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Articles and other contributions appropriate to the Society's interests are welcome, for possible publication in the Journal, and should be submitted to the Hon. editor:

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Cover: 1826 advertisement in Griffith's History of Cheltenham

A political problem: local Liberal candidates at the 1910 general election

JOHN HOWE

POLITICS IN Edwardian England was a lively and exciting business. Major new issues were emerging, a new political party appeared and elections involved a complex balance of personal factors, local and national issues and party organisation. There was widespread popular interest shown by the extensive coverage of local and national politics in the local press which gave lengthy news reports supported by much comment and gossip on all political issues. The main political meetings attracted packed audiences filling the largest public halls and excitement reached a climax at general elections when the numbers who voted show that virtually every registered elector who was physically able to do so actually voted.

Nationally, the Conservatives had won the 1900 general election during the Boer War but thereafter their fortunes declined. Evidence of incompetence during the war and its mounting cost, Nonconformist anger at the terms of the 1902 Education Act and Joseph Chamberlain's attack on Free Trade in 1903 galvanised Liberals into activity culminating in a landslide Liberal victory in the general election of January 1906. At the same time a growing awareness of social problems - poor housing, ill-health, unemployment and widespread poverty - was leading many Liberals to demand social reform financed by higher taxation. In some respects the new Liberal government proved a disappointment for despite its huge majority in the House of Commons it was unable to get several major policies through the House of Lords which had an overwhelming Conservative majority. However old-age pensions introduced in 1908 were widely welcomed and in 1909 Lloyd George produced a radical budget, the People's budget, to finance pensions and other social reforms. This produced revived Liberal enthusiasm but Conservatives were enraged and in the summer and autumn of 1909 there was much speculation that the House of Lords might reject the budget and thus force a general election. (1)

The 1906 election had also brought a small group of independent Labour MPs to the House of Commons. They had much in common with the Liberals - concern about poor social conditions and willingness to use State action to achieve social reform - although some commentators on the right feared the growth of extremist Socialism and the Labour party itself insisted on its complete independence. Many on the political left indeed saw Liberals and Labour as two parts of the progressive forces and feared that if they competed

they would split the progressive vote and let the Conservatives in.

Locally, we are concerned with two constituencies, the borough of Cheltenham and the surrounding county division known as North Gloucestershire or Tewkesbury but extending from Berkeley in the southwest to Chipping Campden in the northeast. Political activity in each seat depended on the local party organisation which by the early 20th Century was modelled on that developed by Chamberlain and Schnadhorst in Birmingham in the 1870s. Annual ward meetings of all Liberals elected a constituency council which in turn chose an executive to run the party on a day-to-day basis. Its key duty was to find a parliamentary candidate and in practice the presence of a candidate was vital. For example in Cheltenham there was a minimal Liberal activity and declining income following the failure to find a candidate for the 1900 general election. An effective local party needed a full-time professional agent who would organise meetings and propaganda, build up a team of volunteers to work at elections and supervise the vital work of getting voters onto the election register (not until 1918 was there an effective official system for registration). All this cost money, some £400 a year and with an annual income of just over £80 in 1900, falling to £51.10.0 in 1902, (2) the Cheltenham Liberals were clearly in a weak position. Then in October 1903, a prospective candidate was found. In December a full-time professional agent was appointed, Mr C.H.Jones, who proved to be extremely able and effective. (3) Regular ward meetings were addressed by the candidate and extensively reported in the local press and there were several major rallies as well as social activities. Mr Jones worked hard at the registration and in March 1905 the Cheltenham Women's Liberal Association was set up, being the first local political organisation for women.

Although there is no direct evidence in the press it seems highly likely that all this activity was financed by the candidate who was also, of course, expected to nurse the constituency, supporting church bazaars, flower shows, football clubs and local good causes of every sort. When to all this is added the cost of an election, which in Cheltenham was some £700 - £800, it will be seen that candidates had to be rich. Furthermore MPs were not paid a salary until 1911 so a successful candidate needed a private income.

There was a widespread preference for local candidates but the Liberals had great difficulty in

finding local men with sufficient time and money. Failing a local man the Cheltenham Liberals contacted the Liberal Chief Whip's office in London which acted as a clearing house to put potential candidates in touch with constituencies. It was by this means that after a series of interviews and discussions the Cheltenham Liberals selected as their candidate J.E. Sears. (4)

Born in 1857 and the son of a Baptist minister, Mr. Sears was a staunch non-conformist with a strongly Liberal family background. Trained as an architect he had moved into architectural publishing and lived in London where he had been elected as a county councillor in 1901. He was aroused to take a more political role by 'the iniquitous education act' and campaigned steadily in Cheltenham for the next two years. His hard work and the effective organisation built up by Mr. Jones led to Liberal victory at the general election of January 1906. (5)

However, success brought problems. The heavy parliamentary programme and long sessions kept Mr. Sears in London and there was some local criticism of his absence, although he did visit Cheltenham regularly and the party continued a full programme of meetings and social activities. He was subjected to particularly abusive and in one case slanderous attacks by local Conservatives who bitterly resented their defeat. Nonconformists were disappointed by the government's failure to get legislation to satisfy their grievances through the House of Lords. Finally in May 1908 Mr. Sears announced that he would not stand again 'for family and personal reasons'. The local press provided no fuller explanation although many years later, the writer of his obituary suggested that 'pressure of other business made it impossible for him to continue his parliamentary career.' He continued to visit Cheltenham regularly to speak at meetings and social events but in May 1909, Mr. Jones the agent left for another job and was not replaced, which may suggest that Mr. Sears had reduced his financial support for the local party. (6)

As soon as Mr. Sears withdrew there was speculation that he would be replaced by R.A. Lister. Born in Dursley in 1845, he was the founder of the agricultural machinery business that still bears his name. He was a paternalist employer, a devout nonconformist and active in local politics. A county councillor from 1889, he was soon spoken of as a possible parliamentary candidate, and was adopted by the Tewkesbury Liberals in December 1903. Despite an energetic campaign run by a good agent, Mr. Lister failed by a narrow margin to win the normally safe Conservative seat in January 1906. (7) He did not continue activity in Tewkesbury so he was available to fight

Cheltenham when Mr. Sears withdrew. The *Cheltenham Chronicle* reported 'an informal approach' to him in May and he came to speak at several ward meetings. At the party's A.G.M. in March 1909, the agent reported that Mr. Lister had indicated that he would "seriously consider" a formal invitation, he entertained the Cheltenham Liberals on their summer outing at his home in Dursley when several speakers urged him to accept the candidacy and in September he was at a major rally to support the Budget in the Town Hall, when he was again spoken of as a candidate. (8)

Meanwhile the Tewkesbury Liberals were also without a candidate and there was little party activity until a new agent was appointed in July 1908. There is no direct evidence as to who provided the money for the agent but in February 1909 the divisional association announced that its chairman, M.P. Price, had agreed to accept the candidacy at an appropriate time. (9) The Prices were a leading local Liberal family who had already provided two local Liberal MPs and M.P. Price had just come back to Gloucestershire from Cambridge to help run the family business and estates. However there was some confusion over the candidacy though neither the local press nor the Price papers reveal how the confusion arose. The outcome was that in July he withdrew, leaving Tewkesbury with no Liberal candidate, as speculation about an imminent election increased. (10)

During the summer a further complication emerged in the form of a Labour candidate. Political activity on behalf of Labour in Gloucestershire had been largely confined to Gloucester and Cheltenham where Trades and Labour Councils and small I.L.P. branches existed, organising propaganda and occasionally putting up candidates in local elections with very little success. Their most prominent local supporter was C.H. Fox, a dentist, who lived in Upton St. Leonards and largely financed the Gloucester I.L.P. In May 1909 the monthly branch meeting discussed the possibility of a parliamentary candidate and Mr Fox said he was willing to stand and to find the necessary funds. (11) He later explained that the local Labour party was keen to fight a parliamentary seat but one "where they would not be likely to meet opposition from the Progressive forces." Tewkesbury, the only Conservative seat in the county and with no declared Liberal candidate, was the obvious choice, although as a largely rural seat with no local Labour organisation, it was not very promising. Mr Fox asked to meet Mr. Lister to discuss the situation and they met probably in July 1909. Mr. Fox then put his views to Mr. Lister in writing on July 29th, and Mr. Lister replied on August 5th enclosing a copy of a letter

to the Tewkesbury Liberal Agent, in which he declared "I am not inclined to avail myself of the invitation to become Liberal candidate for Tewkesbury. Mr. Fox supported me at the last election." (12)

Thus by September 1909 the local situation as an early election seemed more and more likely was that in Tewkesbury there was no Liberal candidate but Mr. Fox, with Mr. Lister's implied encouragement, was campaigning vigorously. He had held 38 meetings by October - on a programme remarkably similar to that of most radical Liberals, including strong support of the People's Budget. Mr. Lister himself admitted that he agreed with 9/10ths of Mr. Fox's manifesto. The Cheltenham Liberals confidently expected Mr. Lister to be their candidate with an added advantage as a local man since the Conservative candidate was a carpet-bagger. Early in September however, the *Gloucester Journal* reported that the Tewkesbury Liberal agent had a candidate in view. The *Journal* which consistently urged co-operation between the two progressive parties was alarmed. 'A single candidate, whether Labour or Liberal, would no doubt receive enthusiastic support' but a split would guarantee Conservative success. (13) By September 25th, the *Cheltenham Chronicle* was reporting threats by the I.L.P. that if the Liberals fought Tewkesbury they would retaliate by voting Conservative in Gloucester and Cheltenham or even fielding candidates there. (14)

These threats proved unavailing for on October 1st Mr. Lister wrote to Mr. Fox to say that, having been pressed by supporters not to desert them, he had decided after all to fight Tewkesbury and was adopted as candidate on October 9th. The Liberal press was scathing. The *Gloucester Journal* had already argued 'that there was much to be said for the Liberals standing aside' and of Mr. Lister's adopting it declared 'While it was magnificent it was not war!' 'Mr. Lister and Mr. Fox ought to be fighting together.' The *Cheltenham Chronicle* reported the general opinion that 'a hash has been made of things', and Cheltenham Liberals left with no candidate had been 'thrown into disarray'. (15) Hasty negotiations with London eventually secured a candidate and Richard Mathias, a Welsh shipowner, was adopted just as the election campaign officially opened in December.

The outcome of these events was a predictable setback for the Liberals. In Tewkesbury, the three-cornered fight encouraged the Conservatives and depressed the progressives. Despite his hard work Mr. Fox polled only 236 votes while the Conservative increased his majority to nearly 1000. In Cheltenham the Liberal majority of 401 in 1906 was replaced by a

Conservative majority of 138. The small size of the majority strongly suggests that, had the Liberals been able to field a well known local man instead of an unknown outsider, they would have had a good chance of retaining the seat in January, a conclusion supported by the fact that Mr. Mathias, once he was better known in the town, was himself able to win the seat back for the Liberals at the next election in December 1910.

In summary, Mr. Lister's decision to fight Tewkesbury rather than Cheltenham damaged his party in three ways. He increased the Conservative majority in Tewkesbury by splitting the progressive vote. He worsened the Liberal performance in Cheltenham and possibly caused the loss of the seat. He damaged relations between Liberals and Labour making future co-operation more difficult. (16) What can explain Mr. Lister's quixotic gesture? His own declaration of loyalty to his Tewkesbury supporters is all very well, but it had not been much in evidence in the previous three years, as Mr. Fox tartly observed, and he simultaneously let down his Cheltenham supporters and went back on what was virtually a commitment to Mr. Fox. He moved from a winnable seat to a hopeless one. The Liberal press gave no convincing explanation. The Conservative *Cheltenham Looker On* said he had received 'peremptory orders from the powers that be in London to step into the breach and prevent the absorption of the Liberal party by the Socialists.' (17) This is not credible. The party in London was not in a position to order local candidates about in this way and it would certainly not want to deprive Liberal-held Cheltenham of its candidate. Moreover party headquarters was generally sympathetic to reasonable Labour claims; a free run for Labour in Tewkesbury was a small price to pay to cement Labour support for Liberal candidates elsewhere in the county.

In the end, then, the reasons for Mr. Lister's decision remain a mystery.

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3. *Gloucestershire Echo*, 3 Dec, 1903.
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- the Herbert Gladstone Papers, British Library, Add.Mss, 46484, interviews of 9 July, 5 Aug, 11 Aug, 13 Aug, 1903.
5. For J.E. Sears see *C.F.P.* 10 Oct, 17 Oct, 1903 and his obituary *Cheltenham Chronicle*, (C.C.) 22 Jan, 1941, *Who was Who*, 1941-50.
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 7. For a full biography of R.A. Lister see 'In Memoriam; Sir Robert Ashton Lister', *The Lister Standard*, Vol.IV,4,1929; *Gloucester Journal*, (G.J.) 12 Dec, 1903.
 8. C.C., 23 May, 1908, *C.F.P.*, 23 May, 1908, C.E., 4 March, 1909, 1 April, 1909, 8 July, 1909, C.C., 18 Sept, 1909.
 9. G.J., 25 July, 1908, 20 Feb, 1909.
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 12. G.J., 9 and 16 Oct, 1909; C.E., 14 Oct, 1909.
 13. G.J., 4 Sep, 1909.
 14. G.J., 25 Sep, 1909.
 15. G.J., 9 Oct, 16 Oct, 1909, C.C., 16 Oct, 1909, C.E., 14 Oct, 1909.
 16. These views were expressed at the time by commentators in all the local Liberal papers.
 17. *Cheltenham Looker On*, 9 Oct, 1909.



From the "Cheltenham Examiner"

The attention of Ladies is drawn to the wonderful efficacy of KEARSLEY'S WIDOW WELCH'S FEMALE PILLS, which have been proved by thousands annually for many years past to be the most effectual remedy for that complaint to which females are liable. Headache, Giddiness, Nervous Depression, Pallor of the Lips and general disability of the system, often accompanied by Palpitation of the Heart. The most obstinate cases (of apparently confirmed invalids) have yielded to a course of these pills. Sold by all Chemists in boxes at 2s9d. Wrapped in WHITE paper. Be sure to ask for "KEARSLEY'S" as sometimes a spurious article is offered.

- 19th March 1873

THE ONLY GENUINE WIDOW WELCH'S PILLS are those prepared by the Granddaughter of WIDOW WELCH, MRS SARAH SMITHERS, who declares herself to be the only possessor of the Original Recipe.

They are wrapped in blue paper, and the label on each box has the signature of SARAH SMITHERS. The Government Stamp bears the name of Edwards....Sold by most Chemists at 2s9d per box.

- 19th March 1873

I MRS HONOR MEEK, did not, nor do I intend to run my husband WILLIAM MEEK, of the Noah's Ark beer house, 50 St. George's Street, in Debt, although he has Advertised me. He has turned me out of house and home, and has left me in total distress; he has beaten me and ill-used me most unmercifully. I am black and blue from the ill-usage I have received at his hands. The reason of my advertising this is to remove all false rumours that the public at large may have heard. MRS HONOR MEEK

- 19th November 1873

OLD ARTIFICIAL TEETH - WANTED TO PURCHASE some. Persons having the above to sell can apply "with the teeth", or if forwarded by post their value will be sent per return. - Messrs Browning, 5 Chilworth Street, LONDON W.

- 4th February 1874

'An ornament to the town': Jessop's Gardens

CAROLYN GREET

Jessop's Nursery Gardens were originally established as a commercial concern catering for the owners of the many substantial houses being built in Cheltenham during the 1820s; however, these carefully laid-out gardens bordered by the then still rustically meandering river Chelt soon became, in the words of Rowe's Illustrated Guide (1845), "one of the most pleasing spots in the locality of Cheltenham". The only reminder of the Gardens' existence today is the street name, Jessop Avenue, yet in his day their founder was a leading figure in the town.

Charles Hale Jessop was born in 1797 at Somerset Cottage, Knapp Road, the eldest son of Walter Hilton Jessop, a successful solicitor. The second son, Walter, followed his father into the legal profession, a career maintained in that branch of the family to the present day. Charles became a nurseryman and by his early twenties was proprietor of a substantial business spread over approximately 20 acres from St. James' Square down to the Chelt, and bounded to the west by Workhouse Lane (now Knapp Lane). In about 1821 or 1822 he married, and although we do not know the exact date of the founding of the Nursery Gardens, it seems likely that at this point he and Elizabeth moved into St. James' Villa and the Gardens were set up, possibly with financial help from his parents.

Charles Jessop seems to have been interested in not just the commercial aspect but also the more "scientific" side of horticulture. Griffith's 1826 "History of Cheltenham" describes how "the most skilful attention is paid to the classification....each subject being labelled in its respective class, order, genus or section, illustrating the Linnaean system"(1). That this was exceptional can be deduced from the pointed lack of such detail in his descriptions of other local nursery gardens. He stressed also Jessop's scientific and humane approach to the keeping of bees, these presumably for the purposes of fertilisation rather than for sale.

Success came quickly; indeed, when the Duchess of Clarence and Princess Victoria visited Cheltenham in 1827, Jessop provided "the most beautiful exotics" to decorate Liddells Hotel (now John Dower House) where they were entertained.(2)

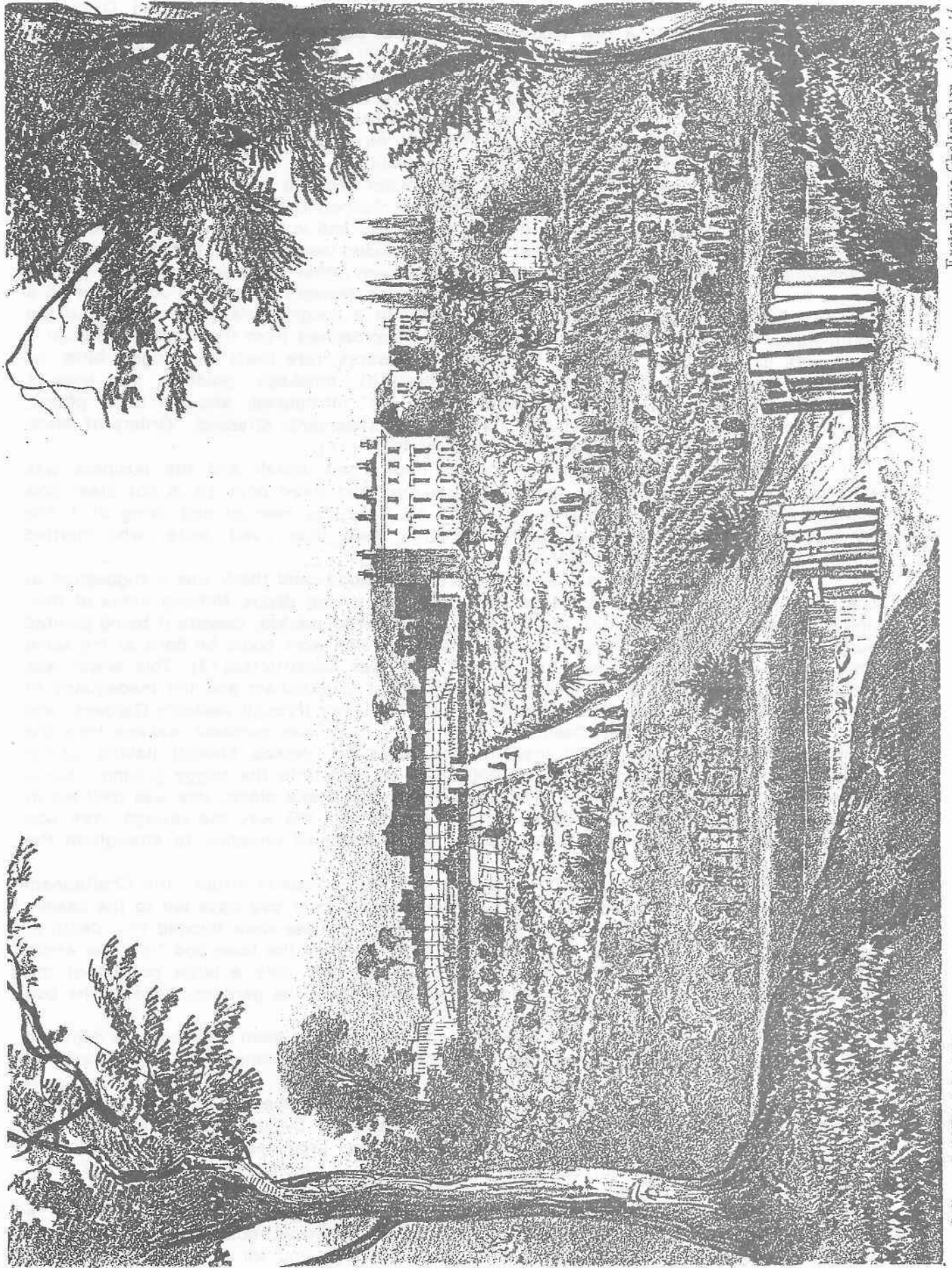
As well as plants, the Gardens boasted a pond stocked with gold and silver fish, a vinery, a warehouse selling seeds, bulbs and tools, hothouses and beehives. In the fashion of the day, there were rustic arbours, arches and rock-work grottoes; rose-walks led down to the Chelt (a boundary that was to prove a mixed blessing) where ducks and other ornamental waterfowl swam near a rustic bridge. Unfortunately we have few illustrations of the Gardens, but from those that do survive it is clear that the extensive greenhouses were of great importance. Rowe gives a detailed description of the "square building of considerable extent, with terraced show stands for plants in the centre and sides, and a walk round for visitors"(3); he also lists some of the exotic plants in the Hothouse. These included a specimen of *Cerus Grandiflora*, a night-flowering succulent; this was advertised every July as a "beautiful and novel spectacle", the gardens being opened in the evening especially for visitors to see it.(4)

Rowe gives a vivid description of the gardens, and despite the air of sycophantic romanticism which pervades it one can glean useful details of the layout. The main "working" area was in a separate, walled enclosure with the house (St. James' Villa) and shop to one side. A broad gravelled path led through a gateway and down to the river, "the ground on either hand forming the rosary of the establishment".

However, flowers were not the only attraction; fancy breeds of rabbit were on view, as were owls and even a sea-eagle. In one corner was a Chinese Pagoda, which Jessop had acquired from the Zoological Gardens in the Park. It must have been a striking sight; the illustration in Rowe's Guide shows a two-storey, octagonal construction with projecting bays, elaborately trellised and decorated with pinnacles and bells, topped with a large flag. This exotic affair held pheasants and fancy fowl. It is not surprising that visitors flocked to the gardens, particularly as no charge was made for admission.

The more serious, commercial side of the business also flourished. He kept abreast of current developments in horticulture, installing extensive forcing frames (shown on a plan of 1851) and an "apparatus for forcing by means of hot water".(5) Practical assistance was offered to those wishing to establish gardens; in 1836 services included: "Hot Houses, Greenhouses etc. erected and Gardens and Grounds laid out both in the

General View of Jessop's Gardens (G.Rowe)



Lithographed & Printed by C. Rowe

NURSERY & FROM BAYS HILL.

Exeter House Cheltenham

Ancient and Modern or English style of Landscape Gardening. Experienced Gardeners recommended"(6), while a few years later potential customers were informed "Foresters and Farm Bailiffs recommended: Forest and other Planting done by Contract"(7). Advertisements claimed "The Proprietor is in constant communication with the most eminent Cultivators in Europe"(8). Indeed, according to Rowe, he was considered "one of the first landscape gardeners of the day" with "extensive engagements in all parts of the kingdom and even on the Continent". Unfortunately no record has survived of whereabouts on the Continent these engagements were carried out.

The development of the railway in Cheltenham began a new and less idyllic phase for Jessop. In 1845 he sold some land to enable the planned station for the GWR to be built at St.James' Square; sale details were published locally and in London, and from the list of stock it was clearly quite a substantial acreage: included were about 1,100 fruit trees, 400 grape vines, 1,600 roses, 600 Italian cypress and many other trees and shrubs(9).

There were other changes too. In 1843 Charles Jessop's eldest son Josiah set up a separate but connected establishment next door, in a roughly triangular section to the south-east. "The Aviaries", as it was called, was approached from the Gardens through a rock-work gateway, and contained ornamental pheasants, rare fowls and singing birds, as well as rabbits "of gigantic and curious breed"(10), monkeys, goldfish, and even a kangaroo. Walks were laid out, "ornamental devices" introduced, and the usual plants, seeds and "Garden Requisites" offered for sale. Advertisements stressed: "Orders of seeds for the Colonies selected and packed with Great Care"(11).

By 1849 the younger brother, Jesse, had joined Josiah and the business was flourishing; in 1851 they jointly employed five men and three boys (it is not clear how many were employed at the Gardens). Josiah by then was married and living at 1 The Aviaries with three children and three servants. Next door lived Jesse, who married sometime between 1851 and 1861(12).

Development by the railway in the area continued, and there was a suggestion at one point that the Gardens should be converted into a coal depot. Nothing came of this, nor of the later proposal to turn the site into a new cattle-market, despite it being pointed out that the site would be very suitable as the conversion work could be done at the same time as the "great trunk sewer along the Chelt" was constructed(13). This sewer was rendered necessary by the increasing development of Cheltenham and the inadequacy of the existing system. A stretch of about 150 yards of it lay through Jessop's Gardens, and here it was to pass below the Chelt. Problems arose; there was constant leakage from the river, and much of the ground was in fact made up, Jessop himself having earlier deposited, by his calculation, some 15,000 loads of earth into the boggy ground. Some nursery stock had to be removed to allow excavations to take place; this was paid for at valuation and auctioned. Jessop was not at all happy with the way the sewage work was tackled and in particular he was worried by the workmen's omission to strengthen the embankment of the Chelt.

It was a worry all too well-founded; in July 1855 disaster struck. The Cheltenham Examiner described in graphic detail how continuous rain over two days led to the sewers being totally unable to cope with the volume of water. Houses were flooded to a depth of several feet, and the Chelt, bursting its banks, swept through the town and "laid the whole [Nursery] gardens...under water. The torrent...swept off not only a large portion of the growing stock, but the very soil in which it was embedded...The gardens...became the bed of a raging torrent of mud and water."(14)

Jessop's doubts about the embankment of the Chelt had been justified. In a dignified and reasonable letter to the Cheltenham Improvement Commissioners two weeks later he wrote:

"I beg to call your attention to the very serious damage done to my garden and premises... which damage, I am advised, was occasioned by the manner in which the sewers belonging to you were laid down through my premises, and the omission to strengthen the embankment of the River Chelt, which had become weakened by the work. I called the attention of your contractors to this matter when they were doing the work, but nothing was done to strengthen the embankment and in consequence thereof a quantity of earth and rubbish has been thrown on my premises, doing me damage to the amount of several hundred pounds, and...I now call upon you for compensation for the

damage I have sustained. I am quite willing, in order to save the expenses of litigation, to leave as well the cause of the damage as the amount of the damage I have sustained and the compensation to be paid me, to any respectable person to be agreed on between us."(15)

This produced no recorded response, but when a Subscription List was advertised for the relief of those who had suffered in the flood, the Examiner's editor put in a special plea for the Jessops:

"When we consider the indefatigable exertions of the proprietors...to contribute to the gratification of the public...we say that they have the strongest claims upon our sympathies...we express the ardent hope that the spirit of public liberality...will not leave them to pursue their arduous task unaided."(16)

An "arduous task" it certainly was. The article went on to describe in detail the desolation in the main garden, concluding: "On the abatement of the water, the whole garden became in one entire state of encrustation from the night soil, under the poisonous properties of which, the strongest plants have died...The most indefatigable exertions will fail to reduce the gardens to anything like order for many weeks to come."

Charles Jessop seems to have been completely demoralised by these events; hardly surprising in a man of 58 who suffered from ill-health and who also lost his wife at some time in this period.

The younger generation, however, were more resilient. Josiah and Jesse too had suffered badly from the flood, but when the Examiner's reporter visited The Aviaries he found that "the enterprising and energetic spirit of the owners is visible. Considering the ruinous appearance it presented only a few days since...we were surprised to find the place not only beginning to assume its original aspect...but that sundry importations...had taken place". These included "a bit of landscape scenery", an eagle and a sealion - the last rather ironically apt in view of recent events. From now on the brothers' interests turned increasingly towards the zoological rather than the horticultural (possibly they felt animals might have a better survival rate in Cheltenham's climatic conditions); further additions included a pair of Arctic fox-cubs, armadilloes, a heron, a new monkey-house, and an American Bullfrog described in a moment of zoological confusion as a "rara avis".

There was another innovation too; for the first time an entrance fee of one penny was charged, "the sole object [being] the accomodation of visitors, by keeping the place select"(17). Presumably selectivity was achieved; at any rate when in 1858 a party of excursionists came up from South Wales, "they behaved themselves with the strictest propriety, not the slightest damage being done to the property in the gardens"(18).

But if all was well at The Aviaries, the same could not be said of the Gardens. In August 1858, notice of Charles Jessop's bankruptcy appeared, and in November the Gardens, with the house and shop, were offered for sale by auction. At the auction, a last-minute attempt was made to save the land; someone suggested it would be suitable for a "people's park", and several gentlemen present offered to subscribe £10 each towards its purchase for such a purpose; another idea mooted was to buy it and give it to the brothers. However, the mortgagees had placed the large reserve of £5,500 on the land, and as the largest bid received was £2,500, the property was declared "not sold".(19)

The stock was sold separately in December, the pre-sale list giving a fascinating picture of the comprehensive stock, from the "several thousand...fruit trees" down to "patent labels...water pots and a variety of other useful articles". Buyers from a wide area attended the four-day sale, the total proceeds amounting to between £600 and £700. The Examiner's editor expressed his "regret that these gardens, which once formed such an ornament to the town, should be thus finally dismantled, and that its proprietor, now in his old age, should have to see the collection which it took him so many years to bring to maturity, scattered to the winds"(20).

He did not have to see it for long. Three months later, on March 25th 1859, Charles Jessop died. He was 62 and had been in declining health, but the bankruptcy and sale of the business to which he had given his life for so long must have been the final blow.

The Aviaries kept going for some time longer, more creatures being acquired for the extensive collection and further attractions added; a maze was constructed in 1861, and in 1865 Maskelyne presented his Box Trick in the grounds. However, from the 1861 Census it seems clear that the brothers were trying to run the business with virtually no extra

help, and Josiah eventually left in 1866 to become the Manager of the Montpellier Baths and Cheltenham Salts Factory, a position he held until 1880. Jesse died suddenly in 1870, and though his widow kept the business going for one more year, by 1872 The Aviaries had gone and a minor chapter in the history of Cheltenham closed.

Jessop's Gardens spanned only 35 years, but they saw many changes in the life of the town. The well-appointed villas with their spacious and fashionably laid-out gardens were no longer being built; less money was coming into the town, and new building in the 1850s was largely in the form of less expansive terracing and artisans' cottages. Even without the disastrous financial effect of the flood, it seems doubtful whether Jessop's Nursery Gardens would have enjoyed many more successful years.

The 140 years since then have seen many more changes. St. James' Station is long gone; where Charles Jessop's old house stood is now a block of offices, the former rose walks are a car park. Most of the remainder of the site is now (1994) a waste of broken concrete, weeds and rubbish. Only down by the Chelt – which still floods from time to time – is there any sign of care and cultivation, where a path has been restored along the banks and a small children's play area is flanked by shrubs.

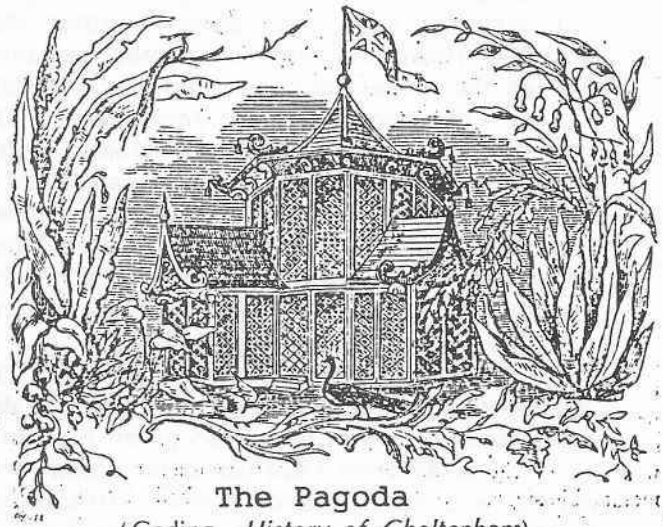
An ornament to the town...?

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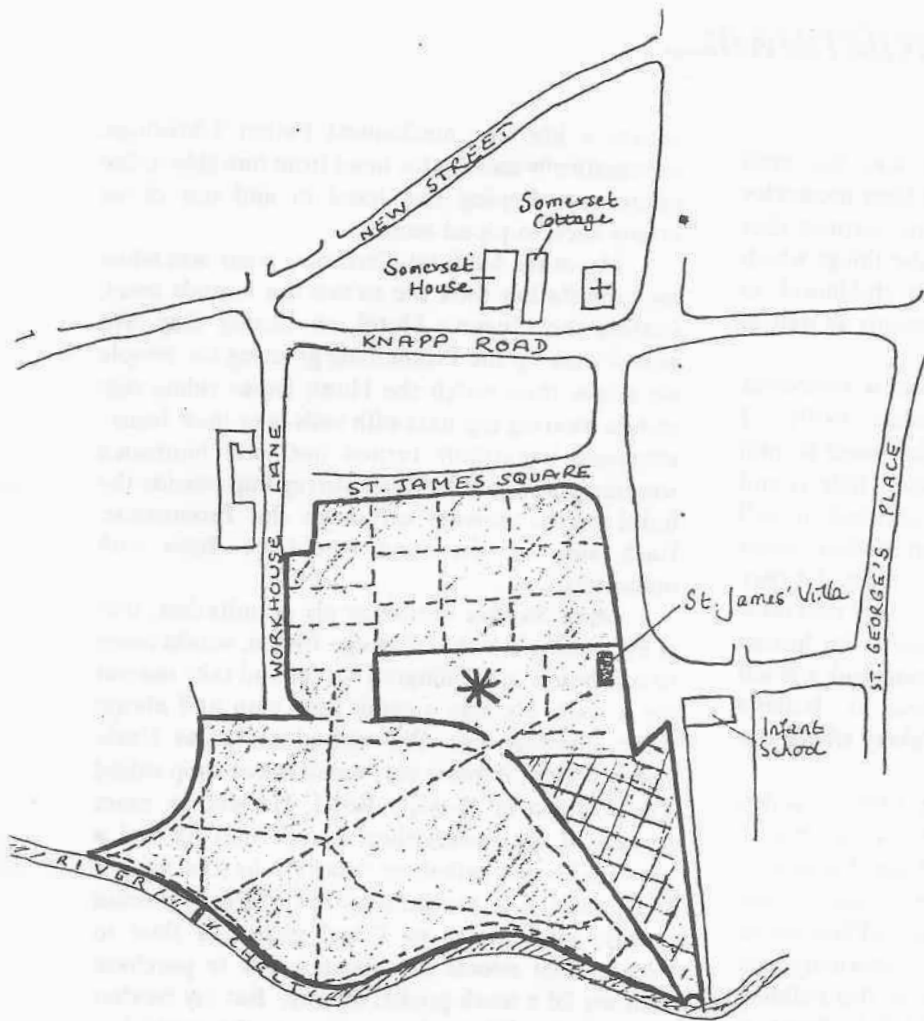
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St. James' Villa
(Coding *History of Cheltenham*)



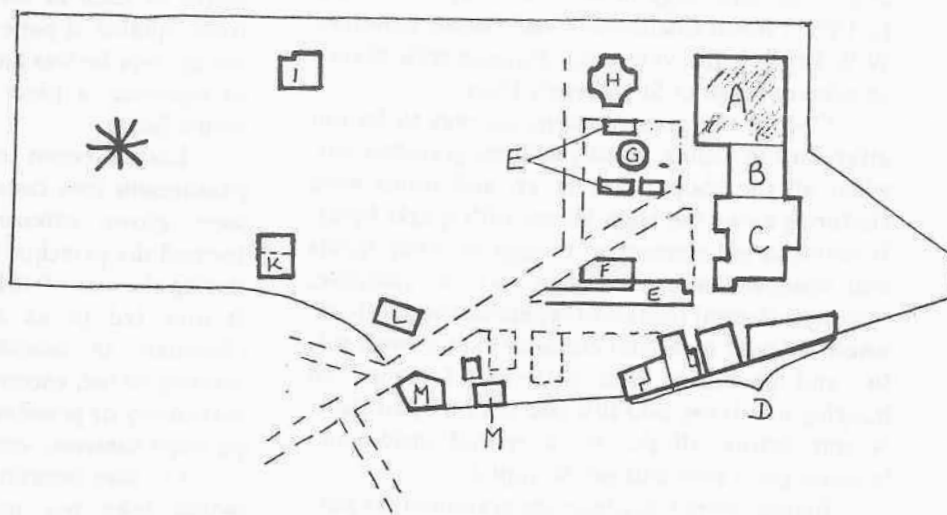
The Pagoda
(Coding *History of Cheltenham*)



The extent of
Jessop's Gardens
c. 1844

-  Nursery Gardens
-  'The Aviaries'
-  Main Garden
(see below)

Plan of
Main Garden



- | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---|----------------------|
| A | House, Office etc. | G | Pond |
| B | Seed Shop | H | Aviary |
| C | Conservatories | I | Vinery |
| D | Stables, Cowsheds etc. | K | Apiary |
| E | Forcing Frames | L | Cart Sheds |
| F | Polting House | M | Tool House and Sheds |

A childhood in Cheltenham

AMINA CHATWIN

I HAD always supposed that it was not until people were in their 80s or 90s that their memories were of interest; so it was with some surprise that I realised recently that almost all the things which made up my memories of early childhood in Cheltenham had disappeared - customs as well as places.

I was born in 1927 so most of these memories must belong to the early to middle 1930s. I remember the great cart horses that used to pull coal wagons, with long well-brushed hair round their big feet. The ones that were particularly well looked after wore horse brasses on leather straps down their chests, and best of all, on May 1st they wore all their brasses and ribbons plaited into their manes and tails. Sometimes I would see horses being shod with an unfamiliar hissing and a smell of burnt hoof; I fancy it was near St. James's Square, almost opposite Lockes Bakery where the veterinary surgeons are now.

This must have been before 1936 by which time no smith is listed in the area, but 5 St. George's Terrace, was John Brain Veterinary Surgeon. This house is on the corner with the side entrance under an arch on St. George's Place which was where the shoeing went on. Veterinary and farriery must have been carried on in this building for some time previously as 1891-2 W. Bryer is listed as a shoeing smith in St. George's Place and as a veterinary surgeon at 5 St. George's Terrace. In 1872-3 *Royal Cheltenham and County Directory*, W.W. Bryer is the veterinary surgeon with Bryer's veterinary forge in St. George's Place.

One of the great excitements was to be out after dark in winter, usually with my grandmother, when all the shops were lit up and trams were clattering along the High Street, with sparks flying. It seems in my memory as though the shop fronts and windows were piled high with merchandise, brightly coloured fruits and vegetables and, I think, whole sides of meat and certainly rabbits with soft fur and pheasants with patterned feathers, all hanging up above, and fish laid out on open slabs. It was before all the stock retired inside and became germ free and pre-wrapped.

Before every Christmas my grandmother purchased a holly wreath and together we took the train to Gloucester to take it to the cemetery and lay it on her sister's grave. It was our annual outing and once the main reason for it was accomplished, we went to the Bon Marché, now Debenhams, for tea and for me to visit Santa Claus in his fairy grotto. I was very sad to see in 1993 in the Cheltenham Regent Arcade shopping

centre a life size mechanical Father Christmas, automatically moving his head from one side to the other and dipping one hand in and out of an empty sack to piped music!

My other habitual Christmas treat was when my grandfather took me to see the hounds meet, outside the Queen's Hotel, on Boxing Day. We would walk up the Promenade greeting the people we knew, then watch the Hunt; ladies riding side saddle wearing top hats with veils over their faces - everyone beautifully turned out, and huntsmen wearing pink coats, taking a stirrup cup outside the hotel before moving off down the Promenade. Each side of the road would be lined with onlookers.

Most Sunday mornings my grandfather, that is my mother's father, George Elston, would come to our house in Wellington Street and take me out for a walk. He was a small neat man and always wore a bowler hat. We walked as far as Uncle Harry's shop; it was a very small sweet shop called The Carlton in Hewlett Road. He was an exact replica of my grandfather, except that he had a moustache and called me "ducks" - he also wore a bowler hat. The brothers, two of a large Victorian family, would talk, so I had plenty of time to decide what sweets or chocolate bar to purchase with my 2d a week pocket money. But my mother told me that when she was young she could buy four different kinds of sweets for 1d; a farthing's worth of each in little screwed up cornets made from squares of paper. My grandfather said in his young days he was lucky to get an occasional piece of liquorice, a piece of "hockey pokey" or some locust beans.

Locust beans came from Carob trees, so presumably they tasted slightly of chocolate. They were grown extensively in Spain, where they formed the principal food of British cavalry horses during the war of 1811-12. Presumably this is what is now fed to us as the tasteless apology for chocolate in biscuits etc. Hockey-pokey is a mystery to me, except that I have the impression it was chewy or possibly an early form of ice-cream - perhaps someone can elucidate.

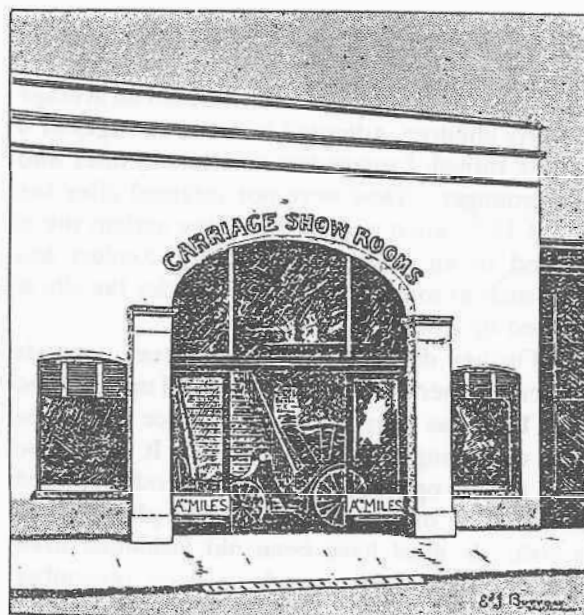
On rare occasions, a special treat for me, he would take me to the Horse Repository in Winchcombe Street, which until recently housed The Indoor Market, where horses were presumably being auctioned. There was a long space in the middle, round which all the people were crowded and men ran up and down leading horses to show off their paces. I must have been young enough to be lifted shoulder high because I remember a sea of cloth caps and bowler hats.

The Horse Repository adjoined Mr Alfred Miles Carriage Show Rooms, not Mills as given in the *Cheltenham and District Post Office Directory* of 1881-2. H.Humphreys owned the Horse Repository; under his direction the site had first been a Livery Stables 1872-3, then by 1881-2 Livery Stables and Horse Repository. Alfred Miles workshops were in Albion Street. Since it appears to have been a single building that housed the two establishments it was probably all built not long before 1892 as a *History of Cheltenham and District* of that date says, "Mr Alfred Miles ... a leading exponent of the high-class coach building trade. The premises occupied are prominently situated in one of the leading thorough fares of the town, and present a decided architectural feature in the neighbourhood, and adjoin Messrs Humphreys Repository. They comprise a substantial newly-built brick building with double open fronted windows" etc.

Another place to which he sometimes took me was Sharp's warehouse. Their shoe shop was in the Promenade, now Jones' and their warehouse adjoined the present County Court where Pepper's restaurant is now, formerly The Star. The room that faced on to County Court Road was very long with equally long counters presided over by a man, again in a bowler hat and wearing an apron round his waist that reached to his ankles. It had been in the rooms over this, now the upstairs restaurant, that my mother had started her dancing school before she was married.

My grandparents lived at 55 Winchcombe Street, about half way between the Horse Repository and Pittville Gates, now part of Hunter's Café-Bar. Here my grandfather made shoes, proper brown leather brogued shoes with holes punched in the uppers or shining black town shoes of black calf. He made surgical boots too, only he didn't mince words and always called them "cripple boots"! He specialised in riding boots, above all beautiful black hunting boots with pinky beige cuffs at the top. Customers had their own wooden lasts which hung in pairs in the gloom at the back of the shop, and there was a mucky looking animal bone for 'boning' up the shine on the hunting boots, and a large terra-cotta basin full of dark brown water for soaking leather in. Sometimes you would find him cutting thick leather for soles with a big curved knife or other times he would be sitting at his bench sewing uppers to soles with waxed thread pulling out both arms wide to pull the thread tight.

He had been apprenticed in Victorian London, and used to recount stories of the Music Halls and of being alone once in Hyde Park when Queen Victoria came by in a horse drawn carriage. He stood at the side of the path, taking off his hat,



Alfred Miles showroom at the Horse Repository

and she bowed her head to him. On another occasion he saw the remnants of the Charge of the Light Brigade at a review in Hyde Park.

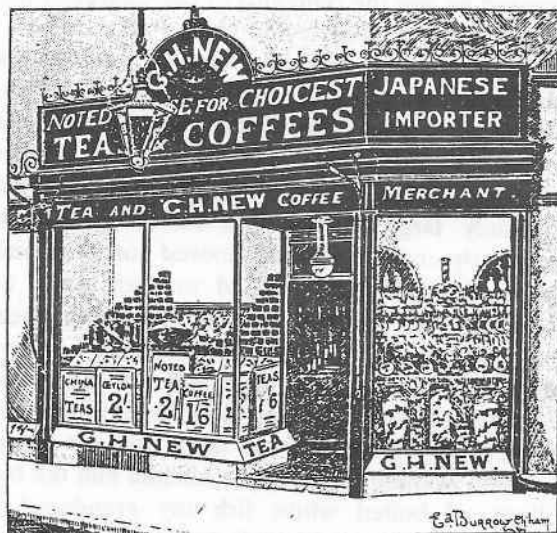
Immediately opposite my grandparent's establishment was the girls' orphanage. The matron was rather forbidding, though she was always very kind to me, and was on good terms with my grandmother. The building seemed extremely large to me and rather grim with apparently endless wooden floored corridors and stairs. I used to be invited to their party at Christmas, but I liked best to go there when everyone had gone away for their summer holiday. Then I would go in with my grandmother and we would feed the cats, and the chickens at the end of the garden. I can almost smell still the great scrubbed wooden tables in the kitchen and the big collops of boiled white fish my grandmother brought with her and divided up for the cats. They would cost a fortune today. At the end of the playground at the back of the building I think there must have been a few flower beds, I certainly remember pink everlasting sweet peas and the scent of rosemary bushes and fennel. It was a pleasure to throw maize to the hens and the fine cockerel; and there were doves too to feed, they flew down and took the grain from our hands.

The orphanage building has gone now and I hardly noticed: one day I walked up the street and found it had disappeared.

The Female Orphan Asylum, originally a school of industry was instigated by Queen Charlotte in 1806. Griffiths' *New Historical Description*, 1826, gives an illustration of the first building. The building of which I speak was

erected in 1833-4 from designs by R. Stokes. According to Henry Davies' *Cheltenham in its Past and Present State*, the institution housed an average of thirty children, admitted between the ages of 8 and 10; though I remember occasionally ones who were younger. They were not retained after the age of 15 "...when a child leaves the asylum she is entitled to an outfit, provided her conduct has been such as to merit approval." Today the site is covered by Robert Harvey House.

Further down Winchcombe Street, towards the centre, there was the Blind School on the same side. That was a dark forbidding place where the blind were taught to make baskets. It must have been almost opposite a grocers, an oddly placed shop sticking out from housing. This place I liked to visit. It must have been old fashioned even then, for it was the only shop I ever remember which had sawdust on the floor. There were great mountains of butter on the counter from which one's half or pound of butter was cut and patted into shape with ribbed butter pats, sometimes even given a moulded wheatsheaf pattern on the top.



(From a Photo. by J. JOYNER.)

G. H. New, 101 High Street

This must have been the Pittville Supply Co. There is still a commercial building there, sticking out from number 98, today it is empty but bears the name Babyland.

The other shop that stands out in my mind was in the High Street called News, a long narrow dark shop. Probably its main trade was tea kept in tin canisters but it also sold other goods from the east, of which my favourite were "magic flowers". One dropped crumpled bits of something into a glass of water and they opened out into beautiful coloured flowers.

According to the *History of Cheltenham and District* published by Walser and Grist, Hove, in 1892 G.H. New was a Tea and Coffee Importer; "This house can justly claim to be one of the most reliable and popular establishments in Cheltenham. The premises in occupation, at No.101 High Street, comprise a compact three-storied building with a tastefully-fitted double-fronted shop facing the main thoroughfare and immediately facing the Assembly Rooms." They imported up to fifteen different sorts of China Tea as well as Ceylon and Indian teas "A large business is done in coffees, fresh ground and roasted, including Mocha. East Indian, Plantation, Costa Rica, Mysore, Guatemala and other sorts, samples of which may be obtained on application. A supplementary branch - quite in keeping with the business - is the sale of teapots, trays, Japanese vases, &c of which a stock of some 10,000 is held, and at prices considerably below those of the metropolitan houses."

My Christmas shopping for the family I always did at Woolworths which was the 3d and 6d stores in those days. I had no difficulty in finding suitable presents for my parents and grandparents, 3d was usually sufficient, one seldom found it necessary to go to 6d! One perpetual calendar of brown plastic with little knobs each side, which changed the date when pressed down, was a great success and lasted my grandfather for many years.

F.W. Woolworth & Co. Ltd was 351a and 352 High Street next to Church Street, before it moved further east towards the London Road.

As I grew older I remember the parties my school friends gave at the Cadena Cafe in the High Street. For these occasions I wore my pinky red velvet cloak lined with quilted white satin patterned with bunches of flowers. When I was a little older there would be visits to Kunz in the Promenade, presided over by Mr Krier, where beneath the cuckoo-clock I went with my mother and her friends to take coffee and eat the most delicious cakes in the world. If one could buy cakes like that today they would cost a king's ransom, but I would gladly pay, if they tasted the same as they did then.

This shop was next to Nixon's china shop which was on the corner of Ormond Place, later called The Little Promenade. The 1936 directory lists it as number 74 Maison Kunz, a name it must have acquired from its original owner C. Kunz pastry cook and confectioner, listed as No 11 the Promenade Villas in 1981-2.

I am surprised how much these memories have centred on my grandparents and the area in which they lived. I seem to remember far less of Wellington Street, near the Town Hall, where I

lived with my parents. At that time a good part of the street on the east side belonged to Boultons the monumental stonemasons, where ramshackle buildings were covered with white stone dust. In the early days they also had a yard opposite our house, "St. Albans", where a very old man used to sit sawing tombstones, with a sack across his shoulders if the weather was damp. I remember my mother found it depressing if she ever happened to be ill in bed.

Leslie Paynter had a motorcycle shop at the top of the street in Cambray and there was an empty piece of ground on the corner known locally as "the cabbage patch", though nothing ever grew there. A woman was murdered on it; though this and the Haw bridge murder are the only ones I ever remember in the area. It must have been the two places that led to my father playing motorcycle football, a popular pastime then, with matches held at the Athletic Ground, and motorcycle scrambles at "Old Dole" California Farm.

"Old Clap" with an electrical shop in nearby Cambray was a local character for many years. He gradually took over little workshops down a narrow alleyway leading into Bath Road and the masons yard where the sawing had gone on. Near Claps shop there was once a little greengrocers, kept by an ample woman who was sometimes moved to make and sell extremely good faggots and peas.

My father was an all-the-year-round, early morning, swimmer at the Alstone baths, and sometimes on the way home he would bring back enormous rectangular dripping cakes, all sticky and full of currants. In later years, when the war came, the chef at the Ellenbrough Hotel, at the other end of the street on Oriel Terrace, would teach us all to put out incendiary bombs with a stirrup pump.

This was done in the garden of the house in which he lived, Buckingham Lawn, which backed on to the end of Cambray Place; here there had been the Regency Cambray House, where the Ladies' College started in 1853 and later used as one of the boarding houses for the girls, from which they moved in 1937. The Cambray flats then occupied the site.

Of course I knew the Town Hall over the years; being the daughter of a dancer. I first appeared there in a dancing display at the age of 3. Later I was roped in to model a bathing costume, as the only child model, at the opening of the open air Lido. I learnt to swim in what is now the Playhouse Theatre, and learnt to ride in the Old Town Hall, on Regent Street, at the end of the Plough Yard, which must now be engulfed in the Regent Arcade.

As a schoolgirl I would sometimes go, after

school, to Rawlin's bookshop in Pittville Street, where I first learnt the delights of second hand books. The street was lined with Regency buildings on both sides then; next to his shop window there was an alcove filled with books on three sides, I believe it was up about three steps, so probably it had been another doorway and here the books cost only a few pence. Others of varying prices were displayed outside along the front of the main window. This was the first of many sellers of second-hand books that I visited through the years; Mr Martin at Heynes' Bookshop in Clarence Street and Mr Williams in the High Street which was later taken over by James Wilson, who moved to 3 Suffolk Place, Montpellier. There he filled the garden with rose trees and railway signals and the rooms with books; his own library on the upper floors and those to sell to the public on the ground floor. There, when you took a book in your hands, he would stand behind you and say, "You don't want that, it's not your subject!" When you were accepted as a friend you would be shown the meticulously kept G.W.R. Museum in the attic, where, before entry, you were issued with a ticket, personally stamped for you "From Montpellier to Hutton House via Gloucester" from a small engraved glass ticket office.

I would have been in my late 'teens before I discovered Charlie Fry's junk yard, down beyond the gas works, on the Tewkesbury Road. Later I bought my first Regency Beregere chair there for "half a dollar" just as it was about to be thrown on the bonfire. There was a rough division of categories; run of the mill furniture was piled high and one needed X-ray eyes - small pieces and "objets d'art" were crammed into various little wooden huts; chairs had a field to themselves where numerous rabbits ran about amongst them and peered at you from between turned wooden legs.

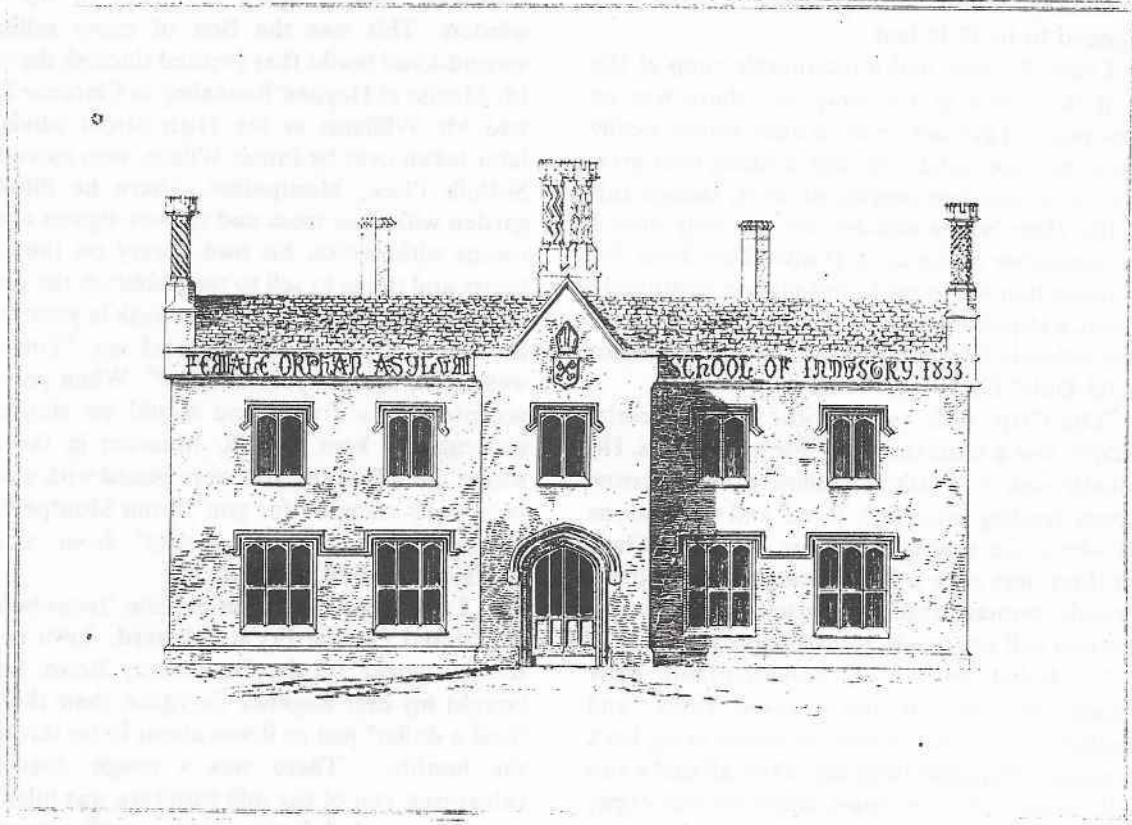
At school I had a friend who lived in Royal Crescent and we played in the gardens, then private to the houses, where the buses now pull in and out at the bus station. Another school friend who lived at Staverton village cycled to school every morning; and when she left, during the war to help on her family farm, she took a part-time job at Mrs Honeyset, jeweller, in Clarence Street, and used to ride her pony into town and leave it at "Mr Brains the Vet".

So many things have changed, customs and a way of life that was in some indefinable way more leisurely. So many places have changed beyond recognition. Buildings I most regret and most miss: the loss of the Priory on London Road; the loss of the New Club, next to the Town Hall, which we irreverently used to call "Zombie Manor". How did

its elderly members ever manage to read their newspapers, which they sat holding before them in armchairs, in the darkish green light which seemed all that their electricity ever achieved? I regret the loss of the fine frontage to Gardner's Brewery in the Lower High street, and above all the great forest trees so many of which had to be felled in

the Promenade. For years after they were gone it seemed so empty and bare to me.

In recent years I met an old friend in the street and he said, "We've seen the best of it". Perhaps it is just nostalgia but I have a sneaking feeling he could have been right.



The Girls' Orphanage in Winchcombe Street [Henry Davies 'Cheltenham in its past and present state' 1843]

From the 'Cheltenham Examiner'

TIGHT LACING

It may not be altogether out of place in fashionable Cheltenham to call attention upon purely humane motives to the growing favour of the 'Waist of the Period'. The LANCET, always the pioneer in the cause of health gives cogent reasons for not succumbing too much to fashion, upon the score of tight lacing for health's sake. Sensible people will not be slow to take the proffered advice. Pictorial illustrations, out of number, have been brought before us, in which the exquisite symmetry of the Grecian and Roman beauties is too apparent when contrasted with the painful dress of the present day. It is, however, an acknowledged fact that women obey fashions, to whatsoever point of compass they may turn. In spite of all warnings there is every reason to apprehend that the 'Waist of the Period' promises ere long to become an acknowledged institution of present times.

- 8th September 1869

Just published (gratis): The Great Crinoline Question solved, by H.M. Empress of the French.

- 25th April 1866

Cheltenham's High Street at the time of Rowe's 1845 Guide

MARK THOMAS

In his Guide ⁽¹⁾ George Rowe's aim was to show visitors through Cheltenham's principal areas and point out the town's main objects of interest. Inevitably parts of the High Street were shown as it was, before and during 1845, and a Cheltenham visitor was conducted through with a series of 'light conversational sketches' on its striking features.

'The wide-foot pavements and smooth carriage way, with their constant stream of traffic - the glitter of the shop fronts - and the marked cleanliness of the Queen of highways, forms a "tout ensemble" which must gratify the most fastidious eye.'

In this article Rowe's travelling routes have been reduced to the areas immediately related to Cheltenham's High Street. However, due to the many building changes which have occurred since, it is now difficult to visualise where the buildings would have been. To make this easier to understand today, the sketches have been rearranged to show more closely where their positions in the High Street would have been. Some interesting points about some of his sketches are also described.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE HIGH STREET

Until the turn of the 19th century, Cheltenham's High Street appears to have been called **Cheltenham Street** or just **The Street**, with small adjacent lanes and alleyways ^(2,3).

Some of the earliest High Street buildings appear to have been St. Mary's Church (11th century), Market Buildings, Grammar School (1574) & principal coaching inns, most notably the Plough Hotel.

St. Mary's Church has been mentioned because, although not directly attached, it is very close to the High Street. It appears just behind the illustrated shop of Mr. Hollis, the Gunmaker (No.346, fig 9). The market had been demolished and rebuilt in several different places before Rowe drew it. His sketch of the entrance to the Market Arcade (No.149, fig 8) showed a very unusual design. Its three front arches were Gothic, but the whole effect appears oriental. The Grammar School (No.158, fig 8) was thought to have been kept in reasonable condition until the beginning of the 19th century when it then entered into a state of decline ⁽³⁾.

Water had been directed down the High Street from the River Chelt via a Mill Pond at Cambray, from the 16th century until early into the 19th century. This was supposed to be done, several times a week, to clean the street. However, it only appeared to be carried out very infrequently. Two earlier High Street pictures by Rowe, (figs.1,2), show stepping stones in the road, needed in certain places to enable people to cross the Street, though these were claimed to often sink into the mud!

Rowe describes how the street had looked in the 1740's (from other written stories?). Cheltenham then appeared like an ordinary country village, the 'broad straggling street, channelled by a babbling brook, crossed at intervals with stepping stones, and diffusing health, cleanliness and freshness along its course'.



fig.1

The 'sandy road of the High Street was occasionally diversified by a patch of stunted grass, on which the vagrant cattle could gather a scanty meal....many an empty space between thatched cottages shewed glimpses of open country....a few fine old trees once stood on spots now occupied by handsome shops'.

Rowe suggests that, since the 1788 visit of George III, from a mere village Cheltenham had become 'one of the most extensive, elegant towns in the kingdom'.

GEORGE ROWE

George Rowe (1796-1864), appears to have been an extremely prolific printmaker in Cheltenham (1832-52) ⁽⁴⁾. During this time his individual pencil drawings were turned into prints and many Cheltenham views were then published. In 1841, Rowe became the printer and publisher for the Cheltenham Examiner newspaper. This gave Rowe the capability of publishing books and as a result his Illustrated Cheltenham Guide was produced in February 1845.

ROWE'S GUIDE

In the Guide, 200 small lithographic sketch views of Cheltenham and its buildings were used and it concentrated particularly on Cheltenham's commercial and retail premises. Rowe describes four routes which all started from the centrally placed Plough Hotel in the High Street. Because of its long life in Cheltenham's history, the Plough had been described as a village inn in the 1740's 'with good accommodation for man and beast'.

In Cheltenham's Street Directories ^(5,6) the High Street, in 1844, was split into the North (Nos.66-245) and the South (Nos.246-457). Although about seven buildings were still lodgings, the following number of shops, hotels etc. were recorded though some shops carried out more than one business. These are compared with the number of Rowe's High Street building illustrations.

	North	South
1844	c.162	c.189
Rowe's 1845	29	38

It appears that Rowe had wanted to cover the main shops and objects of interest. It is true that the majority of the shops he illustrated were around the central area of the High Street which perhaps was and still is the busiest part. However, it is likely he was also keeping a close eye on his finances and he probably asked for payment from the shops to allow them to be entered into his Illustrated Guide.

Route 1 covered the main buildings (29) in the centre of the High Street. Although route 2 started from the Plough, no High Street buildings were described. Route 3 journeyed from the Plough Hotel up the High Street to the London Road and covered 21 High Street buildings while Route 4, again from the Plough, directed the visitor towards the lower High Street where 17 buildings were illustrated.

The number of Rowe's illustrations in his Routes along the High Street were as follows:

	NORTH	SOUTH
Route 1	12	17
Route 3	9	12
Route 4	8	9
	-----	-----
	29	38

The Plough (Nos.387&388) had been improved, changing it from being a humble country inn, to its 1845 imposing facade. Rowe's illustration showed how it appeared in the 1790's (was this copied from an earlier print?) and claimed it had then presented a rather formidable line of frontage.

fig.2

1790's



fig.3

1845



These were both included to show how times had changed and shopping life had improved. On emerging from the Plough's portals in 1845, visitors could immediately see a busy scene on both sides of the High Street. The High Street fully displayed handsome shops, and two broad pavements each side were 'fully thronged with gaily dressed pedestrians'.

Rowe describes the shops very eloquently throughout the book. He thought many improvements had been made upon the old fashioned low-gabled houses. Only one of these appeared in the High Street sketches. This was Mr. Attwood's, the fishmonger (No.93), which was 'an old gable-fronted house, a remain of Cheltenham's more primitive domestic architecture'. These low-gabled houses dated back to pre Regency times.

The shops were given a complementary discussion and were typically referred to as;

'elegantly and well furnished'
'holding every kind of useful item'
'very neat and tasteful'
'neat and handsome '
'furnished and ornamented with great taste'
'windows which attract by their exhibition'

In addition to these comments, information was given related to the design/additions to some of the buildings. Rowe hoped that after completing his suggested rambles the Rambler would feel indebted to him for many things worth seeing, which otherwise would have been left unexplored. A number of businesses in Cheltenham were run 'by Royal Appointment' ⁽¹⁾ and on five High Street buildings (Nos. 109,246,371,384,397) the Royal coat of arms can be seen. Other interesting objects which can be seen in some of the illustrations are described below.

No.118,119:- the George Hotel was claimed to be readily recognised by its handsome 'portico' which covered the approach to the hotel affording 'convenient protection on alighting or entering carriages or public conveyances' to or from the hotel.

No.120:- Messrs. Norman & Buckman, ironmongers had 'an unpretending frontage bearing the significant emblem of the ANVIL, to mark the trade of the occupiers', an old custom had apparently gone into general disuse by the time of 1845.

A well-painted pane in the window described the following passage from Shakspeare's King John:

"I saw a smith stand with his hammer, thus,
The whilst his iron did on the anvil cool,
With open mouth swallowing a tailor's news."

Apparently this picture was illuminated at night to give a very striking and pleasing effect.

No.130:- Mr. Joseph French, grocer & tea dealer
His accommodation above the shop had a 'gigantic Tea Cannister', presumably to attract customers.

No.351:- Public Office
Above the Public Office entrance projected a large Town Clock, which formed a good landmark for visitors!

No.361:- Mr. Davison, fancy repository & silversmith

To one side of the shop's window was fitted a barometer and thermometer. This was designed for the benefit of the public to check on the weather conditions. Above the shop an umbrella model was also on display to attract people's attention.

No.371:- Mr. Joslin, chemist & druggist

A 'leviathan' pestle and mortar existed on the upper part of the front of the house. This was also designed to 'readily direct attention, even at a street's length, to the Drug Depository below'.

No.384:- Lee's Royal Library

Here chairs were placed in front of the library windows which appear to be well used. Presumably they were there to attract customers, although Rowe suggests they also accommodate loungers and they were usually 'occupied by a busy group of intelligent looking controversialists'.

No.392:- Assembly Rooms

These rooms were described as forming a 'conspicuous ornament in the street view' and its portico stretched right across the pavement.

Some errors are evident in the Guide. Were all the illustrations carried out by Rowe himself or were some done for him by an apprentice? No.377 (Mrs Waterfall, cook & confectioner) had No.387 incorrectly illustrated above the doorway. No.134 (J&J Taylor, grocers) were shown twice on pages 10 and 48! Had these been illustrated by the same artist?

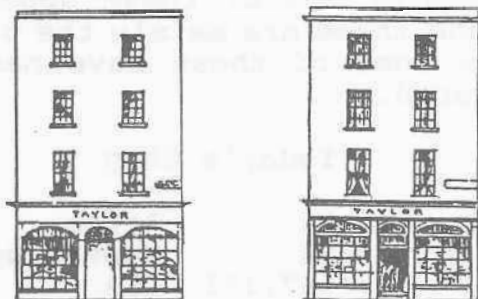


fig.4

No.346 (Mr Hollis, gunsmith) was described on page 84 and claimed to be shown in the addenda, which admitted there that the illustration had been misplaced on page 99.

Names were sometimes spelt slightly differently when compared with the directory (eg No.400, Mathews & Co; No397, Prockter). However, the directory (Matthews; Proctor) may have been incorrect in these cases.

Although many of the 67 illustrated buildings have been demolished and rebuilt, apart from St. Mary's Church, three other buildings in the High Street look very similar to their 1845 illustrations. These are:-

1845's Nos.		Today's Nos.
55	Belle Vue Hotel	23
177/178	General Hospital	311
257/256	New Burying Ground	444/436

The Belle Vue is also shown here because it includes the entrance to the Upper High Street.



fig.5

Cheltenham's General Hospital and Dispensary had existed since 1813, but had been enlarged in 1839. The New Burying Ground or Cemetery was purchased in 1830 due to the crowded state of St. Mary's churchyard.

Of the remaining 64 High Street buildings most facades have been completely changed. However, 15 of these appear to have some similar artistic views and these are mainly the upper front parts of the buildings. Even some of these have had the number of their upper stories reduced.

1845's Shop		Today's Shop
85		91 Argos
86		93 Superdrug
105,106		147,151 C&A
109		159 Thomas Cook
110		161 Saxone
121		189 Hill Samuel
187		331 (Household Goods)
246		458 Regent Components
306		318 MountStevens Bakers
344		222 Super Towels
345		218 Paris
346		216 Sketchley/SupaSnaps
382		158 Dixons (part)
384		152? Radio Rentals
428		46,46a Pan Pizza Delivery

Rowe's building illustrations are reprinted here and although they have been kept legible they are not quite as good as their original book quality. Fortunately, most of the buildings were illustrated directly opposite although some were shown at a slight angle (eg the Plough). The related map area of the High Street has been added below the buildings to assist in seeing where they would have been. Numbers have also been included on each map area, at road junctions to help with showing the buildings' positions.

The building illustration sizes were shown at different scales throughout the book. Although most are shown slightly smaller here it has been attempted to show how they would have appeared together in 1845. Apologies if the sizes are not exactly correct.

A map of the High Street (fig.6) has been included taking adjacent road names from the 1844 directories. Here Rowe's routes (1-4) have been ignored and instead the buildings have been split into convenient sections. This has resulted in ten areas (figs.7-10), in increasing street numbers, of the High Street. These start on the North side from the Upper High Street down to the Lower High Street, (figs.7,8), and then continue on the South side of the Lower High Street back to the Upper High Street, (figs.9,10). The eighteen buildings which survive (listed on page 6) are marked with an asterisk(*) in figs.7-10.

By arranging the shops in this new format, it is intended to make it easier today to see where the shops, from Rowe's 1845 Guide Book, were to be found in the High Street.

References.

- 1) Rowe, G., The Illustrated Cheltenham Guide (1845), reprinted 1969, 1981
- 2) Blake, S., & Beacham, R., The Book of Cheltenham (1982)
- 3) Hart, G.M., A History of Cheltenham (1965)
- 4) Blake, S., George Rowe, Artist & Lithographer 1796-1864, Catalogue of Exhibition (1982)
- 5) Harper's Cheltenham Street Directory (1844)
- 6) Cheltenham Annales (1844)

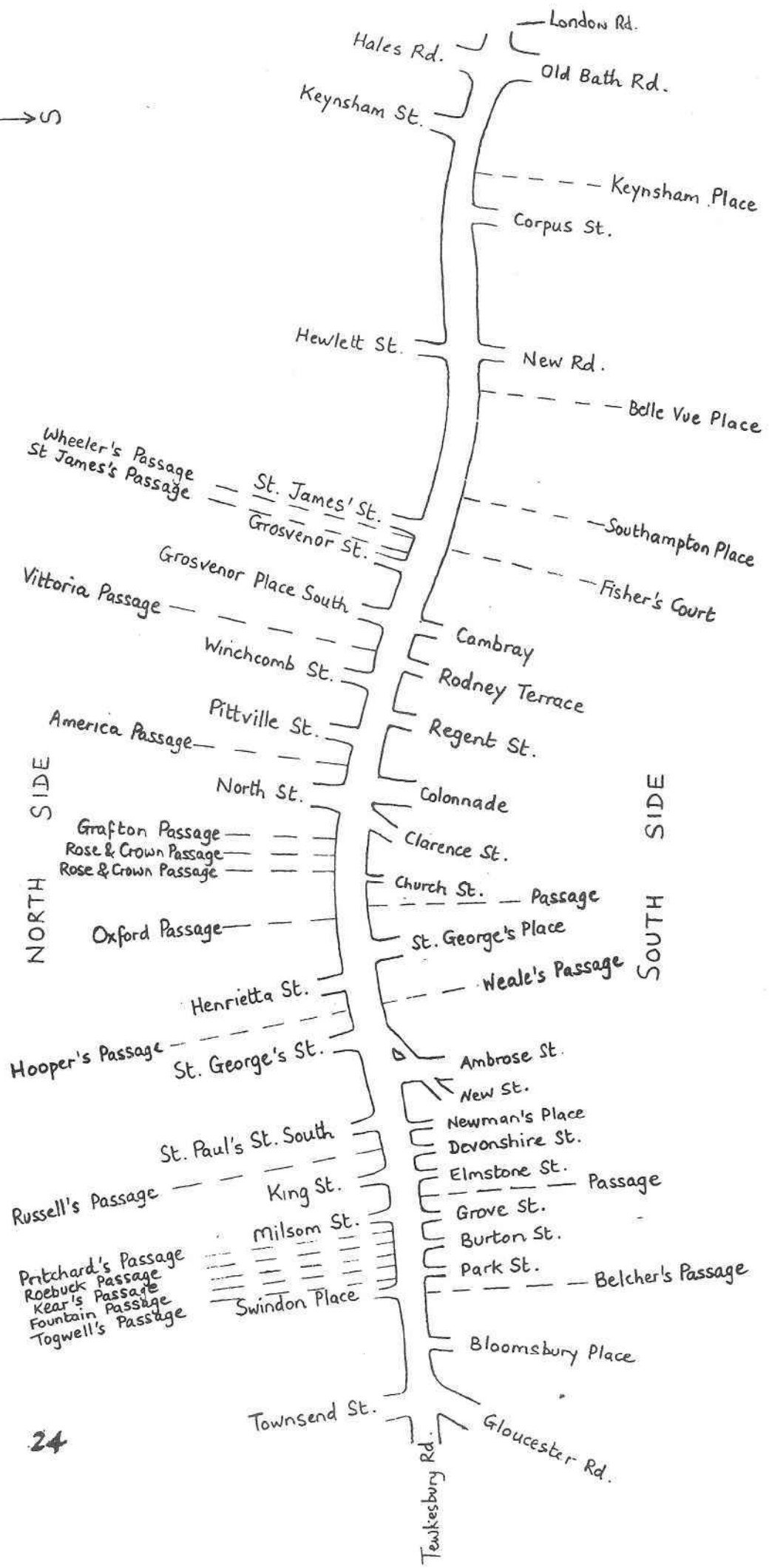
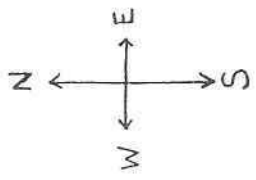


FIG 6 : CHELTENHAM HIGH STREET (1845)
With Side Passages included

Figure 7 : CHELTENHAM HIGH STREET (1845)
North Side (Nos.55-121)

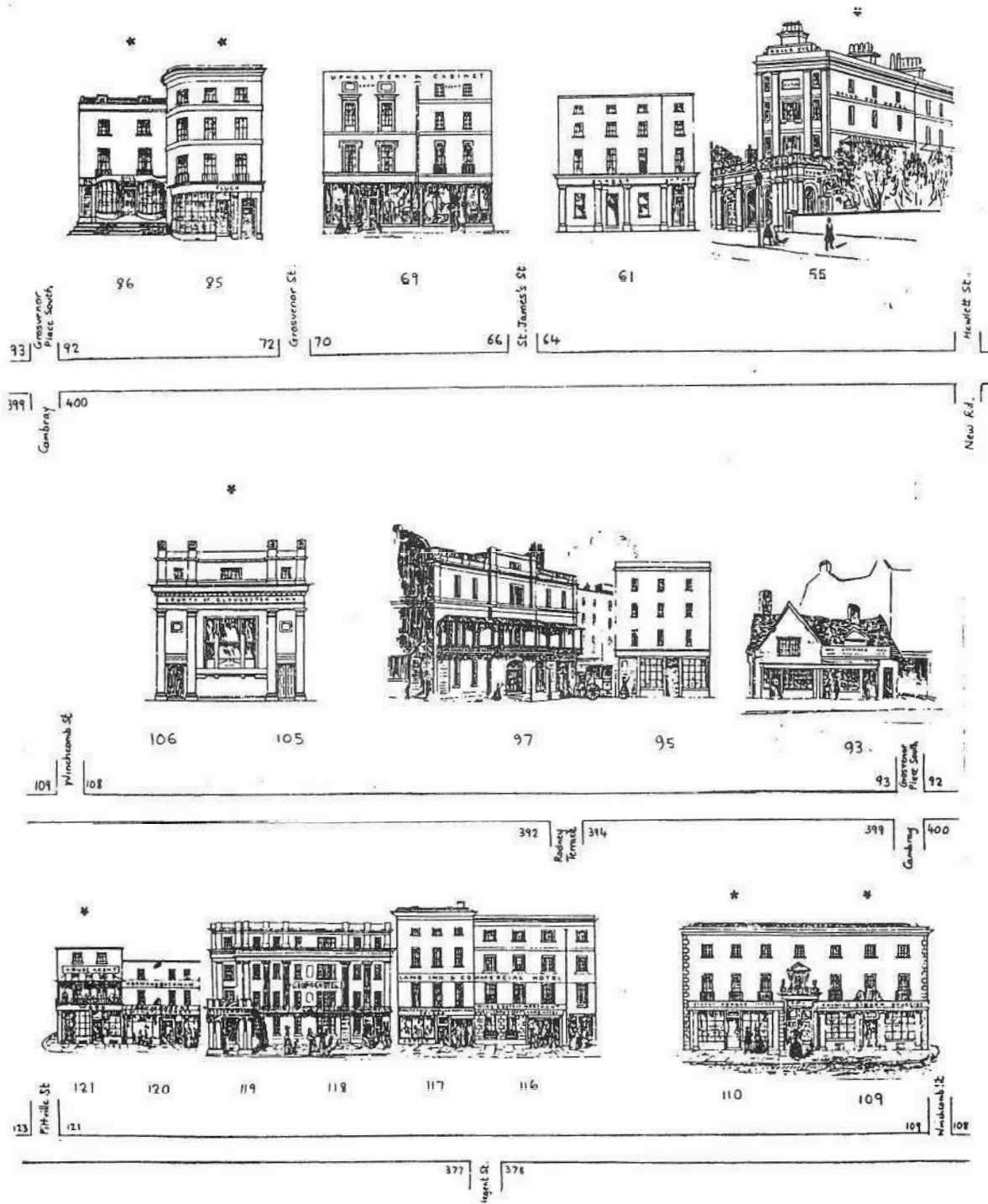


Figure 8 : CHELTENHAM HIGH STREET (1845)
North Side (Nos.123-187)

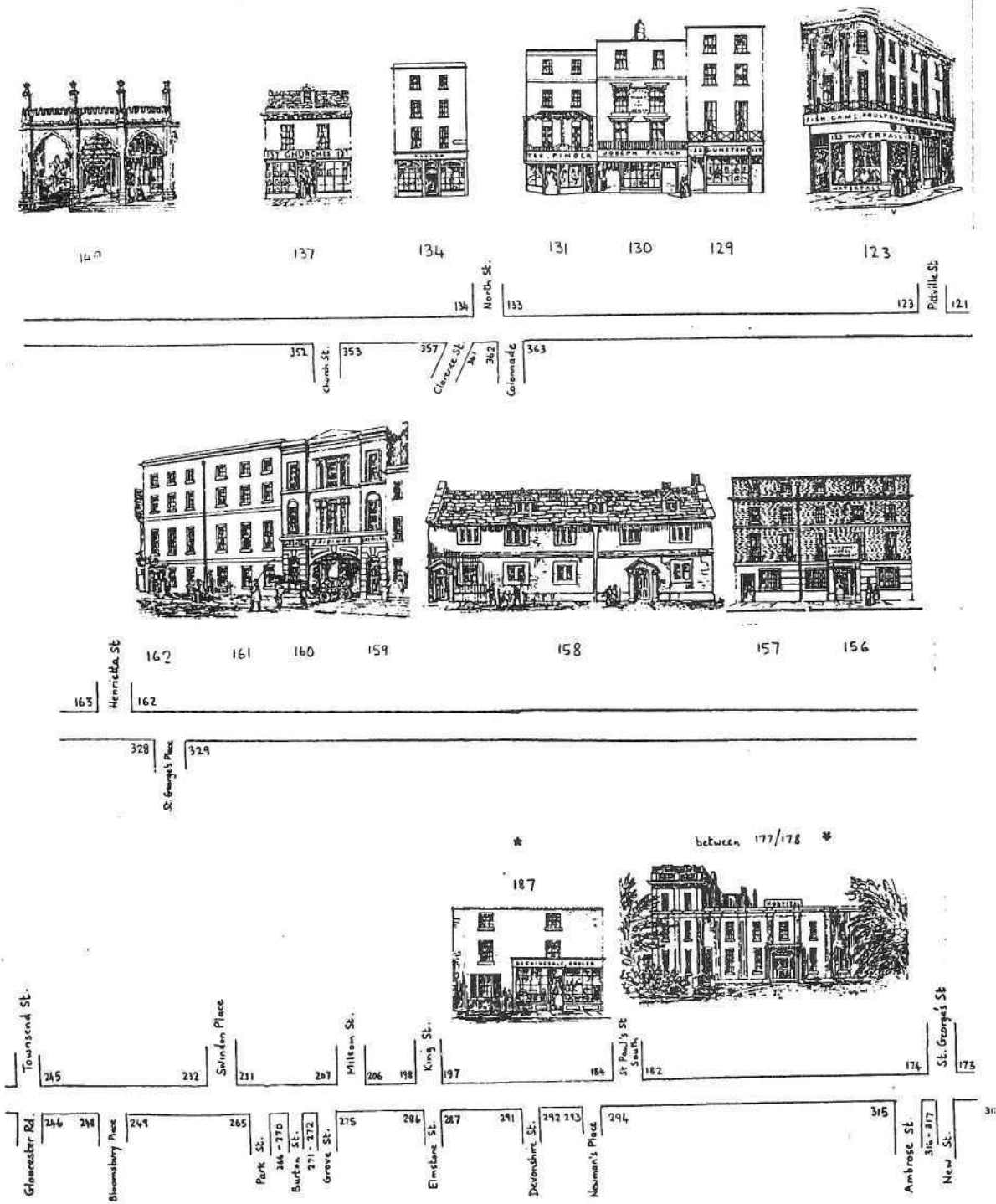


Figure 9 : CHELTENHAM HIGH STREET (1845)
South Side (Nos.246-377)

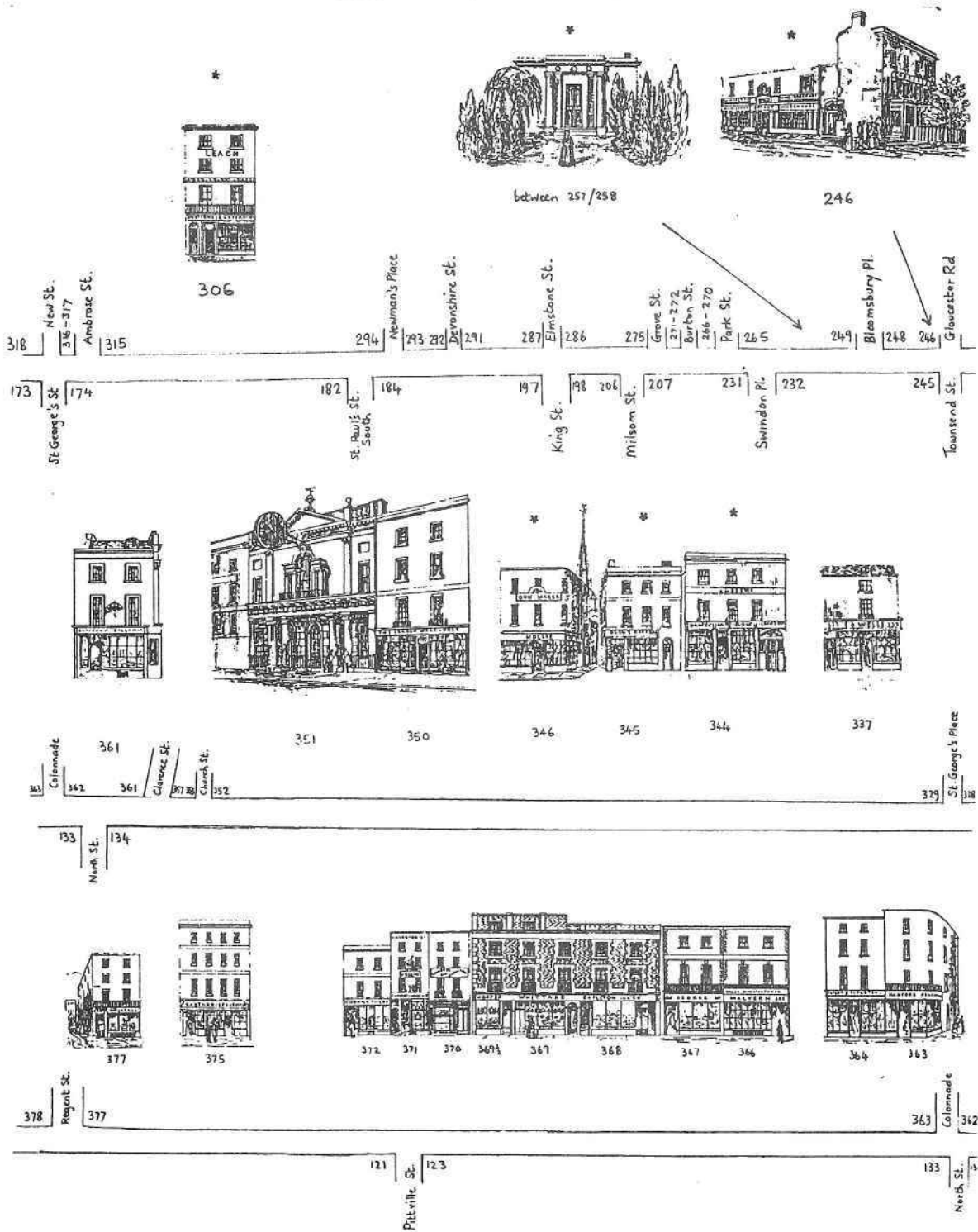
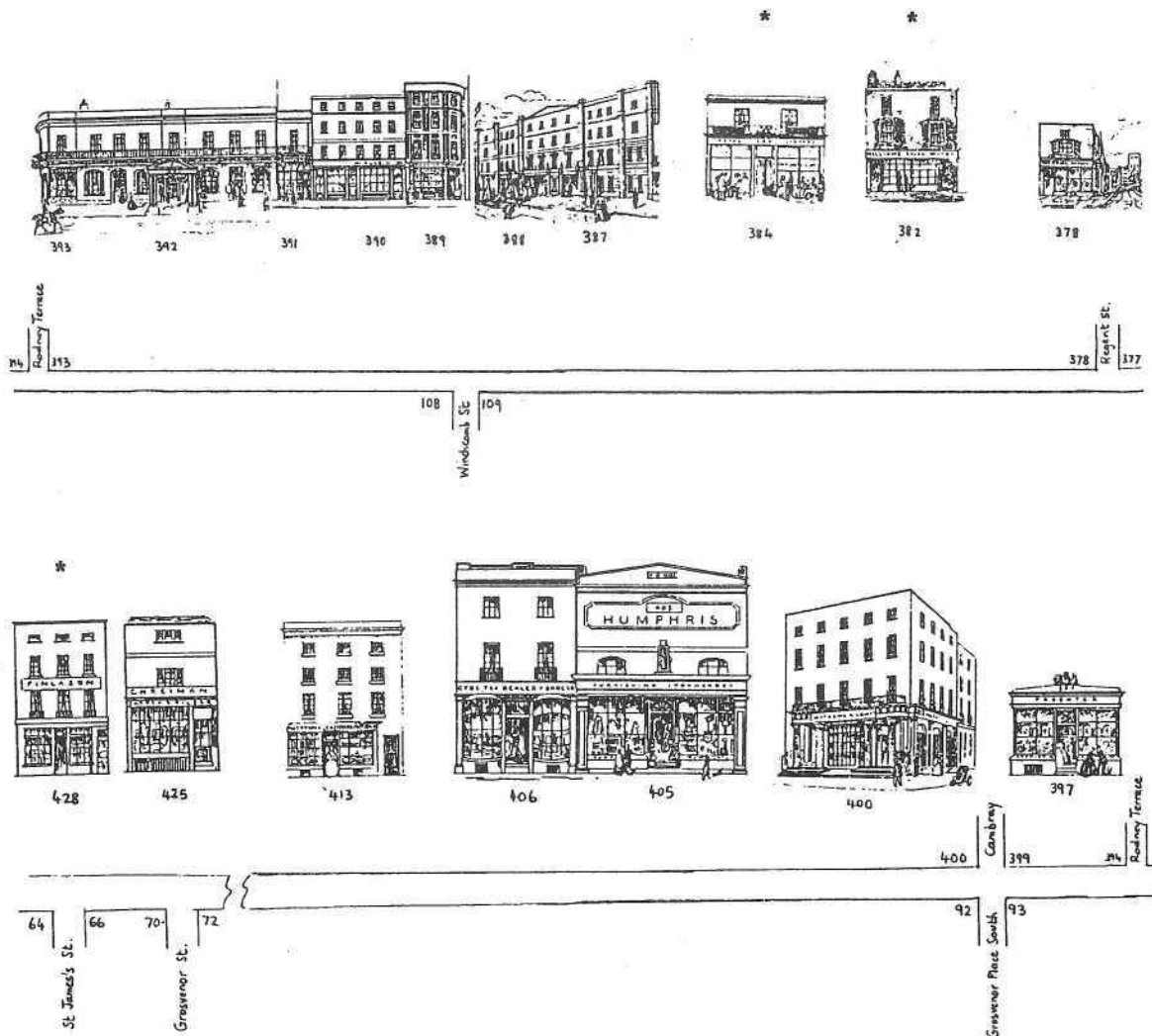


Figure 10 : CHELTENHAM HIGH STREET (1845)
South Side (Nos.378-428)



... another retrospection

FURTHER TO the article "Cheltenham Streets That Never Were", more information has come to light on the projected *Cambrey Parade*, which was to have run from Bath Road, near the Chelt, in a grand sweep round to Sandford Road. The scheme is referred to in a short notice in the *Cheltenham Chronicle* of 31 January 1825, the same year as it appears on Griffith's map.

"New street: We are informed that the above, on a magnificent scale comprising upwards of 200 houses of the first magnitude, is about to be connected in the Bath Road leading from the garden and premises of Colonel Ollney and continuing in a circular form occupying nearly 14 acres of land. It will be 80 feet wide, and the houses built upon a plan and under the superintendence of Mr Edwards, architect".

At the moment, nothing more is known of the moving spirits behind this very ambitious, and as it happened ill-timed scheme, but the mention of Ollney may give a clue. Col James Ollney (d 1836) was a magistrate and town commissioner, with known interests in property development. His name survived, until the houses were renumbered as 36-40 Carlton Street, in a short terrace called Ollney Place.

JAMES HODSDON

'Disgraceful practical joking'

JOHN ELLIOTT

READERS OF the *Cheltenham Examiner* of the 14th February 1844 would have been astonished to learn that the "joke" concerned the incumbent of the Parish Church, the Reverend Francis Close, the sending to him of a hamper containing the coffin of a baby boy. Today we might think that an event like this warranted a more serious heading but this was in some ways a more robust age. Victoria had only been on the throne some ten years and the *mores* of the reign of George IV were still appropriate. However Mr Close had been incumbent rather longer, since 1826, and was already making a name for himself by his intemperate attacks on the theatre, on racing, on High Church practices, on railway excursions on Sundays, and even on oratorio singing in the Cathedral. He was a man of immense energy and personal attractiveness and there is no doubt that his involvement in local affairs, his support for new churches and for church schools, and his unswerving support for the Protestant ethos brought him great local notoriety. It is not surprising that the events of the 7th and 8th of February and the accounts of the subsequent inquest aroused intense local speculation.

The inquest, held at the Clarence Hotel, was reported in all the local papers but most of what follows is taken from the *Cheltenham Examiner* since it is that paper which reported the events most fully. After viewing the body, the Coroner, Mr J Barrett, opened the inquest. Mr Barrett seemed to have been an official of decided views since he started by warning the jury not to be influenced by recent transactions in a neighbouring town, Winchcombe, where the proceedings at an inquest were investigated by a tribunal, not constitutional but self-elected, and presided over by a nobleman and the trustees of the Grammar School who without having the slightest power to do so, impugned the verdict of a jury after long and patient investigation. Mr Barrett clearly felt strongly on the subject since he went on at some length before returning to the matter in hand and calling the first witness.

CHARLES HILLYER, clerk at Cheltenham railway station, confirmed that the basket and address produced were received at the railway station off the train which arrived from Birmingham at 10 minutes after 9 on the night of the 7th. It was forwarded by omnibus for delivery to the Royal Hotel. The railroad bill tallied with the direction produced which had on it "The Rev Mr Close, Bays Hill, Cheltenham". It was returned on Thursday about 2 o'clock and had been opened. It was taken into the taproom of the station where it remained until he received the coroner's orders for its removal.

GEORGE FINCH, porter at the Royal Hotel coach office, stated that the basket was taken by him to Mr Close on Thursday morning about 9 o'clock. It had been brought to the coach office on Wednesday night about 10 o'clock and he received 1s 11d for carriage.

CLEMENT JAMES HAWKINS MRC indicated that he had examined the dead body of a child under the direction of the coroner. He had found it placed in a coffin in a hamper, packed tight with hay. A cap was on its head and a bed gown on its body, the whole being covered with a napkin. A post mortem confirmed that it had been properly attended to at birth. It was a male child weighing 8lbs. He could not say how long it had been dead but suggested that a disease of the large intestine could have been a cause of death.

JOHN RUSSELL, fruiterer and greengrocer of No 3 Clarence Street, told the Court that at about 10 o'clock a boy came to him at his shop to say that Mr Close wanted to see him immediately at The Grange. On going there Mr Close had told him that a basket had come to him from the Royal Hotel and that in the basket was a coffin. Mr Russell went with Mr Close downstairs where Mr Close put a screwdriver under the lid. Mr Russell assisted him by forcing the lid open with his hands. Inside was the body of a child. Between the coffin and the basket was a quantity of hay which concealed it from view. Mr Close went with Mr Russell to the magistrate's office to ask for advice. They advised that the basket should be returned to the Royal Hotel.

The inquest was then adjourned. So far the inquest had been routine but now matters took on a rather more contentious tone. Mr Barrett was clearly very angry. A copy of the *Morning Advertiser*, a London newspaper, had been put into his hands containing an incorrect and garbled account of the former sitting's proceedings. Evidence was misstated and persons dragged before the public who were not before the jury. He almost regretted having allowed reporters of the public press to be present at the enquiry. It was also communicated to the Coroner that Mr Close was in an adjoining room and ready to give evidence if required. The Coroner thought that there was no need of Mr Close's evidence. The first witness was then called.

SARAH DALMAN, parlourmaid to Mr Close, said she received a hamper from a porter from the Royal Hotel, took it to the kitchen, opened it, saw there was a coffin and told the cook who took the coffin to Mr Close in his room. At this point one of the jurors asked whether there had been any female applying

to the Grange in the 'family way' who had been refused relief. Sarah Dalman said there hadn't but she had only been there herself two months.

HARRIET BLAND, cook, added that when Mr Close saw the coffin he took a turn-screw and lifted a corner of the lid. She saw a piece of white cloth. Mr Close carried the coffin down to the cellar, locked the door and put the key into his pocket. She commented that no-one could have seen the hamper through the kitchen window. Mrs Bland went on to refer to a servant called Weaver who had left Mr Close's service some three months ago. She had left with a good character and had had no quarrel with her master. Although she had been fond of playing tricks Mrs Bland hoped she would not play any serious tricks! It was commented by a Mr Rowe at this point that although Weaver had been a stout girl she didn't get any stouter previous to her leaving.

There was then a startling development. Mr JOSEPH YATES, one of the jurymen, gave evidence that he had been at the George Inn on the evening of the 9th with various other persons. A person named Leopold Sach was also present. Mr Sach asserted that he had been in the kitchen when the coffin was opened and that there was a paper on the body with the words written on it "Behold Thy Likeness". This was said quite loud and over and over again. Mr Sach was sober at the time. Mr Sach was informed that Mr Yates was on the jury, and Mr Yates left the room and communicated the matter to the police.

MR FLEISCHMANN, proprietor of the George Inn, said that he was present and corroborated Mr Yates' evidence. He added that Mr Sach was a teacher of Hebrew.

MR LEOPOLD SACH was then called to the witness box. He swore on the Bible but with his hat on! His evidence was extremely confused and rambling. He indicated that he went to the Grange very frequently to receive money, adding that it was not money due to him or lent to him. He used to give Mr Close an acknowledgement for it to repay him when he received his money from Greece. It seemed that he had a brother who was secretary to the King of Greece (presumably Otho of the House of Bavaria who reigned from 1832 to 1862). He went on to say that his friend Mr Francis Adolphus had told him about the inquest. Mr Adolphus was a Pole, while he was a German. While Sach admitted that he had been at the George Hotel and had told his companions that he had been at the Grange when the coffin was opened, that there was something written under the coffin and that the words were "Behold Thy Likeness", he asserted that he did not say this of his own knowledge but from what his friend Mr Adolphus had told him. The witness explained that he had been talking in the historical manner according to German custom - "It was written", "it was said".

At this point the Coroner, not surprisingly, indicated that he would very much like to procure the attendance of Mr Adolphus. On being told by Police Constable Scott that he had been to Mr Adolphus' address only to find that he had left town, Mr Yates interjected that this was untrue. He had seen Mr Adolphus on Monday and Mr Adolphus had in fact called on him several times and had asked him not to come to give evidence. Mr Yates does seem to have played a curious role in this affair!

Mr Sach was then called back to the witness box. He insisted that he knew nothing about the body of a child, and again reported that he was accustomed to go to the Grange several times a week. He couldn't remember which days he was there and suggested he might have been there on the Thursday in question but wasn't sure. His intention on visiting the Grange was to ask about particular things between himself and the clergy. It was nothing to do with religion or money, it was respecting a recommendation he had received from other persons. He was usually seen in the kitchen or the cellar of the Grange. Again he insisted that he did not look through the window and that he had not seen a basket at the Grange. He only reported what his friend Mr Adolphus had told him and he added that Mr Adolphus was now out of town. He went to the Grange according to his own pleasures and at this stage he refused to say whether he received money there since it was a particular question and not necessary to the enquiry. After being told by the Coroner that it was a very particular question in his position, Mr Sach admitted that he received from Mr Close about 16 shillings a week, adding that he gave memorandums to him and that money was also advanced in respect of some pictures which were pledged in London. Oddly this matter was not pursued by the Court. Mr Sach continued by insisting that he had not represented himself to Mr Close as a converted Jew but went to obtain instruction with a view to conversion. He concluded by saying that when he went to the George the company there were speaking against Mr Close and that was why he mentioned what he had been told by Mr Adolphus.

No further witnesses were called and in his summing up the Coroner took the opportunity to attack Mr Sach for spreading an infamous slander since there was no evidence to show how the body got there and then went on at some length to express a great sense of outrage and the hope that the perpetrators would be found and brought to justice.

Needless to say, the papers of the following weeks were full of fulsome expressions of sympathy for Mr Close, and the *Examiner* printed in full the presentation of an address to Mr Close signed by a large

number of the worthies of Cheltenham stressing their destination of such a vile insult. In his reply Mr Close not only thanked the inhabitants of the town for their support but also confirmed that he had received several letters threatening his life which he had passed to the Police.

This seems to me to be an unsatisfactory conclusion to an odd case. There are too many loose ends for comfort. Who was Francis Adolphus? Were efforts made to contact him and if not, why not? What happened to Leopold Sach, and did he continue his visits to the Grange? What were the pictures in London? Why wasn't Mr Close asked to confirm or deny what Sach disclosed about their dealings?



Recent books and articles on the Cheltenham area

Aldred, D., (ed) & Gotherington Area Local History Society, *Gotherington: the history of a village*, Alan Sutton Publishing, Stroud, 1993. 123pp. £6.00.

Bick, D., *Old Leckhampton*, (new enlarged edition), Runpast Publishing, Cheltenham, 1994. 72pp. £8.95

Cadle, E., *Light on Leckhampton*, published by the author, 1993. 32pp. £1.00.

Chatwin, A., 'Cheltenham mills', *Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology Journal*, 1993, 3 - 15.

Clark, K., *The ghosts of Gloucestershire*, Redcliffe Press, Bristol, 1993. 80pp. £4.99. Includes Cheltenham and Prestbury references.

Denning, A., [edited and extended by Paul Ranger], *Theatre in the Cotswolds. The Boles Watson family and the Cirencester Theatre*, The Society for Theatre Research, 1993. 254pp. Includes a detailed account of the Cheltenham theatre.

Doughton, D., 'The early decades of the Cheltenham Dispensary', *Gloucestershire History*, 8 (1994), 4-9.

Garrett, J.V., *Cleeve Common and the North Cotswolds*, Thornhill Press, Parkend, 1993. 104pp. £8.95.

Gill, P., *Cheltenham at war in old photographs*, Alan Sutton Publishing, Stroud, 1994. 128pp. £7.99.

Kippin, M., *The history of the Cheltenham Silver Band, 1937-1989*, privately printed, 1994. 22pp. £2.50.

Mourton, S., *Steam route around Cheltenham*, Runpast Publications, Cheltenham, 1993. 96pp. £8.95.

Paget, M., *Charlton Kings Local History Society Bulletins*, published half-yearly.

Pierce, S., *Cambray Baptist Church 1843-1993*, published by the church, 1993. 120pp.

Sinclair, I. (ed), *The pyramid and the urn. The life in letters of a Restoration Squire: William Lawrence of Shurdington, 1639-1697*, Alan Sutton Publishing, Stroud, 1994. 161pp. £16.00

Stait, B. (ed), *Leckhampton 1894. The end of an era*, Leckhampton Local History Society, 1994, 64pp. £3.50.

STEVEN BLAKE

Cheltenham's earliest postcards

STEVEN BLAKE

ON 1ST SEPTEMBER 1894, the Post Office agreed that privately - printed postcards, with an adhesive halfpenny stamp, could be sent through the post. Before then, the only available cards were those produced by the Post Office itself, with a printed halfpenny stamp. These had been introduced in 1870 and, at only half the cost of posting a letter, were very popular.

By the end of 1894, publishers in Scarborough and Edinburgh had produced cards with small views of their towns; these measured 4¼ inches x 3½ inches, and any message had to be on the same side as the view, the back being reserved for the address.

Between 1894 and the turn of the century, publishers in many other towns, including Cheltenham, followed suit. At least a dozen different examples of Cheltenham postcards dating from before 1902 (when the 'divided back' was introduced, so that the whole of one side could be given over to the view) are known. A number of these were posted in 1899 and 1900 by at least two young ladies named Weber, to their mother and sister in Germany, and from their messages it is possible to identify with reasonable certainty the earliest Cheltenham cards.

A total of eight cards sent by the Misses Weber, now in two private collections, are known. They were presumably once in a family album, which was broken up for sale. The earliest card (Fig.1), with a message dated 28th January 1899, shows a view of the Promenade, looking north from Imperial Square. It was published by J.J. Banks's Imperial Library, which was also in the Promenade. Its message includes the significant words, "these cards have only just been published. There are only two, as yet". The second card referred to (Fig.2) was a view of Pittville Lake, also published by Banks's Library. It has a message dated 15th February 1899, including the words, "this p.c. and the one of the Prom. I sent you last time are the only ones published of Cheltenham as yet". The cards have the numbers 230 and 231 printed on them, and may therefore have been part of a large series of cards, though clearly not all of Cheltenham!

One of the Banks's cards was addressed to Miss W.M. Weber, and the other to Miss F. Weber, to an address in Rungsdorf, near Bonn, although their messages, and subsequent cards, reveal that these were actually the same person. The cards are simply signed with a letter, which appears to be an H, although it is not very clear. What is clear, however, is that on 13th November 1899, the same person sent no less than three cards to Miss F. Weber, at the same Rungsdorf address (Fig.3). These were a view of Pittville Lake, a view of the Promenade showing 'Harward's Buildings', the terrace now largely occupied by the Municipal Offices, and another view of the Promenade from the Queen's Hotel, showing the Sebastopol Cannon; this latter view is erroneously titled 'The Parade'. No publisher's name is given, but the error in one of the titles may suggest a non-local publishers.

The messages on the November 1899 cards are of interest for two reasons. Firstly, they reveal the sender as a keen collector of postcards, as one of them includes the words, "how is your collection going? I have more than 300 cards now". Secondly, the cards refer to an impending visit to Cheltenham Ladies College by Princess Beatrice of Battenberg, to unveil a bust of Queen Victoria - an event which took place on 16th November 1899. Clearly, the writer was a pupil at the College, and its Admissions Book does indeed refer to the admission of one Agnes Ernestina Annabella Weber, aged 14 years 10 months, in September 1899. Her Guardian was the Revd. G.H. Weber, and her home address was the same as the one to which the postcards were sent in Germany.

Three further postcards, sent by Nesta Weber (as she signed herself), to her mother and sister in Rungsdorf between May and December 1900 are known. They reveal her sister's name to have been Frieda. Puzzlingly, although all three cards are signed by Nesta, the writing on each of them is rather different, and none is particularly like that on the five earlier cards. This may, however, simply be the variations of a young hand, and all eight cards may well have been sent by Nesta. Certainly the tone of their messages is similar, and they reveal their writer as a regular sender of cards, as one of them, posted to her mother on 14th June 1900 states that, "this is my fortnightly p.c. to Frieda".

None of the three cards posted by Nesta in 1900 has a publisher's name, but they do appear to be part of the same set of cards, with similar print. One, sent to Frieda on 10th May (Fig 4), shows another view of Pittville Lake, and gives Nesta's Cheltenham address as 28 Park Place. The card posted to her mother on 14th June (Fig 5) shows the Promenade and Winter Garden, while the third card, also posted to her mother, on 12th December (Fig 6), shows the earliest known postcard view of the Parish Church. It refers to Nesta's impending Christmas visit to Germany, and also includes a message from someone signing herself May, probably the May E. Weber who is recorded in the Autumn 1904 Ladies' College Magazine as having left the College in December 1903 to train as a teacher at Cambridge.

Presuming that we may believe the claim of the writer of these cards that the two Banks's Library postcards were the earliest of the town, the advent of postcards in Cheltenham may be dated to late 1898 or early 1899. Whether any others were published of surrounding parishes before then is less clear - there are several very early views of Leckhampton Hill, and Nesta Weber (if she was indeed the sender of these earliest Cheltenham cards) may not have counted those as Cheltenham! Even so, the chance discovery of these cards has thrown some light on the origins of one of the town's most familiar and popular types of visual record.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to the current owners of these postcards for permission to consult them, and to produce them here. I am also grateful to Janet Johnstone, Librarian at Cheltenham Ladies' College, for making College Records available to me.



No. 231. Publ. J. J. Banks.

The Promenade.

Figure 1: front and back of the card dated 28 January 1899 (actual size)

Thank you very much Cheltenham,
indeed for the pretty calendar Jan 28th /99.
I like it so much - I will write
to you tomorrow. These cards
have only just been published -
there are only two, as yet.
Did you receive my P.C. from
Crasbourne? Love from H.

CARD.



Miss W. M. Weber

Aram

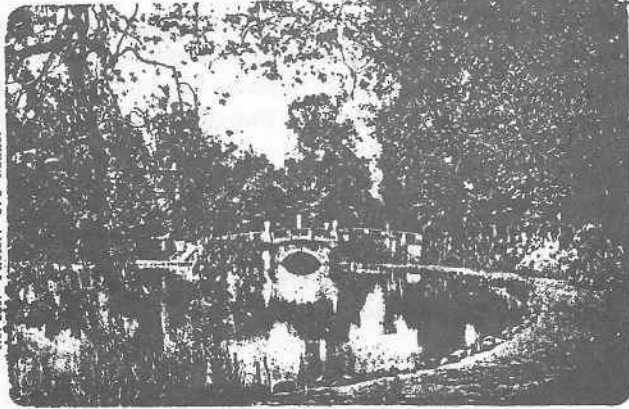
Rhein Allee

Rüngsdorf

Bonn



Germany -



No. 984. Photo: J. J. Banker.

Pittville Gardens.

Thanks so much for Cheltenham. Feb. 15-
 the pretty p.c. you sent me. We are
 so dreadfully sorry to hear that
 you have had influenza & neuralgia
 again - I hope lay before this
 reaches you, you will be quite well
 This p.c. is the one of the prom. I sent
 you last time are the only ones published
 of Chelt. as yet. Much love from M.
 Do write soon.

POST-CARD.



Miss F. Weber

Arām

Rhein Allee

Rüngsdorf

Bonn

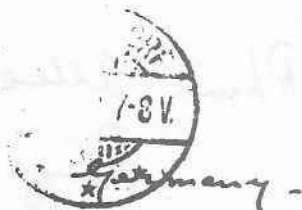
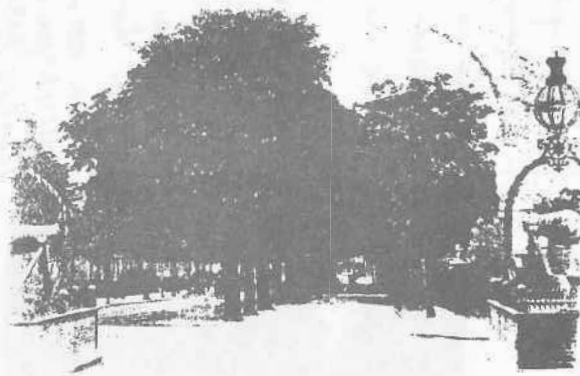


Fig 2: front and back of card dated 15 February 1899 (actual size)

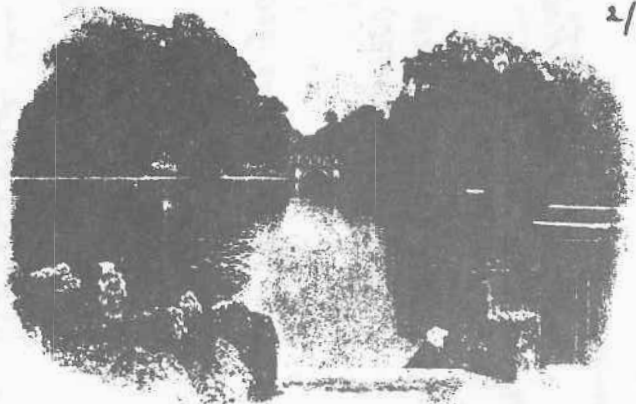


The Parade, Cheltenham.

Nov: 13th - 1899 -

This is to wish you very many happy returns of your birthday - I hope you will spend a very happy day - We are so busy now, as the Princess Beatrice is coming on Thursday to

35



Pixie Gardens, Cheltenham.

unveil a bust of the Queen at College - There is going to be a sort of dedication service & the orchestra have to play - so there are such heaps of extra practices & things - It is so nice having Uncle

Fig 3: three cards dated
13 November 1899
(actual size)

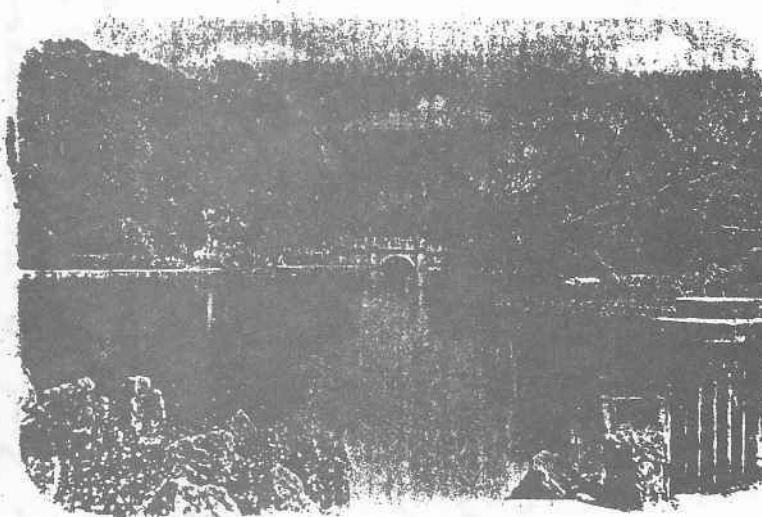


The Promenade, Cheltenham.

& Auntie here. The letter looks much better than I expected - I am going to write tomorrow but I hope these cards I will reach you on the 15th

How is your collection getting on? I have more than 300 cards now - Very much love from

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PITTVILLE GARDEN. CHELTENHAM.

25 Park Place Thursday
Cheltenham May 10th M.C.M.

Dear Frieda
Thanks for
letter. I had
forgotten
about the P.C.
but here is
the first.
Return one
soon there's
a dear.
With love
From
Nesta Heber.

PROMENADE & WINTERGARDEN. CHELTENHAM.

Darling Mother. Can Jessie
come and stay with us for
these summer holidays
Please let her quicker at once
because I must let her know
at once. I suggested her in
the holiday she was awfully
keen on it. This P.C. is my
fortnightly & Frieda
Nesta.

Fig 4: card dated
10 May 1900

Fig 5: card posted 14 June 1900

Fig 6: card posted
12 December 1900



PARISH CHURCH. CHELTENHAM.
So write soon

Please will you send the
prescription for the journey!!!
Mr. Rimmington's at once as the
time is getting rather near.
The act comes off to-morrow
& we are all awfully excited.
I'm in you on Tuesday 10th
Hope to see you on Wednesday &
Thursday at Cologne station.
Must you answer at once so
that we can have it made
up. Love from Nesta. If we
can scrape round by Tuesday I
will let you know. But I doubt it.
There is packing & every thing to be done
^{over the 9th} It is a horrid day, raining, raining.
your sister May.

Gloucestershire Record Office accessions 1994 relating to the Cheltenham area

- * Burton Knowles, Estate Agents: additional property files c. 1967-74. (D2299)
- * Cheltenham Coroner: case papers 1919-92 (CO 7)
- * Cheltenham Borough Council: building control plans pre-1974 (CBR)
- Cheltenham Marriage Guidance Council (now 'Relate'): minutes 1945-68; newscuttings 1945-88; handbook 1970s-80s (D7064)
- Cheltenham Methodist Circuit: minutes 1964-91; accounts 1866-1991; chapel records 1897-1994 (D3418)
- merger papers and circuit plans, directories and magazine after merger with Tewkesbury circuit 1991-94 (D7028)
- * Dowty Rotol: AGM minutes of Rotol Airscrews (later Rotol Ltd) 1937-39; minutes of Rotol Inc. USA (later Dowty Rotol Inc. USA) 1957-62; Rotol ledgers 1930s-50s, five drawings 1940s & company seal register 1955-62; Dowty Group journal 1954-60 (n.b. missing issues nos. 13, 14, 16, 17, 19-21 and 23-? - if anyone has copies of these issues we would be pleased to hear from them!); pensioners' newsletter 'Newslink' 1989-93 (also missing nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 14, 20-?) (D6327)
- English Folk Dance & Song Society, Gloucestershire District: accounts 1971-90; newsletters 1990s (D5445 & D6511)
- Everyman Theatre: presscuttings books, photos, programmes, posters etc for productions c. 1945-90s (D6978)
- Gloucestershire Chinese Community: development reports, projects and newsletters 1993-94 (D6901)
- * Gloucestershire Citizens' Advice Bureaux Group: copies of group minutes 1965-85 (D3925)
- * Gloucestershire Diocese: correspondence files for diocesan schools and other education office records 1930s-80s' faculties 1992; confirmation returns 1993 (GDR)
- Gloucestershire Federation of Women's Institutes: council & committees' minutes 1948-90 (D6381)
- Gloucestershire Rugby Football Union: records 1878-1985 (D7035)
- Sir Charles Irving M.P.: photographic copy of his grant of coat of arms and crest, 1991 (D6917)
- Mr H G Williams of BGAS: colour slides of church fonts, stained glass and other features in churches throughout Gloucestershire 1970s-80s (D4984)
- Winterbotham family of Cheltenham: family papers 19th-20th cents. (D5731)
- * Pre-registration Title Deeds to properties in and around Cheltenham 19th-20th cents (D7063)
- Receipted bills for fruit trees etc bought from Cheltenham nurserymen 1869-92 (D7102)
- Sales catalogues, inventories, accounts, etc. relating to various farms and houses mainly near Cheltenham late 19th-mid 20th cents. (D6955)
- Traders' Association Handbook to Cheltenham: printers' proof of J. Burrow & Co. Ltd., 1916 (D6987)

Accessions marked with an asterisk may not be immediately available for research.

JULIE COURTENAY - Senior Cataloguer

**TITLES RECENTLY ADDED TO CHELTENHAM REFERENCE LIBRARY
LOCAL STUDIES COLLECTION**

CARRUTHERS, Annette &
GREENSTEAD, Mary

Good citizen's furniture: the Arts & Crafts
collections at Cheltenham.
Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum 1994.

CYPHER family

nurserymen of Cheltenham
album of newspaper clippings,
photographs, etc.

DENNING, Anthony
edited by Paul Ranger

Theatre in the Cotswolds: the Boles
Watson family & the Cirencester
Theatre.
Society for Theatre Research 1993.
[includes a chapter on the Cheltenham
theatres].

GILL, Peter

Cheltenham at War, in old photographs.
Alan Sutton 1994.

GIULIANO, Geoffrey

Paint it black: the murder of Brian Jones.
Virgin 1994.

KIPPIN, M.I.

The History of the Cheltenham Silver
Band 1937-1989.
Published by the author.

RAINEY, Christopher A.P.

The struggle for power & influence among
late 19th century Anglican professional
women with particular reference to the life
& works of Dorothea Beale.
Cheltenham & Gloucester College of
Higher Education. thesis. 1992.

SAMPSON, Aylwin

Holst and Cheltenham: a short account &
trail.
Holst Birthplace Museum Trust 1994.

Book reviews

J.V.GARRETT *Cleeve Common and the North Cotswolds*. Thornhill Press 1993 £8.95

IN TWO respects this account of an area closely associated with Cheltenham could be considered a sequel: the first publication appeared in 1919 and was entitled *From a Cotswold Height*, covering largely the same extent; and its author was the father of this book's. So the reason for writing, and the attraction, are that comparisons can be made between the landscape as it was then and the present. Since both father and son had keen interests in natural history, scenery and local lore, there is much to engage the reader.

The major part of the book is a series of descriptions of walks, firstly around Cleeve Common and then to more distant places like Hailes, Chipping Campden, and Broadway. Each excursion has details of route, flora and topography which serve the needs of the active user as well as the armchair traveller.

Acting as an overture to these walks John Garrett provides an overview of the character of the area, its features and the changes that have taken place over seventy years.

This is a book which clearly demonstrates the author's love of his subject, though it deserves higher quality photographs, and perhaps more meticulous attention to editing. The builder of Sezincote was Cockerell not Cockcroft; it was the Revd Francis not William Witts - but these are minor blemishes in a praiseworthy addition to the Cotswold corpus.

And, not least, the author is a member of this Society.

D.R. WEBBER *The History of Leckhampton School*. Privately published. n.d.

THE CHRONICLES of educational establishments like those of commercial institutions can range from the arid cataloguing of dates and names to the anecdotal assortment of trivial episodes. Both treatments may be of some interest to those who have been closely associated with the organisation, but of little consequence to the general reader.

However anyone concerned with local history will find in such publications material that makes its contribution to the fabric of the area, and by judicious selection extract relevancies that prove invaluable in creating a balanced account.

Thus, this modest booklet provides insights into the life of an unexceptional school over 150 years. Such topics as the buildings, health, discipline, subsequent occupations of pupils and finance form the bases of chapters. Inevitably there are lists of teachers, and indeed dates, but the overall characteristic is that of affectionate reminiscence.

If the quality of illustration had matched the engaging text and the story had been given more Leckhampton context this would have been a valuable addition to the village's history.

M. KIPPIN *Cheltenham Silver Band 1937-89*. Privately published. 1994. £2.50

THERE ARE perhaps few bands that can be recorded as making a debut at a women's football international, and even fewer at the triangular contest held in Cheltenham in 1938. So the subject of this little publication by a member both of the band, and our Society, begins its life with quite a headstart.

Formed as the Works Band of Aircraft Components Ltd its early association with Dowty ended somewhat unhappily when Sir George gave an ultimatum on the band's double booking - "play at my function or leave the Company."

So the new identity of a town band was established, its character and standards owing much to a succession of conductors each bringing his own personality. Many are the incidents, doubtless typical of such groups of musicians, recounted here. They are a delightful contribution to the history of the town.



Index to Issues 1-10 of the Journal

BERYL ELLIOTT

- Note: 1. The General Index includes personalities only where there is substantial reference. For research purposes, a fuller index of all persons mentioned by name is available separately.
2. Individual houses and terraces are indexed only where they are the subject of study.
3. References to newspapers, guides, maps and directories purely as a source are not indexed.
4. Reference is to **Journal number** and page.

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