



# Cheltenham Local History Society

**JOURNAL 25**

**2009**

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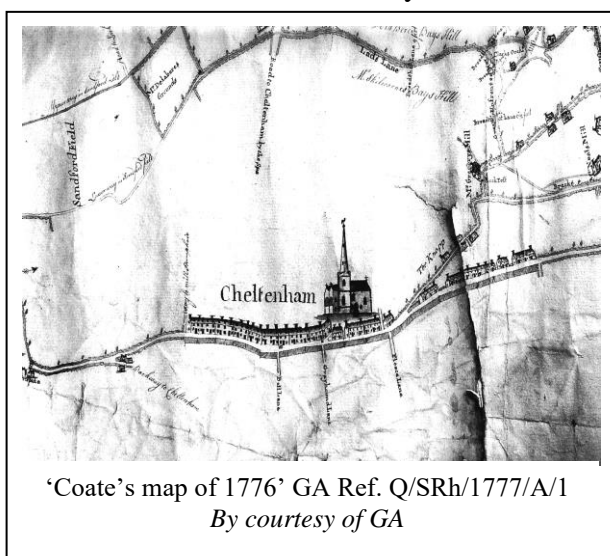
# From the Editors

SALLY SELF

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*‘the writing of history is one of the fullest and most rewarding expressions  
of an individual personality’<sup>1</sup>*

A WARM GREETING to our readers and a thank-you to all those who contributed, to this the 25<sup>th</sup> edition of the Society’s Journal: we welcome members, old and new, seasoned writers and those making their first attempts. To celebrate this anniversary we have a colour supplement recording the Cheltenham Floods of 2007, the funding of which comes from the Severn Trent Water Community Fund.



‘Coate’s map of 1776’ GA Ref. Q/SRh/1777/A/1  
By courtesy of GA

Whilst researching, I used the map often referred to as ‘Coate’s map, 1776’; it needed an accurate reference which was not initially available, so I applied to Gloucestershire Archives. The following information came to light, which I believe is not generally known, but may be of interest.<sup>2</sup> The full title on the map is ‘*A Plan of Roads leading from Arle Cross to Pillford Lane taken July 10 1776 by G Coates & Son*’. The GA reference also includes the following information, ‘*a detailed perspective plan, ink on paper, linen backed of Cheltenham, inc. Church, Toll Gate, Bedlum Bridge, and Mr.*

*Gregory’s Mill; showing road from Arle Cross to Pillford Lane to be stopped up. Cartouche (wreath). Surveyors: G. Coates and Son.*’ So though this map is sometimes used to establish the extent and detailed topography of Cheltenham in the 1770s, its intention was more limited and therefore needs to be interpreted with caution.

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. We are very willing to discuss and support all aspects of the proposed article: we have printed Guidelines for the format and conventions of the text and illustrations, which can be emailed to you. Articles for Journal 26 can be received at any time from April 2009 until the closing date for submissions which is 15 January 2010.

I should like to place on record my appreciation of all those people who have guided me through this first year as ‘editor-in-chief’: to Sue Rowbotham who has been very supportive and extremely patient with my many enquiries, and to other Committee members who have given so generously of their knowledge and time – heartfelt thanks to you all.

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<sup>1</sup> Cobb, R., *A Second Identity*, (1969) OUP, quoted in Tosh, J., *The Pursuit of History*, p187 (2006) Pearson.

<sup>2</sup> I am most grateful to John Putley of Gloucestershire Archives for the information reproduced here.

# The Ghost of Garden Reach

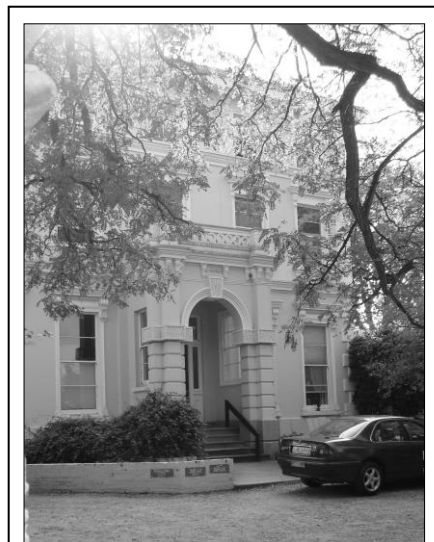
MICK KIPPIN

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*I recently purchased a pair of medals belonging to a Major Edmund Swinhoe of the Indian Army, but I didn't expect my purchase to come complete with family ghost story! The 'Cheltenham Ghost' is one of the best-documented hauntings in the whole of the country and has featured in many articles and books on ghosts and strange apparitions. However, I feel that I have been able to add a number of new facts, so the story is worth telling once again.*

THE HOUSE IN PITTVILLE CIRCUS ROAD CHELTENHAM, later to be known as 'Garden Reach' was built in 1860 and was described by the builder as, 'a typical modern residence, square and common place in appearance'. Mr Henry Swinhoe, Edmund Swinhoe's grandfather, who was already resident in Cheltenham and had been living at 17 Suffolk Square, bought the house even before it had been completed.

Before coming to live in Cheltenham, Henry Swinhoe and his wife Elizabeth had lived in Sidmouth, Dorset. The first reference to the Swinhoes being resident in Pittville Circus Road is 1865, when Henry named his new house 'Garden Reach' after the area of Calcutta in India where he had been brought up. Henry and Elizabeth lived in the house until she died suddenly on 11 August 1866. This unexpected death of his wife drove Henry to drink until, after two years as a widower, he re-married.



St. Anne's, Pittville Circus  
Road, September 2008  
*Photograph by Mick Kippin*

Henry's new wife, Imogen Hutchins, thought that she would be able to ease the pain he was still feeling over the death of his first wife and could stop his drinking; in fact it got worse and Imogen herself began to drink.

Henry found his wife's behaviour so bad that he filed for divorce in April 1875, citing Imogen's excessive drinking and also occasions when she had physically assaulted him. Imogen laid a counter claim that Henry had had an adulterous affair with Elizabeth Townsend, a maid in the Swinhoe household, and that she had had a child. Despite Henry's strenuous denial of the whole affair, Miss Townsend attempted to sue both Henry and Imogen Swinhoe for slander.

Imogen's drinking bouts led to violent arguments, especially over Elizabeth Swinhoe's jewellery, which Henry wanted to keep for the children from his first marriage. As a result of all of this, Imogen left Cheltenham just before Henry Swinhoe's death on 14 July 1876, vowing never to return. Imogen died in Clifton, Bristol on 23 September 1878 and despite vowing never to return to Cheltenham, she left instructions for her body to be returned to the town and buried along with those of her parents in Holy Trinity church.

There were now no members of the Swinhoe family in Pittville and ‘Garden Reach’ stood empty. The house was auctioned in May 1880 by the local firm of Engall, Sanders & Co, but failed to find a buyer. The auction details suggest that the house had been renamed ‘Pittville Hall’, but there is little evidence that this name was ever really used. Despite further attempts to sell the house at ever decreasing prices, no buyer could be found, so in 1882 it was let to a retired army officer, Captain Frederick Despard.<sup>1</sup> He changed the name of the house to ‘Donore’ after his hometown in County Meath, Ireland.

The ghost of Imogen Swinhoe was first seen in 1882. It was seen most often by Rosina, Captain Despard’s eldest daughter, who described it as, ‘...a tall lady, dressed in black of a soft woollen material. Her face was hidden by a handkerchief held in her right hand.’ At least seventeen people have apparently seen this ghost. So why should Imogen want to come back and haunt her old home, since nobody from her family lived there after she had left in 1876? A notice put in the *Cheltenham Examiner* for 31 March 1875 by Henry Swinhoe suggests a possible financial motive:<sup>2</sup>

I, Henry Swinhoe,  
of Garden Reach, Pittville, WILL NOT be responsible for any DEBT or DEBTS  
that MRS. IMOGEN or HENRY SWINHOE may contract in her or my name;  
nor will I pay any debt or debts that may have been contracted by Mrs Swinhoe  
and for which I am not legally responsible.

This notice also appeared in *The Times*. It would appear that Imogen had been running up bills in the town using her husband’s name. She must have spent a lot of money; a marriage settlement dated 15 February 1870 between Henry and Imogen shows that she was a wealthy woman in her own right, with money inherited from her father. In his will Henry left everything to the five children from his first marriage – Imogen got nothing!

Captain Despard and his family lived in ‘Donore’ until about 1895, when they moved away. The house was then empty until 1909 when it changed name again, becoming the St. Anne’s Nursery Training College. There are reports that the college proprietors were forced to sell the house in 1939 because of constant problems with “the ghost”. The house was sold next to the Gloucester Diocese for use as a Retreat Centre and was then converted into flats. It was a tenant of one of these flats who was reportedly the last person to see the ghost of Imogen Swinhoe in 1962. Today ‘St.Anne’s’ embraces the peaceful air of the Pittville area and gives no clue to its somewhat turbulent past.

Sources: Mackenzie, Andrew, *Apparitions and Ghosts*, (1971), pp.145-158; Brookes, J.A., *Ghosts and Witches of the Cotswolds*, (Jarrolds, 1981) pp.57-63; Clark, Keith, *The Ghosts of Gloucestershire*, (Redcliffe, 1993) pp.4-8; Swinhoe Divorce Court papers, NA J/77/159/3803; GA, D7596/3, Marriage Settlement between Henry Swinhoe and Imogen Hutchins, Henry Swinhoe’s Will; *Cheltenham Annuaire*s, 1860-1957; *Cheltenham Examiner*, 31 March 1857; *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 24 April 1880; *The London Gazette*, 27 June 1851.

<sup>1</sup> Formerly of the 99<sup>th</sup> (The Duke of Edinburgh’s) Regiment of Foot.

<sup>2</sup> The uppercase characters are as printed in the original newspaper article.

# Samuel Whitfield Daukes 1811-1880: Architectural Hero or ‘Rogue’?

ALEC HAMILTON

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SAMUEL WHITFIELD DAUKES STARTED HIS ARCHITECTURAL CAREER in Gloucester, blossomed in Cheltenham and positively dazzled in London. Yet he ended his professional life under several clouds – and is last observed not as an architect, but as a director of an odd clutch of companies, including the distinctly speculative-sounding West Grenada Gold and Silver Mining Company. In this article I shall examine his career, particularly his work in Cheltenham, Gloucester and the county, and try to bring him blinking from undeserved obscurity into a kindlier light.

On the face of it, Daukes ought to be a well-known name. His career coincides with the boom in Victorian mercantile building – warehouses, railways, merchant palaces. Lots to build, and lots of money to build with.

His contemporaries are well-known: he was just one year older than A.W.N. Pugin (1812-1852), who in 2007 was described by Channel 4 as the ‘The God of Gothic’.<sup>1</sup> Daukes was exactly the same age as Sir George Gilbert Scott (1811-1878), whose Midland Hotel at St Pancras stands as the ultimate statement of Victorian commercial confidence. He was the same generation as those giants of ecclesiastical architecture Butterfield (1814-1900), Pearson (1817-1897) and Street (1824-1881). Yet Daukes is obscure, his name forgotten and his work now either damned with faint praise, or dismissed: ‘correct but dull’ is a fairly typical view.<sup>2</sup> This seems odd, since his buildings, over 50 of which survive, earned high praise in his lifetime. And he was talented enough to win his three most important commissions in open competition.



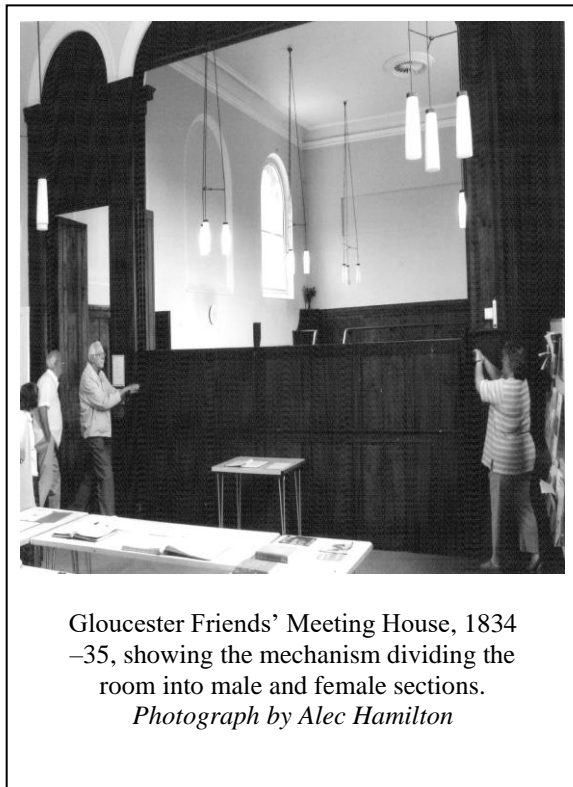
Daukes with wife and children, by  
Antoine de Salomé.  
GA D3941, Box 18

Daukes was the contemporary of two other architects of almost comparable obscurity – S.S. Teulon (1812-1873) and E.B. Lamb (1806-1869), both members of the ‘Rogue Goths’, a group of architects rather picturesquely, and damningly,

identified by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century critic Harry Goodhart-Rendel as ‘continuously in disaccord with the conventions of the time...personal nonconformists’ who built with ‘a fancy for queer shapes.’<sup>3</sup> Alas, Daukes does not even qualify as a ‘Rogue’, for Goodhart-Rendel does not so much as mention his name. Indeed, the *only* critical assessment published on Daukes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (before this) is in three articles published in 1973 by the late David Verey, editor of the 1970s ‘Pevsner’ Gloucestershire volumes, whose interest arose from Daukes’s many buildings in Gloucestershire.<sup>4</sup> Other than that, Daukes has attracted little interest – unjustly: his buildings are enjoyable and full of interest.

## Gloucester

Daukes was born in Worcester,<sup>5</sup> the son of a wealthy businessman and mine-owner, who apprenticed him to a York architect, J.P. Pritchett.<sup>6</sup> Daukes set up in practice in Gloucester. At this time there was no professional body of architects, so Daukes could not be ‘qualified’ or put letters after his name: he proved himself by his works alone. The first building attributed to him is a modest house and offices at 172 Southgate Street, Gloucester, ‘c1830-40, probably by S.W. Daukes’.<sup>7</sup> This building, at one of Gloucester’s busiest intersections, remains remarkably unaltered externally. It has a certain impudent air, but by no means dominates the scene, nor promises anything exceptional.



Gloucester Friends’ Meeting House, 1834–35, showing the mechanism dividing the room into male and female sections.  
*Photograph by Alec Hamilton*

Rather more impressive is the Gloucester Friends’ Meeting House in Greyfriars (1834-35). Here Daukes shows his flair for both handling of space, and for innovation. The Meeting House is substantial and spacious, and still in regular use. When built, Friends’ meetings were sexually segregated – men had the room to the east, women to the west. But when there was a need for all to convene together, the two rooms had to be convertible into one. Daukes achieved this by creating perhaps the largest ‘hatch’ in the county: the wall between the two rooms is an enormous wooden panel, perhaps six metres wide and five metres high, which can be lowered into a deep basement slot by crank-handles manned by two sturdy Friends. If the Friends’ Meeting House is open on Heritage Days – as it has been in past

years – visitors can sometimes see this amazing contraption in action. Some of Daukes’s original decorative scheme has also survived, in fragments. These show he had an eye, not only for mechanical ingenuity, but also for colour.

The next Gloucester building we know to be Daukes’s is the sturdy and no-nonsense Pillar Warehouse (1838) in Merchant’s Road, just south of the Llanthony Bridge. He built two other warehouses in Gloucester: Sturge’s (1840), now called

‘Double Reynolds’, and the Droitwich Salt warehouse (date unknown) on what is now the site of a timber yard. Plans and elevations for these last two warehouses survive.<sup>8</sup>

In 1836 Daukes married Caroline White of Long Newnton, by whom he was to have five children. Now his career exhibited a startling change of pace; he built a rather grand country house at Abberley Park in Worcestershire (1837) for a wealthy Birmingham banker, John Lewis Moilliet. The house, now a prep school, still retains in the hall and library, Daukes’s layout and essential structure.<sup>9</sup>

## Cheltenham

It is not clear when Daukes first worked in Cheltenham. He seems to have retained his main office at Gloucester until at least 1839, but he is listed in a directory as a Cheltenham architect in 1841.<sup>10</sup> His first involvement seems to have been with Thomas Billings, the developer of The Park, which in 1838 opened as the Gloucestershire Zoological, Botanical and Horticultural Gardens. Daukes designed an Italianate Lodge for Billings in 1838, apparently free of charge, suggesting they were working together in some way: it stood just to the west of the present Fulwood Lodge, and was demolished in the 1870s.

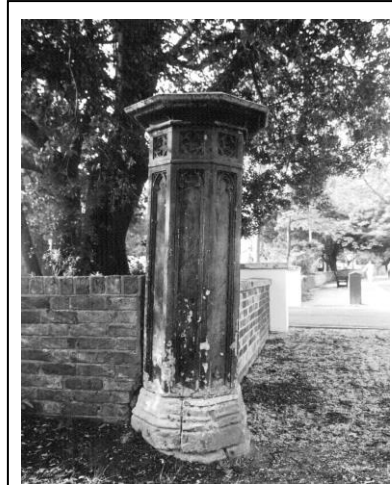
In 1840 the Zoo failed, and Daukes bought the land at auction in 1841. He seems to have converted it into a ‘pleasure ground’, with plans for villas round the perimeter, ‘according to the fancy and tastes of their prospective owners.’<sup>11</sup> He possibly intended to emulate Pitt’s fashionable plans on the other side of the town. But only one house in The Park can be safely attributed to Daukes: Tudor Lodge (1837-9, demolished 1964). This building is mourned in Oliver Bradbury’s *Cheltenham’s Lost Heritage*: ‘shamefully demolished and replaced by the most dull Modernist blocks imaginable.’<sup>12</sup>



Tudor Lodge’, The Park, 1837–9. Daukes himself was living in this house in 1841  
*Reproduced by courtesy of CAG&M*

All that survives is one of the Lodge's magnificent boundary piers, now rather blackened and awry, by the pavement on the east side of The Park. Thankfully, it was carefully boxed up and kept safe by the builders when nearby Benton was being turned into luxury flats in 2006. At the back of the 1966 flats that replaced Tudor Lodge, a raggle-taggle of brickwork represents one end of the house's stables.

Daukes also designed a pair of pavilions for the entrance to The Park, at least one of which was certainly built – a lithograph by Rowe shows both. The pavilion itself was removed by Billings in 1850 and rebuilt as Park Spa on the site where Cornerways now stands. Cornerways (see front cover) itself has been attributed to Daukes, but the date of the present house, as suggested by Bradbury, is 1865.<sup>13</sup> At this late date would Daukes have really been back at work in The Park? Perhaps it was built to an earlier design.



All that is left of Tudor Lodge', demolished in 1964  
*Photograph by Alec Hamilton*

It is tempting to see Daukes's hand in the design of other villas in The Park. Aylwin Sampson has recently tentatively suggested several as possible Daukes designs: St. Oswald's (1833); Oakfield (1835); Batsford and Mountview (1838); Silwood, Rudd Hall and Longford (1839), even Fulwood itself (1847), but there is no documentary evidence.<sup>14</sup> One other group has a slight *stylistic* echo of Daukes: the semi-detached pair 10-12 Grafton Road, whose detailing, particularly at the first floor balcony level, is strongly reminiscent of a later building by Daukes, Lypiatt Terrace (1847), discussed below. Daukes sold The Park in 1844. In 1839, he designed Thornbury Register Office: this bizarre little building, which survives in the town centre, is as much Egyptian as classical. He also built a Baptist church, and probably Manor House, Bridge Street in Pershore.

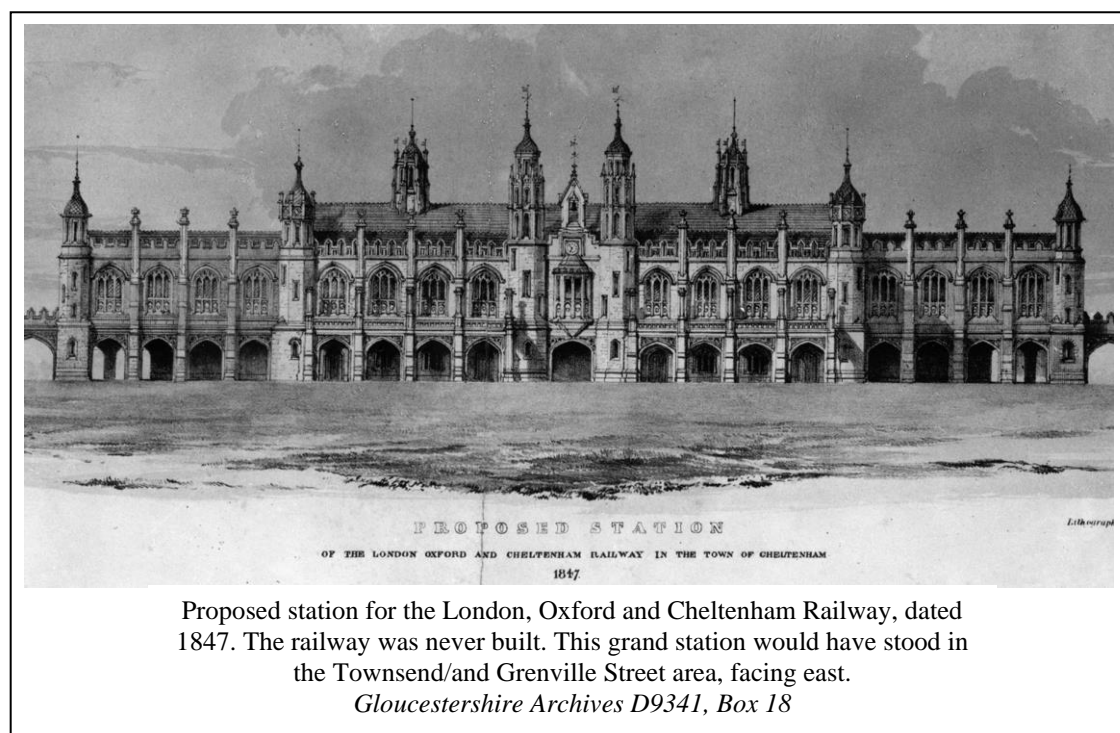
In 1841 he went into partnership with a railway builder-architect, John Hamilton, and together they adapted an existing villa in the west of the town to make Lansdown Railway Station (now Cheltenham Spa). The whole question of Cheltenham's surviving railway station has been much debated by railway historians. Those who argue it is an adaptation of an existing building are confronted by the embarrassing difficulty that no such building is shown on contemporary maps. On the other hand, those who argue it is a purpose-built building have a number of awkward questions to answer: why does it not line up with the railway line? Why is it on a far grander scale than anything else on the Birmingham to Gloucester line? And why was it apparently built with cellars?

Oddly enough, these questions have been examined and pretty thoroughly answered by an impeccable railway authority – Rev. Wilbert Awdry, who not only invented Thomas the Tank Engine, but was a diligent historian. His extensive notes on the question, which he seems to have investigated at the request of David Verey, are to be found with the Verey papers in Gloucestershire Archives.<sup>15</sup> The railway



company's minutes seem to indicate that an existing building was probably adapted to serve the needs of the railway.<sup>16</sup> Even today, its distinctly domestic ground floor makes for an awkward ticket office. Sadly shorn of its imposing Doric porte-cochère – presumably added by Daukes and Hamilton – it could easily pass as a perfectly respectable villa of 1830.

For a time at least Daukes was decidedly a railway man: architect to the Birmingham and Gloucester Railway from 1839 to 1842. He built numerous wooden buildings for the Railway – sheds and workshops – in the area to the north of the station, none of which survives. According to his obituary in *The Builder*, Daukes 'designed and superintended several stations and other railway buildings.'<sup>17</sup> Verey adds 'he designed clerks' houses, engine sheds, brakemen's cottages.'<sup>18</sup> Awdry's notes suggest that locally he designed the level crossing keeper's lodges at Gloucester and at King's Norton, and a goods lift at Cheltenham. Of his railway buildings, the only ones which still stand appear to be two level crossing lodges: one at Brockhampton, Swindon Village and the other at Wadborough, Worcester. From 1842 Daukes's railway work seems to be mainly arguing about his fees.



He also designed a magnificent *new* station for Cheltenham, which alas, was never to be built. It would have served a new line from Cheltenham to Oxford which was to run north from Lansdown station before turning east: the station would have obliterated what is now Grenville Street. But the Oxford line took another course all together and made its way towards Andoversford through the south of the town, by Leckhampton and Dowdeswell. It is also possible that Daukes may have been the architect of a wooden church opened for railway workers by Francis Close.<sup>19</sup> If so this may have been Daukes and Close's first meeting.

While involved with two ecclesiastical commissions, Holy Trinity, West Bromwich (1841), and St John, Wednesbury (1842-6), Daukes with Hamilton designed Montpellier Street (1843-4), following the feel and shape of Montpellier

Walk. The year 1845 brought Daukes and Hamilton their first major public work: the Agricultural College at Cirencester. The commission was won against 38 other competitors, and shows Daukes's ability to be both practical and imaginative. In 1847, Daukes added the beautiful chapel. He was going up in the world: the college's patron was Prince Albert.

### Over-reaching?

But Daukes was also casting his net wider: his first London commission (1845) was greatly admired<sup>20</sup> and in 1846 he began to get diocesan work in Gloucestershire: firstly the Rectory, Poole Keynes (1846), where he also built a church school; then a major re-modelling of the vicarage at Tewkesbury (1846), and two further schools, Russell Street, Gloucester (1846-8) and Down Hatherley (1847). He also embarked on his most intriguing and significant work in the county: two churches, one at each end of the long spectrum of 1840s Anglicanism: St Saviour's, Tetbury for the Tractarians, and St Peter's, Cheltenham, for the Evangelicals. Mixing 'high' and 'low' like this was a potentially dangerous brew.

St Saviour's, by a happy chance, remains more or less as Daukes built it: perhaps his most beautiful and complete composition. It was designed in 1845 (perhaps even as early as 1843) and consecrated in 1848. Its brief working life has preserved the original gas lighting fixtures, the font cover with delightful dove counterweight and the alms-box angel.<sup>21</sup> Nobody has ever thought to re-order the church to reflect changing fashions in liturgy: it presents a perfect example of a brand new 'high' Church of 160 years ago: 'a model Tractarian church.'<sup>22</sup> It is today in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust: the key holder lives in the cottage next door.



St Peter's, Tewkesbury Road  
From a lithograph by George Rowe 1849-50  
By courtesy of CAG&M

While St Saviour's was being built, in 1847, Daukes was commissioned to build what might be seen as an 'opposition' church: St Peter's, Tewkesbury Road, Cheltenham. The client was Francis Close (later Dean Close), Perpetual Curate of Cheltenham, outspoken leader of the Evangelical movement, and bitter foe of the Tractarians! Close's 1844 sermon, *The 'restoration of churches' is the restoration of popery*, equated the Oxford Tractarians with the Cambridge ecclesiologists – and both with the loathed 'Romanism.' At its consecration in 1849, 'inevitably *The Ecclesiologist* ...was highly critical of the design of St Peter's church.'<sup>23</sup> The new church was

based on St Sepulchre's, Cambridge, the restoration of which, by 'high church' Ritualists, had inflamed Close's anti-Romanist wrath. Daukes seems to have been

employed to show how St Sepulchre's *should* have been restored by a good Evangelical.

But Daukes was all this time a fully paid-up member of the Ecclesiological Society: he joined in 1844 while working on St Saviour's. His 'conversion' to evangelical views seems rapid – and convenient! *The Ecclesiologist* sneeringly refers to 'a gentleman who in his earlier days affected us, Mr Daukes.'<sup>24</sup> Daukes's preparedness to build 'high' for the Tractarians at Tetbury, then 'low' for Close at Cheltenham indicates pragmatism bordering on the expedient. It would be kind to say he was detached from mere partisan doctrines: a meeter of briefs, not an architectural demagogue. But such unusual flexibility can look like 'trimming,' even duplicity – and that counts against him.

While meeting the stern doctrinal demands of Close, Daukes was also designing the most theatrically exuberant terrace in Cheltenham, Lypiatt Terrace (1847); and the following year, York Terrace, St. George's Road. This might look like inconsistency, even frivolity. It is certainly symptomatic of Daukes's tendency to over-reach himself. Lypiatt Terrace is perhaps the last flourish of Cheltenham's glamour years. It echoes Osborne House, Queen Victoria's palazzo on the Isle of Wight, which Cubitt began two years before. But all did not go well. The first eleven of the seventeen houses of Lypiatt Terrace were completed in a single campaign by the builder, Keightly. But the last six had to wait ten years before they were completed. Some of the Italianate flourishes seen at Lypiatt Terrace are reminiscent of ideas first aired at Abberley – but the Cheltenham terrace is a more ambitious and dashing conception.

Now Daukes was hungry for larger, and more lucrative projects. In 1848, he took on *three* institutional commissions simultaneously: the Church of England Training School, Cheltenham for Close (now Francis Close Hall, University of Gloucestershire); the enormous Colney Hatch Paupers' Asylum, Middlesex<sup>25</sup> and the Smallpox Hospital, Highgate. He was also working on Bricklehampton Hall, Pershore and the Abbey Hotel, Malvern. It was about now he seems to have moved his office to London, and broke with Hamilton. And the storm clouds steadily gathered.

## Trouble

Daukes won the commission for Close's Training School in a competition against fourteen other entrants. But the entrant who came second, 'Double Ring', wrote letters both to the Committee, and more worryingly, to *The Architect and Master-BUILDER*, accusing Daukes, first of submitting hopelessly optimistic estimates to secure the work, then insinuating that Daukes had used not his own design, but 'Double Ring's.' This must have cast a shadow, but Daukes pressed on: the building is by turns homely and imposing – perhaps the very mix a training school should be. It was modelled on an Oxbridge college, though more compact and less formal. Its crenellated tower is faintly comical. However, problems with ground levels and drainage emerged and disagreement soured the relationship with Close, though Close later commissioned Daukes to examine the fabric of St Mary's, Cheltenham and make a report.<sup>26</sup> Daukes also secured further commissions: a new church at Newport, Isle of Wight; a country house – Horsted Place, Sussex<sup>27</sup>; Holy Trinity, Malvern Link; the Asylum for Worthy and Decayed Freemasons, Croydon; rebuilding Holy Ascension,

Oddington, near Stow, and in 1851, his most fashionable church commission, Christ Church, Hampstead, ‘one of the richest and best attended churches in the capital.’<sup>28</sup> But after the late 1840s work began to thin out distinctly: Daukes received no further public commissions. The giddy rise was over.

From here on, Daukes’s ambitions led him away from Gloucestershire and indeed away from architecture. He appears as company director to various businesses: the Wandle Water and Sewage Company, the Railway Passenger Assurance Company and the West Grenada Gold and Silver Mining Company. Echoes of ‘the Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company’, the swindle at the heart of Dicken’s *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1841), are almost irresistible. In 1856 he was Chairman of The West Par Consols Copper and Tin Company: it may have made his fortune.

Daukes’s final house commissions were the re-modelling of Witley Court, (1854), which shows flashes of genuine innovation, such as the curving curtain wall joining the main house to the Orangery,<sup>29</sup> and Eastwood Park, Falfield, near Thornbury, (1858-1862), an engaging combination of interesting detail: essentially a French chateau in appearance. The nearby estate church of St George (1858-60) is a tiny, condensed gem in romanticised Early English.

In 1863 there was yet another whiff of trouble: suggestions that Daukes had not acted fairly as the judge in a competition to build the new Masonic Grand Lodge in Great Queen Street. His final architectural work is modest indeed: extending a hotel at Malvern (1863); the tiny chapel-of-ease, St John the Baptist, Edge (1865); a small school at Drakes Broughton, Worcestershire (1867-8); the United Reform Church in distant Salford (1872-5); and the lodges and chapels at Pershore Cemetery (1874-5), a suitably sombre parting note.

## Conclusion

Daukes was ‘incorrigibly eclectic.’<sup>30</sup> Though some 50 buildings still stand, there are good touches, but no great triumph. Something of his character seems to militate against him. He got into bad odour with the Ecclesiologists, then with Francis Close, then with the Middlesex health authorities, and finally the Freemasons. He enjoyed something close to royal patronage, but effectively dishonoured it, an unforgivable social blunder. What might have been seen as a building of greatness – and Colney Hatch is a remarkable object – became tainted with unseemly dispute.

Daukes’s name is so deeply obliterated from the record, even one of his very best buildings, Horsted Place in Sussex (now a smart hotel), is confidently credited on its website to the much more famous Pugin. Wholly wrong: Daukes used Pugin’s favourite builder and installed a Pugin-designed staircase – that is all.

At Lypiatt Terrace, fate has been hard on Daukes, too. There is only one source which ascribes Lypiatt Terrace to *any* architect: Daukes’s obituary in the *Cheltenham Looker-On*, written 33 years after Lypiatt Terrace was started.<sup>31</sup> As a result, the work has been attributed by historians to several other possible architects: the Jearrad brothers, Charles Baker, and even Keightly, the plot’s developer. If Daukes did build it, his name does not appear on any extant plans or legal documents. At last, Brooks has finally allowed it to be Daukes.<sup>32</sup> But no-one greets the news with fanfares.



Lypiatt Terrace, designed by Daukes in 1847  
*Photograph by Alec Hamilton*

Daukes is never domineering, never flashy. He never indulges in polemic or theorising. He would have been solid and reliable – had he not made mistakes! Nowadays a great architect who builds a bridge that wobbles or a roof that leaks somehow can remain a great architect. But not, it seems, in the 1850s. Daukes was talented, but he cannot be allowed greatness, and especially if he besmirches Prince Albert. That will *never* do.

*This article is based on an independent study on Daukes as part of a BA Fine Art & History of Art at University of Gloucestershire, submitted in May 2006. My thanks to Dr Steven Blake, Alan Brooks, Rev Dr Alan Munden, Aylwin Sampson and Rev Brian Torode for their helpful comments and corrections; to the staff at Gloucestershire Archives; and to Peter Howell and Dr Nick Kingsley for additional information.*

<sup>1</sup> Pugin: *God of Gothic* was the title of a ‘Time Team’ special, produced and directed by Brendan Hughes, broadcast 1 March 2007. Hughes appears to have coined the phrase.

<sup>2</sup> Cherry, B., *London 2: North, Buildings of England* (Yale University Press, 2004) p200.

<sup>3</sup> Goodhart-Rendel, H., ‘Rogue Architects of the Victorian Era’, *Journal of the RIBA*, 56, 1949, pp252-3.

<sup>4</sup> Verey, D., ‘Two Victorian Architects’ Work in Gloucestershire: Daukes’s early Victorian eclecticism, and Bodley’s High Victorian Gothic’, (Presidential Address), *BGAS Transactions*, 1973, pp5-11; ‘Architect of Great Assurance: Samuel Whitfield Daukes - I’, *Country Life*, 6 December 1973, pp 1914-6; ‘A Victorian eclectic at Work: Samuel Whitfield Daukes - II’, *Country Life*, 13 December 1973, pp 2016-8. More recently, Nick Kingsley (late of GRO and now at the National Archives) has published a short article on Daukes on Wikipedia, with a full list of his buildings.

<sup>5</sup> GA, D9341, Box 18: Letter from B.F.L. Clarke to David Verey, 28 February 1973. However, Daukes’s obituary, *The Builder*, 20 March 1880, states his birthplace as London. Alan Brooks notes strong connections between Daukes and Pershore.

<sup>6</sup> Daukes’s early training was spent at Wentworth Woodhouse estate, where Pritchett built cottages and schools, and enlarged the house. Another Cheltenham architect, John Middleton (1820-1885), was later also trained by Pritchett - though Middleton was a local boy, born in York.

<sup>7</sup> Brooks, A., *Gloucestershire 2: The Vale and the Forest of Dean*, (Yale University Press, 2002), p494

<sup>8</sup> GA, D2460/3/2/3/23-28: Plans and elevations of Sturge’s Warehouse, Gloucester; GA D2460/3/3/6/4: Plans and elevations of Droitwich Salt Co. Warehouse.

<sup>9</sup> Abberley Park was partially destroyed by fire in 1845, but Moilliet’s widow commissioned him to rebuild, seemingly on the original ground-plan. Though ‘enriched and redecorated,’ (Roche, J., *Abberley House and Clock Tower*, 2004, p9), by later owners, surviving pillars and door cases give an impression of the opulence; a house just on the turn from Regency politeness to Victorian overstatement.

<sup>10</sup> Verey, ‘Architect of Great Assurance’, p1916.

<sup>11</sup> Davies, H., *The Park, The Stranger’s Guide to Cheltenham*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, 1843.

- <sup>12</sup> Bradbury, O., *Cheltenham's Lost Heritage*, (Stroud: Sutton, 2004) p164.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid, p44.
- <sup>14</sup> Sampson, A., *Laid out with taste and judgement: a History of The Park* (University of Gloucestershire, to be published) contains an investigation of the history of properties in the Park.
- <sup>15</sup> GA, D9341, Box 18: David Verey's Daukes papers include an undated typescript by Rev. W. Awdry on Daukes's railway work. Awdry consulted the Birmingham and Gloucester Railway's Minute Books, 1839-42. (He gives reference BGR 1/12, but does not state where these records are. I have been unable to locate them.)
- <sup>16</sup> Awdry's note in his typescript states, 'The first [mention of Lansdown Station in the Minutes], dated 8 August [1839] (Minute 1207) refers to the construction of steps down to the platform area, urinals and porter's room at a cost of £800. No mention can be found of design or construction of station house, and as Min 1371 speaks of houses as already there one is forced to conclusion [sic] that it was an already existing house and adapted as above for railway purposes.' Awdry quotes from Davies, H., *A View of Cheltenham in its Past and Present State*, (1843), n.p., and states 'It is noticeable that Henry Davies does not specifically say that Daukes designed the building: he merely refers to their 'arrangements and dispositions'. Awdry also quotes Ramsden, J., 'The place of Lansdown Station in Railway History', *Gloucester Railway Society Newsletter*, Vol. 1, 1955/56 n.p.: 'The site surveyed for the station at Cheltenham was part of a large country estate with a mansion in the grounds. To save time and expense this house was adapted, part being demolished for the railway to run through at what was the level of the cellars...'. Awdry adds that he has been 'unable to locate and question' Ramsden.
- <sup>17</sup> *The Builder*, 20 March 1880, p366.
- <sup>18</sup> GA, D9341: undated handwritten note.
- <sup>19</sup> Suggested by Alan Munden. *Cheltenham Journal*, 15 and 22 July 1839.
- <sup>20</sup> This was St Andrew's, Wells Street. Its incumbent was a co-founder of the Camden Society, whose journal, *The Ecclesiologist*, stated: 'considered from a ritual point of view, it is the most satisfactory church yet built in London.' (Quoted in Hitchcock, H., *Early Victorian Architecture in Britain*, (Architectural Press, 1954) p 141.) Remarkably this church was dismantled stone by stone in 1931 and re-erected some 20 miles away at Kingsbury, Brent, as part of a scheme proposed by the Bishop of London to 're-cycle' unused city centre churches to the suburbs; seemingly the only one so treated.
- <sup>21</sup> St Saviour's was built as 'a poor man's church', with no pew rents. However by the 1880s, the main town church, St Mary's, was also rent free and the arrival of an unpopular incumbent at St Saviour's seems to have driven its congregation back to St. Mary's. (Prince, T., 'The Sad Story of St Saviour's', *The History of Tetbury Society Journal*, 49, 1996, pp 10-11). For a full description of the church see Brooks, A., *Gloucestershire 1: The Cotswolds*, (1999) p687, which gives its dates as 1845-8. The Lambeth Palace Library ICBS website, [www.churchplansonline.org](http://www.churchplansonline.org) gives 1843.
- <sup>22</sup> Brooks, *Gloucestershire 1*, p687.
- <sup>23</sup> Munden, A., *A Cheltenham Gamaliel: Dean Close of Cheltenham*, (Dean Close School, 1997) p33
- <sup>24</sup> Verey, 'A Victorian Eclectic at work,' p2016.
- <sup>25</sup> Colney Hatch, the largest asylum ever built in Britain, was an undertaking of national importance with Prince Albert laying the foundation stone. It still presents an imposing bulk; now all luxury flats. In 1856 an enquiry, by the Committee of Visitors, concerning the foundations and roofs, resulted in a court action for negligence. Daukes won, but his reputation suffered: it was not wise to cloud any royal connection with litigation and accusations of negligence. (See Cottrell, C., *Special Report of the Committee of visitors of the County Lunatic Asylum at Colney Hatch, (1859)*. A summary can be found at the Talisprism website, keyword Daukes.)
- <sup>26</sup> *Cheltenham Journal*, 1 July 1850.
- <sup>27</sup> Girouard, M. *The Victorian Country House* (Yale University Press/BCA, 1979), pp172-8.
- <sup>28</sup> Cox, J., 'History of Christ Church, Hampstead,' (2005).
- <sup>29</sup> Built for William Ward, 11<sup>th</sup> Baron of Birmingham, it was burnt out in 1937, and stands now as an empty shell, as forlorn as Miss Havisham's wedding cake. English Heritage maintains it as a romantic ruin, and has lately restored the impressive Neptune Fountain, reputedly the highest in England, to be seen shooting skywards on appointed days in summer.
- <sup>30</sup> Bradbury, p 166.
- <sup>31</sup> *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 27 March 1880, p 220.
- <sup>32</sup> Brooks, *Gloucestershire 2*, p274.

# The Origins of Pittville Park: an Outline Chronology

STEVEN BLAKE

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BETWEEN 1888 AND 1900, CHELTENHAM CORPORATION PURCHASED A SUBSTANTIAL area of land on the north side of the town, and created a major part of what is now Pittville Park. Further purchases in 1931 and 1945 extended the Park area to the north and west. This article provides an outline chronology of those purchases, and of the establishment of the Park's facilities. It deals chronologically with the Corporation's purchases in five sections, each corresponding to a constituent area of the Park, namely the Agg-Gardner Recreation Ground (1888), the Pittville Gardens (1890 and 1892), the Marle Hill Annexe and Lake (1892), the western extension to the Recreation Ground (1900), and the Approach Golf Course (1931 and 1945). The location of each of these areas is superimposed on a copy of Merrett's 1834 map of the town (Fig. 1).<sup>1</sup>

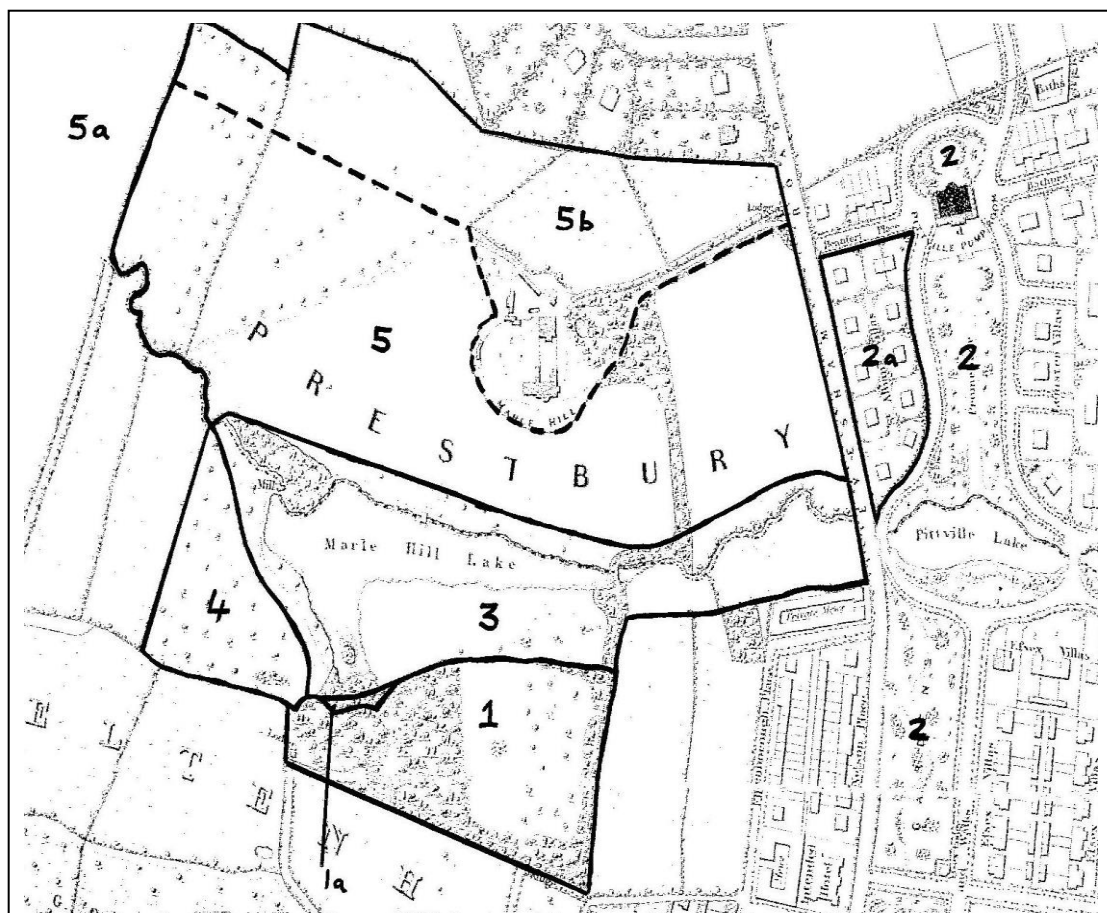


Fig. 1: The constituent parts of Pittville Park, superimposed on Merrett's 1834 map of the town; the numbers refer to the five sections of the text.

## 1. The Agg - Gardner Recreation Ground, 1888

The earliest reference to the Corporation's intention to create a Public Recreation Ground for Cheltenham may be found in its minutes for 3 August 1880, when a Committee to consider the subject was appointed. Clearly, however, it failed to make any progress, as a new Committee 'to consider the desirability of establishing baths and recreation grounds for the working classes' was appointed on 1 December 1884.

This second Committee certainly made far more progress, for on 31 August 1887, the Baths & Recreation Grounds Committee agreed to purchase a little over seven acres of land to the north-west of the town from a Cheltenham butcher named Henry William Holliday, 'for the purpose of a Public Pleasure Ground', at a total price of £2,200 (Fig. 2). That land comprised three distinct parts -

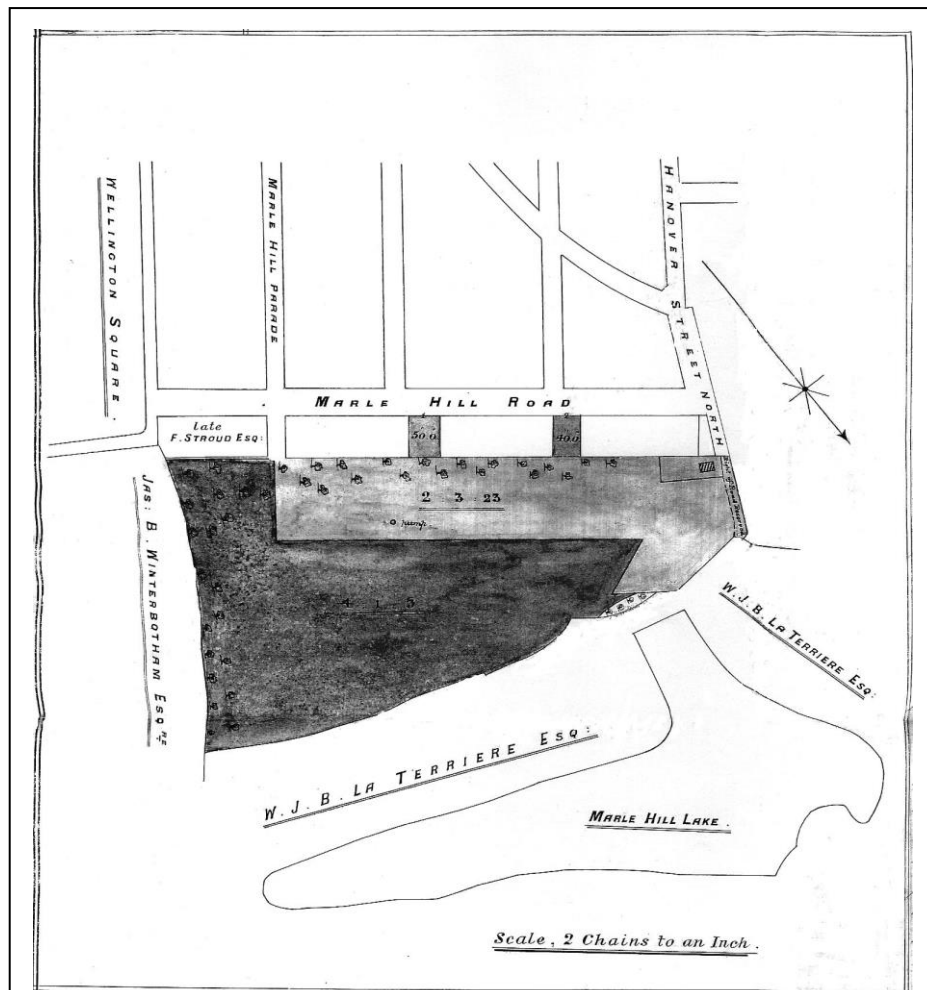


Fig. 2: Plan accompanying the conveyance from Henry William Holliday to the Corporation, 6 March 1888, showing the four pieces of land forming a major part of the Agg-Gardner Recreation Ground  
(reproduced by permission of Cheltenham Borough Council)

**i. 4 acres 1 rood 3 perches of freehold land**, formerly part of the Marle Hill Estate, that Holliday had purchased at an auction sale at the 'Plough' Hotel on 15 February 1877. The vendors were the trustees of the will of the late Lewis Griffiths (died 26



April 1869), who had owned the Marle Hill Estate since 1833, when he had purchased it from Robert Capper. The land had been formally conveyed to Holliday on 16 May 1877 for the sum of £700, plus £55 for the timber growing thereon, and was described as ‘all that piece or parcel of freehold meadow or pasture land near to the old lodge formerly the southern entrance to the Marle Hill Estate and extending thence about half way to the Marle Hill Lake’. ‘The old lodge’ was situated at the top of what is now Marle Hill Parade, and is clearly shown on the 1834 map; it appears to have been demolished by the time the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map was surveyed in 1884.

**ii. 2 acres 3 roods 23 perches of copyhold land** to the south and west of the freehold plot, also formerly part of the Marle Hill Estate, and purchased by Holliday from the trustees of Griffiths’ will, for the sum of £543, on 12 December 1879. This land was described as ‘all that piece or parcel of copyhold meadow or pasture land with the cottage and garden’, and included the line of a road forming a northwards extension of Hanover Street, now known as Hanover Parade; ‘the cottage’ probably refers to a second lodge to Marle Hill, situated at the top of Hanover Parade (also shown on the 1834 map, and named as Mill Cottage on the 1855-7 Old Town Survey), which appears to have been demolished by the Corporation soon after its purchase of the land.

**iii. Two plots of freehold land** with frontages of 40 foot and 50 foot respectively to Marle Hill Road. These were two of four plots of land ‘in a new road called Marle Hill Road’ that Holliday had purchased from Courtenay Connell Prance of Evesham for £215 on 19 November 1881, intending to use one of them as the site of a new road from Marle Hill Road to his recently-acquired land and the other three for house building.

In order to fund the purchase of the land, and the likely costs involved in establishing the Recreation Ground, the Corporation applied to the Local Government Board for permission to raise a loan of £3,000. The Board’s agreement was obtained on 14 October 1887, and by March 1888 the Corporation had arranged to borrow £3,000, at 3.5% interest per annum over three years, from one William Grover Cooley of Sheffield. The land was conveyed to the Corporation on 6 March 1888.

One final purchase was required before the land for the future Recreation Ground was complete: in order to ‘straighten’ the north-west boundary of the proposed Ground, 31.5 perches of land was obtained from the owner of the adjoining Marle Hill House and Lake, William James Bulmer La Terriere, in return for half a perch of Corporation-owned land immediately to the east, and a cash payment of £50. This small tract of land (marked as 1a in Fig. 1) was conveyed to the Corporation on 21 September 1888.

Soon after the purchase of the land, the Town Clerk, Edward Brydges, approached the Lord of the Manor of Cheltenham, Mr (later Sir) James Tynte Agg – Gardner MP, to discuss the possible enfranchisement of the copyhold parts of the new Recreation Ground. Agg-Gardner not only agreed to enfranchise the land (which would thereby become freehold) without charge, but he also offered the Corporation a gift of £3,000 to cover the entire estimated cost of the new Recreation Ground. This was gratefully accepted by the Corporation at its meeting on 9 May 1888 and Mr Cooley’s loan was subsequently repaid in full.

Although initially referred to in Committee minutes and newspaper reports as simply 'the Recreation Ground', or 'the North Ward Recreation Ground', or 'the Marle Hill Recreation Ground', Agg-Gardner suggested that it should be named after a prominent local solicitor and public servant, W. H. Gwinnett, in recognition of his contribution to the life of the town. Gwinnett, however, declined the honour, suggesting instead that Agg-Gardner's own name should be associated with the Ground, given his generosity in funding it. Both the Corporation and Agg-Gardner agreed to this, and the new Ground was formally opened by Agg-Gardner, on 20 June 1888.

Whilst these negotiations were going ahead, the land was fenced, to prevent access to the adjoining properties, and work began on laying out the Ground, including the creation of paths. A screen of existing trees on its southern and eastern sides was retained, and sports pitches were established in its centre. The existing entrance from Marle Hill Parade was supplemented by a second entrance at the top of Brunswick Street, opposite which a Caretaker's Lodge was built, at a cost of £255 10s., by Mr H.D. Brown. Its first occupant was an ex-Police Sergeant named James Maggs, who was appointed on a salary of £1 per week, plus free housing, on 1 June 1888, and who continued in post until his death in 1899. Sometime after the Lodge's completion in late 1889, a grey granite plaque recording Agg-Gardner's generosity, carved by the monumental mason Herbert Henry Martyn at a cost of £7 10s., was affixed to the outside of the Lodge. Both the Lodge, and the plaque, are still there today.

During 1888-9, a public shelter, which may also have incorporated a bandstand, was built on the south side of the Ground, on or close to the site of the present pavilion, and in 1889, the Cheltenham Temperance Union provided a drinking water fountain close to the Ground's Brunswick Street entrance, on the west side of which, public conveniences were built in 1894. Later additions to the Ground included a children's paddling pool at the north-west corner of the Ground, created in 1937-8, at a cost of £574. The pool was 'damaged by enemy action' during the Second World War and was reinstated during 1947 - 8 at a cost of £1,189 11s. 2d., the cost being borne by the War Damage Commission. Although still shown on the 1955 O.S. map, the pool has since been turfed over.

## **2. The Pittville Gardens, 1890 and 1892**

On 13 March 1888, while the Corporation was finalising its purchase of the land for the Recreation Ground, the solicitors, Messrs Ticehurst & Son, wrote to them on behalf of the County of Gloucester Bank, offering to sell them the Pittville Pump Room and Gardens for £5,400, representing one half of the £10,800 outstanding debt remaining on Joseph Pitt's estate, which had been administered on behalf of his creditors by the Court of Chancery since 1842. The offer was accepted by the Corporation later in 1888 and a clause authorising them to purchase the property and to raise the necessary loan to complete the sale was included in the 1889 Cheltenham Improvement Act. A £6,000 loan to cover the purchase and other expenses was agreed by the Town Improvement Committee on 24 November 1890, and the Estate was conveyed to the Corporation on 31 December 1890.

Although a major part of the present Pittville Gardens was purchased directly from the County of Gloucester Bank, a small tract of land with a 345 foot frontage (west) to Evesham Road, a 470 foot semicircular frontage (east and south) to West Spa Drive, and a 212 foot frontage (north) to a house called St Arvans had already been sold as building land earlier in the century. That land had comprised Lots 4-6 at the 10 September 1845 auction sale of Joseph Pitt's unsold Pittville property, at which it was acquired by the Bank. In 1868, the Bank agreed to sell the land to the Revd. William Boyce of Southsea, who in turn agreed to transfer it to a Cheltenham builder, Edwin Broom, to whom it was conveyed in 1887. Broom subsequently used the land as security for a mortgage, on which he defaulted, as a consequence of which his mortgagees sold the land to the Corporation, for £300, on 9 July 1892. This land is now occupied by the Aviaries and the Children's Play Area, and is marked as 2a in Fig. 1.

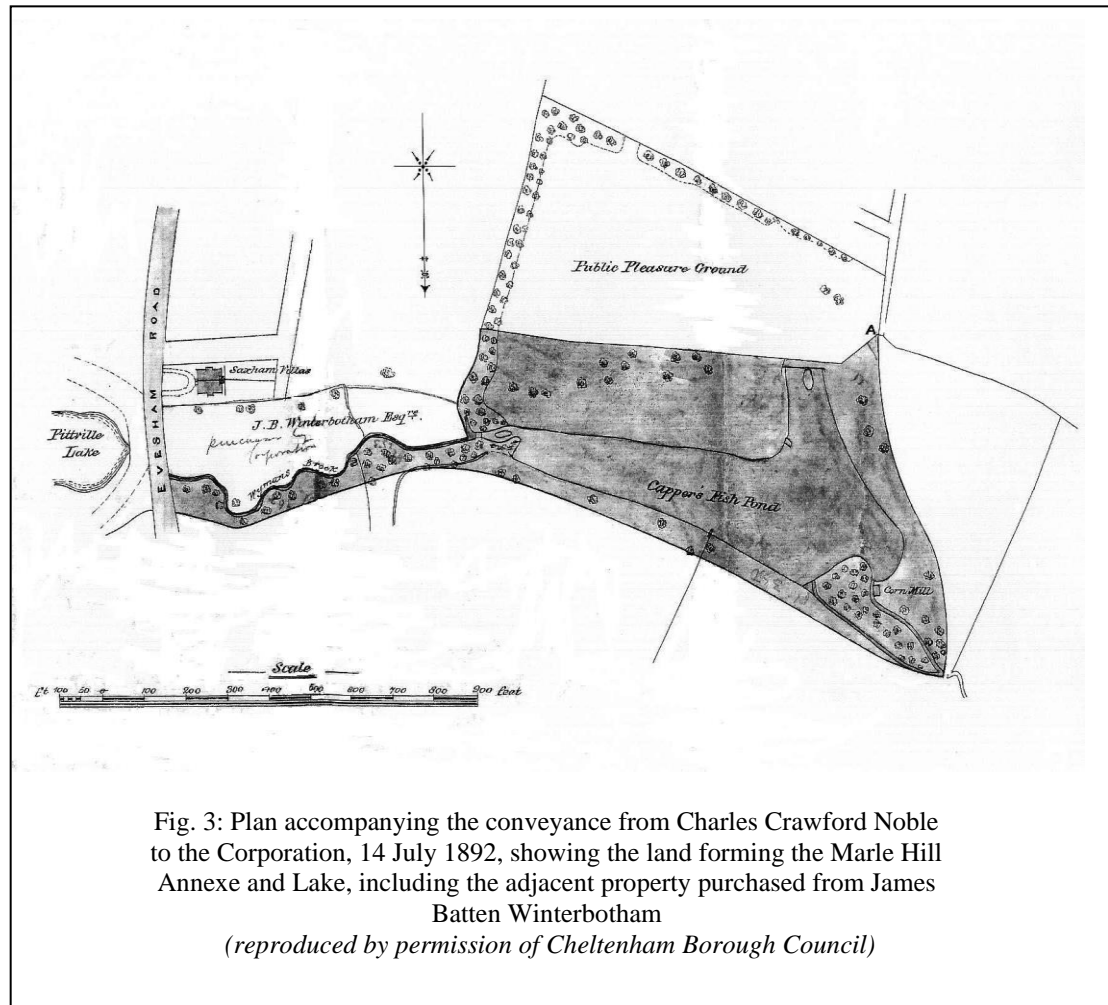
In the years following their purchase, the Corporation made a number of changes to the Pittville Gardens, most notably the replacement of the shrubberies between the Pump Room and Lake with a large area of grass, and the building of greenhouses on the former shrubbery at the rear of the Pump Room. The provision of a bandstand was proposed by the Borough Surveyor, Joseph Hall, in February 1891, but this was not achieved until 1900, when the present bandstand was built, to Hall's design, by Messrs Collins & Godfrey. Originally built directly in front of the Pump Room, the bandstand was moved to its present position in 1901. In 1902-3, the Corporation built the present Refreshment Kiosk and Entrance Lodge on the north side of Central Cross Drive; this was also designed by Joseph Hall and was built by Messrs A. & C. Billings at a cost of £373. In January 1903, following the new Lodge's completion, the dilapidated Essex Lodge (a small kiosk at the corner of Central Cross Drive and Pittville Lawn, at which the spa waters had been available since the late 1820s) was demolished by a local builder, Mr C.W. Spackman, who paid the Council £9 for the materials, *in lieu* of a fee. By 1903, the Corporation also appears to have built a small wooden summer house on the north side of the Lake, although its exact date is uncertain.

### **3. The Marle Hill Annexe and Lake, 1892**

Following the purchase of the Pittville Gardens, the Corporation turned its attention to the acquisition of further land on the west side of Evesham Road, to the north of the Recreation Ground, as an additional public park. Negotiations took place with two individuals – Charles Crawford Noble of Aylesmore Court, near St Briavels, who had purchased the Marle Hill Estate, totalling 56 acres 3 roods 6 perches of land, from William La Terriere, for £11,000, on 22 June 1891, and James Batten Winterbotham, a local solicitor, who owned a tract of land called The Holts, totalling 10 acres 3 roods 8 perches, which he had purchased from James Tynte Agg-Gardner, for £2,500, on 8 August 1887.

On 5 October 1891, the Corporation agreed to purchase parts of both of these estates, and on 28 June 1892, permission to do so, and to raise the necessary loan, was obtained from the Local Government Board through an amendment to the 1889 Improvement Act. The land purchased by the Corporation was as follows (Fig. 3) -

**i. 12 acres 1 rood 18 perches of land** from Noble for £1,854 7s. 6d., comprising the whole of the Marle Hill Lake, plus a certain amount of land around its banks, and a small strip of land on the north side of Wyman's Brook, as far east as Evesham Road. This land was conveyed on 14 July 1892.



**ii. 2 acres 2 roods 6 perches of land** from Winterbotham for £500, comprising the northern part of The Holts, including the south side of Wyman's Brook (which formed the boundary between the two estates) and a frontage to Evesham Road. This land was conveyed on 16 December 1892.

Even before the formal conveyance of the land, the Corporation had invited tenders for the extension of the Marle Hill Lake eastwards towards Evesham Road, by widening Wyman's Brook, and on 2 December 1892 the Town Improvement Committee accepted the £1,552 10s. tender of J. K. Baker of Cromer for this work. This increased the total length of the Lake to 550 yards, leaving just a short stretch of the brook between the eastern edge of the Lake and Evesham Road. Also in December 1892, the Committee accepted the £340 tender of John Strachan of Cardiff for the creation of a pedestrian subway beneath Evesham Road.

In 1893, following the Lake's extension, a 'rustic bridge' of bamboos was built across it (more or less on the site of an earlier bridge across Wyman's Brook, at

the east end of the original Lake, which formed part of the footpath between the town and Marle Hill House), and in 1894 the current boathouse was constructed on the north side of the Lake. Also in 1894, the old corn or flour mill at the west end of the Lake was re-roofed for use as tool shed, although according to Burrow's 1897 town guide, it was in use by then as a summer house.

On 8 March 1894, the Corporation announced that the Pittville Gardens and the Marle Hill Annexe would in future be jointly known as 'Pittville Park', which was formally opened to the public by the Mayor on 25 April 1894. Two years later, Horace Edwards' 1896 *Penny Guide to Cheltenham* remarked that 'those who remember Capper's Pond and its surroundings cannot fail to be struck with the transformation that has taken place. Pittville Park, with its beautiful background of green hills, its splendid Pump Room, well wooded drives, artistically created lakes, bridges and boat houses, the arrangement of its walks, rockeries, shrubberies, its profusion of flowers etc. is a pleasure ground absolutely unequalled in England'.

Further additions were made to the Park following its formal opening. In c.1895, public conveniences were built towards the eastern end of the Annexe, at the top of West Drive, close to Saxham Villas, and in 1900, at the same time as the circular bandstand was built in front of the Pump Room, a second, rectangular, bandstand was built on the south side of the Marle Hill Lake (which was often known as 'the Lower Lake' after 1894). Also designed by Joseph Hall and built by Messrs Collins & Godfrey, it replaced a temporary bandstand on the same site, and survived until 1958, when it was demolished as surplus to requirements.

#### **4. The western extension to the Recreation Ground, 1900**

During 1899, the Baths & Recreation Grounds Committee discussed the problem of the over-use of the Recreation Ground, particularly by football and cricket teams, and the need to acquire additional land, which would allow one third of an enlarged Ground to 'rest' so that the grass would re-grow. Consequently, on 28 June 1900, 3 acres 1 rood 13 perches of land to the south-west of the Marle Hill Annexe and bordered at its south-east corner by the western end of the Recreation Ground was purchased by the Corporation for £450. This land was also part of the Marle Hill Estate and its vendor was a Chepstow solicitor named George Carwardine Francis, who was acting as a trustee for Charles Crawford Noble. In 1932, and again in 1959, a further westwards extension of the Recreation Ground was proposed, but never carried out.

#### **5. The Approach Golf Course, 1931 and 1945**

On 1 March 1929, the Auctioneers, Bruton Knowles & Co., wrote to the Corporation, on behalf of its owner, offering to sell them Marle Hill House and the remainder of the Marle Hill Estate between Evesham Road and Tommy Taylor's Lane. Two and a half years later, on 1 October 1931, the property, totalling 41 acres 3 roods of land, was conveyed to the Corporation by the Personal Representatives of Joseph Maby for £6,500.

In 1946, following wartime use as allotments, a part of this land, to the west of Evesham Road and south of Marle Hill House, was earmarked for use as the new

'Pittville Sports Area', to include a golf course, tennis courts, bowling green and pavilion, although all that was eventually achieved was a 9 hole golf course, opened on 8 May 1953. A further 4 holes were provided to the west of the existing course in 1965-6, with a final 5 holes on land to the west of Tommy Taylor's Lane in 1969. The latter land was part of a 2,849 acre tract of land on either side of Tommy Taylor's Lane that had been purchased, for £4,200, by the Corporation on 16 March 1945; its vendor was Lloyds Bank, acting in its capacity as the Personal Representative of the late Edward Leighton Baylis (died 12 February 1944). Since 1945, the land had been used for a mixture of allotments and tipping: as well as the western extension of the golf course, this land later provided the sites of the Recreation Centre and the Prince of Wales Stadium; the location of the part of the land that was used for the golf course extension is marked as 5a in Fig. 1.

The remainder of the Corporation's Marle Hill property, to the north of the golf course, and including Marle Hill House, was sold for private housing development in 1964, resulting in the demolition of the house, although the exact date of demolition is uncertain; this land is marked as 5b in Fig.1, and is delineated by a broken line.

<sup>1</sup> Much of the background research for this article was undertaken during the preparation of a landscape history of Pittville Park, as part of Cheltenham Borough Council's 2008 Lottery bid for funding towards the conservation of the Park. I am grateful to the Council, and in particular to its Green Environment team and the Project Co-ordinator, Rosemary Mansbridge, for the opportunity to undertake this research, and to the Council's Legal Services Practice, and in particular Julie Sanders and Marie Butler, for access to the title deeds of the constituent parts of the Park, and for permission to reproduce two plans contained within the deeds. Much of the information within this article is derived from those deeds, and from the minutes of the Corporation and its various Committees from 1876 onwards, copies of which are held at Gloucestershire Archives. Additional information has been obtained from local guide books, maps and newspapers. For the earlier history of the Pittville estate, see S. Blake, *The Pittville Pump Room 1824-1980* (Cheltenham Borough Council, 1980; 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2000), and S. Blake, *Pittville 1824-1860: a scene of gorgeous magnificence* (Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum, 1988). Further information about the Park's bandstands may be found in M. Kippin, 'Cheltenham's Bandstands', *Gloucestershire History* 18, 11-16.

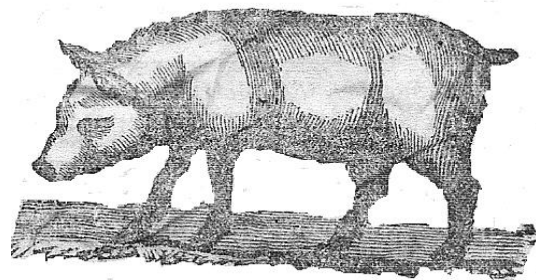
## Toby the Sapient Pig

NOW EXHIBITING  
At the ASSEMBLY ROOMS, CHELTENHAM,  
THE WONDER OF THE PRESENT AGE!  
Under the Patronage of the Royal Family, and the first Nobility.  
**TOBY!**  
THE SAPIENT PIG,  
From the Royal Profferade Rooms, Spring Gardens,  
London.

HE is in colour the most beautiful of his race; in symmetry the most perfect, and in temper the most docile. He far exceeds any thing ever yet seen, for his intelligent Performances. It is impossible to form an adequate idea of the surprising sagacity of this Animal; in him the power of Instinct is so extremely striking, that it seems superior to reason in many instances, and to some Persons it may have the appearance of romance; but the curious may form some just idea of his extraordinary capacity from the following particulars:—

This most Surprising Creature will SPELL and READ, CAST ACCOUNTS, tell the Points of the Sun's Rising and Setting.

Any Lady or Gentleman may put Figures in a Bonnet, make what numbers they please, and then shut up the box, and this wonderful Pig absolutely will tell what number is made, before the Box is opened.



*Editor's note:* 'Toby' was supplied by David Smith. It is from the *Cheltenham and Gloucestershire Advertiser*, 15 October 1818. It was found at Berkeley Castle Muniments, CMP 12.6. It had been used as a wrap for another more important document.

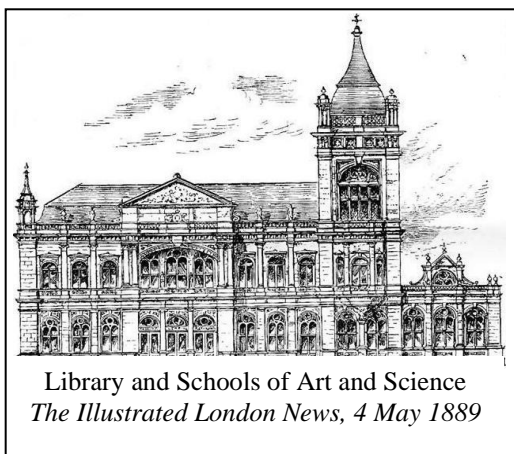
# The Opening of Cheltenham's Public Library and Schools of Art and Science - 1889

GEOFF and ELAINE NORTH

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*This article continues our series of Cheltenham events and locations that were considered to be of sufficient interest to be published in national newspapers and periodicals.*

IN 2008 CHELTENHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY PUBLISHED '*A Chronology of Cheltenham's Literary Connections*'<sup>1</sup> to accompany a display put on by members of the Society on the theme of 'Gloucestershire's Poets and Writers, at the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council's County Local History Afternoon on 4 October 2008.



An entry under Libraries, Booksellers etc. for 24 April 1889, relating to the formal opening by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, of the town's Public Library and Schools of Art & Science in Clarence Street,<sup>2</sup> prompted a search to see if the event was reported in the national press. Sure enough, on 4 May 1889 approximately one third of a page of *The Illustrated London News* contained the following report and drawing (as shown) of this "handsome building", designed by the architects Knight & Chatters.

## ‘LIBRARY AND ART AND SCIENCE SCHOOLS, CHELTENHAM

*On Wednesday, April 24, Sir M. Hicks-Beach, President of the Board of Trade, opened the Public Library and Art Schools at Cheltenham, a handsome building, erected at a cost of £15,000. There was a procession from the Queen's Hotel, headed by the Volunteer Rifles, followed by the Mayor and Corporation, and the Mayors of Gloucester and Tewkesbury. The route was gaily decorated, and there was a large concourse of spectators. Sir Michael was presented with a golden key, and at the request of Alderman Captain Welch, R.N., Chairman of the Library Committee, opened the doors of the building. The Mayor briefly related the history of the Free Library movement in Cheltenham. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach said this was an institution happily associated with art and science. The result attained was not altogether from the public rates, because there had been liberal subscriptions; but in a town like Cheltenham support could be given not only by money, but by books, which could not be always bought. He did not object to novels, and would not refuse them to the working classes, instead of the vicious literature which prevailed. The Mayor entertained a distinguished company at dinner at the Plough Hotel.'*

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<sup>1</sup> Copies of *A Chronology of Cheltenham's Literary Connections*, compiled by Jill Waller, 2008 can be purchased for £4 (+£1 posted in the UK) by sending a cheque payable to CLHS to The Treasurer, 7 Parr Close, Churchdown, Glos GL3 1NH.

<sup>2</sup> The Schools of Art and of Science & Technology moved to new buildings in St Margaret's Road in April 1905.

# Prestbury's Fields & Roads in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century: The evidence of the 1732 Inclosure Award

BERYL ELLIOTT

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## Creating the modern field system

LIKE MOST OTHER VILLAGES IN LOWLAND ENGLAND, PRESTBURY emerged from the Middle Ages as a compact settlement ringed with open arable fields which were farmed in strips by a large number of individuals. This open field system persisted for a long time, only ending with the enclosure movement of the 18th and 19th centuries. Over this long period there were gradual modifications to the classic field pattern, as economic conditions changed and village society shifted. Individual landholdings became variable, and sometimes one man might come to occupy a major part of this field or that. There was even a certain amount of piecemeal enclosure: a few little plots were taken out of the communal system, fenced off and farmed as the private property of a single individual; and, on a somewhat larger scale, substantial parts of Westfield were enclosed by the landowner of the time during the turbulent period of the English Civil War.<sup>1</sup>

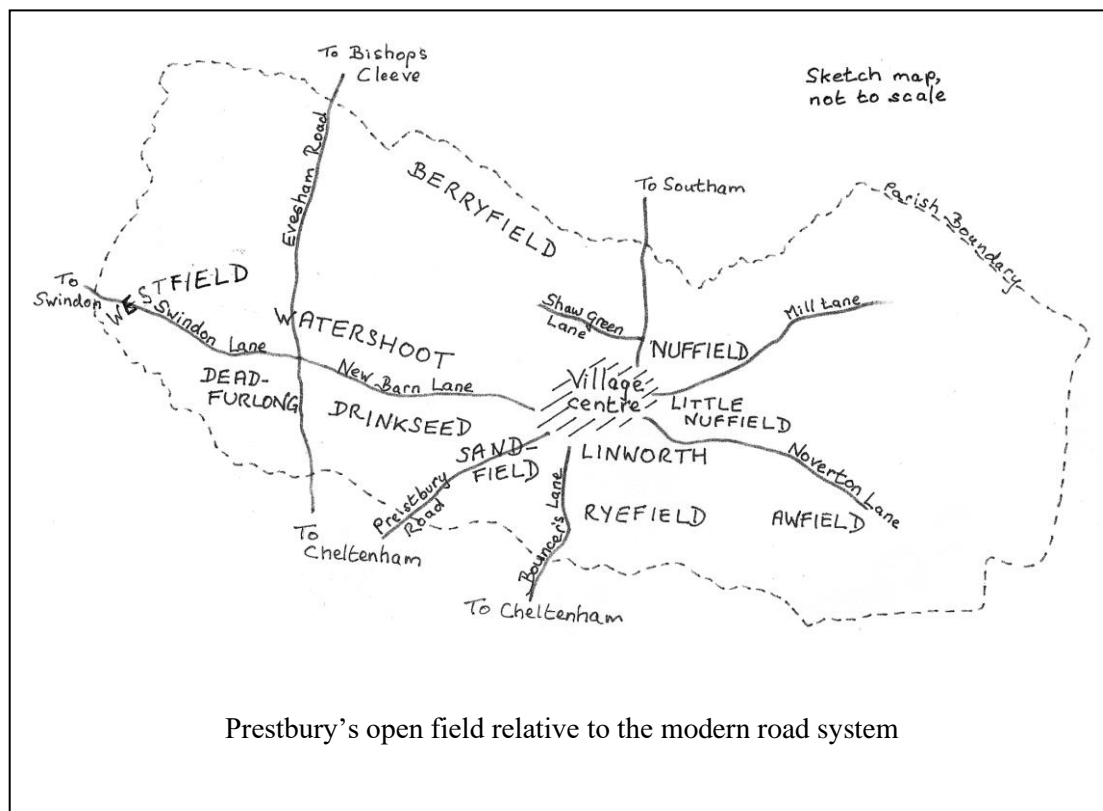
The main enclosures however were effected under the Prestbury Inclosure Act of 1730.<sup>2</sup> An Act of Parliament in that year enabled the enclosure of all the remaining arable fields and meadows, by then amounting to 725 acres, and also 630 acres of common grazing on the hilltop. In the 16th century Prestbury had had eight fields: Westfield, Berryfield, Nuffield, Linworth, Ryefield, Sandfield, Watershoot and Drinkseed. All of these were still in existence in 1730, even if reduced in size, and a ninth, Awfield, is now mentioned for the first time. The impetus for drafting the 1730 Act, and the cost and effort necessary to see it through Parliament, came from a small group of the biggest landowners of the parish;<sup>3</sup> but many others were affected, from yeomen with a hundred acres, to labourers with just one or two strips of land and the right to keep a couple of animals on the common pasture.

The Act itself was followed 2 years later by the Inclosure Award.<sup>4</sup> This was a working document for implementing the enclosures, and listed in precise detail every individual allotment of land; it also provided that "Maps of the said Field and Hill shall be truly made, and [...] shall be annexed to these presents", but sadly this stated intention does not seem to have been put into effect - or if maps were made, they have not survived.

Even without a map, however, it is possible to arrive at a partial reconstruction of the new field layout. The general location of most of the open fields can be deduced from the nineteenth century Tithe Map<sup>5</sup>, where the open field names often survive in use for the smaller units resulting from enclosure, and the Inclosure Award itself gives a considerable amount of detail. For each of the old fields the new allotments are listed in geographical order, the boundaries defined by their



“abutments”, i.e. the name of the next-adjointing tenant, or - for those at either edge of the field - the name of the property or roadway next to it. Particular care is taken to lay down the approved access route, e.g. ‘his way shall be through Finchcroft Lane’ or ‘thro’ John Hathaway’s Lot’. In addition the road names quoted are themselves of considerable interest. It is possible to establish that some roads have retained the same name over time, and some of the unfamiliar one can be confidently equated with our current names.



### The fields on the eve of enclosure

The following outline places each of the open fields in its geographical position within the parish, noting any defining roads or other landmarks named in the Award; it starts in the extreme west of the parish and proceeds clockwise around the village centre. To avoid confusion, road names used in 1732 appear in upper case; modern road names used for reference are always in lower case.

**WESTFIELD** was also known as the Great Furlong, but thanks to the Civil War enclosure it had shrunk considerably and now covered only 61 acres. It lay in the extreme west of the parish, towards Swindon. The 1732 Award refers to several existing little fields, scattered about within Westfield but not now considered as part of it; these almost certainly represent land enclosed in the 17th century. Westfield lay both sides of THE WAY TO SWINDON (today's Swindon Lane); the part south of the road goes down to WYMAN'S BROOK (so named); in the west it adjoins MORRICE HILL, compared. to today's Morris Hill Close in Swindon, and in the east it abuts DEADFURLONG field. The part north of the road appears to be separated from the boundary with Swindon by a single enclosed field called MAJOR'S HYDE; the northern

edge, not specifically referenced, runs against the southern boundary of the former deer park, long enclosed.

**BERRYFIELD**, with 65 acres, was a narrow strip of land east of the modern A435, between the northern edge of the deer park and the boundary with Southam. Access for some lots is from **SOUTHAM LANE** for others from **MANOUR LANE**. The former presumably equates to today's Southam Road; the latter must have led to the old manor house which in medieval times stood at grid reference SL 966 247, but it is hard to say whether the road itself is today's Spring Lane, or the track which runs west off that road to the site of the old house.

**NUFFIELD** and its subsidiary **LITTLE NUFFIELD**, 55 and 24 acres respectively, perhaps originated from a single large field lying north of the village centre, but by this date were considered separately. **NUFFIELD** was in the angle between **SOUTHAM LANE** and **MILL WAY** (Mill Lane), and **LITTLE NUFFIELD**, separated from its larger partner by **MILL WAY**, extended south from there to today's Noverton Lane, known then as **THE WAY TO OVERTON**, or **OVERTON WAY**.

Several roads are mentioned in connection with Nuffield, but the road system has changed considerably around here, and it is difficult to reconstruct the 1732 situation with any confidence. The way to Winchcombe at this date did not go via Southam, but followed a more easterly route higher up the slope, and the later establishment of the modern route changed also the use of minor lanes in the area, some becoming less important or even vanishing. As well as **SOUTHAM LANE** the award mentions **WINCHCOMBE WAY**, **CARRIERS WAY**, and **CROSS WAY**. Of these **WINCHCOMBE WAY** is the old main road over Cleeve Hill, now surviving for at least the first part of its length as Queenwood Grove, which runs northeast from the end of Gravel Pit Lane, at SO 972 240; in 1732 **WINCHCOMBE WAY** extended further west and south from this point to join **MILL WAY**; but this southern part has now shrunk to a field path. **CARRIERS WAY** remains so far unidentified; it would be tempting to equate it with Gravel Pit Lane, likely to be an old way since it links Shaw Green Lane and the manor house to the hill top pastures, but the references are not sufficiently precise. The exact position of **CROSS WAY** is also unknown. The **MILL BROOK** (Mill Stream) is also mentioned, as are two further unidentified landmarks, **MILL GATE**, and the **WASHING-STOCK-A-MEER** or **WASHINGSTOCK**.

**LINWORTH** field lay to the east of Bouncer's Lane. To the north it touched both today's Blacksmith's Lane and Noverton Lane, wrapping in an L shape around the house plots of the village centre. By this date it was only 34 acres. Some plots were to be accessed from **TATCHLEY LANE**. Today that road name covers only a short piece of road leading west towards New Barn Lane from the 5-ways junction with Deep Street, but the 1732 reference is unambiguously to modern Blacksmith's Lane, on the eastern side of the junction. It appears that in 1732 the name **TATCHLEY LANE** covered the whole length of the road both west and east of the junction.

**RYEFIELD**, with 79 acres, lay immediately south of Linworth, the boundary between the two fields lying along the footpath now known as School Lane. For much of its north-south length it immediately adjoined **BOUNCER'S LANE**, so called in the Award. For plots in the east of the field, access was from **FINCHCROFT LANE**.

**AWFIELD**, 31 acres, was to the east of Ryefield, separated from it by some small enclosed fields. In terms of today's road layout, it is immediately east of the Noverton estate, its western boundary following the curved line of the footpath bordering the eastern edge of that estate.

**SANDFIELD** (also called **BEREWORTH FIELD**) extended both sides of Prestbury Road, which separated it into north and south furlongs; in the south-east it extended to **BOUNCER'S LANE**. In all it covered 64 acres. Prestbury Road itself was known as **CAKEBRIDGE HIGHWAY**.

**WATERSHOOT FIELD** (also called **WATERSHUT**) covered 120 acres in total. The main part (75 acres) lay between the area of the old deer park to the north and New Barn Lane and Swindon Lane to the south; at that date the Evesham Road had not been constructed, and the field extended west without interruption to include what is in today's terms the first field west of Evesham Road, but not the large field south of Hunting Butts farmhouse.

A further 45 acres, described as **DEADFURLONG IN WATERSHOOT**, was in the general area of Cleevelands Avenue, with **THE HIGHWAY TO SWINDON** (Swindon Lane) to the north, and Drinkseed Field to the east. There is also reference to **DICTON LANE**, not identified.

**DRINKSEED** was a big field of 136 acres. Broadly speaking it occupied most of the area between New Barn Lane, then called **WATERSHUT LANE**, and the boundary with Cheltenham. Its precise layout is difficult to establish, but it seems to have been separated from New Barn Lane along most of its length by a group of enclosed fields called Hencroft; in the west it reached more or less to the line of Albert Road. In the east it was separated from Sandfield by **DRINKSEED LANE**, which must have branched south off New Barn Lane, very probably along the line of New Barn Close.

Together, these nine fields covered most of the cultivated land in Prestbury, the overall pattern not much affected by the comparatively minor early enclosures. There remain just three blank areas on the map. The north-western corner of the parish was occupied by Hyde Farm, which had been managed separately from medieval times, serving the Bishop of Hereford's estate in Prestbury. In the heart of the parish the site of the Bishop's deer park persisted as a great oval between Westfield, Watershoot and Berryfield; in 1732 this was a prosperous independent estate, known as Prestbury Park. In the east, the steep slopes of the hill had never formed part of the open fields, and had gradually been enclosed piecemeal into a jigsaw of small irregular pasture fields, while the flatter land on the hilltop had always remained open as common pasture.

## Summary

Many of the field names of 1732 persisted into the 19th century for parts of the dismembered medieval fields, but while some no doubt remain in use among farmers and landowners, they have vanished from general use. Road names on the other hand are of continuing relevance.

In 1732 the following roads already went by the names we use in 2008, or by a recognizable variant: BOUNCER'S LANE; FINCHCROFT LANE; MILL WAY (Mill Lane); OVERTON WAY (Noverton Lane); SOUTHAM LANE (Southam Road); THE WAY TO SWINDON (Swindon Lane); also TATCHLEY LANE, though in 1732 it extended over Deep Street/ Bouncer's Lane junction to include Blacksmith's Lane.

Some have changed their name over the intervening time: Prestbury Road used to be CAKEBRIDGE HIGHWAY; Queenwood Grove had more importance as WINCHCOMBE WAY; New Barn Lane was WATERSHUT LANE; New Barn Close probably follows the line of DRINKSEED LANE; MANOUR LANE was either Spring Lane or else a lane off that road.

Other roads again are so far unidentified: CARRIERS WAY was near Gravel Pit Lane and Mill Lane; DICTON LANE in the general area of Cleavelands Avenue.

Finally, WYMAN'S BROOK and MILL BROOK were already so named, and there was a field or landscape feature called MORRICE HILL preshadowing today's Morris Hill Close.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Browne, A.L., 'Title Deeds of the Manor of Prestbury', abstracted from the Bodleian Library MS. *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucester Archaeological Society*, Vol. 75, (BGAS, 1956).

<sup>2</sup> In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the word 'enclosure' is regularly spelt 'inclosure' with the initial 'i'.

<sup>3</sup> For a more detailed account of the enclosures, see B. Elliot, 'Squire Delabere and the Inclosure of Prestbury', *CLHS, Journal* 4, (CLHS, 1986).

<sup>4</sup> Gloucestershire Archives, reference P254a SD1

<sup>5</sup> Gloucestershire Archives, reference P254/SD/2



Berryfield, looking east towards Prestbury. The Race Course is visible on the right.  
Grid reference SO965249  
*Photograph by Russell Self*



Westfield on the Swindon Village side of the Evesham Road.  
Grid reference SO952247  
*Photograph by Beryl Elliot*

# The Old Age Pension – one hundred years!

ELAINE NORTH

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*I should like to thank CLHS member John Hyett for his suggestion to include an article on this subject in the Journal and for all his help.*



The recipients of the Old-Age Pensions, at a party given by local Liberals, at The King's Hall, Cheltenham, 1 January 1909  
*Cheltenham Chronicle & Gloucestershire Graphic, 9 January 1909*

IN 1909, ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO, PARTIES WERE HELD to celebrate the introduction of the 'new' Old-Age Pension and Cheltenham was no exception. One hundred years later we may feel that we have little to celebrate and the 'state pension' is now considered by many to be a mixed blessing and perhaps something of a 'white elephant'. There are no easy answers to today's challenge of how to sustain an adequate pension for a generation that is living 20 or even 30 years beyond retirement age, a situation which would not have been envisaged in 1909. The notion that "the state will provide for our old age" is still ingrained in the minds of many but sadly no longer a reality and some of the poorest members of today's society are its pensioners.

John Hyett, a Cheltenham Local History Society Member and a 'senior' citizen, unearthed a copy of an information sheet which was included with the Prestbury Parish Magazine for December 1908 entitled 'Old Age Pensions. What they are, and how they can be obtained.' The sheet makes interesting reading and I have reproduced it here for your information and hopefully some amusement!

Perhaps we should consider the situation in the country around the turn of the century and during the years before the First World War which led to the enactment of the 'Old-Age Pension' on 1 January 1909 together with a few key personnel in Cheltenham at the time. Half a million old and very poor people, over the age of 70 and after satisfying quite stringent conditions, were very pleased then to queue at their local post offices to collect their first state pension. Nowadays, some 11 million pensions are regularly paid out to 'pensioners' currently from the age of 60 (for women) and 65 (for men) of all incomes and from all walks of life.

<p>271</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Old Age Pensions.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>What they are, and how they can be obtained.</b></p> <p><i>Introduction.</i>—Many people will be asking various questions about this matter. This leaflet is written for such persons, in as simple language as possible. It does not pretend to answer all questions that will be asked, some of the questions can only be answered by those who have to carry out the provisions of the Act of Parliament. These few questions and answers deal only with the chief questions that arise out of the matter of Old Age Pensions, and are intended for the guidance chiefly of those who will be entitled to a Pension, under the Act.</p> <p><b>I. Who can get Old Age Pensions?</b></p> <p>All who before, or on January 1st, 1909, are at least 70 years of age: all who become 70 later will be able to have a pension as soon as possible after that age, when their claim has been allowed, see further, answer to Question IV.</p> <p><i>You cannot have a pension</i></p> <p>(1) if you have an income of more than £31 10s. a year, see further, answer to Question II.</p> <p>or (2) if you have received parish pay during 1908. After 1910 it seems that a pension may be claimed instead of such pay.</p> <p>or (3) if you have refused to work according to your ability, opportunity and need.</p> <p>or (4) if you have, within the preceding 10 years, been in prison, without option of a fine.</p> <p>or (5) if, being over 60 years of age, you have been ordered or are liable to be detained under "the Inebriates Act" of 1898.</p> <p>or (6) if you are in a lunatic asylum, or are maintained elsewhere as a criminal, or pauper lunatic.</p> <p>or (7) if you are not a British subject, or have not resided in the United Kingdom during the whole of the last 20 years.</p> <p><b>II. How much can be got?</b></p> <p>That depends upon how much you have as income, without any Old Age Pension:—</p> <p>If your weekly income is 8s., that is £21 a year, or less, you will get, weekly, a pension of 5s.</p> <p>If your weekly income is over 8s., but not more than 9s. 2d., that is £23 12s. 6d. a year, you will get a weekly pension of 4s.</p> <p>If your weekly income is over 9s. 2d., but not</p>	<p>272</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OLD AGE PENSIONS.</b></p> <p>more than 10s., that is £26 5s. a year, you will get a weekly pension of 3s.</p> <p>If your weekly income is over 10s., but not more than 11s. 1d., that is £28 17s. 6d. a year, you will get a weekly pension of 2s.</p> <p>If your weekly income is over 11s. 1d., but not more than 12s. 1d., that is £31 10s. a year, you will get a pension of 1s.</p> <p>If your weekly income is more than 12s. 1d., that is £31 10s. a year, you cannot get any pension.</p> <p>It is most important to know that in the word "means" or "income" is included other things than cash; it includes such things as living in a house rent free, free board and lodging, clothes and other gifts. The value of any or all of these must be taken into account in reckoning what your "means" are. And if you have money in the house, to any extent, not put out to interest, the value of that, at a certain rate of interest, will be included in your "means."</p> <p><b>NOTE.</b>—If your yearly income either rises or falls, after you have become a pensioner, you will be dealt with accordingly; in the former case you will get less pension, in the latter case you will get more pension.</p> <p>No one will be allowed to lessen his or her income, so as to qualify for an Old Age Pension. You will have to be very careful in reckoning, and stating your income, for any wilfully false statements will be severely punished.</p> <p>The Government Officials will tell you exactly how to calculate your yearly income.</p> <p><b>III. How will the Income of a Husband and Wife be reckoned?</b></p> <p>The Act says, "In calculating the means of a claimant who is one of a married couple living together in the same house the means shall be taken as at least half the total means of the couple."</p> <p>This means, that if each of the couple is over 70 years of age, and their total means do not exceed £42 per annum, they are each entitled to a 5s. weekly pension. If their total means exceed £42, but are not more than £53 per annum, they are each entitled to a pension of either 4s., 3s., 2s., or 1s. per week according to their means. But if their total means exceed £63 a year, both of them will be disqualified for any pension.</p> <p><b>IV. When can an Old Age Pension be got?</b></p> <p>Old Age Pensions will begin to be reckoned from January 1st, 1909, and will begin to be paid on a day settled by the Authorities, of which each Pensioner will be given due notice, and will be paid to all persons whose Claim has been allowed. After that they will be paid from the first Friday</p>	<p>after the Claim has been allowed: for example, a person who becomes 70 years of age on any date after January 1st, 1909, can send in the Claim 4 months before he or she will become 70, and will receive his or her proper Pension as soon as possible after he or she is actually that age.</p> <p><b>V. How can an Old Age Pension be got?</b></p> <p>You must first get a Form of Application at any Post Office. These can be had at any Post Office, now, without any charge. Then you must fill up that Form; next you must hand in that Form at that Post Office at which you wish your Pension to be paid. <i>It must not be posted.</i></p> <p><b>NOTE.</b>—At some time after your claim has been handed in to the Post Office, a Pension Officer will come to see you; he will make all such enquiries as he may think necessary.</p> <p>When your Claim has been allowed, you will be given a book of Pension Orders, one of which you will have to take, or send, to the Post Office that you have chosen, every week, on the day named by the Government. Pensions will be paid a week in advance. Of course you cannot have any Pension before January 1st, 1909.</p> <p>It is advisable for you to send in your Claim as once, if you are already 70 years old, or if you will be that age on any day in January, 1909. You can send in a claim 4 months before you reach the age of 70.</p> <p><b>VI. How am I to prove that I am 70 years old?</b></p> <p>No doubt there will be a good deal of difficulty in many cases, but if there is any doubt about your age the Pension Officer, who will call upon you, will require you to furnish him with evidence, such as a Certificate of Birth, or of Baptism, or of Marriage, if your age was then entered, or any other evidence that will throw light upon your present age.</p> <p><b>NOTE.</b>—You need not furnish any such evidence at the time you hand in your Claim to the Post Office, but must be prepared to do so when the Pension Officer calls to see you, as he will do later.</p> <p>The object of all the enquiries is not to stop anyone who may be entitled to a Pension from getting one, but to prevent all those who have no such right. Wilfully false statements of any kind about yourself or any other person will subject all such persons to very severe punishment.</p> <p><b>NOTE.</b>—There is no Charge made by any Pension Officer for any advice given.</p> <p><b>NOTE.</b>—The above is copyright. Copies, with other information inserted, can be obtained from the Rev. W. C. Tulung, Stihney Vicarage, Helston, Cornwall. Price 1s. each, post free. Reduction for over 12 copies.</p>
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In 1902 George Barnes, General Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, formed the National Committee of Organised Labour for Old Age Pension. He spent the next three years travelling the country urging this social welfare reform. Today, his great-great nephew, Peter Barnes lives in Barnwood, near Cheltenham. He put on a party for local residents in December 2008 to celebrate the work of his great-great grandfather.

Interestingly, the pensions nearly failed to get off the ground. In 1908 the Commons had agreed to the introduction of Old Age Pensions but the financing of them (£8million, to be paid for by large tax increases) was to be the subject of the 1909 budget, the People's Budget, and that budget when presented on 29 April 1909 by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer in Herbert Asquith's Liberal Government, the Hon. David Lloyd George, who was determined to take action that in his own words would 'lift the shadow of the workhouse from the homes of the poor'. He felt the best way of doing this was to ensure an income for those who were too old to work. The Budget proposals sailed through the Commons with support from most Labour Party members but were thrown out by the Lords, where there was a large Conservative majority who objected to this apparent attempt to redistribute wealth,

causing widespread furore and political ructions. In 1895, Edward VII, then Prince of Wales had said,

*'I have taken the deepest interest in the long and laborious inquiry of the Royal Commission on the Aged Poor. In not attaching my signature to the report I do not mean to express disapproval of it. I feel that as the subject has become to a considerable extent one of party controversy, both inside and outside parliament, it has assumed a phase inconsistent with my position of political neutrality'.*

In 1909, Edward, now King, like the Lords refused to tolerate the budget. He thought the proletariat should subscribe to Friendly Societies in preparation for their old age and this at a time when farm labourers were often earning less than ten shillings a week. The King opposed the rise in income tax which he said could only be used for war purposes and we were not at war. Lloyd George, in his Budget speech of 1909 retaliated by saying,

*'This is a war Budget. It is for raising money to wage implacable warfare against poverty and squalidness[sic]. I cannot help hoping and believing that before this generation has passed away, we shall have advanced a great step towards that good time, when poverty, and the wretchedness and human degradation which always follows in its camp, will be as remote to the people of this country as the wolves which once infested its forests'.*

The friction continued through to August 1909 when Asquith was summoned to attend the King on his yacht at Cowes where he was told that the provocation had to stop. On 27 September the King was at Balmoral. McKenna, as Minister in Attendance told the King that a rejection of the Budget would be so unprecedented that it would require immediate legislation to define and limit the Upper House's powers. The second reading of the Budget took place on 5 November 1909 and was passed in the Commons by 379 votes to 149, but again the Finance Bill was subsequently rejected by the Lords by 350 votes to 79. Asquith had previously warned the King that if the Lords rejected the Budget he would seek a dissolution hoping that he would be able to return to power and that Lord Lansdowne would honour a promise made that if that was so then the Lords would pass the Budget.

The January 1910 election left Asquith with a majority of two, but with the help of 40 Labour members and 82 Irish Nationalists he was able to govern. Lansdowne kept his promise and the Lords voted the Budget through. As a result of the long struggle and conflict, the Liberal Government passed the 1911 Parliament Act that restricted the power of the House of Lords to block legislation passed by the House of Commons. The ruling still stands today that the Lords are only able to veto a Commons bill twice before being automatically passed on its third reading.

Before 1906 the Conservative Party had a strong presence in Cheltenham. James Tynte Agg-Gardner<sup>1</sup> was elected in 1885 as the town's MP and re-elected in 1886, 1892, and again in 1900 (Col. Francis S. Russell, MP, also Conservative, representing Cheltenham, 1895-1900). In 1906, the Liberal non-conformist J. E. Sears was elected Member of Parliament for Cheltenham and remained so for the next four years. Sears was not a local man. The son of a Baptist minister, he had trained as an architect and lived in London.<sup>2</sup> The Liberals' home in Cheltenham at this time was Albion House<sup>3</sup>



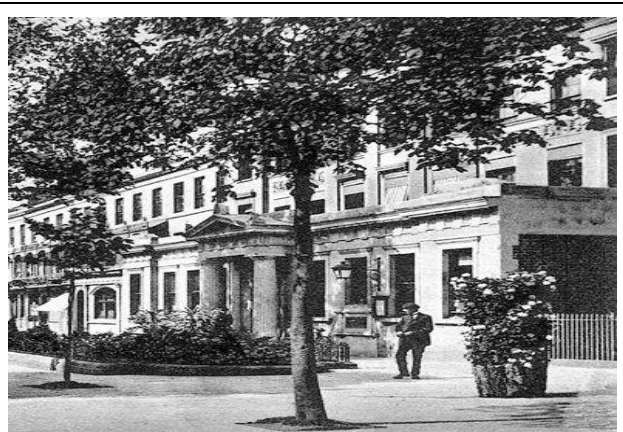
J. E. Sears  
Photo courtesy of Geoff  
& Elaine North

in North Street, having been purchased by the Cheltenham Liberal Club Company in 1886 for around £1,000 and subsequently known as the Cheltenham Liberal Club.

Following the Old Age Pensions Act of 1 August 1908, Cheltenham's Town Council constituted itself a Pension Committee for administering the Act. In order to remove any stigma associated with receiving 'benefit', the Old-Age Pension was to be paid from post offices with effect from 1 January 1909. At this time the town would appear to have been well-served by sub-post offices which I assume were able to pay out pensions to local residents. *The Cheltenham and Gloucestershire Directory (Annuaire)* of 1905, in addition to the General Post Office situated in the Promenade, lists sub-post offices at 73 High Street, Keynsham Street, Townsend

Place, Tewkesbury Road, Montpellier, Tivoli, Gloucester Road, Great Norwood Street, St. Mark's, Pittville, Hewlett Street, Albion Street, St. Paul's, Lower High Street, Bath Road, Moorend, Charlton Kings, and Charlton Church. *The 'Looker-On' Directory for Cheltenham and Gloucestershire* of 1914 includes reference to the Customs, Excise and Old Age Pensions' Offices at 25, Cambay and an additional post-office by that time in St. George's Road.<sup>4</sup> Many of these local post offices have now either disappeared or are under threat of closure.

Our 'General Post Office' is now housed upstairs in the High Street store of W H Smith. Reading a letter in the *Gloucestershire Echo* recently from 'Disgruntled Pensioner' unhappy about having to queue to collect his pension at this 'office' after fighting through bustling crowds and struggling up flights of stairs I can't help feeling that today's pensioners are getting a raw deal.



The General Post Office, The Promenade  
Photograph courtesy of Geoff & Elaine North

<sup>1</sup> The Rt. Hon. Sir James Tynte Agg-Gardener, P.C., M.P. was elected a further five times as Member of Parliament for Cheltenham between 1911 and 1924. On 30<sup>th</sup> October 1896 he was admitted as Freeman of the Borough of Cheltenham. He was also Mayor of Cheltenham 1909-1910.

<sup>2</sup> 'A political problem: local Liberal candidates at the 1910 General Election' by John Howe, CLHS *Journal* 11 1994/1995.

<sup>3</sup> For more information about the history of Albion House and the liberals in Cheltenham see 'Albion House – the First 200 Years', Tom Maslin, CLHS *Journal* 22 pp. 22-28.

<sup>4</sup> By 1958 the number of sub-post offices in the town had further increased, see 'Where is your Nearest Post Office?', Mick Kippin, CLHS *Journal* 24 2008.



# The Tale of the Teapot

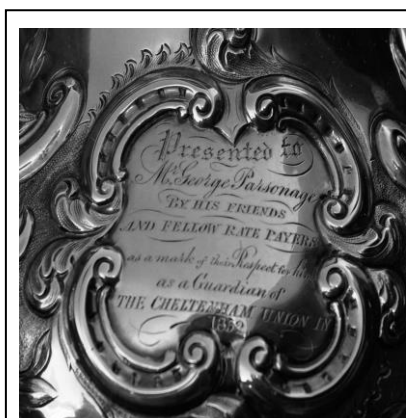
JOYCE CUMMINGS and VIC COLE

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*The email enquiry was nothing out of the ordinary – it read 'I am the great great granddaughter of George Parsonage who was Mayor of Cheltenham around 1840. I am looking for any pictures or information you may have of him, Carol, Sante Fe, New Mexico.'*<sup>1</sup>

IT SOON BECAME CLEAR THAT LITTLE WAS KNOWN OF THE GREAT GREAT GRANDFATHER either side of the Atlantic except that there was a silver tea set from Cheltenham in Sante Fe. Researches led us to an early mayor, George Parsonage, who was known locally as 'The Whittington of Cheltenham.'<sup>2</sup> He had a life that, in many ways, matched that of the original; a young man looking for adventure, whom partly by lucky chance and his own hard work, gained substantial means, exerted influence in public affairs and attained the highest of civic offices. Of humble background, he was born on 5 February 1815 at Market Drayton, Shropshire, one of eleven children. His father, Edward Parsonage was a well-respected plumber, but having so many children he had no means of giving them much education. However he did ensure his sons learnt his trade and the business thoroughly.

At the age of 17 George Parsonage realised that with so many brothers and limited work available in Market Drayton, he had to go out into the world and seek his fortune. Firstly, he went to Liverpool and Manchester, where for a short time he worked at his trade. In April 1835 he left the district with the intention of going to London, travelling via Cheltenham by the stage coach 'Hirondelle'. He stayed the night with Mr S. Bourne, (who had been apprenticed to his father) who persuaded him to stay in Cheltenham. He then worked for Messrs. Humphris, builders, and became their foreman, eventually setting up his own business in St George's Parade, part of which he built.<sup>3</sup> In 1861 he employed 70 men and 12 boys.<sup>4</sup>



Inscription on silver coffee pot presented to G. Parsonage, 1852  
*Photo courtesy of the family*

In 1841 he married Anna Butt, daughter of Henry Butt of Alstone: a relationship that arose from his being in charge of the Brighton Sunday Schools in Lower Alstone.<sup>5</sup> A seated portrait of her entitled, 'Mrs George Parsonage nee Anna Butt' by an unknown artist is in the Art Gallery donated by her grandson Rev. Canon G.F. Seaver.<sup>6</sup> Active as a Conservative in local politics, he was also a Guardian of Up-Hatherley Workhouse, in which capacity he rooted out fraud and irregularities, carried out by the Master and the Matron over many years. For this public service in March 1852 he was rewarded with a silver tea and coffee service and a gold watch and chain. The year 1854 was an auspicious one for him; not only did he design and build the Cheltenham Exhibition, at the Royal Old Well in June, but he also elected to a seat on the newly formed Cheltenham governing body. As Commissioner, Town Councillor and Alderman for Cheltenham and as High Bailiff for the Manor, his contribution and

influence lasted until his death on 3 December 1891. He strongly opposed the proposal of the East Gloucestershire Railway Company to tunnel under Montpellier and Bayshill where he was a large owner of property. He never rose to speak except when he had something to say with a definite purpose and when he did, his words carried weight and influence. His style of speaking was not pretentious; it was vigorous and terse, almost to abruptness.<sup>7</sup>

In 1883 he was presented with specially embroidered gloves for his official work. He remains Cheltenham's longest serving Mayor; to honour this achievement in the fifth consecutive year of his Mayoralty he was presented with a silver-gilt mace and a full length portrait of himself in his official robes, painted by the artist Knighton Warren.<sup>8</sup> Subsequently the portrait was hung in the Council Chamber and he presented the Mace to the Borough. The Mace was draped in black and carried before the hearse at his semi-state funeral from his home to St Mary's church, stopping at the Municipal Offices to be followed by the full Council.<sup>9</sup> However success in public office was not matched in his family life. Anna died in 1857, aged 45 and five of the eight children born to them predeceased her. Those surviving were the first born, Edward, born 1842; Mary born in 1851, who died in 1874, and Emily, born 1855.<sup>10</sup>

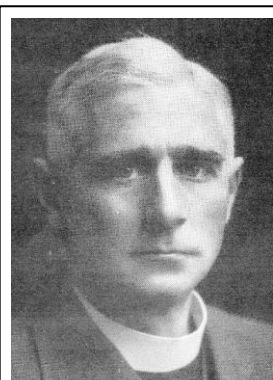
Edward Parsonage joined his father on the Council, serving 27 years and distinguishing himself in the reorganisation of the Workhouse and the building of the infirmaries and chapel. On his death in 1909 the Town Clerk referred to his intimate knowledge of the Workhouse buildings; it was said that he knew every brick.<sup>11</sup> He married Ellen, his eldest stepsister, from George's second marriage to a widow, Sarah Creed. They had one child who died aged three. Ellen passed away in 1901 and he married Emma Sandford in 1902. He was a regular worshipper, churchwarden and sideman at Christ Church.<sup>12</sup>

Emily Parsonage losing her mother at a very young age grew up in the care of her sister Mary, then her stepsister Sophia. It was said that she resembled her mother Anna Butt in features and disposition and her father in strong will, sound judgement and foresight. She proved herself indispensable to her father when she took on the role of Mayoress, on the death of George's second wife Sarah Creed.<sup>13</sup> During this time she met a young Irish curate, the Rev. William Seaver. After he obtained a position at St Luke's, Cheltenham in January 1888, they married at Christ Church. A quiet wedding was arranged as there had been two recent deaths in the bride's family, but three or four hundred spectators arrived. The bride's dress was of shot silk, sage green and plum coloured. The ceremony was performed by the bridegroom's father and brothers.<sup>14</sup> A small family wedding breakfast had been prepared, the cake was a marvel of the confectioner's art; it weighed 60lb, was profusely decorated and was supplied by the local bakers, Messrs. Locke and Son. Before the wedding ceremony an address was presented to the bridegroom recording warm appreciation of his ready and willing spirit in his work of ministering to the sick and needy in the lanes and alleyways of St John's parish, one of the poorest in Belfast.<sup>15</sup>

Curate at St Paul's, Cheltenham<sup>16</sup> in 1901, Edward and Emily had three children, Mary Violet, born December 1888, George Fenn, 1890, both born at Western Lawn, followed Eviene born in 1898 at Felixstowe, who died young. George Fenn Seaver followed his forebears into the Ministry, becoming the Rev. Canon Seaver: he was a caring and compassionate man, who never married and who gained world-wide fame as an author. His books included those on fellow Cheltonian Dr

Edward Wilson, 'Birdie Bowers' and Scott of the ill-fated exhibition to Antarctica, Albert Schweitzer, Charles Kingsley and several others.<sup>17</sup>

Joseph Seaver was living in Mexico and came back to England to fight in the First World War and ran into George at a club in London, both getting up to answer a page calling for a Mr Seaver; so they both laughed and found that they were distant cousins. George then asked Joseph to come home for the weekend and meet the family. When he saw Violet it was love at first sight. He and Violet married when the war ended and he took her back to Mexico. They had three children, Rosemary, Jonathan and Heather. Joseph insisted that the first two were born (and later schooled) in England. Heather, for some unknown reason was born in Mexico and educated in the U.S.A. Joseph and Violet stayed in Mexico for the rest of their lives, they loved the people and the country.<sup>18</sup>



George Seaver, 1933;  
Photo courtesy of  
the family

The answer to this tale was found in the will of Edward Parsonage, dated 9 September, 1902, living at 'Western Villas', Cheltenham.<sup>19</sup>

*I bequeath the Gold Watch and Chain which formerly belonged to my late father my Encyclopaedia Britannica and the bookcase containing it and also my Century Dictionary to my nephew[sic] George Fenn Seaver. I give to my wife Emma Parsonage and my sister Emily Sarah Seaver all the presentation gifts of chattels made to my late father which belong to me Upon thrust to permit my said wife to have use and enjoyment thereof for her life and after her death Upon trust for the said Emily Sarah Seaver her executors administrators and assigns absolutely But I*

*request the said Emily Sarah Seaver, but not so as to impose any trust in respect of the said chattel or to fetter her absolute freedom in dealing therewith, not to part with any such chattels but to keep them during her lifetime and to do her best to provide for their remaining in the her family after her death in memory of my said father ...'*

<sup>1</sup> Full name is not supplied for privacy reasons.

<sup>2</sup> 'Editors Requests' Journal **23**, (2007) Cheltenham Local History Society.

<sup>3</sup> Obituary of George Parsonage, *Cheltenham Examiner*, 9 December 1891, p.8 col. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Census 1861 Cheltenham.

<sup>5</sup> Marriage certificate, Parish Register, St Mary's, Cheltenham.

<sup>6</sup> Portrait recalled by Vic Cole as hanging in the defunct 'Fashion Gallery' at Pittville Pump Room.

<sup>7</sup> Obituary George Parsonage.

<sup>8</sup> Photograph supplied by Carol.

<sup>9</sup> Obituary George Parsonage.

<sup>10</sup> Gloucestershire Family History Society; <http://www.gfhs.org.uk> look-up service.

<sup>11</sup> Council tributes to Edward Parsonage, *Cheltenham Examiner*, 25 February 1909, p.5 col.6.

<sup>12</sup> Gloucestershire Family History Society look-up service.

<sup>13</sup> Sarah Creed died in 1884, in the second year of George's mayoralty.

<sup>14</sup> The Ven. The Archdeacon of Connor, D.D., incumbent of St John's, Belfast, the bridegroom's father, assisted by the bridegroom's brothers.

<sup>15</sup> Wedding report and address, *Cheltenham Examiner*, 11 January 1888, p.4, col.7.

<sup>16</sup> St Paul's church magazine; Census 1901.

<sup>17</sup> Searches using the Irish Genealogist, <http://www.igrsoc.org.ie>

<sup>18</sup> Family memorabilia supplied by Carol.

<sup>19</sup> Gloucester Probate Registry, copy of Will held at Gloucestershire Archive; the will of Edward Parsonage is quoted using the original spelling.

# Mr. Balfour – A popular Headmaster

JOYCE CUMMINGS

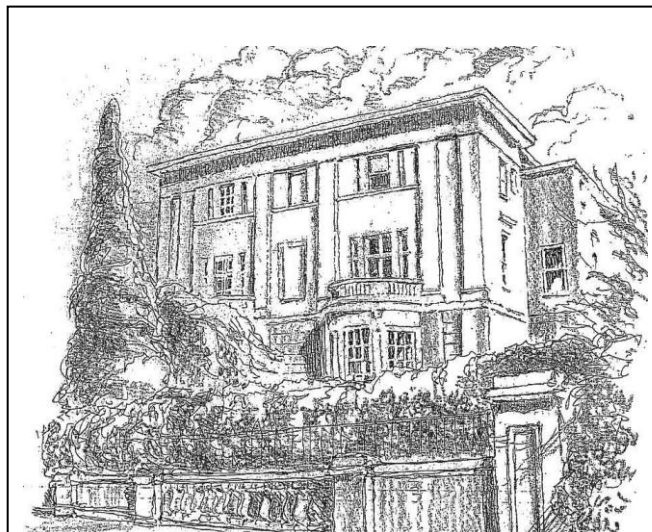
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Editor's note: The copy of five original testimonials was supplied by Dana Hutcheson, a descendent of Marcus Sisson, who is mentioned in the last testimonial. 1 & 2 Segrave Villas, (now Mercian Court) is presumably Seagrave House. The list of pupils mentioned in the last testimonial is interesting.

*'Mr. Balfour has many other letters of more recent date equally satisfactory – but as nine of his pupils follow him from Chester where he last resided, he deems it unnecessary to offer here further Testimonials.*

*'Reference is kindly permitted to the Rev. W.S. Phillips, Chaplain to the Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, Cathedral House, Gloucester, and the Rev. W.M. Kinsey, St. John's Lodge, Cheltenham.*

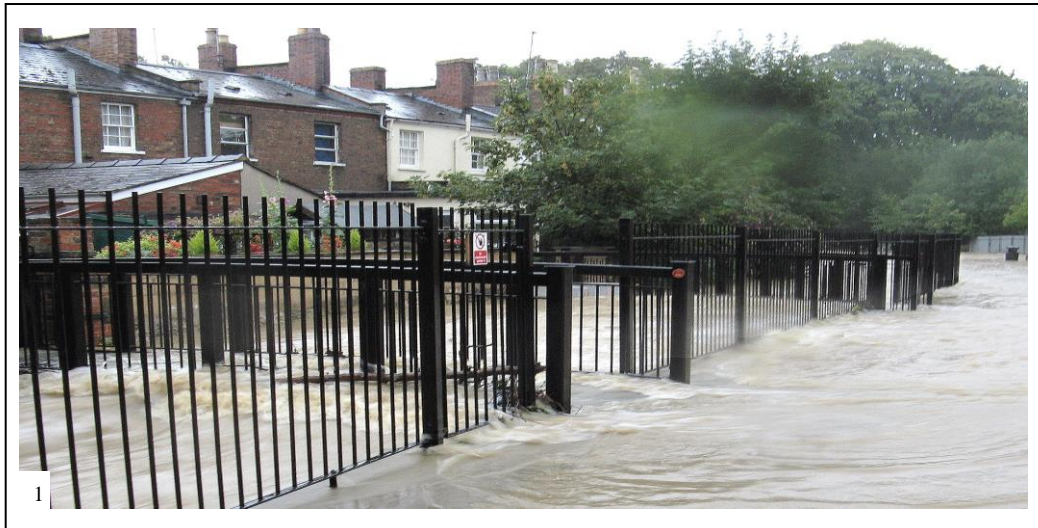
*'The Pupils at present at Seagrave House, are – one son of General Sir J.W. Guise, Bart.; two of Lieutenant General Sir R. Darling; one of Sir M.G. Smith, Bart.; one of John Peart Esq.; one of Colonel Thackwell; one of Dr Conolly; one of P.V. Onslow Esq., near Worcester; two of T. Webster, Esq., Poolton, near Liverpool; one of T. Prickard, Esq., Ddrew, House, Rhayad[...], Radnorshire; two of D'Arcy Hutton, Esq., Aldburgh Hall, Bedale, Yorkshire, one of Mullins, Esq, Barrister, Dublin, one of John Skipwith, Esq., Cheltenham, one nephew of W.H.Prescod, Esq., Cheltenham, one nephew of S.M. da Silva, Esq., Cheltenham; one son of Edmund Scott, Esq. Cheltenham; one of the Rev. R.N. Raikes, Longhope Vicarage; two of [.]J. Doran, Esq, Cheltenham, one of T. Pickford, Esq. Mayfield, near Manchester, one of Capt. Sisson, Cheltenham, &c.'*



1 & 2 Segrave Villas, The Place.  
(now the site of Mercian Court)  
By courtesy of Aylwin Sampson

# Cheltenham Floods July 2007

Cheltenham has had several notable floods and the one that occurred at the end of July 2007 will stay in the inhabitants' memory for many years.<sup>1</sup> Not only were many lives disrupted and buildings flooded, but the water supply was cut off for ten days, and the town was close to evacuation owing to circumstances at Mythe Waterworks, Tewkesbury and the Walham Electricity Sub-station, Gloucester. The event has already passed into local history and these photographs, taken by Mary Nelson, Cheltenham LHS member, form part of an important record for the future.<sup>2</sup>



- 1 River Chelt
- 2 Canterbury Walk
- 3 Neptune Fountain
- 4 Hatherley Parade
- 5 Bath Road
- 6 Keynsham Road



<sup>1</sup> See also article CLHS, Journal 23, Mick Kippin.,

<sup>2</sup> Some of Mary Nelson's photographs are available for purchase at CLHS events. The production of the centre pages are supported by a grant from the Severn Trent Water Community Fund.



**The view from Bredon's Norton hilltop looking north over the flooded River Chelt joining the flooded River Severn at Wainlode, with the Malvern Hills in the distance.  
29 July 2007**



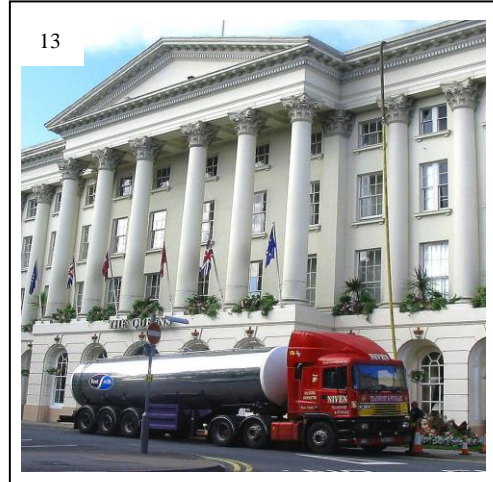
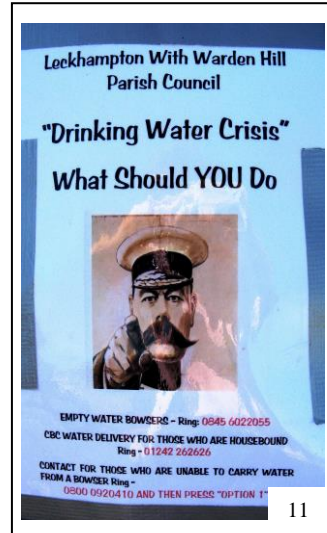
**Playhouse Theatre, Bath Road, Cheltenham. The vehicles had been abandoned, 20 July 2007**



**River Chelt overflowing into Sandford Park East, near Keynsham Road entrance, Cheltenham, 20 July 2007, 7:38pm**



**After the floods, Bath Parade, Cheltenham. Repair work was still ongoing in many properties and was to continue for many more weeks, 9 October 2007**



- 7 & 8 Morrison's Carpark
- 9 & 10 Water bowzers
- 11 Poster on a bowser at Warden Hill
- 12 Portaloos, St George's Road
- 13 The Queens Hotel, The Promenade
- 14 Winchester Way

For full details of photographs 1-14 see inside back cover



# ‘Every measure that may gratify the public’; Humphrey Ruff’s Contribution to Cheltenham

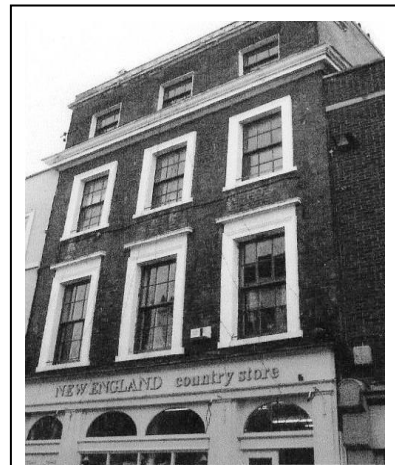
CAROLYN GREET

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TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO, ON 4 MAY 1809, A LANDMARK PUBLICATION in the history of Cheltenham appeared - the first edition of the town’s earliest local newspaper, the *Cheltenham Chronicle*. Gloucester could already boast two local papers, the *Glocester* [sic] *Herald* and the *Gloucester Journal*, the latter founded as far back as 1730, but despite the immense increase in the town’s popularity over the past twenty-five years, Cheltenham had so far relied for local publicity on these, and Gloucester was not noticeably keen on publicising its rival nine miles away.

The ‘H. RUFF’ whose name proudly appeared on the *Cheltenham Chronicle* as Printer and Publisher, was no stranger to such an undertaking, for some eight years previously he had started the *Glocester Herald*. He was not however a native of either town: his family came from Worcester where for several generations they had followed the traditional local craft of glove-making. His parents, Humphrey and Jane, lived at 51 Broad Street and here Humphrey junior was born in May 1773.<sup>1</sup> He was baptised at the nearby church of All Saints, as were his elder brother and sister.<sup>2</sup> His father died ‘much respected’ according to the local newspaper,<sup>3</sup> in February 1796 at the age of 68. On Christmas Day 1797<sup>4</sup> at the age of 24, Humphrey, who had joined his father and elder brother Henry in the business, married Ann Warder<sup>5</sup> of Mitton, near Tewkesbury, and for at least the next twelve months the couple lived with Humphrey’s brother and widowed mother at Broad Street. Humphrey and Ann’s eldest child, Jane, was baptised at All Saints on 6 January 1799, but within a few months the small family moved to Gloucester where Humphrey began a new career as printer and publisher. Although Humphrey Ruff senior apparently did not leave a will, it is possible that he left his younger son enough money to start this unexpected venture.

Ruff’s press at Gloucester was in St. John’s Lane. At first he printed small items such as handbills, cards, posters and estate agents’ particulars which would have provided a regular income. His sights were set much higher however, and in October 1801 he started the *Glocester Herald*. Exactly why he felt there was a need for a second paper in the town is not obvious; the *Journal* was long-established and well respected, and from the editions of Ruff’s *Herald* that have survived it does not appear to have been so different from the *Journal* in either style or



The Ruff family home in Broad Street, Worcester  
Photo by Carolyn Greet

content. Both contained four pages, cost 6d and appeared weekly, the *Herald* on Saturday and the *Journal* on Monday. Unfortunately the earliest editions of the paper have not survived so we do not know any reasons Ruff himself may have given. In any case, he was soon to abandon it; just over a year later the edition of 27 November 1802 carried an announcement that ‘in future the Paper, with other Departments of the Concern, will be confided to the management of Mr. G.F. Harris’.

Four months later the *Herald* carried a further announcement by Ruff that he was opening another printing office, also in St. John’s Lane. Perhaps he felt that there was sufficient business for another, particularly as this advertisement appealed specifically to ‘Gentlemen of the Law’. There may have been a more personal reason, however; it included the intriguing assertion that ‘he has NO CONNECTION WHATEVER with the Gloucester Herald Newspaper Office’. Had Ruff fallen out with Mr. Harris? The fact that all subsequent advertisements placed by Ruff appeared in the *Journal* rather than the *Herald* does tend to suggest so.

In any case, Ruff was now involved in a new and more ambitious venture, the Cheltenham Literary Press, as he proudly announced in February 1803:

*‘H. RUFF*

*Begs leave to inform the Public in general, and Literary Gentlemen in particular, that he has BUILT and OPENED an OFFICE at CHELTENHAM, upon an extensive scale; where he will be enabled to print Books of ever so voluminous a nature, Pamphlets, Particulars, Club Articles, Posting-Bills, Hand-Bills, Cards etc. on the same terms as at Gloucester. As he has several Works already in the Press, (which will appear to the world with all possible expedition), he feels confident, from the elegance and correctness with which they will be executed, that they will meet the encouragement of a liberal Public.’*

The ‘several works already in the Press’ may have been a slightly optimistic spin, but the main point of the advertisement followed:

*‘Among the Works which H. RUFF is about to print, is the following:-  
.... THE HISTORY OF CHELTENHAM AND ITS ENVIRONS;  
Containing a particular account of the Waters, Amusements, Public Buildings, and Places of Resort; also the various Walks, Rides, Picturesque Scenery, and Gentlemen’s Seats, which surround the town of Cheltenham. Adorned with an elegant Frontispiece (View of Cheltenham), designed by Mr. Burden, and engraved by Mr. Aiken.*

*The above Work is intended as a correct and useful Guide. It will be found to contain the most useful and necessary information, without entering into laboured points of antiquity, or digressing into trivial topics of common remark. As the town of Cheltenham has of late assumed a considerable degree of importance from the great and regular influx of visitors of the first rank and distinction – and as its local scenery is peculiarly rural and picturesque – it is hoped that every Visitor, and the Public at large, will patronize a Work which is intended to gratify the man of pleasure, taste and research.*

*The Authorities of Atkins, Rudder, Lysons, and others, will be freely resorted to; and the most valuable and important matter will be compressed into a clear, succinct and intelligent point of view.'*

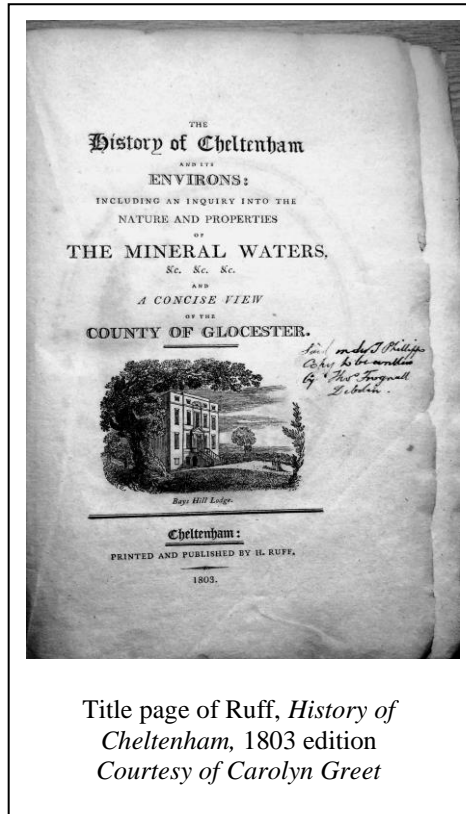
This was not, of course, the first guide to the town to be produced. The earliest had appeared in 1781 – *The Cheltenham Guide or Useful Companion in a Journey of Health and Pleasure to the Cheltenham Spa* by W. Butler. It is a slim volume of 98 pages, plus a lamentable poem singing 'The Praises of Cheltenham Well', and two letters, one highly critical of the town, the other refuting the former. Eight pages describe Cheltenham's history and situation, followed by 26 giving brief details of the church, school, local produce and public walks. A further 19 pages deal with the spa waters, their properties and the recommendations for taking them, followed by 36 describing nearby places such as Dowdeswell, Charlton Kings and Postlip, mentioning in particular the seats of local gentry. A final five pages give some additional useful information about hire of sedan chairs, costs of the stage coach and the proposed plan for a canal from the Severn. The book would have been a concise and useful accompaniment to anyone visiting the still very small town.

Two years later Simeon Moreau, Cheltenham's first Master of Ceremonies, published his *Tour to Cheltenham Spa, or Gloucestershire Display'd*. This was a more substantial work and went through eight editions over the next 14 years. Like the earlier *Guide*, this begins with the history of the town, though the chapter entitled 'Owners of Cheltenham' rather confusingly also contains brief information about the church, markets and subscriptions to the Rooms. All this having been covered in 22 pages, he then devotes the next chapter to the spa waters and their qualities. The rest of the volume, some 120 pages, deals with the county as a whole and includes long descriptions of Gloucester and the other major towns, before ending with some rather sketchy 'Rides near Cheltenham', dominated by historical footnotes. The final items are a series of Itineraries showing the routes and distances between Cheltenham and 30 towns, including Nottingham, Aberystwyth and Poole, plus Worcester to Hereford and Tetbury to Gloucester, and a fascinating set of 'Directions for Travellers when to pass the Severn'. Although the title-page of the book claimed that it contained 'An Account of Cheltenham in its improved State', in fact it gives little impression of the town as a whole and would have been far more useful to those touring the whole county, as indeed the sub-title suggests.

Ruff's *History* appeared in September 1803, though without the specified frontispiece, which for some unexplained reason - 'a neglect which the Editor could neither foresee nor prevent' – could not be included. Anxious not to go back on his word, he instead included as frontispiece a charming oval vignette by Spornberg<sup>6</sup> of the view across Church Meadow to St. Mary's Church and the Great House; for good measure he added to the title page a small (anonymous) illustration of Bay's Hill Lodge where the King had stayed in 1788, and illustrated the chapter on the Spa with a picture of the Well Walk, again by Spornberg.

The *History* is generally referred to as 'Ruff's' and his is certainly the name appearing at the foot of the Preface, but in fact it seems that the work was compiled by Thomas Frognall Dibdin. Dibdin was born in Calcutta in 1776<sup>7</sup> but after both his parents died while returning to England in 1780, Thomas was brought up by relatives

in Reading.<sup>8</sup> He graduated from Oxford, then studied law and briefly became a lawyer in Worcester, before changing career for the church and being ordained priest in 1805. He came to the attention of Earl Spencer of Althorp who appointed him his librarian and became his patron, and it was while working at Althorp that in 1809 Dibdin published *Bibliomania*, a lively account of ‘the history, symptoms and cure of this fatal disease’ and a work which was influential in establishing interest in book-collecting. An earlier printed work however, and the one which initially brought him to the notice of Earl Spencer, was *An Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics*, published in 1802 – by Humphrey Ruff in Gloucester.



Title page of Ruff, *History of Cheltenham*, 1803 edition  
Courtesy of Carolyn Greet

Dibdin and Ruff had presumably encountered each other in Worcester, where the two young men, admittedly from rather different social strata but much of an age, both with lively minds and hoping to make their independent ways in the world, may well have met within the limited circles of a small market town. The Ruff family home in Broad Street was very close to Bridge Street, where Dibdin lived during his short time in the town.<sup>9</sup> He had been fascinated by books and particularly by their formats, bindings and illustrations since childhood,<sup>10</sup> so Ruff’s decision to move to Gloucester and become a printer must have interested him and when seeking to publish his *Introduction* it would be natural that he should think of Ruff, by then over in Gloucester but not so many miles distant.

It would be interesting to know whose idea it was to produce a history of Cheltenham; perhaps it was a joint plan, hatched during the period 1802-3 while Dibdin was becoming more disillusioned with law and attracted to the church. Why did Dibdin not acknowledge authorship of the *History*? Possibly he felt that this was too lightweight a project for him to be openly associated with at this critical point in his career; at any rate his name is nowhere mentioned. Ruff’s Preface acknowledges that he had collaborators whose ‘aid has not been confined to mere information, but [they] have furnished me with those paragraphs from which the reader will receive the most satisfaction’. They (though the plural seems to have been a fiction) did not want public acknowledgment, though ‘It would have been a pleasure to me to have announced their names’.

It is impossible to tell exactly how much of the text is Dibdin’s, though we probably have to assume that most of it came from his pen. Certainly the style of much of the *History* reflects the general description given of his writing as lively and amusing with ‘an irrepressible flow of idiosyncratic and obscure anecdotes’.<sup>11</sup> Whoever the author, he is interested in many topics, fully aware of current preoccupations and interests, and capable on occasions of quite sharp criticism. Above all, he is practical and enthusiastic, the latter a quality later amply demonstrated by

Ruff in other undertakings. While acknowledging, therefore, that ultimate responsibility for the *History* almost certainly rests with Dibdin, it seems most practical to continue to refer to the author as Ruff.

The Preface set out reasons for producing the book. As the writer pointed out, the last edition of Moreau's book had appeared six years previously, since when there had been 'vast alterations and improvements' in the town. There was more than a desire to update information however; Ruff felt that Moreau's *Tour* was deficient in both content – it concentrated too much on 'ancient customs and forms', he felt – and particularly arrangement. Rather unkindly he pointed out that 'Mr. Moreau's arrangement was so extremely perplexed, that, unless nearly the whole was read through, when any particular information was wanted, the reader would find himself obliged to lay down the book without being satisfied'. This was slightly unfair, as Moreau had included a brief 'Table of Contents', but Ruff's own arrangement was undoubtedly more helpful and practical; his Contents page listed the chapters with general headings such as 'Accommodations and Amusements' then subdivided each, giving the page number for each subject, e.g. 'Russell's Boarding and Lodging House, 43, - Billiard Tables, 51, - Musical Library, 58.' Ruff clearly feared that despite his strictures on Moreau his own work was rather too similar to it for comfort. Stating somewhat defensively that 'were this book collated with Mr. Moreau's, more would appear to be borrowed from him than I am prepared to allow', he acknowledged that he had transcribed Moreau's account of the Royal Tour, part of his account of the spa waters and a few of his 'multifarious notes'. Any other similarities, he insisted, were solely because both he and Moreau had used the same sources, the writers Rudder<sup>12</sup> and Atkyns.<sup>13</sup> His, Ruff's, work was fuller, more accurate and showed above all 'a degree of method and perspicuity most unaccountably neglected in [Moreau's] book'. Perhaps fortunately, Moreau had died two years earlier.

The opening chapter covered the history of the town, though instead of discussing at length 'dry and difficult points [...] to gratify the antiquarian', Ruff kept the section brief and uncontroversial, bringing the history up to date with the present Lord Sherborne (or 'Shireborne', to use his spelling). Having dealt with these to him rather less interesting points, he turned to the much more congenial task of 'selling' his adopted town to visitors both actual and potential.

Here the author's lively approach scores in many ways over Moreau's more sober style, and the ascription to Dibdin is most plausible. As an example, the importance of sheep to the area, described by Moreau in plain and objective manner, becomes in Ruff 'The Egyptians of old could not more have revered their Ibis, than a thorough-bred Gloucestershire farmer does a Cotswold sheep'. His descriptions of the countryside are positively lyrical; not only is he keen to promote its superiority over 'the rural charms of foreign scenes', the reader is swept away on a flood of enthusiastic phrases: 'fruitful and wide-spreading vale', 'enlivening and heart-touching landscape', 'the magnificence of the Malvern Mountains'. For good measure he also takes a swipe at Buxton, another spa which had recently undergone considerable development: 'What can be more insufferable than a fine row of buildings, exposed to the sultry rays of a meridian sun – surrounded by bald and barren hills – innumerable smoking lime kilns – and heavy roads, which destroy both carriages and horses!'

Ruff's *History* was sold by booksellers in Bath, Oxford, Worcester and Gloucester as well as several in London, and would have provided useful and practical advice for those considering a visit to Cheltenham. Moreau had mentioned lodging-houses but in terms hardly calculated to inspire people to rush to Gloucestershire: 'the inhabitants who, from the neglected state of this place for near thirty years, have been fearful of risking any expense, will [...] be convinced that it is their interest to render their lodgings as commodious as possible [...] such an exertion, and amendment of roads in the vicinity will make Cheltenham [...] one of the most frequented watering-places'. Ruff lists the main hotels and lodging-houses, assuring his readers that charges are 'reasonable and satisfactory' and that lodgings are all let fully furnished without any unexpected extra charges. Visitors are left in no doubt that, whatever their tastes, plentiful and varied entertainment will be available: balls – accompanied by a 'well composed' band – billiards, backgammon, a puppet-theatre, theatre and libraries, for most of which Ruff details the cost. Most of these are described in glowing terms, though he cannot resist adding a footnote in typical style criticizing Mr. Harward's Library for its arrangement: 'It is grievous to find [...] the majesty of Lord Bacon, in a quarto dress, insulted by the last duodecimo edition of a modern novel'.

Sometimes the writer's personal feelings rather get the better of him: in the section on 'Summer Concerts', after six lines he sweeps into a panegyric on organ-grinders who apparently 'frequently parade the streets of Cheltenham: the tambarine [*sic*] is also touched by some female hand [...] while the glass glides glowingly round and every countenance partakes of the general mirth and good humour'; and while describing 'Mr. Cook's China Warehouse' he discourses on the ugliness of the figures on fashionable Chinese porcelain - 'a woman sitting like a taylor and picking her ear is no very picturesque object' – before hastily adding 'In Mr. Cooke's repository little of the above kind will be found'.

Despite all these blandishments, for most visitors the primary purpose was of course to take the waters. For his chapter on the springs, properties of the waters, rules of drinking and 'Good Effects', Ruff drew heavily on Moreau, also on a *Treatise on Mineral Waters* published by Mr. Saunders in 1800. He sub-divides this section into categories such as Gout, Consumption, Nervous and Hypochondriac, presumably so that potential visitors would be better able to judge whether the waters were likely to be effective in their particular case, and he also includes details of Mr. Barrett's newly-developed chalybeate spa at the eastern end of the town, and of Freeman's Baths (on the north side of the High Street near St. James's Street). Even here unexpected and lively detail appears; in the middle of a section on Vapour Baths he suddenly interpolates: 'The inhabitants of the South Sea Islands dig a hole in the sand, and fill it with red hot stones and sand, and when the latter has become quite hot, they cover the patient up to his neck with it'.

The second half of the book deals, as its title suggests, with the environs of the town. Moreau had divided his similar part into sections covering geographical areas – the Cotswolds, the Forest of Dean – followed by political areas, produce of the county and the major towns. His 'Rides near Cheltenham' formed a brief section near the end. Ruff, on the other hand, starts by describing the rides within the immediate vicinity, starting with those closest to the town which a visitor would presumably tackle first. The difference between his approach and Moreau's can best be shown by

brief extracts from both, in each case describing the ride to Prestbury; there is little doubt which the average visitor would find more inspiring.

Moreau:

*'Down the Swan Lane<sup>14</sup>*

*First turning, R. back of the town, L. to the marsh.*

*Second turning, R. to Hewlet's.*

*At the turnpike at the bottom of the hill L. a road to Prestbury.*

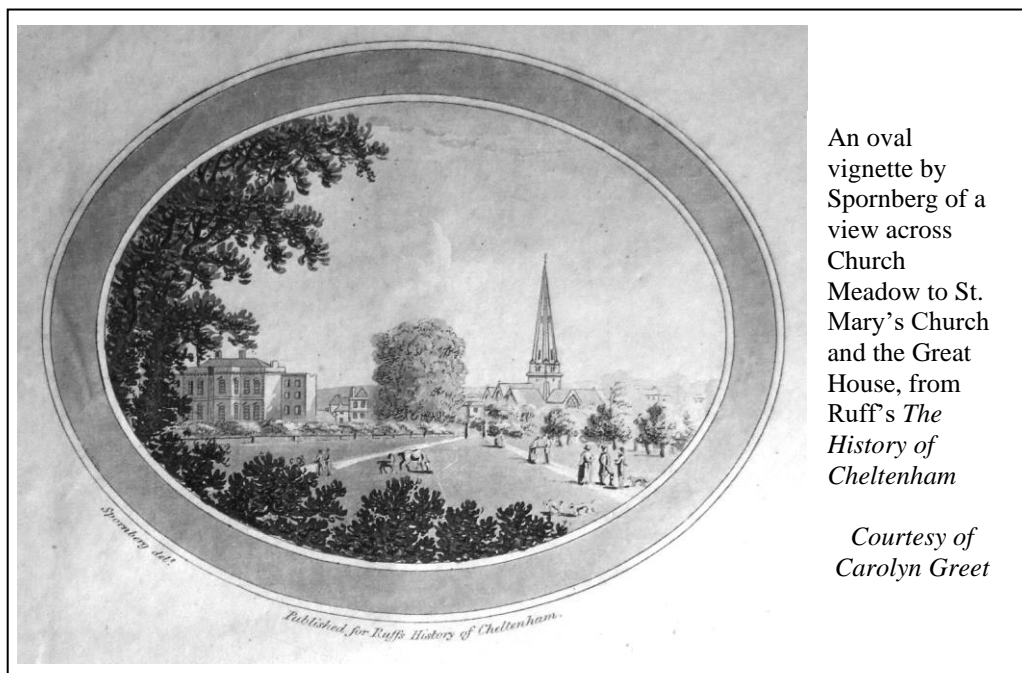
*Second turning, L. to the marsh.*

*The straight road through the Common Field to Prestbury.'*

Ruff:

*'As soon as you have left the town, by going down Winchcomb Street, a fine expanse breaks upon you: in front, you see the Cleeve Cloud hills (about three miles and a half to their summit), stretching towards Leckhampton, which looks boldly picturesque, on the right. To the left, the Malvern Mountains claim the liveliest attention: and if the day be partly sunshine and partly cloudy, you will have a rich treat in studying the variety of soft shadows in which they are involved. After passing the turnpike at the end of the field, the road becomes winding, and sheltered on each side by trees: to the left, at intervals, you catch a peep of the village church of Prestbury.'*

Once the visitor had experienced the delights of the immediate vicinity, he would presumably feel sufficiently invigorated to try longer excursions, and further chapters describe these, to Gloucester, Tewkesbury, Worcester, Malvern, Cirencester, and 'Down the Wye'. This last is particularly significant, for the cult of 'the picturesque' was virtually begun by William Gilpin who in 1782 had published his account of a trip down the Wye, in which the characteristics of this aesthetic view of nature were set out. Ruff quotes at length directly from Gilpin in this section, though his admiration for the picturesque and his awareness of its popularity with fashionable travellers leads him to frequent use of the term when describing scenery in other parts of the county, including Leckhampton as quoted above.



An oval vignette by Spornberg of a view across Church Meadow to St. Mary's Church and the Great House, from Ruff's *The History of Cheltenham*

Courtesy of Carolyn Greet

The final part of the book is a 'Concise Display of the County', covering such topics as the Forest of Dean, rivers and canals, and products of the county, concluding with some local proverbs and what is claimed to be 'A right famous old Glostershire Ballad' in dialect. An Appendix includes Moreau's account of the King's 1788 visit, also slightly incongruously the 1802 Expenses and Receipts for Cheltenham Repository,<sup>15</sup> plus details of Posts and Coaches. Detailed Itineraries, taken from Cary's *New Itinerary, or accurate Delineation of the Roads of England and Wales*, conclude the book.

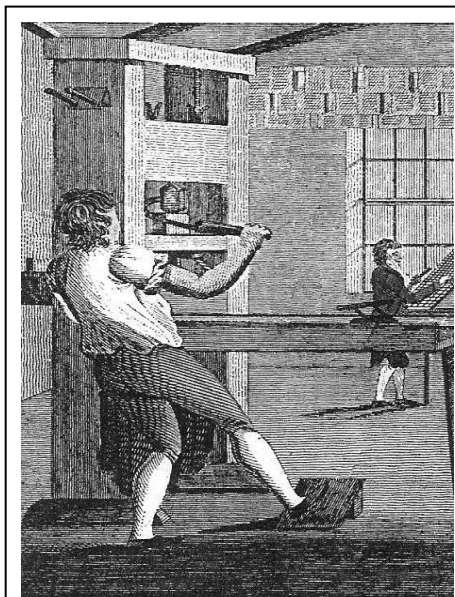
Ruff's advertisement for the Cheltenham Literary Press announced that he had 'built and opened' this new office, and it is possible to work out where this building was, on the South side of the High Street between the Colonnade and the present Rodney Road. To the west of what is now Regent Street was a good-sized plot of land marked on the Enclosure map of 1806 as belonging to Thomas Jordan, a butcher. Here were Jordan's own premises, also two houses used as lodgings and by 1800 one of Samuel Harward's two libraries in the town.<sup>16</sup> Next to this last and apparently lying somewhat back from the street was the printing office of Harward, who also described himself as a printer, and it seems likely that Ruff in fact had an arrangement to use Harward's press, only the office itself being new. This was a major business move for Ruff, and later events suggest that he may have had a financial partner in Jordan, who was much the same age.

After the successful *History of Cheltenham*, Ruff published a curious selection of titles, all of which had local connections. *An Introduction to the History and Study of Chess* by Thomas Pruen, a member of a Cheltenham family and another whose acquaintance Dibdin (and possibly Ruff himself) had made in Worcester, appeared in 1804; *Fenelon's Treatise on the Education of Daughters*, a translation by Thomas Dibdin of the 1688 original 'undertaken at the request of Mr. Ruff the publisher' in 1805. Both these publications were similar in style and typeface to the *History*. Another offering by Pruen, *A Comparative Sketch of the Effects of Variolus and Vaccine Inoculation, being an enumeration of facts not generally known or considered, but which will enable the Public to form its own judgment on the probable importance of the Jennerian Discovery*, was published in 1807.

In 1806 Ruff announced that as his 1803 edition of the *History of Cheltenham* had now virtually sold out, he was to bring out *A New Cheltenham Guide or A Key to its Amusements*, which would contain the original feature of a map showing the inns, lodging-houses and public rooms. This appeared in June 1806 as *Ruff's Beauties of Cheltenham, with a complete Guide to its Amusements and Accommodations*. It was basically the same text as the 1803 *History* but had some interesting differences. For one thing it was described as 'purporting to be a Guide rather than a History'; collaborators were not mentioned, except for some 'Medical Gentlemen' who assisted with the section on the waters. More wells were included, as was a new section on some wells in the surrounding area, such as Arle, Barnwood, Walsworth and Walton. The strictures on Harward again appeared in the section describing the Libraries, and following it came an entirely new passage describing Ruff's own establishment in some detail, with the modest addition: 'For the performance of my Printing-office I beg leave to refer to the numerous specimens it has produced'. The account of the King's visit was omitted entirely. The most striking difference is that of style; there are far fewer dubiously relevant interpolations, the enthusiasm of the earlier book has been greatly toned down, and the term 'picturesque' appears only in the description of



the Wye. Thomas Dibdin was by now safely embarked on his church and bibliographical career, and Ruff relied on his own abilities for this later edition.



Letter Press Printer  
(Courtesy of Worcester  
Family History Centre)

Having satisfactorily established his printing press, Ruff turned his energies to other developments. In April 1805 a lengthy advertisement appeared in the *Gloucester Journal*, announcing that he was to open a 'New English and French Circulating Library' in Cheltenham. There were already four libraries here; Harward's two, and others owned by Mr. Selden and Mrs. Jones, but Ruff must have felt - almost certainly correctly - that as the reputation of the town spread and the visitor numbers increased still further, there would be sufficient custom for another. It was next to his Printing Office, an excellent central location.<sup>17</sup> Ruff advertised in alluring terms: '[it] will consist of a Selection of several Thousand Volumes, in the different Classes of Polite Literature, particularly of Modern Publications, and to which every new Book of Estimation will be added.' The

inclusion of 'French' indicated that it was designed to appeal to the French refugees who had taken up residence in the town, and this was made still clearer in the list of publications with which the Reading Room was to be supplied, which included two specifically for émigrés: '...the usual daily London Papers, but also [...] The Moniteur, Courier de Londres, Irish, Scotch, Welsh, and Provincial Prints: Reviews, Agricultural Magazine, Medical Journal, Cobbett's Weekly Political Register, Army and Navy Lists etc.' The Library was advertised as 'Cheltenham Library'; a clever piece of publicity implying that this was the chief one, although the existing ones in the town had all already been well-established for some years, and Harward's was actually next-door.

The number of visitors to the town had of course increased enormously in the years since the King's visit; Ruff himself claimed that from 370 in 1780 they had risen to about 2000 in 1802, and though there is no way of verifying his figures it is clear that there was a considerable problem in finding suitable lodgings for all. Spotting an opportunity Ruff announced that he was starting a Lodgings Register, to be operated from his new Library, 'by a Reference to which, all Parties may be immediately accommodated - the Hirer by finding without fatigue or trouble the object he is in search of; and the Letters (and amongst them, those who have eligible Houses etc, but which, from situations, are not generally seen or known) by having an opportunity afforded of ensuring a constant succession of Tenants without any intermediate loss of time; and no pains will be spared by him in discovering and recommending the Situations most appropriate to the wishes of the Parties'.<sup>18</sup> This was a genuinely useful idea, which was later copied by others in the town.

The year 1809 saw a number of new ventures established by Ruff, building on the apparently considerable success of his Press and Library. Behind the Library, in the area now partly covered by Regent Street, he opened extensive Gardens. It is

possible that these were in fact opened the previous year; the earliest mention is in the *Cheltenham Chronicle* for June 1809, in an advertisement uncharacteristically restrained for one of his new ventures. However, if they were first opened earlier there was no mention in the *Gloucester Journal* as one might expect. Initially they were known simply as 'Ruff's Gardens', but after the appointment of the Prince of Wales as Regent in early 1811, the name was changed to 'Regent Gardens', as was that of the Library to the 'Regent Library'. This was evidently an official arrangement; in an advertisement in August that year for a Grand Masquerade to celebrate the Prince's birthday described him as 'his [i.e. Ruff's] illustrious Patron', and from that time advertisements were frequently headed by the Prince of Wales' Feathers.

The Masquerade was an elaborate affair, priced at one guinea per ticket to include an 'elegant supper'. Parties of ten or more might book a private Supper Room and private Dressing Rooms were also available, for all were expected to wear at the very least a 'domino' (a cloak and half-mask) and Ruff obviously hoped that most would appear in more elaborate attire, for he appended a 'catalogue of dresses' which could be hired from him at the Library. The list is fascinating; in addition to the entry price, for one guinea a male masquerader could come as, among others, a Highlander, an Auctioneer, a Devil, Falstaff, a Fancy Clown, Pan, a Spanish Don, a Slave in Chains, Hamlet or a Holiday Sweep. The ladies were more restricted in their choice; whereas the men were offered the choice of no fewer than 47 different guises, they had to make do with a mere 16, and if they did not fancy coming as a 'Virgin of the Sun' or 'Indian Princess', they were left with much less exotic items such as Peasant, Old Maid or three varieties of Nun - Grey, White or Black. The event was of course for 'Nobility and Gentry' only; indeed 'attention will invariably be exerted to preclude the possibility of any improper persons intruding themselves'. Ruff's advertisement for the grand occasion assured ticket-buyers that 'every possible arrangement will be made for their comfort and convenience should the weather prove unfavourable', presumably by transferring to the new Music Room, of which more will be said.

On special occasions such as the Masquerade the Gardens were illuminated with 'variegated lamps', and a band played every day from one till four, and again from six until they closed. Like other, later, Gardens in the town they were exclusively for subscribers, and this seems to have been a separate subscription from that to the Library. There was a Bowling Green attached to the Gardens, and on two evenings a week the 'nobility and gentry' who were Ruff's main customers had to share their amusements when 'respectable Inhabitants' were allowed to use it, providing of course that they paid.

The Gardens were open every day from Monday to Saturday for regular subscribers, while on Sundays they were open only from 4.00pm. This latter was a separate subscription: each gentleman paid half a guinea (10s.6d.) for the year, each lady 7s.6d., and a double ticket could be had for 15s. A subscription of one guinea covered a whole family, while non-subscribers, who presumably just wanted to go for the occasional visit, paid one shilling each. This entitled people to 'a right to Promenade' from 4.00pm till 9.00pm. Refreshments were available: wines, spirits, bottled porter, beer, cider, tea and coffee, as well as ices and 'confectionary'; indeed the advertisement for this new feature was headed 'Regent Tea Gardens'. Surprisingly, the Library itself appears to have been open for at least part of Sunday,

for a note added: 'After the Library closes on Sunday, the Gardens will be for the reception of respectable Tea Parties'.<sup>19</sup>

The refreshments were presumably served within another of his ventures, a 'spacious and elegant Music Room' which was built in the Gardens within a year of their opening. Here various musical entertainments were given during the Season, some with, as advertised, 'Performers of Celebrity, from London'. The room was open every evening for amusements such as billiards and the popular game of 'one-card loo' and must have been a considerable attraction on the chillier summer evenings as well as providing a suitable venue for events such as dances and dinners.

**GALA.—RUFF'S GARDENS.**

**H.** RUFF has the honour of announcing to  
his Subscribers and Friends, that  
**ON WEDNESDAY NEXT,**  
HIS  
**Gardens**  
Will Open, be Brilliantly Illuminated, and attended by an  
entire New BAND OF MUSIC.  
The Performance will be Vocal as well as Instrumental,  
and several CATCHES AND GLEES will be sung.

Advertisement for Ruff's Gardens, *The  
Cheltenham Chronicle*, 22 June 1809  
Courtesy of Cheltenham Local & Family  
History Collection

One such dinner was held on 8 May 1812 to mark the opening of the Gardens for the Season. This was a ticket-only affair, with the Bowling Green and Musical Promenade open from 1.00pm and dinner – provided by Mr Carnell 'late cook at Mr. Styles' boarding house'<sup>20</sup> – at four. The chair was taken by Captain Gray and many toasts were proposed, while entertainment was provided first by a 'band of juvenile singers', followed by more serious (and clearly more appreciated) items from well-known local soloists. It was a long evening, for the festivities did not break up until

eleven, but was a triumph for Ruff's powers of organization and persuasion, his 'extensive and spirited undertaking' as it was described.

Only three weeks later another major event took place at the Gardens – a 'Public Breakfast and Promenade, with a Brilliant Display of Fireworks' in honour of the King's Birthday on 4 June. The Breakfast, price 5s 6d, was held at 1.00pm and a band played. Fireworks were to be let off at 10.00pm and the programme for these was printed in advance. Another band attended in the evening, this time under the direction of the 'Principal Bassoon player at the Music Room, Oxford', though he also had a more local connection, being Leader of the band attached to the County Militia. The evening must have provided an exciting and entertaining few hours for the admission price of 2s.6d. per person. But even gardens, printing press and library apparently failed to provide sufficient outlet for Ruff's energies and determination to provide any services that might attract customers, for since at least 1807 he had also been running sales of horses and carriages every Monday, and holding evening auctions of 'Trinkets etc., as practised at all Watering Places on the Sea Coast'.<sup>21</sup>

Possibly the most important venture with which Ruff was involved was revealed to the public on Thursday 4 May 1809; the *Cheltenham Chronicle*. In his opening 'Address' the editor explained that the long-established fame of Cheltenham as a resort for visitors was now matched by the considerable numbers who had settled in the town permanently. A weekly newspaper had long been desired as the distribution of handbills – hitherto the only means of advertising events or services – was unreliable and inadequate. The *Chronicle* would remedy this lack, and enable in

particular potential purchasers of property or land to discover what was available and find suitable tradesmen. Ruff's own established Lodgings Register had proved extremely useful, but a weekly newspaper could cover a larger area and be consulted much more easily. The paper would of course also carry news, both local and carefully selected items of national interest, and reports from Parliament. Interestingly, the writer pointed out that whereas provincial papers were expected simply to copy political items directly from the London papers, he hoped that thanks to Cheltenham's 'connexions and the peculiar opportunities of the place' – insider information from important visitors – this new paper would be able to provide a certain amount of original political information. As far as possible, however, he pledged to avoid all political bias.

The artistic aspects of life were not to be neglected; Literary Correspondents had been appointed, and in order to encourage others who 'might probably afford us their assistance, could it be given without publicity, a letter-box will [...] be kept in the Publisher's window for the reception of their communications'. This offer was possibly regretted; some of the anonymous offerings proved dire.

Overall the intention was to produce a useful, informative, clear and entertaining paper; 'to avoid insipidity without indulging in scandal, and to interest without creating disgust in the serious, or raising a blush on the cheek of modesty', and in this the venture appears to have been successful. Plenty of items of local interest were included in the first issue (of four pages, price 6d.). Some of these were for events – an auction of furniture, the anniversary dinner of the Gloucestershire Society – others for businesses, for example a local architect and Land Agent, the chemist Paytherus, Savory & Moore, various shops, the coach from the Plough Inn to Bath, and an offer of private tuition from Rev. Pruen, the curate of Fladbury. The growth of the town was reflected in the advertisements for land or houses; two at 'St. James' Village, Cheltenham'; a new house in St. George's Square and two more (unfinished) opposite the King's Head; a 'Mansion House' to let nearly opposite the Lower Rooms; land suitable for villas for sale 'adjoining Mr. Thompson's Public Rides',<sup>22</sup> more land near the road to Prestbury; and a large area owned by Corpus Christi College Oxford consisting of a new house, a shop, an old property suitable for demolition and land 'for a number of houses'. The first Parliamentary Report included the Royal Assent to the Bill for 'Making and Maintaining a Railway or Tram-road from the Quay in the City of Gloucester to or near a certain Gate in or near the town of Cheltenham [...] called the Knapp Toll-gate, with a collateral branch to the top of Leckhampton Hill'. There were altogether 19 'local' advertisements in the first issue, a figure which quickly rose to 32 in the second and continued to rise thereafter. Other items included 'Cheltenham Arrivals', a brief report of the previous Sunday's sermon, 'Fashions for May', and the rather odd inclusion of a list of the newspapers published in the country, the probable explanation being that the *Chronicle* brought the number triumphantly up to one hundred.

The front page announced that it was 'Printed and Published for the Proprietors by H. Ruff, Library, No. 329 High Street'. One of the 'Proprietors' was Ruff himself, but the identity of the other remains uncertain; possibly it was Thomas Pruen whose book on chess Ruff had published in 1804 or Thomas Jordan on whose land the premises were situated. In any case this initial arrangement of dual proprietorship lasted only eight months: Harward, whose printing press Ruff had been using, died in 1809 and his library and associated buildings, including the one 'late a

printing office', became the property of Isaac Cooke, a glass and china merchant who moved from a shop further down the street to these highly desirable central premises in January 1810.<sup>23</sup> Sole proprietorship of the *Chronicle* was offered to Ruff but he declined on the grounds that he was too busy; the edition of 8 February 1810 announced that 'The Editor and late joint Proprietor [...] having come to an arrangement with Mr. Ruff (to whom an offer was made of the Concern, which, on account of his various other engagements, he declined accepting), he is now become the sole Proprietor and Manager of the Paper'. The office was to remain next door to Ruff's Library, and the printing press itself seems to have been retained though possibly moved, but the paper would in future be printed by 'J. Sharp, Chronicle Printing Office, Jordan's Yard'. J. Sharp's name appears nowhere else in connection with Cheltenham, and it is likely that he was simply brought in to operate the press and had no creative input.

One year later the entire concern was passed to new owners and publishers, J.K. and S. Griffiths of Portland Passage (the site of the present Pittville Street), where a new office was opened, and all connections with Ruff's premises was severed. The subscribers and general public were urged to pledge their continued support after what had clearly been a difficult year. It appears that bills had been sent out only infrequently; anyone 'indebted to the Concern' was urgently requested to pay up and the new owners promised that in future bills would be sent out quarterly. An intriguing phrase referred to the 'many peculiar disadvantages under which [the paper] has hitherto laboured', which are unfortunately not specified but must include the change of proprietorship.

The suspicion is that Ruff had over-reached himself and taken on more than even he could manage. His other concerns continued to take up much of his time; musical evenings continued at the large Music Room behind the Library, and in 1811 he organised a gala 'for the benefit of the British prisoners confined in France', as well as inaugurating a series of fortnightly balls on Thursday evening during the winter: 'every measure that may gratify the public', as an appreciative comment put it.<sup>24</sup> There was also one final *Cheltenham Guide*, published by him in 1811, which covered the new developments in the town since the 1806 edition, including Montpellier, Cambray Street and the new theatre (1809) as well as the 'New Baths'.<sup>25</sup> No details of the Libraries were given, but a short paragraph sang the praises of the 'spacious and elegant Music Room' in Ruff's Gardens.

Ruff's ten years of whirlwind activity helping to establish entertainments and artistic life in Cheltenham came to a melancholy end in 1813, when the edition of the *Chronicle* on 16 December carried the notice that Humphrey Ruff, 'Bookseller, Dealer and Chapman', had been declared bankrupt. The Library, Gardens, Music Room and Printing Press became the property of Thomas Jordan, and for a few months the Library was known officially as 'Jordan's Library'. But clearly Jordan was overwhelmed by the difficulties and expense of such responsibilities, and in December 1814 he too was declared bankrupt, all his property - including his butcher's shop - being sold at auction. The Library was bought by Stokes Heynes, the proprietor of the Regent Wine Vaults,<sup>26</sup> and changed name yet again. It never regained the prosperity it had enjoyed in the enthusiastic early days of Ruff's ownership, and Heynes in turn became bankrupt in 1817, after which the Library finally closed and the premises were taken over by a woollen-drapeer.<sup>27</sup> The auction notice made no mention of the printing press, but the Regent Gardens and the Ball

Room (as the Music Room was now generally called) were sold. Although the Gardens had been in existence only eight years, Cheltenham had continued to expand and this land was seen as ‘capable of very advantageous subdivision [...] in the immediate neighbourhood of the extensive improvements now carrying on near the Colonnade [and presenting] an ample field for beneficial speculation’. That the new owners agreed is clear; building certificates for the properties in Regent Gardens and the new Regent Street appear from 1824.<sup>28</sup>

The Music/Ball Room survived for some time, appearing on the ‘Post Office’ map of 1820 as the ‘Regent Rooms’. By the 1830s the Star Hotel was on the site; one part of it is still a pub, raising the intriguing question of whether the original Room was incorporated into the later building and whether, if so, part of Ruff’s ‘spacious and elegant Room’ might still remain 200 years later.



As for the Library building, we may have a description of it, perhaps even an illustration. The woollen-draper's business was taken over in December 1818 by Nathaniel Colt. Colt's property was sold in 1822, the advertisement in the *Bath & Cheltenham Gazette* describing it as ‘peculiarly calculated as a minor Boarding House; a Suite of elegant Sleeping and Dressing Rooms, or a profitable Lodging House; consisting of front and back Drawing rooms, communicating by folding doors; the front dining room on the first floor, eight good bedrooms & every convenience for servants; water closet, cellaring, etc.’ Was this Ruff's building? It seems rather large – though we know he had grand ideas – but the communicating rooms on the ground floor were a relatively unusual feature as these were generally on the first floor; could they have been the former reading-room? The premises still housed a tailoring business in 1845, when George Rowe's *Illustrated Cheltenham Guide*<sup>29</sup> illustrated the four-storey building. There is no way of establishing whether this is in fact Ruff's Library, but the possibility remains.

And what of Humphrey Ruff himself? We know surprisingly little of his private life, beyond a few Cheltenham Parish Church records which show that three children were christened there: Henry in 1804, Ann in 1807 and Elizabeth in 1810. In August 1812 the burial of his wife Ann is recorded.

Ruff was only 40 when he was declared bankrupt and though a man of his energies and enthusiasm was clearly unlikely to disappear without trace, there are comparatively few clues to his later life. The following marriage announcement appeared in the *Cheltenham Chronicle* for 16 October 1817: ‘On Tuesday last at St. George's, Hanover Square, Humphrey Ruff of Swan Terrace, Great Dover Road, to Miss Ann Finch Howell, eldest daughter of M. W. Howell Esq., of Hans Place, Chelsea’. There were two surviving children of this marriage: John Henry, baptised at

St. Luke's, Chelsea on 25 December 1818, and Mary Ann Collins, born 9 July 1823<sup>30</sup> and baptised at St. Andrew's, Holborn on 16 May 1824. A third child, Humphrey, was born in December 1825 but lived only 14 months.

Perhaps Ann Howell had money or maybe Ruff 'made good' by his own efforts; at any rate, in 1819 he obtained his Certificate of Discharge from Bankruptcy.<sup>31</sup> According to Pigot's *Directory* for 1826 he was by then living at 3 Mawson Lane, Chiswick, a handsome terrace of five-storey houses which still exists.<sup>32</sup> Impressive as the house was, it was rated at only £17, the low value presumably reflecting the unpleasantly close proximity of Fuller's Brewery. Ruff is described in the *Directory* as a 'reporter of sporting intelligence' for the London press, though in the record of his son Humphrey's baptism in January 1827 his occupation is given as 'printer'.

At some time after February 1827 the family moved to Turnham Green, a small house called Farm Cottage, and here Humphrey died on 21 June 1829, aged 56, 'much respected', according to the brief obituary notice in the *Cheltenham Chronicle*. It seems that money problems had continued to dog him to some extent, as his name appears on the Defaulter's List for 1827-8 for non-payment of rates.

Ruff's will, in which he is described as 'Gentleman', was witnessed by his servant Thomas Nutley, Thomas Birchley of Newmarket and John Linnett of Wood Ditton. Farm Cottage was left to his widow with the proviso that on her death or remarriage it and the contents were to go to the young son and daughter of his second marriage. Ruff had inherited the old family home in Worcester on the death of his brother Henry in 1810, and this he left to Jane and Ann, the surviving daughters of his first marriage, who were living there. His son Henry had died at the age of 18 and the other daughter, Elizabeth, had also died young. The executors of his will were a local grocer and cheesemonger of Turnham Green, Thomas Adey, and John Burgess of Maiden Lane, Convent Garden, printseller. His widow did not stay long in the parish; by Michaelmas 1830 she and the children had left, though the name of Ruff still appeared on the Defaulters List for that year.

In Cheltenham, the town to whose entertainment Ruff devoted so much energy, there is now no sign of his influence apart from the survival of the name Regent Street, which few people now realise relates to the former Gardens. He would though surely be pleased to know that the *Cheltenham Chronicle* survived for a long time, becoming the *Gloucestershire Chronicle* in 1975 until it closed in 1983, and paving the way for all our subsequent local newspapers.

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<sup>1</sup> A previous child, also christened Humphrey, was born in 1772 but lived only a few days. (Parish Register of All Saints, Worcester).

<sup>2</sup> Mary born 1766, Henry born 1769. (Parish Register of All Saints, Worcester).

<sup>3</sup> *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, 11 February 1796.

<sup>4</sup> His father had also married on Christmas Day (1765).

<sup>5</sup> *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, 4 January 1798. She was christened 25 September 1779 (IGI).

<sup>6</sup> Jacob Spornberg, originally from Finland, worked in Cheltenham for some years. In 1810 he opened a short-lived endeavour, 'Cheltenham Museum, a select and highly interesting collection of Natural and Artificial Subjects,' *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 14 June 1810. He also produced cameos or 'Etruscan Profiles'. (Dr. Steven Blake, *Views of Cheltenham 1786-1860*, catalogue of exhibition held at Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum, 1984).

<sup>7</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*.

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<sup>8</sup> O'Dwyer, E.J., *Thomas Frognall Dibdin, Bibliographer and Bibliomaniac Extraordinary*, (Pinner Private Libraries Association, 1967).

<sup>9</sup> O'Dwyer, *op.cit.*

<sup>10</sup> O'Dwyer, *op.cit.*

<sup>11</sup> Windle, J., *Thomas Frognall Dibdin*, Oak Knoll Press, 1999).

<sup>12</sup> Rudder, Samuel, *A New History of Gloucestershire*, (1779).

<sup>13</sup> Atkyns, Sir Robert, *The Ancient and Present State of Gloucestershire*, (1712).

<sup>14</sup> At the time of Moreau's guide book the street later known as Winchcombe Street was called Swan lane. Hodsdon, James, *An Historical Gazetteer of Cheltenham*, (BGAS, 1997).

<sup>15</sup> Founded that year.

<sup>16</sup> Harward's other library was in the Colonnade.

<sup>17</sup> At the time, these premises had no number; in c. 1807 they became no. 329. (Greet, Carolyn, 'Cheltenham High Street, 1800-1820', Cheltenham Local History Society, Journal **17**, 2001).

<sup>18</sup> *Gloucester Journal*, 22 April 1805.

<sup>19</sup> *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 23 July 1812.

<sup>20</sup> At no. 107, High Street (later no. 157), next to the Grammar School.

<sup>21</sup> *Gloucester Journal*, 10 August 1807

<sup>22</sup> At Montpellier

<sup>23</sup> Manor Court Books, 17 January 1810 (Gloucestershire Archives D855 M43)

<sup>24</sup> *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 11 July 1811

<sup>25</sup> Henry Thompson's Montpellier Baths in Bath Road, opened in 1806.

<sup>26</sup> There were vaults 'at the back of Ruff's Library', in 1809 according to an advertisement in the *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 11 May; these were probably the same ones.

<sup>27</sup> Bastin, as advertised in *Cheltenham Chronicle* 23 May 1816; he died in 1818.

<sup>28</sup> Hodsdon, James, *An Historical Gazetteer of Cheltenham*, (BGAS, 1997).

<sup>29</sup> Published 1845, reprinted 1981. The illustration is on page 6.

<sup>30</sup> I am grateful to James Wisdom, Val Bott and Carolyn Hammond of Brentford & Chiswick Local History Society for this detail as well as for other information about Ruff's time in Chiswick. Mary Ann Collins appears to have had a second christening on 10 January 1827, when the year-old Humphrey was also christened.

<sup>31</sup> *London Gazette* 23 October 1819.

<sup>32</sup> Now called Mawson Row.

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## Taxes - 1605

### JILL BARLOW

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PAYING TAXES WAS NO MORE POPULAR in 1605 than it is now. In the National Archives is a commission<sup>1</sup> (in Latin) from the Court of the Exchequer instructing Kynnard Delabere, Thomas Machin and Roger Bannister to investigate the complaint of Edward Lippyat, husbandman, one of the tenants of land once belonging to John de Cheltenham. Lippyat had claimed that although he was quite prepared to pay the tax he owed (the 'fifteenths and tenths' levied at the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I), Nicholas White the former collector had seriously overcharged him. On the back of the document is the tantalising statement that the results of the enquiry were attached. If only they were!

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<sup>1</sup> TNA E178/266



# Thomas Snow and the Western Schism

ALAN MUNDEN

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FROM 1818 TO 1822 'SNOW'S CHAPEL' SITUATED IN GROSVENOR STREET, CHELTENHAM, was associated with the preaching of the former Church of England minister, Thomas Snow (1786-1867). But who was he, what did he believe and why did he have his own chapel? These questions may be answered by looking at three phases in his ministerial career. First, during his early period in the Church of England; second, when he left the Church and was involved in the so-called 'Western Schism'; and third, after he returned to the Church of England.

## **Snow's early period in the Church of England**

Thomas Snow, the fourth son of the banker George Snow, and his wife Elizabeth, was born at Langton House, Blandford Forum, Dorset in 1786. While he was a pupil at Sherborne School his acting abilities became apparent when aged only twelve 'the promising talents of Snow, a very young lad' were recorded when 'in the character of a Negro slave, delivered in French an address to his masters, displaying singular strength of memory and propriety of action.'<sup>1</sup> At the age of twenty-four he entered Queens' College, Cambridge and became part of the circle associated with Charles Simeon, the vicar of Holy Trinity church.<sup>2</sup> Simeon's ministry in Cambridge extended over a fifty-four year period and he shaped the lives of many future Evangelical clergy.

In 1813, and in rapid succession, Snow graduated, was ordained and became an incumbent. On 3 May he graduated BA;<sup>3</sup> on 13 June he was made deacon by the Bishop of Salisbury at Quebec Chapel, Marylebone;<sup>4</sup> on 27 June ordained priest by the Bishop of Norwich (for the Bishop of Salisbury); and two days later became the vicar of Winterborne Stoke, north of Salisbury.<sup>5</sup> His incumbency was short-lived, and in November 1814 Snow was appointed by Sir Thomas Baring to be the vicar of Micheldever and East Stratton, north of Winchester. In December 1815 he married Maynard Eliza Farquhar, a widow from East Stratton. The service took place at Micheldever and the officiant was James Harrington Evans, then curate of Milford and Hordle. Gradually Snow was drawn into the small group of Anglican discontents known collectively as the 'Western Schism' and in May 1816 he was baptised by full immersion, and thereby severed his ministerial connexion with the Church of England.

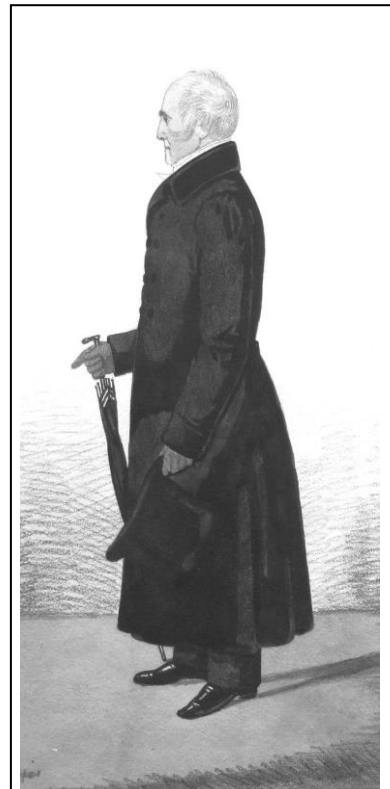
## **Snow and the 'Western Schism'<sup>6</sup>**

The Western Schism was the creation of a network of mostly well-connected Evangelicals led by members of the aristocratic Baring family, whose wealth and influence came from banking and commerce. A powerful figure within the movement was Harriet Wall (1768-1838), the eldest daughter of Sir Francis Baring<sup>7</sup> and wife of Charles Wall, a partner in Baring's Bank. She was a powerful and capable woman whose 'cool temperament gave her a real superiority over the heated brains and crude notions of her disciples,<sup>8</sup> and her husband was 'a shrewd, bustling, practical man of

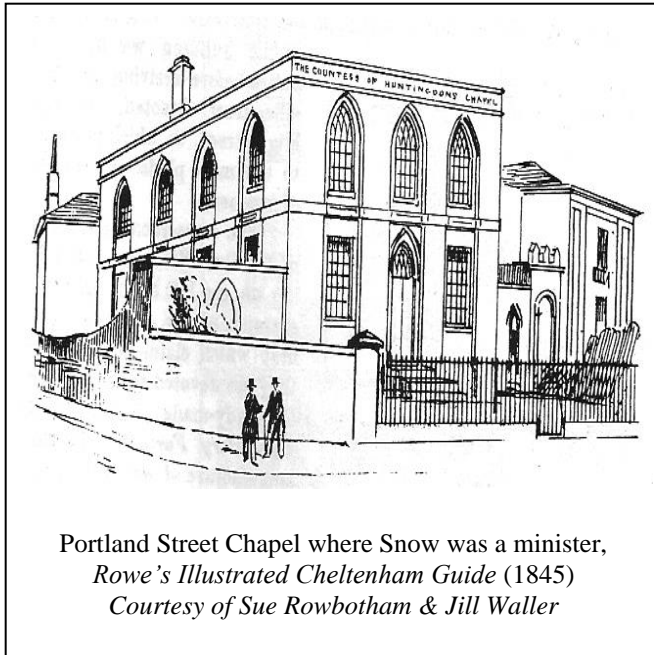
business.<sup>9</sup> Initially the couple lived at Albury Park,<sup>10</sup> Surrey and following his sudden death in 1815, Harriet moved from Surrey to Hampshire to be nearer to her brother Sir Thomas Baring, of Stratton Park, Stratton, and her son Charles Baring Wall, of Norman Court, West Tytherley, west of Winchester. During the summer months various properties in the vicinity of Stratton Park were rented to accommodate the ever expanding circle of supporters. Other individuals that became involved with Baring and his sister included Thomas Snow, the local vicar, and his curate George Bevan. Snow had doubts about infant baptism (and did not have his own children baptised) but Bevan, a man of strong opinions, had fundamental objections to the established church.

The 'Baring party', as they were known, were characterised by their strict Calvinistic principles and their rejection of infant baptism. No longer for them were the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion a sufficient standard for doctrinal orthodoxy. The acolytes that assembled at Stratton Park to discuss and debate the finer points of theology took their views with them and the movement soon spread throughout the West Country. Thomas Baring's brother George and his friends settled at Walford House, near Taunton, where he preached in a hired room in the town. The congregation soon outgrew the building and the former Wesleyan Methodist chapel in Taunton, known as the Octagon Chapel,<sup>11</sup> was acquired and re-opened as the 'Trinitarian and Particular Baptist Chapel'. In May 1816 Thomas Snow, together with other sympathisers that included Baring and his family, were baptised by full immersion. Soon, however, the group broke up and those involved went their separate ways. George Baring<sup>12</sup> became the minister of a congregation in Bartholomew Street, Exeter, George Bevan<sup>13</sup> moved to London and Thomas Snow became the minister of a congregation in Cheltenham. 'The rapid fragmentation of the schism's original leadership revealed something of its youthful effervescence and doctrinal restlessness.'<sup>14</sup> They had gathered around them the curious and the discontented, and those attracted by unorthodox teaching. Some like Thomas Snow, remained orthodox in their views, while Harriet Wall became more extreme, and some adopted heretical opinions about the Trinity.

In 1816 Snow and his family moved to Cheltenham. He already knew the wealthy layman Robert Capper, who had erected Portland Chapel in North Place, and he invited Snow to become the first minister. Although both men were Calvinists they disagreed over Snow's strict policy of excluding from communion those who had been baptised as infants. Capper withdrew his financial support, Snow left the chapel and he and his supporters worshipped at his home, Selkirk Villa, off Prestbury Road, that was licensed for worship in March 1817. At the same time Capper re-opened Portland Chapel and in 1819 transferred it to the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion.



Water colour of  
Robert Capper  
*Courtesy of CAG&M*

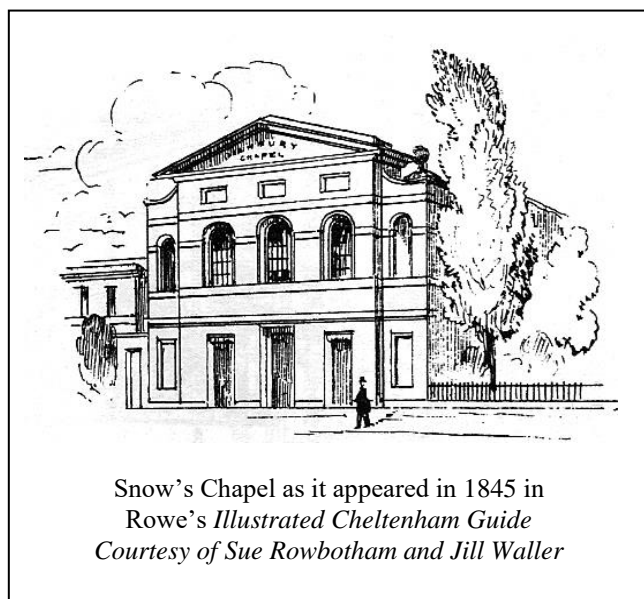


Portland Street Chapel where Snow was a minister,  
*Rowe's Illustrated Cheltenham Guide (1845)*  
 Courtesy of Sue Rowbotham & Jill Waller

The wealthy Harriet Wall erected a new chapel<sup>15</sup> for Snow in Grosvenor Street (then known as Glyde's Terrace) where he served as the minister for four years, 1818-22. The foundation stone was laid in July 1817 by James Harington Evans<sup>16</sup> another dissident clergyman who had been re-baptised at the Octagon Chapel. 'Snow's Chapel' (as it became known) could accommodate 1,000 people, was plain and unadorned and suited the sober and severe doctrine of the pastor. On Sundays, three sermons were preached - at 11.00am, 3.00pm and 6.00pm -

and only those adults baptised on a profession of faith were admitted to communion. It became, in effect, a Strict Baptist chapel. At that time the churches and chapels of Cheltenham were mostly evangelical in outlook; at Cheltenham Chapel in St George's Square (which used the Anglican liturgy); in Portland Chapel, North Place; and in Ebenezer Chapel in King Street. Charles Jervis had been the incumbent of the parish church since September 1816 and during the following ten years was responsible for the establishment of Anglican Evangelicalism in Cheltenham.<sup>17</sup> He planned to erect two new churches,<sup>18</sup> supported the growing number of national Evangelical societies, and invited Charles Simeon and other leading Evangelicals to preach in the parish church. Like most of his fellow Anglican Evangelicals Jervis was a moderate Calvinist, and within days of his first sermon at the parish church, comparisons were being made between his doctrines and those of Snow. Clearly Snow's ultra-Calvinism would have set him apart from the other clergy and ministers in the town, though shortly before he left Cheltenham he publicly supported the formation of an auxiliary branch of the London Hibernian Society, and became a member of the organising committee.

The activities of the schismatics involved with the Western Schism did not pass unnoticed. Tracts and counter tracts were published and contentious issues like limited atonement, Antinomianism and infant baptism revived old controversies. Snow came to the attention of the wider public on the publication of the address he preached following the death of the Princess of Wales. It was entitled, *A Sermon preached at*



Snow's Chapel as it appeared in 1845 in  
*Rowe's Illustrated Cheltenham Guide*  
 Courtesy of Sue Rowbotham and Jill Waller

*Cheltenham on the day of the funeral of her royal highness, the Princess Charlotte.* This brought a counter-blast from John Simons, the Evangelical rector of St Paul's Cray entitled, *A Letter to an highly respected friend, on the subject of certain errors, of Antinomian kind, which have lately sprung up in the West of England, and are now making an alarming progress throughout the kingdom.* In it Simons referred to 'this new divinity' and to 'these errors' expressed by Snow and 'his deluded friends'.<sup>19</sup> This in turn brought a response from Snow, *A reply to a Letter, written by the Rev. John Simons, rector of St Paul's Cray, purporting to be on the subject of certain errors of the Antinomian kind which have lately sprung up in the West of England.* Snow denied that his sermon expressed false views, and refuted the suggestion that those involved in the controversy were young and inexperienced.

By the autumn of 1822 Snow's enthusiasm for Baptist dissent had waned and having changed his theological views he left the Grosvenor Street chapel. His convictions apart, the transition from the security of the established church into nonconformity would have meant both a reduction in income and also a loss of status. Snow sought the advice of Charles Simeon over his own future ministry and also that of the chapel. It had been Snow's intention to present it to the Simeon's Trustees, the patron of Cheltenham parish church, but there was no endowment and the building was unconsecrated. The outcome was that the chapel remained closed until August 1827 when it was sold for £1,300 and re-opened as Highbury Congregational Chapel. In 1852, during the lengthy ministry of Dr Morton Brown (1843-79) a larger chapel was opened in Winchcombe Street. Eighty years later the site of this chapel was acquired for the Odeon cinema, and a new Congregational church was opened in Priory Terrace. For about one hundred years the former Grosvenor Street chapel remained in use as a schoolroom, until it was sold in 1929 and then used for a variety of purposes, including currently as a social services and youth centre.

In October 1822 Snow returned to Stratton Park, the home of Thomas Baring, and during a visit by Simeon three of Snow's children were baptised<sup>20</sup> on 10 October in East Stratton church. Simeon baptised the eldest son, George (who was then aged four years and eight months) and the curate Joseph D'Arcy Sirr, baptised the two younger children, Harriet and Thomas.<sup>21</sup> It must have been a deeply moving experience for Snow and his wife to witness the baptisms in the church where he had served as the incumbent.

Snow consulted Simeon about his future and while it is not known what his advice might have been, it is most likely that he would have insisted that Snow should submit himself to the authority of his diocesan bishop. This would be a public acknowledgement of the error of his ways, alongside the baptism of his children that was the personal recognition that he had changed his views.

### **Snow's later period in the Church of England**

During the four years 1822 to 1826 Snow returned to Langton, and during that time he was a compliant member of the Church of England. He corresponded with the Bishop of Winchester (in whose diocese he had once been an incumbent) and submitted to him his confession of error, and also with the Bishop of Bristol (in whose diocese he was then living). Unlikely as it might now seem, before 1836 the archdeaconry of Dorset was part of the diocese of Bristol. Initially Snow met Bishop

John Kaye in Cambridge and then, at the bishop's request, part of their correspondence was published. It was the bishop's opinion that as Snow had previously published his views in his controversy with John Simons, he should now make public his change of heart and confession of his error.

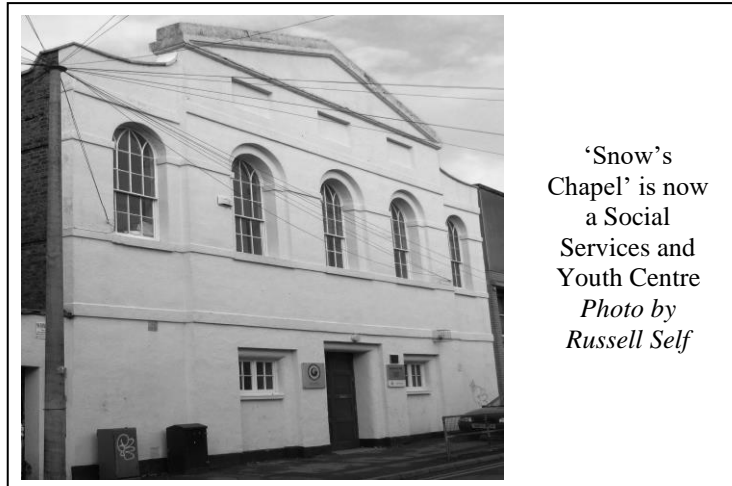
The correspondence was published as *Two Letters from the Rt Rev the Lord Bishop of Bristol, to the Rev Thomas Snow and his reply to each*. Snow made it clear that his separation from the Church of England was solely over infant baptism. Some of those involved in the Western Schism were unorthodox in their theology, but Snow made it clear that his orthodoxy was defined by the Athanasian Creed. What he had previously published he now rejected, for there was no place for 'fresh and direct revelation of the Spirit, independent of the written word of God.'<sup>22</sup> He had enjoyed the favour of the Bishop of Winchester and had no particular attraction for nonconformity. He realised that it been wrong for clergy to separate from the Church of England and then to set themselves up as teachers, and to gather around them congregations. His change of heart was wholly positive. 'And when the first glimpse of a right view on this subject was presented to my mind; the possibility of my returning with my family to the establishment, as a quiet resting place, after the endless uncertainties and confusion without it, gave rise to one of the most cheering hopes of my life.'<sup>23</sup> Some of the dissidents involved in the Western Schism had denied the efficiency and necessity of prayer, but not so for Snow and his family. Every day, morning and evening, for the past seventeen years, Snow had gathered his family for prayer. Every day, Snow heard his eldest son read a chapter of the Bible and pray, and his wife heard their eldest daughter read and pray with the younger children. Far from being 'inefficacious or unnecessary' Snow considered it to be 'productive of the greatest blessings man can enjoy.'<sup>24</sup> It may be concluded the 'restatement allowed Snow to make amends for his previous errors in judgement, though his moving in quick succession from one good living to another suggests that, at least in the view of most churchmen, he had little to atone for.'<sup>25</sup>

Having satisfied all that the Bishop of Bristol required for him to be restored into the fellowship of the Church of England, Snow then served two curacies in his diocese. The first was at Chettle, north-east of Blandford Forum, 1826-27, and then at Charmouth, near Lyme Regis, 1827-33. In December 1827 Snow preached a rousing address entitled, *A Sermon preached at Charmouth Church, on the second Sunday in Advent, pointing out one particular in the character of a real Christian, wherein he differs from the mere formalist*. By this sermon he made clear his Evangelical orthodoxy.

In 1833 Snow became the rector of Sutton Waldron, north of Blandford Forum, and a year later the rector of St Dunstan's-in-the-West, Fleet Street, London. This was a prestigious living and that Snow was regarded as a suitable candidate shows that he had been fully accepted back into the established church. During this period of his ministry he was regarded as an 'excellent minister' whose 'preaching is certainly of the highest order.'<sup>26</sup> In the capital Snow became more closely identified with the growing number of Evangelicals, and it was during this phase of his career that he became involved with the founding of the Church Pastoral Aid Society.

Snow remained in London until 1842 when he became the incumbent of Newton Valence a small country parish south of Alton in Hampshire. He resigned in

1860 and retired to Littleton House, Langton Long near Blandford Forum and died there in 1867.



'Snow's  
Chapel' is now  
a Social  
Services and  
Youth Centre  
*Photo by  
Russell Self*

1 Gourlay, A.B., *History of Sherborne School* (Sherborne) 1971, p.84, note 8.

2 Munden, Alan, Charles Simeon (1759-1836), in A. Atherstone (ed.) *The Heart of the Faith* (Cambridge, 2008), pp.81-89.

3 The university archives make it clear that Snow did not proceed to MA.

4 Quebec Chapel was opened in 1759 as a proprietary chapel (one of nine such chapels in the parish of Marylebone). In 1894 it became a parish church dedicated as the Church of the Annunciation, and was demolished in 1909.

5 The patron of Winterborne Stoke was Alexander Baring (later Baron Ashburton) the second son of Sir Francis Baring.

<sup>6</sup> For the background to the Western Schism, I am indebted to Carter, G., *Anglican Evangelicals. Protestant Secessions from the Via Media, c.1800-1850* (Oxford, 2001) pp.105-151.

7 His son, Charles Thomas Baring (1807-1879) was successively the Bishop of Gloucester 1857-61, then the Bishop of Durham 1861-79.

8 Baring-Gould, S., *The Church Revival* (London) 1914, p.96.

9 *Ibid.*, p.95.

10 Albury Park later became the venue for the Albury Conferences and associated with the Catholic Apostolic Church.

11 The chapel had been opened by John Wesley. In March 1776 he recorded, 'I went down to Taunton, and at three in the afternoon opened the new preaching house. The people showed great eagerness to hear.' J. Wesley, *Journal of the Rev John Wesley* (Dent Edition, London) 1906, Vol. 4, p.69.

The Octagon Chapel closed in 1822, and four years later reopened by the Wesleyan Methodists, and then acquired by the Plymouth Brethren.

12 George Baring (1751-1854) lived under the shadow of other members of his family. He only remained in Exeter for a year, then fled to the continent where he turned his back on Christianity, became a profligate and went bankrupt.

13 George Bevan (1782-1819) became more extreme in his views and held unorthodox views of the Trinity. He died in Hampstead apparently unconnected with any particular denomination.

14 Carter, *Anglican Evangelicals*, *op.cit.*, p.116.

15 The Bartholomew Street Chapel in Exeter, cost George Baring and Harriet Wall £4,000, and seated 1,000 people. After Baring left the chapel further divisions took place within the congregation, the largest faction became Plymouth Brethren.

16 James Harrington Evans (1785-1849) as the curate of Milford and Hordle had been a near-neighbour of Harriet Wall. From 1818-49 he was the minister of the John Street (Baptist) Chapel, Holborn. Evans was 'the most able theologian of the [dissident] party', Carter, *Anglican Evangelicals*, *op.cit.*, p.123.

17 Munden, Alan, *Evangelical in the Shadows: Charles Jervis of Cheltenham*, *Churchman*, Vol. 96, No 2, 1982, pp.142-150.

18 Only Holy Trinity was opened during Jervis' incumbency; St Paul's, was opened by his successor, Francis Close.

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19 Simons, J., *A Letter to an highly respected friend, on the subject of certain errors, of Antinomian kind, which have lately sprung up in the West of England, and are now making an alarming progress throughout the kingdom* (London) 1818, pp.v, 30.

20 Baring-Gould wrongly stated that *two* of Snow's children were baptised by Simeon, *Church Revival*, op.cit. p.97.

21 Snow insisted that his subsequent children were baptised as infants.

22 *Two letters from the Rt Rev the Lord Bishop of Bristol, to the Rev Thomas Snow, and his reply to each* (Blandford Forum) 1826, 13.

23 Ibid. p.8.

24 Ibid. 16.

25 Ibid., p.131.

26 [Collection] *The Church of England preacher or sermons by eminent divines, delivered in 1837* (London) 1838, p.77.

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## A Medieval Cheltenham Cleric

MICHAEL J. GREET

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ON 13<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 1378, AT BROMSGROVE, THOMAS STURDY OF ALRE (Arle) was ordained as a secular priest (i.e. an ordinary priest, not a monk or canon regular) to a title of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Gloucester. (A title is a spiritual office with a guarantee of maintenance. Lacking this, the ordaining bishop would be liable to maintain the priest until he gained a church living).

St. Bartholomew's Hospital was founded in the twelfth century for sick men and women, and for workmen building Westgate Bridge over the Severn. (The Hospital later assumed responsibility for maintaining the bridge). The Hospital was described as a Crutched Friars Hospital in Papal letter of the fifteenth century. In 1229 it had a Prior, brothers (including priests of the Crutched Friars), and lay brothers and sisters ministering to the poor and sick. In 1333 there were some ninety sick people there.

The Crutched Friars in England derived from a group formed in Belgium which followed the Rule of St. Augustine, and worked mainly in Hospitals.

No doubt Thomas would have known William Bole, of Charlton Kings, who became successively, a secular acolyte, sub-deacon, and then deacon, in the period 1377-1379, and who also served at the Hospital.

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# An Extraordinary Actress: Lillah McCarthy

ROGER BEACHAM

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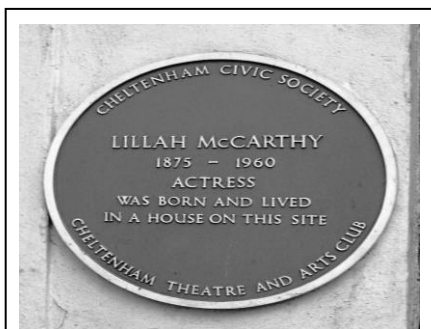
‘IT IS AN ACTRESS’S PROFESSION TO BE EXTRAORDINARY’ wrote George Bernard Shaw, ‘but Lillah was extraordinary even among actresses.’<sup>1</sup> Charles Landstone (sometime Deputy Director, Arts Council) who saw her in Masfield’s *The Witch* wrote ‘Lillah MacCarthy’s performance has always remained with me as one of the great acting experiences in my life.’<sup>2</sup>

The seventh child of Jonadab McCarthy, a furniture and fine art dealer, and his wife Emma, Lillah was born on 22 September 1875 at 384 (now 152) High St.<sup>3</sup> In her autobiography Lillah writes that at a few months old her sister accidentally gave her a bottle of sour milk that sent her into convulsions. As she had not been baptised her anxious parents sent for a clergyman and a doctor. The clergyman baptised her and the doctor pronounced her dead but the quiet determination of her grandmother, who nursed her all night long, brought her back to life! Her baptism is recorded in

the registers of St Mary’s Parish Church 17 September 1876 when she was given the names Lila Emma.<sup>4</sup> At the time of Lillah’s baptism the family were living at St Mary’s Hall, now Normandy House, Lower High St.<sup>5</sup> Over the next 18 years or so the family moved, successively, to 120 (now 187) High St, Hartley House and 7 Grosvenor Place both in Albion St, and 5 Promenade, part of the terrace now housing Waterstone’s bookshop at the former Post Office. Although a pupil for a short and unhappy time aged eight at The Priory<sup>6</sup> Lillah was largely educated at home by her father, a man of wide intellectual interests.



Postcard of Lillah McCarthy  
postmarked November 1904  
*Courtesy of Sue Rowbotham*



Civic Society blue plaque, the site of Lillah’s birthplace, High Street (now Burger King)

*Photo Sue Rowbotham*

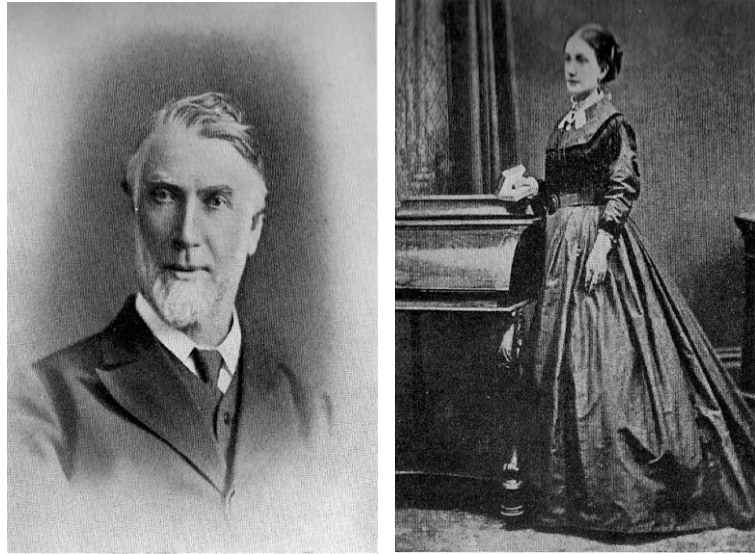
As a teenager Lillah accompanied her father to watch the cricket at Cheltenham College, becoming an avid fan of the ‘the Croucher,’ Gilbert Jessop. With her father’s tuition Lillah acquired a reputation as reciter of verse. In March 1890 in a programme organised by the Band of Hope (a temperance organisation) she recited *The Jackdaw of Rheims*.<sup>7</sup> On 8 April 1891 Lillah made her first appearance on the amateur stage when she appeared in a farce *Turn Him Out* at a Conservative rally at the Assembly Rooms. When the town’s new theatre the Opera House (now

Everyman Theatre) opened 1 October 1891, Lillah sat spellbound as the curtains



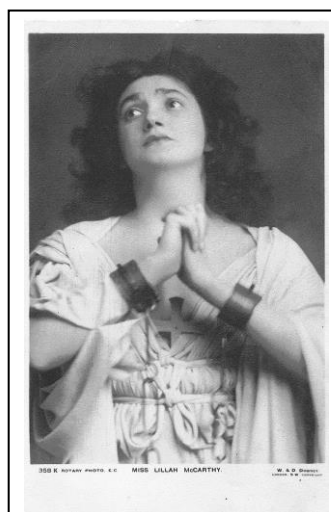
parted and Lillie Langtry stepped onto the stage as Lady Clancarty. The previous evening Lillah had been placed on a chair by Jonadab to test the theatre's acoustics. Soon Lillah herself was to create a sensation when at the age of 15 she appeared in a Conservative Club entertainment as Lady Macbeth in the murder scene.<sup>8</sup> When Frank Benson brought his company to the Opera House Lillah was taken by her father to see him. Benson listened as

Lillah recited some of Arthur's speeches from *King John*. "She has talent," said Benson. "Send her to London to be trained."<sup>9</sup>



Jonadab and Emma McCarthy,  
From Lillah's autobiography *Myself and My friends*  
Courtesy of Sue Rowbotham

So it was that in 1893 the family left Cheltenham for Lillah to be trained by Hermann Vezin. Two years later she again appeared as Lady Macbeth in an amateur performance at St George's Hall, on this occasion adding an 'h' to her name 'as it looked more imposing.' Bernard Shaw was in the audience and despite all Lillah's faults, 'immature, unskilful and entirely artificial,' could yet discern her promise.<sup>10</sup> Following Shaw's suggestion of some years of hard work and study, Lillah joined first Ben Greet's Shakespearian touring company and then Wilson Barrett playing in England, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. In December 1900 Barrett played



Lillah in *The Sign of the Cross*. Undated.  
Courtesy of Sue Rowbotham

at Cheltenham Opera House in the melodramas *Man and His Makers*, *The Silver King* and *The Sign of the Cross*, Lillah as leading lady. They returned in Nov 1903 with the addition of Lillah's brother Daniel in the company. After nearly ten years since Shaw's criticism of her Lady Macbeth, Lillah went to see him. The playwright immediately recognised the changes in her and believed she was now the actress to bring Ann Whitefield in *Man and Superman* to life. He gave her a copy of the play to study.

In London's Sloane Square stands the small Royal Court Theatre. Here, from 1904 to 1907, Harley Granville Barker with his business manager J.E. Vedrenne, presented a landmark season of new plays (mostly of Shaw's creation) and classic revivals. On 1 May 1905 Lillah joined the company to play Nora in a revival of Shaw's *John Bull's Other Island*, beginning a long

association with Shaw for whom she would create five of his roles. *Man and Superman* was given its first performance 21 May 1905, produced by Barker who also played John Tanner. Shaw inscribed volume 10 of Lillah's copy of his collected works: 'This volume is very specially dedicated to the Creatrix of Ann Whitefield, who will always be my Ann'.<sup>11</sup>

Lillah had first met Harley Granville Barker in Ben Greet's Company when he had played Paris to her Juliet. Renewing their acquaintance they quickly fell in love and were married in a civil ceremony 24 April 1906. They became accepted everywhere in London society, 'she for her beauty and talents, he for his charm and leadership in the intellectual theatre.' Though unequal to Barker intellectually, Lillah contributed greatly to his success with the care and attention she gave him in his home life and in her enthusiasm, energy and active seeking of financial backing. In November 1906 Barker presented the first production of Shaw's *The Doctor's Dilemma*, Lillah and Barker creating the roles of Jennifer and Louis Dubedat.

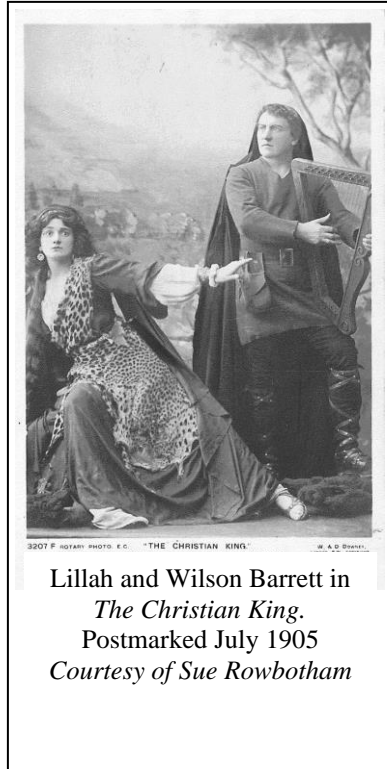
*Man and Superman* is a very long play, (a full length performance would take nearly eight hours) and when first performed Act 111, scene 2 was omitted. That scene was presented at the Court as a one act play, *Don Juan in Hell* 4 June 1907, Lillah playing Dona Ana de Ulloa (Ann Whitefield). In 1911 as part of the Coronation celebrations the Prime Minister, H.H. Asquith, arranged for Lillah and Barker to perform the third act of *John Bull's Other Island* at 10, Downing St before George V and Queen Mary. Lillah also appeared in Barrie's *The Twelve Pound Look* performed at the same time.



Lillah as Ann Whitefield  
in Shaw's *Man and  
Superman*.  
Courtesy of Sue  
Rowbotham

Early in 1911 the Barkers moved to a small flat over the Little Theatre, John Street Adelphi. Lillah arranged a lease of the theatre and asked Shaw for a new play. He gave her *Fanny's First Play* on the condition that he remained anonymous, although its authorship was widely known. Lillah played Margaret Knox and the play was Shaw's first commercial success.

*Oedipus Rex* translated by Gilbert Murray and produced by Max Reinhardt was presented at Covent Garden in January 1912. Martin Harvey played the name part and Lillah, Jocasta. Murray wrote to Lillah, "I never saw you so good. Indeed I did not know that there was any actress in England capable of looking and speaking the part with that heroic strength and dignity."<sup>12</sup>



Lillah and Wilson Barrett in  
*The Christian King*.  
Postmarked July 1905  
Courtesy of Sue Rowbotham

Lillah longed to appear in Shakespeare and Barker wished to produce the great plays. In 1912 they took a lease of the Savoy Theatre and Lillah appeared as Hermione in *The Winters Tale*, Viola in *Twelfth Night* and, in 1914, Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Shaw's *Androcles and the Lion* was presented at the St James's Theatre in September 1913 with a principal part, that of Lavinia, written for Lillah.

Towards the end of 1914 the Prime Minister encouraged the Barkers to leave England for America. Their performances he believed would support the war effort. They presented Shaw, Shakespeare, Anatole France's *The Man Who Married A Dumb Wife* and Gilbert Murray's version of *The Trojan Women* with Lillah as Hecuba. The Barkers returned to this country in June 1915 but Barker had formed an attachment to the already twice married wife of one of his American millionaire backers. In September Barker returned to America alone, the affair was rekindled and in January 1916 Lillah received a letter from her husband saying that he would not return to her and that she must divorce him. Despite being counselled by Shaw Lillah could not accept that her marriage was over. She continued to act but scarcely knew what she was doing. The granting of the decree absolute was a disaster for Lillah. To support her Shaw wrote and produced *Annajanska the Wild Grand Duchess* which was presented at the (London) Coliseum in a variety bill in January 1918. Lillah suggested to Arnold Bennett that he write a play for her based on the story of Judith and Holofernes in the Apocrypha. Charles Ricketts designed the costumes and scenery and *Judith* with Lillah in the title role opened at the Kingsway Theatre in 1919. It was not a success and Lillah lost half her capital in its production. 'EJB', whom I take to be Edward J. Burrow, travelled up to London to interview Lillah for the *Cheltenham Looker On*. Asked if "she liked the somewhat stilted language of a Biblical Drama." "Yes," she replied, "I have a great liking for the sonorous phrases of the Bible: for nothing can surpass their beauty of diction if properly rendered."<sup>13</sup> Without Barker to guide her she tended to revert to the declamatory style that Jonadab had taught her.



Lillah as the 'Dumb Wife', Shannon  
Photo by Sue Rowbotham, courtesy of CAG&M

In 1920 Lillah married Frederick Keeble, knighted in 1922, sometime Director of the Royal Horticultural Society gardens at Wisley and afterwards Sherardian Professor of Botany at Oxford. After 1921 Lillah virtually left the stage and settled to a happy married life devoted to poetry and gardening at their home at Boars Hill, Oxford. On 29 October 1925 Lillah gave two recitals at Cheltenham Town Hall, with readings from Shakespeare, Masfield, W.B. Yeats and Flecker's *Hassan*. At the afternoon session the audience of mainly Ladies' College girls did not fill a quarter of the seats, though the evening recital was better attended.

Lillah had been painted twice by her friend Charles Shannon, as Dona Ana in 1907 and as the Dumb Wife in 1916/1917 to which his companion, Charles Ricketts, had added a butterfly to the headdress. The Dona Ana picture was lent to Cheltenham Art Gallery for exhibition in 1931. In August that year Lillah wrote to the Curator wishing that "the Tradespeople & others of Cheltenham would subscribe enough to buy it" and offering to give a recital to raise funds. The offer was declined.

When in 1932 the Prince of Wales opened the new Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford Lillah read the prologue specially written by Masefield.

In July 1935 Lillah appeared in the title role of Laurence Binyon's new play *Boadicea* at the Oxford Playhouse, the only named member of an otherwise anonymous cast. "She easily sustained the main burden of the play and knew when and how to increase or relax its tension" commented *The Times*. An "all star cast" Shakespeare matinee was held at Drury Lane 26 November 1935 in the presence of the Duke and Duchess of York and Princess Elizabeth - the future King George VI, Queen Elizabeth and Queen Elizabeth II - in aid of the proposed National Theatre. Lillah was singled out by *The Times* for her "firmly drawn sketch" of Queen Katharine.

When Lillah came to write her autobiography Barker caused her further pain when he insisted every reference to himself be removed. Lillah thought that it should not then be published but Sir Frederick did not agree and completely rewrote his wife's book.

After Sir Frederick's death in 1952 Lillah lived in London where she died 15 April 1960. The Victoria and Albert Museum having declined the portraits by Shannon they were presented by Lillah's executrix to Cheltenham Art Gallery, together with three other works. There is also a portrait by Ambrose McEvoy in the National Portrait Gallery.

This article can only outline Lillah's career and achievements and we can only guess at what she might have accomplished if her first marriage had lasted. Great stage acting lives only in the moment and in the vividness of memory but Lillah deserves greater honour in her native town.

NOTE: For Lillah's appearances in Shaw I have relied on Mander, R. and Mitchenson, J., *Theatrical Companion to Shaw*, (1954). John Gielgud has an interesting account of Lillah in *An actor and his time*, (1979), pp120-123. I gratefully acknowledge the help received in writing this article from my mother, Christopher Rainey, Madeleine Cox of the Shakespeare Centre Library, and Sue Rowbotham for the illustrations.

<sup>1</sup> In his foreword to *McCarthy, Lillah Myself and My Friends*, 1933.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Trewin, J.C., *The Edwardian Theatre*, (1976) p.90.

<sup>3</sup> Site marked by blue plaque. Jonadab became a successful developer of shop property and owner of the Plough and George Hotels.

<sup>4</sup> There is no indication in the register that the baptism was not held in the church. St. Mary's is also where Lillah's parents were married 15 November 1865.

<sup>5</sup> See Atkinson, Heather, *The Other Side of Regency Cheltenham*, (1997), p.27

<sup>6</sup> *Cheltenham Annuaire, 1883*, Mrs Bush, Priory House, High Street, School for Young Ladies.

<sup>7</sup> Highbury Congregational Church lecture hall. Also taking part were Agnes and Elsie Nicholls, *Cheltenham Free Press*, 22 March 1890.

<sup>8</sup> *Cheltenham Examiner*, 23 December 1891, in contrast to the effusion of some reports, stated that Lillah 'has much to learn' and 'something to unlearn'. Lillah also appeared as Cleopatra in the farce *Turned Up*. Both plays were staged at the Opera House.

<sup>9</sup> Trewin, J.C., *Benson and the Bensonians*, (1960), p.83.

<sup>10</sup> Holroyd, Michael, *Bernard Shaw, Vol. 2*, (1989), p.154.

<sup>11</sup> Lillah's set of Shaw's works, each of them inscribed, was offered on the Internet for sale by Charles Argent, Mertztown, PA, 16 October 2008.

<sup>12</sup> Purdom, C.B., *Harley Granville Barker*, (1955), pp. 131-132.

<sup>13</sup> *Cheltenham Looker On*, Second Volume, 1919, pp.189. Edward Burrow also reminisced of the time he and Lillah had appeared in a concert at the All Saints' Church schoolroom.

# Recent books and articles on the history of Cheltenham

List compiled by STEVEN BLAKE

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Bradbury, Oliver, '13 Portland Street, Cheltenham: an example of the architecture of Masonic preferment', *Transactions of the Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, **125** (2007), pp. 331-9. A detailed account of a now demolished house of 1818, possibly designed by George Underwood, a pupil of Sir John Soane, whose style is evident in the building's architecture.

Green, Chris (ed.), *How the Other Half Lived. Discovering Alstone Volume 2*, (Hesters Way Neighbourhood Project, Cheltenham Borough Council, 2008). 96pp. £3.50. Aspects of the history of the Alstone area, researched and compiled by Margery Hyett, David Edgar and Jill Waller.

Kippin, Mick, "'Under Water': Flooding in Cheltenham 1731-1993", *Gloucestershire History*, **22** (2008), pp. 25-9.

Loomes, Brian, 'An unrecorded maker. Moses Bradshaw of Charlton Kings', *Clocks Magazine*, (April 2008), pp. 9-14. An account of an 18<sup>th</sup>-century clockmaker, an example of whose work is on display in Cheltenham Museum.

Mathers, Helen, 'The Evangelical Spirituality of a Victorian Feminist: Josephine Butler, 1828-1906', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, **52.2** (April 2001), pp. 282-312. Aspects of the life of this one-time Cheltenham resident.

O'Connor, David A. (compiler and editor), *Lives Revisited. A Biographical Survey of the Churchyard of St Mary, Charlton Kings*, (Charlton Kings Local History Society, 2005). 149pp. £6.00. An alphabetical list of 232 entries, with historical details of each individual.

O'Connor, David A., in collaboration with Ian Harvey, *Troubled Waters. The Great Cheltenham Water Controversy*, (published by the author, 2007). 215pp. £9.99. A history of Cheltenham's water supply, including the Hewletts and Dowdeswell Reservoirs, since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Pilbeam, Alan, *The Old Paths of Gloucestershire*, (Tempus Publishing Ltd., Chalford, 2008). 158pp. £14.99. Chapter 7 (pp. 89-101) covers 'Promenading in Regency Cheltenham'.

Pope, Ian, *Private Owner Wagons of Gloucestershire*, (Lightmoor Press, Witney, 2006). 240pp. £21.99. Includes (pp. 62-107) accounts of all the known Cheltenham railway wagon makers and owners from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, many of them coal merchants.

Sale, Jane (ed.), *Charlton Kings Local History Society Research Bulletin* **54** (2008). 56pp. £3.50. A wide range of notes and articles on Charlton Kings by a variety of authors, including Charlton 1000 years ago (Jane Sale), Charlton in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Mary Southerton), the Charlton Kings Senior Citizens Welfare Committee (Don Sherwell), building on the grounds of the Court House (Joyce Simpson), the publisher Edward J Burrow (P. J. Pearce), the Manor of Ashley (Jane Sale) and the history of Moorend Road (David Morgan).

Torode, Brian E., *John Middleton. Victorian, Provincial Architect*, (University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia, 2008). 175pp. £14.50. A detailed account of the work of this important Cheltenham-based architect, both locally and nationally.

Waller, Jill (compiler), *A Chronology of Cheltenham's Literary Connections*, (Cheltenham Local History Society, 2008). 40pp. £4.00. The sixth in a series of chronologies produced to accompany the Society's display at the annual Local History Afternoon in Gloucester.

Williams, Isobel, *With Scott in the Antarctic. Edward Wilson: Explorer, Naturalist, Artist*, (The History Press Ltd., Stroud, 2008). 320pp. £20.00. A new biography of the Cheltenham-born Antarctic explorer.

Wills, Jan, and Catchpole, Toby (eds), 'Archaeological Review No. 31, 2006', *Transactions of the Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society* **125** (2007) has short notes on archaeological evaluations in Cheltenham and Leckhampton (p.353) and Prestbury (p.363).

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## Gloucestershire Archives: Cheltenham Area Accessions, 2008

JULIE COURTENAY, Head of Collections

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Details of these, other collections and services available at Gloucestershire Archives can be found online at: [www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=15434](http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=15434). Members may also like to be aware that by using the Gloucestershire Archives website archives can be ordered in advance of a visit. If you would like to keep up-to-date with what's going on at Gloucestershire Archives, you can subscribe to our quarterly e-newsletter. Please ask to join our mailing list by contacting: [archives@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:archives@gloucestershire.gov.uk)

Please note that it takes sometime to sort and list new collections so you may need to make an appointment in advance to see them.

Newly catalogued in 2008 is the archive of John Moore (1907-1967), Artistic Director of Cheltenham Literary Festival, 1949-1961 (D8451) and the small archive of celebrated violinist Marie Hall (1884-1956), resident of Cheltenham from 1911.

*Julie Courtenay, Head of Collections, Gloucestershire Archives, Clarence Row, Alvin Street, Gloucester, GL1 3DW, Tel: 01452 427772, Email enquires to: [archives@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:archives@gloucestershire.gov.uk)*

**Battledown Children's Centre:** management minutes and papers, 1998-2003 (GA ref. S78/2)

**Cheltenham Borough Council:** Parks and Recreation Department annual reports, 1984-1986, details of recreational facilities, undated, and survey of Pittville bandstand, undated (DC137); full electoral register published December 2008, in force for 2009 (Q/Rer)

**Cheltenham Branch of the Gloucester and Bristol Diocesan Association of Bellingers:** branch minutes, 1960-1996: news sheets and posters, 1983-2007; Association Annual reports 1921-2000 (D11288)

**Cheltenham Fabian Society:** records including membership cards, accounts and correspondence, 20<sup>th</sup> century; research papers relating to a report entitled 'Battered Wives in the Cheltenham Area', 1975 (D11379)

**Cheltenham Freemasons, Foundation Lodge No 82:** charity fund records, 19702-2000, booklet on the New Masonic Samaritan Fund, Province of Gloucestershire Festival, 2006 (D9764)

**Cheltenham Hebrew Synagogue:** correspondence, 1841-1910; accounts and receipts, 1849-1949; correspondence and accounts concerned with the London Committee of Deputies of British Jews, the Chief Rabbi and the relief of the Jewish poor, 1844-

1875; invoices and receipts for rates, utilities, repairs, purchases and cheque book stubs, 1809-1910; agreement, rent book and receipts for tax and rates for premises on Elm Street, 1892-1915 (D3883)

**1<sup>st</sup> Cheltenham (Highbury) Scout Group:** minutes, 1966-2002; troop and patrol logs 1930s-1980s; troop registers, 1933-1943; records of trips and camps, 20<sup>th</sup> century-2000s; membership and badge records, 1976-c.1988; 80<sup>th</sup> and 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, 1988-1998; personal recollections of former members, (1940s-1980s); photographs, 1940s-1990s; troop and district newsletters, 1960s-1990s; certificate awarded to troop for cooking at Imperial Scouting Exhibition, 1913; history of group, written for centenary, 2008; minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> Cheltenham Air Scouts, 1957-1965 (D11345)

**Cheltenham Manor:** court roll, with transcript, 1576 (D11250)

**Cheltenham Town Hall Centenary Memories Book,** 2003-2004; correspondence, postcards and three concert programmes (signed Vic Oliver, George Weldon and Cyril Smith), 1946-2007; photographs of various events in Cheltenham, includes garden parties, Dancing in the Street and Fringe, 2001, n.d. [1990s-2001] (D11186)

**Deeds of various properties** including:

Culverhay, Sturmys Orchard, Sturmys Yate and Sturmys Field, Cheltenham for the augmentation of the vicarage of Brockworth, 1763 (D11268)  
 Gloucester Road properties, (1890)-1963 (D11443)  
 12 Lansdown Crescent, 1843-1998 (D11262)  
 34 Rodney Road (formerly known as Fowlers Cottage, Serampore Lodge, Arran Cottage and Arran Lodge), (1815)-2001 (D11106)

**Green family of Battledown Approach** and elsewhere: correspondence, family history notes and other papers, relating to Miss Mary Green and her parents Lieutenant Colonel Valentine Christian Green and Mary Green (nee Heriot Hill), and other family members, 20<sup>th</sup> century (D11336)

**Jessops of Cheltenham, solicitors:** deeds relating to 14 Royal Crescent, Cheltenham, which formed the offices of Jessops until the merger with Rickerbys on 1 January 1987, 1930s-1980s (D10211)

**Note: the following archive material was transferred, 2008, from Cheltenham Library (GA reference D5130):**

Pittville Spa and Gardens subscription book, 1830-1852

Presentation address to the Reverend J A Aston, vicar of St Luke's, Cheltenham 1883

Manuscript of James Elroy Flecker's 'Don Juan' and related papers, 1910-1934

Photographs, manuscripts, concert programmes, newspaper cuttings and notes relating to Harold Chipp (chairman of the Cheltenham Gramophone Society c.1961), c.1920-1970

Signed copy of manuscript symphony of No. 5 by Malcolm Arnold, July 1961

Glass slides including the Moody Bell Collection, Miss Drew Collection and the Beozley Collection

**John L Jones of Cheltenham, architect** (with L W Barnard and Partners of Cheltenham): slides of drawings and buildings worked on by Mr Jones, mostly Gloucestershire and South Wales, 1930s-1980s (D11237)

**Monkscroft Primary School:** admission registers, 1973-2006; attendance registers, 2006-2008; governors' and committee minutes, 2006-2008; governors' correspondence and papers including annual reports, head teacher's reports and papers concerning Gloucestershire area schools review 2005, 2000-2008; plans of school site, 2001; papers concerning school amalgamation, 1996-2002; letters and press release concerning campaign to save school, 2005-2006 (S78/18)

**St James' parish:** magazines, 1925-1948 (P78/5)

**St Peter's parish:** vestry and PCC minutes, 1939-2002; church accounts, 1916-2001; magazines, 1897-1989; other property records including organ trust book, 1859-1910 and churchyard survey, 1988  
 press cuttings and correspondence relating to church survival, 1971-1972; photographs and pen and ink drawings of church events and incumbents, c.1890-1950; centenary programme, 1849-1949; papers relating to the 150<sup>th</sup> celebrations, 1998; papers relating to church redundancy, 2004-2006; memorial book relating to the retirement of Charlotte Anne Field (Sunday School teacher), 1886-1953; Sunday School minutes, 1955; Mother's Union records, 1950s-1990s; Over 60's Club records, 1950s-2000 (P78/11)

**Captain A G Tod of 2 North Parade, photographer:** 3 unidentified portrait photographs, taken [late 19<sup>th</sup> century] (D11474)

**Worker's Educational Association, Cheltenham Branch:** minutes, correspondence, reports and other papers, 1949-2007; 'WEA: Cheltenham branch-the first forty years', by E G Whitall, 1964 (D4227)

**Frederick Wright of Gloucester and Cheltenham, tobacconists:** deeds and legal papers relating to premises at 111-112 High Street Cheltenham [later renumbered to 163-165 High Street Cheltenham], 1717-1960 (D11384)

# Members' Interests and Research Topics

## DOROTHY SEATON-SMITH

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*The Society aims to share knowledge and promote research. With this in mind, members are asked, when joining the Society or renewing their membership, to specify any topics being researched or any special interests they may have.*

*If you pay your membership by standing order please ensure that you return the slip with your interests each year or your interests will not be included in future lists.*

**To be put in touch with a member, please contact Dorothy Seaton-Smith:  
[email@seton-smith.wanadoo.co.uk](mailto:email@seton-smith.wanadoo.co.uk)**

MEMBER(S)	INTEREST(S) AND/OR RESEARCH TOPIC(S)
Eileen Allen	Pates family; Priory Terrace; Hewlett Road; Charlton Kings; Swindon Village
Eva Bailey	Cheltenham & Indian connection; The Park; Christ Church, Cheltenham
Jan Baltzerson	Commemoration of the war dead
Joan Bate	Church architecture; gardens; the development of Cheltenham
Mike Beacham	Corn mills
Roger Beacham	Theatres; Prestbury; All Saints Church
Patricia Bilbey	Victorian places, Cheltenham
Rod Bowden	Roman & Medieval local history
Sue & John Brasher	Prinbox Works/Tivoli Wagon Works, William Henry Brasher
Simon Butler	Architectural History
John Clarke	A. J. Smith, 7, 8 & 9 Bennington Street; Bennington Street
Michael Cole	Music; Fine Arts
Joyce Cummings	Economic & social development of St Peter's, St Paul's and Fairview – the workshops of Cheltenham; Family history; Living & working in the Strand (High Street from Cambray to Sandford park entrance)
Christine Denny	Family history outside Gloucestershire; Local history
Angela Dovey	History of St Paul's & St Peter's; Cheltenham Workhouses and Schools, High Street – including Lower High Street; Cheltenham's history in general
Jenny Eastwood	Social conditions, St Peter's area; traveller families wintering in St Peter's
Tim Edgell	Breweries & public houses in & around Stroud, Nailsworth, Dursley, Weston-under-Edge, Cheltenham and Gloucester specifically and all Gloucestershire
Beryl Elliott	Prestbury before 1850
John Elliott	History of cinemas; Cinemas in Cheltenham
Alan Gill	Cheltenham and Engelfontaine (adopted after First World War) Cheltenham & Crimea War (its impact on the town)



MEMBER(S)	INTEREST(S) AND/OR RESEARCH TOPIC(S)
Carolyn Greet	Cheltenham High Street pre 1850; Cheltenham markets; Humphrey Ruff, 1773 – 1829
Mike Greet	Cheltenham – medieval times; The medieval church in Cheltenham and its chapels; Issac Bell, Gardener-Rhymer (1800 -1889)
James Hodsdon	Cheltenham's streets & place names; Cheltenham Manor Court records
Gordon Jones	Yeomanry & Cavalry in Gloucestershire, particularly Royal Gloucestershire Hussars
Laura Kinnear	Georgian Worcestershire & Cheltenham – Jeremy Wood in particular; Cheltenham shops; Gustav Holst related material
Mike Kippin	Medals presented to people from Cheltenham; Volunteer Movement in Gloucestershire, 1793-1808;
Graham Lockwood	Music events in Cheltenham
Sandra Maxted	Sussex House, Portland Street - owners, staff & any related history
Mrs. P. A. Meyrick	Churches in photographs – Charlton Kings & Cheltenham, especially St Mary's, Cheltenham
Alan Munden	Francis Close; Edward Walker; Jane Cook; F. W. Robertson; Thomas Snow; Churches & Chapels of Cheltenham;
Geoff North	Voluntary Aid Hospitals in Cheltenham 1914-1919
Elaine North	Housing the Poor in Cheltenham - information required in preparation for History Afternoon October 2009; Cheltenham's lifeboats & benefactors; Joseph Hall; Cheltenham's first telephones, for database
Sue Rowbotham	Maskelyne family; W. D. Slade; Christchurch Schools; Constance family; entertainment - circuses & magicians; Beetham's chemist
Derek Rowles	Tivoli Road
Evelyn Ross	Old cinemas
Russ & Sally Self	History of Arle; Cheltenham maps and books
Dorothy Seton-Smith	Field family history (William Field, chimney sweep); Social & economic development St Peter's, St Paul's, Fairview - workshops of Cheltenham; Dorcas Society in Cheltenham; St Monica's Home for Girls (C of E)
J. Shipton	Shipton family in Cheltenham, late 19 <sup>th</sup> century
G. A. & P. Smith	Tibbles family; Local history of Coln St. Aldwyns, also Hatherop
Bol Stallard	Fanny Glossop, died 15 May 1874, Regent Place, Swindon Road; Grace Glossop & Elizabeth Meakin, Salisbury House, Swindon Road, 1891-1922; History of Cambray Chambers; Cambray Place, pre 1922
Peter Stephens	Casino Place; Black & White Motors; Cheltenham postcards; Swindon Street
Margaret Stocker	The Palmer & Gwinnett families of Cheltenham; TB in 19 <sup>th</sup> century Cheltenham; Solicitors in Cheltenham
Jill Waller	Alstone area; Lansdown Industry; Cheltenham property deeds
Alan White	Cheltenham in the Great War; Postcards and crested china - the Great War

## Erratum – Journal 24

'The Owe 40 Club-National lawn Tennis' Elizabeth Millman & Pauline Bradstock, p.32, caption for photo bottom right should read 'Lew Hoad, Exhibition Match, Cheltenham 1965. Courtesy of Elizabeth Millman.

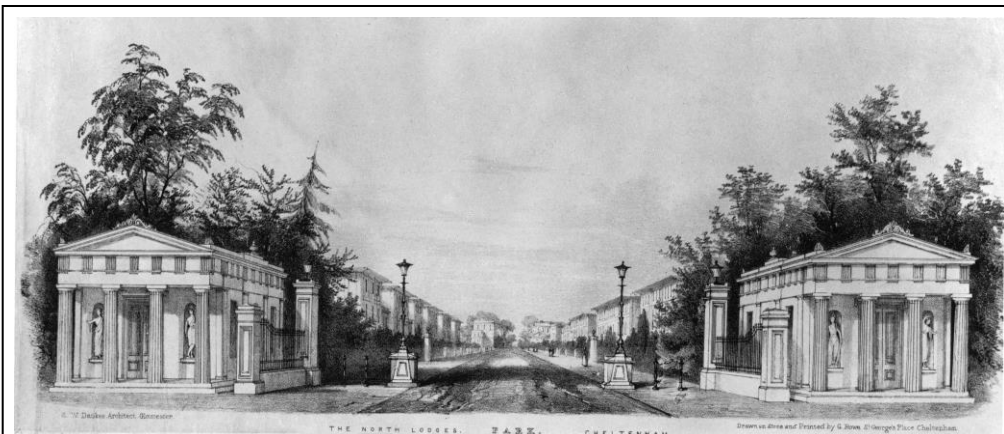
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Pair of pavilions, The Park, c. 1833. It is not certain that both were built, though one seems to have been moved to the site of Cornerways in 1850.  
(see article 'Samuel Daukes', p.5 & front cover) *By courtesy of GA*