Froyle

100 Years of Memories

Collected by Annette Booth

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Since they moved into the village of Froyle, in Hampshire, in 1971, Annette Booth and her husband, Chris, have been collecting photographs and information about the place they are proud to call ‚home™Over the past 29 years they have collected in the region of 500 photographs of Froyle.

In 1995 they set up the Froyle Archive, with the specific aim of not only collecting as much information as they could about Froyle, but also making that information available free of charge to anyone who might care to use it.

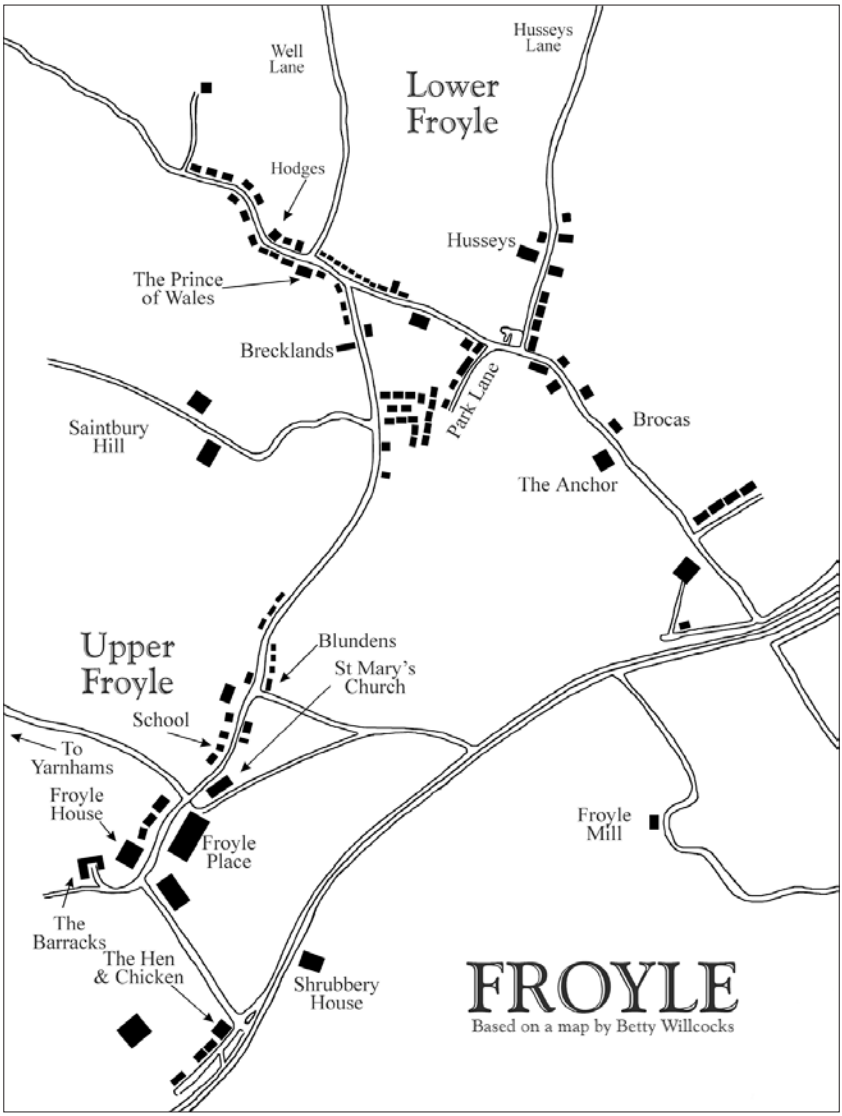
Today the Froyle Archive reaches far beyond Hampshire to the rest of the world with a 300 page web site, at www.froyle.demon.co.uk, whereby anyone with Internet access can trace their relatives and relive the history of this tiny Hampshire village.

This book contains some 225 photographs, as well as stories from the villagers of Froyle themselves; some from memories put down on paper several years ago, others told over a cup of tea only yesterday.

£9.99

Froyle

100 Years of Memories


Well Lane
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The Prince of Wales
Brecklands
Park Lane
Brocas
Saintbury Hill
The Anchor
Upper Froyle
Blundens
St Mary's Church
School
To Yarnhams
Froyle House
Froyle Place
Froyle Mill
The Barracks
The Hen & Chicken
Shrubbery House
FROYLE
Based on a map by Betty Willcocks

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The Froyle Archive
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Contents

Compiled by Annette Booth
for Froyle Millennium 2000

This book is dedicated
to all the people of Froyle
past, present and future

I would like to thank my husband, Chris
without whose expertise and guidance
I could not have even contemplated this project

Foreword

Those of us fortunate enough to have lived in the 20th, and now the 21st, centuries will have found this a time for looking towards the future and contemplation of the past.

We in Froyle, in common with so many others, have endeavoured to mark the Millennium in a variety of ways. This book by Annette Booth MBE is an apt and enjoyable reminder of the last 100 years.

Annette's past career as a journalist, her previous books on Village Life in Hampshire, Alton, Farnham, and Haslemere, all in old picture postcards, coupled with her role, along with her husband, as joint custodians of the Froyle Archives, gives her insight and knowledge to make this book important to those interested in rural life throughout the past century.

The research has been wide ranging, as will become obvious to the readers of this fascinating and evocative book.

I commend it to anyone interested in history, life in the country, or Froyle.

Anne Wetherall,
Chairman, Froyle Millennium Committee

Introduction

In 1908, in a book entitled 'Highways and Byways in Hampshire', D.H.Moutray Read wrote, "Though Froyle is old, it lacks all recorded history."

Just fourteen years later a new Headteacher arrived at the Village School and started collecting snippets of information about this tiny Hampshire village. That man was Tom Knight and he started something which, like Topsy, just grew and grew, until today Froyle is one of the best documented villages in the county.

Tom Knight spent a great deal of time transcribing the Church Registers and talking to the local residents, often scribbling down notes on the back of cigarette packets. His 'Historical Notes on Froyle' has formed the basis of all research since that time. Lt.Col.John Willcocks produced several pamphlets and booklets on St Mary's Church and the village of Froyle, culminating in his 'Little History' and, in 1993, a fascinating history of Froyle School was produced by the late Mrs Nora Jupe, its last Headteacher.

Since we moved into the village in 1971, my husband, Chris, and I have been gathering photographs and information about the place we are now proud to call 'home'. Over the past 29 years we have collected in the region of 500 photographs, some 230 of which are here for you to enjoy.

In 1979 as a member of Froyle Parish Council, I became the official Village Archivist and, on retirement from the council in 1995, was asked to continue in that role. Chris and I set up The Froyle Archive with the specific aim of not only collecting as much information as we could about Froyle, but also making that information available free of charge to anyone who might care to use it. Last year the Froyle Archive was delighted to receive from Mr & Mrs Theo Beck an extensive and invaluable set of research notes covering the early history of the village. Information from all the sources mentioned above has been used extensively throughout this book.

All the other stories have come from the villagers of Froyle themselves; some from memories put down on paper several years ago, others told over a cup of tea only yesterday, and I do hope they will forgive me for not mentioning them all by name. So many people have given me snippets of information, or allowed us to copy their photographs, over so many years, that I would not wish to leave anyone out. So I say to each and every one of you - thank you.

Annette Booth
Froyle, 2000

It was ever there

Evidence of a Bronze Age settlement was unearthed only recently

Froyle's Early History

The small village of Froyle lies, tucked away, in the north east corner of Hampshire. You might be forgiven for missing it, as you hurry by on the busy dual carriageway A31 between Alton and Farnham, but pause a while and you will discover a rural community, proud of its history, but which is ever looking to the future.

The village is made up of two parts, Upper Froyle, centred around the Church and Manor House, and Lower Froyle, which grew up around the farms.

We know that it has a long history. Stone Age and Bronze Age implements have been found in the area and there are the remains of a Roman Villa at Coldrey on the southern edge of the parish. Some twenty years ago, a dig found evidence of a round barrow, along with a great deal of broken pottery ranging from the Bronze Age to the Romano-British period (around 55 B.C.)

But we will begin with the country's earliest public record, the Domesday Book. The entry for Froyle, translated, reads:-

Froli in NEATHAM HUNDRED.
Land of St Mary's Winchester.
The Abbey itself holds Froli. It was ever there.
Before 1066 it answered for 10 hides, now for 8 hides.
Land for 10 ploughs. In Lordship 3 ploughs.
15 Villeins and 23 smallholders with 8 ploughs.
A Church; 10 slaves; 2 mills at 22s 6d; meadow, 8 acres.
Value before 1066 and later £12; now £15, however it pays £20 of revenue.

Prior to this time Froli was a Royal Manor held by Edward the Confessor "in his own person." His Queen, Editha, held the manor of Alton (Aweltone). With the Conquest, Froli came into the hands of William the Conqueror who gave it to the Nuns of St Mary's Abbey, Winchester, known then as Nunnaminster, and it was held by them until the dissolution of the nunnery in 1540.

But let's just go back to that Domesday entry for a moment and look at it in a little more detail. First, the name, 'Froli', as it was then. There are two schools of thought with regard to the meaning of this name. The first is that it derived from Froehyll or Frija's Hill. Frija was the Norse goddess of Love and one of Odin's wives; she protected men's marriages and made them fruitful. If this is the case, then the hill referred to has been suggested as Saintbury, but there is no documented proof that this hill has ever born any name that would confirm this. The second school of thought, according to the extensive research undertaken by the late Theo Beck is that it comes from Mediaeval English 'frow' translating as 'swift' and Old English 'wiell(e)' - 'spring or stream.'

This 'stream' he sees as "the Ryebridge stream rising in the Combe Field opposite Blundens House and known for generations as 'Newmans Spring' which flows continuously, but at a season of the year becomes 'lavant' and swollen by water gushing from the adjacent ground, floods the stream, overflows the culvert and floods the road with a swiftly flowing stream." Mr Beck also adds, "With reference to Ryebridge Stream, it is interesting to note that in West Sussex the word 'Rithe', Anglo Saxon, is a fountain; well; rivulet. A small stream, usually one occasioned by heavy showers of rain. (A Dictionary of the Sussex Dialect, by the Rev W.D.Parish, 1875)."

But whatever the origin of the name, it is interesting to trace its transition from 'Froli' to 'Froyle'. In 1086, as we have seen, it was Froli; Frolia, 1166; Froila, 1167; Frolia, 1196; Frohill, 1199; Froyles, 1229; Froyle, 1236; Froille, 1236; Froile, 1237-1242; and the Froyle that we are so familiar with came into use around 1316.

By far the largest class of the population at the time of the compilation of the Domesday Book was that of the villeins or villagers; these occupied nearly everywhere the greater part of the lands of the manor, and the lord depended mainly upon their labour and services for carrying out the agricultural work on his estate.

The average holding of a villein in addition to his homestead, the messuage with toft (a place where a house formerly stood) and croft (a small piece of pasture land near a house) in the village, was a virgate or yard-land, being about 30 acres, consisting of a number of acre and half acre strips distributed through three arable fields, generally ten or twenty strips in each field. The distinctive feature of these holdings was that the strips were not collected together in one plot but lay interspersed in the several fields; one in this furlong or shot (shoot), another in that. Hence we have Indentures, like this one in 1760, between William Draper and Adam Blunden, who we shall meet later, which contain pages of references to the fields owned:

> ".....In Burrowfield thirteen acres and a half dispersedly in eight pieces (to wit) one piece upon Reed by Reed Close one acre; one other piece butting to Bonhams ground two acres; one other piece called the Rainbow acre one acre; one other piece called the White Ditch five acres; one other piece that goes across the way that goes to New Close two acres; one other piece by late Forders half an acre one acre; one other piece near the field Gate half an acre and one other piece butting to Hill Close one acre....."

Looking at Froyle today it is hard for us to visualise that the whole village

consisted of just these three fields at the time of Domesday and for many years to come. But their names are, perhaps, quite familiar to many of us -Combefield, Coxfield and Burrowfield.

But by the 1800s the Enclosure Acts had put an end to this open farming and Froyle looked very different. In the Froyle Archive is a copy of the Tithe Map of 1847, painstakingly traced by a Froyle resident, Mrs Sue Clark, which, along with its accompanying Apportionment Book, gives us a snapshot of the village 153 years ago. We know who all the landowners were and who rented the land from them and there before us are all the names of every field in the parish. In all, there are 478 field names. Many are simply 'cottage with garden' or 'The five acres', but some have interesting names and I have included a few of my favourites. I have also tried to describe the position or modern name.

Lucerne Paddock	Opposite Rose Cottages
Adams	The Bungalows
Hither Cullum Bottom	Opposite Sylvesters
West Stillions	Bottom of the Sheep Drove
Horse Nail	Crest Hill Farm, Well Lane
France Coppice	On Long Sutton parish boundary
Butter field	Opposite the turning to Isington
Yarnham's Foxes	North West of Yarnham's Farm
Hilam Milam	South of Yarnham's Farm

Looking towards the Beeches, from what is now the Recreation Ground. At the time of the Tithe Map these fields were known as 'Flood Piece', 'Butt Piece' and 'Bambrass Down'

Downland on the outskirts of Lower Froyle photographed in 1912. The wooded area to the left was known as 'The Common' until the late 1940s. In the Tithe Map it was 'The Twelve Acres'. The field in the foreground was 'Barland' and the downland with the grazing sheep was 'Murvils'

While the Tithe Map tells us about Froyle 153 years ago, it is the Court Rolls that we turn to for the village's earliest recorded history.

These Court Rolls are the Minutes, if you like, of the Manorial Courts which enforced the customs of the Manor. They were usually held at the Manor House and every male over the age of 12 was obliged to attend. The Court met at least twice a year and its main business was to deal with transfers of land, the management of commons, and the rights of the Lord and his tenants. It also appointed various officials, who we will meet later. Here is just one example of a section from a Court Roll of the Froyle Manor.

> "The presentments of the Homage for the Court there houlden the seventh daie of June Anno dom 1647. We present Nicholas Wheeler (and) Robert Vinden for not appearing att the Lords Court on paine of 4d each of them 4d. .....We order that noe geese shall be kept in the fields or common nor in the lands after the first of August next following on paine of sixpence for everie goose soe taken to be paid by the owners of the said goose....We order that all hogges that goes abroad shall bee Ringed by mid somer next...."

And I wonder what this means:

> "We present William Newman.....the turning of the Swattes out of his course from newsom to the spoyling of the hieway"!

The Officers and Servants of the Manor by Theo Beck

"The following descriptions of some of the principal officers who superintended the work of the manor applies to manors generally, Monastic or otherwise, and are mainly drawn from the work of Sir Walter de Henley.

THE STEWARD. The steward's duty is to hold the Manor Courts and there to enquire if there be any withdrawals of customs, services and rents or of suits to the Lords, courts, markets and mills, and as to alienation of lands. He is also to check the amount of seed required by the reeve for each manor for, under the steward, there may be several manors. On his appointment, he must make himself acquainted with the condition of manorial ploughs and plough teams. He must see that the land is properly arranged, whether on the three field or two field system, and the ploughing regulated accordingly. Besides the manorial ploughs and plough teams, he must know how many tenant or villein ploughs there are, and how often they are bound to help the Lord. He is also to enquire as to the stock in each manor whereof an inventory indented is to be drawn up between him and the reeve, and as to any deficiency of beasts, which he is at once to make good with the Lord's consent.

THE REEVE. The best husbandman is to be elected by the villeins as reeve, and he is to be responsible for the cultivation of the arable land. He must see that the ploughs are yoked early in the morning - both the demesne and villein ploughs - and that the land is properly ploughed and sown. He is a villein tenant and acts on behalf of the villeins, but is overlooked by the Lord's bailiff.

THE BAILIFF's duties are stated to be: To rise early and have the ploughs yoked, then to walk in the fields to see that all is right. He is to inspect the ploughs, whether those of the demesne or the villein or auxiliary ploughs, seeing that they be not unyoked before their day's work ends, failing which he will be called to account. At sowing time, he and the Reaper must go with the ploughs through the whole day's work until they have completed their proper quantity of ploughing for the day, which is to be measured and if the ploughman has made any errors or defaults and can make no excuses the Reaper is to see that such faults do not go uncorrected or unpunished.

THE HAYWARD is to be an active and sharp man. He must arise early and look after and go round and keep the woods, corn and meadows and other things belonging to his office, and he is to superintend the sowing. He is to look after the customary tenants that may come and do the work they are bound to do. In hay time he is to overlook the mowers, and in August assemble the reapers and the labourers and see that the corn is properly gathered in. Watch early and late

that nothing be stolen or eaten by beasts and spoilt. In some Manors he attended to the fences and hedges and was answerable for stray cattle which it was his duty to impound. This office was often combined with that of Beadle, the verger of the Manorial Court. He was accustomed to superintend the work in the hay and harvest fields, carrying his rod or verge.

THE PLOUGHMAN is to be a man of intelligence, and should know how to repair broken ploughs and harrows and to till the land as well. He should know how to yoke and drive the oxen without beating or hurting them, and he should forage them well. He must ditch the land so that it may be drained and he must not carry fire into byres for light or warmth, nor have any light there except from a lantern.

THE WAGGONER must know his trade and keep his horses and curry them, and he must not overload, over-work or over-drive them. He must know how to mend the harness and the gear of his wagon, and he shall sleep every night with his horses, as does the Oxherd with his oxen.

THE COWHERD must be skilful, knowing his business and keeping his cows well, and foster the calves from the time of weaning. He must see that he has fine bulls of good breed, pastured with the cows to mate when they will; and no cow to be milked or allowed to suckle her calf after Michaelmas, for the cows will thus become weak, and mate later the next year. Every year from each vaccary the old cows and the barren, and the young that do not promise well, have to be sorted and sold.

THE SWINEHERD should only be kept in manors where swine can be kept in the forest, woods, wastes or marshes, without sustenance from the grange.

THE SHEPHERD must enclose his fold with hurdles and keep it in good repair. He should sleep in the fold, he and his dog, and he should pasture his sheep well, and keep them in forage and watch them well so that they be not killed by dogs, stolen or lost; not let them pasture in bogs or moors to get sickness or disease. He should not leave his sheep to go to fairs, markets, wrestling matches, wakes or the tavern, without putting a good keeper in his place that no harm may arise. The shepherd could be a hired servant but more usually was a tenant who gave his service as rent for his holding with certain allowances being allowed; a lamb or fleece and often had the Lord's fold on his land for twelve days at Christmas for the sake of the manure. He had occasional use of the Lord's plough, fifteen sheep in the Lord's fold and their milk if mother sheep. His wife was dey or mistress of the dairy, and he had to find a milkmaid. Walter of Henley recommends the Lord to watch if the sheep are scared at the approach of the shepherd, for if so

he is no good shepherd.

THE DAIRYMAID should be of good repute, and keep herself clean and know her business well. How to make cheese and salt cheese and to save and keep the vessels of the dairy that it need not be necessary to renew them every year. She should help in the winnowing of the corn when available, and take care of the geese and hens and answer for the returns.

THE TITHING MAN, HEADBOROUGH or CONSTABLE was another of the officers chosen by the tenants themselves at the Court Leet, his duty was to summon fines, arrest vagabonds and nightwalkers, distrane on the goods of defaulters and preserve in his district the King's Peace.

THE ALE-TASTERS or CONNERS were appointed similarly to see that brewers within their district brewed beer of the requisite strength and purity, that they did not sell at excessive price or use false measures and to see the Assize of Beer was not broken in their locality. The Assize of Beer and Beer was a franchise conferred on the Lords of Manors from a very early period, frauds being severely punished.

THE CARPENTER and SMITH were generally tenants who gave their service in exchange for rent. The carpenter had to make a plough and harrow out of his own timber and assist the tenants in making their carts. The smith, in addition to helping the carpenter in making ploughs, was to shoe certain of the Lord's horses. If one died he was allowed the skin for making bellows and a dish of butter to grease them. He had to sharpen the scythe of the mowers in hay time and to bind with iron hoops certain wooden vessels.

THE SURVEYOR OF HEDGES was required to see that the temporary hedges erected at certain seasons around the holdings of the tenants were duly erected and kept in repair. The surveyor of ditches and watercourses had to see that they were kept open and scoured.

THE KEEPER OF THE POUND fulfilled his ancient office as did the Hayward and Woodward, or Woodreeve. Under the rule of the Abbey and extending into post suppression times, the Woodward to the Manor of Froyle was a most important officer and is specifically referred to in Henry VIII grant after the suppression and where the exact rate of this officer's pay is set out."

Having met the Officers of the manor, let us take a look at a typical year in medieval Froyle.

Work in the Manor by Theo Beck

"Michaelmas, the period after harvest, was the natural commencement of the farming year, when new leases were entered upon and the then universal system of husbandry necessitated the sowing of the winter field. The first work was the ploughing of the wheat field while the other two fields lay in stubble. At its completion the sowing of the winter wheat and rye was taken in hand.

The cattle at the completion of the ploughing were brought in from their pastures and stalled in their sheds for the winter, to be watched over by the ploughmen whose duty it was to fill the oxbins with hay and keep them well watered and throw out the manure. The duties of the swineherd at this season was to bring in from the swine pens in the woods all the weaker animals and sows that had littered and move them into the pig sty of the Manor.

The preparation of food for the winter required the slaughtering of cattle and swine and the curing of the carcasses. Threshing was also carried out in the winter, grain, peas and beans were all threshed for which purpose flails were used and the winnowing carried out by hand for which procedure women were often employed. Wheat and rye were the ordinary foodstuffs, malted barley being used for brewing.

February saw the beginning of the main work of the year with the spring ploughing of the second field in preparation for the spring sowing of peas, beans and vetches or barley and oats. The ploughing was the work of the customary tenants covering a period from Candlemas to Easter. The stubble since August reaping had provided the feeding of hens, geese, sheep and other stock. Except in heavy ground, eight oxen would be the normal team. There was a driver and a leader of the team to each plough. In Froyle the ploughing was probably shallow, the rude construction of the plough and the high price of iron would make it unlikely there would be really effectual overturning of the soil or deep ploughing. This would account, together with modern farming practises, for the obliteration of any crop markings or traces of the old strip field pattern.

All tenants were found something to do including work in the Lord's demesne. The Manor possessed a garden, a part given over to pleasure flowers, arbours and an orchard and the equivalent of a vegetable plot, the latter producing leeks, onions and peas; a list of these could be compiled from Bailiffs accounts. Apples were largely grown for cider and references to the latter are found for Froyle.

Two out of the three Common Fields have been dealt with and the Third Common Field is in fallow, and work on it begins in May or June. Any waterlogged parts were ditched to drain off excess water, and the whole area dressed with manure from the cattle pens. Where stiff soils were involved lime was also used and there is

evidence of this at Froyle where many chalk pits of varying size still abound though many of them have been filled in, some at the time when the dual carriageway of the A31 was being constructed.

In the summer months weeding was put in hand and, after Midsummer, washing and the shearing of the sheep was undertaken by those of the tenants best fitted for the task, including the women. Sheep played an important part in the Froyle economy, at least three shepherds being employed in the 13th century, and a fulling mill existed in early times. This was the time when building operations were carried out, each tenant was bound to keep his dwelling in proper repair or ran the risk of being presented and fined at the Manor Court. It was customary for the tenants to be allowed their 'Estovers' in the Lord's woods, permitting the felling of timber and cartage of the same and also a certain allowance was made to the wheelwrights and carpenter for the making of ploughs, carts and tools. From the woods and coppices come the material for the setting up of folds and pens at this time and maintenance of the weirs for the two water mills of the manor and mill-gear.

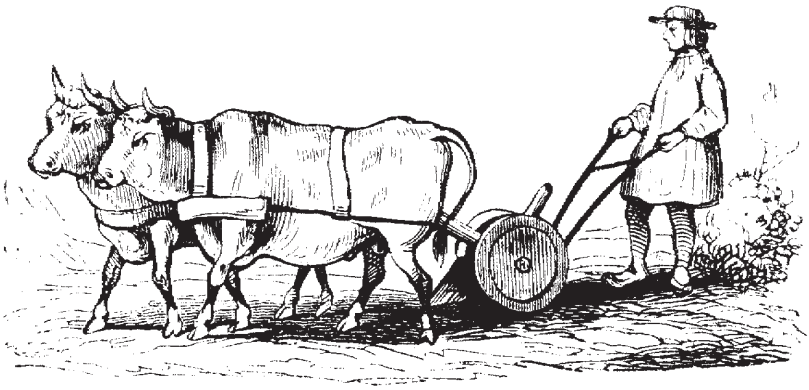
The mill was a vital feature of every estate and at Froyle on the river Wey we have two water mills, Froyle mill and Issinghurst or Isington mill. The mill was generally farmed out by the Lord, the miller taking his toll of the tenants for whom it was compulsory to bring their grain there to be ground.

August, September and October were the important months for gathering in the crops, reaping and mowing were the priorities taking advantage of weather conditions. The hay harvest, of all times in the farming year, is the jolliest, providing the weather holds good. The hay was mowed by the customary tenants as one of their services, assisted by hired labour in cases of urgency. In the old days 'haysil' came second only to harvest in the jollifications of the summer. Barley, oats, peas and beans were also mowed, and these crops having been cleared, the work of the harvest began at the end of July by the reaping of wheat and rye. These were cut rather high on the stalks with sickles leaving the stubble to be mown after the crop was gathered in.

For the celebrations and thanksgiving for harvest home, food, beer and cider were consumed and, during the work, refreshment in certain quantities was allowed, according to the custom of the Manor. The harvesting would take a month to six weeks, according to weather conditions. However the feasters' enjoyment was probably tempered by the fact that the ale which formed the major feature was brewed from malt which they had unwillingly contributed and that they were paying for the (compulsory) privilege of consuming their own produce. Here again Froyle was fortunate in having as its Lord the more kindly disposed Abbess of St Mary's. Tenants on other manors were often less fortunate, for it

was at the hands of the officials, the hosts of the Stewards, bailiffs and the like that the peasants, yeomen and smaller gentry suffered. These men, secure in the protection of a chain of superiors stretching back to some great noble, lived on their neighbours, extorting money from them on every or no pretext.

One never ending and most important duty of the tenants, and constantly referred to in Court Rolls, is hedging, a routine for spring, summer and autumn. The hedging was of two types, permanent hedges and their maintenance and those which had to be cattle proof but of a temporary character, but nevertheless entailed a considerable amount of labour. During the early part of autumn these hedges were completely or partly removed and the cattle were allowed to wander over the stubble. We have noted the relief from monotony at harvest time but the church enjoined relaxation from work at her festivals, for example in harvest a full week before St Mary's Mass (September 8th)"



Two early wise decisions of the Nuns of St Mary's contributed greatly to the stability of the Manor. The first of these was to keep under their close control the best land in the Manor. The second was to allow the tenure of a large proportion of the rest to pass into the possession of two powerful families; the Husseys and the Brocas, thus producing two sub-manors and it is these we will look at first.

Husseys

This is first mentioned in 1262, when a Walter Heuse (Hussey) held the Manor of Husseys, which was described as "a messuage, mill and carucate of land." The Husseys held the land until at least 1414, when they sold the property, but remained as tenants, as Nicholas Hussey is returned as tenant in 1415, of seven virgates of land and two mills, rent 61/-.

In a Court Roll of 1545 the Manor of Husseys is listed with many others in a marriage settlement between Mary Wriothesely and Sir Richard Lyster, Chief Baron of the King's Exchequer, who held this manor for a further ten years. On 21st December 1555 he sold Husseys to John Gyfford of Northolt in Middlesex. He, in turn, sold the manor to John Fitzwilliam, of Kingsley, the following year.

On 1st June 1560 Sir William Jephson, who had already purchased the chief Manor of Froyle in 1538 from the Crown following the Dissolution of the Monasteries, also acquired the Manor of Husseys for the sum of four hundred and fifteen pounds "of food and lawful money of England".

Husseys remained part of the chief Manor until 1652, when it, along with the whole estate, was sold to John and Richard Fiennes, sons of Lord Say and Seale. Lord Say and Seale was the Commander of Cromwell's Blue Regiment, and, according to his contemporaries, was "to have a hand in all the evils of the time." They in turn sold Husseys four years later to Bernard Burningham on or about

the 10th May 1656 for a down payment of two thousand one hundred pounds and a firm guarantee of two further yearly payments of £214. The Burninghams were to remain at Husseys until 1906.

The Burninghams of Froyle

The Burningham family came to Hampshire from Ireland and Peter Burningham moved into Cattleys Farm in Upper Froyle in 1608, living there until 1612, when he moved to Malms Farm in Binsted, which was adjacent to his fathers land at Stean Farm. On the death of his father in 1620 Peter took over the running of both farms as a business venture until his own sudden death in 1623 as a result of a fall from his horse. He died a wealthy man. Cattleys Farm was purchased by the family and became a key factor in their estate, being in Upper Froyle and opposite Froyle Place, the chief Manor House. It was on the site of Cattleys in 1820 that Thomas Burningham, Esquire, built Froyle House in a vain attempt to rival the Miller family.

But let's return to Peter's son, Bernard Burningham, who has just purchased Husseys. At the time of his father's death he was just a small boy of eight, and, according to the Burningham family historian, Walter Philip Burningham, writing in 1979, he inherited only 5/-. However, in 1637 he married Ann, the eldest

Froyle House at the turn of the last century. It was built in 1820 on the site of Cattleys Farm

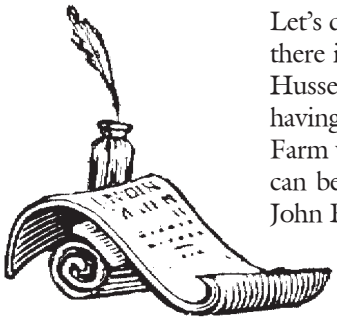
daughter of Henry Wheeler, the owner of the Fulling Mill at Millcourt on the River Wey in Binsted parish. Even so, Mr Burningham believed that Bernard still had trouble in paying the final two instalments for Husseys, because for some reason he did not purchase the manorial rights at the same time. This oversight, if it was that, was to prove an embarrassment for Bernard's son Henry, who took over Husseys from his father.

The Froyle Burninghams were fast developing into the status of the 'Landed Gentry' and Henry appears to have acted accordingly! In 1678 he refused to attend the Court Leet of Froyle Manor and pay his dues of three shillings and six pence. He sent a message back to William Horner, the Steward, written in a bombastic manner, saying that he refused to recognise the overlordship of Samuel Gauden, the then Lord of the Manor of Froyle! He considered Husseys a manor in its own right, which, unfortunately, it was not.

Henry Burningham was tried by the Earl of Danby in the Court of Common Pleas, found guilty and ordered to pay up, with damages! According to Mr Burningham, Henry, "started grovelling and immediately climbed down."

The first Burningham entry in the St Mary's Church Registers is in 1670, when Henry's son, also named Henry, was born. He married Ann Baldwin in 1698, a marriage which ensured that Baldwins Farm became an integral part of the Burningham's estate and would have greatly pleased Henry Senior.

Henry died in 1736. His son, John Baldwin Burningham, was probably responsible for the Georgian front which was added to Husseys in about 1764, along with the unusual group of four oast houses behind the house, symbolic of the prosperity brought by wheat and hops at that time. In 1820, as we said earlier, Thomas Burningham made the move to Upper Froyle, where he built Froyle House.



Let's digress briefly here to look at Baldwins. Today there is no sign of the house, which stood opposite Husseys, the present residence bearing that name having been built in 1938. But in its hey day Baldwins Farm was obviously quite an important property, as can be seen by the Inventory taken at the death of John Baldwin in 1661.

Inventory of Baldwins Farm, 6th January 1661

Inventory taken of the goods and chattels of John Baldwin of Froyle in the County of Southampton, yeoman, late deceased as it was prised the 6th day of January 1661 by those whose names are herewith subscribed

		£	s	d
Imprimis his wearing apparell and money in his purse		10	0	0
It(em)	In the hall one long table and frame Two joined forms Three Clocks Two cupboards and settle Six join stools Two pairs of andirons	3	0	0
It	In the chamber above the hall Two bedsteads with two feather beds with all that doth belong unto them One great chest and press Two trunks Two little chairs and table and frame	8	5	0
It	In the little chamber within the hall One Join bedstead with one feather bed with all that belongs there unto Two old chairs Two old coffers Two boxes and trunk with Two old tables	5	5	0
It	In the chamber over the little chamber Two bedsteads one feather bed with all there to belonging Two old coffers one great chest one little box	2	10	0
It	In the great chamber within the hall Two low bedsteads one feather bed one flock bed with all things there unto belonging one great chest with other old lumber	3	0	0
It	In the kitchen one table and form Three chairs Four iron spits one pair of Andirons Two pairs of pots	1	3	0
It	In the milk house one pair pails Thirteen trays with other pots and other old lumber	0	15	0
It	In the Buttery three hogsheads five butterolls three tubs one... one... trough with other lumber	2	2	0
It	In the well house one leaden pump Two tubs with other lumber	2	0	0
It	In the Brewhouse one...one Brewing vat seven tubs seven... one cheese press with other lumber	4	10	0
It	In the Malt loft one quarter of malt and one table with other lumber	1	6	0

It	In the Cheese loft sixty cheeses Three old chests with other lumber	2	10	0
It	In the Smoke loft twelve flitches of bacon with other lumber	10	0	0
It	In the loft above the Buttery one malt quern two tubs with other lumber	1	0	0
It	In the garret loft four barrels of apples	1	0	0
It	for the Pewter dishes	4	10	0
It	for the brass vessel and two iron kettles	3	6	0
It	for the linen	3	10	0
It	the wagons dung-pots wheels ploughs and ploughshares and harrows	15	10	0
It	six cows and two calves at Lower Froyle	20	0	0
It	six young heifers	2	2	0
It	the wood boards and timber and faggots with other lumber	2	0	0
It	the horse and harness bridle pannier and sadle	40	0	0
It	the hay and other fodder with the corn in the barn	130	0	0
It	the Sheep	30	0	0
It	the corn upon the land in the fields	62	0	0
It	of debt due upon bond	10	6	0
It	Six heifers or Rother beast at Upper Froyle	12	0	0
It	all the goods in the house at Upper Froyle	6	10	0
It	Also	0	12	0
Sum is	400	12	0	

Andrew Baldwin
Thomas Warner

Notes:-

1. 'Rother' is West Sussex dialect for a horned beast.
2. Henry Wake, whose name appears at the bottom of this inventory, is probably the Henry Wake who is shown in the Church Registers as having been, "taken to Alton like fish in a barrel" in 1674. This man was a Quaker and his body had to be taken to the Quaker burial ground in Alton.

Let's now look at the other sub-manor, Brocas.

Brocas

John de Brocas was one of three brothers educated at the Court of Edward II. They were sons of a Gascon knight, Arnald de Brocas, and John was 'valettus' to the King in 1314. In 1337 Sir John de Brocas was chief Ranger of Windsor and Warden of Nottingham Gaol, as well as Master of the Horse, and he was given the estate of Froyle as a reward for loyal services to the King. But the Brocas who cut his name highest on the pinnacle of fame was Bernard, Sir John's third son. He married, as his second out of three wives, Mary des Roches of Roche Court, and he acquired another manor, Beaurepaire, near Basingstoke. He was a friend of the Black Prince and of William Wykeham. He took part in the French Wars, was Constable of the Aquitaine, Master of the Buckhounds, Constable of Corfe Castle, Warden of Episcopal Parks, Controller of Calais, Chamberlain to Queen Anne, Captain of Sandgate Castle, and, in Hampshire, he was a Knight of the Shire and Commissioner for Defence. He was buried in Westminster Abbey. He was succeeded by another Bernard, his son by his second wife, Mary des Roches. This Bernard was executed at Tyburn for his part in the plot to kill the King, Henry IV, at Oxford in 1399.

This sub-manor was held by the Brocas family until 1539. In 1659 it belonged to Henry Burningham and he sold it that year to William Newman for £710, no doubt to help him finance Husseys. These two families became closely linked by Henry's marriage to Ann Newman, for the Newmans were also an able and ambitious family.

Brocas Farm in 1915

The Manor of Froyle

From early times the manor house was the centre of the life of the community. It was often a building of very simple pretensions and was generally sited next to the Church. Many of these houses still remain though long since turned into farm premises or devoted to other uses. In the case of Froyle, the site of the early house in Upper Froyle was extended and the imposing Jacobean mansion of 1620 erected by the Jephson family. It was here that the Manor Courts were held. Grouped around a courtyard were the granaries, sheds for cattle, the dairy, a dovecot and other buildings.

A drawing of the manor house of Froyle, Froyle Place, in the late 1600s

Henry VIII had sold the Manor to William Jephson in 1538, for the sum of £1,505 17s 4d and an annual rent of £4 13s 5d.

> "The King by Letters Patents grants the Manor of Froyle, the lands called Isinghurst and several other messuages and lands in Froyle, and the Advowson of the Vicarage of Froyle unto William Jephson and Mary, his wife, to hold the said Manor and premises (except the Rectory and advowson) to the said William and Mary and the heirs of William and to hold the said Rectory and advowson to the said William and his heirs..." 23 June 1538.

The Jephsons held the Manor until 1652, when they sold it to John and Richard Fiennes. They, in turn, disposed of it in 1666 to Samuel Gauden of Lincoln's Inn. In the early 1950's a dovecot was demolished at Froyle Place, bearing a stone marked S.G.1686.

In 1695 the estate consisted of "34 messuages, 10 tofts, one water mill for grain, one dovecot, 44 gardens, 1600 acres of arable land, 100 acres of meadow, 120 acres of pasture, 300 acres of wood and £41 rent for property in Binsted and also the rectory of Froyle and the tithes in Froyle."

In 1693 Samuel Gauden died and was succeeded by his son Jonathan, who died in 1705. He, in turn, was followed by his nephew Gauden Draper. This was a period of affluence for the Manor; hops had been introduced in the 17th century and the soil in Froyle was proving suitable for producing crops of the highest quality. But Gauden Draper was not to be able to enjoy this wealth. Following his premature death in 1710, the estate was run by his wife, Mary, and her advisers, until her son William could take up the duties as Lord of the Manor in 1719 at the age of 21.

William had a Dower House built in Froyle Park for his mother, on the other side of the Church. Although there has not been a house there within living memory, we are fortunate to have a drawing of it, below, in 1836.

It was on the death of William in 1765 that the main changes of ownership in Froyle took place. Up until that time the Lord of the Manor, in this case William Draper, owned practically all the estate, apart from Cattleys and Husseys. But from 1768 onwards, William's daughter, Mrs Mary Nicholas, who had inherited the estate, sold the majority to Sir Thomas Miller, 5th Baronet and Member of Parliament for Chichester, and other parts to Henry Burningham, Joseph Westbrook and others. She kept the Dower House and part of the Park for herself, and she and her descendants, the Moodys, lived there until 1860.

Sir Thomas now became Lord of the Manor of Froyle with control of its Court Leet and Court Baron, the right to present his own clergy for a Benefice and rights regarding tithes and extending to Hunting, Hawking and Fishing. He was therefore able to set up his eldest son Thomas Combe as Vicar of Froyle in 1811. Thomas Combe Miller became 6th baronet on his father's death in 1816. Born in 1778, he married Martha, eldest daughter of Rev Thomas Holmes, of Brooke Hill, Norfolk, in 1824, and the couple had six sons and four daughters. The eldest of those sons, born in 1829, was Charles Hayes Miller. In 1856 he married Katherine Maria, the second daughter of James Winter Scott Esq. of Rotherfield Park, and they had two sons, Charles John Hubert and Cecil Walter Nicholson, and three daughters, Margaret Catherine, Gertrude Teresa and Constance Caroline.

Rev Thomas Holmes

Lady Miller

Sir Charles Hayes Miller

Lady Katherine Maria Miller

Sir Charles Hayes Miller became the 7th Baronet, following the death of his father in 1864, but he was not to hold the title long, dying in 1868. His brother, William Uvedale, also died in the same year.

We are very fortunate to have these photographs of the Miller family, taken we believe in 1866. Little did the small boy standing in the photograph on the right realise that within two years he would become the 8th Baronet, and Lord of the Manor of Froyle!

Charles John Hubert Miller and his younger brother, Cecil

Sir C.J.Hubert Miller, photographed here in September 1928, on his 70th birthday. He was the last Lord of the Manor of Froyle

Sir Charles John Hubert Miller was just a small boy of nine years old when his father died. His mother took the children and left Froyle soon after her husband's death and from that time until 1940 Froyle Place was let to various tenants. In due time Sir Hubert, as he chose to be known, joined the Coldstream Guards and in 1892, at the age of 34, retired as a Captain.

He came back to Froyle, but never returned to live at Froyle Place. Instead he took up residence at The Shrubbery, a charming Georgian house built in about 1740 on the main road near the Hen & Chicken Inn. It was originally a river keeper's cottage, which had been enlarged by several of its previous owners. Sir Hubert, himself, extended it and someone was heard to remark, after Sir Hubert's death in 1940, "If Sir Hubert had lived a few years longer The Shrubbery would have reached the river."

Sir Hubert was a devoted High Churchman and Tom Knight tells us that "his avowed intention in Froyle was to wake the Church up." It is thanks to him that St Mary's Church has some of the most beautiful vestments in England, as well as some very fine silver. These days this is kept in the Bank and only brought back to Froyle on very special occasions.

Sir Hubert in the garden of The Shrubbery with his gardener, Gerald Robinson, in about 1895

The Shrubbery, known today as 'Shrubbery House'

Sir Hubert is also responsible for the reason that Froyle is known as.....

"The Village of Saints"

From about 1900 Sir Hubert Miller would spend some of his time in a villa he had in Venice. Sometimes he would stay away from Froyle for six months of the year. But, when he returned, he would bring with him, not only the vestments and silver as I have already mentioned, but also small statues of saints. These were placed in the niches and under the eaves of the houses and cottages belonging to the estate in Upper Froyle; and here they stand today, even though the estate has long since been split up.

Possibly, most people's favourite of the nineteen saints dotted around the village is St Hubert, standing over the entrance door of Old Post Office Cottage. The patron saint of hunting, St Hubert is shown with the stag which led to his conversion. Legend tells that while hunting in the forest on Good Friday, he came upon a stag which displayed a crucifix between its antlers and he was thus converted to a better life.

On either side of Old Post Office Cottage, pictured below, are houses with St Anthony of Padua, St Christopher, several with St Joseph, and a charming group of the Holy Family adorn Jasmine and Myrtle Cottages.

Blundens House, a 14th century timber framed building, has, in a niche over a bedroom window, the statue of St Peter holding the 'Keys to the Kingdom of Heaven.' Other statues include St Katherine, with her wheel, The Virgin Mary and The Holy Shepherd.

If you look back at the photograph of The Shrubbery, you will be able to make out the saint in his niche in the middle of the front of the house. This particular saint is St Michael, slaying the dragon.

All the saints are well preserved, considering their age, but one of the most splendid must surely be St Paul (right). He stands, with his sword and book, on a specially erected plinth, gracing the front of what used to be the Vicarage.

When the property was sold and a new name sought for the elegant house, what could be more fitting than 'St Pauls'.

One saint that visitors to the village will not see is St Joan of Arc, for she is the only 'inside saint' as far as I know. She stands with her sword and shield in the window of a charming little cottage, where she is protected from the effects of the weather on her painted finish.

Sir Hubert Miller was very much the Squire; sending his tenants baskets of fruit when they were ill, handing out sweets to the schoolchildren and providing them with Christmas treats.

He often invited groups of people to tea at The Shrubbery. The bellringers were one such group. Sir Hubert was well known for his trips abroad and one member remembers him hurrying home from Paris by Imperial Airways in order to attend the 'Ringing Tea'. The members enjoyed walking round Sir Hubert's lovely gardens. They were always amazed at the choice of blends of tea which were on offer.

He died on 4th October, 1940, at the age of 82, leaving his estate to his niece, Mrs Olive Mary Loyd, who sold the property to the trustees of the, then, Lord Mayor Treloar College.

Lord Mayor Treloar School

Sir William Treloar, Lord Mayor of London in 1906-7, launched his 'Little Cripples Fund' to build a hospital in the country air for young children suffering from non-pulmonary tuberculosis. His fund was oversubscribed within a year and the hospital was built in Alton. Soon afterwards a College was added to it for the education and training of older boys. In 1948, when the National Health Service took over the running of the hospital, the trustees of the College bought a site at Froyle, Froyle Place, for the boys. The College opened its doors in 1953. A similar establishment, The Florence Treloar School for Girls, was founded at nearby Holybourne in 1965. In 1978 the two schools were amalgamated, with Froyle as the lower school and Holybourne developing as a further education college. In 1995 the School and College were separated in order to better reflect the changes taking place nationally.

This aerial view of the College, as it was then, was taken about 1956. Froyle Place is at the top left and you can see all the new buildings which provided classroom and boarding facilities.

In our next chapter we will take a trip through the village of Froyle, looking at a number of the older houses.

At Home

The Dining Room of Froyle House, described in a sale prospectus of 1915, as, "Handsome Georgian Dining Room, measuring 22ft by 19ft. This apartment is typical of the period, with alcove recesses on each side of the fireplace and sideboard recess. Lighting by two large French windows opening on to the Terrace, marble mantlepiece with register stove and tiled hearth. Service Door and Lobby."

The Shrubbery

The Shrubbery, as we have already seen, was, from 1892, until his death in 1940, the home of Sir Hubert Miller, last Lord of the Manor of Froyle. Today it hardly seems part of Froyle at all, with the busy dual carriageway between it and the rest of the village. But, as can be seen in this photograph, taken at the turn of the last century, the road was much narrower and quieter in those days! Originally a river keeper's cottage on the river Wey, sale particulars of 1846 describe it as "a most eligible and justly admired villa residence with a garden, shrubbery and good garden interspersed with beautiful shady walks, screened by choice ornamental and valuable timber; having a fine cooling spring on the property, and a valuable trout stream for its boundary." It was auctioned at the Swan Hotel in Alton on Friday April 24th 1846.

While on the subject of this part of the river Wey, I will just mention the fish ponds in the valley below the house. These were a major feature of Monastic Estates and Theo Beck points out that, "although no documentary evidence has been discovered, the construction is likely to be c.1200. In the Middle Ages, fish was eaten in great quantities, not only during Lent, but also on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, which were usually fish days all the year round. Fresh water fish - especially pike - was a prestigious and costly food. The fish pond was probably stocked with roach, bream, perch and pike. The religious houses were very sophisticated in this field, and were well aware that by draining the

pond periodically, removing all the silt and allowing the pond to remain dry for a season, was an effective way to increase the fertility. The Lord of the Manor is stated to "....have the fishing of the whole water or river called 'Froyle River' from Mill Court Godhatch to Isington Moor, and, in Isington, so far as the land of the Lord extends."

Across the main A31, we climb Hen & Chicken Hill, so named because of the public house at the bottom of it, into Upper Froyle.

The Manor House

This house has had several names over the years - Froyle Manor, West End and Place Farm. Adjoining the grounds of Froyle Place, it most probably was the home farm house. The house, faced in early Georgian red brick, is a high, steeply roofed building, the evolution of which is difficult to deduce. Several of the rooms are panelled in bolection wainscot which, with the staircase, can scarcely be later than 1730. William Draper succeeded Gauden Draper as squire at Froyle Place in 1710; a big improvement of the home farmhouse may have been undertaken at that date. An unusual feature of the staircase is the decoration of the under surface of the upper flight with crudely painted landscapes, recalling distantly the 'King of Grisaille' scenes introduced by Thornhill in some of the lower surfaces of his painted hall and staircase at Stoke Edith, circa 1725. The photograph is from a postcard postmarked 1905.

In 2000 the Manor House is part of the Lord Mayor Treloar School.

The Barracks

The five cottages that make up The Barracks were almshouses in the 18th century and it is still quite plain to see where the old doors and windows were, when it would have been 'one up and one down'. During the French Wars, French prisoners were housed here, hence the name 'The Barracks'. These prisoners are supposed to have quarried the stone in nearby Quarry Bottom to build most of the stone walls in Upper Froyle.

After the departure of the prisoners, the buildings were converted into cottages, and, in the census, people are referred to as living at 'Sir T.C.Miller's Barracks'.

A brief word here about the census. Censuses began in 1801 and were taken, as they still are, at 10 yearly intervals. Originally they were only concerned with numbers, but from 1841 names were recorded, and from 1851 the actual place of birth, thus making them invaluable for the local historian. The individual returns were copied by people called census enumerators into ledgers and these records are often very difficult to read. The Froyle Archive has photocopies of all the census returns from 1841 and we are eagerly awaiting 2001, when the 1901 Census will become available.

The Census for 1881 shows this family living in just one of the cottages in The Barracks; remember these then were 'one up, one down', with no modern sanitation, electric lighting or mains water.

Surname	*Christian name*	*Family*	*Age*	*Occupation*	*Where born*
Oakford	George	Head	44	Agricultural Labourer	Whiteparish Wiltshire
Oakford	Mary Ann	Wife	37		WinterbourneWiltshire
Oakford	George	Son	13	Scholar	Easton Hants
Oakford	Ann	Daughter	10	Scholar	Easton Hants
Oakford	John	Son	9	Scholar	Easton Hants
Oakford	William Charles	Son	6	Scholar	Stoke Hants
Oakford	Sarah	Daughter	5	Scholar	Froyle
Oakford	Kate	Daughter	4		Froyle
Oakford	Rosa	Daughter	2		Froyle
Oakford	Sidney Edward	Son	1		Froyle

For a short time after the Second World War, the name of the cottages was changed to 'The Square', but in 2000 it is, most definitely, 'The Barracks'!

Gothic Cottage

Belonging to the Froyle Place Estate, Gothic Cottage, was, in the 1920's, the house which went with the job of Head Gardener. In 1928 it became the home of Harold and Hilda Horn. We will hear more of Mr Horn a little later, but, in the meantime, here is a photograph of his new bride at their cottage

Froyle House

As already mentioned, Froyle House, pictured above in 1912, was built by Thomas Burningham in 1820 and became the family seat.

On Tuesday, 16th November, in 1915, the Froyle House Estate was sold at Auction by the London firm of Escritt & Barrell at the Forester's Hall in the nearby town of Alton. The Froyle Archive is lucky to possess a copy of the prospectus for the sale, and it gives a unique insight into life in Froyle House at that time. It is also a valuable point of reference for the rest of the village, as many of the farms and cottages were part of the estate. The house was sold "by direction of Mrs Burningham" and the estate is described as follows:

> "A particularly Choice Freehold, Residential, Sporting and Agricultural Property, known as Froyle House, extending to nearly 1050 acres, including a Fine Old-World Georgian House, Gardens, Parklands and Woodlands, Five excellent Farms, Small Holdings, Cottages and Accommodation Fields. The whole let and producing £1,740 per year.....On two sides of the Residence is a Large Verandah with glass roof, from which charming views of the Gardens and Grounds can be obtained, and frequently used for afternoon tea. The residence is lighted by Petrol Gas from an excellent instalment."

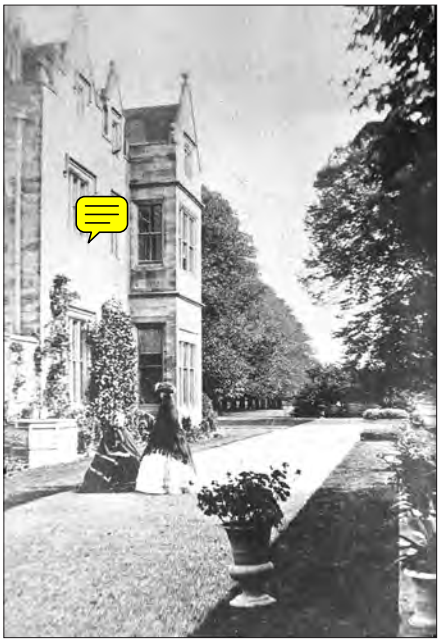
In 2000 Froyle House is the headquarters of the Treloar Trust.

The Drawing Room is described as, "Spacious, measuring 25ft by 24ft, with large bay windows and French doors, giving access to the Verandah, marble mantlepiece, tiled sides and hearth and register stove."

"A feature of the Ground is the Magnificent Pergola, with a Grass Walk and long Herbaceous Borders on each side. There is a quantity of Wall Fruit, Ornamental Archways, Vinery, Heated Plant House and a range of Forcing Pits."

Froyle Place

Froyle Place stands beside the Church in Upper Froyle, the seat of the Lord of the Manor since the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The present building is said to have been built in 1588, but Theo Beck suggests that 1620 is a better estimate.



It is, in the main, a gabled U-shaped Elizabethan Manor House of the local clunch or hard chalk. A cellar at the north-west end retains two fine Tudor doorways, and an adjacent quoin bears a consecration cross. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, probably when bought by the Millers, sash windows were inserted, and the principal rooms modernised in the Adam taste; in about 1865 and later, further and, perhaps, less attractive alterations were made, including that of the centre between the wings on the south-east front.

This photograph of, I believe, Lady Katherine Miller and her mother in law enjoying the sun on the terrace, was taken in about 1866.

Not long after that photograph was taken the Miller family would leave Froyle Place, never to return there to live. As I said earlier, Sir Hubert came back to Froyle but never lived in this house again. The house was let to a number of tenants.

Mr F.B.Summers occupied Froyle Place from 1912 until 1926. In 1922 Froyle Place was a 'Hive of Industry', according to Tom Knight. He tells us, "In the house itself there was a butler, footman and quite a number of maids. Seven in the gardens, three chauffeurs and four keepers. The old ex-coachman attended to the dogs and poultry. If anyone threw a matchstick down in the yard he walked along and picked it up. The Racquet Court was fitted with a stage, scenery and footlights. Concerts and weekly dances were held here, with the old coachman in close attendance to see that everything was in order." This photograph is believed to have been taken around 1918, and judging from all the patriotic flags on display, could well have been at that time.

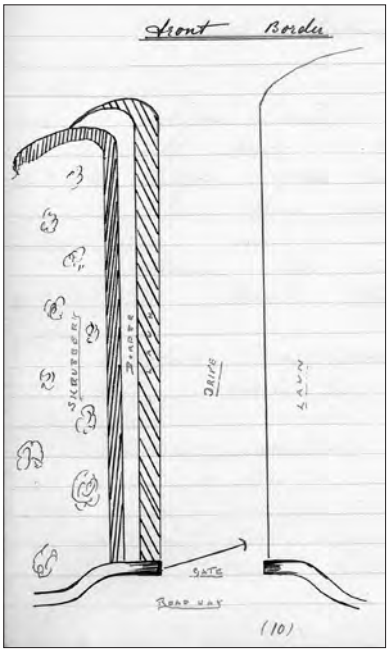
Mr Summers donated a considerable amount of money to Alton Cottage Hospital, for a new operating theatre. He wanted to be the first to be operated on there. Apparently it was an operation which was not absolutely necessary, and, tragically, he died in January 1926.

The Gardens of Froyle Place

Harold Horn's prize-winning melons

From the fascinating diaries of Harold F.Horn we learn a lot about the running of a large country house. Harold Horn took up his position as Head Gardener at Froyle Place on Sunday 27th May, 1928. He was given one day to look round the property by Colonel Innes, who was the tenant at the time, and then it was down to work on the Monday. Mr Horn had four gardeners working under him - George, Bill, John and Charles. Sadly, he never mentions their surnames, but I have the feeling that Charles was the youngest, as the only job he ever seems to be doing, according to Mr Horn, is turning the manure!! Harold, at this time a bachelor, seemed to have settled in well. He was asked to umpire the races at the Froyle Fête and was invited to tea on Sunday afternoons by different ladies in the village. On July 29th he took the day off to marry Hilda, but was back at work the very next day.

The diaries were loaned to the Froyle Archive by Mr Horn's sons, Derek and Colin. The books are much more than diaries as they contain the 'Plans & Records of Froyle Place Gardens'. On one particular occasion he propagated 1,260 violas and 900 calceolarian. His job not only included growing the plants and looking after the garden, but he and his men were also in charge of decorating the house with flowers and packing boxes of fresh vegetables for the family to take on holidays to Scotland.



This page from his book shows the layout of the front drive of Froyle Place with lawn on the right, and shrubbery, border and lawn on the left. Harold was very keen on his melons and won several prizes for Colonel Innes in local shows. When Colonel Innes left Froyle in 1933 the Horns went with him.

Yarnhams House in 1924

Yarnhams

Let us just leave the main street of Upper Froyle for a moment and, turning left opposite the Church, travel up the hill to Yarnhams. This house was built by Sir Thomas Coombe Miller as a Dower House for his wife, in case he died before her. In fact Lady Miller was to survive her husband by some thirteen years, but she never moved into Yarnhams.

Returning to the main street once more, we pass the Vicarage, School, and old Post Office, which we will deal with in later chapters.

Park Edge

This house, photographed here in 1912, stands on the site of Earls Farm. Little is known about the farm, but Tom Knight tells us that "the Earls were an old Froyle family going back to the 17th Century. Sarah Earl, an unmarried woman, gave birth to an illegitimate child, who was baptised Jonathan, and his father's name is given as Jonathan Burningham. Her son was sent abroad, presumably as a remittance man, and settled in Salt Lake City, Utah, where he lived to a great age."

Blundens Farm House in 1836. The artist is unknown

Blundens Farm House at the turn of the last century

Blundens House

Originally a three-bay building with a single-bay Hall, c.1450, Blundens House is the most complete example, in the parish, of a Wealden House.

It is also the one house in Froyle where we can actual trace its tenants back almost five hundred years, thanks to the painstaking research undertaken by the late Theo Beck and his wife into the history of their home. They moved into Blundens House in 1981 and were able, through Court Rolls, Leases, Wills, Tithe Maps and various records, to trace the tenants back to 1545.

The earliest tenant that the Becks could find was a John Mixenbroke and references to the Mixenbroke family can be traced as far back as 1505. John Mixenbroke died in 1570. The inventory of his goods includes a painted cloth and a painted ceiling - the grand total is £24 7s. The copyhold passed to his widow Alice and on her death in 1581, to Thomas Forder (Furder).

Thomas Forder appears in the Lay Subsidy Rolls of 1586. He died in 1605, leaving his widow Alice his executrix. He is described as a yeoman and appears to have been far more affluent than John Mixenbroke. The total of the Inventory is £91 18s 8d, but he owed £56 16s 4d to various persons, including £5 to William Jephson (the Lord of the Manor), 11 shillings to the Vicar, Mr Knight, £40 to Helen Knight (presumably the Vicar's wife) and amounts varying from 4/- to 40/- to neighbours, local well-to-do people and what appear to be tradesmen. His 'wearing apparell' was apprised at 26s 8d compared with John Mixenbroke's "apparell and the money in his purse 10s".

His debts were as follows:-

to Sir Wm Jephson	£5 0s 0d	to Helen Knight	£40 0s 0d
to Stephen Write	24s 0d	to William Barnes	40s 0d
to Lawrence Gele	16s 0d	to Griffeth Morgan	24s 0d
to John Dene	10s 0d	to George Hawkins	28s 6d
to John Whetstone	12s 0d	to Mr Knight	11s 0d
to Thomas Newman	4s 4d	to Richard Loughe	7s 0d
to One Bumbrick	3s 0d	to Bulbrick of Alsford	4s 4d
to James Ledall	4s 0d	to Edward Pratt	14s 8d
to William Broman	10s 0d	to Robert Campson	12s 0d
to Wm Matthew of Alton	3s 0d	to John Powte	8s 6d

In his Will he left 3s 4d "unto the poor of Froyle to be divided amongst them" and to each of his children 20/- and the rest of his goods, "after my debts be paid and funeral expenses discharged", to his wife.

An Inventory of his goods at the time of Thomas Forder's death in 1605 makes interesting reading and helps us build up a picture of the house at the beginning of the 17th century.

	£	s	d
Imprimis in the Hall a table and chair 3 framed stools a form a bench a back board 2 trestles and a shelf board prised at		10	0
Item in the Chambers 4 bedsteads a cupboard 4 coffers A shelf board prised at		37	0
Item a feather bed 3 feather bolsters 4 feather pillows 3 flock beds 2 flock bolsters 4 coverlets 4 blankets 6 pair of sheets and 4 pillows prised at	9	10	0
Item 10 platters 4 pongers and saucers 4 porringers 3 candlesticks 2 salts a mortar and pestle prised at		27	8
Item in the Buttery certain barrels and timber stuff And other things prised at		20	0
Item 4 bushels of wheat prised at		12	0
Item 2 kee and 2 bullocks prised at	10	10	0
Item in the Kitchen 2 brass pots a cauldron 3 kettles 2 skillets a chafing dish and other stuff prised at	3	0	0
Item the wood in the grate		20	0
Item certain hurdles a scythe 2 prongs and a van prised at		5	0
Item 6 hogs and 3 pigs prised at		42	6
Item the hens and ducks prised at		3	4
Item the geese and gosskens prised at		4	6
Item 6 horses prised at	9	0	0
Item the carts ploughs harrows prised at	4	0	0
Item the wheat and other corn in the fields prised at	50	0	0
Sum is	91	18	8

Note: A prong is a hay fork and a van is a winnowing fan or food hopper.

The next tenant of Blundens, or 'Forders' as it was known then, was Henry Lucas. He had married Elizabeth, the sister of Sir John Jephson, and lived first at Banburies, being granted a 99 year lease by Sir William Jephson in 1609. The lease was renewed by Sir John Jephson in 1620, but somewhere between 1609 and 1620 Henry and his family moved to Forders and during this period the house was extended. Henry Lucas died in 1639, administration being granted to his daughter Elizabeth Bettesworth.

On the 28th April 1642 Henry Warner, Yeoman, was granted a lease by William Jephson of "all that copyhold tenement in Froyle aforesaid called Forders with all housings buildings orchard gardens gaterooms land pastures meadows feedings..... late in the tenure and occupation of Henry Lucas gent and now in the possession of the said Henry Warner containing by estimation three score acres." The timber was reserved to William Jephson (the Lord of the Manor). "All fishing fowling hawking hunting and all other Royalties" were also excepted. The lease was granted for 99 years to Henry Warner and Elizabeth, his wife, at a yearly rent of £20. Henry Warner was responsible, at his own cost, for the usual repairs and had to appear at every Court Baron as a 'Customary Tenant'. He also had to grind his grist 'of what sort soever' at the Lord's mill.

Evidence that the house has been considerably enlarged is shown in the Inventory drawn up on the death of Henry Warner in 1678. We now find items to the value of £110 10s in an Inner, Outer and Middle Chamber, as well as the Kitchen and there is also a Malt Loft, Malt House, Cheeseloft, Milkhouse, wheat barn and woate (oats) barn.

Henry's son William took on the tenure of the house. Times were obviously becoming a little more prosperous now as this is the first mention we have of servants. William had a maidservant and two man servants, who had their own Servant's Chamber. He did not marry and died in March 1706. In the Inventory items are listed as in the Inner Chamber, Outer Chamber, Servants Chamber as well as in the Hall, Kitchen, Drinkhouse, Bakehouse and Cheeseloft. A Barn at Mame (Malms Farm, Binsted) is mentioned as well as "the Barn at Froyle". His livestock comprised 5 horses, 3 cows and 2 heifers, 40 dry sheep, 7 couple of ewes and lambs and 5 dry sheep, 4 pigs. The value of these items was £380, including money due to him 'on bond'.

Born of a Quaker family of farmers, Thomas Heath came to live at Blundens after William Warner's death. His initials are carved on the beam over the fireplace. He was the son of Thomas Heath (senior) (1640-1718), who was already a farmer in Froyle. Thomas (senior) had married Joan Tribe of Froyle at the Alton Meeting on 26 September 1673. The Heaths remained Quakers and many are buried in the Quaker Burial Ground in Alton.

The Quakers had been founded by George Fox in about l650. His disciples affected plainness in their dress, were frugal in their manner of living and very reserved in their conversations. Oliver Cromwell tried to suppress the movement but, in spite of this, the sect prospered. Many inhabitants of Froyle were among the early Quakers - their headquarters being in Church Street, Alton. This Quaker Meeting House was built in 1672 and is the second oldest Meeting House in the world still used by Quakers. Thomas, himself, was married at the Alton Meeting on 27th November 1702 to Hannah, the daughter of John and Mary Cager of Froyle.

On Thomas' death in 1751 came the tenure of the man whose name the house now bears, Adam Blunden, and yet, mysteriously, he is the one person Mr & Mrs Beck found difficult to trace.

On 30th May 1760 William Draper, then Lord of the Manor, granted Adam Blunden, "husbandman, a nine year lease from the previous feast day of St Michael the Archangel (1759) of all that messuage tenement or dwelling house formerly in the possession of Thomas Heath." The lease was obviously renewed because he was an Overseer for the poor in 1761 and 1765 and "for his farm" in 1773. In 1778 there is an entry, "Farmer Blunden the money that he overpaid in the Poor Rate 18s 2d." There is no reference to him after this date. In spite of extensive searches by the Becks no will or record of Adam's death can be found, but his initials A B are carved on the same beam as Thomas Heath's.

For the next century the house was occupied by members of the Simpson family. The Tithe Schedule of 1847 shows James Simpson as the occupier of Blundens House and Farm. James Simpson was followed by his second son James. Directories show a James Simpson at Blundens for various years from 1847 to 1880; described as farmer, hop planter and shopkeeper in 1847; farmer, shopkeeper in 1857 and 1867; farmer, hop grower, assessor and collector of taxes in 1875 and 1878 (shopkeeper not mentioned in 1878), and farmer, hop grower and shopkeeper in 1880.

The shop mentioned here was a butcher's shop, which was run by James' brother John, and which stood close to the site of the present day 'Chestnuts'. In the sale particulars of Park House Estate, the name Froyle Place was known by then, dated 1870, prepared by Daniel Smith Son and Oakley of Pall Mall for Sir Charles John Hubert Miller Bart., Blundens Farm is described as, "Let to Mr James Simpson, an old Tenant, who is under notice to quit at 29 September 1885 at the reduced rent of £250 p.a." The house is described as, "Old Fashioned Farm House, Brick, Half Timber, Tile and Thatch, containing 4 Bedrooms, Parlour, Kitchen, Back Kitchen, Larder,

Scullery, Cellar and Grocer's Shop; Wood House Board and Thatch, and

Garden." He was growing over 10 acres of Hops, 3 acres Wood. The Farm is described as "a compact occupation of Excellent Arable, Pasture, Hop and Wood Land." In fact, this sale never actually take place.

About 1880 John Simpson, who was James' nephew, took over the tenancy of the farm, without Blundens House, in addition to the butcher's business. This stayed in the Simpson family until 1926, when it passed to William Edward Andrew. He took up tenancy of "Blundens Farm, Butchers Shop and Land at Froyle" from Sir Hubert Miller on 16th September 1926. The witness to the deed was Gerald Robinson, who was "Gardener to Sir Hubert" and living at Turnpike Cottages. In 2000 William Andrew's grandson Roy is at The Chestnuts.

But back to Blundens House. James Simpson, Yeoman, was buried on 18th August 1887 and James House is shown in the 1891 Census as living at the house. He was followed by Mrs Frances Leeke, Mrs Eric Simpson, Mrs Maude, and the Rev William Woodward and his daughter.

V.J.Gadban was tenant of Lord Mayor Treloar Trustees from 1953-1963, Blundens House having been purchased by the Lord Mayor Treloar Trustees in 1953 out of trust moneys "upon trust for sale". V.J.Gadban was Clerk to the Alton Council. The House was sold to A.J.Maxse in 1963. The Maxses had Blundens House from 1963 to 1973. They were followed by D.J.Evans from 1973 to 1981 and, in 1981, the house was sold to the Becks.

Upper Froyle at the turn of the last century, looking towards Blundens Farm

Blundens Farm Cottage

This pretty cottage has changed little over the years. The photograph was taken in the 1920s, but could just as easily have been taken yesterday. A typical yeoman's house, it is timber framed with brick infilling, possibly built in the 17th century. In the late 1800s it was two cottages, one up and one down, with a small scullery and lean to on the side. Downstairs there are two staircases and, upstairs, the two original buildings have been linked with a door between the beams, which is only a few feet high.

The saint, on the right hand side of the photograph, is the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Joan Andrew, who has lived in the cottage all her life, told me that the saint was specially presented to her father, Wilfrid Andrew, by Sir Hubert Miller sometime after 1926. Wilfrid was Sir Hubert's Head Server at St Mary's and was given the saint in recognition of his service to the Church. According to Joan, Sir Hubert called the statue 'The Bleeding Heart' and Joan's mother didn't like the sound of that. I think this must just have been the name Sir Hubert gave the statue, as its correct title is 'The Sacred Heart'.

Moving on towards Lower Froyle we pass, on our left, Bamber Lane, leading to Saintbury Hill Farm. It has always been assumed that this hill was so named by the Nuns of St Mary's Abbey, but I would like to put forward my own theory here. Throughout the village, as we shall see over and over again, houses and lanes took on the names of the people who were living there at the time. A lady who lived in the village many years ago told me, "We used to love to roll down

Simbury Hill". Now I had already seen Saintbury Hill Farm called Simbury in the censuses from 1841-1871 and it made me wonder whether the name Saintbury couldn't have evolved from a Hampshire dialect of Simbury. If so, why Simbury? For my theory to work, there should be a farmer by that name, living at the top of the hill and - Yes! There is!

In 1657 the farm on top of the hill is known as Banburies and, interestingly, there was a Gilbert Bennebury farming in Froyle in 1415. But by 1679 the farm has taken on the name of Simbury and in 1760 a James Simbury acts as witness to the lease drawn up between William Draper and Adam Blunden!

A small boy and an old man at 'The Beeches' in the late 1940s. Sadly, these magnificent trees which stood between Upper and Lower Froyle are no more. In the 1990s they were found to be diseased and felled. Their absence is a great sadness to all who enjoyed them!

Brecklands

We do not have a date when Brecklands was built but we do know that it was the old Workhouse. It was converted to cottages in 1835 when Froyle, with 20 other parishes, came into the Alton Union. Until relatively recently they were known as Workhouse Cottages, but the name has been changed to Brecklands. When it was a Workhouse, or Poor House as it was known, the Overseers of the Poor met here in turn with the Hen & Chicken and The Anchor. The photograph below was taken in 1938.

By the Workhouse Act of 1723 single parishes were empowered to erect workhouses and by 1776 there were about 2,000 in England. Generally the poor were restricted to the building apart from Sundays and often male and female members of the same family were housed apart.

In Froyle 'Overseers of the Poor' are first mentioned in 1750. Relief both 'in and out of the House' was given to poor families. This was paid to people with large families to augment the meagre wages of that time, so we have the beginning of our present day family allowances. The poor relief in 1774 was 4/- per month, and the clerk was paid 3/- for each parish funeral.

There was an epidemic of smallpox from 1774 to 1777. Various sums, including one of £24 7s 4½d, were paid to Samuel Hoare of nearby Crondall for boarding out people at the Smallpox Hospital, and the Church Registers of St Mary's record the large number of burials at this time.

Tom Knight provides us with a few entries from the Account Book for the Overseers of the Poor in the late 18th century.

		£	s	d
1767	1lb of hops for the Parish beer			8
1768	Upkeep of highways cost			4
1769	Relief to man with a pass	11	0	2½
	Carting faggots from Upper Froyle for the poor	3	4	0
	A bill for Stonepicken			
	Thomas Hall out of pocket by a mistake in casting his accounts	2	12	10
	Beer at Sarah Hawkins funeral as was forgot to be charged		2	8
1771	5½ ells of hop bagging to make Jas.Newman a bed		4	1½
	A round frock for Trimmings boy		1	6
1772	Paid the County tax	10	0	0
	400 Ravens	1	4	0
	Sugar, tea and a jugg		1	6
	Spent at Parish Meeting at the Hen & Chicken		18	0
1773	Pd. for writing two letters			6
	Spent at the Hen & Chicken		4	6
	Catching sparrows		1	0
	Bread, cheese & beer		4	4½
	3½ lbs mutton		1	3½
	Making a Shirt			6
	For bleeding Thomas Smith		1	0
	Making a frock and shirt		1	4
	11 loads of stones and a man to fill and spread		4	8
1775	Spent on horse to Winchester		5	10
	Thomas Newman			
	by order at Church for innoculation himself & family	2	2	0
1776	2½ days work putting stones on the routs		1	3
	Getting the bucket out of the Almshouse well			6
1778	Cleaning the stables where the smallpox people was		1	0
1779	Spent at Parish Meeting Paid for a gallon of beer	1	10	0
1780	Spent at Parish Meeting at Chequer		4	6
	Paid for 1doz sparrows			2
1781	Paid for sining the book		4	6
	Paid two years rent for Ann Newman	2	0	0

Hadwick's Corner

As you may have guessed, these two cottages in Lower Froyle, photographed here in 1947, are so named after the man who lived there. Henry Hadwick came to Froyle some when after 1851, as he was not shown in the 1851 Census. He married Eliza Taylor on December 2nd 1854 and they initially lived at Brocas Farm (1861 Census) and in one of the several cottages at the north end of Lower Froyle that were demolished at the turn of the century (1871 Census). The 1881 and 1891 Censuses show them at 'Hadwicks Corner', although the cottages were not called that then, of course, as Mr Hadwick had only just arrived there! They were previously known as Brocas Corner Cottages. The Tithe Records of 1847 also refer to them as 'Broccas Corner Cottages', as they were owned by Brocas Farm - that is probably how the Hadwicks came to live there. If one can accept that the order of the names in the census is the order of the houses, the Hadwicks lived in the left-hand part of the pair of cottages.

John Willcocks tells us that Henry was the 'length-man' in Froyle, which meant he was responsible for keeping the ditches and hedges in a fit state. Henry died in 1907, aged 74 and Eliza died in 1912 at the age of 76.

Today the cottages look exactly the same. All that has changed is that the road, which leads to Upper Froyle, has been widened on the corner.

Warren Cottage

This cottage, on the far left of the photograph below, adjacent to the Prince of Wales public house, was probably named after one of its owners. Built in the 17th century, it really ought to be called 'Cricketers', as a man who had an important role to play in the history of the game was born here in 1714. His name was Aquila Clapshoe.

No doubt, like many others, he was a cricket player who made his own bats, but his expert craftsmanship put him in a class of his own and soon everyone was clamouring for one of his bats. In the garden of Warren Cottage there is still a very old barn and it has been suggested that this is where Aquila made those first bats. His son, also named Aquila, went one better than his father. He left Froyle and set up the Aquila Clapshoe workshop at Turnham Green, London, in 1780, making cricket bats. The Clapshoe firm, who by the 1800s had become Clapshaw, became 'Aquila Clapshaw and Salmon' in the latter part of that century, after taking into partnership one Louis Salmon. The business continued, in different locations, until the 1970s. It was dissolved in 1976. There is, apparently, an Aquila Clapshaw bat, dated 1860, in the museum at Lord's cricket ground. At the time of writing, the Froyle Archive is in touch with at least four of his ancestors.

Aquila Clapshoe appears to have been quite a shrewd businessman and indentures of several cottages around this area have his name associated with them. On Aldersey Cottage, on the other side of the public house, there is a plaque inscribed A.C.1737 - could this be Aquila, I wonder?

Just past the turning to Well is Church Cottage, a pretty cottage so named because it stood alongside a temporary church, which we will read about later. Opposite this cottage is Aldersey Cottage, originally built, as I said, in 1737, but greatly extended in the early 1970s. As a small boy, Bill Elstow used to visit his grandmother, who lived, at different times, in both cottages, and he shares some memories with us.

Home Life in Froyle by Bill Elstow

Every cottage had a woodshed, always brick built though the original roof might now be replaced with corrugated iron. Inside, always down a step, on the dirt floor would be an upright trunk of a small tree to serve as a chopping block, the top worn into a rounded dome from the continuous chopping. The choppers were always long hook-ended affairs quite unlike the square headed hatchets of the town.

There is nothing like the smell of burning kindling collected in the woods but an even more memory-provoking smell is that of rainwater being boiled. As every drop of water we used had to be drawn from a well, all the rainwater that could be collected was collected. Because the well water came from the chalk not only was it bright and sparkling and good to drink, it was hard. On the other hand the rain water was beautifully soft. It was used for washing, giving a wonderful lather especially with the little metal cage device into which were put the soap dog ends so that they would not be wasted. There were of course no baths in the cottages, washing down was done standing in a galvanised bath in front of the fire. En suite in those days meant that you had a painted table in the bedroom on which stood

a large jug in a large china basin for washing and a chamber pot under the bed to save you having to walk down the garden in the middle of the night.

Drawing water from a well is an interesting experience if you have not done it before. At the first cottage that my Grandmother lived in (Church Cottage) the well was in the garden, in the second (Aldersey Cottage) it was in the scullery of the attached cottage. Thus this backdoor always had to be left unlocked to provide access but as the front door of most cottages could be opened during the day by just lifting a latch this was nothing remarkable. Neither well was like the traditional representation of a well with a low surrounding wall. They were both round holes about four to five foot across in a one brick high plinth. When not in use the hole was covered by two wooden doors meeting at the middle. The doors may well have been the two hundred year old originals, they certainly would not have borne anybody's weight. The winding axle was a smooth log shaped piece of wood with an iron crank handle at one end.

To draw water you clipped your bucket to the end of the wire rope, leaned forward, opened the doors and let the bucket fall by its own weight. As it picked up speed and approached the water, (Gran's was reputed to be an extra deep well), you slowed its descent by resting your hand on the smooth winding axle but at

Aldersey Cottage

all times keeping clear of the flailing, arm breaking, wrist smashing, iron crank handle. Then came the long wind up and finally the lean forward over the hole to pull the bucket to the side to unhook it. At this point if you were careless it was possible to drop the bucket down the well. Fortunately there were 'experts' in the village who would then come along with a grappling hook and drag about for sometime, making remarks such as, "Its enormous down there, you could get a cart and horses in it". They very seldom recovered a bucket from Gran's well, it was too deep, though they frequently brought up remnants of much older buckets. A proper well bucket was shaped narrow at the top and bottom and wide in the middle like a plumb bob. It was much easier to draw up than a wide mouth bucket that would tend to sway. However it was much more expensive and the risk of losing it could not be contemplated. The sides of the well were constructed of chalk bricks all green and damp at the top and covered in cobwebs. Presumably all this debris joined the rusty buckets at the bottom of the well but I don't recall anybody considering this when drinking the water. All in all the whole process would be a modern Health and Safety Officer's delight.

Lighting was originally by paraffin oil lamps with a long glass chimney and wicks that had to be regularly trimmed to prevent the lamp from smoking. As a child I was always fascinated by the fact that you could light a cigarette just by holding it at the top of the glass chimney.

Keeping a cottage warm in winter was quite an art. The first thing of course was never to let the range go out, and to be sure that when you came down in the morning you could put on a handful of sticks, give the ashes a tickle with a poker, and bring it all back to life again.

Like many of the cottages in the village, you stepped down through the front door of my grandmothers first cottage, ducking your head as you did so, if you were a man, to avoid a head cracking. The floor was brick and you did not need to be told that there was no damp course if you were first down in the morning in bare feet on the damp bricks. My grandfather would often roll up the previous days' News Chronicle, light one end of it and go all over the bricks with it to warm the air up before breakfast was started.

Without a damp course it was impossible to consider wallpaper unless it was nailed to the wall. To make up for this we had folding draught screens decorated with magazine covers that you could put behind your chair if you sat between the door and the chimney. Mind you, the best efforts were made to block the doors with curtains and draught excluders. I don't recall any carpets but fireside rugs were made by cutting up old clothing into inch strips and looping them through a sacking backing so that the two ends came through to form a pile. The characteristic colours of these rag rugs were grey, blue, black and brown."

Hodges Farm

Hodges Farm is another example of a yeoman's farm house, which has benefited from the prosperity brought about by the sale of hops and corn in the eighteenth century. There was quite a building 'boom' in the village at this time and, as we have already seen with Aldersey Cottage, a number of cottages and houses have dates showing them to be early, or mid-Georgian. Hodges was completely refronted at this time and it has been said of the house that it is "the most accomplished piece of brick building in the village."

There is a record of a Richard Hodges in 1657, but one can only presume that this is where he was living. From at least 1841 until 1871 Hodges Farm was run by the Mayhew family. In 1851 Hannah Mayhew, a 77 year old widow, was in charge of a farm of 220 acres, employing 6 labourers. Following her death, Hodges was run by her two sons, Shadrack and John, while their sister Elizabeth looked after her brothers as their housekeeper.

The 1881 Census shows the farm in the hands of Charles Collins, while at the turn of the last century William Towers Westbrook was farming there.

In 1912 the Andrew family moved from their farm in Thame, Oxfordshire, to take up the tenancy. All livestock and equipment was brought by road, using horses for transport. The Andrews remained at Hodges until 1926, when they moved to Blundens Farm, Upper Froyle.

Hodges Farm and its barns, photographed for a set of postcards in 1912

Beechcroft in 1915

Beechcroft

Another of the houses built in the 1700s, Beech Cottage, as it is called today, has a stone set into it with the inscription R.C.1719. In the Tithe record of 1847 it is described as two cottages and the census details bear this out. But, at the beginning of the 20th century, it had become a single residence and the home of William Towers Westbrook and his wife. The Westbrooks came from a long line of local farmers, the name appearing in the Froyle Church Registers as early as 1652.

This article from the local paper of 1937 tells us a little about them!

"Froyle Golden Wedding
Mr & Mrs W.T.Westbrook

Mr Westbrook, who is 81, married Miss Emily Alice Tame, who is 80, in 1887. Mr William Towers Westbrook was born at Rock House Farm, owned by his father, William Westbrook, now the residence of his brother's widow, Mrs George Herrett Westbrook. The family have been farmers since Cromwell's days and Mr Westbrook himself farmed at Hodges Farm for 22 years after his marriage. He retired to Beechcroft 25 years ago. Mr Westbrook has been a sidesman at St

Joseph's Church for fifty years. He can remember when, as a boy, he used to walk to Anstey Grammar School, now Eggars School, in Alton, every day.

He remembers the time when the only school in Froyle was a kindergarten run by a governess. Mr Westbrook also remembers when Sir Hubert Miller's father owned a bullock team. At the time of their marriage the Jubilee of Queen Victoria was being celebrated, and it is a coincidence that their golden wedding year should fall at the time of the Coronation. He saw the first motor car pass through the village. They have seen many changes since that Good Friday many years ago when they hurried down to the turnpike to watch the first motor car travelling down from London to Southampton. 'Three hours we had to wait -but now we just take cars as a matter of course'."

Sadly, just four months after their Golden Wedding, William Towers Westbrook passed away.

Before we go any further, let me introduce you to another member of the Westbrook family. Lilian Westbrook was born in 1900, the third child of Mr & Mrs George Herrett Westbrook. She married John Henry Smither in 1925 and moved to Farnham. She had a wonderful memory and, in the 1960s and 1970s wrote many articles about her childhood in Froyle.I was fortunate to meet her in the late 1970s and remember her with great affection. She always called me Mrs Booth, even though I was almost half her age, and would often ring me to find out if I had started putting together the Froyle history book that we had often talked about together. Well, Mrs Smither - at last, here it is!

Returning to Lower Froyle we head towards the northern end of the village and come to two modern houses standing on the site of a group of five cottages, which now only live on in people's memories. Luckily for us Mrs Smither wrote down her recollections of these very old cottages in 1962 soon after they had been demolished.

Westbrook Cottages by Lilian Smither

"Oh, the pity of it. This group of five old cottages have been demolished by order of the Rural District Council. Old, yes, very old indeed, having been built in 1724, as shown on a tablet over the front door of the second cottage, and also bearing the initials T&W.C. Unfortunately the names of the persons commemorated cannot be established. They were built of stone and brick with timber supports and tiled roofs. Maybe they all had thatched roofs in 1724; the fifth cottage retained its thatch roof until recent years, and here and there a modern window replaced the old.

The cottages were known as Westbrook Cottages and were built round a bend in the road, so that when approaching the first cottage the fifth one was not in sight, causing a blind bend in the road for motorists. They were so planned that the front doors were quite separate, and not in view of each other, so that the occupants could not see who was calling on their neighbours. The first cottage stood back, the second jutted out, the third lay back, the fourth jutted out and the fifth again stood back.

They all had ample gardens, well stocked with vegetables and fruit trees and at one time were well cultivated and tended. Each cottage contained different accommodation, ranging from one to three bedrooms, with here and there a cellar. There were two wells, one inside the second cottage and one in the garden, which served all the cottages, until the water main came into the village about 25 years ago. One can imagine the gossip which went on around the wheel and bucket of those old wells. The sanitary arrangements in the garden were, of course, quite inadequate.

Now the cottages are gone completely and the motorist has a clear view and so will be able to travel even faster, at this point, through the little village."

Westbrook Cottages, once very much part of the Lower Froyle landscape

Mrs Eileen Merrifield, née Stevens, lived in No 3 Westbrook Cottages as a child in the late 1920s. She was one of a family of ten and remembers that they would get frogs inside the cottages quite often - admittedly there was a pond on the other side of the road.

A little further down the road is another house, which is no longer here today and that, too, is associated with the Westbrook family.

Rock House Farm

Rock House Farm, Lower Froyle, was built around the 16th century, mainly of grey sandstone from nearby Quarry Bottom. It was purchased by William Westbrook in about 1855 and the farm was worked by members of the family until 1936. In that year William's son, George Herrett Westbrook, died and, because he had no male issue, the farm passed to Henry Brownjohn, who was his nephew. This photograph was taken in about 1938. The young boy sitting on the wall is Mr Henry Brownjohn's son, David. The farm house was finally demolished in the 1960s.

Strangely, the deeds to our bungalow (built in 1962), contain an inventory for Rock House Farm, taken at a time when money was borrowed on the security of the land, a field named 'Adams', that the bungalows were built on.

Rose Cottages

Rose Cottages were built by William Westbrook in 1902 and Mr Herbert White was the first tenant of No 3. His granddaughter, Pat Pritchard, describes him, "He was a village character, always known as 'Hub'. He was very self sufficient, lining his shed every year with wood to keep fires burning through the winter, coppicing the hedges and producing bean sticks and pea sticks for most of the village, as well as clothes props. In this photograph you can also see my brother, Francis and mother, Mercy Milne. The picture was taken in about 1940. Dad had been called up into the RAF and we spent a lot of time down at granddads."

With 'Hub' is his dog 'Bonzo', who used to travel the half mile or so to the shop with money in his mouth and bring back the paper or any other small item 'Hub' needed! Mr White lived in No 3 Rose Cottages until his death in 1959.

We have now reached the north end of the village which a hundred years ago was much more built up than it is today. This area changed dramatically around 1900 when many cottages were pulled down and a few new ones built in their place. From here we will retrace our steps and return to Hadwick's Corner to look at the rest of Lower Froyle. Passing the Methodist Chapel and The Froyle Gallery, which we will return to in later chapters, we come to a house which, for many, is the 'jewel in the crown' of Lower Froyle.

Sylvesters

Sylvesters is a beautiful yeoman's farmhouse, dating from the 14th century, which was extended in 1674, according to a stone plaque let into its back elevation. The house has seen little change since then. A Sylvester appears in the Church Registers in 1670. In 1800 Sylvesters was one of Sir Thomas Miller's farms.

The photograph below was taken from the sale brochure of 1915 when the Froyle House estate was sold. Obviously at some time between these two dates Sylvesters had changed hands from the Millers to the Burninghams.

Lilian Smither writes about Sylvesters

"I was born at Sylvesters Farm House, Lower Froyle, on May 7th, 1900. My father rented this farm for 40 years, from 1894 to 1934. We were a family of four daughters. Our only brother, William George, died of pneumonia at the age of seven and a half years, a real tragedy in the family.

The first room on the right of the passage was the pantry, a large room with a small window high up under the ceiling. Inside one looked to the right to see a barrel of beer. Father never visited a public house as he didn't abide, as he put it, the smell and smoke, but he enjoyed a glass of beer at dinner time. I often filled his glass and on one occasion I tasted the stuff. How awful, how could Father, or anyone else for that matter, drink it? I was then about 12 years old.

Next stood the churn for butter making each week, 12 or maybe 20lbs, according to the amount of cream available. Lovely butter - sold at 1s 2d a lb! In the winter it was kept in the Dairy, in the summer carried to the cellar on slabs of slate. A large meat safe came next and two long shelves opposite, always full of good home made food.

Through the Pantry was the Dairy, a newer building than the house. A tiled floor, white walls and in 1910, on May 7th, Father bought a milk separator. This mysterious machine was quite something in those days. Father was not too pleased with it, he having to turn the handle. I was up early that morning, my 10th birthday. The Postman arrived with the news that King Edward VII had died, also bringing me a card without a halfpenny stamp. My Mother, in the excitement of the moment, and getting the postman twopence for the surcharge on the card, was late with the jug of hot water which had to be put into the separator before the supply of milk ran out. Father called, I ran for Mother to bring the hot water, and we met at the heavy curtains near the Pantry door. I screamed as the hot water went over my face and neck. Father hearing my scream, guessed what had happened, suddenly let go the handle of the separator, instead of releasing it gradually and broke a small part. In his concern for me with a scalded face and neck, he threatened to throw the new machine into the farm pond. Poor Mother, poor me, I sat in the kitchen, Mother dabbing my face with snow water, which she had saved from the previous winter. No scar was left on my face but my neck suffered quite badly.

Next on the right from the passage was the dining room. A very pleasant room, a long window occupying nearly the whole length of one side and looking out over the farm yard. Large shutters hung down below the window but these were never used in our day. Nicely furnished with an oak refectory table, large dining table and antique dining chairs. In the winter a large green heavy plush curtain was hung from the black beamed ceiling, touching the floor and about two thirds across the room to stop the draught from the front door which faced north east. The floor was red brick, covered with lino, later with a good carpet. A hanging oil lamp decorated the room, which gave both light and heat. A window high up on the inside wall, looked into the passage, a borrowed light.

Opposite this room, across the passage, was the drawing room, a good grate burning both wood and coal. A wide mantelpiece, full of ornaments, with a pretty material frill hanging from it. There were three windows, two with seats and when the winter curtains were up, one could sit in the window behind the curtains and not be seen. The whole house was a marvellous place for playing hide and seek. An oval walnut table with a centre splayed pedestal support, red patterned sofa, armchairs and six small chairs to match and of course, a piano,

complete with candlesticks. All four daughters had lessons, a teacher coming to the house from Isington.

Continuing along the passage we come to the cellar door, ten steps down, passing a small wine cupboard on the right; two rooms here, parted with a slatted screen of wood. Bottles and other debris lived here and a large drum of paraffin oil to supply the large and small lamps used around the house. We carried candles to go to bed.

We must return to the main passage, turn left along a short passage and a blocked up window, with small lamps standing on the window sill, and into the little room, where extra china was stored and a Rag Bag. Everyone in those days had a Rag Bag! Here we kept our bicycles when we were considered old enough to possess such means of transport. Back to the passage and now we reach the side door into the garden, with its massive bolt and chain.

We enter the large kitchen here, a very strong door with a very wide iron bolt. What a kitchen; no bedroom over, and walls continued up to the roof. A good kitchen range; high above your head was a bacon loft, which needed a ladder for entry. I never reached such heights, nor did my sisters as far as I know. A brick bread oven, the fireplace at floor level which Mother never used. The room was L shaped although we never thought of it in that way. A huge copper; what activity on wash days! The water in the copper had to boil to keep the white clothes white.

The hired washerwoman was a pleasant, kindly soul. Mother being short had to stand on a stool to use the copper stick to push the clothes under the boiling water. Bavins (bundles of kindling wood) were used to light and keep the fire burning. This wood stretched across the floor, brick of course, and whoever thought of it, just pushed them into the fire. The sink had to be seen to be believed, red brick, with a slatted draining board, and it was not uncommon to see a large slug come up from the open drain outside! Two pigs were killed each year, one pork, one bacon. The local pig killer was called and after the kill the animal was hung up for two days and then brought into the kitchen, laid on a long wooden bench and the animal cut into joints and carried to the cellar by Father and salted as necessary. Every part of the pig was used in some way; pork pies were delicious, liver and crow and brawn. The only part of a pig which cannot be used is the SQUEAK! I well remember standing at the kitchen door watching these gruesome proceedings, but I enjoyed the good wholesome food.

We return to the front stairs and main bedroom, which we girls occupied in turn, two at a time as we grew older. The room was stocked with useful furniture; all beds, pillows, bolsters and cushions were filled with feathers plucked by mother from numerous chickens, ducks and turkeys.

From the short passage at the top of the front stairs, turn right, through a doorway but no door, on to the back landing, a large dark cupboard, no window. I never went inside, only looked, to see a cot, cradle and wicker clothes basket. It was known as the dirty linen cupboard.

The back stairs ended here on this landing, with Mother and Father's bedroom door exactly opposite. A large room, window overlooking the farm yard, thatched stables and barn and a tiled cowpen, well-carpeted and adequately

furnished also with two cupboards. Through this room was the nursery, although we never termed it thus. It was the small children's room, with two windows high up, so as children we could not look out. This room faced the road. We all washed in the same water, hot or cold, according to the season.

Jack Day, the cowman

Returning to the back landing, a very substantial door lead to three attic rooms, one with a ceiling. Here the cowman slept, a good friend and farm worker to the Westbrook family. I was twelve years old when he first entered our home and worked on the farm in all kinds of jobs, although he was officially the cowman. He stayed with the family until his death at the age of 86, a period of over 50 years. The other two attic rooms had no ceilings. One was entered by a very narrow board, approximately 4ft x 1½ft, which had to be lifted out for entry. I well remember looking in, but I never ventured to see what was beyond. I wish now that I had. The other room, if the wind was in a certain direction, let snow through the tiles and Father was not too pleased when he had to take a bath and buckets and sweep up the snow to prevent it coming through the ceiling of the main front bedroom.

Of course there was no electricity, gas or running water. Father had to draw all water from the well at the rear of the house and we bathed in a zinc wash tub with our knees up under our chins when grown up. The toilet in the garden, a double seater, was very convenient with a family of four girls, when one or other had to make the trip into the garden after dark. We all enjoyed and loved that old house."

The Westbrooks left Sylvesters and moved to Rock House Farm in 1934.

In about 1900, as I mentioned earlier, there was quite a spate of re-building in Lower Froyle. William Westbrook took down thirteen old cottages and built three pairs of cottages and a single one - these were at the northern end of the village and included Rose Cottages and Rock Cottage.

A Mr Butler of Husseys built two cottages in Husseys Lane, and Mr Duncan of Coldrey built two at the corner of Park Lane on the site of two old ones. You can see these on the right of this photograph, taken in the 1930s.

In the 1861 Census, Park Lane was called Lawrence's Lane and we do find a family of Lawrence living at the far end of the lane - a Charlotte Lawrence was the Head of the family, and, we learn from later censuses, she was a dressmaker. By the 1871 Census the lane has become Croucher's Lane and there is a John Croucher, carpenter, living there with his family. At the turn of the century it was known as School House Lane and we are told there was a school there, but as yet, I have found no real evidence to support this. What the censuses do tell us is that there was a Day School just down the road in Husseys Lane in 1861, at the home of James Walker, a retired Pig Dealer. His thirty-nine year old daughter, Harriett, was the School Mistress.

By the time of this photograph Froyle was looking very much as it does today. In March 1930 eleven year old Jim Knight, a pupil at Froyle School, wrote an essay entitled.....

"**Modernising Froyle** - Electric light cables are being laid up the Hen and Chicken Hill in Upper Froyle, because some people want it. It is very convenient to have it, but it will be too dear for some people, as it costs ninepence per unit. At Lower Froyle gas pipes are being laid from Isington crossroads and I think

they are coming to Upper Froyle. The men have got as far as Mr Brownjohn's shop. After the men have finished laying the pipes and cables the roads are going to be widened and in later years I expect that the roads will be tarred. People will be able to have better lighting in their houses and some will be having gas stoves for cooking."

But back to Park Lane. One of the families who lived there were the Mills. A Charles Mills was living at Number 4 Park Lane in 1851, but the family pictured below came to live in the cottage in 1873 or 1874. George Mills and his wife, Jane, came from nearby Bentworth and settled in Froyle. They already had one son, George, and then had six more children while living in Park Lane. The youngest of those, Emily, was born in 1889, when Jane was 47 years old. Emily would grow up to play an important role in the village's Methodist Church. The other child I would like to mention is Charles, who was always known as 'Charlie'. The Census of 1881 tells us that his occupation is Printer's Apprentice, and, indeed, he would go on to set up the business of C.Mills, Printers, in Alton.

In the photograph below, loaned to the Froyle Archive by the present owner of the house and taken around 1908, are Jane and George Mills, seated, with their children, Emily, Jane, Annie and Charlie, outside what is now 4 Park Lane, but which was, at the time, known as Lilac Cottage.

Other houses in this part of Lower Froyle are dealt with elsewhere, but let's just look at two more, the first in Husseys Lane.

Fords Cottage

Called Fords Cottage in the censuses, that isn't the name this cottage bears today and perhaps one would not recognise it now anyway, since, like many of the cottages in the village it has been restored and extended. It stands almost opposite Husseys Farm and, in 1841, was two cottages. I assume that they belonged to Husseys, as in one of them lived Jonathan Ford, who was a male servant. Jonathan appears to have been a widower and he lived with his fifteen year old daughter, Harriett, who was a dressmaker.

Coldrey

The other house is Coldrey, a Georgian fronted residence, which dates back to the 14th century. It is not strictly in Froyle, being just outside the village adjacent to the original line of the A31. For many years it was described as an 'extra-parochial place'. It is now part of Bentley parish. A Roman farmstead was discovered here and Coldrey, which belonged to the Bishop of Winchester, was leased to various tenants. In the 14th century it was held by the Coldrithe family, and it is no doubt from them that the house gets its present name.

At School

An official school photograph taken at Froyle School in 1893. It was taken in front of the school and this was to become a tradition. At this time photographs were only taken at five yearly intervals, and even then many parents simply could not afford to buy one. However, they provide an invaluable aid to the local historian

The First Schools

The very earliest mention of education in Froyle has come to light in a letter written by a John Knight to his brother Stephen, who lived at Chawton Manor, regarding Stephen's son, whom John apparently treated as his heir. In the letter, dated 10th January 1616, John writes, "The imperfection you speak of in your son's speach, I have not at any time observed, butt that in speaking he doth lyspe. I hope he be long since come from you and att Froyle." However, in May of the same year, he writes of his intention to move his nephew to a schoolmaster at Basingstoke because "his (the nephew's) usage at Froyle was not to my liking."

In the next century we find James Marshall's will of 1751 leaving £5 per annum to teach poor children of Froyle to read and write, but there was no known 'education centre' in the village.

But in the Census of 1841 we read of a George Croucher, aged 30, whose occupation is given as Schoolmaster. Ten years later we learn that he had a 'day school' in Froyle. George Croucher lived at the north end of Lower Froyle, so maybe his school was there. As I mentioned earlier, the censuses tell us is that there was a 'day school' in Husseys Lane in 1861, run by Harriett Walker. This school was held in a cottage just below Baldwins Farm.

What we can be certain of is that in 1852 Henry Burningham built a school room onto the front of a house in Upper Froyle, now known as Froyle Cottage. This he did in memory of his young son, Francis Carleton Burningham, who had died at the age of seven. The school was run by his coachman's daughter, Letitia Enefer.

Froyle Cottage, with the schoolroom extension at right angles to the main building

Sir Charles Hayes Miller

Froyle National School, as it was known then, was founded by Sir Charles Hayes Miller in 1867, but was not opened until after his death in 1868. His son, C.J.Hubert Miller, then a child of nine, is said to have laid the foundation stone of the new school.

According to that very first log book, the school opened quietly on Monday, November 2nd, 1868, with Mr George Veal as 'Master'. There were presumably no processions or bands, perhaps because Sir Charles Hayes Miller was no longer alive to see the fulfilment of his plans. It was, however, a special occasion; after a Church service the opening ceremony took place in the school, performed by the Vicar, the Reverend W.R.Astley-Cooper, this being followed by tea and cake for the adults and children at the ceremony.

On that first day 138 pupils were admitted, 70 of whom had already been attending Mrs Burningham's School just up the road in Froyle Cottage.

In those early days parents had to pay for their children's education and many considered the three pence a week an unnecessary expense, preferring their children to work alongside them in the fields.

> *"The attendance of elder children not at all good. Haymaking is about commencing. The irregularity interferes much with a uniform system of working... I fear there are many children who will not put in an appearance*

Froyle School and its adjoining Schoolhouse early last century. They were said to have been built with the last stone from nearby Quarry Bottom

until after the Harvest Holiday.....Parents are very much disposed to take children with them into the fields instead of sending them to school....."
(G.Veal, June 1877)

Looking through the log books we see the summer holiday was known as the 'harvest holiday' and began much later than it does now, around August 12th. But it was quite flexible, depending on the harvest,

"August 24th 1883....broke up for the harvest and hop-tying today. Very few children have been present this week, many with their parents in the field. We should have broken up before but there is every prospect of a late and long hopping in which case we should have difficulty in making the necessary attendances."

Mr Veal was followed by Mr John Perry in 1884 and Mr Arthur Mann in 1891. Then came the first of three Heads who were to take Froyle School through half a century of education. William Button Downes became Headmaster in 1892 and was to remain so for 30 years. He was assisted by his wife, Alice, then an uncertificated teacher, who taught the Infants and also Needlework. His children attended the school as scholars, moving on to Eggars School in Alton when they were older. They helped out with the teaching on many occasions so the running of the school was a real family affair.

Mr.William Button Downes, with his wife Alice, and their four children, surrounded by some of the school children and staff, pose for the photographer in 1900

In this photograph of the school, taken in 1913, we meet the Westbrook and the Brownjohn children. Among them are Lilian Westbrook, who you have already heard from, and Harold Brownjohn, who has, only recently, provided some wonderful photographs for this book. The Westbrook and Brownjohn families are two of the oldest in Froyle, being mentioned in the parish records as far back as the 1600s.

The full list of names are as follows:

On the left: Mr & Mrs Downes. Back row, left to right: Harold Brownjohn, Sidney Rix, Arthur Aslett, Hubert Brownjohn, Dick Beckhurst, Tom Brownjohn, Charlie Brownjohn.

Second row from back, left to right: Annie Munday, Edna Newport, Nellie Lawrence, Mary Munday, Alice Etherington, Lily Ellis, Daisy Page.

Second row from front, left to right: Rosie Cherrill, Kathleen Beckhurst, Tom Munday, Doris Etherington, Grace Westbrook, Lilian Westbrook.

Front row, left to right: Marjorie Cherrill, Flora Cherrill, Bill Lawrence, Ernie Munday, Bertie Gates and Ena Westbrook.

The School Log Books give a graphic picture of life in a small village and remind us that times were hard in those early days. On many occasions children came to school without warm clothing or even a pair of shoes on their feet and

many died in infancy. In 1906, for example, the scourge of Diphtheria raised its ugly head,

> *"Diphtheria is developing. A child named Charles Knight died this morning and one of Munday's children has been taken to the hospital. Only 64 are present this morning, there being quite a scare in the parish. Dr Leslie, M.O.H., came over at 11am and formally closed the school."*
>
> *(W.Downes, Oct 10th 1906)*

> *"Adelaide Steer was buried today. Having died of Diphtheria."*
>
> *(W.Downes, Nov 9th 1908)*

> *"School closed owing to the continued prevalence of Diphtheria."*
>
> *(Feb 26th - March 22nd 1909)*

But there were also some happier moments.....

In her retirement, the last Headteacher, Mrs. Nora Jupe, put together an extensive history of the school and she tells us, "There was a whole week's holiday to celebrate the new King's Coronation in June 1911. Sir Hubert Miller attended the ceremony and spoke to the children, describing it to them; later in the week Miss Burningham brought in some Coronation souvenirs for the children. Other excitements were concerts and magic lantern shows and even fireworks in the Master's garden, attended by the older pupils, who were given gingerbread afterwards."

At Christmas the children looked forward to small gifts from the managers. In 1912 the log book entry tells us,

> *"School broke up today for the Xmas holiday. Sweets and oranges distributed, the gifts of the managers. The afternoon, from 3pm, spent in festivity."*

Life went on very much as usual until the Spring Term of 1922 . This was an unhappy term, culminating in William Button Downes final entry in the Log book on March 21st 1922,

> *"Resigned the mastership of these schools following upon a serious nervous breakdown.....William Downes".*

His wife and sister, who had also taught at the school, retired on April 21st 1922, thus ending a 30 year span of a school ably run by a conscientious and caring Master, helped by his family throughout the years.

And then came the man who became known not just as a good Headmaster, but also as Froyle's Historian, Mr Tom Knight. At the same time Mrs Bygrave and Miss Pullinger joined the staff and together they brought the school through the Winning Years of the Thirties and the War Years of the Forties.

Tom Knight was highly respected by all those he taught. Don Pritchard, who

was at Froyle School from 1922 until 1931, is just one of those who remember him well, "Mr Knight was a good Headmaster, but very strict. He wouldn't allow any talking at all. We used to sit in pairs in iron framed desks. His favourite expression was 'Come out, you scamp!' He would tell us wonderful stories about his time in South Africa. When he mentioned that, we knew we were all right for the afternoon. He once said, in later years, that we were a rough lot, but he wouldn't have swapped us for the world!"

This photograph of Mr Knight and his wife was taken in the garden of the schoolhouse, which stood adjacent to the school.

In 1923 the Duke and Duchess of York were married and Froyle School was given a holiday to celebrate the occasion. Two of the managers of the school, Mr Summers and Mr Sidgwick, presented it with a maypole, so that maypole dancing could be part of the celebrations. Naturally, a special photograph was taken of the children using the maypole for the first time.

In the 1930s, under the instruction of Mrs Bygrave, the school was to excel in needlework and country dancing. In 1933 the school entered a national competition for needlework and found themselves amongst the prizewinners. The Froyle Parish Paper of St Mary & Joseph announced the results with pride,

"We take off our hats to Mary Caines, aged 11 years, (below, seated) who won second prize in the junior class for plain needlework in the National Needlecraft Competition recently held by the 'School Mistress'.

The Competition was open to schools in the British Isles and abroad, and attracted thousands of entries. In the same class, certificates of honourable mention were gained by Marjorie Herson and Nancy Knight, while in the senior section a similar certificate was won by Dorothy Herson. Ordinary certificates for plain needlework were awarded to Marjorie Cox and Jessie Pinnells and a certificate for embroidery to Peggy Newland.

This is certainly a great accomplishment and worthy of loud cheers, so let us give three hearty cheers for the successful children, coupled with one extra loud one for Mrs Bygrave who has been untiring in her efforts of training and supervision."

Three of the girls who were so successful have very clear memories of that competition:

Mary Caines - "I don't remember what I made, only that the stitches were so tiny you could hardly see them. As well as the certificate, I won £1 and a lovely cream lace collar."

Dorothy Herson - "We were told by Mrs Bygrave that Queen Mary had visited the Exhibition and seen our work. Most of my work, which was a petticoat, was done by gaslight at home, by a coal fire. I don't know how I kept it clean."

Marjorie Cox - "My entry was a full length short sleeved nightdress in plain white Nainsook, edged with mauve bias binding. I remember getting into trouble with Mrs Bygrave because I pricked my finger and she was worried I would mark my needlework."

The Folk Dancing Team at Rotherfield Park in 1935 with Mrs Bygrave and Bandmaster, Mr Leslie Seymour

In 1935, again under the instruction of Mrs Bygrave, a team of fifteen girls found themselves taking first place honours in the English Folk Dancing Competition, held that year in Guildford. The photograph above sees them at the East Tisted Fete in Rotherfield Park on 20th July 1935, when they gave a display of their expertise. Just look at those hemlines! Have you ever seen anything so level? The reason for this was that all the dresses had to have the hemlines adjusted so that they were all the same height from the ground.

The girls are (left to right) Sheila Hill, Dora Holland, Rose Willis, Doris England, Violet Harris, Olive Rix, Nancy Knight, Peggy Robinson, Mary Burns, Marjorie Herson, Marjorie Watterson, Violet Wells, Jean McDonald and Phyllis Savage.

Jack Cooper, who attended Froyle School from 1934 until 1941, shares his memories of those days, "I remember the summers when, on our way to school, we would pop the bubbles of tar in the road where it had been poured to fill the pot holes and we would get ourselves covered with tar. It would get all over us, particularly in our hair. We hated the visit of the dentist who came in a caravan which was parked up at Froyle Place. If you had to visit him you were thankful if your name came early in the alphabet. The drill was worked by a foot pedal. Later in the day his feet got tired and the drill went slower!"

On April 18th 1946 Tom Knight's entry in the Log Book read,

> *"At the end of the Easter Holidays, May 4th, I cease to be Headmaster, as I am retiring, so this is my last day of actual teaching. Mrs J.A.Bygrave has been appointed Head Mistress."*

There is no doubt that Mrs Bygrave did not have the same place in the hearts of Froyle children as Mr Knight had done. Having said that, the school continued to do well under her headship. The H.M.I.'s Report in June 1955 reads, "This school has more than doubled its numbers since the last report in 1947. There are now 85 children on roll. The three classrooms are of good size; the largest, containing the piano, is used for Assembly and when the playground is unfit for use, for Physical Education. The Infant's classroom is used as a dining room, the school meal is cooked in a small kitchen on the premises, the attendance for the meal is nearly 100%. The Offices consist of buckets. In a classroom there is a sink with running water, but wash basins are of the portable type....

Every care is taken by the teachers to give these children a happy school-life, and to teach them to behave courteously to others; the children's ready response reflects credit on all concerned."

Asked how they remembered Mrs Bygrave, most of those Froyle children, who are now in their fifties and sixties, commented on her tinted glasses. Many found them quite disconcerting. "She always used to stare down at you through those dark glasses and you were never quite sure what she was thinking", one told me. Isn't it strange what sticks in your memory when you are a child! The reason for these glasses was that Mrs Bygrave had continuing problems with her eyes

Mrs Bygrave, on the right of the photograph, introduces Mr Heywood, the first Headteacher of the newly opened Lord Mayor Treloar College, to the children in 1954

Mrs Bygrave surrounded by her school children on the Recreation Ground in Lower Froyle

and had to undergo several operations, necessitating the heavily tinted lenses. The children probably weren't even aware of that!

After thirty five years of service to the school, Mrs Bygrave retired in 1957. We believe the photograph above is of her retirement presentation, but as there is no record of it in the School Log Books and none of those 'youngsters' can remember, we are only guessing. Whatever the occasion, Mrs Bygrave is certainly being thanked for her service to Froyle School.

The next Headteacher, Mrs Dean, was only at the school for two years, but they were very active years, with the forming of the PTA.

> *"A meeting of parents was held in school this evening. It was decided to form a parent-teacher association. A temporary committee was elected to plan initial meetings consisting of Mrs Dean and Mrs Roberts - representing the staff; Mrs Robson, Mr Pros(s)er and Mr Barnes, representing the parents and Miss Chubb the Managers." (A.J.Dean, March 20th 1958)*

A permanent committee was elected in June, consisting of Chairman & Treasurer, Mrs Dean; Secretary, Mrs Tourrell, with Mrs Roberts representing the teachers; Mr Barnes and Mrs Peters, the parents; Miss Chubb, the Managers.

There was also a great deal of restoration work on the actual fabric of the building during Mrs Dean's headship and this was something Mr W.J.Lailey fought tirelessly for from the moment he took over as Headmaster in 1959.

Indeed, it was during his term of office that there was talk of a new school altogether.

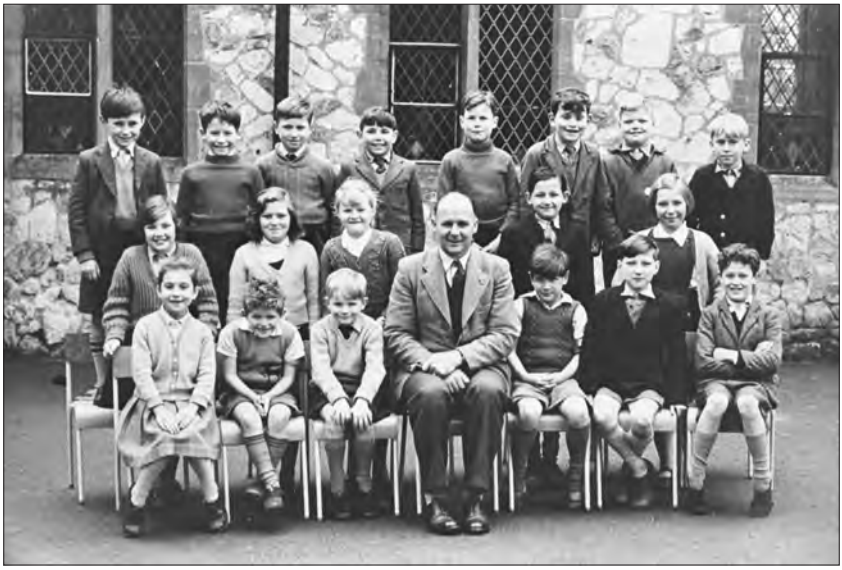
> *"A meeting was held in the school to discuss the possibility of a new school. It was unanimously agreed that a new school was desirable and the County was urged to proceed as quickly as possible....The question of siting was discussed, and in view of the fact that most of the population of the school was mainly centred in Lower Froyle, it was agreed that that would be the most likely and convenient place to build."*
>
> *(W.J.Lailey, Nov.1962)*

> *"A meeting of the Managers was held to mark the map, provided by the County, with possible sites for the proposed new school. The most popular choice decided upon was opposite the Westburn Fields housing estate, on land farmed by Mr Thomas and owned by Mrs Bootle-Wilbraham."*
>
> *(W.J.Lailey, Dec.1962)*

Sadly, all this activity was to no avail. In 1964 Mr Lailey was informed that Yes! Froyle School would close, but at some unspecified date in the future, when the children would be transferred to a new school to be built in the nearby village of Bentley! That unspecified date turned out to be 1986!

Mr Lailey was another very popular Headteacher and many of his students remember him with affection. Andrew Pritchard, who was at Froyle School from

Mr Lailey with his class in 1960



Children enjoying a snowball fight in the playground during the winter of 1963

1961 until 1967, told me, "He used to produce some marvellous Christmas Pantomimes, all in rhyme. I remember us doing 'Sleeping Beauty'. Mark Elston, Barry Cousins and myself were three pantomime fairies, complete with frilly skirts and knickers. I still remember our opening lines,

> *"We're Pantomime Fairies, our duty is clear We stand here before you, year after year*
>
> And they ended,
>
> *Although we're short on beauty, you'll agree We're probably the sleepiest lot you'll ever see!"*

Perhaps, not surprisingly, Andrew didn't offer us a photograph of this magic moment in his childhood!

Patricia Wood, née Knight, at school from 1960 to 1966, also has happy memories of her time there, "Mr Lailey, Mrs Roberts, Miss Amaballino, and Mrs Tourrell, the school secretary; the peacock tapestry we all helped to do, wonderful school dinners cooked by Mrs Whittock and Mrs Binfield, Christmas plays, sports days, nature walks with Mr Lailey, and then the long walk home through the Beeches, seeing how far you could walk along the wall before falling off."

Mr Lailey was followed in 1967 by Miss Swain, who was Headteacher until 1975. Strangely enough, I have never seen one photograph of Miss Swain and know very little about her time at Froyle at all. That is mainly because she, unlike those heads before her, wrote very little in her log books.

They were literally logs of events, almost like an appointment book, rather than the lengthy and often quite personal notes of some of the other heads. For example, nowhere does she mention the celebrations that took place in school during 1967 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the school - rather an oversight, I would have thought! Luckily, the local press were around to, at least, capture the celebrations on camera.

Mrs Nora Jupe took up her post in 1975. Little did she realise as she greeted the children on the first day of the autumn term that she would be the last Headteacher of Froyle School. Life went on very much as usual, the children excelling in sport as well as continuing to do well in the academic subjects. But numbers were dwindling and by the beginning of the 1980s there were only 22 children attending the school.

Although at the start of 1984 the school seemed to be flourishing, and about to be redecorated, there were rumours of closure throughout the year and in February 1985 an Open Meeting was called to discuss the future of Froyle School. It was clear, at that meeting, that for 'future' one should substitute 'closure'.

Froyle school children in 1974. Steven Webb, Mark Solley, Mark Waring, Robbie Bullpitt, Gary Woodcock, Claire Cray, Karen Stupple, Elaine Maine, Sandra Shurgold, Dawn Woodcock, Mark Cray, Jackie Bramley, Patrick Mayo, Sandra Trim, Jane Waring, Robert Watkins, Paul Mayo, Wendy Shurgold, Andrew Bennett, Karen Webb, Michael Caine, Brian Shurgold.

In her book about the School, Mrs Jupe tells us,

"The final closure proposal was not validated until September when letters, first to the PTA secretary, then to the Chairman of Governors, were received and a copy of the Governors letter was sent to the school.

After the final closure notice, parents and teachers were determined to make sure the last two terms of Froyle School were to be happy successful ones. The PTA organised a 'Car-Boot Sale' for funds and at the AGM they organised an illustrated story competition, for both Infants and Juniors. The stories were put on the computer by the children and the printouts mounted with the illustrations, anonymously of course. A bass xylophone was purchased from school funds, after consultation with Bentley School, where Mrs Russell (a teacher) hoped to transfer after July 1986. Mrs Jupe had already decided to retire when the school closed."

Numbers had now fallen to 20 - a far cry from the 135 who had attended that very first day 118 years before - but Mrs Jupe and her staff wanted to make sure the school closed 'with a bang', so plans got under way to invite as many past pupils as possible to join the present ones for a 'Farewell Occasion'.

I leave Mrs Jupe to describe the last few days of Froyle School,

"The main occasion of the term however, was the 'Farewell Occasion' on Midsummer's Day. For more than thirteen hours, hundreds of visitors came to take part in a pleasant but sad reunion on a perfect summer's day. Many memories were revived, prompted by a photographic exhibition in the Hall of the school's history in decades, while in the Junior Classroom, children's work over the past decade was displayed. Sustained by ploughman's lunches and cups of tea, some visitors stayed all day and there were dancing displays in the afternoon, joined in by visitors. After a tea party for the school children and a disco for the teenagers, the grown-ups enjoyed a barbecue and disco and were loathe to go home until just before midnight when a thunderstorm broke - the school really did close with a bang!

In the last week of term, a Farewell Service was held in the Church; Mrs Dean and Col.Willcocks spoke about the school and the children performed their play, 'The Conversion of Saul', as the theme of the service was 'Light'. Both old and new hymns were sung, the school ending as it had begun, with a service in church and tea in the school. After presentations had been made to Mrs Jupe and the staff, by Mr R.Haddock, the Assistant Area Education Officer, and autograph

albums had been presented to the children, containing a copy of their last school photograph, the cake sculpted by Mrs Trim in the shape of the school building was cut and eaten."

At that presentation Roger Haddock presented Mrs Jupe with the 'Gold Letter', a token of the County's appreciation, and he told a crowded hall, "Mrs Jupe has always been loyal, dedicated and full of the joys of the world. We thank her sincerely."

On that final day of term, as the children gathered on the front lawn for the last time, parents joined them for a short meeting where Mrs Jupe, who was retiring that day, supervised the children as they presented their farewell gifts to the staff. Finally, Mrs Jupe closed the school with the words, "It only remains for me to now say 'goodbye' and 'thank you' as our children leave these premises for the last time as pupils of Froyle School."

Twenty two children transferred from Froyle to Bentley School after the closure, although the building continued as a school during 1987, being used by Bentley School while their own premises were enlarged and refurbished. But in July 1987 Froyle School was handed back to the Treloar Trust, from whom it had been leased.

The Trust considered incorporating it into the rest of, what was then, the Lord Mayor Treloar College, but after discussion, decided to put it on the market, with planning permission to turn it into a private residence.

Mrs Jupe attended the auction to watch her school come under the hammer. She was just one of several local people who felt they had to be "in at the end" of the building that had played such an important role in village life.

Let us leave Froyle School with a selection of photographs from that "Farewell Occasion" Exhibition.

Froyle School 1868-1986

We believe this is the very first photograph taken at Froyle School and, although we are unable to date it precisely, you will notice that someone has written on it 'Alf', identifying one of the children. This Alf is, in fact, Alfred Brownjohn -someone you will meet later. Alfred was born in 1871, so that would put this photograph around 1880 I would think. The Headmaster at this time was George Veal.

The older children in the playground around the year 1898. At this time the younger children were separated by a fence and you can just make out their blurred little faces peeping over the top

The School in about 1902. Unfortunately nothing is known about the occasion of this photograph

The Football Team of 1908

All the children gather at the front of the School for the traditional photo in 1922

The Class of 1923

Flower fairies in the 1930s, we believe, although no-one has owned up yet!

The Class of 1930

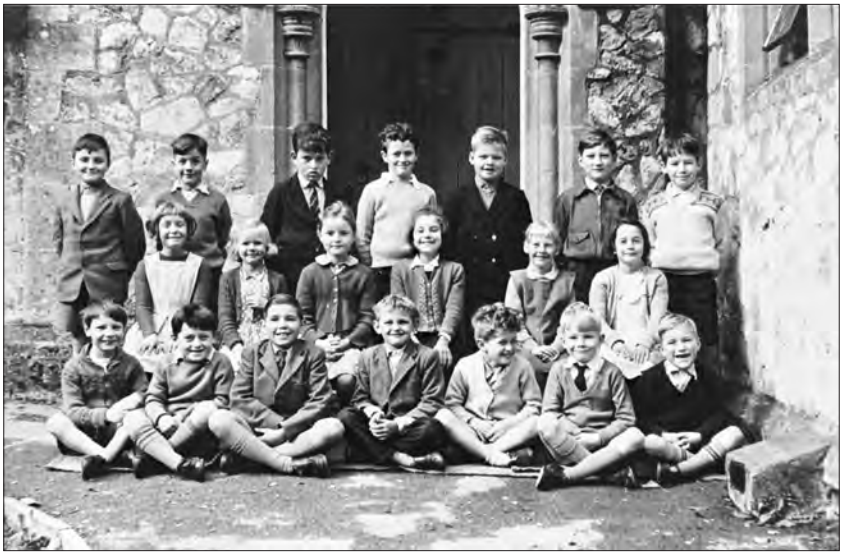
The Class of 1950

The Class of 1951

Playing Rounders in 1954

Mrs Roberts' Class of 1958

The Class of 1961



Miss Amabilino's Class of the early 1960s

'Christmas in Mexico', a school presentation in 1975

The school children pose for a special photograph in 1977 to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II

Froyle School children at an Inter School Sports Day in 1978. The girls Netball team had picked up the trophy for gaining the highest number of points amongst the smaller schools.

Prizewinners at Froyle School's Spring Show in 1982 with Mr Hawkins (left), Mrs J.Bootle-Wilbraham and Mr Hart

May Day Celebrations at Froyle School in 1985. Headteacher, Mrs Jupe, steadies the maypole, while, in the background, Miss Ireson provides the music with her piano accordion

The last official Froyle School photograph, taken in 1986

Froyle School in 1989, during its conversion into a private dwelling

At Work

The Brownjohn brothers, Walter and Alfred, stand outside their newly refurbished stores in 1908. I think Lipton's might have had a hand in the refurbishment, as I have never seen so many adverts for tea! From left to right are Alfred's son Charles, then Walter with his hands on his hips. Next to him is his brother Alfred, with arms folded. The little girl is Kitty Collins - perhaps she has come to buy some lemon sherbert! Have you noticed the lads on the roof? How they must have enjoyed posing for this photograph. They are Alfred's sons, Tom and Harold, and Walter's son, Hubert

Farming

Looking back as far as records exist, we find that the 'industry' that played a very large part in the economy of Froyle in the 12th and 13th centuries was wool. Theo Beck tells us,

"Out of the Manor of Froyle, belonging to the Nuns of St Mary's Winchester 3 weys 4 stone (a wey or weigh of wool and 56lbs or 2 sacks) of wool were sold in 1236 for £3 6s 0d; in the following years 4½ weys 28lbs realised £6 9s 6d and 2½ weys 9 cloves £3 16s 6d. In 1240 three weys of wool were sold for £3 9s 0d and next year the large wool (lana grossa) brought in £5 3s 6d, while 2s 5d was also received for 43 fleeces of lambs. The fleeces of sheep accounted for on the Manor in that year reached a sum total of 837, of these 84 were paid in tithes and 3 were allotted as customary prerequisites to the three shepherds. The 750 of the residue being estimated at 41½ weys. The price of wool seems to have been increasing towards the middle of the 13th century, for, in the year 1246, 5 weys of large wool from Froyle Manor brought in £5 6s 8d."

There was a Fulling Mill at Millcourt where the wool was cleansed before being sent to the Clothiers. It is generally supposed that Fuller's Earth, having been discovered at Churt, was first used here and at Orp's Mill, Alton. Hampshire was famous for its wool in the Middle Ages, and there were many of these Fulling Mills. Wool was exported from Southampton, where it was weighed on the Tron (weighing beam) to collect the King's dues. Woollen goods were made in Hampshire towns, including Alton, and in village cottages. 'Burrells', 'Quilts' and 'Challons' were made. 'Challons' were the nearest thing to our modern day blankets. Blankets, as we know them, were first made by Mr Blanket of Trowbridge, Wilts, in 1836.

Theo Beck continues, "Another product of Froyle was cider and every dwelling of any size had an orchard. Some cider was sold, but considerable quantities were delivered to the Abbey for its own use. In the year1236 three Tuns of cider were sold for 21s. In the following year the remainder of a 'cask of cider' was sold for 14d, and out of four tuns of new cider, two were used on the Manor in 'bever' (bever - eleven o'clock luncheon) otherwise appropriated by the Abbess. Two full casks remained to the next year. In that and the next two years no cider was sold, but in 1241 no less than £2 3s 5½d was derived from this source."

In Charles II's time, when John Aubrey tells us that Farnham had become "the greatest market in England for wheat", Froyle farmers had long since turned over to arable farming. When harvesting was done by hand all the village went gleaning and the corn was ground, and, of course, home-made bread was baked. There were several mills in the vicinity. Froyle Mill still stands on the River Wey, but is now a private house.

In more recent times the growing of hops has played an important part in the prosperity of the village. At one time the fields would be full of them, as far as the eye could see. In 1800 there were 141 acres of hops in Froyle, and an 1855 Directory states that "there are hop-yards on all the farms." Today there are hardly any. William Westbrook was one of those farmers still growing hops at the turn of the 20th century and his daughter Lilian, who we met earlier, had fond memories of hop picking at that time,

"Hop picking was such a busy time in our family for many years, grandfather, uncle and father all grew hops on their separate farms. They employed the same pickers, always home pickers and so we knew them all. Grandfather's hops were picked first, then uncle's and last, my father's. The three farms were adjoining.

Whole families went into the gardens - babies in prams, toddlers and school children of all ages. Many old folk wouldn't have missed the hop picking season for anything. The pickers were mostly women and children, the menfolk of the village being occupied with their various jobs. The hops were always picked during the school summer holidays and it certainly gave the children something to do. Even my mother, with a family and a busy farmhouse to control, would spare a certain amount of time each day for the hop gardens, and we children went too.

We were expected to pick hops and not play around, but we had our fun. It was quite a thrill to sit on a small stool and fill an upturned umbrella with the hops, gradually covering the wires and then emptying them into the big bin and

Hop fields in Lower Froyle in 1912

starting the process all over again. These hops grew on poles. Grand-father and his sons never changed their method of hop growing to the modern way with string. Pole pullers were kept busy and would walk backward and forwards pulling the poles with a fag-hook for the pickers, who put the poles across the bins. These bins held seven bushels and were emptied from time to time, the tally man keeping a strict account of the bushels each family picked. The secret of a good day's picking was an early start at 6.30 or 7am, finishing at about 5pm. Leaves would fall in the bins and these had to be picked out again as they spoilt the samples for the hop buyers.

A welcome visitor to the hop gardens was the local baker with his basket of buns of all sorts and sizes, and the lucky ones with pence to spare enjoyed them for lunch. Dinner was often eaten in the gardens, with hands half black with the stain of the hops and, oh, what a bitter taste was mingled with the sandwiches, pies, apples. After a busy day what a delight it was to wash your hands at the old fashioned brick sink in the farm kitchen and sit down with the family to a fish supper, herrings or bloaters for preference.

The hop kiln was a fascinating place, and sometimes we children were allowed to watch the old hop drier at his work, to see the hop pockets filled and to roast large potatoes in the hot embers of the charcoal fire for our supper. The old hop drier was a remarkable man; he went to each hop kiln in turn and ate, slept and lived in the kilns day and night for three or four weeks, his bed a wooden bench with a few sacks for bed clothes. He was a cheerful happy man. The previous old drier perished in a fire at uncle's hop kiln before the turn of the century.

And now a word of the price; it was usually 2d or 2½d a bushel, grandfather paying the pickers. Gradually the hops were grubbed out, and in 1912 only one garden remained on father's farm. The hops were so small that he had to pay 6d a bushel to get them picked, and so ended the hop growing on three family farms in a little village in a corner of Hampshire."

Mrs Smither mentions the hop drier who lost his life. His name was William Bunce and here is the story told by his son Arthur to the Coroner's Jury when it met at the Traveller's Rest, Lower Froyle, two days after the fire. This report appeared in the Hampshire Herald in September 1895.

> "On Wednesday night, the 18th inst., about half past nine, deceased and myself were moving hops from the 'hair' (a large sieve); I was shovelling and father was sweeping behind me to dry hops off the kiln..... There was a lamp hanging close to the doorway, it was a paraffin lamp, with wire all round the glass. As I was throwing the hops out of the doorway, the handle of the shovel struck the bottom

> of the lamp and knocked it over; as it was falling the oil fell out, and a blaze struck up all round my feet. I could not see my father, so I jumped down into the store room and from there down to the ground outside; the other fellow, Wm. Pinnells, done the same. I could not get through the flame to my father; he was a fairly active man. It was impossible for me to get at my father; there was an 'hair' cloth there and blazed up immediately. I picked up the lamp directly it fell and slung it out of the door and the oil dropped as I threw it....."

The report continues,

> "Nothing could be done to save William Bunce, but the villagers rushed to the scene to save the ricks and barns by throwing buckets of water over them. Mr Westbrook's nephew, Mr Edwin Brownjohn, jumped on his horse and galloped the five miles to Alton to call the Fire Brigade, shouting 'Fire! Fire!' as he went through the village."

In 2000 the actual hop kiln mentioned above is still standing, almost in its original state.

Hop pickers at the turn of the last century. You can clearly see the tally man with his book

Whole families worked in the field. Here we see Jim and Nancy Knight with their mother, along with a friend, Maurice Hill, in 1929

Gwen Knight lent us her late husband Jim's schoolbook for the year 1929. In it Jim, with the cap in the picture above, describes a trip to the hop gardens.

"One Monday I got out of bed at about a quarter to seven, ready to go into the hop-garden. It was a beautiful sunny morning and it looked like being a very hot day. I had my breakfast at seven o'clock and then I walked to the garden with mother. We got there at about half past seven and then we started picking. They first measured at ten o'clock, and then we had some lunch. The next measure was at half past twelve. Mr Clarke, the tally man, then told us that we could have an hour off for dinner. The last measure was at half past three and then we went home, after having spent an enjoyable day in the hop-fields."

Bill Elstow remembers what hop picking was like in the 1940s. "If you have not picked hops your picture of life's rich pattern is still incomplete," he says. "The ritual was that you were picked up early in the morning at various points in an open backed lorry and taken to the hop garden where each family was assigned a row to pick. To start with you had to hang onto a vine to pull it down. The first ones in the morning were always wet with enough dew to give you a soaking but the

summer days that I remember were always scorching hot so that the vines soon dried out. Every so often during the day the tally man would come round with a horse and wagon and two helpers to measure the hops you had picked, tip them onto a large piece of sacking, roll them up and throw them up onto the wagon. The tally man would then enter the amount against your name. The procedure was, before he came, to thrust your arms deep into the hops and fluff them up to sit as high in the basket as you could make them. Woe betide anyone who knocked the basket after that! When you picked hops your hands got covered by the hop resin and by lunch time your hands were black with it. Some people would pick with fingerless gloves to avoid the scratching caused by the vines but it was all a pretty primitive affair with no toilet or hand washing facilities. Calls of nature had to be dealt with in the shaded areas of darkness down the end of the rows. When the time came to eat your sandwiches with resin covered hands at lunch time you soon appreciated why hops were used to make bitter beer. The hops were taken from the gardens to the hop kilns for drying and preserving and this would go on all day and all night during the short season. It was a very pleasant experience as the chill of the evening came to wander into the warm base of the kiln where the drying fires were being maintained to dry the hops spread out on the upper floors. The men used to have glistening yellow sticks of sulphur which they used to burn to produce sulphur dioxide to help preserve the hops. When dry the hops would be raked to a hole in the floor falling into a very long circular sack where they would be compressed rock hard to give a poke of hops."

Marie Summer and Beryl Vivian in the hop gardens

The Brewery area in Husseys Lane at the turn of the last century. You can just see the hop kiln

During the 1800s, when hop growing was at its peak, there were several Malthouses in Lower Froyle - nearly all harvesting and drying their own hops.

But, in Husseys Lane there was not only a Malthouse, but also a Brewery. I was very fortunate to be able to examine the deeds of what is today, Old Brewery House, although these only go back to 1798 and the house is a little older than that, I believe. At this time it was described as a "messuage, tenements, malthouse and kilns." From 1826 until 1864 it was run by William Messenger, who also had another Malthouse in 'Froyle Street'. This, I believe, was the Malthouse which stood alongside Brownjohn's Stores and which was pulled down around the turn of the last century.

The last Brewer in Husseys Lane was Mrs Hannah Selina Morse, who lived to the good age of 94. The daughter of William Mayhew of Lower Froyle, she was brought up at The Travellers Rest 'Beer House', as it was known then. She married Raymond Morse and the couple farmed at Yarnhams for several years. In 1881 they left the farm and Raymond purchased the Froyle Brewery from the estate of the late Mr W.Knight. After her husband's death in 1907 Mrs Morse carried on the Brewery, which was renowned for its family ales, until about 1926, when the oasts were demolished.

These next few pages look at farming with one of the longest established families of Froyle, the Westbrooks.

The photograph below is of George Herrett Westbrook, (Lilian's father) watering his horses in the 1920s at Sylvesters, the first farm his family occupied. The pond only had a soft bottom, so the horses would be brought to the water's edge with a halter round their necks to prevent them from entering the pond and becoming stuck in the mud. On one occasion a young horse did take the plunge and Lilian remembers how everyone, farm hands and neighbours, rushed to push at it with poles. "The poor beast must have been bewildered", she writes, "and then a mighty push and a plunge and out he scrambled covered in black slimy mud."

By the 1960s this pond had disappeared completely, like so many of the ponds that used to exist in the village.

If one looks at the Tithe Map of Froyle one will see that in 1847 there were no less than 17 ponds in Froyle. In 2000 there are just two; one in Upper Froyle in what was part of Froyle Park, and the other in Lower Froyle at the corner of Husseys Lane, which as long as anyone can remember has been 'The Village Pond'.

Lilian Smither remembers

"About the year 1895 my grandfather, William Westbrook, decided it was time that a long outstanding debt was settled, so he took the law into his own hands. Very early one morning he harnessed two of his horses to a farm wagon and, accompanied by one of his carters, set forth. The distance was about fifteen miles to a farm in a village of the neighbouring county. The money not being forthcoming, he thereupon collected goods to the value of the amount owing and commenced the long trek back home, and so the debt was satisfactorily settled.

When it grew dusk my grandmother, then well over 70 years of age, became uneasy as grandfather had not returned. Lighting a hurricane lantern she and her son went through the village to the main road. This village road was very narrow, very rough, in many places trees met overhead and even in the day time it was dark and gloomy. At night the darkness was such that it could be felt and one could pass other travellers on the road without seeing them; only their footsteps could be heard. They could hear the horses' hooves upon the road and the rattle of the wagon. One can imagine the shouting and the "Wooa Wooa," as the swinging of the lantern would be a sign that someone was waiting for them. Then with grandmother and her lantern in front they all proceeded through the village street to the home farm.

Among the goods grandfather collected were four sets of horse bells. These were used on special occasions and in 1900, at a 'Harvest Home' in the village, grandfather's four horses and decorated wagon, complete with horse bells, won first prize. The bells were fixed to the horses' collars and made sweet music as they walked. The bells, no doubt, contributed towards the gaining of the prize. These bells were also used at night to give audible warning of approach as the farm wagons had no lights.

The years passed, grandmother and grandfather died, and an uncle living in the same village acquired the horse bells. They rested in his attic for several years. I paid uncle a visit and he showed me the bells lying on the floor of the attic covered in dust, beside the rotting apples and pears. I admired the old bells but uncle never so much as lifted them from their dusty bed and I had to be content to leave them there. In due course of time uncle died and we of the family said, "What about the horse bells?" After a while we learned that auntie had sent them to a Museum in a nearby town and there they rest to this day.

Grandfather's method of settling a debt was quite unlawful no doubt, even in those far off days, but he avoided a County Court action and its costs, and one feels that the bells are quite safe in their last resting place. They will not return to a dusty attic nor be sold to a scrap iron dealer."

These two photographs, taken in 1900, are of the Harvest Home dressed wagon competition, which was an annual event. Below we see the wagon entered by Mr William Westbrook, complete with its team of four horses, which, incidentally, won first prize. Above can be seen a number of entrants in other classes, including two prams and a small cart pulled by a little goat. Today William Westbrook's horse bells can be seen at the Curtis Museum in Alton

Frank Pinnells, George Cox, Dick Beckhurst, Jack Day and Gyp in the yard of Rock House Farm

Frank (Chink) Pinnells at Sylrock Farm stables with Toby in 1939. Frank worked for the Westbrook family for over 40 years

Bill Elstow remembers that Frank Pinnells worked three shire horses at the Westbrook farm. "Whether ploughing or binding when lunch time came he would unharness the horses and ride them back to the farm for lunch. How I yearned to be given a ride on them but never had the nerve to ask and so never did."

Saddling the horses at Rock House Farm

The farmyard and stables of Rock House Farm

Harvest time at Froyle in the 1930s

Steam power on the farm at Froyle in the 1930s

A much loved Froyle farmer of the last century was Ena Westbrook and her sister Lilian wrote this about her in 1982.

Ena Westbrook

"I must begin at the beginning, even before she was born. Her birth occurred two months after our only brother died. One can imagine the hope that the new baby would be a boy, to replace, in some measure, the little lad of seven years, who died the previous February.

The baby arrived at Sylvesters Farm, Lower Froyle, on April 20th, 1906, a girl, and was christened 'Ena'. Why 'Ena'? ask my grandchildren. Princess Ena, the great granddaughter of Queen Victoria was married on that day to King Alfonso of Spain. Great interest was obviously taken by my family in the Royal Family at that time.

The Westbrook family came from a long line of farmers. The name occurs in the Froyle Church Registers in the 16th century, and always they were farmers and later hop growers; hence the great desire for a boy. Ena was the youngest child in a family of four daughters.

Ena, with her sisters, attended the Froyle Village School; at the age of 12 she cycled with her sister Grace to Eggars Grammar School, at Alton. She often recalls the pleasure she obtained from riding a bicycle. The distance from our home to the Grammar School was four miles, and the road through the village was rough and stony. These two young girls cycled in all weather, wet or dry. Two or three other Froyle children also cycled with them. Ena found the academic side of life at the school most interesting and she enjoyed every minute of it and certainly did her best in work and play, particularly netball.

It was taken for granted that she remained at home with mother and father to help in any capacity at the farm, indoors or outdoors, as required. She spent many hours with the poultry and watching mother make butter, and kill and prepare poultry for the oven for various customers.

She became fond of the horses, both the trap horses and cart horses. Father died in 1936 at Rock House Farm, Lower Froyle, but fortunately he bought Ena a car in 1934 and she learnt to drive. Father never did, he preferred to drive a horse in the trap and wagonette, with the entire family, going to market or visiting relations and friends. How slow the pace was in those days.

Mother continued to farm with Ena's help after father's death and built the house 'Sylrock', where Ena and her sister Grace still live. Because we were all girls we did not inherit the Westbrook property after father's death. Grandfather's will directed this and the property passed to our male cousin.

Ena loved the outdoor life and continued to farm after mother's death, in

1943, with the same carter and cowman (Jack Day). Fortunately her health was very good and from about 1930 onwards she has not had a holiday. She organised the hay making and harvesting in due season, year after year; turning the hay with a two pronged long handled fork and putting the corn in stooks. She worked long hours, all the hours of day light. Farming was her first love but she was also very interested in the two Churches in the village, St Joseph's at Lower Froyle and St Mary's at Upper Froyle.

She made butter, reared poultry, killed and plucked them, just like Mother did in her day. When the cowman became too old to milk the cows, she did this job also, by hand of course, no milking machine for Ena.

The next thing she tackled was a tractor, as shown in the photograph below. Now at the age of 76, she rears poultry and looks after other people's horses, when necessary, in the meadow adjoining the house.

So the baby girl, who should have been a baby boy, was certainly the next best thing!"

Ena Westbrook passed away in 1986 at the age of 80. Her sister Grace died in 1989, closing the Westbrook chapter in the history of Froyle.

Henry Brownjohn

In 1937 Lilian Smither's cousin, Henry Brownjohn, and his family, took over Rock House Farm and his two daughters Kath and Marj worked alongside their father. Marj can see herself now sitting up on the binder and taking the reins of the three horses, while her father sat beside her with the whip ready to 'gee' the horses up. "They really needed that when we were working in Upper Cullum, (the old name for the field above the quarry in Well Lane). It was hard work for them in that particular field because of the slope of the land", she told me.

Marj and her sister were kept very busy milking the cows on the farm. An average day for the two girls started at 6.00am with milking, followed by bottling. They then delivered the milk by pony and float and a trade bike to Lower Froyle and the nearby village of Bentley. As well as helping with many chores on the farm, they also assisted their mother in the house as she took in paying guests.

It's perhaps difficult for us to imagine a time when milk was collected in cans, still warm from the cows! But right up until the 1950s people in Froyle collected their milk this way from various farms in the village and horsedrawn milk floats were a familiar sight. When the lanes were much quieter there was a pleasant stir of activity after the afternoon milking, when women with cans and jugs would greet each other in passing. In the 16th century a gallon of milk could be bought for 1½d and for many, many, years fresh butter and cream could be bought at any farm. Ann Hill, who lived at Elm Croft, used to have to walk up Husseys Lane every day to fetch two pints of milk from Mrs Morse - do you remember, we met her earlier at the Brewery! She apparently also kept cows and sold milk to villagers in the area around Husseys Lane. Ann also remembers the fact that Mrs Morse used to smoke a clay pipe!

Kath and Marj Brownjohn in the spring of 1942 taking a well earned break after milking

Marj Brownjohn with the pony and float

Roy Andrew with his sister Joan in the early 1940s

In Upper Froyle the Andrew family had farmed since 1925, but this article from the Petersfield Post of August 17th, 1994, is indicative of the changing face of the village.

"Farewell to a Farming Era

Three generations and 82 years of family farming come to an end next month.....

The Andrew family have been tenant farmers at Froyle since 1912, when Roy's grandfather and family moved from their farm in Thame, Oxfordshire to Hodges Farm, Lower Froyle. All livestock and equipment was brought by road, using horses for transport.

In 1925 the family moved to Blundens Farm, Upper Froyle, where Roy's parents moved into Blundens Cottage, where he was born. Grandparents moved into The Chestnuts, where Roy has lived since his marriage in 1955.

Blundens Farm became a mixed farm, growing wheat, oats, barley, lucerne, peas, beans, sainfoin and short leys for hay. The livestock consisted of sheep, dairy cattle, beef cattle, pigs and 1500 chicken. (Roy's sister, Joan, tells of 999 eggs being collected in one day alone and, try as they might, they could not find that 1,000th egg!)

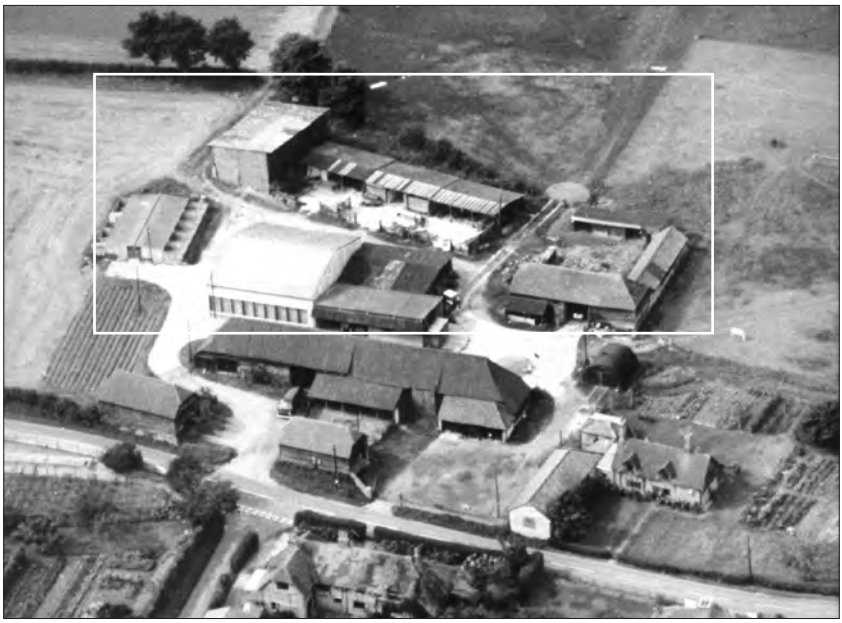
During the Second World War Roy started full time work on the farm which by then was also growing kale, mangles, swedes, potatoes and sugar beet. Each beet was trimmed and loaded into trailers by hand, then taken to Bentley Station and loaded by hand onto the railway wagons.

In 1920 Roy's father and uncle purchased their first tractor, a second was acquired in 1939, but still much of the farm work was carried out by horses and manpower.

In 1925 there were 11 men working on the farm and during the Second WW 10 men (some of whom were Italian and German prisoners of war) with one land girl.

In contrast Roy has, for the past 7 years, run the now all-cereal farm on his own with the help of one man during the summer months."

In 2000 all the large barns highlighted in the photograph below have disappeared. In their place is a 'modern day Manor House'.



Over the past few pages we have seen several working horses and they, of course, all needed the services of a blacksmith. So, here in Froyle, as in other rural communities, we find, not just one but several blacksmiths.

In Upper Froyle there was a forge, built by Sir Hubert Miller at the turn of the century, which was certainly in operation within living memory. But before that the censuses tell us that there was a "Blacksmiths Shop with Cottages at back" in Upper Froyle Street. It has been suggested that this was at Park Edge, as part of the old Heath's Farm, but I wonder whether it might not have been at Blundens Farm Cottage, seen in the bottom right of the photograph above. Bob Adams, who worked in the blacksmiths all his life, told Joan Andrew, who lives in Blundens Farm Cottage, that he lived in her house. The Census of 1871 tells us that he lived at the Blacksmiths Shop!

Bill Elstow remembers the Upper Froyle smithy, built by Sir Hubert Miller, as if it was yesterday.

"Jack Morris was the village blacksmith and many is the hour I used to stand in the doorway watching him work, both shoeing horses, making shoes and mending bits of farm machinery. The smithy was a mixture of smells... burning hoof, quenching steel and the smell of the forge. And the noise of the hammer on the anvil was characteristic too. With each strike he would let the hammer bounce to give 'clang, tink, tink'. And in between the anvil noises the wheeze of the bellows to bring the coke up to white heat to redden up the bits of iron laying in it." Mr Morris retired in the early 1950s and in 2000 the forge is a timber yard.

In Lower Froyle there was a blacksmith at the north end of the village, opposite Rock House Farm, but certainly not within living memory.

The other main blacksmith's shop in the village was also in Lower Froyle, near the pond in Husseys Lane. In the 19th century it was a wheelwrights and blacksmiths, run by Mr Faulkner. Of course, he didn't just deal with the horses and carts. An invoice, dated 1894, shows us the kind of jobs he carried out; "soldering a teapot, 3d; ringing two pigs, 6d; soldering two tin cans, 4d."

Children from Mayfield School in Alton visit the forge in Upper Froyle. Jack Morris, the blacksmith, can be seen standing to the left of the door with, on his right, Bob Adams with cap

The village pond on the corner of Husseys Lane at the turn of the last century. Carts would be driven into it, and allowed to stand for some hours, to fully soak the wooden wheels which would swell and make the iron tyres fit tightly onto them

Mr Faulkner also stamped hop bags, and Edwin Stacey, who worked at the forges in both Upper and Lower Froyle, told the compilers of the Froyle W.I.Scrapbook, in 1952, that during the hopping season, it was not unknown for him to work from 2.30am until 8pm. Mr Stacey and his wife had been married in St Mary's Church in 1905 and lived in Froyle all their married life.

In the 1930s the blacksmith was Mr Stent or 'Spriggy' as he was known. Sheila Gordon, née Hill, told me about his association with her father, E.R.Hill, who was the local builder and undertaker. "My father was a qualified wheelwright, but when it came to making wheels, he also had a carpenter and joiner, Charlie Chappell, in the yard. When it came to putting iron bands on the cart wheels, these were made by the blacksmith, 'Spriggy' Stent, who also worked in the yard. They worked together to put the bands on. Mr Stent shod the horses. He was a very busy man."

Mr Hill stamped the hop bags for Mr Mann at nearby Coldrey and continued to do this well into the 1960s. This was still carried out with the traditional wooden stencil, each one painted and applied by hand, with a certain amount of effort.

Ann Brownjohn who started her bakery business around 1841

Brownjohn's Stores in 1902, looking more like a scene out of the Wild West

The stores in about 1907. Walter Brownjohn stands at the door of the shop, while his brother Alfred is standing with his three children. On the right are 'Doughy' Lawrence with his horse 'Rufus', dog 'Bob' and cart. Note the gate across the entrance to the shop area

Brownjohn's Stores

We can trace the complete history of Froyle Stores, or Brownjohn's Stores as it was known for years, from its beginning in 1841 until it ceased to be a grocer's store in 1989. Since then it has been home to two interior design shops and, in 2000, is an art gallery. But it began its life as a bakers, run by a young widow with five children, the youngest of them just one year old.

Ann Sutton had married John Brownjohn in 1828 and they had settled at Froyle Mill. Sadly John passed away in 1840 and Ann sold up, purchasing the property at Lower Froyle and setting up her baker's business. By 1851 the census shows us that she was employing two bakers and a roundsman.

Ann died in 1871, but by this time Thomas, her son, had taken over the business. He married Caroline Varndell in 1860 and the couple had ten children, eight of whom survived. The eldest of these, Walter Brownjohn, took over the running of the shop on the death of his father in 1892.

For over half a century Walter and his younger brother Alfred worked alongside each other, serving the community. They sold everything imaginable; sweets, especial lemon sherberts, hardware, soap, paraffin, patent medicines, coal in the yard, and home baked bread, to name but a few. The store was also a sub-post office.

There is a lovely tale that has been handed down about postage stamps. Before the Second World War, Lady Baden-Powell, who lived at Pax Hill in nearby Bentley, was seen laughing to herself as she left the store. When asked what was so amusing she replied that she had purchased thirteen stamps, but had only paid for twelve. When she had asked why, Mrs Brownjohn had pointed out that when someone bought twelve stamps she always gave them one extra - a real baker's dozen!

The Brownjohns sold their store in 1946 to Messrs Wheatley of Bentley and the local newspaper ran this story, "Mr W.L. Brownjohn handed over the reins of office on Monday after completing fifty four and a half years service at Lower Froyle. He was appointed sub-postmaster on May 1st 1892, in succession to his father, who had held the appointment for a number of years. Mr Brownjohn's connection with the Post Office actually extended over 70 years and goes back to his schooldays, when he performed a delivery of letters in the village before attending school. He has carried on a grocery business as well as the Post Office and in addition has been Parish Clerk for over 51 years. As an appreciation of his services, he was recently presented with a pair of silver candlesticks by the parishioners."

(The presentation was actually given when he retired as Parish Clerk after 52 years)

Alfred and Kate Brownjohn with their sons, Charles, Thomas, and Harold

Harold Brownjohn, seen above on the right of this family group, remembers Brownjohn's Stores just prior to the First World War.

"The staff consisted of Walter, Alfred (Harold's father) and Edith Brownjohn. Lawrence was the head baker and Green the assistant with two roundsmen and a stable man to attend three to four horses and outside operations. There was one covered van plus two carts which went out daily covering rounds in Froyle, Bentley, Binsted and adjoining hamlets taking bread, cakes, groceries etc. generally ordered in advance.

In the shop Walter, Alfred and Edith did the serving, covering the sub-Post Office and groceries on one counter. Bacon, butter and bread etc. was on a rear counter whilst the third counter dealt with household goods - shoes and materials, crockery and glass and haberdashery etc. In the storeroom was meal and grain as well as feed for poultry, pigs and domestic animals, also a separate section for wood and paraffin etc. In the yard coal and coke was on sale and in the orchard behind the hop kilns pigs were reared for slaughtering and a special building used for curing bacon by smoking oak wood.

Good Friday was a hectic period as Hot Cross Buns and Lardies were specially made overnight and delivered round for Friday breakfast tables. The hop picking period caused extra work as bread, cakes and sweets were taken to the hop fields and camps. The business also covered the catering for the annual flower shows

and school and Christmas parties using their own trestle tables, crockery etc.

In fact the shop in the period 1900-1945 was the centre of the community and I remember many times when someone would knock quite late in the evening asking for a loaf or cheese to make sandwiches for the following day's lunch. On one or two occasions Alfred was knocked up in the middle of the night as he had a cycle, to alert the doctor or district nurse in Bentley of an emergency."

Alfred and Kate Brownjohn in 1932

Mrs Holland's Shop

Also in Lower Froyle was the confectioners and tobacconist shop run by Mrs Holland. It was situated at the bottom of Husseys Lane, opposite the pond, in a property now known as Bridge House. In the photograph above, taken in the 1930s, the shop can be seen on the right of the picture. It is probably Monday as Mrs Holland has a fine line of washing fluttering in the breeze. Note the state of the roads - they remained this way until the 1940s.

Mrs Holland outside her shop in the 1930s. The young lad on the left is Rob Stilling

The house itself was built in 1712, or so says a plaque set high in the wall facing the pond. Also on this plaque is a simple inscription of a boot, along with the initials K.E.L., so one might imagine that this particular building might have been a shoemaker's shop back at the beginning of the eighteenth century. At the beginning of the twenty first century it is a private house.

But back to Mrs Holland. She ran the shop in the 1930s and sold sweets and tobacco etc. Her daughter, Dora, has this to say about the shop, "It had iron railings outside, also a verandah with a galvanised roof, which allowed Mother to display fruit and odds and ends, basically it was a little general shop. We entered the shop from a living room. There were fixtures and drawers on one side, a narrow gangway, but a fairly big counter to serve and display. Thinking back of course, most people smoked, so that was a lively trade; woodbines, 2d a packet of five cigarettes; there were many cheap brands and tobacco for pipes and rolling one's own. Mr Jones was a friend and tobacconist from Alton who supplied Mother.

Unfortunately, she had very little time to herself in the evenings as people were always coming to the side door for things they had run out of, usually cigarettes!"

Francis Milne can remember buying toys there on his sixth birthday. That memory has stayed with him for sixty four years, so it must be a very special one!

E.R.Vivian, Butcher

Just down the road from Mrs Holland's was Mr Vivian's butcher's shop. Indeed, Mr Vivian had begun his butcher's trade in the shop on the corner of Husseys Lane which was to become Mrs Holland's. This new shop, pictured below, was built for Mr Vivian by Mr E.R.Hill, the local builder (and undertaker) in the late 1920s. Bill Elstow, who, incidentally, married Mr Vivian's daughter, Pam, passes on one of his father-in-law's famous sausage recipes of the 1930s.

5lbs lean white pork
4lbs of fat
1lb breadcrumbs
6 new laid eggs
1 pint of cream
2½oz of seasoning

The seasoning consisted of ½oz of each of dry marjoram, thyme, rosemary, mace, black pepper, ground together to a fine powder with 8oz salt.

As Bill adds, "You don't have to go and buy sausages like this - they come and knock on the door by themselves!"

There are two more shops I would like to mention. The first is the old Post Office in Upper Froyle, photographed above in about 1908. Now a private house, this was a Post Office until as late as 1989. But at the end of the eighteenth century it was a carpenter's shop with a saw pit in the front.

It was the home of Gerald Robinson and he helped his father, Thomas, in the saw pit until he was twelve years old. But, according to Gerald's son, Reg, he got so fed up with his father saying, "Clear out the sawdust, boy! I'm going down the pub", that he left home and went to work for Sir Hubert Miller as a gardener. You may remember a photograph of him in Chapter One. In time he became Head Gardener for Sir Hubert at The Shrubbery.

As well as being a carpenter's shop, the building was also the Upper Froyle Post Office and stamps etc. were sold from a tiny window at the side of the front door of the house. You can just about make it out in the centre of the photograph, to the right of the large round bush. It's interesting to note that in 1891 there were two posts on week days and Saturdays and one on Sunday!

This wasn't always the Post Office in Upper Froyle. Until at least 1861 the Post Office was part of the butcher's shop. 'A butchers? In Upper Froyle?', I hear you say! Sadly, not only is the shop no longer there, but neither is the building, although a few of the sheds can still be seen. They stand behind The Chestnuts, a house which was built almost directly in front of an earlier building known as 'Jointure House'.

A Jointure House was similar to a Dower House; that is to say, a house built for a widow for the period in which she survives her husband.

Unfortunately, we know nothing about this house, apart from the fact that it was there in 1672.

The butcher was John Simpson, the brother of James, who we have already met at Blundens Farm. The Simpsons were butchers from at least 1841, until at least 1891, and the family lived here until 1926, when the present Chestnuts was taken over by William Edward Andrew. The Chestnuts must, therefore, have been built during the tenancy of the Simpsons.

John was a very keen cricketer and we have a letter written by him to his sister, Rebecca, in 1832. In it he tells her, "I am beginning to feel myself at home. I don't know how I shall feel when I return for we are at Cricket every day and I fancy myself respected by them all. We have Gentlemen come for twenty miles round to play with and against us." He was writing from Cirencester and told her he was moving on to Oxford, but would not be home for about six weeks. He also remarks that he wished he had been playing for his friends in Froyle. Could it be that John was a semi-professional cricketer? He would have been 21 years old at the time. Anything is possible!

Besides these 'proper' shops, ones which we would recognise today, there were several other shops in the village, that could hardly be called 'shops' at all; they were often just the corner of someone's front room. In Upper Froyle, Mr Hall had a shoemaker's shop at Combefield, while in Lower Froyle, the 1861 Census informs us that James Lunn ran the "Lower Froyle Grocer's Shop" in one of the three Chapel Cottages, adjoining the Methodist Chapel. This photograph of them was taken some time later, in about 1905. Today the three cottages have been modernised and made into two.

At Warren Cottage we find Harriett Finden with her grocer's shop and post office. This must have been where letters were delivered before Brownjohn's Stores became a sub-post office. There were also several shoemakers, including William Ellis near the Prince of Wales public house.

At Leecot, just below Sylvesters, there was a grocer's shop in the 19th century, run by an Edwin Warren. During the Second World War the owners, Mr & Mrs Lee, let the small shop attached to it to Ted Wallace, an electrician by trade, who used it to charge up accumulators for radios.

If you were not working in the fields, or in a shop, then you would probably be in service. Many girls would go straight from school at quite a tender age to take up a post in 'the big house'.

In 1851 the servants at Froyle Place were:- Ann Thurkettle, cook & housekeeper, from Norfolk; Harriott Grimwood, nurse, also from Norfolk; Elizabeth Stroud, laundrymaid, from Dorset; Sarah Burt, housemaid, from Wilts;Esther Faulkner, housemaid, from Bentley; Mary Smith, kitchen maid, from Binsted; Charlotte Stacey, dairy maid, from South Warnborough; Harriott Hankin, laundry maid, from Bentley; Sarah Walker, scullery maid, from Froyle; James Mancey, gardener, from Winchfield; James Lock, footman, from South Warnborough; and Richard Kemp, footman, from Froyle.

Mr Herson, proud to drive the very first car in Froyle.
He worked as chauffeur to Mrs Lindsay, who lived at Highway House, Lower Froyle

At Play

Froyle Football Team in about 1900. At about this time matches were played in a corner of Froyle Park opposite the Hen & Chicken

Time, Gentlemen, Please

As far back as records exist men have been enjoying a long cool drink after a hard days work! By the 19th century there were three main types of retail outlets selling ale; Alehouses, in which beer and ale were brewed and sold on the premises, Taverns, in which wine could also be sold, and Inns, which provided food and shelter as well.

The Hen & Chicken

Situated on what is now the busy A31, this is the earliest recorded Inn in Froyle. It was built around 1740 as a Chaise House, following the construction of a new coach road in about 1730. Here the stage coach would stop to drop off and pick up passengers. The Inn provided refreshment and lodgings for travellers and if, after they were fully refreshed, they wished to travel to a nearby village, horses could also be hired. The stables were at the rear of the building and can still be seen today. The Inn was not a staging post, where horses were changed, as there was one in both Alton and Farnham and there was therefore no need to stop at the Hen & Chicken for that purpose.

The original building was, apparently, refronted in 1760, following a devastating fire which destroyed the upper storeys.

The Hen & Chicken in about 1902

The Inn is first mentioned in the parish registers in 1767. The Overseers of the Poor held their first meeting here in that year. There are records of them meeting again at the Hen & Chicken in 1772, when they spent no less that 18/-, and again in 1773, when they managed to confine the spending to 4/6d; perhaps they had been told to keep to a tighter budget! They didn't meet here regularly until 1806.

In the Curtis Museum in Alton are three old manuscript ledgers which record that every year on 11th July, from 1798 until about 1860, the farmers of the locality held a dinner at the Inn with the exclusive object, apparently, of wagering on the autumn crop of hops. The books contain lists of those present and the amounts of their stakes, as well as a wide range of side bets.

The main business of the evening was "a sweepstakes for 5/- each for dinner, etc., etc." on the amount of the hop duty for the current year, the gentleman making the closest approximation being the winner. Apparently the result, and its proceeds, were not formally announced till the next year's meeting, when the winner was ex officio Chairman of the gathering. The estimates in 1798 ranged from £19,999 19s 11d. to £42,000 - this optimistic forecast being that of the winner, a gentleman from Farnham, and falling short of the actual amount of £56,032 1s 11d.

Many of the side bets are amusing reflections on the psychology of the company. A Mr Andrews in particular appears to have been a spirited gambler, who laid numerous side bets, but became more and more melancholy as the liquor took hold. As the evening wore on his stakes rose (from 5 to 10 guineas) but his estimate of the season's yield in hops declined proportionately. In this year, a favourite wager was a pair of boots - ten or twelve pairs were pledged on various issues, and some £80 in the aggregate was laid in side bets - an indication of the prosperity of most of the yeomen. A frequent side bet was the weight of the squire's crop. Mr Lamport, the Innkeeper, laid Mr Andrews a guinea that "Sir Thomas Miller's plantation gives 30 cwt. of hops."

And so it went on for two more generations, with many of the same names appearing over and over again. The last meeting was soon followed by the withdrawal of the hop duty, in 1862.

It is not clear in the photograph, but the sign reads 'Hen & Chickens'. The name appears to have been changed for a period from about 1835 until well into the 20th century. I'm glad to say that in the year 2000 we all know that 'Chicken' is plural!

Besides the laundry cart outside the Inn there is also a carrier's wagon, ready to take customers into Alton for a few pence. Nowadays the area on the left of the photograph is a petrol station.

The Hen & Chicken was quite an important meeting place for villagers.

In 1852 the railway, a single line from Farnham to Alton, was opened and nearly all the people of Upper Froyle assembled near the Hen & Chicken on July 26th to see the first train go along.

There is a story told that, among the people waiting to see the train, was a man who stuttered badly. When the train appeared in sight, he commenced "Here she c-c-c-c ------- omes. There she g-g-g-g-------", but before he could get 'goes' out, the train had come and gone. As this is also told about other places, it was probably a story 'going the rounds' in those days.

The Inn became a popular gathering place for horse dealers and other 'travellers' and occasionally tempers would flare. The landlord in the early 1900s, Mr Rawson, apparently had a unique way of dealing with them. Like many country people, he kept bees and one particular day, when things started to get out of hand, he brought them into the pub and set them on the 'travellers'. That soon cleared the room! After that he only had to say "Do you want me to let my little friends out?", and peace reigned.

We leave the Hen & Chicken with a photograph, taken, I believe, well before the turn of the last century. An elderly gentlemen gets close to the fire - and I do mean close! In fact, it appears that the fire itself is not in the actual fireplace, but out in the room! Although the quality is not that good, you can clearly see the racks above the fireplace where letters would be posted.

The Anchor

This public house in Lower Froyle is first mentioned in records in 1806, but the building is much earlier than that. Reputed to be of 14th century origin, it is shown on old maps as a 'Beer House'. Like many of the houses in the village, it has an indoor well - in fact it is now a feature of the public house. Unfortunately we have no early photographs, so this is The Anchor in the early 1950s, very much as it is today.

Froyle is nowhere near the sea, so why is it called The Anchor, you may ask? The name probably derives from the words of St Paul (Hebrews 6 verse 19), "We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope..." , hence the name 'Hope & Anchor' often seen. Over the years, in many places, the 'Hope' was dropped and the pub simply became 'The Anchor'.

The Anchor Darts Team in the 1950s

The Prince of Wales around 1895. The group of ladies have stopped for refreshments. Their bicycles can be seen leaning against the wall of the public house. We believe the lady with them, with the walking stick, is Sarah, the wife of the Landlord, Middleton Young

The new Prince of Wales soon after it was built in 1910

The Prince of Wales

In the village of Lower Froyle stood the 'Prince of Wales' public house. Originally described as a 'malthouse', it was not recorded as the 'Prince of Wales' until the 1891 Census. It began life quite differently, as you can see from the top picture on the opposite page. This is one of the most delightful photographs we have in the Froyle Archive. It was obviously posed, but what a nostalgic image of an age long past. The plans for the new 'Prince of Wales' (lower picture, opposite) were drawn up in October 1908, by the Farnham architect Arthur J.Stedman, for Crowley's Alton Brewery. It was one of four public houses built in the area at that time, identical apart from their entrance doors. Of the others, two have already become private homes.

The older building stood much nearer the road than its replacement. It is very difficult to see, but there is a well, to the right of the bicycles, behind the two men in the picture. In the photograph of the new building, you can see the well with its roof, looking very much like a bandstand. In fact, this is what many of the local people always called the well and it was a popular gathering place, sheltered as it was.

The new Prince of Wales had no less than four bars; a saloon, a public, a jug and a tap bar. The regulars all had their own seats, so, when you walked in, you could immediately see who was missing. Everyone looked forward to Saturday nights because that was the time for a good old singsong!

By 1998 the pub was no longer viable and it was sold for conversion into a private house.

The Prince of Wales public house between the wars. A couple lean against the well on a sunny evening

Looking towards the Traveller's Rest at the turn of the last century

The Traveller's Rest

Another public house in Lower Froyle which is now a private house was the Traveller's Rest, the building in the distance on the right of this photograph, although this has not been a pub for many years. Situated at the north end of the village opposite Westbrook Cottages, it started life, like The Anchor, as a Beer House and is first mentioned in the Census of 1851, when 42 year old William Mayhew was the Victualler. I do not know when it became a private house.

Tug of War

Froyle had a very successful Tug of War team from 1948 until 1955. Ned Fry was the coach and his son, Jim, who was also a member of the team, fills in a few details for us.

"My father kept the rope and coached the team until he left the village in 1955. After that the team broke up. The team didn't lose many pulls - one year I remember we won more than a dozen awards. We pulled all over the area, sometimes travelling in an open backed coal lorry using bales of straw for seats.

We did practice pulls using a large elm tree on the edge of the recreation ground, a pulley at the top and bottom, and a very large concrete block!

Both my father and I pulled for the Royal Navy."

Members of the triumphant Froyle Tug of War Team, after an 'Away' pull. Ned Fry, Alec Wells, Wilf Andrew, Jack Russell, Len Robson, Ron Vast, Jack Robson

The team in action at a Froyle Fête in 1954.
In this particular year the Fete was held in the grounds of Froyle House, Upper Froyle

Cricket

As we have already seen with Aquila Clapshoe, the bat maker, and John Simpson, the cricketer, the game was very dear to the hearts of the men of Froyle. We do not know where they played their cricket before 1898 but in that particular year Mr William Westbrook kindly agreed to allow the Froyle Rovers Cricket Club to play on a piece of his land. Unfortunately we are not told where this land was, only that the gates and fences should be kept in good repair, but we believe it was opposite Hodges in Lower Froyle. After a season playing in this meadow, the Froyle Rovers approached the Parish Council, asking them to procure a piece a ground specifically for cricket - one can imagine how frustrating it must have been to play serious cricket on a field more suited to dairy cattle! But although the Parish Council agree to write to Mr Westbrook to see if he would be willing to allow them to actually purchase the meadow, nothing more is heard from either the Parish Council or the Froyle Rovers for another seven years. But the men of Froyle were serious about their cricket and proud of the tradition. The seeds had been sown for a permanent site in Lower Froyle for sport and recreation. At the Annual Parish Meeting in March 1907 a petition, signed by 34 residents, was produced, requesting a recreation ground. Bernard Bentinck was Chairman of the Parish Council at the time and he immediately appointed a committee of five

Froyle Cricket Club in the 1920s

Froyle Cricket Team in the late 1940s.
Standing, left to right, Ted Wallis, Bill Rhodes, George Gillen, George Cherrill, Joe Lee, Bert Chappell, Doug Rix, ?. Seated, Wilf Rhodes, ? , Dick Goodyear, Bill Barnes, Les Frost

councillors to investigate. That investigation appears to have taken a long time because Froyle eventually got its recreation ground thirteen years later! Once more it took a petition to get things moving and, this time, the Parish Council, under the Chairmanship of Sir Hubert Miller, were able to comply - but it did take a compulsory purchase order to achieve it. Today we all take the Recreation Ground very much for granted without realising how hard was the fight to obtain it.

The Ground was officially opened by General Baden-Powell, who planted a copper beech tree and, according to one onlooker, expressed the hope that the tree would flourish and be "as green as the shamrock badge" of his own regiment. "And I've still got to see a green copper beech" commented the onlooker with a smile. As it turned out, no-one even saw one leaf - the tree failed to take root!

The Cricket Club thrived, but the outbreak of the Second World War meant that sports had to be put on hold for a while. George Cherrill, a keen cricketer, wrote about his particular sport in the 1952 Froyle Scrapbook.

"The Club was reformed after the War, mid-way through Season 1946, and the gear, which had been looked after during the War by Mr R.Beckhurst, consisted of two bats, three pairs of pads, two balls and one pair of wicket-keeping

Froyle Cricket team 1952.
Ted Wallis, George Gillen, Michael Pritchard, Ken Tabb, Jim Peters, Walter Start, Cliff Summers. George Cherrill, Bob Donahue, Doug Rix, Les Frost, Bert Chappell, Bill Barnes.

gloves. It is interesting to note that we are still using one of the bats, which Mr Beckhurst reckons is about seventeen years old, and it will still out-live some of the bats we have bought in recent years. We play between twenty and twenty-five matches during a season, and on an average, up to the moment, we usually win about fifteen matches a season.

There have been several good performances, both batting and bowling; the best performance with the ball, to my mind, was W.J.Rhodes' bowling against Crondall in 1947 when he took nine wickets for twenty-three runs, and the last five wickets fell without a run being scored. His brother Wilfred scored ninety-five runs the same season against Bentworth, which is the highest score by any of our players since the War. The teams we play are mostly local, and four of the matches we always enjoy are the local Derbies against Bentley and Long Sutton."

Sadly, for some years now Froyle has had no cricket team.

The Froyle Cricket and Football Clubs amalgamated to form the Sports Club on the 29th October 1946. The first Secretary of the Sports Club was Fred Knight, who lived at Ryebridge Cottages in Upper Froyle. He was succeeded by A.W.Barnes.

Football

At the turn of the last century football was played in a corner of Froyle Park opposite the Hen & Chicken Inn.

But 1921 saw the formation of the Alton & District Junior Football League and that first season was described by Philip Clinker in a booklet he produced in 1971, commemorating 50 years of local soccer.

"The conditions of the period were far from ideal. All players paid a signing-on fee of 2s 6d and had to buy their own strip. It must have cost a fortune when a player wanted a transfer. Travel, for those living away from the area, was undertaken by bicycle, vans and even beer lorries with upturned crates serving as temporary seats. It was tough, but the survivors of a terrible Great War were accustomed to such conditions, and the League slowly but surely began to flourish."

Froyle did well in the Alton League and were never far from the top. But their best season came in 1948-49 when they were not only League winners, but they also managed to win the Inter-League, and pick up the Alton Charity Cup and the Alton Challenge Cup. At this time the Captain was W.J.Rhodes. During the 1949-50 season, under the Captaincy of Don Pullman, the team won the Alton Charity Cup, the Alton Challenge Cup and the Hants Benevolent Cup. At that time membership of the team was restricted to men from the village and a three mile radius.

Members of the victorious Froyle Football Club with their four trophies in 1949

Froyle Football team members include John Stagg, Jim Bellis, Dave Morgan, Dave Cousins, Bill Pritchard, George Pritchard, John Caslake, David Naylor, Ken Tabb, Tony Pritchard, Jim Cousins, Ken Warry, Don Pullman, Barry Pullman, Dave Bennett and his four year old son, Andrew

Froyle's next winning run came in 1967-68 and then again in 1968-69. In 1969 Froyle amassed twenty-five points from a possible twenty-eight, leaving runners-up Castle Park Rangers three points behind. It was at this time that the team left the Alton & District Junior League and joined the Aldershot Junior League. Once more they were victorious, winning the League in their first season, 1969-70. The photograph shows the Captain, Fred Bennett, being presented with the trophy by Mr Eric Perrin, Secretary of the Aldershot League.

On the following Sunday eighty officials, players and supporters from the White City, London, were invited to play in two matches. The local paper reported, "The youngsters played the first match and Froyle crashed 4-1 to the visitors who played some superb football. In the second game Froyle did extremely well to draw 2-2, after being 2 down at half time - and against a defence that included Fulham's A goalkeeper.

Referees were Mr D.Bennett and Mr G.Pritchard. The match balls were supplied by Queen's Park Rangers and a further ball, donated by QPR, bore the signatures of their first team and was raffled."

Today, like cricket, football is no longer played in Froyle.

Horses

Horses have always been a common sight in Froyle and Joyce Kemp, seen below with her father and brother in late 1920s, has many happy memories of her childhood. "When I was in my teens the fields at Sylvesters Farm were full of horses and ponies and happy children and young people, of which I was one.

Mrs Goschen, who lived at Sylvesters Farm, was the District Commissioner of the Hampshire Hunt branch of the Pony Club.

I had learnt to ride in the first place with a kindly man at the seaside. He was smartly dressed in breeches and gaiters and bowler hat and he led two ponies on sixpenny rides at Bognor. He taught the children how to mount and hold the reins. Then he adjusted the stirrups and taught us how to rise at the trot - all for sixpence!

After that I used to save pocket money to spend on riding locally, at one time I was earning pocket money for weeding in friends' gardens at three pence an hour, and spending it on riding at six shillings an hour, so I must have been one of the keenest Pony Club members although at the beginning I must have been one of the worst.

Mrs Goschen took a great interest in her local members, mostly farmers' children or grandchildren and gave us extra Saturday morning rallies and called us her home team.

Pony Club rallies in Froyle in those early days had all sorts of ponies and horses there including donkeys, as when Tony Marks from Saintbury Hill Farm

Joan Andrew with Egyptian Star, soon after she received the horse as her 21st birthday present!

turned up on his. What would today's instructors say! People who had several ponies used to lend them to children who didn't have any.

We learnt about caring for ponies as well as riding them. I well remember Mr Burns, who was the head groom at Sylvesters, showing us how to clean saddles and bridles - properly! Some of us were successful at those gymkhanas at Sylvesters Farm in the 1930s, winning our first ever rosettes and having the excitement of getting round in the jumping classes.

What we learnt in those early P.C. days and the fun that we had has been passed on and snowballed; when you remember that some of us children later became instructors and still help in the Pony Club today. Some of us later on ran riding schools and some of our pupils are instructors today, passing on pony care and riding instruction and you could say it all began in Froyle."

One of Froyle's most successful riders has been Miss Joan Andrew. Joan has lived in Blundens Farm Cottage in Upper Froyle all her life. Her career started at the age of nine, when her father, Wilfrid, bought her a pony called Betty. Betty, who was only thirteen hands, promptly got herself into the local newspapers by her remarkable feat of jumping out of her new quarters over three five-barred gates and galloping all the way back to her previous owner, Frank Butler of South Warnborough. Four times she escaped and travelled the five miles of fields and hedges. Eventually she realised that she was well off with Joan, even then a very accomplished rider, and the two had a long and successful career together, Betty still winning prizes at the age of 21 years. When Joan was 14 she acquired a young thoroughbred, Greek Hero, and later added the versatile Egyptian Star and Harlequin to her stable. All three horses were very successful for Joan.

Mr Goschen's Hounds

Mr Goschen's Hounds were very much part of the Froyle scene. It was in 1965 that Mr and Mrs Goschen set up Mr Goschen's Hounds. They had moved into Sylvesters Farm, Lower Froyle, in the 1930s, and were already joint masters of the Hampshire Hunt when they decided to retire and go their own way, setting up their pack of hounds at another of their farms, Isnage, nearby.

They had 20 couple of hounds and were given a further three couple by the late Duke of Beaufort. The late Mr Ken Goschen was keen on hound breeding and was well respected for his knowledge. The land over which his hounds hunted was lent by various other packs in the area. Talking to me at their last ever meeting in 1991, Mrs Goschen said, "We were keen to get people interested in the hounds. We tried to encourage the sort of people who were perhaps too bashful to join a large hunt, or those who couldn't afford a lot or lacked the expertise but were keen to have a go." Throughout their 25 years, the Hunt never charged a subscription to their members - they simply relied on a small 'cap' for those people hunting on a particular day.

The closure of the Hunt in 1991 was brought about by the lack of open country over which to ride and the increase in development.

Mr Goschen's Hounds travel through Froyle for the last time in March 1991

More Horse Power

Outings were always very special occasions

Grandma Westbrook's nephew, Herbert Saunders, takes her for a drive in his smart A.C. car in about 1926. Herbert's wife, Clara, sits in the back with Grandma, while the couple's daughter, Audrey, poses for the camera alongside the car

A Charabanc outing in 1929

A Mother's Union outing in about 1935

A Women's Bright Hour trip to Southsea in 1955. Standing are, left to right, Mrs Morgan, Mrs Laney, Mrs Warwick, Mrs Tabb, Herbert White, Mrs Sims, Olive White, Mrs Lawrence, Mrs Watterson, Mrs Woodcock with Sue Woodcock, Mrs Holland
Kneeling are Mrs Miles, Pat Milne, Mrs Peters, Mrs Milne, Flora Cherril, Mrs Goodyear

Celebrations

These two photographs are believed to have been taken at a pageant celebrating the Coronation of George VI in 1937. The children above, from left to right, are, Barbara Stevens, Nancy White, John Newland, Joyce Mitchell, Barbara Newland, Gerald Gunning, Betty Laney, Joyce Gunning, Joan Laney, Pam Vivian. The two boys on the right are not known

In the lower picture, Peggy Robinson plays the part of Britannia, while in front of her is Reg Vivian as John Bull. Immediately in front of him is Pat Milne, sitting between Brenda Stevens and George Pritchard

Children celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee in July 1977 with a special tea party in Froyle Village Hall. There were also sports and a bonfire, with a dance in the evening for the adults

Froyle children enjoy a tea party as part of the village's celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of VE Day in May 1995 outside the present Village Hall, which was built in 1984

Fêtes and Flower Shows

Fêtes have always been very much part of village life and Froyle's annual event is always looked forward to with anticipation.

Before the turn of the century it was more of a 'club' than a Fête and, apparently, took place on Whit Monday, when the village would hold a cricket match, at which there would be a few stalls and a band.

Sir Hubert Miller was responsible for starting an Annual Flower Show and, since that time, the Fête has been run in conjunction with this.

At those first shows, the exhibits were displayed in the school and... No, let Nellie Smith tell you about them. She was thirteen years old in 1904 and wrote this imaginary letter as an exercise at school. "I am writing to tell you about our Flower Show which took place on August 3rd, 1904. All the people were glad because it was a nice fine day. All the things that were brought to the school were very nice. The wild flowers also looked very nice. The prizes were given out by Lady Lindsay. After she had given them out we went into the meadow which was kindly lent by Mrs and Mr Simpson. Dancing and other amusements were held in

Archers from the Lord Mayor Treloar College display their skills at a Church Fête in 1965. This particular Fête was held at Park Edge, the home of Mrs Joan Bootle-Wilbraham, seen here in the centre of the photograph, holding a small dog

Miss Grace Westbrook receives the silver challenge cup for the highest number of points in the horticultural section of the Flower Show in 1954. Presenting the trophy, on the left, is Mrs Lowy, President of the Women's Institute, who organised the show. Others in the photograph are (left to right) Miss Chubb, flower show organiser; Mrs P.Bush, assistant flower show organiser; and Lt.Col. Newton Davis, Chairman of the Flower Show and Fête Committee

the meadow. We also had a band. Swinging boats were placed in the meadow and a lot of people had some swings. Some of them went up so high that you would think they were going to fall out. After the dancing and sports, a grand display of fireworks took place. They were let off by Mr Curtis."

As well as the Show, there was a Best Kept Gardens Competition. For a while in the 1930s the Flower Show lapsed, but it was revived by the Froyle W.I. in 1940 and has taken place in July or August ever since, although now it is organised by Froyle Gardening Club. Around 1947 the newly formed Sports Club joined forces with the Flower Show and turned the event into a real village Fête Day.

These Fêtes were often held in the grounds of various large houses in Froyle, but from the late 1960s they were held on the Recreation Ground, as they still are today.

Clubs and Groups

Froyle was, and still is, a very active community. Here are just a few of the Clubs and Groups that were run during the last century.

The Over Sixties Club enjoy a Christmas Party in the 1940s. The oldest member, Mrs Rawson, the widow of the Licensee of the Hen & Chicken Inn, has the honour of cutting the cake.

Froyle Youth Club

In the 1940s and 50s there was a thriving Youth Club in the village. Dick Allcock has these memories of it.

"We moved to Froyle in September 1946 and I ran the Village Youth Club. The Youth Club began to occupy more and more of my time and very soon every young person of the appropriate age became a member. The membership was made up of some very special young people which the life of the Club soon reflected. We were very fortunate in having a Management Committee made up of some very important people. Our President was the Hon. Mrs Talbot, who lived in Upper Froyle in what is now the Treloar School. Our Chairman was General Molesworth, and the members included Lady Smiley, Mrs Robson of the Hen & Chicken, and Mr Andrews was the Treasurer. Two very loyal supporters were Mr & Mrs Milne, parents of Francis and Pat. Francis became Chairman of the Members Committee.

The Club met in the Village Hall three nights a week. Mr Milne played a pivotal role as he was also a member of the Parish Council and the Hall and Playing Fields Committee. Mrs Milne ran the Club canteen and undertook a multitude of other roles. Froyle was a village second to none."

Dick Allcock left Froyle in 1948 to become a full time Boys Club Leader.

Froyle Youth Club in March 1956. John Benniman proudly holds the trophy which he, Kenny Tabb (left) and Denis Worsfold (right) have won in the National Association of Boys' Clubs County Cross Country Running Championship

Members of Froyle British Legion enjoy their 1955 Christmas Dinner in the Village Hall

Several generations of Froyle people gather on the recreation ground for the Golden Wedding of Mr & Mrs Albert Cox in 1968. Mr & Mrs Cox, who were both born in the village, had known each other from childhood. They were married at Bentley in 1918. Mr Cox had only recently retired from farm work at the age of 78. At this particular time, Mr Cox was the oldest resident

Members of Froyle Gardening Club manning one of the first of their still popular Plant Stalls. The Club was formed in 1969. Seen here, from left to right, are Ann Figgins, Anne Blunt, Doug Penman, Mr Hester, Olive White, Mr Everard

Froyle Ladies Group celebrates its 10th birthday in November 1982. Maureen Fry, the Chairman of the Club, is seen here cutting the cake. The Group was started in 1972 by Mavis Start, who can be seen standing next to Mrs Fry on the left. In 2000 the Ladies Group is still going strong

Dramatically, there has always been plenty of talent in Froyle.

Froyle Dramatic Society performed One Act Plays for a short time during the 1960s. In a scene from 'The Late Miss Cordell' are Ernest Weeks, Evelyn Lawrence, Pat Pritchard, Betty Barnes, Molly Goodyear and Betty Roberts

The Froyle Players very first Village Pantomime in January 1984. In 2000 the company's 17th production was Cinderella. Mark Cray, on the far left, has appeared in every single one

At Church

Miss Marjorie Brownjohn marries Mr Reginald Robinson at St Mary's Church in July 1946. Also in the picture are, left, Molly & Dick Goodyear, and right, Henry & Daisy Brownjohn. The bridesmaids are Shirley & Beryl Goodyear and Janet Rhodes

The Church of Saint Mary of the Assumption

As we have seen from the Domesday entry, there has been a church at Froyle since at least 1086. We know that there was a Vicar in 1274 and that the chancel of St Mary's was built sometime between 1300 and 1350. Today this is the only part of the original church that remains. The tower and steeple at the west end were demolished in 1722 and rebuilt faced in fine brickwork. Above the clock one can just read the name, 'John Baldwin 1722', and if you look a little higher you will see that the weather vanes on top of the tower bear the same date. 'H.B.' over the tower door no doubt stands for Henry Burningham who died in 1735. Scratched into the brick at a lower level are several sets of initials, most probably those of the men who built the tower. This was a very common practice in Froyle, at least during the18th and 19th centuries, and many older houses also have initials and dates scratched into their brickwork. In 1724 the bells were hung. Four of them bear the inscription, 'R. Phelps Fecit 1724'. The fifth one bears the inscription, 'Messrs. Henry Burningham, Richard Marshall, R. Phelps Fecit, Rev Mr John Greenway, Vic 1724'. The sixth bell bears the inscription, 'Thomas Tower and Thomas Hall, Churchwardens. Thomas Swain made me, 1757'. Perhaps the original bell cracked and had to be rehung at that later date - who knows! The bells were restored in 1995.

St Mary's Church in 1866. This picture and those of the Miller family are the oldest photographs we have in the Froyle Archive. As photography was relatively new it is not unlikely that they were all taken by the same photographer at the same time

At the beginning of the nineteenth century concern was expressed over the state of the Nave. After some deliberation it was agreed that "it was cheaper to pull down the old Nave and rebuild rather than repair the old one." Tom Knight gives us the details:

George Parfect of Headley was the Bricklayer and Plasterer.
John Dyer of Alton was the Carpenter.
George Beagley of Bentley, a Bricklayer.
James Harding, Surveyor of Farnham, was the Architect.

Walls half erected	£297	12s	6d
Walls ready for roof	£200	0s	0d
Roof reared and healed in	£200	0s	0d
Plastering finished,			
Pews and galleries half finished	£100	0s	0d
Work completed Sept. 29th 1812	£1,297	12s	6d

D. H. Moutray Read, in his book 'Highways and Byways in Hampshire', tells us that, "The Aisleless Nave used to be filled with heavy and ugly box-pens, and the men's gallery blocked it up still further. The Squire's pew was in another gallery, a sore matter for the Vicar's wife, as the Vicarage seats were down below, nor was the good lady content till a big pew was erected on iron supports near the pulpit, to which she ascended complacently every Sunday up the pulpit steps!" These were no doubt removed when the Nave was rebuilt.

The present Chancel is definitely 14th century. On its north wall there is a recess, known as an Easter Sepulchre. John Willcocks explains the use of this Sepulchre in his book, 'Froyle, A Little History', and I quote, "In the old Church on Good Friday the Priest would remove the Crucifix from the altar, lay it in the Easter Sepulchre and draw across a curtain. There it would remain until the first service on Easter Day when the Priest would take out the Crucifix, hold it aloft and cry, 'Behold He is risen'; the whole congregation would reply, 'Indeed He is risen'. This custom is still followed in the Eastern Church."

This Easter Sepulchre was definitely there in 1377, for we know that John Mott, of Froyle, died in this year, and left, among other things in his Will which was discovered at Lambeth Palace in 1929, "Money for candles to burn before the image of the Virgin in the Church", and, "Money for candles to burn in the Easter Sepulchre."

Undoubtedly, the treasure of St Mary's Church is the East Window - or, to be more precise, the upper lights of this magnificent window, shown in the photograph on the left. Several experts have expressed the opinion that Salisbury Cathedral and York Minster are the only places with glass which compares with it. The lights date from the building of the church in the 1300s and John Willcocks, himself an authority on heraldry, believes they may have been a gift to the new church from Edward II. He explains that in the window are represented the coats of arms of the Royal Family, together with those of other persons closely related to them by marriage.

St Mary's Church and Froyle Place in 1912

Those shown are believed to be:-

Edward the Confessor, Patron of England.
Edward II.
Edward, Prince of Wales, later to become Edward III.
Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford.
His wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Edward I.
John de Warenne, Earl of Surrey.
His wife, Joan, granddaughter of Edward I.
Isabella of France, wife of Edward II; or, perhaps, Margaret of France, his second wife.
Thomas Brotherton, Earl of Norfolk, son of Edward I by Margaret of France.
De Chastelon; these arms are the 'odd man out', as he was not connected with the Royal Family, though he may have been Lord Lieutenant. It is possible that this light replaced the arms of Edmund of Woodstock, the brother of Thomas Brotherton, who was executed in 1330 on the orders of Queen Isabella and Roger Mortimer.

The oldest tomb inside the Church is that of John Lighe - 1575 - a brass on the Sanctuary floor, on the south side. Tom Knight tells us that, "John Lighe (or Leigh) is supposed to have built the original Coldrey House with material brought from the ruins of Waverley Abbey. The fact that Coldrey was described

as 'an extra parochial place', and also that the brass on his tomb shows him in clerical attire, gives rise to the possibility that John Lighe was, at one time, Vicar of Froyle."

Outside, on the south side of the church, you will find a modern cross on a much older base. The cross itself is a memorial to the 18 year old daughter of Mr and Mrs Frank Summers, who died in 1911. The Summers family lived at Froyle Place at the time. But what is interesting is the base on which the cross stands. This medieval base is most probably part of the 'Froyle Cross', which was erected to Nicholas of Ely in the 13th century. The cross is mentioned in a book entitled 'The Abbey of the Blessed Mary of Waverley', which was written by Francis Joseph Baigent in 1882. He states, "On the 25th July 1310, the Abbot, Phillip de Bedwynde, and the Convent of Waverley, undertook certain obligations with regard to their late benefactor, Bishop Nicholas de Ely (Bishop of Winchester, 1268-1280). One of these obligations was as follows, 'Moreover, we will maintain for ever the marble cross, set up for the soul of the said Bishop by his executors, at Froyle; and if it shall happen that the said cross, which God forbid!, shall be injured, broken, or entirely thrown down by lightning, thunder, or other violent storms, we will erect another in its place there according to our best ability, if not of equal dignity'."

But where was this cross? Surely not in the churchyard where it is today? In a footnote to the above, Francis Baigent added, "The base of this cross remains at Froyle to this day (i.e. in 1882)..... it acquired the name of Froyle Cross..... Robert White, of Farnham, in his will dated 16th October, 1467, says, 'I bequeath for the reparation of the bad and imperfect roads, commencing from the hill on this side of the cross, called Froyle Cross, to the end of the town of Farnham, wherever it is most necessary, the sum of ten pounds'."

Presumably, the cross and base were removed from their original position sometime between 1882 and 1911.

Church Registers

Here are a few interesting entries from the Church Registers, which date back to 1653. Let's start with a couple of records of great longevity:-

1653 Buried Ann Dawson aged 103 years.
1673 Buried John Wakeford aged 100 years.
1669 Buried Roger Sutwade aged 100 years.

In 1677 and 1678 Acts were passed for 'Burying in Woollen'. This was done to assist the wool trade. A relative of the deceased was required to swear an affidavit within eight days of the event that a 'woollen burial' had taken place or else a fine of £5 was levied not only on the estate of the deceased, but on anyone connected with the burial. The law was repealed in 1814, but by then it had already fallen into disuse.

1687 Buried Mary Newman of Brocas in woollen.
1765 Buried William Draper Esq., paid forfeit for not being buried in woollen.

The Choir of St Mary's Church in 1910. Sir Hubert Miller is in the centre, carrying the cross

Other entries include:-

1674	Henry Wake was carried to Alton like fish in a barrel. (Henry Wake was a Quaker and had to be buried in the Quaker burial ground in Alton.)
1689	Buried Elizabeth Trimming, an antient maid.
1691	Buried William Smith, a vagabond.
1693	Buried John, son of Mary Davis, a stranger.
1788	Was buried John Bone who in a fit of insanity hung himself. (It is interesting that Tom Knight, transcribing these registers in the 1940s, omitted the graphic details and chose to write 'killed' himself.)

I couldn't resist this delightful photograph, taken in the 1930s, which I have entitled 'Tea at the Vicarage'. It seems to say so much about the period. The gentleman seated second from the left is William Towers Westbrook, and the lady next to him is his wife. They are wearing the same clothes as in their Golden Wedding photograph, so this could have been a special tea for them.

They would have been having tea with Father Sangster, who was Vicar of Froyle from 1928 until 1943.

Joan and Roy Andrew remember him, as he used to help with the harvest on their parent's farm during the war. Joan said, "He always looked so short when he stood in the pulpit, but when he was in the harvest field he looked quite normal."

Before Father Sangster had come the Reverend William Annesley. While he was at Froyle he set up a small orchestra. Harold Brownjohn told me, "At the end of the 14/18 War he offered to teach people in the parish a stringed instrument. A number accepted. Alfred (Harold's father) took up the cello, my brother Charles, Wilfrid Andrew and others the violin, and with Walter Andrew they gave recitals."

But the Vicar that most people remember is the Reverend William V.Tunks. He was Vicar of Froyle from 1943 until 1958 and was perhaps the archetypal eccentric English Vicar.

Bill Elstow remembers him arriving in Froyle. "Myself and a London evacuee, Derek Murfin, from Battersea, who was staying with his aunt, earned a few coppers helping him move in. The point of interest was his dedication to smoking, so much so that he had a little room done out in Arabian style reserved just for smoking. I have a feeling that we may have been privileged to see it!"

The Reverend Tunks was also very keen on antiques and would often open the Vicarage for people to view 'its works of art'. Several people, who were children then, remember that he used to take the members of the Sunday School over to the Vicarage to do his dusting for him.

Everyone remembers that he had an enormous dog, which went everywhere with him. One resident told me, "He used to take the dog into church with him and preach to the dog as there would be no-one else there. The dog would then finish off the communion wine!"

Lilian Smither remembers:-

"Rogation week, containing the Rogation days, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, are before Ascension Day. The illustration (above) is of the choir of Froyle Parish Church, about 1916 or 1917. The Cross Bearer is Edwin Nash, who was the Vicar's right-hand man in many activities. The Vicar, the Rev William Annesley, was a bachelor and well liked. The choir master and organist was Mr Norris Thrower of Alton, and the village was grateful to this gentleman for the excellent choir he trained for many years.

The two Church Wardens, carrying their staffs of office, were both farmers. My father, the late George Herrett Westbrook, of Sylvesters Farm, Lower Froyle, far left, and Lewis Simpson, of Upper Froyle, next to him. A large congregation followed the choir, as seen in the photograph. We walked around the fields, mainly Mr Simpson's, his farm being at Upper Froyle near the church. Maybe he had extra good crops that year, for we sang appropriate hymns and listened reverently to the Vicar blessing the crops.

My father was a sidesman and church warden for 40 years, never failing to walk to church at Upper Froyle every Sunday morning. His daughters accompanied him, a distance of a mile, in all weathers. He would relate how, in his younger days, he would be working in his father's lime kiln on a Sunday morning, when he heard the church bells begin to ring; run across the meadows to his home,

Rock House Farm, up two flights of stairs to his attic bedroom, change into his Sunday suit, run to Upper Froyle, overtaking his mother on the way, and arrive in time for the service.

Father would never work on a Sunday; hay-making and harvesting would cease, no matter how tempting the weather. Sunshine on Sunday, maybe rain on Monday, but, so be it!

He died in September, 1936, and the Vicar at that time, the Rev Sangster, referring to his death in the Parish Magazine the following month, wrote, 'thou shalt be missed because thy seat will be empty. These words were said by Jonathan to David', and were equally true of father. He always sat in the same seat with his daughters beside him.

He remarked one day that he must be the only person to have had his grave dug twice. At the age of three years he was very ill with a fever which was raging in the village. His brother Scott, age seven years, died and the doctors assured his parents that he would also die. The grave was dug deep enough for the two little coffins, but father recovered. He lived all his life in the village of Froyle, except for a period of two years in his youth, when he was a boarder at the College Boarding School, East Street, Farnham. He died in the same house in which he was born."

"One of his own farm wagons, covered with flowers and evergreens, carried the remains of Mr Westbrook to their last resting place in Froyle cemetery. Some of the mourners followed in two horse carriages and others walked behind."

St Joseph's Church, Lower Froyle

In the late 1800s Sir Hubert Miller, concerned that his parishioners in Lower Froyle had too far to travel to worship in the parish church of St Mary's, had St Joseph's built on the corner of Well Lane. It was not a large church and was built almost entirely of red corrugated iron, with a small bell tower. It was never intended to be more than a temporary structure until a permanent one could be erected on the site of what is now Nedfield Terrace, opposite the Recreation Ground.

Unfortunately the Great War of 1914 delayed this and afterwards the land was requisitioned to build council houses and Lower Froyle never did get its church. Sir Hubert Miller was supposedly heard to say that he spent the money on Chichester and Liverpool Cathedrals!

For nearly 90 years St Joseph's Church, known affectionately by many as the 'tin tabernacle', served the people of Froyle, with the vicars over the years having not one but two churches to look after, with services alternating between the two.

However, during the month of August, the Lower Froyle parishioners would have to make the mile or so journey to Upper Froyle because St Joseph's would be closed. Why? Because its corrugated iron cladding made it almost unbearable in hot weather. Another characteristic of its construction was that when it rained no-one could hear themselves speak, let alone hear what the minister was saying.

St Joseph's Church at the turn of the last century

Also, in the autumn, the children would sit and stifle giggles as berries from the trees which overhung the church dropped and bounced down the roof.

Although perhaps not the most attractive building outside, St Joseph's was every bit a place of worship inside. Statues, for which Froyle is famous, abounded, as can be seen in the photograph above, which was taken around 1911. Talking to me in 1981 Lilian Smither remembered how, as children, she and her sister were responsible for setting out the vestments for communion. "They were kept in a chest of drawers in the vestry - it was never locked!"

Joyce Kemp remembers helping her Aunties, Miss Grace and Miss Ena Westbrook, decorate St Joseph's at Easter. One time, "Auntie Ena wasn't very pleased with Hubert (Joyce's brother) and I when we were playing the little organ. It just so happened I was playing 'The Blue Bells of Scotland' as a rather important gentlemen walked in to see how the decorations were going!"

Sadly by the 1960s the little church had fallen into disrepair and in 1965 was sold. It was purchased by Mr & Mrs Tom Hughes, who seven years earlier, had bought the pretty cottage adjoining the church, calling it appropriately at the time, Church Cottage. Although it was a great talking point for the Hughes - after all, how many people have their own church at the bottom of the garden - by the end of 1967 the church had been demolished.

But that wasn't the last Froyle residents saw of the little tin church. In 1983 portions of its 90 year old stained glass windows were sold to help raise money for the restoration and preservation of St Mary's in Upper Froyle.

The Methodist Church in Lower Froyle

The Methodist Church

Methodism had come to the village almost twenty years before the Church was built, during a Primitive Methodist Mission to Alton and District organised by the Micheldever Circuit. For a few months in 1841 there were regular meetings somewhere in Upper Froyle, comprising a Sunday Service at 1.30pm and a Weekday Meeting each Tuesday. Nothing else is known of the work there and the meeting very quickly died out. Very likely they never obtained the regular use of a house for indoor meetings. After the closure of the mission a Travelling Preacher was stationed at Holybourne and no doubt also sought to spread the gospel to the adjoining villages. It seems he must have had some response, certainly at Lower Froyle, for in 1846 it was decided to move the struggling Holybourne meeting to Froyle. There they met at the house of George and Harriet Reed. This was one of the dwellings into which the old workhouse had been divided.

There were then twelve members of the Society, including a number who came from Holybourne. They also had the benefit of a resident Minister, or Travelling Preacher, as they were then called. This was John Wright, and he must be the only Methodist Minister ever to have been stationed at Froyle. However, the remoteness of the village from the centre of the circuit, Micheldever, created difficulties. The Travelling Preacher was moved to Basing, the numbers dwindled, and it seems in about 1849 the congregation changed their allegiance and joined

the Bible Christian branch of the Methodist Church. George Reed, who had been a Local Preacher under the former body, continued to be recognised as such after the transfer, and his house was registered for worship. But the change did not have the desired effect and after a few years the Society became extinct, probably because of the existence of a more flourishing Bible Christian Society at East Green, Bentley, and the building of a chapel there in 1854.

And so along came the Wesleyan Methodists to build on the missionary work of the Primitives and Bible Christians. At the March, 1860, Local Preachers' Meeting of the Guildford Circuit - Alton became a separate circuit later in the same year - it was decided that Froyle should come on the plan. Where exactly they met is not known - perhaps it was again the old workhouse. In 1861 there were Sunday Services at 10.30am and 6pm, with the Lord's Supper once a quarter, and also a Wednesday Evening Meeting twice a month.

Things moved quickly. In that same year a site was purchased from William Messenger and a start made on erecting a Church. The Trustees appointed at that time were John Benjafield (farmer), Albert Hiscock (farmer), John Chubb (blacksmith), John Goddard (shepherd) and Uriah Benjafield (believed to be a wheelwright from Holybourne) and six from other churches in the circuit. William Hall, a shoemaker from Upper Froyle, was one of the witnesses of the conveyance. The Church was built of stone with brick quoins at a cost of £260 and a date, 1861, can be seen crudely inscribed on a stone in the north west wall of the building. It was officially opened in 1862 and had, until its closure in 1998, the honour of being the oldest Methodist Church still in use for worship in this area.

Little is known of the next thirty years but among the couples whose children were baptised at the church were:- John & Eliza Benjafield, Emanuel & Caroline Trim, George & Jane Shute, David & Harriet Bowman, Charles & Jemima North, George & Jane Mills, Caleb & Eliza North, Charles & Jane Covey, James & Susan Cole, George & Mary Stimson, and George & Rosa Cox.

In those early years the Church Anniversary was always held on Easter Monday. The report of the occasion of 1892 is typical. The Alton Mission Brass Band was there and two van loads of visitors came from Alton. Tea was served, followed by a meeting. The following year there was also an Open Air Service before the evening service.

By 1890 the name of 'Hockley' was prominent in church affairs. Charles Hockley used to belong to Bentley Parish Church. As a boy he had the job of filling the oil lamps there, for which he got twopence a week. It is said that with his first sixpence he bought himself a bible. Certainly he became a shining light for Christ. At Froyle he served in every possible way - Poor Steward, Chapel Steward, Society Steward, Sunday School Superintendent, Class Leader, Trustee and Local

Preacher. There are records of him speaking at Church Anniversaries as early as 1892.

In 1903 the Society Stewards were Charles Hockley and his father in law, Edward Hall. Mr Hall, who had succeeded to his father's shoemaker's business in Upper Froyle, had been a leader at Froyle for many years prior to that date. Hockley's brother, James, was also a regular preacher. A memorial to the brothers is in the form of the Church's unusual font which bears the words, "Presented to Froyle Chapel, July, 1929, in loving memory of Charles and James Hockley who served so faithfully in the Methodist School and Circuit for over 50 years."

Charles Hockley

The earliest membership figures are for 1900 with 15 in September and 17 in December. From then until 1905 the numbers fluctuated between 13 and 17. A decline then set in with a minimum of 7 being reached two years later. Subsequently a recovery took place and, from 1910 onwards, the membership was always in double figures.

For many years there was a strong Sunday School. In 1910, for example, there were 32 scholars and 4 teachers. They met both morning and afternoon. Certainly at a later date, and probably at this time also, the 3pm appointment shown on the plan was the Sunday School. The normal practice was that a preacher would be appointed to take the afternoon Sunday School and then, after staying for tea, the evening service at 6pm. This most probably accounts for the rather incongruous entry in the Minute Book of 1938, "The secretary was instructed to write and thank Miss Hall and Miss Mills, the organists, and also to express their thanks to them for entertaining the preachers on Sundays!" These two ladies, pictured left, Miss Louise Hall (seated), who was Edward

Hall's granddaughter, and Miss Emily Mills, were two stalwarts of the Church. As well as being organists for over 30 years, they were joint Sunday School Superintendents for many years.

Others who should be mentioned include Miss Mills' brother, Charles, who from 1937 until 1958, when he had to retire owing to ill health, was both Treasurer and Secretary to the Trustees of the Church; and Walter and Mavis Start, who took up the two offices on Mr Mills retirement, and continued serving Froyle Methodist Church to the end.

The years 1952 and 1953 were particularly significant for the Froyle Church. For some years the lack of any accommodation other than the church had been strongly felt. In 1952 this difficulty was overcome by the erection of a wooden hut next to the church on a site which had once been part of Charles Hockley's garden. No doubt he would have been pleased to see it so used. The hut has an interesting history. After the sale of Union Road Primitive Methodist Chapel in Farnham in 1936 a site was bought in an area in which it was expected the town would develop with the intention of ultimately erecting a church there. In the meantime a tennis court and pavilion - the hut -were put on the site. However, the development at Farnham did not take place and so the site was sold in 1952 and the hut sold to the Froyle church for £100. As well as serving as a pavilion, it had also been used for a time at Farnham for other meetings.

The Methodist Schoolroom is officially opened by Mr Charles Mills in 1952

Following the erection of the Schoolroom it was immediately decided to renovate the church and so on 25th September 1953 a completely renovated church was reopened by Mrs Thomas. According to the newspaper report it had formerly been a drab building, dark and uninviting, with a bare wooden floor and only hard benches for the congregation. Externally the church had been changed little, apart from the roughcast applied to the front and south east walls and the removal of the porch. The roughcast covered up an engraved stone high up on the front of the building. There were formerly two flights of steps from the road - one to each side of the porch. The presence of the porch had made it very difficult to manoeuvre coffins into the church for funerals and so such services had often been held at the house of the deceased.

Internally the changes were greater. Previously there had been a centre aisle, no fixed screen inside the door, three or four fixed pews at the back, and forms in front which were moved for the Sunday School. There were also choir pews at either side of the pulpit - there was a flourishing choir in Froyle for many years, at least up until about 1960. There was a solid fuel stove to provide the heating and the building was open to the rafters. The pulpit had two fine oil lamps with spherical glass shades on the wall behind it. The changes involved new strip lighting, rubberised floor, new pulpit, chairs of light unstained wood, and the erection of a ceiling.

Miss Emily Mills at the Church's new organ, which was anonymously donated

The Methodist Sunday School in 1954

Membership reached a peak of 23 in 1958, but then a gradual decline set in; 19 in 1961, 11 in 1971 and 11 again in 1981. The numbers had not increased even though members of Crondall Methodist Church had joined Froyle in 1979, following the closure of their own church. Perhaps the writing was already on the wall for Froyle's building. The Church was rewired in 1990 and in 1991 work was carried out on the roof, the entrance and the schoolroom. Further roof repairs were carried out in 1995, but with falling numbers - only 8 by now - and mounting costs, it was obvious that the Church could not be kept open. The Minutes of a meeting of the Church Council held on Thursday, 27th November 1997, tell the sad story, "The Quinquennial Report had been received from the surveyor and the cost of repairs prohibitive and beyond the financial means of the Church. After discussion it was unanimously agreed that the Church be closed.....All the members expressed a wish that the Church should close with a Thanksgiving Service in the Spring."

The numbers that attended that service are a testament to Froyle Methodist Church's service to the community

The Sunday School outings to the common, on the outskirts of Lower Froyle, were always a real treat. This particular one was photographed in 1943. For some reason, one young man appears to have ended up in the wrong group

Pat Pritchard, née Milne, pictured opposite, second row, far right, has this nice story about Sunday School. They would always go Carol Singing at Christmas and she remembers vividly going up Saintbury Hill. "First we called on Mr Chubb. I always thought he was Jesus when I was a child because he had a white beard", she told me, "And then we knocked on the door of Bamber Lane Cottages. These housed some prisoners of war and I remember we sang 'Silent Night' to them and they came out and gave us oranges. It was really very moving and I shall never forget it!"

Additional Methodist material by David Woodcock

The Nuns of Froyle

Miss Ann Hill related a very interesting story her father had told her about their home in Lower Froyle. Mr Hill had purchased Elm Croft in 1929 and learned that at some time in the past the garage of his home had actually been a place of worship. Apparently the Bishop of Winchester had even come to bless the roof of the garage, which was a hay loft, so that an order of nuns could hold services there. The hay loft was boarded over. The garage was converted into a dining room, which can be seen on the right of this photograph, taken in the 1930s. Today the garage has been demolished and the house extended, the present owners knowing nothing about the nuns of Froyle.

Two happy days in Froyle. Edith Westbrook marries Daniel Kemp in 1918 and Pat Milne marries George Pritchard in 1955. Both brides are pictured outside their homes. Edith is on the front lawn of Sylvesters and Pat only had to walk a few yards from her house to the Methodist Church

At War

Froyle's Volunteer Fire Service in August 1943 with the cup they won, competing against full time firemen. Not only were they the most recently formed team, but they were the only one to include a woman. The team are, from left to right, Mr Frank Laney, Mr S.Beckhurst, Mr Price, Mr Lawrence, Miss Banning, Mr Joe Lee, Mr E.R.Hill

The First World War

Looking at the records it would appear that life went on very much as usual during the First World War, although soldiers were billeted in the Park at Upper Froyle and also in a field between The Anchor Inn and Highway House in Lower Froyle, known as Anchor Plain.

Mr Summers of Froyle Place did his bit for the war effort, fitting out his car as an ambulance and travelling to Belgium and France with the Red Cross. Froyle Place itself was a military hospital for twenty men from November 1914 until November 1915 and, after that time, until the end of the War, was a Convalescent Home for overseas officers.

The homes of Froyle suffered heavily. Mr Summers' eldest son, Captain William Asheton Summers M.C., was killed at the Battle of the Somme on the 30th July, 1916, at the age of twenty, and his name appears, with those of twenty nine other Froyle men, on the War Memorial, which stands on a hillside between the two halves of the village.

Another of those young men who never returned was Tom Brownjohn, the eighteen year old son of Mr & Mrs Alfred Brownjohn, the proprietors of the grocers and bakers stores in Lower Froyle. The local newspaper of the time

The War Memorial, soon after it was dedicated by the Bishop of Guildford on 14th April 1921

Tom Brownjohn

reported his death thus,

"Private T.Brownjohn joined up in October last and was sent to the firing line after only five months training. Mr & Mrs Brownjohn received a letter from his platoon Commander; 'In reply to your further letter of enquiry, I am sorry that I cannot give you better news. Your son was killed on top of a hill just above the Chambercy-Lary road, at 7pm on May 31st (1918). I can't say exactly where he was buried, but it would be just in front of a line of fir trees, right at the top. Your son was very much liked by his comrades, who admired his clean healthy manner of life, and I am sure that his influence will still remain, and work for good amongst the few men left, who knew him'."

Tom Aitcheson was another Froyle lad who lost his life fighting for his country. The pain felt by everyone in this small community, not just the family, is quite evident in the entry William Downes makes in his school log book in November 1916,

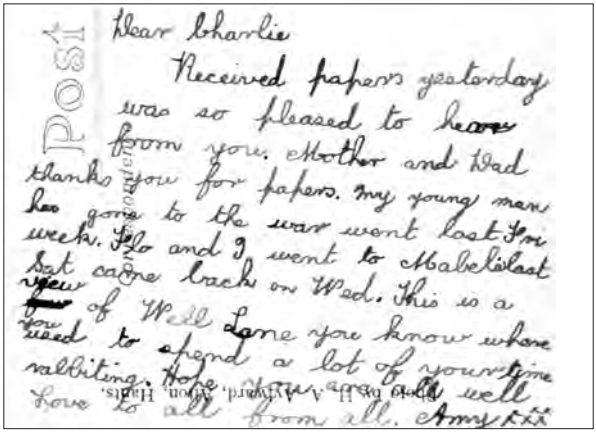
"News has been received of the death of Lieut.Tom Aitcheson, killed in action. He was one of the best lads I ever had in any school. I had kept up a correspondence with him for years and when at home he always paid his old school a visit."

While the men of the village were away, the schoolchildren did their bit for the war effort. The Alton Herald of May 1917 has this report,

"In this village no less than 940 eggs have been sent up to the London distribution depot for the wounded and suffering sailors and soldiers. Each child, under the supervision of the staff, was allocated a district with a collecting card. Between them they collected 448 eggs and £4 2s 0d in money from those parishioners who do not keep fowls. This money was used to purchase fresh eggs at 2/- per dozen.

The eggs were carefully packed by the children in the boxes supplied - it is satisfactory to note that not one arrived broken at the central depot. The Parish is to be congratulated on such a happy effort to afford warmth and comfort to our brave fellows."

So very often it is not the front of a postcard, but the back that can be of interest. This simple postcard, of Well Lane in Lower Froyle, has a story to tell us about the First World War. It was produced, as one of a set of at least 44 cards of Froyle, in 1912. How I wish I had all of them! This particular card was sent just 19 days after the start of World War One. The postmark is quite clear August 23rd, 1914. The recipient was a Mr Charles Taylor in Walthamstow, Essex, and it was sent by his sister, Amy. As you can hopefully read from the postcard, Amy


Post
Dear Charlie
Received papers yesterday was so pleased to hear from you. Mother and Dad thanks for papers. My young man has gone to the war went last Fri weeks. Flo and I went to Mabel's last Sat came back on Wed. This is a view of Well Lane you know where used to spend a lot of your time rabbiting. Hope you are all well Love to all from all. Amy xxx

In those days postcards were often the quickest form of communication

has just said goodbye to her 'young man', who appears to have been called up almost on the day war was declared.

So, was this card from a Froyle girl? Let's look at the Church Records! Yes, there is an Amy Louisa Taylor baptised on April 5th 1896 and she is the daughter of James & Agnes Jane Taylor - who also have a son, Charles Frederick, baptised three years earlier on January 15th 1893. This would mean that Amy is eighteen in 1914, providing, of course, that she was baptised soon after her birth. Additionally, she had a sister, two years older, called Florence May who must surely have been the 'Flo' mentioned in the postcard. The Taylors lived in Lower Froyle, in one of the cottages in the Rock House Farm area. Their ancestors are first mentioned in the church records of 1749.

As to who Amy's 'young man' was, and whether he survived the 'War to end all Wars' we do not know, but the Church Records do show that on 24th April 1916, Amy Louisa Taylor married Thomas George Tindale at St Mary's Church, Upper Froyle.

It would be nice to think that this story, at least, had a happy ending.

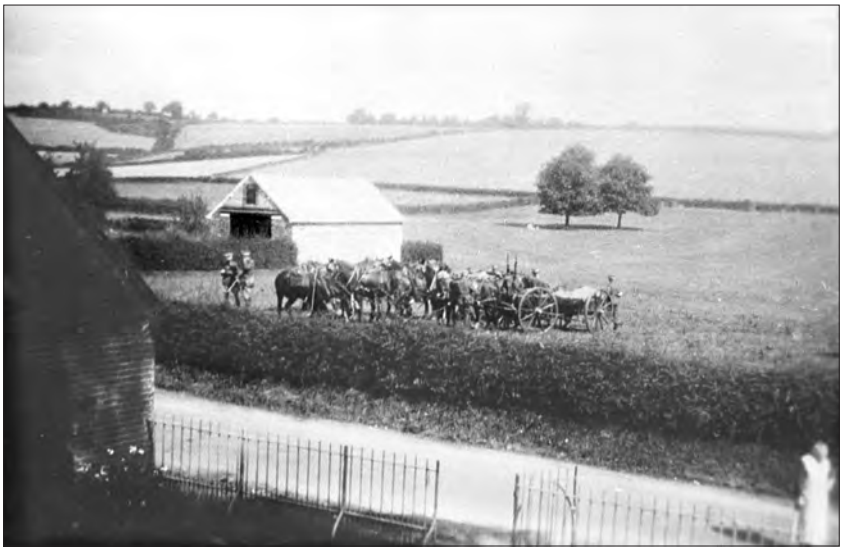
Troop Manoeuvres in Lower Froyle just before the Second World War. The photograph was taken from the lawn of Rock House Farm looking towards the five Westbrook Cottages

Bill Elstow remembers the coming of the Second World War to Froyle

"Before the war at the end of the summer the army would hold its manoeuvres in the country side around the village. The army was still not fully mechanised at that time and there was always plenty of cavalry around (see picture) with their wonderful cross lanced badges. And in those wonderfully balmy, phlox scented, long summer evenings after the days games were finished the grooms would walk the horses through the village to chat with the villagers and their daughters at the garden gates whilst we youngsters would run back and forth to feed the horses with windfall apples which they would eat in one devastating crunch and swallow.

The manoeuvres were always exciting for us, I am sure that there is very little difference in the noise of live ammunition and that of blank cartridges. There were certainly plenty of the latter for us to collect the empty cartridges for our own games. One must remember that blank cartridges still have a wad in the end which can be very painful if it hits you from short range. On one occasion some Infantry were laying prone hidden behind a hedge about three foot above the road when some very important looking map reading officers on horseback turned into the lane. As they reached the middle of the ambush someone started

Troop Manoeuvres in the field opposite Sylvesters Farm, Lower Froyle



to open fire. There is no need to describe the resulting mayhem of bucking horses and unseated riders to contemplate what punishment was meted out to impress on the hoi-poloi one of the things that one does not do to Officers and Gentlemen but, more importantly, certainly not to their horses. But all this was to disappear very quickly with the arrival of the Bren gun carrier.

It so happened that I was in Froyle on the first day of the war. It was a Sunday and I was waiting for my parents to arrive to take me back home to start at my new grammar school.

In Froyle at about quarter past eleven a monoplane flew low over the village and it is remarkable how many people had clearly seen the black and white crosses on its wings. But it is such things that pub conversations are made of, all enjoy listening to it even if they don't believe a word of it and in any case they were there too and can't quite remember whether it was six or seven that they saw. By turning out time the lone Hurricane had probably become a squadron of German heavy bombers. Little did we know that soon this was to be, for some, the stark reality, but not in Froyle.

By the outbreak of war the Army was already a permanent resident of the village in the form of a searchlight battery up Well Lane. They cleared an old gravel working for their generator and provided another topic of conversation in claiming that they had killed over two hundred adders in so doing. The searchlight was further down the lane nearer the village and some of us were playing there on the Friday before the Sunday when a lorry arrived to issue some rifles with the news that the Germans had entered Poland that morning. I am now ashamed to admit that for us youngsters it was all very exciting and something to look forward to. I can only plead an ignorance that would be rectified in the following years.

It was difficult to understand why a searchlight was situated at Froyle, there were no AA guns nearby, unless it was to serve as a beacon for our own aircraft going into RAF Odiham. It must have been one of the cushiest postings of the war. That is not to say that Froyle saw no action. A German bomber did drop some bombs up in the woods by the common and a bomb disposal squad had to come and dig them up and let them off. The operation took several days and we used to delight in joining the soldiers at lunch time pulled up in their lorry outside the Prince of Wales, trying to cadge a badge from them.

We had double summertime which gave us long summer evenings and we used to collect at Hadwick's corner on a collection of old hay wagons which had been drawn up onto the cleared bank so that they could be used by the Home Guard to block the road in the case of an invasion."

The Second World War, as seen through the eyes of Mr E.R.Hill, writing in the Froyle W.I.Scrapbook in 1952

"During this War the loss of husbands and sons from the homes of Froyle was much less than in the previous one. The names of Hubert Brownjohn, C.Goodyear, R.S.Morgan, W.A.Morris, and W.Stevens, appear on the War Memorial together with those of Mr Chubb's son, Richard, who was killed in an air raid while on civilian war service in London, and of Phyllis Savage, whose death was due to an accident at her WAAF Camp.

The village was too near points of danger such as Lasham and Bordon to be considered safe for official evacuees, though there were a number of voluntary evacuees. Because of this danger, the Home Defence was highly organised. Mr E.R.Hill was Head of a capable band of Wardens. Mrs Sangster organised a large company of First Aiders, which was able to carry on after she and Father Sangster left the village. At the Vicarage, and later at Park Edge, Mrs Sumner's house, there was a First Aid Station, with sub-stations at Mrs Shell's, Husseys Lane, Sylvesters, and Oak Cottage.

In May 1940, Mr Hill formed a volunteer Fire Brigade. Beginning with a length of hose and a group of men looking at it, by July the Brigade was able to give a demonstration at Marelands, Bentley. Major Wade, lately retired from his command of the Farnham Fire Brigade, was loud in his praise. Meanwhile, better equipment was acquired and in September 1940 the Brigade was recognised as a branch of the Alton Rural Fire Service. In July 1943 Froyle was officially enrolled in the National Fire Service.

Its greatest triumph was on August 6th of that year. Here follows the account given by the Hampshire Herald:

'A Fire Brigade competition was held, in which teams from Froyle and Binsted took part, in addition to the regular and part-time members of the

N.F.S. at Alton, and a surprising feature was that the full-time members of the service were beaten by the part-timers, while the Cup, which was presented to the successful contestants by Mrs Busby, was awarded to Froyle, the most recently formed team and, incidentally, the only one which included a woman.'

In spite of its position, Froyle was fortunate in having no bombs on the village. One heavy bomb fell in High Woods making a crater large enough to contain a cottage, and another large one fell nearby. Neither of these had exploded, so they had to be dealt with by the Aldershot authorities. Three bombs and a fire bomb fell in the fields about a hundred yards from the main road. These did no harm whatever, but traffic had to be diverted through Froyle village. The nights were most alarming when great fleets of German planes passed over the village, going to Coventry and Birmingham.

Oak Cottage, Lower Froyle, in the summer of 1915

There was a Searchlight Camp of about ten men, later becoming a Radar Station, in a field near the chalkpit in Well Lane. The work done there was of a highly technical nature, but the ladies of Oak Cottage, who had given the men leave to use their bathroom, were not a little amused at the inability of some of them to manage a common gas geyser.

At the close of the War, a Welcome Home Fund was organised by Mrs Emery and Mrs William Rhodes, who raised about seven hundred pounds, which was divided among some eighty Froyle men who returned to the village."

Mr Hill mentions 'the ladies of Oak Cottage' - these were a Miss May Ollis Pelton and Miss Vera Walker. Not only did the ladies share their bathroom with ten men, but they were amongst a number of W.I.ladies who did their bit for the war effort by making jam. Up until 1941 this posed no problems as the ladies obviously made the jam in their own homes but, in that year, the Ministry of Food issued instructions that jam making would now have to be carried out in public buildings. Miss Pelton wrote to the Parish Council on behalf of the W.I., asking that the hut on the Recreation Ground be fitted with a sink and cupboard. After much discussion the Council agreed providing the cost did not exceed thirteen pounds. It obviously did not, as we read in the Farnham Herald of 4th October 1941:

"Between 800 and 900 pounds of jam were made during the season by members of the Froyle Fruit Preservation Centre at The Hut."

Air Raid Precautions

Mr E. Hill was Head Warden for Froyle and his daughter, Ann, has provided us with a superb insight into just how the village pulled together in those dark days of the war. She has details from Alton Rural District Council's Air Raid Precautions, listing the people in Froyle who could be called on in an emergency and I make no excuse for reproducing it in full!

FROYLE'S TEAM

Head Warden			
Hill, Ernest Rivers	Elm Croft	Builder, Undertaker. Available any time. Has car.	
Name	*Address*	*Notes*	*Task*
Savage, Albert	Millcourt Cottage	Available at night	First Aid
White, Harriet	Lower Froyle	Can't drive, no car	First Aid
Savage, Herbert	Millcourt Cottages	Farm Worker	First Aid
Cousins	Coldrey	Has motor cycle	First Aid
Savage, Doreen	Millcourt Cottages	Works Crosby & Co	First Aid
Cox, Hilda	West End	Will go out day or night	First Aid
Rix, Gordon	Homestead Cottage	Plumber	Fire Guard
Savage, William	Brewery Cottages	Works at F.Stevens	Rescue Party
Pinnells, Alfred	Lower Froyle	Was in Army. Pedal cycle	Rescue Party
Vickery, Charles	Lower Froyle	Available at night	Rescue Party
Shell, Andrew	Husseys Farm	Has car. Day or Night	Rescue Party
Rhodes, Frederick	1 Brewery Cottage	Can do day or night	Rescue Party
Dedman, Albert	Husseys Lane	Worked Husseys Farm	Rescue Party
Brownjohn, William	Rock House Farm	Farmer. Has motor cycle	Rescue Party
Pinnells, Frank	Lower Froyle	Ex-Service. Farm worker	Warden
Harvey, Theodore	St Catherines, UF	Car. Commander Retd	Warden
Cousins, Edward	Coldrey Lane	Has motor cycle	Warden
Tabb, Frank	Rose Cottage, LF		
Alton Hairdresser. Has Austin car. Trained as warden in London			Warden
Cox, Albert	Whiteway Cottage		Warden
Hargrave, George	Froyle Mill	Can drive. Day or night	Warden
Blanchard, William	The Square, UF	Can drive	Warden
Blunden, Charles	Ovington Bungalow	Can drive. Builder	Rescue Party
Robinson, Peggy	Prince of Wales Inn	Day or night. Steel hat given	Fire Guard
Milne, Francis	Chappell Cottages	School age	First Aid Messenger
Lythgoe, H	Park Edge, UF	Worked in garden	First Aid
Lawrence, W.G.	Lower Froyle		First Aid
Ezzard, J	Upper Froyle		Fireman
Beckhurst, Richard	Lower Froyle	Bricklayer. Has cycle	Rescue Party
Squibb, Maurice	Upper Froyle	Motor cycle	First Aid
Batchelor, J.W	Rye Bridge	Motor cycle	Messenger
Bannon, Mrs	Brocas Farm	Can drive. Has car	Ambulance driver
Lady Smiley	Froyle House	Can drive. Has car	Ambulance driver
Vivian, Ernest	Lower Froyle	Master butcher. Has van	Can drive Ambulance driver

Glasspool, Ernest	Millcourt Cottages	Gardener	
Milne, Mrs Mercy	Chappell Cottages	At Vicarage. Has cycle	First Aid Helper
Vincent, William	2 Park Lane	Any time	Phone duty
Rose, Walder	Manor House	Any time. Anti-gas course	First Aid. Phone duty
Andrew, Wilfred	Blundens Cottage	Farmer. Has car	
Hill, Mrs Hilda	Elm Croft	Trained	First Aid
Mabb, Minnie	Gothic Cottage	Any time. No car	First Aid Helper
Nash, Miss E	Lower Froyle		First Aid Helper
Knight, Mrs L	Lower Froyle		First Aid Helper
Pelton, Miss M	Oak Cottage	Day or night. No car	First Aid Helper
Cherrill	Lower Froyle	No car	First Aid Helper
Shilling, Mrs A	Lower Froyle	No car	First Aid Helper
More, Mrs R	Hodges Farm	Has a car	First Aid Helper
Sumner, Nina	Park Edge	Day only. Has car	First Aid
Walker, Vera	Oak Cottage	Any time. Will cook	Ambulance
Burns, Mary	Sylvesters Farm	Day or night. No car	First Aid
Cherrill, Miss G	Ewelme, LF	Day. No car	First Aid
Goschen, Ethleen	Sylvesters Farm	Day or night. Can drive anything.	
	No car, but can offer a horse		Ambulance driver
Laney, Frank	Coldrey	Day or night. No car	First Aid

According to Ann, her father was delighted to be offered a horse by Mrs Goschen, as he said it would save time cutting across country.

Bob White (pushing) and Francis Milne doing their bit for the war effort by collecting waste paper. Francis was also a First Aid Messenger

Nora Jupe tells us how Froyle School coped during the war:

"Just as education seemed to begin to make strides again, the storm clouds of the Second World War began to gather.

The Summer holiday of 1939 was divided into two parts; the first (for corn harvest) was from August 4th - 14th and on the children's return to school they were told to take their gas masks with them for adjustment and practice. These masks had been supplied by local wardens a few weeks earlier as another war now seemed inevitable. Two parents refused to let their children take their masks and four masks were faulty or the wrong size so this was reported to their own Air Raid Wardens, who had been training in wartime procedures for some months. The gas masks were supplied in strong cardboard boxes with a string shoulder strap (some children used ready-made bags and cases instead, mostly made from rexine, a 'leather-look' cloth). During the course of the war, the masks had to be taken everywhere with their owner and children were sent home to collect theirs if forgotten. Thankfully they never needed to be put into actual use but after the use of poisonous gas by the Germans in the First War, there was a great fear, especially in the first year of the war, that gas might be a lethal weapon again. Gas masks were manufactured from light sheets of rubber, strong but flexible; they had a pig-like filter or snout and a clear oval eye-screen; they were fitted to the head shape by adjustable straps. Gas mask practice became as regular an event as fire practice, although there is only one recorded practice at the school in July 1943.

By the time school reassembled on October 2nd things had settled down again..... School proceeded fairly normally apart from having buckets of sand and stirrup pumps on view and possibly sticky brown paper strips on some windows to prevent the glass shattering from blast. Arrangements must have been made for taking shelter in an air raid and traces of wooden battens on the Junior classroom window, plus old blackout curtains discovered years later in the 'cubbyhole', suggest that at least one room could be blacked out and used after dark, provided of course not a chink of light showed through! ..... The first mention of enemy action in the Log Book was on October lst, when the 'closing of registers was delayed as many children were late owing to Air Raid during the night'.

Attendances were low in the snowy winter in January 1945 when only 18 children out of a possible 59 attended school, the Log Book recorded, 'Many of the children have no suitable boots, the parents have the money but no coupons. Also suitable boots are in short supply in the shops'. Wellington boots were not made during the war as the rubber materials were scarce and required for military purposes.

Victory came at last and the entries in the Log for May 8th and 9th, 1945 were made in red ink (Red Letter Days!). There was no school on the two V.E.Days. All over the country, parties were arranged, in schools or in streets with fancy dress and flags flying. Two days school holiday were also given for V.J.Day on 15th and 16th August."

I asked several Froyle residents, who were children at the time, what they remembered about the Second World War:-

Pat Pritchard, née Milne, who was five years old when war broke out, remembers, "Any spaces alongside the road were used to place old farm carts, huge concrete blocks and rolls of barbed wire in case of invasion. The women in the village worked in the fields, as the men had gone to war, and some of the older boys left school at lunchtime to harvest potatoes. The women also worked very hard arranging functions, such as whist drives and entertainments to raise money for a 'Welcome Home Fund' and the atmosphere in the village was wonderful. At Christmas Lady Talbot at Froyle Place gave us an exciting party for the whole school with Father Christmas coming down the main staircase and giving each and every one of us a present."

Maureen Fry, née Chappell, who was at Froyle School from 1940 until 1946, said "We had to walk in single file on different sides of the road on our way to school in case of air raids. In Lower Froyle we were told to always walk on the left - I still do!"

Jack Cooper, at school from 1934 until 1941, said "Mr Knight felt that the older children should learn our Allies' National Anthems. I remember learning the English words to the French National Anthem and singing them in class. The school windows were all taped up and classes finished earlier in the winter to get us all home before the air raids started."

Ann Hill, who was born after the war started, still has vivid memories of those years. "I remember lying in

bed listening to our planes in the dark", she said. "Of course, we had to be very careful with the blackout up at the windows at night. I remember the signs were taken down on the roads. My father made an air raid shelter in the garden and we all went into it when we thought the bombs might come. We had oil lamps down there, as well as a wood burning stove to help keep us warm. There were bunk beds, I remember, but no running water. You had to take food and water with you if you had time, as you had no idea how long you might have to stay down there."

As we saw earlier, Ann's father was the Air Raid Warden for Froyle. Her mother was also busy during the war, nursing and working with the Red Cross in the area. She received a medal for her service at the end of the War.

Pam Vivian's family also had an air raid shelter in the garden of the Butcher's Shop. "Ours often had a foot of water in it", she said, "and we only slept there a few times in the early days when the planes came over Aldershot and Odiham."

David Bennett was one of those children who came to Froyle from London.

"It was during the war-years that I first visited Froyle and spent a few months here. During this time I had to attend Froyle School. It seemed so safe in the country. It was good to sleep without fear of German bombers and Doodle-bugs and no interruption at school - well, I didn't really mind that! The highlight of going to and from Froyle School was to watch the village blacksmith at work.

In Church Street, Alton, the Evangelical Free Church was then called the Foresters Hall. All types of events were staged there. One such event was a party for London kids only. I had a great time - the bonus of extra food a treat on its own."

Francis Milne remembers standing in the hop fields and watching the Battle of Britain! "The Home Guard was formed and I was a messenger between Home Guard, A.R.P. and firefighters. Grandad and I caught rabbits; grandad prepared them for the pot and we sold them at 2/6d each, which was a main source of food during the war years."

Victory Celebrations

A committee of twelve residents was set up to organise a number of celebrations in the village. Miss Mary Chubb, Mr Tom Milne and Mr James Andrew representing the Parish Council on the committee. We are not told in the Parish Council Minute Books what those celebrations consisted of, but our 'War Kids' remember them well.

Pat Pritchard tells us about V.E.Day, "We had a huge bonfire in the Recreation Ground. The road had just been resurfaced and the tar barrels made a base for the biggest bonfire I have ever seen. Union Jacks hung from every available spot, even on the trees in the Rec. and all the village turned out to sing the war songs, just to celebrate."

The Pinnells family, sitting on top of their air raid shelter

Joyce Kemp told me a lovely anecdote, which, I believe, sums up a lot of people's attitude during war time. She remembers, "how everyone worked hard to help keep Britain fed. They often worked on even when the sirens had sounded. They were used to carrying on in bad weather so they were not going to stop for a few bombs!

One day, during the war, Auntie Ena called in to see us in Alton after her usual trip to market. We were chatting with friends about the bombs which had dropped nearby in the night.

'Well, I can't stand here talking', Aunty said, 'I've got a load of logs to move', and off she went. A friend of ours remarked, 'Hitler doesn't stand a chance - not while there are people about like your Aunt!'."

Ena Westbrook in 1930 with her neice, Ruth Smither

At the Millennium

H.R.H.Princess Anne, the Princess Royal, opens the new Heywood House at Lord Mayor Treloar School in 1997. She is seen here, accompanied by the Chief Executive of Treloar Trust, Col.J.W.F.Sweeting, talking to Joan, Richard and George Ezzard, all of whom work at the School

At The Millennium

And so we reach the 21st century. After the Second World War the village changed once again, this time the most dramatic change since the days of Henry VIII and the Dissolution of the Monasteries. Sir Hubert Miller had died in 1940, and in 1947 the Estate was sold to the trustees of the Lord Mayor Treloar College, who were to take over virtually the whole of Upper Froyle. Froyle Place would become Gasston House and be converted into classrooms and dormitories; Froyle House would become the Headquarters of the Treloar Trust, and many of the cottages attached to the old estate would become homes for employees of the College.

By the late 1950s the College had settled in, building new dormitories and classrooms in the grounds of Froyle Place and, consolidating their holdings, the Trust sold the unwanted parts of the estate to Mrs Joan Bootle-Wilbraham in 1960.

Mrs Bootle-Wilbraham paid £257,500 for four large farms, 2555 acres of land, the estate sawmill, two thatched cottages, a forester's house and a gamekeeper's cottage, besides lodges and farm workers' cottages. She died in 1995 and her properties are now managed by the Froyle Settled Estate.

Changes in the fabric of the village began immediately after the War with the building of the Westburn Fields council estate in 1947 and continued in the 1960s with the modern bungalows in the field originally known as Adams opposite the 'Prince of Wales' and with other individual houses, mainly in Lower Froyle. Accompanying all this was the influx of newcomers - people working at the College, and others (ourselves included) who were trying to find affordable homes near London.

The 'old' image of the village, with a genial Lord of the Manor looking over his employees had gone and there was a danger of the village becoming the home of two groups of people - those who were born and bred in Froyle, and the incomers, like us. Luckily, unlike many other rural communities, this division never really materialised, and, in the new Millennium, the spirit of community is stronger than ever.

Despite the fact that since 1980 we have lost our vicarage, our school, both our shops and Post Offices, our public house and our Methodist Church, the village is alive and well in the year 2000. One of the problems in recent years has been the rise in house prices, forcing our young people to move out of the village where they were born in search of a home they could afford. Froyle Parish Council took up the challenge of 'Village Homes for Village People' and, in 1992, some twelve new low cost houses, both equity share and to rent, were built on land provided by the Froyle Settled Estate at Barnfield Close in Lower Froyle. As this book goes

Barnfield Close, Lower Froyle

to print the search is still on for another site for additional affordable housing.

The other change has been the industry in the village. Gone are the small farms each employing a dozen or so workers - now more efficient management is needed and contractors handle the seasonal work. As a result a lot of the 'support' industries, the blacksmiths and farriers, have disappeared. Nowadays there are still plenty of signs of light industry in the village - vintage car restorers, interior decorators, and the like provide employment - instead of the village shop in Lower Froyle we have an Art Gallery and there is a flourishing pottery just up the road from it.

The rapidly advancing innovations in technology mean that more and more people can work from and at home. The yeoman farmers' houses of the 16th and 17th centuries are becoming the 'techno-cottages' of the 21st century.

Moving forward we may be, but we haven't forgotten the old traditional values. Mrs Alfred Brownjohn, talking about the Froyle of the early part of the 20th century, said "There was a great spirit of neighbourliness then and one was always ready to help another. Far from being the cause of quarrels or feuds, the one not in need of help would be only too pleased to think that the one who was had someone to see them through." That community spirit is as alive in Froyle

today as it was then, in fact it appears to be getting stronger year by year. Because whatever changes are made in the fabric of the village it is the people that matter - they are what make up the community and they are what makes Froyle such a special place to live today!

The Millennium Itself

For a small community of just under 300 households, Froyle celebrated the actual Millennium in style. A committee had been set up in December 1996, under the Chairmanship of Mrs Anne Wetherall and, following a survey of every household, five projects were selected and undertaken. This book is the last of these projects to have been completed.

The other projects were: A Stained Glass Window in St Mary's Church, possibly the only Millennium project that could see in the year 3000, the enlargement of the existing children's playground, a Parish Map drawn and decorated by local artists, and two videos; one charting the history of the village and the other following the villagers themselves from January to December in the last year of the twentieth century.

And the last night of the century was enjoyed by a large number of villagers as they sipped champagne and sang Auld Lang Syne round the bonfire on the Recreation Ground.

When D.H.Moutray Read wrote in 1908, "Though Froyle is old, it lacks all recorded history", he wasn't to know that within the next twenty years schoolteacher Tom Knight would be jotting down snippets of history on the back of his cigarette packets.

We have come a long way since then. Today the Froyle Archive reaches far beyond Hampshire to the rest of the world with a 300 page web site, whereby anyone with Internet access can trace their relatives and relive the history of this tiny Hampshire village. At the time of writing, the Internet address for the Froyle web site is http://www.froyle.demon.co.uk. This technology has given us the opportunity to convert the writings of Tom Knight, and those who followed him, into a digital form that stands a better chance of surviving for future generations than paper and ink.

This book is dedicated to the people of Froyle, past, present and future, and we hope that those in the future will continue to enjoy the records and memories of the past. After all, we live in a village that, even at the time of Domesday in 1086, was "ever there".

Appendix

A most delightful photograph of St Joseph's Church, Lower Froyle, in the snow in the early 1900s

The Vicars of St Mary's Church, Froyle

1274	The Vicar isn't named but he attended an enquiry as to whether the Rectory of Worldham was vacant or not.
1307	Walter de Bertone
1311	Philip
1342	John Quenyngdon
1381	William Bakere
1394	William Polhamptone
1400-1500	No Vicars can be traced during this century, and it is generally accepted that the Church was served by the monks of Neatham, or Neteham, which was at one time a more important place than Alton.
1529	William Wyncard
1542	Sir John Acrewe
1655	Roger Moor
1688	Richard Ffarrer
1697	Richard Jope
1719	John Greenway
Between 1730 and 1733	there was probably no Vicar as there is a note in the Register to the effect that it was in the charge of Mr Burningham during this period.
1755	Thomas Loggin
1773	Richard Follen
1804	Sir Thomas Combe Miller
1864	William Astley Cooper
1876	H.Castle Floud
1897	B.H.S.Lethbridge
1908	T.D.Carter
1911	William Annesley
1928	C.H.Sangster
1943	W.V.Tunks
1958	E.P.Field
1961	R.Whalley
1966	L.A.Pickett
1975	K.C.Daubney
1983	K.G.Bachell
1988	C.A.Ardagh-Walter
1997	J.Croft

The Saints of Froyle

The Blessed Virgin Mary	Saintbury Hill
She stands high in a gable end with one foot on the Serpent who has an apple in his mouth	
Saint Katherine	Saint Katherine's
A beautiful little wooden statue; she holds her wheel	
The Blessed Virgin Mary	Froyle Saw Mill
A bronze plaque an the end of the building	
The Holy Family	Jasmine & Myrtle Cottages
Saint Peter	Blunden's House
Holding the Keys to Heaven	
The Sacred Heart of Jesus	Blunden's Farm House
Saint Antony of	Padua Park Edge
He carries the Holy Child. He is at the back of the house	
The Blessed Virgin Mary	Fern Cottage
Saint Hubert	Post Office Cottage
Beside him stands his stag bearing a cross between its antlers	
Saint Antony	The Chestnuts
A coloured plaque. He holds a bell and is accompanied by his pig	
Saint Paul	Saint Paul's House
He holds a sword, the instrument of his martyrdom	
Saint Joseph	Saint Joseph's Cottage
The Blessed Virgin Mary	Froyle Cottage
Saint Christopher	The Manor House
He bears on his shoulder the Christ Child holding a globe, in his hand he holds his staff	
The Good Shepherd	Turnpike Cottage
Saint Joseph	Villa Saint Joseph
Saint Michael	Shrubbery House
Slaying the Dragon	
Saint Christopher	Froyle Mill
Jesus Christ	West End Lodge
Saint Joan of Arc	An indoor Saint

Froyle Parish Council

Froyle's Parish Council was born at 6.30pm on Tuesday, December 4th 1894 in the Schoolroom in Upper Froyle - now a private house. The proceedings were minuted - as are all meetings - and so began a form of local government that would guide the fortunes of the village for over a 100 years. The list below records the Chairmen and Parish Clerks since the foundation of the Council.

Chairman of Froyle Parish Council

Rev H.C.Floud	1894 - 1897
Mr Harry Coster	1897 - 1904
Mr Bernhard W.Bentinck	1904 - 1908
Major Bryan	1908 - 1910
Sir Hubert Miller	1911 - 1941
Mr John Chubb	1941 - 1945
Col.Greville	1945 - 1946
Sir Hugh Smiley	1946 - 1952
Col.Newton-Davis	1952 - 1965
Col.John Willcocks	1965 - 1976
Mrs Pat Morris	1976 - 1986
Mr Andrew Pritchard	1986 - 1989
Mrs Jean Benson	1989 - 1999
Mr Ian Black	1999 -

Clerks to the Parish Council

Mr Walter Brownjohn	1895 - 1946
Mr Tom Knight	1946 - 1957
Mr Walter Start	1957 - 1973
Major Kenneth Leese	1973 - 1987
Mrs Joan Emery	1987 - 1988
Mrs Marsha Hadley	1988 - 1990
Mr Ted Crowhurst	1990 - 1992
Mr David Whitaker	1992 -

About the author

Annette Booth was born in Northampton in 1946 and spent her childhood in Bridport, Dorset.

A qualified teacher, she gave up her career when she moved to Lower Froyle with her husband in 1971.

For twelve years she worked as the village correspondent for the local newspaper, turning her hand to authorship in 1992 with the first of four books on local history.

Deeply immersed in village activities, she was appointed MBE, for services to the community in Froyle, in the New Years Honours List of 1996.

Jacket photograph
Lower Froyle village pond
at the turn of the last century

What is it about Froyle? We discovered it nearly thirty years ago on a damp, dull, February evening while searching for an affordable house near London, and we are still here. Many others have come to the village intending to stay for just a few years and then move on, but they too are still living in ‚The Village of Saints™ Why?

The answer is the people. There is something about the spirit of fellowship that exists in the village that gets to even the most insular of folk. In the last twenty years we have lost our vicarage, our school, our shops, our pub and our Methodist Church and yet the feeling of community has got stronger year by year.

This book records the memories of those living today and the writings of those who have long since passed away, illustrated with more than 200 photographs, dating back to the middle of the 19th century. Perhaps in these pages you can discover for yourself just what makes this small village such a special place.