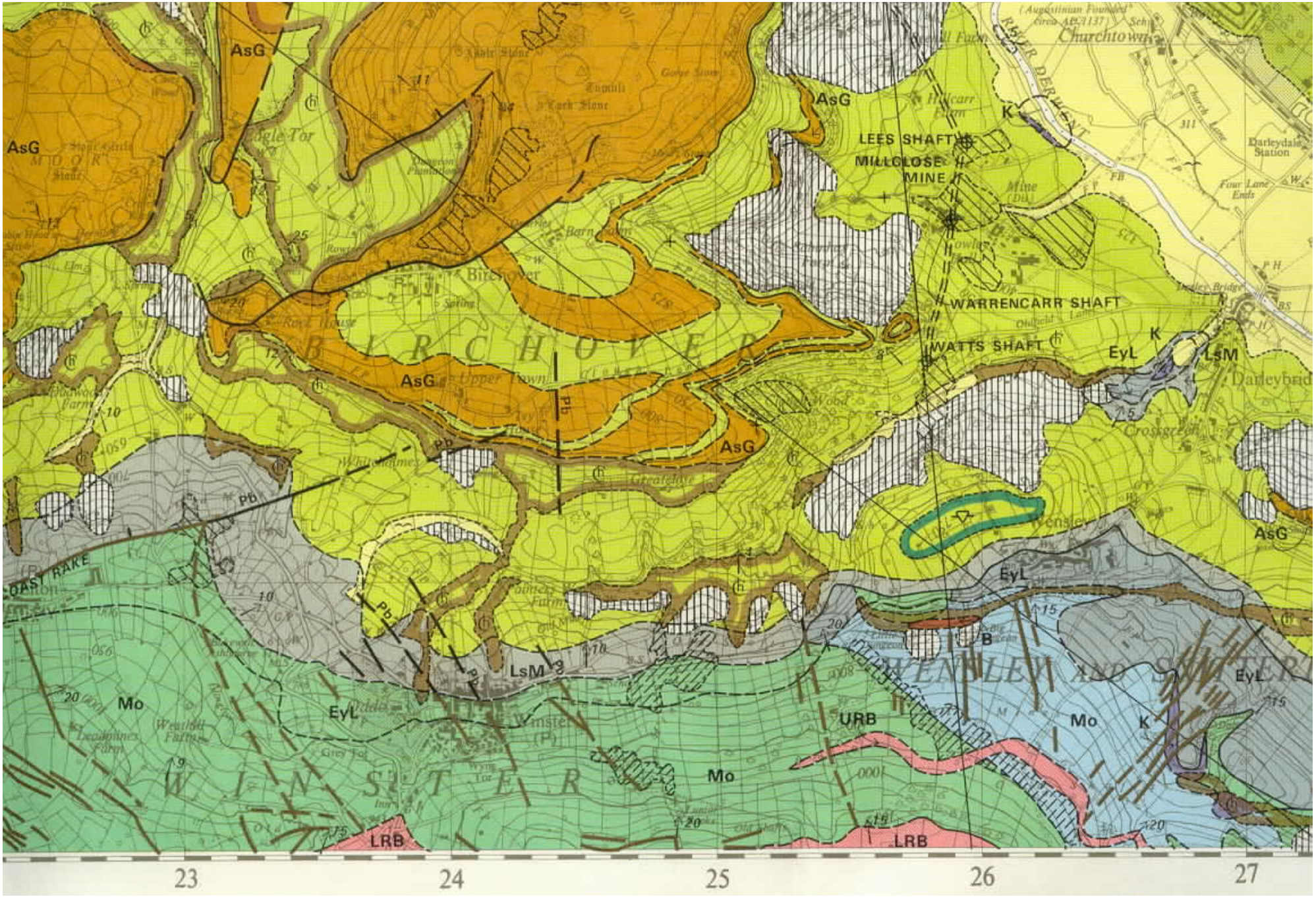
HOW WINSTER GOT ITS WATER

A talk to Winster Local History Group by Geoff Lester
Winster, Derbyshire
28 April 2008

The following slide shows the geology of Winster.
To the north the rocks underlying the soil are shales, mudstones, sandstones and millstone grit (grey, lime-green, brown).
To the south there is limestone (mid-green) with occasional layers of impervious basalt (pink).
The dividing line is right along Winster Main Street.



Geological Map of Winster and its surroundings

Anyone who walks around Winster knows that the terrain on the north is much wetter.
Some of the paths were paved long ago, and the slabs frequently have to be relaid as they sink into the wet ground.



A paved footpath north of Winster

Winster for many centuries was a thriving centre of lead mining.

Here on this north side of the village the mines had to be driven deeper than on the south, and they frequently encountered the problem of flooding.

It was at Yatestoop mine that a Newcomen steam engine was installed in 1716 for the purpose of 'unwatering' the mine - the first steam engine in Derbyshire.

A massive pumping engine, built in 1819, was removed in 1976 from the Wills Founder Mine (from a shaft near Winster Burial Ground). It can now be seen in the Peak District Mining Museum in Matlock Bath…

Wills
Founder
Engine



On the steep limestone bank south of Winster the situation is different: water is in short supply

The following slides show Winster Pitts mine, now a Scheduled Ancient Monument. On the surface are the remains of an ore-washing site. Where did the water come from – was it pumped up from below ground or brought in?



Winster Pitts Mine surface features

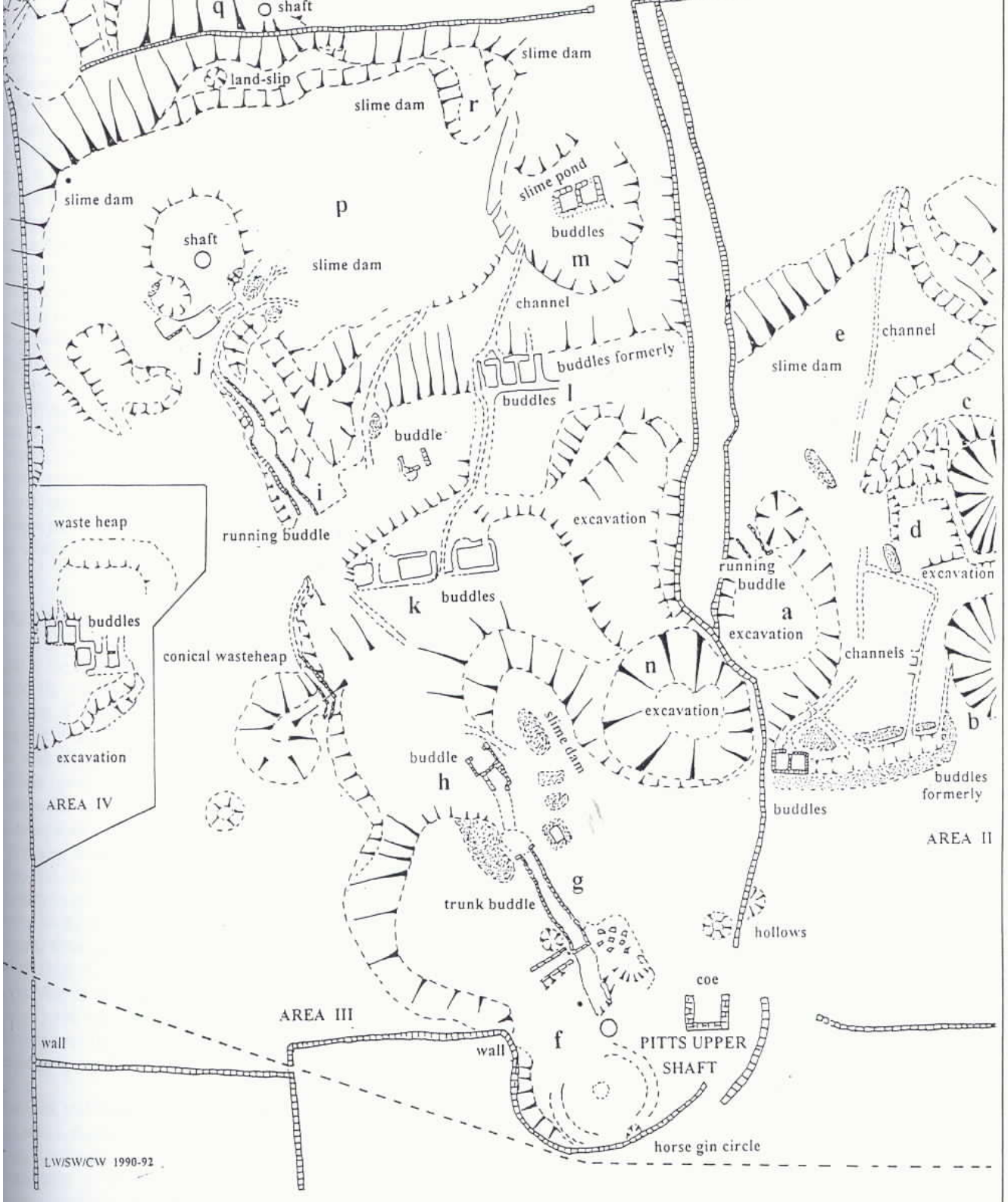


Winster Pitts Mine



Winster Pitts Mine: buddles (washing troughs)

Winster Pitts Mine: interpretation (*PDMHS Bulletin* 13.6, 1998)



Orchard Mine Winster upper shaft, 280 ft (86m) deep, flooded at 300 ft (92m) level.





Orchard Mine Winster upper shaft

Gathering Water

Water wells

Some of the houses in Winster, especially the grander ones along Main Street, had their own wells, such as this one in the Vicarage (built 1869)…



Vicarage well


Vicarage pump

Tanks and water butts

Most people had some means of collecting and storing rainwater, as shown in the following slides…

Thomas and Agnes Burton

They lived in Rock View, Bank Top, now Pinfold Cottage, East Bank. Thomas died 1920.

See their two water butts in the background.





Water tank serving 2 cottages, Olives Cottage and Yew Cottage, West Bank.



Inside the same tank.

Ponds

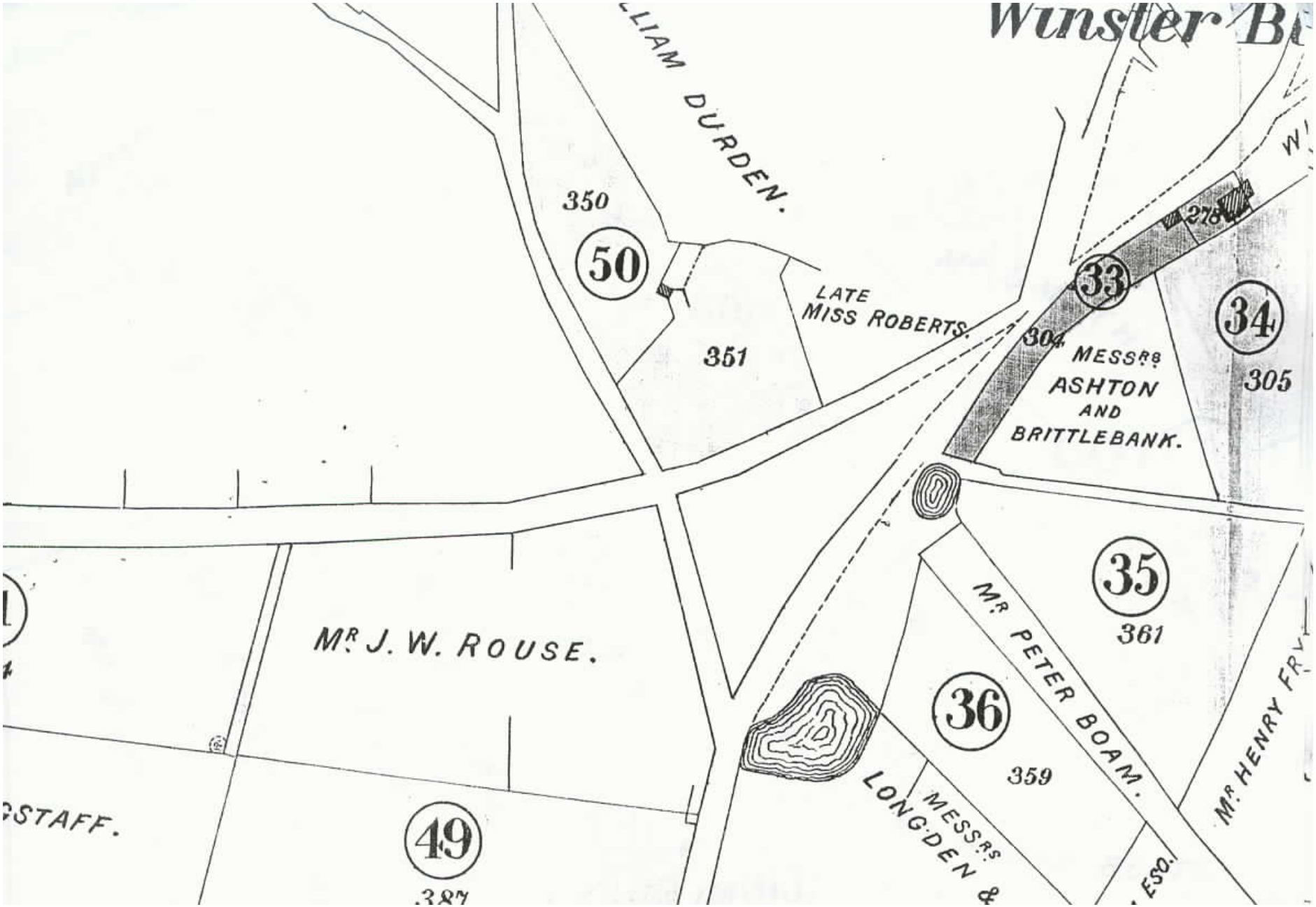
Animals were watered at the small number of ponds in Winster



Cattle market on East Bank.
Water would be needed for
the animals.



Cattle market on Main Street. Stoop Farm on the right (now the Old Angel) watered its beasts at a pond up the road at what is now called Leacroft.



At Bank Top water trapped by an impervious layer of basalt formed a natural pond called Mosey Mere (left of no. 36). The smaller pond shown above it was Little Mosey Mere (now filled in), which was constructed as part of the 1809 enclosure of Bank Pasture. (From Sale Cat. 1891.)



Mosey Mere from a glass slide ‘done by a lady in Bradwell in 1922’. In those days when frozen it was used as a skating rink.



Mosey Mere today is rather silted up

Collecting Water from Springs

The main spring in Winster is one that flows constantly at Shothouse in the southern tip of the parish. Water emerges from a hillside because of the occurrence of a layer of basalt. In times of drought water was collected in buckets and carried back to the village on yokes.

It has for many years been conveniently projected by a fixed spout (‘Shothouse Spout’), and farmers still drive their wagons underneath to collect water in churns and other containers.



Shothouse Spout c.1934, with Eric Roper (in cap)



Shothouse Spout c.1936. Herbert Boam with pony and trap filling churns with his son Walter (who, aged about 10, lost an eye after being butted by a goat on Headlands Field).



Shothouse Spout today

There was another well at Brimsbury on the B5056 in the north of the parish. Until 1999 it was marked by a large stone trough at the roadside.

This is said to have been set up by the owners of nearby Stanton Hall as a horse trough on the turnpike road that became the B5056. The inscriptions were inlaid in lead ornamented by equal-armed crosses: on the front 'Brimsbury Well A.D. 1826'; on the north side 'Bakewell 4½ miles' and on the south side 'Winstre 1½ mile'.



Brimsbury Well. This was stolen in 1999 and recovered three years later, as described in this newspaper article…

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4 April 2002

News

Stolen well found after three years

BIRCHOVER'S missing Brimsburu Well is to be returned to the villagers three years after being stolen.

It is now the property of Derbyshire County Council as a result of a civil case on September 20 last year brought by the council to establish right of ownership.

The court ruled that the county council was the rightful owner and the well was recovered from a stone collector in the south of the county who had purchased it from travellers.

The county council have agreed to give it to Birchover Parish Council for its restoration and re-siting as a memorial for the Queen's Golden Jubilee.

Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, Walter Burrows said: "We have to welcome that it has been recovered and eventually it will be returned to where it should be.

"It's not just any well, it's part of the highway construction and the fact that it is recovered for the people of Birchover, restores the natural heritage of the village."

By Moira Browne

Chairman of Birchover Parish Council, William Elliot said: "We are delighted as we have tried long and hard to get it returned.

"We are in consultation with the county council and plan to take it to a local mason to be restored.

"We then plan to discuss as a village where to put it as a feature and seek opinions of conservation bodies, such as the Peak Park Authority and Derbyshire County Council who we are very grateful to for its return."

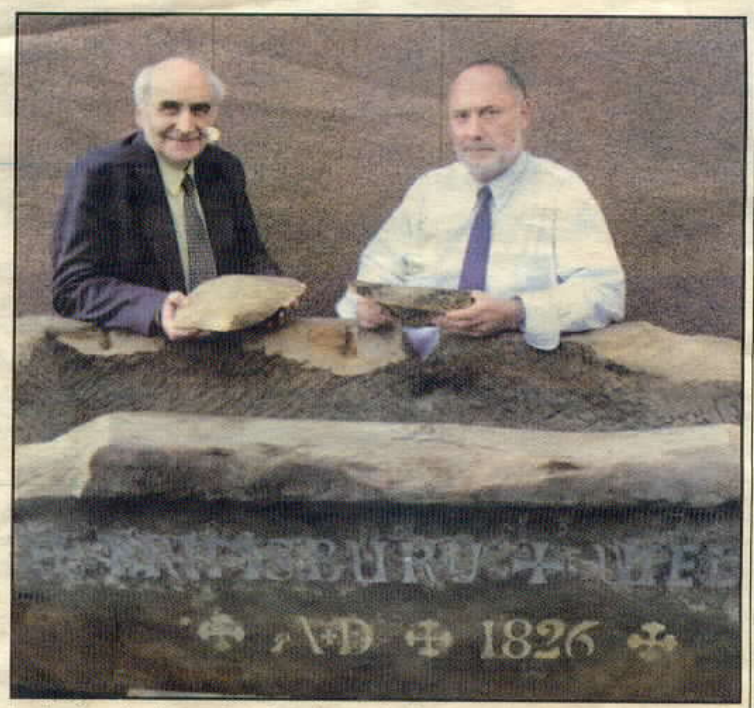
The gritstone trough valued at £2,000 used to be situated on the B5O56 between Eagle Tor, at the bottom of Birchover and Winster, until it was stolen on January 31 1999.

It was originally commissioned and built by Stanton Hall and used to be a horse trough at a road toll.

The thieves took a day and a half to prise the well from its location and in doing so damaged the well as they removed its steel plate protector with a crowbar and aroused suspicion from a passerby who took down their registration number.

By the time the police had traced the van's owners, the well had already been bought from the thieves and its new owner was not prepared to simply hand it over, hence the need for the court case.

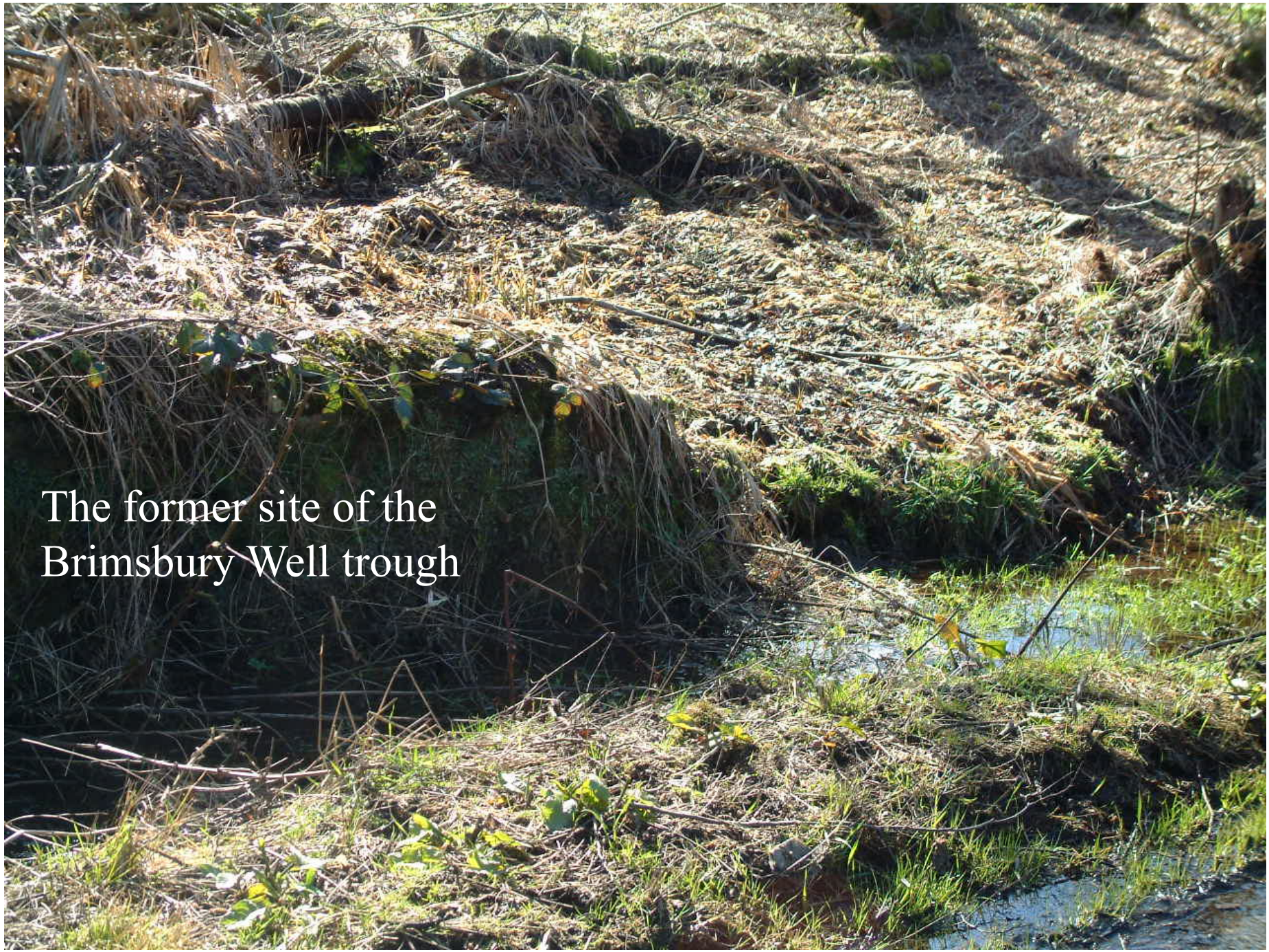
Derbyshire County Council Highways Manager David Carr said: "Just because it is there, people shouldn't be able to take it because it might look nice in their garden; it should be enjoyed by everyone."



● **DARLEY DISCOVERY: Cllr Walter Burrows and David Carr are pictured with the recovered well.**



The former site of the Brimsbury Well trough


The former site of the
Brimsbury Well trough



Brimsbury Well has now been repaired and resited outside the Red Lion at nearby Birchover. Inset lead inscription: + BRIMSBURY + WELL + + A+D + 1826 +



Original north side: + BAKEWELL + + 4½ miles +



Original south side: + WINSTRE + + 1½ mile +

Winster’s first piped water 1871



Llewellynn Jewitt. Winster's first piped water supply was organised by Llewellynn Jewitt, the well-known engraver and antiquary, who rented Winster Hall 1867-80. See W H Goss, *The Life and Death of Llewellynn Jewitt* (London, 1889), 248-9.

Jewitt formed a committee of influential people and raised subscriptions to have water piped from the Stanton Estate above neighbouring Birchover through 3-inch cast-iron pipes to a service reservoir on West Bank, Winster, and from there to 8 public taps around the village. The cost was probably about £1000, and the poorer people of Winster contributed by offering their labour free in such things as laying the pipes. Mrs Brittlebank of Oddo gave £300 on the understanding that water would be piped directly to Oddo and Ivy House, both of which she owned.

The scheme came into operation 21 December 1871, so it was like a Christmas present to the village. The Derbyshire Times 30.12.1871 wrote:

The town was gaily decorated... Flags waved from every house and garlands were suspended at different intervals along the streets. The bells of the Parish Church rang out a merry peal. The Church was beautifully decorated... and the village choir mustered in strong force. At 12.30 a service was conducted... The company then walked in procession to the first tap, which, like the others, was beautifully decorated with evergreens, etc, and here Lord George Cavendish pressed the spring tap and allowed the water to stream away for a short time, after which he declared it free to the people of Winster for ever.



Breech Well, a small reservoir constructed c.1870 to supply Birchover, was the source of the water

The plan was for Winster to share Birchover's reservoir, which was in a field north of Birchover.

A chamber was built next to the well (the 'Spring Chamber'), which was filled by the overflow from the reservoir. Winster paid half the cost of the recent construction of the reservoir, plus the cost of the chamber and of the laying of the mains. A service reservoir was built on common land on West Bank, Winster.

The water was gravity fed from the chamber, which was about 270m/885ft above sea level. Pipes were laid as much as possible along the highways.



Breech Well from the south



Breech Well from the south



Breech Well from the east


Breech Well. Remains of the Spring Chamber

Church Tap. In 1871 this was the rising main for the whole of Winster.





The service reservoir on West Bank, now filled in.



The service reservoir on West Bank, now filled in.



A trough, formerly filled from the reservoir.


The reservoir is now a garden
(behind the hedge on the left)..



Site of one of the 1871 taps, outside the Burton Institute



Site of another of the 1871 taps, outside the Manor



Site of another of the 1871 taps, opposite the Market House

1897
Another Winster scheme
1920
A scheme by Bakewell RDC

(both revisions of the1871scheme)

A Public Health Act, 1875, and various later Acts, imposed a duty on all local Sanitary Authorities to provide every inhabitant with proper water, drainage and sewerage. By 1897 it was obvious that the original water scheme was failing, due to lack of maintenance, and the Rural District Council [RDC] gave Winster a period of time to come up with their own scheme or have one imposed. Several public meetings were called, and Winster decided to continue to manage its own water supplies. Everyone was fearful of a big rise in the rates, so they went for a voluntary scheme, a revision of the old one.

A new Water Company was formed and a legal agreement was made with the Thornhill Estate for the use of Breech Well plus a nearby spring (for an annual rent of £1), and to relay the mains and repair the reservoirs. Also to repair the old pillar taps and provide new ones.

This scheme failed, and people were once again having to buy water brought from Shothouse and Brimsbury for 1½d a bucket. So in 1920 Bakewell RDC instituted a revised scheme using the same source. They made a new agreement with the Thornhill Estate and commissioned an engineer's report, which stated that the previous schemes had failed 'through lack of inspection and proper management'. A new Winster Water Committee was appointed, to help in the organisation locally. This scheme was also fraught with difficulty and eventually had to be abandoned.

For information on the 1871, 1897 and 1920 schemes see DRO D504/41/1/5 (26 documents).

Some relevant extracts from the minutes of Winster Parish Council (DRO D3701). The PC was set up in 1894.

In July 1898 it was thought desirable that there should be an additional service reservoir. The 1871 reservoir seems to have consisted of a single chamber. In December 1921 17/6 was paid for cleaning the 'old reservoir'.

The PC employed a Water Bailiff, Mr Hodgkinson. It's said of him in the Winster Book (*Winster: A Peak District Village Remembers*: Winster Local History Group, 2000, p.96) that he was 'bamboozled and ill-used'. Yet he did the job for at least 16 years for an initial salary of £5 a year (April 1921). He was still in post in October 1937. 'Attention was called [by the Water Bailiff] to the Elton Road tap.' He said that 'the door was repeatedly undone by some unknown person'. In June 1921 the Parish Council decided to put an iron band on the front.

The ‘iron band’ and iron gate on the Church Tap can still be seen



More extracts from the Parish Council Minutes

In June 1922 the Water Bailiff reported a declining water supply and he was instructed to cut off supply from 10am till 4pm. The same economy measures had to be taken for the same hours in October 1949.

In August 1922 the PC discussed the possibility of extending the water main to the school, but it was decided that the water supply was insufficient to make it possible. It still hadn't reached the school by November 1935.

More extracts from the Parish Council Minutes

Feb 1928. The Water Bailiff reported that he had great difficulty in retaining the water level in the service reservoir owing chiefly to leakage at the Market Hall tap. He stated that he had great difficulty in getting the plumber to attend promptly to the burst.

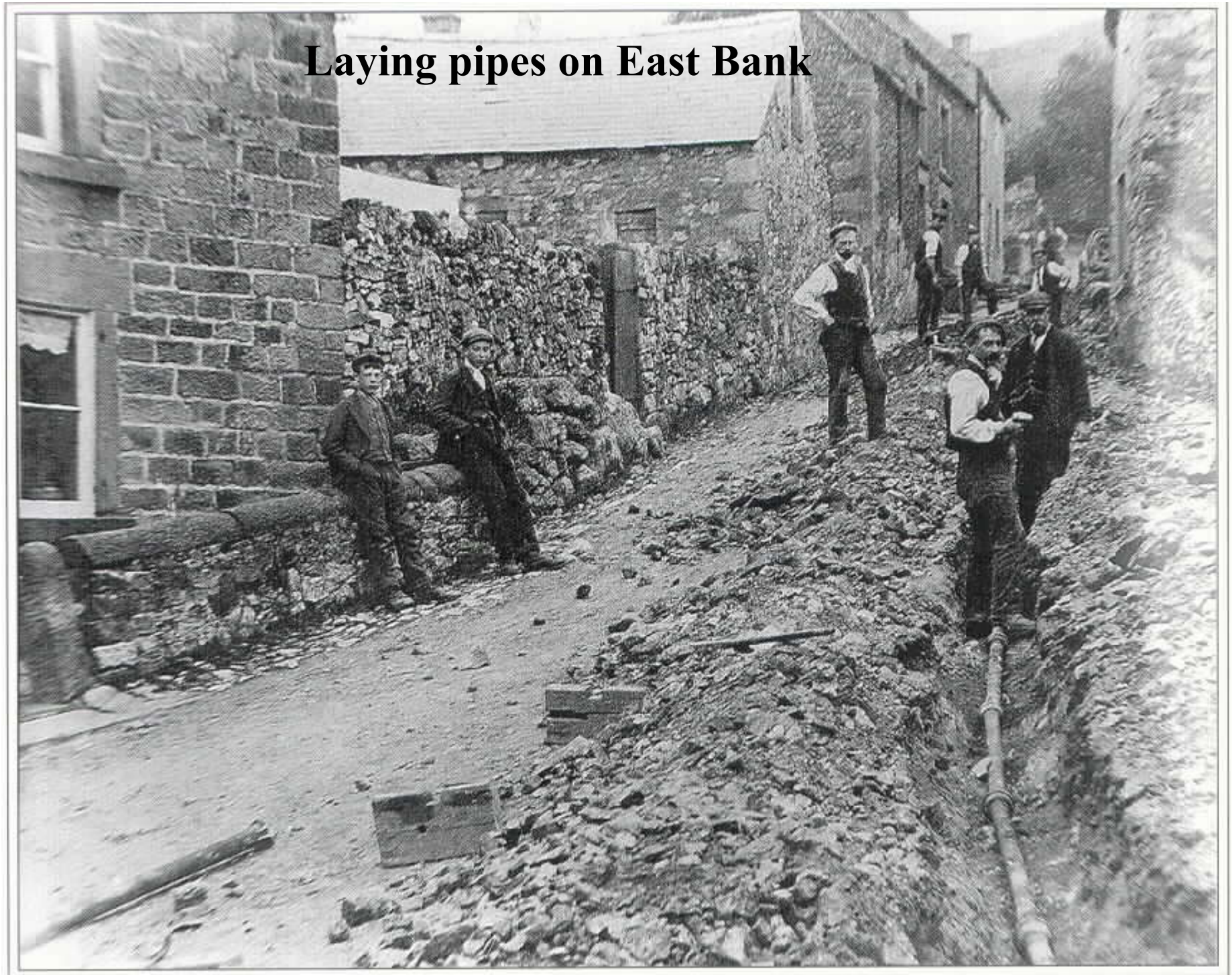
June 1928. It was brought to the notice of the PC that one resident was using a hosepipe from the standpipe on Main Street to convey water to his tank. According to Marjorie Stoker (Winster Book p.96), her husband Dr Stoker was guilty of the same misdemeanour, at 4 or 5 in the morning.

More extracts from the Parish Council Minutes

In August 1928 'The Water Bailiff reported that the tap on East Bank wanted attention, as there was only a quarter of the amount coming through'. It was decided to submit to RDC a suggestion that it be relaid for about 60 to 80 yards.

Possibly this is what is going on in the next slide (though it could be one of several other occasions).

Laying pipes on East Bank



More extracts from the Parish Council Minutes

March 1933. The Water Bailiff reported that the tap at East End had been broken off. The Clerk was instructed ‘to ask the Constable to try to find the culprit’.

And so it went on…

Various Parish Meetings were called to consider how the water supply could be improved. In October 1932 a resolution was passed asking RDC to provide more water for the parish. Carried *nem. con*. In November 1932 RDC replied that 'the whole question of water supply in Winster is under review'. In April 1936 there was reference to 'the new water scheme'.

1937 Bakewell RUDC
Water piped from Shothouse to Winster and Elton

New RDC scheme 1937

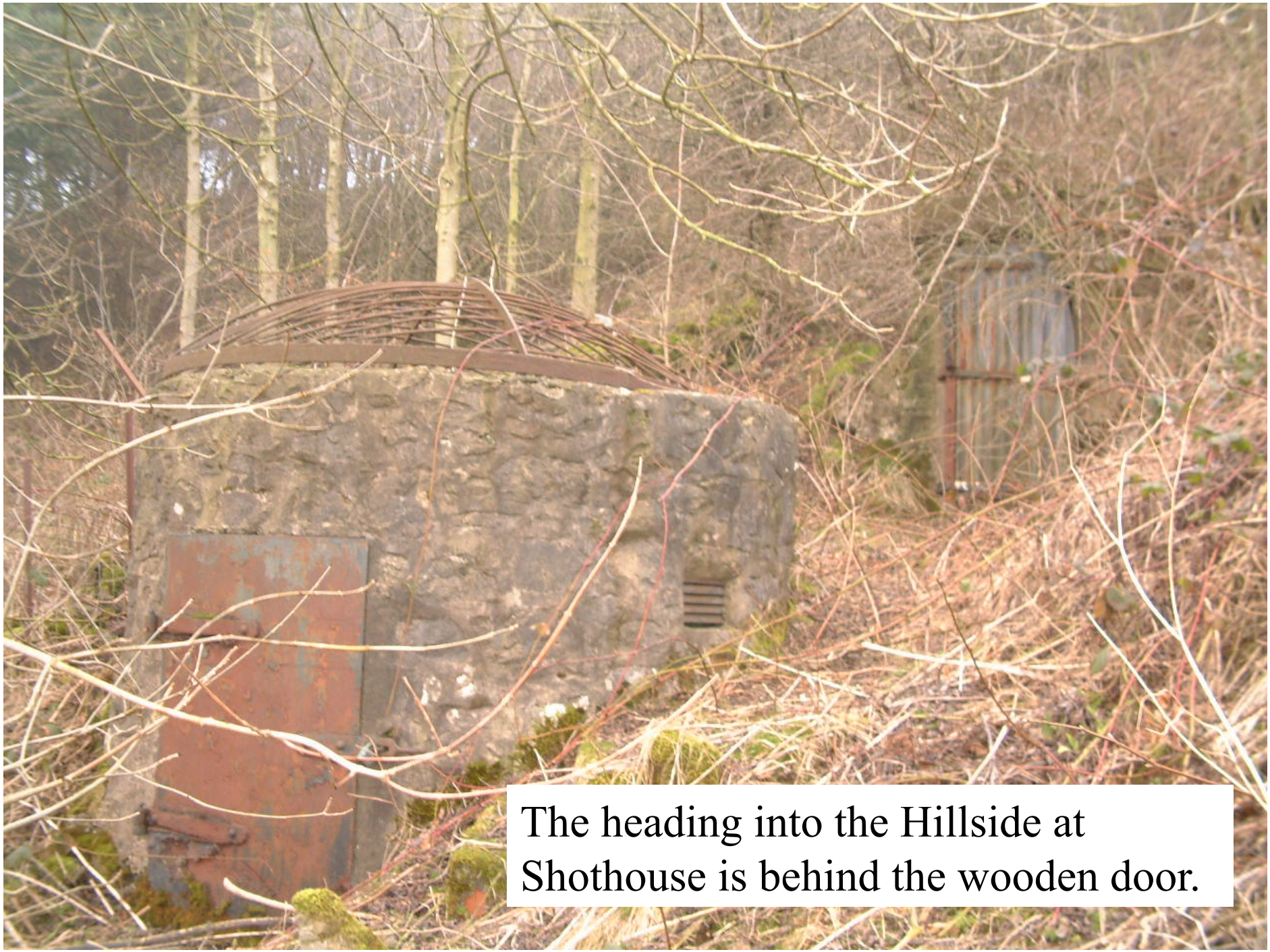
Water from a heading into the hillside at Shothouse, to the south of Winster, was pumped to a 36,000 gallon open service reservoir on Gallimore at 1010 ft above sea level. Water was lifted by a triple-ram pump of 3,300 gallons per hour driven by an oil engine.



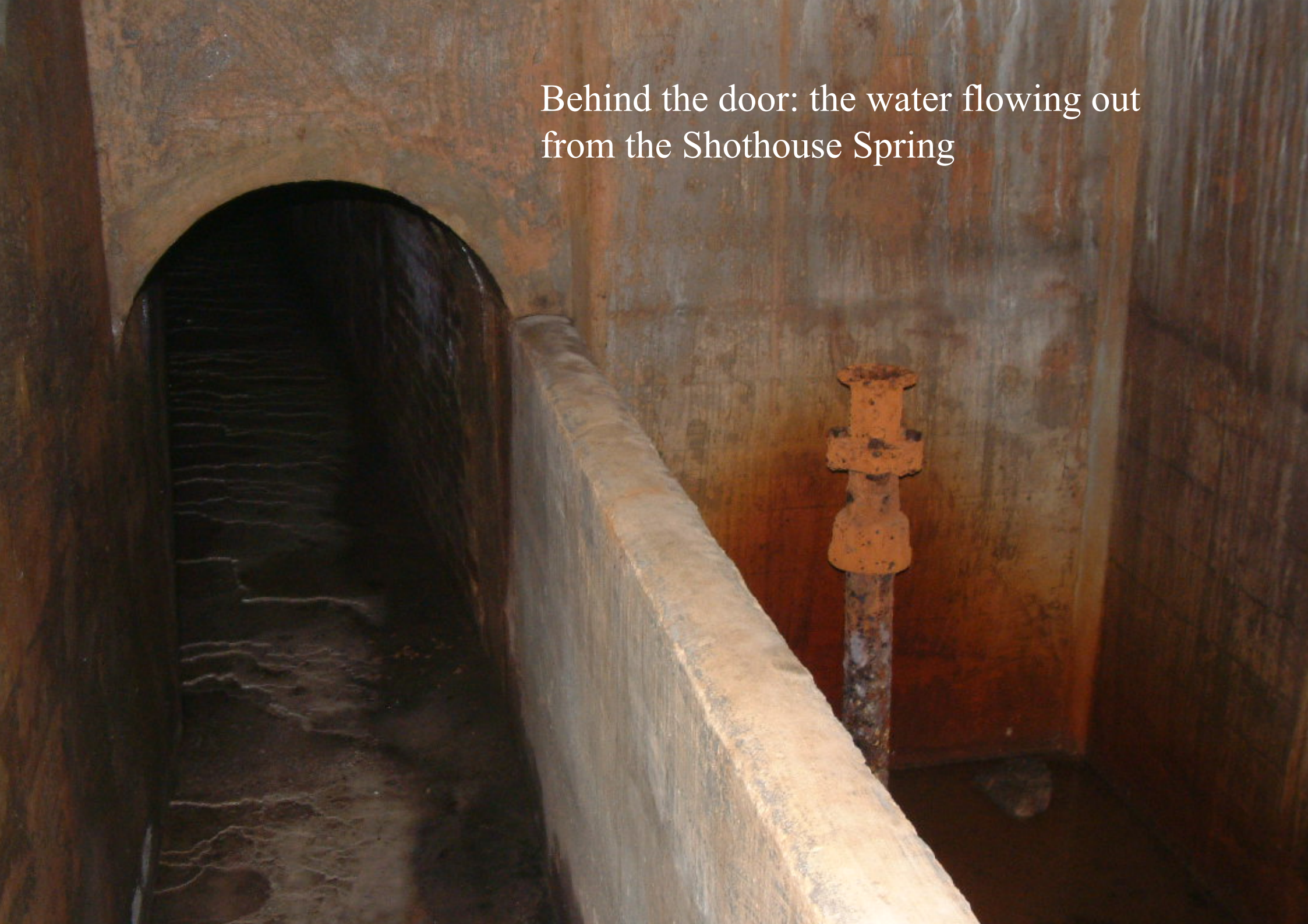
Shothouse Spout



Shothouse Spout



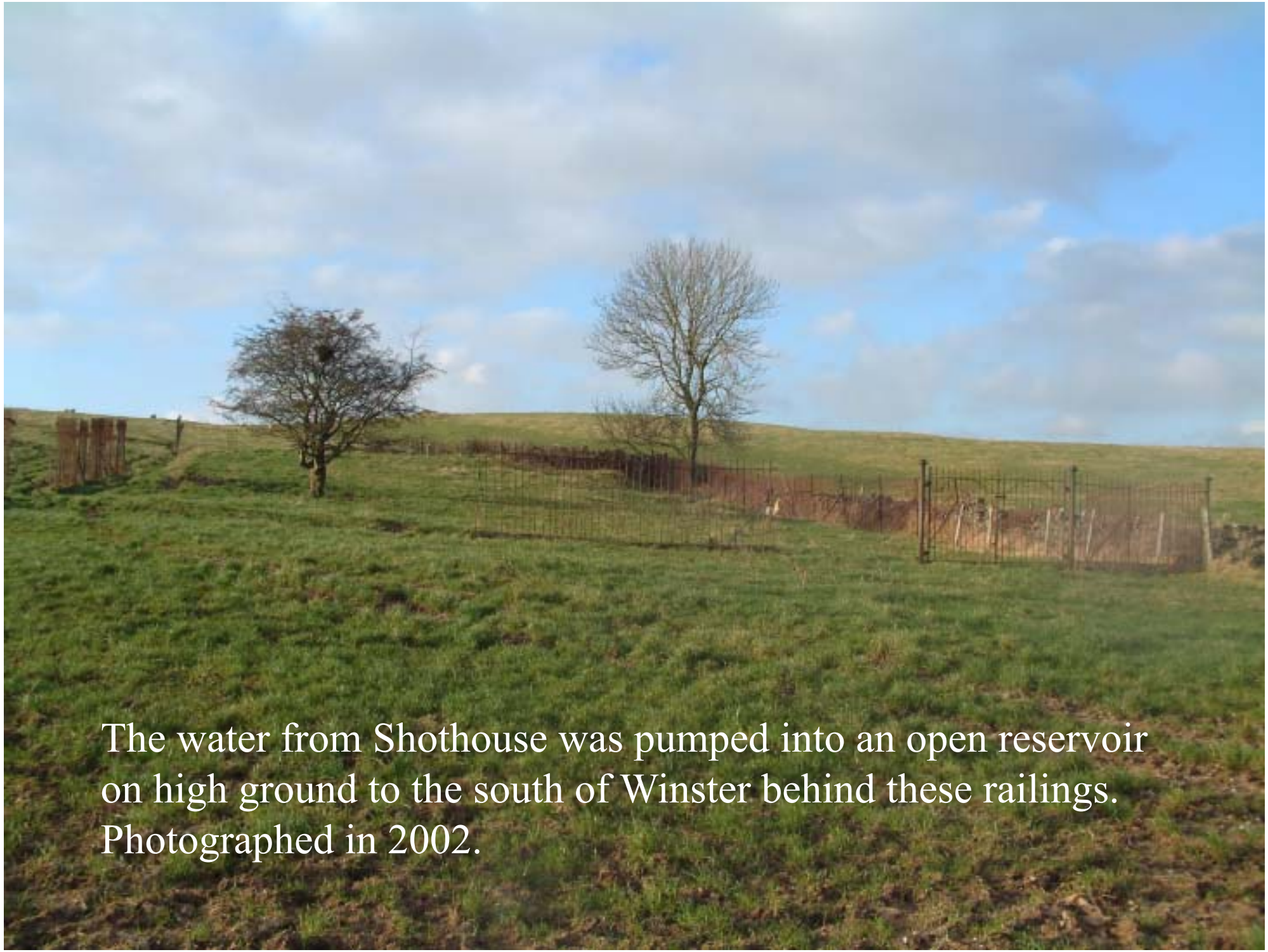
The heading into the Hillside at Shothouse is behind the wooden door.



Behind the door: the water flowing out from the Shothouse Spring


The water flows through this structure…


… where it is aerated in this cascade.



The water from Shothouse was pumped into an open reservoir on high ground to the south of Winster behind these railings. Photographed in 2002.


Site of former reservoir

Incident at Gallimore Reservoir.

An incident that caused a lot of strong feeling in Winster is reported in the Winster Book p.97. It was as a result of this incident that it was recommended in July 1954 that the reservoir be covered:

About 1953 or 1954 - because William was about two or three and Andrew was about six or seven – Eric, my husband, was working in one of the fields near to an open reservoir, which was at the top – on Shothouse there – in one of the fields on the right-hand side. Have you noticed that there's a stile through the fields, opposite the bottom of Bonsall Lane, and the path goes across the fields? Well, when you've gone across three fields the reservoir is there. Mr White was in charge of all this. He turned the water on. He worked for the Water Board, and he lived in the village. Well, Eric was working in the field and William was with him, but Andrew and another boy, who lived just down here, they were playing around this reservoir and they were throwing grass in and bits of things, throwing stones in, but they'd also found an oil can, and they threw that in. They weren't there long, because as soon as Eric noticed they were there he said, 'Come on off there', thinking they'd fall in. Later that day a very irate Mr White came down to see me

saying, ‘Your kids have been all over here and they’ve done this and that, and it’s all lying on top o’ water, so it’ll have to be drained’. So I said, ‘Well, you have to do what you have to do. I don’t know anything about it.’ So I tackled them and said, ‘What were you doing up there?’ And they said, ‘Well, there were some frogs in the water and we were throwing at them.’ It was reported in the paper, and there was a great big piece about vandalism on the water. So, of course, I wrote a letter and I said that no vandalism was intended at all. There were frogs in the water. So can you imagine all the fuss. The whole thing was drained. Everybody was boiling the water. Anyway, one of the Parish Councillors at that time - it was the late Eric Shimwell - came up to me and said, ‘Don’t worry about it, Margaret. The rubbish that came out of that reservoir - old bicycles and you name it - it was all in the bottom.’ He said it was a good job they did it! [Margaret Tomlinson]



Concrete tanks used to replace former open reservoir



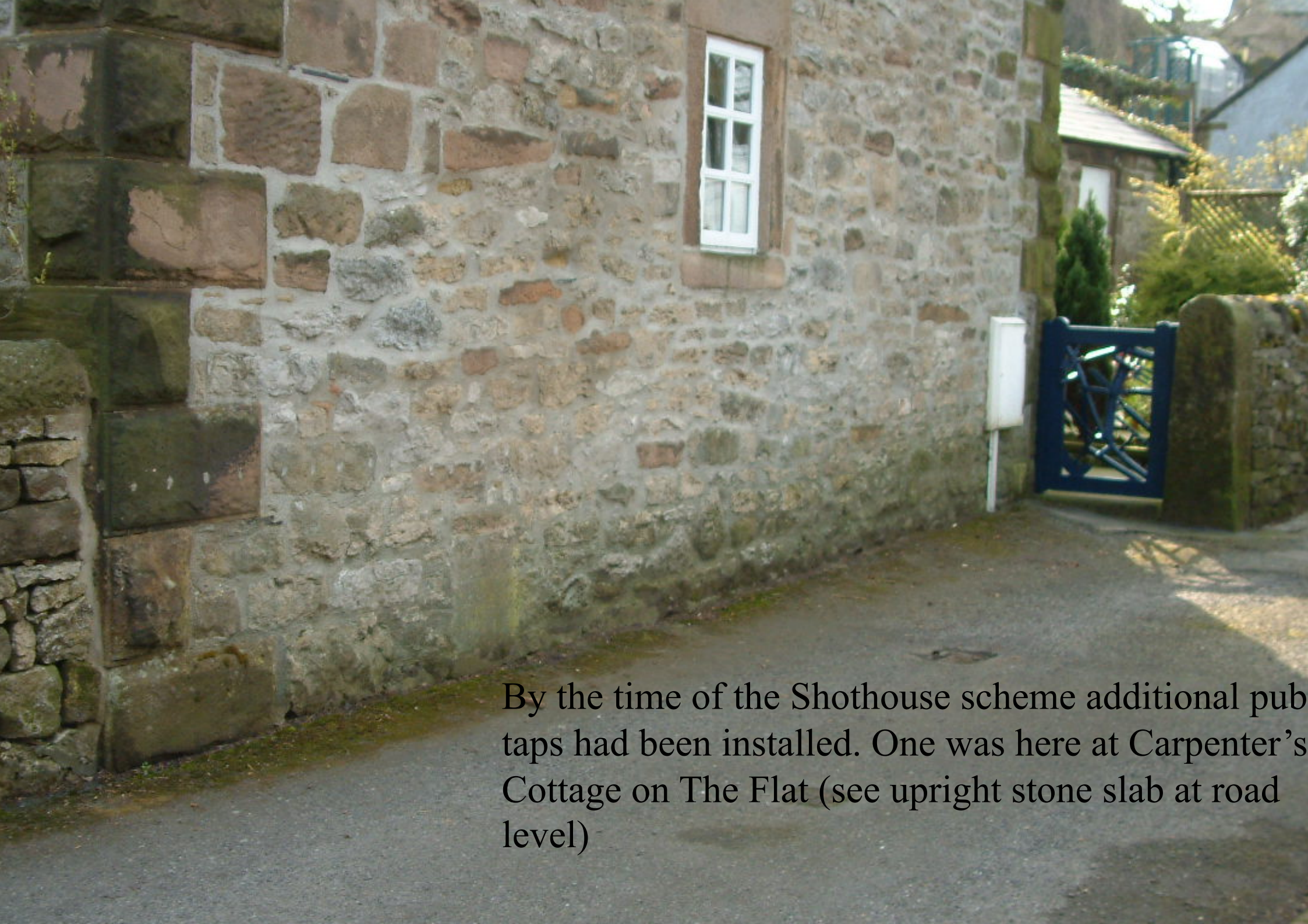
These concrete tanks can still be seen




The railings have been removed since 2002



General view of the reservoir site looking towards the B5056



By the time of the Shothouse scheme additional pub taps had been installed. One was here at Carpenter's Cottage on The Flat (see upright stone slab at road level)

Another was at Honeyspot.

Granny Heathcote (Elizabeth) and Miss Bertha Greatorex at the Honeyspot tap



Did the Shothouse scheme solve Winster's water Problem?

No, but it did bring about some changes.

The water suddenly changed from soft to hard, despite being softened by the base-exchange process. There were constant complaints about the hardness.

In June 1939 Dr Fletcher, the village GP, said that there had been reports that the Gallimore reservoir had 'scummed over'.

In October 1944 there was a complaint by W Slack that the stand tap on East Bank 'takes 25 minutes to fill 2 pails of water'.

The old service reservoir on West Bank continued in use, but there were constant references to the poor state of the roof and walls and the danger to children. A request was made in January 1948 for the roof to be concreted, but the contractor said it would need about 20 tons of cement and that there was little chance of getting it [due to post-war shortages]. Pre-cast concrete slabs were used instead.

In July 1946 it was reported that 'it was the desire of the RDC to see every household connected with water.' But this was far from a reality.

However some showed more enterprise than others, as shown in this extract from the Winster Book, p.98:

An ultimatum. It was 1946, and I had two children by that time, and I had to fetch the water in buckets from up the Bank, where the trough is. Up West Bank there's a trough in the big wall. Well, there was a stand-tap there, and I had to fetch the water from there in buckets. On wash days Eric used to bring me down a churn full of water. He used to roll it down, a churn full, to wash. I used to take my nappies to the stand-tap and rinse them all under the tap. I had an old mangle, because I had no electricity. Then in 1946 I went home to my mother and I left an ultimatum: 'If you don't put the water on, I'm not coming back.' I didn't mean it, of course, but fortunately Eric's older brother, Reg, worked for the Water Board - East Derwent Valley Water Board in those

days. I must have motivated them, because they dug a trench across the back of the garden and connected it to the water. It was about 1946. I can't be sure, because I never kept a diary. So I had running water. How marvellous it was! Previously to that I had a big metal tank outside the house, which the roof drained into, and nothing else but a brass tap over an old-fashioned sink. Well, that was alright for the rough work, but it wasn't fit, and it had got tiny red worms, which I later discovered was the larvae of the – what do they call those flies that breed in water? - mosquito larvae. We get immune to them, don't we? So it was a big thing to have water laid on. [Margaret Tomlinson]

Despite such initiatives many of the older houses did not have their own piped water even in the 1960s.

The next slide shows a day in 1963 when the the taps froze: George Goodwin (left), Eve Nutt, Wallace Boam, Agnes and Mary Shepherd, Margery Pickles, Eunice Vincent, Dot Walker, Florence Heathcote, Ethel Boam, with children Kevin Nutt and David Pickles.



When the taps froze in 1963

But the days of the Shothouse scheme were numbered. Although people think of this spring as a constant and unchanging source, that is not the case.

In October 1949, for instance, there was a sudden, unexplained drop, when it was reported that the yield at Shothouse had gone down 35,500 gallons in a fortnight.

Despite this, RDC decided in 1953 to pipe water from Shothouse over to Birchover, which seemed a bit like carrying coals to Newcastle and got the villagers of Winster into a state of great indignation.

The next stage marked the installation of the water scheme that is used today.

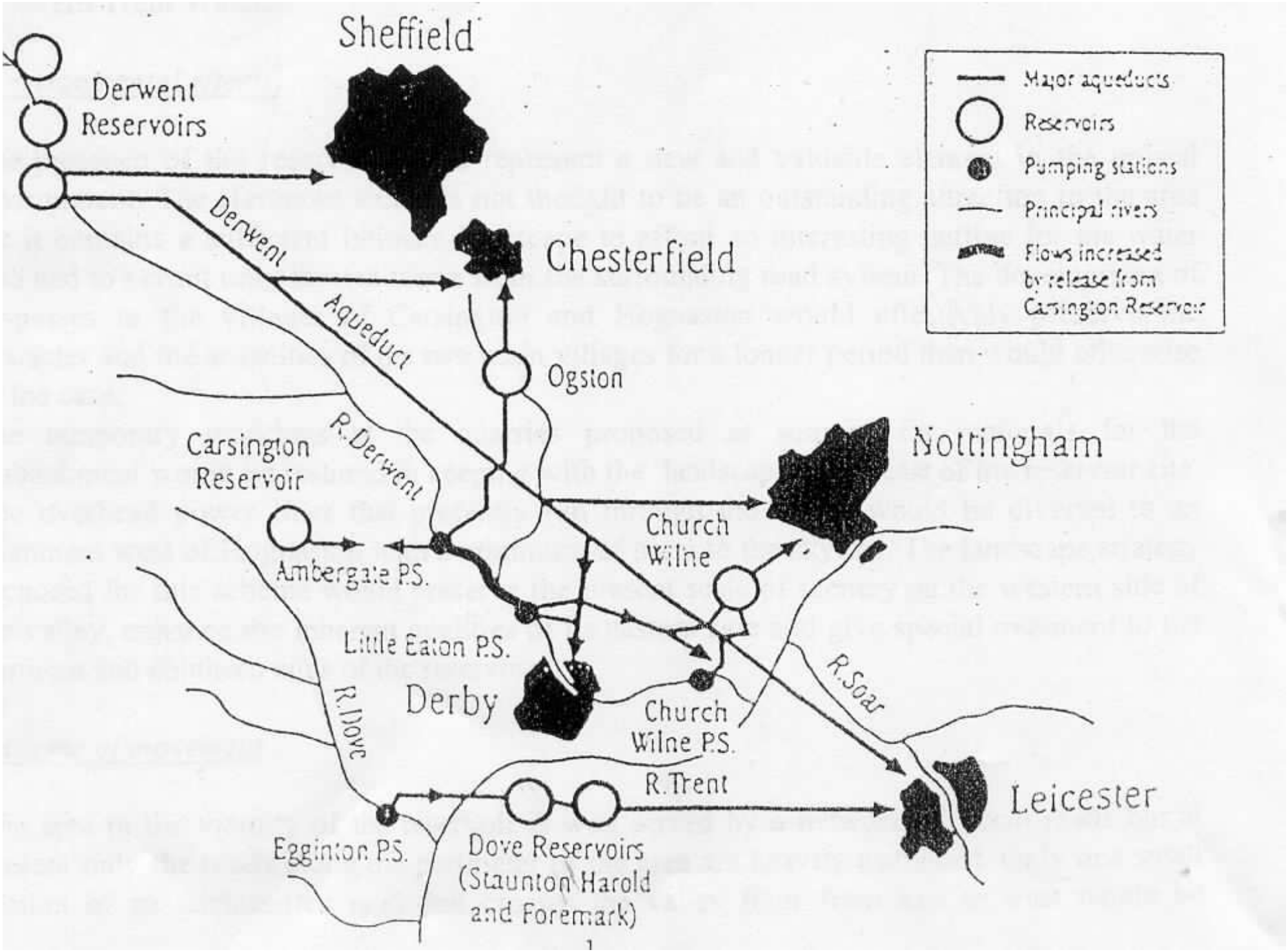
There are no references in the PC minutes as to exactly when the change took place, and it seems to have been a staged changeover. As early as February 1956 the RDC reported that Winster, Elton and Birchover were soon to be supplied from Middleton Top, which is where the present-day service reservoir is still situated.

Most of the references in the PC minutes are to problems, so the lack of reference may mean that the latest scheme worked well. One present-day resident remembers that in the early 1970s the water suddenly changed from hard back to soft.

1970s
Water from the upper Derwent Valley to service reservoir at Middleton Top

From the 1970s the major cities, towns and villages of the East Midlands have been supplied from large reservoirs (Derwent, Howden and Ladybower) in the Upper Derwent Valley on the outskirts of Sheffield, as shown in the following diagram.

This is where Winster now gets its tapwater from.


Sheffield
Derwent Reservoirs
Derwent
Aqueduct
Chesterfield
Ogston
R. Derwent
Carsington Reservoir
Ambergate P.S.
Nottingham
Church Wilne
Little Eaton P.S.
Derby
R. Dove
R. Soar
Church Wilne P.S.
R. Trent
Leicester
Egginton P.S.
Dove Reservoirs (Staunton Harold and Foremark)
Major aqueducts
Reservoirs
Pumping stations
Principal rivers
Flows increased by release from Carsington Reservoir

Sewerage

1899
Bakewell RDC
Winster Sewerage Scheme

A picture of the old, inadequate sewerage system endured in many towns and villages is drawn in the Winster Parish Magazine Jan 1896:

‘Antiquated and obsolete common sewers, built with un-mortared rubblestone or other material. Filthy and ill-constructed house drains in direct communication with these common sewers. And slop-stone waste pipes running immediately into these house drains, thus providing a channel or way through which sewer gasses, and the dangerous offgivings of decomposing matter in the sewers and drains, find their way into the dwelling. Ash-pits, middens and privies within a few feet of the house, and often built upon a higher

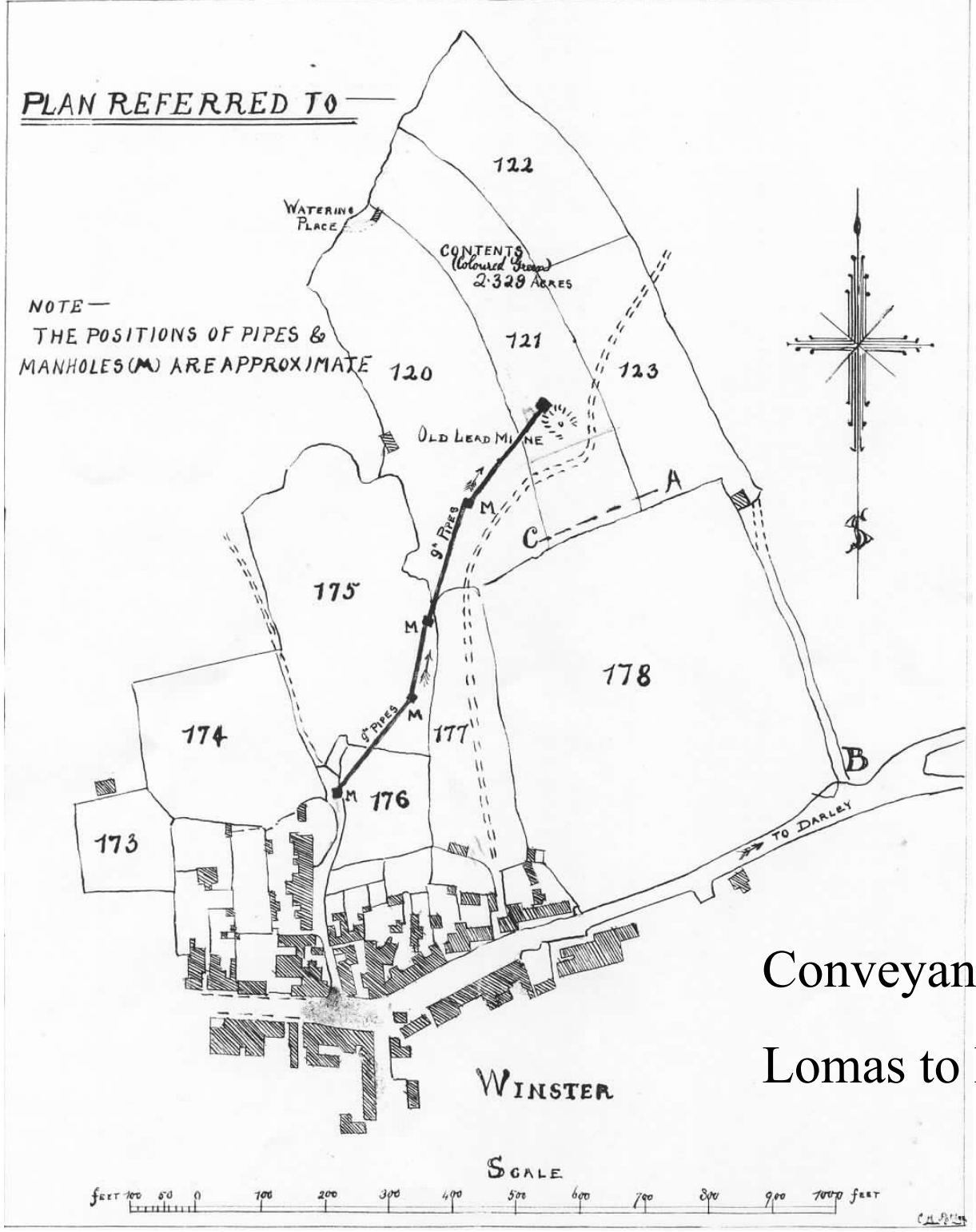
level than the house, thus draining into their foundations. Cesspools of filthy matter only occasionally emptied. Pig-sties, cow-houses and stables immediately attached to cottages. Ill-ventilated and damp buildings. All these and similar evils abound unchecked.’

Because of a succession on Public Health Acts in the late 19th century, the local authority decided to act, and a new scheme was initiated in 1899 by Bakewell RDC, despite fears in Winster about the cost - which amounted to nearly £3,000 and resulted in a rates rise which the people of Winster found to be 'a grievous burden'.

A field was purchased by the RDC on the lower, north side of Winster (no. 121 on the following plan) and a village sewage treatment plant was built. This lasted until 1971, when it was replaced by a new plant at Picory Corner (near Haddon).

The land is at the back of gardens on what is now Leacroft Road. The Leacroft estate was built in phases from 1949 on the big field numbered 178 on the plan.

When the sewage-plant land was sold the RDC smashed up the masonry and ironwork, and the remains are still visible. The initial purchaser was John Millward, who planted a copse of trees where the buildings once stood.



Conveyance 1899

Lomas to BRDC



land (now wooded) where the sewage plant stood



e field has exceptionally well-made perimeter walls and a retains a squeeze stile that
ved the former access footpath.



Remains of the sewage plant



Remains of the sewage plant



Remains of the sewage plant



Remains of the sewage plant



Remains of the sewage plant



ough brook runs at
e bottom of the field

Postscript:

One of the last houses to have piped water was Bonsall Lane Farm in the early 1990s (the house is in Bonsall Parish but the pumping station is in Winster). However, Sam Raines, the occupant at the time, preferred to keep using his water collection tank.



mping station at
lower end of
nsall Lane serving
nsall Lane Farm

Sam Raines (right) and Bert Boam outside Bonsall Lane Farm in 2001





d finally…

e of the benefits of researching Winster Water is that you can get your car washed in the process.

The End