



GREAT WAR 100

# WESTENDER

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## FROM OUR ARCHIVE



Photo of Chalk Hill taken circa 1926

From our archives in this edition a picture of what was known before World War 1 as South Road, now known as Chalk Hill the is taken looking down towards the New Inn. The old thatched cottage on the right is still there, although now it is two properties and the site of the later Coopers Close is on the right.

Note the road is just a compacted dirt surface and does not have a tarmac surface, this did not happen until the early 1950's. You will also note the absence of street lighting at this time.

Who the children with the pram are we do not know—perhaps you do?

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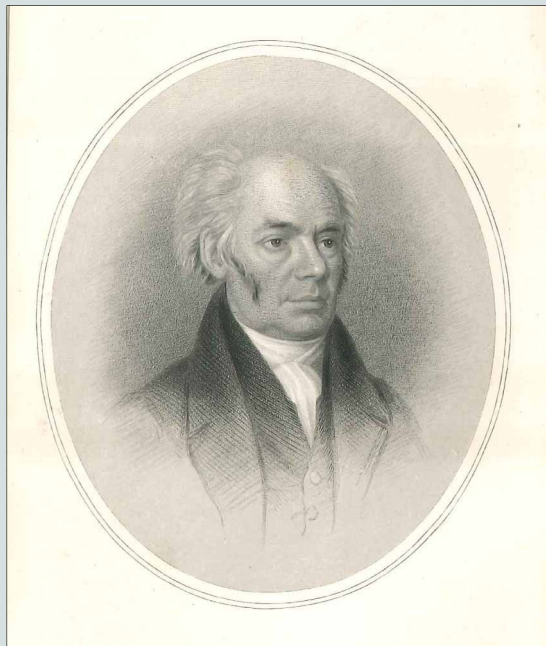


## THE SILVER PLAQUE MYSTERY

By Sue Ballard, PhD.

When I started working as a volunteer in the WELHS Museum recently, the curator Nigel Wood, showed me a silver plated plaque that had been dug up in a garden in Warden Close and handed in to the museum. The plaque is in the shape of a shield and is engraved with the words: "A token of Esteem and Respect from the Maynard family of Seaborough House to their dear friend, the Revd. James Crabb". Nigel asked me to find out who the Maynard family of Seaborough House and the Reverend James Crabb were and what connection they might have to West End. A previous volunteer had located the Maynard family at Seaborough House, Dorset in the 1851 census and found the title of a book published by the Reverend James Crabb in 1831. Armed with these dates as clues, I decided to try some sleuthing.

I was fortunate to find that Reverend James Crabb was actually very well-known in his day, to the extent that he appears in the National Dictionary of Biography. This tells us that James was born in Wilton, Wiltshire in 1774, the son of a cloth manufacturer, and after working for his father for a few years, opened a school in Romsey. He married a Miss Martha Radden, who persuaded him to become a Wesleyan Methodist. Eventually, he broke away from the Weslyans and set up the Zion Chapel in Southampton. The Dictionary states that Reverend James Crabb was the prime mover in a number of initiatives, including the foundation of the Hampshire Female Penitentiary, the Kingsland Place Infant School and a Bethel (seaman's chapel) for sailors, but his fame was largely due to his concern with the welfare and rights of the New Forest gipsies, resulting in his 1831 publication, "Gipsies' Advocate" – still in print and available in five different editions.



Rev. James Crabb 1774 - 1851

The entry for Reverend James Crabb in the National Dictionary of Biography was based on an obituary published in The Gentleman's Magazine 1851 Vol.XXXVII, but the obituary that appeared in the Hampshire Advertiser on 27<sup>th</sup> September 1851, perhaps because it was local, had more detail. It appears that while living at Romsey he would walk to Southampton and back in the evenings, preaching to the poor and disenfranchised along the way. He built the Zion Chapel with his own money, having only £100 at the outset and finishing with a debt of £800 and never received any income from it, subsisting on the income from his school in Spring Hill. In addition to founding the sailor's Bethel (which, in a letter he wrote to the newspaper in 1839, he says cost him £150), he would go aboard the P&O Company's ships to preach to the

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I began by turning to the census. Unfortunately, as James died in September 1851, he only appears in two censuses: 1841 & 1851. Previous censuses did not name individuals, which is unfortunate because by then most of his children had grown up and left home. In 1841 he lived at Spring Hill House in Millbrook, with his eldest son James Raddon Crabb, who, with the help of two other young tutors, ran a boarding school with 24 pupils between the ages of 8 and 16. His obituary indicates that James himself founded the school and taught there before handing it over to his son. At the time of the 1841 census, James was 67 years old and still a practising minister. By the 1851 census, taken on the night of 30<sup>th</sup> March, he had retired and lived alone with a single servant. By 17<sup>th</sup> September of that year, he had died.

The 1861 census shows his son James Raddon Crabb running the school at Spring Hill House in Millbrook and living with a wife and 14 year old daughter. This census shows that he was born in Wilton, where his parents had married, so it is reasonable to begin with Wilton in the search for other children of James & Martha. The 1851 census had two other likely candidates: Frances Raddon Crabb aged 43 lived at the Vinery, Millbrook with his wife and two daughters. He was born in Wilton and was a Classics & Mathematics teacher with five pupil boarders. Raddon Crabb, aged 47 and also born at Wilton, was a journeyman cabinet maker living at Lansdowne Hill, Southampton (the same street as Reverend James Crabb's Zion Chapel) with his wife, three daughters and a son. As James & Martha Crabb were Wesleyan Methodists, I did not expect to find baptism records for their children among the parish records, but I have not found any non-conformist records either. However, non-conformist records are notoriously scattered so it is, perhaps, not so surprising. Nonetheless, given that Martha's surname was Raddon and the couple married in Wilton, it is reasonably certain that Frances Raddon Crabb & Raddon Crabb were also sons of James & Martha. Unfortunately, as I have found no non-conformist baptism records listing James & Martha Crabb as parents, I have been unable to trace any daughters who may have been married before the 1841 census.

I now had to trace what happened to James & Martha's grandchildren from their three sons – 6 girls and 1 boy in total. No Crabb families appear on census at West End and indeed, censuses show that James & Martha's only known grandson, Francis Raddon Crabb, moved to Birkenhead, Cheshire where he worked as a steward. My next step, then, had to be to trace the marriages of the girls to find their married names.

Reverend Crabb's eldest son, James Raddon Crabb, remained in Millbrook until his death in 1869, after which his widow Frances lived in Bitterne and later Christchurch. It would appear that they only had one child, a daughter named Fanny. She never married and after her mother's death she moved from Christchurch to Reading and later Bournemouth, where she died in 1926. We can eliminate this family from the search for the West End plaque connection.

The second son, Francis Raddon Crabb, moved from Millbrook to Dibden, where he continued to work as a school master. He died there in 1890, his wife having already died in 1861. He had two daughters, neither of whom married. The elder, Ann Caroline, died at Dibden in 1900, while the younger, Martha Esther Budd Crabb, also worked as a teacher and the 1891 census shows her as principal of her own little school for boys in Dibden – there were just seven boys aged between 6 and 12; a typical "Dame School" of the period. Later, she worked as a governess for wealthy families, first in Portwood and later in Hungerford, Berkshire. She died in Southampton aged 82 in 1937. She is not found in any Southampton directories between the 1911 census, when she was at Hungerford, and her death in 1937. This suggests either that she was still working as a live-in governess, or she was eking out her savings in lodgings, as only householders were listed in the directories. There is therefore a possibility that she was living in West End before her death, but we cannot know for sure. Was she, perhaps, governess to one of the tenants of The Chestnuts?

James & Martha's youngest son, Raddon Crabb the cabinet maker, remained in Millbrook with his wife and children, where he died in 1871. His widow Jane Elizabeth lived in Millbrook until her death in 1883. Their eldest daughter, Jane Raddon Crabb, lived with her mother in the 1881 census, after which she

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disappears from the records; I have been unable to find her in the census, nor in either the marriage or the death indexes. Their second daughter, Margaret Raddon Crabb, was working as a governess to the Eldridge family in Eling in 1861, but married a William Fynmore in 1864. She is found in the New York State Census in 1875 and the New York Censuses of 1900 & 1920. Margaret died in New York in December 1920. The youngest daughter, Martha Raddon Crabb, is found at Grosvenor House School in Brentford, Middlesex in 1861. In 1863 she married Edward Thomas Goldfinch. They had a daughter, Frances Goldfinch, who was living with her grandmother Jane Elizabeth Crabb in 1871. The whole Goldfinch family disappear from the census. Did they emigrate? With Raddon & Jane's son Francis Raddon Crabb in Birkenhead, the Fynmore's in New York and the Goldfinches disappeared, the family of James & Martha's youngest son can also be eliminated from the plaque origin quest.

So, without knowing of any daughters of James & Martha, we only have one possible contender for the plaque having come to West End through the descendants of James Crabb. The alternative possibility, of course, is that it was attached to an object which was bought as an antique by a West End resident and has since been lost. Perhaps we shall never know for sure.

But what of the Maynard family of Seaborough House? What is their connection to the Reverend James Crabb? The 1851 census shows Newland Maynard, a widow aged 70, living at Seaborough House, Dorset with her married daughter and Polish son-in-law, all of independent means. However, they had only one maid-of-all-work (the minimum staffing of servants to which even the upper working class aspired), so perhaps Newland was not so well off after the death of her husband, although he left her shares in the Great Western Railway. Going further back, the 1841 census shows the family living in Queen Square, Bristol while Newland's husband, Captain Forster Maynard of the Bengal Artillery, was still alive. Death announcements for Forster and later Newland indicate that Seaborough House was near Crewkerne and research shows it to have been the 14<sup>th</sup> Century Seaborough Manor on the borders of Dorset and Somerset. It is now an upmarket B&B.

The only connection I have found between James Crabb and Dorset is the foundation of a gypsy school at Farnham, Dorset. The Hampshire Telegraph of 9<sup>th</sup> October 1847 shows "Rev. James Crabb of Southampton, the Gypsies' Advocate" [sic] in attendance at the opening of the school. The report states that four of five hundred people attended, "comprising many of the principal residents of that part of the country", some of the more important being listed by name. No Maynards are listed, but it is possible that one or more were in attendance and were inspired by James's speech. In 1864, some 14 years after the death of James Crabb, Reverend William Maynard sat on the Board of a training ship for the orphans of sailors – evidence, perhaps, of the influence of James Crabb, who had a great concern for the welfare of sailors, having set up his own sailors' chapel and written tracts on missions to seamen. Yet it seemed unlikely that a single speech would be sufficient for the whole family to hold him in such esteem or to call him a "dear friend". There had to be a greater and more personal connection.

Then I looked more closely at the Maynard children. Forster & Newland Maynard had at least seven children. Their eldest daughter, Newland Mary Maynard was baptised at Westbury on Trym, Gloucestershire in 1801 and married Joseph De Sedzimer in 1844, the Polish son-in-law seen in the 1851 census. However, all of Forster & Newland's other children – their sons Forster (b.1803), William (b.1804), George (b.1806) & Thomas Brooke Elliott (b.1814) and their daughters Christian Rose (b.1807) & Elizabeth (b.1809) – were born in Romsey. I think it safe to assume that this is the connection with Reverend James Crabb. It is likely that the Maynard boys attended his school in Romsey. Certainly two of them (Forster & William) entered the Church, possibly due to his influence. Although the Zion Chapel in Southampton was built as early as 1823 and opened on 9 June 1824, Pigot's Directory of Hampshire shows Rev. James Crabb still running his academy for boarding and day pupils in Romsey as late as 1828. He would have been there for the whole of the Maynard children's upbringing. It would appear that he was a beloved and well-respected teacher.

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I only partially completed Nigel's challenge. I may have found the connection between the Maynard Family of Seaborough House and the Reverend James Crabb, but the mystery remains. How did the plaque come to be buried in Warden Close, West End?



Warden House on the site of which the plaque was found

## THE AUGUST SOCIAL MEETING AT THE MUSEUM



Good weather and good company .... Our August Social Meeting at the Museum was a great success, with a great many members and lots of guests totalling around 60 people, the evening proved as popular as ever. Thank you to everyone who made the evening a success and to the ladies who made the cakes and did the refreshments and raffle and the all the helpers.

Ed.

## THE CHEQUERED PAST OF GATER'S MILL

By Pauline Berry

Gater's Mill today, should remind us of a large and industrious family named Gater, originally from Sawythling, who owned or leased much of the land west of the present centre of West End village in the 19th century. Whilst researching this family's history, I realised that the story of Gater's Mill, which had a very varied and sometimes complicated past, needed some explanation first.

The mill, as we know it, stands much reduced in size, at the bottom of Gater's Hill on the A27. The River Itchen and a second channel runs conveniently through its site, once essential to its past activities. It had several names over the centuries, now following:

Two mills were recorded in Allington (Manor) in 1086 and it is probable that at least one was on the site of Gater's Mill. It is mentioned again in the late 13th century when the rent of 'Allington Mill' was granted by William Alis to the Priory of St. Deny's. This was known thereafter as Allington Mill or Upmill until the 1800's.

By 1360 a 'fulling mill' was established on the site, alongside an earlier corn mill, with a fishery passing under the mill wheel. At that time the woollen industry was very important to trade and employment in England. Water-power was the main source of power for the mill and the River Itchen also provided the necessary barge transport. 'Fulling' was just one woollen procedure which produced 'felt' (a non-woven material) by heat, moisture, compression and vibration. The finished cloth was then stretched and hung out to dry on 'tenterhooks' or indoors in a shed. So if your name is Fuller, Walker or Tucker, then 'fulling' was once your ancestor's occupation. The resulting thick felt was an ancient craft used for clothing and hat-making.

During the 15th century a greater part of the streams at Upmill passed to Winchester College, (which caused a lawsuit much later in 1896). In 1538 the fishery between Southampton and Winchester was so rich in salmon and eel that local people were reputed to have neglected their normal work in order to steal the fish!



Thereon, there were a series of lease holders of the mill until the Gater family took over circa 1770. In 1612 Arthur Blomfield held a 40 year lease of the Winchester College part of "two corn mills and one malt mill under one roof called Upmill". The 'fulling' part of the mill had ceased production by 1685. Following a charter granted by King James II, the Company of White Paper Makers owned Upmill in 1686-1697, when nine of the fifteen papermakers were French refugees (Huguenots) and it was probably

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whilst William Henry took charge of the adjoining corn mill. The two mills continued thus, with other members of the Gater family taking over the reins at times, until the mill partnership was dissolved in 1851.

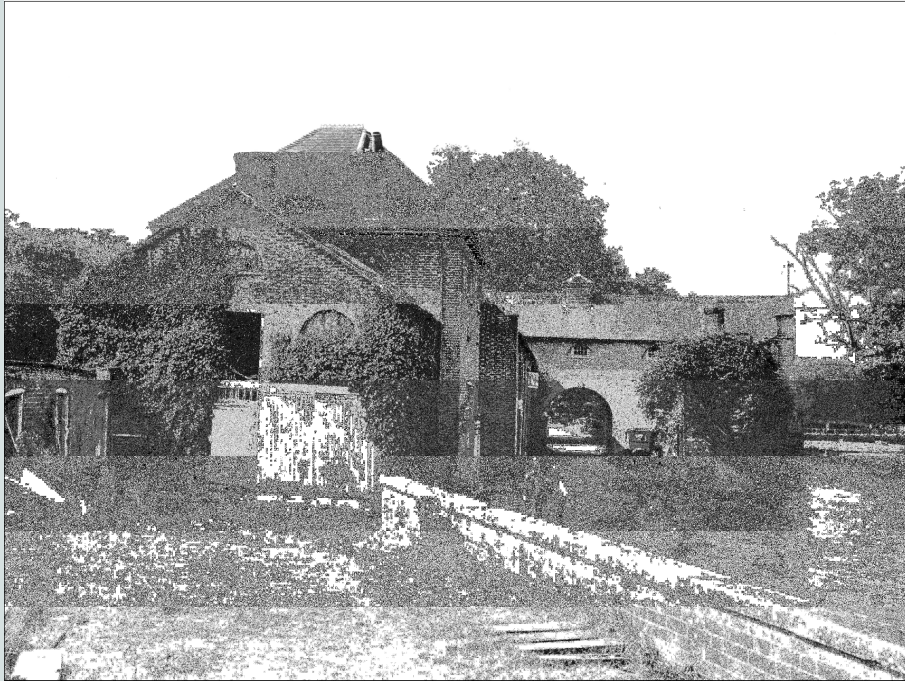


Photo of Gaters Mill from the rear taken  
in the 1930's with owner Mr Drewitt in  
picture  
from the WELHS collection

Circa 1790 white paper, produced from linen and cotton, sold for 20 shillings per ream and brown paper, made from woollen rags, sold for 6 shillings. White paper was in great demand for printing and writing then, but by 1865, taxes on paper and the introduction of mechanisation caused its decline and hand-made white paper ceased manufacture at Upmill.

The Gater family continued here and the mill was partly demolished and the corn mill was in sole flour production, under the name John Gater & Co.. Now known as West End Mill it carried on flour milling until a devastating fire in October 1917 and was eventually sold by the family in 1921.

The Dumbleton family ran the mill later as tenants and during World War Two the repair and cleaning of fuel tanks belonging to MTB's (Motor Torpedo Boats) and similar craft, was carried on. In 1958, C.P.C. a non-ferrous and iron founder occupied part of the building and in 1976 Dumbleton gave up the tenancy of the mill.



Postcard showing Gaters Mill in the  
1970's  
from the WELHS collection

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The Lower Itchen Fisheries Ltd and other business premises have occupied it in recent years. A Conservation Area Order was placed upon the former mill in 1989, preserving both the oldest building (1790), and its turbine chambers and the site around and above the mill. Let us hope that the legacy of Gater's Mill etc.. is now safe for years to come.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Winchester Record Office  
Christopher Currie and the late Hilda Stowell  
Tony Yoward

#### NOTE:

We have a lot of pictures and information at the museum - for those interested a visit one Saturday would be well worth the effort. Ed.

## **WINCHESTER - Bishops,Buildings & Bones**

**A review by Roy Andrews**

The September meeting had 47 members in attendance to listen to the last in a trilogy by Andrew Negus on the above subject. Andrew however pointed out that this time there would be no bones but mostly buildings in his presentation on Winchester from 1700 to the present day.

The town had long since ceased to be the country's capital and was something of a back water in 1700; with a population of 4,500 it did however return two members to Parliament, one of whom donated the curfew bell to the town still rung every night at 8pm. The other provided the clock which still hangs out over the High Street.

Prosperity was beginning to return to the town and many fine Georgian buildings were being erected. In 1737 the first hospital built outside of London was built in Colebrook Street. This location however was a bad choice as it was in a low area, prone to flooding and in the 'Red Light' area of the town. In 1768, the hospital moved to new premises in Parchment Street.

In 1760, Winchester became a garrison town and in 1778, the army moved out of its Southampton barracks to Winchester. In 1780, the North Gate in the town walls collapsed, killing 20 people and in 1792, although Catholic worship was still illegal, the first Roman Catholic Church, St. Peters, was built and consecrated in the country since the reformation.

By 1800, the town population had risen to 6,000 and the residents had their own, fine looking, Debtors' Prison in Jewry Street until replaced by the current prison in Romsey Road in 1850. Traces of the original prison façade can still be seen, although one wing was demolished and replaced by a church.

Jane Austen got a mention for, after her untimely death, she was buried within the Cathedral, not because of her writing prowess, of which there is no mention on her tomb stone, but only because her brother was an important member of the Church.

St. John's Alms Houses, in the city since 1100, are thanks to 970 endowments over the years; now they own about half the properties in the city.

In 1834, a Work House, looking much like later prison designs, was built at Orams Arbour, followed by the building of the Corn Exchange in the High Street in 1836 and a new hospital in Romsey Road

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In 1868. The Law Courts moved into the Great Hall in 1870 and remained there until 1974 when the new courts were built.

By 1874, the city had reached a population of 20,000. The Guildhall was built and although the city fathers had refused to countenance building a sewer system for the city, new laws required them to and by 1880, the Garnier Pumping Station for the new sewers was working.

1885 saw the opening of Chessil Station on the Didcot, Newbury and Southampton Railway followed, in 1890, by the opening of the thirty-arch viaduct over the River Itchen.

By 1900, the Cathedral which had been built on a water meadow was in danger of sinking so William Walker, a diver, spent the next seven years underpinning the foundations. He died in 1919 in the great flu epidemic.

The famous King Alfred Statue was unveiled in 1901 and 1904 saw the three day unrest in the city known as the 'gun riot' after the residents believed an old cannon displayed in the park for many years was going to be removed.

Concerning the two world wars, we were told of the numerous army camps, RAF stations set up around the city and the continuing involvement with the military who have five museums in the city.

Bringing us up to date, after mentioning the 'Hat Fair', 'Christmas Fair' and the M3 at St. Catherine's Hill, Andrew informed us that a new display is being built in the cathedral so that all five volumes of the 'Winchester Bible' from 1150 will be on show together. Andrew did finally mention bones when he referred to the ongoing attempt to identify the mixed up bones, thanks to Cromwell, of the Royals who had been interred in the Cathedral in the hope they can be 'reconnected'.

So, after four talks this year on Winchester, we are all experts on the City, so perhaps a Christmas quiz on that fair city beckons?



## APOLOGY

I have to apologise for the late arrival of Westender this edition—it should have been out and distributed at the October meeting, but due to holidays it was not possible to have it finished and printed. However, better late than never it will be out for the November meeting closely followed we hope by a smaller Christmas edition at the December meeting.

Ed.

## CAPTAIN ROSTRON FETED ANSWER FROM LAST ISSUE

The singer was Asa Yoelson born in St. Petersburg in 1886 and known as Al Jolson in America. Known for the early “talkie” films like “The Jazz Singer” in 1927 and “The Singing Fool” he entertained America for many years and was the first to offer to sing for the US troops during the Second World War.

## THE NEXT MEETINGS ARE.....

**October 5**  
**LIVES INTERRUPTED - 10 Officers in the Great War**  
*Dr Frances Hurd*

**November 2**  
**MEDIEVAL SOUTHAMPTON - the Italian Connection**  
*Geoff Watts*

**December 7**  
**SOCIAL EVENING**  
**Christmas Buffet, Quiz and Raffle**

## ON THIS DAY.....

**On this day (5th October) in.....**

**1830** Chester Arthur, American Republican statesman and 21st President, born at Fairfield in Vermont, the son of a Baptist minister.

**1880** Jacques Offenbach, German born French composer of operettas and the opera ‘Tales of Hoffman’, died in Paris.

**1919** Donald Pleasence, English actor, born at Worksop.

**1923** Glynis Johns, British film actress, born at Durban in South Africa.

**1930** The 777-ft. British airship R101, captained by Flight Lieutenant Irwin, crashed at the edge of a wood near Beauvais in France on its way from Cardington to India - killing 48 of the 54 passengers and crew.

**1933** Diane Cilento, film actress, born in Queensland, Australia.

**1933** English champion jockey Gordon Richards rode his 12th consecutive winner in 3 days - 11 at Chepstow following 1 at Nottingham.

**1936** The Yarrow March of unemployed shipyard workers to London started on its southward journey, led by Labour MP Ellen Wilkinson.

**1967** The first majority verdict taken in Britain, by 10 to 2, at Brighton Quarter sessions.