

To the Parish Council for the Parish of Bampton, Oxon.

Gentlemen,

We the undersigned, being the ratepayers of the above Parish, protest against the proposal to dig a well in the Market Place at Bampton.

1. We consider that it would not improve the appearance of the Market Place, and we deny that there is any such demand for the expenditure as would justify the P.C. in incurring it.
2. We consider also, That if regarded as a source of water supply for the inhabitants it would only benefit a few surrounding houses at the expense of the general body of ratepayers, while viewed in the light of a protection against fire it would be worse than inadequate, as tending to create a false feeling of security.
3. Lastly we would point to the ruinous rates imposed on a neighbouring town as a result of the meddling with the water supply and drainage system, and we strongly deprecate the P.C. taking any action in the nature of sinking a public well which by lowering the already low summer level of the other wells might involve our Parish in a similar expenditure.

P.Southby
N.D.Hunt
N.R.H.Bullen
W.K.Hampshire
Chas.Winslett
W.T.Mills
John Anger James

F.R. Blackburne
F.J.Staples-Browne
W.G.Lindup
Charles J.Douglas
Wm.Attwood Rigden
G.E.Gerring
John White.

Mr. Carter said the P.C. had thoroughly discussed every point raised in this petition. One of the signatories to the petition proposed at the Council Meeting that a committee should be formed to discuss the matter. That gentleman had always supported the idea, and the proposal was carried on the Council without a dissentient. No protest was made until the Parish Council had passed it, and accepted a contract for the work. He thought such conduct was disgraceful.

The Chairman (Mr. J.Bryan) thought before a contract had been accepted the P.C. ought to have obtained the consent of the R.D.C. The petition was an influential one. Mr. Carter observed that when one man signed others followed as a matter of course. Mr. Macray asked if the

P.C. had power to do that work without calling a Parish Meeting. Mr. Carter thought most certainly that they had that power. He could not see why the well should be unsightly; the objections were absurd.

The Chairman did not think that they were in a position to give the P.C. power to break up their highway.

Mr. Carter said he was doubtful whether the highway belonged to the Council.

The Chairman thought that it was a matter that wanted very careful consideration, and he would suggest that a committee be appointed to report on it.

Mr. Carter agreed with the suggestion .

Messrs Clarke, Clare, Pilkington and Carter were appointed a committee to inspect and report.

1-3.

Parish Council: A special meeting of the P.C. was held on Friday last to receive a protest signed by 12 ratepayers against the sinking of a well in the Market Place. The councillors present were - Messrs Theo Carter (Chair) C. Winlett, J.P. Oates, J.H. Prall, C. Carter, C. Williams and H Smith. The Chairman said that the proposal to dig a well had been before them for about five months and if any parishioners disliked the idea they should have objected before now. The contract for digging the well had now been signed and the Council now had no alternative but to proceed with the work as soon as the consent of the District Council had been obtained respecting the ground. The Chairman addressing a number of the Council present who had signed the protest asked if he had any proposition to make respecting the matter to which the member replied he had not. The general feeling of the Council present being with the Chairman's views, the meeting decided that under the circumstances they could not entertain the protest.

15-3.

The Well Question: Considerable feeling has been aroused in the town by the action of some of the ratepayers in petitioning the R.D.C. against the proposed well in the Market Place. The Parish Council feel aggrieved at the steps that have been taken in the matter and they consider that any objection there was to the idea should have been made to the P.C. at the time the matter was being discussed. Many rumours afloat as to what will eventually be done. One persistent rumour is that the P.C. are going to resign en bloc as a protest against what has been done behind their backs. We also understand that the R.D. Councillors for Bampton will not offer themselves for re-election for the same reason.

22-3.

Editorial: Witney Gazette:

Plucky Bampton Parish Council. Apparently this Body is about to assert the right of Parish Councils to manage their own affairs with out the interference of the District Council. Ever since the establishment of Parish Councils the complaint has been that they have no real powers to do anything. It has been left to Bampton to decide otherwise and they are going to sink a well in the street for which the D.C. refused to give their consent. It will be very interesting to see how this works out.

22-3.

Witney R.D.C. Surveyor's Report:

Mr. Eeles has now altered the pavement in front of his shop in Market Square.

The Well Question: Mr. W.H. Clarke stated that the Committee appointed to consider the matter met on February 28th and again on March 12th. The committee were not agreed on the matter. Dr. Pilkington and himself were of the opinion that permission to dig the well should not be granted. The question as to whether the site of the proposed well belonged to the Council was discussed, but the Committee did not agree on the matter.

Mr. Carter asked the Surveyor if he had ever repaired that part of the road where the well was going to be dug.

The Surveyor said he had never done so.

Mr. Clarke said he thought it was a great pity that a difference of opinion had occurred on the matter in Bampton. The Committee had met twice in order to come to some agreement but failed to do so.

Mr. Carter said the R.D.C. had nothing to do with the matter. The site of the well belonged to the P.C. who were unanimously in favour of digging the well.

Mr. Pilkington said that when the Committee first met the question appeared to be whether the well was necessary or not. Mr. Clarke and himself came to the decision that it was not necessary. Then on a second occasion the question arose as to whether the site of the well belonged to the P.C. On that point they could not agree and there was the end of the matter.

The Chairman said the Committee were unanimous as to whether the well should be dug or not. On the question as to whether the site belonged to the Council (P.C.) three were of the opinion that it did not belong to the Council and one thought it did belong to them. Mr. Abraham asked what was the feeling in the town on the matter.

Chairman: Very strongly against it. We have a petition against it.

the large congregation, which numbered about 500 were seated, the choir chanted the 39th Psalm. The Vicar then read the lesson appointed. Then followed the hymn 'Rock of Ages'. The Vicar then entered the pulpit and gave an eloquent address on the uncertainty of life. After the address the body was taken to the cemetery, again led by the band playing portions of the Dead March; the crowd here was so great that the police officer on duty had as much as he could do to keep the line of the procession from being broken. At the grave everyone uncovered. After the body had been committed to the earth, the choir assisted by many friends sang accompanied by the band the hymn 'For Ever with the Lord'. The last rite being ended the solemn procession slowly wended its way from the cemetery.

Witney R.D.C.: Proposed well at Bampton.

Mr. T. Carter on behalf of the Bampton P.C. applied for permission to sink a well in the immediate neighbourhood of the Town Hall between the main road and the highway. It was a piece of waste ground and he believed it did not belong to the highway authority, but as a matter of courtesy the P.C. decided to ask the R.D.C. for permission to dig the well.

The Clerk read a letter he had received with regard to the matter:-

Dear Sir,

Bampton R.S.O.
Oxfordshire,
Feb: 1902.

I understand that the question of digging a large well in the Market Place at Bampton is to be considered at your meeting tomorrow. As many of the chief ratepayers are of the opinion that not only is it unnecessary, but also likely to be a danger and a nuisance, they have sent a protest to the P.C. about it. I therefore trust that the District Council will not agree to a well being dug without a full local inquiry and investigation into the matter.

Yours truly,

Philip Southby.

The petition referred to above was read as follows:-

Mr. Carter: I do not agree that the town is against it. As to the petition, it was placed in the Church and signed after the service. We are going to dig the well and that is the end of the matter. You can do what you like.

Work actually started on the well, but in the P.C. Minutes of _____ it was stated that instructions had been given for the digging to cease. 'Squire' Southby had his way!