



Cheltenham *Local History Society*

Journal 29 ~ 2013

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Introduction

SALLY SELF, Journal Editor ☎ 01242 243714 ✉ journal.clhs@btinternet.com

WHAT, NO 'BIG RED BOOK? SURELY CHELTENHAM must have one?' Such was my conversation in the local history library five years ago. I was about to start an in-depth piece of writing for a diploma assignment and needed that 'bible' which systematically outlines all the major aspects of an area's history with detailed footnotes that give further guidance as to where additional information can be found. I am not the only one to have bemoaned the lack of a Victoria County History volume for Cheltenham, but things are about to change for the better.

And now, 700 years after Cheltenham was first declared a 'borough' in a tax list of 1313¹, there are positive signs that we will finally achieve that distinction. In the words of the Gloucestershire County History Trust, who are organising the work and the fundraising, Cheltenham is 'a major settlement with national influence, [... a] professional VCH account would correct this [absence], offering a firm base for future study and research. A VCH account is the only practical way for the numerous obscure and difficult sources for Cheltenham area history to be put in context and brought to a wider public.'² Cheltenham Local History Society is actively involved in promoting this venture which, with Cheltenham's neighbouring parishes, will take about five years and we hope that all members will feel that they can contribute in some way.³

This, our 29th Journal, is slighter shorter than it was in the immediate past: we have attempted to keep the weight in a lower band to reduce the cost of postage. We have many excellent articles featuring 'old' and 'new' contributors; articles on Lewis Carroll and his visits to Cheltenham, two prominent Roman Catholic families, our 30th anniversary celebrations, an update on Pittville Gates and two articles which encourage members to make use of the growing number of transcripts of the town's early records. We hope you enjoy reading your Journal.

Articles for Journal 30 can be received any time from April 2013 until the closing date which is 5 January 2014. All enquiries relating to the Journal and other CLHS publications should, in the first place, be directed to the Journal Editor.

☎ 01242 243714 ✉ journal.clhs@btinternet.com

¹ Hart, G, *A History of Cheltenham*, (Leicester University, 1965), p29.

² Gloucestershire County History Trust, October 2012.

³ For more information on how you can become involved with the VCH go to

www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/gloucestershire or contact James Hodsdon on 01242 233045

Thirty Years and Counting

ELAINE NORTH

IN JOURNAL 19 PUBLISHED IN 2003, I wrote about the first 20 years of Cheltenham Local History Society.¹ Now 10 years on ... another cake ... and more celebrations.

Sadly, in June 2011 we lost Sue Newton, Chairman from 2003 and a dear friend to us all. However, David Scriven stepped into the breach, or rather 'gaping hole' left by Sue, and continues as Chairman in 2013. At the Society's annual Research and Display Evening in January 2012 three former Chairmen of the Society, Michael Greet, Dr Steven Blake and Dr Anne Dunn joined David for a photograph with the celebratory, now obligatory, cake before it was cut and enjoyed by members and friends.

As Sally Self, Journal Editor, reported last year², the Society continues to thrive, with lectures and summer visits, very much as it has done since 1982. However, there have been important additions to the programme in recent years. On 29 June 2003, CLHS successfully hosted the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council's (GRCC) Regional History Afternoon at St Andrew's, Montpellier, featuring a talk by Aylwin Sampson, guided walks by Society members, a raffle, displays and sales tables and, of course, a buffet tea. It was Sue Newton's vision that the Society could host a similar Local History Afternoon on a regular basis which the general public would be encouraged to attend and be introduced to not only Cheltenham Local History Society but other local societies participating at the event. The first such History Afternoon was held in 2004 and subsequently the decision was made to hold this event every second year. July 2012 saw the fifth Cheltenham Local History Afternoon take place at St. Andrew's.

Another innovation was the introduction of two morning meetings to the Society's annual Lecture Programme. A number of members, not keen to venture out on dark winter evenings, had been asking if the Society could meet during the day. My husband Geoff and I persuaded the Chairman and other Committee members to let us arrange a trial morning meeting. This was planned for Tuesday 29 November 2005 to be held in St Luke's Hall. Teas, coffees and biscuits were served at 10am with a lecture at 10.30am by CLHS member John Elliott. As it turned out, more than 50 members braved snow and ice on what was possibly the coldest morning of the year to support this new venture. As a result, morning meetings are now held in the spring and autumn, regularly attracting more than 60 members and visitors.

The Society's Annual General Meeting is now held in May, thus extending the winter season of lectures by one month. A new feature of this meeting is the presentation of the Peter Smith Award, introduced in 2010 in memory of Peter by his widow Judy, to be given to a member, either as a token of the Society's appreciation for work done on behalf of the Society or as an encouragement to further research. The recipients of this award to date have been Vic Cole, Jill Waller and Brian White.

The Society continues to participate in regular local events such as the annual Montpellier Fiesta Day in Montpellier Gardens (sadly cancelled in 2012 due to bad

weather) and at special events arranged by community groups, for example the South Cheltenham Local History Exhibition held 16 and 17 March 2012 at Bethesda Church Hall, Great Norwood Street. A regular commitment by the Committee was, until October 2011, the GRCC Local History Committee's Gloucestershire Local History Afternoons, where CLHS frequently received awards for its displays. Currently, the Society provides table-top displays, on a variety of themes, on a monthly basis for the Local Studies Library and, when requested, displays for Gloucestershire Archives.

Finally, a plea to members - Geoff and I strongly believe that photographs should be an integral part of a Society's archive and readily available for use by members and Journal Editors, when articles such as this are required. With this in mind, we are currently working to produce a digital archive of photographs (and ephemera) relating to people and events dating from the Society's founding in 1982 to the present day. If any member has anything at all to contribute to this archive, please get in touch.

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¹ Cheltenham Local History Society, Journal **19**, pp.2-3 and 15.

² CLHS Journal **28**, pp.2 and 36.



Above Evening lecture meeting 15 November 2011 in the Council Chamber, Municipal Offices.

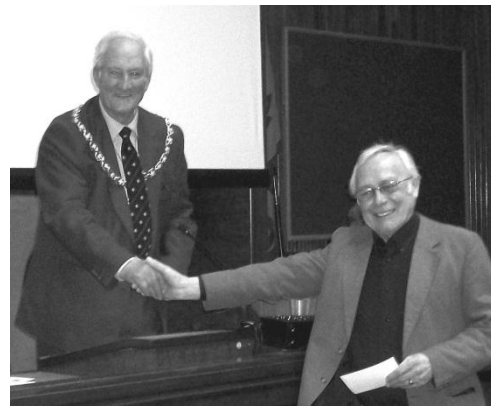
Below Morning meeting 8 October 2008 at St Luke's Hall, - a talk by Aylwin Sampson.

Images: top, © Mike Holtam, bottom © Geoff North



Our thirtieth anniversary – Research and Display Evening 17 January 2012.

Left to right Michael Greet, Chairman 1982-1984; David Scriven, Chairman 2011- ; Dr Anne Dunn, Chairman 2000-2003; Dr Steven Blake, Chairman 1984-1987. Other Chairmen were Aylwin Sampson, founder member, Chairman, 1987-1992 and still actively involved, and Sue Newton Chairman, 2003-2011.



Left Montpellier Fiesta 10 July 2010: Sue Newton, Chairman 2003-2011 and Heather Atkinson, Secretary 2005- , manning the CLHS stall. *Right* Vic Cole, the first recipient of the Peter Smith Award with the Mayor, Cllr. Lloyd Surgenor, President of the Society 2009-2010, at the Annual General Meeting.



Left A Society summer visit to Cheltenham Ladies' College 31 May 2011, arranged and conducted by Kath Boothman, Newsletter Editor, 2007- . *Right* 2nd Cheltenham Local History Afternoon held 13 August 2006 St Andrew's Church awaiting the start of a lecture by Steven Blake.

Images © Geoff North

Who Screened the First Talkie in Cheltenham?

JOHN ELLIOTT

I HAD ALWAYS BELIEVED AND INDEED HAVE QUOTED in talks I have given, that the first screening of a talkie in Cheltenham was that of Ronald Colman in *'Bulldog Drummond'* at the Theatre and Opera House. The *Gloucestershire Echo* of 1 October 1929 gave a full review of the occasion noting that the preceding day 'witnessed the opening of a new chapter in the history of the Cheltenham Theatre, for it was the first day of the talking pictures and the various changes that have marked their advent, including continuous performances and the disappearance of the orchestra.'

The same issue also included a lengthy account of the dinner held at the *Plough* to commemorate the opening of the 'talkie era at the Cheltenham Theatre'. Mr Eric V. Hakim, managing director of the Cinema House Ltd of London, which had recently acquired the Theatre from its local owners, had invited a large company of guests interested in the Theatre. These included the Mayor (Ald. C.H. Margrett) and many of the directors of the old Theatre company. It is interesting to note that in his opening speech, the Mayor expressed some concern that many of the inhabitants of the town were very fond of the drama and commented that 'I should regret exceedingly if our only Theatre were to be formed into a place of variety entertainment only (applause).' He also regretted the displacement of the orchestra. Nonetheless he congratulated the new owners on their enterprise and wished them every success. In his reply Mr Hakim confirmed that, while he was responding to public desire for talkies, he was aware of the long history of the Opera House and he was able to reassure those present that the Theatre would retain its character as a centre for stage productions.

The new owners were clearly aware of the value of advance publicity. In the *Gloucestershire Echo* of 27 September 1929, there was a lengthy description (by, presumably, a suitably briefed local reporter) of the changes to the Theatre that the introduction of talkies had necessitated. He described, *inter alia*, the large white screen and the ease with which a touch on a pulley lifted it away to the 'flies', the mighty loud speakers, the modernisation of the old orchestra stalls into a ladies' room with lavatories and the appearance of two additional ladies' lavatories for the gallery (he was clearly particularly impressed by the toilet arrangements!), the generating room and its five dynamos and the operating and rewinding chambers. The paper's representative had also heard, but not officially, that the business of the change-over had cost 'anything up to £15,000'. The architect concerned in the changes was Mr Leslie Kemp, a partner in the architectural practice of Kemp and Tasker which was best known for their cinemas in the London area.

However the inhabitants of Cheltenham were intrigued when, in the *Gloucestershire Echo* on 2 October, another candidate for showing the first talkie appeared in a letter from the formidable Mr Shakspeare Shenton, manager of the

Winter Garden New Kinema (and also at this time proprietor of the Palace Cinema in the High Street). He wrote that 'as a pioneer of cinematography in Cheltenham he was not going to sit down and see a London syndicate cutting the ground from under his feet'.

He went on to point out that 'off my own bat I have installed at the Winter Garden New Kinema two of the finest British-built talking machines on the market, equal in every respect to the much-boosted American made machines and opened on Monday afternoon several hours before the above remarks were made', (that is before the dinner given by Mr Hakim). Mr Shenton also confirmed that he had 'retained my orchestra who will accompany the silent films which will be screened together with a talkie each week, thus not throwing my musicians on the labour market'. He was as good as his word. The following week while the Theatre was screening the well-known talkie, Al Jolson in *The Singing Fool*, Mr Shenton was showing two silent films with full orchestra, *Three Weekends* with Clara Bow and Louise Dresser in *Not Quite Decent*, as well as the all-singing, all-talking *Syncopation* with Ian Hunter. In addition to his involvement with entertainment, Mr Shakspeare Shenton was well-known in the town as director of Shakspeare Shenton Billposting Company and Shenton's Printing Works (the former at 23 Grosvenor Place South and the latter at number 22).

Clearly we need to determine which venue was the first to screen a talkie. Both were having their initial showing on the Monday. However, a look at the starting times of performances does confirm that the Theatre was indeed the first but only by half an hour. At the Theatre, performances started at 2.00pm and screening was continuous until 10.30pm, while at the Winter Garden the starting time was 2.30pm and continuous until 10.15pm. So not only did the Theatre's performances start earlier but also finished later by a quarter of an hour!

They've all got
DRUMMONDITIS
after seeing and hearing
RONALD COLMAN
at the
OPERA HOUSE,
Cheltenham.

Gloucestershire Echo
1 October 1929

AMUSEMENTS.

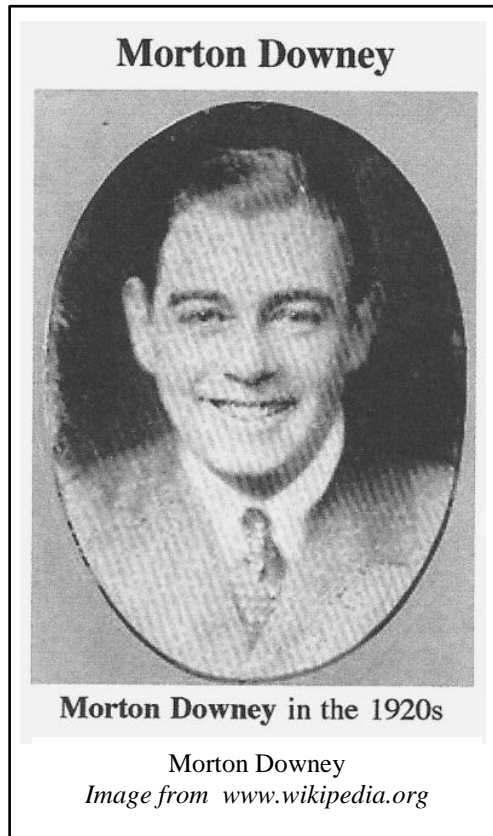
THE OPERA HOUSE TEL. 3159.
CONTINUOUS DAILY 2.0 to 10.30 p.m.
CHELTENHAM'S FIRST REAL TALKIES.
RONALD COLMAN in
"BULLDOG DRUMMOND."
Played on the Famous Western Electric
System.
NEXT WEEK:-
AL JOLSON
in
"THE SINGING FOOL."
The Outstanding Success of this Generation

WINTER GARDEN NEW KINEMA,
THE PROMENADE, CHELTENHAM.
Director: Shakspeare Shenton.
Monday, September 30th.
TO-DAY.
Continuous 2.30 to 10.15.
CHELTENHAM'S FIRST TALKIE.
MORTON DOWNEY, in
"MOTHER'S BOY."
AN ALL-TALKING and SINGING PICTURE.
R.C.A. Sound Recording.
AND FULL SILENT PROGRAM.
THE WINTER GARDEN ORCHESTRA
Will be Retained
NO INCREASE IN PRICES.
FREE CAR PARK.
POPULAR PRICES (including tax): 1s. 3d.,
1s., and 9d.

Gloucestershire Echo
1 October 1929

It is worth having a look at the relative merits of the systems used and the popularity of the talkies screened. On the second point there is little doubt the Theatre's film was the more popular and better publicised of the two. *Bulldog Drummond* was an exciting story of a British officer bored with civilian life who investigates an extortion case for a beautiful girl, adapted from one of the popular stories by Herman C. McNeile (better known as Sapper). It had the major advantage of starring Ronald Colman who was already well-known for his roles in more than twenty films including *Stella Dallas* and *Beau Geste* and who remained a star of the screen into the

forties. The cast also included Claud Allister and Joan Bennett (a popular actress whose career also lasted for many years into the sound era, with, for example, *Scarlet Street* and *The Woman in the Window*). The film was later nominated for Academy Awards for Best Actor in a Leading Role (Ronald Colman) and for Best Art Direction. In the event the Best Actor Award went to George Arliss for his performance in *Disraeli*.



Mother's Boy, the advertised all-talking and all-singing picture at the Winter Garden, is a sentimental tale of a young singer who has worked hard and is just about to embark on his first Broadway show when a former sweetheart brings him the news that his mother is dying. He returns home and by his presence his mother's life is saved. The publicity given to this act of self-sacrifice is sufficient to save his career. The film starred Morton Downey (the father of the later well-known talk show host, Morton Downey, Junior) a popular radio performer and prolific recording artist. He was voted American Radio Singer of the Year in 1932 and was known as 'The Irish Nightingale'. *Mother's Boy* was not Morton Downey's first singing role. That was in *Syncopation* the same year which also made use of his popularity as a vocalist and was RKO's first sound musical. The cast also included Helen Chandler and Brian Donlevy, the latter a stalwart of numerous cowboy films of the thirties and forties.

The sound systems employed, Western Electric at the Theatre and Opera House and Radio Corporation of America (RCA) at the Winter Garden, were two of the major competing technologies that emerged in the film industry in the late 1920s for synchronising electrically recorded audio to a motion picture image. The techniques employed by these two (and indeed the other two major systems) are complicated and the following brief descriptions are, I hope, not too confusing.

The 'RCA Sound Recording' technique as advertised by Mr Shenton (also known as Photophone or Vitaphone) was the last but most successful of the sound-on-disc processes. The sound track was not printed on the actual film but issued separately on 12-16 inch (30-40mm) phonograph records. The disc would be played while the film was being projected. The sound-on-disc system had advantages both in amplification, allowing sound to be played to a larger audience at higher volume and also in fidelity with its superior dynamic range. It had however serious disadvantages in, for example, the requirement for separate distribution of the discs (not helped by the need to replace the discs after about 20 playings) and in synchronisation if, for example, the film became damaged.

The 'Famous Western Electric System' as promoted by the Theatre and Opera House (also known as Movietone) was a sound-on-film method of recording

sound for motion pictures that guaranteed synchronisation between sound and picture. It achieved this by recording the sound on a variable density optical track on the same strip that recorded the picture. It also created the Western Electric Universal Base, a device by which early silent cinema projectors could be adapted to screen sound films. In addition, the firm designed a wide-audio-range horn loudspeaker for cinemas. This was estimated to be nearly 50% efficient and allowed a cinema to be filled with sound from a 3-watt amplifier. This was an important breakthrough because high-powered audio valves were not generally available at that time.

Both systems (and the films screened) were reviewed in the local reports of the two occasions. The *Gloucestershire Echo* noted that at the Winter Garden though ‘the sound production was not all that could have been desired, the entertainment was certainly of a pleasing character’ and went on to comment that a ‘wonderful feature of the picture is the collection of night club and cabaret scenes’. The local critic found more to comment on in his review of the presentation at the Theatre. He was clearly surprised at its quality and praised the clarity of the speaking, commenting that ‘in the course of a long performance one lost very few words’, although it observed that while the chest resonance is more than natural, the head resonance is somewhat flat and colourless and consequently voices tended to lose some of their natural character. Taken as a whole, ‘the work of the new installation was so good that it must have been a great surprise to many having their first experience of speaking pictures’. It does seem that the critic gave more attention to and found more to praise in the presentation at the Theatre than that at the Winter Garden.

Not everyone was enthusiastic about the introduction of talkies. There were doubts about the quality of the sound and the kind of films to be screened. There was extensive correspondence in the local papers deploring the loss to the town of a major venue for live theatre and the replacement of live English voices by American standards of speaking, which caused local criticism. For example, in the same issue of the *Gloucestershire Echo* which gave space to reporting the dinner given by Mr Hakim, there appeared a letter from Mr Edward Burrow (printer of Imperial House) complaining that his experience of talking pictures in London was that they were ‘usually disastrous expositions of the American idea of correct speaking which is not very agreeable to anyone loving the English language properly used’ - a view which was repeated in numerous letters over the following weeks and months. Indeed, on 3 October 1929, there was an advertisement in the *Gloucestershire Echo* addressed to ‘depressed Cheltenham play-goers’ noting that in the original ‘talkies’, the human voice can never be surpassed and can still be heard at the Gloucester Hippodrome in big London successes!

There was also dismay at the loss of the orchestras and the consequent reduction in employment for trained musicians. It is certainly true that a major consequence of the advent of sound film was the loss of employment for many musicians. Before the arrival of talkies a musician of age 16 or 17 could be earning £5 or £6 a week in one of the larger cinema orchestras. Some idea of the extent of employment opportunities for musicians to work in ‘silent’ cinema can be calculated from the increase in the number of cinemas in London alone. Between 1909 and 1912 the number leapt from 90 to 400. At the height of the silent film era, movies were the single largest source of employment for instrumental musicians (certainly in America and also to a large extent in the United Kingdom), but the introduction of talkies, which happened simultaneously with the Great Depression, was devastating to

musicians. Many of them went to radio and band stands; some became teachers but a large number had to take to the streets as buskers or abandon the profession altogether. The American Federation of Musicians calculated that within three years of the introduction of talkies, 22,000 theatre jobs for musicians who accompanied silent film were lost in America. In Cheltenham considerable attention was given to the plight of unemployed musicians and there were many letters over the next months protesting at their treatment and suggesting possible ways in which they could be employed; but that subject demands more attention than seems appropriate for this article.

What of the future? Talkies were clearly here to stay and more cinemas converted their equipment to screen talkies until only the North Street Cinema devoted their shows exclusively to silent films and even this closed in July 1931 when there was a shortage of such films. Live shows and variety also continued to play a major part in what was provided for the theatregoers of Cheltenham. The Coliseum, for example, presented live shows as well as films and even the Theatre by the end of the month was advertising a live musical show although it continued to be a cinema for some years.

It soon became clear that the Cinema House Company and Mr Hakim had over-reached themselves and with more cinemas screening 'talkies', they were forced to sell the Theatre to the original owners, the Theatre and Opera House Company. The event was celebrated in a front page report in the *Gloucestershire Echo* of 6 August 1934. After some structural seating and decorative alterations the Theatre was formally reopened by the Mayor, who welcomed the return of the Theatre to local owners and 'rejoiced that a company of local gentlemen of courage and enterprise had once more been able to acquire that beautiful building which had such historic associations'.

And Mr Hakim himself? Clearly Hakim was a smooth and persuasive con man. At the time he gave the dinner he was merely an employee of the board and had little money of his own, certainly not enough to fund an occasion of the opulence quoted in the *Echo*. According to the *Kinematograph Weekly*, Hakim first came to notice as a violinist in a south London cinema. He became interested in the burgeoning cinema distribution companies and became involved in a group including Cinema House London and The Electric Theatre Company (with offices in Oxford Street) and became Managing Director. He founded a film production company and having gone into partnership he invested in prestigious offices in Soho and bought the film rights to *Metropolis*. He went into film production and persuaded MGM to back the production of three pictures (not quota quickies, apparently but expensive productions). The first was successful, the other two lost money, which led to the sale of major company property. By this time Hakim had resigned and founded another company, National Film Distribution! Eventually he was deemed bankrupt in 1935 but later was charged with obtaining credit while bankrupt. Surprisingly, he was acquitted. He had disposed of the Theatre and Opera House in 1933 (at the same time he had disposed of properties he had acquired in Gloucester – including Picturedrome and King's theatres). Little is known of his later career although there were rumours that he had married a Russian 'actress'.¹

¹ I would like to thank Mr Michael King for providing the above information about Mr Hakim. It provides a curious postscript to the arrival of 'Talkies' in Cheltenham.

Beer But No Skittles: the Career of David Powell, a Tavern-Keeper in Jacobean Cheltenham

JAMES HODSDON

AS PREVIOUS ARTICLES HAVE NOTED,¹ Cheltenham's manor court records contain a wealth of material on many aspects of life not illuminated by other sources, especially in the days before newspapers. Drawing on recent work by our Society's Latin Group over the last year, transcribing the court books of the last years of Elizabeth I and the first decade of James I,² this article shows what we can learn about just one individual, chosen more or less at random: David Powell, tavern-keeper.

Powell was not an especially notable person, but partly because of his later occupation, he appears regularly in the court records, so we can start to form a fuller picture of him. We don't know for certain when he was born, though he and his wife Jane had at least five children baptised in Cheltenham between 1577 and 1594, so we might guess at a marriage around 1575 and a birth date around 1555. He was buried in Cheltenham on 21 March 1615; no will or inventory survives, so apart from the preceding dates, drawn from the Society's transcription of the parish registers,³ this account is based almost entirely on what appears in the court books.

We can deduce from references to other Powells that there were possible relations in the town, though there is no sign they had been long established; there is no Powell listed in Cheltenham in the 1522 military survey. Perhaps, along with the bearers of other Welsh surnames in Cheltenham (Humphries, Parry and so on) they had arrived during the middle years of the Tudor century.

Our first firm reference is in January 1597, when our David Powell took a lease on a house, along with its close of pasture and garden. This lay somewhere in Cheltenham tithing but outside the burghage area. The lease began on the usual date, Michaelmas, and was to run for the standard 12 years. Again as was customary, David was to be responsible for keeping the house, outbuildings and hedges in good repair during the lease, while the landlord Edward Staple was to supply any large timbers required for building repairs. David was allowed to take the 'lop and shred' of all trees other than fruit trees on the premises, i.e., trimmings for hedge repair and firewood and so on.

He was of sufficient standing that year to be chosen as a juryman at the April 1597 view of frankpledge and in September 1598 he was chosen as one of the two Cheltenham constables for the following year – an unpaid and probably fairly thankless task. The other constable was Thomas Milton, who ran the *Crown Inn*; whether David himself was in the licensed trade at this point isn't clear. Being a constable did not mean he was entirely above reproach: at the same September court, he was one of five people fined 3s 4d(17p) for allowing their pigs to wander at large and feed in the lanes and highways before the end of harvest.

In July 1599 there was a further lease to David by Edward Staple; it appears to add another 12 acres of land to the existing lease, and extended the term to the lifetime of Edward plus a further 12 years, so it seems David was proving an acceptable tenant. Staple may have transferred ownership of the house the following year, though David remained the occupant.

So by this stage we know that David was leasing a house and a fair amount of land, which he might have farmed himself or sublet and he certainly kept pigs; that ought to have been enough for family self-sufficiency. But at some point in mid-1601, for reasons we can only guess at, David took a lease on a burgage property (there is some later evidence that he didn't entirely relinquish his other holdings). The deal was recorded at the October court; the house was owned by William Pates, stood on the north side of the High Street, and was let for 21 years – longer leases were possible for burgage properties. Pates would receive £6 rent a year, in quarterly instalments. The house may have been in need of fixing up: part of the agreement was that Pates would roof the house with tiles (thatched roofs were a perennial fire risk). David undertook to maintain the property, and also to repair the wall next to the adjacent house of Walter Mason, for which he could deduct the costs from the rent.

It can be no coincidence that also in October 1601 there comes the first firm evidence of David Powell's new interest: he was one of three men each fined 2s 6d (13p) for selling ale without licence, a common offence at the time. It is surely from his 'new' High Street property that he had started selling ale. Was he fed up with agriculture, perhaps not fit enough to pursue it, was he simply a sociable type? We shall never know, but tavern-keeping was to be his calling for the rest of his life. To use the language of the court records, he was a 'common tippler' – a tippler then being a *supplier* of tittle, not a consumer. No name or sign is recorded for his ale-house; this was not unusual, only the *Crown Inn* being mentioned by name in all the records recently examined.

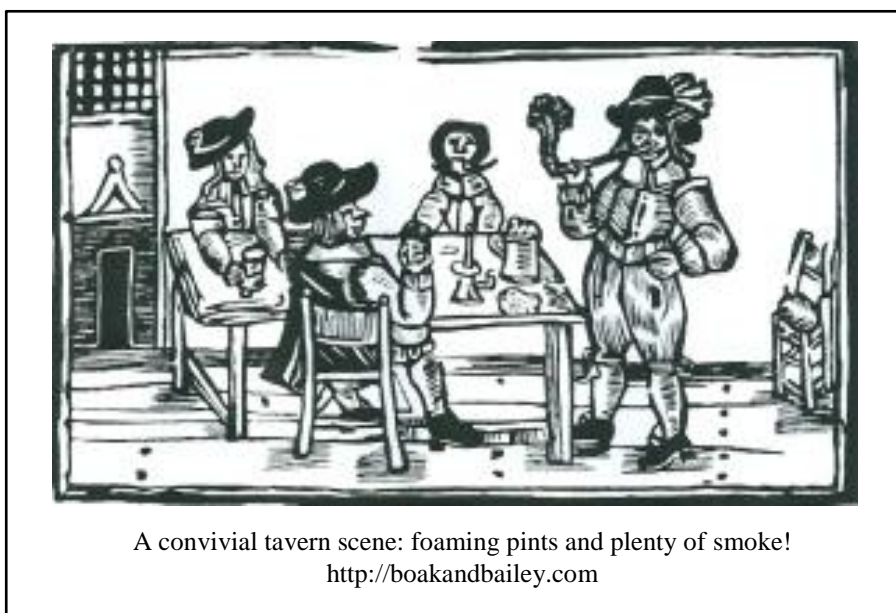
After 1601 there is a gap of a few years in the records, but we can assume that in April 1607 it was not for the first time that David was fined 12d(5p) for allowing unlawful games in his house – cards and backgammon. Not only this, he was failing to sell ale in the approved quart measure. At the same court, there was evidence of a casual attitude to the catering side of the business: he was fined a further 12d for cooking – and presumably serving - meat during Lent. He was also ordered to attend to his 'mounds' - field boundaries – next to Ballacre, which was in Alstone tithing. This is the first clue as to where his leased land lay.

Compared with some Cheltonians of the era, he was not a litigious person. There was just one short-lived dispute in late December 1607, subject unknown, in which David was the plaintiff and one John Packer the defendant. The parties came to an agreement the following January and the case was withdrawn.

David's sole known appearance in non-Cheltenham records comes in August 1608, when John Smith of Nibley carried out his famous survey of Men and Armour in Gloucestershire.⁴ Powell is there described as a mercer – possibly not meaning much more than 'shopkeeper' – but frustratingly for us, the entry omits the additional indication of age, stature, and military experience that Smith provides elsewhere. Perhaps he was too old to be worth considering.

Wandering pigs were again the occasion of a fine in April 1608, and at the same court David was again presented for repeatedly allowing backgammon and cards in his house, and using unlawful measures for his ale. He was also cautioned once more to 'make his mounds' next to Ballacre (here spelled 'Baldacre') and Mead furlong – also in Alstone.

The fines were not enough to make him mend his ways – it is likely that David and other publicans saw them as a necessary evil, part of the costs of running a business – for in 1609 he was presented twice more for selling ale and beer in short measures ('unlawful stone pots of less than the royal standard'), and once for not having a licence. The stone pots or jars were clearly sturdy affairs – they were still in use when he was twice fined again in 1610, with the rattle of backgammon and slap of cards still being heard.



Little had changed in 1611: further fines for unlawful measures, and a charge that he had 'at many times since the last leet kept and maintained unlawful games in his house, namely cards, against the form of statute'. Early in the same year David had been a bit player in one of the more dramatic local events: on 17 January, a Thursday, one Guy Dobbins caused a stir by marching up and down the town banging a drum and proclaiming that 'whosoever would hear a play should come to the sign of the Crowne [at] such an hour'. The authorities did not like the sound of this, ostensibly because there was plague at Tredington and Prestbury and they did not want 'company' gathering in Cheltenham. Thomas Milton, landlord of the Crown, whom we met earlier, was warned not to permit the event at his establishment, whereupon the would-be players 'in murmuring manner departed, but not satisfied did endeavour to play notwithstanding at the house of one David Powell a victualler likewise in Cheltenham'. Between them, the bailiff and under-bailiff dealt with the matter.⁵ As David was not among those subsequently fined, it seems that he had not actually encouraged the proposed use of his premises, but we might infer his house was big enough to accommodate quite a crowd.

Nevertheless, perhaps with advancing years, his grip on discipline apparently began to slip. In April 1612, for the first time he was among those fined, a modest 2d(1p) for failing to come to court without excuse. In October 1612, not only was he done yet again for not having a licence, he was presented for allowing night-time drinking (once specified as 11pm, way past a decent burgess's bedtime), and even worse, for allowing 'dauncing' in his house at night time on a Sunday. In addition, a number of named men were sentenced to corporal punishment for having been drunk in Powell's house. The jury must have viewed this as an exceptional catalogue of misbehaviour, for on this occasion he was fined 40s(£2).

As an aside, the townsfolk of Cheltenham may well have been grateful that a popular pub such as David Powell's house was on the north side of the High Street rather than the south: in 1613, one of his fellow tipplers, Geoffrey Tuffley, was ordered to 'cause his privy, built across the watercourse' - that is, the Chelt - 'leading from the Horsepool to the lower end of town to be removed, and to sufficiently cleanse the watercourse before Pentecost next'.

On 21 August 1613 David's wife Jane Powell was buried in Cheltenham, and in the court records for 1613 we may detect signs of decline on his own part too: there had been further games offences on the premises, this time 'shovegrote' - the high-stakes version of shove-ha'penny? - and not only was his ale sold in non-standard measures, *it tasted old*, that unmistakable sign of a failing landlord. In October this year too, there was another possible sign, when he was for the first time among the ranks of those fined for not turning up on any of the six days officially appointed for road-repair duties - not fit enough for the work?

And so our tippler slides silently out of the court record, his final appearance being in the register of burials at St Mary's in Cheltenham on 21 March 1615.

What I hope this example shows is that - especially in the Elizabethan and Jacobean period - there really is a great deal of social interest to be mined in these records. David Powell is just one of hundreds of individuals who populate the pages. If he (or one of his fellow townsfolk) is one of your ancestors, what a wonderful extra dimension to the basic record of baptism, marriage and death.

Editor's note: see also pp.58-64 for a further example of the research that is possible using Cheltenham transcribed records.

¹ See for example Jill Barlow's account of 1608 courts in *Archives and Local History in Bristol and Gloucestershire* (2007) pp.82-88. Also 'A Century of Change: Cheltenham in the 1700s', Cheltenham Local History Society, Journal **26** (2010).

² The main sources for this account are D855/M7 and M8, held at Gloucestershire Archives. For their support, corrections, advice and coffee, my thanks go to all the other members of the group, which this year has included Jill Barlow, Kath Boothman, Anna Green, Elaine North, and Jill Waller.

³ Extracts kindly supplied by Sally Self.

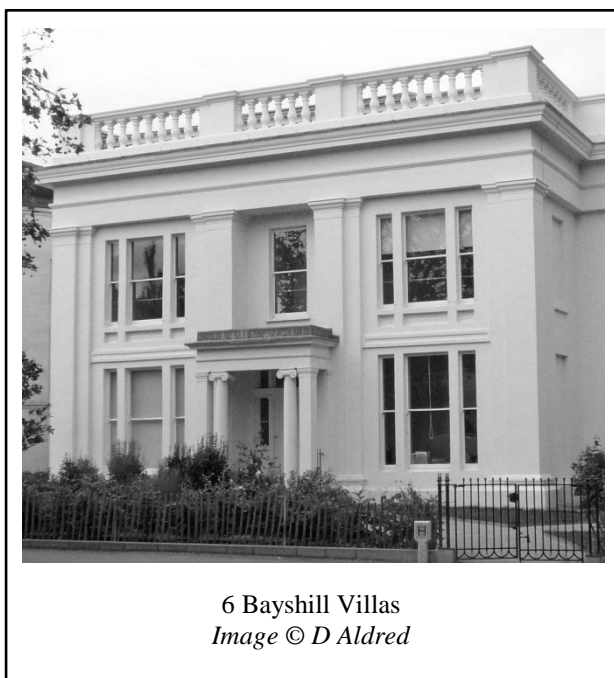
⁴ Originally published 1902, reprinted by Alan Sutton in 1980.

⁵ This episode, seemingly the first evidence for travelling players in Cheltenham, was published in full in A. Douglas and P. Greenfield, *Records of Early English Drama: Cumberland, Westmorland and Gloucestershire* (1986), pp.288-9.

George Freeman, Fundholder of 6 Bayshill Villas

DAVID ALDRED

BETWEEN 1801 AND 1851 THE POPULATION of Cheltenham increased tenfold. All conditions of men (and women) chose to move to live in the town. Yet we know hardly anything about them, save for the general understanding that many were ex-military.¹ My research on Andrew Morton Brown,² published in last year's journal, introduced me to George Freeman, an elderly wealthy member of his Highbury congregation.² Further research has enabled me to trace Freeman's career from lace manufacturer in Tewkesbury in 1825 to resident of Bayshill in 1846.



George Freeman was born in the small village of Glooston, 11 miles south east of Leicester, in 1780. We first find him as a silk stocking weaver in Nottingham in 1807. At that time the East Midlands were a hotbed of innovation in the traditional textile industries. Mechanisation offered large profits at the expense of hand workers. George was lodging with a fellow weaver, John Brown, and together they were experimenting with a machine to make lace. The particular problem facing them was to allow the warp (the thread attached to the frame in conventional weaving) to move

sideways or 'traverse' the frame to create a honeycomb pattern. In 1811 they were successful.³ The lace made on their frames became known as bobbin net lace. A wealthy local banker, William Nunn, immediately financed the building of 50 machines providing his 16-year old son Henry became a partner in the venture.⁴ So before 1811 had passed, Brown, Freeman and Nunn had opened a factory in Warwick, away from the claustrophobia of the powerful East Midlands industry. However it was not a success, so they relocated to Blackfriars in London until this in turn failed and its 74 frames were split equally between two new factories, in Tewkesbury and Newport, Isle of Wight.⁵

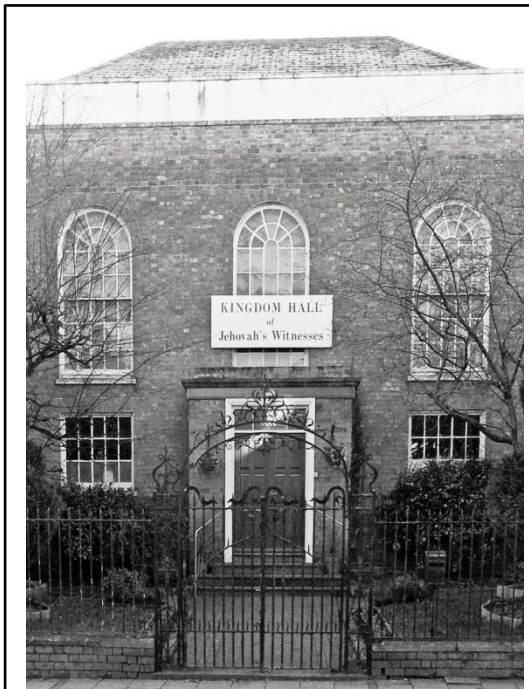
As the elderly John Brown had died, George Freeman organised the move. This coincided with 'twist net fever', a mania which drove the bobbin net lace industry between 1823 and 1825, as the patents on the earliest machines expired.⁶ George the innovator now showed himself as the shrewd businessman. Was Tewkesbury's declining framework knitting industry the main attraction to him? Knitters were looking for work and the thread they spun was fine and so eminently suitable for lace



Freeman's workers' houses in Chance Street,
Tewkesbury, with the factory to the rear.

Image © David Aldred

manufacture. Also there existed a large market in fashionable Cheltenham only ten miles away; the rivers Severn and Avon formed transport arteries and the town was a centre for the coaching trade. In addition, Oldbury open-field, Tewkesbury had been enclosed in 1811, so allowing for the eastward expansion of the town.⁷ By 1825 George had built his factory here with seven workers' houses. It proved a very profitable venture. Although we don't know how the factory was financed, in the words of the industry's nineteenth-century historian, in Tewkesbury 'George Freeman realised considerable wealth, amounting to what is called 'a plum', i.e. £100,000.⁸ In 1841 his most skilled workmen were earning just £100 a year.⁹



The former Congregational chapel in
Barton Street, Tewkesbury

Image © D Aldred

When George retired to Cheltenham in 1846, his younger brother, William, took sole charge of the factory although George continued to hold his interest in the building until it was sold in 1861.¹⁰ It had lain empty for eight years since William had closed the business and sold the machinery to Henry Kirkland, a Nottingham lace manufacturer in 1853.¹¹ Thus Freeman & Co disposed of their enterprise before the industry collapsed in the 1860s under competition from France.

George Freeman's secure wealth enabled him to play an active part in Tewkesbury's civic life as an ardent Non-Conformist and political reformer. In 1828 he and William served on the committee to enlarge the Congregational chapel to provide more seating for the poor. In the year he left the town he provided half the £340 cost of enlarging the schoolroom and he continued as a chapel trustee even whilst living in Cheltenham.¹² In politics he acted as secretary of the successful election campaign of 1832 for the reforming Whig, Charles Hanbury Tracy, even though he was not qualified to vote.¹³ He served on the board of health to deal with the cholera epidemic of 1832.¹⁴ When he was elected to the reformed town council of 1836 he began a decade of active involvement in the town's government. He served on the watch and gaol committees; in 1836 and 1839 he played a prominent part in devising new bye-laws against such 'nuisances' as speeding traffic, mad dogs, cherry knocking and indecent bathing! In 1843 he served on the committee for the repeal of the Corn Laws. His resignation in 1846 seems to have taken his fellow councillors by surprise. Six months later brother William filled his place.¹⁵

After a long and profitable life in manufacturing we can but guess George's motives for moving to one of the newly-built prestigious villas in Bayshill. He had come to Cheltenham to make a statement in his retirement but he almost completely disappears from the written record, except he remained an active Congregationalist. In 1846 he transferred his membership to Highbury, and although the chapel's nineteenth-century minutes from 1846 are largely missing, we do know he contributed generously to the new chapel of 1852.¹⁶ However, it is ironical we know more about his generosity to the Welsh Independents than about his retirement in Cheltenham. In 1851 the census records him as a bachelor and fundholder (no longer a lace manufacturer) living with two nieces, Mary and Elizabeth, a servant and a groom.¹⁷ In 1861 he had added railway proprietor to his self-declared status.¹⁸ He had obviously invested as well as enjoyed spending his wealth. No obituaries marked his passing and only the *Cheltenham Mercury* announced more than the date of his death, viz: 'George Freeman in his 89th year of natural decay'.¹⁹ His house passed to his nephew Henry William Freeman, who in the mid-1870s moved to Thirlestaine Hall.²⁰



Tewkesbury High Street: from the 1841 census it is probable that George lived at the second brick-fronted house from the left, but it is just possible he lived at the first.

Image © D Aldred

Acknowledgements

The staff at Gloucestershire Archives, Cheltenham Local Studies Library and Tewkesbury Library have been extremely helpful. I am grateful to John Dixon, President of Tewkesbury Local History Society, for help with some of the details of George's career in the town.

1 For example, Eva Bailey, 'Cheltenham and the Indian Connection', *Cheltenham Local History Journal*, (CLHS) Journal **14** (1998), pp.48-51.

2 David Aldred, 'Doctor Andrew Morton Brown and a Welsh Connection', *CLHS Journal* **28** (2012) pp.53-60.

2 David Aldred, 'Doctor Andrew Morton Brown and a Welsh Connection', *CLHS Journal* **28** (2012) pp.53-60.

3 William Felkin, *A history of the machine wrought hosiery and lace manufacturers*, (London 1867), p.215.

4 *Ibid.*, p.217.

5 *Memories of Henry Shepard* (who moved from Tewkesbury to Newport to manage the Isle of Wight factory in 1852) found at www.woottonbridgeiow.org.uk/lace.

6 W. Felkin, p.331.

7 T. Rath, 'The Tewkesbury Hosiery Industry', *Textile History* **vii** (1976), pp.142-51 *passim*.

8 W. Felkin, p.226. George's estate fell into the £100,000 to £250,000 category of wealth (*England and Wales National Probate Calendar [Index of Wills and Administrations 1861-1941]*), p.336.

9 House of Commons, *Report of the Select Committee to enquire into the Laws affecting the Exportation of Machinery*, (London 1841), p.246.

10 Gloucestershire Archives (GA), D2079/III/73; deeds of the factory.

11 *Memories of Henry Shepard*.

12 GA D6026/12/28: Tewkesbury Congregational Chapel miscellaneous material.

13 James Bennett, *Tewkesbury Yearly Register and Magazine*, Volume 1, p.80.

14 *Ibid.*, p.104.

15 GA TBR A1/9; Tewkesbury Council Minutes Book 1835-46, *passim*.

16 GA D12407 Box 37728. Highbury chapel's records are at present being catalogued; W. Ansell, *One Hundred Years of Congregationalism in Cheltenham: Highbury 1827-1927* (Cheltenham 1927), p.37.

17 National Archives (NA) HO107/1973/fol.99/p.38.

18 NA RG9/1800/fol.133/p.22.

19 *Cheltenham Mercury* 17 April 1869, n.p.

20 *Royal Cheltenham and District Directory 1878*, p.201. In the same directory for 1872-3 (p.108) Henry is recorded as still living at 6 Bayshill Villas.

COMFORTABLE EATING HOUSE.

SIMMS (late Cook at the Plough Hotel), begs leave to announce that he has opened an EATING-HOUSE, in Winchcomb-street, where he solicits the patronage of the Visitors, Inhabitants, and Public in general, and informs them, that he provides Hot Dinners every day, from one until two o'clock, of the most prime quality, which he cuts out, and serves up in a very convenient room, in plates agreeable to orders given, with Vegetables, and every other requisite, as comfortable as at a private table.

Dinners dressed on the shortest notice, and sent to any part of the Town or Vicinity, on the lowest Terms.

Pea and Gravy Soups, Ham and Beef Sandwiches, Sausages, Potatoes, Tripe, &c. always on sale.

N. B. Simms will punctually attend to cook at any Gentleman's house, on the shortest notice, at the most reasonable charges.

An early Cheltenham restaurant!
Cheltenham Chronicle
 9 November 1809
 Supplied by Carolyn Greet

Faggots and Peas: the Lower High Street

JOYCE CUMMINGS

MY MUM RAN HER FINGERS ACROSS the baize covered mantelpiece, high above the black leaded iron cooking range, past the wooden, brass topped candlesticks, and the green toby jug, until she felt the brown leather purse in which she kept her house keeping money. Picking up her purse, she emptied the contents on to the table and counted out the money.

“Well kids, we can have faggots and peas tonight,” she exclaimed with delight, at the same time handing me some coins.

“Shall I take the white jug?” I asked.

“No, take the brown enamelled can, looks like a milk churn, but with a cup for a lid. It will keep hotter than a jug,” she replied.

“Where is it? I can’t find it. Our Dad takes his tea down the allotments in that, I expect it’s still down there!” I grumbled from the depths of the pantry, finding it as soon as I had spoken.

“Walton’s mind, not St George’s Street, give you more there!” was my Mum’s parting shot, as I opened the front door.

Walton’s shop was in the Lower High Street, run by Mrs Walton and her daughter. Both women were very similar, short, slight figures, with dark eyes and black, crinkly, curly hair, parted on the same side and falling to their shoulders.



‘Waltons’, Lower High Street. The author is not sure if it was the left- or right-hand doorway. Now numbered 116, the central doorway and the cupula are recent additions.

Photograph © Joyce Cummings

They both worked very hard, making faggots in the day and selling them at night. No one else made faggots that tasted so good. It was rumoured that Mrs Walton had a secret ingredient, besides the pig’s liver, pig’s fry, pork, onion, sage, breadcrumbs and seasoning.

Before entering the shop, I would stand on the cellar grating, pressing my face against the steamy window. The faggots were in a big meat tin, shaped by hand and wrapped in pig’s caul, with a great basin of juicy, marrowfat, green peas standing next, together with a large container of smooth,

dark brown, rich gravy, all resting on a metal plate, the width of the window and warmed from below by a flickering gas jet.

I would check on how many faggots had been sold before entering the shop: there was no sense in spending three pence on a whole faggot when you could get a pennyworth of scrapings if the last faggot in the tin had just been sold!

I used to push open the shop door and approach the counter; the wooden floor covered in brown linoleum, the anaglypta walls painted brown halfway up, the remainder, like the ceilings, deep butter cream. Two long tables stood in the shop, with vinegar bottles and pepper pots on the top. Benches, crowded with people, provided the seating. "Go through to the dining room, sir, I'll be with you in a minute to take your order," called Mrs Walton to the young courting couple who entered the shop.

I'd never seen the proper dining room. In any case it was much more fun to sit at the packed benches, saving half a penny, by bringing my own hunk of bread and eating my pennyworth of peas and gravy.

"Yes, dear?" Mrs Walton waited for my order. As I handed over the brown can, the succulent smell of hot faggots, peas, gravy, vinegar and pepper, the clash of spoon upon plate overcame me. I spoke, taking deep breaths of the pleasure to come, and I realised I looked like one of the 'Bisto kids' on the advertising hoardings!



Only a few yards away from the site of Walton's shop stands the Chapel of the old burial ground, now the Winston Churchill gardens. This photograph taken c.1935, with the Chapel in the background, shows a group of boys, many of whom Joyce remembers frequented the faggot and pea shop. In the centre is Miss Choate, a church worker from St Mary's parish church, who ran the St Mary's Mission. Joyce's brother-in-law stands behind Miss Choate's right shoulder and to his right is Lionel Fitz, who ended up as a vicar at St Mary's.

Image supplied by Joyce Cummings

The Penfold Pillar Boxes of Cheltenham

RICHARD POPPLEWELL

IN 1864 CONSIDERATION WAS GIVEN TO the introduction of two different kinds of pillar box as well as different sizes. The Postmaster General Sir Rowland Hill was succeeded by John Tilley (who married the sister of Anthony Trollope – the first Postmaster General). Tilley considered that a hexagonal shape would be an improvement on the existing design of cylindrical boxes. He engaged the services of Mr J.W. Penfold, architect and surveyor, and after a number of drawings had been submitted, one of Penfold's designs was selected as the new standard pillar box in October 1865.

In November 1865, tenders were invited from a number of iron founders for the supply of at least 50 new boxes in three sizes. Only three responded; these being Smith and Hawkes of Birmingham, Cockrane and Grove of Dudley and Abbott's Iron Works of Carlisle. The most attractive were those supplied by Cochrane, who agreed to reduce their price by three pounds per box after the first 50 were made. The sample boxes were approved in August 1866 and installation began in September.

During the thirteen years that Penfold boxes were standard issue, their design was modified three times and a definite pattern of evolution can be seen. The posting aperture in the first box was sited immediately beneath the projecting rim and further protected from rain ingress by a white enamelled hanging flap showing 'Letters'. Below this, within two horizontal bands, were the royal arms and the words 'Post Office'. Under this was the door, at the top of which was a plain edged collection plate holder. The royal cipher of VR was positioned below the collection plate midway down the door. The whole was topped by a six-inch(15cm) acanthus bud.

Towards the close of 1874 John Tilley felt it advisable to ask the Office of Works to seek fresh tenders for the supply, and due to letters being caught up inside the boxes, to alter the internal features. By November 1875 a new design had been prepared but this was cylindrical, the Office of Works saying that it was superior in capacity and form and showed greater economy in construction and repair. The Postmaster General whilst preferring the hexagonal shape for appearance adopted the new shape for future use. Handysides of Derby offered the cheapest tender and distribution began in March 1879. So the siting of the Penfold design ceased from that time. As a point of interest, the coat of arms and the royal cypher were accidentally omitted from the new design and several of these 'Anonymous' boxes exist in Cheltenham.¹

The Penfold boxes in Cheltenham are all of the first Penfold design from 1866. They are 'medium' size, with 26 balls around the cap. They are sited at:

Bayshill Road, junction with Parabola Road (*see also this issue's cover*)
Montpellier Walk
Pittville Circus Road and Hewlett Road
St. Paul's Road and Margrett Road
Westall Green, Lansdown Road, Queens Road
College Lawn outside Hammond Court

Douro Road and Malvern Place
Near Pittville Spa – Evesham Road and Cleaveland Drive
A ninth one situated by St. Mark's church has disappeared.



1



2



3



4

Penfold post boxes: 1. Westall Green 2. The junction of Bayshill and Parabola Roads (featured on the front cover), **3. Douro Road 4. College Lawn.** Penfold boxes were installed between 1866 and 1879. The earliest post boxes were painted green, but the red colouring was adopted in London in 1874. Penfold boxes are now rare and Cheltenham is now second only to London in the number preserved. *(see also this issue's front cover)*

Images © Richard Popplewell

¹ I gratefully acknowledge the assistance provided from 'The Letter Box' by Jean Farrar

Carroll's Adventures in Cheltenham

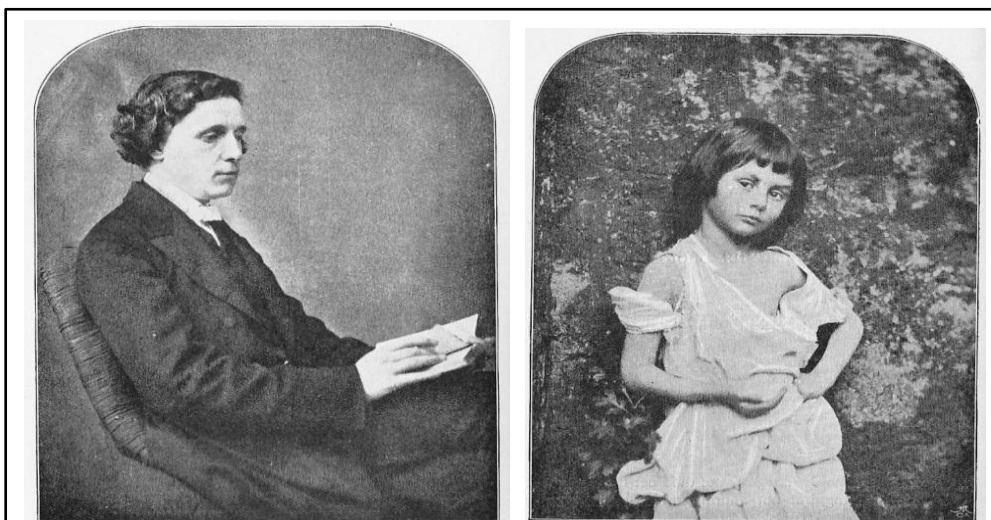
SUE ROWBOTHAM

EASTER 2013 MARKS THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY of the visit to Charlton Kings and Cheltenham of the Revd Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, better known as the author Lewis Carroll. It was a significant time in Carroll's life - after the river trip that inspired his best-known work, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, but before the book's publication in 1865. I looked at Carroll's diary entries made during that visit, and used my research into his life, Cheltenham's local history and 19th century illusionists to set those entries into context. Carroll's diary entries are reproduced in *bold italics* throughout, to distinguish them from other sources.

Background

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (1832-98) graduated from Christ Church, Oxford with a first class degree in mathematics in 1854 and was appointed as a lecturer in mathematics at Christ Church. He remained there for the rest of his life, mixing with some of the foremost scientists, writers and artists of his day and rarely leaving the college for any length of time. Dodgson, a devout Christian, took Deacon's Orders in 1861, but never went into full priesthood although he did preach on occasions. In addition to his academic and religious calling Dodgson had another side. The eldest of 11 children he had been a writer since the age of 12, initially writing newspapers, poems and plays to amuse his close-knit family, but from 1854 his mostly humorous and satirical work began appearing in professional publications. From 1865, he published these under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll to distinguish them from his academic works. He was also an accomplished conjurer and fond of inventing games, both as a child and as an adult.

Carroll first met Alice Pleasance Liddell, when she was aged nearly four, her elder sister Lorina Charlotte, known as Ina, aged seven, her younger sister Edith



Left Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, more commonly known as the author Lewis Carroll. *Right* Alice Pleasance Liddell as 'The Beggar-child'. Photograph by Lewis Carroll, 1858.

Images supplied by Sue Rowbotham

Mary, nearly two, and their governess Miss Mary Prickett, in the spring of 1856 after their father, the Very Revd Henry George Liddell, had been appointed Dean of Christ Church, Oxford. Carroll would often visit the Deanery to entertain the children, teaching them how to play games, such as chess and croquet. As the children grew older he would take them out on walks and boat trips, telling them stories woven around the people, places and objects that they knew, to amuse them on the way.

4 July 1862 – the beginning of Alice’s adventures

...Duckworth and I made an expedition up the river to Godstow with the three Liddells: we had tea on the bank there, and did not reach Christ Church again till quarter past eight, when we took them to my rooms to see my collection of micro-photographs, and restored them to the Deanery just before nine.

It was on the hot summer’s afternoon of 4 July 1862 that Carroll and his friend Robinson Duckworth rowed five miles up the Thames from Folly Bridge, Oxford, to Godstow Lock with Ida, Alice and Edith Liddell. Later he added to this diary entry ‘*on which occasion I told them the fairy-tale of ‘Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland’*. After at least one re-telling Alice had insisted that Carroll turn the tale into a book.

January to March 1863

Carroll completed the first draft of his story, originally entitled *Alice’s Adventures Underground*, in December 1862, and was attempting to illustrate the story, but with only limited success. Carroll was acquainted with John Ruskin, a leading Victorian art critic, arts patron, draughtsman, water-colourist, social thinker and philanthropist, who was a friend of Dean Liddell and his family in Oxford. Ruskin is said to have advised Carroll that ‘*he had not enough talent to make it worth his while to devote much time to sketching*’¹.

Good Friday 3 April 1863

Heard from Ina, inviting me to lunch at Hetton Lawn, Charlton King’s (old Mr Liddell’s) on Saturday, and asking by what train I come to Cheltenham, that they may meet me.

Ina, Alice and Edith Liddell had been sent to stay with their paternal grandparents, the Revd Henry George Liddell and his wife Charlotte, who lived in Charlton Kings², near Cheltenham, while their mother was going through a particularly difficult pregnancy. The girls were accompanied by their governess Miss Mary Prickett, whom Carroll knew well. Ina, then aged nearly 14 and the eldest of the three Liddell girls, was obviously aware that he was intending to visit his relatives, the Pooles, in Tenby in South Wales, and that the train passed through Cheltenham en route.

‘Old Mr Liddell’, the Revd Liddell, had been the Rector at Easington, Co. Durham, since at least 1833. On 23 July 1861 the *Cheltenham Chronicle* had repeated a report from *The Sunderland and Durham Herald* which had stated that:

'...the Rectory of Easington, value £1355 per annum, with house, one of the rich livings in the patronage of the Bishop of Durham, has become vacant by the resignation of the Rev. H. G. Liddell, who has relinquished that preferment on account of advanced age and failing health, and is about to reside in Cheltenham.'

On his retirement the Revd Liddell and his wife Charlotte had purchased a small 17th century house in Cudnall Street, Charlton Kings, formerly part of one of the main roads into Cheltenham from the east. The Liddells built a sizeable extension to the east of the original house in 1862 and turned it into a substantial family home with a large garden that extended down to the north bank of the River Chelt. The house was named 'Hetton Lawn', after Charlotte's birthplace in Hetton-le-Hole, Co. Durham.

Alice Liddell's father, the Very Revd Henry George Liddell (1811-98), was Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, from 1858-91 and Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University from 1870-74. He was also a 'life member of [Cheltenham] College Council' from 1862-84³. The Dean's relationship with Cheltenham College may help to explain several other connections between Christ Church, Oxford and Cheltenham. It is known that Carroll had been appointed as an examiner for Cheltenham Ladies' College by 6 June 1863⁴, writing and marking geometry papers as an assistant to Revd James Albert Owen, who had also studied at Christ Church, Oxford. The Ladies' College was located in Cambray House, Cambray Place at that time, just a few minutes walk from the *Belle Vue Hotel*. However no evidence has been found in the Ladies' College archives so far to support the idea that Carroll's visit to Cheltenham at Easter 1863 was linked to that appointment, or that Carroll visited the school on that or on any other occasion. It is intriguing to note that Revd Owen who moved to Cheltenham with his family in 1870, was Assistant-Master in the Classical Department at Cheltenham College from 1870-96, and was involved with many charitable and education projects in the town. He died in Cheltenham on 16 July 1907 and is buried in St Peter's churchyard, Leckhampton.

Easter Saturday 4 April 1863

Left Oxford by the 7.30 and reached Cheltenham by 11.30. I found Alice waiting with Miss Prickett at the station, and walked with them to Charlton Kings, about one and a half miles. The party there are Mr and Mrs Liddell and their two daughters, and the three children.

Carroll would have travelled on the Great Western Railway (GWR) line from Oxford, arriving at Lansdown Station, one of Cheltenham's four railway stations at that time. Today Lansdown is Cheltenham's only station, and is now known as Cheltenham Spa. 'Mr and Mrs Liddell' were the Revd Henry George and Mrs Charlotte Liddell. Their two daughters were the Liddell girls' maiden aunts, Charlotte Elizabeth Mary, aged 46, and Amelia Francis, aged 43.

In the afternoon we went in a large party in the carriage up to Birdlip where Ina, Alice and Miss Prickett walked back with me over Leckhampton Hill. Except for the high wind, the day could hardly have been better for the view. The children were in the wildest of spirits.

It is assumed that there were eight members in the 'large party' for the Liddells' expedition to Birdlip so a sizeable carriage would have been essential. It is likely that Hetton Lawn had its own carriage and coach house. The census records certainly show that there was a footman living at the house in 1871. Alternatively the Liddells would have had to hire a carriage, perhaps from William Davis, the 'Fly proprietor' who had premises close by at Charlton House, on the Cirencester Road⁵.

The views from Birdlip across Leckhampton and Cheltenham and over the Gloucestershire plain are spectacular when the weather is clear, and the flat, open space on the top of Leckhampton Hill would have given Alice and her sisters the freedom that they were so used to on their many afternoons with Miss Prickett and Dodgson in the water meadows besides the Thames. One wonders what their elderly grandparents thought of their 'wildest of spirits'. Mavis Batey, who has written several books on Lewis Carroll, has suggested that the square fields laid out in the valley below Birdlip look something like a chess-board, and were recalled by Carroll in his second book entitled *Through the Looking-Glass*, published in 1871.

It would have taken some time to walk from Birdlip, over Leckhampton Hill and back to Cudnall Street, which would probably explain why Edith, aged only seven, was not with her elder sisters. The route taken by the party is not clear, but was probably via Sandy Lane or one of the other ancient byways that lead directly from the hill into Charlton Kings, rather than down through Daisybank, and back via Leckhampton Road and Old Bath Road which is substantially further.

When we got back we found Mr C. Liddell, who had arrived in our absence. I stayed for dinner and for the evening, then to the Belle View Hotel.

'Mr C Liddell' is thought to have been Charles Liddell, the Revd and Mrs Liddell's eldest son. Charles was a railway engineer, who was a student of George Stephenson, the 'father of the railway', who also hailed from the north-east of England. Charles is known to have worked on a number of Stephenson's projects, including the London and Birmingham Railway.

On 4 April 1863 the weekly column entitled 'Arrivals at the Principal Hotels' in the *Cheltenham Looker-On* included the 'Revd Mr Dodgson' amongst the guests arriving at the Belle View Hotel [sic]⁶. The Belle Vue was one of the six 'principal' hotels listed in the column⁷.

BELLE VUE

Family Hotel and Boarding House,
M. THOMAS, Proprietor.

Visitors to Cheltenham will find at this Hotel every comfort
with moderate charges.

Mrs. Thomas also recommends to public notice her
extensive stock of

Wines, Spirits and Liqueurs.

ALE AND PORTER IN CASK AND BOTTLE,
Sparkling

BOTTLED CIDER AND PERRY, &c.,

All of superior quality and at moderate prices.

Mrs Thomas owned the Belle Vue Hotel at the
time of Lewis Carroll's visit.

*Image supplied by Jill Waller and held at
Cheltenham Local & Family History Centre*

Easter Sunday 5 April 1863

Walked towards Charlton to meet the Liddells on their way to church. Only Miss Liddell and Miss Prickett came. We went to St John's, a proprietary chapel. In the afternoon I went to Christ Church. Dined again at Hetton Lawn.

It is assumed that 'Miss Liddell' is Ina, who was growing up, and whom Carroll described in his diary less than two weeks later as '*now so tall as to look odd without an escort*'⁸. St John's in Berkeley Street was described as '*the smallest but one of the best-attended places of worship in Cheltenham*'⁹ at this time. The church, demolished in 1967, would have been about 15 minutes' walk from Hetton Lawn, and less than five minutes from the *Belle Vue Hotel*. The Revd George Roberts, Minister for St John's, was renowned for the power of his sermons, the second volume of which was published in September 1863.¹⁰

Christ Church was, and still is, one of Cheltenham's most spectacular churches. Built in 1840, the church stands on Bayshill on the west side of the town, not far from the railway station in Lansdown. Its distinctive square gothic tower is clearly visible from Leckhampton Hill and Birdlip, and from many parts of the town itself. The Revd Joseph Finch Fenn, perpetual curate at Christ Church from 1860-77, devoted himself to his parochial duties, including the careful preparation of his evangelical sermons, some of which were published. Fenn was active in movements for the improvement of the young, and was an eloquent promoter of the free library system in Cheltenham.

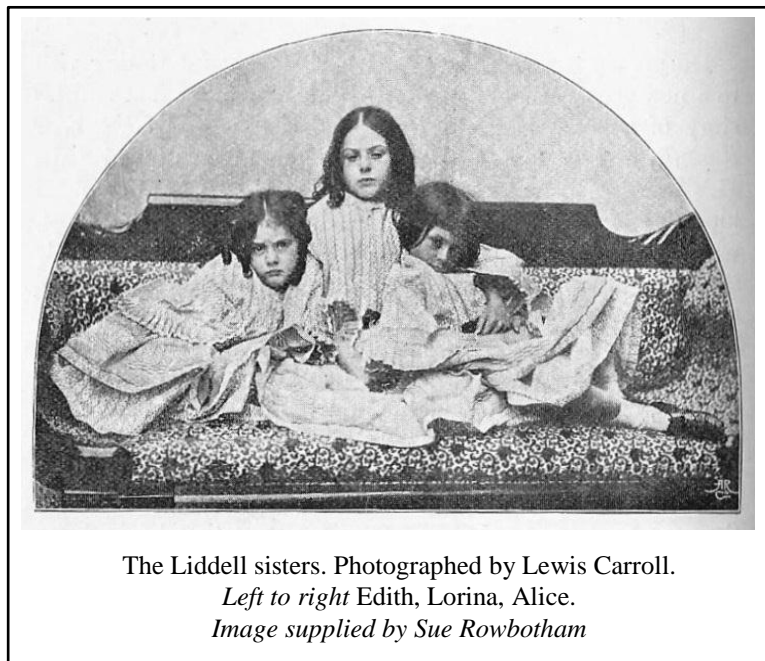
Easter Monday 6 April 1863

Rain all day. Spent most of the time at Hetton Lawn, in the schoolroom with the children, showing them photographs etc.

The *Cheltenham Looker-On* described the town that week:

*'The view adown the beautiful road from the Queen's Hotel to the High Street [The Promenade]... is tinged on either hand with the pale clear tints of the bursting foliage, which, in another such week of showers and sunshine as that we have just experienced, will have expanded into full leaf.'*¹¹

The Liddell girls would undoubtedly have been full of energy and in need of distraction after a full day confined to the house with their grandparents and elderly aunts because of the weather. Carroll was an accomplished photographer in what was the very early days of photography and took many



The Liddell sisters. Photographed by Lewis Carroll.
Left to right Edith, Lorina, Alice.
Image supplied by Sue Rowbotham

portraits of children, including the Liddell sisters and adults of his acquaintance in Oxford, such as the artists Dante Gabriel Rossetti and John Millais and writers

including Alfred Lord Tennyson and John Ruskin. He is also known to have experimented with miniature photographs, as indicated in his diary entry on 4 July 1862.

Went with the party in the evening to see Herr Dobler, a conjurer.

The *Cheltenham Looker-On* reported with approval that during Holy Week there had been:

*'...a suspension of those gaieties and amusements which, in a greater or less degree, characterise the proceedings of other weeks in the year.'*¹²

The only entertainments advertised in the town on the evenings of Easter Monday and Tuesday were two performances by the illusionist Herr Dobler. The promise of seeing a conjurer may well have been a ploy to encourage the girls to behave in the course of the day.

<p>Assembly Rooms, Cheltenham.</p> <p>IMMENSE ATTRACTION! POSITIVELY FOR TWO NIGHTS ONLY! EASTER MONDAY AND TUESDAY, APRIL 6th & 7th. GRAND MID-DAY ENTERTAINMENT on TUESDAY, APRIL 7th, at Half-past Two. Doors open at Two o'clock; Carriages to be ordered at Half-past Four.</p> <p>HERR DOBLER, The Greatest Wonder of the Age who has had the honour to appear (by command, before Her Gracious Majesty and a full Court, will open his ENCHANTED PALACE OF ILLUSIONS! Without Apparatus, without Covered Tables, without Sleeves, and without Coat Pockets!</p> <p>Doors open at Half-past Seven, Entertainment to commence at Eight o'clock. Carriages to be ordered at Ten. Admission:—Stalls, 3s.; Family Ticket to admit Four, 10s. 6d.; Unreserved Seats, 2s. Gallery, 1s. Colleges, Schools, and Children Half-price to First and Second Seats only. Tickets to be had, and Seats secured, at the Assembly Rooms, where a Plan of the Stalls can be seen.</p>	<p>Advertisement for Herr Dobler's show at the Assembly Rooms. <i>Cheltenham Looker-On</i>, 4 April 1863. Courtesy of CL&FHC</p>
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Herr Dobler performed at the Assembly Rooms on the High Street not far from Rodney Road (now Lloyds TSB), which were only five minutes' walk from the *Belle Vue Hotel*, and only a short carriage ride from Hetton Lawn. The doors opened at 7.30pm, the performance began at 8.00pm, and carriages were instructed to collect their passengers at 10pm. This would presumably have been quite late for the girls. Herr Döbler was, in fact, George William Smith Buck from Bristol. He had taken the name of an internationally-renowned Viennese illusionist, Ludwig Leopold Döbler (1801-64), who had retired from performing in 1848. After Dobler's performance the *Cheltenham Looker-On* reported that:

*Herr Dobler, the celebrated conjuror, exhibited tricks of legerdemain at the Assembly Rooms, last Monday and Tuesday, to large audiences; and the wonderful rapidity with which he produced the various changes astonished not only the juvenile portion of the company but, in several cases, completely baffled the ingenuity of those of maturer years; even of such as were most familiar with the performances of Jacobs, Houdin and Frikell, neither [sic] of whom excelled Herr Dobler in tricks of a similar character to those exhibited on this occasion.'*¹³

Dobler continued touring the country with his show entitled 'Enchanted Palace of Illusions' after his performances in Cheltenham, appearing at the Royal Albert

Rooms, College Green in Bristol on the afternoons of 18-20 April. He advertised in the *Bristol Mercury*¹⁴ that he was 'direct from the Assembly Rooms, Cheltenham' and the same paper announced that the 'Cheltenham papers are loud in praise of the talent he displayed at their Assembly Rooms'¹⁵. On 21-23 October 1863 he appeared at the Royal Public Rooms, Exeter. The advertisement Dobler placed in *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post* on 21 Oct 1863 gives a glimpse of the show that he may well have performed in Cheltenham.

'HERR DOBLER,

The greatest wonder of the age, who has had the honour to appear (by command) before Her Most Gracious Majesty and a Full Court, will open his ENCHANTED Palace of Illusions Without apparatus, without covered tables, without sleeves, And without coat pockets! The best entertainment in England. Will transfer his assembly to the gold and silver regions, and will fill silver dishes to the brim with gold and silver coins, of all nations, catching them in the air as they fall to all parts of the room.

In the course of the entertainment HERR DOBLER will explain the exact manner in which Professor Pepper's

Celebrated

GHOST ILLUSION

Is performed, and will introduce a small apparatus, showing at a glance how you may produce a ghost in a drawing room without expense, and with very little trouble.'

The reference to Professor Pepper's 'celebrated ghost illusion' is intriguing. The effect is an illusory technique employed in theatre, magic tricks and haunted house fairground rides, which uses plate glass and special lighting to make objects seem to appear or disappear, to become transparent, or to make one object change into another. Professor John Henry Pepper, an analytic chemist, first showed what came to be known as Pepper's Ghost in a play by Charles Dickens called *The Enchanted Man* on Christmas Eve 1862. The ghost illusions were the sensations of the year and were widely reported in the press, including *The Times* and *Punch*. After patenting the apparatus on 5 February 1863 Pepper gave demonstrations all over the country, beginning at the London Polytechnic Institution. Many other performers, including Döbler, were quick to replicate the illusion, with or without Pepper's permission. On 6 June 1863 *The Cheltenham Looker-On* advertised that Professor Pepper himself would perform 'a new and curious series of optical illusions and other experiments' at the Assembly Rooms in Cheltenham from 8-11 June 1863.¹⁶ Mavis Batey claims that Pepper also performed a show billed as *Two Hours in Wonder World* in Oxford in June 1863¹⁷, although no direct reference to this show has come to light so far.

Tuesday 7 April 1863

Went over for the last time to Charlton, and walked into Cheltenham with Alice, Edith, and Miss Prickett, and left them at the Riding School, where the children were going to have a lesson. Left at 12.30 for Tenby...

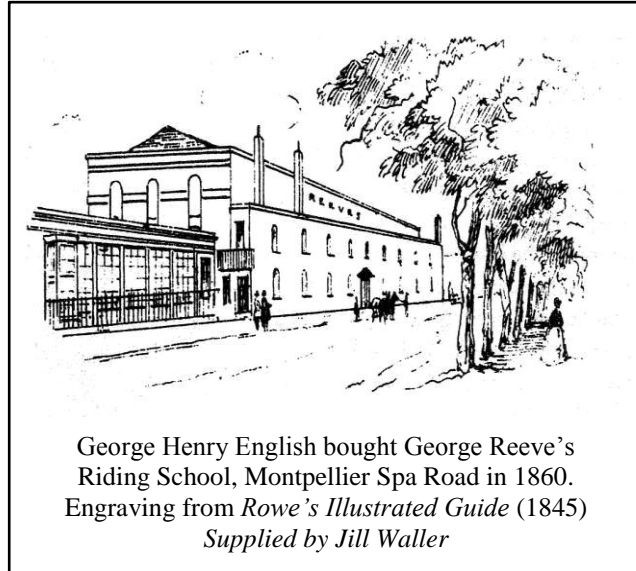
Henry George English ran the only Riding School in Cheltenham from October 1860¹⁸ until he was declared bankrupt in August 1889¹⁹. The school was situated on a large site on Montpellier Spa Road behind and to the east of the Queen's Hotel, and comprised extensive stable blocks and livery stables. The Riding School was on Carroll's route from Hetton Lawn to the railway station at Lansdown, so it made sense for Alice, Edith and Miss Prickett to walk the mile and a half to the stables with Carroll, and for him to carry on the extra mile or so to the station.

**Wednesday 8 – Tuesday
14 April 1863**

Carroll spent the week with his relatives in Tenby.

Wednesday 15 April 1863

Left Tenby about 10 with General Hart²⁰, and travelled, via Narberth Road, to Cheltenham, parting with General Hart at Gloucester. I put up at the Belle Vue again.



There is no reference to Carroll's name in the Arrivals column for the Belle Vue Hotel in the *Cheltenham Looker-On* for that week.

Thursday 16 April 1863

I had written to Edith, proposing an expedition to the "7 springs", if they could remain another day at Cheltenham, but not finding any note at the Belle View [sic], I concluded they had left for Oxford, and so went over to Gloucester, and attended service in the Cathedral there. The West window is beautiful.

The '7 springs', known today as Seven Springs, are a group of natural springs in an attractive, shady grove²¹ in the hills above Cheltenham, about halfway between Charlton Kings and the village of Cowley. The springs are one of the two acknowledged sources of the River Thames, and the furthest from the mouth of the river, which flows 229 miles eastwards from this point. The Springs would have been of particular interest to Alice and her sisters because of their familiarity with the Thames, known as the Isis at Oxford.

The train from Cheltenham at 2.40 brought the three Liddells and Miss Prickett [to Gloucester]. They had waited another day, though not on my account, had answered my note to Tenby, and had stayed in three-quarters of an hour for me in the morning. We had a very merry journey to Oxford together.

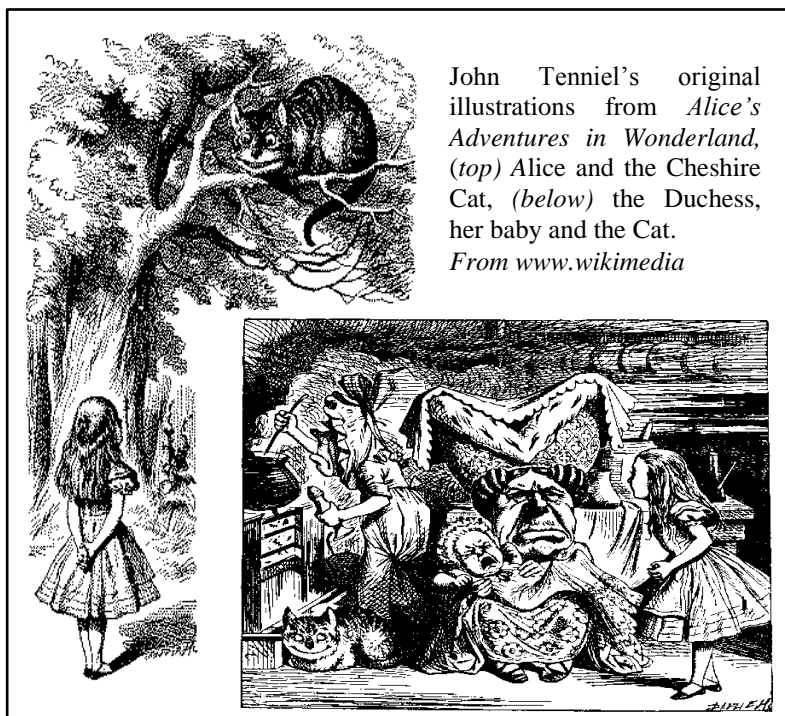
The GWR train from Cheltenham that took the Liddell girls and Miss Prickett back to Oxford went then, as now, via Gloucester although today it is necessary to change at Swindon. This is probably one of the few long train journeys that Carroll

would have shared with the Liddell sisters and Miss Prickett. He would undoubtedly have entertained the party during the two and a half hours, retelling old tales and probably making up stories about their fellow passengers.

After Lewis Carroll's visit

Following Carroll's visit to Charlton Kings in April 1863 he added two further chapters to his fairy-tale. One chapter, entitled 'Pig and Pepper', includes the well-known description of the Cheshire Cat which '*vanished quite slowly, beginning with the end of the tail, and ending with the grin*'. Edwin Dawes, Professor of Chemistry, performing magician and respected magic historian claims that Carroll's visit to Döbler's show in Cheltenham was the inspiration for the Cheshire Cat. The chapter also includes the scenes of the Duchess and her very ugly baby, which turns into a pig. Were these scenes an oblique reference by Carroll to the girls' mother and her latest confinement that had led to them being sent away from home for a month?

Carroll abandoned his original drawings for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, but from January 1864 he worked with Sir John Tenniel, British illustrator and graphic humourist whose work as an artist for *Punch* magazine he admired. He wrote *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*, published in 1871, as the sequel to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. *Through the Looking Glass* was also illustrated by Tenniel. A very large gilt mirror at



John Tenniel's original illustrations from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, (top) Alice and the Cheshire Cat, (below) the Duchess, her baby and the Cat.
From www.wikimedia

Hetton Lawn is said to have been Carroll's inspiration for the second book. The lavishly decorated mirror, thought to be contemporary with the house, originally hung above the fireplace in the drawing room, but is now situated at the top of the imposing staircase. It is known that Carroll worked very closely with Tenniel and, although the artist would not have seen the mirror himself, it is easy to imagine that Carroll described it to him and had woven stories for the Liddell girls based on the ornate pastoral figures, animals, birds and foliage that decorate the mirror's frame.

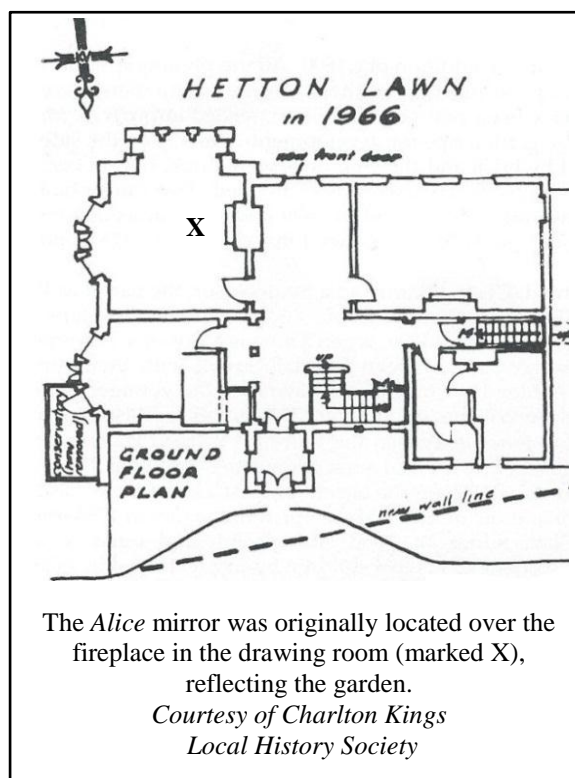
The train journey from Gloucester to Oxford on 16 April 1863 may have been the inspiration for the railway carriage scene and its characters in Chapter Eight of *Through the Looking Glass*. A section of this scene, mentioned in Collingham's biography of Carroll but never included in the *Looking Glass*, was only re-discovered in 1974. The missing section, which Tenniel had found impossible to illustrate, describes Alice's exchange in the carriage with a peevish wasp wearing a bright

yellow wig, kept in place by an equally yellow handkerchief, tied under its chin. The section was subsequently published separately with the title *The Wasp in a Wig* in 1977.

On 26 November 1864 Lewis Carroll gave Alice the handwritten manuscript of his story entitled *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* with illustrations that he had drawn himself, dedicating it as '*A Christmas Gift to a Dear Child in Memory of a Summer's Day*'. The story was finally published to Carroll and Tenniel's satisfaction on 26 November 1865 under the title *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The book, now often referred to simply as *Alice in Wonderland*, has become one of the most successful children's books ever written. It has never been out of print and has been published in many languages. Its structure, characters and imagery have been enormously influential in both popular culture and literature for nearly 150 years.

Alice's grandparents remain in Charlton Kings

Alice Liddell's grandparents continued living at Hetton Lawn for a further 10 years. In 1876 Revd Liddell purchased the Methodist Cudnall Chapel, built on the north side of Cudnall Street in about 1838. It is not known what Revd Liddell planned to do with the chapel, but by 1879 the building had become a private house.²²



Alice's grandmother, Charlotte Liddell, died on 11 February 1871, aged 85, and was buried at St Mary's, Charlton Kings, on the western side of the churchyard. The census taken at Hetton Lawn on Sunday 2 April 1871 records the newly-widowed Revd Liddell, his daughters Charlotte and Amelia, together with Alice Liddell, now 21, her parents Dean Henry George and Lorina Liddell, her brother Edward Henry, aged 23, and her sisters Lorina, aged 21, Edith, 17, and Rhoda, 11. Also recorded in the house were a butler, a footman, a pageboy, two housemaids, a cook, a kitchen maid and three ladies' maids. The number of servants reflects the size of the house and the social standing of the Liddell family. The

fact that the Dean and his family were in Charlton Kings exactly a week before Easter in April 1871 may suggest that they visited regularly at this time of year.

Alice's grandfather, Revd Henry George Liddell, died on 9 March 1872, aged 84, and was buried in the same grave as his wife at St Mary's. The censuses taken in April 1881 and April 1891 show that his daughters Charlotte Mary Elizabeth and Amelia Frances Liddell, still unmarried, continued living at Hetton Lawn with three domestic servants; a parlour maid, a cook and a housemaid, after their father's death.

Charlotte died, aged 80, at the house on 26 June 1896, and her younger sister Amelia died, also aged 80, at the house on 26 June 1898. Records at St Mary's in Charlton Kings show that Charlotte and Amelia are buried in the same grave as their parents, although the grave inscriptions do not reflect this.

Revd William Wren Liddell – Rector of Cowley, Gloucestershire

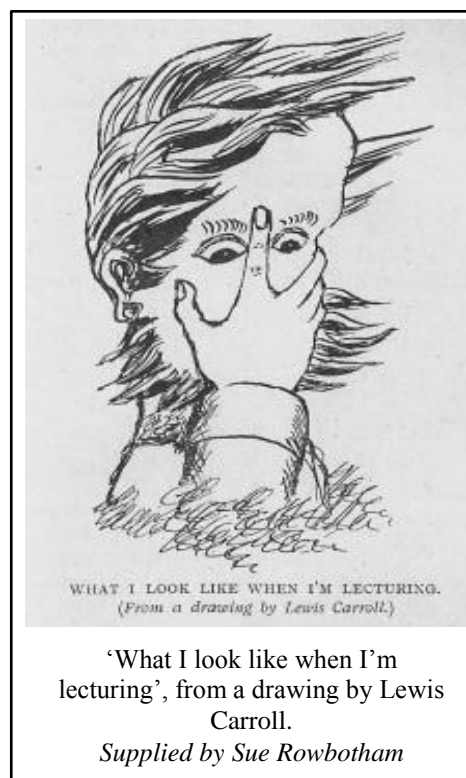
Alice's paternal uncle William Wren Liddell became Rector of St Mary's at Cowley, a small Cotswold village about five miles from Cheltenham, in 1870 when he was 'presented to the Rectory by Lord Hatherley, then Lord Chancellor'²³. William served the small picturesque 13th century St Mary's church, adjacent to Cowley Manor, from 1870 until his sudden death on 8 June 1892 while he was speaking at an open-air temperance meeting near the adjacent village of Coberley²⁴. It seems likely that William, who never married, took the living at Cowley in order to be closer to his aging parents. Some accounts of the Liddell family confuse Cowley in Gloucestershire with the village of the same name close to Oxford, where there is also a Cowley Manor. The Revd William Wren Liddell's burial place has not yet been located, but is thought likely to be in the churchyard at Cowley.

Postscript

On 4 July 2012 my husband Steve and I joined other members of the Lewis Carroll Society from as far afield as the USA, Canada, Finland and Japan as we climbed aboard the riverboat *Serafina* at Folly Bridge in Oxford and retraced the route that Carroll, Duckworth and the Liddell girls had taken upstream along the Thames to Godstow Lock on that same date in 1862. We were joined by a Canadian film crew and 10-year-old Eva Salins from Maryland, USA, who delighted us by playing the part of Alice for the day.

Acknowledgements

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¹ Re-told in Collingwood.

² Charlton Kings was a separate village and administrative unit until 1971, when it merged with Cheltenham to become a suburb of the non-metropolitan district of Cheltenham.

³ Cheltenham College Register, p.26.

⁴ Wakeling, *Lewis Carroll's Diaries*, 6 June 1863, p.202 and note 209.

⁵ William Davis, fly proprietor, is listed at Charlton House, Charlton Kings in *Harper's Cheltenham Directory 1857*, and in the *Post Office Directory for Gloucestershire*, 1863. Until recently Charlton House was part of Spirax Sarco.

⁶ The *Belle View Hotel* is more generally known as the *Belle Vue Hotel*.

⁷ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 4 April 1863, p.217, col 2. The principal hotels in Cheltenham, as listed in the *Looker-On* in 1863, were the *Plough*, the *Queens*, the *Royal*, the *Belle View* [sic] and *The Lansdown* in that order.

⁸ Wakeling, *Lewis Carroll's Diaries*, 17 April 1863, p.192.

⁹ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 25 April 1863 p.266, col 1.

¹⁰ Published by Davies & Son, Royal Library, Cheltenham in September 1863. Price 10 shillings. *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 26 September 1863 p.618 col 1.

¹¹ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 11 April 1863, p.233, col 1.

¹² *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 4 April 1863 p.216, col 1. Jacobs, Houdin and Frikell were all internationally-famous illusionists who had performed in Cheltenham.

¹³ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, Sat 11 April 1863, p.233, col 2.

¹⁴ *Bristol Mercury*, Sat 18 April 1863, p.4, col 7.

¹⁵ *Bristol Mercury*, Sat 18 April 1863, p.8, col 1.

¹⁶ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 6 June 1863, p.353, col 2.

¹⁷ Batey, *The Adventures of Alice*, p.54.

¹⁸ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 20 October 1860, p.684, col 2. English bought both George Reeve's Riding School and the adjacent Livery Stables belonging to Frederick Jacobs in 1860.

¹⁹ English moved his business to 'more convenient and less expensive premises' at Lansdown Mews, to the rear of 14 Lansdown Place in July 1889, renamed it 'Lansdown Hunting and Livery Establishment' (*Cheltenham Looker-On*, 20 July 1889, p.18, col 1). He was declared bankrupt in Aug 1889 (*Gloucester Citizen*, 10 Aug 1889, p.4, col 2).

²⁰ The identity of General Hart is not known. See Wakeling p.188, note 184.

²¹ The Seven Springs are situated beside the A436, close to the junction with the A435.

²² Ed. Paget, M., *A History of Charlton Kings*, Alan Sutton (1988), p.137.

²³ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 11 June 1892, p.567, col 2.

²⁴ *Reading Mercury*, 18 June 1892, p.5, col 7. The name of the village was then written as Cubberley, and is still pronounced that way by many who live locally.



George Rowe's view over Leckhampton and Cheltenham *c.* 1840. Christ Church tower can clearly be seen on Bayhill in the centre of the picture. Other landmarks can also be identified.

Image supplied by Sue Rowbotham



Eva Salins as Alice Lidell on the 150th anniversary of the riverboat trip on 4 July 1862 that inspired *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.
Image © Sue Rowbotham



Above The Belle Vue Hotel by George Rowe, c. 1840.
Image supplied by Sue Rowbotham

Below The Belle Vue hotel has been converted into flats,
but externally still looks much as it did in 1840.
Image © Sue Rowbotham



Detail from an engraving of the *Plough Hotel, Cheltenham* by George Rowe, c.1840. Left of centre, one sees the canopied entrance to The Assembly Rooms, High Street where Dobler performed.

Image supplied by Sue Rowbotham

The Liddell grave, bottom left, in St Mary's churchyard, Charlton Kings

Image © Sue Rowbotham



Above Hetton Lawn, showing the present entrance. Originally, this was the back door into the extensive garden. Right Hetton Lawn, with the large stone-faced extension added by Revd Liddell to the left, and the porch facing Cudnall Street, through which Lewis Carroll would have entered.

Images © Sue Rowbotham



Left The mirror (no longer in the original position) at Hetton Lawn, said to have inspired *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. Above Detail of the pastoral decoration on the *Alice* mirror.

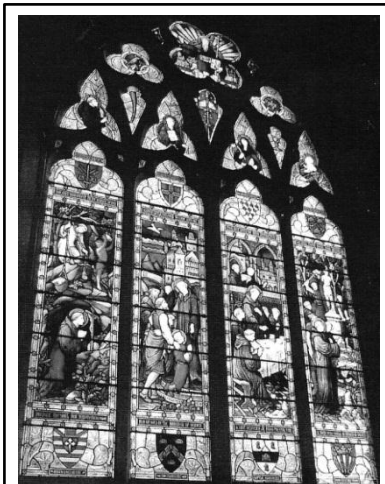
Image © Sue Rowbotham

Endeared to Friends and Pupils Alike: the Tiesset and Gonez Families 1836 - 1884

JOANNA VIALS

**Of Your Charity, Pray for the repose of the souls of Francis and Alice
Gonez, Who presented the above window to this Church.
AD April 1884 R.I.P**

THIS WORDING IS FOUND ON THE BRASS PLAQUE recently replaced beneath the window in the north transept of the Roman Catholic Church of St Gregory the Great, Cheltenham. The 'St Benedict' window is an impressive pictorial narrative of a saint especially associated with the church. The lives of the couple who are commemorated on the plaque reflect aspects of the development of Cheltenham society and national Catholic life in the nineteenth century. They demonstrate one family's commitment to the educational life of the town, to St Gregory's parish and to each other.



St Benedict Window,
North Transept
*Image © Christopher Bentall
See back cover for a
coloured reproduction*

During the first half of the nineteenth century 'Regency' Cheltenham had grown rapidly in population, swelled by permanent residents and seasonal visitors to the now fashionable spa town. The parish of St Gregory the Great reflected this in its development. In 1807 it was a poor parish without a chapel served by the émigré French priest Abbé César. Responsibility was handed over to Fr Birdsall OSB in 1809 and he provided generously for the parish from his own personal income. By the middle of the century the parish community, with increasing confidence, was able to raise funds for the building that was opened in 1857 and very much as we know it today. Fr Blount's parish census taken in 1856 put the number of souls at 1100 and of these 500 were Easter communicants. 'The congregation is partly supported by wealthy Catholics who come to Cheltenham during the season, or to drink its waters. It mainly consists of poor Irish who settle in the town

in considerable numbers, and migrate from it in the summer, wandering over the country in search of agricultural employment.'¹

The fashionable, wealthy society which gave Cheltenham its distinctive architectural heritage drew upon various supporting industries: the building labourers, market gardeners, lodging house keepers and the people who contributed to the cultural and educational life on which Cheltenham prided itself. Music teachers, language professors and dancing masters often came from continental Europe and Frans Louis Gonez², born in Tournai, Belgium belonged to this group.

The Arrival of the Gonez and Tiesset Families

When Frans came to Cheltenham in December 1860 he probably found a town he could fit into quite comfortably. His aunt, Mademoiselle Tiesset, had been 'induced to leave' her home in Boulogne in 1836 by Lady Darling, Lady Ford and others who promised to recommend her progressive methods as a teacher of languages. On her arrival in Cheltenham Sophie Flore Tiesset stayed at Alpha House, Alstone a little way out of town on a minor road³. It is more than likely that she made this rather unusual choice of residence because it was also the home and headquarters in the 1820s and '30s where Samuel Wilderspin was practising his pioneering developments in infant education.

Apart from living at Alpha House later evidence also suggests that Mlle Tiesset was in sympathy with Wilderspin's philosophy. She shared premises for most of her working life with the Misses Young who cited him directly as informing their approach to education in their small private infant schools. They also had a direct familial link through their brother, Thomas Urry Young who married Wilderspin's eldest daughter Sarah Anne; both worked strenuously in education. In the *Cheltenham Annuaire* for 1837 Miss Cuff, Miss Wilderspin and Miss Young are the proprietors of an 'Infant School for Children of the Higher Classes' at 9 Portland Street where Sophie also held classes. Two years later Miss Anna Young was joined by her younger sister Jane and they established the Misses Young's Infant Boarding and Day School for Young Ladies and Gentlemen at 2 Essex Place, Rodney Road; this was also Sophie's residence where she gave private lessons and the base for Mrs Charles Cuff's classes. A mark of the Youngs' progressiveness is that while the Cheltenham Directory for 1839 lists eight private Academies for Young Gentlemen and sixteen for Young Ladies there is only one private Infant School.

Mlle Tiesset regularly advertised her teaching services, working independently or in small private establishments and at the Ladies' College. She published her own textbook, *The Little French Instructor*⁴ and took out an advertisement in George Rowe's innovative *Illustrated Guide to Cheltenham*, first published in 1845, to promote her book and teaching services. She had the confidence to pay one pound for a full page testimonial on her own behalf while most professional and trades people contented themselves with a quarter page display costing seven shillings. By 1845 her brother Casimir, aged 37 and eight years her junior, had joined her, bringing his English wife, Mary, and their two elder children from Boulogne to live at 23 Bath Parade. He, too, advertised as a Professor of Languages, 'Membre de l'Université de France'.

Like his sister, Casimir took his role as an educationalist very seriously and had

<p>MADemoISELLE TIESSET,</p> <p><i>Institutrice Brevetée,</i></p> <p>Author of a Table for the Conjugation of French Verbs,</p> <p>AS ALSO A WORK ENTITLED</p> <p>THE LITTLE FRENCH INSTRUCTOR,</p> <p>Receives Classes limited to Eight Young Ladies of the upper circles, or gives private instruction in the following branches: <i>French, Italian, History, Geography, and Arithmetic.</i> A residence of nearly nine years in Cheltenham, has enabled Melle. Tiesset to obtain <i>Testimonials</i> from several ladies whose daughters were entrusted to her care.</p> <p>RESIDENCE—2, ESSEX PLACE, RODNEY TERRACE.</p> <p>Advertisement from Rowe's Guide 1845</p>

obviously been influenced by the same sources as Wilderspin. In a lecture given to the Literary and Philosophical Institution soon after his arrival in Cheltenham, M Tiesset 'urged the importance of recognising religious and moral influences in co-operation with the very earliest attempts at mental training.'⁵ He advocated a holistic approach of carefully attending to 'the different faculties as they severally and successively became developed' rather than trying to impart mere knowledge and firmly believed 'infantile instruction' was a worthwhile endeavour. A particular point of view which others in the teaching professions might not have readily agreed with was that the study and acquisition of languages was of paramount importance, 'being the best adapted of all others for expanding the powers of the mind, and producing that vigour and energy of thought [...] which so pre-eminently distinguished the worthies of Greece and Rome.' What is striking about this occasion is the breadth of Casimir's thinking and his confidence in the high calling of a teacher. He has no hesitation in associating the teaching of infants with ancient classical learning: both belonged to intellectual culture and were directly linked. He would also have been delighted to be on the teaching staff of Miss Dorothea Beale, another educator with the highest ideals and ambitions for her pupils.

Casimir and Sophie Tiesset joined the Cheltenham College Institution for the Education of Young Ladies (Cheltenham Ladies' College) when it first opened at Cambray House in February 1854 with 82 pupils and a staff of 10, three of whom were visiting teachers. In the words of its Education Committee in 1855, the aims of the College were 'to give sound instruction without sacrificing accomplishments, to develop the intellect without making female pedants, to combine efficiency with economy [...] through the education of the faculties of the mind by slow, steady and judicious training.'⁶ When Miss Annie Proctor resigned after four years as Lady Principal, Miss Dorothea Beale was appointed. Despite the consolidation of the school's results and reputation outside Cheltenham, there was a lack of support in the town for 'advanced' education of a 'more public character' than was thought proper for a ladies' establishment.

The appointment of Roman Catholics onto the staff was also a cause for critical comment. A headmistress of one of the private academies who deplored the 'evils' arising from 'new things' critically commented, 'large numbers say three hundred girls together must be an evil and five to be employed in it as Professors are Roman Catholics.'⁷ However, Miss Beale was able to steer a steady course amid the religious tensions of this period which led at times to stormy confrontations in the public life of the town. She had a deeply held personal Christian faith which enabled her to respect the differing church affiliations among her members of staff and fend off factional criticisms.

Casimir stayed at the College until 1862, becoming Professor of French in 1854 and contributed to setting the school on its firm foundations during its formative years. Former pupils remembered him fondly: 'We worked hard, and the teaching was very thorough. [...] M Tiesset made our French lessons delightful ... and he seemed to enjoy teaching us as much as we did being taught by him. [...] M Tiesset and his sister taught French very well indeed, and I especially remember a chart of irregular verbs, M Tiesset's own arrangement, which, I believe, was a valuable help.'⁸ In response to Casimir's letter of resignation the Council asked the Secretary to write 'thanking him for his services to the College from its commencement and bearing

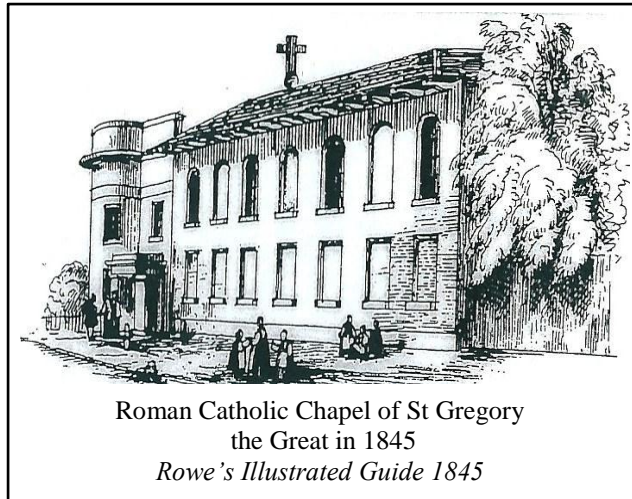
testimony to his great ability as a teacher.’ During this period Casimir was also a visiting French Master at Cheltenham Grammar School as well as offering a range of private lessons; unfortunately, his wife Mary remains a figure in the background.

Frans Gonez would have found his way into Cheltenham society made smoother by joining this established teaching family of Tiessets. He, too, was employed at the Ladies’ College as a French teacher, commencing in November 1862, just prior to the departure of the Tiessets. He was initially employed as a teacher for the First Division French Classes, which included six ‘forms’ a week. He was paid £10 per annum for each form, supplementing his income by tutoring individual pupils. For each pupil over the age of twenty-five he was paid £12 ‘in consideration of the exercises and examinations taken out of school hours’. These were probably ‘bye students’, that is occasional students who came in to study particular subjects.⁹

In the brief advertisements placed in the local press by the Tiessets and their nephew we get a clear indication of their working hours, the spread of their teaching – juveniles, advanced pupils wanting ‘Après Dinées Françaises’, young gentlemen in need of cramming during the Christmas vacation – and their own scholarship. Sophie offered a class in Chronology, promising to render ‘this usually difficult and uninteresting study both easy and amusing’ while nonetheless covering all the principal events of Ancient History. Casimir did not despair of slow learners, blaming their poor progress on not having been sufficiently well grounded at the beginning of their studies, a problem he could rectify *for every diligent Pupil*. Although Frans Gonez seems very soon to have restricted himself to teaching French he was introduced to Cheltenham as a ‘Professor of Rhetoric, Ethics, Natural Philosophy, &c’. M Tiesset modestly omitted to mention he was the uncle of the ‘highly educated French gentleman’ he had secured in partnership. The frequent appearance of these advertisements and their approachable, almost familiar, tone suggest the Tiessets felt comfortable and accepted in Cheltenham. As they frequently changed the wording of their notices these were always fresh and offered something a little different to other advertisers. So informing the public that they ‘are at home every evening at half-past six o’clock’ made business sense but also gives a picture of domestic satisfaction.¹⁰

Frans needed the Tiessets, too, as close relatives. He was already a widower in 1860, at the age of 38, and brought his nine year old son, also Frans, to live with him. His arrival coincided with a period of change for his uncle and aunt. While Casimir was sharing a house in Winchcomb Street with his sister Sophie, his wife Mary and their four children – Mary, Casimir, Eugene and Charles – were elsewhere, quite possibly abroad furthering the young people’s education in music and modern languages. With the family away there was room for Casimir’s and Sophie’s nephew Frans Gonez and his son to join their household.

As well as educational expansion, the mid-nineteenth century saw a period of extensive church building in Cheltenham. At St Gregory’s this was vigorously assisted by a fund raising committee of four parishioners headed by Fr James Cotham OSB. One of these was Hector Caffieri, wine merchant, prominent citizen and friend of Casimir Tiesset.¹¹ The *Appeal* sent out to potential subscribers ‘at a distance’ in 1853 asked for donations ‘to raise a Church suited to the wants of the numerous but poor Catholics of this Town. We appeal more especially in the name of two thirds of our Congregation who are *the poorest of the poor*.’ Families such as the Tiessets and



Roman Catholic Chapel of St Gregory
the Great in 1845

Rowe's Illustrated Guide 1845

Caffieris belonged neither to the wealthy Catholics nor to the poor Irish settlers but to the up and coming middling sort who exercised their entrepreneurial skills among those who valued their services and could pay for them. In the parish account book of subscriptions covering the years 1854-1873, the names of Tiesset and Gonez appeared frequently and they gave generously. For example, Mr Gonez donated £20 to the Tower

fund and £20 to the Spire fund; the three Tiesset sons each gave 10 shillings while their sister Mary contributed £3. Mr Tiesset, as well as monetary donations, presented the Crucifix for the High Altar.¹²

Frans Gonez did not stay long as a lodger with his relatives. He moved first to 6 Pittville Terrace and shortly after, in 1864, to 45 Montpellier Terrace. Each summer he would travel to the continent for four to six weeks between June and August, probably taking his son with him although it was not until the boy was 16 in 1868 that he is mentioned in *The Cheltenham Looker-On* as having travelled with his father. The following year there was no travelling abroad. Young Frans died on 19 August 1869 aged 17 and while still a student. He had suffered acute tuberculosis for five months before dying from a final lung haemorrhage. After his son's death M Gonez remained in the house with only a cook and a general domestic servant for company.

Another Newcomer: The Arrival of Alice Courtney

By 1870 Alice Julia Courtney was also in Cheltenham as a visitor in the house of Mrs Augusta Rolles, widow of the Revd Edward Rolles and her three unmarried daughters. Alice had been born in London on 19 February 1846

into a wealthy family of coachbuilders. Her father, William Charles, had business premises in Covent Garden with his brother Charles Barker. Alice had three younger sisters – Rose, Eleanor and Julia – but the girls' mother died in July 1850, aged 26,



Sketch of the new proposed church by
Charles Hansom, 1853

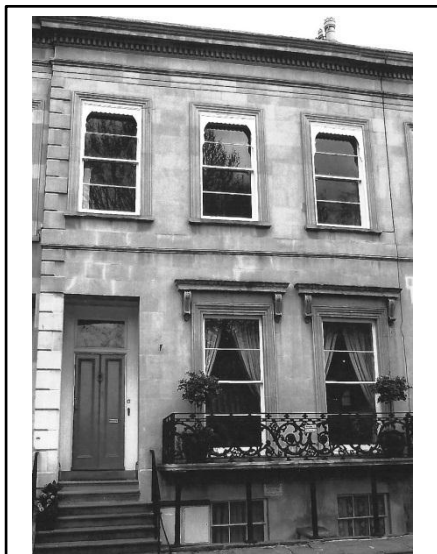
Reproduced by permission of St Gregory's Archives

just three weeks after Julia's birth. The girls lived with their father in Oxford Terrace, Hyde Park until his death in 1863 and then with their uncle and his wife at Rutland Gate, Knightsbridge. Like their parents, the three younger sisters were all to marry at St George's Church, Hanover Square but before this their eldest sister Alice had moved away from London, perhaps to have greater freedom to make her own particular choices.

In 1870 Alice was 24 and Mrs Rolles' daughters – Ada, Caroline and Ellen - were aged 22, 21 and 17. The household was shared with Mrs Rolles' sister and their widowed mother, all looked after by four domestic staff. Fortunately the house and grounds at St Anne's, Albion Street¹³ was large enough for these eleven women, having four sitting rooms, seven bedrooms and standing in four acres of land.¹⁴ For a while in the 1850s Revd Rolles and his family had lived at St George's, Hanover Square; the three Rolles daughters were close in age to the four motherless Courtney girls and close contact would have been likely.¹⁵

Although we do not know what brought Alice to Cheltenham in the first instance, her 'Arrival' and 'Departure' is noted a number of times in *The Cheltenham Looker-On* as she travelled to and from the Rolles' home at St Anne's, for example in 1870 when going to Brighton for five weeks in the summer. It was probably from their home that she went to St Gregory's on her 25th birthday on Sunday 19 February 1871 to be baptised and received into the Roman Catholic Church (*sub conditione et in ecclesiam recepta*) by Fr Robert Wilkinson OSB; there is no mention of a godparent or sponsor being present.

At the beginning of 1872 Alice left St Anne's for Dover.¹⁶ The circumstances of Frans' and Alice's first meeting are unknown but this departure for Dover, and presumably the continent, might have been in preparation for what came later, for Frans Gonez and Alice Courtney were married by Fr James Cotham at St Gregory's on Tuesday 2 July 1872, shortly after the end of the College term.¹⁷ The newly-married couple honeymooned on the Isle of Wight before returning to Cheltenham in August.¹⁸ After six months of marriage they moved, in January 1873, from Montpellier Terrace to 17 Royal Parade, Bayshill. The house was conveniently situated for Frans following the move of the Ladies' College from Cambray in March 1873 to its present site in Bayshill, thought 'absurdly large' at the time for the 220 pupils it was designed for.



17, Royal Parade, Bayshill,
conveniently close to the
Ladies' College
Image © C Bentall

While Frans and Alice were settling down to married life in Cheltenham the extended Tieset family continued to move home. By 1865 Casimir had left Cheltenham to join his wife and three younger children who were now furthering their own careers. This took the family to America where they settled in Chicago. Casimir continued working as a Professor of Languages and his wife Mary, in the American phrase, 'kept house' without live-in servants. When the family returned to

England they settled in Newcastle upon Tyne where Casimir died from heart disease on 16 April 1879, aged 71. His death was registered under the name 'Casimir Hippolite Phillipe Tiesset de Ste Amours'.¹⁹

Sophie remained in Cheltenham, firstly at 32 Cambray before removing to 13 Cambray possibly because her landlady Miss Spearman made the same move. Here, still the mainstay of the family, she was joined by her eldest nephew Casimir and his wife Mary who had married in Lancashire in December 1868. The three of them lodged together at 13 Cambray Place for a short while until Casimir died of phthisis (pulmonary tuberculosis) on 16 May 1871 at the age of 29.²⁰

A Diminishing Presence

An instance of Sophie, her nephew Frans and his wife coming together at St Gregory's is recorded in one of the handwritten parish notebooks; it opens with the title page: '*The Book of the Confraternity of the Most Blessed Sacrament, May 1874*'. A list of 85 members begins with Fr Robert Aloysius Wilkinson OSB, followed by Frans Gonez Esq, Edward Healy Thompson Esq, H Charles Brandling Esq, Mrs Gonez (Collector), Miss Tiesset (Collector), the latter's teaching colleagues Miss Billacoys (Collector) and Miss Buels (Collector) and ending with Mrs Fitzgerald who lived in the Alms Houses. The members were mostly, but not exclusively women, many from the poorer areas around the lower High Street and it seems clear that Fr Wilkinson had appointed a committee of three men to handle the business side of the Confraternity's work of providing for the day to day running costs of the sacristy, providing altar wines and charcoal and on occasion 'the lacquering of angels'. In the accounts, the first receipt is for £1 15s 6d (£1.78) entered against Miss Tiesset's name for April 1874 – some weeks before the Confraternity officially came into existence! Collections were brought in two or three times a year and of the 11 named Collectors on page one only five or six appear regularly. No receipts at all were recorded from Mrs Gonez and her name appears only once more when she is reimbursed for expenditure of 8/6d (43p). Sophie's last appearance is not until December 1881 with a deposit of 12s (60p) and shortly afterwards the book's entries end in March 1883 with the last two collections.

Franz continued to be listed as a Professor of Languages in the annual Cheltenham directories until his death on 5 November 1879 from 'dilatation of the heart' associated with 'syncope' (collapse), the heart failure possibly arising from damage caused by the

DEATH OF M. GONEZ. — On Wednesday last, M. Franz Gonez died at his residence in Royal Well-terrace, of heart disease, after a brief illness. For twenty years he was the most eminent Professor of the French Language and Literature in this town, after succeeding his relative, M. Tiesset, well known to an earlier generation of pupils. M. Gonez was born at Tournay, the son of one of the old soldiers of Napoleon I., and had received, in France, a very liberal culture, which formed his taste for literature. His urbanity and politeness endeared him to his pupils and friends alike, who will long retain respect for his memory.

Cheltenham Examiner, 12 November 1879

Courtesy of Cheltenham Local & Family History Library

streptococcus bacterium, common but untreatable before the advent of antibiotics. He was buried in the public cemetery by Fr Wilkinson two days later. His obituary, above, was respectful. Frans left 'effects under £1500. No leaseholds.' One of the sureties to the probate was given by Dr John Callender Gooding of 'Alconbury',

Albion Road. As well as Frans' physician he was also a good friend to the couple, a common extension of the doctor's place in his patients' lives when purely medical interventions could not bring the comfort the sick looked for.

A year after Frans' death Alice Gonez moved from Bayshill to Clare Villa, Hales Road with her cook and general servant, Abiah Taylor. This was a significant move for Alice. Hitherto, Frans, like his Tiesset relatives, had lived within easy reach of the main thoroughfares of Cheltenham and his homes in Pittville Terrace, Montpellier and Bayshill were all close to Cheltenham's public spaces. As a childless widow Alice moved from these Regency streets to a Victorian semi-detached house in one of the newer, less frequented, suburban developments.

Life would have been much quieter for Alice; her family lived a considerable distance away across the south of England and she was without the contact with Frans' pupils. Sophie Tiesset continued to be a stalwart of St Gregory's, fundraising and sponsoring groups of 20 or 30 confirmation candidates on several occasions.²¹ Unlike Sophie, Alice was not associated with the paraphernalia of bazaars, raffles and luncheons taking place around the time of the consecration of St Gregory's church in November 1877. Quite possibly she was not well enough to be more active as she suffered chronic rheumatoid arthritis and subsequently kidney disease, nor is it likely that she was able to give practical help in the various charitable foundations of the town as did her friends the Goodings.

Alice died on 12 March 1884 and was buried three days later by Fr Wilson. She was 38 years old and had been a widow for four and a half years. Dr Gooding certified the causes of death as 'chronic rheumatic gout; atrophied kidneys; uraemia; epileptic form fit'. Her sister Rose was present at her death, as she had been at her wedding. Alice had drawn up her will in July 1880, following Frans' death and before she left Royal Parade. In the will we read,



Clare Villa, Hales Road

Image © C Bentall

'I bequeath the sum of fifty pounds to my friend Mrs Laura Morgan of Westbrook Lodge, Staines as a token of my friendship to her. I bequeath to my servant Jane Tobias provided she be in my service at the time of my decease the sum of fifty pounds.'

A year before her death, on the 17 April 1883, Alice altered these two small bequests in a codicil. To Laura Morgan she now left £100 and to her 'friend' Dr Gooding also £100. The legacy for Jane Tobias was revoked since she was no longer in Alice's service.²² The main bequests were: £1000 (jointly) to the Revd Fathers Robert Aloysius Wilkinson and John Dunstan Breen, priests in charge at St Gregory's; £1,000 to His Eminence Cardinal Manning, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster; the residue of the estate, with a gross value of £9,475 16s 2d (£9,475.81), was to be shared equally among her sisters.

The St Benedict window was ordered by Fr Wilkinson from Hardman and Co, Warley in March 1884; probate was granted on 3 April 1884 and with the money made available the window could be linked to the memory of Frans and Alice Gonez.

We do not know if Sophie Tiesset saw this fine window. After the death of her nephew in 1872 she had not gone back to the Misses Young's establishment but had moved to Mrs Steventon's lodging house, Oxford House, Bath Road, just across from Montpellier Baths. Despite her advanced age, 84, and chronic bronchitis, Sophie was still advertising her readiness to educate young ladies, reserving her quarter page space in the 1885 edition of the *Cheltenham Annuaire*. The Misses Young – Anna, Jane and Sarah – had all died by 1883, although the school, still carrying their name, was continued by their three nieces, Emma, Eliza and Sarah Kemp whom they had educated years previously.²³ Since coming to Cheltenham in 1836 to live at Alpha House, Sophie had indefatigably maintained her financial independence while involving herself closely with family and church. She had moved home frequently, living with family members, or as part of the Misses Young's boarding schools, and finally alone in lodgings.

By the end of 1884 there were no family members left in Cheltenham to attend to Sophie Tiesset when she died at home on Tuesday 23 December. Her death was registered on Christmas Eve by Harry Steventon, the 26 year old son of her landlady. The burial in the public cemetery on Saturday 27 December was conducted by Fr Wilkinson. The *Cheltenham Mercury* published a generous obituary remarking on her 'exceptional talent as a teacher' and her 'kindly disposition' which ensured that

*'many a poor girl struggling to qualify herself as a teacher found in Mlle Tiesset a ready instructress and a generous friend; and her purse was ever open in the cause of benevolence ... in no work did she take a warmer interest than in the education of the poor children whom the congregation of St Gregory's have dependent on them.'*²⁴

Sophie's niece and nephew Mary and Eugene Tiesset were her executors and co-heirs with Eloi Chapp, her great nephew.²⁵ The executors were instructed to hold her estate, amounting to £549 2s 9d (£549.14), in trust and pay the interest twice yearly to Sophie's brother Auguste in Boulogne. Sophie was interred in the same grave as her nephew Casimir, her name, without dates or comment, being inscribed at ground level below his on a stone which stands close behind the larger memorial to Fr Wilkinson. Frans and Alice Gonez are also interred together in the 'Catholic' section of Cheltenham's public cemetery but their headstone has disappeared.

Mary Harriet Virginie Tiesset was the last survivor of the Cheltenham branch of Tiessets. Her mother, Mary née Davies of Clun, Shropshire, died in 1886, having buried her husband and three sons. Mary Harriet Virginie moved to Oxford and was a teacher of modern languages at St Ursula's Convent School, St Giles, founded by a French congregation in 1891, until her retirement. She continued to live at the convent as a visitor and we can assume the combination of education, religion and French culture under one roof would have made a congenial environment for Mary Tiesset 'de Saint Amour'. She died aged 73 in October 1914.

From the 1830s onwards as the character of Cheltenham as a fashionable spa town of leisure and pleasure waned a more earnest focus on education and religion

prevailed. This earnestness is an attribute frequently associated with ‘the Victorian age’ in general but in Cheltenham it was very consciously cultivated as the town reinvented itself – again – as the spas declined in importance. Cheltenham had not evolved organically but was literally hand-built as specific moments of opportunity were seized by creative individuals. In choosing to make Cheltenham their home the extended Tiessel family, in their modest way, took advantage of, and contributed to, the ‘signs of the times’ which the town exemplified, doing so with flair, imaginativeness and generosity.

¹ *The Tablet*, 6 June 1857

² The spelling *Francis* is found only on the plaque and death certificate. Elsewhere *Frans* and *Franz* are used interchangeably. M Gonez himself seems to have used *Frans*.

³ Alpha House, once Edward Jenner’s premises, has been demolished – the site will become a retirement complex. When the NUT held its Easter 1898 Conference the souvenir guidebook given to delegates proudly, but inaccurately, points out Alpha House as ‘interesting especially to the NUT visitors, in that it was here that Wilderspin, the originator of Infant Schools, first carried on his useful educational work.’

⁴ The book ‘deserted the long trodden paths of theory’ and proposed a modern system of becoming familiar with conversation ‘from imitation only’ before tackling the intricacies of grammar allowing ‘scope for the ingenuity of the pupil’.

⁵ ‘A Lecture on Intellectual Culture’ reported in *The Cheltenham Looker-On (CLO)*, 15 November 1845. Casimir sat on the Council of the Literary and Philosophical Institution for 1849/50; its premises were in the Promenade.

⁶ Report of the Annual Meeting, 1855 to shareholders. Quoted in *1853-1979 A History of the Cheltenham Ladies’ College*, A. K. Clarke, 1979, 3rd edition, pp.26-27.

⁷ Avery, G., *Cheltenham Ladies. An Illustrated History of the Cheltenham Ladies’ College*, 2003

⁸ Raikes, E., *Dorothea Beale of Cheltenham*, 1908, quoting from *History of the Ladies’ College from 1853-1904*, D Beale, 1904.

⁹ There was great emphasis on the teaching of modern languages in the early days of the College, this being an essential part of a young lady’s formal education; the language departments would have had numerous teachers for girls of various ages and abilities. I am indebted to Isobel Laing, Archive Assistant at CLC, for providing details of the teachers and curriculum of the College’s early days.

¹⁰ *CLO*: 3 October.1853; 4 October 1858; 15 December 1860 *inter alia*. Thanks to Mike Grindley for newspaper references.

¹¹ The two families stood as god-parents to each other’s children at baptisms in 1846 and 1852.

¹² There are subscriptions from M and Mme Tiessel of Boulogne (probably Casimir’s brother Auguste and his wife) and one guinea is credited to Emma Tiessel of Guadeloupe, a gift made on her behalf, no doubt, by her Cheltenham connections.

¹³ Now the British Legion Headquarters in St Anne’s Road

¹⁴ *CLO* 15 February 1862, advertisement for St Anne’s ‘To Let’.

¹⁵ Mrs Rolles was not unsympathetic to the Catholic Church. She subscribed £1 0s 0d to St Gregory’s building fund and when she left St Anne’s she named her new house on Evesham Road ‘Walsingham’.

¹⁶ *CLO*, 13 January 1872.

¹⁷ Witnesses were Rose Courtney and William Bubb, solicitor; no-one from the Rolles family attended.

¹⁸ *CLO*, August 1872.

¹⁹ The other family members added this suffix to their names using various spellings.

²⁰ Mary returned to Widnes for the birth of their daughter, Mary Sophia. She returned to Cheltenham, but the baby died aged six months and Mary again went home to Widnes. She died two years later.

²¹ During this period confirmation groups of 700 or 800 were not uncommon in the Parish Church.

²² The initial bequest may have been an indication of Jane Tobias’ role as nurse as well as housekeeper, since personal care of an invalid in the house was often part of the duties for live-in servants.

²³ The family name is continued in Cheltenham by Young & Gilling Estate Agents, established in 1834 by their brother Edward John Young with Thomas Gilling.

²⁴ *Cheltenham Mercury* 3 January 1885

²⁵ Eugene died in April 1885, *CM* 6 June 1885; he was unmarried. The youngest son, Charles, had died childless in 1883, eighteen months after marrying Emily Turnbull, a widow.

Where is it Now? - Cheltenham's Old 'Cold Bath'

AMINA CHATWIN

Editor's note: While the general area of the 'Cold Bath' is known, the present topography of the area means that the exact position is now open to discussion. Amina would be interested to hear from anyone who has further information.

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN INTRIGUED by references to Cheltenham's 'Cold Bath'. If you descend an incline from the pavement of St George's Road at the end of Bayshill Terrace, and walk towards the river you find an area that has been much altered in recent years. I remember a time when there was a direction post to 'The Cold Bath', pointing roughly towards what is now Chelt Walk. This post was just before the buildings owned by Marshalls, whose premises were on the opposite side of the river and the walk beside it level with the houses in Little Bayshill Terrace.

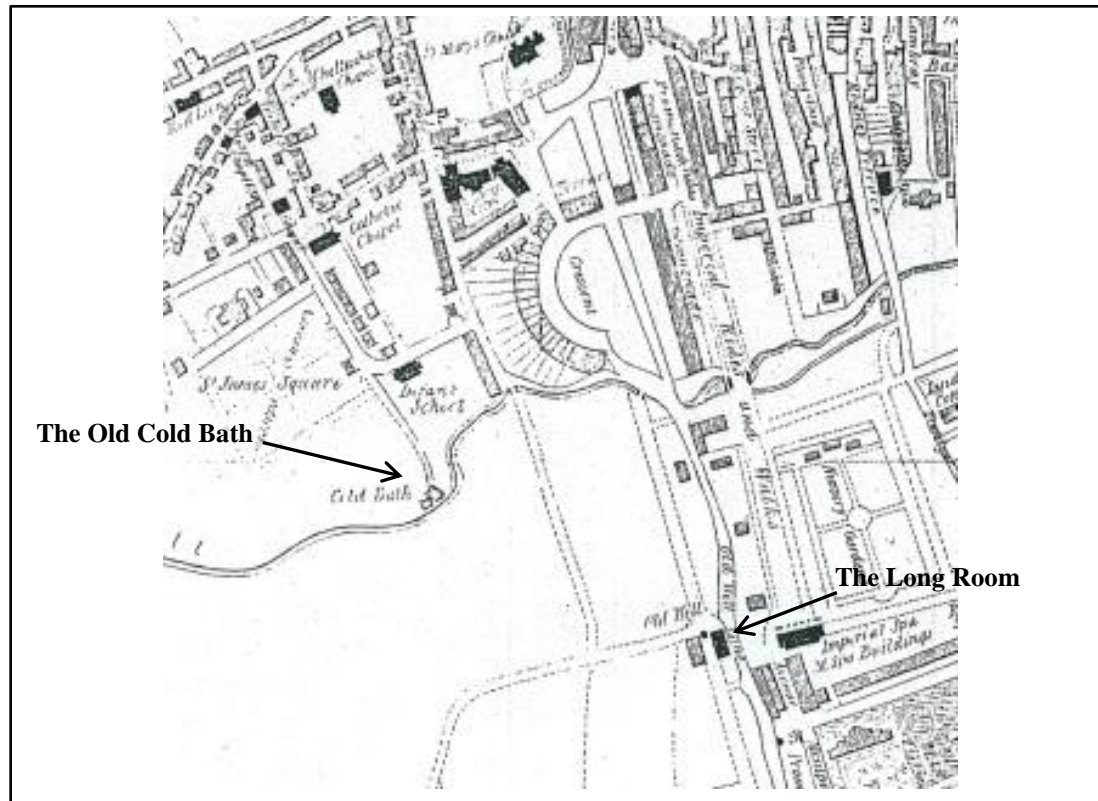
Reference to the Cold Bath surfaced again in the recently published Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Report (2008), partly given over to Romano-British agriculture at the former St James's railway station, where it states that 'the site of a reputed Roman villa known as 'Cold Bath' lies to the south-east of the excavation area.'¹ The authors suggest that the interpretation of this site as a Roman villa should be treated with the greatest caution.

The 1820 map² shows two buildings together near the river, but as there are no other adjacent buildings and the marked path is now untraceable on the ground, the exact positioning is impossible to find from this map. In 1825 an infant school was opened, under the auspices of the Revd F. Close, in St James Square.³ This is a fine stone building which is still standing and is at the corner of Synagogue Lane. In 1832 a map shows the two buildings, the Cold Bath and the Infant School, so for the first time we have a better idea of its situation. Also shown is Old Well Walk⁴.

According to Anthea Jones in *Cheltenham, a new history*, between 1741 and 1746 Lady Frances Stapleton was building the Great House during the time when Captain Skillicorne was promoting the Wells. The Cold Bath, 'which was an added amenity', was part of the Great House property.⁵

The Cold Bath was somewhere not far from the river end of Old Well Walk. The Long Room stood at the middle of the Upper and Lower or Grand Walk. I have spent many hours pondering over the descriptions of Well Walk from early guide books, where sometimes even measurements of the paths are given. However, not one of my efforts really gets us anywhere! A path from St Mary's churchyard passed close to the Great House, (which was on the site of the present St Matthew's Church), crossed Church Mead or Meadow and continued towards Well Walk - this serpentine path was some 171 yd (156.4m) long. It then crossed the river via a 'rustic wooden' bridge, before the start of the Lower or Grand Walk which was 199 yd (182m). The

square with the Well was a little over a 10 yard square (8.36 m), and then the walk continued to the Upper Walk which was about 104yd (95.1m) in length. One would think it would be easy to locate the Cold Bath because we know that it was between 200 and 300 yards from the Long Room on the pump square. But did they mean that one went via the Lower Walk and then across the fields? Or across the fields all the way from the Long Room to the Cold Bath? It is very difficult to pinpoint the exact position.



Detail from Plan of the Town of Cheltenham 1832
Author's own collection

John Goding in *Norman's History of Cheltenham*⁶, says,

'At the rear of Bayshill Terrace, at the point of the Chelt which is now crossed by a wooden bridge, has been found the remains of a Villa rustica, with its bath. From the earliest date down to the present day this spot has been called 'The Cold Bath', in consequence of a local tradition respecting its Roman origin. The works of our forefathers appear not to have become useless until the last few years, for there are inhabitants who can yet remember when the Bath was publicly used. About twenty years since, Mr Johns the owner of some adjacent property, erected a house upon a portion of the old ruins, and the banks of the old river being raised at the same time, the villa and its hypocaust for ever disappeared from view. During the progress of these improvements, many coins, bath tiles, tessellated pavement, and portions of pottery, were dug up and are preserved by the author and other residents.'

From the following account in a Cheltenham guide⁷, published in 1781, it would appear that this bath had been in general use.

'At a distance of between two and three hundred yards from the Long Room, are the remains of a Cold Bath, close beside the Chelt, and originally supplied from its stream, which for many years was much resorted to.'

This is corroborated by another guide⁸ of 1783,

'Close by the Chelt is a building for a cold bath, supplied from the brook, with conveniences for warm bathing and much resorted to for many years, but having been suffered to lie in a ruinous state, no use can be made of either, though highly necessary, and much sought after by the company.'

This is of course before the medicinal waters were made popular by the visit of George III. Gwen Hart has left us an excellent account of using the waters in general, from their discovery in 1718.⁹

As regards our 'Cold Bath', I am left with the impression that there was once a stone tank or bath, connected with some possible Roman remains by the Chelt, and that for part of the 18th century it was used by the inhabitants for bathing.



A rather sad view of the general area where the 'Cold Bath' was situated, between what is now Jessop Avenue and the river Chelt.

Image © Russell Self

¹ Coleman, L., & Watts, M., 'Romano-British Agriculture at the Former St. James's Railway Station, Cheltenham: Excavations in 2000-2001', *Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Report No 6*, Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society (2008), pp85-87.

² Plan of Cheltenham, 1820, E Cossens, postmaster

³ Davies H., *The Strangers Guide to Cheltenham*, (1832 and 1834), p155

⁴ Map - The Plan of the Town of Cheltenham, 1832

⁵ Jones, A., *Cheltenham, a new history*, Carnegie Publishing Ltd, (2010), p.170.

⁶ Goding J., *Norman's History of Cheltenham*, (1863, Queen's edition), p.16

⁷ An annotated Guide in the author's possession dated 1781 giving exact measurements between various points mentioned in the guide.

⁸ The New and Improved Guide, 1783, p.23

⁹ Hart, G., *A History of Cheltenham*, Leicester University Press, (1965), Chapter 10, The Beginnings of the Spa,

Howletts of Cheltenham, Jewellers and Watch and Clockmakers

ERIC MILLER

LECKHAMPTON PARISH HALL WAS OPENED in 1897 to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. A hundred years later the clock was in need of restoration, as its hands had for some time been stuck at twenty-five past twelve. The mechanical parts were retained, being still in good order, but the pendulum was replaced by electrical action. A new face was supplied, more resistant to the weather, while the old one was repainted in its original black with gold Roman numerals. This is now displayed behind glass inside the entrance porch.



Leckhampton Village Hall: the new clock face before installation (*left*), next to the refurbished original.

Image © Eric Miller

The original clock face bears the name Howlett, a firm of watch and clock makers which was started in Cheltenham by John Howlett in about 1830 and did not cease trading until the late 1960s. Leckhampton's clock was not the only one to have been installed and maintained by him. In 1866, when the spire of Cheltenham Parish

Church was rebuilt, he repaired its clock, repainted the dial plate and re-gilded the face and hands.¹ His obituary notice in 1897 stated that he was Cheltenham's oldest trading inhabitant and had been custodian of the other public clocks in the town as well as that of the Parish Church.²

John Howlett was born in Bath in about 1807.³ He was the third generation of clockmakers of that name, the first having started work in London. He was first mentioned in Cheltenham in 1830 at 19 Winchcombe Street.⁴ By 1839 he had moved to Regent Street and in about 1847 he moved again to grander premises at 9 Clarence Parade where he remained until his death in 1897, aged 91.⁵ This is on the east side of the street, in a building today occupied by the dress shop 'Cocoa'.⁶

Two of John's sons, William (born *c.*1836) and Edward (born *c.*1842), also worked in the trade in Cheltenham. In 1898 William announced that he had taken over his late father's business and moved to 3 Clarence Street,⁷ where he remained until he died in 1909, Edward having bought and moved to 9 Clarence Parade⁸. He appears to have been joined there (or possibly succeeded) by a third brother, Frederick (born *c.* 1838). Frederick was still living at that address in 1923 but, perhaps not surprisingly,



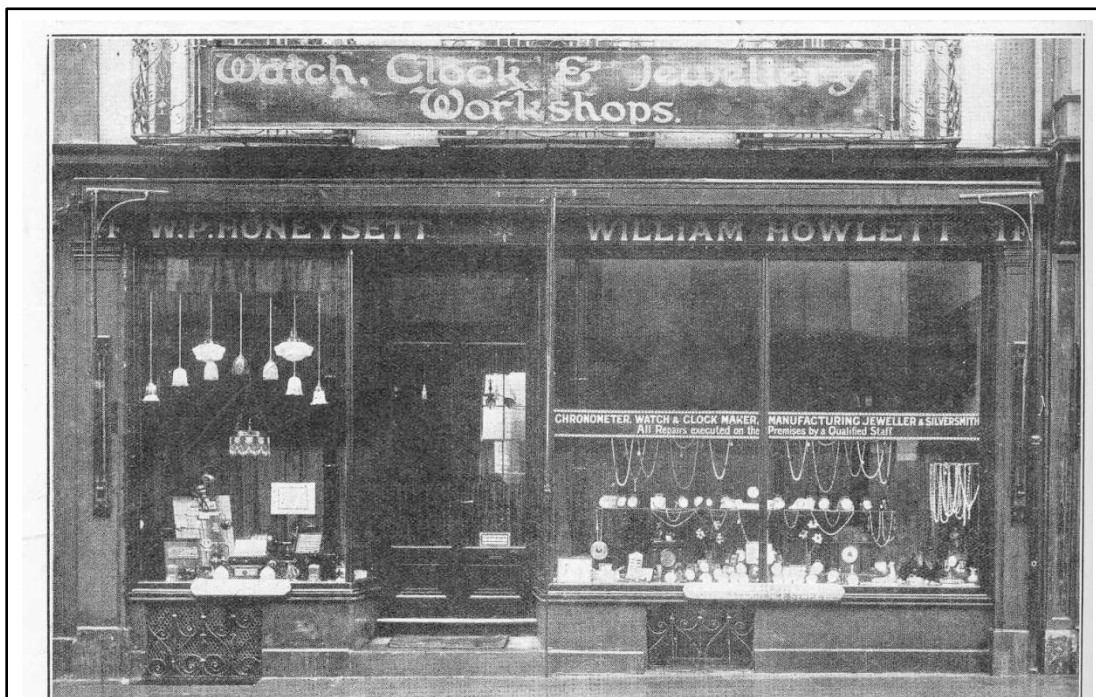
9 Clarence Parade, formerly the Howlett shop from 1847 to at least 1923.
Image © Eric Miller

at the age of 84, he was no longer carrying on his trade. (Frederick had for a time departed somewhat from the family tradition. Together with his wife he had previously run a confectioner's shop in Hereford, and although in 1871 he stated that he was also a watchmaker, he had dropped that description by 1881.)

During the First World War the businesses were looked after by female members of the family; a Miss Howlett at Clarence Parade (it is not clear whether she was a sister or a daughter) and at Clarence Street by William's French-born second wife, Maria Lidvine.

Members of the family continued working well into the 20th century at various addresses in Clarence Street. In 1925 William Howlett was at number 3, for the first time mentioning

repairs to jewellery. He formed a business partnership with his brother-in-law William Percy Honeysett, an electrician, for in the following year's directory there appeared a bold entry for 'Howlett and Honeysett, manufacturing jewellers, watch and clock makers and electrician'. This coincided with a move to number 14 Clarence Street, later renumbered as 29, Honeysett now being described as an 'electrical contractor' or 'engineer – electrical' and Howlett as a 'manufacturing jeweller'.



Honeysett and Howlett's shop at 29 Clarence Street 1925.
Cheltenham Chronicle and Graphic – supplied by Roger Beacham

The photograph (*previous page*) has been supplied by Roger Beacham whose grandmother was formerly a Miss Honeysett and Lynne Cleaver.⁹

After 1965 the directories make no further mention of William Howlett, junior, as a dealer in watches and clocks,¹⁰ indicating that the family's business had come to an end, well over a century after John Howlett's arrival in Cheltenham. In any case, it would not be long before number 29 Clarence Street was purchased compulsorily to make way for the new headquarters of the Cheltenham and Gloucester Building Society, which spans numbers 23 – 43. William Honeysett was still at that address in 1968, but the building and its neighbours were vacant the following year¹¹ allowing building work to begin soon afterwards.



Clock made by William Howlett, hanging in the Mayor's Parlour, Cheltenham
Image © Eric Miller

It is unlikely that the Howletts made the components of the clocks themselves but rather they would have assembled mass-produced parts or movements according to a customer's requirements, subsequently carrying out maintenance and repair. Examples of smaller timepieces made by them are still advertised for sale by antique dealers, for example a ship's clock and mantel clocks: one of which was sold in Derby in 2011 for £800.

Closer to home, on a wall of the Mayor's Parlour, there hangs a mahogany clock made by William Howlett, presented in 2007 by the horologist Michael Grange 'as a memento of forty years happy residence in this most beautiful town'.¹² Sadly, today this timepiece is no longer in working order.

¹ *Cheltenham Examiner*, 8 August 1866.

² *Cheltenham Examiner*, 21 April 1897.

³ Detail from Census.

⁴ Piggot's Directory.

⁵ Various Directories and *Cheltenham Examiner*, 21 April 1897.

⁶ Hunt's Directory. In the 1861 Census the address was listed as 4 Promenade Parade, another name for this terrace.

⁷ *Cheltenham Looker-On* 5 February 1898.

⁸ *Cheltenham Looker-On* 13 November 1897.

⁹ From *Cheltenham Through Time* by Beacham, R., & Cleaver, L, (2011).

¹⁰ There is no mention in Kelly's Directory of 1965; the copy for 1964 is not available in the Library.

¹¹ Kelly's Directory.

¹² Manuscript note by Roger Beacham, Cheltenham Local Studies Centre.

History in the Unmaking: Pittville Gates Are Dismantled

JUDIE HODSDON

Editor's Note: This short article gives an update to the article 'A Grand Entrance': the Pittville Gates, Cheltenham' published in Cheltenham Local History Society's Journal 27, in 2011.

THE PROJECT TO RESTORE JOSEPH PITT'S 1833 'Grand Entrance' to Pittville reached a significant milestone on Monday 19 November 2012, when contractors started to dismantle the six stone pillars and the attached ironwork, much of which was in a poor state. Some interesting discoveries were immediately made.

The bottom pivot of one of the pedestrian gates was revealed, about 6in (15cm) below the level of modern paving, showing how much build-up there has been over the years. The work also exposed the stone plinth, visible in old images, into which the central screen was set. The pillars themselves rest on substantial brick foundations, over 3ft (91cm) deep, which will be good enough to carry the re-built pillars without serious alteration. Bricks of a similar appearance (yellow, not completely regular) have been seen in the footings of early walls elsewhere in Pittville and appear to have made for this purpose. Recent survey work confirmed that the pillars were still both upright and all of the same height, so the original workmen did a good job on the foundations.



19 November 2012, workmen dismantling Pittville Gates ready for restoration

Images © Judie Hodsdon

The white-on-blue 'H' sign on the second pillar from the right (indicating a nearby water hydrant) has been saved and will be re-attached after the restoration. Photographs show it was in place since before the First World War; another example survives in Lansdown Terrace Lane. When removed, complete with its cast-iron frame, it proved to be a ceramic tile, clearly marked on the back as a product of the famous Victorian firm of Maw & Co, of Broseley, with their 'Floreat Salopia' trademark very prominent.

The big surprise was the discovery of an underground chamber, to the front of the left-hand pillars. This is about 12ft (3.7m) square, and 8ft (2.4m) high, accessed by a metal ladder. Its walls are of good-quality buff-coloured engineering brick, similar to what is seen on some local late-Victorian and Edwardian dwellings. It now seems likely that it housed the sub-station mentioned in municipal records for 1895,¹ at the time the town's new electricity supply was being extended to Leamington Place round the corner in Prestbury Road. There are a few rusty brackets and fittings on the walls of the chamber but no firm clues. The blue-green box behind one of the pillars now seems to have carried only the power supply to the gate lamps.

Upon removal, the base of the 1833 light fittings was seen to be very substantial cast-iron, in good condition, which should come up well in the restorer's hands. The 1897 overthrow, or arch, being generally of thinner wrought-iron work, has not weathered so well, and will need a lot of attention, including some extra strengthening, a new coat of arms and a replacement pigeon.

This phase of the works is scheduled to continue until March 2013. It is being funded by large grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Cheltenham Borough Council Environmental Fund, Gloucestershire County Council Community Match, the Gloucestershire Environmental Trust, and many other donors including Cheltenham residents.

The next phase, to put back the missing opening gates, lanterns in the original style and the adjoining railing, is to begin when sufficient funds have been raised.

To learn the latest news or to make a contribution to the restoration project, go to

www.friendsofpittville.org/pittvillegates

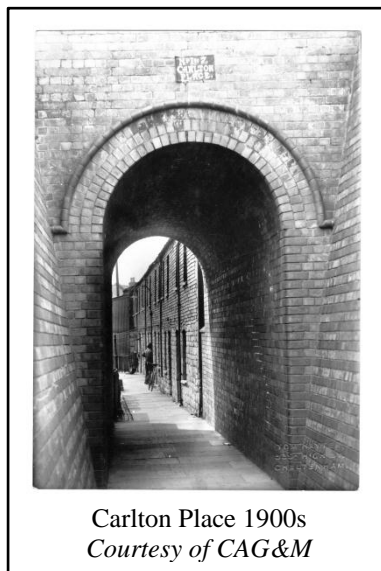
¹ Gloucestershire Archives, CBR C2/3/11/1, Electric Lighting Committee, 23 Sept. 1895

Carlton Place, Cheltenham

HEATHER ATKINSON

TO THE WEST OF CHELTENHAM TOWN CENTRE, Carlton Place links Swindon Road to St Paul's Road, running parallel to the Honeybourne line railway embankment. On its eastern side is the red brick perimeter wall built to surround the Cheltenham Union Workhouse, and now the site of St Paul's Medical Centre. On the western side of Carlton Place were once cottages with gardens, two of which were advertised in the *Gloucestershire Echo* on November 20th 1888 thus:

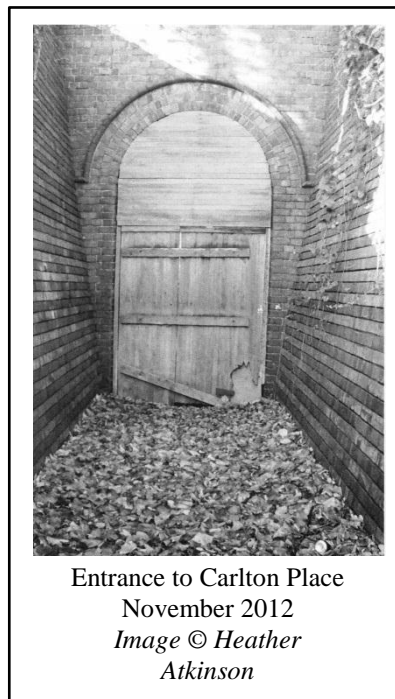
To Let – 2 and 4 Carlton Place West. Decent cottages in good repair. 4 rooms, wash-house, garden and conveniences. 4s weekly, rates included. Apply Mr Steele.



Carlton Place 1900s
Courtesy of CAG&M

A map of Cheltenham, circa 1880 shows the cottages with an access path leading through from Carlton Place to the cottages beyond. When the Honeybourne railway line was built in the early 1900s, the cottages fronting onto Carlton Place were demolished, but an entrance to the remaining cottages was cut through the embankment at the site of the original access path to the remaining cottages. The first photograph shows this clearly. The second photograph, taken recently, shows this neglected-looking boarded up entrance. On the St Paul's Road side of the railway bridge, between the blocks of modern flats, it is still possible to see part of the original stone wall which divided off the gardens of the Carlton Place cottages.

These cottages sound perfect for single-family occupation, but in reality, families who fell on hard times would move in with another family and share the rent, or take in lodgers, rather than enter the dreaded workhouse, where families were split up. The census of 1871 reveals that 4 Carlton Place was then occupied by a husband, wife and their 5 children, 2 lodgers and a mother with 2 children.¹ Cheltenham was typical of other towns and cities in England and Europe at this time, where single-room living was commonplace in the poorer neighbourhoods, but by 1901, only 36 Cheltenham families in a total of 11,036 tenements lived in one room.²



Entrance to Carlton Place
November 2012
Image © Heather
Atkinson

¹ Census 1871, 40320(41) St Peter's

² Census 1901 (GRO)

Linking the Records: the Apothecary's Tale

SALLY SELF

THIS RESEARCH STARTED WHEN I CAME across the word 'apothecary' whilst transcribing St Mary's parish records, 1558-1803. The names associated with the occupation, William Arnold and Jonathon Stevens, sent me immediately to two books, *Cheltenham Probate Records, 1660-1740* and the recently published *Cheltenham Manor Court Books, 1692-1803*. There were copious details to be extracted and as I pursued the trail the information grew until a period from c.1560 to c.1750 was covered and 'apothecary' had expanded to cover midwives, 'doctors of physic', barbers and surgeons. The questions I ended up exploring were 'Who served the inhabitants of Cheltenham in medical matters?' and 'What information can these early records give one about their lives?' The research also confirmed that it was now possible to build a more rounded view of early modern Cheltenham.¹

These roles nowadays have well defined boundaries but in the period referred to this was not so. The roles of physician and apothecary could overlap and could include, especially away from the influence of London, some elements of surgery.² In general terms, physicians examined and diagnosed and apothecaries prepared and prescribed the medicines. The midwife, mostly but not exclusively female and who 'might or might not have a certificate of competence from the local bishop'³ was often, in rural areas, an experienced neighbour. The barber had a role that included dentistry and minor surgical procedures. More invasive surgery was in its infancy and was frequently fatal.

The earliest information occurs with three burials: Alice Gregorie, in March 1588, Elinor Symes, widow, January 1605 and Elinor Mason, widow, April 1640, all designated as 'midwife'. The recording of livelihoods between 1558 and 1653 is sparse, so it points to the importance the community attached to this role. In London midwives could often command high fees for attending a birth but locally it was more likely to be 1s to 2s (5p to 10p) for the better off and the 'middling sort', while they were probably paid in kind by the poor.⁴ The presence of Alice and the two Elinors leads one to hope that the town was served by a 'qualified' midwife from around the 1560s up to 1640, but the fact that two were widows may indicate that they were actually experienced 'goodwives'.⁵ Elinor Symes is the subject of a rare addition to the bald statements of births, marriages and deaths. 'This child [Anne Oddell] was born in the house of Elinor Symes for which Richard Tryndar gave his bond to discharge the parish.' This makes it clear that Anne's family, father Richard and the nameless mother, were vagrants or travellers and that though the child was born in the parish she would not become a charge on it.⁶ Unfortunately, Anne only lived for four months; she became one of several vagrant and traveller burials recorded during this period.

With regard to infant mortality further analysis is needed, but it is probable that Cheltenham was in line with such national statistics as are available for comparison. An early statistician, John Graunt (1657-1758) of London, states that 36

in a 100 died in the first six years and another 24 up to 16 years of age, with 18 births in every 200 stillborn. Also, the incidence of death of the mother in child birth seems to have been around the average for this time – Graunt states three in 200.⁷

The information on the two apothecaries relates to the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century.⁸ ‘Mr Arnold’ first appears in 1710 in the probate records, when a ‘book debt’ of £1 10s (£1.50) was settled by Mary Arrowsmith for Obediah her husband who had recently died. Two larger debts also appear: one for £2 14s 4d (£2.70) when William Arnold was one of 107 creditors in the affairs of James Smallpiece and another for £8 paid by Charles Roberts on behalf of William Roberts.⁹ The consultations and ‘physic’ all three must have obtained may have prolonged their lives and at least given them some comfort. The lack of local information relating to William Arnold prior to 1710 may be explained by references to him and his family further afield: it is likely that they came from the Hanley Castle area, [Worcs], on the border with Gloucestershire.¹⁰

In 1719 William himself died and an inventory of his goods and chattels was taken.¹¹ Apparently he lived in some luxury judged against the majority of the Cheltenham inventories. The four-floored, eight-roomed house included two garrets which were almost certainly in the roof space and a small cellar.¹² The parlour with its table boards and chairs (rather than the usual benches and joint stools), pictures, screens and window curtains offered considerable comfort. The kitchen was well furnished with numerous pewter plates and dishes, brass pots and kettles. The fore chamber boasted ‘a fashionable bedstead’ with its hangings and flock mattress and included a dressing table, two mirrors, window curtains and a fireplace. There were also 12 cane chairs, which may have enabled the room to be used as a meeting place.

The stairs had a landing of some description where ‘a clock and case with the weights’ stood. Six further beds were available: three in the garrets, one in the chamber over the kitchen and two more in the ‘little room’. The value of the household goods, £78 6s 8d (£78.33), places the Arnolds well above the mean of £22 and towards the top end of the range of £141.¹³ The tally of beds, chairs, plate and linen leads one to speculate. Did William have a large extended family or was he fond of entertaining? Or was he possibly training apprentices? Unfortunately inventories do not state the position of a property; so we have no clues as to its position in the town.

To the rear was a brew house, where apart from household preparations, the distillation of medicines was performed using a ‘[heated] still worm and cold still’¹⁴. The stable housed his horse, though it was unlikely to have been used for doctor’s rounds. There is



Matthew Manna: A Country Apothecary:
See end of article for details
Courtesy of Royal Pharmaceutical
Society Museum

other evidence that the family had links to other practitioners in Gloucester and London. He was also lending out money, £200, 'on speciality', and had 'book debts, good and bad' of £47. The 'bad' debts were those that were carried over from year to year with little hope of collecting.

His house also contained a room that was designated as his apothecary's shop, with its own closet, accommodating his 'books, a table and a chair'.¹⁵ The inventory names numerous medicants and the tools of his trade – 'potts and glasses, chests, boxes and frames, mortars and pestles' to the total value of £48 7s 4d (£48.37). 'Drugs and simples' accounted for nearly half of this, with 'chymicall preparations' being the other costly item. There were also '20 pounds of syrups, eight pounds of conserves, twenty pounds of oyntments'. To dilute and mix these were '15 gallons of cold stilled waters' and 'eight pounds of oyls'. The stilled waters would have been prepared in the brew house, thus ensuring that the medicines were not contaminated by the local water drawn from the Chelt or wells. The inhabitants did not lack for an early equivalent of Boots! Unfortunately there is no evidence that will enable one to work out the approximate cost of individual prescriptions.

In the Shop		£	s	d
15 gallons cold still waters	—	05	30	00
four gallons cordial waters	—	01	12	00
twenty pound of syrups	—	01	05	00
eight pound of conserves	—	00	12	00
eight pound of Oyls	—	00	10	00
twenty pound of Oyntments	—	01	05	00
Plasters: Balsam	—	00	10	00

Extract from William Arnold's inventory, 1 September 1719
 Courtesy of Gloucestershire Archive Ref 1719(81)

Simples were herbs, pounded, steeped in wine, oil or water and used directly. For example, 'for the colic, take a pint of muscadine and 6 or 7 spoonfulls of the Juice of sage and mingle them together.' Or for a syrup 'Take the heads of white Poppies and black [...] of each six ounces; the seeds of Lettuce, of the flowers of Violets, of each one ounce, boyl them in eight pints of Water [...] strain them, and with four pounds of Sugar boyl the Liquor to a syrup.' The 'four gallons Cordiall water' may have been such multi-purpose panaceas as *Aquamirabilis* with its 11 ingredients (including pints of 'good white wine' distilled overnight using a low, slow heat.) The other great cure-all at this time was 'Mithridate' - one recipe contained 50 ingredients and Culpepper names 19 ailments that it could cure. Its manufacture was complicated and needed a well-trained apothecary. Ointments were much as we know them today and some are still used, such as arnica and calendula. The chemicals would almost certainly have included sulphur and mercury, but did the inhabitants also expect gold, silver and pearls? And if so, who could afford them? All of these were believed to have medicinal qualities.

We know little of the diseases present in the town at this time. The parish registers name only two - the 'pestilence' in October 1592 and a smallpox epidemic at the end of the 17th century.¹⁶ The word 'pestilence' is ambiguous but there was a serious outbreak of bubonic plague in Gloucestershire at this time. If it was the plague it seems to have been relatively short lived and to have claimed few lives.¹⁷ It caused the death of six people, male and female, three from the Lonng family, within a

fortnight. The names are entered with no accompanying details, such as 'child of', 'old' or 'widow' which might give some information as to their age. But one can speculate that they were older people who were in close contact. Some may have been the inhabitants of the Almshouses.

The other was a smallpox outbreak during 1682 and 1683: this followed a more 'normal' course of development. Early cases in the spring are few but later, of the 26 recorded deaths, 21 occurred within nine weeks during the autumn, before petering out at the end of the following January. Over 60% of those who died were females and probably, as many are recorded as 'child of', young people. There would undoubtedly have been others who would have survived but carried the pock marks for the rest of their lives.¹⁸ There were other sporadic cases later in the decade. Unfortunately none of the medicines in William Arnold's shop could have saved them, but some may have made the illness less painful.

What else can one find out about the Arnold family? William's wife was named Elizabeth¹⁹ and they had six children: John (1698-1731), James, who only lived for 19 months, Elizabeth, a second James, Edmund and Mary, of these last four nothing more is revealed.²⁰ John, the eldest child, inherited the shop and the 'practice', presumably in 1719 on the death of his father. His wife Ann features in another will as the beneficiary of Holland shifts, a red lutestring petticoat and a stripped satin gown – costly apparel possibly given in settlement of a debt of gratitude or money. At John's death he too was owed money, but this time only 8s!²¹ John and Ann had a family of four children; John, who died after only seven days, Ann and twins William and John, both of whom seem to have survived. Even his knowledge of medicine could not prevent the first John's death or his own at the age of 33. John had clear links outside of the town – in the list of money owed to him is James Durham, a London chemist and Joseph Cheston of Gloucester, a pharmacist.

The 'rival' apothecary during this period was Jonathan Stevens and at this point one comes up against a major drawback of many early records. The Arnolds were apparently the only Arnolds in town; the Stevens (Steevens, Stephens, Steephens) were numerous.²² However, several records indicate that he had a wife Sara and eventually six daughters. Two died young, Mary at 10 and Anne aged 14 months, also Rebecca (later Roberta) who inherited her parent's land holdings and Frances, Elizabeth and Rachel.²³ In 1695, they purchased a house and garden, on the north side of the Street where they had previously been tenants and at one stage had Obediah Arrowsmith as a neighbour.²⁴ One wonders why Obediah preferred the Arnolds as his 'doctor' rather his neighbour 'Jonathon Stevens pharmacop.?'

Jonathon did not enjoy life in his house for long as he died in May 1698, at which point the records show that his wife continued to run the business for several years. Apart from 'midwife' this is the only other female occupation named over the 250 years of the parish records. Evidence points to the Stevens running a lucrative practice; they were dealing in land transactions and loaning money at interest - £80 against lands that Toby Sturmy mortgaged – and when this was not paid gaining the six acres of land.²⁵ No further information seems to be forthcoming after around 1756, so possibly in the face of growing competition Sara retired.

During the same period that we know the apothecaries were working, there was also a doctor diagnosing the ills of the inhabitants. Edward Wright was styled as

‘doctor of physic’ on his death in 1692, and he could well have been practising in Cheltenham for the previous 40 years. He is described as a customary tenant and his daughter, Frances was baptised in 1652.²⁶ Two other ‘chemists’ are mentioned; a Mr Broadway, who had also incurred bad debts and Thomas Ballinger, pharmacist, who acted, with two others, as a bond holder for £500.²⁷ During the second half of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century, our small market town of c.1500 population seems to have had plenty of medical advice to call upon.²⁸

Then as the early development of the spa begins there is an escalation of recorded activities. The term ‘apothecary’ begins to decrease as the occupations of surgeon, doctor of physic and druggist appear more frequently. This new breed of medical men, John Forbes druggist of London, Henry Wills of Wells, Somerset, John Martyn of Chelsea, Francis Gregory of Ledbury, Bryon Mills of Epsom, Will Stafford of Painswick and John Hughes druggist of London, made considerable investments in properties and land. The information points to them not being long term residents, but rather drawn to the town to take advantage of the opportunities. Did they arrive with their patients for the ‘season’? Did they come to sample the ‘cure’ for themselves and then take advantage of the possibilities to develop amenities?

However four, Edmund Smith, Edward Nicholls, Boulter Tomlinson and Baptist Smart, seem to have been or at least to have become residents and apart from serving the sick, of which there is, alas no record, they also took on other responsibilities. Edmund Smith, apothecary and surgeon, who married and had a daughter Mary, also witnessed wills, was entrusted to sell properties and to arrange annuities for the support of widows and children.²⁹ From a fairly modest start, by 1727 he had acquired two properties, one a newly-built house, with outbuildings, a garden and orchard, which was valued at £160. He went on to acquire considerable land holdings and properties and was sufficiently well-off to loan sums of money against properties amounting to £480. When he died around 1744 his daughter inherited a considerable estate. However not all doctors died wealthy men: Edward Nicholls, druggist, died in 1752 and an inventory was made.³⁰ Unlike that of William Arnold’s the details are tantalisingly few: clothes valued at £2 10s (£2.50) and cash of £3 10s (£3.50). This modest total is at variance with the apparent wealth of many of the others; nor annoyingly does it give any details of a medical nature to compare to previous records.

Boulter Tomlinson, originally termed ‘of London,’ was ‘of Cheltenham’ by 1741, when he obtained a house on the High Street, with outbuildings, garden and orchard ‘opposite the Horse Pond.’³¹ Two years later he may have moved to Westall, where he bought another property and a considerable acreage of land in Alstone and Arle for £920.³² He married a widow, Eutatia Trevanion, but this was short lived as she died in January 1747 (as did his daughter Elizabeth, three weeks later). He continued for another 20 years, presumably serving the community, until his death in August 1766. During this time his activities in the property world continued.³³ He seems to have married again, though no local record exists, as in 1766 in a further land transaction, his widow is named as Sarah. She surrendered much of the portfolio of houses and land to John Delabere and Baptist Smart.³⁴

Baptist Smart, another doctor of physic, seems to have followed a rather similar pattern. He married Lucy Whitmore in 1740 and on her death also remarried. Were these doctors becoming enamoured of their patients? Or were the patients while

visiting Cheltenham seeking more than an improvement to their health? He too began to amass a large holding; the properties with frontages to the High Street and houses and land in Charlton Kings, Westal and Alstone. The sums of money that these medical men were able to amass are in stark contrast to the modest one or two shillings charged by the midwives!

The Patient,
sendeth for a
Phyician
who feeleth
his pulse,
and looketh upon
his Water,
and then prefcribeth
a Receipt
in a Bill.

That is made
ready
by the Apothecary
in a Apothecaries
fhop,
where Drugs
are kept in Drawers,
Boxes,
and Gally-pots.

And it is either
a Potion,
or Powder,
or Pills,
or Trochisks,
or an Electuary.
Diet
and Prayer,
is the beft Physick.

The Chirurgion
cureth Wounds
and Ulcers,
with Plaifters.

Transcribed from
Orbis Pictus, 1659,
by John Amos
Comenius

One further individual who illustrates the development of the medical role is John Iremonger, who came from a family of Devon apothecaries. He seems to have moved to the town from Taunton and to have set up a practice here. He is variously recorded as an 'apothecary', an 'apothecary and surgeon' and finally in 1765 as 'surgeon'. He too seems to have acquired several properties and holdings which he left to his sister Sarah, so presumably he was either unmarried or his wife had already died. One of these assets was a property on the High Street near the Bull but another seems not to have been as prominent as it was a converted stable on Mill Lane.³⁵

Another medical occupation was that of barber or barber-surgeon. During the 1630s and 40s, Gyles Berry was probably carrying out the contemporary practices of blood-letting and the use of leeches, as well as dentistry. Later barbers, Valentine Smith, 1680s, James Waddenton and Richard Alloway, 1710s, probably had a similar role, but the evidence after this points to them being not barber-surgeons, but barbers as the terms 'barber and perukemaker' become more frequent. They, Thomas and William Surman, Thomas Hartlebury, William Petty and William St. Leger seemed to have been moving in a very different league, buying and selling property nearly on the scale of the doctors.³⁶ Interestingly, the earlier and less costly dealings involving some of the barbers where for properties on the south side of the Street, whilst the doctors were buying frontages to the north. Is this an indication of the profits that could be accrued from the different trades?

The final piece of evidence comes from the Gloucester city apprenticeship records. Three relating to Cheltenham are recorded. Giles Webb (1703), the son of a collarmaker, went to Gloucester to serve for seven years with Henry Vernon, apothecary; Thomas Nicholls (1738), son of a yeoman and Edward Goodrich (1739), son of a glover, served respectively with Edward Bennett, apothecary and Samuel Harris, barber-surgeon. There is no record of them returning to work in the town.

It is important to remember that the records were not written with later historians in mind and all pose problems. Early parish records were not comprehensive and lack detail. Probates were also selective - those with limited incomes had few acquisitions to record and there was no legal necessity to do so. The manor court rolls are considered to be reliable, though with some gaps between 1710

and 1730.³⁷ Also many informal transactions must have taken place. How many young men served an informal apprenticeship with a father or uncle? Even where an inventory exists how many possessions were given to friends and relatives before death occurred? Did the parish clerk always record every transaction?

While the picture is very incomplete and one is left with wanting to know a great deal more, the general impression is that there was a level of 'professional' medical help available even from the beginning of the period and that most practitioners were well respected men and women, some of whom lived lives of considerable comfort. The majority of families would anyway have been able to call on a store of inherited knowledge; 'goodwives' had a fund of medical information passed on to them from their mothers. It was not all doom and gloom. Many of the burial records speak of long lives; many use the term 'old', as in 'Ould Widow Gregorie' and 'Old Robert Bicke'.³⁸

Matthew Manna, A Country Apothecary, see illustration p.59

This illustration published in 1773, depicts the apothecary as an ungainly figure in a large, old-fashioned, long coat with deep boot cuffs and a large irregularly cocked hat (typical of tradesmen). He holds a wig, a staff and has a barber's bowl under his arm. His shop is depicted as a rough, single-storey, thatched stone cottage. For illiterate customers, it has a sign – a prominent barber's pole. The board above the window proclaims all the services he can provide. MATT MANNA, Apothecary, surgeon CORN Cutter, etc. Man midwife [sic], Gentlemen shaved and Hogs gelded, shave for a penny and Bleed for 2 pence.

Illustration and Notes courtesy of Royal Pharmaceutical Society Museum

Acknowledgement: My thanks to James Hodsdon for alerting me to sources of information relating to the two apothecaries outside of the local area.

¹Main texts: *Cheltenham Probate Records, 1660-1740*, ed. A.J.H. Sale, (TBGAS, 1999) G.R.S. 12 (CPR); *Cheltenham Manor Court Books, 1692-1803*, ed. J. Hodsdon, (TBGAS, 2010) G.R.S. 24 (MCB); St Mary's parish records; PFC78/1 in 1/1 (1558-1631); PFC78/1 in 1/2 (1631-1653); PFC78/1 in 1/3 (1676-1703); PFC78/1 in 1/4 (1703-1745); PFC78/1 in 1/5 (1745-1769); *A Calendar of the Registers of Apprentices of the City of Gloucester, 1595-1700*, ed. Jill Barlow, GRS 14 and GRS 25, (TBGAS, 2001 and 2011).

²Originally part of the Grocers' Guild, in 1617 apothecaries formed a separate body, The Worshipful Society of the Arts and Mysteries of the Apothecaries of the City of London. Relations between apothecaries and physicians were mixed; at times co-operative (the joint publications of pharmacopoeia), at others bitter (court cases). Surgeons had to serve a seven-year apprenticeship and pass an examination. A 'doctor of physic' would obtain a degree at a university but might have little practical experience.

³Sloan, A.W., *English Medicine in the Seventeenth Century*, (Durham, 1996). The Church empowered a midwife to baptise a child if a priest was not available and wished to ensure that sorcery was not practised.

⁴Fraser, A., *The Weaker Vessel, Women's Lot in Seventeenth-Century England*, (Phoenix Press, 1984), pp.538-9.

⁵'Goodwife', a term of respect given to older, experienced women running a household or inn.

⁶The Poor Laws of this date stated that those born in a parish were its responsibility.

⁷Graunt took his figures from the London Bills of Mortality. Rural areas were considered to be cleaner and healthier than densely packed urban environments.

⁸There are no parish records for the period 1653 to 1676, therefore links between the early and later period are difficult to establish.

⁹ CPR: no. 278 Obediah Arrowsmith; no. 322 Thomas Keare; no. 336 Charles Roberts. Debts were mostly for relatively small sums; there are only two debts recorded of more than £100, with a further eight between £10 and £99.

¹⁰ Worcestershire Record Office; 705:134/1531/18/2/5, 20 December 1709 – leasehold payment

¹¹ PFC78/1 in 1/ 4; Mr Wm. Arnold, buried 15 March 1719. CPR, nos. 363 & 364, William Arnold, apothecary.

¹² The house is likely to have been on the north side of the High Street.

¹³ 'Pigsties or a Green Silk Satin Suit', Sally Self, CLHS Journal **26**, (2010).

¹⁴ A still or alembic: a copper coil apparatus used in the distilling of medicines.

¹⁵ There were many medical publications at this date: e.g. *Pharmacopoea Londiniensis* (1618), *Methodus curandi febres* (1666), *Surgical Operations* (1672), *The English Herbal of Physical Plants* (1694).

¹⁶ This recording suggests that they left a deep impression. Most diseases were not recorded as they were all too common. There is also the incident in 1611 with 'one Guy Dobbins'. See also James Hodsdon's article 'Beer but no skittles: the career of David Powell, a tavern-keeper in Jacobean Cheltenham' CLHS Journal **29** (2013) and Gwen Hart, *A History of Cheltenham*, (Leicester 1965), p.74.

¹⁷ Hart, G., p.74 Hart states 'there is little doubt that it [plague] reached Cheltenham'; however the burials for 1592 and 1593 – 39 and 24 are not excessive. There are years with a far higher incidence of mortality – 1587 (51) and 1597 (81).

¹⁸ The 16th century form of the disease was relatively mild, but it is believed that at the end of the century it mutated or a more virulent strain was introduced. Sloan, A.W., p.158.

¹⁹ CPR. No. 363 'widow and relict of'.

²⁰ PFC78/1 in 1/3 and in 1/4: James, 6 January 1700 to 17 August 1701; Elizabeth, baptised 30 September 1701, a second James baptised 4 July 1705, Edmund baptised 30 December 1707, Mary baptised 4 July 1710.

²¹ CPR nos 454, 474 and 486.

²² The name is variously recorded as Jonathan, Jonathon, Stevens, Stephens.

²³ PFC78/1 in 1/3 & PFC78/1 in 1/4.

²⁴ MCB, no. 128, the purchase also included 4 acres of land in Cheltenham Lower Field and Leechcroft.

²⁵ MCB, nos. 1643 and 2357.

²⁶ MCB, no [11.10] footnote 1 gives 1666 (D855/M35, p.98); PFC78/1 in 1/2, baptism Frances Wright in 1652.

²⁷ CPR, No. 322 Thomas Keare (1715); no. 383 Richard Capell (1722).

²⁸ Sir Robert Atkyns's *History of Gloucestershire*, 1712, gives an estimated population of 1500.

²⁹ CPR, no. 322, Thomas Keare; CPR, no. 430, William Theyer, selling house & land and investing to support the widow & 5 children; CPR, no. 505, Giles Head, buying widow Elizabeth Ashmead an annuity for £80.

³⁰ Gloucestershire Archives ref. D1752/25.

³¹ MCB, no. 1903.

³² MCB, no. 1953. He may have rented the house to tenants: the 'house [...] with barn, stable, orchard, garden, courtyard, backside, 2 closes and another close [...] in all 18 acres'. He also acquired a further 50 acres in Alstone and Arle, including Brook House with out-buildings and grounds.

³³ MCB, no. 2343. Two houses, with one more behind, including brewhouse, woodhouse, etc., stretching through to what is now the line of St Margaret's Road.

³⁴ MCB, no. 2636-7.

³⁵ Somerset Archive and Record Service, DD\X\VZ/4 (1754) quitclaim. It is clear that John is from a family of apothecaries. His father Vincent and his grandfather John were both apothecaries, and his sister Sarah was married to Edmund Darch, surgeon. There also seems to be connections to land of considerable value in Leicester, which is where John may have acquired the money to buy property in Cheltenham. Also MCB 2239, 2345, 2385, 2464 and 2581.

³⁶ MCB, nos. 1327, 1644, 1896, 2057, 2240, Thomas & William Surman; nos. 1761, 2734 William Petty; no. 1941 William St Leger; no. 2180. Thomas Hartlebury.

³⁷ See Introduction to MCB, p.xxvi for details.

³⁸ There were 89 burials recorded between 1558 and 1653, which use the term 'old'.

Recent Books and Articles on the History of Cheltenham

Compiled by STEVEN BLAKE

Benson, Derek, 'Chartism in Tewkesbury and District', *Tewkesbury Historical Society Bulletin* **19** (2010), 18-25.

Benson, Derek, 'William Morris Moore (1813-1841)', *Tewkesbury Historical Society Bulletin* **20** (2011), 3-8. Both articles include information on Chartist activity in Cheltenham.

Green, Chris (editor), *The History of Hester's Way. Volume 4*. 80pp. £3.00 [No date or publisher included]. Aspects of the area's history since the Second World War.

Greet, Carolyn and Hodsdon, James, *Cheltenham Revealed: The 'Town and Tithing' Plan of c.1800*, Cheltenham Local History Society, 2012. 76pp. £5.00.

Lowe, Tom, *Not a Guide to Cheltenham*, The History Press, Stroud, 2012. 128pp. £5.99. Facts and figures about the town and its past.

O'Connor, David (editor), *Charlton Kings Local History Society Research Bulletin* **58** (2012). 60pp. £3.50. Articles on Charlton Kings by a variety of authors, including an account of the life of the auctioneer Harry Villar (David O'Connor and John & Beverley Wisdom), Battledown Grange (David O'Connor), Local trams (David Morgan) and local returns from the 1941-3 National Farm Survey (Brian Lickman).

Parrack, Neil, *The New Club at Imperial Square. A diary of its first 98 years*, privately published, 2012. 152pp. £10.00

Rowbotham, Sue and Waller, Jill, *Cheltenham Then & Now in Colour*, The History Press, 2012. 96pp. £12.99.

Sandles, Geoff, *Cheltenham Pubs Through Time*, Amberley Publishing, Stroud, 2012. 96pp. £14.99. 'Then and Now' photographs.

Stevens, Peter, *History of the National Hunt Chase, 1860-2010*, published by the author, Stable Flat, West Crudwell, Malmesbury SN16 9EF, 2010. 402pp. Unpriced.

Wills, Jan and Hoyle, Jon (editors), 'Archaeological Review No. 35, 2010', *Transactions of the Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society* **129** (2011), includes reports of evaluations and excavations in Cheltenham (Kingsmead School/All Saints Academy site and North Place/Portland Street car park, p248) and Prestbury (Spring Cottage, Blacksmiths Lane and Moat Corner, Spring Lane, p.256).

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Amateur film of the fire at the Municipal Offices, Cheltenham, Boxing Day 1960 (D12647)

Arle Court: copy wills and research notes relating to owners (1697-1929) (D12146, Acc 12735)

***Arle Secondary School, later Kingsmead School:** records include photograph albums and loose photos 1960s-2011 (many unidentified and undated); plans and related documents inc. main entrance, laboratories, dance/drama studios, 20th cent; sports, drama and other scrapbooks, 1976-2008; school magazines, 1997, 2006; prospectus and proposals for the future of the school, 2005-2008; (S78/29 Acc 12821.2 and Acc 12681)

Cambray Baptist Church (additional): church magazines, 2002-2012 (D2766, Acc 12747)

***Cheltenham Archdeaconry** (additional): papers relating to Archdeacon's visitations of parishes, 1999-2009 (GDR, Acc 12769.1)

Cheltenham Art Club (additional): newsletters, 2011-2012; director's report, 2011 (D11487, Accession 12788)

Cheltenham Borough Council (additional): papers concerning local government reorganisation, 1992-1995; minutes of Modernising Local Government Sub-Committee [later Committee], with related papers, 1999-2001; papers concerning government proposal for elected regional assembly, 2002; papers concerning new executive arrangements, 2010 (DC148 Acc 12745); electoral register for Cheltenham, 2012 (Q/Rer Acc 12810)

Cheltenham Local History Society: digital copy of the "Old Town Survey" of Cheltenham (from original of 1855, deposited by Cheltenham Borough Council at Gloucestershire Archives), made 2011 (CBR, Acc 12717)

Deeds of various properties including 81 Marle Hill Road, 1959-1999 (D12718); 4 Andover St, (1834)-1988 (D12723); Ravensworth, Thirlestaine Road (sale particulars and draft deed), 1952

(D12855); Ivy Cottage, Cudnall Street, Charlton Kings, 1862-2008 (D12935)

Friends of Crickley Hill Archaeological Trust: constitution, minutes, reports and audited annual accounts, 1984-1998; publicity material and publications including complete set of newsletter "The Crickley Chronicle", 1984-1999 (D12754)

***Girls' Brigade, Cheltenham District:** minutes and newsletter, 1970s-1980s (D12689)

Hamblett: research notes of local historian Miss June Hamblett, including transcripts of interviews with a Mrs Watts [nee Underwood] of Cheltenham, who worked in the munitions factory at Quedgeley during the First World War, and a Mr Flint of The Reddings, Hatherley; notes on the history of the railways around Cheltenham; notes on the history of streets with the name "Regent" in Cheltenham, 1980s (D11121 Acc 12852.2)

Holy Apostles Church of England Primary School: governor's minutes, 1991-2006; School Manager's reports and minutes, 1978-2006 (S76/4 Acc 12963)

Hughes: will of Samuel Hughes of 50 Clarence Square, Cheltenham, Captain in the Honourable East India Company's Establishment, 26 February 1852, proved 17 June 1852, with note of payment made, 1870 (D12852)

***Illman Young Landscape Design Limited** (additional): project files, c.2000-2007 (D10830, Acc 12673)

Sales particulars of various properties including Gallipot Farm, Cheltenham, 1802; particulars of Seymour Hall, Portland Street, to be let, 1824 (D12931)

***St Benedict's Catholic College:** admission registers, 1962-1998; minutes

of governors meetings, 1998-1999, 2002 and Christ College, 2007-2011; schedule of title deeds/documents held by school's governing body, 1997; papers relating to Cheltenham flood alleviation scheme, 1998; papers relating to new sports hall and improvements to entrance, 2000-2007; governors' financial papers, 2004-2006 (S78/31 Acc 12821.1, 12682 and 12848.2)

St Mark's Methodist Church (additional): newsletters, 2005-2011; leaflet entitled "Our Community" 2010; minutes of the St Mark's Methodist Sisterhood/St Marks Church Women's Fellowship, now defunct, 1977-2003 (D3418, Acc 12688)

St Stephen's parish: illuminated address commemorating the retirement of Revd Edward Cornford, June 1878 (P78/12 Acc 12868)

***Webb:** sheet music of compositions and arrangements (both published and unpublished) of Evelyn ("Lyn") Webb (1923-2003), composer and teacher at St Paul's College, 1960s-1980s, with notes on his career and list of music compiled by his widow Anthea (D12854)

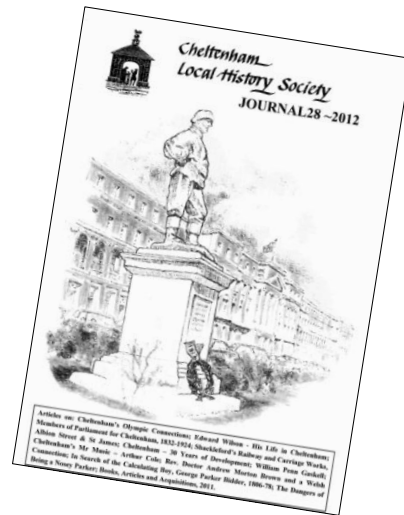
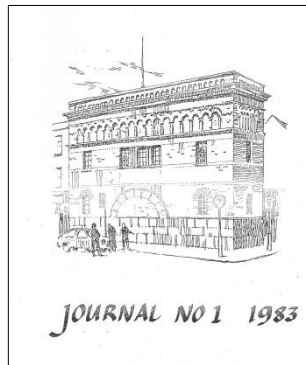
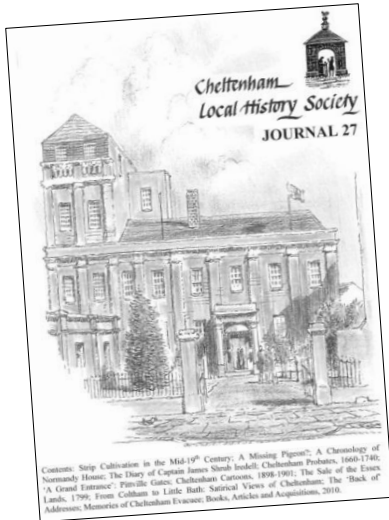
Willans of Cheltenham, solicitors (additional): deeds of properties in Cheltenham and elsewhere, 1810-2011 (D5907 Acc 12791)

***Women's Institutes:** records of various Gloucestershire WIs including Charlton Kings Evening WI scrapbooks, 1970-2006; Leckhampton Evening WI minutes, 1952-2007, secretary's memoranda, 1947-1949, annual reports, programmes and plays, 1949-2000, histories of Leckhampton compiled by WI members as entries to GFWI competitions, 1958, 1975; Leckhampton Afternoon WI minutes, 1995-1997 (D2933 Acc 12915.1)

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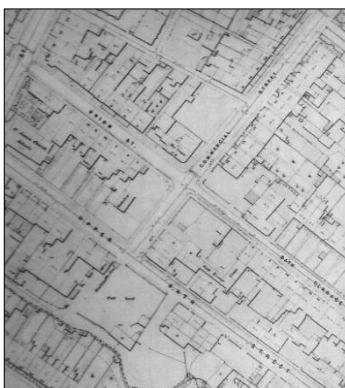
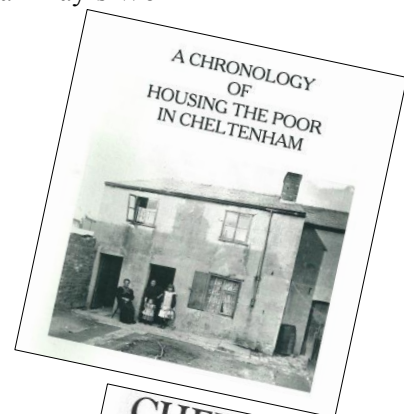
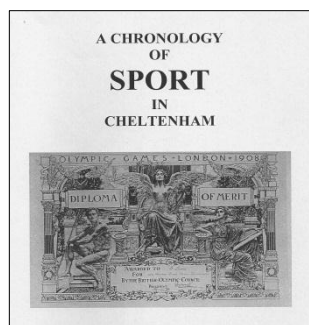
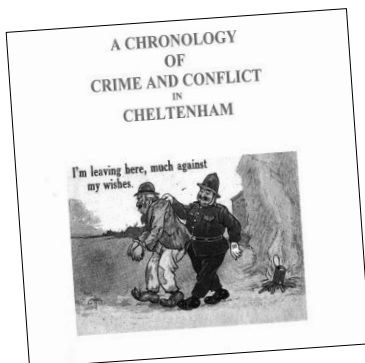
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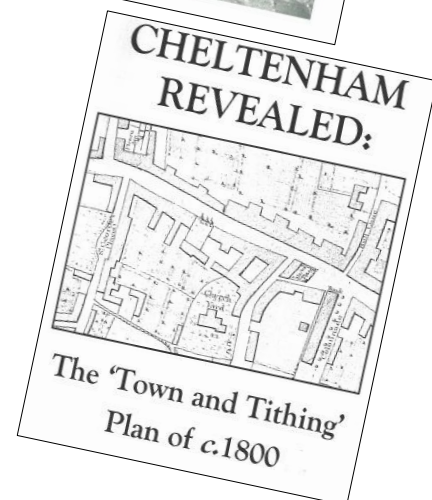
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Cheltenham Old Town Survey, 1855 - 1857; digitalised mid-19th century detailed map of the town



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