

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2010

Colwall Village Society
Revealing Our Heritage

John Unett - Chartered Accountant and Author (1906 – 1984)

by David Hodgson

In the late 1960's John Unett lived at "Barberry" on Colwall Green. (The house name has now changed). Later he moved to Longridge Road, Malvern and afterwards to Ashton Close, Malvern. He died in Worcester Hospital in December 1984. In 1985 his personal effects were sold at auction in Malvern. Attending the auction was Mrs Mary Ritchie MBE, formerly of Colwall and a member of the Village Society. Mary purchased two portraits at the auction, of Letitia Unett and George Unett, dating from around the 1850's. Also at the auction were several photo's, a christening gown and a policeman's helmet.

Having done a little research about John Unett, Mary was aware of the Unetts at Castle Frome; but was unable to make further progress.

I received an enquiry from a member of Malvern Family History Society about the entry of "A. Unit" in the Worcestershire Parish Registers. This encouraged me to find out more about the Unetts. The portrait of Letitia, baptised Elizabeth Frances Letitia, stated that she was the wife of George Unett and the last of the Unett daughters. She came from Freens Court, near Hereford. Looking through the Marden Registers I found that her father was Henry Unett and her mother was Mary Unett (formerly Lechmere of the Fownhope branch of the Lechmere family) Several of Letitia's ancestors were born at Freens Court and Castle Frome going back to the 1500's.



In 1844 Letitia's father Henry was in financial difficulties, he decided to leave the country and fled to the Continent, taking with him his wife and two young daughters, Blanche and Lucy. Letters from 1844 indicate that his debts would be paid off by the family. There is no reference to his financial problems but around that time people were investing in the canals and railways and often got into difficulty. The will of Henry was made in 1848 (In Brussels?) It refers to a marriage settlement made in 1818 (Similar to a modern day prenuptial agreement) It appears that Henry did not return to England and died in 1854.



In 1844, Letitia married George Unett, from Handsworth, Birmingham. A son, George, was born in 1846 (the portrait is of this George). At this time the family were living in Lillington, Warwickshire. The house was called "Castell Froma" and is now a residential nursing home. Letitia, her husband George and son George are buried at Saint Mary Magdelene Church, Lillington.

I decided that I would try to link the two families and the relationship of John to Colwall. (There are four generations named John.) John (of Colwall) was born in 1906, in Ireland, to John and Annie Unett (formerly Slater). Research into John's father indicated that he was Chief Constable of Essex in 1914 (hence the policeman's helmet amongst the auction items) This John was born in Ross-on-Wye in 1869 to John Unett and Margaret Unett (formerly Horton) The Marriage Certificate states that his father also John was a Gentleman who was at one time a Captain in the Third Hussars. This John was born in 1839 at Catshill, near Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, his father was a solicitor. The baptism records for Birmingham show the solicitor John's parents to be John Wilkes Unett and Catherine Unett (Formerly Pidcock.) Walter, Thomas and George were brothers to solicitor John. It is George from this family who married Letitia from Freens Court.

John Wilkes Unett was a solicitor and was a founder of the Birmingham Law Society; he also built many houses around Filey in Yorkshire. John Wilkes Unett's family can be traced back to the early 1500's at Tittensor, near Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire.

John Unett, from Colwall, was the great great grandson of John Unett, whose brother, George, married Letitia. This is the link connecting the Unetts of Freens Court and Castle Frome to the Unetts of Tittensor. John was a Chartered Accountant by profession and served in the army. He was author of "Making a Pedigree", in 1970, when in Malvern. In 1947 he wrote "Fishing Days", an account of his love for fishing on the Scottish Lochs especially Loch Tummel, the River Witham in Lincolnshire and the River Lugg near Hereford. He also wrote "Bookkeeping for Small Traders" and "Management for Small Traders". There are 8 Piano Preludes in existence, which may also be the work of John.

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Colwall Shops - as Remembered by the Late Peter Pedlingham

Location No.	Name or Type	Proprietor or Manager
1	Fish and chip shop	Mr Turner
2	Grocer	Olive Pedlingham "Hill"
3	Post Office	Mr Harold Powell
4	Teas and Sweets, and pop	Knapp Cottage
5	Sweets, pop etc	Mrs Davis
6	Teas	
7	Grocer	Mrs Bishop
8	Butcher	Mr Jack Bishop
9	Ironmonger, paraffin etc	Mr Hill
10	Butcher	Mr Tustin
11	Newsagent and grocer	Mr Brant
12	The Crown pub	
13	Toys, marbles, wool, clothing	Miss Humphries
14	Gas Show Room	
15	Midland Bank and Surgery	Dr Richardson
16	Post Office	Miss Plowman
17	Lloyds Bank	
18	Chemist	Mr Bell
19	Grocer - fish and vegetables	Miss Godsall/Mr Bufton
20	Colwall Park Hotel	
21	Ironmonger, Dinky toys, ladies clothing	Armstrong
22	Baker	Wormington
23	Fishmonger and fruit	Mr Evans
24	Hairdresser and Tobacconist	Mr Holford
25	Butcher and green grocer	Mr Pedlingham
26	Fruit Farm and shop	Mr Knight
27	Grocer	Mrs Gough
28	Grocer and corona	Mr Stokes
29	Petrol and grocer	Mr Allen
30	Plateau café	Mrs Smith
31	Café	Mr Green
32	Teas	
33	Herefordshire House Pub	
34	?	Mr Whital
35	Post Office	Miss Doman
36	Grocer and fruit	Grundy
37	Newsagent and Haberdashery	Grundy
38	Tailor	Mr Green
39	Garage	Lockyear's
40	Yew Tree Pub	
41	Horse and Jockey (<i>sic</i>) Pub	
42	Chase Inn	

32 to 38 over the Wyche

31

29

30

42

28

27

16, 17, 18 & 19

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15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 & 25

14

9, 11, 12 & 13

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39

6, 7 & 8

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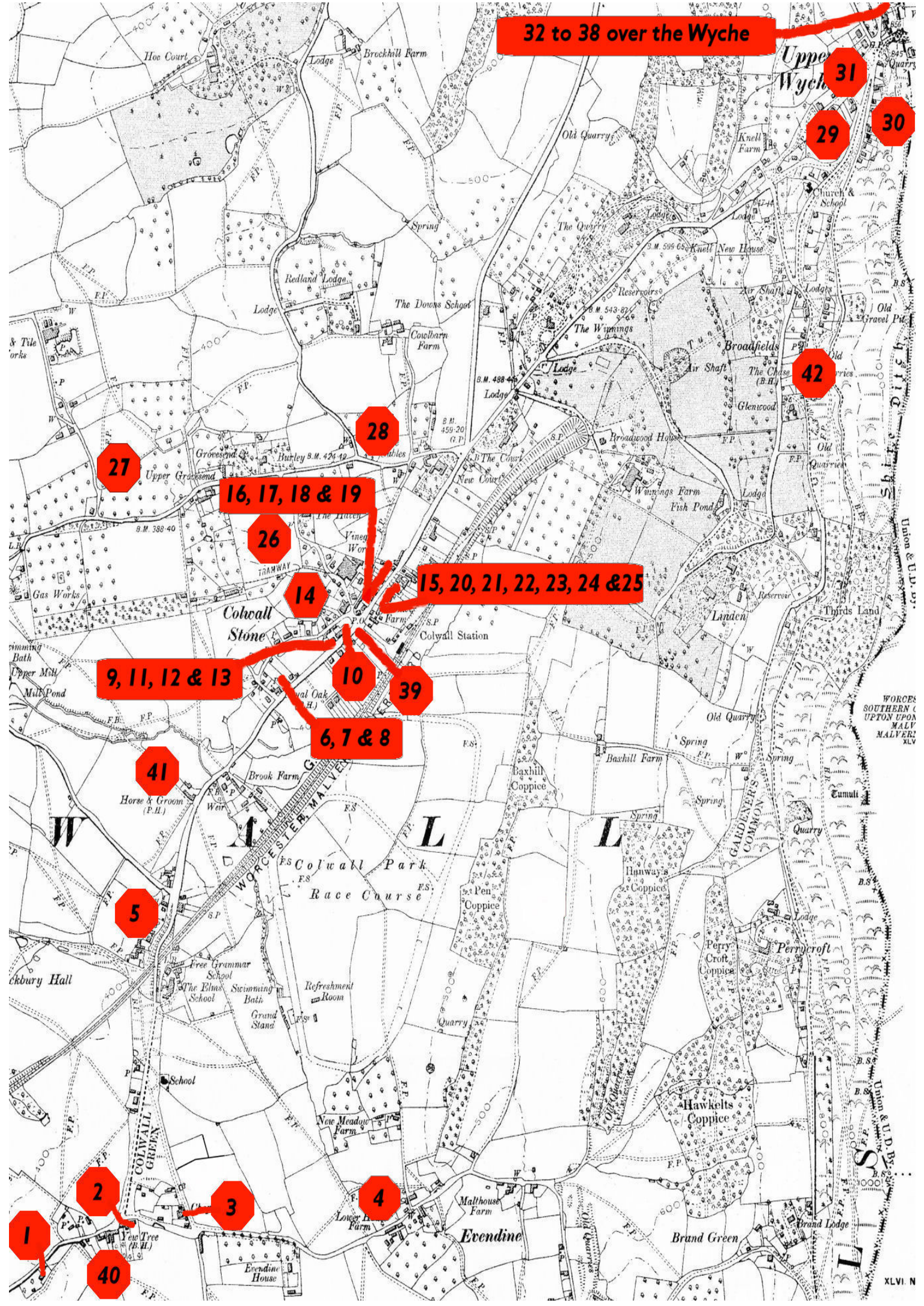
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SOUTHERN (UPTON UPON MALVER)
MALVER
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Chief Constable John was educated at the United Services College, Westward Ho. He served for two years in the 3rd Battalion of the Welsh Regiment and then joined the East Yorkshire Regiment (where he met his wife). He served in the South African War from 1900 to 1902, in the Orange Free State, Transvaal and Orange River Colony. He was twice mentioned in dispatches and received the DSO, the Queens Medal with three clasps and the Kings Medal with two clasps. He gave up his career in the Army to train for the job of Chief Constable. He worked for The City of London Police, Hertfordshire Constabulary and became Chief Constable of Preston prior to taking up his position in Essex.

Thomas Unett, (2nd Son of John Wilkes Unett) was Lieut-Colonel of the 19th Regiment at the battle of Alma, September the 20th, 1854, where his horse was severely wounded. At the battle of Inkerman, he was employed in the trenches and honourably mentioned. He was mortally wounded while leading the assault of the Redan, September 8th 1855, and died of wounds, September 15th

There are 9 Baptisms of Unetts in Colwall, from 1599 to 1615 children of John and Mary Unett.

Freens Court, Sutton near Marden was a 15th century moated manor house probably built by the Lingen Family (John Unett, born 1662, married Frances Lingen of London) it was finally demolished in 1955. It is thought that the name Freens derives from Hugh de Fresne, a descendant of one of William the Conqueror's knights. He was licensed to fortify a manor house near the present Deer Park in 1294, on the site of the original Moccas Castle. This can still be identified (though with difficulty). It was a small Motte and Bailey construction that probably did not include any masonry structure. Eventually, it fell into ruin after it passed to the Vaughans, who lived at nearby Bredwardine Castle.

The village of Marden is situated just north of Hereford, off the A49. Freens Court lies on the other side of the River Lugg and was investigated as a possible site for the Saxon palace of King Offa, by the TV programme "Time Team", in 1999. The dig confirmed the existence of a large aisled building; but it was thought to date from the mediaeval period.

Birchend at Castle Frome was the seat of the Unett family. In the church at Castle Frome there is a Unett tomb with recumbent effigies of William Unett, a cavalier and his wife. There is, also, an ancient stone font, reputed to be Norman.

In 1840, John Benbow of Hill Farm, Castle Frome joined the Latter Day Saints and took about 600 converts with him to Salt Lake City. There was a pond at Hill Farm where many of the United Brethren were baptised.

Future Talks

26th April 2010: [AGM]
Graham Cowan, 'Colwall Past and Present'

21st June 2010:
Mike Beard, 'The Story of a Colwall Blacksmith – and a few sheep'

20th September 2010:
James Ferguson, 'Not Just a Railway Village, 1800 – 1930'

17th January 2011:
Tim Bridges, 'Colwall Church'

18th April 2011 [AGM]:
Elizabeth Lloyd, 'The Bright Family of Colwall'

Colwall Funday – Downs School – 31st May 2010

A date for your diary. Many local organisations will be taking part in this event organised by the Colwall Rotary Club. We plan to have a stall at which there will be opportunity to name the faces in some of the Society's archive photos and perhaps record your memories for posterity.

Finally ...

My thanks to our contributors. Articles on Colwall related subjects (however tenuous!) are always welcome.

If you are prepared to receive your newsletters by electronic means, please register with the email address below.

Corrections and additions to the information in newsletters are always welcome, as are CONTRIBUTIONS!

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