



# Cheltenham Local History Society

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# From the Editor

**SUE ROWBOTHAM**

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ONCE AGAIN we have to thank both new and established contributors who have taken the time to write an article for the Journal. I know how difficult it can be to tear oneself away from one's research and actually commit pen to paper, or finger to keyboard. There is always another question to be answered, or avenue of research to pursue, isn't there! I have included an index with the Journal for the first time this year, which I hope will help you to find that snippet of information that you know that you have seen somewhere in the Journal, but cannot remember exactly where.

Knowledge sharing is one of the principal aims of the Society, so if you are carrying out original research on a topic relating to the history of Cheltenham please think about writing an article for a future Journal. I am happy to discuss your ideas with you. If you have never written an article before, and do not know quite where to start, please let me know. I am happy to help in any way I can. For more confident contributors we have guidelines for the format of text and illustrations. Please ask if you would like a copy. Please note that the closing date for submissions for Journal 22 is 31 Dec 2005.

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## A glimpse into our colonial past?

**SUE ROWBOTHAM**

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ONE OF CHELTENHAM'S SHORT-LIVED TRANSPORT VENTURES, and certainly one of the most unusual, was the introduction of rickshaws onto the town's streets in October 1910. The proprietors of the scheme were Mr and Mrs Alexander Clifton, seen below as passengers in two of the rickshaws near the Gordon Lamp in Montpellier. Does anyone know any more about this venture, and what happened to it?



# ‘A pleasing but dangerous delusion’: Cheltenham through Quaker eyes

CAROLYN GREET

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THIS ARTICLE draws on the edition of *The Diary Of Sarah Fox* published by the Bristol Record Society in 2003. I am grateful to Madge Dresser MSc., General Editor of the Society and editor of the Diary, for permission to use the volume.

The delights and mild dissipations of the Cheltenham Season are well attested to in the diaries and correspondence of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century visitors; balls, walks and ‘elegant amusements’ which, as a guidebook of 1810 noted, were ‘various and respectable’. Occasionally a sourer note was struck, such as Cobbett’s dyspeptic dismissal of the town as ‘a nasty, ill-looking place’, but the general view was encapsulated in the well-known description of it as ‘the merriest sick resort on Earth’.

For an impression of the town seen from a more sober viewpoint it is interesting to turn to the diary of Sarah Champion, a Quaker from Bristol who visited Cheltenham on several occasions between 1766 and 1795. Sarah had been brought up to a simple way of life with few distractions and Cheltenham was, in the words of another Quaker, ‘a resort for persons of fashion and dissipation [which] rendered it altogether unfavourable for the training of young persons in the manner that serious and conscientious friends have judged to be consistent with the example of Christ and his enlightened followers’.<sup>1</sup> Though never less than serious-minded, in her younger days particularly Sarah seems to have been more ambivalent in her attitude, seeing the delights of the town as ‘a pleasing but dangerous delusion’.

The Champions had been prominent in the Bristol Society of Friends (Quakers) for at least three generations, enjoying comfortable financial security and a respected position in Bristol society. Sarah, her younger sister Esther and their brother Richard, however, were less fortunate in their family circumstances. In 1745 two months after Esther’s birth, their mother died and their father Joseph left Bristol for London, leaving three children under the age of four. Sarah, the eldest, went to her maternal grandmother while her siblings were left with a nurse in Westbury; later Esther joined her sister and Richard went to live with his father, subsequently seeing little of his sisters for some years. In 1752 Joseph Champion remarried, having visited his daughters only a few times in the years since his departure. Shortly afterwards their grandmother died and the sisters were split up, Sarah going to live with her father’s sister. Perhaps surprisingly she appears to have remained on reasonably friendly terms with her father despite seeing him very rarely, though at the age of 17 she did pay him a somewhat unhappy six-week visit.

In 1762 Sarah and her brother Richard were reunited when he returned to Bristol at the age of 19 to learn the trade of porcelain manufacturer. However, two years later he eloped with one of her friends; his father was furious and his displeasure seems to have extended to Sarah, especially as she made her home with the pair for some years. Later she lived with her sister, until in 1790 at the age of 48 she married a Plymouth Quaker, Charles Fox. She died in 1811.

Sarah is said to have left forty volumes of journals at her death, though her Diary is known only through a manuscript of extracts made in 1872 by John Frank, the editor of the Quaker magazine *The Friend*, whose family had known the Champions. The earlier part was apparently undertaken at the request of her brother:

*Here, I paused, & taking a view of the remaining part of my journal, determined to close at this period, offering it to my beloved brother, at whose request I have many years continued it, as it is. (1783)*

Richard had fallen into financial difficulties and in 1778 was forced to leave the Society of Friends. Six years later he emigrated to South Carolina with his wife and family, and Sarah sent the original journal to accompany him:

*It may serve, both now & in the future, as the remembrance of a sister who more than wishes for the happiness of a much loved brother both here & hereafter. (9 Sep 1784)*

This earlier part appears to have been compiled by Sarah in retrospect, using material from diaries kept at the time. The early years of her life are covered only briefly but from about 1761 the surviving entries contain considerable detail, both of her daily activities and her spiritual concerns. She had a wide circle of friends and acquaintances, mostly themselves Quakers, many of whom she visited.

Her sister Esther suffered poor health all her life and in 1766 at the age of 21 she and Sarah (then 24) came to Cheltenham, which had been recommended as her best hope of a cure. Over the next 19 years they returned several times, and Sarah paid one final visit with her husband in 1795.

Though most of the relevant diary extracts are brief, they provide an interesting if partial view of the town as seen from a perhaps slightly unusual point of view.

**1766** *On the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 1766, we set out for Cheltenham. My brother accompanied us, & as soon as he saw us settled in lodgings, left us. Our first walk was to the meeting house which was pleasantly situated in a lane about a quarter of a mile from the town. There was a pretty court before the door, on one side of which were three tenements for the poor belonging to the Society [of Friends] – on the other, a very neat garden. This garden was in possession of an old man near ninety, who with his daughter inhabited one of these tenements. They kept it exceedingly neat and raised flowers in it for sale. Many of the company at the season resorted to this place & visited the old man & his worthy daughter, whose appearance altogether, as well as her complexion, answered the idea of olden times when damsels were, by tending sheep etc., much exposed to the sun. Her extreme neatness, with the great age of her father, & their pretty little abode, gained much of our attention; and we often visited them during our stay in Cheltenham. The meetings were held on the 1<sup>st</sup> days & once in the week & generally consisted of about 12 people. The old man often exhorted them, but was never, I believe, an approved minister.*

The first Meeting House in Cheltenham was built on land that had been owned by Elizabeth Sandford and transferred by her in 1701 to John Pumphrey, John Drewett and William Mason, the owner of the original spring. The building, licensed for worship in 1703,

stood in Manchester Walk, now part of Clarence Street, adjacent to the site of the later (1836) building; it is clearly marked on the 1809 map of the town, as is the 'pretty court' in front of it. The 'old man & his worthy daughter' were probably William King (b. 1676) and Mary (b. 1712). The term 'minister' as used by the Quakers did not imply ordination, simply approval by a meeting. Despite Sarah's claims that there were usually 'about 12' at meetings, Thomas Pole, a Quaker who married a Cheltenham girl some twenty years later than this visit, asserted that there was 'great lukewarmness present among the few [members]' and there were frequently only four or five present, though according to one guidebook the Meeting House could hold two hundred people.<sup>2</sup>

*Whilst we were at Cheltenham we one evening unexpectedly met Catherine Peyton on the walks with whom we spent the evening at Betty White's & the next morning accompanied her to the walks & pump room & afterwards to meeting, where she had a large audience & gave general satisfaction by a excellent discourse. [short description of visit to Gloucester with their brother omitted] My sister and I returned to Cheltenham soon enough to take our evening's amusements & the walks. The cause of this being generally frequented by us was the company, both morning and evening, who attended us there. Every thing independent of this amusement except the company of W. Hopton & the visit of my brother, was received by us as an interruption to our pleasures. We left Cheltenham on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September...*

The Cheltenham Season extended from May to October, so during the sisters' stay visitors would have been relatively plentiful and all the amusements at their height. (Although precise visitor numbers for the 1760s are not known, in 1786 there were reckoned to be 1140, an increase of 776 over six years.<sup>3</sup> As a comparison, in the same year there were said to be about 400 houses and 2000 inhabitants.)<sup>4</sup> The well, later to be known as the Royal Well after the visit of George III in 1788, had initially been developed by William Skillicorne some 25 years previously. The facilities included a small Pump Room and an Assembly Room above which was a Billiard Room; a Long Room was added in 1775. Visitors were advised to drink the waters morning and evening and to take gentle exercise afterwards along the gravelled and tree-shaded walks. These stretched for 900 yards from the church up to the area that was later to become Montpellier, and featured prominently in early descriptions of the town as, in the words of Cheltenham's earliest guidebook, '... a mall, which, in proportion to its extent, may vie with the most celebrated of its kind throughout the kingdom'.<sup>5</sup>

Catherine Peyton, a Quaker minister, travelled in her twenties nearly 9,000 miles through America. She was presumably lodging with Betty White, who was the wife of saddler Richard White and is mentioned in early directories as letting lodgings. The Whites lived on the north side of the High Street just below Coffee House Yard, on the site of the present Pittville Street.<sup>6</sup> W. Hopton was a friend of Sarah's brother Richard.

**1867** *July. After spending a little time at my brother's, my sister & myself on the 16<sup>th</sup> again set out for Cheltenham. On our way thither we saw Lord Bathurst's woods, with Mark Harford & my brother who accompanied us & saw us settled in lodgings at the widow Shelicom's. She was a worthy woman & a constant attender of our little meetings, but in circumstances which made the trouble of letting lodgings quite unnecessary. The well was the property of this family. This year we renewed our acquaintance with those in the place & neighbourhood who visited us last year, &*

*also attended a tea [party] of Lord Tracy's.*

*Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>. We left Cheltenham after having spent three months in a pleasing but dangerous delusion – a kind of delirium fostered & carried on by many in a superior station...*

William Mason's daughter Elizabeth, who had inherited the original well, married Captain Henry Skillicorne in 1731; she was the 'widow Shelicom' mentioned here. It is an unusual name originating in the Isle of Man, and it seems that either Sarah never saw it written down or this was an idiosyncratic local pronunciation of it. Other visitors also had difficulty with the name; John Byng, Viscount Torrington, visiting in 1781 referred to 'Mr. Skellingcoat'. The Skillicornes lived at Old Farm in St. George's Place so this was presumably where Sarah and her sister lodged.

Lord Bathurst's woods are at Cirencester. Mark Harford was a member of another prominent Bristol Quaker family; he had married a cousin of Sarah's in 1762.

**1768** *Aug 1<sup>st</sup>. Left Stoke in order to go to Cheltenham with my brother & sisters. We staid there till the 14<sup>th</sup> of September.*

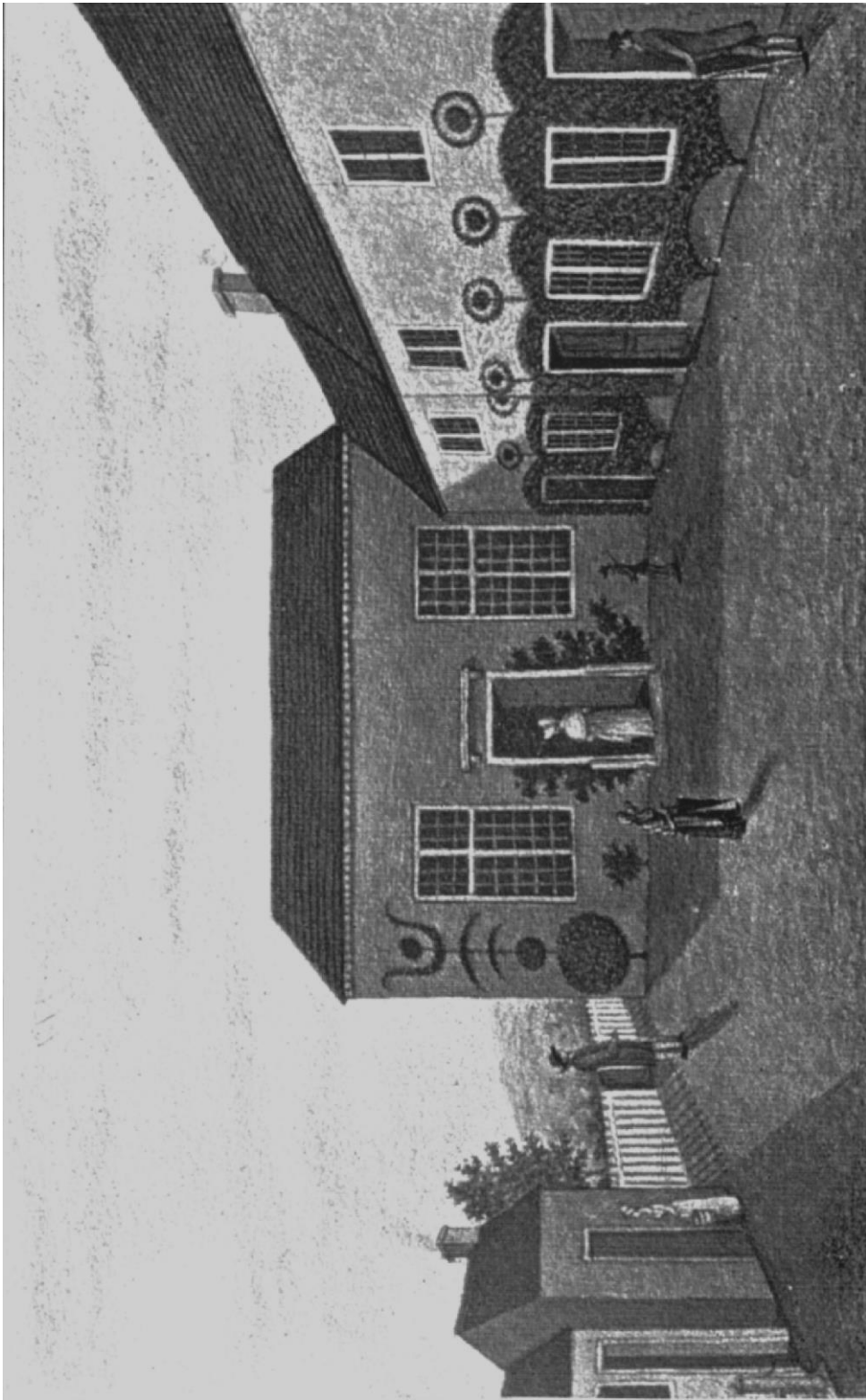
**1773** *July 29<sup>th</sup>. Here seems to be another leaf turned over in the volume of my life, which I trust & hope promises more solid advantage than the last which was on our first visiting Cheltenham.*

**1774** *May 7<sup>th</sup>. We set out for Cheltenham, where my sister having been again a little poorly was advised to go. P.D.T. went with us there, & we took our little favourite Hetty Champion, who was about 4 years old, a sweet engaging child, all sensibility, & very pretty. The season being not yet commenced, left us in possession of more retirement than Cheltenham usually affords, & this was particularly acceptable, as we had met with much hurry before leaving Bristol & some perplexing circumstances which had the effect of retarding the conclusion of the marriage between my sister and P.D.T. During this stay at Cheltenham we kept as little company as possible & contracted but few acquaintances, except with the clergyman of the place, a very pleasing young man who had lately come there, who had lodgings opposite us. We continued at Cheltenham till the 15<sup>th</sup> of July.*

**1778** *June 5<sup>th</sup>. Set out for Cheltenham again taking little Hetty with us, where we arrived the same evening...*

*[July] On the 20<sup>th</sup> we were surprised by seeing Dr Ludlow, his wife & daughter, with whom we spent two evenings at an inn, & accompanied them to the walks.*

The 1773 entry is intriguing in that it is unclear to what events Sarah is referring. It is believed that she fell in love on at least one occasion, although without apparently admitting her feelings, so perhaps that had occurred at Cheltenham. There is no obvious explanation of the second 'leaf turned over' either, though two months earlier she and her sister had been involved in a terrifying coach accident in floods between Bristol and Gloucester when both had very nearly drowned. Sarah commented that 'such events are loud calls to devote the life thus preserved to the great Preserver'. (20<sup>th</sup> May)



The first Friends' Meeting House in Cheltenham. This drawing c.1784 appears in *Thomas Pole M.D.* by E. T. Wedmore (Society of Friends, 1908) and reproduced in *Cheltenham: A History* by Sue Rowbotham and Jill Waller (Philimore, 2004)

'P.D.T.' was Philip Debell Tuckett, another Bristol Quaker, who married Sarah's sister Esther on 2 August 1774. 'Hetty' (b. 1766) was the daughter of their brother Richard and his wife Judy. Despite Sarah's assertion the 'very pleasing' young clergyman had only recently arrived in the town, the Rev. John Lloyd had been the incumbent since 1767; he was succeeded by Hugh Hughes in 1778. It is possible that Hughes had come as curate and that the reference is to him, though the entry for 1 August 1783 makes this unlikely.

This is the end of the section 'intended as a legacy to my dear brother ... The original ... was accordingly sent on board to accompany R. & S. Champion to America'.

**1780** *May 22<sup>nd</sup>. ... we once more took my sister T [Tuckett] to Cheltenham where we lodged at Avis's our friend Shelicom being deceased since we were last there. ... July 19<sup>th</sup>. We left Cheltenham*

Elizabeth Skillicorne died in April 1779; she is buried in the Quaker Burial Ground in Cheltenham. 'Avis' is another of Sarah's curious mis-spellings; he was John Everis, who had a large lodging house on the north side of the High Street below St George's Street.

**1783** *June 19<sup>th</sup>. ... set out for Cheltenham. ... Whilst at Cheltenham, we made some acquaintance with a young man, Thos. Rich, settled as a watchmaker since our last being here – a member of our society...*

*Aug. 1<sup>st</sup>. H. Hughes, the clergyman of the place, drank tea with us.*

*Aug. 4<sup>th</sup>. We called to see a gentleman of the name of Lawrence who introduced us to a daughter of the late Dr. Doddridge... 9<sup>th</sup>. We left Cheltenham.*

Thomas Rich (1750-1830) came to the town in 1782 from Oxfordshire. He initially had a seasonal shop at the Long Room beside the well but in 1787 he bought a property in a prime position near the *Plough Hotel*; he sold this in 1809 and retired a year later. The Lawrence family owned Greenway, Little Shurdington.

**1784** [arrived Cheltenham 29 June] *July 1<sup>st</sup>. We had a visit from M. Bishop, a person whom we had never before seen, but with whose character we had long been acquainted, & had, as well as her letters, particularly admired. She was a woman of true religion ... by profession she was a methodist, & kept a school at Keynsham.*

*August. Thomas Pole came to pay Betsy Barrett a visit, to whom she was soon to be married. He drank tea with us & we found his conversation very interesting; & there was reason to believe that our agreeable young friend E.B. would have a good husband. 17<sup>th</sup>. The next morning we left Cheltenham.*

The Barretts were a prominent Quaker family in eighteenth-century Cheltenham, concerned particularly with milling, malting and baking. Their house was a large three-gabled building close by the churchyard, erected in the early years of the century by William Barrett (d. 1714). Earlier in 1784 the head of the family, also William, died, leaving his second wife Mary and their six surviving children, of whom Elizabeth ('Betsy') was the eldest. She was born in 1756 and educated in Worcester, where she lived with her half-sister for a time before returning to Cheltenham just before the death of her father. In October the same year she married Thomas Pole, a distinguished member of the Society of Friends, at



Cheltenham. After her death Pole published an account of her life as a 'Tribute of Affection' to her.

**1785** *June 6<sup>th</sup>. Travelled the old road to Cheltenham. It was the only place we ever went to, & we found my sister always relieved by the waters.*

*June 20<sup>th</sup>. ...The widow Lawrence took tea with us, whom I accompanied into town. In our way she stopped at the door of a house where a person of the name of Boston lived who had a cancer in his cheek which had made dreadful ravages in his face...*

*July 1<sup>st</sup>. We left Cheltenham, with a sort of presentiment in my mind that we should visit it no more...*

James Boston died seven months later, in January 1786. Sarah's presentiment was correct; she was to visit Cheltenham only once more, and then without her sister.<sup>7</sup>

**1795** *Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>. We set out for Cheltenham in order to spend two weeks quietly on my husband's account. ...got to Cheltenham where we lodged at H. Smith's... We spent an agreeable fortnight at Cheltenham enjoying the society of each other free from cares. During it we contracted an acquaintance with Sarah Darby a sensible, religious, valuable woman, & her companion S. Appleby [they were in Cheltenham for only one week]. We also visited our old friend Mary Barrett & Thos. Rich who were married since I was last in Cheltenham. We had one visit from the widow Buxton, her uncle M. Lloyd & her pleasing sister Mary Hanbury.*

*Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>. We left Cheltenham & the same day arrived home.*

Henry Smith let lodgings above his grocer's shop in the High Street. Thomas Rich married Mary Coates, also a Quaker, at Tewkesbury in 1792. Mary Barrett, Elizabeth's mother, died in 1814 at the age of 84.

On 2 February 1790 Sarah Champion married Charles Fox, a banker from Plymouth; she was 48 and as she herself wrote 'It is late in life to change'. Charles, a widower, had suggested that they should live in Bristol, realising that Sarah was greatly attached to the place where she had many friends and relatives: she however had declined 'from a belief that it was meant solely to oblige me, & that the change would render him less happy', and the couple bought a house in George Street, Plymouth. Two years later they moved to Bristol<sup>8</sup>, and here Sarah died in 1811 at the age of sixty-nine.

<sup>1</sup> Pole, Thomas, *The Life and Character of Elizabeth Pole* (1823)

<sup>2</sup> Williams, G.W., *The New Guide to Cheltenham* (Cheltenham, c.1822)

<sup>3</sup> *Ruff's Beauties of Cheltenham* (Cheltenham, 1806, reprinted 1981)

<sup>4</sup> Moreau, Simeon, *A Tour to Cheltenham Spa or Gloucestershire Display'd*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Bath, 1786)

<sup>5</sup> [Butler, W.], *The Cheltenham Guide or Useful Companion* (London, 1781)

<sup>6</sup> Alternatively 'Betty' might be Elizabeth Harris who married Rowland White in 1758.

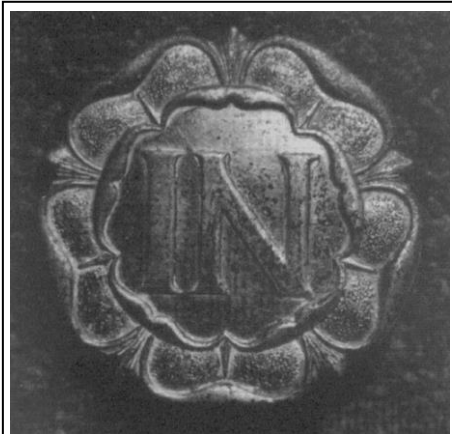
<sup>7</sup> Esther died in 1798.

# Jack Reginald Golby

## An international volunteer

MICK KIPPIN

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**British Volunteer's cap badge,  
Finland 1939-41**

ON 2 JANUARY 1940 the British Government promised the League of Nations that the United Kingdom would do all it could to help Finland resist Soviet Russian aggression. The same day it was suggested to Lord Halifax, the Foreign Secretary, that a Volunteer Force of 1,000 men should be raised to go to Finland. The War Office refuted the idea of a Volunteer Force, instead suggesting a 'Finland Bureau' to offer military advice act as a recruiting office for a British contingent within a larger, international volunteer force. The Finnish government responded positively, saying it would welcome a force of British Volunteers, as this would set an example to neutral countries such as the United States, who might be expected to follow Britain's example.

Among the 227 men of the British Volunteer Company who enlisted in London and did make the journey to Finland was Jack Reginald Golby. Jack or 'Popeye' Golby was born at 1 Hillview Cottages, St Paul's Road in Cheltenham<sup>1</sup> on 20 March 1903, the son of John Henry and Alice Golby (nee Thatcher). The names of Golby's parents on his birth certificate are at odds with those given on his Finnish enlistment papers, which give his father as William Edward Golby and his mother as Alice Golby (nee Green). Why the anomaly is unclear, perhaps Golby was adopted after birth by an uncle and hence there was no change in surname.

His Finnish enlistment papers also show that he had been in the British Army between 1919 and 1930, and that he had served in Ireland between 1919 and 1922<sup>2</sup>. He enlisted into the British Volunteer Company for service in Finland on 5 March 1940. Golby's previous military service was obviously noted and when the third and largest draft of men for Finland was embarked at Leith in Scotland on 10 March Golby found himself as one of two Non-Commissioned Officers in No. 3 Platoon.



**Finland. The Winter War  
medal, 1939-40**



**Road mending near Malung, July 1941. Golby is on the right**

Although the Volunteers did not involved in any fighting, due to the Finns signing an armistice with Russia, they were trained in the country and were ready to go to war. For their assistance to Finland they were awarded the Winter War medal with the clasp 'KOTIJOUKOT' or 'HOME SERVICE'.

If the Volunteers had got involved in fighting the Russians, it would have meant that Great Britain would have been at war with Russia and not allies as was the case. What would the outcome of the war been in that case?

There is still a lot of research to be done on this story, especially the anomaly of Golby's parents and what happened to him once he returned from Finland. Did he take part in the war elsewhere and is he entitled to other medals to go with his Finnish one? The Finnish language version of Justin Brooke's book suggests that Golby was living in South Africa in 1945. Despite these remaining questions the Winter War medal is a very different addition to my collection of 'medals to people from Cheltenham'.

### ***Reference***

Brooke, Justin, *The Volunteers (The Full Story of the British Volunteers in Finland, 1939-41)* (Self Publishing Association, 1990)

<sup>1</sup> The Golbys must have been lodging at this address. The 1903 Ward Roll shows a Louisa Mundy as the owner of the house.

<sup>2</sup> If Jack Reginald Golby had been in the British Army in 1919, he must have enlisted under age, as he would have only been 19.

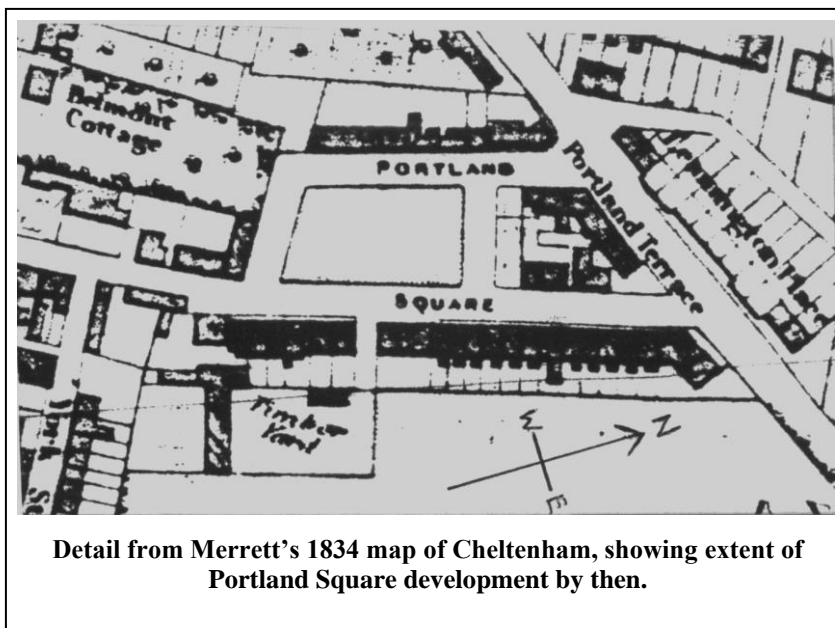
# The Portland Square and Albert Place District: land, houses and early occupants

MIKE GRINDLEY

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*T'is gone with its thorns and its roses,  
With the dust of dead ages to mix!  
Time's charnel forever encloses  
The year Eighteen Hundred and Six*

THUS THE LOCAL PRESS<sup>1</sup> alluded to the 1806 Cheltenham Inclosure Award which allotted ownership of areas of potential building land on the north side of the town, including the piece of orchard that later became the Portland Square development. Numbered 223 under the Award, it bordered the Prestbury Road opposite the SE edge of the future Pittville Estate; to the south were the lands on which the streets of Fairview came to be built.



## **THE LAND AND ITS OWNERS: 1739 - 1824**

The earliest mention of land so far seen in Portland Square deeds<sup>2</sup> is in the November 1739 Will of Samuel Whithorne Esq., of the ancient Charlton Kings family. On 2 January 1801 his grandson, John Whithorne the younger, sold to William Wills of Cheltenham, gent., for £200 'all those three acres and a half of arable land [in four lots] lying dispersedly in and about a field in the parish of Cheltenham called Sandfield, otherwise Prestbury Field, otherwise Whaddon Field'. The tenant was John Peacey, a Charlton Kings plasterer.

William Wills was a peruke maker of the then 48 High Street, who died in Spring 1804, leaving all his houses and lands to his widow Penelope, their son William to inherit on her death. William the elder was granted (posthumously, it turned out) Inclosure Allotment 223 in January 1806, 'containing two acres two roods 39 perches [almost two and three

quarters acres, somewhat less than the Wills purchase of 1801], situate in Whaddon Field and bounded by the Prestbury Turnpike Road on the north' and by lands of Joseph Pitt on the east, Mary Fisher and James Gore on the south, and Joseph Kendall on the west.

Between 1801 and 1804 William Wills the elder built a house<sup>3</sup> on his newly acquired land. The 1806 Inclosure Award Map and Mitchell's revised (1810) map show a solitary building on the SE side of the Prestbury Road, opposite the Union Row cottages, and thus approximately where the entrance to Albert Place<sup>4</sup> now stands. It still existed in March 1824<sup>5</sup>, but must have soon after been demolished to make way for the new Portland Square development. There is no evidence that this house was called Portland Cottage; however, this name was later given to 35 Prestbury Road (built 1831-2), a few yards to the west.

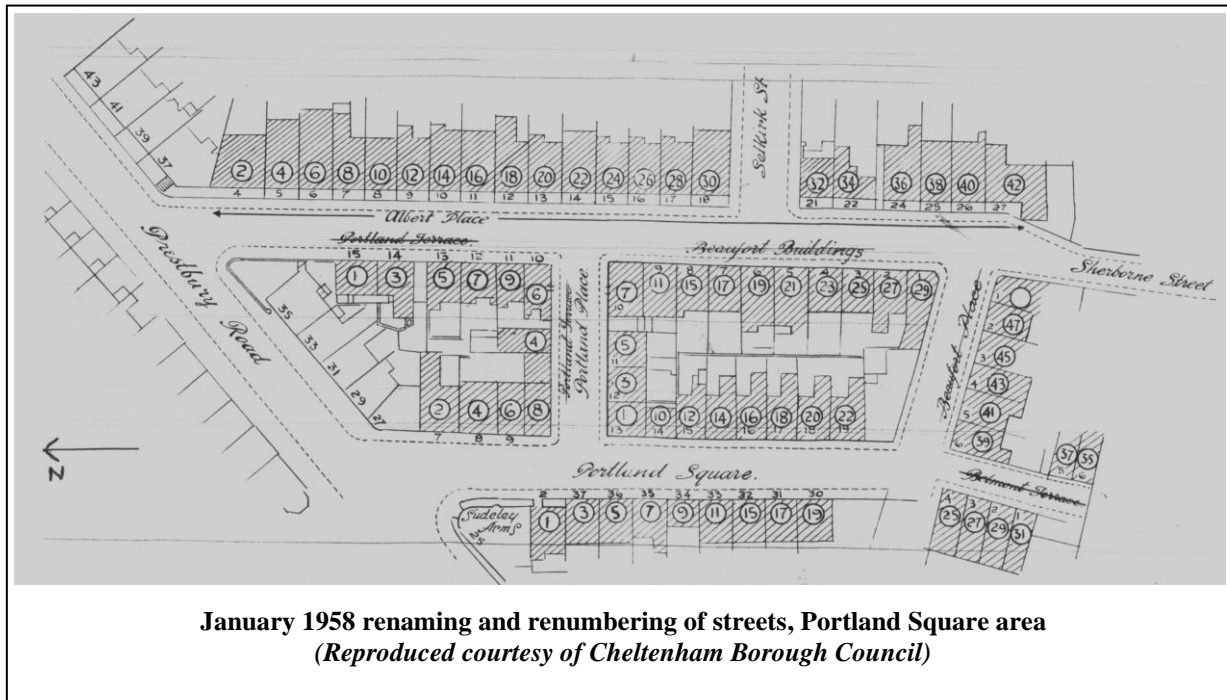
In March 1824 came a decisive event. Penelope Wills and son William sold the entire Allotment 223 to Joseph Hughes, butcher, who was already the tenant of this land and single house. He became the developer of Portland Square and built some of its earliest houses. Penelope Wills retired to her son's residence, the ancient gable-ended Farm Cottage in Cambray (demolished 1879), where she died 9 March 1832, aged 88, having 'resided in Cheltenham upwards of 70 years'. Son William died 1 June 1832, aged 47, at Dawlish in Devon 'whither he had repaired for the benefit of his health'.

#### **GENERAL NOTE ON JOSEPH HUGHES**

Joseph Hughes was born in Winchcombe *c.*1783 and baptised there 8 November 1787 with sister Mary, children of James and Sarah Hughes. Gill & Bradshaw's 1820 Directory gives Joseph Hughes, butcher and lodging-house keeper, in Portland Place, Portland Street, Cheltenham. From late 1825, already a widower, he lived in the largest house built by himself in Portland Square (27, later 42 Albert Place (see Fig. 4), now demolished and part of Fairview Green). Bankrupt November 1827, he became yearly tenant at what later became the *Sudeley Arms*; his sister Mary, wife of William Berington, scion of an old landed gentry family of Winsley, Herefordshire, also lived on these Portland Square premises, their son running the Ale, Porter & Cider Stores there until 1848. In December 1833 Joseph Hughes remarried to Mrs Sarah Herbert of Charlton Kings and resided at Boulton Cottages there as a farmer until at least 1856. Widowed again, he retired to live with his two daughters, Miss Mary Ann Hughes and Mrs. Sarah Williams, at 4 Portland Parade (now 43 Prestbury Road) where they ran a small school for young ladies. This moved to 2 Sussex Villas (now part of Clarence Court, near Clarence Square), where Joseph Hughes died on 15 February 1875, 'aged 91... much respected'.

#### **THE BUILDING BACKGROUND**

The identity of whoever laid out Portland Square in 1824 for Joseph Hughes, and coordinated 1825-7 house elevations and building work, has not been stated. It might have been William Arthur Watson, who was later architect and surveyor to the Pittville Estate<sup>6</sup> and in August 1827 occupied the now 37 Prestbury Road on the corner of Albert Place.<sup>3</sup> However, much more likely is Francis Rawlings (1772-1836) who had already been the architect/surveyor for William Fletcher's 1823 development of nearby Fairview Street<sup>7</sup>, and who surveyed and valued an unfinished house in Portland Square in June 1827<sup>8</sup>. Moreover, he was auctioneer for each of the Square's house sales advertised in the 1826 and 1827 local Press. Lastly, when his eldest son and business partner, William Rawlings, was the plaintiff in an infidelity court case, the publicized letters to the latter's wife from her paramour



included the February 1827 enquiry, ‘Have you been either to Chapel or to **Portland Square** with him [William Rawlings] today?’<sup>9</sup> It being then customary for married couples to visit parents on a Sunday, this letter could possibly indicate Francis Rawlings’ actual residence in the Square in early 1827.

The vision of Joseph Hughes was doubtless to erect a fashionable square that would sit adequately, albeit on a more modest scale, alongside the grand Pittville Estate. But it was his misfortune to start his building career shortly before the great banking crash of December 1825, when ‘the usual channels of credit were stopped and the circulation of the country became completely deranged; the question [for businesses] would soon be, not who goes, but who stands’<sup>10</sup>. Joseph Hughes went, though not until 15 November 1827, the date of his bankruptcy. When he had purchased Allotment 223 in March 1824 for £2,500, that sum remained on mortgage to the Wills family. He paid it off in August 1825, but from December of that year onwards was forced to make a series of mortgages on the houses he had built. By 1827 he was overwhelmingly in debt, and was made bankrupt. His assignees sold off his houses and land in 1828 and 1829.

The earliest houses, including six by Hughes himself, were built in 1825-6, totalling about half the eventual east side of Albert Place, two round the corner onto the Prestbury Road, and two (including the now *Sudeley Arms*) on the west side of Portland Square. The following detailed notes show how construction progressed thereafter. The building over of the ‘open garden or pleasure ground’ in the centre of Portland Square in 1835-6 completed the pre-Victorian works and finally put paid to Joseph Hughes’ original concept.

The following entries give early building and occupancy details for each house in the Portland Square district, arranged by terraces on the east, west and south, followed by the north central and south central blocks.

**THE EASTERN-SIDE TERRACES**

The terrace of four houses on the Prestbury Road (odd numbers 37 - 43) and the two Albert Place terraces (even numbers, either side of the Selkirk Street entrance) were originally all called Portland Square. Mid-1830, the Prestbury Road houses were often called Portland Terrace, but in 1838-9 became Portland Parade and remained thus until being renumbered into the Prestbury Road sequence in 1937. The two eastern terraces from the corner with Prestbury Road to the top of Sherborne Street were renamed Albert Place c. August 1842, with consecutive numbers from '4' onwards as before, reflecting the plot numbers of the original building plan. They were renumbered from '2' onwards (even numbers only) in the overall Portland Square district street name/number rationalisation of January 1958 (see p.14). All houses in Albert Place were either built on land bought from Joseph Hughes, or were built by Hughes himself in a few cases

The current Back Albert Place (known as Selkirk Road in 1860s-1880s) was built c.1840 by Edward Cope on land bought from Pitt. In 1841-2 Cope also sold extra land to nearly all the house owners of the now 2-30 (evens) Albert Place and 39 Prestbury Road, which extended their gardens/yards by 40 feet at the rear, with access to the new back road.

**43/41 Prestbury Road** (ex 4 and 3 Portland Parade). Both built 1834-5 by Richard Hewitt (No.3) and Thomas Darby (No. 4), on land bought from Joseph Pitt plus the NE corner (Lot 1) of Joseph Hughes' land. No. 3 occupant 1840-51 Mrs Henry Briggs, and owned 1841 by Mr Beavan. No. 4 occupants 1836 G.J. Engall, estate agent; 1836-40 Eyton family; 1840-2 Edward Cope, builder; see also General Note on Joseph Hughes.

**39 Prestbury Road** (ex 2 Portland Parade). Built 1825 by William Fisher on land bought from Joseph Hughes (Lot 2). Mortgaged March 1826 to Abraham Hatherell Esq. Fisher went bankrupt.

**37 Prestbury Road** (ex 1 Portland Parade). Built 1825/6, probably by Joseph Hughes. Owned August 1827 by Mr Blizard, when occupied by Mr. [William Arthur] Watson, surveyor. Probable occupant 1828 Mrs. Heane.

**2 Albert Place** (ex 4). Built 1827 by William Vines, marble and stone mason. From 1830's to early 20th century this large property was a lodging house. Occupants 1839 William D. Saunder, late of the town's Literary Saloon; 1840-4 Hon. Lady Vane. 1912 to at least 1930s it was Pittville Police Station.

**4 Albert Place** (ex 5). Built 1827 by Hon. Katherine Monson, Cheltenham's famous lady builder. Occupants c. 1828 Mrs Compere, society lady; 1832-50 Miss Frances Capper (elder sister of Robert Capper Esq. of Marle Hill), having bought the house. Run as a lodging house 1851-81.

**6 Albert Place** (kept same number). Land to Samuel Clarke, whitesmith, 1827, but resold to Captain William Moore Beetlestone, who had the house built 1831-2. Occupants 1832-6 (and 1846-71) Capt. Beetlestone; 1836-7 the socialite Isaacson family; 1838 Rev. Thomas Page. Double rear garden.

**8 Albert Place** (ex 7). Built 1825-6 by Thomas Newman, carpenter, occupying the house briefly (bankrupt May 1826). Conveyed 1829 to existing mortgagee Joseph Webb, cheese factor, Gloucester. Owned by Webb until 1879.

**10 Albert Place** (ex 8). Land to Mr Hill Cooper by May 1825. House built 1829-30 (builder unknown). Occupants 1831-3 Samuel Butt, conveyancer; 1834 Thomas Sandys, solicitor; 1836-8 Major Thomas Wright.

**12 Albert Place** (ex 9). Built 1825/26 (builder unknown). Occupants 1826 Miss Turrell's Dancing Academy; 1829-32 Miss Frances Capper (rent £32/10/0 per annum), when owner possibly Mr. Green, *Cross Keys Inn*, Cheltenham.



**14 (now 22) and 15 (now 24) Albert Place, drawn in 1947 by Philip Smith. On right is 10 Beaufort Buildings (now 7 Portland Place) with long-vanished metal porch.**  
(Reproduced courtesy of the artist, and of Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum)

**14 Albert Place** (ex 10). Built 1827?-30 (possibly started by one builder, but completed by another). Occupants 1831 Mr. Trott (rent £36 per annum); 1833 R. Slader, cabinet maker; 1838-41 William Haining, grocer and tea dealer.

**16 Albert Place** (ex 11). Built 1827?-32. Started by one builder, but 'completed by Mr. Webb' (according to Building Certificate). Possibly the unfinished house auctioned September 1827, 'details from Mr. W. Taylor, builder, Cirencester'. Occupants 1841 William Workman, baker; 1843 Mrs. Mary Pensom, society lady.

**18 Albert Place** (ex 12). Built 1825-6, possibly by Ebsworth Humphris, as centre house of the original terrace, with pedimented doorcase and 'handsome stone staircase'. For auction



June 1826. Occupants 1829-31 John Savery Esq., late of Bristol; 1833-4 John Knowles, excise officer, whose daughter Caroline Knowles ran it as lodging house until 1850; 1840-51 Miss Lewis, lodger, of a high-level Bengal Civil Service family.

**20 Albert Place** (ex 13). Built 1825-6 by Joseph Hughes, who mortgaged to Mrs Hester Boyd in April 1826 for £400. Occupants 1827-8 Mr. Porter, possibly the Arcade bookseller; 1829-30 George Exton Turner, auctioneer; 1833 Mrs. Hester Boyd; 1833-4 Edward James Pasquier, landscape and marine painter (rent £60 per annum); December 1834 Mr. & Mrs. Buckland opened a 'Preparatory School for Young Gentlemen' there.

**22 Albert Place** (ex 14). Built 1826 by Samuel Hartell, victualler. Occupant 1827 Thomas Roper Hawker, tailor. Owned 1838 by Thomas Brunson, butcher, Winchcomb Street. Two storey brick store/coach house built on back plot c.1870s by Charles William Spackman, plasterer (bought the property 1859). (See p.16).

**24 Albert Place** (ex 15). Land to Robert Fisher June 1826. He possibly built house that year. Occupants 1835 Mrs. Williams; late 1830s - 1854 Borthwick family (Scots travelling drapers). (See p.16).

**26 Albert Place** (ex 16). Built 1826?, probably by Robert Fisher. Owned by Mrs. Hopkins 1832-3. Occupant 1833 Henry Sperring Merrett, architect and surveyor, who made the 1834 map of Cheltenham (see p.12)

**28 Albert Place** (ex 17). Land originally sold to William Vines, mason, but remained a building plot until c.1869, when Alfred C. Billings at the now No. 30, builder, erected a house on it.

**30 Albert Place** (ex 18). Built 1828-9 by William Vines, marble and stone mason. Mortgaged 1833 to Misses M.A. and E. Gardiner, who later ran a lodging house there until the former's death in 1854. Occupant 1841-7 Mrs Charlotte Capel.

**Selkirk Street gap in terrace.** Originally Lots 19 and 20 in Joseph Hughes's layout plan. Both sold by Hughes's bankruptcy assignees in 1828 to John Darby, builder, who used the gap as a road to his easterly adjacent timberyard and premises, whereon in 1833 he built what is now Kensington Villa plus its adjoining, now demolished, workshops and stable (see Fig. 1). This rough road was made into Selkirk Street in 1839/40 by builder Edward Cope.

**32 Albert Place** (ex 21). Built 1830 by Thomas Marchant, builder, on land sold July 1829 by Joseph Hughes's bankruptcy assignees (as were the next two plots).

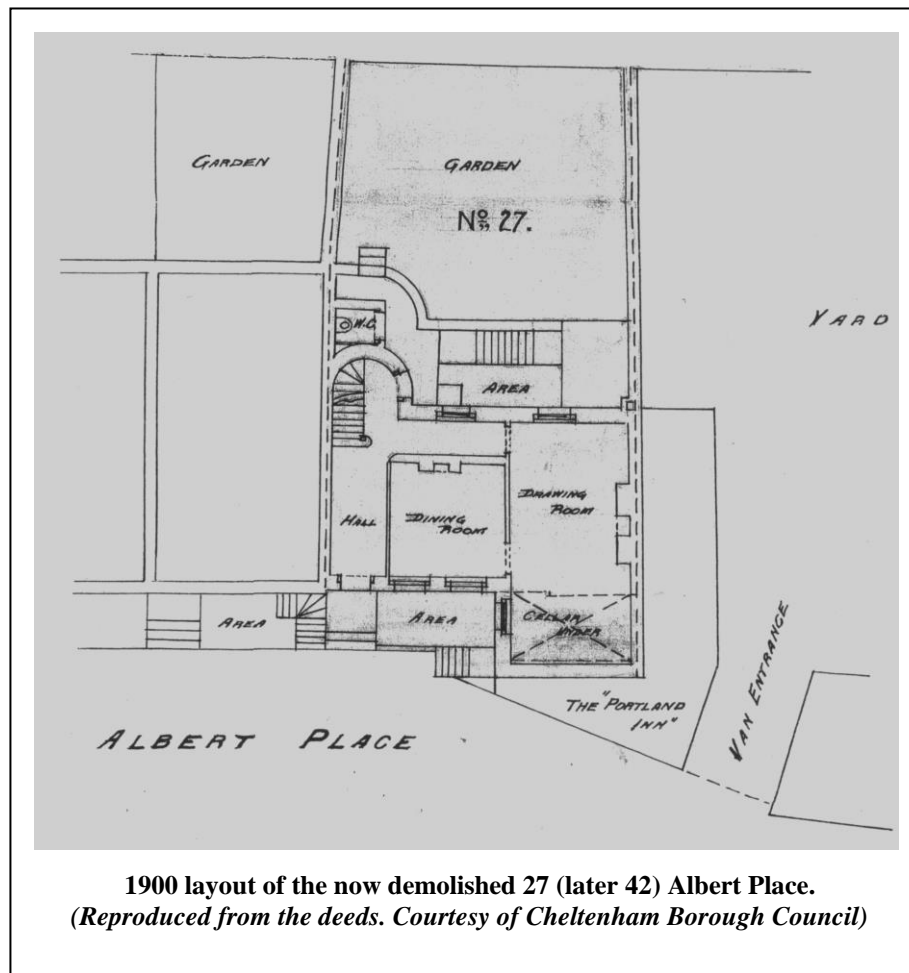
**34 Albert Place** (ex 22). built 1831 by William Rogers, porter. Occupant 1841-4 Steven Schwamenkruge, shoemaker.

**36 Albert Place** (ex 24 and 23). Built 1830 by Joseph Coome, plumber and glazier, who left 23 and 24 to son Henry at his death in 1869. No. 23 was the cottage behind No.24 (via arched passage from Albert Place) and became part of it c.1936. Occupant of No.24 (1840-58) John Pearce, printer and Trade Unionist with the *Cheltenham Chronicle* for over 40 years.

**38 Albert Place** (ex 25). Built 1825 by Joseph Hughes and sold to Charles Birt, who left it to daughter Miss Birt (died 1853). Occupants 1831-7 R. Williams Esq.; 1839-41 William Brunson, tailor.

**40 Albert Place** (ex 26). Built 1825 by Joseph Hughes. Mortgaged December 1825, plus No. 27 and attached land, to Miss Elizabeth Buckle, Uckington, for £1000; all for auction September 1828 after Hughes' bankruptcy. No. 26 occupants 1828 Mr. Thomas (rent £40 per annum); 1838-41 Richard Graham, linen draper.

**What is now the Northern part of Fairview Green.** 42 Albert Place (ex 27, see Fig. 4). Built 1825 by Joseph Hughes as his own residence, complete with large yard, piggeries, slaughterhouse, stables and vaults. See previous entry for mortgage. Another house (No.31, later 61 Sherborne Street) also built 1826/7 by him on this land. No. 27 became Portland Brewery (Messrs. Maule & Parker) 1829, *Portland Arms* 1842, then *Portland Inn*, split 1870 into No. 27 private house and No. 28 *Portland Inn*. The house suffered fatal fire October 1955 and was finally demolished 1963. The pub became Portland House Dairy (renumbered 63 Sherborne Street) in 1924, and finally A. & S. Baileys until demolition in 1961/2.



### **THE WESTERN-SIDE TERRACE**

Always known as Portland Square, except for the *Sudeley Arms*, long known as 25 Prestbury Road. Confusingly, houses on the western side bore numbers in two different

directions in the later 1830s and 1840s: south to north numbers in 1843 were 30, 9, 8, 33, 6, 35-37, 2 and 1, in that order! No.2 lasted, against the tide, until January 1958, when the whole row was renumbered to the present system (see p.14).

**Sudeley Arms**, 25 Prestbury Road (ex 1 Portland Square in the 19th century). 'House and offices' built 1825-6 by Ebsworth Humphris, builder, on land bought from Joseph Hughes for £45. In 1835 Humphris's mortgagees sold premises to Isaac Baylis for £800. Occupant 1828-1832 Hughes himself, as yearly tenant. His nephew John William Berington, of landed gentry family (see General Note on Hughes), ran the Ale, Porter and Cider stores here until 1848; the residential side was a high-class lodging house. The establishment became the *Sudeley Arms* by 1851, under landlord George Holland (bought it in 1857).



The former No. 1 Portland Square, including J.W. Berington's Ale, Porter & Cider Stores, from George Rowe's *Illustrated Cheltenham Guide* (1845).  
Now the *Sudeley Arms*, 25 Prestbury Road.

**1 Portland Square** (ex 2). Built 1825-6 by Joseph Hughes, who mortgaged April 1826 to John Sadler, gent., Uckington, for £500. Bankruptcy conveyance September 1828 to Sadler (who still owned it in 1861). Occupants 1827 Samuel Butt, conveyancer; 1830-60, Mrs. Mary Lambert, lodging house keeper, with long-term lodger Joseph Gowling, landed proprietor. Called Portland House in 1880s.

**3-23 Portland Square** (odd numbers, omitting 13). Originally '10 lots of building ground', sold January 1829 by Hughes's bankruptcy assignees to William Wills, gent. of Farm Cottage (see earlier), and resold in 1832 for £350 to William Halford builder, who sold plots as follows:-

**3/5 Portland Square** (ex 37/36). Built 1833 and 1834 by William Henry Mason, tailor, owner of both until 1854 and 1858 respectively. Occupants (No. 37) 1834-8 William Henry Mason; 1838-42 Thomas Tipton, coachman of the Royal Exeter coach. (No. 36) 1836 Mr. Bease; 1841-4 John Watkins, coachman.

**7 Portland Square** (ex 35). Built 1833 by Gabriel Boyce, bricklayer, who lived in it until c.1857.

**9 Portland Square** (ex 34, ex 6). Built probably 1833. N.B. One of this row was built 1833 by William Lineham, plasterer and slater. The three Freeman's Cottages behind (named after Prestbury owner Charles Freeman) were reached via the later named Bowstead's Passage (Robert Bowstead was 1860s-80s tenant of No. 34). Cottages demolished in 1935.

**11 Portland Square** (ex 33, ex 7). Built 1833 by George Tinkler, gardener, who lived in it until nearly 1860. Lodger 1837-8 Mlle Pavin de Belle Isle, language/music teacher.

**15 Portland Square** (ex 32, ex 8). Built probably 1833/4. Owner-occupant 1838-55 John Davis, gent.

**17 Portland Square** (ex 31, ex 9). Built probably 1833/4. Occupant 1843-4 James Bournes, silversmith.

**21/23 Portland Square** (built 1978) This site was formerly 19 Portland Square (ex 30) plus cottages alongside. No.30 and first four Spackman's Cottages built 1833/4 by Charles Spackman plasterer, who lived in No. 30 until his death in 1852. Owned by Spackman family until 1886. Two more cottages added later. All six renamed Portland Cottages 1897 and demolished in 1936. House demolished c.1960s.

### ***THE SOUTHERN-SIDE TERRACES***

The main terrace known as Beaufort Place until 1958, though from 1860s to 1880s often referred to as Portland Square (but with existing numbers). The cul-de-sac at western end named Belmont Terrace. Both renamed Portland Square in January 1958 (see p.14).

**49 (Site only)/47/45/43 Portland Square.** Four plots, standing partly on the former Old Sandy Lane, were sold by Joseph Hughes for £150 (August 1827 agreement) to Isaac Baylis, who resold April 1834 to William Morgan, builder and timber merchant.

**Former 49 Portland Square** (ex 1 Beaufort Place). Built 1834 by William Morgan as a house and shop - the Portland Dairy 1841 and simultaneously a 'house of ill fame'! Morgan lived there in 1844. Demolished 1964 (Blake's grocery). Now a brick hardstanding.

**47/45/43 Portland Square** (ex 2-4 Beaufort Place). Built 1834/5, possibly by William Morgan. Hiatt family, van proprietors and coal dealers, lived at No. 3 1840-1880s.

**41-25 (odd numbers) Portland Square.** This land sold January 1827 for £260 by Joseph Hughes to Samuel Young Griffith of Belmont Cottage to enlarge his garden. Land (plus an extra piece of that garden) bought May 1863 for £150 by Winchcombe Street grocer Edward Foxwell Barnfield who had eight houses erected (see p.14):

**41/39 Portland Square** (ex 5/6 Beaufort Place). Built c.1864. No. 6 was the *Carpenter's Arms* until 1940, when it became a private house.

**37/35 Portland Square** (ex 5/6 Belmont Terrace). Built by 1866.

**33A Portland Square.** Modern house converted 1988 from former workshop.

**31/29/27/25 Portland Square** (ex 1-4 Belmont Terrace). Built c.1864. The entrance to a builder's yard (on land sold c.1827 by Joseph Hughes to Henry Haines) stood between No.4 and Spackman's Cottages.

### ***THE NORTHERN CENTRAL BLOCK***

Known originally as Portland Terrace (PT) on all four sides, though in the early years some PT properties were often referred to as 'Portland Square'. The five shops on the Prestbury Road were renumbered into that road's sequence in 1937. Properties on the other sides of the block were given new numbers and street names in January 1958 (see p.14):

**35 Prestbury Road** (ex 2 PT). Land to Robert Fisher April 1827, conveyed March 1832 to Nathaniel Walford, who built house 1831-2, named Portland Cottage. Bought 1832 by Mrs Ann Stevens (died there 1843). Her family owned it until 1881, also the triangular plot on NE corner (never built on).

**33 Prestbury Road** (ex 3 PT). Land to William Halford, builder, April 1827. Conveyed 1833 to Percival Wiles, plumber and glazier, who built house and out offices same year. Sold 1834 to John G. Beavan. Occupants 1833-4 Benjamin John Mayer; 1838-51 John Keylock, butcher (later at 5 PT).

**31 Prestbury Road** (ex 4 PT). Built 1827 by William Matthews, poulterer, who lived and had his business there until 1854. Sub Post Office here early 1900s.

**29 Prestbury Road** (ex 5 PT). Built 1827 by Hon. Katherine Monson, builder. Owned 1839 by Mrs. Gummery. Occupants 1841-3 James Walker, draper; 1843-4 James Phelps, waiter; 1847-51 Joseph Gough, greengrocer; 1851-late 1980s always a butcher's shop. Still has elegant metal canopy with delicate ornamental ironwork beneath.

**27 Prestbury Road** (ex 6 PT). Built 1827 (corner shop) by Joseph Hughes, butcher. Occupants 1828-43 Thomas Read, grocer; 1843-50 Waren Tay, grocer and tea dealer (see right).

**2 Portland Square** (ex 7 PT). Built 1827 by Charles Spackman, plasterer, and owned by his family until 1886. Occupants 1838-9 Mrs. Hodson; 1842-8 James Phipps, tailor; 1851-2 Thomas Hill Knight, accountant (see 15 Albert Place).

**4 Portland Square** (ex 8 PT). Built 1831 by William Halford, builder. Became the *Coach and Horses Inn* until c.1940. Occupants 1835 Henry Hobbs (beer shop); 1837-44 James Ovens.



The former 6 Portland Terrace (Waren Tay's Tea & Grocery Warehouse), from George Rowe's *Illustrated Cheltenham Guide* (1845).

**6 Portland Square/2/4/6 Portland Place/9 Albert Place** (ex 9/-/-/10/11 PT). Land on mortgage 1827 to Daniel Theyer, Shurdington. Building ground until c. 1869 when 10/11 PT were built. 9 PT built early 1880s, with coach house, yard and stables (later Portland Mews) where 2 and 4 Portland Place now stand.

**7/5 Albert Place** (ex 12/13 PT). Both built 1834 by Percival Wiles, plumber and glazier. No. 12 occupants 1834 Charles James; 1840-3 James Byrne, ladies' shoemaker. No. 13 occupants 1834-6 Percival Wiles himself (died there); 1841 George Best, cabinet maker, and Owen Byrns, tailor.

**3/1 Albert Place** (14/15 PT). Both built 1833-4 by Percival Wiles above, and sold 1834 to John G. Beavan. No. 14 occupants 1834 Richard Mansfield; 1838 William Hill Knight (aged 24, well-known Cheltenham architect). No. 15 occupants 1834 James MacMath; 1841-4 William Gregory, whitesmith.

### ***THE SOUTHERN CENTRAL BLOCK***

Originally the 'open garden or pleasure ground' in the centre of Portland Square (see p.12), and fenced off with hurdles; no trees allowed over 13 feet high. July 1829 Hughes' bankruptcy sale to John Surman Cox, gent., for £105. October 1829 to John Harris, gent. October 1832 to Thomas Haines, gent., and Charles Floyer Wickes, chemist, for £210. December 1834 these two persuaded Samuel Young Griffith (owner of Belmont Cottage) and Henry Haines (owner of adjoining land) to lift the restriction against building on the centre ground, in return for promising not to put windows in anything built opposite Belmont Cottage garden. By June 1835 the centre ground's middle and southern sections were sold to Charles Williams, stonemason, who arranged plot layout and agreed house elevations with each purchasing builder. The northern section (now 11 Albert Place, 7/5/3/1 Portland Place, and 10 Portland Square) was probably dealt with similarly, but not by Williams. Houses built on the centre ground were all known as Beaufort Buildings (BB) until the January 1958 rationalisation (see p.14):

**29/27/25 Albert Place** (ex 1-3 BB). All built 1835 by William Morgan, timber merchant. John Board, parish clerk of St. Mary's, died at No.2 1841.

**23 Albert Place** (ex 4 BB). Built 1835 by Charles Tomes, stonemason. Occupant 1840-3 John Waterworth, master of Holy Trinity School.

**21/19 Albert Place** (ex 5/6 BB). Both built 1835 by William Beard, plasterer, who lived in No. 5 until 1847 death. Both three storeys, with iron verandah balconies, facing up Selkirk Street.

**17 Albert Place** (ex 7 BB). Built 1835-6 by John Gilder, joiner, who lived there until 1840. Occupant 1841-2 James Royal, professor of flute and piano.

**15 Albert Place** (ex 8 BB). Built 1835-6 by Thomas Matty, whitesmith. Occupant 1841-7 Thomas Hill Knight, accountant, and brother of W.H. Knight, architect.

**11 Albert Place/7 Portland Place** (ex 9/10 BB). Both built 1836 by William Morgan, timber merchant. 10BB (corner house) became the *Blue Boys* beerhouse by 1841 and until 1853. (See p.16).

**5/3 Portland Place** (ex 11/12 BB). Both built 1836 by James Edmonds, builder.

**1 Portland Place/10 Portland Square** (ex 13/14 BB). Built 1835 or 6. Originally just 13 BB, but split by 1848 into No. 13 (cornerhouse) and No. 14 (called 14b in 1850s).

**12/14 Portland Square** (ex 15 BB/Hennor Cottage BB). Built 1835 and 1836 by William Charwood, builder. The former house started as 14, then 15a (1861), then 15 BB (mid-1860s onwards). The latter was always 15 BB until mid-1860s change to Hennor Cottage to obviate confusion.

**16/18 Portland Square** (ex 16/17 BB). Both built 1835 by Charles Williams, stonemason.

**20 Portland Square** (ex 18 BB). Built 1835 by Samuel Cave, stonemason. Occupant John Carter, waiter, 1838 until 1878 death.

**22 Portland Square** (ex 19 BB). Built 1835 by William Norman, builder.

**24 Portland Square.** Built 1997 on corner site of former coach-house, stable and yard, originally Hiatt's coal yard and furniture van depot (erected late 1850s by Thomas Henry Hiatt on land bought 1835 by Samuel Young Griffith of Belmont Cottage). The old stable block is still there.

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

My thanks to Cheltenham Reference Library (local Press, directories, census records, maps, poll books and Town Council Minutes); Gloucestershire Record Office (deeds and Building Certificates); Legal Services Department of Cheltenham Borough Council (deeds of demolished properties); Dr. Steven Blake, Head of Local Studies in Cheltenham (for letting me share his office to consult the Fairview G.I.A. historical records); Roger Beacham (for providing some original information) and Philip Smith for permission to reproduce the 1947 drawing of Albert Place.

My thanks also to Mike Brazill, Vic Cole, Pam Cowley, the late Cecil Day, Lydia Davis, Steve Lee, Rosemary Maidment, and Nikki Overton for giving me access to their own house deeds.

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<sup>1</sup> *Cheltenham Journal* 2 Nov 1829

<sup>2</sup> Deeds of 33 Prestbury Road and 1/3 Albert Place. GRO D1581/4

<sup>3</sup> Mentioned in Deeds of 2 Albert Place. See GRO (Shire Hall Office) DC/SJ36

<sup>4</sup> Not to be confused with short-lived 'Albert Place' in nearby Glenfall Street, opposite Albert Villa (built 1840). The 1841 Census shows two cottages there. These were renamed Burndyke Cottages when the east side of Portland Square became Albert Place in 1842

<sup>5</sup> Deeds of 2 Albert Place

<sup>6</sup> Blake, Steven, *Pittville 1824-1860* (Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum 1988) p.36

<sup>7</sup> Blake, unpublished notes for lecture on Fairview (December 1999)

<sup>8</sup> Deeds of 2 Albert Place

<sup>9</sup> *Cheltenham Chronicle* 31 May 1827

<sup>10</sup> *Cheltenham Chronicle* 21 Oct 1847 ('The Panic of 1825')

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## A gist of William Milton's will, 1424

### MICHAEL GREET

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THE WILL OF WILLIAM MILTON<sup>1</sup>, Dean of Chichester Cathedral (1417x1419-1424<sup>2</sup>), dated on the Feast of St. James, 25 July 1424, (and proved 7 August 1424), is of interest to us; firstly, because he owned land in Cheltenham (no details given) which he left to his 'brother' John Hert (presumably a half-brother in view of the name<sup>3</sup>); and secondly, to medievalists, for the details of his bequests. It may be that some of these indicate places and religious foundations where he had served.

William Milton left his soul to God, the Blessed Mary and All Saints; and his body to be buried in the South Porch of Chichester Cathedral. Other bequests were:

- £20, and his best maplewood (*de masera*) cup (*ciphum*) with cover to the Archbishop of Canterbury;
- a silver and gilded cup with cover (*argentum et deauratum cum cooperatorio eiusdem*) to the Prior and Convent of Canterbury [Cathedral], and a similar one, without cover, to the Abbot and Convent of Gloucester, each cup - marked respectively (*cum signo*) with a swan (*cigni*), a dragon (*draconis*), - to be left in each Refectory so that healthy (*valentibus*) visitors might taste good wine there when they arrived;
- £10 to his elder brother Richard;
- a portable breviary (*portiphorium*) with a cover with a ruby (*rubeo*), to Master John Lyndefeld, Archdeacon of Chichester;
- a portable breviary with a cover of brocade (*baudekyn*) which was formerly the Bishop of Worcester's to Lord (*Dominus*) William Malpas;
- £10 to John Hert, with a bed, with the sign of a stag, with the side curtains, hangings and other furnishings for it, his second best cup of maplewood; all his land at Cheltenham in the County of Gloucester, with its appurtenances, to have and to hold to him his heirs and assigns of the chief lord of the fee for ever;
- a blood-red coloured cloak with a furred hood (*capicio penulato*) to his [Hert's] wife;
- 100s. and a green bed which is at Langele [unidentified] to his servant Edmund;
- 5 marks to his servant John Foulere;
- 5 marks to John Chestre so he may go to school (*ad scolas*);
- 5 marks to George lingering (*commoranti*) with him;
- 40s. to Walter at Stable;
- (other servants to be rewarded at the executors' discretion);
- his great missal to the high altar of Chichester, if the Use of Salisbury<sup>4</sup> is observed there, and if not then to the disposal of the Dean and Chapter;
- a suitable priest was to celebrate [mass] for his soul and all faithful people for one year at Hadestoke [Adstock] Church in the County of Buckingham at a suitable salary;
- (a 20 marks debt owed by John Hosteler of Wyteneay was forgiven);
- all female kinswomen (*cognata*) should have a complete suit of clothes (*robam integram*) of his [things] at Langele [unidentified];
- a silver cup called Rose with cover (*cooperculo*) to Nicholas Vicar of Felgham [unidentified].

The Executors were to dispose of everything else. The Archdeacon of Chichester, William Malpas, and John Hert were to be the Executors.

The will is in the Register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury 1414-1443 (1937) Vol.2., pp. 287-28

<sup>1</sup> The name was altered to Mitton in a later hand on the will.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Canon Atkinson, Canon Librarian, Chichester Cathedral, to me, 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Members of the Heort family were living in Arle in 1327. (Franklin, P. *The Taxpayers of Medieval Gloucestershire* (Sutton, 1327). John (Slade) Milton was living in Cheltenham in 1522. (Hoyle, R.W. *The Military Survey of Gloucestershire, 1522* (B.G.A.S. 1993)

<sup>4</sup> "The Sarum Use was introduced at Chichester 'from the early years of the fifteenth century'" (Atkinson quoting Dumcan Jones' *Chichester Customary*). Presumably its use was being considered in 1424.



# The Palmers of Cheltenham

## MARGARET STOCKER

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IT ALL BEGAN with a Christmas card:

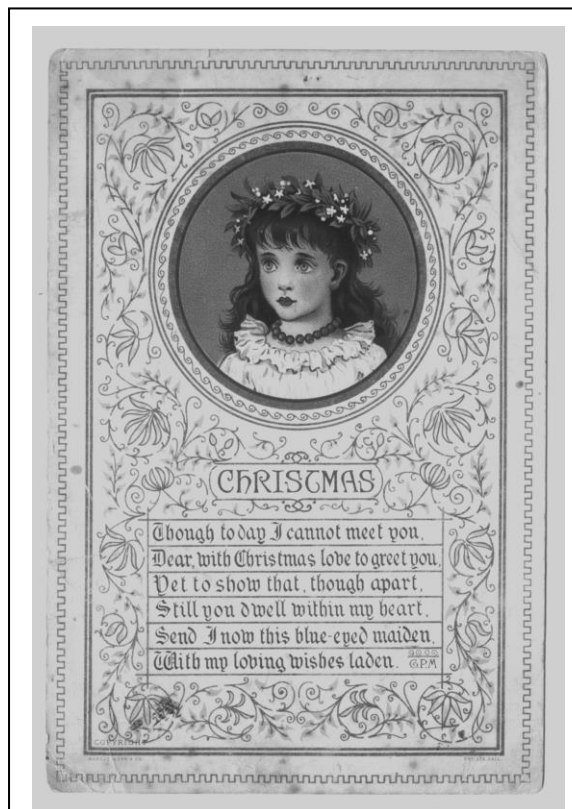
*'For my dear little "Ida"  
with her Grandma's  
kind love –  
11 Royal Crescent,  
24<sup>th</sup> December 1880.'*

By some miracle, this postcard-sized piece of family history had survived and been handed down to my father, to be puzzled over for a good many years before I really began to unravel the family mystery.

The 'little Ida' was no mystery. Florence Ida Georgina Palmer, my grandmother, was born in Cheltenham in 1874. That much we knew, from the card reproduced from *The Times* announcing the birth. Her parents, Alexander Douglas Greenlaw Palmer and his wife Harriett resided at Essex House, Rodney Road. I had two clues. Two houses. But surely, Royal Crescent was in Bath? It was the only Royal Crescent I had heard of, as I had lived in Kent all my life and rarely ventured into the west of England. Harriett Palmer's family did come from Bath, but I was concerned only with Cheltenham. I then discovered there is also a Royal Crescent in Cheltenham, and I began to piece together the whole story.

My father, Kenneth Stocker, was born in 1912 and always knew that his grandmother had deserted her husband. Belonging to a generation when their elders did not bring family skeletons out of cupboards, he and his sisters remained ignorant of their mother's background, and how she and her brother had their lives changed by the action of their mother, Harriett Palmer nee Parkinson.

The Parkinson family were originally from London and George Thomas Parkinson, like his father, practiced as a dentist in St James, London, and lived at Norwood, Surrey. He married Elizabeth Russell of Horton Kirby, Kent. Several of their children were born while they lived at Norwood, including Harriett, in 1848. In about 1851 they moved to Bath, perhaps for family reasons<sup>1</sup> and rented a Georgian villa in Batheaston for several years. The surgeon/dentist practice was in Princes Buildings and then Edgar Buildings. George must have been very successful and they eventually lived at 28 The Circus. There were seven children.



**The front of the Christmas card to little 'Ida'**

In Cheltenham at this time, Thomas Gill Palmer was practicing as a dentist at No. 1 Royal Crescent. He too came from London and had a young family. There must have been a connection between the Parkinsons and the Palmers. I think professionally the two men had trained together or met through business. Thomas Gill Palmer of Cambray had married Rosa Matilda Gwinnett, the daughter of Theodore Gwinnett, in July 1839 at St Mary's, Cheltenham.

Theodore Gwinnett (1773-1827) was a prosperous local attorney and great benefactor to the town. The large window at the back of St Mary's, Cheltenham is dedicated to him and his wife by their son, William Henry (1809-1891) Rosa's brother. They had a large family, and Rosa was born at Brockhampton Park with her brothers and sisters in the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Their town address was Albion House, in North Place. The Gwinnetts came from north Wales in Elizabeth 1st's reign and settled in Down Hatherley. They became a big family in Gloucestershire with branches all over, and Theodore came from a Cheltenham branch. Both the Palmers and the Gwinnetts were prominent Freemasons.

Thomas Gill Palmer and Rosa had five children at No 1 Royal Crescent. It was inevitable, I suppose, that there should have been some matchmaking between the two families of the men (or their wives!). In February 1872 the marriage took place between Harriett Parkinson and Alexander Douglas Greenlaw Palmer at St Swithins, Walcot. It was a double wedding, for her sister Elizabeth married Melville Neale. Alex and Harriett came to live at Essex House in Rodney Road. Alex Palmer has chosen a career as a solicitor, and Cheltenham Directories list him at this time from the early 1870s to the late 1880s at that address.

Alex's brother, Thomas William Gascoigne Palmer, took up dentistry, and went into business with his father, at No 1 Royal Crescent. He continued running an extensive dentistry practice there after the death of his father Thomas Gill Palmer in 1875. Unfortunately by 1887 he was separated from his wife and was declared bankrupt, owing a large amount of money as 'his household affairs had been conducted on very extravagant lines'<sup>2</sup>. However he later inherited a 'liberal legacy' from his uncle, William Henry Gwinnett, which must have resolved his financial difficulties. Sadly by the time he died aged 53 in 1895 the balance of his mind had been affected with religious hallucinations, although 'never in a form which called for restraint'<sup>3</sup>.

Almost from the start, the marriage between Alex and Harriett Palmer seemed to be in trouble. Alex was never, I suspect, a well man. I do not know much about how the Victorians coped with tuberculosis, but I suspect that life with a consumptive was not easy, and there was no cure. Tragedy struck a year after their marriage, for their firstborn died as a premature baby. They named him Alexander Claude Valentine and buried him in Cheltenham Cemetery and Crematorium in Bouncer's Lane. The following year, 1874, my grandmother was born, and in October 1875, her brother, Cecil Dundas. In the November, Harriett ran away with another man, leaving her husband and children, never to return to him.

Harriett returned to Cheltenham some months later and must have been reunited with her children, for Cecil was christened at All Saints, Pittville in January 1876. The announcement has her address as Seagrave House, Pittville. This house still stands near the gates into Pittville Lawn, and was known as Seagrave Place West. It is listed as Alex

Palmer's private residence in the late 1870s, but by 1880 was described at 'seven apartments'.

Harriet's return to Cheltenham suggests some sort of reconciliation, for she clearly got custody of the children, but there was no divorce. Harriett did not return to Bath, where she was no doubt in disgrace, but went to her mother's sister in Plumstead, south London, then part of Kent. Her mother's family had lived in Kent for generations and her unmarried aunt Kate Russell who was something of a philanthropist took her in. For some reason in the 1881 Census she was living at Portsea, and there is no mention of Ida. However by 1891 she had settled in Plumstead with both children and her mother, Elizabeth Parkinson, by that time widowed.

Reading Alex Palmer's will for the first time brought forth many revelations. It is an unforgiving will, written in 1891 by a man who had never lost his bitterness towards his wife. He may have been very ill at this time, for he died in October 1892, aged only. He left nothing to his wife and children. Instead he left large sums to his business partners; his mother's companion, Miss Leonora

Kimber; money for a lifeboat at Weymouth, where he had a home; his cutter yacht to his captain, John Spranklin, and all the contents of his two homes to his housekeeper, Fanny Nash. In all he left over £12,000, and was buried, according to his instructions, with his firstborn son in Cheltenham Cemetery and Crematorium. Reading this will for the first time was a revelation, and fortunately my father, who died in 1995, was at last able to know a little of what had happened to his grandparents.

It must have been quite a shock for Harriett when Alex died and the will was proved, to find that neither she nor her children were to get a penny. So much so, that in June 1893, when the will was proved, it went to the Royal Courts of Justice, when Harriett Palmer 'and others' contested the will, bringing an action against Griffiths and Loveridge, Alex's Executors. The Justice of the High Court, Sir John Gorell Barnes, ruled for the 'force and validity of the will' and Harriett lost. Unfortunately these documents have been destroyed.

The implications of Alex Palmer's will opened up all kinds of avenues of enquiry for me. I discovered that a few days after Harriett left, Alex Palmer's father Thomas Gill Palmer had died. Perhaps the shock had killed him. The man that Harriett ran away with, named in the will as George John Buchanan, does not reappear in her life. There were several



Buchanans in Cheltenham, and in Bath. Was he a man that her family had forbidden her to marry, or an old family friend?

At this point I was able to clear up the Christmas card mystery. After Thomas Gill had died, his widow Rosa had moved to No 11 Royal Crescent and lived there until her death in July 1893. It is nice to think that the two children had some contact with their father's family. No wonder my grandmother treasured that Christmas card.

Cecil Dundas Palmer, Harriett's son, attended the Bluecoat School in Newgate Street, London from 1885 to 1890. I already had a photo of him clothed in the famous bluecoat, and found a great deal about it at the Guildhall Library, London. The Petition was submitted on the basis that there was no money for a fee-paying education, and it had to be filled in with the reasons for the application, and supported by a Minister, Churchwarden, or 'housekeepers' - relatives or friends. Harriett claimed in the papers preserved there that her husband's 'business had failed through ill-health' and there was no maintenance for them. However the truth was more likely that he did not provide a penny for her or the children. Her appeal was accepted – fortunately the authorities did not ask too many questions!

Harriett returned to Bath in the early 1930s, no doubt to be near her older unmarried sister Georgina. She lived first in Park Street and then Combe Down where she was living when she died in 1934. Her two children, Ida and Cecil, remained in the Kent and south London area. Cecil had a successful business as a professional photographer in Camberwell, but died aged 44 of cerebral tubercular meningitis in 1918 leaving a wife and baby daughter, Ella, who I knew all my life until her death in 1990. Harriett's daughter, Florence Ida, my grandmother, married Edwin Stocker in 1895 and lived in Woolwich and then Orpington until their deaths in the 1950s. Their three daughters and son – my father – perhaps wondered when hearing of their Cheltenham roots, that had it not been for their grandmother's actions, *what might have been?*

### Acknowledgements

With thanks to Cheltenham Reference Library for providing help in locating references to newspaper reports, directories and maps.

### Sources

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 Private papers and photographs

<sup>1</sup> There was a Felix Parkinson practicing as a dentist in Bath in the 1830s

<sup>2</sup> *Cheltenham Examiner* 18 May 1887, 25 May 1887

<sup>3</sup> *Cheltenham Examiner* 20 Feb 1895

# Letters from Cheltenham, 1803 and 1805

TERRY MOORE-SCOTT

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GIVEN THE WEALTH OF RECORDED INFORMATION about the early days of Cheltenham Spa, one would think that there could not be a lot more of significance to record on the subject. Certain items of personal correspondence however have recently come to light, and been made available to this author<sup>1</sup>, which seem worthy of publication not just for the detailed reportage in them but also for the personal (at times rather Austen-esque) observations they give on the lively goings-on in the early spa resort.

The correspondence consists of two hand-written letters, one dated 15 August 1803, the other 15 October 1805, both sent from Cheltenham by a lady named M. Nevill and addressed to Lady Reade at Shipton, Burford, Oxfordshire. The latter seems likely to be Jane, daughter of Sir Chandos Hoskyns, who married Sir John Reade of Shipton Court, Shipton under Wychwood in 1758. The Reades of Shipton were an ancient Oxfordshire family of some standing whose members over time had served in various capacities at the royal court (including those of Elizabeth I, George I and George II)<sup>2</sup>. We know that she visited Cheltenham because a Theatre Royal playbill dated 17 October 1812 featured her and Sir John Reade as patrons of the performance on that evening<sup>3</sup>. It is also clear from the letters that Miss (or perhaps Mrs) Nevill was writing to keep Lady Reade up to date with the comings and goings and the social life of the town. The evidence points to the writer, and her sister, being seasonal visitors to Cheltenham: she writes of being at Canonfrome (in Herefordshire) but it is also evident that she and her sister were in the habit of breaking their journey at Shipton Court, presumably when travelling to and from London. Because the letters in themselves make such interesting reading, the original texts are quoted verbatim below, with comments on the contents appearing as footnotes at the end of this article.

## Letter I

*Cheltenham August 15<sup>th</sup> 1803*

*Dear Madam*

*I intended myself this pleasure some time ago, but meeting Mr Reade in the deepest affliction for the dangerous illnefs in his family which I am sorry to find carried off one of his little ones, I deferr'd writing to your Ladyship till I could give a better account of them, & upon sending this morning I had the satisfaction to hear that they were all recovered & playing in the garden. And now let me beg of your Ladyship to accept our sincerest acknowledgements for the many civilities we have repeatedly receiv'd at Shipton & where we so lately spent those pleasant days, which so agreeably broke the length of our journey: we had a comfortable morning drive to Cheltenham, which had been remarkably full & gay: the Cottage formerly inhabited by Mrs Cox (at the entrance into the town from London) is now occupied by Mr. & Mrs. Grey, who gave a fete to about a hundred; they met early, drank tea, danc'd on the Green then in the house, & concluded with an elegant supper<sup>4</sup>. The Ball for the Master of Ceremonies was uncommonly thin, only 200 were at it; 50 more intended going but were prevented by the bad news from Ireland<sup>5</sup> & one of Lord Longford's family being wounded at St. Lucie<sup>6</sup>. Mrs Siddons seems to have behav'd here with lefs politeness than*

*usual both she and Cooke were gone before we came; & tho' there is at present a very indifferent set of actors the house fills especially when plays are bespoke. Lady Mary Singleton (daughter to the Marquis Cornwallis), Lady Somers and Lady Stourton have each bespoke plays<sup>7</sup>. Lord & Lady Somers paid 9 Guineas a week for the house at the end of the Well walk; they are just gone & are to be succeeded by the Dowager Lady Waterford & four daughters<sup>8</sup>: Lord & Lady Stourton are at Bayes hill (once Lord Fauconbergs)<sup>9</sup>. Lord & Lady Southill have taken a house in St George's place till Christmafs. The Great house is once more advertised to be sold, it has been full of Lodgers all the Summer. Lady Catherine Blythe & Mrs Monk have just left it & are to be succeeded by Mr & Mrs Granville (once Miss Delabere)<sup>10</sup>. Miss Guydickins is here with a Lady from Bath; Mrs Travells have lett their house to Lady Owen, but are soon to take her place<sup>11</sup>. Last Thursday Lord Dunsany's 2<sup>nd</sup> daughter was married to Mr Roach at this Church, so privately that the Company coming at the time from the Well did not suspect it till the Bells rang: the whole family soon after set out for Ireland. Lord Sherbourn's son has made a much more prudent choice (in Lord Stawells only daughter) than report gave him last winter. Mr Hunt of Charlton Kings is in a very declining state of health, his son Mr Prynne & his Lady now live with him. I wish I could fill my paper with anything that could afford your Ladyship any entertainment but I fear I have already tired you with the uninteresting news this place affords: as to public affairs little is said; the people here do not seem to think themselves in any immediate danger, & are slowly forming themselves into Military Corps, what our Servant is to do is not yet determin'd<sup>12</sup>.*

*My sister unites with me in Compliments & best wishes to your Ladyship & believe me to be D'r Lady Reade's*

*Most affec't & oblig'd friend  
M Nevill*

*We have not been one evening in publick, but preferr'd rural walks to crowded Rooms. Lady Gosford bespeaks the play tomorrow.*

## **Letter II**

*Cheltenham Oct. 15<sup>th</sup> 1805*

*Mr. Jones's Garden House<sup>13</sup>*

*Dear Lady Reade,*

*I have long been in hopes of receiving a letter from your Ladyship but not having had that pleasure this summer, I begin to fear either you are not well, or that the letter I wrote from Canonfome has miscarried and I cannot forbear troubling you with this in hopes to hear a good account of your health & in case my letter did not reach your hands, to vindicate myself from appearing negligent or ungratefull. We came here the 6<sup>th</sup> of August & found a great Crowd of Company, few of whom I even knew by sight; & several people made the same observation. Excepting the Master of Ceremonies Ball, & one play, we did not go to any publick evening amusements the first month but led a Country life & preferr'd an Evening walk to hot rooms. The month of Sep't produced a great change in the Company – till within this week the Inns as well as the Lodgings have been full notwithstanding the numbers of new houses. Mr Tyson has given up the upper Rooms at Bath, & Mr King is canvassing to succeed him, & sent a letter here last night to excuse his attendance at the Ball last night, which was a very good one; above twenty couple danc'd till twelve, but from want of a M.C. it was late before they began. Lady Kinnouls daughters, Lady Brabazon's, Mifs Guise, our Cousin Mifs Nevill are some of the prettiest dancers. We have a very Elegant new theater but I cannot say much for the Company of Actors who belong to it<sup>14</sup>: in July I was tempted to go to it to see*

*Mifs Mudie, a child of 7 years old perform Norval & Roxalana in a wonderful manner; her voice was clear, and her action gracefull & she seem'd to understand her character perfectly, & quite to pofsefs herself; but excellent as her performance was, one could not help laughing to see the little creature defying the tall stout man in the character of Randolph; she afterwards spoke an Epilogue with great Spirit: it is said she is to act at Covent garden Theater; she had only perform'd at Belfast & went from hence to Liverpool or Birmingham. Bannister perform'd here 3 nights, & now Mrs Edwin is to perform tonight for the 4<sup>th</sup> and last night; her first night was for her father Mr Richards's benefit, who belongs to this Company. I wish we could prevail with your Ladyship to favor us with your Company here, we have a spare bed & your maid could sleep with ours. Our relations Sir Rob't & Lady Hodson spent two days with us in their way to Ireland; Mrs Piers & her maid we accomodated for near three weeks last year, & she has half promis'd to renew her visit this year but I have not yet heard when, if I do not hear from her soon, I shall suppose she is too well to want the Waters. Mr & Mrs Bosanquet, his brother & great niece spent ten days here in their way from Monmouthshire to London; they and Baron Wolfe drank tea with us last Sunday. Mrs Travell lett her house to Lady Eliz: & Mr Inge, then to Mr & Mrs Leigh, & now she is come to it herself, Mrs Whalley, Mifs Bottinson & Mifs E. Guydickens are her guests. Tonight we are going to see Mrs Edwin in the Wonder, bespoke by Lady Orkney; last week Lady Mary Lindsay, & Lady Maddeline Sinclair each put their name to the playbill Tuesday & Thursday<sup>15</sup>. We went one morning to the Cathedral at Glocester during the Musick meeting, & were well entertain'd with a fine selection admirably perform'd, we returned to dinner; the next day I heard, when the Messiah was perform'd, there were 1,300 in the Cathedral<sup>16</sup>. Mr & Mrs Musgrave of Barnesley spent last week here; many are going, & a few still coming; Mrs Leigh (sister to the late Lord) is expected here next Friday. I wish'd much to have sent your Ladyship some cuttings or rather layers of the true Clove Carnation, but cannot find any one going thro' Burford, a woman brings [word obscured] here from Leckhampton 2 miles off. Having the honor of being Chaperon to the two Mifs Bush's (of Burcote) their mother being an invalid) made us quite gay: we not only attended them to the Balls constantly, but took several delightfull Country walks for which this dry temperate Season was favorable: sometimes we were afsisted with a Donkey which we mounted by turns; they are much the fashion here, but I cannot be quite reconcil'd to their tricks: one of them after going three miles gradually lay down with me, I easily stept off, & it was only a laughable adventure: since the hack I rode for 8 summers was sold last year, I have not been back on horseback; tomorrow if the weather permits we are to pay Lady Guise a morning visit at Withington on horseback. Mrs Brocas, Mr & Mrs Sam' Bosanquet have been at Mr Bosanquets in Monmouthshire this summer. Mr & Mrs Stratton, his brother & sister were here with a great retinue & shewy liveries for a few days.*

*We had five Concerts here thinly attended, but at the 6<sup>th</sup> we had 400 as Mrs Billington sung gratis in her way from Glocester. Having sufficiently tired your Ladyship, I will conclude with the Compliments & best wishes of my sister and*

*Dear Lady Reade's Most affect' & oblig'd*

*M Nevill*

#### ***Author's post-script***

For all that the above correspondence tells us much about the life and preoccupations of the early spa's fashionable visitors, relatively little is said about the medicinal waters, which were supposed to be the reason for visiting the town. In fact, the only allusion to the subject comes in

the 1805 letter where the writer says [regarding a Mrs Piers]: "if I do not hear from her soon, I shall suppose she is too well to want the waters" [my underlining], as if any excuse was really needed to visit the 'Merriest Sick Resort on Earth'!

<sup>1</sup> G.R.O. ref. D5130/27. I am grateful to Nicholas Kingsley of the Gloucestershire Records Office for his permission to transcribe the two letters and to Dr Steven Blake of Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum for drawing them to my attention.

<sup>2</sup> Principal source: *Burkes Peerage*.

<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately there was not room in this edition of the Journal to reproduce this playbill [Editor]

<sup>4</sup> The Cheltenham Directories of 1800-1802 refer to 'The Cottage' as being at 'the top of the town, going to Sandford on the left hand'. This suggests possibly 'Oxford Cottage' which is shown on Cossens' map of 1820 at the SE corner of London Road and Old Bath Road ('Albion Cottage' is on the opposite (NW) corner).

<sup>5</sup> The Emmet rebellion in Dublin had taken place just a little earlier in July 1803 and, although unsuccessful, it had still shocked the country.

<sup>6</sup> Meaning unclear but very possibly a reference to the island of St Lucia in the West Indies, ownership of which had been disputed militarily between France and Britain since 1778 and was not resolved until the island was ceded to Britain under the Treaty of Paris in 1814.

<sup>7</sup> The Theatre Royal operated a system of patronage or 'bespeaking' whereby patrons of the theatre supported their desire for a particular programme of entertainment by buying up a block of seats for use by themselves and their guests – somewhat along the lines of modern-day sponsorship. Several of the names quoted in these letters as having bespoken performances at the Theatre Royal appear in the CAGM's playbill collection.

<sup>8</sup> The original Well Walk led from the River Chelt, at the southern end of Church Meadow, to the Old Well (now beneath the Ladies' College); it is not quite clear where along Well Walk this particular house stood but it may have been 'Grove Cottage' which, until at least 1820, was located at the far end of the Walk that extended southwards from the Old Spa (*An Historical Gazetteer of Cheltenham*, compiled by James Hodsdon; vol. 9 of the BGAS Record Series (1997)).

<sup>9</sup> A reference to Bays Hill Lodge, built in 1780 for Lord Fauconberg and used by George III during his 1788 visit (Hodsdon).

<sup>10</sup> The Great House was erected in 1730 on the site now occupied by St Matthew's Church in Clarence Street and was the centre of Cheltenham's social life for over 100 years (Hodsdon). In the town directory for 1802, it is described as being 'at the end of the Church Yard, [occupant] Mr Hooper, Surgeon'.

<sup>11</sup> The town directories of the time list a Miss Travell at no.180 High Street (south side) and, according to Carolyn Greet, no.180 was occupied in 1800-2 by Miss Travell and, in 1804, by Mrs Ann and Mrs Catherine [?Travell] (Carolyn Greet; *Cheltenham High Street, 1800-1820*; the Introduction of this report was published in Cheltenham Local History Society's Journal 17 (2001) and the full report is held by Cheltenham Reference Library).

<sup>12</sup> An allusion perhaps to the resumption of hostilities between Britain and France following the ending of the Treaty of Amiens earlier in 1803.

<sup>13</sup> 'The Garden House' was situated behind 368 High Street (also known as the Arch or Arched Buildings), the front of which accommodated the shop of Mr Jones, dealer in wines. The Garden House behind, reached by a side passage, consisted of a kitchen, parlour, drawing room and four bedrooms; the premises also possessed the advantages of a pew in the church. At one time, the remains of the passage could be seen leading off County Court Road (Greet).

<sup>14</sup> Cheltenham's new Theatre Royal was opened by John Boles Watson in Cambray earlier in 1805.

<sup>15</sup> The names of all three of these sponsors of the theatre appear on playbills held in the Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum's collection of Theatre Royal playbills (nos.293, 295 and 296).

<sup>16</sup> The annual Music Meeting began in the early 1720s and the tradition carries on as the Three Choirs' Festival, which meets annually, rotating between Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester cathedrals. 'The Messiah' was first performed in an English cathedral, namely Hereford, in 1759.



# The White House, Arle

PHYLLIS WHITE

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THE NEWS THAT THE ENGINEERING COMPANY Tungum Ltd. are planning to leave their Headquarters - 'The White House' - on the corner of Kingsmead Road<sup>1</sup> and Village Road<sup>2</sup> will be received with some regret by those living nearby, as this company has been considerate neighbours and employers for 50 years. Sadly, apart from the remains of the original Arle Court built c.1605 still in Kingsmead Road, the White House is the last tangible reminder of the ancient history of the Arle Court Estate, and the Butt family, the last owners of the house.

Exactly who built The White House - a Grade II listed building originally known as Arle Villa - and when is not known but one can easily imagine what an attractive property it must have been when newly built, and even more so when the garden had begun to mature, as is evident by the trees which, miraculously, still survive.

The earliest owners of the property appear to have been a family by the name of Fagg, who may have had family or business connections with the Welch family who lived opposite in Arle House, as it would appear that in 1835 John Gregory Welch sold Arle Villa to an Alfred Fagg, as this name is mentioned in deeds appertaining to the Welch estates in Essex. It also occurs as a second name to one of the Welch children - Francis Fagg Manooch Welch, second son of George Asser White Welch - who died on 1 August 1836, aged 3 years and one month, at Hadleigh House, Essex.



**Arle Villa, later known as the White House, Village Road, Arle about 1975**

Previous to that, however, on 7 May 1830 a Mr Benjamin Fagg had paid £550 for the same property, which is rather puzzling. In 1838 Mrs Elizabeth Fagg (probably the widow of Alfred) was granted a licence to demise Arle Villa for 14 years, the price, including a £1 stamp, was £330 per annum, but less than five years later the house was unoccupied, when the following advertisement appeared in the *Cheltenham Examiner* of 22 November 1843:

**ARLE VILLA**

**TO BE LET ON LEASE – UNFURNISHED**

*A most desirable residence for a genteel family, excellent walled garden; pleasure ground and green house, also coach house and stabling, brew house etc. Apply to Messrs. Humphris & Son, Keynsham Cottage.*

Less than two years later another advertisement appeared in the *Cheltenham Examiner* of 16 July 1845:

ARLE VILLA

*Situated about a mile from the centre of Cheltenham near the road leading to Tewkesbury. It contains Dining Room and Drawing Room (with Conservatory communicating with the latter) six bedrooms, and dressing room, excellent offices, well stocked wall garden, with lawn and shrubberies.*

*For particulars apply to Messrs. Humphris and Son, Builders and Estate Agents, Keynsham Bank, Cheltenham.*

In 1845 Mrs Matilda Fagg sold the property to the Trustees of the late Thomas Packer Butt of Arle Court, who died in 1828. Two years later his widow Ann married his best friend and executor, Samuel Sadler, a Yeoman of Purton, Wiltshire, who died on 30 May 1845. When Anne Sadler moved out of Arle Court, a few yards down the road, to Arle Villa, with her two sons William Packer Coulston<sup>3</sup> and Thomas Packer Walter Butt, and her two daughters Lydia Bann and Ann Matilda Butt.

In March 1848 Ann's elder son, William Packer Coulston Butt, died at Arle Villa of tuberculosis, having a year earlier in 1847 purchased a property known as Grovesfield on the Gloucester Road<sup>4</sup>. In September the same year Ann Matilda Butt married the Rev James Fisher, Curate of St Mary's, Cheltenham, son of William Fisher, builder of St James' Church and developer of Suffolk Square. In November 1848 Ann's surviving son, Thomas Packer Walter Butt, by now a wealthy man, having inherited everything that had been left to his elder brother – as his father's heir – including the Arle Court estate, married Anna Maria Lutener, the second daughter of Dr William Lutener of Dolerw, Newtown, Montgomeryshire.

Ann Sadler was still living in Arle Villa at the time of the 1861 census, with a cook, housemaid and coachman; and by 1871 there were three servants listed – John Whittaker, coachman from Newtown, Montgomeryshire; Mary Corfield from Llandyil, also Montgomeryshire and a housemaid from Church Stoke, Salop. Although absent on the night of the census, the head of the household at that time could well have been Sophia Lutener, the unmarried younger sister of Anna Maria Lutener, who moved into Arle Villa after the death of her parents, bringing with her retainers from her old home.

By 1881 an Irish lady was in residence, with a page/domestic servant aged 15 who came from Tetbury, and a Sarah Sepions, a needlewoman born in America, and in 1891 a James Ricketts from Westbury-on-Severn was living there with his family, plus a cook and a housemaid.

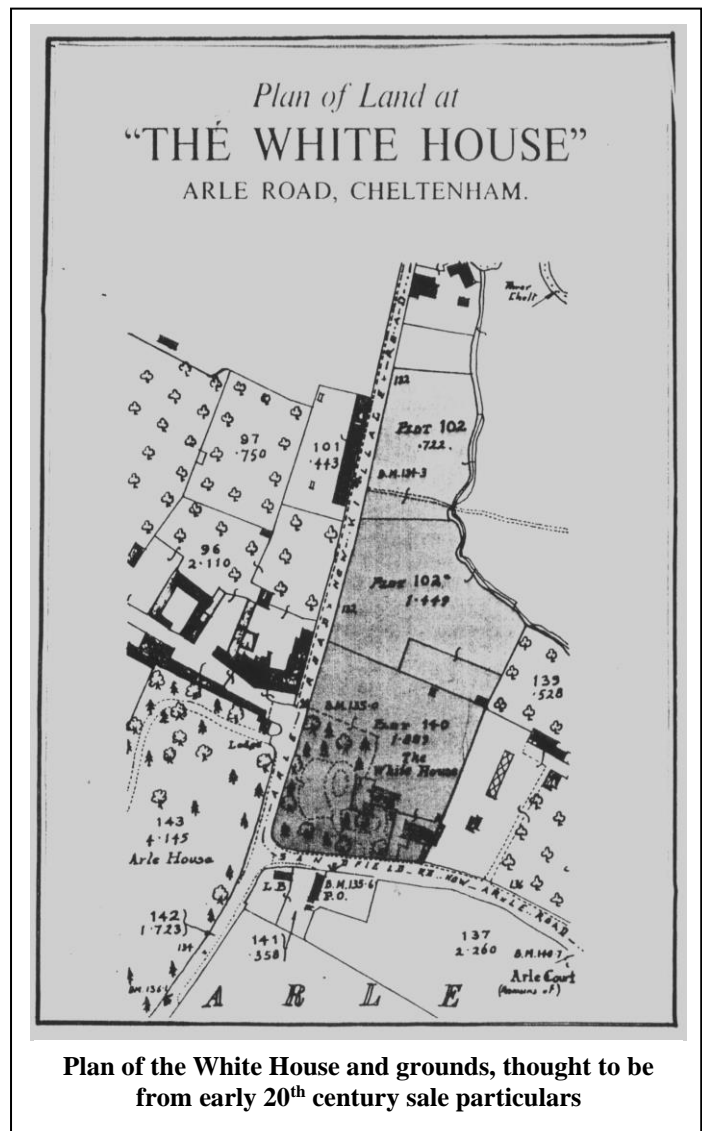
At some date between 1891 and 1915 the name of Arle Villa was changed to The White House when a Mr and Mrs Hutchings were living there. On 30 December 1915 they suffered the loss of their son Commander John Hutchings and his wife Mabel Innes Hutchings, daughter of Major-General and Mrs Cunningham of St Keverne, Christ Church Road. The couple had travelled to Cromer where Commander Hutchings had re-joined his ship *HMS Natal*, which

was berthed in the harbour. Both were aboard when there was an explosion on the armoured cruiser. 404 people, including Commander Hutchings and his wife, were tragically killed.

By 1917 Arle Villa (or The White House) had been acquired by Mr Frank W. Brown of Arle Court Farm. Arle Court itself had been demolished in about 1878, save the rear part of the house, which became the farmhouse, with farm buildings being built opposite. Brown sold the White House to a Nicholas Harris. In 1931 Mr Harris sold it to Percival James Stevens, but it is not known if either were actually resident in the house.

Lieutenant-Colonel Richard William Arthur Denne of the Indian Army lived there after his marriage to Anne Manooch Welch of Arle House in 1919, and at the time of her death in 1944 she was living back in her old home, together with two of her sisters.

In 1946 P.J. Stevens sold The White House to Clara Gladys Martin from Conderton and in 1948 it belonged to Margaret and John Phillips. In 1952 Robert Muir was resident there and in 1955 Lindsay Muir and Co. Ltd, 81 Promenade, Plant Hirers, sold the property to Tungum Ltd. for £4,000.



<sup>1</sup> Until 1967 Arle Road

<sup>2</sup> Previously Arle Village Road

<sup>3</sup> Coulston was Ann's maiden name

<sup>4</sup> Now known as Arle Court, previously home to Dowty Headquarters, and now part of Cheltenham Film Studios.

# The Religious Census of Cheltenham in 1851

ALAN MUNDEN

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THE NATIONAL RELIGIOUS CENSUS OF ENGLAND AND WALES took place on Mothering Sunday, 30 March 1851. Holding the Census was a contentious matter and it was opposed by a number of churchmen including Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford. Throughout the country he had his supporters. The vicar of Claverdon in Warwickshire noted on his return - 'I decline giving the attendance' and was one of the 1% who failed to complete the official forms. Some considered that the timing was inappropriate. Being Mothering Sunday some people were absent from their local church or chapel because they were away visiting their families; in other instances illness was blamed on the poor attendance and as ever the bad weather provided a convenient excuse for being absent. The rector of Coberley, Gloucestershire noted that, 'The day has been wet: especially the afternoon.' However the weather did not deter those attending St Paul's, Cheltenham where was 'a larger than average evening congregation by one third.'

In simple terms the Religious Census revealed that just over a half of the population attended a place of worship and of those who did attend roughly 50% attended the Church of England and the rest in other places of worship. The Church of England was strongest in a line south of the Dee estuary and the Wash (apart from Cornwall), numerically weak in the north of England and in Wales, and in some of the major urban centres there were more Nonconformists than Anglicans. In all thirty-five denominations were identified. The Census revealed the strengths and weaknesses of Protestantism, Roman Catholicism and a variety of non-Christian groups like the Jews, Mormons, Unitarians and Swedenborgians). No reference was made to other world faiths since at that time there were few adherents in England and Wales. What was evident was that the churches and chapels were far from full thus dispelling the popular myth that in the past 'The churches were always full.' New churches were built for *potential* rather than *actual* congregations and the challenge to the denominations was to fill the empty seats. Attendance was weakest where there was a high concentration of the working classes and in the large urban centres they rarely attended any place of worship.

Two types of official form were provided. One was for Anglican churches and the other for all the rest. Various questions concerned the location and the endowment of the building as well as the number of spaces available for worshippers. Most people paid a rental for their seat (families could rent a whole pew) while the poor sat on free seats or benches or had to stand. Worth noting are the estimated number of people who attended on Census Day (for Jews it was the previous day) and the average number of attendants over the previous months. Attendance was recorded for the morning, afternoon and evening and some people probably attended more than once. Afternoon services were common before the introduction of gas lighting. In Cheltenham the afternoon service was usually at 3.00pm and the evening at 7.00pm in the Anglican churches and at 6.30pm in the nonconformist chapels. Sometimes there was a considerable variation between the numbers that attended on Census Day and the average attendance over the past six or twelve months. A lower figure might well have reflected the prevalence of illness and bad weather, and the higher average figure the exaggeration of the minister who made the return! The Census also distinguished between the 'general congregation' and 'Sunday scholars' and of particular interest to the historian is the space provided for 'remarks.'

## Cheltenham Introduction

In 1851 the resident population of Cheltenham was 35,051 and this number was increased by a large number of visitors. The community was served by seven Anglican churches and about twenty non-Anglican places of worship. The Church of England held services at St Mary's, Cheltenham (the parish church), Holy Trinity, St Paul's, Christ Church, St Peter's, St John's, St James and in the National schoolroom in Bath Road that became the nucleus of the congregation of St Luke's which opened in November 1854. Five of the Anglican churches, but none from St Peter's, St John's or the Bath Road schoolroom made returns. Though technically not part of Cheltenham the returns for the neighbouring Anglican parishes of Charlton Kings, Leckhampton and Prestbury have been included here for they are of some interest because they show the attendance figures in churches unconnected with the Evangelicalism of the majority of the Anglican churches in Cheltenham. Holy Communion was administered once a month in all of the Anglican churches apart from St John's where a communion service was held each Sunday.

Within the town there are returns from eighteen or nineteen non-Anglican places of worship. They include 'Old Dissent' (the Independents - more generally known as Congregationalists - Baptists, Quakers and Unitarians) and 'New Dissent' (denominations formed from the eighteenth-century - the Methodists and the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion). There were in addition returns from Roman Catholics, Jews and the Mormons. This last named group had established itself in Cheltenham in the 1830s and over the next twenty years had experienced considerable growth. Though technically not part of Cheltenham the returns from the Wesleyan Methodist chapels at Charlton Kings, Arle and Golden Valley are included because they came under the superintendence of the same Wesleyan minister. Sometimes the origins of a particular denomination precede the date of the chapel in which the members worshipped. Previously they might have occupied hired premises or in some cases chapels later used by other denominations. Some of the chapels recorded in the Census were not recorded elsewhere. For example in *The Cheltenham Annuaire and Directory* of 1851 it has the dismissive note that besides the main chapels 'there are a number of other smaller places of worship connected with different sects of dissenters, which, however, are scarcely of sufficient importance to entitle them to a particular enumeration.' (Appendix, p.ix).

At the time of the Census it was determined that 58% of the population should be provided with seating in a church or chapel. In the published summaries for Cheltenham it was stated that there was already accommodation for 52.5% of the population and it was calculated that only a further 2,423 seats were required. Of the existing 23,204 sittings, 39.2% were provided by the Church of England (14,520 seats), 17.2% by the Nonconformists (7,609 seats) and .08% by the Roman Catholics (360 seats). Out of forty-five large towns Cheltenham was one of twenty-five towns that provided 25% and more in non-Anglican chapels, but one of four in providing for over 30% of accommodation in Anglican churches. The four towns were Bath (38.6%), Worcester (36.2%), Exeter (35.3%) and Cheltenham (31.00). But it should be noted that there is some discrepancy between the printed summaries and the information given in the local returns. However with some reasonable guesswork it is possible to suggest the numerical strength of the attendance in the churches and chapels of Cheltenham in 1851.

**Census of Great Britain, 1851.**  
(13 and 14 Victoria, Cap. 53.)

**A RETURN**

Of the several Particulars to be inquired into respecting the undermentioned CHURCH or CHAPEL in England, belonging to the United Church of England and Ireland.

[A similar Return (*mutatis mutandis*,) will be obtained with respect to Churches belonging to the Established Church in Scotland, and the Episcopal Church there, and also from Roman Catholic Priests, and from the Ministers of every other Religious Denomination throughout Great Britain, with respect to their Places of Worship.]

I.	NAME and DESCRIPTION of CHURCH or CHAPEL.							
II.	WHERE SITUATED.	Parish, Ecclesiastical Division or District, Township or Place	Superintendent Registrar's District	County and Diocese.				
III.	WHEN CONSECRATED OR LICENSED	Under what Circumstances CONSECRATED or LICENSED						
IV.	In the case of a CHURCH or CHAPEL CONSECRATED or LICENSED since the 1st January, 1800; state							
	HOW OR BY WHOM ERECTED		COST, how Defrayed					
		By Parliamentary Grant .....						
		, Parochial Rate .....						
		,, Private Benefaction, or Subscription, or from other Sources.....						
		Total Cost.....£						
V.			VI.					
HOW ENDOWED			SPACE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP					
	£		£					
Land .....		Pew Rents .....		Free Sitings .....				
Tithe .....		Fees .....		Other Sitings .....				
Glebe .....		Dues .....						
Other Permanent Endowment .....		Easter Offerings .....						
		Other Sources .....		Total Sitings...				
VII.	Estimated Number of Persons attending Divine Service on Sunday, March 30, 1851.			AVERAGE NUMBER OF ATTENDANTS during Months next preceding March 30, 1851. (See Instruction VII.)				
		Morning	Afternoon	Evening		Morning	Afternoon	Evening
	General Congregation } Sunday Scholars }				General Congregation } Sunday Scholars }			
	Total..				Total...			
VIII.	REMARKS							

Return form for the Religious Census of 1851

**Church of England overall attendance:**

	ADULT ATTENDANCE			SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE	
	a.m.	aftn	p.m.	a.m.	aftn
<b>St Mary's Cheltenham</b>	1,600	1,000	2,000	120	
<b>Holy Trinity</b>	1,100	780		c.100	
<b>St Paul</b>	700		c.800	200	
<b>Christ Church</b>	c.1250	c.650		c.200	c.150
<b>St Peter</b>	c.500		c.400	c.150	
<b>St John</b>	c.450		c.300	c.100	
<b>St James</b>	1,400	600		200	200
<b>Total:</b>	7,000	3,030	3,500	1,070	350
<b>Printed Summary:</b>	6,866	3,338	3,200	Includes Sunday School	
In addition there were the unrecorded figures for the Bath Road Schoolroom					
<b>Bath Road Schoolroom</b>	c.600		c.600		

**Non-Anglican attendance:**

	ADULT ATTENDANCE			SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE	
	a.m.	aftn	p.m.	a.m.	aftn
<b>Highbury Chapel</b>	500		750	150	
<b>Cheltenham Chapel</b>	200		220	55	
<b>Albert Street Chapel</b>	70		140	65	70
<b>Upper Bath Street Chapel</b>	50	30	60	30	30
<b>Bethel Chapel</b>	250		500	c.50	
<b>Salem Chapel</b>	800		1,100	c.100	c.50
<b>Ebenezer Chapel</b>	150		200	190	200
<b>Providence Room</b>	50		40	c.10	

	ADULT ATTENDANCE			SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE	
	a.m.	aftn	p.m.	a.m.	aftn
<b>Bethesda Chapel</b>	250		300	70	
<b>Wesley Chapel</b>	250	40	450	165	
<b>Bethany Chapel</b>	30		45	20	30
<b>Bethany Branch Chapel</b>		25			25
<b>Countess of Huntingdon Chapel</b>	<i>c.</i> 250		700	<i>c.</i> 50	
<b>Roman Catholics</b>	400	400	400		
<b>Quakers</b>	25	10			
<b>Jews</b>	20				
<b>Mormons</b>	150	300	500		
<b>Unitarian</b>	50		35	15	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>3,595</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>5,440</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>405</b>
<b>Printed Summary:</b>	<b>4,034</b>	<b>910</b>	<b>4,867</b>	<b>Includes Sunday School</b>	

In many churches and chapels throughout England and Wales there were more empty seats than those that were occupied. In Cheltenham the largest congregation was at the parish church where the Rev Francis Close and his curates preached to huge congregations. The small building with its irregular seating and galleries was nearly 'always full and crowded' and many people had to stand. At the same time Holy Trinity, Christ Church and St James' had morning congregations of well over 1,000. There were large afternoon congregations at these four fashionable churches and surprisingly St Paul's (which served the poorer part of the town) had a large evening congregation. None of the non-Anglican chapels reached these high attendance figures though on Sunday evening the largest nonconformist congregation was at Salem Chapel with an average attendance of 1,100. The next largest evening congregations were 700 at the Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel and 500 at Bethel Chapel. The combined morning attendance at the two Wesleyan Methodist chapels was 569 and 756 in the evening. Overall there was a higher Anglican attendance on Sunday morning and a higher nonconformist attendance on Sunday evening.

Sunday Schools were provided by most of the denominations and the pupils were taught reading and writing as well as the Christian faith. Nationally 38% of under 15s attended Sunday school in 1851, with a high point of 52.6% in 1901 (today it is 4%). From the seven Anglican churches, there were an estimated 1,070 children in the morning and 350 in the afternoon and 970 children in the morning and 450 in the afternoon in the non-Anglican chapels. Some children probably went twice and it was not unknown for children to attend the Sunday school in another denominations in order to qualify for the annual summer 'treat'!



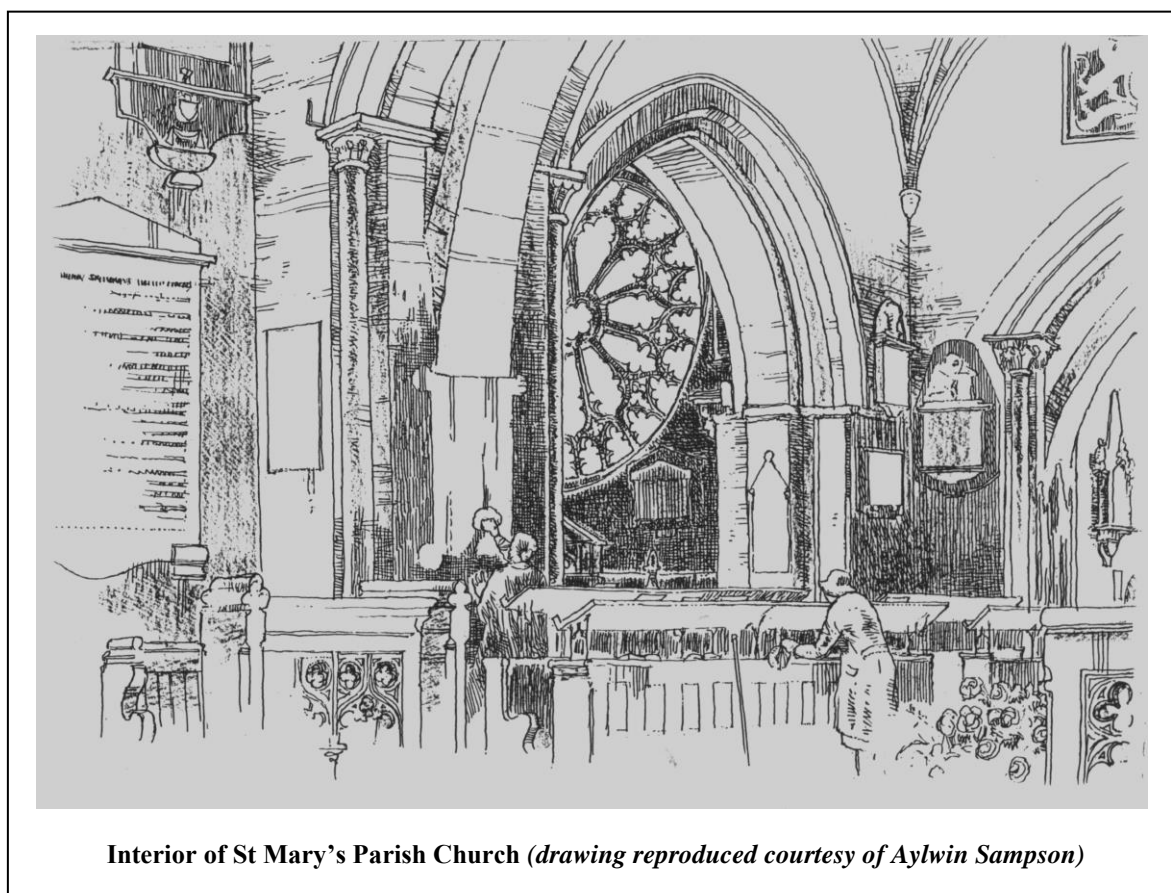
Some of the non-Anglican chapels had little support. The Quakers had a morning congregation of twenty-one people and nine in the afternoon. The synagogue had an average Saturday morning congregation of twenty Jews. On Census Day the Unitarians had sixty adults in the morning and thirty-five in the evening. The Mormons with a membership of 230 converts had a morning congregation of 150, an afternoon congregation of 300 and 500 worshippers in the evening. The Roman Catholic community of Cheltenham was small and so was their chapel that only seated 360 people together with standing room for another forty worshippers, which meant that the maximum attendance could only be 400.

### **The Religious Census of Cheltenham**

The returns of the Religious Census are held at the National Archives at Kew (HO 129/344). Unfortunately no microfilms are held in Gloucestershire and as yet there are no plans to follow the example of other counties and to publish the complete census of the county. However this modest study of Cheltenham might encourage someone to research and to publish the returns on the church and chapel attendance for the whole county.

The returns given below have been edited and my notes are in square brackets. The dates of the opening of the churches and chapels have been corrected. There is some variation in the numbers given for those who could be accommodated. The official adult bottom width was 20" (though with changing fashions this would have been inadequate). Where no figures are given no information was recorded in the Census. There is some difference between the official printed summaries and the figures given below. The chapels are recorded by the names given in the Census and as occupied in 1851 and in the order printed in the Census.

Note: SS = Sunday schools, HC = High Communion



**Church of England in Cheltenham****St Mary's, Cheltenham, High Street**

Incumbent Rev Francis Close, The Grange, Lansdown Terrace.

Seats available 320 free; 1,500 other; 1,820 total.

[On another form 400 free; 1,200 other; 1,600 total]

30 March

Average

11.00am 1,600 + 120 SS

3.00pm 1,000

7.00pm 2,000

Remarks: 'Always full and crowded.' '130 girls exclusive of the day school of boys which attend - 130 in all.'

['A lecture is delivered in the New School Room, Devonshire Street, every Thursday evening, at 7.00pm. A Missionary Meeting is held at the Infants' School the first Tuesday evening in every month, at 7.00pm. The Rev F. Close delivers a Sacramental Lecture at the Infants' School, the Friday evening before the first Sunday in the month, at 7.30pm.' (*The Cheltenham Annuaire and Directory*, 1851, Appendix, p.vi)].

**Holy Trinity, Portland Street (opened April 1823)**

Incumbent Rev John Browne, East Hayes, Pittville Circus.

Seats available 444 free; 906 other; 1,306 total

30 March

Average

11.00am 1,056

1,100

(includes SS)

(includes SS)

3.00pm

738

780

**St Paul, St Paul's Road (opened July 1831)**

Incumbent Rev Charles Henry Bromby, Church of England Training School.

Seats available 700 free; 700 other; 1,400 total.

30 March

Average

11.00am 700 + 200 SS

3.00pm

7.00pm 1,200

[800]

Remarks: 'The numbers were actually counted in the gross. There was accidentally a larger than average evening congregation by one third.'

**Christ Church, Malvern Road (opened January 1840)**

Incumbent Rev Archibald Boyd, 11 Hatherley Place.

Seats available 434 free; 1,401 other; 1,835 total

30 March

Average

11.00am 1,460 (includes SS)

3.00pm 800 (includes SS)

7.00pm [Held in the schoolroom. On Sacramental Sundays (1st Sunday in the month) the afternoon service is at 3.30pm].

**St Peter**, Tewkesbury Road (opened March 1849) [From 1844 the congregation met in the Waterloo Place Infant School].

Incumbent Rev William Hodgson, Nash Cottage, North Place.

Seats available 700 free; 350 other; 1,050 total

30 March Average

11.00am

6.30pm

Remarks: [No returns of attendance. In 1845 the Waterloo Place schoolroom had a congregation of 350].

**St John**, Berkeley Street (opened January 1829) [Closed and demolished 1968].

Incumbent Rev William Spencer Phillips. [He lived in Ryde, Isle of Wight and the curate in charge was the Rev Alexander Watson, Roseville, London Road].

Seats available [200 free; 540 other; 740 total].

30 March Average

11.00am

3.30pm

Remarks: [No returns of attendance. HC at 9.00am on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays in the month. 'Some of the congregation of the chapel come from distant part(s) of the parish' (Ecclesiastical Commissioners (St Luke's) Letter from Rev A. Watson, 26 April 1844)].

**St James**, Suffolk Square (opened October 1830) [Closed in 1967].

Incumbent Rev Francis Duncan Gilby, Eckington House, Lansdown.

Seats available 350 free; 1,400; 1,750 total

30 March Average

11.00am 1,400 + 200 SS

3.00pm 600 + 200 SS

Remarks: 'The attendance seldom or never varies.' [At 3.30pm on the third Sunday in the month (Sacramental Sunday) and from May to August inclusive].

**The National Schoolroom**, Bath Road (opened June 1845). [St Luke's opened in November 1854].

Curate in charge Rev William Fraser Handcock

30 March Average

11.00am

7.00pm

Remarks: [No returns of attendance. In 1845 there was a congregation of between 600-700].

### **Church of England - near Cheltenham**

#### **St Mary's, Charlton Kings**

Incumbent Rev James Frederick Secretan Gabb, The Parsonage.

Seats available 150 free; 531 other; 100 children; 781 total

30 March Average

11.00am 444 + 126 SS 400 + 120 SS

3.00pm 381 + 116 SS 320 + 100 SS

6.30pm 164 130

Remarks: 'The congregation of yesterday as counted enables the estimate more correctly the average as above.'

**St Peter, Leckhampton**

Incumbent	Rev Charles Brandon Trye		
Seats available	142 free; 176 other; 318 total		
	30 March		Average
	11.00am		100 + 65 SS
	3.00pm		160 + 65 SS

**St Philip, Leckhampton**, Grafton Street [now Road] (opened May 1840) [Rebuilt as St Philip and St James opened in April 1882].

Incumbent	Rev John Esmond Riddle, Tudor Lodge, The Park.		
Seats available	350 free; 480 other; 830 total		
	30 March		Average (6 months)
	11.00am	507 + 150 SS	510 + 150 SS
	3.00pm	510 + 150 SS	510 + 150 SS

Remarks: 'Some persons attend divine service in the morning who do not in the afternoon, and vice versa; I reckon that about 800 persons attend once at least every Sunday.' 'NB in the evening some members of this congregation attend other churches.'

**St Mary's, Prestbury**

Incumbent	Rev John Edwards [later Baghot de la Bere]		
Seats available	50 free; 280 other; 90 children; 420 total		
	30 March		Average
	10.30am	264 + 62 SS	290 + 70 SS
	3.00pm	198 + 42 SS	290 + 70 SS
	6.00pm		

**Nonconformist chapels in Cheltenham*****Independents [Congregationalists]***

**Highbury Chapel**, Grosvenor Street (opened August 1827) [Closed in 1852, used as a schoolroom until 1929, now a youth centre. Replaced by a new chapel in Winchcombe Street 1852 and demolished in 1932 and a new chapel opened in Priory Terrace].

Minister	Rev Andrew Morton Brown, 1 Oxford Street.		
Seats available	150 free; 600 other; 750 total		
	30 March		Average
	11.00am	466 + 174 SS	500 + 150 SS
	6.30pm	470	750

Remarks: 'The Chapel was built by a lady [Mrs Wall] for the Rev Mr [Thomas] Snow, a seceder from the established church, who afterwards returned to the church, and after passing through several hands, was purchased for a Congregational Chapel and opened in communion with this denomination in 1827.'

**Cheltenham Chapel** [also called St George's Chapel], St George's Square (opened August 1809). Some of the early ministers were from the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. [Closed 1857 and from 1858-86 used by the Presbyterians].

Minister	Rev John Rawlinson, Northfield House, North Place.		
Seats available	250 free; 550 other; 800 total		

	30 March		Average
	11.00am	163 + 55 SS	200 + 55 SS
	6.30pm	174	220

Remarks: 'About 100 sittings are let: the chapel will seat 800 persons.'

**Albert Street Chapel**, Albert Street (opened 1828 for the Primitive Methodist). [From 1848 by Independents and later known as the Gas Green (Baptist) Chapel].

Minister Rev Edward Minton, 17 Queen's Retreat, Gloucester Road.

Seats available 80 free; 200 other; 280 total

	30 March		Average
	11.00am	54 + 69 SS	70 + 66 SS
	afternoon		70 SS
	6.30pm	100	140

Remarks: '1835 as a Methodist Chapel became an independent chapel 1828'(sic.).

**Upper Bath Street Chapel**, Upper Bath Street (opened c.1822) [see also Gospel Towns and Village Missionary Brethren].

[Signature] Caleb Parker, Suffolk Road.

Seats available 200 free

	30 March		Average
	am	42 + 30 SS	
	aftn	27 + 30 SS	
	pm	56	

### *Particular Baptist*

**Bethel Chapel** [also called Zoar Chapel] Knapp Road (opened 1753, rebuilt 1821) [Now the Christadelphian Hall]. [The congregation of Bethel Chapel divided three times and some members opened Salem Chapel (which in turn divided and became Cambray Chapel), Ebenezer Chapel and Providence Chapel].

Minister Rev John Bloomfield, 5 Northfield Terrace.

Seats available 300 free; 300 other; 600 total

	30 March		Average
	11.00am	250	
	6.30pm	500	

### *Baptist*

**Salem Chapel**, Clarence Parade (opened June 1844) [broke away from Bethel Chapel 1836 and after a further division Cambray Chapel was opened in April 1855].

Minister Rev William Garrett Lewis, Pine Cottage, Winchcombe Street.

Seats available 400 free; 1,000 other; 1,400 total

	30 March		Average (6 months)
	11.00am	600	800
	3.00pm		
	6.30pm	900	1,100

Remarks: 'No Sunday school return.' 'For some cause not accounted for the attendance on 30 March 1851 was under the usual average.'

**Ebenezer Chapel**, King Street (opened September 1813) [From 1813-40 used by the Wesleyan Methodists; then by Baptists who broke away from Bethel Chapel 1844-55; and finally by Primitive Methodists 1859-1934. Now the building is converted into apartments].

Minister Rev Thomas How, 10 Albert Place.  
 Seats available 100 free; 400 other; 500 total  
 30 March Average  
 11.00am 150 + 190 SS  
 aftn 200 SS  
 6.30pm 200

**Providence Room**, Bath Terrace (opened September 1837) [Broke away from Bethel Chapel, and in June 1870 opened a chapel in Naunton Parade(now called Naunton Terrace)].

Deacon John Smith, 1 Bath Road.  
 Seats available 100 'all free'  
 30 March Average  
 am 30 50  
 aftn  
 pm 34

### *Methodist*

#### **Wesleyan Methodist**

**Bethesda Chapel**, [also called Wesleyan Chapel] Great Norwood Street (opened July 1830, rebuilt and re-opened January 1846).

Minister Rev William Henry Cornforth, 22 Great Norwood Street.  
 Seats available 82 free; 308 other; 390 total  
 30 March Average  
 11.00am 230 + 72 SS  
 3.00pm  
 6.30pm 300

Remarks: 'The present chapel was erected in 1845 "in lieu" of one built in 1830.'

**Wesley Chapel**, St George's Street (opened August 1840) [From 1857 the United Methodist Free Church. Closed 1971 and now offices].

Minister Rev William Henry Cornforth, 22 Great Norwood Street.  
 Seats available 272 free; 618 other; 890 total  
 30 March Average  
 11.00am 339 + 164 SS  
 3.00pm 37  
 6.30pm 456

Remarks: 'The present chapel was built in 1839 "in lieu" of one erected in 1812.'

**Charlton Kings Chapel**, Church Street (opened 1838)

Minister Rev William Henry Cornforth, 22 Great Norwood Street.  
 Seats available 92 free; 82 other; 174 total  
 30 March Average  
 am  
 aftn 17 + 36 SS  
 pm 65

**Arle Chapel** (opened 1847)

Minister	Rev William Henry Cornforth, 22 Great Norwood Street.		
Seats available	50 free		
	30 March		Average
	am		
	aftn	28	
	pm		

Remarks: 'We have regularly supplied preaching from 1847'

**Golden Valley Chapel** (opened 1824) [Subsequently a Baptist Chapel].

Minister	Rev William Henry Cornforth, 22 Great Norwood Street		
Seats available	85 free		
	30 March		Average
	am		
	aftn	25 + 17 SS	
	pm		

**Wesleyan Methodist Association**

**Bethany Chapel**, Regent Street (opened 1849). [Moved to Royal Well Chapel in 1865; later used by the Christian Brethren].

[Minister	Rev J. Gibbons]		
Steward	Henry Lane, 6 Royal Parade.		
Seats available	70 free; 110 other; 50 standing room spaces		
	30 March		Average
			(6 months)
	11.00am	30 + 14 SS	30 + 20 SS
	aftn	32 SS	
	6.30pm	42	45

**Bethany Branch Chapel**, Bath Road (opened 1850)

Steward	Henry Lane, 6 Royal Parade.		
Seats available	60 free; 20 standing room spaces		
	30 March		Average
	am		
	aftn	20 + 29 SS	25
	pm		

**Countess of Huntingdon's Chapel** [also called Portland Chapel] North Place (opened August 1816). [Used by Calvinistic congregation 1816-19 then by the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion. Before closure used by a Baptist congregation, now fitness centre].

Minister	Rev James Wake, Jersey Cottage, Hewlett's Road.		
Seats available	200 free; 550 other; 750 total		
	30 March		Average
	11.00am	300 (includes SS)	
	6.30pm	700	

Remarks: 'The number of children in our Sabbath schools is returned by our superintendent.'

## Other denominations in Cheltenham

### *Roman Catholic*

**St George's Church**, Manchester Place (opened 1810) [Replaced by the present building opened in May 1857 and completed in 1877].

Priest	Rev James Kendal [and Rev P. Levey]		
Seats available	100 free; 260 other; 360 total; 40 standing room spaces		
	30 March		Average
	8.30am	250	'The same'
	11.00am	400	
	3.00pm	400	
	7.00pm	400	

Remarks: 'Cheltenham being a visiting place the Catholic population fluctuates averaging from 800 to 1,000 persons.'

### *Gospel Towns and Village Missionary Brethren*

**Upper Bath Street Chapel** (opened c1827) [This would seem to be different from the Upper Bath Street Chapel, Upper Bath Street].

[Lay Minister]	Caleb Parker, Suffolk Road		
Seats available	200 'all free'		
	30 March		Average
	am	50	27 SS
	aftn	45	
	pm	60	

Remarks: 'This place of worship was re-opened after being closed for some time on Sunday, 2 March [by?] a few working men. The pulpit services are conducted by [untrained?] preachers.'

### *Society of Friends [Quakers]*

**Friends' Meeting House**, Manchester Walk (opened 1702, rebuilt 1758 and 1836) [Closed c.1917 and subsequently used by St Paul's College and now a fitness centre].

[Signature]	John Matthews, Albion Lodge		
Seats available	'Space for 100'		
	30 March		Average
	11.00am	21	
	3.00pm	9	
	[6.00pm in winter]		

Remarks: 'About the year 1837 near the site of the old Meeting House was erected before 1800.'

### *Jews*

**Synagogue** St James' Square (opened May 1839)

Wardens	H. Karr and Samuel Sternberg		
[Reader	R. Jacobsohn]		
Seats available	15 free; 70 other; 85 total		
	29 March		Average
	(6 months)		



8.00am 16 20  
 Remarks: 'Services held on Saturday' [29 March 1851].

***Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints [Mormons]***

**Tabernacle Chapel**, Clare Street, Bath Road (opened 1836) [1836-43 Strict Baptists who moved to Ebenezer Chapel; 1843-60 used by the Mormons; 1860-1933 used as the St Luke's Mission Room].

President	James A. Ross, 15 Townsend Street.		
Seats available	630 all free		
	30 March		Average
	11.00am	150	
	aftn	300	
	6.30pm	500	

Remarks: '230 joined members. 230 to 300 more generally attend the Tabernacle Chapel is as rented by this body on the 8 March 1851 formerly occupied Zoar Chapel, Manchester Walk, Cheltenham.'

***Unitarian***

**Unitarian Chapel** [also called Bays Hill Chapel] Bays Hill Terrace (opened April 1844).  
 [Closed and is now in use as an auction room].

[Minister	Rev Henry Solly, Thornville, Leckhampton]		
Secretary	Thomas Bartlett Shenton, 90 Winchcombe Street.		
Seats available	300 all free		
	30 March		Average
	11.00am	60 +12 SS	50 +14 SS
	7.00pm	35	

**APPENDIX: 1901 churches and chapels in Cheltenham** (in addition to those above)

**Church of England**

St Marks (opened February 1862)  
 All Saints' (opened November 1868)  
 Holy Apostles (opened June 1871)  
 Emmanuel Church (opened May 1873)  
 St Stephen's (opened 1874, 1883)  
 St Matthew's (opened April 1879)  
 St Philip and St James, Leckhampton (opened April 1882)

**Other denominations**

**Baptist**

Cambray Chapel (opened April 1855)  
 Gas Green Chapel

**Methodist**

Wesleyan Methodist  
Mission Chapel, Swindon Road  
St Mark's  
Wesleyan Methodist Association  
Royal Well (opened 1865)

**Presbyterian**

Scotch Church also called the Church of Scotland, the Walker Memorial Church and now the Cheltenham Evangelical Free Church (opened 1877), Whaddon Lane  
St Andrew's Church, Fauconberg Road

**Christian Brethren**

Portland Street  
Christian Assembly Rooms, St George's Place  
Regent Hall, Regent Street  
St George's Hall, High Street

**Miscellaneous**

Salvation Army, Central Hall, St George's Square  
Catholic Apostolic Church, Grosvenor Street  
Church of Christ, Handel Hall, Portland Street  
Christadelphian Hall, Corn Exchange

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# The Mitfords of Tivoli Road

ERIC WOODHEAD

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MY HOUSE, before its conversion in 1949, was the coach-house of Northumberland Lodge in Tivoli Road. In the course of preparing a history of the house I became aware that Northumberland Lodge had been occupied, between about 1847 and 1880 by a Robert Bertram Mitford. Could Robert, I wondered, be in any way related to the Mitford family which includes the Barons Redesdale of Northumberland and the well-known Mitford sisters, Nancy, Diana, Unity, Jessica and Deborah, and the lesser-known Pam? I discovered that he was related to the Redesdale Mitfords, but the relationship was distant<sup>1</sup>.

The ‘Tivoli Road’ Mitfords and the ‘Redesdale’ Mitfords have a common ancestor – a Robert Mitford of Mitford Castle<sup>2</sup>, who lived there before the Norman Conquest. According to *Burke’s Landed Gentry* a certain:

*‘Robert Mitford carryed an old writeing to produce at Durham upon some occasion by wch one of ye ancestors of Mitfords, of Mitford, in ye time of [King Edward] ye Confessor did assure his wife’s joynture and of lands in Mitford, wch writing Sir Joseph Craddock saw and attests it under his hand, but is since embezzled and lost.’*

*Durham Booke*

At the time of the Conquest in 1066 the Barony of Mitford was held by Sir John de Mitford at Mitford Castle. He had an only daughter, Sibella. Unfortunately for Sir John, William the Conqueror decided that Sibella should be given in marriage to Sir Richard Bertram, a son of Lord Dignam in Normandy. Not only that, William decided that Mitford Castle and the income from its estate should be also be given to Sir Richard. Despite their loss succeeding successors of Sir John de Mitford held positions of authority in Northumberland, such as High Sheriff.

At the Battle of Northampton (1460) Roger Bertram of Mitford Castle, a descendant of Sir Bertram and Sibella, was one of the northern barons captured by the forces of King Henry VI. He was made to forfeit Mitford Castle and his lands. Presumably, having regard to what happened later, they became vested in the Crown. Following the return to England of Charles II in 1660, Robert Mitford, who died in 1674 and was a successor of Sir John de Mitford, acquired, by grant from the King, Mitford Castle and its lands which had passed out of the Mitford family in about 1066. On 20 July 1755 another Robert Mitford succeeded to the ownership of Mitford Castle. He was a major in the Army. He married Anne, the daughter of John Lewis of Jamaica. She had 23 children, 18 of whom died in infancy.

Bertram Mitford (1777-1842) of Mitford Castle, the grandson of Robert and Anne, took the name Osbaldeston, by Royal licence, before his own surname, on succeeding to the Hunmanby and Osbaldeston estates in Yorkshire. On 19 March 1829 he married Frances, the daughter of Captain Henry Mitford of Exbury. She was a descendant of Sir John de Mitford. Bertram died childless on 27 February 1842, being succeeded by his brother Admiral Robert Mitford, who also died childless on 18 June 1870.

The second of the surviving sons of Robert and Anne Mitford, John, had a son Robert. In August 1805 he married Letitia, the daughter of the Rev. Edward Ledwich LLD of Dublin. They

had three sons and two daughters. Robert and Letitia's second son Robert Bertram was born in 1810. On 20 July 1844 he married Anne Maria, the daughter of Sir Francis Ford, Bart. Sometime between 1847 and 1848 they took up residence at a house then known as Turbeyville Lodge in Tivoli Road. Turbeyville was a forename of an earlier occupant of the house. In 1849 the house had changed its name to Northumberland Lodge – named after the county from which his family originated.

In the 1861 census Robert Bertram Mitford was said to be a 'Landed Proprietor'. He was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. He was also an inventor; two of his ideas were exhibited at an exhibition in 1862. One idea was for a table – called a 'Conversational Tablet' – which was intended to facilitate conversation between invalids who may be deaf or dumb and their friends. The other idea was a tablet to replace, in some degree, the use of books in the infant schools of the poor.

Robert Bertram also found time to write letters to the *Cheltenham Examiner*. One of them, in the issue of the *Examiner* dated 8 October 1857<sup>3</sup>, concerned the throwing of stones by errand boys. In order that the boys could be readily identified he suggested that they should wear badges, stitched to an article of clothing, with the name of their employer printed on it. Another, in the issue of the *Examiner* dated 1 June 1864<sup>4</sup>, disclosed a new and more ready way of reading for the blind.

Robert Bertram Mitford's wife Anne died on 20 June 1870. He remained at Northumberland Lodge until his death on 1 Dec 1880. On his gravestone in Cheltenham Cemetery it is said 'His belief was that all things work together for good to them that love God.' He died without issue. The death of Robert Bertram did not end the connection of the Mitford family with Northumberland Lodge. According to the 1881 census the occupants of Northumberland Lodge were:

- Bertram Mitford, aged 25, unmarried, and a Civil Servant (Cape of Good Hope), born in Bath
- William L. Mitford, aged 23, unmarried and an undergraduate at Durham University, born in Bath.

They were the sons of Robert Bertram's younger brother Edward Ledwich Osbaldeston Mitford.

According to *Who Was Who*<sup>5</sup> this Bertram Mitford was a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and the third son of the late Edward Ledwich Osbaldeston Mitford of Mitford Castle, Mitford, Northumberland and Hunmanby Hall, Yorkshire. His career was varied. From 1873 he lived largely in South Africa but travelled to many parts of the world. He wrote 42 books and many short stories. His recreations were shooting, fishing, bicycling, walking and, in his early life, mountain climbing and reading other people's novels. He died in October 1914. Bertram's younger brother, William Ledwich, became Rector of Ickburgh, Norfolk. These two brothers appear to have been the last of the Mitfords to occupy Northumberland Lodge, and that was probably of short duration.

The connection of the Mitford family did not even end at that time. For, on 24 February 1908, an Arthur Rogerson, of Fleurville, Ashford Road, sold Northumberland Lodge with its coach-house and 'the use of part of the garden of Fleurville' to Edward Ledwich Osbaldeston Mitford of Mitford Castle (the younger brother of Robert Bertram) and Ellie Elizabeth Osbaldeston Mitford, his wife, for £1750.

This raises a question that has yet to be answered. Under what conditions had the Mitfords occupied the house? Did they have a 60-year lease, commencing in 1848, and ending in 1908? And, if they did, and as no Mitfords had lived in it after 1881, why did they buy it? It is a pity that the deeds of the house are not available.

The Mitfords owned the family until 14 April 1930. Mrs Ellie Mitford, then a widow (her husband died, aged 100, in 1912) and living in Ellora, Hadlow, Sussex, sold Northumberland Lodge and its coach-house, but without that part of the Fleurville garden to Mary Annie Sarah Woodhead of Hurst View, Chudleigh, Devon. That lady was not a relation of the present owner.

### Acknowledgements

I have to thank Jill Waller for providing me with the family tree, Aylwin Sampson for his comments on my first draft and Derek Rawles for the photograph of Robert Bertram's gravestone.

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<sup>1</sup> Eric has a family tree that shows the relationship in detail, but unfortunately there was not sufficient room in the Journal to include it [Editor]

<sup>2</sup> The village of Mitford is near Morpeth, Northumberland

<sup>3</sup> *Cheltenham Examiner*, 8 Oct 1857 p.3 col.2

<sup>4</sup> *Cheltenham Examiner*, 1 Jun 1864 p.8 col.5

<sup>5</sup> *Who Was Who*, Vol. 1, 1897-1915

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## An important caution

From the *Lady's Magazine*, June 1816

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‘THE LADIES WHO ARE ACCUSTOMED to wear their dresses extremely low in the back and bosom, or off the shoulders, are particularly requested to beware of a person who has, for sometime past, frequented all places of public amusement, and many private parties. He is an elderly gentleman, of venerable appearance and correct manners; his constant practice, when he observes a lady dressed in the manner above described, is, with an almost imperceptible, and apparently accidental pressure of a little instrument which he carries in his hand, to imprint the following words upon her back or shoulders, *‘Naked, but not ashamed.’*

‘The stain is like that produced by lunar caustic; washing will not remove it, and it becomes more visible by exposure to the air, so that nothing but a covering can conceal it. It is said that several ladies were marked last summer at Cheltenham, and various other places of fashionable resort; and that they cannot, even now, strip for company, without displaying this indelible badge of disgrace.’

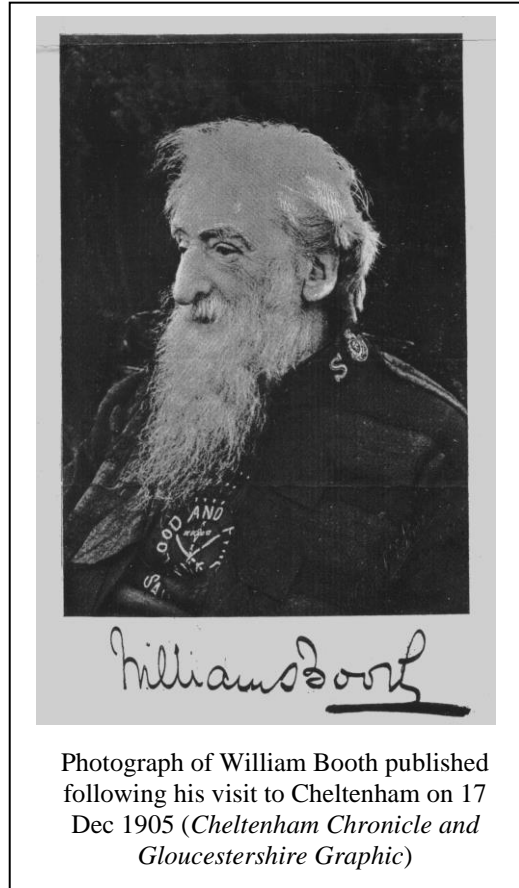
# 'Blood and Fire'<sup>1</sup> – The Salvation Army in Cheltenham

LESLIE BURGESS

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THE SALVATION ARMY is a Christian Evangelical organisation, originally started in British but which later spread worldwide. In 1865 William Booth, helped by his wife Catherine and others, first held services in a tent in Whitechapel, London. The tent became known as the 'East London Christian Mission' and it was intended that the Mission would cover the whole of London by 1870.

In one of Booth's pamphlets he referred to those working with him as an 'army of salvation'. 'Salvation Army' was soon accepted as the name of the body; an army that fought for God and to defeat the Devil. All its main officials were given commissioned-officer ranks, (i.e. Captain, Colonel, etc.) and the main local helpers were given non-commissioned ranks (i.e. Sergeant, Sergeant-Major etc.) These local officers were all vitally important to the general running of the Corps as they, unlike the commissioned officers, were usually unchanging. Many of the halls became known as 'Barracks' or 'Citadels' and each separate Salvation Army group became known as a Corps. The military metaphor still continues to this day. The weekly financial contribution that each member makes (such as a tithe, in many churches) is called 'firing a cartridge', and the term used for a Salvationist who has died is that he or she has been 'promoted to Glory'.



In the middle of the 1800s studies of poverty in some of the English town and cities revealed that 30% of the inhabitants lived in poverty, and similar conditions existed in Cheltenham at that time. The magnificent classical villas and luxury shops of the town centre contrasted greatly with the unsanitary, overcrowded dwellings and common lodging houses in cramped courts, narrow streets and alleys which led from the High Street. The followers of William Booth preached, at least in those early times, to men and women to whom the indolent churches would not reach out and the movement quickly spread across the country.

In late 1878 or early 1879 someone wrote to London to ask if the Salvation Army could come to Cheltenham. The Army responded quickly and two women were sent. The main one (at least she is the only one to have sent reports) was Sister Atkinson from Gateshead. The first meeting of the Cheltenham Corps took place on 23 March 1879. It must have been quite a formidable task for the two women, standing in the street of a town that they did not know,

preaching and trying to get the attention of people who knew nothing about them. I assume that the person who wrote to London asking for them must have given them help and possibly provided them with accommodation. A little later that same year a Corps was opened in Stroud and six months later another was opened in Gloucester. By the end of that year Cheltenham Corps had 89 members, Stroud - 102 and Gloucester –125, showing how rapidly the Salvation Army was spreading in the area.

The main problem that the Sisters faced was finding a place of worship. It was no use considering what might be thought of as the obvious place, such as a church or chapel because the type of person the Salvation Army was trying to reach out to would not go near a church. In fact, in the lowest part of the town (now Tewkesbury Road) the part that locals referred to as Lower Dockem, St Peter's had been built for them in 1849 but there were very few indeed who went inside it. The Salvation Army needed somewhere very different from these, something like a music hall or a public house. They began by hiring the Theatre Royal, Royal Well for Sundays and the North Ward Hall for weeknights. The Theatre Royal was originally Samuel Onley's Music Hall<sup>2</sup>. North Ward Hall's address is given as High Street but I have been unable to find out anything about it.

The Salvation Army Sisters soon became ill and they lost their voices and had to leave. George Leedham took their place. On his first report George gave his address as 1 St George's Place, suggesting that he was living locally, but very little more is known about him. However General Booth's son Bramwell is reported to have said that a George Leedham, who had been a Salvation Army convert at the Lambton Street Citadel in Sunderland, was the first man to play the cornet in a Salvation Army band<sup>3</sup>. This claim to fame has also been attributed to the George Leedham who came to Cheltenham.

George Leedham became known locally as 'Hallelujah George' and the ladies who were with him in the open-air meetings were called 'Hallelujah Lassies'. George sent his first report to London:

*We went out into the open air, the sisters, myself and some others. I was astonished to see the people. We sang to the hall, and half the people could not get in, it was packed. We had a glorious time and when I asked for volunteers for Jesus a great big man, about six feet six inches high, who had been transported and was, in fact, the terror of this place, came out and got gloriously saved, as well as three others.*

The Salvation Army soon lost the use of the Theatre Royal but managed to hire the Colosseum. This was a building that stood by the River Chelt, the front being in the Bath Road, the rear being in Wellington Street. Originally named Wellington Hall, it seated about 1,200 people and was often hired out to circuses, usually for about six or seven weeks at a time. For this reason it was frequently referred to as the 'Circus'. It was also used for other large events, for example the National Rally for Temperance Societies.

The Salvation Army hired the Colosseum fairly regularly from late 1879, and full time on an annual tenancy from 1882. The *Cheltenham Examiner* reported that 'the area is being covered in, a platform erected and the building is being adapted to meet the requirements of the Army'. On 11 October the paper reviewed the first meeting. 'The building was crowded on each occasion, especially in the evening when hundreds went away, unable to gain admittance.'

There is an interesting description of the Colosseum and of the first visit to Cheltenham of General William Booth in the *Gloucestershire Guardian* dated Wednesday 13 December 1882. The journalist writes:

*The visit of General William Booth, leader of the Salvation Army, to Cheltenham on Saturday and Sunday last created considerable excitement and the four meetings in the Colosseum at which he was present will not readily be forgotten by those who visited the building either out of curiosity or as friends and members of the Salvation Army itself. Since passing into the hands of the Cheltenham Corps the Colosseum has undergone internal alterations which are certainly conducive to the comfort of those who attend the meetings; the centre has been boarded and at the far end, facing the front entrance door, a platform has been erected but it is totally inadequate, in point of size, to accommodate the local members of the Army. The appearance of the building, when packed with a mixed audience is very striking and never was it more so than during General Booth's visit. The galleries, rising tier above tier present a most animated spectacle, and especially when every eye was riveted on the founder and head of the Salvation Army as he delivered one of his impassioned and stirring addresses... "the General" is of a commanding appearance and, apart from his uniform, would be sure to attract attention on any public platform. His entrance into the Colosseum was the signal for a shout of rejoicing, or, to put in the language of the Salvationists, they "fired a volley". It is well known that singing forms an essential part of the services and, although sweeter strains may have been heard at the Colosseum in days gone by, seldom have hymns of praise been rendered with greater heartiness in any building in Cheltenham than at the Circus on Sunday last.*

Without doubt the Salvation Army was making great progress with their mission amongst the people in the lower end of the town but there must have been many in other parts of Cheltenham who were far from pleased. Each open-air meeting ended with the Salvationists, and many others who accompanied them, marching down the street to their place of worship where they held another meeting, inside the building. This happened every weeknight and three times on Sundays. The lively singing, probably accompanied by tambourines and possibly other instruments, must have seemed bad enough during the weeknights, but to many it must have seemed that they vulgarised the Sabbath and Christianity. Gwen Hart, in her *History of Cheltenham* describes the town in this period as 'stronghold of the Evangelicals' and writes about the emphasis that the Evangelicals placed on keeping the Sabbath. She says 'according to a Presbyterian Scot the Sabbath was better kept in Cheltenham than anywhere else in Britain – outside Scotland'. The Salvation Army were also Evangelical, but I feel sure that they did not seem so in the eyes of the strict churchgoers in the town whose concern received a vindication from none other than Francis Close, Dean of Carlisle. Close had been Perpetual Curate at St Mary's, Cheltenham between 1826-56 and had worked energetically on behalf of the Evangelicals. He had dominated the town, preaching very powerful sermons and relentlessly attacking anything with which he did not agree. Although he had left Cheltenham 26 years earlier Close still had an influence in some quarters. In 1882 it was reported that he had made a blistering attack on the Salvation Army! I quote:

*No one who has read the fearful publication the War Cry [the Army's weekly publication] without horror and indignation can be a devout Christian, while the Little Soldier [published for children] boldly tramples the fifth commandment underfoot. It appears to me that the teaching of these is the subversion of our social system and tends directly to the uprooting of every Christian Church. Some of these writers and speakers*



*are really like maniacs casting out fire and dirt; should this monstrous system prevail the consequences are truly appalling... The Army has drawn away a number of pious men and women from their own religious bodies, charges it with the guilt of wide and persistent Sabbath-breaking, with scattering the idea of a church and sacraments to the winds and with meeting all sacred and holy names with profanity.*

He advised the clergy to be up and doing if they did not wish to lose their helpers and communicants, and he expressed his satisfaction that the Queen has acted with such wisdom in refusing to help the body. He regretted that others in high position had not manifested like prudence and discernment.

Close's comment about scattering 'sacraments to the winds', referred to the Salvation Army's rejection of the Eucharist. Apparently the Salvationists' objection to observing this, the most sacred of all sacraments, was because of Catherine Booth's objection to the use of alcohol for any purpose whatsoever. The full reason was that if services concluded with taking the body and blood of Christ at the altar rail it would not be possible to build the services up to a climax again in order to appeal for repentant sinners to approach the Penitent Form. I am sure that Francis Close's report confirmed to many that the Salvation Army was creating havoc amongst Christian communities. However the Army's work within the poor part of the town continued to progress, and Dean Close's attack had little effect on them. One reason was that a majority of those attending the Salvation Army meetings would have been hardly literate and whatever was printed in the papers would have passed them by.

Earlier in 1882 the *Cheltenham Examiner* had produced something that had surprised many. Following the example set by other provincial journals, the newspaper carried out a census on 'Public Worship in Cheltenham'. They made an enumeration of the attendance at the various places of worship in the district. This was quite a task, as the paper covered not only Cheltenham but also the outlying churches and chapels in places like Charlton Kings, Swindon, Leckhampton and Prestbury. In order to add further interest a separate enumeration of males and female worshippers was made. The figures also included the seating accommodation. The paper does not state who undertook the task, and doubt has been expressed concerning the accuracy of all the figures, suggesting that this may have been an opportunity for some churches to 'boost' their numbers. In any event it is interesting to see that organised religion played such an important part in people's lives that the newspapers found it worthwhile to make a big feature of it. 18 churches were listed under the main heading 'Church of England', from St Mary's, Cheltenham to the Cemetery Chapel. The other non-denominational Christian and non-Christian groups were listed with how many places of worship they had. There were six Baptist, three Wesleyan, two Methodist, one Unitarian, one Presbyterian, one Church of Scotland, one Roman Catholic, one Jewish, one Plymouth Brethren, two Society of Friends, one Christadelphians, one Humanitarian, one non-denominational and two Salvation Army. Unfortunately the day for the enumeration turned out to be very wet and although the census was taken the *Examiner* did not feel that it was a fair indication, so they tried again the following Sunday. Fortunately that day turned out to be dry.

The results of the census are interesting. The highest figures for a Church of England Church on the wet Sunday were for St Matthew's with accommodation for 1,500 – morning attendance - 491, evening attendance - 784. On the dry Sunday Christ Church, with accommodation for 1,500, claimed morning attendance – 1,080, evening attendance - 701. The newspaper did a summing up, including pointing out that the churches accounted fashionable showed a preponderance of females, in some cases in a proportion of three to one. On the other

hand the chapels frequented by the poorer classes of the population had about equal number of both sexes. At the Salvation Army meetings, which may fairly be taken as the place of worship of the poor man, 1,097 females against 1,101 males attended the service on the wet Sunday. This was the largest congregation assembled in any one place of worship in Cheltenham at both services that day. When dealing with the dry Sunday the paper stated that the Salvation Army again claimed the largest attendance of worshipers, the total in the evening reaching 1,138. In the mornings the Salvation Army had met in two halls, the Colosseum and the People's Hall. This second hall may have been in Granville Street, in the Lower High Street<sup>4</sup> or in Upper Bath Street, off the Upper Bath Road<sup>5</sup>. In the evening only the Colosseum was used.

Of course not everyone living in the fashionable parts of Cheltenham were prejudiced against nor ignored the work the Salvation Army were doing. A letter was published in the *Examiner* in June 1882. The writer, who simply signed himself 'Oliver', pleaded that Christian help and instruction be given to the so-called low classes that lived in their midst.

*It may seem satirical that such a request should be made in this nineteenth century and in this highly respectable and evangelical neighbourhood. 'Is not our singing perfect, our ritual beautiful and our preaching intellectual and spiritual? Can we do more?'*

He went on to point out that if the poor did not come to them they should go out to the poor.

*And if you say "but look what the Salvation Army is doing", yes, and no thanks to you: another agency is trying to do your work; by their work clearly proving first, that there is a way to reach the people; and secondly that you have not attempted this way.*

I do not know the name of the man who wrote to London and asked if the Salvation Army could come to Cheltenham but I tend to think it might have been the man whose letter to the *Examiner* was signed 'Oliver'.

Salvation Army meetings in those early days were quite lively affairs, with people calling out 'Hallelujah', 'Amen' and 'glory' at any moment during either the prayers or the address (sermon) if they were so inspired. When General Booth came to speak at the Circus in 1882 the journalist who covered the visit for the *Examiner* commented 'A chorus was sung in slow tempo and many of the people waved their handkerchiefs to the slow time of the music, the rendering was most effective'. They were not very 'germ-conscious' in those days, but the whole idea was to 'gain souls for God'.

The American evangelists who had come to this country had tremendously impressed William Booth as a young man. They were very similar to Billy Graham who had great success in England in the 1960s. The Salvation Army had embraced the belief they preached of 'instantaneous deliverance' the theory being that God, having promised redemption it must be instantly available to every sinner who truly repents and places absolute trust in the Word of God. There is no doubt that a number of these 'converts were alcoholics, another reason for not introducing the Eucharist which involves taking wine these people could easily go back to alcoholism. No doubt the Salvationists assisted them (they could attend meetings every night of the week) but the brewers would have been far from happy at the prospect of losing business. Maybe the publican could be provided with one or two half-guineas by their employers to pass on to one or two 'regulars' who might try to break up the meetings knowing that others would soon join in the 'fun'.

This sort of rowdiness happened all over the country and Cheltenham was no exception. Here is a report sent to London from Cheltenham dated 26 June 1880:

*Truly God was with us yesterday. The persecution was something terrible. Mud, stones, clods of grass were flying about in all directions but it only made our soldiers more determined to fight on confident that we should win the day... The march at night will never be forgotten here. I thought there would be a riot. When we arrived at the hall we had to fight our way through. The men who held the door were completely covered in mud, so much so that they had to wash themselves before they came into the hall, but whilst they kept the mob back they sang, prayed and shouted 'Hallelujah', rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ.*

Later progress was being made. Here is a report sent from Cheltenham to the *War Cry*. It is dated 1887 but although Cheltenham Corps was flourishing they were still not without troublemakers.

*...the congregation were the best that we have seen in the place. Monday – reinforcements from round about were early on the scene, officers and soldiers. One party drove 16 miles in an open trap to be present. The regulation-keeping Gloucester Band turned up at night and we had a rousing march, quite a stir. "Hoooooo-", shouted the hoodlums...*

There were also many occasions when someone caused disruptions in the meetings. At first very little was done and it appeared that policemen on duty looked the other way, but after a while many of these people were taken to court. In fact the cases appeared in the local newspapers so frequently that the papers had to think hard in order to make some variety in the headlines so there were 'The Salvation Army', 'The Salvation Army again', 'The Salvation Army once again' and many more. One of the earliest of these court cases, which involved Hallelujah George, was reported in the *Cheltenham Examiner* on 14 May 1879. George was summoned, at the insistence of Inspector Bryant, for causing an obstruction in the public street. He was seen in Grove Street at about 7.00 p.m. 'surrounded by a large crowd of men, women, boys and girls, some of whom were singing, some squabbling and, in fact, there was a general hubbub altogether'. Opposite the Friends' Cemetery he stopped with his 'Hallelujah Lassies' and commenced preaching on religious matters. The crowd around him were cursing and swearing and the Police Sergeant, who was the witness, had had great difficulty in getting to the middle where he could observe all that was happening. He said he heard remarks that if the Roman Catholic Priest came there '[George] and his fraternity would be booted out'. The street was crowded and completely blocked up. He received numerous complaints and then George and his lassies moved down and across the High Street to their room.

The magistrates appeared to be sympathetic to 'Hallelujah George', although there was the problem that he had infringed one of the byelaws of this town. George produced a letter from the Salvation Army Headquarters explaining that meetings such as this were being held in nearly a hundred towns in this country and listed the names of Mayors of various cities who had countenanced and aided the efforts to reach the people. Eventually the Chairman dismissed the case on payment of seven shillings expenses and a warning that he must not do this again. The Superintendent remarked upon the disorderly appearance of the High Street on a Sunday

evening when the fraternity was on parade. At the conclusion of the case the *Examiner* reported that:

*...some merriment was caused by the appearance of a man named Hill who stated that he was a firm believer in the good work the 'Lassies' were performing. Stepping up to the bench he 'craved the honour' of being allowed to pay the expenses of the wronged defendant. Very excitedly the old gentleman commenced making all sorts of charges against the officers of the court. It was not until Superintendent Day and the Bench threatened him with the penalties of 'Contempt of Court' that he became quiet. After paying the expenses and being about to leave he again broke out but when the order to "turn him out" was given he quickly left and the Court resumed its usual quiet.*

I suppose all this could have been avoided. Leedham may only have been in Cheltenham for possibly two or three weeks. If so his knowledge of Cheltenham would have been at the least 'sketchy'. He was not to know that between 1700 and 1800 the town's population had doubled, meaning that there was need for a great deal of employment, especially labourers. Many Irish labourers and their families came to the town and an Irish community was soon established in Grove Street which by halfway through the 19<sup>th</sup> century also contained a public house called the *Shamrock*. It is to be expected that practically everyone in that community was Roman Catholic and for them to have a Protestant preaching at them would not only have caused great resentment, but also considerable anger. Quite possible George Leedham was fortunate to escape in one piece.

I think that Cheltenham had to wait for a long time before acquiring a band. Instruments have to be purchased then members have to be taught at least the rudiments of music as well as instruction on how to play. When I was in contact with the International Heritage Centre, the Salvation Army's museum, I asked for details about the possible formation of a band and I said I supposed that the records might have been burnt as were so many others when the Army Headquarters were bombed during the Blitz. I was told 'No, those records would be Cheltenham Corps' records, they would not come to London'. However I was unable to get any help from Cheltenham.

Without doubt Gloucester Salvation Army was able to enjoy a band long before Cheltenham could. In 1882 a Gloucester newspaper reported that a horse bolted along Southgate Street when it heard the band begin to play. Obviously the horse did not enjoy it! When William Booth came to the Colosseum in 1882 the local paper reported that on the Saturday, Captain Whitmore of the 89<sup>th</sup> Corps (Cheltenham Corps) played the cornet during services but on the Sunday the Gloucester Band had accompanied the hymns for all the services. Gloucester must have been most fortunate in obtaining a very generous sponsor. The earliest confirmed date for the Cheltenham Corps Band is 1897.

By 1895 the interior of the Colosseum had deteriorated to such an extent that the Salvation Army needed to look for another place of worship. They became proprietors of the Cheltenham Chapel, the oldest non-conformist place of worship in the town. They purchased the building from the Presbyterians who had moved to their new church, St Andrew's at Montpellier. They renamed the Chapel the 'Central Hall'. From the first, however, they found the position was not to their liking. The policy of the Salvation Army was to have an open-air meeting then march back to their hall with those who been attracted by what they have had to say, following. As they approached their Hall they wanted to make it as easy as possible for everyone to enter straight from the street into the hall. If you look at the Chapel you will see that



**The earliest known photograph of the Cheltenham Salvation Army band c.1897. The building in the background is the side wall of the old Colosseum or ‘Circus’. The Corps officers are Charles and Laura Hannam with their first child Charles. (Reproduced with permission of Robin Bvant)**

this cannot be done as it lies back from the roadway. They did, however, make do with this situation for nearly seven years, always on the lookout for more suitable premises. During all this time the Colosseum was standing derelict.

Meanwhile the Salvation Army had to hire out buildings that had a larger capacity if a well-known person visited them. Mrs Catherine Booth (the wife of the General) came to the Corn Hall<sup>6</sup> in 1885 and General Booth made a second visit to Cheltenham, speaking at the Salem Chapel in 1896<sup>7</sup>. They turned once more to the Colosseum and eventually were able to arrange for its purchase.

*The building itself was in too dilapidated a condition to be turned to account but the site, considering its central position and the materials upon it, was deemed to be worth the price fixed, and plans were got out for entirely new buildings. The Salvation Army architect was responsible for the scheme which provided for the erection of two halls: the smaller one, fronting the Bath Road, to be reserved for children of whom it will seat on the first floor some 275 and for whose further accommodation class-rooms will be fitted on the ground floor; while the larger hall to be erected at the rear of the other building, will seat about 500 adults, entrance being gained to it through a passage running alongside the wall of the children’s hall. Little or no attempt at ornamentation is to be made, but in order to give something of a military character to the barracks, the red brick elevation is to be castellated, as in the case of most Army Halls in the country<sup>8</sup>.*

The building contract was given to Messrs A.C. and S. Billings, and the site and buildings together cost £2,838. £645 came from a bequest of the late Mr Isaac Solomon, £228 was raised on the old building, and a mortgage of £1,465 was raised on the new building. A further £500 had to be raised before the scheme could be completed. The stone-laying took place on 24 September 1902. The *Cheltenham Examiner* reported that the Mayor Alderman Col. Rogers and the Mayoress together with other ladies attended on the Monday afternoon. The ceremony was witnessed by a large crowd, which not only filled the cleared place for the buildings, but also stretched across the road in front of the site.

*The Mayor said he had pleasure in being able to accept the invitation to take part in the interesting ceremony of that afternoon... the fact that his most gracious Majesty the King gave a command that the Salvation Army should be represented at his coronation was not only a proof of the King's interest in the good work that the Army aimed at doing but also, in his [the Mayor's] opinion a testimony to the fact that the Salvation Army had justified its existence (applause). When, some twenty-three years ago the Army commenced its work in Cheltenham he was somewhat skeptical as to the good it might do: but, with the experience of those years had brought, he was bound to say that those doubts had been removed and that he was satisfied that the Army had done and was doing a very praiseworthy work not only in England but in the Colonies, and indeed, in almost every corner of the world (applause). As chief magistrate of the town he was proud to say that there was far less crime in Cheltenham than in many other towns of a similar size, and he thought some of the credit for this was due to those who laboured under the auspices of the Salvation Army.<sup>9</sup>*



The Salvation Army band in front of the new Citadel built in 1902. One of the foundation stones can be seen between the two right-hand tuba players. James Noyse, seated 4<sup>th</sup> from left, succeeded Cecil Miller as Bandmaster following his death in 1905. This photograph must therefore date from 1905 or later.

*(Reproduced with permission of Derek Horlick)*

The chief stone was 'well and truly laid' by the Mayor. It bore the inscription 'His Worship the Mayor of Cheltenham Colonel R. Rogers, V.D., J.P., to the glory of God and for the Salvation of the people. 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept. 1902.' It was afterwards announced by Major Smith, the officer in charge of the local branch, that his Worship had promised to send a cheque to the building fund. Other stones were laid by 'Brother Tommy Smith', who presented a cheque for £50; by Mrs Sully,

who contributed £10; by Ensign J. Audoire, who gave £5 and Sergeant-Major J.H. Sperry, who also contributed £5. J. Sperry was the Corps Sergeant Major, the highest rank of local officers. When the 1902 Citadel building was demolished in the late 1980s part of the right-hand pillar was found to be a joint structure with the sweetshop next door and so it remains. The stones laid by J. Audoire and J. Sperry can still be seen, although their surfaces are badly worn.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century held much promise for Cheltenham. The town had been spared the miseries of the factory system and by the thirties was developing industries that did not destroy the old town. Even so at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there was unemployment and dire poverty in many areas. The great pioneer of women's rights, Josephine Butler, whose husband had been the Vice-Principal at Cheltenham College between 1857-66, described what she saw when she returned to the town in 1902.

*...there are low class brothels too, well-known to the police, and slums that would be a disgrace to London or New York; twelve or thirteen of a family in one room, grown ups and children; girls of fifteen carrying their own babies in their arms like bundles of rags, and openly confessing themselves to be the mothers... It is not all this that grieves me so much as the ignorance of it in the Christians – these correct Evangelical Protestants. They don't want to know of it; not a hand is moved nor a voice raised except one humble minister of Lady Huntingdon's chapel and perhaps a poor woman or two... Oh, the Churches... in this correctly Evangelical Cheltenham, they are all so 'comfortable' – so properly Evangelical that they catch you up if you pronounce a single word that is not pure low church shibbouleth.<sup>10</sup>*

The Rev James Owen, senior assistant at Cheltenham College, and his wife Frances began a mission in Rutland Street, the most notorious street in the town. Gwen Hart describes the way in which Josephine Butler and the Owens worked to help and speak out against the apathy of the majority but I am rather surprised that she failed to mention the work of the Salvation Army. They also worked within the area that Josephine Butler had so graphically described, and became an accepted and respected part of the Cheltenham scene. Apart from their regular open-air and indoor meetings they ran a 'soup kitchen' under the Salvation Army's 'Goodwill' section at Victoria House, 54 Tewkesbury Road until that part of Cheltenham was cleared under the rebuilding schemes in the 1920-30s, then the kitchen was moved to Swindon Road and became the Army's Community Centre. At this moment of writing the Centre has closed due to their inability to meet the new building regulations. From 1945 until 1971 Charlton Court on London Road was a girls' reformatory run by the Salvation Army for the Home Office.

By the 1930s the Salvation Army were not as demonstrative as they had been in earlier times but they were numerically strong and always extremely well organised. The social work they have always done is still carrying on. The excessive drinking that was caused by so much poverty is not the problem it was, and the slum dwellings have been cleared away but there are other things that now present tremendous problems, not least the Aids situation and the Army is on hand to help in these and other issues.

In June 1931 the River Chelt overflowed and the flood caused considerable damage to the Citadel. The river burst its banks at the side of the hall and Derek Horlick, an older member of the Corps, has vivid childhood memories of the day: 'I was lifted up and told to sit still on a wall. I looked and saw the water rushing down Bath Parade [the road immediately opposite the hall] as if it were the sea.' Many men, a number of them bandsmen, helped sweep the water

from the hall. They then brought out some of the forms that usually were for the congregation to sit on and placed them across the road in the form of 'stepping stones' so that people could cross.

General William Booth made a third and final visit to Cheltenham in 1905, and in 1934 a new General, Eva Booth (William and Catherine's youngest daughter) came to the town. She had become General whilst in America and had travelled back to London where she received a tremendous reception. On 22 December 1934 she travelled from London to Cardiff. On her way she stopped at the *Queen's Hotel* in Cheltenham for luncheon. She was in the town for about two hours but journalists and photographers were waiting for her. After all, this was news – in 56 years she was the first woman General. She spoke of the 'happiness it gave her to pay even such a fleeting visit to Cheltenham'<sup>11</sup>. She was given a 'rousing cheer' by the Salvationists who had waited to see her (not many knew of her visit) and she was into her car and away to Cardiff. Cheltenham was never to see her again.

In September 1964 a fire broke out in the kitchen of the Senior Hall. The fire caused serious damage, particularly as the electric lighting was rendered out of use. Another flood in May 1979 presented more problems with regard to the deterioration of the hall. A lot of thought was given in the following months with regard to its future and eventually it was decided that a new hall needed to be built. It required two years of fund-raising and, for the last year while the old hall was being demolished the Salvationists had to meet in various places, frequently in St Luke's Church Hall. The new Citadel finally opened on Saturday 7 February 1989. The guests were Cheltenham MP Charles Irving, the Mayor of Cheltenham Maureen Stafford and the Chief Secretary of the Salvation Army Colonel Ian Cutmore. The new Citadel seats about 250, and there is also a Young People's Hall.

The strangest event that happens every week is the work done by the 'pub boomers', the group of Salvation Army members who go into the pubs in the town on Friday evenings, armed with the latest edition of the *War Cry*, and sell their papers to the pub customers. This is with the sanction of the publicans! The Salvation Army, through the *War Cry*, continue to preach what it has always done - in favour of total abstinence. This is somewhat of a turnaround from those early days when the landlords gave half a sovereign to regular drinkers to go out and break up the Salvation Army meetings. It's a bit of an irony!

## Acknowledgements

Many thanks for help with information and photographs to Mike Grindley, Elaine Heasman, Derek Horlick, Ruth Pursglove, Sue Rowbotham, Beryl Scarborough and Kelston Stanford.

<sup>1</sup> 'Blood and Fire' is the monogram of the Salvation Army.

<sup>2</sup> Built on the site of the original Royal Well. Replaced in 1897 by the Princess Hall, Cheltenham Ladies' College.

<sup>3</sup> www.sunderlandtoday.co.uk

<sup>4</sup> Two streets before the railway bridge.

<sup>5</sup> Building can still be seen today, although the Salvation Army ceased using it after 1926.

<sup>6</sup> The Corn Hall was in the High Street, approximately where Marks and Spencer's is now.

<sup>7</sup> Salem Chapel is now a public house called *The Pulpit*.

<sup>8</sup> *Cheltenham Examiner* 25 Sep 1902.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>10</sup> Quoted in Gwen Hart's *A History of Cheltenham* (1965)

<sup>11</sup> *Cheltenham Chronicle and Graphic* 22 Dec 1934



# Recent books and articles on the history of Cheltenham

List compiled by STEVEN BLAKE

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Bradbury, Oliver, *Cheltenham's Lost Heritage*, Sutton Publishing, Stroud, 2004. 176pp. £14.99. A comprehensive survey of the town's lost buildings.

Corlett, Geoffrey, and Gaunt, David, *Physical Education & Sport at St. Paul's College, Cheltenham 1937 – 1979*, published by the authors, 2004. 184pp. Unpriced.

Edlin, Ron, 'A Case of Poverty in Late Victorian Cheltenham', *Gloucestershire History* **18** (2004), 29-31. An account, based on local newspapers, of the inquest into the death of a baby in 1886, highlighting inadequacies at the Cheltenham Workhouse.

Harris, Khim, *Evangelicals and Education. Evangelical Anglicans and Middle-Class Education in Nineteenth-century England*, Paternoster Press, Carlisle, 2004. 421pp. £29.99. Includes many Cheltenham references, in particular to the educational work of the Revd. Francis Close.

Hughes, J. P., *The Junior Rugby Clubs of Cheltenham, District and Combination*, Lost Century Books, Cheltenham, 2003. 264pp. Unpriced.

Kippin, Mick, 'Cheltenham's Bandstands', *Gloucestershire History* **18** (2004), 11-16. An extended version of the author's 1997 article in the *Cheltenham Local History Society Journal*.

Miller, Eric (ed.), *Leckhampton Local History Society Research Bulletin* **3** (Autumn 2004). 60pp. £3.00. Six articles on the history of Leckhampton: 'A celebration of Leckhampton', by Eric Miller [re. the placename]; 'A historical look at Leckhampton's farms', by Terry Moore-Scott; 'The Trowscoed Lodge Estate and its occupants', by Mike Rigby; 'The archaeology of Leckhampton Moat : excavation and geophysical survey', by Terry Moore-Scott; 'The Hargreaves of Leckhampton Court', by Eric Miller; 'Tithes of Llanthony Priory in Leckhampton', by John Rhodes.

Moore-Scott, Terry, 'Leckhampton Moated Site: an update', *The Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Newsletter* **55** (August 2004), 10-11.

Munden, Alan, *A History of St. Luke's church, Cheltenham 1854-2004*, published by the St. Luke's Church P.C.C. 72pp. £5.00.

Oakley, Mike, *Gloucestershire Railway Stations*, Dovecote Press, Wimborne, 2003. 159pp. £12.95. Includes accounts and photographs of all Cheltenham's railway stations.

O'Connor, David A., 'The Battledown Brickworks', *Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology Journal* 2002, 4-18.

Peters, Stewart, *Festival Gold. Forty years of Cheltenham Racing*, Tempus Publishing, Stroud, 2003. 192pp. £25.00.

# Gloucestershire Record Office: Cheltenham Area Accessions, 2004

JULIE COURTENAY, Senior Cataloguer, GRO

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The GRO continues to receive a wide range of archives relating to the Cheltenham area. The following is a brief list of archives donated or deposited in 2004. Gloucestershire Record Office (GRO) is always pleased to hear about archive material relating to the county and can give advice about preservation. Most of the accessions received during 2004 are not yet fully catalogued so it is best to enquire in advance of making a visit if you want to see any item.

More of the GRO's existing catalogues are going online - you can use the Access to Archives (A2A), a national project website <http://www.a2a.pro.gov.uk> as well as GRO's own web pages at <http://archives.gloucestershire.gov.uk/dservea/index.htm>

**Abbey Studios Ltd and predecessors of Cirencester, photographers** Mainly of Cirencester area but include some views of Cheltenham, *20<sup>th</sup> century* (D9841)

**Bennington Hall Trust (formerly National Christian Education Council: Cheltenham and district):** AGM and executive committee minutes including accounts, 1964-1981, 1978-2002; Scripture examination record book, 1968-1993; record book (news cuttings), 1969-1980; Bennington Hall Trust minute book, 1971-2002; list of names and dates of Presidents of Cheltenham Sunday School Union, 1953-2004; other correspondence and accounts (D9789)

**Chamberlain, Leslie deceased late of Gloucester:** Photographic slides including Cheltenham, *1950s* (D9796)

**Cheltenham** Sir Arthur Bliss and Herbert Howells in conversation at Cheltenham, 1972, 1 audiotape, *1972* (D9913)

**Cheltenham: Bethel Chapel** Church report book: minutes of church meetings, *1899-1934* (D10033)

**Cheltenham Borough Council** Electoral register for Cheltenham, qualifying date 10 October 2000, in force from 16 February 2001, *2000-2001* (Q/Rer)

**Cheltenham Borough Council** Electoral register for Cheltenham, including registers for some parishes within Tewkesbury constituency: full register published 1 December 2003, in force for 2004; includes updates; statistics from register, *2003* (Q/RER)

**Cheltenham Borough Council** Sketch map of further town planning, *1911* (CBR)

**Cheltenham: deeds** Deeds of 53 Pittville Lawn, Cheltenham, *1836-1988* (D6791)

**Cheltenham: deeds** Copies of court roll relating to 44 and 45 (later 11 and 15) Rosehill Street, *1863-1923* (D9980)

**Cheltenham: Dunalley Primary School:** Managers' meeting correspondence, *1990-2000* (S78/7)

**Cheltenham, Everyman Theatre** Records of productions at the theatre, including programmes, leaflets, posters, photographs, contracts, copy invoices, staff timesheets, news cuttings, minutes of production meetings and plans of stage sets, *1987-2003* (majority 1993-1997 and 2002-2003), *1987-1994* (D6978)

**Cheltenham: Fairview** Deeds concerning two messuages in the Upper Field, *1838* (D9874)

**Cheltenham: Gardeners Lane Primary School:** Managers' meeting correspondence, *1997-2000* (S78/26)

**Cheltenham, Holy Trinity C of E Primary School** Governors' minutes, *2000-2003* (S78/14)

**Cheltenham: Lakeside Primary School:** Managers' meetings correspondence, *1996-2001* (S78/23)

**Cheltenham, St Pauls Road,** Deeds concerning 32-34 St Pauls Road, *(1875)-1987*, (D6791)

**Emily Jones of [Staverton]** Recollections of Hayden Villa [Staverton], 1870 (D9924)

**Benhall Infant School** Governors' minutes, 2000-2003 (S78/24)

**Cheltenham: Naunton Park County Secondary School** School prospectus, 1981; programmes for prize-givings, 1976, 1982-1983; programme for Christmas concert, 1980; programme for musical evening, nd [1977 or 1983], 1976-1983 (D2427)

**Cheltenham: plans** Plans of Lansdown Road and Gloucester Road in Cheltenham, copied from deeds of 1834 and 1854, n.d., [late 19th century]; annotated "Lansdown Castle Deeds", (1834)-n.d., [late 19th century] (D5130)

**Cheltenham: Townsend Street** Deeds and related papers concerning 32 Townsend Street, (1834)-1954 (D9875)

**Cole family of Charlton Kings and Cheltenham** Account book of Arthur Cole (1891-1969), musical director, 1954-1955; press cuttings books belonging to Mr Cole, 1911-1969; recipe book belonging to Mrs Cole, c.1960-1971; local history project on Arthur Cole by student at [Cheltenham and Gloucester College], 2001, 1911-2001 (D10001)

**Diocese of Gloucester:** Confirmation returns: archdeaconries of Gloucester and Cheltenham, 2003 (GDR/P2)

**Diocese of Gloucester** Minutes: Diocesan Advisory Committee on the care of churches, (include war memorials 1919-1928), 1928-1932, 1942-1947, 1950-1952, Bishop's Council, 1989-1998, Priorities Review Group, 1994; Diocesan Synod, 1984-1988, 1989, 1994-1998, 1871-2000 (GDR)

**Gloucestershire Constabulary** Aliens and Overseas Visitors registration cards, c.1946-c.1987, and transfer cards, c.1939-c.1990, 1939-1990 (Q/Y)

**Gloucestershire Constabulary** Photograph albums compiled to illustrate the history of the Constabulary, 1979-1991 (Q/Y)

**Gloucestershire Constabulary** Register of licences concerning the Cheltenham division, 1930s-1970s (Q/Y)

**Gloucestershire County Council: Environment: Local Plans and Development** Publicity and display items used by the former County Planning Department including streetscape sketches of

shops and buildings at Bath Road and Lower High Street, Cheltenham, 1963; photographs of Cheltenham Town Centre, n.d. c. 1960; panoramic sketch of landmarks visible from viewpoints at Cleeve Hill and Barrow Wake, n.d., 1959-1965 (K1835)

**Gloucestershire County Council: Environment: Office Services** Papers relating to the boundaries of Cheltenham, 1946-1956, 1939-1971 (K1854)

**Gloucestershire Family History Society** Memorial Inscriptions project: master copies of the inscriptions, (arranged alphabetically by site); maps and other papers; South Gloucestershire war memorial inscriptions for certain parishes, (named), c.1979-2004 (D10009)

**Gloucestershire County Council: Resources: Property Services** Correspondence relating to the Cheltenham Northern Relief Road, 1984-1988; correspondence relating the former Cheltenham Friends Meeting House, 1960-1977, 1960-1982 (K1815)

**H H Martyn of Cheltenham** Additional papers and photographs concerning work of H.H. Martyn & Co, (1899)-2003 (D5922)

**Jones, Allan S late of Cheltenham, estate of:** Slides of Gloucestershire, including many churches, and surrounding counties with index, 1970s-1990s (D9797)

**Methodist Circuit** Circuit plan for Cheltenham, 1975 (D6791)

**Newman, John of Cheltenham, wheelwright and carpenter** Apprenticeship indenture of John Newman of Cheltenham to his father, Richard Newman, wheelwright and carpenter, 1762 (D10030)

**Norfolk, late Mr Frederick, estate of, Arle Road, Cheltenham** Papers concerning Frederick Norfolk, heating engineer for R E & C Marshall Ltd of Cheltenham, engineers, and some other family papers, 1929-1961 (D9876)

**Original Cheltenham Brewery** Bill to Mr [Hingstone], 1838 (D10099)

**Putley, Derek of Cheltenham** Flying log book of Derek Putley, member of Dowty-Rotol Flying Club based at Staverton, 1955-1975; includes pilot's licence, 1967-1975, notes issued by club, nd [1960s], 1955-1975 (D10080)

**Royal Gloucestershire Hussars Memorabilia**, 19th and 20th centuries; trustee files, c.1999-2004, *19<sup>th</sup> century-2004* (D4920)

**Saunders, Dr P.L.L. of Leckhampton and Cheltenham** Family and personal papers, [early 20th century]-1980s; papers concerning Dr Saunders' biography of Edward Jenner, 1960s-1980s, including various drafts and notes; papers concerning Leckhampton Court School, of which Dr Saunders was headmaster, 1950s-1970s (mostly letters to Dr Saunders from pupils); papers concerning Dr Saunders' time as Cheltenham Borough councillor, including protests against Cheltenham Development Plan and the campaign to save Jenner's house in the town, 1960s-1970s; papers concerning Dr Saunders' chairmanship of Cheltenham Spa Campaign, 1970s-1980s, *[early 20th century]-1980s* (D10112)

**Tanner and Hartnell of Cheltenham, carriers** Bill to Rev W Hatherill, 1841 (D10096)

**Willans, solicitors of Cheltenham** Deeds and related papers including properties in Alstone, Andoversford, Bishops Cleeve, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, Gotherington, Leckhampton, Shurdington and Up Hatherley, *[19th century - 21st century]* (D5907)



An early advertisement for water closets, 1818. Mr Gore's premises were in St George's Place, where Cheltenham's first public sewer ran under the street to empty into the River Chelt

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## Errata – Journal 20

Apologies to Mike Grindley. The caption on the lower illustration on p.25 should have read 'Miss C.A. Rolles, last surviving great-granddaughter of Captain John Cooke' and the caption on the illustration on p.26 should have read 'Mrs Mary Yiend, daughter of William Hunt'.