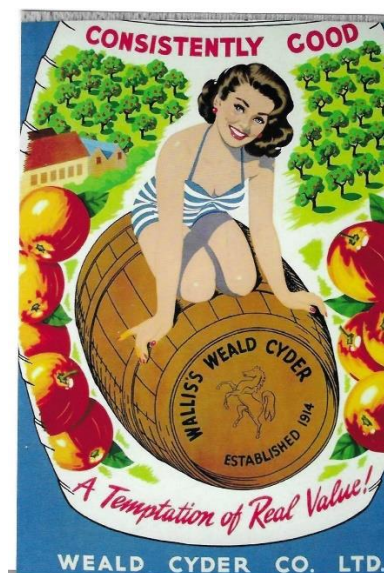
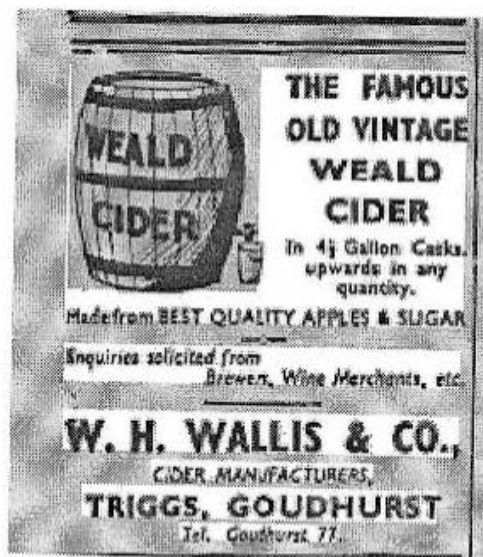


## VILLAGE ECHOES

### The Weald Cyder Company

Following the sad demise of the Cellar Head Brewing Company & Tap Room after seven years of hard work we can look back at another brewing venture in Goudhurst that ended badly. The Weald Cyder Company of Goudhurst sometimes known as The Famous Old Vintage Weald Cider had a disastrous end by going up in flames.

The Company was established in 1914 as Wallis's Vintage Cyder. Wallis was William Henry Wallis of Triggs Farmhouse where he lived in 1935 and 1937 according to the Goudhurst Jubilee & Coronation books. A series of advertisements appeared in the Kent & Sussex Courier in the 1930s declaring that the cider was made from the best quality apples and sugar. The minimum quantity was a 4½ gallon cask and there were 'special terms' for large quantities of at least 6 gallons in May 1937. Enquiries were answered on telephone number Goudhurst 77.



It isn't known when William arrived in Goudhurst, he doesn't feature in the 1901 or 1911 census at Triggs. However, he seemed to have held some status in the Community as he was on the Parish Council in 1935 and Chairman in 1938 thereby responsible for greeting and escorting the Duke of Kent in Goudhurst in June that year. The main reason for the royal visit was to inspect the Infant Welfare Centre that was held upstairs in the Goudhurst Club, followed by a tour of an exhibition mounted in the Village Hall by the History Society. In the 1939 pre-war register he is described as a 74 year old farmer, a widower and a special constable. His wife Edith had died in 1916, aged 29, and is buried in Goudhurst.

We don't know exactly when the fire happened at the Company but in 1957 he was named in a joint licensing application to Cranbrook Justices with Bob Luck, the famous local cider producer. A search for a newspaper article about the fire was surprisingly unsuccessful. The only clue to the exact date was according to the late Percy Mephram who thought it was in the 1960s. That would tie in with the fact that in the London Gazette of 1967 it was recorded that the business was dissolved. It seems unlikely that William Wallis was still in charge as he was 100 in that year. Possibly a burial recorded in Goudhurst in 1959 for a William Howard Wallis aged 84 living at Hillesdon, Cranbrook might have been our Wallis although by that time he was actually 94.



*The aftermath of the fire*

If anybody has any further information, such as a newspaper cutting, or can solve the mystery disappearance of William Wallis, we would love to hear from you.

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