Cheltenham Local History Society Journal 9 1992/1993

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:
Aylwin Sampson
33a Tivoli Road
Cheltenham GL50 2TD
tel. 237302

Statements are solely those of the contributors.

Membership of the Society includes receipt of this Journal and Newsletters which contain details of meetings and other activities. Further information may be obtained from the Membership Secretary:
Mrs Barbara Rawes
18 Oldfield Crescent
St Marks
Cheltenham GL51 7BA
tel. 528461

Grateful acknowledgement is made of Cheltenham Arts Council assistance in funding this publication.

Price to non-members £3

ISSN 026 3001

Printed by Top Flight,
93 St George's Place,
Cheltenham GL50 3QB

Artwork, unless stated otherwise, by the Editor

Cover drawing: a sedan chair once belonging to the Snooks family of Bourton-on-the-Water, and now in Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum (see Geoffrey Wilson's article on Public Hire Chairs in Cheltenham)

Charles Sturt: Australian Explorer and resident of Cheltenham

JANE SALE

A PLAQUE on the wall of 19 Clarence Square marks the house where Charles Sturt lived from 1863 until his death in 1869. During these years he lived quietly and modestly, 'like a hundred others who doze away the quiet evening of their lives at Cheltenham', as the *Daily Telegraph* expressed it in his obituary. (1) In Australia, however, Sturt is remembered for his courage and endurance in leading expeditions into the unknown interior of the continent. There his name has been given to a mountain, desert, creek and river, a main avenue in Canberra and a modern inter-state highway. His story has added poignancy in that he died shortly before his achievements were given official recognition by the granting of a knighthood.

Charles Sturt was born in India in 1795, one of eight sons of Napier Sturt, a judge in Bengal under the East India Company. The Sturts and Napiers were families 'of good birth' from Dorset, but always short of money. It was the prospect of easy wealth that had encouraged Napier to India, but Charles was always to feel at a disadvantage through lack of financial security.

After a childhood spent mostly in England, including a period at Harrow School, Charles joined the Dorsetshire Regiment, otherwise known as the 39th Regiment of Foot. He saw service against the French in the Pyrenees, against the Americans in Canada, and was in Ireland during the famine riots of 1821-2. By 1825 he had been promoted to the rank of Captain, and in 1826 sailed from Chatham on the *Mariner* in charge of the guard over convicts being sent to Australia.

On arrival at Sydney, Sturt was offered the post of Military Secretary to the Governor of New South Wales - Ralph Darling. By this time Sydney had become an established settlement, but only very limited exploration had been undertaken beyond the coastal range of mountains. The orchards and cornfields laid out by earlier settlers were no longer sufficient to feed the growing colony, especially in years of drought such as experienced in 1828. Governor Darling decided to send an expedition inland in search of greater areas of fertile land, and Sturt leapt at the chance to lead it. He was considered well-suited to the task for, as well as being a proven leader of men, he was an enthusiastic botanist and had a talent for sketching and writing.

On this first expedition, to the north west of Sydney, Sturt crossed the coastal mountains and followed the seemingly inland-flowing Macquarie River until it met an even bigger river. This he named the Darling 'to pay by this trifling mark of respect some part of the gratitude I owe to the present Governor of the Colony' (2). Having followed the Darling downstream for a considerable distance and discovered other rivers flowing into it, he returned to Sydney to report and prepare for a further expedition. In 1829 he set forth again, this time to the west of Sydney, following the Murrumbridgee River, in the hope of finding a route through to the Southern Ocean. He discovered one of Australia's greatest rivers - the Murray, which he named after Sir George Murray, the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Following the Murray, he passed the point where the Darling flowed into it, and eventually reached its outlet at a coastal lake on the southern shore, close to where Adelaide would later be established. He named it Lake Alexandrina, after the Princess who would be the future Queen Victoria. By the time the party returned to Sydney they had travelled over 2000 miles through mainly unknown territory, and opened up a large area for future settlement, which resulted in the formation of the South Australian Colonisation Association in London.

Sturt, from a portrait by Charles Koberwein

Sturt paid a heavy penalty for this achievement - his health was undermined and his eyesight never fully recovered from an attack of

temporary blindness. He was sent back to England for a two-year spell, during which he retired from the army, and devoted his time to writing up his expeditions and giving advice regarding the new colony of South Australia and the siting of its capital, Adelaide. After being granted an allotment of land in New South Wales, he married Charlotte Green in 1834 and set sail for Sydney, with the intention of settling down to farm his land. Their first two sons were born there, but Sturt was not happy farming, and he decided to sell his property and take up a position as Surveyor General in the newly-established Adelaide. Another son and a daughter were born there, but tensions arose with a new Governor over his pay and the period was not an entirely happy one. Sturt was restless and longing to set off again on further expeditions.

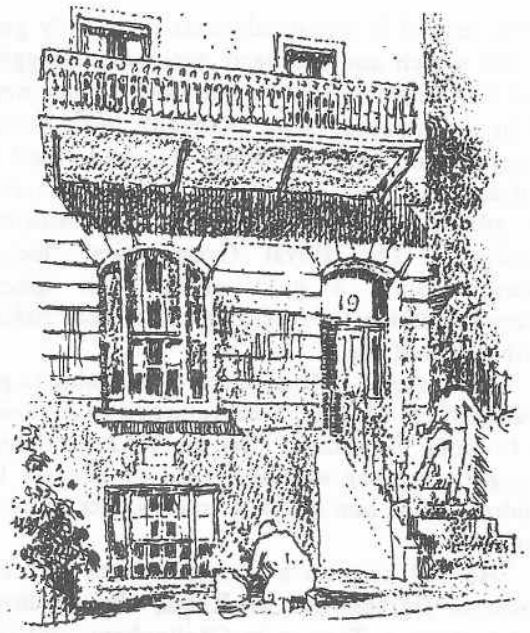
His observations on the way the rivers flowed and the movements of birds had convinced him that there must be an inland sea in the region of latitude 29°, not far from the Darling River. In 1840 Sturt's friend John Eyre had made an attempt to find this sea, but only succeeded in discovering a lake amid an endless waste of barren rock and sand, and the aptly-named Mount Hopeless. Sturt set out in 1844, determined to have another attempt himself, in spite of being the father of four children, and not in the best of health. He took sixteen men with him, together with horses and carts, a boat, bullocks and sheep and provisions for a year. They followed the Murray and Darling Rivers in a north easterly direction from Adelaide, then struck into the unknown interior, keeping eastward of Eyre's earlier route. This is an area subject to extreme weather conditions - very high temperatures produce burnt-up deserts for months on end, which can suddenly be subject to flash-flooding. Sturt reached latitude 29°, but a severe drought forced the party to stay at a water-hole for six months. The sight of seagulls led them on, but only to stretches of water that diminished into endless plains and stony deserts. After the death of his second-in-command, Sturt reluctantly gave up the search and the party eventually struggled back to Adelaide after two years away. They were all in an appalling state of health, with Sturt's eyesight badly affected again. He had failed to find an inland sea, but gained much information on plants, geology, bird life and weather conditions. The Royal Geographical Society awarded Sturt a gold medal with special recommendation for returning rather than risking further loss of life.

Sturt's water-bottle formerly in the Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum

After a spell of home leave in England, to get treatment for his eyes, Sturt returned to Adelaide as Colonial Secretary. But by 1852 his failing eyesight, together with the need to educate his children, made him decide to return once more to England.

He had kept up a correspondence with ex-Governor Darling, now Sir Ralph, who was living at 7 Lansdown Terrace in Cheltenham, and this may have influenced his decision as to where to settle. At any rate, the *Cheltenham College Register* shows that Sturt's two younger sons entered the college in the Michaelmas term of 1853 as dayboys, and the *Cheltenham Annuaire* lists Captain Sturt living at St.Edmunds, Tivoli Road, from 1854 until 1860. During this period Sturt's thoughts and energies were still very much bound up with Australia. He was involved in the preparations for Gregory's expedition in 1855, sending him over fifty pages of theory about the Central Desert. He applied for the post of Governor of Victoria in 1856 and as first Governor of Queensland in 1859, but both applications were unsuccessful, in spite of requests from local residents.

By 1860 he appears to have become a broken man, writing to friends of his sufferings with rheumatism. The 1861 census shows St. Edmunds occupied solely by a housekeeper, and no record appears of the family in Cheltenham until 1864 when the *Annuaire* lists Captain Sturt at 19 Clarence Square. His death on 16 June 1869 came suddenly, shortly before the announcement that he was to receive the K.C.M.G., but the Queen gave permission for his wife to use the title Lady Sturt. The *Cheltenham Chronicle* printed an abridged obituary from the *Daily Telegraph*, entitled 'Unrewarded Heroism'. In it Sturt is described as 'a man whose actions will live in English history'. But surely it was the final irony that they made a mistake over his name - 'Died on the 16th instant at Cheltenham, George Sturt Esq'. (3) The 1871 and 1881 censuses show that Lady Sturt and her daughter continued to live in Cheltenham at St John's Lodge, Tivoli. She died there on 5 June 1887 and is buried with Charles Sturt in the Cheltenham Cemetery.



The Clarence Square home of Sturt where he spent the last six years of his life

Perhaps the story of Charles Sturt has its modern equivalent. How many of the men and women 'dozing away the quiet evening of their lives' in Cheltenham today also have stories to tell of courage and endurance in their younger days?

1. *Cheltenham Chronicle,* Tuesday, 29 June 1869.
2. J.H.L. Cumpston *Charles Sturt His Life and Journeys of Exploration,* Melbourne, 1951, p.22
3. *Cheltenham Chronicle,* Tuesday, 29 June 1869.

Further sources

Alan Moorehead - *Cooper's Creek,* Hamish Hamilton, London 1963.

Rex and Thea Rienits - *Discovery of Australia,* Hamlyn, London, 1969.

Edward Salmon - *Imperial Cheltenham and Charles Sturt,* Typescript of address to Cheltenham Rotary Club, 1937.

Public Hire Chairs in Cheltenham

GEOFFREY WILSON

'THERE ARE two sedan chairs at Cheltenham the owners of which, from the little use that is being made of them, will not carry any fare for under a shilling'. So runs an entry in the first, 1783, edition of a *Tour to Cheltenham Spa* by Simon Moreau. Clearly, Moreau's first three years as Master of Ceremonies at Cheltenham had had small effect on its handful of chairmen (chair bearers) at the time. One illustrious visitor in 1781 who complained of the high rates for hire chairs was the Hon. John Byng, later fifth Viscount Torrington. (1)

One can hardly blame the chairmen. For reasons examined by Cheltenham historian Gwen Hart she estimated number of visitors to the infant spa had slumped from 855 in 1748 to 360 in 1780. When George III and his family paid their first visit, in 1788, Cheltenham still had a mere 30 lodging houses among its 300 habitations, though the royal patronage soon began to revive the fortunes of the spa, with lasting benefit. By 1821, with Cheltenham's star now firmly in the ascendant, the minimum chair hire charge had dropped to 6d as shown by the fare chart included with the bye-laws for chairmen in Betteson's *New Guide To Cheltenham* of that year. The complete changes were then: For carrying any person

1.	not more than 250 yd	0s 6d
2.	250 - 900 yd	1s 0d
3.	900 - 1200 yd	1s 6d
4.	1200 yd - 1 mile	2s 0d
5.	1 - 1½ miles	2s 6d
6.	1¼ - 2 miles	3s 0d
7.	For every 500 yd above 2 miles	6d

After midnight fares increased as follows:

1. to 1s 0d
2. to 1s 6d
3. to 2s 0d
4. to 3s 0d
5. to 3s 6d
6. to 4s 6d
7. to 1s 0d

A passenger might detain the chairmen in every fare without extra payment, as follows:

	min
in a 6d fare	10
in a 1s fare	15
in a 1s 6d fare	20
in a 2s fare	25
in a 2s 6d fare	30
in a 3s fare	35

Betteson's 1821 guidebook defines the then limits of Cheltenham to which the bye-laws and regulations concerning sedan chairmen and their fares applied. They are as follows: 'As extending parallel to the road leading along the back part of the town 300 yd north of the road from its commencement to Cheltenham Upper Field, at the turnpike gate, to the turnpike gate at Maidenhorn, and from the commencement of the said road to Cheltenham Upper Field in a straight line of the same direction with the said road to Coltham Lane. From the end of that lane to and including the houses at Sandford and so to Sandford Field, thence in a line bounded by the north side of that field to Red Acre Piece, thence along the east side of the said piece up the road or lane leading towards Gallipot House, and from thence along the lane, and for 200 yd south of that lane and parallel to, down to, or near the western corner of Westall Orchard, thence round Bay's Hill Lodge in the direction of Lad's Lane, thence towards the river Chelt and over it to eastward of Alstone Upper Mill, and from thence to and including the new-built house of Mrs Forty, below the turn-pike gate, and from thence to the road aforesaid, about 200 yd below Maidenhorn Turnpike.'

A Measurement of Town Distances

Down north side of High Street, from	yd
Gray's Cottage - No 1	183
No 1 - St James's Street	87
thence - York Hotel	140
thence - The Vittoria (No 32)	84
thence - Winchcomb Street	120
thence - The George (No 69)	80
thence - North Street	100
thence - Counsellor's Passage	138
thence - Stiles's Boarding House(No 107)	39
thence - Fleece Lane	90
thence - No.124	104
thence - No.140	130
thence - No.162	160
thence - Nag's Head (No 181)	140
thence - No.186	80
thence - Turnpike Gate	54
Up south side of High Street, from	
Turnpike - White Hart (No 195)	21
thence - Grove Street	252
thence - No 140	180
thence - St. George's Place	244
thence - Church Road	133
thence - The Burial Road	22
thence - Eight Bells Road	40
thence - The Colonnade	63
thence - No 229	75
thence - No 339	35
thence - The Plough (No 342)	40
thence - Assembly Rooms	49
thence - Cambray Street	35
thence - Old Ball Room	40
thence - Theatre	67
thence - No 383	155
Streets &c from south side of High Street, from	
No 383 - Chalybeate Well	200
cnr Cambray Street - Thompson's Wells	600
thence - Theatre	95
thence - Cambray Lodge	60
The Burial Road - Church	30
thence - Norfolk House (Churchyard Corner)	80
thence - first house in the Crescent	140
thence - bridge at foot of Well Walk (in straight path)	180
thence - Pump House	200
thence - New Well	120
High Street along St George's Place to Chester House	120
thence - King's Well	850
Chester House - Somerset Place	140
thence - Somerset House	100
thence - Alstone Turnpike Gate	100
Chester House - Norfolk House	94
The Street up Day Lane - Cumberland Place	90
Streets &c from north side of High Street, from	
High Street - top of Counsellor's Passage	189
cnr North Street to the top	95
thence - end of road	116
High Street - top of Winchcomb Street	130
thence - Fair View Cottage	480

Paving, or Town, Commissioners 'with cognisance all matters connected with paving, lighting, building and police' had been first appointed by an Act of 1786. A repealing Act of 1806 gave the Commissioners new powers, including the regulation and licensing of sedan chairs. At their general meeting on 15 February 1810, for example, they licensed William Hayward and William Perrot to keep chairs numbered 1 to 10. If between them these men owned that total they were in a fair way of business, perhaps akin to the long-established 'chairmasters' of Edinburgh who managed that city's well-organised public chair hire service. The men may have been, indeed almost certainly were, chairmen as well.

Although at that meeting the Commissioners allowed the period until their next meeting for licences to be granted to other persons who might apply, ten public hire chairs would have probably still met all requirements in 1810, even given that Cheltenham's remarkable growth in population and popularity was matching the earlier rise of Bath

and the contemporary rise of Brighton, already pre-eminent among seaside resorts challenging inland spas for public favour. From an estimated 2700 in 1797 Cheltenham's resident population rose by 1811 to 8325 and then by an astonishing 300% to 22942 in 1831, by when it welcomed some 12000 visitors a year compared with the 2000 that John Goding estimated for 1800.

Bath was, or had been, a special case. Its resident population by 1742 was 6000-6500 and fast growing as the city began to spread beyond the bounds of its medieval walls. As early as 1749 it was welcoming perhaps 1200 visitors a year, a staggering number of which we have the testimony of the Bath architect John Wood. These factors coupled with the social demands and topography of the city ideally favoured the expansion of chair transport. By 1745 some 60 public hire chairs were licensed and by 1755 another 20. By 1793-94 the licensing 'ceiling' was 200 sedan hire chairs, this surprisingly large total making the fleet in Bath, with its resident population of 27686 by 1801, the second largest in the country. London had a maximum of 400, as enacted in the reigns of George I and George III, which also fixed the maximum number of hackney coaches in the capital at 1000.

For other comparisons, by 1821 Exeter (population 23479) had 18 public hire chairs and Taunton (8534), ll. In 1822 Brighton (24429) had 24 sedans licensed, as well as 24 fly chairs and 24 wheel (Bath) chairs (2).

An Act of 1821 repealed those of 1786 and 1806, while giving Cheltenham's Commissioners more powers and ratifying others, including their responsibility for licensing hire chairs which now also included wheel and fly chairs. In 1828 hackney coaches began to be licensed.

In 1827 new conditions imposed by the Commissioners resulted in no chairman presenting himself at the licensing meetings, the lack forcing the Commissioners to advertise for applicants as far afield as Bath and Bristol. Gwen Hart says that there is no record how the matter was resolved but comments that undoubtedly there was much ill-feeling against the Commissioners. She also records the acrimony ten years later when the Commissioners issued new orders affecting carriage drivers.

Originally, chairmen had been limited to not more than two miles from the Market House, a sufficiently arduous 'lift', particularly with a corpulent fare! In practice it is most unlikely that such long journeys by chair were frequent. Any complaints by chairmen or their passengers were heard by the magistrates. Persons declining to pay on demand any hired chairman (or coachman) the correct sum might be summoned to appear before the Bench and be ordered to pay, under a power of distress, or be committed to the town's House of Correction or elsewhere in the county.

Regulations dated 4th July 1816 established the following fixed stands for chairs, though an empty chair could be engaged anywhere, or one could be ordered to attend where required:

Cambray (Street) near Mr Rous, watchmaker
Winchcomb Street
Colonnade Road, beyond the houses
Fleet Lane Street below the Pump
Near the Prison, New Street

Davies's *Stranger's Guide through Cheltenham,* 1832, makes a point of explaining that the rules and regulations for chairs and hand-drawn flys were framed 'so as to protect strangers from imposition on the one hand, and from insult, neglect, or carelessness on the other.' Davies adds that the Commissioners had enjoined that the name of the owner or owners be painted on a conspicuous part of each sedan chair or fly, under a penalty of 20s for every omission. This condition seems to have been peculiar to Cheltenham. Usually the display of the licence number of the front, side or back of the conveyance sufficed.

Chairmen had to wear a long, loose blue coat, its sleeve bearing a 3-in. scarlet badge showing in blue the licence number of their chair. Such a coat was apparently *de rigueur* for chairmen in general, though post-1820 pictures showing chairmen in Bath depict them in a short coat or waistcoat, perhaps as 'undress' wear in warm weather. With the long coat went black knee breaches with buckles, white stockings or gaiters, buckled shoes and a large cocked hat.

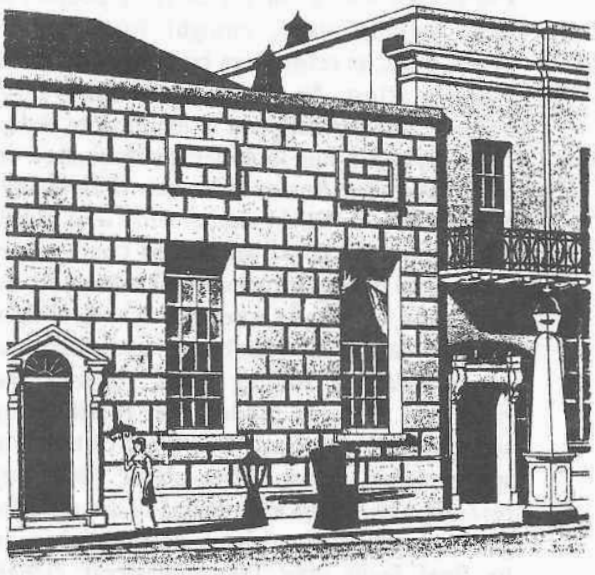
As was general, no chair was allowed on the pavements within the town limits when being carried empty, under a fine of 10s for each infringement. Incidentally, it was customary everywhere, if not obligatory, for an empty chair to be carried reversed, and then equivalent of the 'not in service' indication on a present-day bus! Dickens refers to the practice.

Davies's fare chart of 1832 shows that sedan chairmen were by then limited to a charge of 6d for up to 500 yards but that otherwise the fares were unchanged, though the omission of an extra 6d charge for every 500 yards over two miles indicates that for such distances horse carriages had the monopoly.

Chairs and other conveyances could, by then, be hired by time, the rates for sedans being 1s 6d for up to half-an-hour, 2s 6d for up to one hour, 4s for up to 1½ hours and 5s for up to two hours, with an extra 1s for every half-hour or less in excess of two hours. Wheel chairs could be hired for one hour for only 2s. and for every successive

half-hour, at a rate of an additional 6d.

The fare chart printed in Davies's *Cheltenham Annuaire* for 1837 covers sedan chairs, wheel chairs, one-man flys, one-horse-drawn flys and other carriages, and two-horse conveyances. By then sedan chairmen were allowed to charge 1s 6d



A detail from Thomas Hulley's 1813 print of the Assembly Room showing a sedan chair parked illegally on the pavement

for up to 440 yards, with an extra 6d for every subsequent 440 yards, and 2s 6d if the chair was hired by time, plus 1s 3d for every subsequent half-hour commenced beyond one hour. Between 1 am and 6 am the fares were increased by half again.

Over the years there were minor variations in fares, mainly affecting the distance for a 6d fare - at one time 400 yards and at another, 440 or 500 yards - and at night-time. At one period a passenger would pay one half more between midnight and 2 am and double thereafter but in the later charts the night rates were simplified to one half more between 1 am and 6 am.

The Act of 1806 had laid down that chairmen demanding an excessive fare or refusing to carry a passenger, using abusive or insulting language, or violent or disorderly behaviour, being otherwise guilty of misconduct, obstruction or annoyance, or being in liquor when employed or plying for hire were to forfeit up to 20s for each offence or be suspended from using their chair, or 'rendered incapable of using it altogether', as the Commissioners decided.

If a distance was disputed it was to be measured, the cost of so doing being payable by the chairmen if less than that for which they were charging, or by the passenger otherwise. Such conditions were more or less standard throughout Britain, though Dublin magistrates could order a chairman to be whipped through the streets for some misdemeanours.

No conveyance could stand or ply for hire unless licensed, a 20s fine being levied for non-compliance.

A passenger could detain a sedan or fly he had engaged for up to a quarter of an hour without incurring an extra charge but had to pay an extra 1s. for any more time not exceeding another quarter-hour. If a person called a chair or fly and then sent it away empty he or she had to pay 6d or 1s according to the distance.

At public places sedans and flys standing first in line would be entitled to take the first fare offering unless that party chose to walk to another vehicle standing there, and engage it. At one period at least no sedan could stand within 60 yards of another except by the permission of the Town Surveyor, and flys could not stand or draw on to the flagged pavement when taking up or setting down, in wet or 'dirty' weather. All conveyances had to be maintained to a satisfactory standard or their owners faced a fine or suspension.

Sedan chairs were made and repaired by either coachmakers or cabinet makers. Ultimately they were of two main types, upright on all sides or with a curved back. At the back the base was usually cut away sufficiently to allow for the rear chairman's stride. They were lined within and the windows had curtains.

Bad weather much increased patronage, particularly as sedans could be taken inside buildings if space allowed, and even carried upstairs if the staircase was wide enough; the chairmen would substitute 7ft poles for the normal 10ft variety for the ascent. In summer weather there would be fewer customers so that chairmen were obliged to find an alternative source of income when business was slack. Even at other times they might have long waits between fares. Fortunately, a public house was never far to find for rest and refreshment! To judge by a print of a street scene in Bath, some chairmen kept dogs by them, perhaps as company while they themselves perched on one of the carrying poles awaiting a cry of 'Chair ho!'

Chairmen expected pedestrians to give way to them. The demand was not unreasonable as a laden chair, its bearers coming along at a brisk trot, could not be instantly deviated or pulled up sharply. Contretemps occurred. A pedestrian might be squeezed against a wall - Swift records how he shattered the window of a chair that hemmed him

in - or a chairman might trip or fall. The work was demanding, particularly if the weather was bad and the way hilly. Chairmen needed to keep fit. Sometimes as a test or for display they would perform feats of strength or endurance for a wager. Scotsman visiting England would boast of the more comfortable sedan rides they enjoyed with their own, fleet-footed Highland chairmen, though foreign visitors seem to have been well satisfied with the performance of London's - predominantly Irish - chairmen at least.

By the time of Davies's *Annuaire* sedans and hand-drawn flys, though still included for short-distance and time fares in the tables he published, were clearly being ousted for longer distances in Cheltenham by wheel chairs generally and horse-drawn flys - 'the public conveyances mostly in use' as Davies comments. The predominance of flys for the 'short haul' traffic by this time is reflected in the reference to misconduct by flymen and fly carriage drivers in a petition on policing made by the Commissioners to the Home Secretary, in 1840.

In many provincial towns public sedan chairs were increasingly rare in the 1840s and 1850s, if they had not already vanished from their streets, but there were some exceptions. Norwich and Peterborough, for instance, could still show one or two in the early 1860s. As early as the 1820s the relentless spread of London had at last proved too much for them, though an early Victorian chronicler records a lone survivor in Mayfair in 1841.

The Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum houses a preserved sedan chair, acquired in 1955. It is a private vehicle, documented as having belonged to the Snooks family of Bourton-on-the-Water in the later Georgian era. It is therefore more ornate than a public chair, in its black finish and little or no ornamentation, though in form and dimensions they were much the same. An example of each may be seen in the Assembly Room at Bath.

1. *The Torrington Diaries, containing the tours through England and Wales of the Hon. John Byng between 1781 and 1794,* 4 vols. London, 1934-8.
2. A 'fly' was originally a light, man-handled, wheeled vehicle introduced in Brighton in 1816. It had one 'hauler' with sometimes a helper to push. From it developed a light, four-wheel, one-horse vehicle. The term eventually came to denote any light, horsed vehicle for hire. The original 'bath' (with lower case 'b') chair in the city of Bath was a special portable chair for carrying people, in their bathing attire, straight from bed to public bath, as references by Pepys and Celia Flennes attest. In its improved form from about 1740 it resembled a small, low sedan chair, its coffin-line look being commented on by Christopher Anstey (*The New Bath Guide*, 1766). Wheel (Bath) chairs came into use in Bath about 1760, as an invalid conveyance. They were like an armchair with a large wheel each side, a small, steerable wheel with a tiller in the front which the one chairman manipulated; a folding hood covered the passenger. Veteran readers may recall having seen in their childhood a survivor of two in a spa or coast resort. After about 1840s any reference to 'chair' as a means of conveyance generally signifies a wheel, or Bath, chair in its final form (see Trevor Fawcett, 'Chair Transport in Bath: The Sedan Era', *Bath History* Vol II).

SOURCES

T. Fawcett. op.cit.
J. Jamieson, 'The Sedan Chair in Edinburgh', *The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club,* (1916)
G. Wilson, 'Public Hire Chairs in Exeter', *Devon & Cornwall Notes & Queries,* (Autumn 1990; Spring 1991); 'Public Hire Chairs in Taunton', *Notes & Queries for Somerset and Dorset* (September 1991); personal collection
J. Goding, *History of Cheltenham* (1863)
C. Dickens, *Barnaby Rudge.*
G. Hart, *A History of Cheltenham,* 1st ed. (Leicester, 1965)

I gratefully acknowledge the help I have received from Mr Roger Beacham, Local Studies Assistant, Cheltenham Library, and Dr. S. Blake, Keeper of Collections, Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum.

The early years of the Cheltenham General Dispensary

DAPHNE DOUGHTON

THE DISPENSARY movement in England was considered to have commenced from 1769 (1) and to have existed throughout the nineteenth century. By 1825, there were about seventy-nine dispensaries in the provinces and at 3 May 1813, the Cheltenham Dispensary could be included (2) after efforts over two years to have such an institution. These dispensaries were 'a very much easier and cheaper institution to run than the hospitals' (3). They were often a supplement to the hospitals that were developing in this century, and in the case of Cheltenham's general dispensary, the initial growth into a hospital started from this beginning which was not unusual.

DISPENSARY FUNCTIONS

The dispensaries could be described as the equivalent of the modern out-patients department of a hospital but with a difference or two, remembering that they were primarily institutions to serve the sick poor. All the same, certain functions such as the advice of the 'medical gentlemen' and the dispensing of medicines, could be paralleled, with the bonus of the apothecary or his assistant, visiting those too sick and infirm to leave their homes where they were traditionally cared for by the family and neighbours. This was the situation in Cheltenham when, at the 1813 start, an advertisement appeared outlining the apothecary's function with an annual salary of £70 plus lodging. An early appointee, even maybe the first dispensary apothecary, was Mr.T.Alder, who was re-appointed in 1817 (4). He needed to 'understand the Dispensing of Medicines, to take Cases, and occasionally to visit the Sick. He must write a good hand, and understand Accounts.' (5)

M.C. Buer in her book explains that the work of the dispensary doctor was laborious and that 'he took his life in his hands as he went about his duty and so little was said about his unremitting and heroic labours, ...' (6)

BEFORE THE DISPENSARY

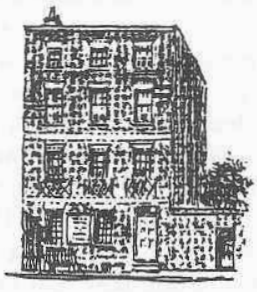
Prior to 1813, and subsequently, patients who had sustained 'dreadful' accidents were sent to Gloucester County Infirmary, as it was called from its inception, with the intention to serve the county's sick and needy. A case highlighted in the *Cheltenham Chronicle* was that of a cooper John Wilson, who having a broken leg and dislocated an ankle, was transported in a post-chaise to the Infirmary, after the surgeon, Mr Thomas Minster, had gratuitously set the broken bone, his conveyance was paid for by Mrs Entwhistle of the Post Office (7).

Local inquests are a source of information, mentioning their findings from deaths at the Infirmary; one death occurred from concussion a few days after a man's fall from a tree, whilst another died there following injury from a flying carriage wheel (8). Another fatal case in 1814, was of a man who went to the Infirmary after a tram accident, in which his leg was severed (9). Accidents and their subsequent care were a great cause for concern then and in the following years, pressing the Dispensary Annual Committee to provide more facilities.

For years money was given by the people of Cheltenham to support the Infirmary in Gloucester, which was a duplicate effort to that required for the dispensary, such as donations from the special annual church (10) and chapel collections, and from the boxes of the Spa proprietors, as in the 'Infirmary Box' at the Old Pump Room, Mr Robert Hughes being responsible for that charity (11). Another source was the annual subscription from the Vestry, to help towards the pauper costs, ranging from two guineas in 1816 and then doubling the following years. These contributions were still continuing in 1834 (12).

CHELTENHAM'S ARGUMENTS

The inconvenience and the suffering encountered on the journey to Gloucester was one of the arguments for Cheltenham having its own dispensary at the early stages and again in the 1820's for the provision of an infirmary or hospital: an early outcome was the introduction of a Casualty Ward at a cost of £100 (13), giving 'an extension to the 'house' providing two rooms for the reception of casualties', at the same time,



The Dispensary in 1826

consolidating the institution's new title: 'The Cheltenham Dispensary and Casualty Ward' with the address of 318 High Street: (14) 'with the further advantage of admission as in-patients to those, who having met with dangerous accidents,

are unfit, without risk of their lives, to be conveyed to the County Infirmary' (15).

With this new title held since 1822 (16) and the extension of facilities there came even greater recognition of the new work undertaken; a statement in the Annual Report for 1824, indicated that the three original objectives of the Cheltenham Dispensary were increased to four now with the addition of the Casualty Ward.

History tells us that dispensaries were established to treat the special diseases; in Cheltenham's case this was the initial idea with reference to smallpox and the undoubted need for the prevention of this disease in the form of vaccination - the method that had superseded variolation from 1798. This need was demonstrated in the idea that the name

Thomas Minster, surgeon apothecary and vaccinator

Gloucestershire Vaccine Institution should be part of the new institution's title in 1811, (17) as well as the 'General Dispensary'. However, this was not to be for, at the official start in 1813, the title became The Cheltenham Dispensary for the benefit of the sick poor (18).

There is evidence that the pre-1800 apothecaries were paid by the Vestry for having attended 'the poor in the smallpox' (19). Their successors, as in the case of the apothecary-surgeons William Wood and Charles Seagar in the years 1805 and 1807, continued to vaccinate as the doctors paid by the Parish (20). Vaccination was also given by the private practitioners in the town, besides that which was to be administered free at the dispensary over the decades (21). Smallpox remained an unwelcome visitor to the town and thirty deaths were reported in 1817; (22) again there are fatalities as in 1844 (23), although the Annual Report says the sickness and suffering of the usual inmates of the institution that year had been less.

EDWARD JENNER'S ASSOCIATION

Into this story of vaccination, fortunately for Cheltenham, comes the name of Edward Jenner (1749-1823), the son of a parson at Berkeley and pupil of the famous John Hunter of St.George's Hospital, London. In a book *Eminent Doctors*, written 1885, the author, G.T. Bettany, concludes a chapter with the remarks of Jenner's biographer and friend, J. Baron, saying: 'Indeed, his chief pleasure seemed to be pouring out the ample riches of his mind to everyone who enjoyed his acquaintance. He had often reason to lament this unbounded confidence; but such ungrateful returns neither chilled his ardour nor ruffled his temper.' Whilst Bettany himself added: 'such was the man to whom the world was indebted for vaccination; no court or metropolitan physician, no university student, but a country doctor, a man of science and benevolence, whose name is undying.' (24) Jenner was referred to by Cheltenham's John Goding as 'the great philanthropist' which is hardly surprising when considering the legacy that he has left. (25) Interestingly the circumstances surrounding the dispensary initiative of 1811 would be far from complete without him, knowing that at a meeting of The Gloucestershire Vaccine Association in Cheltenham 'he offered to give a piece of ground, and to erect a building, for the purpose of a Vaccine Institution in this town." (26).

At the time, Jenner was the President of the Association whose members included the local physicians and surgeons; Boisragon, Christie and Parry, Messrs. Wood, Lucas, Newell and Seager, all of whom were associated with the 1811 proposal, when Jenner offered himself as President to the new institution. Besides continuing vaccination, the dispensary was to be. 'adapted solely to the uses of the needy sick of Cheltenham and its immediate vicinity, exclusively of the Parish Paupers.' (27)

After the prevalence of smallpox in the County around April 1811 and the associated ideas and activities (28) that later in the year included the mention of 'the prospect of a speedy establishment of an Institution for the benefit of the sick poor...' (29) and that 'subscriptions are forthcoming' (30), little has been found about the dispensary proposals during 1812. The severe winters of the time, such as one month's snow in January 1814, caused the poor always to be a focus of concern in the town. There was the need for other practical help, such as the provision of coal, (31) clothes and food, to include soup kitchens as provided by the Rev. Charles Jervis, incumbent of the Parish Church, and Mr Thomas Newell, Surgeon in 1816 (32).

The dispensary when founded as an establishment in 1813, started in a 'most commodious house', described by the *Chronicle* as being in Winchcombe Street. The premises had been offered by the proprietor for 'the purposes of

this Charity'. (33)

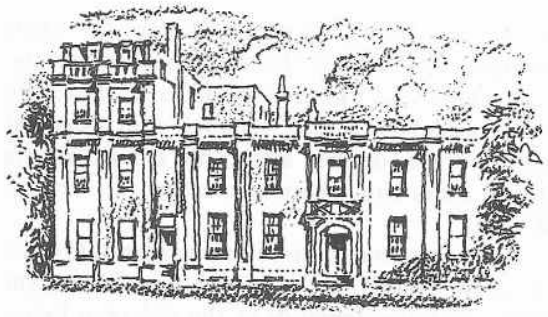
Undoubtedly there was wide support for the venture which was fully reported in the March 1813 editions of the *Chronicle.* Among those present at the well-attended public meetings were the fashionable inhabitants and visitors to the town but without the association of Edward Jenner at that time. It is as well to remember that he was now a man of sixty-four years of age with an ailing wife, but in that year he received one of his greatest honours - a Doctorate of Medicine from Oxford University.

DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMEN

The nucleus that formed the institution's original medical committee of the 6 March 1813 included Jenner's past colleagues of the Vaccine Institution, together with Mr Fowler, Dr Jameson and Mr Minster. In mentioning these names there are stories to be told of these and other distinguished gentlemen, suffice it to say Thomas Jameson wrote *A Treatise on the Cheltenham Waters and Biliary Diseases,* his work being quoted widely; (34) ... Christie's fame was associated with his work of vaccination against smallpox in India, besides being Physician Extraordinary (as were others in the town), to the Prince Regent; Mr Thomas Minster, another most worthy name was a surgeon apothecary rendering services to the parish poor for many years, being parish vaccinator and surgeon to the dispensary, as well as serving on the medical committee, during a career up to his death in 1858 (35). (There is a portrait of Mr Minster in the Cheltenham Museum).

These are just a few examples. Their daily acts of help and administrations to the poor showed them to be humble men, often with recorded instances of individual benevolence to the destitute, widowed and sick; whilst the pattern of medical service as provided for by the Parish was on a rotational basis: 'to attend every person that the present Overseers shall think proper to recommend as fit objects...' (36). For this the medical gentlemen would receive an annual payment with extras allowed for the smallpox, broken bones and the 'lioning wooman', (as would be said today, the 'lying-in woman'), but with the understanding that the doctors provided the medicines and attended the accidents of the poor ... the 'same conditions' were referred to yearly when the Vestry approved the nominated surgeon and his salary. (37)

The elected physicians and surgeons at the dispensary would give of their services gratuitously and make daily visits to the Institution. The apothecary and his assistant were resident and paid servants with more arduous duties including the responsibility for and management of the



The General Hospital & Dispensary in 1839, now Normandy House

institution, and the preparation and dispensing of medicines. The apothecaries of the time were sometimes referred to as the 'underprivileged members of the medical profession ... the keystone of hospital practice'. (38)

Cheltenham's general dispensary, as was typical of the time, had a code of practice, with Charles Parry, as told by John Fosbroke, 'Resident Surgeon at Cheltenham', drawing on his experience of Bath to formulate the 'first proposals and first code of regulations' for the institution; Parry was also referred to as the 'chief founder' of the dispensary (39).

CHARITABLE SUPPORT

The support given to the dispensary by the medical fraternity was also totally dependent on, not least of all, the charitable amongst the residents and visitors, who gave money and practical help in a variety of ways, causing Ruth Hodgkinson to write: 'The dispensary system had been accused of shifting the burden from the whole of the community and imposing it on the charitable few' (40).

Cheltenham was fortunate, with patronage to the fore, that there also came assistance at the very onset of the dispensary 'cause' from different classes of society, ... regardless of religious or political persuasion, 'persons of the most discordant political and religious principles are uniting in the cause of suffering humanity' (41).

The dispensary was not the only institution to benefit from patronage at the time. There were the School of Industry, the Orphan Asylum and the Sunday Schools with the Day Schools, creating a natural setting for an element of competition when seeking funds. For the dispensary over the decades, there was direct and regular giving from the yearly subscriptions and donations (42) besides monies being given from various sources. There were 'collections' following the appeals that were regularly launched from the sermons (43) given from the pulpits of the churches and chapels; (44) also relied upon were the annual charity balls with

the call to the fashionable world for their benevolent aid, as was the case in 1836 for the 'Grand Fancy and Full Dress Ball', run under the superintendence of the Annual and Medical Committee, (45) money also came from concerts (46) and other organisations such as the Cricket Club (47).

The treasurers as the years passed would have been very aware of an expanding institution pulsating with the demands by the sick poor being made upon the services, knowing that funds were invariably in short supply. Requests were regularly made for the arrears in annual subscriptions to be paid up and promises to be fulfilled (48). Often this situation prompted the extra 'exertions' of the clergy which were reported in the Annual General Meetings (49). Occasionally the pendulum would swing favourably, as in 1835: 'the funds were never in a more prosperous condition; the mortgage of the Dispensary has been entirely paid off and cash remains in hand.' (50)

The dispensary as a result was sustained through the generous benevolence of the people of the town and surrounding area; undoubtedly there was dedication, goodwill and much effort by everyone concerned towards this much loved charity. Today, as their heirs, the town of Cheltenham is left with two very substantial hospital buildings remaining; the present Cheltenham General Hospital from 1849 in Sandford Road, (formerly Sandford Fields) and the institution that was the General Hospital and Dispensary (1837-1849) in the High Street.

The General Hospital in Sandford Road

To quote Irvine Loudon: 'A few original dispensary buildings still exist, serving some new purpose such as ... (for Cheltenham) a commercial enterprise ... They are monuments of the period 1770-1850, the 'golden age' of the free dispensaries in which they brought such medical care as was available to the urban poor on a scale that was totally new'. (51)

Cheltenham's Monument as a dispensary is now called Normandy House which is a Grade two Listed building, surely one of the best preserved ex dispensaries. Happily the building is still in use. (52).

1. M.C. Buer, *Health, Wealth and Population in the Early Days of the Industrial Revolution*, Routledge, 1926, p.135.
2. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 6 May 1813.
3. Buer, op.cit., p.136.
4. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 23 January 1817.
5. Ibid., advertisement; 18 March 1813.
6. Buer, op.cit., p.135.
7. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 1 November 1810.
8. Ibid., 3 October 1811.
9. Ibid., 16 June 1814.
10. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, e.g. 7 July 1814; Rev. Henry Foulkes preaching.
11. Ibid., 5 September 1811; £5-8-9 and 1 July 1813; £10-16-8.
12. G.R.O. P78 OV 2/1; 2 gns, 1816, 4 gns, annually; 1817-1823.
13. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 16 January 1826; the financial accounts give this figure as spent on additional buildings.
14. G.R.O. HO 3; 1824 Medical Report; the Dispensary address.
15. Ibid., A.G.M., January 1825.
16. Ibid., 1832 Medical Report.
17. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 5 December 1811.
18. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 18 March 1813.
19. Vestry Minutes of Saint Mary's Church, 27 November 1770.
20. Ibid., April 1806 and April 1807.
21. D.M. Doughton, 'The Beginning of the Cheltenham Dispensary', *Gloucestershire History*, 1991, p.15.
22. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 23 January 1817.
23. G.R.O. HO 3; A.G.M., 1845.
24. G.T. Bettany, *Eminent Doctors*, John Hogg, 1885, p.201.
25. John Goding, *Norman's History of Cheltenham*, 1863, p.130-3.
26. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 25 April 1811.
27. Ibid., 5 December 1811.
28. Ibid., 4 April 1811; re Gloucestershire Vaccine Association meetings.
29. Ibid., 28 November 1811.
30. Ibid., 26 December 1811.
31. *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 28 November 1811.
32. Ibid., 26 December 1816.
33. Ibid., 11 March 1813.
34. e.g., G. Arthur Cadew, *Echoes of Reminiscences of Medical Practitioners in Cheltenham of the Nineteenth Century*, J. Burrow & Co. Ltd., 1930, p.8 refers to Jameson's book written 1803.

35. Ibid., p.50.
36. G.R.O. P78 VE 2/2.
37. Ibid., e.g., Vestry meeting, 8 April 1806, sets down the conditions that continued in the ensuing years, having taken into consideration (for salary purposes) the 'increased number of accidents which are liable to take place from the additional buildings and increased population'.
38. John Woodward, *To Do the Sick No Harm*, London 1974, p.28.
39. Rev. T.D. Fosbroke, *A Picturesque and Topographical Account of Cheltenham*, 1826, p.209.
40. Hodgkinson, Ruth, *The Origins of the National Health Service*, London 1967, p.212.
41. *Cheltenham Chronicle,* 5 December 1811.
42. Ibid., 11 March 1813.
43. Ibid., Rev. H. Foulkes put forward this idea when Chairman of the 6 March 1813 meeting in the Vestry Room of St Mary's Church, appealing for 'the exercise of an extended Benevolence in this very meritorious cause'. On this occasion associated with a 'fast day'. Annual sermons with collections for the Dispensary are recorded into the 1820's and 1830's.
44. Ibid., 25 August 1814, e.g. Collection at S Mary's Church £63 and Chapel £8.
45. *Cheltenham Chronicle,* e.g.'s, 5 February 1829 and 18 February 1836; held at the Assembley Rooms, tickets 7s. each (tea included); the events intended to the exclusion of other private parties of the 'fashionable', (costumes could be hired), indicates the prestige of the Dispensary 'cause'.
46. Ibid., 10 January 1833, e.g. a public performance of sacred music by the Choral Society at St James Church.
47. G.R.O. HO 3; A.G.M., 1825, Cricket Club, £20-12-0 per the Rev. T.B. Newell.
48. *Cheltenham Chronicle,* e.g., 12 January 1837; A.G.M., funds for new building.
49. Ibid., 12 January 1832; eight Cheltenham and village churches thanked with the Cheltenham Roman Catholic Church and Chapels.
50. *Cheltenham Chronicle,* 15 January 1835.
51. I.S.L. Loudon, 'The Origins and Growth of the Dispensary Movement', in the *Bulletin of the History of Medicine,* Vol.55, p.342, John Hopkins University Press, 1981.
52. *Gloucestershire Echo,* newspaper feature: 15 January 1992.

As an Associate Student of the Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education it is my pleasure to record my thanks for the opportunities, facilities and encouragement given to me during my studies and research by the staff and especially Mrs Penny Richards, M.A.

The Spa Bands of Cheltenham 1780 - 1875

MICK KIPPIN

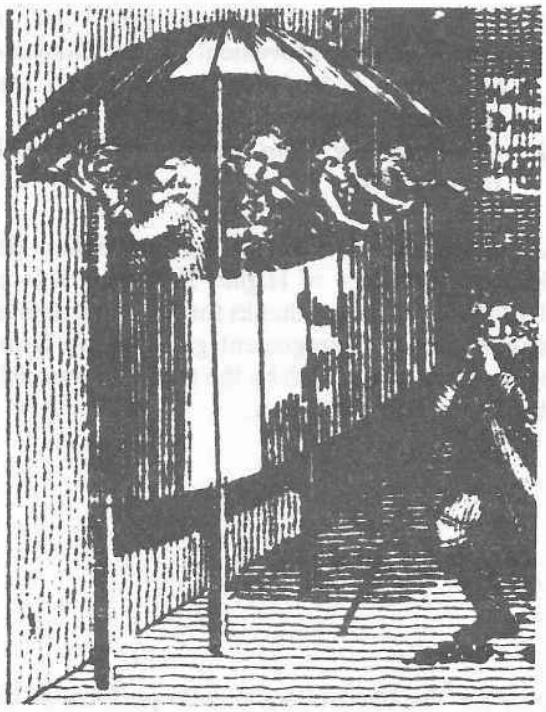
CHELTENHAM has a significant musical history. As early as September 1834 the editor of the *Cheltenham Looker On* wrote, 'For the last 10 years, Cheltenham has been almost as famous for its musical amusements as for its waters.'

Of the six Spas that have existed in the town at various times, only three provided musical entertainment for their patrons: Royal Old Well, Montpellier and Pittville, and it is on these three that this account concentrates.

Cheltenham Old Well was opened to the public by Henry Skillicorne in 1740 and John Goding recorded the fact that a small ballroom was built near the Spa, but we do not know who provided the music, nor on what type of instruments they played. Some detail was provided in 1781 when the Cheltenham Guide included, in a description of the Spa, 'At the upper end of the new Long Room is a gallery some feet from the floor, for the band of music who perform at the ball every monday evening'. A print by J.Sewell dated 1786 shows this gallery; the instruments in use include a 'natural' horn, a posthorn and a violin. This band was still active in 1788 for the visit of King George III who is quoted as saying, 'The band of wind instruments was infinitely better than could have been expected'. So the stringed instruments appear to have been phased out in favour of a purely wind and brass ensemble. All these references to 'bands' needs to be understood in context with the period; they should not be thought of as a band of today's size (perhaps some 25 musicians) but probably not more than seven or eight. It should also be remembered that the brass instruments of the period did not have the valves that we find so important today; when Mozart wrote his famous Horn Concertos, they were written for little more than a hunting horn!

Doctors attending the water drinkers at the Spa obviously approved of a band being there. In 1783 the Town's Master of Ceremonies, Simon Moreau, wrote in his book *Tour to Cheltenham*, 'Music helps the operation of the waters because the spirits being put into motion, and most agreeably touched by the harmony of the instruments, the sensible fibres become more pliant and the several organs better adapted to the free exercise of their different functions.' Taking the language of the period into consideration, we must assume that this meant that they thought music was a good thing!

As new Spas were opened they competed with each other for bigger and better musical attractions. From 1833 the *Looker On* speaks of



A detail from Sewell's print of Cheltenham Wells, 1786 showing the musicians' gallery

the Montpellier Band in almost every issue. This band held Musical Promenades most evenings during the Summer Season either in the Spa Promenade, in Montpellier Gardens or inside the Rotunda (now Lloyd's Bank) if the weather wasn't favourable.

We know something of this band's composition: in 1834 it consisted of 17 musicians led by a Mr Murphy on clarinet, Mr Davies on flute, Mr Andre on that marvellous instrument the Serpent, Mr Klussmann on horn, and Mr Jenkins percussion. The Serpent provided the Bass end of the band. A poem written at the time entitled 'The beauties of Cheltenham' has one verse:

> The famous Montpellier Band,
> Which plays every night at the Room,
> Your presence will surely command,
> If you have a taste for the drum'.

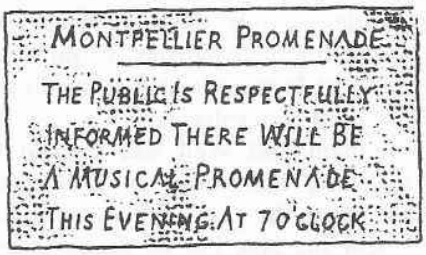
Does this suggest that Mr Jenkins was a bit heavy on the drum?

They had new uniforms for the 1834 season: dark blue frock coats, Oxford-mixed trousers, officer's caps trimmed with a broad silver band and a white silk tassel and a crimson sash. A print in the Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum showing this band has the date of approx 1835 on it. Either that date is incorrect or the artist used artistic licence with his colouring since they are depicted in short scarlet jackets.

The first reference to a Brass Band was in 1836. The *Looker On* reported on July 2nd, 'A novelty in the musical performances of the evening Promenades, which has been some time in preparation, will be tried next Wednesday...the selection originally announced for the Waterloo anniversary; and, in order to give additional effect to the music, a brass band will be introduced, an experiment of this kind, we believe, has never yet been tried by any of the Cheltenham bands.'

The experiment apparently went down well and it was later announced that it would be repeated occasionally throughout the season. What sort of music was the band playing at their Musical Promenades? A typical evening programme included a mixture of classical pieces and the popular songs and dance of the day: March by Hollonitsch, Pas Redouble by Meyer, Glee 'the chough and the crow' by Bishop, Duet. Unterero by Donizetti, Fantasia by Brepsant, and the Waltz 'La plus Belle' by Strauss.

Bishops, Strauss and Donizetti are all well known, but I have not been able to discover who Brepsant and Hollonitsch were. There were also compositions especially written for the Band, such as 'The Beauties of Cheltenham' composed by a Signor Morelli and first played in the Rotunda on June 7th 1834. It would be nice to know the



A plaque now in the Art Gallery & Museum

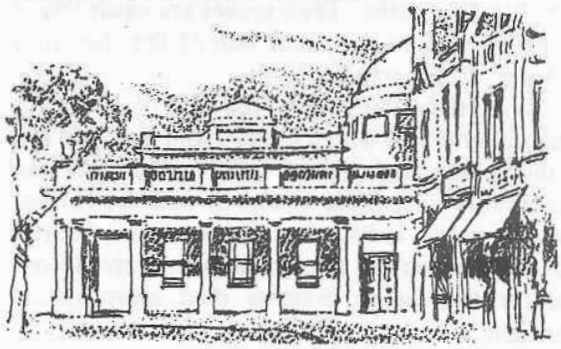
whereabouts of this piece of music and have it arranged for today's Band to play.

Playing concerts at the Spa was not the only activity for the Band, for they took part in social events in and around the Town. On 10th October 1837, for example, they led a procession of some 700 school children from the Rotunda out to the fields of Alstone where Rev. Francis Close laid the foundation stone at Christ Church.

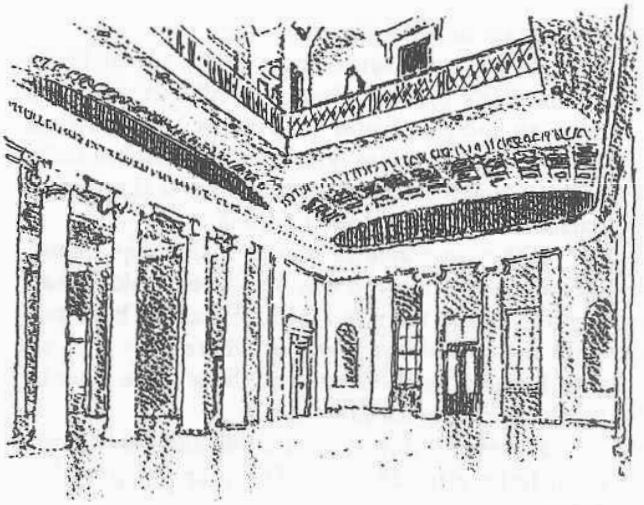
The Montpellier Band had the monopoly on this type of music in the Town until 1841 when the proprietor of Pittville Spa announced the formation of his Band, and about this time the Old Well's Band seems to have died out leaving just Montpellier and Pittville.

The mid-1850's saw the Pittville Band gaining ascendancy and eventually being billed as the Town band, although Montpellier was still active. On 10th July 1858 the Town Band took part in the great procession of the Sebastopol guns.

On 10th February 1859 two new names appeared in Cheltenham. On that date Messrs Major and Bretherton's Band played at the Master of Ceremonies Ball in the Assembly Rooms. From this date on, Major and Bretherton began to take nearly all public engagements when a Band was needed. One of the final engagements by those whom had known the headier days of the Montpellier Band possibly took place on 4th May 1859 when Mr Brooke conducted an enlarged Cheltenham Summer Band at the Cheltenham &



The north side of Montpellier Spa where the band played for the 'promenades'



Pittville Pump Room

Gloucester Horticultural Society's first show of the 1859 season at Royal Old Well. The *Looker On* reported, 'The Band was led by Mr Brooke and included Mr Williams, the famous cornet player, Mr Jenkins, Mr Poole and others of the Montpellier Band of former years ... which made us more than ever regret the discontinuance of those entertainments which formerly conferred such musical celebrities upon our Town.'

Only three days later Major and Bretherton's Band was being billed as 'The Summer Band' and, for a while, there was some confusion as to which Band was which, with the old Montpellier Band struggling for existence against the up and coming Major and Bretherton Band. Often both classed themselves as the Cheltenham Summer Band.

This period saw the end of the Spa Bands as they had been. Major and Bretherton became the Town's leading musical entity despite attempts by Mr Hatton to revive the Montpellier Band. The 'glorious' days of the Spas were over and musically many people were beginning to favour the idea of a permanent Town Band.

The Cox family: 75 years in Cheltenham

JAMES TOOMEY

BORN IN 1820, James Cox was the fifth child of William Cox, who became the 1st Canon of the Church of Ireland Cathedral at Kildare, in what is now the Republic of Ireland. His wife Elizabeth was a woman remarkable for her beauty and remembered for her irascible temper, caused perhaps by the fact that she was called upon to mother 18 children, many of whom died in their infancy.

Educated by the Parish schoolmaster at first, and afterwards by his father, James was well taught in figures, and was said to be a first rate

accountant and bookkeeper.

He was sent out to India at the age of 15, to his mother's brother George Medlicott, who was then an indigo planter in Tirhoot. At this time great Indigo Factories flourished in Northern India and the planters could afford to build themselves palaces and live like petty barons.

Either in Calcutta or on board ship, James met a young man who was 3 or 4 years older than himself, called George Neville Wyatt. These two went up to Tirhoot together where they met up with David Russell Crawford. These three were to be close friends for life.

James Cox duly made his pile and came home from India after 25 years. The year was probably 1860.

He returned to his native Ireland and in 1870 he married Charlotte Margaret Adamson who came from near Athlone in County West Meath.

The Coxs set up their married home in Connellmore, which is at Newbridge, in County Kildare, where their first child Elizabeth was born on 15th October 1873. Their only son George Lindsay followed in 1876, and then came Ethel Mary in 1877 and Mabel Charlotte in 1881.

In 1884 the Cox family moved to Cheltenham which was a Mecca for retired officers and gentlemen from India, and it was in Thirlestaine Road that James purchased the very imposing property which is now the Administrative Headquarters of the Chelsea Building Society today, Thirlestaine Hall.

Thirlestaine Hall stood in a seven acre garden and was built in the Italianate style with a fine Doric porch, marble mantlepieces and elegant plasterwork ceilings. The upper floor was provided with no less than 15 bedrooms, dressing rooms and bathrooms. It must have been just the place to bring up a family.

The reason for the move to Cheltenham was probably to be near his old India friends, for living almost next door was David Russel Crawford and further down Thirlestaine Road at Lake House lived the third member of the party George Neville Wyatt. What memories these three old men must have relived together.

The Cox family were soon followed to Cheltenham by Charlotte's sister Joanna Maria Adamson and their old mother Elizabeth Adamson, who had been living at Kingstown, now called Dun Laoghaire.

These two settled at Roselea East, a semi-detached house in Thirlestaine Road facing Cheltenham College and standing between Sandford Lodge and Thirlestaine House.

Elizabeth Adamson died there on 18th March 1895 and arrangements were made by Mrs Cox's brother-in-Law, Major General George Rodney Brown, who was staying at Thirlestaine Hall at the time, for the burial to take place at Leckhampton, and the grave had been dug.

When the news of the death of Elizabeth Adamson was brought to Ireland George Archibald Graham Adamson who was Elizabeth's eldest surviving son, was away from home on duty with the Irish Land Registry.

On being contacted George travelled by the fastest means to Cheltenham to claim his mother's remains, because she had indicated to him, secretly, that she wanted to be laid to rest with her family at Mount Temple, near Moate, in County West Meath, and not in Cheltenham.

On arrival by train in Cheltenham, George caused great shock and surprise when he announced his intention to take his mother's remains back to Ireland with him. This he did, accompanying the coffin both on the train and the steamer, and it is known that he sat with the coffin on the top deck throughout the six hour night crossing to Kingstown.

At Moate the coffin was removed from the train and the burial did take place, as promised, at Mount Temple.

James Cox died on 7th August 1892, aged 72. He was buried in Leckhampton churchyard almost beside his two friends who had gone before him, all within 12 months. Their graves are easily found clustered close to the south wall of the church of St. Peter, Leckhampton.

With these men went the last of the great indigo planters of Tirhoot and Bihar and the last of those who had served India under both the Honourable East India Company and the Crown. Even the indigo industry was on the wane. Shortly with the discovery of the aniline dyes derived from coal tar the indigo industry died away almost overnight.

Connellbeg, Naunton Park Road, built for Miss Ethel Cox

James Cox's widow continued to live at Thirlestaine Hall while her family grew up. Her son Lindsay went to the College and then to Merton College, Oxford. He was always a rather fragile fellow and although he had studied law, he never had to practise it, and in fact never had to throw himself into the hurly-burly of a working life.

The three Cox girls never went to school, few young ladies of their day were expected to. They were educated at home by their own French governess, Miss D.Argent.

The Cox girls as they grew up enjoyed a very gay and enjoyable life in a high society which throve on giving balls, many of which took place in the glorious double-drawing room at Thirlestaine Hall, and garden parties.

It was while the writer's mother was staying with her cousins at Thirlestaine Hall, that she met his father who was home on leave from India. They married soon after and they went out to India in 1907.

In 1903 the eldest daughter Elizabeth, but always called Elsie, married Lyall Jackson and went to live at Sandford Lodge in Thirlestaine Road. Until World War II, the Jacksons always spent each summer fishing in Southern Ireland and the winter at Sandford Lodge from where they could follow the Cotswold Hounds each week by car. In this respect they developed the power of knowing which escape path the hunted fox would take, even before the fox itself had decided. This enabled them to always be in the right place to see the fox go by.

Proudly but sadly their eldest son Lt. Colonel Maver Jackson DSO was killed when commanding the 8th Battalion of the Durham Light Infantry at the assault on the Mareth Line, Tunisia, in March 1943.

Sandford Lodge is now the official residence of the Head Master of Cheltenham College.

In 1906 the youngest Cox daughter Mabel Charlotte married the Rev. Edmund Godfrey Burr, DD, the rector of Chatham. On her husband's retirement just before World War II, the Burrs bought Linden House in College Lawn, which was later purchased by the College.

With only two unmarried children living at home, Mrs Cox decided it was time to move to some smaller property and in 1909 Thirlestaine Hall was sold to a Mr Player, a retired South Wales tin-plate manufacturer.

The smaller house to which Mrs Cox moved stood in its large garden opposite what is now The East Gloucestershire Club in Old Bath Road, Cheltenham. She named the house Connellmore, after her old home in Ireland. Here she lived with Lindsay and Ethel until her death on 3rd February 1929, just short of her 90th birthday.

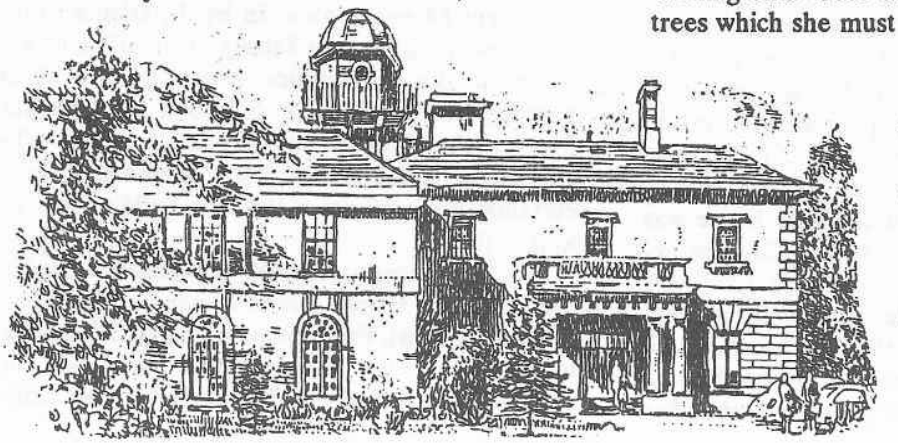
With her passing, her unmarried daughter took for herself the half acre of the Connellmore garden with frontage onto Naunton Park Road and thereon she built herself a four bedroom, double fronted house, set back from the road, with an attractive porticoed entrance leading to a rather grand staircase. She called her new house Connellbeg, beg being the Irish for small. Ethel Cox was a member of the Cotswold Hunt for many years and was regularly seen hunting with them almost up to World War II. She was also a very talented water colour artist in the landscape field. She died very suddenly on August 21st 1953, aged 76.

The house and the remainder of the garden of Connellmore had been sold in 1929 or 1930 to a Colonel Stoney-Archer who lived there for many years.

In about 1960 the house was demolished to make way for a modern development with houses designed by the well known architect, Eric Lyons. These were all to be accommodated within the grounds of Connellmore, and the first houses to be completed were the five in Verney Close.

The writer was delighted to be able to move his wife and family into No. 4 in the Spring of 1963, a very comfortable, happy house situated in the middle of what used to be his aunt's garden.

In the little plot was one of her stately Wellingtonia trees and a small avenue of Hazel trees which she must have known well.



Thirlestaine Hall: the observatory and left hand wing date from after the Cox occupancy

The Manor Mystery: the rise and decline of the house of the Bishops of Hereford at Prestbury

BERYL ELLIOTT

ON THE northern edge of Prestbury, between Spring Lane and the furthest bend of the race-course, is a quiet spot where trees hang over a pond. In the reign of the first Elizabeth a splendid mansion stood on this site, and the origins of the house go back perhaps 500 years before that. The pond we see today is all that is left of the moat. Of the house, not a stone remains. There is no record of a fire or other disaster, so what happened to deprive Prestbury of its own stately home?

The history of Prestbury manor, as recorded for example in the *Victoria County History*, lists many owners in confusing succession. Recourse to the original documents seems at first to make matters worse, not better. There are too many owners, contradictory claims, documents which conflict with events. This is an attempt to establish in outline what really happened, and to resolve at least some of the contradictions. It may provide a groundwork for future research into the problems that remain.

The main sources for the history of the manor are the papers of the Chamberlayne and Craven families preserved in the Gloucestershire Record Office (1). Some important facts also emerge from an abstract of Prestbury title deeds from a manuscript in the Bodleian Library, printed in the *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society* (2). Another volume of the same journal contains Mrs O'Neil's record of her excavation of the site in 1951 (3).

THE BISHOPS

Like other great men of the time, the medieval bishops of Hereford owned manors and property over a wide area, and Prestbury had belonged to the bishopric from before the Norman conquest (4). A special feature of the manor here was the deer park, an oval enclosure stretching some 2 kms west from the house, almost to the parish boundary with Swindon. Its shape and limits can be established from their permanent effect on the pattern of field boundaries, still plainly visible on the Tithe Map of 1841 (5).

We do not know when the first house was built on the site, but pottery of the 12th century has been found there, and certainly in 1209, 'the Bishop had here a handsome stone house moated about' (6). By the end of the 13th century, the house was centred on a great hall more than 12 metres square, with the bishop's private chamber and chapel on the first floor, and a separate kitchen building (7). In 1289 Bishop Swinfield kept Christmas at Prestbury, with lavish provision of food and drink. His hounds were sent in advance, ready for hunting in the park, and 50 horses were stabled at the manor over the time of the feast. In 1344, under Bishop John Trilleck, house and buildings were thoroughly repaired, a service extension contrived for the hall, and the chapel rebuilt. On at least one occasion ordinations were held in the chapel, and as late as 1480 episcopal documents were signed at Prestbury.

Times change. Hunting began to go out of fashion for churchmen. In 1532 the Bishop was Charles Booth, energetic in political life, and in practical matters. During his bishopric the north porch of Hereford cathedral was rebuilt in its present form, and substantial improvements were made to the bishops' palace (8). Looking round his outlying manors, Bishop Booth must have decided that extra rents were preferable to a remote and unused house with a run-down deer park, for he leased house and park to a certain Humfrey Elton, at a total rent of £17-10s-0d per annum (9).

A few years later, in 1542, there was a new bishop, John Skip, and a new tenant, John Harford, a gentleman from Bosbury, one of the bishops' Herefordshire manors. Harford's lease (10) describes the property in four parts, (numbering not in the original):

1. 'The Great Hyde in the Lordship of Prestbury.' Although listed first, this land, described as meadow and pasture, had not been included in Elton's lease, but had been held immediately before 1542 by one John Taynton. It must equate to part or all of the ancient land unit now represented by Hyde Farm (11), which lies immediately against the North-west boundary of the park.

2. The 'syte' of the manor and its demesne land, rent £4 per annum. In legal parlance, 'syte' could mean either 'the Setting or Standing of any place', ie the geographical extent (of the whole manor), or 'the Seat or Situation of a Capital Messuage', ie of a chief residence (12). The context here implies the latter meaning; there is certainly no implication that the building was no longer there.

3. Six pieces of meadow or pasture, named as Thacham, the Grove, Great Wynearde, the Grove Brache (breach), Brodhome, and Little Wynearde; total rent £10 8 0d. Of these, Thatcham, Great and Little Winyard and the Broad Ham, also Little

Grove, were still current as field names when an estate survey was made in 1768 (13). From this later survey, it is clear that the group of fields represents the eastern third of the original park area, between the manor moat in the east and the little stream which flows across the park crossing the southern boundary at SO 958243, amounting together to about 150 acres. Some earlier bishop must have taken this land out of the open park, part of it for grapes, to judge by the field name Wynyard.

4. The 'pasture, herbage and pannage of the Park', rent £4. (In the lease this is listed before part 3). This must represent the remaining, western, two-thirds of the original park enclosure, still a single undivided unit in 1542. As late as the 19th century this area of about 280 acres was divided into unusually large fields, including two named Park Piece and Park Field (14).

It is noteworthy that the distinction between the western and eastern parts of the original park enclosure corresponds to a difference in tithe rights. Back in 1164, when Bishop Robert de Melun had granted to Llanthony Abbey the major part of the demesne tithes, a share was still reserved for the Dean and Precentor of Hereford cathedral (15). The 1841 Tithe award shows that the area over which the Dean and Precentor retained rights was precisely the same eastern part of the park, plus about 170 acres outside the park to the north-west (the original extent of Hyde Farm?), and some scattered fields throughout the parish totalling about 200 acres. It is tempting to equate the 'demesne' of Harford's lease with the scattered fields which in 1841 still paid part of their tithes to Hereford.

Though the 16th century bishops who leased it out foresaw no further use for Prestbury manor as a residence, they remained conscious of the need to maintain the ancient rights of the diocese. Harford's lease contains a clause reserving to Bishop Skip and his successors the use of the manor house and its subsidiary buildings 'during the tyme that they shall fortune to be there'. In such circumstances, Harford himself would retain the occupancy of 'the Southe syde of the greate house (16) with other houses before tyme to the Farme accustomed'. This is probably no more than a legal precaution, Harford surely would not have relished decamping from his home at regular intervals.

John Harford was still at Prestbury in 1553, when the appointment of a new bishop meant the drafting of a new lease. The same thing happened in 1555, but this lease was never executed, - perhaps just a piece of administrative slackness.

The bishops' long tenure of Prestbury came to an end without conflict or drama, yet quite suddenly. Within a year of the accession of Queen Elizabeth, the Queen's officials negotiated the exchange of four of Hereford's best manors, - Bishop's Castle, Ledbury, Ross and Prestbury - for some less profitable advowsons (17). Circumstances were favourable to the Queen in that the year saw a vacancy in the see and the appointment of a new bishop. Prestbury was lost to the bishops almost without them noticing.

THE AMBASSADOR

Whether John Harford stayed on at Prestbury in the first years of crown ownership we don't know, but in 1564, Elizabeth granted the lease of the manor to a new tenant (18). Sir Thomas Chamberlayne had been a courtier and a diplomat over four reigns, serving as ambassador in turn to the courts of Hungary, Sweden, Portugal and Spain. He moved in the same circle as Richard Pate (a better-known figure in Cheltenham history) while Pate was on the Royal Commission to survey chantry lands in Gloucestershire, and in 1549-50 both men engaged in some profitable speculation in former church lands in Gloucester city (19). In 1552 Edward VI granted Chamberlayne the Barony of Churchdown, a land-holding comprising seven Gloucestershire manors.

Sir Thomas came to Prestbury with his third wife, formerly Anne Pierson, and a large family of children and step-children. John, Edmund and Theophila were children of his second marriage, (one of them had the Queen herself as godmother), and Dame Anne already had four sons and two or three daughters. Around this time major improvements were made to the house (20). The undercroft to the chapel was made into a living room; it was given a new decorated plaster ceiling with pendants, and an ornate stone fireplace with coloured tiles. The chapel itself became another living-room, and the old-fashioned great hall was turned into domestic offices, possibly a kitchen.

The family settled down in the village. Dame Anne had a baby, Thomas, third and last of Sir Thomas's sons. Rose Pierson, one of the step-daughters, married George Baghott from Prestbury's other big house at Hall Place. It seemed that the Chamberlaynes were set to become squires of Prestbury, hereditary land-owners and heads of village society. But in 1574, Sir Thomas initiated important changes in the land tenure, which drastically altered their situation, and incidentally were the source of much confusion and conflict after his death. On 20th July, he 'procured the lease to be passed to Robert Earl of Leicester' (21). A fortnight later, on 4th August, Leicester sold the 'site' of the manor back to Chamberlayne. What was going on? The Queen's grant to Leicester in July clearly refers to 'all the

manor...with all its rights members and appurt(enance)s thereto.' It is less clear what the August sale covered. However, Sir Thomas's will (22) mentions only 'my manor or dwelling house of & in Presbrie', with no reference to any land, so he plainly accepted that the land remained Leicester's. The motives behind this transaction are obscure. Did Chamberlayne owe Leicester a favour or could it be put down simply to the erratic action of an aging man? Sir Thomas still intended that his descendants would continue to live at Prestbury, for the following year he obtained a Crown grant of the office of Park-keeper at Prestbury for the life-times of himself and his eldest son (23). The post was presumably a sinecure, since the park was no longer his!

Sir Thomas Chamberlayne died in 1580, having made careful provision for his three sons. John, the oldest, inherited the bulk of the Gloucestershire lands, and also the Prestbury house. Edmund received the manor of Compton Abdale, and Thomas the manor of Oddington. The old man must have intended that Dame Anne and her children would move away from Prestbury, leaving the expensively improved manor house as a proper residence for the new head of the family. It seems that his wishes were ignored. John did not settle permanently at Prestbury, and when he was knighted in 1603 his home was in Oxfordshire (24). On the other hand there is evidence that Dame Anne and her younger children continued to be part of Prestbury society. Young Thomas, only 12 when his father died, grew up to marry Margaret Baghott, (probably the niece of his step-sister's husband George). Another of Dame Anne's daughters, Winifred Pierson, married Reginald Nicholas, a 'gentleman', yet in some way in the employment of John Chamberlayne. We know that in 1606 the Nicholases were living in the manor house (25), and the most likely explanation is that he was Chamberlayne's steward at Prestbury.

COURTIERS AND LAWSUITS

Following Leicester's acquisition of the park lease, the property began to circulate rapidly from one high-placed courtier to another. Successive owners regarded it solely as a financial asset, to be milked for rents or sold off, as circumstances required, and it is unlikely that any of these famous people ever visited Prestbury to inspect their land. In 1580, the Queen granted the whole manor outright to Leicester's young step-son, Robert Earl of Essex (26). (Had Leicester 'forgotten' to inform Her Majesty of his earlier sale of the house to Chamberlayne?) Sixteen years on, Essex in turn sold it to Sir Francis Bacon (27), who shortly mortgaged it with a group of three gentlemen, including that same Reginald Nicholas who had married Dame Anne Chamberlayne's daughter. In 1602, Bacon had not kept up the interest payments; Nicholas bought out his remaining share and became the full owner of the park and the rest of the land. At this time, as we have seen, Nicholas was living in the manor house, probably as steward. With an absent master who took little interest in the place, Nicholas seems in the end to have forgotten that he was no more than steward, as far as the house was concerned. The popular verdict a century later was that Reginald Nicholas had 'supplanted his master Sir John Chamberlayne' (28); no-one seems to have remembered Leicester's part in the story. At all events, after Reginald's death his son Thomas Nicholas sold out in 1622 (29) to Dame Elizabeth Craven, the widow of a former Lord Mayor of London. A woman of considerable business sense, Dame Elizabeth was engaged in investing her late husband's enormous fortune in buying land for the benefit of her 15-year-old son William, later first Earl of Craven.

Meanwhile, Sir John Chamberlayne, inheritor of the manor house, was embroiled in legal and financial troubles. He seems to have assumed that his inheritance covered the whole manor, but in 1614 he was involved in a lawsuit over the matter, and lost; 'judgement ... obtayned against me for 100 acres of land, 3 score acres of meadow, 500 acres of pasture, 100 acres of wood, and 200 acres of firse and heathe,' all in Prestbury (30). Two years earlier there had been difficulties with his other Gloucestershire estates, and he had handed over the manors of Churchdown, Hucclecote and Witcombe, and 'the capital messuage wherein I dwelt in Prestbury' to Sir Thomas Thynne in trust, for Thynne to sell part, and pay off Chamberlayne's debts and mortgages with the proceeds. Alas, things went from bad to worse, and when Sir John wrote his will (31) in 1617 he was obliged to accompany it with a document relating the tale of how 'Sir Thomas (Thynne) hath not only fayled, but hath also suffered a greate part (of the debt) to be doubled ... and other extremities to fall upon the said Sir John, which might have been prevented'. Sir John's two brothers were left to 'agree with my creditors'. Thomas was living in Gloucester; his claims on the estate were to receive priority. Edmund, now settled at Maugersbury (32), near Stow-on-the-Wold, was executor and residuary legatee.

The dust had hardly settled on this affair when Edmund Chamberlayne found himself with another lawsuit on his hands. Dame Elizabeth Craven considered that her purchase of the manor included the house. She was not being unreasonable, for the indenture specifically

mentions 'the Capital Messuage or Mansion house of the said Manor of Scite of Prestbury'. In fact none of the transfer documents in the chain of owners from Leicester to Nicholas makes it clear that the house was excluded, and some of them specifically include it. The wonder is that the clash was so long delayed. Only a string of absent and fundamentally careless owners could have let such a situation persist, - and Dame Elizabeth was a careful guardian of her son's interests. Documents survive (33) summarising the two sides' cases in the ensuing lawsuit, which came to court some time in the 1620s, but the arguments presented seem contrived and irrelevant. There is no documentary record of the judgement, but events make it plain that the Cravens lost their case. After 1630, the ownership of the house is plainly separate from that of the rest of the manor, and 100 years later, a Chamberlayne still owned one and a Craven the other.

THE CIVIL WAR PERIOD

There still remain a couple more twists in the tangled story of Prestbury manor, though they did not result in any permanent change of ownership. Both the Cravens and the Chamberlaynes were ardent royalists, and both estates were sequestrated under the Commonwealth. In 1649 John Chamberlayne of Maugersbury (Edmund's son) paid the required fine to regain the use and rents of his lands (34). The schedule of his property confirms that the family interest in Prestbury had shrunk to the house alone, and even that had lost the dignity of 'manor'. The annual value of 'a house in Prestbury' in his ownership is assessed at £3 6s 8d, compared, for example, with £104 for his 'Capital Messuage & certaine lands ... in Maugersbury.'

Lord Craven did not redeem his land, though he could easily have paid a fine, however large. He spent the years of the Commonwealth with the court in exile at the Hague, contributing at least £50,000 to Charles II over that time (35). The Craven estates remained under the control of Cromwell's administration, and in January 1650, the 'manor or lordship of Prestbury Powle' was conveyed to Thomas Daughty of Icomb, near Stow-on-the-Wold; ('Powle' must be a mis-copying of 'Parke' by an inexperienced legal clerk). In 1653, Daughty in turn sold the manor to Mary Talbot and her son William, both of Whittington in Staffordshire (36). Though absentee landlords, the Talbots must have been keen to maximise revenue from the land, for during their tenure an agreement was implemented between them and 'the several inhabitants of Prestbury for enclosing the common fields there'. (37) This early enclosure was probably the medieval West field (38); this area had certainly been enclosed by the mid 18th century (39), though it had not been included in the 1732 Act for the enclosure of the other common fields and the open hilltop common. At the Restoration Craven regained his former property, paying the Talbots £1050 in 1663 (40).

Also during the Civil War period the Nicholas's make one more appearance in the story, still manifesting the family talent for reinterpreting facts in their favour. In spite of all that had gone before, notably Thomas Nicholas's sale to Dame Elizabeth Craven of his Prestbury property (whatever that comprised), in 1647 they tried to sell it again. Thomas himself had died in 1638, at Stratton near Cirencester, but before his death he had put his property, including 'all that manor and lordship of Prestbury' in trust (41). Now, nine years later, his trustees completed a transaction selling the house and most of the land to Edward Guise of Brockworth, for £2020 (42). It is impossible to say if Nicholson's trustees acted in good faith or if they hoped to take advantage of the confusion of the time. The unsoundness of the would-be vendor's position must have come to light fairly soon after the signing of the indenture, for apart from the sale document, there is no evidence that the Guises ever owned the manor or any other land in Prestbury, though they did hold the adjoining manor of Sevenhampton.

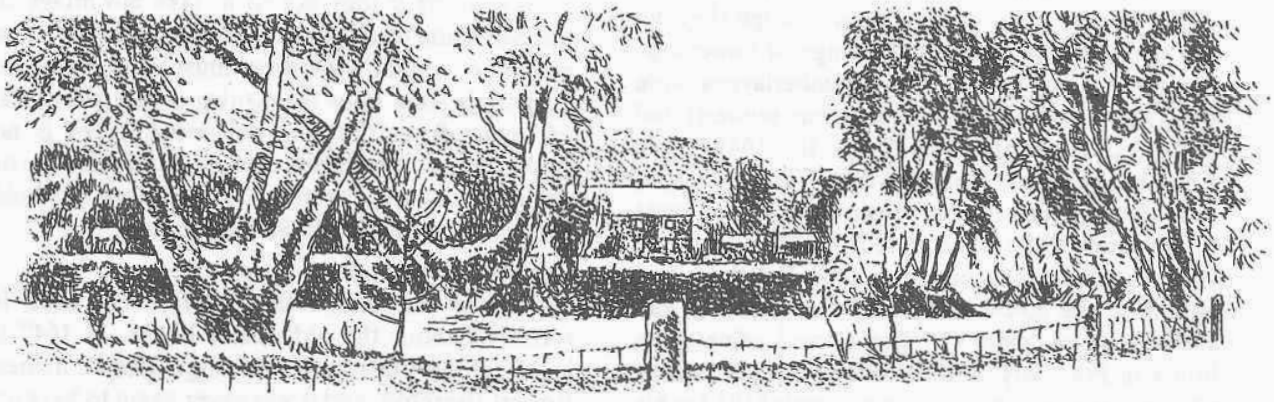
THE END OF THE HOUSE

After the mid 17th century, very little is recorded about the old manor house. In 1647 it had been let out to a tenant, a gentleman named Robert Brereton, and it was never again to have an owner as occupier. By the time Sir Robert Atkyns compiled his survey of the county in 1712, neither house nor tenant warranted a mention. We may presume that there was a succession of tenants, gradually slipping down the social scale, from gentleman to farmer, to smaller farmer. Lacking an interested landlord, repairs must have been left undone, and the weather got in. With the prolonged conflicts over ownership the building may well have been left uninhabited for lengthy periods. Finally its only value was as a quarry for building materials. In 1762 Edmund Chamberlayne (a descendant of the earlier one) sold it to the current Lord Craven, - 'Two pieces of Pasture Ground ... being the Scite of the Manor of Prestbury ... and called by the name or names of the Mannor or Manor Closes.' (43) This time, clearly, 'scite' does mean that the building was no longer there. The outgoing tenant at the time of the sale was John Turbett, and the new one Jeremiah Cresser, both members of local families of no particular distinction. So at last the Cravens'

tenure of the manor extended also to what had been the house. Agents of the Cravens managed the land efficiently until 1853, when the manor was sold to F T Cudden (44).

Just when the house slipped beyond the point of being habitable, and whether it was then pulled down or simply crumbled, we do not know. One much-quoted piece of evidence, said to prove its ruinous condition in 1698, turns out on close examination to be of very doubtful value. In that year the parish churchwardens' accounts (45) record a payment to Mr (William) Baghott 'for halling four Loade of Stone from the manor' for the repair of the church tower. At first sight this seems proof enough, but Baghott's four cartloads of stone were only one contribution among many; altogether various parishioners brought in 58 cartloads from their several properties. The 'manor' therefore was not unique in having stone available, and it may not even have been dressed stone that was in question. Moreover, William Baghott had nothing to do with the old (bishops') manor. His family home was Hall Place, which by this date had unofficially taken over the role and title of manor hour (46). So the question of when the old house disappeared remains open.

If we ask for a single reason why the bishops' manor house did not survive, the answer must lie in Sir Thomas Chamberlayne's transfer of the manor lands to the Earl of Leicester. A fine house needs its surrounding land, both as an amenity, and to maintain the owner's status in the community. Without land, the house simply had no future as a gentleman's country seat. The secrecy which apparently surrounded the transaction made matters worse. Even Sir Thomas's heir, it seems, was not aware of the true situation, and the confusion over ownership must have hastened the house's decline. In the end, the mystery that remains is 'Why did Sir Thomas do it?'



1. Gloucestershire Record Office D621 and D1333 (Chamberlayne family), and D184 (Craven family).
2. Revd A L Browne, 'Title Deeds of the Manor of Prestbury', abstracted from a Bodleian Library MS. *TBGAS* 61 (1939), 281.
3. Helen O'Neil, 'Prestbury Moat, a manor-house of the Bishops of Hereford in Gloucestershire'. *TBGAS* 75 (1956), 5.
4. Victoria County History, Gloucestershire. 8, 72.
5. G.R.O. P254/SD/2. For later history of the deer park, see also B Elliott, 'Prestbury Park Farm', *Cheltenham Local History Society Journal 3,* (1985), 1.
6. R W D Fenn & J B Sinclair, *The Bishops of Hereford and their Palace.* Friends of Hereford Cathedral, 1990.
7. O'Neil, op.cit.
8. Fenn & Sinclair, op.cit.
9. Hockaday extracts, Prestbury. Gloucester Central Library, local History Collection.
10. G.R.O. D184 T70.
11. For the ancient origins of this farm, see B Rawes, 'The Hundred of Cheltenham and its boundaries', *Chelt. Local History Soc. J 2* (1984), 8.
12. *Jacob's Law Dictionary,* 1744.
13. G.R.O. D184 P1.
14. G.R.O. P254/SD/2.
15. V.C.H. 8, 78.
16. Clearly 'greate house' in the 1542 lease. Hockaday's transcription of the earlier, 1532, lease has 'gatehouse', which must be a copying error.
17. Fenn & Sinclair, op.cit.
18. G.R.O. D184 T72, and Browne, op.cit.
19. F Douglas Price, 'The Commission for Ecclesiastical Causes for the Dioceses of Bristol & Gloucester, 1574', *TBGAS* 59

(1937), 66, footnote.
20. O'Neil, op.cit.
21. G.R.O. D184 T72, and Browne, op.cit.
22. G.R.O. D1333 3.
23. G.R.O. D621 T1.
24. G.R.O. D1333 3.
25. G.R.O. D184 T70.
26. Browne, op.cit.
27. ibid.
28. Sir Robert Atkyns, *The Ancient and present State of Gloucestershire,* (1712).
29. G.R.O. D184 T70.
30. ibid.
31. G.R.O. D1333 3.
32. The Chamberlaynes had exchanged Oddington for Maugersbury, previously owned by the Leigh family; Joan Johnson, *The Gloucestershire Gentry,* Alan Sutton 1989.
33. G.R.O. D184 T72.
34. Browne, op.cit.
35. Cockagne, *Complete Peerage*, Alan Sutton, 1982.
36. G.R.O. D184 T70.
37. Browne, op.cit.
38. See field names in 1841 Tithe map, G.R.O. P254/SD/2.
39. G.R.O. D184 P1.
40. Browne, op.cit.
41. G.R.O. D1637 T25.
42. G.R.O. D1450 T1.
43. G.R.O. D184 T76.
44. V.C.H. 8, 72; also records subsequent changes of ownership to 1925.
45. G.R.O. P254 CW 2/1.
46. eg G.R.O. D1637 T25.

From the 'Cheltenham Examiner'

The road which ran past the cemetery will henceforth bear, in lieu of its former designation of 'Bouncers Lane', the more euphonious title of 'Cemetery Road'!

- 23rd November 1864

A singular accident occurred on Monday at the establishment of Mr. Williams, tea dealer, Clarence Street by which a large piece of glass was entirely demolished. It appears that two or three very large American cheeses were placed in a slanting position in the window when, from some unexplained cause, one of them threw an involuntary somersault over a heap of Portugal onions and demolished the sheet of glass and made its way with some of the Portugal esculents to the pavement outside. We believe Mr. Williams had only a few weeks previously taken the precaution to insure his window.

- 23rd August 1865

TO WIDOWS AND SPINSTERS

A gentleman of noble family, but limited means, of middle age, a Widower, family grown up, wishes to FORM a MATRIMONIAL CONNECTION with a LADY of respectable family, age about 45 years, of independent property (which will be secured to her) and a member of the Church of England. Satisfactory reasons for the advertisement which is honourable and truthful.

Letter addressed to CHAS. CAVENDISH ESQ., (until called for) G.P.O. London will meet with early and confidential attention.

- 6th September 1865

National Association for Promoting Freedom of Worship by the Abolition of Pew Rents and the Revival of the Weekly Offertory.

Canon Madan has been elected a Vice-President of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Branch of this Society.

- 6th September 1865

CHELTENHAM POST OFFICE. The public will do well to recollect that for the future, until further notice, the General Post-office in Clarence Street will be closed at Nine o'clock in the evening, instead of at Ten, as heretofore. Letters for registration must therefore be presented before that time.

- 9th January 1867

Intellectual Amusement and Instruction: the 1841 Exhibition of Works of Art and Science at the Cheltenham Literary and Philosophical Institution

JEAN LACOCK

ACCORDING TO Cheltenham Borough Council's publication, *the Clarion* of June 1992, 'Cheltenham is famous for the high quality of its leisure services, which lie at the heart of its reputation, as a town with a rich lifestyle'. Richness of lifestyle certainly became the concern of its inhabitants soon after the town's rapid growth two hundred years ago, when the need to maintain attractiveness to visitors and potential residents resulted in emphasis on the pleasures to be found in 'an elegant and well-regulated town' ... with the inestimable advantages of pure air and agreeable rural scenery. The variety and abundance of its amusements were celebrated, but the members of the Cheltenham Literary and Philosophical Institution founded in 1833, wished to promote literature and science, to the intellectual improvement of society.

To this end on May 27, 1841, a Special General Meeting was held, which began a 'spirited attempt to disseminate a knowledge and love of the arts and sciences among our townsmen' by holding an Exhibition of Works of Art and Science for at least two months.

It was to be housed in the Institution's building, which had been erected in the line of The Promenade Villas in 1835-36 from designs by R.W.Jearrad (a founder member), the architect of Christ Church and The Queen's Hotel. Here, papers and communications were read, mostly contributed by members' public lectures were given by professors engaged by the Institution and conversazioni, occasionally held and always well attended, according to Griffith. A library of reference and a museum too had been formed.

The Committee of Management were aware of exhibitions having been held in many large towns, including Leeds, Sheffield, Derby, York, Bath, Bristol and Halifax. Hopes were high, the *Cheltenham Chronicle* asserting that Cheltenham would vie with any exhibition of the kind in the country, while the *Cheltenham Free Press* stated that it would not cause surprise if it was surpassed by no similar exhibition.

The C.L.P.I. committee believed its exhibition would result in many advantages. As the *Cheltenham Examiner* commented, 'We know nothing so calculated to be intensely useful to all classes of society, from the highest to the lowest.'

It was hoped to disprove, according to a letter sent by 'A Residenter' to the *Cheltenham Looker-On*, the allegation that 'Cheltenham is famed for idleness, gaiety and a taste for amusements of an ephemeral nature - the inhabitants and residents scouting the idea of supporting anything more intellectual than squibs and crackers, or a new set of quadrilles.' Cheltenham would show a taste for fine arts, reveal an abundance of talent and draw visitors to 'so attractive a source of intellectual amusement'.

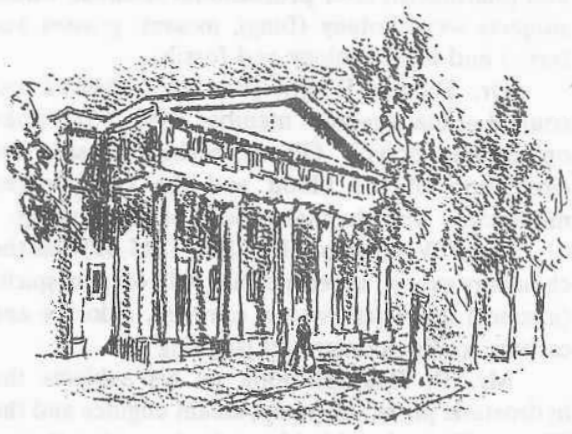
Besides being a source of delightful recreation, the exhibition was intended 'to exalt the general character of Cheltenham, in the estimation of men of taste and intellect, and thereby induce them to take up their abode with us.' With the improved tone and proven intellectual character of the town, the Institution could hope for an influx of new members.

Having knowledge of the financial rewards of exhibitions in other towns, the Institution expected its efforts would prove advantageous to its funds, although prudently a guarantee fund was set up. In Derby, where 400 people had lent 5,000 articles as exhibits and 96,000 visits had been made, expenses had been £763, while the receipts were £2,119.

A report on Derby's exhibition included the opinion that 'if such were more frequent, a change would occur in the character and habits of the English population with less debasing sports and leisure hours spent in tavern and in shops'! Dr Disney Thorp (Committee member, later Vice-President and then President 1843-45) who had, at the Special General Meeting, seconded the resolution proposing the exhibition, gave an address on October 9th. Speaking of the advantages extended to each portion of the community at the exhibition, he enquired, 'What more likely to entice the artizans from grosser to more refined enjoyments' than by 'beholding the admiration bestowed on the trophies of those mental victories over Art and Science by the master minds of today?' He did not explain how the inspection of paintings, machines and models could be achieved by the workers at the entry prices charged. He accepted that since the country had chosen to educate the workers, there was 'a duty to assume responsibility to set them in the right direction.'

The Committee of the Institution, augmented

by others likely to promote the fulfilment of the planned exhibition, began its duties by advertising for Works of Art. Models and Natural Curiosities were to be borrowed and carefully returned, free of expense, for Artists, Mechanics and Patentees wanting an opportunity of making known or selling any Models or Specimens of Ingenuity or Art. Contributions illustrative of the progress of invention and discovery - models and philosophical apparatus 'explanatory of some of the most striking phenomena in Chemical, Electrical, and



The Institution in the 1840s

Mechanical Science' were needed. It should be remembered that philosophy meant the study of natural science, hence philosophical instruments and apparatus.

The exhibition opened on Monday, 9th August and consisted of four sections. In the lecture room of the Institution building there was a Gallery of Ancient and Modern Buildings with water-coloured drawings, models and statuary. The resident gentry had provided oil paintings and other Fine Arts specimens from their private collections. About 200 paintings were hung around the walls, while screens at either end displayed the drawings. In the centre, marble busts and statues were arranged. All round the gallery, tables covered with crimson cloth held natural or artificial curiosities and loans from the Royal Asiatic Society.

The lithograph produced in situ by George Rowe captured this scene. Contemporary descriptions of the arrangement as beautiful, judicious, elegant and tasteful, with striking and brilliant effect, would not be one's reaction today!

Works displayed were by Veronese, Salvator Rosa, Poussin, Canaletto, Velasquez, Reynolds and Gainsborough together with those of many lesser artists. Detailed descriptions of the paintings were published in newspapers but the printed Exhibition Catalogue is no longer extant.

Rearrangements took place after complaints that the work of local artists sometimes pushed the Masters' work into less easily seen positions on the walls, while the natural daylight, from above, was replaced for the evening sessions by gas lighting, provided by Thomas Spinney, superintendent of the Cheltenham Gas Works. As an inaugural subscriber and shareholder he had given free gas for lectures and public meetings at the Institution.

Two rooms housed a Museum of Natural History. One opening out of the Picture Gallery was devoted mainly to ornithology, with specimens in cases ranged round the walls and on a centre table. Here were to be found a flamingo and scarlet ibis, as well as a duck-billed platypus - the latter a cause for speculation as to a link between bird and quadruped. Shells were displayed in several cases but not classified.

The other room, upstairs, contained extensive entymological collections, all classified and scientifically arranged on one side of the room, while opposite more miscellaneous rarities of air, earth and water were displayed. A fine collection of minerals, specimens in geology and a complete arrangement of the fossils of the neighbourhood of Cheltenham were on view.

An Archaeological Museum or Museum of Antiquities was situated through large folding doors, out of the Art Gallery, guarded by two figures in complete suits of armour. Etruscan, Roman, British and other remains consisted of arms, armour, domestic utensils, implements, vases, sepulchral relics, coins and medals. A black baked clay Etruscan vase of 1184 B.C. was singled out by the *Cheltenham Chronicle.*

A new building, about fifty feet by twenty-five feet, had been erected at the back of the picture gallery, especially for the Exhibition to house 'Philosophical Instruments and Machines for the purpose of exhibiting various experiments of a Scientific Character; Processes of Manufacture etc.' In this Saloon of Science had been built a large circular basin, holding upwards of 800 gallons of water, with an elegant fountain, modelled by Papera, after that in the Montpellier Gardens. Here at intervals one could watch the process of blowing up the *Royal George* (sunk off Spithead) by electro-magnetism, see Hall's hydraulic belt for raising water, and a diving bell. This hall of practical Science contained a steam engine from Messrs Ferrabee of Stroud, a turning lathe, a circular saw, Bramah's hydraulic press, with Budding's mowing machine, Fulling's cloth shearing machine and various steam engines. Printing, copper-plate and lithographic presses, microscopes of differing construction, including the oxyhydrogen one, the electrotype, electrical and

electro-magnetic apparatus were here with a machine for ventilating ships' holds. There was a model of the Cheltenham Gas Works which had been made by Mr. Spinney and which explained the process of making gas easily and scientifically. These models and apparatus for demonstration were to make this the general workshop and laboratory of the exhibition.

Certain exhibits were intended to amuse and delight the visitors. 'The Invisible Girl' consisted of a globe with a pretend lady inside and four trumpets. A question asked in one of the trumpets gained an immediate answer apparently from the girl in the globe because it was so feeble, but it could be heard by an ear at any trumpet. This acoustic deception was popular, especially with the juveniles. The 'Fire-cloud' consisted of a continuous stream of naphtha being ejected onto a board, hanging from the roof and lit so that the flame followed the stream and had the appearance of a cloud of fire. It was regarded as beautiful and striking. The 'Phantasmagoria' intended to amuse the young, showed grotesque figures. Scenes and other objects were thrown on a screen and ingeniously managed to 'produce the effect of Dissolving Views now so much run after in the Metropolis'.

Other attractions were introduced. A camera obscura was set in the pediment of the portico and included in its range The Queen's Hotel and the whole of the Promenade, showing equestrians and pedestrians.

A Welsh harper, Mr Griffiths, with triple harp, proved a novelty and attraction, his music with paintings being thought of as 'twin sisters'. Alfred Darbyshire from the Adelaide Gallery, a profile cutter 'with wonder working scissors' charged 6d upwards for a portrait, that of Capt. Kirwan, Cheltenham's M.C. causing approving comment. The *Cheltenham Journal* and *Stroud Herald* recommended people to go to have Mr. Darbyshire take 'the cut of their phiz.' A glass blower attracted a crowd of visitors to watch his manufacture of 'elegant bijouterie', and buy 'a tiny ship or lilliputian bird of paradise'.

George Rowe worked in public on his lithographic view of the interior of the picture gallery. The prints were sold to visitors as a work of art and a memorial of the exhibition as he described his art and the various processes, and demonstrated the press. His lectures and demonstrations were examples of a most important feature of the Exhibition. Various managers and gentlemen of the C.L.P.I. agreed to explain models and exhibits, to give demonstrations or show experiments.

For most of the exhibition period, the Institution was open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and from 7 - 9 in the evening. The short talks or demonstrations took place at 3 o'clock and 8 o'clock, as illustrations of Art and Science, to give 'life and distinctive interest' to the exhibition. Although not intended as long lectures, these were a considerable undertaking and were given regularly, interspersed with the more dramatic Firecloud, Royal George, etc.

The gentlemen most involved included Mr James Buckman (Hon. Sec. 1842-1844), chemist and pharmacist, later professional scientist, whose subjects were botany (fungi, mosses, grasses and ferns) and local geology and fossils.

Dr. Thomas Wright (President 1847-52 and council of management member 1836-1861) spoke on corals, polypi, Gloucestershire fossils, the circulation of the blood and the oxyhydrogen microscope with demonstrations of insect wings.

Dr. F.W. Crump (Hon. Sec. 1845-46) was the chemistry expert, experimenting with oxygen, spirits (alcohol) hydrogen, water, nitrogen, chlorine and carbon, and demonstrated laughing gas.

Mr. R. Beamish took as his subjects the hydrostatic press, air pump, steam engines and the Thames Tunnel and held out the hope that Brunel would visit the exhibition.

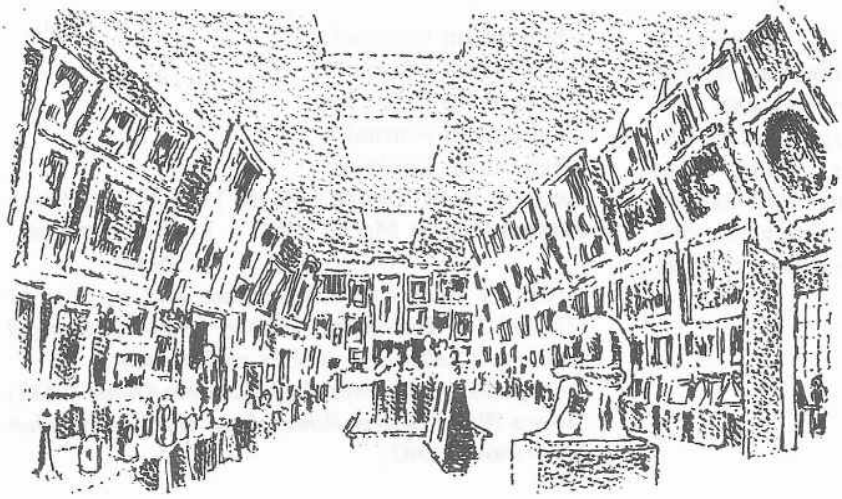
Other well-known Cheltonians took their parts. Dr. H.C. Boisragon (President 1834-39) spoke on Etruscan Antiquities and the Fine Arts. His son, Dr. T. Boisragon (Vice-President 1844-45) chose meteorology. Dr. A. Eves (Vice-President 1846-48 and almost continual council member) - on the eye, light and the Nebular Theory. Dr. D. Thorp (President 1843-45) on health - R.W. Jearred (Committee 1836-1843) surprisingly on felt cloth manufacture, then warming and ventilation. Gen. Briggs, one suspects, was responsible for the Royal Asiatic Society's loans for he lectured on lac in India, on agricultural operations there an on cooling systems in tropical climates.

Others too spoke of subjects that interested them, such as F. Richardson on the honey-bee and R. Wolseley on balloon flights. Mr. Bunting explained electricity and gave members of his audience electric shocks.

What a range of subjects available to season ticket holders!

Proprietors and Annual Subscribers of 2 gns. could obtain free season tickets, not transferable, admitting to morning and evening sessions. Annual Subscribers of 1 gn. paid 2/6d. Non members paid 5/- each for season tickets.

Morning (11-5 o'clock) tickets cost 1/-; evening tickets - Mon. Wed. and Fri. (7-9p.m.) were also 1/-; evening tickets - Tues. Thurs, Sat (with less expensive demonstrations or without



The Picture Gallery at the Exhibition, after a lithograph by George Rowe

music) were 6d. On the first day, the exhibition was crowded with fashionable company and £22 of tickets were sold. On the first Saturday £12 was taken. That autumn season, 'the influx of company was large beyond all past example' in September and October and the attractions of the exhibitions were frequently and well reported in the local newspapers. A description had been included in *The New Cheltenham Guide of 1841* (A.H. Hamilton).

Realisation that attendances were lower than anticipated in spite of these facts may have been a reason for some specially arranged visits. On 16th September, the Church of England Working Men's Association members and their families, about 200 people, attended. On 23rd September the Tee-totallers' Society had a special evening and were reportedly not too pleased when Dr. Conolly (Vice-President 1834-1839) burned gas he produced from water and claimed he could get as much flame from it as from brandy! These visits cost 6d per person.

The exhibition had been billed to last at least two months. It opened on Monday, 9th August, closing Saturday 9th October, but re-opened on Tuesday 12th October with altered hours of opening until Saturday, 23rd October.

The beginning of the C.L.P.I's 1841/1842 session had been postponed with members agreeing to forego the use of the rooms. Maybe this was the reason why in the last week there was a musical soiree every day.

Figures published in the Cheltenham Free Press in November, for the 11 weeks of the exhibition were: Season Tickets 445; Single tickets at the door 4,748; Daily Average 227; Total 12,289.

The expenses and receipts of the exhibition remain unknown. The account was kept separate from the Institution's general expenditure, listed in an Account Book from March 1841 - 1845, which includes a few relevant items only: July 31 20 large boards for pasting bills (T.Tainton) £1.10.0; Aug 6 Ironmongery (R.E.Marshall) £12.11.7; Sept 25 Preparing objects for Museum £2.1.0; Nov 20 Exhibition Ctee in purchase of apparatus and materials as agreed £15.15.0.

No printed copy of the 1841/42 report given at the March 1842 Annual General Meeting has survived. Newspaper accounts of the meeting and the report do not refer to the exhibition finances.

Dr. Thorp, in his October 9th concluding address, claimed that visitors to the exhibition were mainly casual, so that there would be little or no benefit to the C.L.P.I. funds. Unless residents gave support, the Institution would have to go to the guarantee fund subscribers. Mr. Crump in his concluding address the same day, denied the exhibition had been established for pecuniary reasons as any sum of money obtained 'would have been wholly applied to extending the usefulness of the Institution'. (Education was the real aim).

The editor of the *Cheltenham Looker-On* hoped that liberal donations would be made by those pleased with the Institution's efforts, to prevent those who had sacrificed so much time being also pecuniary losers. At the next A.G.M. the subscribers to the guarantee fund were thanked, so presumably the appeal was not entirely successful.

Another disappointment was that the residents of Cheltenham had not attended as hoped or become convinced of the need to join the C.L.P.I. Between March 1841 and March 1842 the total numbers of members increased by three!

There was, however, pride in the meeting of 'men of all parties in the spirit of friendship to receive and communicate improvement. The Geologist, The Chemist, The Botanist, The Engineer, The Architect, The Artist and the Antiquarian, spread forth their varied knowledge'

in the C.L.P.I. A week after the exhibition's closure, about forty of the 162 members assembled in the picture gallery, with many paintings still displayed. The room was lit by a large pendant and twelve gas burners on the tables. Here, these gentlemen held their annual dinner and had an 'intellectual feast' with 'real enjoyment in one another's company' and no doubt a feeling of pride in their achievement.

SOURCES

Bath and Cheltenham Gazette
Cheltenham Chronicle
Cheltenham Examiner
Cheltenham Free Press
Cheltenham Journal
Cheltenham Looker-On
Account Book, March 1841-45) C.L.P.I. Archives
Annual Report March 1843) in Cheltenham
) Library
Griffith's *History of Cheltenham and its Vicinity (1838)*A.H. Hamilton. *Visitors New Condensed Guide to Cheltenham and its environment.*
George Rowe. *Illustrated Cheltenham Guide* (1843)
Steven Blake *George Rowe, Artist and Lithographer 1796-1864* (1982)

College and County: Cheltenham Training College and its proposed rival 1903-7

CHARLES MORE

BY THE early 1900's the Cheltenham Training College was expanding rapidly after a long period of stagnation in the mid to late nine-teenth century. Its dynamic Principal, Henry Bren, appointed in 1895, had already instituted new building schemes and had increased student numbers. St. Paul's, as the men's department was popularly known although it was not its official title at that time, had increased its numbers from ninety students to one hundred and twenty, while St. Mary's Hall, the women's department, had doubled in size to one hundred and twenty. (1) This expansion reflected the rapid changes in education at that time. County councils had gained in 1890 some rights to provide post-elementary education; the provision of elementary education by school boards and the churches continued but they too were increasingly catering for older children as well as younger. For a variety of reasons there was a major reorganisation of education in 1902 at a national level, which brought elementary and post-elementary education together under the control of local education authorities (LEAs). For Cheltenham, Gloucestershire county council became the relevant LEA, although due to a special proviso in the Act which sanctioned the continuing existence of larger separate elementary authorities, Cheltenham Borough had oversight over elementary education. (2) One of the powers given to LEAs was to open new training colleges, which had hitherto been the preserve of the churches and, from the 1890's, universities. The reasons for granting these powers are not our prime concern here: basically they were the growing secularisation of education and the increasing need, or perceived need, for trained teachers.

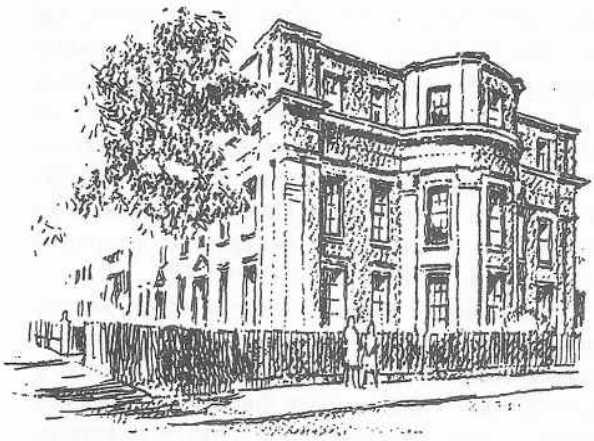
Gloucestershire celebrated its newly acquired LEA status almost immediately with a proposal for a teacher-training college. The earliest recorded reference to this is in the minutes of Cheltenham Training College's executive committee, which early in 1903 reported that the threat - as it seemed to the College - was 'sprung upon us by the Grammar School authorities under the County Council'. (3) What had the Grammar School got to do with it? The Grammar School had been reorganised in 1900 to incorporate a School for Technology and Science which had been set up earlier under the auspices of the County Council. (4) It seems that the Council, which retained representation on the governing body of the reorganised school, was using it as an agent for expansion in further education as we would now call it, or higher education as it was called then. In 1901, for instance, Cheltenham Training College had been asked to draw up a scheme for a pupil-teacher centre, but a rival scheme sponsored by the Grammar School had been preferred. (5)

Unfortunately the county council records are intriguingly unforthcoming about the teacher training scheme. The final set of minutes of the county council's old Technical Instruction

Committee, which concerned itself *inter alia* with the County Council's interest in the Grammar School, were for May 1902. The first recorded meeting of the new 'Higher Education' committee, which appears in effect to have been the old Technical Instruction Committee renamed, and was not a subcommittee of the full Education Committee, was on 25th April 1903. This seems to be the first time there is a mention of the training college plan on the council side: 'the Committee was requested to give their early attention to the question of providing for the training of teachers....' (6) The first mention in the full Education Committee minutes appears from the index to be as late as June 1903, when it was reported that the higher education subcommittee was studying the matter. In other words, the proposal, together with details about the Grammar School's involvement, surfaces in the training college minutes before it is even discussed in the relevant county council subcommittee. (7)

Before exploring the reasons for this, we should look at the subsequent history of the proposal. The higher education committee was still considering the matter in June 1903, and the education committee received a letter from an interested party about the scheme early in 1904. (8) These seem to be the only subsequent references. The scheme died. However, Gloucestershire continued to be interested in teacher training. In 1904 the Grammar School authorities were encouraged to arrange classes for serving teachers who wished to take their certificate examination. In 1907 there was discussion about the sending of students from Gloucestershire to the local authority college in Bristol, and there seems to have been an agreement for the Bristol college to take 'bursars' from Gloucestershire, that is students for whom the local authority paid the fees. (9)

Cheltenham Training College's reaction to the mooted LEA training college was much more vigorous than the local authority's own subsequent actions. Bren immediately proposed that a hostel should be purchased to take women students (women teachers were most in demand, no doubt because they were paid much less). The hostel would be worked under a 'conscience clause' which would mean that students, if they wished, could opt out of the religious education provided by the College. The College could therefore take Nonconformists; this was relevant to the national debate because the imbalance between Anglican and Nonconformist colleges - in favour of the Anglicans - had long been a grievance with nonconformists whose pressure for change was becoming increasingly difficult to resist. (In 1907, by legislative fiat, 50% of all Anglican college places were opened to Nonconformists). The College decided to purchase one half of the Priory, a large house at the junction of Priory Road and London Road, to take forty students. In 1904 the other half was bought and another forty students accommodated. (10)



The Priory, London Road

It would be tempting to assume that the county's failure to go ahead with its scheme was because the College had assuaged its fears over teacher training places. But as has been seen, the county in 1907 was still looking for places for its bursars, the reason for this being that Cheltenham Training College was 'averse' to taking them. (11) This means probably not that Cheltenham refused to take all local authority supported students, since by this time many students were supported on merit and would not make special allowance for local students. The truth of the matter seems to be that Cheltenham continued its old policy. The opening of the Priory did not lead to an influx of local students, although of course there were always a few. (Denis Healey's mother, Winnie Powell, was one such; she came from Newnham). (12) Whatever Cheltenham's policy, Gloucestershire's continued failure to do anything about a teacher training college probably owes itself as much to unwillingness to spend much as to anything else. When the discussions with Bristol were going on in 1907, the authorities there suggested at one stage that they would enlarge their college if neighbouring local authorities would help with the financing. The Gloucestershire higher education committee was 'in hearty sympathy' - but regretted that its funds would not allow it to participate. (13)

We are left with two questions: was the county council's original proposal in early 1903 the real reason why the Cheltenham Training College

bought the Priory? And if the College had not acted in this way, would the council have gone ahead in the first flush of its enthusiasm and set up a rival training college? Although hypothetical, neither question is unimportant to the history of education in Cheltenham. The increase in St.Mary's size to two hundred as a result of the Priory acquisition meant that in the inter-war years, when contraction rather than expansion was the rule, St. Mary's could give up some student numbers to St. Paul's to ensure the latter's viability and still remain viable itself. (The Board of Education refused to sanction an overall increase in student numbers). Without the extra eighty students, there might well have been pressure to close at least one of the colleges, as happened elsewhere in the 1920's and 1930's. (14)

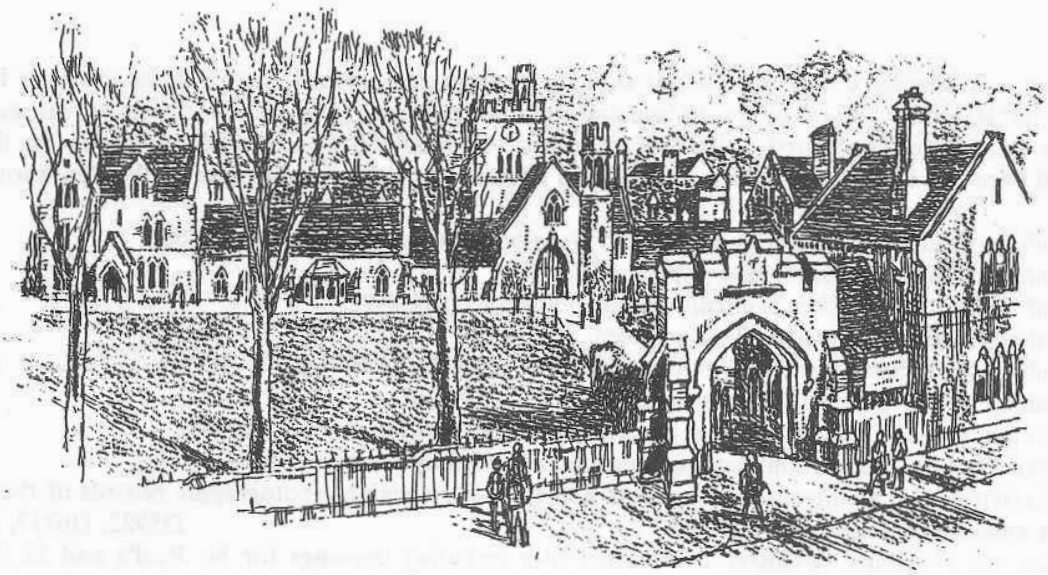
While the evidence of the College minute books suggests that the council's 'threat' was the decisive element in the purchase of the Priory, a wider consideration suggests that there were other factors. Henry Bren was highly sensitive to current educational issues and was also an expansionist: the Priory satisfied the growing pressure at national level to increase Nonconformist places, and it did this while making money, since fixed costs were not increased on a pro rata basis with the number of students. Furthermore, its acquisition fitted in with previous patterns in that Bren had already substantially increased student numbers at the College. (15) The realistic conclusion is that the county council initiative provided Bren with an opportunity to do what he might well have done anyway. This supposition is supported by the speed with which Bren brought the proposed LEA Training College to the attention of the College executive committee, so that it was discussed there before it was even formally put before the council's Higher Education committee. Nevertheless, it is possible that without that opportunity, which was also in itself a cogent reason, the College governors would not have backed Bren; in that case the future of the College, or from 1921 the two colleges, might have been very different.

In the case of the county, as has already been seen, its actions subsequent to 1903 were marked by caution and an unwillingness to spend money. Nevertheless, it is not impossible that if Cheltenham Training College had done nothing, the Board of Education would have encouraged the county to go ahead; maybe it would have taken its courage in its hands and done so. As it was, Gloucestershire had to wait until the 1960s for its own local authority training college with comprehensive subject coverage.

In spite of the failure of Gloucestershire's initiative, the episode can be seen as part of the process of secularisation of education. Given that school boards were initiated in 1870, it was in some ways anomalous that church sponsored training colleges should continue to have a monopoly as long as they did. Gloucestershire's failure to set up a college was not a setback to secularisation. On the contrary, it happened partly because Bren was alert to the demands of the time and willing to respond to them. In a few years he had changed Cheltenham Training College from an inward looking institution to one which was much more in tune with the contemporary world. The purchase of the Priory was a part of this process. There was, of course, another reason for Gloucestershire's failure and that was money. This too was a factor which has reoccurred in English educational history. Bold plans have been made and then not fulfilled due to lack of finance. Given that finance was always likely to be a stumbling-block towards the realisation of Gloucestershire's aims, it is a tribute to Bren's management skills that he financed the extensions to the College, including the Priory, so successfully.

1. See Charles More, *The Training of Teachers 1847-1947: A History of the Church Colleges at Cheltenham*, 1992, ch. 2; there is a brief account in Charles More, *'A Splendid College': An Illustrated History of Teacher Training in Cheltenham 1847-1990*,1992, ch. 1.
2. A. Platts and G. Hainton, *Education in Gloucestershire: A Short History*, 1954, p.82.
3. Cheltenham and Gloucestershire College of Higher Education Archives (CH) 2/1/4, Feb. 10th 1903. A discussion of these archives can be found in More, *Training*, Appendix 1.
4. Gwen Hart, *A History of Cheltenham*, 2nd ed. 1981, p.318.
5. CH 2/1/4, Nov. 12th 1901. Pupil-teacher centres were intended to take older children, who were working as pupil-teachers, out of class to give them more formal education. They spread rapidly in the late nineteenth century, but were to decline equally rapidly soon afterwards as facilities for secondary education grew.
6. Gloucestershire Record Office (GRO) CE/M7/1, April 25th 1903.
7. GRO CE/M2/1, June 13th 1903.
8. GRO CE/M2/1, Jan. 30th 1904.
9. GRO CE/M7/2, July 9th 1904, Sept. 21st 1907, Jan. 18th 1908.
10. More, *Training*, p.32 and ch.2., note 53.
11. GRO CE/M7/2 Jan. 18th 1908.

12. More, *Training*, ch.6 note 62.
13. GRO CE/M7/2, Nov. 9th 1907.
14. More, *Training*, p.33. Among the colleges closed were the Home and Colonial in the 1920's, and Truro in the 1930's.
15. Ibid., pp.32-3 and 183-4.



Francis Close Hall, Swindon Road, formerly Cheltenham Training College

Book Review

O'CONNOR, D. Battledown: *the story of a Victorian Estate* published privately 1992. 150pp. £15.99

Cheltenham, like most towns, is an accretion of identifiable areas each with its own character. Some like Pittville and The Park have had their history investigated; others still await a chronicler. Battledown has as it were been waiting in the wings, till now. As a resident and a Trustee of Estate, David O'Connor, has boldly accepted the challenge and produced a study worthy of his time.

It was the announcement in the *Looker-On* of 9th October 1858 that 107 acres comprising up to 70 lots were to be developed as a 'new town emulating Cheltenham in the number and quality of its fashionable residents' which heralded the purchase by Somerset Tibbs, George Ridge and William Bain of the land. It cost them £6,500.

Progress was slow, for many owners were reluctant to be the pioneers in actually building houses unless they could be assured others would do likewise; and it was also costly, in the first couple of years roadmaking expenditure amounted to over £3,700. Moreover the original Trustees fell victim to financial pressures and departed.

Nevertheless, as the author shows, gradually the estate took shape. He includes engaging details: the road work advertised resulted in a submission from Samuel Barnett 'whose tender no one could understand'; in 1922 testing of vehicles was forbidden on the hill; a £10 fee was paid by the Race Course annually for traffic using the estate route to Meetings; and during World War II the American army contributed £104 because of a unit at the camp.

There are descriptions of the houses from the earliest examples, together with lavish colour photographs, and biographies of some of the celebrated residents. These included the usual sprinkling of 'Army, Navy, Medical and Church', but also had such names as Holborrow the Gloucestershire Dairy man, Lance of shop repute, Dangerfield Town Surveyor, and Rogers five-times mayor.

This is a book for all persuasions of local historian: those archival, those social and those architectural. Altogether a valuable addition to Cheltenham's record.

Gloucestershire Record Office Accessions 1991-2 relating to the Cheltenham area

The following list comprises those archives of local interest deposited at or donated to the Record Office in this period. Some have yet to be catalogued and packaged, and therefore access for researchers may be delayed (uncatalogued collections in this list are denoted by an asterisk). Records less than 50 years old are not usually available to researchers without the written permission of the depositor.

Cheltenham Council of Churches: Peace and Development Group papers, 1978-89	D6050
Cheltenham District Coroner: case papers, 1987-89	C07
Cheltenham Methodist Circuit: circuit and chapel records, 1954-91	D3418
Cheltenham Natural Science Society: minutes, 1877-1903	D5130
Cheltenham Petty Sessional Division: court minutes, 1936-53, and registers, 1923-87	PS/CH
Cheltenham Poetry Society: minutes, scrapbooks, etc., 1967-91	D6536
Cheltenham Trades Council: minutes, secretary's files and other records, 1967-86	D6379
Everyman Theatre Association: correspondence and publicity records, 1955-91	D6540
H.H. Martyn & Co, architectural decorators and furnishers: mainly photographic records of the firm's work, premises and employees, c1900-50	D5922, D6337, D6345
*Healing and Overbury, architects: additional files including drawings for St. Paul's and St. Mary's colleges and other buildings in Cheltenham, 20th cent.	D5587
Poll book listing freeholders in Cheltenham, Leckhampton, Swindon and Charlton Kings, not dated (early 18th cent.)	D5130
Rotol, aircraft manufacturers: press cuttings, technical papers and other material gathered during research into the firm's history by B. Stait, 1937-60	D6327
Frank Rouse & Co, motor trimmers: ledgers, 1935-49	D6652
Spa Pharmacy: prescription books, 1904-76	D3893
St. Stephen's church: material used for the church's centenary brochure, (1883)-1978	D6490
Suffolk House, Suffolk Square: architect's outline drawings, 1936 (house demolished in July 1936)	D6506
White Bros. and Whittern & sons, grocers of Suffolk Parade: accounts, 1931085	D6569

Deeds were received throughout the year from solicitors and private individuals. They included 36 Alexander Street, (1880)-1971 (D6260); 32 Albert Street, 1835-1948 (D2172); The Coach House, Stanley Lodge, Battledown, 1859-1985 (D6663); Selby Lodge, Cambray Place, 1819-69 (D1347); 4 Coltham Road, (1873)-1984 (D5902); 7 Commercial Street, 1824-1988 (D6260); 71 Gratton Road, (1888)-1984 (D5902); Hatherley Villa, 1854-63 (D6439); ½ burgage in the High Street, 1710 (D6688); 125-128 High Street, properties including The Ram Inn, 1803-1938 (D6412); Methodist Chapel, King Stret, (1789-1819) (D5130); 9 Lansdown Place, (1708)-1921, (D6406); 'Oakville', 22 Marle Hill Road, (1881)-1985 (D5902); Meeting House, 10 North Place, 1825-1932 (D6518); 9 Rotunda Terrace, (1715)-1981 (D5902); 14 Station Street, (1910)-1992 (D5902); 'Daisynook' and Oswald Villa in Swindon Road, 1859-1986 (D6494); 1-4 Wolseley Terrace and cottages in Vittoria Walk, 1805-1959 (D6728); 9 York Terrace, (1743)-1897 (D6726).

The Record Office is always pleased to hear about potentially interesting documents and archives and can give free advice about how best to look after them. Owners are welcome to discuss this with the County Archivist, David Smith.

Julie Courtenay, senior cataloguer, Gloucestershire Record Office