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Issue 97  
March 2019  
wsmfhs.org.uk



The Society, which was founded in 1983, grew out of an Adult Education Class which had been inspired by Brian Austin (now a Life Member) to continue their research. It has grown into an active membership of over 200 who come from all parts of the world as well as those who live locally.

The area covered by the Society includes Weston-super-Mare and the Parishes in North Somerset and in the Axbridge Registration District as shown on the back cover.

Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month, except August and December, at the Vintage Church, Hughenden Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 2UR. The doors open at 7.00pm for refreshments and informal research. Meetings start at 7.30pm. *New members and visitors are always welcome.*

The Society tries to encourage and stimulate interest in family history generally and has a very positive link with Weston-super-Mare Library, which has excellent local history resources and facilities. Each Saturday, volunteers from the membership are in the Library from 2.00pm until 3.30pm to assist anyone who wants to start searching for their ancestors or who has a problem with their research.

Enquiries may be made through our website [www.wsmfhs.org.uk](http://www.wsmfhs.org.uk) – Use the ‘Contact Us’ button towards the top right-hand corner of the home page. Enquiries can also be addressed to the Secretary of the Society: 125, Totterdown Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 4LW, accompanied with a SAE please.

#### **Honorary Life Members**

Brian Austin, 2001; Mrs Pat Hase, 2005; Paul Tracey, 2014;  
Brian Airey 2018; Graham Payne 2018

#### **Annual Subscription 1 January to 31 December**

Worldwide member taking the Journal in electronic format	£9.00
UK member taking the Journal in printed format	£12.00
Non-UK member taking the Journal in printed format	£20.00

#### **Cover picture:**

Brown Brothers' Café, High Street, Weston-super-Mare (1909 and 1923)

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**Family History Society**  
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Please note that the next issue is due for publication at our July meeting. The deadline for articles is 30th June 2019. Thank you.



**Editorial**  
**Sue Maguire**



Thank you very much for continuing to send in your interesting articles and photos for 'Buckets & Spades'. Shared experiences are one way of encouraging others to carry out research and might even provide ideas for readers to eventually write something of their own.

It is very good news that Pat (Chair) and Peter (Vice-chair) are recovering well. Peter returned to us recently and we hope that Pat will be able to join us again very soon.

The days ahead have much to offer – spring flowers, longer days, Society activities and other events. I hope you will enjoy some or all of them!

I look forward to speaking with you at Society meetings and, if you have any concerns about the presentation of an article you are thinking about submitting, don't worry – I am prepared to advise or help. You can also contact me by email at [smaguire15@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:smaguire15@yahoo.co.uk)

Remember – The revised issue dates for 'Buckets & Spades' are March, July and November.



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**Need Assistance with Your Research?**

Brian Austin, WSMFHS Honorary Life Member and our local historian, has informed us that he is happy to assist members with their research. To contact Brian, please send a SAE and your query to 11 Alma Street, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset, BS23 1RB.

## **Your Society Needs You!**

**Urgent appeal** - volunteers are still needed to serve our refreshments. We are alright for this meeting (March) but, sadly and we can't believe it, no one has come forward for any of the meetings for the rest of this year!

Remember, we have only 10 meetings per year and with the number of people who attend, if everyone helped just once, their next turn would happen in 2 (or 3) years' time!

Thank you if you have already assisted and, if you haven't, please consider. There's not much to it – on the night, just fill/switch on kettle/urn, put out (and pack up) the coffee/tea/biscuits/milk/sugar and greet your 'customers'. Now that most members bring/use their WSMFHS or own mugs, there's very little washing up!

By the way, having sold out, we recently purchased a further supply of Society mugs, now priced at £5 each. The increase is due to it being a small order, so we had to pay a packing and delivery charge. A nice product and still good value.



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### **Erratum:** 'Buckets & Spades' Issue 96 – November 2018

Please note page 25, paragraph 4 -

The 'Royal Edward' sailed from Avonmouth, Bristol, on 28 July 1915 (not 2015).



## Thoughts from the Chair Pat Hase



Many thanks to Jenny Towey, Acting Chair, and the rest of the Committee for steering this Society while I watch from the sidelines!

Sometimes family history research can be used as a welcome distraction from the problems of day-to-day living. As a Society we are not aware of all the issues which members have to battle with, but I would like to offer our support and best wishes to those who are battling the illness of themselves or their loved ones and our sympathy to those who have lost family members.

Since the last edition of 'Buckets & Spades' we have an updated website, with access to a vast amount of information for members researching local families. If you have any queries about it, please contact Paul Tracey.

We also have a new Facebook Group of just over 80 members. This is to allow us to advertise the Society and to draw attention to what we have to offer. There is a link from our website; alternatively, you can use: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/225868047988340/> Thank you to Lorna Gibson and Jeanette Carter for overseeing this enterprise.

We are grateful to the Saturday Volunteers who have been hard at work in the Library where they aim to give tips and confidence to those who come seeking help to start or continue their research.

But I have a question – why do so few members appear to contribute to the website? Of course, some people prefer to respond to queries privately, directly to the questioner, but where are the queries?

The Research Forum has been very quiet lately. Does this mean that you have no brick walls or problems? If so, I'm envious of your success - everything I find just seems to ask another question. Could you offer advice to others by sharing your experiences of successful research and by suggesting useful resources? The website is our public face so please help us to keep it interesting and attractive to the casual viewer.

Thank you for all your good wishes. All being well, I hope to be back attending Meetings by the July edition of 'Buckets & Spades' and I look forward to taking a full part in the activities of the Society again.

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### **New This Year**

Weston-super-Mare & District Family History Society



now have a Facebook Group

In January, our Facebook Group went 'live' and already we have 84 members. This is a great opportunity to reach new family history researchers and help more people along the journey to discovering their ancestors. It is also a useful way to encourage new members to join our Society and attend our Saturday Afternoon Help Sessions at Weston-super-Mare Library.

Why not join us and share your questions, photographs and memories? Please use CAPITAL letters for surnames as it makes them easier to spot.

Adminstrators: Pat Hase and Lorna Gibson  
Moderator: Jeanette Carter



## **Grand Event**

Saturday, 6th April 2019

To celebrate the restoration of the  
Tower and Bells at St Augustine's Church, Locking

You are invited to ...

- 10.00am Bell ringing in the tower by local band of ringers
- 11.00am Re-dedication Service led by the Archdeacon of Bath
- 12 noon Lunch in Church Centre with hand bell ringing
- 1.00pm - 2.15pm Open ringing in the tower
- 2.30pm Tower tours - climb the tower, learn about bell ringing
- Local History Displays in the church
- (For more information, contact 01934 822857)

St Augustine's Church, Locking, is a Grade II listed building of particular historical importance. The oldest part of the building is the medieval church tower built in 1380, when Locking was a prominent landmark and Weston was no more than a few fishermen's huts. The oldest of the 6 bells in the tower dates from 1380.

Simon Begent  
St Augustine's, Locking



## **WSMFHS Autumn Lunch at Worlebury Golf Club Monday, 30th September 2019**

The venue for our Autumn Lunch has now been booked. The menu and further information will follow; details will also be available on our website. If you have any queries, please speak with Peter de Dulin or Roy Smith. The last 2 years were excellent; we hope to see many of you there!



**Weston-super-Mare & District Family History Society**  
**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**  
**27th November 2018**

Apologies: Pat Hase, Peter and Gillian de Dulin, Arlene Pilgrim.

Peter sent his thanks for all the good wishes he has received. He is progressing well and will return early in the New Year.

Jenny Towey took the Chair and thanked Maureen Harvey for providing the cake and raffle prizes for this evening.

1. **Minutes of previous AGM.** These were distributed to those present and passed as correct.
2. **Matters arising.** Kerry's records are in their final proof reading and will be published next year.
3. **Chair's Report.** This was read to those present by Acting Chair, Jenny Towey, and will be attached to these Minutes.
4. **Treasurer's Report.** Roy presented the accounts and asked for questions from the floor. There were none. Peter Towey proposed they be accepted, seconded by Jenny O'Donoghue and passed.
5. **Nominations for Committee.** Nominations have only been received from those already serving on the Committee, namely:

Chair: Pat Hase; Secretary: Brian Airey; Treasurer: Roy Smith; Committee Members: Graham Payne, Paul Tracey and Susan Maguire. Bill Caple and Brian Yandell will be co-opted.

It was proposed by Maureen Harvey, seconded by Libby Twite and agreed that they be accepted en bloc.

6. **Nomination for Accounts Examiner.** Brian Wilson, who undertook the task this year, is willing to continue. He is not a member of the Society.
7. **Any Other Business.** Jenny presented Brian Airey and Graham Payne with Certificates of Life Membership for their years of dedication to the Society. Maureen has a Christmas card for Pat and asked members to sign. Tea and coffee volunteers arranged for January but more needed for February onwards. Jenny asked for assistance to set up a Facebook account for the Society. Grace Rubery proposed a vote of thanks to Jenny for standing in as Chair. Agreed. Paul has produced a book 'May They Rest in Peace' detailing the lives of those from the Parishes of Hutton, Bleadon & Locking who fell in WW1. Cost £10 + p&p.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 7.55pm. The next AGM will be on 26th November 2019.

## **Chair's Report 2018**

### **by Pat Hase**

During the past year, your Committee has steered the Society as it endeavours to encourage and assist its members to achieve their target of researching and understanding their ancestors. To this end, our Monthly Meetings give the opportunity to meet others who share our interests and learn from invited speakers about their experiences and the background to the records we eagerly consult. We are always grateful when one of our own members can contribute a session – thanks to Bill Caple, Peter de Dulin and Neil Gibson (not actually a member, although his mother is!). When added to the Members' Evenings which included a very sweet DNA demonstration from Peter and Jenny Towey, this meant the cost for speakers was kept at a minimum this year.

Balancing the books is the responsibility of our Treasurer, Roy Smith, who manages to control our income against the expenditure of running the Society. This, he manages with an iron fist in a velvet glove and a smile!

Our membership numbers are slightly down when compared with this time last year – we currently have 316 full members, but this is in line with the experiences of other Societies. The increased availability of information online seems to be affecting the membership of Societies.

We all appreciate the value of being able to meet with, and gain inspiration and suggestions of research technique from, fellow members. The Meetings also give the opportunity for members to use our library of relevant books and consult Journals from other Societies. Thanks to our Secretary, Brian Airey, for the library and a special recognition for the work done by Jim and Margaret Nigh for their custodianship of the Exchange Journals.

Fewer Societies are now exchanging hard copies of their Journals as more and more appear online and the cost of printing and posting becomes a major concern.

During the year, we were saddened and shocked by the sudden death of Ian Edwards who had been in control of our website since the death last year of its original builder. Ian had been so helpful at a very difficult time and we were extremely grateful to him. The Committee has now decided that the site needs a general overhaul and rebuild which it is currently undergoing. The website is a major link with our members and is a way of attracting new members so needs to be easy to use whether you use PC, tablet or phone to consult it. Thanks to Paul and Graham for overseeing this.

Paul Tracey finally relinquished his editorship of 'Buckets & Spades' with the February edition and Sue Maguire is now in control of our flagship Journal, reliant as always on contributions from our members. 'Buckets & Spades' is exchanged digitally with other Societies, both here and in other countries so gets a wide readership. We are grateful for the work done previously by Paul and now by Sue in making this an interesting and readable publication.

Our visit to the National Archives at Kew was successful for those that went but was not as well supported by our members as by those from the Clevedon Civic Society who we always invite to join us. Not everything is on the internet and visits to examine original documents are a valuable aid to research. The Committee would like to hear from the members whether they still want these trips organised or if they would like some arranged to other Archives and, if so, which ones would you like to visit? Please contact Brian Airey with your ideas.

During the year, we ceased the Monthly Free Help Sessions we were running in Portishead and Worle Libraries and the Healthy Living Centre which we had started as an experiment, as they did not prove viable. However, the Weekly Free Help Sessions at Weston Library continue to attract people – some of whom we hope will become members. Our thanks go to Maureen Harvey and the team of volunteers for their enthusiasm and skill in tackling all the queries which are thrown at them each Saturday from 2.00 until 3.30pm.

Weston Library has a marvellous collection of local resources including microfiche of images of all baptisms, marriages and burials from the North Somerset Parishes.



Transcriptions of all of these, plus those from parishes in the original Registration District of Axbridge, can be seen by members on our website. This is made possible by the hard labours of Graham Payne, who is also our Membership Secretary and in charge of our stand at Family History Fairs. We all appreciate the work put in by Graham on our behalf to make the Society one to be proud of and to attract others to join.

How to do we encourage others to join? We have introduced a Public Relations role to the Committee in the person of Sue Dury to make sure that as many people as possible are aware of us and what we have to offer. She would welcome advice and suggestions from members about how best to publicise the Society without breaking the bank.

The Committee spent a considerable time this year tackling the intricacies of the new Data Protection Rules with which we are now complying.

The Annual Autumn Lunch at Woodspring Golf Club was very successful and organised by Vice-chair, Peter de Dulin, who we are glad to hear is recovering well from his heart operation.

This will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> AGM which I have had to miss. Last year it coincided with a hip replacement and Peter stood in for me. This year Jenny Towey, as Acting Chair, will take my place but I am hoping that once my chemo is over – not sure yet when that will be – I will be back amongst you all. My sincere thanks to Jenny and all the Committee for their support.

In commemorating the end of WW1, the Society is publishing a book entitled ‘May They Rest in Peace’, the research for which and the editing has been in the hands of Paul Tracey. Many thanks to Paul for undertaking this and congratulations on the final result which covers the Parishes of Bleadon, Hutton and Locking.

Finally, every Society is dependent on its active membership for its very existence. Thank you to those who contribute in any way: making coffee, setting up the room, using the Research Forum, submitting articles for 'Buckets & Spades', taking part in Members' Evenings, etc. Please tell the Committee what it is you want from the Society and what can be done to meet your requirements for 2019 so that you can make that long-awaited breakthrough with your research.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **New Year's Resolution?** **by Jenny Towey**

OK, so it's March - but I'm writing this in January. Did you decide on a New Year's Resolution to make 2019 the year you: 1) wrote an article for 'Buckets & Spades' and/or 2) wrote a talk to present to the Society?

You could start with writing an article - you must have at least *one* ancestor who was interesting/naughty/a raving axe murderer, etc. Tell us about him/her - how you found out that they were interesting, how you tracked them down through various archives/sources and tell us about those, too, as we may not have heard of them.

Got enough information to make it into a 20-minute talk? Yes, 20 minutes – you don't have to make it a 45-minute talk, unless you want to! You also don't have to present it on your own; ask a family member or friend to help you.

Haven't got Somerset ancestry? Neither have I, neither does the Vice-chair or many other members; we're all just interested in family history per se.

Don't have enough/any computer expertise to produce a presentation? Don't worry; ask your Committee for help in putting your talk together. Go on - make this the year to contribute something to your Society!

## *May They Rest in Peace*



Read about the history of the men of Bleadon, Hutton  
and Locking who are commemorated on the First World  
War Memorials in these Parishes.  
Details from our website: [www.wsmfhs.org.uk](http://www.wsmfhs.org.uk)



*To the Glory of God and in Memory  
of the Men of the Parishes of Bleadon,  
Hutton & Locking  
The Great War 1914 - 1918*

**Society Meetings and Speakers for 2019**  
**Weston-super-Mare & District Family History Society**

Meetings at The Vintage Church, Hughenden Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 2UR. The venue is open from 7.00pm with coffee/tea and biscuits. Meetings start at 7.30pm.

- **26 March 2019 – ‘Know Your Place’**

The West of England digital mapping project which is putting your neighbourhood's heritage on the map.

**Speaker: Eve Bickerton**

- **23 April 2019 – ‘Time, Gentlemen, Please’**

**Speaker: Lynda Hotchkiss**

- **28 May 2019 – Film: ‘Bristol’s Great War’**

Documentary that Clive wrote, and helped present, about Bristol's role in WW1. Filmed in Bristol, France and Belgium.

**Speaker: Clive Burlton**

- **25 June 2019 – A Genealogical Mystery – How I Wrote It?**

**Speaker: Lois Sparshott**

- **23 July 2019 – The Weston, Clevedon & Portishead Railway**

**Speaker: Paul Gregory**

**No Meeting in August**

- **24 September 2019 – British War Medals**

**Speaker: Peter Towey**



- **22 October 2019 – Somerset Photographers 1839 – 1939**

A celebration of Somerset's photographic history, as seen through the lives of its photographers.

**Speakers: Phil Nichols and Robin Ansell**

- **26 November 2019 – AGM, Followed by Members' Evening & Memorabilia**

Do you know any Black Sheep? Do you have famous or infamous people on your tree? Be prepared to talk about your naughty but interesting ancestors! Question and answer session.

**No Meeting in December**

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**Dew and King Families**

There is an article, in 'Ancestor' (the quarterly Journal of The Genealogical Society of Victoria Inc, Australia) about the Dew and King families. A Stephen Dew married a Maria King in Walcot St Swithin, Somerset, in 1821 and had nine children. If you are interested in this article, send a C5 SAE to Jenny Towey, 4 Channel Heights, Bleadon Hill, Weston-super-Mare, BS249LX.

**Are you Missing a Christopher William Caple?**

Have you got a Christopher William CAPLE on your family tree, born 24<sup>th</sup> December 1906 in Weston-super-Mare, son of Frederick and Elizabeth? Did he then disappear? Well, I can tell you what happened to him. He went, on 11<sup>th</sup> September 1923, to Australia where, in 1940, he married Mary Dorothy Wright, my third cousin twice removed!

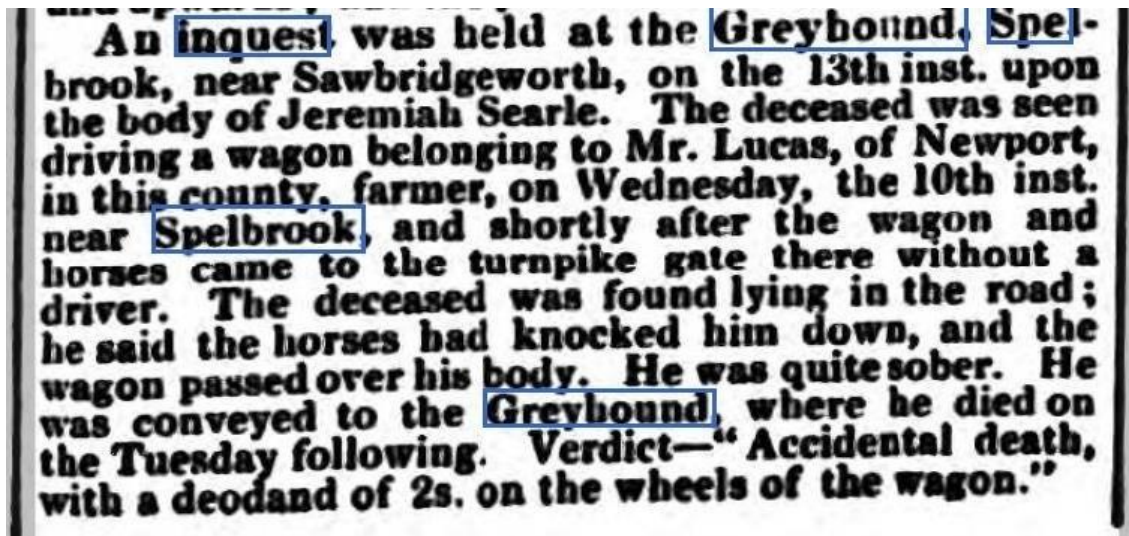
**by Jenny Towey**

## Diary Dates for 2019

<b>26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<p><b>Family Tree Live</b> Alexandra Palace, London</p> <p>A new venture, in a new-for-family-history venue, being organised by 'Family Tree' magazine and the Federation of Family History Societies. <a href="http://www.family-tree.co.uk">www.family-tree.co.uk</a></p>
<b>27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<p><b>Commemoration, Conflict &amp; Conscience</b> The M Shed, and elsewhere around Bristol</p> <p>This festival is the culmination of a year-long project looking at stories of the First World War. <a href="https://everydaylivesinwar.herts.ac.uk/ccf/">https://everydaylivesinwar.herts.ac.uk/ccf/</a></p>
<b>7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<p><b>The Genealogy Show</b> NEC, Birmingham</p> <p>This is another new venture being run by an international group of genealogists. <a href="http://www.thegenealogyshow.uk">www.thegenealogyshow.uk</a></p>
<b>6<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<p><b>SWAG Fair</b> UWE Exhibition &amp; Conference Centre, Bristol Find out more: <a href="http://www.thefamilyhistoryshow.com/south-west">www.thefamilyhistoryshow.com/south-west</a></p>
<b>27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<p><b>AGRA* Conference</b> Pembroke College, Oxford</p> <p>Commences with formal dinner on 27th September and lectures held on 28th September. You don't have to attend dinner and stay the night, if you just want to hear the lectures. Open to all, not just AGRA members. <a href="http://www.agraconference.com">www.agraconference.com</a></p> <p>*Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives</p>

**Jeremiah Searle**  
**by Arlene Pilgrim**

The Inquest into the death of my husband's ancestor, Jeremiah Searle, was reported in 'The Essex Herald' dated Tuesday, 23rd September 1834.



**An inquest was held at the Greyhound, Spelbrook, near Sawbridgeworth, on the 13th inst. upon the body of Jeremiah Searle. The deceased was seen driving a wagon belonging to Mr. Lucas, of Newport, in this county, farmer, on Wednesday, the 10th inst. near Spelbrook, and shortly after the wagon and horses came to the turnpike gate there without a driver. The deceased was found lying in the road; he said the horses had knocked him down, and the wagon passed over his body. He was quite sober. He was conveyed to the Greyhound, where he died on the Tuesday following. Verdict—"Accidental death, with a deodand of 2s. on the wheels of the wagon."**

Always interested in learning more, I looked up the word 'deodand' and this is what I discovered.

The English Common Law of Deodands traces back to the 11<sup>th</sup> Century and was applied, on and off, until Parliament finally abolished it in 1846. Under this Law, a chattel (some personal property, such as a horse or a haystack) was considered a deodand whenever a Coroner's jury decided that it had caused the death of a human being. In theory, deodands were forfeited to the Crown, which was supposed to sell the chattel and then apply the profits to some pious use. The juries, who decided that a particular animal or object was a deodand, also appraised its value and the owners were expected to pay a fine equal to the value of the deodand. If the owner could not pay the deodand, his township was held.

This Law was abolished in 1846 after railway engines had been held forfeit in this way!

## **Does This Leaf Belong on Your Tree?** **by (Revd) Patrice Sessions**

One of my great joys as a social historian is to research archives and records to discover odd and interesting facts, using them to add colour and texture to otherwise plain narratives. I quickly found, when starting to uncover our family history forty years ago, that the record could not simply be a series of BMDs but needed to be illustrated with mini-links to historic events, joys and tragedies, to show something of the lives of past generations.

Churchwardens' accounts tell of epidemics and cholera outbreaks, destitution and the work-house; there are tales of young men pressed into military service and not heard of again, and there are reports of accidents and major natural disasters which caused a gap in some families. Written up, such episodes are collectively known as 'leaves on the tree'. I wonder if any of your ancestors were involved in the Great Flood of 1607 and can add this particular leaf to your family tree?

Together with many coastal communities, residents living in Somerset have worried for centuries about the risk of flooding from the sea or local rivers, particularly after sea walls carefully built and maintained by local monks for centuries fell into disrepair after Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries. There were a number of coastal flooding events in this area, but the greatest devastation occurred on 20<sup>th</sup> January 1607. We are told it was a bright, cloudless day with people happily starting their day's work unaware they were to be hit by Britain's greatest natural disaster to date. I offer both sides of the debate – was it caused by a storm surge or a tsunami?

**First – Storm Surge.** There had been a high spring tide and strong winds from the south-west when the seawall at Burnham gave way and seawater surged over the Levels and Moors. Thirty villages in Somerset were affected, including Brean which was described in reports of that time as 'swallowed up'. The Great Flood, as history records it, was moving 'faster than a greyhound can run', the flood water flowing inland as far as Glastonbury Tor and devastating both sides of the Bristol Channel.

The records of All Saints Church at Kingston Seymour paint a grim picture of loss of life. 'An inundation of seawater breaking down the sea banks . . . in this parish and in



many adjoining . . . whereof many persons were drown'd and much cattle and goods were lost; the water in the Church was five feet high, the greater part lay on the ground about ten days.'



The Great Flood of 1607 resulted in the drowning of as many as 2,000 people. With villages and farms swept away, an estimated 200 square miles of farm-land was inundated and livestock destroyed. It wrecked the local economy on both sides of the Bristol Channel but was it just a storm surge caused by severe weather? Modern research claims it may have been a tsunami!

**Second – Tsunami.** Professor Simon Haslett of the University of Wales cites local eye-witness accounts of the sea receding before the mighty wave hit the poorly-maintained sea defences, reports of 'huge and mighty hills of water', sparks coming off the crest of an enormously high wave and reports of salt marshes torn out of the Severn Estuary. He claims only a tsunami would have the power to erode the coastline in this way.

Other sources mention massive boulders displaced by enormous force. A British Geological Survey, conducted for a BBC Timewatch programme for the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary, suggested there could have been an earthquake off the coast of Ireland, causing a vertical displacement of the sea floor; I also found, in Welsh records, mention of an earth tremor on the early morning of the Flood which may bear this out.

Storm surge or tsunami? The verdict is yours! More to the point, does this particular event shed any light on a brick wall or unexplained gap in your own family history? I should very much like to know, please.

**A Child in Axbridge Workhouse**  
**by Pat Hase**

In the records of AxbridgeWorkhouse, there is this letter:

*122, The Vista,  
Eltham, LONDON SE9  
11<sup>th</sup> March 1933*

*Dear Sir,*

*I am very sorry to ask you for further information regarding my life, but I have already written to Mr Burdge, who according to my reply from him, had to refer to you, the situation is this. I am working for a company that is going to bring a staff pensions scheme into force and I have been asked to produce my birth certificate. As I had the reply from Mr Burdge, I have shown them this , also I have written to Somerset House and the Vicar of Banwell but have received no satisfactory reply, this is what I wish to ask you to be so kind if you can let me know if when I was admitted to your institution is any information was given to you and placed on record why I was admitted.*

*I quite see the possibility of my mother not being married when I was born also, they may have been travellers or destitute, but I hardly think anyone would be allowed to place a child in an institution without an explanation as to means and cause, so I would not be surprised at any answer to this.*

*The Vicar of Banwell states that he is unable to find the name Wiltshire anywhere in any of his records. I was admitted to Axbridge at the age of 4 in 1908 and someone kept my company for 4 years so if I can find out what happened in that time I may at least find where I was born, if not in Banwell. Of course, there is the possibility of my name being false and my mother's name Ada Wiltshire being false but if you could tell me if I was admitted in her custody or the name of the person who did so and why I may be able to proceed along the right way to getting my birth certificate.*

*I am sorry to cause you any inconvenience, but I would thank you sincerely for a reply.*

*I am*

*Yours truly,  
A Wiltshire*

I don't have any record of the reply but have done some research to see if I could find out today, with all the modern resources available, the answer to his question. According to the Axbridge Union Workhouse Creed Registers, a 4-year-old Arthur E St Leger WILTSHIRE was admitted to the Workhouse on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1908 by a Mrs HURLEY of Rose Cottage, Banwell. He was discharged on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1908, but it doesn't say where he went or with whom.

Who was Mrs HURLEY? What was her involvement? Can anyone find anything about her?

After a great deal of searching, I found a birth registered in Bristol in the June Quarter of 1904 of an Arthur Edwin WILLSHIRE [sic] on FreeBMD. On the GRO Index, it is entered as:

Name:	Mother's Maiden Surname:	Order: ?
WILTSHIRE, ARTHUR EDWIN ST LEGER	-	Certificate
GRO Reference: 1904 J Quarter in BRISTOL Volume 06A Page 83		PDF

Note: there is no mother's maiden name, which infers that he was illegitimate, and this was confirmed by his birth certificate giving a birthdate, address and mother's name. On the 1901 Census, 6 Upper Berkeley Place, Bristol was a boarding house.

Registration District <b>BRISTOL.</b>										
Sub-District <b>ST. PAUL &amp; ST. AUGUSTINE</b>										
1904. BIRTHS in the Sub-District of <b>ST. PAUL &amp; ST. AUGUSTINE</b> in the <sup>City</sup> County of <b>BRISTOL.</b>										
Columns :-										
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	
No.	When and Where Born.	Name, if any.	Sex.	Name and Surname of Father.	Name and Maiden Surname of Mother.	Rank or Profession of Father.	Signature, Description, and Residence of Informant.	When Registered.	Signature of Registrar.	Baptismal Name if added after Registration of Birth.
81	6 <sup>th</sup> April 1904 6 Upper Berkeley Place U.S.	Arthur Edwin St Leger	Boy	—	Ada Wiltshire no occupation	—	Ada Wiltshire Mother 6 Upper Berkeley Place Bristol	Twelfth May 1904	Ernest Dorman Registrar	

But could St LEGER be his father's surname? What happened to Ada?

The 1911 Census gave a possibility for him with the DAVIS family in Oxford described as a 'nephew'. Walter and Jane DAVIS had been married for 6 years and during that time

their only child had died. Walter's Military Record reveals that they were married in London in 1904 and that her maiden name was Elizabeth Jane BROUGHTON. An unnamed daughter died shortly after birth in 1905. Walter DAVIS, also described as 'nephew' on the Census, was the son of Walter senior's brother, Thomas, but was Arthur WILLSHIRE really a 'nephew' as well?

### 1911 Census Transcription - 16 Wellington St Oxford, St Thomas, Oxfordshire

First name(s)	Last name	Relationship	Marital status	Sex	Age	Birth place	Occupation
Walter	Davis	Head	Married	Male	29	Oxon Fifeild	Baking and Grocery
Jane	Davis	Wife	Married	Female	28	Not Known	-
Walter	Davis	Nephew	Single	Male	17	Oxon Fifeild	Baking Assisting in Business
<b>Arthur</b>	<b>Willshire</b>	<b>Nephew</b>	<b>Single</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Not Known</b>	<b>School</b>
William	Eustace	Visitor	Single	Male	17	Not Known	Baking Assisting in Business
Elizabeth	Price	Visitor	Single	Female	18	Oxford	-

### In 1927, a marriage was registered in the Wincanton District

Surname	First name(s)	Spouse	District	Vol	Page
<b>Marriages Sep 1926</b>					
Sugg	Gladys M	Wiltshire	<a href="#">Wincanton</a>	5c	<a href="#">857</a>
Wiltshire	Arthur E S	Sugg	<a href="#">Wincanton</a>	5c	<a href="#">857</a>

The next sighting was on the 1939 Register, with 4 blacked-out entries, presumably their children who may still be alive. Note: the date of birth for Arthur matches his birth certificate, so presumably he was successful in his request.

### Willshire (Wiltshire) Household 21 Edgeworth Road , Woolwich, London,

FIRST NAME(S)	LAST NAME(S)	DOB	SEX	OCCUPATION	MARITAL STATUS
Arthur E S	Willshire (Wiltshire)	06 Apr 1904	Male	Steam Petrol & Diesel Roller Driver	Married
Gladys M	Wiltshire	28 Mar 1906	Female	Unpaid Domestic Duties	Married

**Then & Now**  
**by Bill Caple**



Bleadon Post Office



**Memories (1954 – 1962)**  
**Weston-super-Mare Grammar School for Boys (Part 3)**  
**by Jerry Dorber**

The train thundered towards Yatton and someone pulled the emergency communication cord! The tremendous de-acceleration that followed, as we careered through the station, caused lots of passengers to fall over. The train screeched to a halt somewhere between the Bristol-end of the platform and the road bridge. The Clevedon contingent, realising that if we didn't get a move on our connection to Clevedon would leave without us, opened the doors and jumped on to the grassy embankment with bags and satchels, making their way back to the Station. Members of the public who lived in Yatton also jumped out. The Station Staff and the Train Guard were extremely unhappy at what we had done. The 'Merchant Venturer' was stranded with all its doors open on one side! About fifty or so youngsters and members of the public now straggled along the edge of the track towards Yatton Station. We made the connection to the Clevedon train and arrived home at our usual time.

‘Merchant Venturer’



There was much 'larking about' in the evenings and a certain amount of minor vandalism. It usually consisted of what you could unscrew in the compartment (ashtrays, pictures from walls, luggage racks, etc). A fair number of light-bulbs would go out the window! The homeward journey also provided an opportunity to sample 'cookery delights' made by the girls from the Girls' Grammar School. Many a macaroni cheese or shepherd's pie met its end on the track somewhere between Weston and Yatton. We were a most discerning group of tasters!



As I progressed, there was the lure of coffee bars in Weston with their thunderous juke-boxes, maturing girls from the Girls' Grammar School, visits to the Open Air Swimming Pool in the Summer Term (particularly when it was the Miss Modern Venus Finals) and 'chatting up' French girls who had come for a month on the Bristol/Bordeaux Exchange - or staying for Athletics Practice after School.

**Open Air Pool, Weston-super-Mare**



**Hard Lessons**

Academically, I did not do well at Weston Grammar School. I always found difficulty with tests and exams and, because of the varying quality of teaching at the School, lack of motivation and not taking life seriously enough, most subjects were problematic. September 1958 found me embarking on O-Level studies. I did badly in the 'mocks' in February 1959 and badly in the actual examinations in June and July. I passed in only one subject (Art) and failed eight or nine others.



**(1958/59) - I'm second from the right, top row**

It was suggested that, because I was the youngest in my year, there was an opportunity for me to repeat the year, do retakes at Christmas and in the following June/July.

As you can imagine, it was quite difficult to return to school in the Autumn Term 1959, be in the same class, but with boys I didn't really know. It was also hard because my friends, with whom I had come up through the School, were now entering the Sixth Form ahead of me. Failure again would mean leaving School the following year with hardly any qualifications and having to get a job so I 'knuckled down' and worked to overcome the precarious position I now found myself in.

By the end of the year, I had passed most of the O-Level subjects that I had earlier failed, and even quite a few new ones too, though English Literature, Chemistry and Physics continued to elude me. In September 1960, aged sixteen years and ten months, I went into the Lower Sixth.

### **A Satisfactory Outcome**

Going into the Lower Sixth at Weston Grammar School for Boys meant a completely different uniform - a black cap and a black tie with thin gold and maroon lines running through it. There were two types of Sixth Form courses we could do - an Arts Course or a Science Course. I was in the Lower Sixth Arts, doing three A-Levels and a few additional O-Levels.

We began the academic year with a residential week away at Dillington House (near Ilchester), where outside speakers introduced us to a wide range of topics ranging from Cybernetics, the workings of the National Grid and the importance of Industrial Growth to the Future of Britain. On the whole, this was not the most scintillating programme for a group of sixteen and seventeen-year-old lads, some of whom were more interested in the young ladies who served us our meals. The highlight of the week was a visit to, and an extensive tour of, the partly-constructed Hinkley Point A Nuclear Power Station site.

Once back in School, I settled down to work. Because now considered to 'have turned myself around', I became a Sub- prefect towards the end of the first year in the Lower Sixth and a Prefect in Autumn Term 1961 in the Upper Sixth. All Prefects and Sub-prefects wore a small enamelled badge with maroon and gold stripes. A Sub-prefect could give an after-school detention, to be counter-signed by a Prefect, whereas a Prefect could give a detention in 'his own right'. Prefects had black tassels hanging from the top of their black caps and they also had the dubious privilege of being able to read the lesson at School Assembly. Because of the reluctance of many of my peers, I found myself a regular reader in the School's Morning Assembly.



One of the Staff (Don Brown) advertised details of the newly-formed Somerset County Outdoor Activity Camp. Basically, this was a mixed Mini Outward Bound Course for about thirty youngsters, held during the first week of the summer holiday and run by members of the Somerset County Youth Committee. In 1959, I went on the first Camp which was held at Charterhouse. There we experienced potholing in Burrington Combe, rock climbing on Haytor and a two-night, three-day canoeing expedition on the River Avon. This involved overnight camping and portaging canoes up and down weirs and paddling about twenty-odd miles. I enjoyed it so much that I applied for the Camp again the following year.

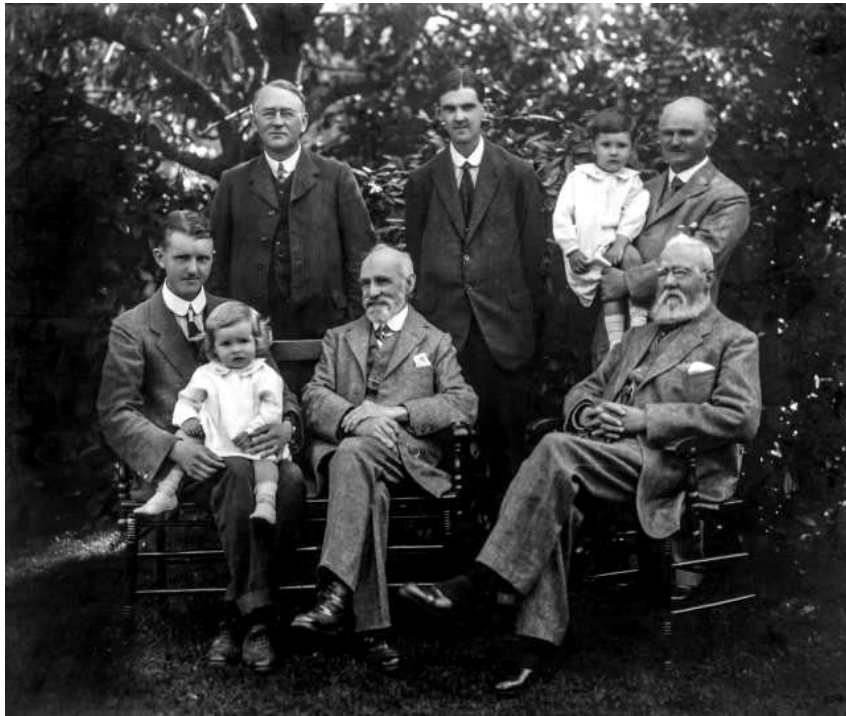
At Weston Grammar School, Don Brown also introduced the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme. I participated in this when I was seventeen and eighteen years old. I got my Bronze and Silver Awards and I was invited to meet with Prince Phillip and Sir John Hunt (Leader of the successful 1953 Everest Expedition) at a Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme Meeting in Taunton.

It was assumed by School, that having passed so many O-Levels and seeming to be doing quite well in my A-Level Studies, that I might now wish to consider going to university – however, I had other ideas!

**(to be continued)**

## **Brown Brothers' Café** **by Paul Tregelles**

In April 1896, Wilfred Marriage Brown was responsible for establishing a café business at 25 and 26 High Street, Weston-super-Mare, with his brother Arthur Edgar Brown (although Arthur focused predominantly on the grocery side of their business).



**Back Row (L to R):** Arthur Edgar Brown (17 February 1872 - 30 April 1951; Charles Reginald Brown (20 February 1897 - 28 September 1979); Wilfred Marriage Brown (16 December 1870 - 17 November 1950) with Arnold Newall Brown (6 January 1919 - 4 August 1927)

**Front Row (L to R):** Wilfred Maurice Brown (26 July 1894 - 9 March 1969) with Leonard Newall Brown (5 November 1920 - 8 February 1942); Edgar Marriage Brown (1 September 1840 - 31 August 1935); Charles Brown (18 May 1835 - 18 February 1927)

In 1896, the use of the word 'café' was then an absolutely new thing, certainly in the West of England and probably throughout England, and people struggled to pronounce the name properly. Although over the next few years Wilfred's idea was copied extensively, his business acumen was such that Brown Brothers' Café was ever abreast of the times.

On opening in 1896, the Café premises were also noted as having lifts, which were a rare occurrence in those days, and proved to be an attraction to the customers, particularly the younger children.

It was also Wilfred's experience, gained under the famous Seebohm Rowntree, that won the firm a considerable reputation for chocolate manufacture.

Although owning both 25 and 26 High Street, Brown Brothers' Café was initially only located on the ground floor of 26 High Street with 25 High Street being the premises of Henry Bryan (a boot and shoe manufacturer). However, the 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors of the Café extended over both sites. At the time of commencing the Café business, the luxuriously-appointed building in the High Street was said to be 'one of the social rendezvous of the town'.

The premises at 26 High Street were known originally as the 'Oriental Café' and were something of a novelty when opened, as may be judged from this description recorded over half a century later. 'The whole of the interior is elegantly decorated in a rich oriental style and, whilst sipping a delicious cup of coffee, one might almost imagine themselves in a distant seraglio, so perfectly harmonious are all the surroundings. High Street, we know, is the most fashionable shopping resort in Weston and, judging from the number of ladies and gentlemen who drop into the Oriental Café to enjoy the luxury of a cup of fragrant tea or coffee, served as it should be, or a delicious cooling ice, or a more solid refection in the way of a little cold beef, ham or tongue with salad, we should say that a distinct success has already been achieved . . .'

Under Wilfred Marriage Brown's managing directorship, the establishment grew in popularity, the premises undergoing many further extensions in the course of the years, particularly to the cake factory and additional dining rooms.

The Café was enlarged in 1897, again in 1899, and in 1900 a new cake factory was built on to the back of the Café at 26 High Street, which extended to North Street.

On the new cake factory being built, it was reported that ‘in order to cope with our rapidly increasing cake trade, and to maintain its high reputation we have erected a new cake factory, fitted with the latest machinery and with four of Baker’s New Patent Continuous Ovens. In this factory, the strictest regard is paid to hygienic principles. The enormous increase in the demand for our cakes is proof of the preference they have over those that are usually sold.’

In 1901, the Café was further extended after which it consisted of the following:

- Ground floor: Shop (with stairs to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor), Café (with lift and stairs to the 1<sup>st</sup> floor), Kitchen (with stairs and lift to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors) and outside yard.
- First floor (above 25 High Street): Dining Room (with stairs to 2<sup>nd</sup> floor), Café and Gentlemen’s Cloak Room.
- First floor (above 26 High Street): Luncheon Room, Landing (with lift and stairs down to the Café area on the ground floor), Café (with stairs down to the Kitchen on the ground floor), Ladies’ Cloak Room (with lift and stairs down to Kitchen on ground floor).
- Second floor (above 25 High Street): Smoke Room, Landing (with stairs down to the Dining Room on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor), Bag Room, Waitresses’ Cloak Room, Kitchen, Bathroom and Toilet.
- Second floor (above 26 High Street): Room for parties, Kitchen, Wash-up Kitchen Room (with lift and stairs down to Ladies’ Cloak Room on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor and Kitchen on ground floor).

The Café had a suite of splendid oak-panelled rooms, which included the Red Room (seating about 40 people) and the Green Room (seating about 100 people).

In addition, there was also the Roof Garden Restaurant which opened from June to September, serving ‘dainty lunches and afternoon teas’ with the Grosvenor Orchestra, performing at 3.30 and 5.30pm daily.

Another striking point concerning the decor of the Café was the use of copper-topped tables, which in addition to the oak panelling, gave it an air of sophistication and elegance.



In the early 1900s, the Café offered hot lunches from 12.30 to 2.30pm.

Around this time, the Café menu offered a special 2s 6d lunch which included either soup, orange juice or grapefruit, choice of joint, vegetables, sweet cheese and cup of tea or coffee.

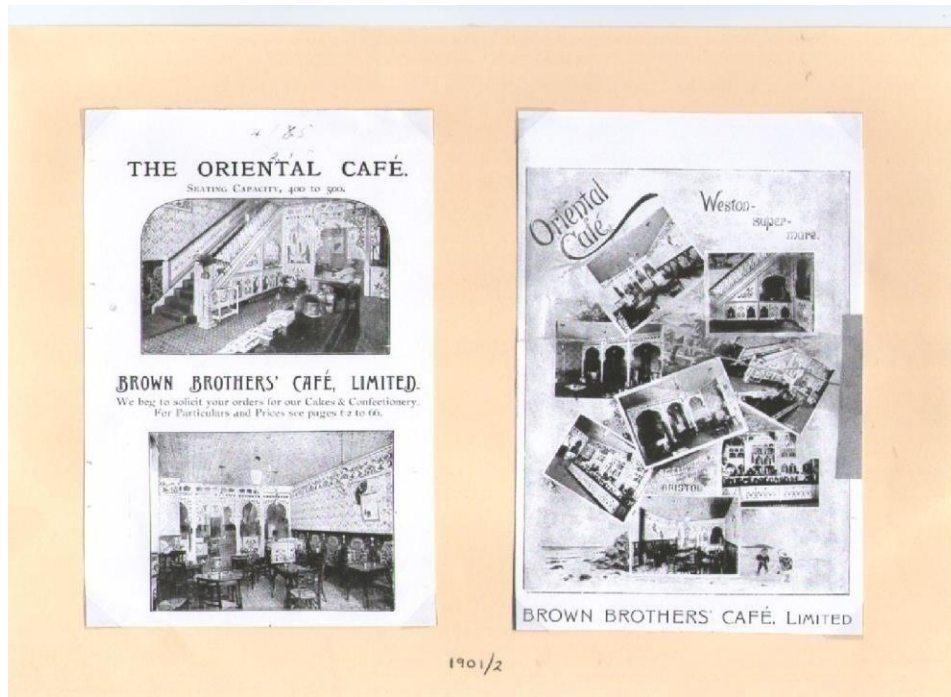
There was also the Table d'hôte Tea at 1s, which included a pot of tea, brown or white bread and butter or roll and butter, and choice of either (a) two crab sandwiches and scone and butter; (b) two egg and cress sandwiches and scone and butter; (c) small fillet of fish; (d) poached egg on toast; (e) sardines on toast. The 1s 6d tea included a pot of tea, brown or white bread and butter or roll and butter, and choice of either (a) peaches and cream; (b) small fillet of plaice; (c) two poached eggs on toast. There were also cream ices, fruit sundaes at 9d, banana split or mixed fruit sundae at 1s each or peach melba at 1s 3d.

In November 1904, planning permission was granted to make alterations to the Café which consisted of changing its entrance, changing the position of some of the stairs and improving the drainage to the yard.

In April 1907, planning permission was granted to extend the cake factory (on the ground floor) to the rear of Bryan's shop at 25 High Street and behind the premises of Fox Fowler's Bank and Lawrence's Printing Works at 27 High Street. Also, a new public room, accessed via an alternative entrance in North Street, (the North Street Hall, later called the Queens Hall) was to be added above the cake factory.

Minor alterations to the above plans were approved in October 1907, which involved improving the toilet facilities and drainage.

In 1908, the premises at 26 High Street were listed as 'The Popular Café of Oriental Café Ltd', rather than 'The Oriental Café', and the signage on the front of the building was changed.



Brown Brothers Café prided itself on its prize-winning cakes and confectionery made on the premises with the following medals being awarded: Diploma - London 1907; Prize Medal - Plymouth 1907 and Prize Medal - London 1908.

In 1920, Bryan's closed and Brown Brothers extended the Café to the ground floor at 26 High Street and operated from 25 and 26 High Street until the Café closed in 1953.

Planning permission was granted for further changes in January 1921, with the major change being another room (called the King Alfred Hall) being added on the first floor alongside the Queens Hall, and the addition of a Servery and Work Room. Both rooms were accessed via North Street.

NB: King Alfred Hall was named after the King Alfred Masonic Lodge in Weston-super-Mare, where Wilfred Marriage Brown was a Master.

Further alterations to the first floor and the addition of Stores and Work Rooms to the second floor, and the addition of a third floor, were given planning permission in July 1921.

On the news of the closure of Brown Brothers' Café in December 1953, the 'Weston Mercury' reported that 'hundreds of adult Westonians will retain, to their last days, memories of some wonderful displays of Easter eggs'.

At the same time, the 'Weston Mercury' also reported that 'the closing of Browns must conjure up a host of memories for Westonians. It has been a popular rendezvous for so many years, the setting for so many important and pleasant functions, that it is difficult to realise it is no more. Memories of it will remain as nostalgically fragrant as those roasting coffee beans that once wafted their all-prevailing aroma on every passer-by'.

With effect from 4 December 1953, Brown Brothers (Catering and Confectioners) Ltd ceased to trade and the premises were leased (for 21 years) to Frederick Hardy Ltd, a well-known local furrier, who had premises in Regent Street, Weston-super-Mare and 12 branches in different parts of the West Country. Following the changes to the numbering of the High Street in the 1960s, the building was changed from 25 and 26 High Street to 76-78 High Street.

In July 1993, Woodspring District Council agreed for the two premises (the empty Golden Spur Restaurant and the former Youngsters Toy Shop, next door) located at 76-78 High Street to be demolished and replaced with a new two-storey building. This 'new' building is currently (March 2019) the site of The Works.

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**Editor:** The story of the Brown Brothers and their enterprises will be continued in the next issue of 'Buckets & Spades'. Paul Tregelles is still researching his family history and would be very grateful if anyone can provide additional information, photos or memories. Thank you!

**Then & Now**  
**Bridge Garage, Bleadon**  
**by Bill Caple**



**c1934--2017**



## Some Useful Local Addresses

The Editor is always pleased to receive additions or corrections to this list, based on Members' experiences.

Bath Library	Tel: 01225 787400
Bristol Central Library, College Green, Bristol	Tel: 0117 9037200 email: <i>bristol-library-service@bristol.gov.uk</i>
Bristol Family History Centre (LDS), 721 Wells Road, Whitchurch, Bristol, BS14 9HU	Tel: 01275 838326
Bristol Record Office, 'B' Bond Warehouse, Smeaton Road, Bristol, BS1 6XN	Tel: 0117 9224224 email: <i>bro@bristol-city.gov.uk</i>
Clevedon Library, 37 Old Church Road, Clevedon, BS21 1RQ	Tel: 01934 426020 email: <i>clevedon.library@n-somerset.gov.uk</i>
Clevedon Story Heritage Centre, Waterloo House, 4 The Beach, Clevedon, BS21 7QU	Tel: 01275 341196
Nailsea Library, Somerset Square, Nailsea, BS48 1RQ	Tel: 01934 426030 email: <i>nailsea.library@n-somerset.gov.uk</i>
Weston-super-Mare Museum, Burlington Street, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1PR	Tel: 01934 621028. Fax 01934 612526 email: <i>museum@wsm-tc.gov.uk</i>
Portishead Library, High Street, Portishead, BS20 6EW	Tel: 01934 426040 email: <i>portishead.library@n-somerset.gov.uk</i>
Registrar of Births Deaths and Marriages, Town Hall, Walliscote Road, Weston super Mare, BS23 1UJ	Tel: 01934 427552 email: <i>register.office@n-somerset.gov.uk</i>
Somerset Heritage Centre, Brunel Way, Norton Fitzwarren, Taunton, TA2 6SF	Tel: 01823 278805 email: <i>archives@somerset.gov.uk</i>
Somerset Studies Library, Paul Street, Taunton, TA1 3XZ	Tel: 01823 340300. Fax: 01823 340301 email: <i>somstud@somerset.gov.uk</i>
Weston Library, Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road, Weston super Mare, BS23 1UJ	For general enquiries: Tel: 01934 426010 email: <i>weston.library@n-somerset.gov.uk</i> For local history enquiries: Tel: 01934 888855 email: <i>answers@n-somerset.gov.uk</i>
Weston Civic Society, The Old Town Quarry, South Road, Weston super Mare	Tel: 01934 412144
Worle Library and Children's Centre, Mendip Avenue, Worle, BS22 6HN	Tel: 01934 462090 email: <i>worle.library@n-somerset.gov.uk</i>
Yatton Library, 48 High Street, Yatton, BS49 4HJ	Tel: 01934 426100 email: <i>yatton.library@n-somerset.gov.uk</i>

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## Map of the Parishes covered by the Weston-super-Mare & District FHS

*On the rear cover is a map of the general area that we cover as a Society, showing the Parishes that are known to have existed in 1832. This basically equates to the same area that forms North Somerset District Council's boundaries plus that covered by the Axbridge Registration District which was set up in 1837:*

1. Easton-in-Gordano	2 Portbury	3 Abbots Leigh
4. Portishead	5. Clapton in Gordano	6. Wraxall
7. Long Ashton	8. Weston in Gordano	9. Tickenham
10. Nailsea	11. Backwell	12. Flax Bourton
13. Barrow Gurney	14. Dundry	15. Walton in Gordano
16. Clevedon	17. Kenn	18. Yatton
19. Brockley	19a. Chelvey	20. Wrington
21. Butcombe	22. Nempnet Thrubwell	23. Winford
24. Kingston Seymour	25. Wick St Lawrence	26. Puxton & Hewish
27. Congresbury	28. Churchill	29. Burrington
30. Blagdon	31. Kewstoke	32. Worle
33. Banwell	34. Weston-super-Mare	35. Hutton
36. Locking	37. Christon	38. Winscombe
39. Uphill	40. Brean	41. Bleadon
42. Loxton	43. Biddisham	44. Compton Bishop
45. Axbridge	46. Shipham	47. Rowberrow
48. Cheddar	49. Charterhouse	50. Ubley
51. Compton Martin	52. Chew Stoke	53. Chew Magna
54. West Harptree	55. East Harptree	56. Berrow
57. Brent Knoll	58. Lympsham	59. East Brent
60. Badgworth	61. Weare	62. Nyland
63. Rodney Stoke	64. Westbury	65. Priddy
66. Burnham on Sea	67. Huntspill	68. Mark
69 Chapel Allerton	70. Wedmore	

*The following Parishes were split as follows:*

*Clevedon into All Saints; Christ Church & St Andrew.*

*Nailsea into Christ Church & Holy Trinity.*

*Weston-super-Mare into All Saints; Christ Church; Emmanuel; Good Shepherd; Holy Trinity; St John; St Paul & St Saviour.*

# Map of Parishes covered by Weston-super-Mare & District FHS

