



## Welcome to our first newsletter in this format.

It seems like a good idea to establish a socially distanced method of staying in touch with our much valued members and friends.

The idea is to let everyone know what the committee are doing behind the scenes. We would also love to hear from you about your experiences of the Lockdown and how you have been spending your time at home. Email: [rayegreen@talktalk.net](mailto:rayegreen@talktalk.net)

The last time we were able to hold our monthly meeting was on 5<sup>th</sup> March when Jane Hill from Weston Museum visited us and talked about their plans. It was the Museum's excellent newsletter which gave me the nudge to start putting this together.

In the very early days of lockdown, in late March and early April, James Rigby, a member of our Programme Sub Committee, took his camera out onto the streets of Worle and took some shots which remind us just how obedient we all were. I am already amazed that everybody responded so readily to the measures suggested by our government to keep us safe.

The lack of traffic on the High Street is remarkable. James's shadow is the only hint of human life in Worle. The shops were almost all closed and at this point even the queues outside Proper Job had not started to form.

I'm sure that many of you have been taking photographs of the village and its surroundings in the past 5 months or so, and it is interesting to think about future generations looking back at this time, trying to imagine what it must have been like.

*Raye Green*





## Some sad farewells

### Peter Townsend



Worle History Society has lost a golden oldie in Peter. He had joined our membership several years ago and despite his advanced years, he gave us all a treasured memory in December 2019 at our Christmas Quiz with his fascinating artefacts. RIP Peter, you will be greatly missed.

### Dennis Urch



Dennis was a local builder and footballer who had contributed to life in Worle for decades. He, and several old buddies, came along to our Worle Football Club evening in 2016. He happily shared his memories with us all. He loved our local history books and features in the new book about the football club. Thank you Dennis.

### Vera Edwards



Vera was well known in Worle and lived in Primrose Cottage (House) one of the few remaining homes in that part of the High Street. She had lived in the village all her life so when Worle History Society was started we visited Vera and took copious notes of her recollections of years gone by. People lined the street to say their goodbyes on the day of her funeral.



## What have the Committee been doing?

### A Day in Our Lives

At the end of March it became obvious that we would have to cancel our meetings for April, May and June. It was a shame, but necessary.

Raye had the idea of putting together a book to record the feelings of the people in Worle, Weston and around. Over 50 people wrote articles of about 300 words describing their experiences of lockdown. Bob and Lesley Champ, Jenny Kingsbury and Raye Green all contributed.

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March was the chosen date and by 29<sup>th</sup> April all the articles were put together and the books came back from the printers. They sold for £10 each and the Staff Well-being fund at Weston Hospital were sent all the profits.

Suzanne at Worle Post Office in the Co-op had a busy morning posting the first batch. Skidmores are still stocking the books if you would like a copy. Hospice shops will be stocking some, we hope.

### VE Day

Did a mini exhibition based around the celebrations in 1945. My old jalopy was home base for the day and families from around and about came to take a socially distanced look and make notes for home schooling projects. At 3 pm everyone left for tea parties in front gardens. Lovely.







## Flower Displays at War Memorial

Many of you will know that Jenny Gosden does voluntary work with Weston in Bloom and Worle History Society normally contributes £25 towards autumn planting for our Worle War Memorial.

Weston in Bloom decided that planting would not go ahead in the Spring and the pots were empty and sad. We decided to bring our contribution forward and we purchased a small selection from Woodspring Nursery, and planted the two big pots just before the hot spell. Frank Gosden took up the watering duties and kept them alive.

It was a struggle, but we managed to keep them going and they now look much better. I understand that Weston in Bloom have offered to pay for plants this autumn if we can do the planting.

I planted this little lot with Jenny's advice, but the choice of plants was limited and a more experienced ten green fingers might do better than me. Volunteers invited, please!

I have missed the efforts of Weston in Bloom this year, and hope very much that our High Street and Rose Gardens will have their tender loving care again in 2021.

Most of us have spent the last 6 months giving our own gardens much more attention than they usually get and it shows.



## Could Banwell House Have Been Worle's First Post Office? By Barrie Underwood



*Banwell House, High Street, Worle  
(Not the white-painted frontage - the older rear part)*

A likely candidate for the location of Worle's first Post Office would seem to be Plot 479 on the 1840 Tithe Map in Lower Street (see below), the site now occupied by Banwell House - but it is the rear part, roof line of which is just visible, that might have been the original Post Office, not the newer white building in the foreground.

The reasoning for this is based on research of the 1841, 1851 and 1861 censuses; the Baptism, Marriage and Burial Registers for St Martin's Church and other local churches; and the 1840 Tithe Map and Apportionment for the Parish of Worle, as described below.

But first -

### A Timeline History of Early Postal Services

- 1635** Charles I makes the postal service available for the use of his subjects in order to generate revenue without recourse to Parliament. This forms the beginning of the Post office as we know it today.
- 1657** Oliver Cromwell establishes the General Post Office.
- 1661** Henry Bishop, the first Postmaster General, develops the first handstamp for use by Post Offices to show when letters had been



- received into their offices.
- 1667** Control of the Post Office is passed from the King's household to the Treasury. It remains with the Treasury until the service is privatised in 1969.
  - 1680** Robert Murray and William Dockwra develop the London Penny Post for delivering mail across the city.
  - 1696** One of the first 'cross posts' is established between Bristol and Exeter to connect nearby towns to the main towns.
  - 1711** The Post Office Act allows the development of a unified postal system for England, Wales and Scotland.
  - 1719** Ralph Allen begins to extend the system of 'cross posts' which serve the towns near the main postal towns.
  - 1765** Penny Posts are made legal for any town, city or suburb if the Post Office believes it 'necessary and convenient'.
  - 1784** John Palmer proposes using coach and horses to deliver mail. On 2<sup>nd</sup> August the first mail coach journey is made from Bristol to London, via Bath overnight and takes 16 hours.
  - 1785** A mail coach service is established in March from London to Norwich. By the end of the year, services have been established to serve Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, Portsmouth, Birmingham, Holyhead (for Dublin) and Hereford from London.
  - 1815** An Act of Parliament makes it legal for villages not currently served by the postal system to establish their own postal system or systems of messengers to connect with the nearest postal town.
  - 1830** The Liverpool to Manchester railway opens. Two months later, the Post Office begins using the railways to convey mail.
  - 1838** Travelling Post Offices, which make use of the railways, are introduced. Mail can now be sorted whilst on the way to its destination. As the railway network expands, so do the Travelling Post Offices.
  - 1840** A uniform Penny Post is approved. Mail can now be delivered for the cost of one penny by the sender, regardless of the distance travelled. This makes posting letters affordable to almost all for the first time. Letters do not have to be pre-paid, but they cost the recipient double the postage rate if they are not pre-paid.

### The Postal Service in Worle

Whilst we do not (at present at least) know the date when a postal service for Worle started, it may be presumed to have been in 1840 as, the 1841 census, 65-year-old Susanna Watts was recorded as being the Post Mistress (Post Mrs).

Worle was the only local village to have a Post Office, with no record in this census for a Post Master or Post Mistress, or for a Post Office, in Weston-super-Mare or in any of the surrounding villages.





7  
Worle

PLACE	HOUSES		NAMES of each Person who abode therein the preceding Night.	AGE and SEX		PROFESSION, TRADE, EMPLOYMENT, or of INDEPENDENT MEANS.	Where Born	
	Uninhabited or Building	Inhabited		Males	Females		Whether Born in same County	Whether Born in Scotland, Ireland, or Foreign Parts.
Worle			Henry Pimm	25		do	y	
			Friedrich Wals	17		do	y	
do		1	Thomas Watts	73		Ag Lab	y	
			Susanna do		70		y	
			Henri do	25		do	y	
do		1	Susanna Watts		65	Post Mrs	y	
			Wm Pimm	33		Blacksmith	y	
			Maria do		33		y	
			Walter do	8			y	
			Henry do	5			y	
			Albert do	2			y	
do		1	George Lee	34		Shap	y	

Extract from the 1841 Census

Living with Susanna Watts were William and Maria Pimm, and their three children. 33-year-old William Pimm was a Blacksmith and member of the Pimm family of blacksmiths in Worle and Kewstoke.

First name(s)	Last name	Sex	Age	Birth year	Occupation	Birthplace
Susanna	Watts	Female	65	1776	Post Mrs	Somerset
William	Pimm	Male	33	1808	Blacksmith	Somerset
Maria	Pimm	Female	33	1808	-	Somerset
Walter	Pimm	Male	8	1833	-	Somerset
Henry	Pimm	Male	5	1836	-	Somerset
Albert	Pimm	Male	2	1839	-	Somerset

Transcription from the 1841 Census



William Pimm and Maria Watts had married at St Martin's Church, Worle on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1831, with the entry in the Marriage Register as follows:

19 <sup>th</sup> February 1831 By Banns	William Pimm Bachelor Worle & Maria Watts Spinster Worle Witnesses: Hester Williams, Arthur Beakes and Sarah Clegg
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It would therefore seem likely that Maria Watts was the daughter of Susanna Watts, and this is confirmed by an entry in the St Martin's Baptism Register for 16<sup>th</sup> July 1809:

16 <sup>th</sup> July 1809	Maria Watts Daughter of Edmund & Susannah
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Researching the Baptism Register further shows that Maria was the youngest of Edmund and Susannah Watts' four children - the others being Henry, born in 1801, Jesse born in 1804 and Hannah, born in 1807:

Working on the assumption that Henry was Edmund and Susannah's eldest child, a search of the St Martin's Marriage Register revealed that Edmund and Susannah had married at St Martin's on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1799, and that Susannah's maiden name was Davis:

2 <sup>nd</sup> November 1799 By Banns	Edmund Watts Bachelor Worle & Susannah Davis Spinster Worle Witnesses: George Davis and Thomas Lloyd
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Returning to the Baptism Register, the baptism records for Edmund and Susannah were found as follows:

27 <sup>th</sup> March 1774	Edmun Wate Son of William & Martha d s
2 <sup>nd</sup> March 1777	Susan Davis Daughter of William & Susana a

Additionally, Edmund was found to have had an older brother, Joseph, who was born in 1771; a younger brother, Matthew, born in 1777, and a brother James (no baptism record found, but the burial of 'James Watts, son of William and Martha' in 1784 was found); and a sister, Martha, born in 1781.

As Edmund Watts was not recorded in the 1841 census, it seems reasonable to suppose that he had previously died, and this is believed to be confirmed by an entry in the St Martin's Burial Register for the burial of an 'Edward Watts' on 27<sup>th</sup> April 1840. It will be noted that Edmund's name has been recorded as 'Edward', but there is no other entry for either an Edmund or an Edward Watts, with which it might be confused.

Turning to the 1840 Tithe Map and Apportionment, an Edward Watts was recorded as the owner and occupier of Plot 479 - House and Garden of 24 perches. His elder brother Joseph was recorded as the owner of three plots -

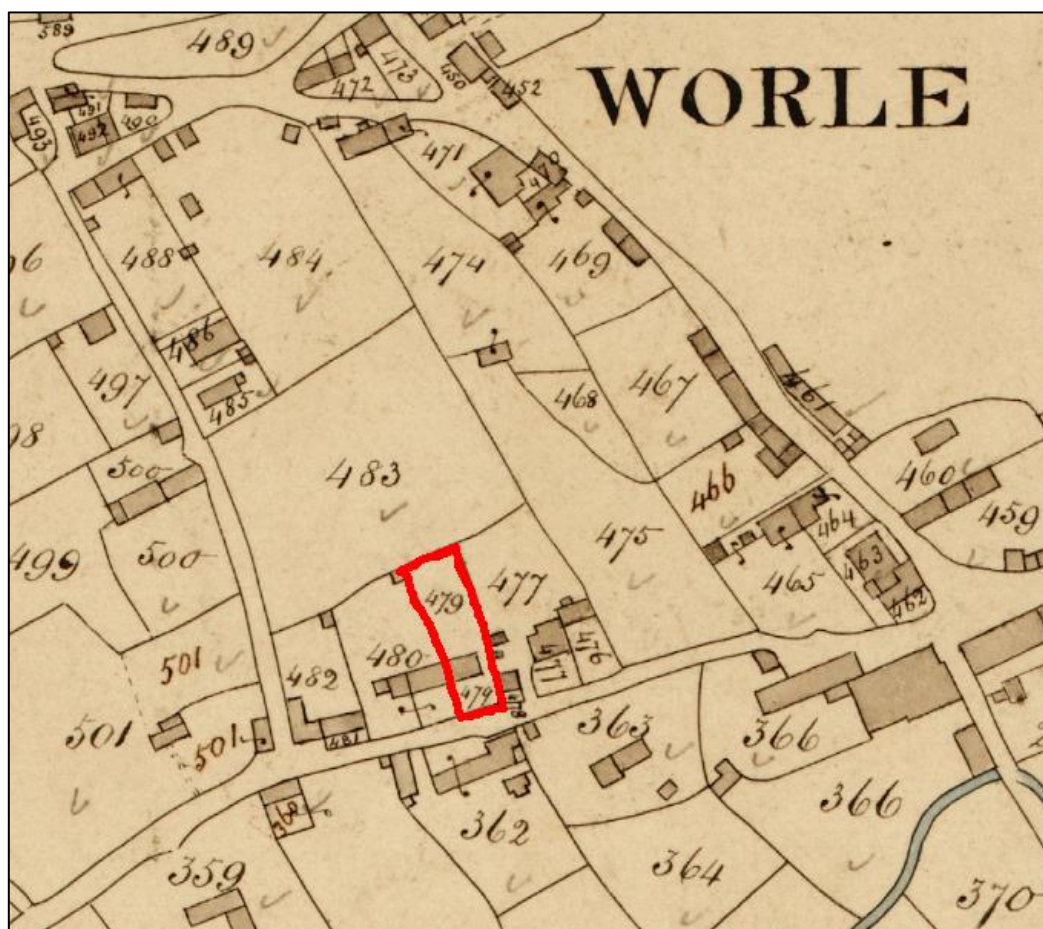




509, House and Garden occupied by Robert Bishop; 510, House and Garden occupied by John Walter; and 508 House, Garden and Carpenter's Shop, occupied by Thomas Watts (who may have been one of his sons).

There are also entries in the Apportionment for John Watts (who may also have been one of Joseph's sons), owner and occupier of Plots 576 and 580; and Thomas Watts (as above?), owner of Plots 794 and 801, occupied by Henry Sheppard.

As Edward (Edmund) Watts owned the house on Plot 479, it seems reasonable to assume that following his death, his widow, Susanna Watts, would have continued to live in the property with her daughter and son-in-law, and their three young children.



1840 Tithe Map - Parish of Worle  
Plot 479 Lower Street



Is this what Worle's first Post Office might have looked like in 1841?

Ten years later, when the 1851 census was taken, Susanna Watts remained Post Mistress at Worle, and her son-in-law and daughter, William and Maria Pimm remained living with her. As with the 1841 census, no exact address was recorded.

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Parish or Township of		Ecclesiastical District of		City or Borough of		Town of		Village of	
Worle									
No. of House	Name of Street, Place, or Road, and Name or No. of House	Name and Surname of each Person who abode in the house, on the Night of the 30th March, 1851	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of		Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born	Whether Blind, or Deaf and Dumb
					Males	Females			
65	Worle	William Howells	Head	Mar	55		Labourer	Sturminster Newton	
		Ann Howells	Wife	Mar		50	Do. wife	North Winton	
		James Co.	Son	11	20		Carpenter	Do. Worle	
		George Co.	Son	11	16		Labourer	Do. Worle	
66	Worle	Richard Smart	Head	Mar	61		Mason	Do. Piddi	
		Ann Co.	Wife	Mar		52	Do. wife	Do. Sturminster	
67	Worle	Edward Fry	Head	M	31		Mason	Do. Worle	
		Ann Co.	Wife	Mar		30	Shoe Binders	Do. Bickwade	
		Albert Co.	Son	11	6			Do. Worle	
		Edward Co.	Son	11	4			Do. Do.	
		Alfred Co.	Son	11				Do. Worle	
68	Worle	Susanna Watts	Head	Mar	54		Post Mrs.	Do. Worle	
		William Pimm	Son-in-law	Mar	42		Smith	Do. Worle	
		Maria Co.	Daughter	Mar		45		Do. Do.	
		Walter Co.	Son	11	14			Do. Do.	
		Henry Co.	Son	11	14			Sturminster Worle	
		Albert Co.	Son	11				Do. Do.	
		Susanna Co.	Daughter					Do. Do.	
		George Co.	Son		7			Do. Do.	
		James Co.	Son		5			Do. Do.	
Total of Houses 14 C B		Total of Persons 137							

Extract from the 1851 Census



First name(s)	Last name	Relationship	Marital status	Sex	Age	Birth year	Occupation	Birthplace
Susanna	Watts	Head	Widow	Female	74	1777	Post Mrs	Worle, Somerset
William	Pimm	Inmate	Married	Male	42	1809	Smith	Worle, Somerset
Maria	Pimm	Inmate	Married	Female	42	1809	-	Worle, Somerset
Walter	Pimm	Son	Unmarried	Male	17	1834	-	Worle, Somerset
Henry	Pimm	Son	Unmarried	Male	14	1837	-	Worle, Somerset
Albert	Pimm	Son	-	Male	11	1840	-	Worle, Somerset
Susana	Pimm	Daughter	-	Female	8	1843	-	Worle, Somerset
George	Pimm	Son	-	Male	7	1844	-	Worle, Somerset
Frances	Pimm	Son	-	Male	5	1846	-	Worle, Somerset

Transcription from the 1851 Census

Also recorded in the 1851 census was Susanna's son, 50-year-old Henry, a Gardener, together with his wife Elizabeth, and their three children. Once again no address was recorded, but as Henry's household appeared as '1' on the census schedule whilst Susanna and her household were recorded as '68', it must be assumed that the two properties were some distance apart and probably in different streets.

William Pimm died in 1854 at the age of 54 and was buried at St Martin's Church on 20<sup>th</sup> January that year.

It is not known when Maria Pimm succeeded her mother, Susanna as Post Mistress, but when the 1861 census was taken, Maria was recorded as being the Post Mistress and living at the Post Office, Watsons Lane, Worle, with four of her children. Meanwhile, her mother Susanna Watts, having retired from the Post office, was living in Lower Street, Worle, with her son Henry and his family - perhaps in the same house that had formerly been the post office and into which Henry and his family must have moved?

Page 23] The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the										
Parish [or Township] of	City or Municipal Borough of	Municipal Ward of	Parliamentary Borough of	Town of	Hamlet or Tything, &c., of	Ecclesiastical District of				
No. of Schedule	Road, Street, &c., and No. or Name of House	HOUSES Inhabited (M, F, or B)	Name and Surname of each Person	Relation to Head of Family	Condition	Age of	Rank, Profession, or Occupation	Where Born	Whether Blind, or Deaf and-Dumb	
117	Watsons Lane		Emma Southwell	Apprentice	Un	18	Shop Assistant	Somerset, Banwell		
			Mary E. Downe	Son	Un	17	Son	Wilt. Donhead St Mary		
			W. Harry Cole	Son	Un	16	House Serv	Somerset, Wilt. St Lawrence		
150	St. Pauls Lane	1	Maria Pimm	Head	Wid	56	Post Mistress	Worle		
			Albert. 2 <sup>d</sup>	Son	Un	22	Ag. Lab	Worle		
			Susanna 2 <sup>d</sup>	Daughter	Un	20	Worner	Worle		
			George 2 <sup>d</sup>	Son	Un	18	Blacksmith	Worle		
			Francis 2 <sup>d</sup>	Son	Un	15	Ag. Lab	Worle		
154	St. Pauls Lane	1	James Cox	Head	Mar	31	Ag. Lab	Worle		
			Ann 2 <sup>d</sup>	Wife	Mar	31		Worle		
			John 2 <sup>d</sup>	Son	Un	10		Worle		

Extract from the 1861 Census





First name(s)	Last name	Relationship	Marital status	Sex	Age	Birth year	Occupation	Birthplace
Maria	Pimm	Head	Widow	Female	56	1805	Post Mistress	Worle, Somerset
Albert	Pimm	Son	Unmarried	Male	22	1839	Agricultural Labourer	Worle, Somerset
Susanna	Pimm	Daughter	Unmarried	Female	20	1841	Ironer	Worle, Somerset
George	Pimm	Son	Unmarried	Male	18	1843	Blacksmith	Worle, Somerset
Francis	Pimm	Son	-	Male	15	1846	Agricultural Labourer	Worle, Somerset

*Transcription from the 1861 Census*

Susanna Watts died in 1863 at the age of 86 (hence born in 1777) and was buried at St Martin's Church, Worle on 1<sup>st</sup> February that year. Although her name was recorded as 'Susan' there can be little doubt that this burial was Susanna Watts, as no other likely burial record has been found.

Maria Pimm died two years later, in 1865 at the age of 56 (hence born in 1809) and was buried at St Martin's Church on 7<sup>th</sup> November that year. By 1871 the Worle Postmaster was 47-year-old Edward Morgan Watson, a Pharmaceutical Chemist, Post Master and General Shop Keeper.

Barrie Underwood  
July 2020

**Please contact us with any remarks or questions.**

Please take regular looks at our website: [www.worlehistorysociety.net](http://www.worlehistorysociety.net)

Our facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/WorleHistorySociety>  
and take a look at Know Your Place: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/638416113618702>

All the best

From all of us.

