

This season's meetings come to an end with the Annual General Meeting on the 8th May, in Milton Village Hall followed by a talk on The Athenian Trireme by Tom Hassall.

A few of the mugs which depict scenes of Milton and Shipton, as mentioned in the last issue of this magazine, are still available. (Please contact Jack Chapman on 830498).



Our Victorian Entertainers.

## ST. MICHAEL'S, MILTON ROAD, SHIPTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD

In the early 1880s, St. Michael's School transferred from the house below the Crown to the newly constructed building in Milton Lane (now road). Here, it functioned as St. Michael's College for Young Ladies until almost the end of the century.

Acquired by the Waifs and Strays Society in 1899, it took in the first of its new residents in 1900 - twentytwo girls 'rescued from immoral surroundings'. Numbers increased to forty but in the 1920s the type of occupant changed to girls

who were orphans or from motherless homes. In 1931 boys were admitted from similar backgrounds, but by 1933 the Waifs and Strays were preparing to close St. Michael's as a Home.

In that year it was put forward that the building should become a Public Elementary (C. of E.) School for 120 day pupils from the area. This proposal did not materialise. The building was put up for sale at £1,200, but there do not appear to have been any takers, and the building remained unoccupied until 1939 when it was used by Basque boys, refugees from the Spanish Civil War.

Their stay was short lived as the military requisitioned the building at the outbreak of war for the billeting of troops, both British and Americans (mainly black) for the duration of the war. During the war, in 1941, the late Dr. Gordon Scott published his plans for the conversion of St.

Michael's into a Wychwood Social Centre at the end of the war. Funds for this purpose were raised by local organisations, but with the coming of peace, came the demise of the scheme.

In the late 40s, St. Michael's was bought by the firm of Alfred Meecham, who used the building as a corn chandlery, mill and warehouse. The local St. John Ambulance Division also used some of the

outbuildings for their meetings and the garaging of their ambulance before their present Headquarters was erected.

Alfred Meecham ceased trading in the mid 1960s, and St. Michael's was bought by Mr. Bernie Hill who ran it as a 'Junk Shop' selling antiques and memorabilia, and became a collectors' haven. Mr. and Mrs. Lawson came in the 1980s to run it as a Junk Shop and Bed and Breakfast accommodation, but by 1988 it was on the market again.

Various planning applications were submitted for the future use of the building, but they all came to nought and the building was demolished in 1989 to make way for the erection of eleven houses.

J.R.



One of the last views taken in 1989