. Commercial vehicles, on the other hand increased from 106 to 155.

30 September 1938

GREAT AYTON

A large number of A.R.P. volunteers were kept busy until a late hour in the British School, Great Ayton, in the assembling of gas masks. The work was carried out under the direction of Mr. Noel Kitching, superintendant of the St. John Ambulance Brigade. The enthusiastic response to the appeal for workers was evidenced by the fact that the workers ranged from Mr. George Johnstone, who saw active service in the Boer War, to young boys just over school leaving age. A number of women workers were also present. The distribution of masks will be completed within the next day or two.

14 October 1938

Mr. H. Wynne Potts, Clerk to Stokesley RDC, visited Marwood School to address ARP wardens and volunteers, ambulance brigade workers and special constables. He explained the purpose of the refugee billeting scheme and distributed forms for a census of accommodation available.

12 November 1938

Stork at Great Ayton

You may remember that last year some young storks were reared in the South of England; they migrated in the Autumn, but it was feared that most of them would either perish in the Channel or fail to return to England. But it seems that one at least is still here because I have word of a stork that has taken up residence at Great Ayton. I have not seen it myself, and the sceptics are bound to say it is a heron; but as crowds of people are flocking to see it daily, and dozens of films have been exposed on it, it is not likely to be a bird which is comparatively common in Yorkshire. In any case, its habits are certainly not those of a heron.

A FRIENDLY BIRD

It has been feeding in company with the farmyard poultry, crows, rooks and is quite undisturbed by traffic or visitors. On Sunday morning it paid a visit to a neighbouring farm where the usual crowd of observers watched it foraging on top of a hay stack. By night it roosts in true Hans Andersen style on the roof of a Dutch barn. One result of its visit is that no fewer than 40 of the Great Ayton schoolchildren were late for school the other day; another is that the fences of the farm on which it has settled are suffering wholesale damage from enthusiastic stork stalkers.

Normally storks migrate to Africa in the Autumn; but from Europe they can manage the passage without any sea crossing so wide as the Channel which was too much for many of the English storks last year and which the Great Ayton stork may have decided is too much for him.

12 November 1938
Great Ayton's Stork

Not for upwards of a century has Great Ayton enjoyed the privilege of entertaining so rare a visitor as a stork. Within the last few days, however, one has made its appearance in the village. For some days the bird made its headquarters at Airey-holme Farm, but now it is apparently settled at Tile Sheds farm. Undisturbed by passing traffic the bird fraternises with the farmyard poultry, crows, rooks and sparrows in the company of which it feeds. Every day large crowds of observers of this unusual visitor may be seen peering over the hedge and dozens of films have been exposed upon this interesting bird.

By night it roosts in traditional Hans Andersen style upon one leg on the roof of a Dutch barn—a singularly-appropriate place. On Sunday morning it paid a visit to a neighbouring farm where it was eagerly watched foraging for food on the top of a hayrick. Naturally the juvenile population have developed a keen, but it is to be feared transient, interest in ornithology. This interest is not encouraged by either Mr. Winn, the farmer whose fences are suffering from the depredations of these enthusiastic stork stalkers, nor by teachers. It is rumoured that on a recent day no lower than 40 were walloped for being late to school as a result of their interest in the stork.

12 November 1938
Unusual Incident - Stork Visits Gt. Ayton

For some days a stork has made its headquarters at Aireyholme Farm but now it has apparently settled at Tile Sheds Farm. Undisturbed by passing traffic, the bird fraternises with the farmyard poultry, crows, rooks and sparrows in the company of which it feeds. Every day large crowds of observers may be seen peering over the hedges and dozens of films have been exposed. By night it roosts on the roof of a Dutch barn. Interest is not encouraged by the farmer, whose fences suffer from the depredations of the stork stalkers. Nor by teachers; it is rumoured that on a recent day no fewer than 40 were walloped for being late to school as a result of their interest in the stork.

16 November 1938

A 26-seater omnibus belonging to A. Dunning and Sons, Great Ayton, was totally destroyed. It left Great Ayton about 6 p.m. for Middlesbrough and when half-way between Great Ayton and Nunthorpe the driver experienced some trouble with the engine, which gave out. The carburettor was heavily flooded. The driver was restarting the engine when it suddenly backfired and burst into flames. He tried using the fire extinguisher on the vehicle but within a short time the bus was reduced to a mass of wreckage. Fortunately, there were no passengers at the time.

7 December 1938

Mr Henry Hall, of Great Ayton, has been granted a provisional protection patent for a device which it is claimed will minimise the risk from roof falls to which miners and workmen employed in any class of tunnelling work are exposed. In view of the recent controversy in reference to the employment of steel props in coal mines, which miners assert do not give the warning creak when under extreme pressure as wooden props do, the invention of Mr Hall is interesting. It is an improved steel prop into which he has introduced features which will render it rigid, collapsible or telescopic, according to the requirements of the local conditions.

Mr Hall was for 13 years engineer at the Great Ayton mine of Pease and Partners. His father, William Hall, of Marske, 87, almost half a century ago invented a rotary drill which entirely superseded the old hammer-driven drill. This drill received the approbation and financial support of the late Sir Arthur Francis Pease in the interests of his firm, Pease and Partners, at whose Upleatham mine Mr Hall Senior was engineer for half a century.

21 January 1939

Institution and induction of the Rev. R.E. Bradshaw to the living of Christ Church took place on Tuesday night in the presence of a large congregation from various parts of the Stokesley deanery. The institution service was conducted

by the Bishop of Whitby (Dr Woollcombe) and the induction by the Rector of Stokesley and Ven. Archdeacon of Cleveland, the Rev. A. Basil Carter.

The new vicar succeeds the Rev. R.M. Kettlewell. The new vicar was educated at Trinity College University, Toronto, and Cuddesdon Theological College, Oxford. Ordained priest and deacon in the Diocese of York, he served his first curacy under the Rev. Colin Marr at Redcar Parish Church. Returning to Canada, he became Vicar of St. Paul's, Provost, on the prairies, and Rector of St. Mary's in the Rockies. He was also Rural Dean of Jasper in the Diocese of Edmonton and held chaplaincies to the Canadian Legion, British Empire Service League and Jasper Park Lodge. Before ordination he was for a number of years engaged in cattle ranching in Western Canada. Until recently he has been assistant to the Bishop of Whitby at Bolton Percy.

January 1939

Mr. A. H. Dobbing of the Friends' School, Great Ayton, who was supported by the Rev. G.B. Raikes, presided over a meeting in the school hall on Tuesday night. The meeting was convened to discuss plans for the assistance of Jewish refugees. Mr. Ferdinand Josephs of Middlesbrough said it was hoped to bring between 20 and 30 children to Middlesbrough. The larger number would be accommodated in a house which was being converted into a hostel. The house, its furniture and medical and dental attention had been provided by the Jewish community. The remainder would be taken into private homes. A committee was formed.

28 February 1939

Tom Kirby quoted from a reference book, "Cleveland Characters of 50 years ago"

Great Ayton: John Dixon had two sources of income - beehive making and a commission agency. Ralph of that ilk was secretary of the Great Ayton Gas Company and was also superintendent of the Friends' North of England Agricultural School.

Ralph and John Jackson were tanners on a big scale and another John Jackson, as he is today, was a hairdresser.

Sammy Rutley was the local cab proprietor and William Wilkinson a water miller.

The Vicar of Newton (the two parishes are now combined), the Rev. William Edward, lived on High Green at Great Ayton. He had two fellow shepherds, the Rev. Richard Wrthington, Vicar of the parish, and the Rev. Edward Herbert (Congregational).

15 April 1939

Travellers to Great Ayton numbered 150 more than those on the two previous Easter Mondays. In addition to return ticket holders, 160 passengers were booked to Middlesbrough on the evening train. This latter included parties of Boy Scouts who had been encamped in the locality. The "sand bank," though now sadly circumscribed owing to quarrying operations, attracted the local children who rolled their pace eggs down what remains of the once grassy slopes. Easter attractions in the village included a concert by the local silver band, the members of which wore their new uniforms for the first time; a sale of work and a whist drive organised in aid of the local ambulance brigade funds.

19 May 1939

A Happy Family

Whilst working in his Sunnyfield, Great Ayton, nurseries, Mr. Raymond Cumbor, Friends' School Gardener, found a litter of five leverets. As the nest was destroyed Mr. Cumbor took the leverets which were only a few days old to his home and placed them with the household cat which was nursing a litter of kittens a month old. The cat showed no aversion to this addition to her maternal duties and is nursing both her own and her adopted family. Neither did the kittens show any resentment towards the leverets and they and the kittens romp playfully together. Mr. Robert Stockdale, who has a wide knowledge of wild creatures, told me that it was only on very rare occasions a hare produces five youngsters. the usual number being two.

9 September 1939

GREAT AYTON - Reception of Children

Great Ayton received its first consignment of evacuees on Friday, when about 300 children, mothers, teachers and helpers arrived from the Gateshead schools. The evacuees were carried by train to Stokesley station, where they were met by buses and after being given a meal and their rations at Stokesley, were transported to Great Ayton. With Mr. Noel Kitching as billeting officer the children were expeditiously dealt with. A party of members of the Women's Institute under the supervision of Mrs. Pain and Mrs. Stapleton, met the children on their arrival and escorted them to their new homes. The Edward Kitching Council school, which was used as a receiving station, was kept open on Saturday on which day there were further arrivals, and also on Sunday for the purpose of directing parents, many of whom paid a visit to their children.

9 September 1939

EVACUEES AT GREAT AYTON HEAR PREMIER'S BROADCAST

The consignment of evacuees for Great Ayton consisting of approximately 300 children, mothers, teachers and helpers arrived from Gateshead. They were met at Stokesley station by buses and after being given a meal and their rations were transported to Great Ayton. With Mr. Noel Kitching as billeting officer the children were dealt with expeditiously. Members the Women's institute under Mrs. Pain and Mrs. Stapleton met the children on their arrival and escorted them to their new homes. The Edward Kitching Council School which was utilised as a receiving station, was open on Saturday to receive further arrivals and again on Sunday for the purpose of directing Parents visiting their children. Affecting sights were witnessed when a party of the evacuees heard Mr. Chamberlain's speech over the school wireless.

It is expected the children will go to school next week for half a day and Ayton children will attend the other half.

30 September 1939

Courageous Survivor's Story

Musician James Cansfield, of the Grange Mill, Great Ayton, was amongst those who were rescued following the sinking of the *Courageous*. Musician Cansfield, who is unmarried, has been in the Navy for eight years and he had been aboard the ship since July last. Seen in the home of his parents Cansfield said "Only a few moments before the explosion, I had been chaffing a shipmate who had been recently married about us being sent-down, but I never for a moment thought my chaff would precede a grim reality. I was standing under an oil tank waiting to go on watch when the first explosion came, the tank bursting and drenching me in oil. My clothes were soaked and felt very sick, but the oil probably helped to keep me afloat. When the first explosion came I thought we had struck a mine, but when, two seconds later there was another I knew we had been torpedoed. Shortly afterwards I had a clear view of the submarine which had been attacked by naval destroyers. She came up with an apparently broken back and then sank to the bottom, our crew giving the German crew a cheer as they went down. Immediately the order to abandon ship came, I dived into the sea and swam about for an hour before I was hauled into one of our ship's life boats. She had been torn from the davits by the force of the explosions and was badly damaged. By dint of desperate bailing however, we kept her afloat for twenty minutes when we were picked up by a merchant vessel. Apart from a few bruises and exposure to the water I was no worse. Of course I lost all my possessions with the exception of my money. Being a good Yorkshireman I took care of that part of my property".

6 October 1939

Two accidents attended by serious results have occurred in Station Road. Great Ayton, during the past week. On Thursday, last week Mr. Thomas F. Cumbor, a well-known farmer, was in conversation with a friend when he stepped directly into the path of a motor-lorry, the approach of which he had failed to hear. Mr. Cumbor who is a member of the Great Ayton Parish Council and Stokesley Rural District Council, instinctively placed his hands before his face for protection. He sustained severe injuries to the palm of his left hand, from which the flesh was torn, necessitating the insertion of seven stitches by Dr. Waldie. Mr. Cumbor, who is making good progress, suffered

severely from shock and bruising. On Tuesday, a Kildale resident named Ross was knocked down by a railway lorry. After having been treated on the spot, Mr Ross, who sustained a fractured leg and superficial facial injuries, was conveyed by motor ambulance to North Ormesby Cottage Hospital. Only a little while ago a soldier was flung from a lorry at the same spot as the vehicle was rounding the corner leading into Station Road.

13 October 1939

A series of weekly shows were organised by Great Ayton Workingmen's club and Institute to provide Christmas parcels for members in the Services.

23 December 1939

Children's entertainment

Christmas festivities began with an open day at the British (Infants') School. Scholars of the Friends School helped with donations. "Owing to the number of evacuee children attending the school and the lack of accommodation it was not possible on this occasion to invite the parents and friends of the local children. The children were served with tea, the desks being converted into gaily decorated tables. The meal was followed by carol singing, games and dancing round the Christmas treat."

1 March 1940

Annual vestry and parochial church meeting

For the first time for many years the parish had been able to pay its full quota. The electoral roll comprised 346 males and 397 females, a total of 743. There was a credit balance of £17.10.2.

10 March 1942

Great Ayton Doesn't Want to Add "Middlesbrough"

Great Ayton people do not like to have "Middlesbrough" added to their postal address, as the authorities would like. They say that the "Great Ayton, Yorkshire." may lead to letters being sent for sorting by inexperienced staffs to York. The fact that the amendment was originally a pre-war one, when staffs were experienced, is overlooked. Insular and parochial as it may appear, many Great Ayton people have rigidly refrained from the incorporation of Middlesbrough in their address. They maintain they have nothing in common with Middlesbrough, and to employ the termination is an affront to their village. The more unwieldy form of "Great Ayton in Cleveland." "near Stokesley." or a reversion to "near Northallerton" would have met with unanimous approval.

30 January 1942

Victorian Ornaments on Cleveland Salvage Dump

Cleveland is responding generously to the appeal for scrap metal. In almost every village and hamlet may be seen a daily growing dump. On one dump there; had been deposited a number of the old hearth ornaments so highly prized in Victorian homes. These ornaments were cast in a variety of forms, lions rampant and couchant, mounted guardsmen and sheaves of corn. They received a weekly coating of black lead and such vigorous "strapping" from brushes as to assume the lustre of polished.

11 July 1942

GREAT AYTON - Book Salvage Effort

Great Ayton had its book salvage effort on Wednesday, when a large quantity of books, newspapers, and other material was contributed. A mile of books was started at each end of the village, the first books being placed by Mrs.

Hood and Mr. Edwin Johnson, both members of the Parish Council. A further fillip was given by a competition, the honour of having collected the greatest quantity of material going to Mrs Hood.

28 July 1942

Great Ayton Man's Rat Bag

Mr. James Tate, a Great Ayton Home Guard, when he is free from these duties devotes his leisure hours to the destruction of rats. Armed with a 4.10 gun, he spends many hours in the old quarry workings along Langbaugh Rig. These have for long been used for refuse dumps by Great Ayton Parish Council. Numbers of large rats have their homes in the dumps. By means of a low whistle resembling the mating call of the rodents, Mr. Tate induces them to come from their holes. Many never return. Within a short time, and at his own expense in ammunition, Mr. Tate has shot no fewer than 400 rats and has saved to local farmers and the country a considerable quantity of food.

27 February 1942

PROPERTY IN DEMAND

There was a brisk demand for Great Ayton freehold properties, offered at auction on Saturday. The sale, which was to close a trust, was conducted at the Royal Oak Hotel, by Mr. Guy Moore, Middlesbrough. All lots were cleared. Two of four houses in East View Terrace, each of which contains sitting room, kitchen, scullery, and three bedrooms, and are let at a weekly rental of eight shillings each, were sold to Mr. T. F. Cumbor, Great Ayton, for £285 and £290, respectively. A third was acquired by Mr. Cumber's sister, Miss Winifred Cumbor, for £290; the remaining house being sold to the occupier. Miss Wilson, for £285. Two houses in North View Terrace, containing sitting room, kitchen, scullery, and three bedrooms, and let at a weekly rental of 7s. 6d. each, realised £255 and £261, respectively, the buyers being Mr. Hanson, Marton-in-Cleveland, and Mr. Little, South Bank. Mr. B. Chambers. Great Ayton, became the owner of the allotment garden covering an area of 611 square yards, for which he paid £25. Mr. Herbert Outhwaite, Middlesbrough, was solicitor for the vendors.

2 January 1942

CLEVELAND ENTERTAINS THE TROOPS (By a "Whitby Gazette" Correspondent.)

Drills, fatigues, guards and all the arduous routine of the services were temporarily forgotten in the merry atmosphere of one of the most successful and memorable parties ever held in the village. Promoted and organised by Mrs. Ridsdale (whose soldier husband was, unfortunately, unable to participate) and Miss Mabel Tweddell, the event was staged in the Parochial Hall. On the stage was a gaily decorated Christmas tree, laden with prizes waiting to be won in the various games and competitions introduced into the admirable programme devised by B.S.M. Ward. Though the sombre khaki of the Army predominated, it was relieved by the touch of blue worn by the representative of the Navy (Mr. Bob Cornforth, home on leave) and by the lighter shade of blue of the men of the Royal Air Force. And how those boys entered into the revelry of this truly happy party!

They waltzed and they tangoed, glided and foxtrotted; they hunted the fox with all the ardour of the chase, as Jorrocks termed it, they marched up hill and down dale with a legendary Duke of York ; and they chose their loves from the East and from the West, from amongst the galaxy of pretty girls who partnered them, and who coyly, but not very strenuously resisted their efforts to bestow a chaste, if boisterous salute. Not only did these boys worthily uphold the tradition of British gallantry, but were joined by their officers, Lieutenant Sutherland. Lieutenant Morgan, Lieutenant Dulton and Lieutenant Pepler, who also freely entered into the gaiety. Sergeant Rose, who officiated as M.C., kept his men up to the scratch in their social duties with the same efficiency as they perform their sterner duties. The active participation in dancing and games demanded breath-regaining interludes, and these were utilised by local artistes who kindly came along to add to the festive spirit.

Amongst those who contributed to a miscellaneous programme were Gunner Block, with his ukelele; Mr. G. Tweddell, who dexterously manipulated the bones; and the members of Mr. T. Whitbread's party. Supper was provided for upwards of three hundred guests, and, despite the assaults on the supper table a surplus remained, so generous had been the response of the villagers to the appeal for provisions. A large Christmas cake, baked by Mrs. W. Featherstone, was distributed amongst the assembled guests. Even free lemonade and, best of all from the

smoker's point of view, there were free cigarettes. Mr. George Smith, his wife and Miss Edna Briggs, who most ungrudgingly gave their services, provided the music for the dancing. Equally unselfish was Mrs. J. Harrison, who acted as accompanist for the vocal items, and also played during an interval of waiting for the orchestra. Lieutenant Sutherland briefly expressed the gratitude of the men for the hospitality shown to them, and ringing cheers were given for those who had contributed to this all-too-quickly-ended night of pleasure, especially to Mrs. Ridsdale and Miss Tweddell.

October 1941

Great Ayton Child's Escape

A small daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. Muxlow, Summerhill Farm, Great Ayton, had a remarkable escape from serious injury on Tuesday. The child had accompanied her father to the village and had been temporarily left in a milk float when the horse bolted through the main street narrowly missing buses cars and other vehicles. The horse then made for a door giving access to the garden of Mr. J. Wood. High Green, where it became wedged and was held captive until the arrival of Mr. Muxlow, who had followed on a bus.

13 December 1941

Aid for Russia.

Three Great Ayton girls Joan and Audrey Heaviside and Pat Jones, have canvassed friends of their parents for contributions to a jumble sale which was held in the home of Mr. and Mrs Jones on Saturday. As a result of the effort, Mr. Jones has forwarded to Mrs. Churchill £5 5s for her Aid for Russia Fund.

9 FEBRUARY 1946

SERVING IN AUSTRALIA

Mr. Tom Kirby. Great Ayton, has received from the Editor of the "Adelaide (Australia) Advertiser" the cutting of a note which appeared in the "Among the People" feature of the newspaper. Bearing the headline "Captain Cook's Village," the note reads: "I had the pleasure of meeting recently a young R.A.F. visitor, L.A.C. Tom Kirby, of a Dakota squadron. He hails from Great Ayton. Yorkshire, and is the only member of the Forces to have visited Australia from the village with which Captain Cook had such intimate associations. Tom Kirby told me that he had never dreamed that someday he would be on service in Australia; he was an apprentice linotype operator on a Middlesbrough newspaper in civil life. He hopes to get a chance to visit Melbourne to see Captain Cook's Cottage in Fitzroy Gardens- He has not been East yet, as he flew from England to Calcutta, and thence came by ship to Perth. L.A.C. Kirby, who is the only son of Mr. and Mrs. Kirby. joined the Royal Air Force in 1939, when nineteen years of age, and. in addition to being on service in Australia, has been stationed in India.

17 February 1945

WELCOME HOME FOR GREAT AYTON - VILLAGERS FAVOUR A MONEY GIFT

A committee has been formed at Great Ayton to raise funds for welcoming home men and women serving in the Forces. The scheme will also be extended to members of the Merchant Navy and to the one Bevin boy from the village. Mr. T. Winn is acting as chairman Mr. H. W. Martin (Clerk to the Parish Council) and Mr. A. C. Walker (Stokesley Rural Council Sanitary Inspector) as secretaries. Mr. W. W. Sills as treasurer and Mr. Stanley Bye as hon. auditor.

At a meeting of villagers on Thursday various suggestions were made. Mr. Stanley Carr headmaster of the Friends' School, favoured the building of a hall in which films could be shown and lectures given. This was supported by Mr. Goom, of the school teaching staff, with the addition of libraries for both adults and juveniles. The provision of a swimming bath was advocated by Mr. J. G. Readman. Major Cundey suggested that those who had lost relatives in the European theatres of war should be given financial assistance to visit the graves of those who had fallen, or alternatively, the gift of an enlarged photograph framed and inscribed. Mr. D. P. Maxwell deprecated the consideration of any definite project before the money had been raised, and upon a vote being taken the suggestion

which made the most appeal was that of a monetary gift accompanied by a suitably inscribed present and entertainment.

12 May 1945

**GREAT AYTON - BEACON FIRE ON ROSEBERRY TOPPING
LIGHTNING FLOODLIGHTS HILLS AND VILLAGES**

A brave show of bunting and flags gave the village a gay appearance, and at several points on the village substantial piles of combustible material were quickly assembled. The low green provided accommodation for two fires. A farmer tracted a load to the peak of Roseberry Topping, the site for a warning beacon in Napoleon's days. At another fire a local man had saved a stock of pre-war fireworks for the long awaited occasion to use them. Many of the children who assembled at this fire were seeing fireworks for the first time.

During the evening the local silver band played at various points in the village. In order to give worshippers the opportunity of hearing the King's speech, the thanksgiving service at the parish church was arranged for ten o'clock. Prior to the service the Rev.J. Eaves Tinsley visited the licensed premises and clubs in the village, carrying with him an invitation to the service. Without exception the Vicar received a cordial and reverent reception from licence holders and customers alike. Later he addressed a large congregation in the Parish Church, at which all denominations were represented.

Following the service a victory dance was held in the recently derequisitioned W.I. Hall in aid of the Welcome Home Fund. Community singing was a feature of the dance, which was conducted by Messrs. T. F. Cumbor and S. Keen. In connection with this effort, by means of which £22 was raised free ices were supplied by Mr. A. Suggitt, the cost being defrayed by Mr. and Mrs. Claud Bulmer, of The Herdholt.

To round off the day a lavish firework display was staged by Dame Nature, For more than an hour the hills and village were "flood lighted" by most vivid flashes of lightning, whilst a barrage of almost terrifying thunder peals added to the noise of hailstones the size of marbles which caused alarm lest they should break windows.

4 August 1945

Repairs to the famous Cleveland landmark, Capt. Cook's monument at Great Ayton, which last summer was damaged by lightning, have nearly been completed. The work that remains to be done is the replacement of portions of the metal protective guard, although this necessary renewal is unconnected with the effects of atmospherical disturbance. It was caused by irresponsible people weakening the iron bars and wresting them from the stonework. More examples of thoughtless conduct are to be seen in the many carvings of names and initials on the more easily accessible parts of the pillar. One is unable to appreciate the mentality of individuals who seem to take every opportunity to disfigure historic monuments. The height of folly has been reached in this respect by a youth who by some unexplained means has carved his name on the apex of the Capt. Cook monument.

5 January 1946

Dixon Wedding

Marriage at Windsor of Mr Alden Hansell Dixon, youngest son of Mr and Mrs Henry Arnold Dixon, of "Fordington," Great Ayton, and Miss Marjorie Joyce Duckworth, of Wraysbury, Bucks. The bridegroom enlisted in the RA in 1939, was taken prisoner at Torbruk, spent 3 1/2 years in POW camps in North Africa, Sicily and Italy, was liberated by the Russians and repatriated in May. 200 guests were entertained in the Parochial Hall.

26 January 1946

Rabbit Pie Supper

In pre-war days it was an established custom of the members of the Great Ayton Congregational Church to entertain their friends to an annual rabbit pie supper. On Monday last week, though the principal item from the menu was absent, a very enjoyable and successful revival of this reunion took place. The guests were welcomed by the Rev. H.

Walker, pastor. A collection was taken for The British Sailors' Society. Games, dancing and community singing followed the supper.

9 February 1946

Golden Wedding (Pearson - ambulance worker)

Mr and Mrs John George Pearson, Melbourne Terrace, Great Ayton, during the weekend celebrated their golden wedding. Mr Pearson, a native of Newby, is 74 and his wife, who hails from Middlesbrough, is two years his junior. They have resided in Great Ayton for 48 years. Mr Pearson is keenly interested in ambulance work and was a member of the Great Ayton ambulance team which won the Donald Bain Challenge Shield in 1914.

16 February 1946

Death of Prominent Agriculturist

By the passing of Mr Isaac Petch, a prominent agriculturist has been lost to the Vale of Cleveland. The late Mr Petch, 72, succeeded his father in the tenancy of Netherby Farm, Marton in Cleveland.

Just as the East Cleveland Petch family have for generations been successful breeders and exhibitors of Cleveland Bay horses, so have the West Cleveland Petches been loyal adherents to the Clydesdale horse. From Netherby Farm, the late Mr Petch went to Snow Hall, Newton, from where he retired a few years ago, but he subsequently assisted in the management of Little Ayton Grange. Mr Petch had latterly made his home with his son-in-law and daughter, Mr and Mrs F. Blair, at Hemlington, where his death took place. The funeral service was held at High Street Methodist Church, Great Ayton, of which for 30 years he was a member. Interment took place at Newton. The service was taken jointly by the Stokesley circuit superintendent and the Great Ayton vicar.

April 1946

Great Ayton Votes

Election fever, I learn, is rife in Great Ayton, the Yorkshire village renowned for its association with the famous explorer, Captain James Cook. On Monday next the parishioners will go to the poll to choose their representatives, three in number, on the Stokesley Rural District Council, as well as their seven Parish Councillors. There are nine candidates for the R.D.C. and no fewer than 16 for the Parish Council, and more interest is being shown in these purely local elections than was observable during the General Election. Many of the candidates have issued addresses, an intensive house-to-house canvassing campaign is being undertaken and the local milkman and coalman are taking advantage of their daily calls and soliciting the votes of their customers. The electors have a wide field of choice. The candidates include a retired schoolmaster, a solicitor, a quarry manager, a farmer-and-milkman, a clerk, a gardener, a Co-operative branch manager, a road foreman, a haulage contractor - cum - coalman, an electrician and an accountant. There are also five women candidates. The integrity of the Great Ayton villagers, is beyond question, otherwise, it seems to me, the position of the coalman would be impregnable.

6 April 1946

STOKESLEY. — Great Ayton and Little Ayton (3). T Winn. 578: T F Cumbor. 436: W W Sills. 413; Annie Wilson. 396; W Johnson. 373: R Bradley 352: K Cumber. 198: Mrs N Bulmer, 154; Mrs A Dixon. 109.

PARISH COUNCILS - GREAT AYTON.— -T Winn. 694: Annie Wilson: 596: T.F. Cumbor. 570: W Johnson. 593: -W W Sills, 551; R Bradley, 486; A K Cumbor, 331: Not Elected: Nancy Bulmer, 292: J. D. Pinkney 273: G Bland, 218; Annie Dixon. 180; Edith Carr. 156; W H Ingledew. 150: Husband 106:

April 1946

GREAT AYTON GIFT TO SERVICE FOLK £3 EACH AS "WELCOME HOME"

Service personnel at Great Ayton were presented with £3 each from the Welcome Home fund on Saturday, when they were entertained to tea by the Home Guard Association. Those absent will have their gifts forwarded.

Festivities were opened by County Coun T Winn, chairman of the Parish Council, accompanied by parish councillors and Home Guard members, Sir John Fry and "Ted" Johnson.

Children's sports, roundabouts, and a "Punch" show had been arranged. Mr. D. Wright was conjuror and Mr. Foster ventriloquist. Physical training and Swedish dancing exhibitions, were contributed by Edward Kitching School, and other entertainment included Billy Scarrow's pierrot troupe the choral society under Mr. H Brown and Teesside Bridge and Engineering Works band.

Old age pensioners and children were entertained to tea by the Parish Council and Home Guard. Mr. Dave Maxwell, of Tile Sheds Inn, masqueraded as "mystery man." and a dance and social were held in the Women's Institute Hall. Bonfires were lit, and a whist drive was supervised by Mr W. Brown.

Sports Results

Girls (50; M Dunning, N Gawthorpe, O Featherstone. (6) A Green, M Tait, M Legg; (7) M Wood, Joan Readman, J Wood; (8) A Thomas, M Garbutt, S Robson: (9) P Marsay, M Teasdale, M Swainson; (11) May Johnston, N Greenwell. J Lynas, (12) Mary Stevens, E Tanfield, A Bailey; (13) A Baldock J Ridley Bulman and Dawson.

Boys; (5) A Anson, E Rowe, W Johnson; (6) J Swainson. J Rolands R Bulmer; (7) S Bonas, B Smith, K Stork; (8) B Dring, V Brown, T Peart; (9) L Heaviside, J Cross, R Waugh; (11) S Ripley, B Jones, K Robson; (12) I Wilson. B Sanders, D Hodgson; (13) Atkinson. D Readman, Stapleton.

Ex-Service men: 100 yds.: E Edwards. K Griffiths, J Garbutt. 220 yds.: L Wilson, S Wilson, J Garbutt.

Civilians: 100 yds.: R Thomas. A Thomas. S Johnson. 440 yds.: Dick Bulman, S Johnson, J Johnson. 220 yds.: I Hall. D Alexander, S Johnson; Mile walk: I Hall. S Wilson, T Cumbor.

Open: 100 yds.: E Edwards, J Garbutt, A Spence; Long jump: A Rowlands, S Wilson, D Thomas. 220 yds.: E Edwards, D Alexander, K Griffiths; High jump: D Thomas, I Hall, J Morton; 440 yds. S Wilson, A Thomas, Hood; Pillow fight: A Rowlands, Hullah, I Hall.

Whist winners- Ladies Mrs Ward, Mrs Russel, Mrs H Shaw, Mrs A Davies; Gentlemen: Mr S Porritt. Mrs T Kirhy Mr S Hugill, Mrs Dawson. Lowest scores: Mrs Church and N Douglas

20 June 1946

GREAT AYTON

Following heavy rains during the week-end, over one hundred trout have been observed dead in the River Leven at Great Ayton. The local bailiff, to whom the incident was reported took nearly fifty trout from the stream, some of which measured up to eighteen inches in length. The Tees Fishery Board were notified, and a visit has been paid to the locality by Supt. Jackson, who, after an examination of the dead fish, expressed the opinion they had died from tar poisoning, caused by melted tar from the roadway having been washed into the stream.

5 February 1947

LICENCE FOR OLD COACHING HOUSE - CLEVELAND TONTINE TO RE-OPEN

Langbaugh West licensing magistrates granted an application at Stokesley, on Wednesday, for a provisional licence for the Cleveland Tontine, an old mail coach posting house at the Tontine on the Thirsk main road, which has been acquired by Messrs J. W. Cameron and Co. of West Hartlepool for conversion into residential hotel with bar facilities. Mr. Berry of Thirsk appeared for the owners, and the application was supported by Mr. Cowan, proprietor of a riding school; Mr. Hutchinson, a farmer. Mr. Edwin Lawson, a Newcastle architect, and Mr. Griffiths, establishment officer of the I.C.I. Wilton Project.

Mr. Lawson said that although modern amenities would be introduced, the historic character of the building would be maintained. Mr. Griffiths said that the I.C.I. had had difficulty in obtaining hotel accommodation for visiting chemists and engineers. It was anticipated that within the next ten years a staff of from 1,000 to 2,000 with 15,000 workmen, would be employed at Wilton.

Mr. R. M. Beckwith, opposing, for the occupiers of the Blue Bell. King's Head and Wagon and Horses inns, argued that their trade was insufficient to provide a livelihood without some form of subsidiary occupation and that the establishment of the proposed hotel would destroy their trade.

The Chairman (Sir Bedford Dorman said that the Bench felt there was a need for the hotel.

Supt. Shepherd reported that no proceedings had been taken against any licensed holder. Seven males had been convicted for drunkenness, against three in 1945. One person being a resident and the others non-residents.

12 April 1947

FLOODING AT GREAT AYTON - STREAM FLOWS THROUGH MAIN STREET

Clay and sandbag barricades were erected in front of several houses at Great Ayton on Tuesday as a protection against water, which poured down the main street. A heavy volume of water poured down the station road, causing several yards of a wall at Neatstead Farm to collapse. A stream which flows through the grounds of Cleveland Lodge, the residence of Sir John Fry, overflowed at the junction of the High Street and Station-road. This, in turn, swept past the old schoolroom of Captain Cook, which was inundated. The water then poured on to the Whitbread memorial bridge and cascaded into the Leven.

The road near Ardencaple Nunthorpe was submerged. Telegraph poles were leaning at precarious angles and telephone cables torn down. As a result of the breaking of the cables, one of which became entangled in the wheels of a bus, telephonic services were disorganised.

The flooding at Great Ayton subsided rapidly.

7 June 1947

"GOOD OLD DAYS" AT STOKESLEY

Memories of Old-Time Personalities by Tom Kirby

Stokesley, once the metropolis of Cleveland, and an important centre for markets and fairs, has known many interesting characters and personalities who possessed a shrewd intelligence and a store of legend.

The pot hawkers or "potters" --so called from the fact that many of them hawked earthenware--were in distant days located "behind the beck." They did an extensive trade, attending all the fairs and markets and sales throughout a wide area. With their long coats, Belcher neckwear, silver rings and long whips, they are familiar figures at North country fairs which still cling tenaciously to life. Daffodils and mushrooms in their respective seasons provide them with a source of revenue. Among the old-established families were the Swales's. Stephenson's. Adams's and Wilsons.

One of my earliest recollections of this "little world apart" is that of Dicky Stephenson. A kindly old man, Dicky was a hawker of brushes, which he transported in a smart trap drawn by an equally smart pony. By his perambulations into the outlying villages and the dales of Cleveland, Dicky amassed a comfortable competence.

Old Frank Grainge, who died a few years ago and whose widow still lives in Stokesley, as do many of his family, was one of the last of the old horse dealers. He was a typical Borrovian character. To the last his interest was centred on horses and horse equipages. Sometimes he drove what he termed a "tit" in one of the living wagons which, in a more picturesque age, were familial-objects on the road and in places where those of a nomadic disposition foregathered.

CHARACTERISTIC COSTUME

Sometimes his conveyance was a flat cart and at other times a phaeton, which he had picked up at a country house sale. He never changed the characteristic costume which stamped him as one of the old school of horse-dealers. Frank Grainge was respected as a keen businessman, who was not slow to clinch a bargain, and one whose word was his bond. John Richmond, from his trade, was invariably known as "Tinker" Richmond. Reserved, almost to a point of taciturnity, Richmond had no use for idle gossip. It is still told of him in Stokesley that a talkative townsman once said to him, "My word, Master, it's grand in the country. I should think people don't often die out here, do they?" Receiving no response, the "towny" again asked, "People don't often die here, do they?" "Nay," replied Richmond, quietly, "seeam as connywhere else, nobbut yance."

The tall, angular John Sanderson and his wife made and sold large quantities of meat pies. John with his basket of pies was a familiar figure at local auction marts and farm sales. Saturday night saw his cottage home (down a "snicket") packed with eaters of pies and peas.

Bob Fiddler was another quaint Stokesley character. On one of the frequent occasions when the Leven overflowed its banks, Fiddler rowed himself around Stokesley in a scalding tub.

Old Marky Lawson, who never varied his headgear, a battered bowler hat. combined the business of town crier with that of keeping the streets clean and tidy. As he swept the streets he whistled blithely, if not very tunefully. His daughter was known throughout the villages and dales as a wassail cup singer.

30 August 1947

SOLDIERS TO ATTEND COUNCIL MEETINGS - GREAT AYTON DECIDES TO ADMIT SIX

Mr. W. W. Sills presided over the monthly meeting of Great Ayton Parish Council on Tuesday night. A letter of protest against the recent action of the Council in terminating the tenancy of an allotment-holder was read, but after hearing the evidence of the allotment-managers as to the unsatisfactory condition of the plot, and the complaints which had been received from neighbouring tenants over a long period of years, the Council unanimously declined to renew the tenancy.

The Commanding Officer of the Great Ayton camp sought permission for N.C.O.s and men to attend a meeting of the Council in connection with the educational scheme of the camp. Councillor T. F. Cumber observed that as permission had already been given to German prisoners-of-war to attend the meetings, he would wholeheartedly support the application.

It was decided to extend the privilege to six men.

Councillor Miss Annie Wilson: And when they do come, do let us show dignity and address the chair, and let us have none of the Mutt and Jeff business.

Miss Wilson raised the question of the provision of notice boards warning visitors against the risk of climbing the rock face of Roseberry Topping, and it was decided to make representation to the appropriate authority for the erection of the boards. Miss Wilson also protested against the removal of a stile, and the wiring up of gate on a public footpath near Roseberry Topping, and the Clerk was asked to deal with the protest.

It was decided to communicate with the Vicar regarding his proposals for the addition of a memorial plate to the existing war memorial perpetuating the names of the men from the parish who fell in the Second World War.

20 December 1947

GREAT AYTON LOSES OLDEST MAN - TEACHER'S SON WHO HAD NO SCHOOLING

A man whose father was a school master but who himself never had a day's schooling has died at Great Ayton: He was Mr. Christopher Dawson, the oldest man in the village.

Mr. Dawson, who was 90 was born at Yafforth, near Northallerton where his father was the schoolmaster. At seven years of age he began tending cattle and geese by the roadsides for a few coppers a day. At 11 he was driving a plough. In early life he came to the Great Ayton locality and entered the employment of the Emmerson family on their Easbv estate. Later he became foreman to Mr Ralph Dixon, a former head-master of the Friends' School Who farmed what is now known as School farm, bu¹, in those days was the Friends' Agricultural School.

For over 60 years Mr. Dowson was a local preacher, and had preached in almost every village in the Stokeslev Methodist Circuit, and in many other churches. He leaves a son, his wife, and only daughter having pre-deceased him. The funeral service was concluded at the Rose Hill Methodist Church Great Ayton by the Rev. R Hailwood B.D

12 June 1948

GREAT AYTON - New 'Phone Kiosks

As a result of Parish Council representations, additional telephone kiosks have been erected at Great Ayton, near the Buck Hotel, at the western end of the village, and near the Women's Institute hall, at the northern end.

6 December 1947

SEQUEL TO CIRCUS MISHAP - RIDER'S CLAIM FOR DAMAGES FAILS

As briefly reported in last week's "World's Fair," judgment for the defendant was given by Mr. Justice Hilbery in the King's Bench Division in an action for damages for personal injuries brought by Mrs. Maisie V. Crabtree, a circus rider known professionally as Maisie Wrigley, against Herbert Reco (Wroe), the proprietor of Reco Brothers' Circus. Mr. Reco's advocate was Mr. Reece Davis. "while Mr. Edmund Rowson, K.C. appeared for the plaintiff. The latter, who was in the witness box for several hours, alleged she was engaged as a solo rider by Mr. Reco. In April of 1946, while the circus was at Northampton. Reco without any warning, or previous rehearsal jumped on to the back of her horse. This caused her to fall off and as a result, of the mishap she broke her right leg, above the ankle. This accident had had the effect of incapacitating" her as a circus rider, and it was for this she claimed damages.

The witnesses: who corroborated the evidence of Mrs. Crabtree were Mr. Stephenson, who trained her as a rider: Edward Orrey, a clown, and Peter Courtenay (both former employees of the Reco Circus), and Florence Yelding, a trapeze artiste. Under cross examination by Mr. Reece Davis, Mrs. Crabtree strongly denied that while the circus was at Stokesley, North Yorkshire, some days previous to the accident, Alva Reco, the young daughter of the defendant, or Mr. Reco had ridden with her on that occasion.

"PART OF THE ACT"

The defendant, in evidence, told Mr. Justice Hilbery that, during the, winter months preceding the accident, there had been considerable discussion during which Mrs. Crabtree had agreed to Alva riding with her, and to some comedy riding with himself being introduced into the act. He contended that his mounting of the horse was a part of the act, and he denied negligence.

An independent witness, Mr. Tom Kirby, Great Ayton, was called by "Mr. Reco. Mr. Kirby said he 'was a correspondent of "The World's Fair" and he identified a cutting from the paper of a descriptive story of the visit of the circus to Stokesley in 1916, which he had written. On that occasion Alva Reco rode with "Miss Parry" (as plaintiff then appeared on the programme) as did also the defendant. Comment was made in the story of this being the first public appearance of Alva Reco in the ring as a rider.

7 February 1948

Great Ayton Old Fashioned Dances

An interesting innovation for which the Village is indebted to Mr. Harold Ward, and his daughter, Mrs. E. T. Harbottle, has been made at Great Ayton. On Monday night, in the Ambulance Headquarters, the inauguration took place of an old-fashioned dance circle. The enterprise, which has met, with much appreciation, is purely a social event organised for the benefit of learners and old-fashioned dance enthusiasts. It is being conducted on a non-profit making basis and any surplus funds which may accrue, are to be devoted to a social gathering or to an outing, as may be decided by the committee appointed.

26 June 1948

GREAT AYTON - Hare Comes To Town

The unusual spectacle of a hare perched on the windowsill of a Great Ayton house, was witnessed on a recent night. The hare, which had evidently come from the neighbouring fields and had become lost in the maze of houses, stayed about for some little time before making off.

12 March 1949

A Great Ayton postman, Mr. Maurice Stockdale, may become the first "Party labelled" representative of the village, on the local councils. Of the three candidates who are to be nominated by the local Socialist Party for the local government elections. Mr. Stockdale is the only "home product."

The older son of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Stockdale he became, on leaving school, telegraph messenger at Great Ayton sub-post office. At the age of 19 he was appointed a postman at Stockton. After three years' service he was transferred to Middlesbrough. A year later he returned to succeed the late Mr. J Smith, at Great Ayton office, where he is senior postman.

During the war he served with the Coldstream Guards as a driver of Churchill tanks in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany. His hobby is gardening, and he is a member of Great. Ayton Allotment Holders' Association. He is also keenly interested in the breeding and flying of racing pigeons. Mr. Stockdale is a keen and enthusiastic Legionnaire, and in that connection he serves on the committee of the Great Ayton British Legion.

24 July 1948

Airman's Decoration

Mr. Dennis Blake, only son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Blake, Race-terrace. Great Ayton, has received the D.F.C. A letter from Buckingham Palace, signed by the King, accompanying the decoration, reads: "I greatly regret that I am unable to give you personally the award which you have so well earned. I am now sending it to you with best wishes for future happiness" The recipient of the decoration joined the R.A.F. in 1942 and he was promoted flight-lieutenant in 1945. He took part in several operations over Germany. The decoration was won in connection with an aerial offensive against Stuttgart in March 1944.

14 October 1949

Great Ayton's hawthorn bush goes

Repairs to Romany and Monkabecque-roads, Great Ayton, for a long time a contentious subject, have begun, for years the deplorable condition of these thoroughfares has been argued upon at ratepayers meeting. The residents in these localities will welcome the abatement of their long-standing grievance, but it is unlikely that property owners, who will have to bear much of the cost, in respect, of their respective frontages, will view the matter with the same satisfaction and equanimity. However diverse the opinions of tenant and landlord may be, they will share a genuine regret at the uprooting of a familiar object, which the repairs have necessitated. A hawthorn bush, a reminder of the days when Romany-road was a field, has borne a wealth of delightful pink blossom each year. The veneration in which the bush as held led the parish council rigorously to withhold their consent for its removal some years ago. Now the bush will no longer add a splash of colour to the road, nor make its aesthetic appeal.

18 February 1950

Street labels

Great Ayton is undergoing the process of "Labelling." In several parts of the village, neat white, plates with black lettering indicating the various localities have been affixed to dwelling houses and business premises. The completion of the task will, to a great extent. eliminate the necessity of strangers inquiring the whereabouts of roads and streets away from High-street, the latter of which has been included in the scheme. For instance, the confusion of Linden-road -with Linden-terrace or Linden-avenue will be made less acute. Doubtless the numbering of houses will follow in the near future as a sequence to the ticketing of the village. Middlesbrough would do well to follow the street names example.

21 July 1951

CHRISTENED BY HIS GREAT GRANDFATHER

At Great Ayton, Mr. Ted Johnson, a 93 year old Methodist local preacher, christened his 16th great-grandchild at Rose Hill Methodists Church, Great Ayton, on Sunday. The child, who received the names of Ian Arthur, is the younger son of Mr and Mrs Clive Johnson, of Great Ayton. Mr Johnson has been in turn quarryman, miner, shopkeeper, bus proprietor, coal merchant, and haulage contractor. He has also been a Sunday School superintendent, a chorister, and a member of Great Ayton Parish Council, Stokesley Rural Council, and North Riding County Council.

5 September 1951

The sign that will proclaim Great Ayton's "Royal Oak."

800 PUBS REMEMBER CHARLES II

To celebrate the 300th anniversary of Charles II's escape from the Roundheads when he hid in the "Royal Oak" at Boscobel, owners and licencees of nearly 800 inns and public houses which have the Royal oak for their sign will make a combined effort tomorrow. Tenants of the houses have been invited to decorate their premises with "ale garlands" of oak leaves, flowers and barley. In addition to the garlands, many of the pubs are having new signs painted, or the existing signs renovated for the occasion. Among them is the Royal Oak at Great Ayton, of which Major R. B. Kirkup is the licensee over a long period of years.

For many years, the house has been without a sign, though it has been able to boast of a well-preserved sun dial. The sign for Great Ayton's loyally named house is to bear a picture of the head of the "Merry Monarch." encircled by a wreath of oak apples and leaves, surmounted by the Crown. The designer of the new sign is Mr Edward Reed, managing director of the owners, the Newcastle Breweries. Sir John Pease Fry is to perform the unveiling ceremony.

It was hoped by Major Kirkup that extensive structural alterations and improvements to the "Royal Oak" (which includes a room known as the Captain Cook room) would have been completed to synchronise with the celebration.

29 December 1952

AYTON DOCTOR RETIRES - GIFT FROM DISTRICT FOR DR. R. MURRAY

SERVED 48 YEARS

After nearly 50 years of service to Great Ayton and District, Dr. Robert Murray has retired, and at a ceremony in the Parochial Hall, Mr. Roy Bradley, chairman of the Parish Council presented to Dr. Murray a cheque, the result of a testimonial fund organised by the Parish Council. Dr. Murray, a Scotsman, came to Great Ayton as assistant to a fellow countryman, the late Dr. Charles Stuart, and at the presentation ceremony the W.I. choir sang Scottish airs in his honour.

On the platform were members of the Parish Council, and the Clerk. Dr. and Mrs. J. T. Waldie, Mr. Harold Walker (Middlesbrough), the Vicar. (Rev. R. E. Bradshaw), the Rector of Kildale (Rev. F. J. Shreeve). and 94-year-old Mr. Edwin Johnson, a former parish councillor.

Mr. Bradley said people of Great Ayton and the outlying districts had been most eager to subscribe to the fund. It had been hoped to give Dr. Murray a piece of antique furniture, but this had been impossible. He was sure Dr. Murray would look upon the gift as a tribute of respect and real appreciation of his services. Speaking of Dr. Murray's life of service, the Vicar said he taken into the homes of the sick not only his skill but his friendship. They were a little sad at parting from Dr. Murray in a professional capacity, but they could rejoice at the thought; that he was to remain among them. Tributes were also paid by Dr. Waldie, Mr. Walker, the Rev. F. J. Shreeve, and Mr. Johnson.

9 August 1952

GREAT AYTON TENNIS COURTS OPENED - BREWERY SPONSORS VENTURE

At Great Ayton on Saturday afternoon the 3 new hard tennis courts recently acquired by the local club were opened. Mr S Keen, the president of the club, introduced Mr McFarlane, a director of Messrs. J Nimmo and Sons, of the Castle Eden Brewery, the sponsors of the courts, which were accepted on behalf of the club by Sir Joseph Fry. Addressing a large gathering of players and spectators, Mr McFarlane expressed pleasure his firm had in providing the courts and he wished the project's success. Sir John Fry said while he is sorry to lose the club from his courts he was pleased to think it was progressing. Mrs Booth, wife of another director of the Brewery, performed the opening ceremony. An American tournament resulted in a win for Mr R Close and Miss Johnson, both of Stokesley, Mr E Little, the captain of the Great Ayton club, and Mrs Metz (Middlesbrough) being the runners-up. On behalf of the club Mrs Keen presented the winners with silver tankards.

17 August 1953

200 HOUSES SCHEME AT GREAT AYTON - PARISH COUNCIL SEES LAY-OUT PLAN

A layout providing for over 200 houses with spaces for a cinema and lock-up garages on the old hostel site at Great Ayton, forwarded by the Stokesley Rural Council, was before Great Ayton Parish Council on Tuesday night. Mr. A. K. Cumbor commented that the site would not be developed in their lifetime, but the Chairman (Mr. W. W. Sills) did not agree, pointing out that a great many houses had been built in the village in a very short time. The Parish Council approved the plan and another for the improvement to the surround of the Captain Cook memorial, obelisk submitted by the Middlesbrough Corporation, the owners of the site.

Following a complaint reported by Mr. Wilson it was agreed to approach the proprietors of houses about the danger caused by water left on the road in frosty weather after the houses had been washed down in the Race Terrace vicinity.

There were also complaints of delay in gritting roads and of the dangerous condition of stiles on the Little Ayton — Easby field path.

8 August 1953

DRUNK WITH CAR AT HUTTON RUDBY - PARKED, SLEPT NEAR CONSTABLE'S HOUSE.

A solicitor's clerk who parked his car broadside across the road near a policeman's house at Hutton Rudby, and went to sleep with one leg protruding from the open door of the car, was before Stokesley magistrates on Wednesday, charged with being under the influence of drink while in charge of a car. He was Peler Creagh (25). of Limetree Avenue. Gainsborough Lincs., and he pleaded not guilty, he was defended by Mr. Norman Harper.

P.C. Burn, Hutton Rudby, said the car had all its lights on when it was parked near his house, and Creagh, slumped in the driver's seat, was fast asleep. He was taken to Stokesley Police Station, and was seen by the police surgeon but he refused to be examined until his solicitor and doctor arrived at 12.45am. He also refused a blood test. Dr. McGill police surgeon, said at the time he examined him Creagh passed all the tests satisfactorily, and in his opinion Creagh was not in an unfit state to drive a car. Dr. Pedlow of Middlesbrough collaborated.

Creagh was fined £20, and ordered to pay £2 3s 6d costs, and £3 3s advocates fee, and his licence was suspended for a year.

4 December 1954

GREAT AYTON BOY A U.S. FOOTBALLER

A Rugby enthusiast in this country, Henry Alan Kitching, eldest of the five sons of Mr. and Mrs. Noel Kitching, The Grange. Great Ayton, who is an exchange student under English Speaking Union auspices at Peddie School, Hightstown, New Jersey, has quickly adapted himself to the American form of football but prefers the rugby shirt and shorts to the heavy armour of the American players.



Alan began his education at the Alan Kitching Grange Preparatory School, Great Ayton, and was afterwards at Cressbrook School. Kirby Lonsdale and Leighton Park School. Reading, before going to New Jersey. When he entered upon his new surroundings, Americans expected he would turn out to be "just another Rugby player who never get the feel of football." And Monchiel Strauss. "New York Times" sports commentator, wrote :

This belief received support when Kitching appeared for foot-hall practice in a rugby shirt and shorts. Micky Shuman. Peddie's coach, was slightly baffled. He took one look at the English boy and

told him to report to the junior varsity.

THE BIG KICK

Then things began to happen. The next afternoon Shuman decided to look, over Kitching's kicking strength. He asked Bob Palm, a 225 - pounder from Matawan, New Jersey, to boot a ball from the tee. "I had concluded that Palm would just do fine. He is a big boy and can get plenty of distance". Shuman confided. "But then this Kitching boy appears from out of nowhere. He's still wearing the same shirt and shorts, which by themselves are enough to make me blink."

"I'd like a go at that. I used to do some kicking off for my Rugby team back home." said Kitching. Kitching took a quick look at the ball, another at the end zone and then moved up on the football" The ball went soaring into the air and landed near the goalpost on the fly.

The "New York Times" commentary continued:

In the early work outs Shuman tested Kitching as a point-after-touchdown prospect. The English lad responded in a remarkable style. As a result, the first time Peddle scored a touchdown. Kitching was called upon. He booted the ball over the bar with ease.

IN THE FIRST STRING

Kilching improved in other departments and was promoted to first-string defensive end. In a game with Laurenceville, which Peddle had not beaten for four years. Kitching turned an almost certain defeat into a 14-7 victory, and on the following Saturday he was a big help in Peddle's 13-7 victory against the Hill School. Said the "New York Times":

Kitching's experiences have not been without complications. One of the first difficulties arose when the school's supply room was unable to find a pair of shoes large enough to fit him. The rugby-minded Kitching had the answer. He announced he would wear the footwear he used for rugby. In addition some of the football language was Greek to Kitching at the start. But now by his own admission, he's "hep."

Apart from his ability, Kitching had added considerable spark to the squad. He always is the first player down field even though he is the kick off man. He is a stalwart on defence, but still has to master some of the finer points of tackling. His coaches say that in another year, he could become a star.

Despite Kitching's size, Peddle's coaches have not allowed themselves to do too much dreaming about next season. Kitching is due to return home in July and the chances are he will go back to the sports he knows best- Rugby and cricket. Alan's affection for cricket is inherent. His grandfather, the late Mr. Henry Kitching. J.P. organised, and his father. Mr. Noel Kitching. J.P.. organises throughout the season country house matches on the beautiful ground of Great Ayton Grange.

26 December 1953

GREAT AYTON NURSE HONOURED – GRATITUDE FOR 28 YEARS OF SERVICE

After 28 years of devoted service in Great Ayton. Nurse Norton has retired from the position of District Nurse. Dr. Murray, who presided at a presentation to her was supported by Dr. and Mrs. Waldie, Miss B. M. Kitching and Mrs. Steel. Dr Murray said of Nurse Norton, that she not only loved her profession, but loved her fellow creatures. In making the presentation, the Vicar (Rev. R. K. Bradshaw) said he would let them into a secret: since her student days. Nurse Norton had been the holder of a gold medal. Never was a decoration more deserved, or worn with such dignity. Miss Kitching also spoke, in addition to the gift of a cheque, Nurse Norton, who was received with musical honours, was presented with a bouquet. She expressed her thanks, not only for the gift, but also for the kindness and friendship she had enjoyed.

8th January 1955

LIGHTS ON CHRISTMAS TREE - Great Ayton Council Faces a Problem

Great Aston Parish Council, meeting on Tuesday, spent some time in discussing whether a possible Christmas tree on High Green at the next festive season should be illuminated. The illumination on the present occasion had to be left, over because of lack of time, and Miss Anne Wilson now reported that she had ascertained that the cost of buying the bulbs for the tree in Victoria Park, Middlesbrough, was very considerable. Special bulbs to withstand the weather had to be used and these were expensive.

The Clerk (Mr W.H. Martin) said that Mr Fletcher would give a tree, and the Friends' School management committee had consented to the wiring being connected to their supply. Mr. M. C. Stockdale, the promoter of the project, said that a local electrician had under taken to supply the bulbs at a cost of approximately £11 and to do the wiring free of charge to the council.

The scheme was strongly opposed by Mr. A. K. Cumbor who said the Parish Council was only a small body, who did a lot of work. The Christmas tree innovation would add not only to then liabilities but also to those of future councils.

There were more important thing to be done than having a Christmas tree. The matter was again deferred for consideration of ways and means of raising funds for the purchase of bulbs.

Mr. Cumbor reported that in the event of the council being agreeable to provide the material for the fixing of the Coronation commemorative seats, Mr. J. Pearson, a local contractor, had offered to do a lot of the work free. It was agreed to accept the offer of Mr Pearson and to thank him for his gesture.

19 March 1955

SIR JOHN FRY'S ELECTION MEMENTO

In our correspondence columns last week reference was made to Sir John Pease Fry contesting the Eccles Division of Lancashire in 1900. Sir John has an interesting souvenir of this election in the form of a cartoon which hangs on his study wall at Cleveland Lodge, Great Ayton. The cartoon depicts the head of the Liberal candidate, bobbing about in a frying pan The caption reads "Mr. Octavius Leigh Clare (the successful Conservative candidate) making John Pease Fry, 1900."

7 May 1955

FARMER'S GIFT TO GREAT AYTON - Mr, R. Alcock Opens Waterfall Close

Great Ayton Parish Council, which for several years has tried to buy a piece of land known as Waterfall Close in the centre of the village, has had it given to item by Mr. Robert Alcock, of Old Batterby, who with his wife will live in the village. He has retired from farming, and has acquired property in Great Ayton.

The official opening of the site before parish councillors and villagers, was performed on Tuesday by Mr. Alcock who severed the tape which stretched across the close. Following the ceremony, Mr. and Mrs. Alcock were guests at a dinner at the Royal Oak.

The four inscribed oak coronation seats on the land were bought by a grant made by the Coronation Celebration Committee, who have given £37 for improving and maintaining the site. As money becomes available, it is hoped to replace felled trees on the site by bushes.

Mr. Wilfred Johnson (chairman of the Parish Council) said that they had gathered to accept officially, "this attractive and pleasant gift from Mr. Alcock for the use and enjoyment of the villagers and visitors."

GOOD CITIZEN

For several years, he said, the Parish Council had tried to buy the land, but the price had been too high. He thanked Mr. Alcock and also Mr. T. F. Cumbor, Mr. J. Pearson, Mr. E. Watson, and Mr Grayson for their work on the site and the Coronation Committee. Mr. W. W. Sills said it was only recently that Mr. Alcock had decided to retire from farming and live in Great Ayton where he had bought property. His magnificent gift proved that he was as good a citizen as he had been a farmer. Later, he said. a tablet would be affixed to one of the posts on the site recording Mr. Alcock's generosity. At Mr. Johnson's invitation. Mr. Allcock then severed the tape, and after replying to the speakers, said he and his wife were looking forward to making their home in Great Ayton.

22 October 1955

NEW CLUB PREMISES AT GREAT AYTON - Reminder by Union Chief

The new working-men's club erected in Cleveland Street. Great Ayton, was officially opened on Saturday evening by Mr. J. Evans, of Middlesbrough, president of the Club and Institute Union. In addition to the usual club amenities, a concert-room, with two dressing-rooms, has been included in the scheme. This room is intended also to provide accommodation for the wives and women friends of the members. The building, which is of pre-cast concrete, has beer, erected by Messrs. Tarslag. Ltd., Stockton. to the plans designed by their architect. Mr. R. A. Collie.

The president of the club, Mr Leo Addison, who was accompanied by Mr. H. E. Heaviside, secretary, and several members, said that the opening of the new premises was a red letter day in the history of the club. The club, he said,

had experienced some difficult times, especially in the 'thirties, and but for the loyalty and support of the members it would have had a struggle to exist.

In declaring the club open, Mr. Evans stressed the importance of clubs keeping pace with the improvements which were being made to their licensed premises by brewery companies. "You have got to cater for the best interest of your members." continued Mr. Evans, he described the Great Ayton club as being one of the best little clubs in Cleveland, one of which the members could be proud.

25 February 1956

PUT CAPT COOK'S COTTAGE ON RAIL

Mr Arol Howe, stationmaster at Great Ayton for the past 20 years, who has retired after 49 years' railway service, was responsible for the consignment in 1934 of Captain Cook's cottage (after it had been taken down brick by brick) from Great Ayton to Sidney, Australia where it has been rebuilt in a public park. Born at Evenwood, Mr Howe started his clerical career with N.E.R. Co in the mineral department at Evenwood station. In early life he earned a local reputation as a footballer and track runner. His chief pastimes nowadays are billiards and snooker which he plays at Great Ayton Unionist Club. During the First World War he was wounded in France while serving with the Royal Naval Division Mr. and Mrs. Howe are to live at Battersby.

4 August 1956

SCHOOL'S LAST "OPEN DAY" Great Ayton Grange to Close

There was a cloud over last week's Open day at Great Ayton Grange Preparatory school, for the celebration was the last, as the school is being closed down. A large number of parents and old scholars, visited the present scholars in their classrooms, and showed great interest in the exhibition of handiwork and art.

The headmistress, Mrs. Stapleton, reported a successful year during which the whole of entrance examinations had been passed. The scholastic achievements of the past were recalled by Mrs. Stapleton, who said that "although the ship was sinking, it would go down with flying colours."

A tribute to the part the school had played in the district and to the inspiring personality of Mrs. Stapleton was paid by Mrs. M. R. Steel. As a mark of appreciation of "her service", Mrs. Stapleton was presented by Mrs. Steel, with a testimonial subscribed to by the parents of past and present scholars.

25 February 1956

GT. AYTON CRITICISM OF ROADMAKING - Another Complaint to Rural Council

The conditions in the Hawthorns area, where road making operations on the Stokesley Rural Council's site are in progress, came in for more criticism at Tuesday night's meeting of Great Ayton Parish Council. Miss Wilson told the council, that she and her colleagues on the Stokesley R.D.C. had spared no effort to bring about an improvement. Miss Wilson expressed her sympathy with the occupants of the houses.

On the morning following the last meeting of the Great Ayton Parish Council, she had, in the company of Mr. Burney and Mr. Wynne Potts, visited the site. Owing to the snow they had been unable to see the worst aspects. Since then she had paid frequent visits to the locality, and she agreed that the conditions were Very bad indeed. Miss Wilson said she did not like to criticise any official, and if the construction of the roads had not been proceeded with before the credit squeeze, which placed an embargo on road construction, the occupants of the houses in Hawthorns would probably have had to wait another six months before they got a road.

"I know that is poor consolation for the people who have to contend with the sticky mess. It is a rotten job, but it is like the whole housing scheme. In Middlesbrough a village is being made in a town: in Great Ayton a town is being made in a village."

DEFENDING OFFICIAL

Mr. W. Cardwell : I am satisfied that the Great Ayton representatives on the Stokesley Council. are doing all they can. But I think that Miss Wilson is spending too much time defending the official responsible, and surely someone *is* responsible. He ought to be prosecuted for sending in bulldozers and making the mess that has been made.

Miss Wilson said she had told Mr. Burney, who was making regular visits to supervise the work, what had been said by one councillor at the previous meeting, and he had replied that he did not know what he was talking about.

Mr. Cardwell: He meant me?

Miss Wilson: Yes.

Mr. Cardwell retorted: "He does not know where I live, he has never met me, he does not know me, and yet I do not know what I am talking about."

Mr. Maurice Stockdale said that a temporal cinder road would have eased the situation. If Mr Burney did not know how to make one, he was prepared to make one for him. Mr. Cardwell said that such roads were made in works.

Miss Wilson: Yes, but in work you are playing with works money. Here you are playing with public money.

12 September 1956

MEDAL IN SOIL - Great Ayton family recovers 1891 keepsake

A Great Ayton family has recovered a keepsake in remarkable circumstances. Mrs. Codling, aged 85, who was buried last week, was the widow of Mr. John Codling. Before farming on his own account at Low Fields, Seamer, near Stokesley, Mr. Codling was in partnership with his father at Lackenby Hall Farm, Redcar. There were bred many Cleveland Bays and hunters. Among the latter was Bonny Girl, the winner of a silver medal at the London show in 1891.

Recently, while road-making was in progress at Great Ayton, the excavated soil was taken to a local farm. When it was being levelled the medal came to light. The finder showed, it in the Unionist Club, in which Mr. Codling's youngest son happened to be. Though much tarnished, the inscription, which included the names of his father and grandfather, was still decipherable, and the medal was handed over to Mr. Codling. It is believed that Mr. Codling senior, who died 22 years ago, lost the medal from his pocket and it has remained buried ever since.

7 July 1956

Battersby Farmer's Keen Employee

"He was so eager to get back to his work that he took the tractor to go home to his tea," said Norman Charlton of High Farm, Old Battersby, at Stokesley court, on Wednesday, when a lad of 15 employed by him pleaded guilty to driving a tractor while under age and driving without third party insurance. The boy was fined £1 on each charge, and debarred from applying for a licence for a year. Charlton was fined £1 for aiding and abetting the first offence and £3 for aiding and abetting the insurance offence.

14 September 1957

Stokesley Move Against Nomads

Nomadic van dwellers have long been a source of embarrassment and annoyance to the police and Stokesley Parish Council, by camping on waste land outside the town. Proceedings were Instituted at the Stokesley Police Court on Wednesday, when three offenders, none of whom attended, were fined. Two other offenders were on the list, but the police had not been able to serve the summonses. Fines of £2 were inflicted upon Sydney Smith (37), of 65, Station Road, Middlesbrough, and Mary Sheffield (39) of no fixed address. Andrew Winter,(26) of no fixed address, who had used a tent, but who had moved on when requested to do so, was fined £1.

25 May 1957

BIGGER CEMETERY PLANNED - Purchase Approved at Great Ayton

Apart from six of the seven members, the Clerk (Mr. W. H. Martin), and a reporter, only three ratepayers, all women, attended an extraordinary meeting of Great Ayton Parish Council on Thursday night. Mr. W. W. Sills (who has been elected chairman for the ensuing year, with Miss Anne Wilson as vice-chairman) presided.

The meeting had been convened to secure the approval of the ratepayers to four resolutions emanating from the Parish Council. These included a proposal for the Parish Council, acting jointly with the Little Ayton Parish Meeting as the Burial Board, to raise a loan of £875, being Great Ayton's proportion of £900 required, to purchase two pieces of land, 2.705 acres in area for extension of the cemetery, sum will include purchase of the land, legal costs for conveyance, and the erection of boundary fences.

The other resolutions were that the loan and loan charges should be on the basis of a penny rate on the two parishes; that the loan should be spread over a period of 60 years, or such other period as may be varied by the Minister of Housing and Local Government; and that application should be made to the North Riding County Council for their approval of the loan. All the resolutions were unanimously approved.

"LIFE" OF 60 YEARS

The Chairman explained that space in the present cemetery would be available for only nine to ten years. Negotiations for other land had proved unsuccessful. When land on the C.D. Hostel site became available, the Burial Board became interested, and the negotiations for its purchase had proved successful. The land adjoined the present cemetery and would last for 60 to 70 years. If it had not been acquired, the Burial Board would have been involved in considerable expense in providing a new site. As a result of the generosity of the owners; Stokesley Rural Council, and Mr. Richardson, to both of whom the Burial Board were most grateful, the land had been bought at a very reasonable price.

AN "OVER-60" CLUB FORMED FOR GREAT AYTON

Great Ayton is to have an "Over 60" Club. The project was confirmed at a meeting held on Wednesday, convened by Mrs. Gutteridge, Her husband, Divisional Superintendent A. Gutteridge of Great Ayton, St John Ambulance Brigade, presided and said that In the event of a club being formed, the Ambulance Hall would be available for a weekly meeting.

Officials and committee were elected as follows: Chairman, Rev. E. Wilson; treasurer. Mrs. Swann; secretary, Mrs. A. Stevens; and Messrs. T. F. Cumbor. R. Readman, T. Husband, Mrs. Hugill, Miss Anne Wilson, and Mrs. J. Greenwell. An initial donation of five guineas to the club was made by the Social Committee of the St. John Ambulance Brigade. On the motion of Mr. T. F. Cumbor, a record is to be made that without the help and interest of Divisional Superintendent and Mrs. Gutteridge, the club would not have come into existence. The generosity of the Ambulance Brigade is also to be recorded.

MOTORCYCLES TOO NOISY AT GREAT AYTON

The annoyance caused to Great Ayton residents by noisy motorcycles led to the appearance of a 16-year-old 'youth, and his 17-year-old companion, before the Stokesley magistrate on Friday. Both youths lived at Little Ayton.

Prosecuting Sgt. H. Smith said the proceedings had been instituted because of the great disturbance caused to Great Ayton villagers by young men riding motorcycles and causing excessive noise. One of the youths had ignored previous warning from the police.

He pleaded guilty to riding a motor-cycle in such a manner as to cause excessive noise, and to failing to display L plates while being the holder of a provisional licence. He was fined £1 on the first charge and £2 on the second. The other defendant, Gordon Bell, Rose Cottage, who pleaded guilty to aiding and abetting in the committal of the offences was fined £3.

20 December 1958

Radio Celebrities at Great Ayton

For the second time, Great Ayton has enjoyed the distinction of welcoming BBC celebrities. Less than two years ago Wilfred Pickles brought his "Have a Go, Joe," feature to the village. On Saturday last, Sandy McPherson, the popular organist, and Anne, of "the chapel in the valley" fame, visited Rose Hill Methodist Church.

Sandy gave two recitals on the organ and vocal items by Anne included that established favourite, The Holy City. The visit caught the public imagination, and on both occasions the church was crowded to capacity. The afternoon recital was presided over by the Mayor of Middlesbrough (Ald. E. A. Dickinson) who was accompanied by the Mayoress and their daughter. Sir William Crosthwaite, of Middlesbrough, presided in the evening. The visitors were welcomed by the Rev. Peter E. Coates.

13 June 1959

CLEVELAND MAN CELEBRATES HIS 101st BIRTHDAY

Now one of the oldest men in the county, Mr. Edwin (Ted) Johnson, Great Ayton was 101 years old on Monday. His birthday was celebrated at the Thornaby home of Mrs. Bradley, one of his two surviving daughters.

Mr. Johnson came to Great Ayton from the Esk Valley as a young man, and found employment in the important whinstone quarries, only one of which is now in operation.

Always before him, however, was the ambition to become something more than a quarryman. His first business venture was the vending of paraffin from a horsed vehicle throughout a district which knew neither electric light nor gas.

Mr. Johnson recalled an early enterprise in connection with Stokesley Show, over 70 years ago. On the eve of the show he stayed up until 3 am on show day making a truck and stall which he loaded with ham sandwiches, sweets and soft drinks. The sandwiches he sold at 2d each. The charge for erecting his stall for the day was 2s 6d. In order to sell out he remained at his stall until midnight, and then trundled his truck back to Great Ayton.

He became in turn a shopkeeper, coal merchant and haulage contractor. The latter businesses are still in the hands of his sons. He also started a motor bus service which plied between the rural areas of West Cleveland and Middlesbrough. This, however, he disposed of.

Becoming interested in local government, Mr. Johnson was elected to the Great Ayton Parish and Stokesley Rural District Councils. In a County Council election he surprised everyone, not excepting himself, by unseating the member, the late Major Robert Bell Turton, the Squire of Kildale.

An ardent Methodist, Mr. Johnson was, for more than half a century, a local preacher. In a pre-motor age he regularly walked to the villages in the outlying parts of the Stokesley circuit to fulfil his preaching appointments. He has held every office open to the layman, in the Rose Hill Methodist (formerly Primitive. Methodist) Church at Great Ayton.

For over half a century he has been one of the speakers at the old established religious camp meetings at Great Ayton and Newby, and where he may well be again this year. When over 90, Mr. Johnson became totally blind. Despite his great age he pluckily underwent an operation for the removal of cataract. To his intense joy, as he is a great reader, and a student of nature, he fully regained his eyesight.



10 April 1997

DISMAY AS SCHOOL CLOSES

An exclusive fee paying Quaker school has blamed dwindling pupil numbers for its decision to close with the loss of 50 jobs. Financial pressures has forced the trustees at Ayton School, formerly the Friends' School in Great Ayton, to announce the decision to close on August 31 ending 156 years of teaching in Cleveland and North Yorkshire. One of only eight Quaker schools in England, the sudden decision was revealed to parents, pupils and staff in a letter circulated by Robert Campbell, chairman of the trustees on Monday.

It explained that the school would be unable to continue following the loss of 37 of the school's 200 pupils after the summer's GCSE exams. With fees ranging from £855 to £1550 a term, the school claimed the drop in new intake couldn't support the future of the school. The school's 28 teachers and 22 staff will now lose their jobs and the school's listed building and 30 acre estate is to be put up for sale. Mr Campbell, whose three children and wife all attended the school, last night told *The Northern Echo*: "It's an extremely difficult and very distressing situation, my family have been associated with the school for around 40 years and of course there are regrets." Mr Campbell blamed financial pressures at the independently funded school for the closure decision, taken at a special meeting of the trustees on Sunday.

"If there was any chance of any security for the school's future we would have taken that chance," he said.

"We have a responsibility to do the best to keep the school open and provide the most amount of time possible to inform pupils and staff of developments. The professional educational staff at the school will be involved in assisting parents and children in finding alternatives and the school will run as normal as possible until the end of the term." Darlington Quaker Thomas Richardson chose Great Ayton, his mother's birthplace, for the school, which be launched as the North of England Agricultural School in 1841. He set it up as a boarding school for the children of Quakers whose parents had married outside the movement and the school grew to more than 250 pupils. (lessons at Ayton School began at 6am and balanced domestic chores for girls and farm work for boys. After 1945, the school expanded adding new classrooms, laboratories and a library and in recent years the school's handful of boarders have come to Cleveland from as far as Hong Kong.

Staff, pupils and parents will continue to receive counselling over the closure in the next few weeks.



■ The way we were: The girls' cookery class in 1903



■ Faces from history: The children of Ayton School in 1904

End of a long tradition: Ayton School, previously known as the Friends' School, will close on August 31 after 156 years of teaching. A drop in the school's pupil number is blamed for the decision which will cost 50 jobs.

By JOHN HOWE