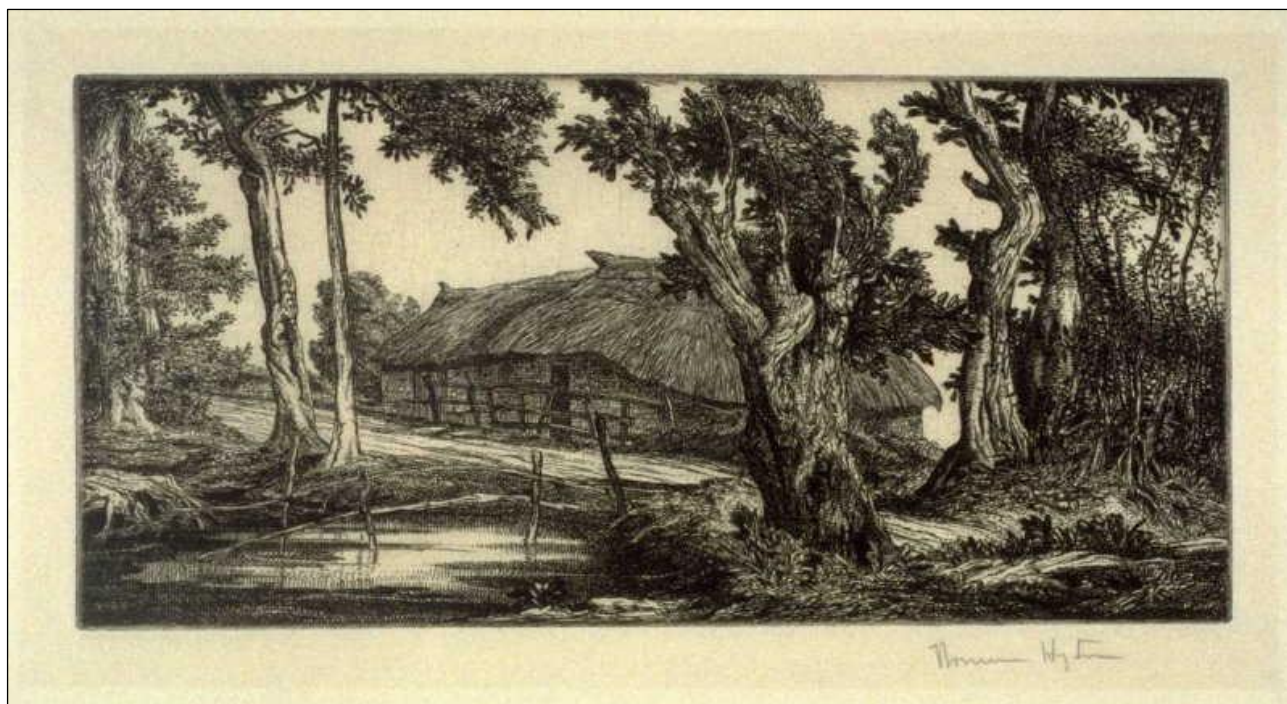


## Musbury Heritage - Ongoing Projects

I thought I would provide an update on some of my current Musbury history projects. The following may be construed as a list of what I haven't achieved, but I can assure you it is a drop in the ocean compared with the pages that make up my 'to do' list! We might be just one village with a small population, but we have generated a lot of history, much of which remains undiscovered.

**The Lethbridge Family** – A family central to the wealthier Victorian history of Musbury. I am sure many of you have noticed the stained-glass window St Michael's that is dedicated to "William Farley Lethbridge and Sussannah his wife". They appeared to own and live at Mountfield sometime in the 1860s, but as they as they travelled so widely, they are proving very difficult to trace. Reverend Cockerton tells of William Farley Lethbridge being Nelson's Flag Lieutenant amongst other things, but so far, I haven't found anything to support this. I do know he was a sugar planter in the East Indies. This will be a very time-consuming research project.

**Edward Bouverie-Hoyton** - I wrote about this artist in the Spring issue and briefly referred to an etching of his entitled "Doatshayne?". I've not had much success with contacting the San Francisco Museum where it is held, but here is a low-resolution image.



*"Doatshayne?" by Edward Bouverie Hoyton c.1930*

Those of you who follow the MH Facebook page will have seen this before, but I don't think we got to the bottom of where it was drawn. Please let me know if you have any suggestions, but I'm beginning to suspect there's a lot of artists' licence involved here! I've also found out that another of EBH's etchings was of Beal's Farm (Musbury Barton) and I'm trying to track down a copy.

**Old Pictures of Musbury** – I'm always on the look out for any old pictures of Musbury and I mean anything up to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, whether they are photographs, drawings or paintings. Recently I saw a collection of pictures for sale at auction and these included a few copies of the following picture.



*Church Hill by Richard Evans*

The artist, Richard Evans has captured Church Hill quite well. Have you seen this etching before? Please let me know if you can tell any more about it. The lack of a porch outside Missals may give a clue to its date. Was Richard related to the Evans living in the Old Cottage in the 1930s? I'm also hoping to sell a few framed copies of this picture to raise some funds for Musbury Heritage.

**Distant Connections** – The website, Facebook page and my rambling in this publication have certainly resulted in some interesting correspondence. My 'rags to riches' story of John Loveridge in the Spring Parish News resulted in my being sent a very comprehensive biography of this man by a family historian in Herefordshire, but needless to say I've not had a chance to edit and publish this yet.

My article on the website about the origins of the Chapel on Whitford Road was read by a descendant of the Wills family of New House Farm (now Castlewood) living in New Zealand. They were surprised to learn that Walter Wills was responsible for establishing and building the Chapel. Shortly after hearing from these descendants I was contacted by another person, also in New Zealand and related to a different branch of the same family. Other contacts have included descendants of the Larcombe, Rockett and Partridge families of Musbury. I'm very happy to help with family history enquiries, but my main goal is to illicit from them as much information about our village history as I can.

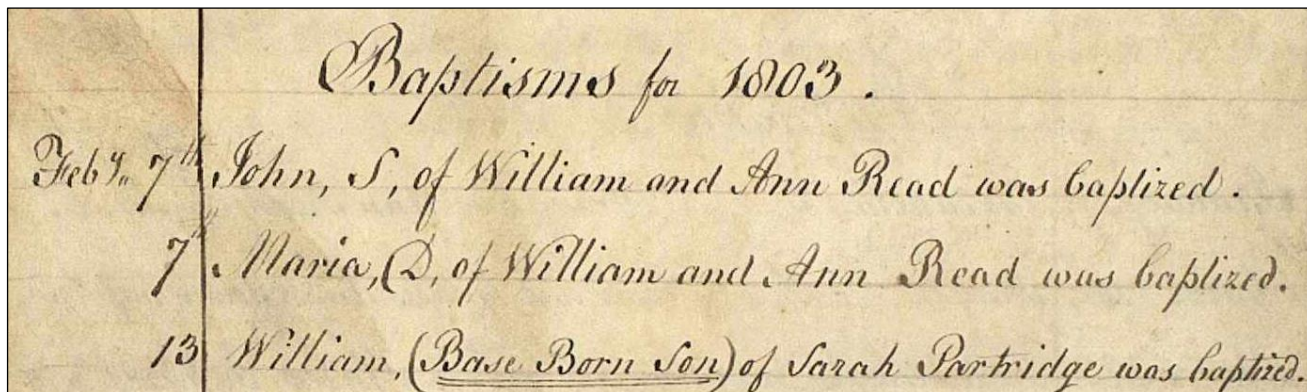
**War Memorial** – Axminster Heritage are re-opening soon with a temporary exhibition about the war memorials in Axminster and the surrounding villages. According to the manager of AH, who is putting the exhibition together, Musbury is the only village without published details about those named on the war memorial. I spent a couple of weeks on this and found out that most of the existing research was limited and contained errors, plus there are some strange anomalies on our memorial. I've also tried to ascertain

where they lost their lives and what action they were involved with. The exhibition at Axminster Heritage will be open from 18 May and EX13 residents will be allowed free entry (proof of residency required) on Saturday, 29 May (10:00 to 13:00hrs). I will be updating the Musbury Heritage website very soon. If you have any details, especially photographs, of those named on our war memorial, I would love to hear from you.

**House Histories** – This is very much an on-going project, as essentially all I have done to date is to keep every snippet of information I find out about a property, whether it be historical documents, pictures, planning applications, newspaper cuttings, etc. until one day when I can make sense of it all. Recently I've been delving a little deeper into the building of the Council-owned properties in the 1920/30s, which, although relatively recent in historic terms, is very interesting. You also recall my asking for help with some defunct names from the past. One of these was "The Towers" (1910 to 1931), which I've now discovered was The Old Cottage on Church Hill. Can you think of a less appropriate name?

If you are concerned about sharing details about your home that may appear on the Musbury Heritage website then I would like to reassure you that no recent history is recorded, privacy is paramount and Musbury Heritage is not used for research purposes by 'urban explorers' (there are many websites more suited to their use). Nothing will be posted without your approval. So far only about 100 people have registered to use Musbury Heritage and most of these are locals, ex-locals, or genealogists. I am sure that between us we can learn a little more about your house history.

**Transcriptions of Old Documents** – I've not been in a position to delve too far into the past yet, as many Old English and Latin documents are beyond my limited talents, but there are still many relatively recent Parish Registers, Wills, Deeds, Conveyances, etc. that need transcribing. I'm very grateful to those who have volunteered to help with this.



*An extract from the Parish Registers*

It is quite amazing how one discovered name can form the link that brings together families or occupiers of houses. Who was considered a Gentleman or Yeoman? Who were the Labourers, Bakers, Butchers, Tailors and other trades people and where did they live? Social history is revealed, illustrating, for example, the depth of deprivation suffered by the poor of the village, whose plight has been less well recorded than that of the wealthy.

**Musbury Family Histories** – These form an essential aid to understanding so much about Musbury. I have created over 30 of these family trees to help understand the connections between people. What was the background of a man who lost his life fighting for his country? Why did a family who'd lived in Musbury for centuries suddenly leave? Who were the families who broke away from the traditional church and became known as "Chapel people"? If you have descended from an established Musbury family (in the village 1911 or prior), then perhaps I can help you with your family tree and we can both learn a little more.

**Finally** – I'm always very happy to chat about Musbury's history. I may not act immediately on what I learn, as this is a very long-term project, but I will retain all information for use in the future. So please keep the stories, pictures, anecdotes, etc. coming.

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