INTRODUCTION by Allan Frost

I first came across Marjorie McCrea’s name in the early 1970s when I discovered the contents of a four-drawer cabinet in Wellington library (the old one, in Walker Street).

The cabinet contained a treasure trove of local history documents, all of which had been donated to the people of Wellington by folk like Marjorie who, for personal reasons, didn’t want their precious paperwork to go to Shropshire Archives or the Local Studies Library, both at Shrewsbury.

Her name continued to crop up from time to time, whenever the fruits of her meticulous research (we could all learn a lot from her when it comes to historical accuracy and interpretation) were published, like the ones in this Special Paper.

It wasn’t until she found herself in the twilight years of her life that I managed to meet her. She realised, with resolute stoicism, that her time for research and writing had ended, and I was most fortunate to borrow her detailed notes on the life of Wellington’s most famous literary figure, Hesba Stretton, which helped me write Hesba’s biography. By way of reciprocation, I lent her recordings of my mother’s memories of Old Wellington... the spoken word is an invaluable tool for those with limited or failed eyesight.

I felt extremely honoured when her remaining research papers were given to me at the time she was preparing to leave home to spend her final days in the Morris Care Home.

Wellington History Group is most grateful to Neil Thomas, current editor of Shropshire Magazine, for kindly giving permission for the articles written by Miss McCrea and published by the magazine in 1982 and 1983 to be reproduced here.
Mr Alfred Barlow was the first ladies' hairdresser to set up business in Wellington. He came from Harrods of London to 40 New Street, on October 6, 1911. He took over the business from Thomas Wood who emigrated to New Zealand in 1911.

The shop was double fronted and had two counters, one for cosmetics, and the other for toys. The men’s and ladies’ hairdressing salons were at the back of the shop, but after the family went to live in Herbert Avenue in 1929 the salons were moved upstairs.

Many businessmen came to be shaved first thing in the morning, and the staff was always busy from 8.15 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. The shop was also open for one and a half hours every Bank Holiday for shaving customers.

In 1926 a shave cost threepence — safety razors came in in the 1920's and electric razors near the end of the second world war. When the employees were not cutting hair they were kept busy covering and repairing umbrellas. This was a custom in most barber’s shops years ago.

An advertisement in the Wellington Directory in 1916 read as follows:

A. Barlow, 40 New Street,
(from Harrods, London)

Ladies kept their hair long up to about 1919 and Mr Barlow had a copper gas hair dryer for drying long hair.

In shape this was an adjustable cylinder three feet high and about four inches wide standing on three legs. There was a gas ring at the bottom and threequarters of the way up there was a piece of wire mesh to catch any loose hairs.

At the top there was a curved cover about eight inches in depth with an opening at the one end where the head and hair was put in. The cover could be left open.

Marcel waving was done by hot curling irons. Gas was used up to 1924, after which electricity was supplied by Messrs G. H. York from their dynamo until electricity came into Wellington in the 1930’s. High frequency was used which is not used today.

Mr Barlow’s son Ronald qualified in Birmingham as a chiropodist and opened a surgery at the shop in 1936.

Usually the staff consisted of 12 people. Hours of working were 8.30am to 7pm before 1939, 9am to 6pm afterwards. They were allowed an hour for lunch and half an hour for tea — provided by Mr Barlow up until 1939. Before the war they were allowed one week’s holiday a year plus bank holidays.

A variety of fancy goods was sold: brushes, combs of all kinds including dust combs, much needed in those days, side combs, fancy and plain hair nets, soap, perfumes, shampoos, curlers, leather goods and toys of all kinds.

At one time perm clubs were run by employees of the Chad Valley Toy factory and others. Twenty girls paid 1s. (5p) per week. When they needed a permanent wave they paid 1s. and the rest was paid from club funds. The person running the club could have a free perm at 21s. These clubs ran for many years.

Barlows made their own vanishing cream during the 1939-45 war. This sold faster than they could make it at 2s.6d. (12½p) per jar. They also bottled their own brilliantine and made their own shampoo from green soft soap which came in large drums, on ration.

When Mr Ronald Barlow’s son was three years old he dropped eight ounces of the employees’ tea (also on ration) into the soft soap drum and mixed it well in — a great loss in those days.

Perfumery was also sold ‘loose’ before 1939 — customers would bring their own bottles to be filled.

The copper gas hair dryer was given to the Ironbridge Gorge Museum by Mr Ronald Barlow when the premises were sold in 1962.
When chemists dispense grains of paradise and Jesuits Bark...

by Marjorie McCrea

JAMES BATES began business as a chemist and grocer in Wellington about 1880 — the joint business must have been fascinating. Relics of those days still remain in the New Street premises — one room in the old building is still referred to as the tea room, with its huge wooden beams and supporting pillars, while dotted around are labels showing the price of items like candles and jellies.

As well as carrying on these trades, dental extractions were also performed. Some of the dental forces are still there, used only occasionally to persuade a difficult nail or screw to release its hold in the wood.

James Bates, a bachelor, was a church warden at All Saints' Church in 1866, and played a part in the freeing of pew rents in that church. On the stone lintel above the church door is engraved "The seats in this Church are free and unappropriated for ever — J. Bates and E. L. Lawrence, Church Wardens, April 23, 1866".

He lived alone above the shop before moving to Cludley, near Wrockwardine. The original building dates back to the early 19th century. On the right hand side of the double-fronted shop there is a passage which led into a kitchen (now a storeroom). It once had a bay window overlooking a garden, and there is also a cellar.

In the passage there is a flight of stairs leading to several rooms which had been used as living rooms. For many years the shop was heated by a gas fire and there was a coal stove at the rear but no other heat was provided, and many an errand boy complained about having to wash bottles in cold water.

Electricity was eventually installed by Messrs. G. H. York of New Street but some of the gas fittings still remain. Outside at the back there was a large drug warehouse in which there is one of the original wells in the town.

In the warehouse there was also an ammunition box from the First World War. This was a large steel container inside a wooden crate with rope handles each side. These were used by chemists for storing linseed meal and shellac for polish and furniture.

At the rear of the drug store another separate building, now used as a store, was once a blacksmith's forge. This forge was adjacent to the Shakespeare Inn (now Sidoli’s) and to the Glee Meadow where the horses could be turned out and where the Tan Bank car park is now.

Probably the smith shod the horses while the owners or grooms were taking their appointments either in the nearby Shakespeare Inn or Bulls Head (now Fine Fare). The Bulls Head yard was also handy with its stabling.

Since most of the medicines had to be made on the premises the crude drugs arrived packed in straw in wicker hampers. Some of the names sound most odd — grains of paradise, devils dung (asafoetida), some of the names sound most odd — grains of paradise, devils dung (asafoetida), wine of opium, Jesuits Bark (Cinchona) while laudanum (tincture of opium) was freely sold over the counter and, it appears, in some quantity.

Mr James Bates eventually took Mr Joshua Hunt into partnership, and he was succeeded by his son, Mr Frederick Hunt.

Over the years advertisements in local papers offered the services of Bates and Hunt as photograph chemists, agriculture chemists, "first class dispensing — qualified men using the finest drugs obtainable!"

They also claimed that "Our golden corn cure makes walking once more a pleasure.

Before the National Health Act of 1947 there was the 1911 Insurance Act for which Lloyd George was principally responsible. Under the 1911 Act, often referred to as the Lloyd George, it was the man who was the insured person, the wife and children were catered for, though totally inadequately, by voluntary savings through friendly societies.

When the chemists were making up pills and their lunch break was due before they had completed the task they would wrap the material in greaseproof paper and put it in their trouser pockets to keep it soft. Otherwise the material would harden and be unsuitable. Bates and Hunt's first lady assistant overcame the problem of not wearing trousers by putting the packet in her bosom.

Animal medicines were similarly compounded, horse blisters, cough electuaries with black treacle, horse balls, bound balls, worming powders — a whole host of remedies, some the chemists' own recipes or those of the owner, groom or gamekeeper.

The chemist was the natural person to compound photographic formulae using mello hydroquinone etc. He understood their function and could modify the formula for a developer or fixer to suit the needs of the professional studio photographer or amateur who processed his own films, glass plates and paper.

At Bates and Hunt this photographic business was conducted at the rear of the premises and with the advent of popular cameras and films, processing was undertaken for the public, then for other chemists in the area and today is a very advanced business in colour photography covering several counties and a large part of the Welsh coast.

It is difficult to believe that New Street was once open to two-way traffic. One particular customer would drive up New Street on the wrong side, stop outside the shop and shout his order from the car. A new assistant thought the gentleman shouted "Bromo", a toilet roll, and delivered it to his hand to be met with a very colourful comment and to learn that Blanco Perdida Hongroise Blan, for a white mustache, was required.

Alcohol was much in use for the preparation of medicines by maceration, and a good store of straw was necessary, not only for packing the wicker hampers but also for providing a quiet resting place to sleep off the effects of partaking of an occasional libation.

On Saturday night there was the ritual of covering the windows outside with a sail cloth to study for Sunday as the hooks and loops still remain. Following rain over the weekend the covers of course had to be dried.

For many years one of the windows was dressed with four carboys. These had been used by the old apothecaries to store liquids and medicines, and they served as their sign. In later days the carboys were just decorative, containing only coloured water.

Published in Shropshire Magazine, January 1983
Life in a Wellington shop in 1900
by Marjorie McCrea

A later advertisement was put in a Wellington Guide:

Thirty-five years ago we set out to build up a reputation for sound value and fair dealing. We succeeded and are now known throughout a large surrounding district as the best shop for everything a draper usually stocks and for many things the ordinary draper doesn't stock.

Materials of all kinds were kept, among them cashmere and cashmirette for babies' dresses, very fine nainsook and cambric for underwear, spotted muslin, black shiny alpaca and treblede for dresses. The shop opened from 9am to 5.30pm except Saturday, when it was open until 7pm. Half day was on a Friday changing later to Wednesday.

There were six assistants and they had lunch and tea in two sitting rooms with the family, when they were engaged they received 5/- (25p) per week, increasing by 2/6 (12½p) yearly and had one week's holiday.

On Thursdays, market day, when the town was very busy with farmers and their wives, they had extra help in the shop. The assistants had a cold luncheon at no set time, each one having it when there was a lull in the shop.

The assistants all wore black aprons made of Italian cloth and had scissors on a tape round their waists and brass tape measures were screwed down on to the counters. Mr. Baxter had a system which the staff called Spiffs Premiums, which gave them a bonus each month.

When Mr. Baxter wanted to sell certain remnants and stock he had had for some time and at sale times (all good stock, he never bought specially for the sales), he would put a special mark below the price using the word DONCASTER X — D—1d, O—2d, N—3d, C—4d, A—5d, S—6d, I—7d, E—8d, R—9d, X—10d and DO—12d.

Assistants selling these garments would have the amount shown by the mark on the ticket. They picked up quite a good bonus in this way, but the head assistant always took the best sales.

All customers were given a bill which was put on a file by the till as they paid for the article.

One customer who spent quite a lot of money but was also rather difficult, always coming into the shop at 6.50 on a Saturday night and was usually still there at 7.30pm. No one wanted to serve her as they all knew how late they would be and Mr. Baxter often went to the rescue by saying he would continue serving her himself.

An errand boy was kept to deliver parcels and to burn the rubbish.

Mr. Baxter once ordered a pair of corsets from Twilift, size 32-inch waist for a very stout lady living in the country. He sent them to her and received them back the following week with a note saying: "Mrs. Jones being dead won't need them." Some of the staff during the dinner hour would go up to the parish church to see the weddings. One day there was a big society wedding and there was a large crowd in the gallery where they usually sat.

On coming down the stairs they found the door locked at the bottom to stop the crowd coming out before the guests. This of course made them all very late getting back to the shop, but they had a good view of the guests from a window on the stairs.

Mr. Baxter's children when young had a Saturday penny and they raced across to the market to spend it at the penny stall (nothing over). Dick Baxter and Russell Roberts (who lived with his grandfather, John Morgan, who had a grocery shop opposite), had great fun rigging up a cord across the Square from their second floor bedrooms and sending messages to each other.

Henry Baxter started his business in the Market Square at Wellington in 1900, taking over the premises of Mr. Yeomans. At that time the property, like most of the old property in Wellington, was owned by the Meyrick family of Apley Castle.

Once a year Mr. Baxter attended a luncheon at the Charlton Arms Hotel, where he went to pay his rent. The first time he went he was called on to carve the joint, since he was the youngest there. A few years later he was able to buy the property.

Mr. Baxter's brother lived with him and worked in the business until he joined the Army and was killed in action in the 1914-1918 war.

Mr. Baxter's property in the Square was named Eagle House and it had two large gilded stone eagles over the shop. During the First World War some Council officials approached Mr. Baxter and said they were surprised that he displayed these eagles as they were the emblem of Germany, so he had them removed.

The shop was double fronted and had four steps leading up to the door and on these, on either side, were large rolls of hessian, canvas, roller towelling, lino and coconut mats.

All kinds of material and goods were displayed in the windows, hats being clipped to long pieces of tape which hung down from the ceiling to the floor. Smaller and lighter items such as lace collars, gloves, handkerchiefs and scarves were stuck on the windows with round gelatine sweets, the size of a halfpenny cut into four.

There was a large window at the back of the shop where part of the floor was blocked off by rails of coats where customers could be fitted.

The following is an advertisement from the 1916 Wellington Directory:

Henry Baxter, Ready Money Draper Stores, now begs to announce that all departments are now well sorted up with new household goods and novelties of every description, hosey, jackets, mantles, capes, dresses, skirts, underskirts, blouses, mackintoshes, umbrellas, gloves, belts, costumes, sheats, quilts, blankets, aprons, pins and overalls. Try our celebrated "Randsonia Corsets" fitted with unbreakable steelse 1/11/od, 2/11d, 3/9d.
Outfitters of old

by Marjorie McCrea

TWO prominent business men in Wellington in the early 1900's were Mr. Jack Owen and Mr. Fred Bean. Both were men's outfitters. Mr. Owen served his apprenticeship at Venables, a large shop on the corner of Walker Street (now the Halifax Building Society).

He was a very keen businessman and always smartly dressed. Clients would admire his clothing and give orders for similar items — it was often said of him that he could sell the clothes off his back!

His first shop was a black and white building in The Square but he later moved to Duke Street. He had a pony and trap which he stabled with Mr. Martin, the vet on the corner of Queen Street, and he would travel round the countryside calling on farmers for orders.

Their accounts were only paid quarterly after the sale of stock, or the hay or corn harvest. He had a staff of special assistants in the shop to help with the cutting, measuring and fitting — Mr. George Wem, Mr. Fred Bean, Mr. Jack Kearton and Mr. Joe Dickenson.

Later the last three gentlemen opened their own businesses in Wellington. Mr. Owen trained apprentices and had several outdoor staff of tailors who took their work home to do. No one did a full suit — one man would make the trousers, another jackets and another waistcoats, and so on.

At one period Mr. Owen supplied the boys of Wellington (now Wrekin) College with their blazers, ties, caps and straw boaters.

Mr. Bean was born at Hack Green in Cheshire. He attended Broomhill School and was the first boy to win a scholarship from there to Nantwich Grammar School. After leaving school he was apprenticed for about seven years to Stretch & Harleck who had a large men's outfitters in Nantwich.

All apprenticed staff had to live in. They had a housekeeper and there was a large dining room and drawing room for their use. About 1906 he came to Wellington to work for Mr. Owen. After a few years Mr. Bean went into business on his own at 2 Crown Street, where he and his family lived over the shop.

Wishing to extend his business he moved to New Street into a property which was then owned by Sir Thomas Meyrick. The shop had two large windows which Mr. Bean himself dressed — he was considered top of the class in window dressing. He was also able to guess accurately a customer's size simply by looking at him.

In those days everything possible was displayed in the windows indicating what was for sale inside. If the article you required was not in the shop window you rarely went inside.

Mr. Bean also sold gentlemen's jewellery such as cuff links and tiepins. New stock was ordered from travellers who brought samples of their wares with them.

For the last five years before he retired Mr. Bean's sister in law, Miss Winifred Frost, managed the business. After being in business for 50 years, Mr. Bean sold his shop in 1962.
Three generations ran Britann’s family business

by Marjorie McCrea

THE FIRM of Richard Brittains Ltd, grocer and provision merchant, was founded in 1826 by William Brittains. He was succeeded about 1860 by his nephew, Richard Brittains.

Mr Richard Brittains was one of the first, if not the first, multiple shop proprietors of his time. When he died in 1888 he owned shops in Newport, Wellington, Oakengates and Shifnal.

It is interesting to note that George Mason, who worked in the Newport shop and later was made manager of the Oakengates shop, established the George Mason Multiple Stores.

A report in the Newport Journal of the time says that: “In the early days the business at Newport dealt in commodities that would seem odd in a grocery store today. A doctor was a regular customer for leeches at fourpence each. He also bought large quantities of snuff at five shillings a pound.”

Another business sideline was the manufacture of tallow candles for the tanner shops around Ketley. Brittains sent the candles out to small grocers in the Ketley area.

Miners at the time refused to use wax candles so the demand for them to the days before the introduction of the Davey lamp must have been extensive. Although people sometimes made the candles for themselves, Brittains were the only commercial manufacturers in the area.

They would buy the fat from the local markets and melt and refine it on their own premises.

When Richard Brittains died he left two sons, William and Henry, 16 and 17 respectively. Their father’s executors carried on the business for eight years before William became manager of the Newport shop and Henry took charge of the shop in the Market Square, Wellington.

When Henry Brittains first came to Wellington, he lived over the shop. Later the family moved to Westbourne, Haggate Road. The dining room at the shop premises was then made into an office and the other rooms used for stores.

The shop was double-fronted, long and narrow. As you entered, on the right-hand side was the grocery counter behind which were shelves and fixtures showing the different types of merchandise.

On the front of the counter were mounted glass display cases about eight inches high showing special items and new products. On the left-hand side was the provision counter behind which was a large marble slab filled with different joints of bacon, shoulder, middle cut, belly, gammon, ham and tongue, large rounds of New Zealand and Danish butter, margarine, lard and cheese of every type.

At the back of the shop was the cash desk connected to the counters by a cash railway, a mechanical device of a series of overhead wires on which ran small cup-shaped containers for the interchange of cash between counter and cash desk.

There was a head man on each counter who dressed the windows and looked after the stock. There was always freshly-ground coffee and Brittains had their own special blended tea, packed in dark blue and white packets; the trade mark was Kapakowrie. The tea was blended by a firm in Liverpool, to whom samples of the waters of Wellington and Newport were sent.

Greengrocery was supplied by Messrs McGowan, who had a wholesale business in Shrewsbury and a large warehouse and a special room for ripening bananas at the North Western goods yard at Bridge Road. Travellers called weekly.

Merchandise in those days was sent by goods trains and arrived at the LMS and GWR railways at Bridge Road where it was unloaded into drays drawn by horses and brought to the warehouses at the back of the shop in Market Street.

The staff who delivered the bread during the period of horse-drawn vehicles lived above the shop. They had to be up at 5am to feed the horses stabled in Haggate Road; they then had their breakfast and began their rounds at 8am. The shop hours were from 8am to 7pm with a half day on a Friday.

Brittain’s had a very good delivery service and customers would call in weekly with lists of groceries they required. Bacon was freshly cut for each customer; one pound or half a pound pieces of butter or margarine would be cut from the main mounds and patted into shape with decoratively marked butter pats. These were wooden instruments for working the butter into shape.

When Mr Brittain went to live at Westbourne he bought the large piece of land behind the house, running down to West Road. He employed a gardener to grow fruit and vegetables and eventually made him manager of the fruit and vegetable shop he opened in Market Street.

About 1913 Brittain’s Model Bakery was built in Haggate Road in front of the stables (where Furrows is now). Brittain’s were the first to wrap bread by machinery. They charged a halfpenny more and called it “Unsliced Bread by Hand”. A free sample loaf was sent to customers.

Between 1914-15 they had motor vans, dark green in colour with gold lettering lined in black. The slogan on the vans was “Quality”.

In 1924 the firm began using a generator to provide electricity and also in 1926 Mr Brittain opened a cafe and cake shop next door to the grocery business; morning coffee was served and there were tea rooms upstairs.

Richard Brittains’ business was operated by three generations of the family before being sold in October 1943 to Morris’s of Shrewsbury.
The life and times of a Wellington jeweller and clockmaker

by Marjorie McCrea

THE FIRM of G. W. Harvey was established at 4 Market Street, Wellington in 1860. John Harvey, who was born in Kirkwall, Orkney Isles, learned his trade as a clock and watchmaker in Edinburgh and came to Wellington with his wife Janet, who was also born in the Orkneys, and one daughter about 1858. Their son George William Harvey was born in 1859.

The watch and clock business was started in 1860 and later developed as a jeweller's and silversmith's. The shop was double fronted and there were several glass cases in the shop filled with clocks, watches, silverware and glassware. A large glass case in the centre contained cut glass, and there was a counter case where the jewellery was displayed.

In 1898 son George, who by then had followed in the business, qualified as an optician and set up sight testing rooms at the Market Street shop over the jewellery department. At that time and for many years later there was an iron spiral staircase from the shop to the first floor. Communication from the ground floor to the upstairs rooms was made by speaking tube. The staircase was replaced later when the shop was enlarged.

Until the First World War much jewellery was manufactured on the premises — rings, brooches, pendants, etc., in gold and precious stones, and customers' own jewellery was remounted.

In 1918 George Harvey, owing to ill health due to shock and sadness at the loss of his only son William who was killed in action on the Somme in July 1916 (and whom he had hoped would follow in the family business), decided to put a manager in the jewellery business in Market Street.

He himself would continue only as an optician, for which purpose he bought a double fronted shop in Crown Street. Both businesses continued in this way for several years. In 1924 the following advertisements were put in All Saints' Church parish magazine:

Harveys — cash jewellery stores, 4 Market Street, Wellington. 9ct 15 jewel lever watch with expanding bracelet £3 - 5s.

G. W. Harvey F.S.M.C., B.O.A., F.I.O., 7 Crown Street, Wellington. Eyesight is a blessing which is not appreciated as it should be. At the first indication of discomfort one should at once consult an eyesight specialist.

In due course Mr Harvey's daughter Helen took an interest in the jewellery and silversmith business and Mr Harvey, when his health recovered, put a qualified manager at Crown Street (the optical business was eventually sold to J. Lucking and Company, Birmingham) and he returned to Market Street.

In 1935 the following advertisement was put in the Wellington, Shropshire Official Guide:

G. W. Harvey, Watchmaker, Jeweller, Silversmith — Established for three quarters of a century. One of the largest assorted stocks in the County of watches, clocks, jewellery, silver, electro plate, etc. Your own interests will best be served by utilizing our long experience when buying a watch or clock.

Besides Mr Harvey's daughter, who had been taught the business, there were two other assistants in the shop and upstairs in the repair shops there was a watchmaker, a jeweller and clockwinder.

One morning when the assistants arrived they found a burglar had taken all the jewellery from the main window. It was surmised that he had got through a small window in the repair shop upstairs. After that all jewellery was locked up in the safe at night. The burglar was never traced.

Another time a man came into the shop during the tea break when there were fewer assistants about. He slashed the counter case from top to bottom. The girl in the shop shouted for help and this startled the man and he ran out of the shop.

The assistant went after him and fortunately there was a policeman in the road who arrested him. They thought the man must have been watching the shop for some days.

Later Mr Harvey acted as consultant with his daughter in charge. He attended business daily until two weeks before he died on December 26, 1939 in his 81st year.

Mr Harvey was a Freeman of the City of London, a member of Wellington U.D.C. since its inception, a member of Shropshire County Council, Justice of the Peace, Governor of Wellington High School and Governor of several local elementary schools.

In October, 1940, the coke fired stove in the cellar for the central heating had been lit for the first time. At about 3pm Helen Harvey came out of a first floor office to find the whole staff downstairs on the floor or crawling up the stairs, overcome by the fumes. Fortunately, with treatment, they all recovered in several hours, but they could have been killed. The heating was immediately changed to gas.

Helen Harvey continued with the business and the same staff. In a short time her two younger sisters joined the business and all carried on until 1966 when the business was sold to W. A. Henn and Son Limited of Wolverhampton.

Next month Marjorie McCrea records the story of a watchmaker who was apprenticed to Mr Harvey in the early 1920's.
Recollections of a watchmaker's apprentice in 1921
as told to Marjorie McCrea

I left school at the age of 15 and went to G. W. Harvey, at 4 Market Street, Wellington, to learn the watch, clock and jewellery repair trade in September, 1921. I was not a bound apprentice in the ordinary way. I worked without pay until Christmas of that year, after which I was paid 2s. 6d. (12½p) per week, increasing from time to time to 5s. (£2.75) when I left in 1931 to start a business of my own.

In 1921 there were other workmen employed — a fulltime watchmaker, a watch and clock repairer and a jeweller. These men could do each other's job if necessary. I was put with the jeweller who could also stand in as clockmaker. The first job I learned was putting pins on brooches. We did all sorts of repairs to rings, necklets, brooches, also large silverware such as jugs and teapots, silver backed brushes and mirrors.

We also made and fitted silver bands for walking sticks and presentation plates for watches and clocks. An interesting fulltime and teapots. clock repair were done by walking sticks and presentation plates for were taken on. This left just two of us.

I started the clock maker left so clock repairs were done by the jeweller and myself. Later on the jeweller left and as there was a recession about that time, no more staff were taken on. This left just two of us, the fulltime watchmaker and myself.

I had to do all about the three workshops as the different repairs came in so getting a good grounding in all departments.

The watches we repaired at that time were mostly silver and gold pocket watches. We often had to turn balance staffs and make parts for watches and clocks. An interesting side was the outside work. We had church clocks to look after and a winding round which consisted of visiting various houses, winding up their clocks and setting them the right time.

The jeweller used to do this but it soon became my job. I used to set out early on a Saturday morning to be at Orleton Hall before 8am so that I could go through the house before the residents were about.

There were six or seven clocks to wind including a very valuable grandfather month clock made by the famous clockmaker, Thomas Tompion. This stood at the top of the stairs on the first landing. Nearby was a large oak chest on which Colonel Herbert used to leave his gold watch and carriage clock to be wound and set at the right time.

There was also the clock over the lychgate arch with an outside dial facing the house. In the lychgate were two or three small rooms where the apples and pears were stored from the garden. The temptation to help oneself on occasions was irresistible.

From here I had to walk through Wrockwardine to Admaston to wind one at Clock House. This was also over an archway.

At that time there was an avenue of walnut trees along the drive so in season I often came home with a bag of walnuts. After Admaston I would walk back to Wellington, nipping home for a coffee and then on to the Holyhead Road to the Old Hall School. They also had a clock with an outside dial. After lunch I finished up at the Halt Ladies College.

As clockmakers we had other journeys out to church clocks. I can recall several of these visits. One story concerns the Orleton Hall lychgate clock. Christmas Eve that year was on a Saturday. The jeweller had done the round that morning. At lunchtime came a telephone call from the Hall saying the lychgate clock had stopped and as they had 25 guests at the Hall they wanted the clock going.

Two of us were sent out on the Saturday afternoon. When we arrived the key to the door of the stairs which led to the clock could not be found. Peter Herbert came along with a bunch of keys but none would fit.

Apparently the head gardener had gone to the football match with the key in his pocket, so we had to wait until he came back, spending the time in the large kitchen, sampling mince pies and other goodies the cook was preparing for Christmas Day.

High Ercall Church clock often stopped in the spring because birds got in the tower and built nests in the works, so stopping the clock. We were taken to Waters Upton Church clock on one fine summer day.

We took the clock to pieces and laid all the parts on one of the flat grave stones and set about cleaning them with paraffin. Eventually we ran out of paraffin and as there was no supply in the village we helped ourselves to paraffin from the church oil lamps. I never heard if the lamps went out during the evening service.

One often had to improvise on these jobs. At little Wenlock the hands of the church clock had got caught up together. We searched the village for a ladder but the only one we could find did not reach quite high enough, so we borrowed a hoe from a nearby garden and standing on top of the ladder prised the hands apart.

One other journey which comes to mind was to Wroxeter Church clock. The Harvey's car was out of order and the problem was how to get there. I was a keen cyclist at the time and owned a tandem. The result was that two of us set out for Wroxeter on the tandem. This must have been the only time two clockmakers were sent out to a church on a tandem.

At one time the Wellington Parish Church clock had to be wound up every day. This was done by the verger and at one period when they were without a verger the job fell to me.

Another memory of Harvey's was the four hanging gas lamps outside the shop which were lit every night.

The shop was heated by hot water from a boiler in the cellar fed with coke. From time to time a load of coke was tipped in the street in front of the shop and had to be shovelled in through a hole under the shop window. Imagine a load of coke dropped into the middle of Market Street today.

There were no radio time signals in those days and on a Monday morning at ten o'clock all the watchmakers in the town congregated outside the telegraph office on Wellington Station to hear the 10am time signal come through. This apparently went through to all stations. We then set our watches and this was the standard time for the rest of the week.
The life and times of a ‘remarkable’ gardener

Mr Joseph Profit Millichap was born on March 1, 1892, at Nannech, near Mold, the youngest of eight children—three girls and five boys. He began his gardening career at the age of 14 at Penbedw Hall where he stayed for three years. He had to walk one mile and usually took his lunch with him; later he had a bicycle and was able to get home for lunch.

He began work at 7am, finished at 5.30pm and had a half-day on Saturday. There were eight gardeners at the Hall; the grounds were large with several lawns and flower gardens.

Mr Millichap worked mostly in the greenhouses and orchard house potting the different fruit trees. Then one of the gardeners left Penbedw Hall to take up the position of head gardener at Cloverley Hall near Whitchurch, and he asked Mr Millichap to go with him.

At Cloverley Mr Millichap lived in a bothy. This was a row of rooms on the level with bedrooms and a living room. There was a woman to clean and make the beds and get the mid-day meal. For breakfast and tea there was a duty rota for the gardeners and the senior gardener would buy in the food which each man would pay for. Mr Millichap rose at 6am and worked to 5pm, except when he was on late duties, to see to the fires in the greenhouses.

Entertainment included socials held in the school, visits to other estates, and Mr Millichap also sang in the church choir.

From Cloverley he went to Shavington Hall, the home of Col Heywood-Londale, who regularly exhibited fruit and vegetables at Shrewsbury Flower Show.

His next appointment was as second gardener at Bedstone Court, Bucknall (now a school). He was still living on the estate in bothies, but here he met his first wife, Miss Alice Flits. Her family lived in Wellington, her mother being employed at Apley Castle.

After he was married, in 1913, he went to

The gardens and grounds of Wrekin College, Wellington — in Mr Millichap’s care for 45 years.

Bedstone Court, Bucknall, where Joseph Millichap was second gardener. It is now a school.

The Wellington Urban District Council agreed provided an alternative road was made. Mr Millichap, that remarkable man, with the help of his gardeners, created the present sweep of road that linked Sutherland Avenue and Prospect and Waterloo Roads.

“This doubled the extent of the ‘home’ ground and the laying down of the Bayley Walk with its herbaceous borders followed, and the dream of Wrekin as a school in a garden had begun.”

Most of the work was done in the old-fashioned way with spades and forks, with no mechanical tools except mowers. In 1930 the school was in need of new playing fields. Mr Millichap was appointed landscape gardener, clerk of the works and head foreman.

The field covered nine acres, and the drop from the school to the east end was 20ft. It was a gigantic task moving tons of earth, draining, levelling and sowing grass, which was completed in a year.

When Mr Millichap retired he moved to a house from which he can still see the school he served so long and faithfully.

On his 90th birthday he was entertained by the headmaster and staff of Wrekin College.

Mr Millichap was at one time a member of the Shropshire Horticultural Society Committee and is now a vice-president. He has judged village gardens, taken part in garden quiz programmes, and helped decorate various churches for Easter and harvest festivals. In 1959 he was awarded the long service medal of the Royal Horticultural Society.
A draper's record — at Wellington

by Marjorie McCrea

ERNEST MYNETT was born on a small farm in Worcestershire in 1865 and died in 1943 aged 80. He served his apprenticeship in London and for a time was an assistant at a draper in Bristol.

In 1904 Mr Mynett had a shop in Crown Street, Wellington. Between 1905 and 1907 he moved to 27 New Street, a property owned by the Meynell family of Apley Castle.

For a time he and his wife lived over the shop, then in 1916 Mr Mynett bought the property, the family having moved to Greystone, a house in Victoria Street. Eventually they had a house build at 97 Haygate Road which they called Abberley.

No. 27 New Street was a double fronted shop. Inside were long counters containing heavy drawers, running down either side of the shop, and two showrooms. Just before the first showroom there was a flight of stairs to the upper floor; the second showroom had a large French window which led into the station path.

As you came into the shop the right hand side was called the Manchester Department where they sold the Oxford cotton shirting, blue and white flannel, union shirting which was a mixture of cotton and wool, bed linen, white and unbleached calico, towels and tarantulae for underwear.

The opposite counter was for ribbon and lace, taffeta and valence lace, gloves and stockings. All the stockings and gloves had to have price tickets on them and they were tied up in their different sizes in a dark cream paper; the staff had to ensure that the string was tied in a special slip knot so that the packets could be opened easily.

There were rods at ceiling height from wall to wall from which different goods were hung; moire waist petticoats in all different colours, camisoles, knickers, combinations etc. These were changed weekly and were all covered at night before the shop closed.

The first showroom had rails of coats, dresses, jackets and all kinds of materials for dresses and skirts. The second showroom was for millinery. A milliner was employed to make hats from buckram shapes and alter and trim hats. In this showroom there was a gas fire and gas ring for the heating of the flat irons which the milliner required to press the buckram into shape.

Mr Mynett always dressed the windows himself, and dealt with the accounts. The shop was open from 8.30am until 7pm except on Friday which was half day closing. On Saturday it stayed open until 9pm. Mr Mynett employed between four and six assistants, and two apprentices who did not receive any wages for three years and were not allowed to work after 8pm. For the first month they did not serve customers but tidied up and dusted the shelves.

The staff had an hour for lunch and three quarters of an hour for tea for which they used one of the rooms on the upper floor; ten days' holiday and were allowed a discount when they bought anything out of the shop.

They wore black dresses and black aprons which they bought themselves and each had a pencil and a pair of draper's scissors which they hung round their waists. Brass measures were screwed on the counters and they had wooden yard sticks which were checked by the weights and measures inspectors.

An errand boy was employed to work each day after school hours and all day Saturday. A large black hat box with a strap on top was kept for him to deliver the hats which the milliner had made; he also delivered parcels and bills locally. Between errands he would tidy up the paper and cardboards boxes.

Customers could have goods on approval and bills were sent out monthly. Mr Mynett tendered to supply clothes to the children at the Preston Trust Homes. When the children were going to their first job in service each child was given a case containing two of everything — boots, stockings, underwear, gloves, morning and afternoon dresses, aprons, caps and a coat and best dress.

During stocktaking all the large rolls of material would have to be unraveled and measured, and the ribbons, too, of which there were very many in those days.

Commercial travellers came by train and the goods they brought with them were packed in skips and put in the luggage vans. On arrival at the station the porters wheeled the skips onto the trucks to the shops.

There were blue linen blinds on the windows and these were drawn every night. The senior assistant called at Mr Mynett's house every morning for the key and opened the shop.

On a Saturday evening as the shop was open until 9pm Mrs Mynett would send the maid down from Victoria Avenue with a large jug of cocoa for the staff and one of the staff would go round to Heath's for some cakes.

One Saturday there was a hospital carnival in the town and Mr Mynett proposed that one of the staff should go as a nurse and suggested that if her father, who owned a bicycle shop, would lend him a bicycle he would dress it as a hospital ward. Mr Mynett covered the wheels with material and the spokes with different coloured wools. The seat was removed and a wooden frame put round which was covered with yellow satin; the 'floor' of the ward was covered with black and white check paper.

Dolls were used as patients and nurses were dressed accordingly. Miniature bottles and pills and other items you would find in a ward were added. It carried a notice saying "Help the Hospital". The errand boy wheeled it round the town and it won first prize.

When Mr Mynett retired in 1931 he let the shop at first to Mr Knowles and then to Mr Daffern to whom he eventually sold it. It is now the Paint and Tool Shop.
When sirloin was a shilling a pound...

by Marjorie McCrea

Frank Onions was a well known butcher in Wellington for 58 years. He was born at Milford in Staffordshire but his family later moved to Moreton, near Newport, where his father was the local policeman. Mr Onions served his apprenticeship at Newport, completing the course with W. H. Mason - it was there he met his wife who was working in the office. About 1910 Mr Onions moved to Wellington to manage a shop in New Street for W. H. Mason (it is now J. Jeffries & Son cake shop).

In 1914 the business moved to 30 New Street. During the first world war, while Mr Onions was in the services, his wife managed the shop and on his return from the war he bought the business from W. H. Mason.

In 1865 30 New Street had been a baker's shop and in the photograph accompanying this article is shown the authoress Hesba Stretton visiting it. Her father had a bookshop combined with a baker's shop in Wellington in 1872.

Alterations to the shop had taken place previously, but the office in the corner with the curved roof had been a stick-oven where the bread was baked. The walls were of wattle and daub and Mr Onions completely tiled them and installed a window and marble slab. Before, there had been a three-sectional window which was taken out on market days to enable him to sell meat from the front of the shop.

From 1930 to 1950 the family lived on a smallholding at Haybridge where Mr Onions reared pigs. He also bought animals at the smithfield in Bridge Road and had to drive them from there, along Walker Street and up Tan Bank to his slaughter house which was situated behind what is now the Information Bureau.

On one occasion a young heifer went up the YMCA stairs in Walker Street, through the billiard room while games were in progress, and down the stairs into Tan Bank. Another time 20 sheep called on Percy Potts who had a shoe repairing shop in Walker Street.

At first Mr Onions had to use a pole-axe in his slaughter house, but in 1934 the humane killer was introduced. This was not electric but activated by a cartridge. The only lighting was provided by candles and hurricane lamps.

They made sausages with a machine which was belt driven by a petrol engine, and prepared their own seasoning. The large blocks of salt were crushed with a rolling pin, and pepper and spice added.

The refrigerator in the early days was not electric but an ice box, and the big blocks of ice had to be collected from the railway station, broken up and put in a cylinder in the ice box.

In 1927 when the Albcott Sugar Beet Factory was built many Germans were employed to do the work, who did not speak English. When they needed meat from Mr Onions ordering was done by sign language - amusing at times when they pointed to different parts of their body.

Food, of course, was rationed during the war and the meat ration for each person was a shilling (five pence) per week. This was often made up of tenpence of meat and twopence of corned beef.

At that time brisket of beef was sixpence a pound, topside one and twopence a pound and sirloin a shilling a pound; hip bone steak was one and sixpence a pound.

The main difference in cutting meat then was that most of it was sold on the bone and cut to the customers' requirements.

The shop had many errand boys over the years who delivered orders by bicycle; there was also a pony and cart with which to deliver the bulk of the weekend orders. The top of the cart was taken off when they needed to transport carcases from the slaughter house to the shop.

Shop opening hours were long — from 8am until 7 and 10pm, depending on demand. Housewives who did not receive their husbands' wages until Saturday evening would travel by train from Hadley to Wellington to do their shopping then.

Mr Onions, whose son Stanley joined the business in 1934, worked in the shop until he died in 1968, and the business was sold in 1973.

30 New Street, Wellington, in the days when it was a baker's shop. The authoress Hesba Stretton is about to enter the shop.

A decidedly different shop frontage for 30 New Street - and a before and after view of Mr Onions' produce!
1924 — when a perm cost £1
and a haircut a shilling

by Marjorie McCrea

IN 1868 Mr F. Richards, who had been living in Godleigh, Devon, came to Wellington and opened a hairdresser and tobacconist shop at No. 6 Church Street, which was situated where the National Westminster Bank now stands.

In those days the patch of land in front, now a car park, was called The Green and was often used for an open market, allowing vendors to put up their stalls for all kinds of wares.

About 1910 Mr Richards died and his son Bert bought the business from his mother. There were two men on the staff and their working hours were from 8am to 9pm.

At this time the business was mostly for cutting men's and boys' hair and shaving. Many men went to their barbers to be shaved then and this was one of the reasons for opening the shop so early in the morning. In 1916 the following advertisement was put in the Wellington Directory — B. Richards — Established 1868.

6 Church Street. The leading hairdresser and tobacconist. Agent for Sprok, Auto stop, Gillette and Cemak razors. Toilet requisites, fringe nets, side and back combs. All kinds of hairwork made to order. State cigarettes. Umbrellas recovered and repaired.

Mr Bert Richards was hairdresser to Sir Thomas Meyrick and his family, who lived at Apley Castle, and visited them on a regular basis. Sir Thomas often sent peaches and grapes to the Richards' family when they had illness. Mr Richards also had a contract to cut the boys' hair at the Wrekin College.

While the business was at No. 6 Church Street, the family lived over the shop and strangely enough Mr Richards reared pigs at the back, a butcher from Oakengates coming to kill them when required. Mr Richards divided the spoil among his neighbours.

In 1920 Mr Richards moved to No. 9 Market Square as he needed larger premises and the family then went to live in Vineyard Road. Mr Richards opened the shop at No. 9 Market Square as a ladies' and gentlemen's hairdresser with modern salons and equipment and more staff were engaged.

There was only gas in shops then and waving was done by heating tongs on gas jets. Shaving was still very much a part of the barber's job and many of the shop owners around would be on the doorstep early in the morning waiting for their first shave. The hours of working changed to 8.30am to 7pm.

During the 1930's the charges were 3d for a shave, 6d (2½p) for a man's haircut and 1s. (five p) for a lady's haircut. Mr Richards made special cigarettes on a machine for some of his customers.

When Mr Roland Meyrick came into town in his car he would stop outside Richards' and call until someone came out of the shop to serve him.

The hairdressing salon was upstairs and to keep the younger children quiet while having their hair cut, they would be put in tall chairs facing the windows and told to watch the trains passing through Wellington station.

About 1924 Mr Richards and the owners of other shops adjacent to No. 9 Market Square decided to buy an engine and generator to make their own electricity. The apparatus was installed in a shed at the rear of Richard Britain's shop. With electricity in the shop, customers were able to have a perm for 21s. (£1. 5p) and shampoo and set for 3s. (15p). They were also able to have high frequency treatment for loss of hair.

On Mondays, cattle market day, they were always very busy, the farmers and their wives coming in for haircuts and perms. Also the farmers bought walking sticks and their weekly supply of tobacco.
How a Wellington man moved with the times — from shoeing horses to engineering

by Marjorie McCrea

Mr George Ernest Turner first became acquainted with the blacksmith's shop in Market Street, Wellington, in 1944, when, on being discharged from the RAF he got a job as fitter welder with John Bromley and Company, agricultural engineers, who owned the site which is now Hall, Wateridge and Owen. He had always cherished an ambition to have a business of his own and was continually looking for somewhere suitable.

In 1948 the blacksmith, Mr Harry Ralphs, died suddenly leaving Ercall Works at 21 Market Street with no one to carry on the business of shoeing and general smith and wheelwright.

As there were already two men employed there this was rather a bigger undertaking than he was really looking for but he took the plunge and went to see Mr Edward Turner of Turners Corn Stores to whom the property belonged. Mr Turner had the property intending to enlarge the corn stores at a future date, but as building restrictions were very difficult at that time, he agreed to rent the premises to him on an annual basis only. This George Turner agreed to and began his tenancy on December 12, 1948.

Ercall Works occupied a site of 5,000 square feet between what was Turners Corn Stores and the Wrekin Brewery, which is now demolished. The blacksmith's shop was simply some old two-up and two-down cottages with most of the internal walls removed and had formerly been known as Butcher's Row.

There were some lean-to sheds open at the front along one side which comprised the shoeing shed and wheelwright shop. There was provision for 40 horses to be tied up so one can imagine the amount of shoeing that was carried out there.

During the next few years of his occupation of the site, considerable changes took place in many ways — horses given up to tractors and to various types of mechanised machinery. The old iron tyred carts and wagons were gradually being replaced by pneumatic tyres. This called for new equipment and welding equipment — his first electric welding plant.

Thus equipped he could himself cut and re-weld a tyre in less time than it used to take by the old method where two men had to do it on the forge. Gradually all vehicles were fitted with pneumatic tyres and so re-hooping became extinct.

There was a considerable amount of horse shoeing still to be done up to 1955, in Wellington alone. There were horses used by British Rail, Grooms Timber Yard (now closed), Wellington Urban District Council and several others for local deliveries. In addition horses were used for most of the work on farms, until, gradually, mechanisation replaced them all. Mr Turner moved with the times and developed a considerable welding and steel fabrication and general engineering business. This called for new equipment and soon there were two oxygen-acyetylene plants, three electric welding plants in full use and also an engine driven electric welding mobile plant for use on open coal sites which were then busy in the area.

The change in agricultural machinery also provided much work converting horses drawn implements for tractor use and for three point linkage removing the horse shafts from carts and drays and fitting them with drawbars, scraping the old wheels and axles and fitting old motor wheels and axles.

All this extra work was too much for the premises in their original state and so the landlord agreed to let Mr Turner have them on lease which made it worthwhile for him to build a new work shop with a concrete floor.

As a result of his fabrication work he was approached by Salop County Council to supply and fit ironwork for school buildings. Mr Turner also carried out work for the COD, Donnington, electricity, gas and water boards. In the early days steel bolts etc. were very difficult to obtain so he had to make several visits to scrap metal yards for material.

New springs for lorries and cars were unobtainable for some years after the war so he had to specialise in setting up and retempering car and lorry road springs. To cope with the volume of work he built another forge.

The Ironbridge Power Station provided work for many years and he was obliged to buy another mobile welding plant.

At some time there were several firms who serviced lawn mowers but as these disappeared he installed the necessary machinery and provided a lawn mower repair service.

From early childhood Mr Turner had always been fascinated by guns, cartridges and shooting. He can remember as a youth acquiring all sorts of old guns and air rifles which he would take to pieces, clean and reassemble and if there was a part missing design and make it. This often involved weeks of experimental work but the success was worth it.

He acquired a reputation as a gunsmith and for some years before the war he was being entrusted with various repairs. During his service in the RAF most of his time was spent in the Armoury which gave him valuable experience.

In the 1930s he decided to try to use the experience he had gained as a gunsmit and displayed one or two guns and air rifles in the shop window, and undertook gun repairs. This side of the business grew over the years.

On several occasions he had to extend the gun shop until the whole of the road frontage that had been the blacksmith's shop was full of guns, rifles and air rifles.

He was interested in clay pigeon shooting and made equipment for the West Midlands Shoot and other events. His interest in shooting encouraged him to develop a school for the purpose of teaching others to shoot properly.

A few years before Mr Turner retired he was able to buy the premises, and after he retired he sold them to Wase and Wedge, heating engineers and plumbers.

For most of the time that Mr Turner had the business, he lived in Bridge Road in a house called Norbury, nearly opposite the Clifton Cinema. In days gone by Norbury was a public house called the Travellers' Rest.

Mr Turner said he could well believe that this was so because of the unusual amount of cellaring and steps leading to the cellars from inside the house and from the pavement outside. Norbury and the adjoining cottages have now been demolished.

DISCLAIMER: Every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this publication is correct at the time of going to press. Wellington History Group cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions, nor do opinions expressed necessarily reflect the official view of the Group. All articles and photographs are copyright of the authors or members of the Group and must not be reproduced without prior permission and due credit being given.

Please address correspondence to:
Joy Rebello, Secretary, Wellington History Group, 6 Barnfield Crescent, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire, TF1 2ES.

Wellington History Group: Special Paper 3

13
When I first met Marjorie McCrea, she was in charge of the filing system at Joseph Sankey and Sons’ Hadley Castle Works. It was in 1941 and I was sent to her with an inquiry from our office. Afterwards it became clear that they had sent the office junior because the others didn’t dare go. She was known officially as MISS McCrea and behind her back as Mother McCrea.

She had a reputation for precision, accuracy and not suffering fools at all; certainly not gladly. The required information was produced and handed over quickly and I was shoed out before I had a chance to chat up any of the girls.

Much later I was to admire her accuracy and ability to write succinctly for the Shropshire Magazine on many local topics. Later, as her eyesight deteriorated, she often rang and I occasionally visited her at home in Albert Road, the house in which John Bayley had started his school. She was fifteen years older than me and was having great difficulty moving and seeing. Her mind and memory, however, were just as sharp as ever and I was surprised to find she had a keen sense of humour.

Here are a few of my own memories of the Wellington tradesmen mentioned in Miss McCrea’s articles.

**Page 2: Barlow’s Hairdressers**

was most remarkable for its scents; walking past there was a very strong odour of brilliantine, soap, shampoo and various perfumes. It was a bit too ‘High Class’ (expensive) for us but as a boy and later a father, I had to admire the range of toys – especially cars.

**Page 3: Bates and Hunt, chemists**

when I remember them, had shops in Market Square and New Street. Some of us think the Market Square shop was William Withering’s birthplace although we cannot prove it. Before the Last World War I had a chemistry set consisting of various chemicals which could be mixed for ‘experiments’. I used to go to the chemist for refills of sulphuric, hydrochloric or nitric acid, iron filings, copper sulphate, saltpetre and such things. If I asked for them now there’d be armed police, the SAS and I’d be arrested for terrorism. There’s progress!

Ashley Walters was manager at New Street when I challenged him to cure my cold. ‘You have a shop full of cold remedies,’ I said, ‘you give me one and I will take it exactly as you say. If it cures me in two days I’ll pay double. If not I won’t pay.’ ‘No deal,’ he replied. The glass carboys and several other parts of the New Street shop’s furniture are on display in Blists Hill Museum. I seem to remember ‘Huntvita’ as a trade name for their involvement in Africa.

**Page 4: Henry Baxter**

as well as being all the things Marjorie says, wrote a history of Wellington which he had bound and kept for reference in the library; perhaps it’s the first of its kind. He was famous for greeting his customers and calling over his shoulder for an assistant with the word, ‘Forward!’

**Page 5: Fred Bean**

was remembered in his New Street shop as a ‘gentleman’s outfitter’ selling everything a smart gentleman needed. At his closing down sale in 1962, I tried to buy a bowler hat but he did not have my size and shape. Jack Kearton’s shop was similar. Joe Dickenson set up at the bottom of Tan Bank and his daughter, Peggy took over later.

**Page 6: Richard Brittain**

and his family built up a business empire over the years, which many of us were sorry to learn had been sold to the Shrewsbury firm of Morris. Their bakery in Haygate Road was very modern though my family preferred Frost’s bread. The grocery shop had the most wonderful collection of smells including roast coffee beans, cheeses (some quite pungent), bacon, tea, soap and newly baked bread. The next door café had morning coffee, which I remember drinking with my father on ‘D’ Day while on embarkation leave.

**Page 7: G W Harvey**

the jeweller, watchmaker and optician, while making a good living with his family business, also contributed to his town as a councillor for Wellington Urban District, which accounts for Harvey Crescent in Arleston being named after him. His optician’s shop in Crown Street was, during the Last World War, managed by John Hall, who later set up on his own in Walker Street and sold out to Bill Thorley. George Harvey’s daughters, who managed the jeweller’s, were almost always called ‘the Miss Harveys’ instead of ‘the Misses Harvey’.

**Page 8: JRL**

the apprentice watchmaker reminds us of the amount of ‘outwork’ that used to be done and the time it would have taken without transport except for ‘Shanks’ Pony’. Work is far less physical now. What a pity we still don’t know the origin of the strange clockface on the south side of All Saints.

**Page 9: Joseph Profit Millichap**

I did not know him.

**Page 10: Ernest Mynett**

All I remember of Mynett is the name. My second cousin Jeffrey Daffern had that shop later with his father Orlando.

**Page 11: Frank Onions**

the butcher was one of the best of the many butchers in Wellington before supermarkets took so much of the food trade. One wonders how the few remaining butchers survive so well. Mason’s shop later became Jefferies, bakers as Marjorie says, and is now a smart, traditional sweet shop. Stray, frightened animals wandering the streets used to be common and small herds driven through town quite usual, especially on Mondays when the cattle market (where Morrisons supermarket is now) was trading.

**Page 12: Richards, hairdresser, tobacconist, etc.**

When I was about 15 I remember moving my custom from the sweet shop next door to Richards and buying a pipe and some tobacco. It seemed part of growing up. They also sold Turkish cigarettes, oval ones with a special scent, and menthol ones that were ‘healthy’ and cured colds. Walking sticks were 6d though you could get one for 1s 3d in other shops.

**Page 13: George Ernest Turner**

was certainly a remarkably talented man who was able to do a great variety of jobs – and do them all very well. He repaired my father’s old shot gun, with which he defended Admaston from the whole might of Hitler’s Third Reich (please see page 2 of Wellingtonia issue 7 for further details.)