

1208 Steam engine at Hanford. Undated.



A real piece of agrarian history. To the left are three young girls their dresses covered by white smocks. Two are holding hula hoops. To the right are five agricultural labourers wearing a variety of hats and waistcoats. The star of the picture is a steam powered traction engine. It's tall chimney can be seen to be hinged at it's base to allow passage under low bridges and the driver and fireman stand behind the firebox. It is pulling a large canvas covered trailer and behind that a smaller trailer. These are almost certainly a threshing machine. Few of the bridges in the area could cope with the weight of these machines and signs had to be attached to them warning drivers of these engines not to cross them. In 1895 Child Okeford Parish Council requested the County council to upgrade Hayward bridge and widen Hayward lane to accommodate them. The council duly obliged in 1903.

Owner: not recorded.

0200 A Charabanc



A fascinating photograph although we have no information about it other than it is in the collection of a villager and is presumed to be an outing of villagers. Where the men are is not known although at the very top two railway rails can be seen. The arrangement of the sleepers indicates this is a double track railway. There is a lamp post on the right. It is possible that the men are at Shillingstone station where there was a passing loop. It is the oldest of the Char- a- banc, literally 'carriage with benches', in the collection. It is a 'soft top', the complex hood having been folded down at the back. It must be of early manufacture as the wheels have solid tyres. On the front of the vehicle are three large carbide lamps. On the running board is the chemical tank. This contained calcium carbide onto which was dripped water. The chemical reaction produced acetylene gas which, once lit, burnt very brightly and generated considerable heat. Carbide lamps were even used on bicycles.

This vehicle has a substantial chassis the front ends of which can be seen with two large towing hooks attached. The starting handle hangs free, probably because it was permanently attached. A large hand powered horn is attached to what today would be called the drivers side except on this machine the steering wheel is placed centrally ; the driver has passengers on both sides. The manufacturers emblem is painted on the side panel but who made it has not been identified. Below the doors is a painted notice SPEED 12 MPH.

Although there are no shadows it is a fine warm day, one man has draped his overcoat over the door. In any case if it were to rain a 'tent' covering the coach can be put up. The supports for this are folded down at the back but can be slid along a rail running along it's side.

Sixteen men [including driver] sit four abreast in the coach. They all wear suits and a range of trilby, peaked and homburg hats. Their dress is typical of the times when no man would be seen in public without a jacket and hat , even on the beach ! One man has risked the world without a hat. He sits at the steering wheel and his hatless state may seem a sensible precaution as he has flapped up the windscreen in front of him. He is not the official driver however, who sits on the right of the coach, smartly turned out in a long white coat and peaked cap.

The men are clearly enjoying themselves as in the second row of passengers one man plays a trumpet and another a squeeze box. Child Okeford had a long history of bands of various types and it may be one of their outings.

Owner: John Davies

0201 An outing to somewhere or other



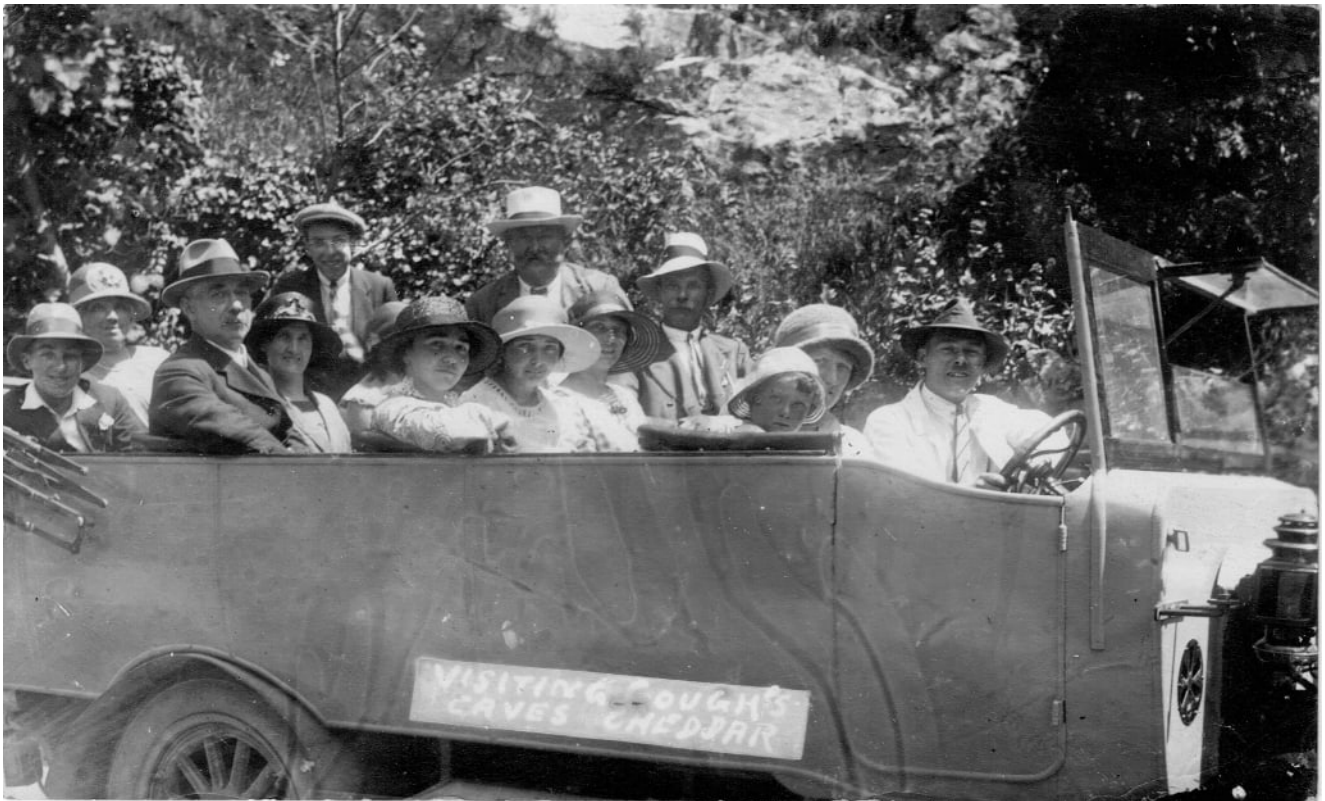
The setting is not known but it is not Child Okeford. Again the photograph is in the possession of a villager and it is believed to be an outing of villagers. The date is probably the 1930's. The picture is of an open top 'charabanc' provided by Mr Charles Fripp of Okeford Fitzpaine who as well as being 'cycle agent and cars for hire' was also the publican at the Royal Oak. The picture shows a group of five women [one with a baby] and eight men. All, including the baby are looking very seriously at the photographer. All, except the baby, are wearing hats.

The driver of the charabanc is wearing a dark suit with bow tie and white hat. In the background on the right a man watches the group. His 'uniform' is very similar to the driver of this charabanc and he may have been a driver too as I have seen a picture where this man is driving a group of people from Blandford on an outing. In fact the whole thing may be a bit of a 'bus man's holiday' for the man with his arm over the side of the vehicle appears in picture 0204 where he is the driver .

As opposed to the vehicle above this machine has pneumatic tyres although the steering wheel is still in the centre of the vehicle. To get thirteen people plus a baby into such a machine cannot have been easy. Following the convention of sailors this is the 'starboard' side of the machine and it will be seen that there is only one access door at the front. Now look again at the machine in the previous picture and it will be seen that the doors on it are on the 'port' side. Note the very necessary tool box on the running board.

Owner : John Davies

0202 A visit to Gough's Caves Cheddar



This is the same vehicle, or at least the same model vehicle as in the picture above. There is a label 'VISITING GOUGH'S CAVES CHEDDAR' on the side and it is not clear if this has been added to the picture or to the machine itself. The party consists of eight women, six men and one small child. All are wearing a variety of hats and one of the men sports a fine pair of walrus mustachio's. This photo at least can be connected directly with the village as some of the passengers have been identified as Bill Pride, Mrs B Pride, 'Bogey' Woolfrey and to his right, John Turner the village butcher, and Alec Cross a local farmer. The ladies are unknown.

The original photo has a note attached 'Driver Mr W Bown' and he can be seen behind the wheel. He is wearing a white coat but in a daring departure from normal he is wearing a homburg hat. Despite my best endeavours I have not been able to find out anything more about him.

Note the large vent next to the lamp at the front of the vehicle. In bad weather air conditioning for the vehicle is provided by opening the vent and flapping up part of the windscreen. Comfort in fine weather is further enhanced by the padded arm rests on the side of the body.

Owner: John Davies

0203 Charabanc on another day out.



A third charabanc, probably another of Mr Fripp's machines. The setting is a town but where is not known. Of the sixteen people 'on board' two are infants, three are men and the remainder are women. The lady standing next to the charabanc is probably of the same party and if we include the photographer it means a remarkable eighteen people have been conveyed by it.

Once again all are wearing a fine selection of hats, with the exception of one young woman in the middle. The driver once again has a peaked cap and white coat. He appears to be the same man as one of the passengers in picture 0201 as he has an unusual facial appearance known as maxillary prognathism. The people's faces are a joy to observe with all manner of expressions on them. All, including the infants, focused most intently on the photographer. Behind the driver can be seen Mrs Pride and Mrs Davies.

The coach itself has pneumatic tyres and three doors on at least one side. Health and Safety is now to the fore as, on the wooden running board, slippery no doubt in wet weather, metal 'non slip' plates have been attached. Even with three doors it cannot have been easy to mount as the rearmost door is partly over the wheel arch.

In the background a pub sign can be seen but not its name and on the far right may just be made out the wheel of a horse carriage.

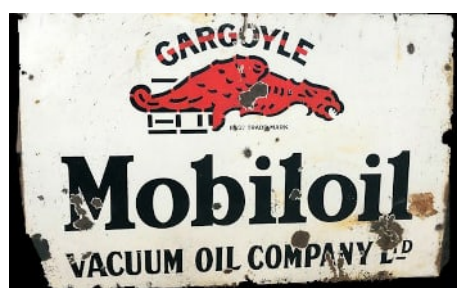
Owner: John Davies

0204 A day out in Weymouth



The setting is Weymouth as a notice advertises that the Borough of Weymouth and Melcombe Regis allows '*Motor coaches or other vehicles may park on this site at a fee of 2/-*'. This appears to be the same vehicle as in the previous picture, at least it has the same non slip running plate on the driver's side and is driven by Mr Bown now turned out in a white coat and white peaked cap. It is parked outside what may be the Pavilion Theatre which is advertising '*The Thrilling Play 'Tiger...'*' [the rest is obscured]. The play was to take place on Monday July 12th and it may be that the twelve occupants of five men, six women and one boy are going to see it. Another poster has been pasted over but on it can be seen the date 1926. In this year the 12th of July fell on a Monday so we can date the picture to that year.

In the background another man in some form of civil uniform, unrelated to the group, watches the photographer from another vehicle. On the walls of the building are signs for PRATTS motor oil and Mobiloil vacuum [the rest is obscured]. On this sign is a rather peculiar drawing which turns out to be the logo of the 'Mobiloil Gargoyle' company. The term 'Vacuum' here has no particular relevance other than it was the name the inventors of the oil chose for their company.



Owner: John Davies

0206 A man, two women, a girl and a car.



A man, two women and a girl, doll in hand, stand in front of a car. The setting, date and model of the car are unknown although it is evidently a hard top machine. The photograph is owned by John Davies and so it is assumed that the people shown are relatives of his.

Owner: John Davies

0208 A car at Gold Hill !



The driver is a young woman and we can see the registration number PR 1217. This indicates that the vehicle was registered in Dorset between January 1923 and December 1927. The impressive suspension springs can be seen as is an equally impressive array of lamps and a massive wing mirror on the driver's side. For the younger generation who may not be familiar with such things, the car sports a handle at the front which had to be 'swung', at great risk to thumbs and fingers, by the driver in order to start the car. Electric light have now replaced carbide lamps.

The setting appears to be Gold Hill. The large tree on the right of the picture, the roof line of no 5 Gold Hill and the stones on the left show the car to be parked on the corner with Net Mead lane.

Owner: John Davies

0209 The same car.



This is the same car as in the previous picture but this time parked next to a van. The tree and the pole seen in the photograph above show that it is in the same place but at a slightly different angle. This appears to have been taken at Gold Hill with the van and car in Net Mead Lane. This time in the passenger seat is a different young lady and her baby. On the driver side below the windscreen appears to be the barrel of a rocket launcher but which is most likely the horn. If this is the case then the car is well provided for as there is another horn attached to battery box on the running board on the passengers side.

Note the single, rather flimsy windscreen wiper on the right. It would hardly cope with today's climate.

Owner: John Davies