

Tadley and District History Society projectnews

issue
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Hospital Sunday, May 1922 – outside *The Fox and Hounds* public house, Mulfords Hill, Tadley

Issue five

March 2004

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About us

Tadley and District History Society (TADS) was founded in 1984 for people with an interest in local social history, and in the broader scope of history and natural history. Monthly evening talks are held on the third Wednesday of each month, except August, at 8.00pm in St Paul's Church Hall, Tadley. These meetings are open to visitors.

TADS is a member of Hampshire Archives Trust and The British Association for Local History.

TADS's projectnews is published three times a year by Tadley and District History Society. If you would like to receive regular copies, please contact Alan Cooke, Distribution Officer, at Tadley and District History Society, PO Box 7264, Tadley RG26 3FA, United Kingdom; telephone: 0118 981 4006; web: www.tadshistory.com

Comments and/or articles for possible inclusion in future issues of projectnews are welcome – please contact Carol Stevens; telephone: 0118 970 1578; email: DGWard@bigfoot.com.

Copy date for the next issue of projectnews is 17 May 2004.

This issue of projectnews is a special eight page edition to mark the opening of Sainsbury's, another stage in the history of a site which has witnessed over 90 years of continuous retail trading. We are grateful to those people who have given us first hand accounts of the period.

For the readers who so enjoy the '100 Years Ago' snippets, those we publish are only a small percentage of what we have extracted from *The Gazette* archive. The full index of what we have recorded is now lodged at Tadley library in the filing cabinet by the reading desk; a full copy is also available from our archives.

Tadley Design Statement

Over the past year or so, a group of residents has been busy preparing a Design Statement for Tadley. This document, when adopted by the Borough Council, will become a supplementary planning document and will be used by the planners when considering any building application within our town. Copies will be made available to interested parties and placed on the internet. The cost of the project, comprising the fees of a professional adviser and the eventual printing, has been funded by the Town and Borough Councils and a grant from the Lottery 'Awards for All' fund.

The survey, as well as being a practical document for today, may ultimately be of historic use as a snapshot of the town in 2003.

The project was initiated by the Tadley Town Council but has been carried out by a team of volunteers. They have visited every part of the town, noting the appearance of every street and significant building, and are using this information to produce a word picture of the town. Since the document size is limited the descriptions are short and vary from a whole estate down to that of an individual building. For convenience the team decided that the town could be divided into five parts: the AWRE estate to the north west; the housing estates west of the A340; the area to the east of the A340 below the common; the two Conservation Areas comprising Manse, Malthouse and Knapp Lanes and Church Road from New

Road to St Peter's Church; and the considerable rural area south of the urban town. The document will make use of photographs and maps to illustrate various items of interest.

As well as surveying the town the group has attempted to gather the opinions of as many residents as it could. This was done by means of a questionnaire distributed with the local paper, a questionnaire to local schoolchildren, three open days at the Ambrose Allen Centre and displays at Budgen's and the library. These opinions have been used to propose a set of guidelines and recommendations that will form part of the Design Statement.

A Design Statement has to limit its comments to the design of buildings and their surroundings; it cannot consider the future development needs of the town, nor consider such matters as traffic or road use. That would be the province of a Town Plan.



The outline of Tadley with the urban area shaded.



View south over rural Tadley



The swimming pool – a modern development

From parlour store to superstore

After six months of intensive building work the Sainsbury's supermarket site on Mulfords Hill opened in February this year. To commemorate the event TADS has researched the history of the site. Some people may be unaware that it has a long and fascinating association with retailing.



Dorothy Blake outside Blake's stores, Mulfords Hill c1915.

Blake's stores c1914-1925

The site now occupied by Sainsbury's has a long and interesting history. To begin we must go back to the early 20th century, before World War I.

The original front room parlour store was located in what is now the car park at the front of the new Sainsbury's store. It was a purpose-built house with an integral shop built probably by Blake's Builders for Noah Blake's son, Albert 'Albie' Blake and his wife Dorothy. Initially 'Albie' and his wife had kept a small store in Honeybottom, Mount Pleasant but at some point they moved from this site to the house on Mulfords Hill. What we do not know is whether there was a store on the Mulfords Hill site prior to this.



Looking down Mulfords Hill, with Blake's stores on the left hand side and The Fox and Hounds on the right c1920/30s.

During World War I, while 'Albie' served his country and later when he worked in the family building business, Dorothy ran the shop and raised their

sons Albert 'Bert' and George. Business for the Blakes in the post-war years was probably good necessitating a side extension to the shop, built before 1925.

Noah Blake retired from his family building business in 1924 and 'Albie' carried on the business in his stead. This may be the reason why, in 1925, the ownership of the front parlour store passed to Yorke Lowe.

Lowe's stores 1926-1945

John Lowe ran a shop on the corner of Silchester Road and Broadhalfpenny Lane in what is now 'The Treacle Mine' public house. *Kelly's Directory* first lists him as a grocer in 1907, so the name Lowe as a grocer and draper was well established in Tadley by 1925 when John's son Yorke moved the family business from Lowe's Corner to Mulfords Hill following his father's retirement.

Jean Pocock's memories

We are grateful to Jean Pocock, daughter of Yorke Lowe, for her memories of Lowe's stores. Jean now lives in Guildford. As a young woman she worked for the Great Western Railway. During World War II, when their staff were evacuated to Aldermaston, she returned home to Lowe's stores on Mulfords Hill.

'Lowe's was a general store, groceries being on the left side. On the customers' side of the two counters were fixtures which held tins of biscuits covered by glass lids so one could easily see the variety. Huntley & Palmers broken biscuits were very popular, selling at 4d per lb.

'Nothing was prepacked in those days so everything was weighed up. Granulated sugar came in 1 cwt sacks; dried fruit such as currants, sultanas and raisins was in blocks and required rubbing on a sieve to separate and clean before packaging. Butter, margarine and lard were in 56lb boxes.

'There was no mains water, each house had its own well; no electricity for fridges either. I recall my father tying ropes around the boxes of fat in very hot weather and lowering them down the well to rest on wooden struts built at different heights.

'The Brooke Bond Tea Company once took samples of the water from various wells in the area and blended an appropriate tea which came in 56lb chests; when the tea was weighed into 0.25 and 0.5lb quantities it was placed in yellow bags and referred to as "Titan". We sold other blends of tea, such as Lyons and Hornimans, in different colour bags. The weighing-up was done in quiet times or after the shop was closed.

'Opening time was 8.00 am and closing was at 8.00 pm, Saturdays 9.00 pm, with half day on Wednesdays.

'Goods were purchased from Kinghams in Reading and Stratton Sons & Mead in Newbury, and were delivered by them. Lyons cakes came by rail to Aldermaston Station and fancy small cakes were collected, usually on Thursdays, from Parslows in Reading and in later years Shinfield Bakery. Hot cross buns were bought from these establishments and delivered by us on Good Friday morning.

'Patent medicines were stocked as there were no chemists in the village and the doctors at Little London and Aldermaston charged for dispensing.

‘We stocked various brands of cigarettes, two of which I remember – Woodbines at 2d a packet and Player’s 10 for a shilling with a halfpenny change in the packet. We also sold thin and thick plug tobacco and customers would ask for an ‘inch of twist’. Black Beauty and loose shag were also available.

‘Several varieties of sweets were kept in glass jars, customers could buy them by the ounce. I remember gob-stoppers at 4 a penny, sherbet dabs, liquorice sticks and whorls, halfpenny strips of toffee. As a child walking to Tadley School I would call at Thick’s Bakery to buy my strip of toffee because theirs was creamier than the variety we sold!

‘The right side of the shop contained a miscellany of goods. Hardware, garden seeds and tools, rabbit wires (used to trap free meals), boot and shoe laces, socks, stockings, working shirts (thick cotton), underwear, elastic, cottons etc, to name a few items.

‘Each year, early in November, a visit was made to a wholesaler in Lisson Grove, London, to obtain toys and gifts, some of which the customers had requested. When these arrived they would be kept in a spare room until the customer came just before Christmas to collect and pay for them. As a child I was not allowed in this room so that I had no knowledge of what some of my friends would receive from Father Christmas.



A view from the south side of the shop looking east towards the old brick kiln site. In the background is ‘Highlands’ the semi-detached property that once stood to the rear of the present library. In the 1970s Roy Bowman used a part of the house as a shop.

‘A large cupboard between the two sections of the shop contained a stock of various types of lamp glasses. Everyone in the village was dependent on candles or paraffin lamps. The shop was lit by two ‘Aladdin’ lamps hanging from the ceiling. If the wind



By 1925, when Yorke Lowe took over from the Blake’s, the shop had already had its first extension – business in Tadley was obviously good. Dated about 1945, just about the time that James Whatmore purchased the premises from Yorke, this photograph shows son Stewart with the family dog.

was blowing from a certain direction and the shop door was kept open too long, the lights would flare-up and the mantles become blackened. The lamps had to be turned low until the mantles ‘burnt-off’ and became white again. The oil was delivered by tanker from Basingstoke and transferred into two large oil drums, in the oil shed’

‘In the early 1930s my Father purchased a German made generator which was housed in a shed – a thick cable running high across the yard provided the electricity to the house.

‘As well as everyday shopping some customers brought in weekly orders which were delivered Thursday – Saturday.

‘Animal foods such as corn, bran and toppings were bought from Aldermaston Mill and stored in a shed in the garden.

‘We kept pigs in styes at the bottom of the garden and at the appropriate time one would be slaughtered, then placed on burning embers to get rid of the hairs, it created an awful smell. Later the pig would be cut up; a few parts being sold as pork joints. The fat would be rendered down for lard and chitterlings were also made. The two sides of pig were salted in a large vat, which I think was lead, and when cured was sold in pieces for boiling or sliced by hand as rashers.

‘At one time we made ice-cream. The

milk was obtained from Chapman’s Farm (next door but one), a powder was added and mixed in a machine like a butter maker. One turned a handle and it seemed hours before the mixture became creamy and set. This was not a very successful enterprise.

‘The first wooden garage, which had a side door, was refurbished as a Tea Shop. On very warm days the tables and chairs would be arranged on the front lawn which was bordered by rose bushes. This project also failed after two or three years.

‘World War II created difficulties when off-ration goods were in short supply. It was my job, having returned home from my own employment, to count the coupons and deal with all the form-filling that rationing caused. One thing that surprised me was the number of people who had biblical Christian names but were often known by nicknames.

‘In 1945 the stores had new owners.’



A very clear photograph of the front of Lowe’s Stores, probably during the 1930s.



Whatmore's staff during the 1960s. Seated (left to right): Edna Old, Reg Hoare, Mrs Wood, Stewart Whatmore, Mrs Elsie Whatmore, Mr James Whatmore, Ernie Awberry, Mary Hiscock, Ron Bartlett. **Middle row standing:** Hannah Coyle, Gwen Bealing, Dot Pike, Rachel Gundry, Rosemary Gundry, Mary Prouten, Joyce Powell, Helen Rigby, Gran Burnell, Shirley Everson, Tommy Perry, unknown. **Back row standing:** Margaret McGrath, Ken Branston, Mrs Hicks, unknown, Mrs Watson, Alan Hunter (pharmacist), unknown, unknown.

Stewart Whatmore's memories

For our memories of Whatmore's stores we are grateful to Stewart Whatmore, son of James S. Whatmore.

'James Whatmore (my father) purchased Lowe's Store in 1945, before the end of World War II. The shop was inside the restricted area of Aldermaston Airfield and customers had to have a 'pass' to reach it!

'Mains electricity was not available and the shop had its own small generator for lighting; the mains supply was connected in 1950.



A view looking north along Mulford's Hill. 'Pilgrim Cottage' is on the right of the foreground. Behind it is Whatmore's shop with an early extension to the original front parlour shop.

'The internal size of the shop at this time was about 150 square feet.

'My brother, Leslie, entered the business after he was released from military service later in 1945 and I joined in February 1948 when I was released from the army. Leslie left the business in 1948, as the work involved was not suited to him, and he went on

to a very successful career in the oil industry.

'The expansion of the shop had now commenced with an extension on the right-hand side. Unfortunately, this involved the destruction of 'Pilgrim Cottage' next door.



A mid-1960s view of delivery vans lined-up outside the shop. The first delivery van (KCG 773) was a Trojan; later the fleet consisted of three Ford Thames vans. In 1963 10% of trade was through a delivery service covering a three mile (five km) radius.

'By 1954 another large extension was required to meet customer demands and this proceeded to produce a store of about 6,000 square feet.

'Our decision to create a pharmacy would entail my father moving from the house still adjoining the store and the ground-floor becoming the pharmacy premises (the first pharmacist was Alan Hunter, Brian Fox taking over as manager in December 1959). The upper floor became offices accessible from the new extension.

'In 1956 a small block of flats (Pilgrim Flats) was erected, to accommodate

staff, behind the garage which we had opened next to the main store.

'1958 saw the need to join a supply and promotion organisation called Wavy Line. This we did, with my involvement leading eventually to joining the board of directors in London.

'By 1960 the need to consider self-service was pressing and I accepted an invitation to join a group of leading UK retailers to attend a conference in the USA which included visits to stores already operating self-service conditions. I returned full of excitement to open along these lines. However, it was not easy to persuade my father, or indeed staff, without considerable discussion, but I eventually won. The results spoke for themselves despite the disapproval of some customers about the loss of credit and deliveries.



Staff and customers pose for photographs featured in the Self-service & Supermarket Journal, September 1963.

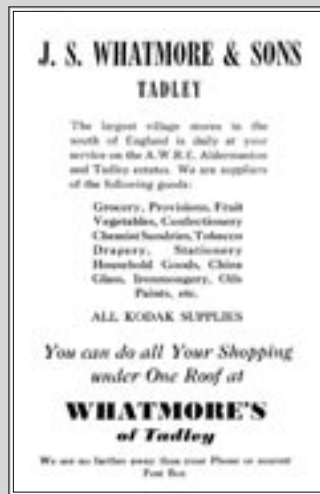
'The shop went on to greater success and my life altered with my election to the Parish Council, becoming Chairman, election to Kingsclere and Whitchurch Rural District Council and representing them on the board of Thames Valley Water Board.

'We had now opened a new self-service store in Thatcham, acquired another pharmacy in Mortimer and introduced a travel department in Tadley. However, the garage did not



A view looking north along Mulford's Hill. On the right of the foreground is Whatmore's Garage, where 'Pilgrim Cottage' used to be.

Village supermarket has personal touch – and £250,000 turnover



In 1963 the trade magazine 'Self-service and Supermarket Journal' ran an article on Whatmores which gives an interesting picture of a successful store, just a couple of years before it was sold to Murdoch Norton & Co in August 1965.

There is nothing unusual about a village store adopting self-service. But a business which grows from a front parlour shop to a thriving supermarket with a selling area of 4,000 square feet and an annual turnover of £250,000 must be hard to equal. This is the remarkable story of expansion of J.S. Whatmore and Sons, whose store at Tadley, between Reading and Basingstoke, we visited last month.

Although it has an 85 feet frontage it still looks very much the village store. Its outward appearance, however, belies the number of customers who pass through its checkouts and the comprehensive range of goods it sells.

Since Mr J.S. Whatmore bought the original shop, 18 years ago, there have been 16 extensions. 'As the village has grown so we have expanded our business,' he said.

The store was converted to self-service in September 1961. 'The reason was that our business grew to the point where we were employing 50 people. The number of customers being served by counter service had become so unwieldy that it was becoming impossible to run the store comfortably. The staff problem was also becoming difficult. In other words, we could not get the customers through fast enough,' he said.

He did not rush into self-service, however. For two years he experimented with self-selection, using dump bins from which customers were invited to serve themselves. The experiment was a success and the store converted to self-service.

At first meats were included, but it was found that customers preferred counter service. Now a combination of the two operates. Meat is sold pre-packed but it

can also be cut to customers' requirements. A large selection of cooked meats, sausages and dairy produce is provided by counter service. A combination of self-service and counter service also operates in the hardware section but the remainder of the store is entirely self-service.

One cannot fail to notice how naturally the village store atmosphere with its personal touch mingles with modern self-service. This is a fact of which Whatmores are proud. 'This is a store with character. It is a friendly place where people can feel we are interested in them individually,' said Mr Whatmore. His son, Mr F.S. Whatmore, who is in partnership with him, added: 'We give the amount of service which will sell us the maximum number of goods for the smallest number of people employed while retaining a certain amount of personal service.'

It is the store's proud claim that a customer can buy anything there. Certainly it sells a range of goods which would do credit to most London supermarkets.

The hardware section, which occupies about 1,000 sq ft of the selling area, offers washing machines and refrigerators, lawn mowers, electrical equipment and a large selection of do-it-yourself tools, for which there is a considerable demand. Included in the department is a toy section which has most things from toy soldiers to tricycles.



Many of the counters, which have adjustable compartments, and also the gondolas were made to their own design. In the same half of the store is a counter service drapery department, occupying about 400 sq ft, and a self-service stationery department.

Occupying prime position in the store is the 500 sq ft, greengrocery section immediately behind the checkouts. It is run by the manager and four assistants and sells a wide range of greengroceries as well as cut flowers and bedding plants when in season. Wreaths and wedding bouquets are also made there. About 10 per cent of greengrocery is bought locally. In one week three-quarters of a ton of local tomatoes was sold. The store's three-ton lorry makes the journey to Covent Garden market twice a week.

A contrast

The 1,533 sq ft grocery department which is well lit, spacious and abundantly stocked, is the most impressive and a contrast to the somewhat homely confusion of the

rest of the store. There is a good selection of wines and spirits. These are carried on 16 feet of shelving running along the left hand wall, attractively set off by a coloured canopy and sold on a self-service basis. Freshly ground coffee is sold. Other groceries occupy the entire right-hand wall on a seven-tier shelving and also the central floor space on gondolas. Each section is clearly marked by the simple device of using printed cards suspended on cord from the ceiling.



Meats and other provisions are sold from a counter occupying the rear wall of the department. The counter has a bacon display and a refrigerated open top cabinet selling cooked meats, chickens and sausages. Other open top cabinets sell frozen foods and pre-packed meats which are prepared in a cutting room at the rear. Other meats are cut to customers' needs. The store has had its own butchery department for three years. Before that they bought pre-packed meats.

There are three checkouts, but Mr. Whatmore hopes to introduce a fourth. Two other interesting services provided are a travel agency within the store and a pharmacy which is accessible from the store. There is fluorescent lighting throughout and eight air conditioners change the air every 20 minutes. Cigarettes and confectionery occupy 150 sq. ft. outside the checkouts on the site of the original shop.

There is a further 1,600 sq. ft., at the rear which houses a wine store, a general store and the despatch department. Outbuildings contain the 500 cu. ft. chilled meat room and the 300 cu. ft. deep freeze. There is also a bulk store.

For many years the store has used its own order books which save the work of two clerks and is also a useful check for the housewife's budget.

The personal touch

Those two controversial services, credit and delivery, are operated by Whatmores. A credit system was inherited when Mr Whatmore bought the business. 'this is a country area and it is a great service to the people,' Mr. Whatmore said. His son continued: 'Credit is something which brings an awful lot of business. If one is prepared to invest capital in it I am not so sure it is a bad thing. But if you were starting from scratch in this day and age you would not install a credit system at the beginning.' Statements are sent out monthly and two people are employed to run the credit system. The store's

National 51 cash registers were specially adapted for credit. The importance of credit trading in a store such as Whatmores can be seen from the fact that each credit customer spends between £22 and £24 a month. They find that a man tends to spend more if he has a credit account.

About 10 per cent of all trade is done through the delivery service. Two vans are employed and deliver within a radius of three miles. The store wants 24 hours' notice for a delivered order.

Whatmores have built up a considerable reputation and customers come from as far afield as Basingstoke and Newbury to shop there. As many as 60 cars are parked outside at the weekend. The customer figures are particularly impressive considering the village population is only 7,000. figures for August Bank Holiday were: Friday (1,096), Saturday (1,620), week's total: 5,979.

These figures are matched by turnover. The weekly turnover of about £4,850 is made up as follows meat and grocery (£3,000), greengrocery (£400), wines, spirits (£300), cigarettes and sweets (£500), drapery (£250), hardware (£400).

Mr Whatmore has had plans passed for yet further expansion.

The Whatmores also own a store at Thatcham, near Newbury which has a selling area of 1,100 sq ft and is entirely self-service with no credit or delivery services.

Whatmores is a family business. In addition to the father and son partnership, Mrs Whatmore senior runs the accountancy department. Helping to preserve the personal touch are the senior staff, most of whom have been with the store for many years. Mr E. Awberry, for example has run the hardware department for 17 years, and Mr R. Hoare has managed the greengrocery side for 15 years. Mr Whatmore is proud of the long service of his managers, all of whom have been trained as specialists in one trade. Altogether there are 54 employees, of whom six are part-time. The store provides accommodation for families of six employees, mostly managers.



The store is a member of Wavy Line, of which Mr. Whatmore junior is a director. He is a firm believer in the value of voluntary groups. 'Any self-service store which is not in a group is making a mistake,' he said. The store carries about 60 special offers including those of Wavy Line, many of them occupying eye-catching positions in window dump bins.



Whatmore's Garage occupied the site of Pilgrim Cottage, south of the supermarket. This photograph shows Bernard Judd, later co-owner of Bernard's DIY store (now King's). The building to the left and rear of the petrol pumps in the photograph was 'Pilgrim Flats', four flats provided by Whatmore's for some of their employees.



Two photographs of the completed Whatmore's Garage – now 'Wheelgame'. The tall hedge on the right hand side of the photograph has been removed to reveal the adjacent cottage, now Unwins, Tulipa and Husseys, behind which was Job's Dairy.

come up to our expectations and we sold this to Mobil.

'1965 arrived; my father was well past retirement age and my wife had not seen too much of me for some years. This needed some thought and a chance to accept an offer from Kinloch's seemed sensible. After considerable discussion my father agreed to sell but retained the pharmacies until 1969. He died in 1970.

'I obtained a position in a London company called Mace Marketing and went on to become Managing Director. Unfortunately this compelled me to give up my membership of the Councils and their representation on The Thames Valley Water Board. We moved nearer London but our memories and connection to Tadley still remain.'

Kinloch's to Sainsbury's 1965–2004

We are grateful to Ken Bartlett and Ernie Farebrother for their memories of Whatmore's and Budgen's.

To clarify the situation at the end of the Whatmore era, in August 1965 the business was purchased for £40,000 by Murdoch Norton & Co, a subsidiary of Kinloch's whose brand name was Wavy Line. The business changed from being a family run concern to being a cog in the wheel of big business.

The store's first general manager for

Murdoch Norton was Derek Marchant. In 1971 Ken Bartlett returned to Tadley to take over as store manager. Ken began working at the shop in 1959, aged 15 years, when James Whatmore paid for him to do his apprenticeship on day release to Reading Technical College. At the age of 23, in 1967, he became Provisions Manager for Murdoch Norton and was subsequently moved to their Staines branch where he remained until his return to Tadley in 1971. His father, Ron Bartlett was grocery and provisions manager for Whatmore's for six years (see staff photo). Ken

remained manager at the store for five years before being promoted to area manager. He kept in close contact with its progress as the store remained within his area even after it became Budgen's. One of the main changes he recalls being made by Murdoch Norton was the phasing out of local deliveries. 'The amount of staff hours involved in making up and delivering orders was considerable' he said.

During the years of expansion warehouse space was at a premium; the original Blake house was used for a time together with a series of corrugated



An external view of Budgen's from the 1970s-80s, with the original Blake house, now the pharmacy, still clearly visible at the left hand end.



The original Blake house now heavily disguised within a modern shop front. To the rear, on the left-hand side, can be seen what is probably the new Budgens store under construction. Within days of the new store opening this front parlour shop with its many extensions was demolished.

iron ‘sheds’ to the rear of the Whatmore extensions. These store rooms went by names such as the ‘jam shed’, ‘soap shed’, ‘cheese house’ and ‘bacon house’. In the days of James Whatmore the latter was used for cooking and boning whole sides of bacon. In the ‘cheese house’ James took pride in maturing whole cheeses, turning them daily. By the Budgen’s era, thankfully, these make-shift premises had been replaced with a brick extension.

Upon Ken’s promotion to area manager Ernie Farebrother became store manager for Murdoch Norton and remained a familiar face to customers

until his retirement. Even in the late 1970s he recalls the store still ran a mixture of self-service and counter service. Murdoch Norton were happy for him to be an independent buyer purchasing local produce from Wantage and Hook. One member of his staff was Kathy Cook, née Smallwood, the Olympic medal winner, who as a student in the late 1970s worked part-time.

In 1977 Kinloch’s were taken over by Bookers whose retail chain was Budgens and so a new name appeared on the shop front. Budgens limited Ernie’s freedom to buy locally grown apples and salad produce and also phased out the butchery and delicatessen counters.

Throughout all the changes in name and organisation one thing on the hill remained: Whatmore’s Pharmacy. In

Stewart’s memories he says that his father retained the pharmacy until 1969. It was then he sold it to Brian Fox who had been manager for nearly 10 years. Brian kept the Whatmore name on the shop sign right up to the time the premises were demolished in 1989. He then moved into a new unit, part of the purpose-built Budgen’s complex to the rear.

Ernie Farebrother reached retirement age in 1987 and so the new supermarket saw a new manager, Des Brown.

On 31 October 1989 a new enlarged Budgen’s store was opened behind the original much extended Blake’s front parlour shop. While the changeover was made both stores were closed for 2-3 days. Almost immediately after the official opening of the new store the Blake’s front parlour shop, with its many extensions, was demolished after 75 years’ trading.

In 2003, following much speculation, it was finally confirmed that the Budgens site and store was in new ownership, J. Sainsbury plc would be the new name on the hill. On 26 February 2004 Tadley customers queued to be first through the doors of the newly reconstructed store.

As a link with the historical past, the opening was performed by Barry McLean. First employed by Murdoch Norton when he left school in 1971, Barry has been continuously employed by each subsequent company for over 32 years. Previously a familiar face in Budgen’s greengrocery department, he now faces a new challenge – the grocery department of Sainsbury’s Tadley.



The new Budgen’s store was officially opened on 31 October 1989 by Heidi White and Laura Butler, two pupils from Bishopswood Junior School. It moved Tadley shopping into a new era with its stylish facade and bright, modern interior – a long way removed from the dimly lit shop, illuminated by Aladdin lamps, which had been run by Dorothy and Albert Blake in 1915.



100 years ago – Hants and Berks Gazette, Dec 1903–Mar 1904

Date	Page	Village	Topic
5 December	6	Tadley	Petty Sessions Alleged cruelty to a horse at Tadley by Alfred Hewlett and son – case dismissed [C].
5 December	6	Baughurst	Waif Saturday £2 15s 0d collected for Dr Barnardo's; collectors named [C].
5 December	8	Pamber Heath	Accident to James Smith, of <i>Yew Tree Cottage Laundry</i> , Pamber, as he was returning home with washing in pony and trap.
12 December	6	Tadley	Church Lads' Brigade Inspection by Major Dunne at Heath End Church.
12 December	6	Baughurst	Entertainment by the Baughurst 'Snowdrop' minstrels in the schoolroom [C].
12 December	6	Silchester	Concert in the Impstone Reading Room by permission of Mr J J Cooper [C].
12 December	8	Mortimer	Band of Hope entertainment in Congregational Church.
12 December	8	Tadley	Arthur Stacey fined 10s for being asleep while in charge of horse and cart.
26 December	5	Ramsdell	Revd Joseph Fuller, vicar of Ramsdale 1867–1893, died on 2 December 1903.
9 January	5	Silchester	School reopens after holiday repairs and redecoration by Messrs Goddard and Sons [C].
9 January	5	Silchester	Sad accident in the Church to James Goddard who was taken up by the tenor bell and dropped down amongst the seats. He is progressing favourably [C].
9 January	5	Silchester	1903 has rolled away – remembered for continuous rains and the disastrous times for farmers [C].
9 January	5	Ramsdell	Pig Club Annual meeting of Ramsdale Pig Club held in School room [C].
16 January	3	Bramley	Bramley Foresters New Year Supper. Court Number 5525, 'The Pride of Bramley Street' [C].
23 January	8	Baughurst	Rector distributed "George Lamb" prizes to Elsie Appleton, Beatrice Appleton, Frederick Riley and Frederick Kent.
23 January	5	Silchester	Baughurst Gospel Temperance Band plays in Primitive Methodist Chapel.
30 January	8	Baughurst	Mission visit of No 1 Winchester Church Army van.
30 January	8	Baughurst	School report of Religious Education was satisfactory.
30 January	8	Pamber	Wedding in Parish Church - Miss Annie Long and Mr Albert Woods.
12 February	8	Tadley	Passive Resistance Movement Local 'passive resisters' league formed (30 ratepayers joined).
12 February	8	Tadley	Entertainment given at Congregational Church by Silchester Choir.
20 February	7	Ashford Hill	Sale of goods of the passive resisters from Ashford Hill and Burghclere for not having paid the educational portion of the Poor Rate [C].
5 March	6	Silchester	Gorse fire last Tuesday near a thatched cottage.
5 March	6	Silchester	Hydes Charity 14s distributed to each of the poorest parishioners.
5 March	8	Silchester	Entertainment in Primitive Methodist Chapel in aid of the 'new organ fund'.
19 March	5	Tadley	Resistance to Education Act of 1902 has reached Tadley – meeting in schoolroom.
19 March	6	Baughurst	Annual parish meeting in school – scanty attendance – year's expenses £1.13.3d.

100 years ago – national and international, Dec 1903–Mar 1904

Date	Topic
10 December	Nobel Prize for physics awarded to Marie & Pierre Curie and Henri Becquerel for work on radioactive materials.
17 December	Wilbur and Orville Wright fly a heavier than air machine for 850 feet in North Carolina.
30 December	In the United States 578 feared dead in a Chicago theatre fire. Later 5 employees were arrested.
1 January	British liner 'Baltic' goes into service, the largest passenger ship yet built at 23,880 tons and 221metres/726 feet long.
11 January	British troops massacre 1,000 Dervishes in Somaliland. Three British officers killed & nine wounded.
12 January	In the United States Henry Ford sets new car speed record of 91.37 mph.
25 January	In the United States 200 miners buried alive in a coal mine explosion in Pennsylvania.
5 February	United States withdraws forces from Cuba.
8 February	Outbreak of war between Japan and Russia.
Among those born at this time were: A L Rowse, historian (4 December); John Piper, artist and architectural historian (13 December); Cecil Beaton, British photographer (14 January); Cary Grant, British-born American film actor (18 January) and Alexander Kosygin, Soviet politician (20 February).	
Among those who died were: Herbert Spencer, British philosopher (8 December).	
In sport the England batsman R E Foster scores a record Test innings of 287 runs against Australia on their home ground.	
Song hits included 'Ida', 'The Kashmiri Song' and 'Sweet Adeline'.	

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