



blidworthhistory@virginmedia.com

March 2021 News Sheet

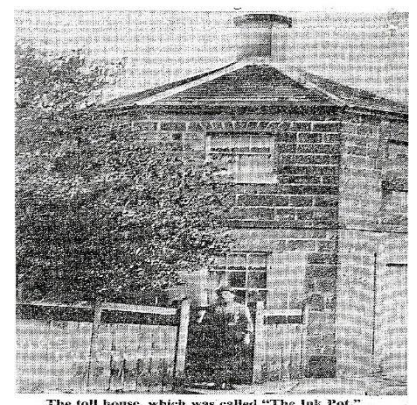
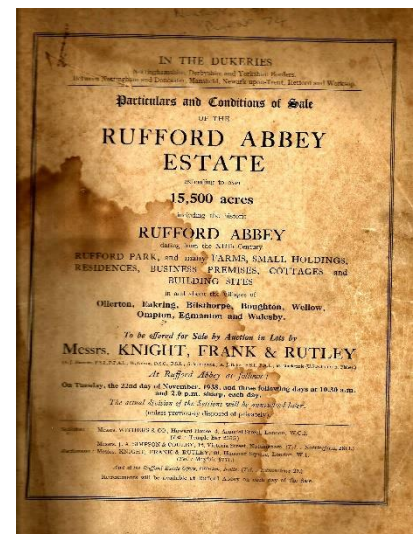
At this time, when we are unable to meet up, we are putting information on our Website and Facebook page. They have both been updated regularly. If anyone would like to ask for some specific information you can contact us (safely) by email at the above address. **But for those members who do not have access to technology we've put together a News Sheet. This will be issued into our community, as safely as we can. See a copy – pass it on SAFELY! If you would like one emailing let us know at above address.**

Whilst researching a question raised about somewhere called Nursery House, we discovered several pieces of information relating to the history of Rainworth. This particular enquiry led us to obtaining information about the building currently forming part of Churchfields Care Home being the original parsonage/vicarage and the land to the side of the road leading to the Home and the caravan/static homes behind the building. We met several individuals along the way who held an interest in our villages and shared our aim in building up the history of Rainworth and Ravenshead.

Julie Dawes, was a lady we met who supported us in our aim and imparted her personal family history to do with Nursery Cottage and loaned us an Auction Catalogue of the Rufford Estate lots in 1938, and planned on working with us. Sadly, this was not to be as Julie passed away very suddenly in February. Having spoken with Julie's family since, we have been assured that she would want us to continue with our aim and that they know we will handle her shared memories, documents as the treasured items they are.

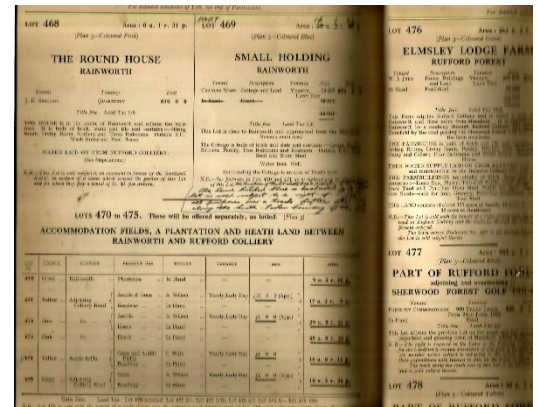
Rufford Estate – Lord Saville's estate covered large areas surrounding and in Rainworth and there are many links to the development of schooling, religious meetings and of course industry both farming and coal mining. In 1938 a sale of a large portion of the Rufford estate took place and properties and land in Rainworth changed hands; for example, the multi named building: the toll house/Round House/Ink pot. This used to stand in Rainworth where the Car Wash is currently opposite the Post Office on Southwell Road East; before being a car wash it was Rainworth Filling Station.

The Rufford estate land and properties will be used over time as we build the history archive for Rainworth. We have several photos and documents to talk and discussing about several major development points in the village's history.



Nursery Cottage still exists but not in its original form. It was the gamekeeper's cottage when part of the Rufford Estate and the tenant at the sale of the property on 22nd November 1938 was a Mr Charles Wain, this was Julie's grandfather, and his handwriting is on the page around Lot 469 indicating his interest in this particular property. His annotation indicates "part" Lot 469 – and some other notes that we are trying to transcribe.

The name Nursery Cottage does not appear in the catalogue just a reference to a small holding at Rainworth that has a cottage built of brick and slate and contains: living room, kitchen, pantry, two bedrooms and boxroom, outside F.C., coal shed and store shed. Water was drawn from a well. The cottage was surrounded by Heath Land – later this was developed into a caravan park. Julie remembers that the original gamekeeper's cottage had stables, that her grandfather had no use for so demolished. When she was quite young and living there. Her grandfather and then later her father had various parcels of land in and around the Lot, but no other structure for living on that land.



They ran the caravan park for many years. Julie remembers that her grandmother's glass ornaments, that were out in the cottage, got damaged with the vibrations when the train struggled up the incline of the track. After the death of her parents Julie sold the land and the original cottage but moved to another property close by. Nursery cottage is still sign posted but is marked private and Julie said that the exterior is all new.



During our short conversation with Julie, we exchanged many shared memories of times in and around Rainworth such as:

- Cutting across the field behind the vicarage (now Churchfield Care Home) to get to garden parties/ fairs/ guides and brownies meetings.
- Python Hill school that she attended as a pupil and then later as a teaching assistant.
- Attendance at Joseph Whitaker Comprehensive School.

We looked forward to exploring together. She mentioned further documents that she was willing to loan us for our research and we discussed what she would like to see happen to these documents later – her family or a museum etc. Engaging with us that day she said energised her and she looked forward to more interactions – as did we.

The following day Julie phoned us to say she had found the documents she referred to – maps associated with the auction catalogue and another detailing the entirety of the Dukeries estate plus a document referring to the proposed alteration to the cottage "Saddlers Wood" Rainworth for Mr Wain, 1947. The last document is a mystery to Julie as she had never heard the name Saddlers Wood before – something we all thought we could investigate together. Julie said she put the documents ready for collection and we discussed ways we could use / scan etc for our archives.

The family of Julie have very kindly passed on those documents and assured us they fully support the development of this history. Join us as we follow this story in memory of Julie and her family's association with Rainworth.

Tom Hubbard "Apart from being called the Wimpey Estate after the builders I have also heard it called the "concrete city" after the method of construction of the houses. Somehow I can't see some of the houses being built today lasting as long as these or those on Kirklington Road or the colliery village in Blidworth." **Ariel photo of Wimpey Estate, Preston Road opposite Joseph Whitaker's 1970s.**



As the families settled into their new homes, they began to learn about the new mod cons that were in the rented house. After the last article about Wimpey estate, we received several people sharing their memories of Wimpey Estate, such as Diane Harrison who said "I remember my dad telling me he did some of the joinery on the Wimpey estate, including the wood in the roofing."

The houses were rented from the NCB and the offices for the rents was in Blidworth. Sandra Anderson commented "I was born in 1954 on

the Rainworth side of Wimpeys on Preston Road. My mum and dad Jack and Dot Hopson lived there all their lives. Dad died 1986 and Mum died in 2019 aged 97 and my Daughter has bought the house and living there with her family. Alison Sherratt explained "I have lived all my life on the Wimpey estate. I was born in the summer of 1954 after my parents, Dorothy and Dennis Barnes, moved into 22 Rugby Road at Easter of the same year (see the rent book). I then moved onto Preston Road on my marriage in 1974 where we still are. I do believe that Preston Road was the parish boundary for years hence why I lived on the Rufford side (dad worked at Rufford) and moved across as my husband worked at Blidworth." And she sent us a photo of an actual rent book.



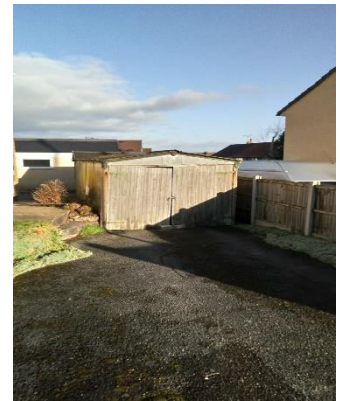
Gardens began to be developed, with grass / turf being set, some trees had been planted in "green areas" around the estate and Eaton Close had its own trees – many a time we played around the base of the tree. Marbles was the best game, where we used the dips and the hollows for great marble rallies. For those with their dinky or corgi vehicles it made a great road system. The tree never made it to full maturity but the areas of green, whilst no longer green due to the many cars travelling over them or parking on them, still remain today.



Cars were few and far

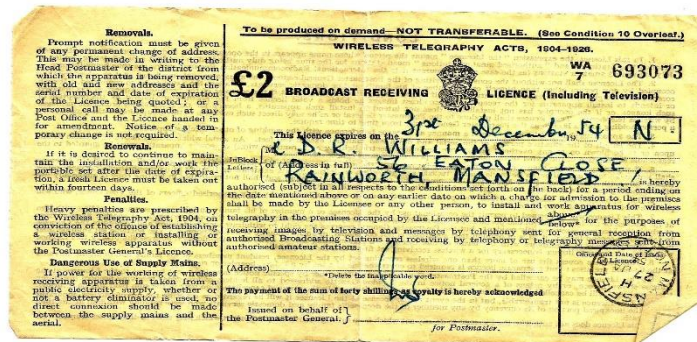
between in the early days – in the middle 50s it was of course the trusty black car just like this photo. **Ford or an Austin?** Its parked outside number 6 Eaton Close and the baby on the grass (seeded by my dad and uncle) is at number 11 Eaton. Of course, as cars began to appear then drives and garages starting appearing at the homes.

The garages were all constructed of asbestos sheets forming the walls and a corrugated (asbestos) apex roof; with double doors to the front and often with windows at the top of the header above the door or in the doors themselves, example here (courtesy of a neighbour with their permission) and yes, it is still standing! Later the style evolved and of course the need then to consider the safe removal of the asbestos sheets in line with H&S did make people think twice before knocking them down to be replaced.



Our garage meant that the coal bunker was moved from opposite the back door, to the back garden opposite the kitchen window. That garage became one of the best places for play; it was a shop; a house; a school; a theatre and all the kids from the street joined my sister and I playing. I remember one occasion when we held a "garage sale" from it – and I sold all of Robert Hardwick's cars (corgi and dinky) and made lots of cash for sweets!

Inside the house entertainment was sorted with the Dad renting a TV (a model like this one called an Ecco) and of course the inevitable licence that went with it (but note the address **56 Eaton Close** there is no numbering beyond **16 Eaton Close** so think **56 was a plot number?** By the following year the licence is for **11 Eaton Close,**



1954 facts about TV broadcasting:

UK exports just over 100,000 television sets. UK TV license increases from £2 to £3. 4.2 million licenses by the end of the year. CRT sizes predominantly 14" and 17". World's first regular colour TV service begins in America. First compatible colour transmission from Alexandra Palace.



It wasn't all play though, there was work to be done - Wash day. A TV show "Back in time to the corner shop" revealed wash day was on a Monday, due to Sunday being the only day off for the factories in industrial areas, so housewife had to get washing doing in "cleaner" air as it built up smog from Monday to Saturday. My sister says that mum did her wash on Monday too. In the same show they modelled face masks to cut down breathing in the pollution – the masks looked like a pair of Y-front pants! Not to



dissimilar to what we are having to wear today. The Gas copper would be settled in the kitchen and hooked up to the gas tap under the draining board, filled with water and set to boil with the lightest cotton soiled clothes first. The washer was a Servis machine, large with top loading and a mangle attached. Water went in from copper into the top and the agitator would wash the clothes. Once finished the water pipe was hung over the sink and the dirty water pumped out. Using wooden laundry tongues to remove the washing into the sink or tub for rinsing. The washing was then taken to the back garden where a line stretched from the house to the bottom of the garden, with a smaller line going from the concrete line post to the right-hand side fence between us and number 13.

More to follow.

AND NORTH NOTTS. ADV

THOSE WERE THE DAYS.

Happy Memories of Blidworth.

AN OLD RESIDENT WRITES.

SOME interesting reminiscences of prosperous and happy days in Blidworth some fifty or sixty years ago are contained in a series of notes sent to the Editor of the "Advertiser" by Mr. George Tansley, of Greenwood Cottages, Sherwood, Hall, Mansfield, who resided in the village in his early days.

"We are all more or less lovers of the countryside and its villages," he writes, "but it is questionable whether there is one in Old England that could give a better account of itself that old Blidworth in so many directions. The villagers of those days seemed to be willing, ambitious, and by hard work and their own exertions to help in making provision, beauty and happiness for themselves and others."

The writer goes on to recall Plough Monday—the first Monday in January—a day on which a number of the young men of the village, wearing masks and blackened faces, would walk into the houses and perform. Their repertory of songs included "Put what you like into our box, and a jug of your best beer" and "Hurrah, boys, for the Army, hurrah for the Red, White and Blue, come my lads and be a soldier, come and take a bob and serve the Queen."

The first Sunday in February was Rocking Sunday, a custom maintained still by the Church. On Monday and for several more days the celebrations were kept going. There were roundabouts, shooting galleries, and various other amusements, but the most familiar figure was the lady with the rock sweet stall. The sweet was of her own making, which she sold for a half-penny a block. When business was slack she would call out, "Come, we shan't be able to buy the frock a child, I mean the child a frock," and hence she became known by the name of "Frock-a-Child"

In June, 1887, fiftieth year of Queen Victoria's reign, medals were presented to all the school

An article from the Mansfield and North Notts Advertiser, Friday March 12 1943. Contained some interesting reminiscences of Mr George Tansley, a resident of Blidworth in his early years.

In this article he writes of Plough Bullocking, held on the first Monday in January and the Rocking service held on the first Sunday in February (cancelled due to covid19 this year).

He also comments on the familiar figure of the lady who made and sold her own sweets on the rock sweet stall! When business was slack, she would call out "Come we shan't be able to buy the frock a child, I mean the child a frock." Hence, she was known as "Frock-a-child"!

Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee celebrations with medals for school children and live pigs to be won by climbing the greasy pole!

Then he tells of old Polly, Mary Radford who travelled by donkey and cart, travelling between Blidworth and Mansfield delivering groceries and other goods ordered by the villagers. Other carriers mentioned are Thomas Pogson and Henry Knowles.

Future joyful events are anticipated such as the annual treat on the

vicarage lawn. Then trips to Park Hall, Sherwood Lodge, Hardwick Park to name a few for the children to enjoy. Finally, a mention of the two local schools.

Let us hope soon we can plan a few trips to enjoy!

In June, 1887, fiftieth year of Queen Victoria's reign, medals were presented to all the school children, and amusements and tea provided. The most conspicuous event of the day, however, was the reward of a fine live pig for the person who succeeded in getting nearest to the top of a pole liberally besmeared with soft soap. No one was successful in reaching the top, but the local Press described the winner as making the "nearest approach to the stars."

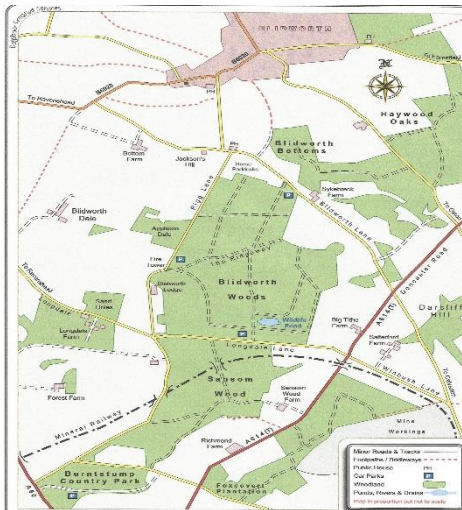
Another familiar figure was old Polly, or Mary, Radford, of Lower Blidworth, who with her two donkeys and cart travelled regularly between Blidworth and Mansfield. On her return journey she delivered groceries and other goods as per order of the villagers. Thomas Pogson was carrier to Nottingham on Saturdays and Mansfield on Thursdays; also Henry Knowles to Mansfield on Thursdays and Saturdays.

Mr. Tansley writes of the Whit-Monday and Tuesday treats as grand days in Blidworth. This was the occasion of the annual Sick Club day treats, of which there were three. There was the usual procession, headed by the Blidworth Brass Band, conducted by Mr. James Robinson, who was greatly esteemed. After the parade the members proceeded to their different headquarters and partook of a repast.

Another popular event for the children was the annual treat on the vicarage lawn. The local farmers also provided an outing for the children about July, when their four-wheeled waggons and horses, all decorated, came and took the children to Park Hall, Woodhouse, Sherwood Hall Park, and to Sherwood Lodge, near the seven-mile house, and Hardwick Park. Those were great days for the kiddies.

There were two schools in the village, the Church School and the National School. Mr. Gore was the headmaster of the Boys' Church School, and Miss Dickenson of the girls. The Vicar, Rev. R. H. Whitworth, was very interested in the school, and visited it every morning to see that the scholars had their Bible lesson.

[To be Continued.]



Notes by Will Richards:

It seems what is now the bridle-path from Longdale Lane towards Blidworth was one of the main routes through the Forest many years ago. It is recorded that the high point of the path near Blidworth Dale was where the forest “Courts” were held, and in 1588 the court of Swinemote was still being held near Blidworth.

The point is called Queen’s Bower because it was one of the many places where Queen Elizabeth I, was *claimed* to have stayed on one of her journeys. On the occasion of one of the Courts there the “Nottingham Town Council” gave a gallon of wine to Sir John Byron, and a like quantity of claret to him and fellow Forest Officers, Sir John Chaworth and Sir Nicholas

Strelley. Each gallon cost no less than 16^d.

However, these courts or Regardes have been held at other nearby places in earlier and later times. A booklet was compiled by Rev. R.H. Whitworth when he was vicar of Blidworth, in which he described how “Forest Law” was administered by royalty or high officials of state.” In 1250 a man named Raufe Clerk was Chief Forester of land owned by the King and he dwelt at the lodge (Fountaindale) on the south side of Lyndhurst beside Reynewurthe syke (Rainworth Water). This lodge was where the site Friar Tuck had his cell.

It seems the walk to visit both Fountaindale and Friar Tuck’s well is still as popular today and the walk and site can be found on any OS map ref SK 45/55 568569.



Here to Help during the COVID-19 Crisis Blidworth And Rainworth Fight Against Covid-19 Facebook page set up by the Blidworth and Rainworth Parish Councils; the Sherwood Forest Community Church C of E and Methodist Churches in Blidworth, as well as the Blidworth Welfare, the Head-teachers of Local Schools and the Social Action Hub (Food share and Co-op). Our purpose is to supply useful and accurate information to the community and to help the vulnerable at this time. We recognise the outstanding response that members of the community have had by making pages etc, this is just a way of consolidating all the various groups.

Contact them on the following numbers:

Rainworth Social Action Hub food share 01623 490498

Blidworth on the move for medical transport 07915929936 & 07377267643 Plus General Enquiries 07816933429 (Lines open M-Fri 8.30am - 6.30pm)

Blidworth food share at Sherwood forest community church 07907 664862



**Annual General Meeting
Wednesday 17th March 2021**

Virtual by Zoom

All members will be contacted with the log in details for this event, please ensure we have your up-to-date contact details.

As we cannot meet face to face, we feel this will be the best way that we can let you know what we have been doing this last year and to update you on how our Society is faring.

We do hope you can join us, but if you have any concerns then don't hesitate to contact us either by email at

blidworthhistory@virginmedia.com or by calling our secretary Jayne on 01623 408978.

Anyone unsure or unable to attend the zoom meeting ring us to discuss or email and be assured that all minutes and notes will be made available to you.

Stay safe and hope it isn't too long before we can meet up again, but until then know we will continue with our endeavours to share the history of our beautiful area of the world.

We hope to welcome new members soon to our monthly meetings.

Here are some things online that you may enjoy:

YOUTUBE VIDEOS:

BLIDWORTH LANDMARKS – Oliver's and Alan's conversation about Will Scarlett grave
<https://youtu.be/seb0jpxVUBE>

JUVENILE MARCHING BANDS 1970s <https://youtu.be/LrM26xdUIOU>

A HISTORY OF COAL MINING IN 10 OBJECTS – 1. HEADSTOCKS:

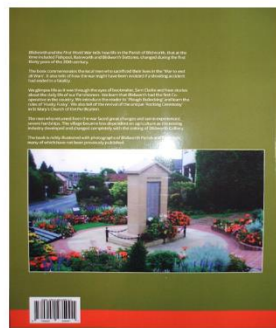
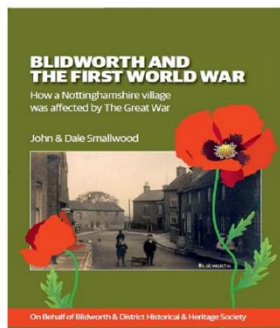
In 2013, there are only three working collieries left in the UK. In this documentary, 76-year-old ex-mining surveyor and mining historian Robert Bradley charts the development of the iconic colliery headstocks which once dominated the skyline of the North Notts coalfields. https://youtu.be/9_alj9EiGBQ

BLIDWORTH DISUSED RAILWAY WALK: THE FORGOTTEN BRANCH LINE
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n498LANj82Q>

NEWSTEAD ABBEY PROGRAMME. PRESENTED BY REHANNAH MIAN
<https://youtu.be/tMFRPrXqT8>

ROUND RAVENSHEAD WALK
<https://youtu.be/uNyxhlsQxhs>

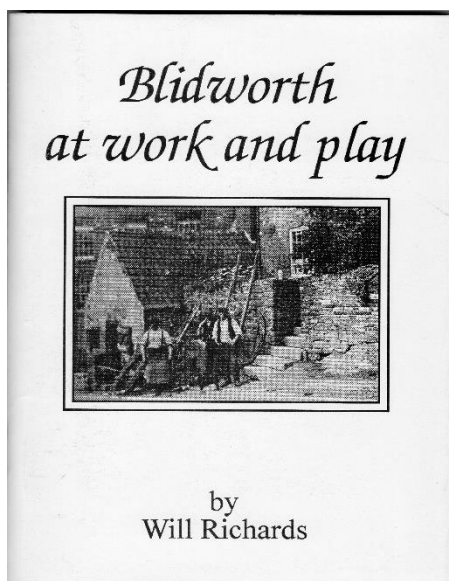
FOR THOSE WHO PREFER NOT TO USE INTERNET:



Our book, Blidworth and the First World War is still available to purchase.

Members £8.00 and £10 for non-members.

Another publication we have is a 96-page booklet "Blidworth at work and play", by Will Richards, that her dedicated to his great-grandfather:



I dedicate this series of books to my great-grandfather,

Thomas Pogson of Blidworth.

I cannot better the recommendation on his grave's headstone
which is five yards from the doors of the Church:

"Reader, prepare to meet thy God".

Price £3 for all.

To purchase any of these just contact us via Facebook; email or phone 01623 408978 and we can arrange.