



Cheltenham Local History Society

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Introduction

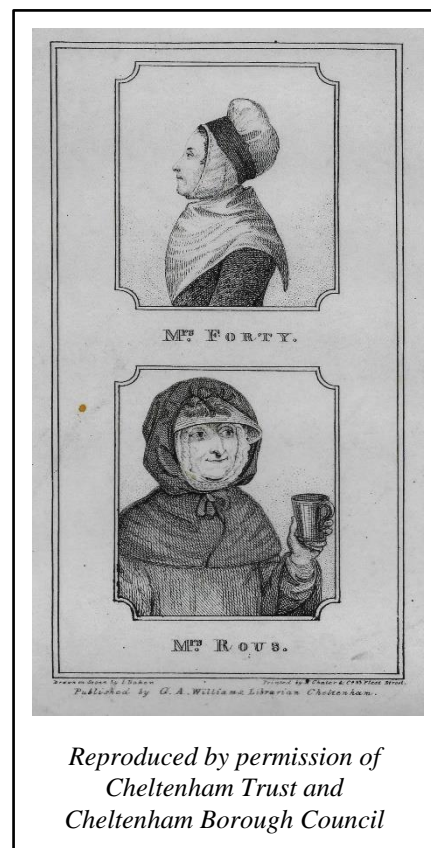
SALLY SELF, Journal Editor

A WARM WELCOME TO ALL our readers and I hope you enjoy reading the 33rd edition of the Society's Journal. Once again there is a wide range of topics, covering several centuries and different aspects of the life in and around Cheltenham. The time scale that the articles cover is again very wide with, for once, an emphasis on the 18th century. There are some entertaining moments – 'elephants that never were' and John Wesley, who was questioned for not being 'holy enough' – and also several articles written as a result of research into previously untapped sources, all of which are excellent and give a wide choice of subjects for your enjoyment.

The past year has seen the celebration of several centenaries, not least the discovery of the Spa water, a date that has been the subject of minor controversy for some time and has finally been settled as being 1716. This was when William Mason acquired an interest in the site where he sunk the well and fenced it off with railings. Various commemorations have taken place in the town, one of which was a display in the Paper Store, a gallery of The Wilson art gallery and museum. Some copies of the originals were used as part of a display, first at the Society's 'Women in Cheltenham', local history afternoon and then at Cheltenham Local and Family History Library. The illustration (*right*) is of two 'women of Cheltenham', pumpers of spa water during the early years of the spa - Mrs Forty and Mrs Rous.

Another centenary that has been celebrated was the launching on 10 October 1866, on Pittville Lake of the *Cheltenham*, a 32ft, 10-oared lifeboat destined for Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset. The lifeboat stayed in service for 21 years and saved an identical number of lives. And of course, commemorations of the events of the First World War have continued to take place.

I should also like to remind everyone that we still need to find a **Journal Editor**, as soon as possible, as I cannot continue with the task of producing an annual research journal indefinitely. As I have said in the past, it is an enjoyable task that I have now done for nine years – one gets to meet many interesting people and to learn more about many aspects of the town's history. I am willing to support anyone who takes on this role. Please contact me,



Joseph Dunton (1810-1886)

Part 1, Archery Entrepreneur

JULIAN HOLLAND

By the mid nineteenth century, Cheltenham was home to a large number of seasonal and long-term residents of independent means in search of recreation and entertainment. Archery, as a pastime and sometime competitive sport, found a place on the recreation grounds of Cheltenham's several spas.

The advent of gunpowder ended the place of the longbow in British warfare in the sixteenth century, but archery underwent a revival towards the end of the eighteenth century among the aristocracy and gentry as a mark of wealth and status. As a rustic recreation, it also reflected a patriotic nostalgia with more than a hint of medievalism in the face of urbanisation and industrial advance. In the 1830s – in the wake of the 1832 Reform Act – archery spread to the leisured middle classes, and among women as well as men.¹

Several Cheltenham residents distinguished themselves on the national stage for their skill in archery. The retired mine manager Horace Alfred Ford was already the national champion when he settled in Cheltenham about 1855.² And two Cheltenham women were among the leading archers at the beginning of the twentieth century. Queenie Newell won the gold medal at the 1908 London Olympics and the national championships in 1911 and 1912. Alice Legh was the national ladies' champion 23 times between 1881 and 1922.³

The man who brought archery to Cheltenham in the late 1840s was Joseph Dunton. He formed a very effective partnership in archery with his wife Elizabeth, which continued until her early death in 1867. The first part of this article, published here, focuses on Joseph and Elizabeth Dunton's archery enterprise. The second and concluding part will examine Dunton's later life and his other enterprises as a photographer, hairdresser and vendor of fireworks.

Archery comes to Cheltenham

The first we hear of Joseph Dunton, in the vicinity of Cheltenham, is at a 'Grand Archery Fete under the direction of Mr. Dunton, of Cremorne Gardens, Chelsea' to be held at the spa in Gloucester in June 1848.⁴ Joseph Dunton was born in Bedford on 2 March 1810, the son of John Dunton, a shoeing smith and his wife Elizabeth. How he made his start in archery remains to be determined, but an advertisement of 1884 claimed he had forty-five years' 'practical experience' in the organisation of public festivities.⁵ This would take him back to 1839 when he was 29. Although such claims are often exaggerated, it is possible that Dunton had been involved in the presentation of public entertainments, particularly archery, since that date.

The Grand Archery Fete was part of a variety of entertainments with performers already well known in London, so perhaps Dunton took no special initiative to go to

Gloucester to entertain the summer crowds. He was just one element of a larger venture.⁶ But it was certainly the beginning of a modestly successful provincial career.

Whether Dunton presented archery in Cheltenham that summer is unknown, but he was certainly there the following summer. When the Fourth Floral Exhibition was held in Pittville in July 1849 – the fuchsias were ‘remarkably good’ – Dunton was in attendance. In the afternoon, residents and visitors availed themselves of the promenades and pleasure gardens of Pittville Spa, ‘while many derived no small amusement from the archery performances of Mr. Dunton, which appear to have been transferred from the Montpellier to the Pittville Gardens’.⁷ This indicates that Dunton had already been a feature of Montpellier Gardens on the other side of Cheltenham for some time that season.

The prior use of Montpellier Gardens and the move to Pittville are both confirmed by an advertisement in September: ‘Mr. and Mrs. Dunton (*late of the Montpellier Gardens*) beg to apprise their Patrons that they have removed to the beautiful Gardens of Pittville, and are constantly in attendance’.⁸ This is the first indication of ‘Mrs. Dunton’. At what point Elizabeth became Mrs Dunton has yet to be discovered. She was born in Gloucestershire about 1809, so they may have met in Gloucester in 1848.⁹ This advertisement makes it clear that she was very much a partner in the archery business. As yet, there is no explicit appeal to women, but the mention of Mrs Dunton implies this. In a spa town to which people resorted for the season for the sake of their health, a ‘healthful recreation’ which could ‘strengthen the nerve’ and ‘impart vigour to the whole frame’ was bound to attract followers.

And Dunton’s entrepreneurial flair wasn’t limited to archery. The climax to a summer of feats of archery on the lawn in front of the Pittville Pump Room was to be a ‘novel entertainment ... [a]mong the most ludicrous of which will be “a team of *real geese* towing a washing tub,” in which Mr. Dunton himself purposes to embark on “the surface of the silvery waters!”’, with fireworks to conclude the entertainments. Weather intervened and the entertainment was postponed to the following week.¹⁰ No account has been found to confirm that Dunton successfully undertook his aquatic excursion, but there is no doubting his flair for publicity.

By the spring of 1850 the Duntons were set to resume their archery enterprise, this time at Cheltenham’s original spa, the Royal Old Wells. The archery ground there, ‘under the management of Mr. Dunton’, was ready at the beginning of May 1850. The summer season was slated to commence at the Royal Old Wells on 6 May, with band music in the day and musical promenades three evenings a week. At the heart of this was the Cheltenham spa water. A new pump room was nearly completed, but ‘for the present the Waters can be Drank at the little Spa in the Lawn’. A bowling green was also ready. Dunton’s archery business took place within a larger commercial operation. Presumably he rented the archery ground from Messrs Rowe and Onley, the proprietors of the Royal Old Wells, and took fees from his own archery customers.¹¹

The Duntons and their archery were by now a fixture in Cheltenham. The successive moves from Montpellier Gardens to Pittville Gardens and then to the Royal Old Wells probably had more to do with the financial terms on which Dunton could establish an archery ground than the physical advantages of one setting over another. In 1851 the Duntons returned to Pittville Gardens. At least, that is the implication of the

1851 census which records Joseph and Elizabeth Dunton living in Essex Lodge, Pittville.¹²

Essex Lodge, or the Little Spa, was (like the one at the Royal Old Wells) a preliminary facility for dispensing spa water before the Pittville Pump Room was opened in 1830. Presumably by 1851, it had long since ceased to be an active spa and had been converted as a modest residence, very convenient to Dunton's archery business in Pittville Gardens. The 1851 census describes Dunton as an archery manufacturer but how much he was engaged in the manufacture of bows and arrows and other appurtenances of the sport or whether the archery equipment he sold or hired was produced by a commercial manufacturer elsewhere has not been determined. Essex Lodge was too modest a structure to allow much space for the tools and materials of archery manufacture. Perhaps Dunton rented workshop and storage space nearby.

The commercial hazards of the archery enterprise must have been a constant concern to Joseph and Elizabeth Dunton. Maintaining an adequate stock of bows, arrows, quivers, targets and other equipment and making a commercial return on them was very dependent on the state of the weather and the mood of the public. This may account for Dunton being the defendant in a demand before the Cheltenham County Court in November 1851 for £8 on a promissory note.¹³

Nonetheless, archery was the basis of the Duntons' livelihood in the 1850s. In 1854 we find their archery ground back in Montpellier Gardens. A competition with prizes was held there in September that year. A 'considerable number of Ladies and Gentlemen assembled to witness the skill and dexterity with which the fair belles of fashionable society could "handle the bow," and project the arrow to its golden mark'. There were five prizes for the women and three for the men. 'The Ladies, of course, claimed the largest share of attention, and not undeservedly, for they exhibited quite as much archer-skill as did the Gentlemen.'¹⁴

Montpellier Gardens was the centre of operations for the next several years. Elizabeth Dunton is noted as the occupant of the Montpellier Rotunda in 1855.¹⁵ The rotunda was the point at which archery equipment could be hired or borrowed to be tried prior to purchase and also the ticket office for major events such as Dunton's Annual Grand Archery Day – a great diversity of public events in Cheltenham were 'grand' – in 1855.¹⁶

On Wednesday, 22 August, the archery grounds in Montpellier Gardens 'presented a scene of great gaiety and attraction, and were crowded by several elegantly-dressed ladies, who displayed considerable proficiency and skill in the above delightful recreation, which is now become quite a fashionable pastime'.¹⁷ Once again, there were prizes for women and men. The afternoon's archery was followed in the evening by a 'magnificent display' of fireworks. The event was attended by more than 600 people, but at a shilling each they cannot have produced a large profit for Dunton after all the expenses had been covered.¹⁸

In the late summer, the Duntons found they could increase their clientele by splitting their time between Montpellier Gardens 'throughout the day' and Pittville Gardens from six o'clock each evening, for the purpose of teaching the Art of Shooting. Dunton solicited the patronage of 'the Nobility, Gentry, and Visitors of Cheltenham', informing them of his 'large Stock of the best YEW BOWS, ARROWS, and every other

description of ARCHERY' on sale at the Montpellier Gardens, 'where parties can try the Bows and Arrows before purchasing them'.¹⁹

Fireworks displays were becoming an indispensable part of outdoor summer evening festivities. Dunton sought to capitalise on this not merely by organising the presentation of a fireworks display in conjunction with his annual archery day, but stocking fireworks for commemorative occasions such as the first anniversary of the battle of Inkerman on 5 November. He stressed the importance of buying fireworks of 'a good and safe kind', in order to cast doubt on the quality of competing supplies. This venture into fireworks seems to have been brief but it was a commercial venture Dunton returned to later in his life.²⁰

On the National Stage

Joseph and Elizabeth Dunton had so firmly established the place of archery in Cheltenham that it took on a life of its own in 1856, when that town was chosen to host the thirteenth National Archery Meeting. Joseph Dunton was not a member of the organising committee, but was well placed to capitalise on the heightened interest in archery.²¹ On the other hand, Elizabeth Dunton's skill in archery received national recognition.

In the first week of July, the archery meeting and associated ball generated a great bustle in Cheltenham. The hotels and lodging-houses were 'soon filled to overflowing ... while chambermaids, boots, waiters, and other attendants were seen hurrying to and fro in all directions'.²² Merchants also sought to capture some of the momentary custom. The silk mercer W.T. Smith, of Brunswick House, Promenade, for example, headed an advertisement 'ARCHERY MEETING AND BALL', to promote his 'New Assortment' of French bonnets, headdresses, and wreaths as well as morning, evening and ball dresses, mantles &c.²³

The archery meeting itself was 'favored by the most brilliant summer weather'. Mrs Dunton competed for the Ladies' Prizes. Mrs Horniblow of Leamington took the £25 first prize with 109 hits and a gross score of 487, followed by Mrs Davison of Worcester (103 hits, 461, £21). Mrs Dunton took the third prize, of £17, for 95 hits and a score of 403, comfortably ahead of the next place-getter, Miss L. James, of Dove Grove Archers, with a gross score of 358.²⁴ For all that Elizabeth Dunton assisted with other aspects of the regular business, her practical skill in archery was a major draw card.

The National Archery Meeting was so successful it was resolved to hold the 1857 meeting in Cheltenham also.²⁵ This was once again an opportunity for the Duntons to promote their services to 'Ladies and Gentlemen who intend to become competitors' at that year's meeting. Although their archery grounds were initially at both Montpellier and Pittville Gardens in 1857, the arrangement soon switched to Royal Old Wells and Pittville Gardens, the advertisement otherwise remaining the same.²⁶

At some time, prior to the 1857 meeting, a Cheltenham Archery Club was formed.²⁷ So local archers had a formal banner under which they competed with members of other clubs at the meeting in July. Elizabeth Dunton was again a competitor, attired in the uniform green and white dress of the ladies of the Cheltenham Club. She again won a prize, but only a lesser one.²⁸

After two years, with archery so prominent, the scene settled back a little in subsequent years. Nevertheless, Elizabeth Dunton's prowess at the two national meetings became a selling point in advertisements: 'Ladies attended by Mrs. Dunton, who won several Prizes at the Grand National Archery Meetings in Cheltenham, 1856-7'.²⁹ She tried her skill with success at least once more on the national stage – this time at the Crystal Palace in London in July 1860, a fortnight after the National Meeting at Bath. She achieved places in several of the contests and won the prize for fourth highest gross score (375).³⁰

Commercial Competition

The rise of archery in Cheltenham through the 1850s created a demand for equipment that Dunton could not monopolise and was probably greater than he could supply. The long-established business of D. Alder & Son at 1, Promenade advertised a range of ladies' and gentlemen's bows throughout the summer of 1859.³¹ But it was the advent of a new competitor in 1860, J. Friskney, that must have put considerable pressure on the retail side of Dunton's business.

John Smith Friskney (1834-1916) was apprenticed to a saddler in his native Lincolnshire and must have set up in Cheltenham with considerable backing. His first advertisement appeared in June 1860 and was soon augmented with an eye-catching vignette.³² By the beginning of the 1861 season, Friskney emphasised that he was the sole agent in Cheltenham for the 'superior bows, arrows, &c' of J. Buchanan, Piccadilly, London, and also agent for 'H. Bowson's celebrated bows, arrows, &c. Leamington'.³³

ARCHERY ! ARCHERY !! ARCHERY !!!

THE ORIGINAL ARCHERY MANUFACTORY,
371½, HIGH STREET, CHELTENHAM.

J. DUNTON,
MANUFACTURER OF EVERY DESCRIPTION OF ARCHERY GOODS,
And for 13 years (in conjunction with Mrs. Dunton) teacher of the fashionable amusement of Archery in Cheltenham,

BEGS to return his sincere thanks to his numerous patrons, and to assure them that his best exertions shall be used to merit a continuance of their patronage. Having not only a theoretical but a practical knowledge of Archery, J. D. flatters himself that he can not only produce a good article, but can also assist Ladies and Gentlemen in their selection of Bows, for it is on this particular that success in shooting so much depends. Having taken the spacious grounds at Montpellier, (lately used by the Cheltenham Archery Club), Ladies and Gentlemen can fairly try their Bows before purchase, and this offers great advantages over those possessed by dealers in toys, who are merely *sellere* of Archery Goods and not *manufacturers*.

Every description of Archery Goods manufactured on the Premises, and a large Stock constantly on Sale and on Hire.

Ladies' complete Set of Archery Accoutrements from 27/6. Gentlemens' ditto from 37/6.
Every Article Warranted, and a fair trial allowed before purchasing. Bows exchanged or altered to suit the strength of the party.

Bows and Arrows repaired and re-feathered, and Targets re-covered equal to new.
N.B.—The only Archery Manufactory in Gloucestershire,
371½, HIGH STREET, (OPPOSITE PITVILLE STREET,) CHELTENHAM.

☞ The Montpellier Archery Subscription List is now open at the Montpellier Rotunda, and Mr. and Mrs. Dunton are in daily attendance at the Grounds.

In April 1861, Dunton responded with his most expansive and detailed archery advertisement. This highlighted Dunton's many advantages: that he was the original archery manufacturer (in bold capital letters) and the only one in Gloucestershire, and that he had been 'for 13 years (in conjunction with Mrs. Dunton) teacher of the fashionable amusement of Archery in Cheltenham'. As both a maker of archery goods and a practitioner of the art, Dunton was well placed to 'assist Ladies and Gentlemen in their selection of Bows, for it is on this particular that success in shooting so much

depends'. Without naming Friskney, Dunton pointed out that his service of allowing would-be archers to try their bows before buying 'offers great advantages over those possessed by dealers in toys [ouch!], who are merely *sellers* of Archery Goods and not *manufacturers*'.³⁴

But Dunton was not in a position to maintain a regular pattern of prominent advertisements. In the absence of a greater variety of evidence it is difficult to assess the degree to which loyalty and personal service protected Dunton from Friskney's continuing advertising campaign. But Friskney, like Alder, had the advantage over Dunton of stocking a wide range of sporting and other goods, providing security over shifting fashions in recreation.³⁵ And the enthusiasm for archery seemed already to be falling off after the peak seasons of 1856 and 1857.

The years of archery promotion by the Duntons and the prominence of Horace Ford in national competition since his arrival in Cheltenham some years earlier were insufficient to keep the Cheltenham Archery Club going. It was dissolved in 1861 and the Duntons resumed the use of the archery ground in Montpellier Gardens. Mrs Dunton was again in attendance 'to give instructions to ladies, for which task she is peculiarly adapted, being herself very skilful in the use of the bow'.³⁶

Archery at Large

In the late 1850s, Joseph Dunton responded to the commercial limitations of archery in Cheltenham in two ways. He acquired or set up a photographic studio, Dunton's Portrait Rooms (to be considered in the second part of this article), and he took archery to celebratory and charitable fetes over a wide range of southern England. Apart from individual occasions, such as the fete for the Stroud Mutual Improvement Society in 1860 and that for the Bicester Literary Institute in 1874, Dunton was a regular contributor to the fetes of two enterprises, the Ancient Order of Foresters and the Great Western Railway Widows' and Orphans' Benevolent Fund.

The Ancient Order of Foresters was one of the more prominent of the provident and friendly societies, mutual help organisations operating before the establishment of modern insurance companies. Dunton participated in Foresters' fetes on at least nine occasions. In Hereford in 1863, he was among those in the morning procession, embodying the mock medievalism from which archery could not entirely liberate itself:

*'We have never seen a society's procession more entitled to the appellation "respectable." The effect was much heightened [sic] by Mr. Dunton, of Cheltenham, personating Robin Hood "on horseback" to the universal approval of sightseers ... The Sherwood Forester was habited in very attractive costume with his little horn slung behind him, while Mr. Preece's very handsome and clever cream-coloured horse bore him with as much dignity as if he had felt the Prince of Wales on his back.'*³⁷

Here we have a glimpse of Dunton's love of showmanship and pageantry, and of his humour.

Brunel's Great Western Railway, linking London with the midlands and the south-west, was one of the great engineering enterprises of the mid nineteenth century. But at a time when industrial accidents were commonplace, an enterprise as large and complex as the Great Western Railway was not immune. A Widows' and Orphans'

Benevolent Fund was established in 1846 and fundraising rural fetes in the gardens of prominent houses were held annually from the mid-1850s.

The earliest Widows' and Orphans' Fund fete which Dunton is known to have attended, was that at Basildon Park in Berkshire in July 1859, when 'Mr. and Mrs. Dunton added not a little to the general success, by the way in which they attended upon their numerous patrons, whose appreciation of archery was evinced by an energy truly remarkable'.³⁸ But this may not have been the first Widows' and Orphans' Fund fete the Duntons attended. The advertisement for the fete in August 1857, at Nuneham Park near Oxford, noted (in capitals) that 'Archery will be provided', and in light of Dunton's subsequent participation he was probably the 'provider' on this occasion.³⁹ In 1863, it was noted that there were 'appliances for archery as usual by Mr. Dunton'. He was becoming a fixture at these events.

These rural fetes were often attended by some 10,000 or more, many coming by special trains from London and cities on the GWR network. For many, the encounter with Dunton was their first acquaintance with archery. In 1867, 'as most of the archers were novices, the arrows were mostly wide of the mark, and it was generally when a bow was drawn at a venture that an arrow was lodged in the bull's eye'.⁴⁰ At the thirteenth annual fete, at Aldermaston Park in 1868, Dunton added to archery his 'Novel Pigeon Practice' – whatever that was!⁴¹ Dunton contributed archery to the GWR fetes most if not every year up to 1879.⁴² His known presentation of archery at fetes, other than those purely local to Cheltenham, is tabulated in the appendix.

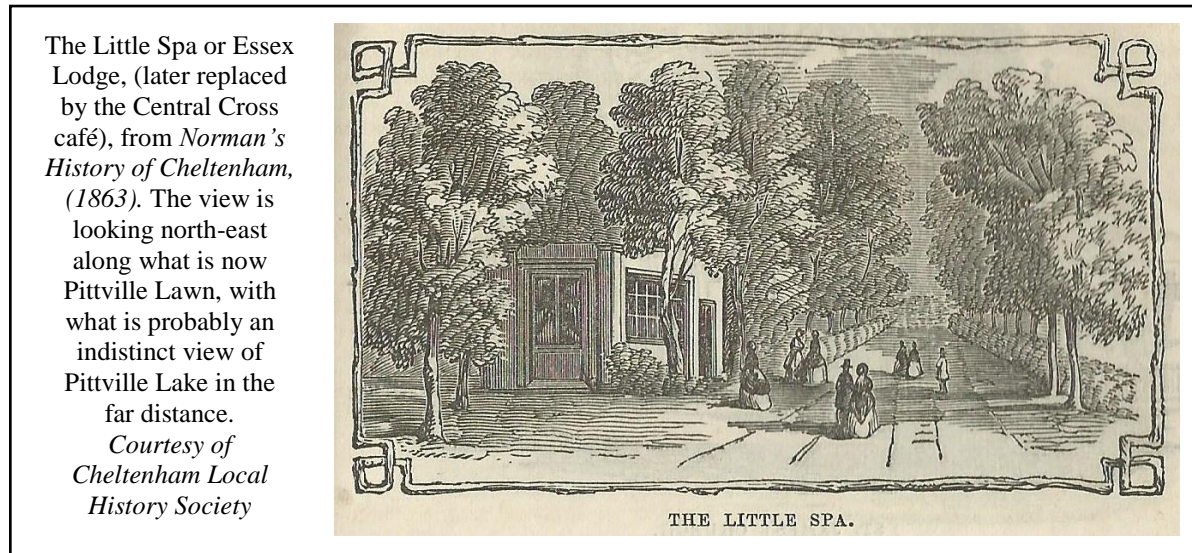
Appendix: Fetes at which Joseph Dunton presented archery

Year	Date	Event	Location
1859	July 4	Foresters'	Tewkesbury
1859	July 26	GWR Widows' & Orphans' Fund	Basildon Park
1860	June 26	Stroud Mutual Improvement Society	Stratford House
1860	July 24	5 th Annual GWR W & O Fund	Hungerford Park
1861	June 4	Foresters'	Cirencester (Earl of Bathurst's park)
1861	July 8	Foresters'	Cheltenham
1861	July 30	6 th Annual GWR W & O Fund	Beckett Park
1862	July 22	7 th Annual GWR W & O Fund	Englefield Park
1863	May 25	Foresters'	Hereford
1863	July 28	8 th Annual GWR W & O Fund	Nuneham Park
1864	July 5	?Annual GWR W & O Fund	Aldermaston
1865	June 26	Foresters'	Cheltenham
1866	July 17	11 th Annual GWR W & O Fund	Beckett Park
1866	July 30	Foresters'	Hereford
1867	July 23	12 th Annual GWR W & O Fund	Englefield Park
1868	July 7	13 th Annual GWR W & O Fund	Aldermaston Park
1869	May 17	Foresters'	Worcester
1869	July 6	14 th Annual GWR W & O Fund	Nuneham Park
1870	July 5	15 th Annual GWR W & O Fund	Beckett Park
1871	July 5	16 th Annual GWR W & O Fund	Englefield Park
1872	May 20	Foresters'	Worcester
1873	July 15	GWR W & O Fund	Blenheim Park
1874	July 29	GWR W & O Fund	Beckett Park
1874	August 3	Bicester Literary Institute	Middleton Park
1874	August 3	Foresters'	Blanquettes, Worcester
1875	July 21	20 th Annual GWR W & O Fund	Nuneham Park

1879	August 19	22 nd Annual GWR W & O Fund	Blenheim Park
1881	August 1	Stroud Working Men's Conservative Benefit Society	Bownham Park

Author's note: Dunton's Portrait Rooms

For about a decade from 1857, Joseph Dunton ran a photographic studio, Dunton's Portrait Rooms. Examples of carte de visite portraits from this studio are known. The author would be very pleased to know of any examples of outdoor photographs or photographs in other formats, especially those which might be available to reproduce in the second part of this article.



¹ Martin Johnes, 'Archery, Romance and Elite Culture in England and Wales, c.1780-1840', *History*, vol. 89 (April 2004), pp. 193-208.

² Horace Ford first practiced archery in 1844 and competed at the grand national meetings from 1848. He was the national champion every year from 1850 to 1859: Hugh D. Hewitt Soar, 'Ford, Horace Alfred (1821/2-1880)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* online.

³ James W. Bancroft, 'Newall, Sybil Fenton [Queenie] (1854-1929)', and Hugh D. Hewitt Soar, 'Legh, Alice Blanche (1856-1948)', both in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁴ *Gloucester Journal*, 24 June 1848.

⁵ *Gloucester Citizen*, 6 May 1884.

⁶ And after the anxieties surrounding the great Chartist rally in London in April it might have seemed particularly opportune to leave the capital for a while.

⁷ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 28 July 1849, p. 470.

⁸ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 18 September 1849.

⁹ The census records indicate that Elizabeth Dunton was born in south west Gloucestershire, on the west bank of the Severn, but differ in the exact location: Newnham (1851), Rodley (1861). Civil registration was established in England and Wales in 1837 so it is curious that the marriage can't be traced, and Elizabeth's maiden name established.

¹⁰ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 22 September 1849, p. 601; 29 September 1849, p. 614.

¹¹ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 4 May 1850

¹² There were no other members of the household.

¹³ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 20 November 1851. The plaintiff, W. Ward, may have been William Ward, house agent, of Blenheim Terrace.

¹⁴ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 30 September 1854, p. 681.

¹⁵ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 28 April 1855. A young man, wishing to obtain a situation as a valet to a gentleman going abroad gave as his address 'A.B.C., Mrs. Dunton's, Montpellier Rotunda, Cheltenham'.

¹⁶ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 18 August 1855.

¹⁷ A cartoon in *Punch* in 1867 satirised the popularity of archery among women: A top-hatted clergyman addresses an elegant young lady in a parkland setting, lady archers and targets in the background: 'I

perceive you are now a Toxophilite!', to which she replies: 'Oh dear no! Church of England I assure you!' (Charles Keene, 'The Archery Meeting', *Punch*, 19 October 1867). William Powell Frith expressed this enthusiasm more gorgeously in his painting of his daughters in archery mode, *The Fair Toxophilites* (1872).

¹⁸ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 28 August 1855.

¹⁹ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 15 September 1855.

²⁰ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 27 October 1855. Dunton gave as his address, Suffolk Parade, back of Suffolk Church. Whether this was his residence or only his warehouse and commercial outlet is not clear. In his later involvement with fireworks, his warehouse was (more or less) distinct from his residence.

²¹ Horace Ford was a member of the general committee of management, while the local committee consisted of Colonel Brett, Captain E.C. Cannon, L. Griffiths, Charles Hogg and W. Hutchinson; *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 8 July 1856.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 28 June 1856.

²⁴ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 5 July 1856, p. 635.

²⁵ The first National Archery Meeting was held in York in 1844, and unlike the British Association for the Advancement of Science, which also held its 1856 meeting in Cheltenham, and coincidentally held its first meeting in York (in 1831), the archery meetings were often held in the same city for two years running.

²⁶ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 25 April and 2 May 1857.

²⁷ The establishment of the Archery Club may account for Dunton's shift to the Royal Old Wells, with the Montpellier archery ground becoming the field of the club's activities, although the club is recorded as officially beginning in June.

²⁸ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 7 July 1857. Mrs Dunton tied with Mrs West for the £5 prize for the greatest number of golds at 50 yards.

²⁹ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 18 June 1859.

³⁰ *Bell's Life in London*, 22 July 1860, p. 5. Mrs Horniblow won the prize (£10) for greatest gross score (450). Mrs Horniblow also achieved 10 golds while Mrs Dunton and two others each secured 5 golds.

³¹ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 12 July 1859 and later issues.

³² *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 19 June 1860, 26 June 1860.

³³ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 9 April 1861. Archery was well established in Leamington, another spa town (and the home of Mrs Horniblow). An archery ground was set up there in 1829 and a Grand Archery Fete held there in 1834. Leamington hosted the National Archery Meeting in 1851 and the two successive years. Henry Bown (not Bowson as given in the advertisement) ran a fancy goods warehouse, and in 1851 he had 'entered upon the work of manufacturing on his own premises every article required by the bowman or in the target-field'; *Royal Leamington Spa Courier*, 21 June 1851. The 1861 census recorded him as an archery manufacturer employing 4 men. The business endured and when Bown died in 1886, the business of archery, cricket and lawn tennis racket manufacturer was continued by his foreman, James Preston.

³⁴ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 30 April 1861.

³⁵ By 1863, Friskney's advertisement used the same vignette but was headed 'Games! Toys!! Games!!!' and listed a great variety of 'New Games for the Ensuing Season'. Archery rated barely a mention; *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 24 March 1863.

³⁶ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 9 April 1861. It is this brief article that records Joseph Dunton as 'the first to introduce this favourite amusement into Cheltenham'.

³⁷ *Hereford Journal*, 30 May 1863. The Ancient Order of Foresters was founded in 1834 but had antecedents in an eighteenth-century group called Royal Foresters. So, while Robin Hood was not central to the conception of the AOF, the modernity masquerading as medievalism, and the spirit of mutual action for collective good, naturally had a place for re-enacting Robin Hood. The AOF survives today as the Foresters Friendly Society.

³⁸ *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 2 August 1859.

³⁹ *Berkshire Chronicle*, 4 July 1857. Many thousands attended the fete and refreshments could be purchased. 'Beyond the sport of archery, in which large numbers indulged, there was no amusement provided, and parties had to fall back upon their own resources'; *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 8 August 1857. The following year, the fete at Hamstead Park near Newbury offered archery and cricket as well as dancing and refreshments; *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 10 July 1858.

⁴⁰ *Berkshire Chronicle*, 27 July 1867.

⁴¹ *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 4 July 1868. Was this the archery equivalent of clay pigeon shooting?

⁴² Dunton was presumably the provider of the archery at the 1864 fete.

The Elephant That Never Was or There's One Born Every Minute

CAROLYN GREET

READERS OF THE *CHELTENHAM CHRONICLE* of 21 September 1815 must have been delighted to see an exciting-looking attraction advertised for the following day: 'The Grand Ærostatic¹ Exhibition' promised a fascinating display of 'Ærial Machines and Figures' which would ascend from the Regent Gardens starting at 'One o'clock precisely'.

The show would open with 'a silk Balloon' (size unspecified) followed by 'A Stupendous Elephant with a Castle etc. on its back'. Next 'A Large Montgolfier, upward of 24 feet high will carry up a Large Living Dog, which, when at a certain height, will by a piece of Mechanism be detached from the Balloon, and descend in safety by a PARACHUTE'. Several models of 'Beasts, Fishes etc.' would then 'ascend and float in the Gardens', and in a final spectacular display, 'A Beautiful Silk Balloon and Splendid Car will be filled with gas extracted from the Forest Coal' and 'In the Evening, ... A NOCTURNAL BALLOON, Beautifully Illuminated, will ascend.' Not surprisingly, people flocked to pay their three shillings admission² (children half price) for the earlier exhibition or one shilling and sixpence for the evening demonstration.

Ballooning was currently all the rage, though the first hot-air balloon flights had been made over 30 years previously in France, by the Montgolfier brothers and James Sadler had made the first English ascent in 1784. Later in the century, ballooning developed from a serious scientific quest to sheer showmanship, and most major events of the first half of the 19th century could boast the attraction of a balloon flight, though – as in the proposed Cheltenham event – these were given the veneer of scientific respectability by referring to 'experiments in aerostation'. For the watcher the excitement and novelty were enhanced by the real risks involved, for several intrepid aeronauts suffered very public life-threatening (and in some cases life-taking) accidents.³

The first balloon ascent in Cheltenham had taken place only two years earlier,⁴ when Windham Sadler, the younger son of James, made a dramatic flight in a snowstorm from Cheltenham Tramway Wharf⁵ to Chipping Norton, an event commemorated by a grandiloquently optimistic piece in the *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 'at length the public wish is gratified! The Ærial Voyage is performed! And the fame of the English Aeronauts will be coeval with the diffusion of mental improvement, and keep pace with the progress of scientific enterprise!'

Since then Cheltonians would have read of ever more extraordinary stunts: parachute descents, night flights accompanied by fireworks (in a *hydrogen-filled* balloon!), ascents with animals, even one by a mounted horseman, but this advertised show was to be their first opportunity of witnessing them at first hand. The Nocturnal Balloon was 'similar to the one sent up in Paris on the coronation of Bonaparte in 1805, and which travelled from Paris to Rome, a distance of 900 miles in 22 hours'. Constant

excitement was promised, for to obviate the 'very tedious process in filling large Balloons' it was to be arranged that 'only intervals of a few minutes each will take place between the different pieces'. There was even the chance of a consolation prize for those who had been unable to attend, a note indicating that 'Any Person finding the above Balloons, particularly the Silk one and Car, and will restore them, to the Printer of this Paper, shall be handsomely rewarded for their trouble'.

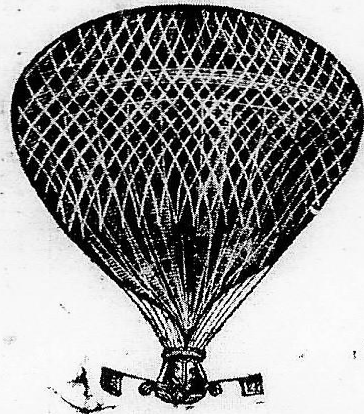
The original idea for this display had come from the well-known and respected, Mr. Bensley, who had had a casual meeting with an acquaintance, a Mr. Ticken, the owner of the balloons who offered to bring his show to the town. A Committee was set up to arrange the event, and a platform from which the balloons were to set off was built in the Regent Gardens, and tradesmen were encouraged to give their support. The Gardens, on the site of the present Regent Street, had been opened in 1809 by Humphrey Ruff and, by this time were owned by Stokes Heynes.

Friday 21 September dawned promisingly and crowds headed towards the Gardens, many from other parts of the county. Preparations appeared to be going well when unfortunately, 'a sudden change of weather and heavy rain came on at about twelve o'clock, which rendered it impossible to make the intended experiments.' Disappointed, the crowds dispersed, reassured by the promise that the display would take place on the very first suitable day. But it was not until Tuesday 3 October that the skies clear sufficiently and the Gardens were opened at midday, half an hour earlier than usual. Soon paying customers filled the place, while every tree and vantage point overlooking the Gardens was crammed with people, some of whom fell off in the excitement.

They waited. And waited. Some of the non-paying watchers amused themselves by shouting 'There it goes! There it goes!' and shrieking with laughter as 'the deluded and gulled inmates' (as the *Cheltenham Chronicle* reporter described them) frantically stood on tiptoe to see what was happening. Then rumours began to fly that, far from the balloons taking off it was in fact Mr. Ticken who had flown and that the takings had gone with him. Furious at being cheated, the 'outsiders' rushed the gates and encouraged – or at least not dissuaded – by the paying customers, set fire to the huge Montgolfier balloon. It burned spectacularly and as the debris swirled into the air there was a distinct danger that shrubs in the Gardens would catch fire. The Constables, who had so clearly failed to preserve order so far, presumably helped to put out the sparks and the company left, grumbling furiously and leaving a highly-embarrassed Committee, none more so than poor Mr. Bensley who had meant so well.

So what had happened? Two days later the *Cheltenham Chronicle* printed a letter from the slippery Mr. Ticken. He began with an apology: 'I left the Gardens on Tuesday abruptly; this was an insult to those who honoured me with their support, and for which I thus publicly and humbly entreat their pardon'. So far so good, if somewhat obvious.

'The report was prevalent yesterday that I went off with the money. This is not true. It was also reported, ... that I had damned the populace, and was determined as much as in my power, to confine my things [i.e. the balloons] to the Garden. Perhaps in this I must do as my superiors are sometimes forced to do, bow before the 'Majesty



The Grand Aërostatic Exhibition,
WILL TAKE PLACE

AT THE REGENT GARDENS,
To-Morrow, Friday, the 22^d of September
Instant, when the following Aërial Machines and
Figures will ascend from a Platform in the Gardens.
—A military Band will attend, and every possible
attention will be paid to the convenience of the com-
pany. The Gardens will be opened at half-past
Twelve, and at One o'Clock precisely the Exhibition
will commence with the ascension of a Silk Balloon,
which in a few Minutes will be succeeded by

A Stupendous Elephant,

With a Castle, &c. on its Back.

A large Montgolfier, upwards of 24ft. high,
Will carry up a large Living Dog.

Which, when at a certain height, will by a piece of
Mechanism be detached from the Balloon, and de-
scend in safety by a PARACHUTE.

SHAKESPEARE'S HECATE.

"I am for the Air, this night I'll spend

"....."

"Upon the corner of the Moon."

SHAKESPEARE.

Several Models of BIRDS, FISHES, &c.

Will ascend and Float in the Gardens.

AND LASTLY,

A Beautiful Silk BALLOON
AND SPLENDID CAR,

Will be filled with Gas, extracted from the Forest
Coal.—The universal and well grounded objection
to witness the very tedious progress in filling large
Balloons, has induced the Proprietors of this Exhi-
bition to arrange the mornings diversion in such
order, that only intervals of a few minutes each, will
take place between the different Pieces, as the experi-
ments of the most celebrated Aëronauts are here
brought into one point of view, together with many
which are original, they anticipate the approbation
of the company, who may honour them with their
presence in the Gardens.—Admittance Three Shil-
lings, Children Half price.

In the Evening, the Gardens will be re-
opened at Seven o'Clock, and ILLUMINA-
TED with Gas from the Forest Coal, and at
Eight o'Clock precisely

A NOCTURNAL BALLOON,

BEAUTIFULLY ILLUMINATED,

will ascend, similar to the one sent up in
Paris on the Coronation of Bonaparte, in
1805, and which travelled from Paris to Rome,
a distance of nine hundred miles in 23 hours.
Admittance to the Evening, 1s. 6d.—Child-
ren Half Price.

Any person finding the above Balloons, par-
ticularly the Silk one and Car, and will restore them
to the Printer of this Paper, shall be handsomely
rewarded for their trouble.

Several Constables will attend to preserve order.

of the People', and if any man, individually, think I have a right to humble myself still lower, there will probably be an opportunity of telling me so.'

Having neatly shifted some of the blame and protested his innocence of theft and implied that he would be back ('probably'), he went on to assure readers that 'I have written to the Gentlemen who honoured me by forming my Committee, and until I hear from them I cannot say more, than that the different Tradesmen to whom money is owing ... shall receive a payment in a short time' (conveniently unspecified).

But *why* he had gone must have been the real question everyone was longing to have answered. After all, the balloons existed - everyone had seen at least the Montgolfier, if not the Stupendous Elephant - and must have represented a considerable investment. Any attempt by Ticken to creep back surreptitiously was hardly likely to pass unnoticed. So the final part of his letter must have been read with particular eagerness. '... I beg the public to suspend as much as possible their opinion, as they must be assured that I must have had cogent reasons for acting as I did, so diametrically against my own interests.' And that was all the explanation anyone ever received, unless his 'cogent reasons' were elaborated upon in that letter to the Committee - never published.

The *Cheltenham Chronicle*, having been unable to resist the temptation of chortling gently at 'the fashionables' who had flocked to see the 'glorious ascent of the motley group', turned to the more serious point of reimbursement. 'The

money which has been received is sufficient to pay the auxiliary mechanics, and the Committee ... we are confident will use them in a wise disposal, should the public not reclaim their subscriptions.'

This however led to some anxieties among the trades-people who, though happy that the labourers who had erected the platform should have first call on any cash, had no wish to see the rest casually passed on to general charities. Indeed a week later they published a letter addressed to 'the Gentlemen of the Committee' ... 'you whose minds are fraught with sensibility, and whose high character for philanthropy is a shield to those that seek shelter under it'. These noble qualities would, they suggested, lead them to view any money not reclaimed as 'a polluted offering'.

Whether this unsubtle flattery had any effect is not known, for no further reference to the affair was ever published. Perhaps more surprisingly, the fate of the Balloons and Figures (or as many of them as actually existed) also remains unknown; perhaps the Committee sold them or even returned them to Ticken. Poor Mr. Bensley was exonerated of all blame, at any rate by the *Cheltenham Chronicle*, for as it pointed out, he also had been a considerable loser financially; one imagines that it was a long time before he ventured any further suggestions for brightening the lives of the locals.

At least one person however turned the situation neatly to his advantage: a couple of weeks later the announcement of the final week of an exhibition was headed in large capitals: 'NO ELEPHANTINE HOAX ...'.

¹ 'Ærostatic' does not appear in the Oxford English Dictionary: presumably this is an error for 'aerostatic'.

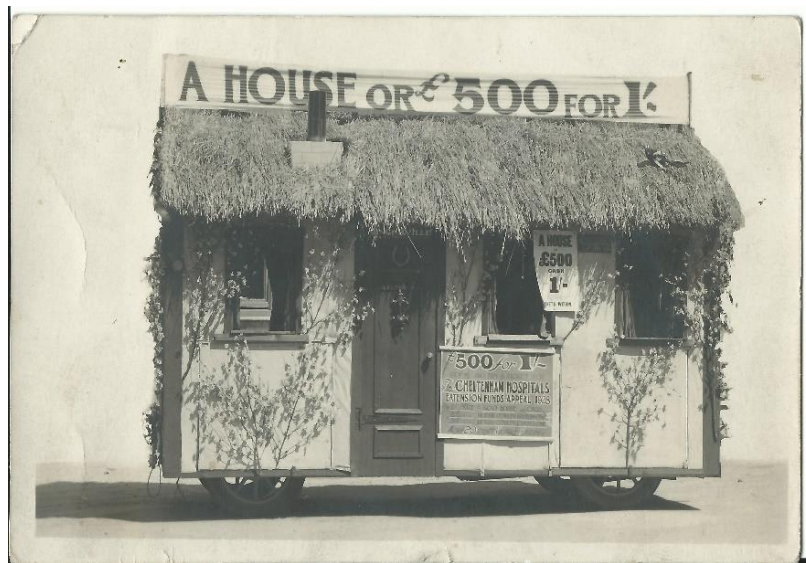
² Compare this price to the price of a seat in the pit at the Theatre Royal in Cambray which was two shillings and six pence; a box cost four shillings.

³ Information from Rolt, L.T.C., *The Aeronauts: A History of Ballooning 1783-1903*, (Longmans, 1966)

⁴ On 7 September 1813.

⁵ This was at the west end of the town, near the junction of Gloucester Road and the High Street. Sadler had not intended to make such a long flight but the snow made it difficult to control his height.

Cheltenham Hospital Appeal 1928 - Part 1



A postcard of a 'house on wheels,' part of Leopold's and the town's fund raising events, on behalf of The Cheltenham Hospital's Extension Funds' Appeals, 1928. A note on the reverse reads, 'Taken June 13th. Just before our little effort, we collected about £68.'

(See also page 66)

Postcard supplied by Bob Leopold of Leopold's Bakers and Confectioners.

Image © Sally Self 2014

J.R. Page, Wood and Coal Dealer, Carlton Place, Cheltenham

DAVID VINER

Introduction

The stimulus for this short article was the chance discovery at a local postcard fair of a sepia photograph of an urban street corner business, with a small wood yard behind and a horse and cart in the road outside. As a collector of images of horse-drawn wagons and carts (and this one strictly speaking is a wagon not a cart), I was immediately attracted to the vehicle, despite its rather run-down appearance, rather than the location.

But my eye also spotted the dealer's own identification of this scene as Carlton Place, Cheltenham, which if correct immediately added to its value as a piece of local history. A deal was quickly done and I was free to do my own research!

Running a magnifier light over the image soon produced more detail including, almost hidden away, the *Carlton Place* cast iron road sign high on the side of the building as confirmation of location, plus the detail of the main sign board above the doorway. This reads *J.R. Page, Wood & Coal Dealer, Furniture removed to any part, Town & Country.*

The whole assemblage, small in scale and tightly compact, represents a typical specific-purpose business in the 'artisan' or working class part of St Paul's in Cheltenham. The photograph is complete with proprietor and family (although the individuals are not identified), plus his horse (only one probably), one of his two main working vehicles and his small yard tucked behind the house, which is itself compact enough.

In the yard are stacks of felled timber, looking as if nothing is wasted, plus a pile of what looks to be railway sleepers behind the lean-to timber shed, which may be significant in light of what happened next. Presumably there is also a coal stack just out of sight.

Protruding from the shed is a pair of cart shafts, suggesting the business had both a cart and a wagon for its everyday working requirements. Study of the wagon standing in the street reveals a relatively unglamorous type, built to a simple plank-sided design but fully locking and essentially functional and fit for its everyday, robust working life. Without doubt both wagon and cart were locally made, probably in Cheltenham itself.

The Page Family Business

Census evidence places this photograph in context. The Page family were dealers in wood and coal in St Paul's for at least 20 years, probably more. In the 1881 Census [RG11/2571] we find John Robert Page, age 16 and born in Cheltenham, living with

his father Robert, wood and coal dealer, as one of his assistants at 1 Phoenix Passage, St Paul's. Ten years later, the 1891 Census [RG12/2044] has the same John R. Page, then aged 26 with his wife Mary and daughter living at 3 St Paul's Cross, in business as a wood and coal merchant.



J.R. Page's business premises on the corner of Carlton Place and Swindon Road in St Pauls, Cheltenham.

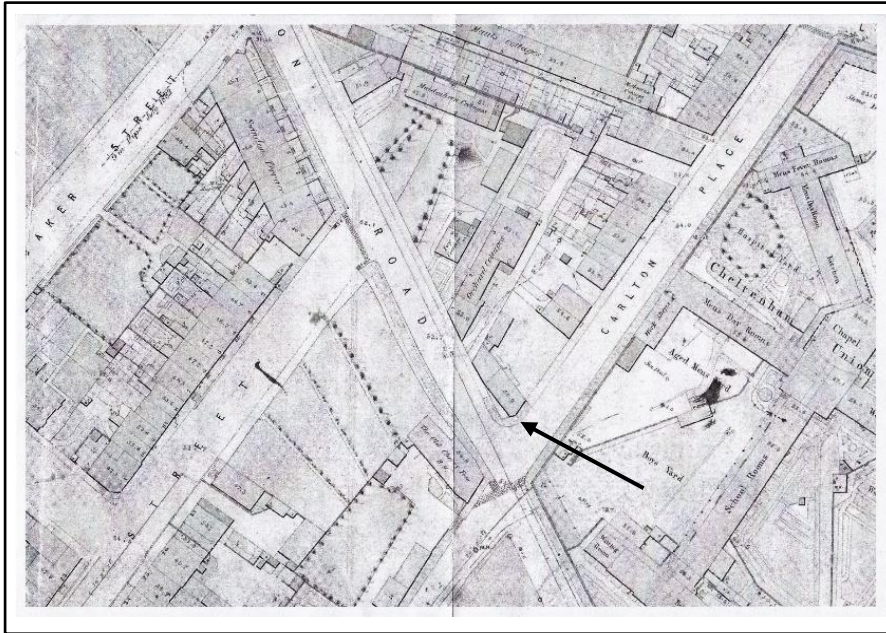
Photographer unknown, postcard in author's possession

By the 1901 Census [RG13/2460] the family consists of John R. Page (37), with wife Mary (33), daughter Caroline (10), and son John R. (8), listed as timber & coal merchant, Maidenhorn Cottage, Swindon Road. These premises are listed between 3 Orchard Cottages, Swindon Road, and 15 Carlton Place West.

By the 1911 Census, Page and his family have moved on and we find him as an inn and lodging house keeper, but still a wood dealer on the side, at a new (and alas indecipherable) address, which we might tentatively assume may still be in St Paul's or not too far away. John Page died in 1919 at the age of 53 and was buried on 19 January in that year at St Mary's, which is presumably the burial ground of that name in Lower High Street.

Map Evidence

The 1855-57 Old Town Survey clearly shows this property on the street corner, albeit un-named. Behind it in the photograph were (and remain today) Orchard Cottages. The Ordnance Survey map of c.1884-5 essentially repeats this evidence. (See inside back cover, for OS map). Both also reveal a fascinating mix of cottages built in the land behind Carlton Place (hence Carlton Place West) and with some access off Swindon Road. Heather Atkinson has written more on this in an earlier *Journal*, 2013. As the address given in the 1901 Census shows, the Page family were very much part of this area and Maidenhorn Cottages show clearly on the Old Town Survey.



A section of the
Old Town
Survey,
1855-57.

By permission of
Cheltenham
Local History
Society,
Gloucestershire
Archives and
Cheltenham
Borough
Council

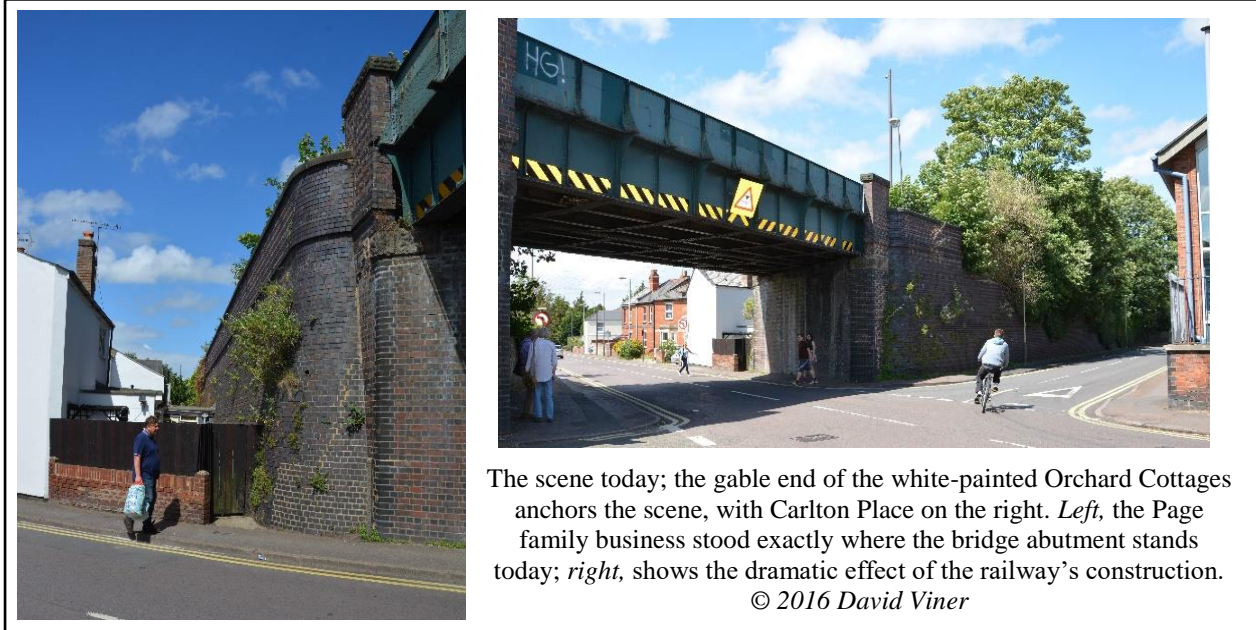
But the implication of that is clear. Initially I took the street corner property in this contemporary photograph to be the same as the 1901 Census address i.e. Maidenhorn Cottage(s), but that would be a duplication. So perhaps we might assume that at this time Page was living at one address but operating his business from the other, a short walk away, which being unoccupied did not therefore feature in the census?

Carlton Place, the Arrival of the Railway: Then and Now

Either way, the local scene was about to change dramatically, with everything in the photograph demolished other than Orchard Cottages on the extreme left. Pencilled onto the Ordnance Survey c.1884-5 map is the alignment for the Great Western Railway's new line from Cheltenham to Honeybourne and beyond, its attempt to create a new and rival route into the Midlands. The pencilled words 'centre line' run right through Page's yard and business.

This part of town was visually dramatically affected by the new works, a large and imposing railway embankment, faced throughout with rather dour railway blue brick, constructed between 1902 and the opening of the line into Cheltenham on 1 August 1906. James Hodsdon's entry in his definitive *Historical Gazetteer* sums it up nicely and accurately, describing Carlton Place as 'a now featureless roadway connecting Swindon Road and St Paul's Road', in which the 'Honeybourne line railway embankment now forms its western side.' It remains today something of an unexciting rat-run through town.

The story of this new railway line for Cheltenham has been told more than once elsewhere, (Crowder and Mitchell & Smith, see below) and need not be repeated here, but a search in the relevant Great Western Railway archives might throw further light on the process of land acquisition by which the railway's route came to be assembled, and the exact timetable for doing so. Suffice to record here how much the embankment still dominates the local scene, now a very pleasant foot and cycle route through the town and beyond, with trains only a distant memory.



Across the road from Page's yard was the Cherry Tree Inn, previous marked on the Old Town Survey as 'The Old Cherry Tree B(oarding) H(ouse)'. It is also shown in *Cheltenham Through Time*, where the photograph is dated as 'immediately before demolition by the GWR in 1905.' This image appeared in the *Chronicle & Graphic* for 1905 in its edition of 18 February for that year but without any explanatory text.

Our photograph probably dates from either the same time or only a year or two before, the photographer perhaps aware of impending changes. It tells its own story, of an 'inner town' family business in the days of horse-drawn transport, operating from a corner site with its own yard tucked behind the house, like so many others.

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Acknowledgements

With many thanks to postcard dealer Mike Orson of Gloucester, to Linda Viner for Ancestry research and once again to Steven Blake for much guidance as ever on sources and Cheltenham's local history generally. The Old Town Survey is from a CD prepared by the Cheltenham Local History Society from the original maps, now in the Gloucestershire Archives as part of the Borough Council's deposit.

‘Being Divine’ – Sarah Bernhardt at the Town Hall

ROGER BEACHAM

THE DAUGHTER OF A GERMAN/DUTCH Jewish mother and an unknown father, Sarah Bernhardt became an extraordinary actress whose private life was as public as her acting career. Though her life was so exposed, Sarah was notorious for embroidering and embellishing any account of events in which she had been involved. Even the date of her birth is uncertain, the records having been destroyed during the Paris Commune.

Two things are widely remembered about Sarah, both belonging to her later years. One, that she slept in a coffin, the other that she possessed only one leg. Exactly how she came to injure her leg is hard to establish. The widely-accepted story is that about 1905 she injured her right leg on stage in South America when appearing in Sardou's *La Tosca*.¹ Another account has her falling on board ship returning from South America in about 1885.² Of course one bad fall may have led to a weakness in the limb making her prone to injury. In any case Sarah suffered so much pain from her leg that in 1915 it was amputated. Sarah had a carrying chair made of white wood and cane, narrow enough to fit into a car, and this provided the transport for the remainder of her life.³

Anxious to return to work and to aid the war effort Sarah appeared in a one act play, Eugene Morand's *Les Cathedrales* which she played to the troops at the front. When performing at London's Coliseum Theatre, Sarah added a patriotic piece of her own *Du Theatre au Champ d'Honneur* - From the Theatre to the Field of Honour, in which she played a fatally wounded French soldier who insists on recovering the flag he has lost. After playing in Birmingham Sarah made a short provincial tour beginning at Cheltenham on Easter Monday 1916. The two performances were arranged by S.C. Field, lessee of the Winter Garden adjoining the Town Hall. The critic of the *Cheltenham Looker-On* wrote:

‘That even in a topical one act piece..... a woman of seventy one, handicapped by a physical disability, the result of an accident some time ago could convincingly impersonate a young soldier wounded on the field of battle was an extraordinary achievement. The sketch gave Mdm. Bernhardt an opportunity for powerful acting that revealed her art in its many phases. The world reputed “golden voice,” like that of Ellen Terry, retains all its charm and thrill, the facial play expressed the multitude of emotions through which she has to pass and the declamatory vehemence of her elocution, especially in the “Prayer for our Enemies” and Derouledes famous verses Au Porte Drapeau, was superb.’⁴

The entertainment at the two performances included variety acts with Allan Adair, a conjuror, Matthew Newton, a tenor and Maud Murray, a contralto. At the conclusion of the performance Mr Field's daughter and several other people presented bouquets to Sarah before she retired to the Queens Hotel for the night.

peruse
hard labour

TOWN HALL, Cheltenham.

TO-DAY ONLY!

Madame **SARAH**

BERNHARDT

AND COMPANY

At 3 p.m. and 7.30 p.m

Doors Open at 2.30 and 7 p.m.

Early Doors 6d. extra at 2.15 and 6.45 p.m

Reserved Seats: 10/6, 7/6, 5/-, and 3/-.

Admission: 2/6 and 1/-.

Gloucestershire Echo, 24 April 1916

The Wilson Art Gallery and Museum has a silver card case, a souvenir of Sarah's appearance here. Hallmarked at Chester in 1899 it is engraved 'Town Hall Cheltenham April 24 1916 Madame Sarah Bernhardt.' Dr Steven Blake has suggested that it may be a gift from S.C. Field to Sarah, but may it not have been a private souvenir of someone present at one of the performances?⁵

Despite her irregular private life such was the regard in which Sarah was held that after her death in 1923 the city of Paris gave her a municipal funeral. In London, a requiem mass was celebrated at Westminster Cathedral at which several leading British actors assisted as ushers and King George V, Queen Dowager Alexandra and Prime Minister Bonar Law were all represented.⁶ Even after 90 years since her death Sarah is still regarded as one of the world's greatest actresses.

¹ Wikipedia, accessed 26 June 2016, places the event in Rio de Janeiro. Gerda Taranow in *Sarah Bernhardt, the art within the legend*, Princetown University Press (1972), p.130, places the accident in Buenos Aires.

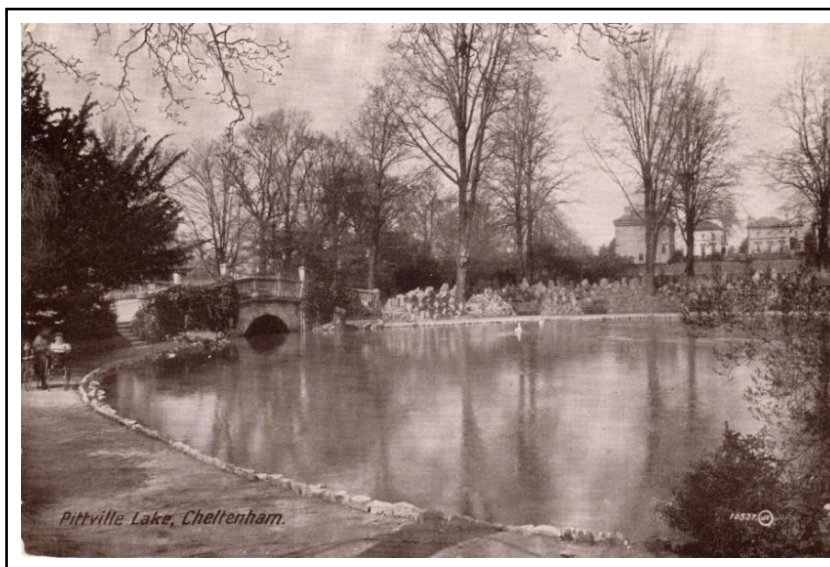
² Ruth Brandon, *Being Divine, a biography of Sarah Bernhardt*, Secker and Warburg (1991), p.322.

³ Ruth Brandon, *op cit*, p.418.

⁴ *Cheltenham Looker-On*, 29 April 1916, p.11

⁵ Dr Steven Blake, *A History of Cheltenham in 100 Objects*, The History Press (2013), p.110.

⁶ *The Times*, 11 April 1923, on line edition, accessed 7 October 2010, states that Sarah had been raised as a Catholic and as a young girl had felt attracted to the life of a religious sister.



An early 20th century postcard of Pittville lake, with St Arvan's being the left-hand house above the lake.
See page 23.
Author's collections

Cheltenham's Lost Heritage Revisited; Part 1

OLIVER BRADBURY

Editor's note: This is the first section of an article prepared by Oliver Bradbury, dealing with buildings that have been demolished or significantly changed. Part 2 will appear in a subsequent Journal. The dates in brackets indicate when the building was erected.

Setting the scene

In 1935 the Regency and Victorian architectural integrity of Cheltenham was still largely intact, though worrisome deletions were beginning to take place. Showcasing such apparent surface integrity and time-stood-still serenity, Ivor Brown's *The Heart of England* (1935) illustrates a very rare and seemingly contemporary photograph of Samuel Onley's Fauconberg Terrace, Bayshill Road (1866), but in fact this must have been taken sometime earlier for 'Onley's Folly' had already been demolished in 1934.¹

Introduction

This inventory is intended as a sequel to my earlier book *Cheltenham's Lost Heritage* (2004). The intention here is to introduce further items of additional research on certain lost Cheltenham buildings and a list of missing buildings that were not included in the 2004 book. It is not intended to be comprehensive and because level of loss is so high for areas such as the High Street, it does not include many of the buildings in the commercial centre, several of which were included anyhow in the book. This research was undertaken between 1995 and 2003 and therefore includes few losses post-2004, however a few updates have been included. The combined toll of those buildings in *Cheltenham's Lost Heritage*, and this sequel, is alarmingly high it must be said. The easiest system of organization here is simply alphabetical:

Albion Street, the site of the entrance to Lidl car park (1980-81), it was a cycle shop and the position of Grosvenor Street houses.

Alconbury, the old St John's Vicarage House, Albion Street. A Victorian house, demolished in 1913. See *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic*, 27 December 1913.

All Saints' Church Vicarage, All Saints Road. A Victorian house, which was still extant in 1954. Possibly a boundary pier survives to the rear.

Alstone Baths (1897).

Arle Farm, demolished 1993.

St Arvan's Court, Evesham Road, Pittville. Charles Winstone, builder, built and perhaps also designed a freestanding pair of houses: St Arvan's and St Leonard's

(now Goldington House). It had been intended that villas should be built here since the plan of the Pittville estate was published in 1826, but they were not built until 1873. St Leonard's was first occupied in 1873, St Arvan's in 1874. The latter was unoccupied by 1970-72 and then demolished in 1973 and later replaced by c.1970s flats called St Arvan's Court. Although no close-up picture (just a distant postcard view, see page 21) has come to light of the house, it is most likely that it was the mirror image of extant St Leonards, in other words a four storey (including basement) and four bay wide stucco faced house, with a recessed entrance bay and heavy ornamental lintels over the ground and first floor windows and a garden stretching back to Pittville Park.

Aubervie, East Approach Drive, Pittville. Three bay-wide Victorian post-1860 villa, within the original 1820s Estate boundary and was the nearest house to Pittville Pump Room and above the extant Ellerslie.

Bath Road, No. 25. Classic plain Regency town house of four storeys and three bays-wide. Ground floor was a shop with a full width wrought-iron balcony at first floor level and windows with simply moulded architraves. Was this Birdlip House, a ruin in 1999? If so, Georgiana House was formerly adjoining.

Bath Road, Nos. 106-108. Regency houses with ornate interiors; semi-derelict in 1977. Design was balanced by extant terrace next to St Luke's Road.

Bath Road, No. 181. Interior had a hall with arch at the junction with stair.

Bath Terrace. Shown on the Cheltenham 1820 map (earliest house built 1819) and by 1834 built on both sides. Site now a car park for Bath Road shops.



Bayshill Court, Parabola Road. Although not demolished, a record is included here for being a drastically recast Victorian villa. An intended villa was generically depicted on this site on Baker and Shellard's *Plan of the Bays Hill Estate, Cheltenham, 1837*, but nothing was built until 1875, as 'The Rectory'. Except for the second floor, the design of this villa looks more like 1845 than 1875. A 1907

postcard reproduced here shows Bayshill Court before removal of stone porch; the hipped roof removed and replaced with current pediment. Rechristened Bayshill Court by the 1890s, it was acquired by Cheltenham Ladies' College in 1930 and dramatically expanded with large flanking brick neo-Georgian boarding house wings, designed by Stanley Hamp in 1931-33. Although the garden was very long, it was only as wide as the house and so neighbouring virgin garden plots on both sides were acquired for Hamp's wings, plots intended for villas way back in 1837.

Berkeley Arms, No. 63 Albion Street. Three bay-wide by three storeys 1820s or 1830s stucco domestic-style public house, with a two-storey front elevation canted bay window, possibly a Victorian addition. This was on the site of what was Debenhams, now to be John Lewis and was demolished post-January 1988.

Berkeley Lodge, Hewlett Road. Built between 1820 and 1830 and demolished in April 1983.

Blenheim Terrace, Portland Street. Four houses built before 1841.

Blenheim Villa (in 1966 Belmont Villa). One of the most surreal sights this author has ever encountered in Cheltenham is finding a Regency villa buried within a car garage; such was Blenheim Villa within ex-Bristol Street Motors site. This was presumably the Blenheim House, Mount Pleasant, see *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 22 March 1821. Bristol Street Motors site occupied a once dense warren of houses, small shops and *The Britannia Inn* (latter, No. 48 Fairview Street, closed in 1980 and 'total demolition' 1987) etc. Also, surviving, until demolition in October 1997, were Winchcombe Street houses, subsumed into the garage perimeter, such as Winchcombe House; a 1936 photograph shows this and adjacent Regency townhouse next to an Italianate-style Blind Institution.

Brookbank Cottage, near Gloucester Road, next to River Chelt. Built c.1830; on 1846 Cheltenham map. Derelict in 1992.

Cambray Lodge. Space between Cambray Lodge (1805) and top of Wellington Street filled with trees, literally a 'wood' in a 1937 photograph. According to *Cheltenham Free Press*, 23 April 1836: 'A Substantially-built Commodious Dwelling House, at the corner of Bath-street [...]; enclosed garden'.

Cedar Lodge, No. 72 London Road. 1820s three bay-wide house with elegant wrought-iron veranda and porch with hood. Neil Rees wrote in 1996: 'An attractive small detached Regency house – now destroyed.' A gate pier possibly survives.



No. 3 Chester Walk.

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Cheltenham Conservative Central Committee Rooms, Albion Street. In George Rowe's *Cheltenham Illustrated Guide* (1845) shown as 'Alder'.² Originally, an attractive Regency house; was it converted to a theatre during the Edwardian period? In 1995 a bingo hall; ended up as Colosseum Variety Club and Athens Restaurant, before recent demolition.

Cheltenham Grammar School (Pate's), Oldbury Road. This was designed by Chamberlin, Powell and Bon in 1963-65 and according to Bryan Little writing in 1967, 'the best modern buildings in Cheltenham'. Pate's was a scaled-down version of this practice's New Hall at Cambridge. Although from the outset a well-received building, Pate's was demolished 30 years later because of 'concrete cancer'.

Chester Walk, No. 3. A pretty, Regency period, ground floor shop front with a large pub-style window with 28 window panes held together with fine glazing bars and

simple fanlight over the entrance. One of several cottages here; in 1975 still lived in though latterly derelict; demolished in 2013 for Museum extension. Also, gone is the Old Bakery, Chester Walk.

Christchurch Road, a three bay-wide Victorian villa, with two canted window bays flanking arched entrance. Empty or derelict in December 1972.

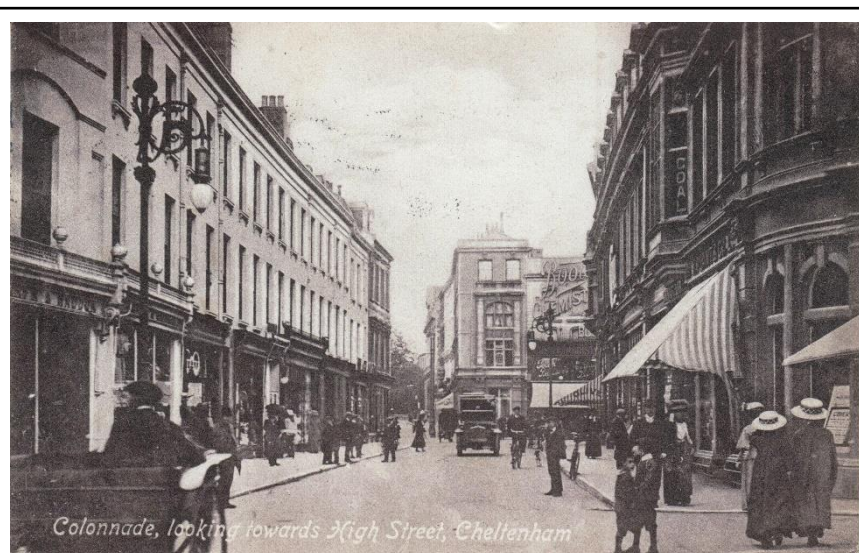
Clare Street Tabernacle, Clare Street. A former chapel, became the 'Cotswold Pram Factory', built c.1836.

Cleevemont, Evesham Road. House on H.S. Merrett's 1834 Cheltenham map. Was this Cleaveland House in 1840? An attractive Gothic Revival house with crenelated parapet and porch with miniature turrets. The 1899 sale particulars say: 'castellated, with a side veranda and 'Ornamental Sheltered Terrace 38ft x 8ft'. The grounds had 'Tastefully Laid-out Velvety old Lawns, Screened & Shaded by really fine-grown Cedar Trees'. The house was demolished about December 1964. 1970s-1980s flats and later town houses on site. Two sets of boundary piers remain, these are stone and *classical*, with cast-iron finials; a lodge survives with an original end elevation with a double pitched roof with bargeboards and original Gothic window glazing. A rear outbuilding, now a private house, also survives.

Clonbrook House, St Margaret's Road (1822), on former Brewery site and in 1855 neighbouring Gardner's Original Brewery. Became part of Pate's Grammar Schools.

College Place, Nos. 1, 2 & 2a, behind Royscott House, The Promenade. Demolished 2 June 1980.

Colonnade, 'looking towards High Street'. See *Cheltenham's Lost Heritage*, pp.61-62. Illustrated below is an early 20th century postcard view of The Colonnade: although an oblique view, this is a particularly instructive vantage point showing how plain the Regency stucco architecture was compared to its florid Victorian stone counterpart opposite (1880-1890), though the Victorian north end rebuild of post-1849 can be just discerned at the 'Boots Corner' end.



1906 postcard of Colonnade, 'looking towards High Street',
Copyright author's collection

Corpus Street, one half gone. Begun c.1820; more than three-quarters built by 1826.

Cotteswolde (Cotswold House), Thirlestaine Road. Grand Italianate Victorian villa, on Old Town Survey (1855-57) and perhaps even 1820 map. Demolished c.1969-1970. Gate piers and an outhouse survive.

Crown Inn, No. 167 High Street. Once opposite the *Plough Hotel*, and existing in 1604, where in a survey it is mentioned as 'the Signe of the Crowne'.³ High Street elevation was a very plain low frontage of three storeys and three bays-wide with no ornamentation at all. *Crown Inn*, a very long narrow tapering building, continued along Crown Inn Passage and was evidently given a Victorian re-facing with two deep bay windows and same period lounge entrances, though 18th century fabric might have survived within. Crown Inn Passage took its name from the Inn and was a footpath between High Street and Albion Street and which is still there though greatly rebuilt. Sometime after 1923 High Street frontage divided into two shops (Nos. 163-65); planning permission for demolition of shops and pub granted in 1987; Inn demolished January 1988 but High Street façade recreated in replica and now Topshop, Nos. 163-166.

The Dobell & Co. Ltd., at the junction of Gloucester and Tewkesbury Roads. Compared to the illustration in Rowe, this building was later chopped in half, horizontally, because of war damage.⁴

Drakes, Winchcombe Street. Drapers. Premises reconstructed 1916-18.

Eagle Star and Cheltenham & Gloucester enlarged HQ building site, Clarence Street. Formerly the warehouse of Shirers & Lances department store; built in 1861 and demolished in 1974. Very sturdy building in a Gothic-Classical fusion style.

Eamont, Bayshill Road. Built 1839, became *The Tudor Hotel* and in 1925 First Church of Christ, Scientist. Early Victorian sub-Gothic Revival.

Ellenborough Hotel, Oriel Road, was part of the western terrace of Oriel Terrace, 1827-29, later converted into a hotel though retaining its Regency interiors and rear gardens. Demolished 1972.

Elmfield, Overton Road. A Victorian house, which became a hotel and was demolished in 1974. On the site was built 16 flats in two blocks.

Elms Court, Albert Road, Pittville. A mid-Victorian stucco villa with arched porch and above a balcony. As a design, it straddled Cheltenham's Regency legacy with the heavier Victorian manner then emerging. Very similar to an extant large, detached house on Hill Court Road. Demolished post-1958, the stable block may still be there, as are mature trees and stone entrance piers. 1960s block on site.

Endcliffe, St George's Road. Possibly one Victorian gothic boundary pier survives.

Exeter Hall, Grosvenor Street. A 10-bedroom house existing by 1840.

Fairholme, Loretto, Langton House, Montpellier Lawn were freestanding late-Regency villas on the Eagle Star Centre site. Ten buildings were destroyed in all for the building. **Fairholme** was on Montpellier Drive and a handsome 1830s house of four bays by two storeys with an attic with arched dormers. There was a full-height canted bay window breaking into a roof gable and an entrance porch flanked by windows with arched decorative tympana; and a full-height side elevation bow. It had the same bay and roof eaves as the extant Eagle House (this was *Montpellier*

Hotel). The front elevation can be seen in an article in *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 31 January 1948, p.5. Fairholme was demolished in 1969.

Fairview Inn, No. 96 Fairview Road, between former All Saints' School (1890), Fairview Street, and Fairview Close (once School Lane). Built in 1804 as Fair View Cottage by William Fletcher (or Fletcher), by 1870 it was the *Fairview Inn*, a beer house. It was the first building in Fairview, predating later encroaching development. A three bay-wide and three storey house, of very simple stucco design, the only ornament being string courses at first and second floor level and roof cornice. The



Fairview Inn, photograph taken March 1980.
© 1980 Dr Steven Blake

Ordnance Survey map of 1885 shows a very deep, stepped-back building, sited at an angle to surrounding roads. The pub was closed in 1979 and demolished for housing in about September 1981. The photograph reproduced here is a rare record of what was Fairview's oldest building. To the immediate west, in between *Fairview Inn* and All Saints' Secondary school, was a narrow, small two-bay

wide, two storey Regency building (No. 94 Fairview Road); this too has now gone since March 1980 – the date of this photograph. It shows just how simple this type of architecture could be, with no more for decoration than a cornice and plain timber entrance architrave, with fanlight within.

Female Orphan Asylum, Winchcombe Street. Erected in 1834, it replaced the earlier School of Industry on the same site. The orphanage closed in 1951 and was demolished seven years later. It was in the Regency Gothic Revival style.

Friends Meeting House, Portland Street. A three bay-wide by three storey Victorian building in a loosely Tudor Gothic style.

Full Moon Inn, High Street, the site became Hutchinsons.

Georgiana Cottage (later House), a site now presently occupied (at least in 1999) by an Eagle Star insurance office on Bath Road and was near the corner of the present Bath Street. It had 'a lovely and very long garden, and was a very pretty house with verandas and balconies.'⁵ Here Lord Byron spent some pleasant hours with friends, writing to Lord Holland on 10 September 1812 from Cheltenham: 'By the waters of Cheltenham I sate down & *drank*, when I remembered thee oh Georgiana Cottage!'⁶ The house was demolished in February 1928.

St George's Avenue: nine houses between Nos. 321 & 321a (now 286-88) High Street, near St George's Square. First noted 1860. All nine were listed for slum clearance in 1935.

St George's Square, west side (Ambrose Street) has been demolished. There were at least six substantial elegant townhouses here; all three bays-wide, and one was double bow-fronted.

St George's Street. A large rendered house at end of St George's Street and Swindon Road. Possibly built 1835-38 and demolished late 1990s. A recent block of eight flats, 'St Georges', now on the site and the same development segues into 'Saracens' on Swindon Road, with 14 flats.

Glendouran House, bottom of Corpus Street. Photographs taken 26 May 1928 show a Regency interior and a Victorian chimneypiece, which with the surviving stone and rusticated gate piers infer a Regency house, but a photograph in the *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic*⁷ suggests an emphatically Victorian house with broad canted ground floor bay window, a large conservatory and gables with eaves on the River Chelt side. There was also a melon house and two dwellings for men servants. Was this a Regency house massively expanded in the Victorian period? The Victorian house dated from 1868. During the 20th century Glendouran belonged to UCAL Chemicals and was burnt in either 1968, 1969 or 1970 and then demolished June 1973. The grounds are now built over.

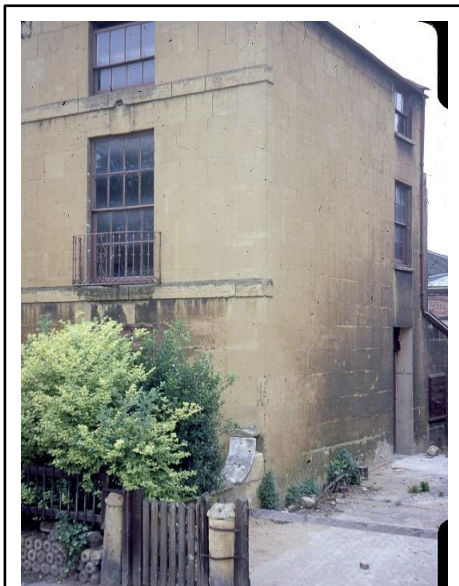
Gloucestershire Co-op and adjoining shop, corner of High Street and Grosvenor Place South.

Gloucester Place, No. 16. Retail premises in a Regency three bay-wide by three storey building, there in 1840.

Gloucester Road School. Built 1905-06, demolished 17 September 2002. A Time Capsule was uncovered under the foundation stone.

Great Western Station, St James' Square (1877). Site now part of insurance offices.

Former Haines and Strange Motors site, Albion Street. There were earlier houses on this site.



No. 1 Hartley Place, off
Witcombe Place, August 1968.
© 1968 Amina Chatwin

No. 1 Hartley Place, off Witcombe Place. **Hartley Place**, five houses first noted in 1883-84 but of a much earlier date, (shown on Merrett's map, 1834). They were at the back of St John's School, Albion Street. House No. 1 had front and side ashlar walls, with one side of brick. Nos. 2-4 were demolished c.1935. No. 1, photographed in 1968 by Amina Chatwin, had a low wall of stone pipe cores in front, photographed by Nigel Temple (1976) means Hartley Place was demolished post-1976. This is a reminder of the failure of the Stone Pipe Company (1805-1815), remotely based 11 miles east of Cheltenham. The company mined limestone which were turned into pipes of all sizes but the venture failed because the pipes leaked. Consequently, 'they were used a lot for wall-building, being useless for anything else.'⁸

Hatherley Hall, on the corner of Hatherley and Warden Hill Roads. The large Victorian house, built in 1880, was two storeys high and five bays-wide with basement and attic. There was a raised balcony over the basement and window architraves and quoins carried out in stucco. Demolished 1971. Although not distinguished, it commanded the site well and was replaced with an L-shaped two storey block of 28 flats.

Hatherley House Flats, Lansdown Road. A mildly Gothic brick Victorian house with details picked out in stone. With a steep pitched roof with central gable, it was built, as *The Gables* in 1897 (anticipated on 1895 map) and first occupied in 1898, within subdivided grounds of neighbouring extant Hatherley House (formerly Hatherley Lawn, built after 1834). The two were later conjoined as 'Lilian Faithfull Homes' when converted to flats and a connecting range built, 1959-1960 and 1972. Demolished December 1987. Original gate piers survive with later name 'Oakdene'; name of replacement retirement home built in 1989.

Hatherley Lane, Victorian school house. Perhaps designed by John Middleton in the 1870s, demolished 2001.

Heath Lodge, Pittville Circus. An 1853 ground plan shows the site of Heath Lodge, but not built until 1864. Still there in 1965, but demolished by 1975 for a four-storey block of 12 maisonettes. Stucco-faced gate piers survive. Other losses in this area include **Essex Lodge** ('Little Spa', built after 1825, demolished 1903) in Pittville Lawn and Central Cross Drive and **Anlaby**, Evesham Road (just north of No. 40 Evesham Road; formerly South Cleeve), built 1840-41 and within the original 1820s Pittville Estate boundaries. Demolished c.1935. Now **Anlaby Court** (1930s houses) and **Nos. 82-92 Evesham Road**.

Hewlett Road. Houses cleared for former '24-hour' garage site and now residential again with '**Sidney Lodge**'; perhaps five 19th century properties were previously cleared, between today's Nos. 35-51a.

High Street, No. 121. Regency two bay-wide stucco town house elevation, between old Woolworth building (Nos. 123-25) and ex-HMV (latter building still extant, Nos. 111-113). No. 121 was the first of two houses that were also part of the *Royal Hotel* (1818), going in an easterly direction. Although *Royal Hotel* was demolished post-1957, it is interesting that this section (No. 121) survived until c.1990. No. 121 and Woolworth were on site of Beechwood Shopping Centre (1991). Although demolished c.1990, No. 121's façade was recreated as part of the Beechwood complex. Next to these buildings was the long 'set back' range of the long-lost *Vittoria Hotel*, still very much there (the 'set back') in early 1986, though it had been totally rebuilt behind the still-extant Regency building, No. 127, stucco with curved corner and first floor iron balconies, abutting the Beechwood arcade.

High Street, No. 106. S.Y. Griffith's *Historical Description of Cheltenham*⁹ shows a Regency townhouse that was a bank. A later photograph in 1960 shows it as *Achille Sere*, cleaners. Demolished in 1967.

High Street, No. 128. Grand four storey Regency town house.

High Street, No. 168. Very elegant and chaste three bay-wide and five storeys tall, stucco town house elevation above the shop (before 1957 it was No. 376). There was



No. 168 High Street (far left) c.1900
Courtesy of Cheltenham Family and Local History Library

a building there in 1800, so in origin it probably predates the current elevation. Perhaps by Sir John Soane's pupil, G.A. Underwood (note delicate first floor incision work), of uncertain date but perhaps c.1817-1823. Described in 1839 thus: 'Messuage Tenement or Dwellinghouse and premises situate and being No. 376 in the High Street of Cheltenham with the yard and cottage behind the same, opening into

Regent Gardens [...]',¹⁰ in 1954 was 'True-Form' Boot Company (J. Sears' shoe shop); by the 1970s all but the façade had been replaced and finally the original façade was demolished in late 1988 or 1989, though recreated in replica. No. 166 High Street (No. 377 in 1855-57), next door, was demolished at the same time as part of new retail development.

High Street, Nos. 174-186, between W.H. Smith and former Burton. Three simple town house-type buildings with retail at ground floor; middle one was stucco-faced with sash windows at first and second floor levels. Demolished post-1988.

High Street, No. 318 (No. 292 in 1957). Four storey Regency townhouse was Cheltenham Dispensary (and casualty ward), established 1813. Later became Martin Brothers, wine merchants, with next door, No. 294, as a two-storey appendage with a long one storey side frontage facing Cheltenham Spa Bowling Club, St George's Square (itself something of a lost square). Both buildings and No. 290 demolished post-early 1988. Compared to a view in S.Y. Griffith's *Historical Description of Cheltenham*¹¹ it is clear that later No. 318 had been stuccoed over; lost first floor lattice balconies and ground floor converted from a domestic to commercial frontage.

High Street, shops from No. 401 High Street to Glanville Street. Now flats and new roadway.

Hilton Lodge, corner of Westal Green and St Stephen's Road (garage roundabout area). Built as Hatherley Villa (by 1900 Quince Lawn), was this renamed again Hilton Lodge? Hatherley Villa built in 1854 in a vaguely Tudor Gothic style with drip moulds over tall raised ground floor windows and a diagonally accented tri-chimney stack, raised corner porch and rear range. Demolished 1964. A stone boundary pier survives. Two blocks of 46 flats built on site.

Holland House, Lansdown Road, site of the present Gloucestershire Constabulary County Police Headquarters, also called Holland House. An 1873 house demolished in the 1960s or early 1970s.

Holy Trinity Mission Hall and adjoining cottages, Sherborne Street. Hall was Victorian Gothic Revival, red brick. Demolished 1997.

Horse and Groom Inn and small houses, site now St James' Street car park.

St James' Street, one side gone. Shops on corner of High and St James' Streets have long gone, now a void next to High Street model shop.

Jenner House, No. 22 St George's Place. One of two Regency town houses, had curved and mahogany doors within. Demolished 1969. Rebuilt in facsimile in c.1994.

Keynsham Road, No. 60. A very plain approximately 1820s or 1830s house of four bays and three storeys. Replaced in rough facsimile c.2000.

Knapp, The, Ledmore Road, Charlton Kings. Although renovated for Ugandan Asians in 1972, it was demolished c.1976. This was a large 1830s house (built by 1838) of three bays and three storeys with a projecting full-height middle bay, full-height pilasters, and projecting tripartite ground floor windows flanking a recessed entrance. All carried out in stucco, there was also a side and rear extension.

Langton Hotel, Bath Road, was on the site of Century Court. This appears to have been a series of 1820s houses joined up to form the hotel. The composition was in stucco with tripartite windows and shallow elliptic arches amongst other features. *Langton Hotel* replaced by office block (former Linotype-Hell), as reported by uncited newspaper clipping, 18 February 1965.

London Road, No. 79. Demolished to widen junction with Old Bath Road.

Malvern Road station. [see also *Society's Journal 32 (2016), p.33, for further photographs*].



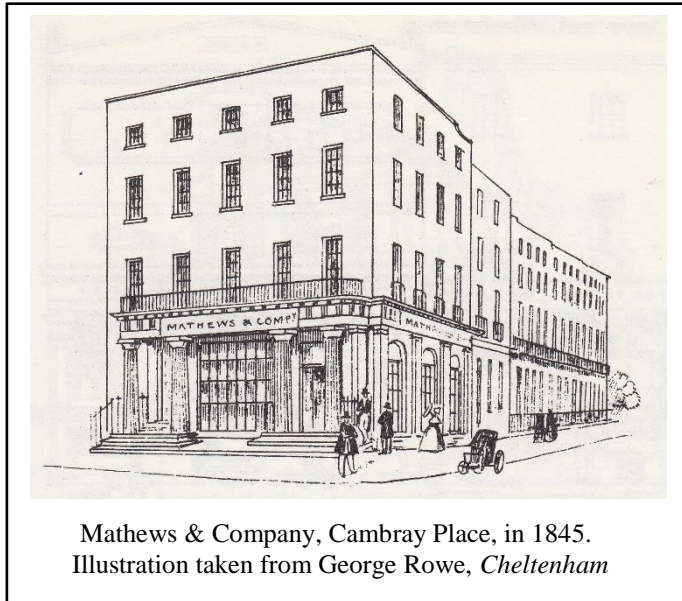
Marston Lodge (later Villa), 1881, photograph.
Is that *Aubervie*, East Approach Drive, in the background, to the left?
© 2016 Oliver Bradbury

Marston Lodge (later Villa), East Approach Drive, Pittville.

Built 1858-59 (on 28 March 1858 house 'now in course of erection') within original 1820s Estate boundaries; large stucco Italianate house of five bays and three storeys with entrance set-back; with outbuildings, grooms' cottage, coach house, stables and garden. Architecturally identical to extant neighbouring Malvern Hill House, both were built 1858-59 by Charles Winstone, builder. Still there in 1975,

Marston must have been demolished between 1975-79. Site now St Ives Court, No. 120 Albert Road, built 1979.

Martins Bank, corner of High and Winchcombe Streets. Demolished 1964.



Mathews & Company, Cambray Place, in 1845.
Illustration taken from George Rowe, *Cheltenham*

Mathews & Company, Cambray Place. George Rowe described this large building thus: ‘at the upper corner of which is the extensive concern of Messrs. Mathews & Co. General Grocers and Tea Dealers. This is an old established house [...]’.¹² This handsome Greek Revival building appears to date from the 1820s. The use of four baseless Greek Doric columns on The Strand elevation suggests that this design might have

been by a pupil of Sir John Soane - himself a Greek Doric devotee - this being the little-known architect George Allen Underwood (1793-1829). Underwood designed at least seven buildings in Cheltenham and probably many more. In 1817 Underwood designed the Montpellier Spa ‘Long Room’, replacing a wooden structure of 1809.¹³ The Mathews building was five bays-wide and note the width of the first-floor balcony and the trouble taken with arched side elevation, in Cambray Place. A detail of the stone ground floor treatment – presumably above was stucco – can be seen in ‘Old Cheltenham’, *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic*, 14 March 1908, which noted that ‘recently the premises have been replaced by a handsome edifice, with clock tower.’ This would infer that the Greek Revival building was demolished during the Edwardian period and replaced with the current red brick and terracotta building about 1907.

Moorend Park (latterly Hotel), Charlton Kings, demolished March-April 1979. Clearly with grounds of 20 acres this site was irresistible to the developer of the day. This was a highly unusual Swiss chalet-style house with conservatory, lake and boathouse, stable block and ‘dummy lodge’. Two photographs in the *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic* for 21 November 1914 show the exterior with elaborate bargeboards and a large interior room. This was built between 1835-1840 for Frind Cregoe Colmore, a Birmingham businessman, the original design was by J.B. Papworth but then Colmore went for a ‘Swiss’ exterior. Other Charlton Kings losses include **Springfield** (built 1818-19 by Robert Crump); **Hambrook House**; **Acomb House**.

National School, Bath Road. According to Rowe: ‘supported by voluntary subscriptions, and calculated to give instruction to between two and three hundred scholars. The building was erected in 1816, and opened for school purposes on the 6th of January, 1817.’¹⁴ The front courtyard setback still survives.

The New Club, The Promenade and Imperial Square. A rather dull two storey Victorian building with verandas on both main elevations, though still preferable to its Modernist replacement, The Quadrangle. Built 1873, demolished 1970.

North Place, No. 10 (next to extant Clifton Lodge, No. 11, a radical façade design of c.1820-1830), although apparently two houses originally, formed a single composition of four bays and three storeys (in 1961 North House). The stucco design was somewhat unusual with the emphasis on the end bays, which have stacked elliptic arches housing entrances and windows above. The entrances had the classic Cheltenham spider's web fanlight glazing pattern. Cleared in 1979-1980 for the Northern Relief Road. There were two further houses (Nos. 9 & 8) of the same period and part of same terrace in North Place when going in a town centre-direction, the one next to North House was same design as North House.

North Place, Nos. 21 & 22. Built up by 1819.

North Place, No. 26.

Northwick and Thirlestaine Villas, on corner of Bath and Suffolk Roads. The collective name for these two semi-detached houses was Thirlestaine Villas. Built by John Rushout, second Lord Northwick's (1769-1859) Northwick Park, Blockley, Gloucestershire, and Thirlestaine House multiple-extensions artisans, Northwick and Thirlestaine Villas were built and completed between 1849 and 1851. They appear to have been very substantial stone-built houses with lower wings on either side. The only known view is a rather distant aerial one.

Oddfellow's Hall, The Strand. Demolished 1963.

Old Gas Offices (later furniture store), North Street and corner of Albion Street. Were 100 years old when demolished in 1964. Site now part of Boots. Opposite side - from former Littlewoods to Cheltenham Liberal Club - was Ward's (drapers, rebuilt 1923); a greengrocer; two pubs (*The Globe Inn*, No. 4 North Street; going in 1878, closed 1969, and *The Cambridge Inn*, on Primark site, going in 1885, closed 1969); North Street Motors and Peacock Manufacturing Co. Site became Littlewoods, with neighbouring Job Centre added in the 1990s.

Old Vicarage, Oldfield Crescent. Substantial Victorian Gothic stone vicarage built for Canon Griffiths, first vicar of St Marks Church, demolished in October 2004.

Parkward Mansions, Shurdington Road. Three storey Victorian house; arched windows with moulded architraves; gabled roof. Bombed 11 December 1940.

Pates Infant School, opposite St Margaret's Terrace. This was originally German Cottage. Possibly on 1809 Cheltenham map and if not, built before 1820 (1820 map), with a large garden. Later subsumed into Pates Infant School, but Regency core still visible, especially central full-height canted bay on east elevation (North Street) though window glazing was changed when converted to a school, but top storey appears to have retained original Regency balconies including that on an original elevation facing St Margaret's Road. Original house was exceptionally plain and three bays deep and faced in stucco; deep eaves and a second-floor canted bay that broke through the hipped roof of flanking wings - an unusual tripartite composition. School extensions flanking original core look Edwardian and then also pre-First World War and had huge hipped gables. At least three Regency stone gate piers survived into the Pates era. Demolished c.1989 and replaced with inferior Postmodern office block, Pate Court.



Pates Infant School, opposite St Margaret's Terrace.

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¹ See entry in this author's *Cheltenham's Lost Heritage* (Sutton Publishing 2004), p.132. *The Heart of England* photograph, taken c.1926-1934, also shows Onley's lost No. 4 Fauconberg Villas (1867-1968) beyond Fauconberg Terrace and covered in creeper.

² George Rowe, *Cheltenham Illustrated Guide* (George Rowe 1845; republished by S.R. Publishers 1969), p.50.

³ Attested in manorial records from the early 17th century, TNA, E 178/7025, f. 1., courtesy of Alex Craven, contributing editor for *Victoria County History*, Volume XV, Cheltenham.

⁴ Rowe, p.91.

⁵ Edith Humphris & E.C. Willoughby, *At Cheltenham Spa* (Alfred A. Knopf 1928), pp.167-69.

⁶ Leslie A. Marchand (ed.), 'Famous in my time' [:] *Byron's Letters and Journals*, vol. 2, 1810-1812 (John Murray 1973), p.192.

⁷ *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic*, 15 March 1930.

⁸ The late David Bick, in correspondence.

⁹ S.Y. Griffith, *Historical Description of Cheltenham*, 2nd edition, Vol.1 (1826).

¹⁰ 'Lease of a Messuage Cottage and Premises in or near the High Street Cheltenham', 24 June 1839, Gloucestershire Archives, D2202/3/78/102/2. A long-covered passageway can be seen on the Old Town Survey that led to the yard with a separate cottage therein.

¹¹ S.Y. Griffith, *Historical Description of Cheltenham*, 1st edition (1826).

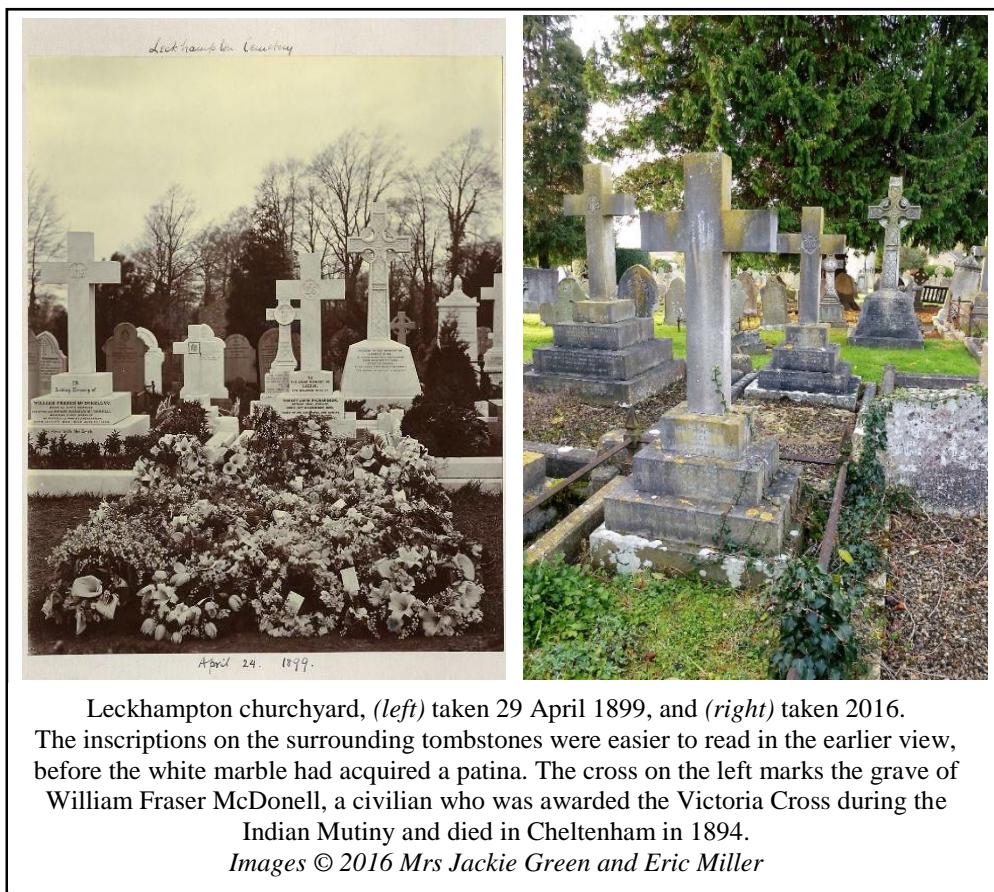
¹² Rowe, p.69.

¹³ H. Davies, *The Stranger's Guide Through Cheltenham* (Cheltenham 1832), p.11.

¹⁴ Rowe, p.75.

One of Cheltenham's Last Indigo Planters

ERIC MILLER



THE ABOVE PHOTOGRAPH (left) showing a flower-strewn grave in Leckhampton churchyard was sent to me in the hope that I might be able to say whose it was. The inscriptions on the nearby tombstones were recognisable and they led me to the plot, now surmounted by a cross. The words on the supporting plinth not only answered my enquirer's question but as a bonus enabled me to identify another of the great indigo planters from Bengal who retired to Cheltenham – and who was moreover a member of a family of outstanding sportsmen.

The grave shown in the photograph of 1899 was that of Violet Gladys ('Jack') Studd, the beloved 15-year-old daughter of Edward John Charles and Helen Studd. Though the family's home was in Cheltenham, her death on 20 April had been registered in Marylebone, where she had evidently been undergoing medical treatment. Her death certificate sheds some light on the distressing circumstances. A few months previously she had been diagnosed with a sarcoma of the humerus and in April an operation was carried out to amputate the arm, but despite the best efforts of the distinguished surgeon, Rickman J. Godlee of Wimpole Street, she died of shock nine hours later. The family left Cheltenham soon afterwards and Edward J.C. Studd died in Folkestone in 1909. His funeral was held at Leckhampton, however, and he was buried in the same plot as his daughter.

Edward J.C. Studd had been born in Tirhoot¹ in 1849. He was the eldest son of Edward Studd, who was a leading member of the British community of indigo planters in Bengal. Edward Studd senior is mentioned in the *History of Behar Indigo Factories* by Minden Wilson² as the owner and superintendent of several estates and factories, as a result of which he and others ‘amassed splendid fortunes ... all he touched seemed to prosper’. He was described as a great practical joker, who kept a pair of tiger cubs as pets – ‘playful but not vicious’ until they had to be shot – and once on horseback chased a wolf for 12 miles. In later life, living at Tedworth House in Wiltshire, he became very religious and followed the revivalists Sankey and Moody. Another son, Charles Turnour Studd, was a missionary in China and Africa.

Edward J.C. Studd left for India in 1866 and on his father’s death in 1877 succeeded as manager of one of the indigo manufacturing concerns in Tirhoot. He married Helen Marian Turnour Richardson while still in India, and their first son Edward Basil Turnour Studd was born there. The family returned to England for good in 1879 and for ten years Edward J.C. Studd immersed himself in Cheltenham’s social life, as a member of the New Club and the Masonic Foundation Lodge, and as a governor of the General Hospital.

In 1899 his son Edward Basil Turnour Studd went out to India, eventually succeeding as manager of the same indigo concern, but he appears to have travelled widely and had other irons in the fire, as the importance of the indigo trade waned. He was a director of the Córdoba Central Railway in Argentina, sailing to Buenos Aires from the United Kingdom in 1910. By 1914 he had evidently returned to Britain to enrol as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Northumberland Yeomanry, but (see below) he was in India again in 1917. In 1923 he was living in retirement at the Manor House, Lower Slaughter.

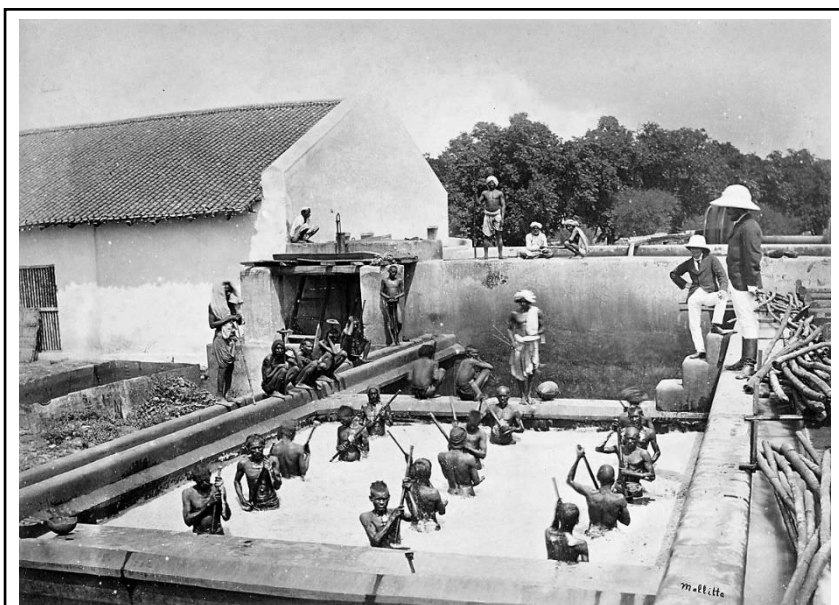
The whole of the Studd family excelled at sports, especially cricket. The above-mentioned Charles T. Studd played in the original ‘Ashes’ test match against Australia. Edward J.C. Studd played as a schoolboy, first for Eton then Cheltenham College, and later (1879 -1886, highest score 110) for the MCC and for various amateur clubs such as the Gentlemen of England. In 1892 he played several games at a Grand Lawn Tennis Championship held at Montpellier. His son Edward B.T. Studd played for Harrow School (1896 - 1898), and the MCC (1907 - 1908 and, after time in India and war service, in 1919). He was back in India again in December 1917, when he played for the Europeans v the Parsees (*sic*) at Bombay.

Edward J.C. Studd was one of half-a-dozen indigo manufacturers who settled in Cheltenham and who chose to live in one of the grand mansions in Thirlestaine Road. His home was Ravensworth (since demolished, the site now occupied by the Mormon Church). Nearby over the same period were James Cox at Thirlestaine Hall, David Russell Crawford at Connellmore (demolished, the site now occupied by The Verneys), George Nevile Wyatt at Lake House (renamed Southwood) and Anthony O’Reilly Edwards at Roseleigh West. John Gale, another of the great names from Tirhoot described in Minden Wilson’s book, lived at Oakfield in The Park. In death too Cox, Crawford, Studd and Wyatt lie within feet of each other in Leckhampton churchyard, and Gale is not far away.³

Finally, to return to the photograph itself. It was taken by Francis Farquhar Sladen, later Judge Sladen of the Bengal Civil Service. In April 1899, he was in his last

year at Oxford but had already passed the entrance examination for the Indian Civil Service, with which his family already had links. Although he was three years older than Edward Basil Turnour Studd, it seems highly likely that he was acquainted with him and/or his father through the Indian connection, and while visiting during the Easter vacation he will have attended Jack Studd's funeral. Both young men went out to India later that year. That was not Francis Sladen's first visit to Cheltenham, however. For example, in November 1898 he was one of 120 guests invited to a supper dance organised by Miss Maud Kelley⁴ at The Rotunda, which was also attended by Mrs E.J. C. Studd, while Edward B.T. Studd was one of the stewards.

Francis Sladen shared his friend's interest in cricket and was clearly no mean player himself. He played for Charterhouse in 1894, and in June 1899 for Balliol College, Oxford, against the Eton Ramblers, scoring 84 and taking four wickets. He died in 1970 the age of 95, maintaining a bank account with a branch in Cheltenham, which he perhaps set up when he visited in the 1890s. When he took the photograph, he cannot have imagined that over a hundred years later it would prompt this unearthing of his visit and of the lives of the family that welcomed him to Cheltenham.



'Indigo beating by hand' carried out by natives under British supervision. *Oscar Malitte, 1877*
The dark-blue indigo dye is obtained from the leaves of the plant *Indigofera tinctorial* – its name indicates its origin in India – which was soaked in water and fermented.

¹ In Behar province, north-east India, close to the frontier with Nepal.

² Published in 1909, digitised by Cornell University.

³ See Toomey, J: 'The Cox Family: 75 Years in Cheltenham' in Cheltenham Local History Society, Journal **9** (1992-3) and Miller, E: 'Eminent Cheltonians commemorated at Leckhampton' in Journal **23** (2007).

⁴ A popular Cheltenham society hostess, still active in 1913.

Other sources include the *Cheltenham Looker-On* and the *Cheltenham Examiner*, local directories and the websites ancestry.co.uk, findmypast.co.uk, cricketarchive.com and tennisarchives.com. I also thank Mrs Jackie Green (née Sladen) for the original photograph and background information on her grandfather Francis Sladen.

Curtain Up - Cheltenham's Theatres 1758-1803

JAMES RITCHIE

Prologue

RUNNING THEATRES IN LATE GEORGIAN and Regency England was no sinecure. It was a period of rapidly changing fashions and tastes with the added hazard of the fickleness of the acting profession - actresses were often equated with prostitutes – there was also the insecurity of funding and the major hazard of fire in an establishment often full of combustible materials, with only rudimentary fire precautions and lit by candles, oil lamps and later the new-fangled gas lamps¹.

Cheltenham was a 'new' town having risen rapidly from village status during the developing spa years and following George III's royal seal of approval on the town as a resort. There was no permanent theatre tradition, as existed in major cities, for example the Globe and Roses theatres in London, until in 1782 Cheltenham's first purpose-built theatre opened in Grosvenor Terrace.

Until the establishment of a permanent theatre in most provincial towns, travelling companies of actors moved between towns, using existing buildings such as town halls, assembly rooms or indoor tennis courts, in which they would erect wooden prefabricated stages, galleries, boxes and proscenium arches to use for their productions. By the 1780s the arrival of companies of players had become very popular, even overcoming evangelical condemnation, leading to the building of purpose-built theatres, the cost usually being met by public subscription. Until the mid-eighteenth century, wax candles lit the theatre with sconces hanging above the proscenium, stands in the wings and a trough containing candles along the front of the stage, which by lowering could provide a darkening effect. Following its introduction at Drury Lane theatre in London, the Argand patent oil lamp spread to the provinces making candle sconces redundant. They had the further advantage of varying light levels using shades which, when adjusted by the single turn of a handle, provided a mysterious night-lighting effect changing from colourless opaque to green.

Act 1 - The Cheltenham Theatre's Beginnings

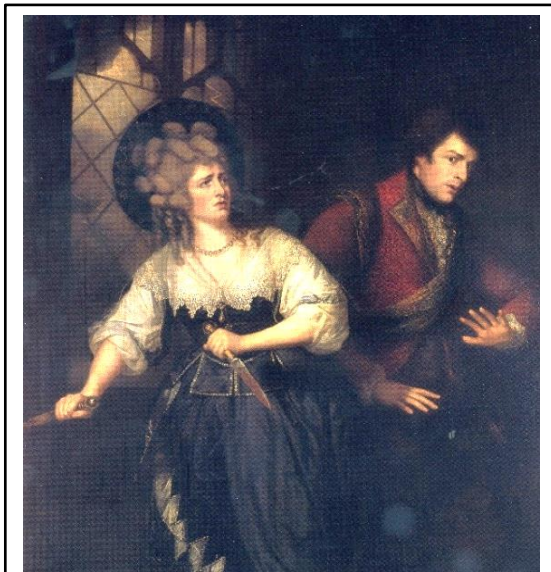
The first recorded theatre in Cheltenham was established in 1758 in an old 'fitted up' malt house, an outbuilding of Newcastle House, a lodging house in Coffee House Yard (off what is now Pittville Street). Converted into a place of entertainment² it was run by its first managers Chamberlain and Crump. An early entertainment in 1758 was advertised in the *Gloucester Journal*, 'Mr Williams' company of Comedians is arrived in Cheltenham and will act 3 times this season'. No proper theatre had been built by the early 1770s, but travelling companies, principally Roger Kemble's company from Worcester, presented plays in the malt house, 'a poor place, little better than a barn'.³ The Coffee House Yard Theatre, as it became known, 'was primitive in the extreme being little more than a shed with straw covering the floor.'⁴ Two descriptions described the temporary theatre:

‘... the “tyring room”⁵ being a hayloft, and the “arena” a stable, fitted up for the “nonce”⁶. The heroine in her sable garb of woe came always in a chair, dressed for the character she had to perform; and was conducted by a miserable flight of steps to the general green room,’⁷

and the second, from the 1856 novel, *John Halifax, Gentleman* by Dinah Craik;

‘In a few minutes we had started in a flutter of gaiety and excitement for Coffee House Yard Theatre... a poor place, built in the lane leading out of the High Street. This lane was almost blocked up with play-goers of all ranks, and in all sorts of equipages, from the coach to the sedan chair, mingled with a motley crowd on foot all jostling, fighting and screaming, ‘till the place became a complete bear garden...’⁸

Lighting too was another problem. Candles, supplemented in the late 1780s by oil, increased the cost of maintaining theatres due to the resulting smut and grime. Candles were taxed and major increases in the cost of candles and oil, as happened in 1781, led managers to cut costs. John Boles Watson, of whom more later, was noted for his parsimony and in James Winston’s notes, was said ‘to burn kitchen stuff in place of oil which is very offensive’ to light the stage, and on the plea being made to light the auditorium with wax, he increased admission to the boxes by sixpence - but ‘after a very few nights the wax candles disappeared.’⁹



Sarah Siddons and her brother John Kemble appearing together at the Garrick, 1786, by Thomas Beach.
Wikipedia Commons

In 1774, despite the primitive environment, an engagement to act in Cheltenham was the turning point for the actress Sarah Kemble, later Mrs Siddons. She was the daughter of Roger Kemble, manager of a Warwick company of actors. John Boles Watson had worked as an actor in Kemble’s company and had befriended his son John Philip and toured with him jointly as strolling players, with Kemble reciting, supported by Watson conjuring. Sarah Siddons, the greatest actress of her generation, played in Cheltenham in various roles, including Portia. John, her brother, was also introduced to the stage here¹⁰ and became an outstanding classical actor of the era, as well as a theatrical manager. The Kemble family regularly performed in the town and Sarah’s acting talents

were first widely recognised when she played Belvidera in Otway’s *‘Venice Preserv’d’* in 1774.¹¹ Attending this performance and expecting a farce, Lord Aylesbury and his stepdaughter, the Hon. Mrs Boyle, a noted poet of the day, were so impressed by Sarah Siddons’ outstanding performance that Mrs Boyle suggested to Drury Lane’s David Garrick, the greatest actor-manager of his day, to send a scout to see her in *‘The Fair Penitent’*. As a direct result, she was on the London stage before long.¹²

Soon after Siddon's first appearance, the old theatre was extended and improved. In 1779 John Boles Watson, based in Cirencester but with his headquarters in Cheltenham, and now managing a troupe of touring players, 'The Cheltenham Company of Comedians' took over the running of the Coffee House Yard theatre. Watson, destined to found a three-generation dynasty of theatre actor/managers, all named John Boles Watson, came from a wealthy Quaker family from Clonmel, Ireland. Several descriptions of his character survive; including from the actor Michael Kelly¹³;



John Boles Watson I
By permission of Cheltenham Trust
and Cheltenham Borough Council

*'a fellow of infinite jest and humour; full of Thespian anecdotes and perfect master of the art of driving away wreathed melancholy. Many a hearty laugh I had with him: he was an Irishman and had, although I say it who should not say it, all the natural wit of his country about him...'*¹⁴; and *'certainly it cannot be conducted by a more loyal subject than Mr Watson who stands forward on ever public and private occasion to support the Government of his country, and to relieve the distress of individuals'*¹⁵; also *'he always remained in both speech and dress, the inveterate Irish actor, unable to resist appearing on stage from time to time, especially to enliven a Watson family benefit night'*¹⁶.

The theatre seasons of 1780 and 1781 were described in *The Cheltenham Guide* thus;

*'The old Play House, which has lately been fitted-up and beautified is neat, but not sufficiently spacious to seat a large audience, so that on particular nights many are obliged to forego the amusement of the theatre. Plays are here enacted thrice a week, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, during the season by a company of Comedians, chiefly from Worcester; who, without aiming at elegance of scenery and decorations, exert their best endeavours to deserve approbation, [and] accordingly meet with encouragement. The subscription is a guinea for 18 nights, or 2 shillings the Pit, and one shilling the Gallery'*¹⁷, *each evening. It has been proposed to form a committee of gentlemen, and erect a new and commodious theatre by subscriptions; each subscriber to receive a proportionable share of the net rent according to his deposit.'*¹⁸

John Boles Watson established Cheltenham's first purpose-built theatre in 1782, a few yards from the eastern end of the High Street in York Passage, which led to what is now Grosvenor Terrace. It however suffered from the disadvantage that it had no frontage on the street and entry was necessary through the passageway of a domestic dwelling. Shortly after opening his new theatre, Sarah Siddons performed there for five nights consecutively in different roles. In 1785, due to Watson's poor health, Ray and Gibbons assumed management of the theatre, but he resumed control by the late 1780s and was building and running theatres throughout the west.



Cheltenham's first purpose built theatre in 1782: Watson's house is on the left, with the entrance to the auditorium beneath the rounded arch; the third door to the right of the arch was the stage door.
Sketch © 2017 James Ritchie, from a painting by James Winston.

The Royal Visit and the Aftermath

On 12 July 1788 George III started a five week visit to Cheltenham. On the first evening, he went for a stroll through the Mall, later Royal Well Walk, followed by a procession of people, including the musicians from the theatre, who abandoned a performance. John Boles Watson was clearly angling for patronage, as a quote makes clear;

'The village had been illuminated in his [the

*King's] honour including the premises, later the York Hotel, and behind it the theatre which "sent forth a stream of light", for when was the elder, the popular Watson, that best and most assiduous of ex-metropolitan managers, behindhand in such demonstrations of public feeling as tended to enhance the welfare of the town, or, secure a "patronage" for his well-conducted theatre?'*¹⁹

Watson had already arranged performances to attract the King, even making a last-minute change due to the indisposition of a leading actress.²⁰ In fact Watson had travelled to London, in anticipation of the King's visit, and had engaged Becky Wells, the King's favourite actress, as well as Mrs Dorothy Jordan, to ensure success. The King, with the Queen and courtiers, visited the theatre regularly, thereby entitling it later, by letters patent, to be called the Theatre Royal.

On 24 July 1788, the royal party visited the theatre to see Mrs Jordan²¹ in 'As You Like It' attended by the 'most elegant and numerous audience ever known in Cheltenham'. A royal box was prepared in the centre, facing the stage and 'this village theatre' as Fanny Burney called it, was from that moment known as the Theatre Royal and its players 'His Majesty's Servants', although it was said that Watson had named it before the King's arrival, as Queen Charlotte 'would have it royal before it received [his] sacred person'. An account of the performance states;

'About 280 were turned back from the boxes only. The scenes were crowded ... and the applause was great. Rosalind was given with much arch playfulness and the serious passages were delivered in a manner that astonished all present. On the 25th of July Mrs Jordan played Rosalind to rapturous applause in the King's presence. The next day Mr Watson was notified that the Royal party would attend Mrs Jordan's Hypolita in 'The Romp'. On the 31st she played Roxana, which was her last contracted night but at short notice she played Roxalana in 'The Sultan' and Hypolita in 'She Wou'd and She Wou'd Not'.'



Dorothy Jordan in the character of Hippolyta, John Hopper, 1791
National Portrait Gallery

On 1 August 1788, Simeon Moreau, the town's first Master of the Ceremonies and an '*arbiter elegantiarum*'²² from Bath, noted that the royal party 'went to the play' and again on 6 August. He also remarked that the theatre or play house was located opposite Mr Miller's public rooms where 'for the reception and entertainment of the company' under the direction of Mr Moreau,²³ he fulfilled his official duties. As described by the Hon. J. Byng, Moreau himself had caused considerable social upheaval in 1780 on his arrival in the town by vying for eminence with the 'foreigner' William Miller, a Londoner, William Skilllicorne's partner at the Well.²⁴

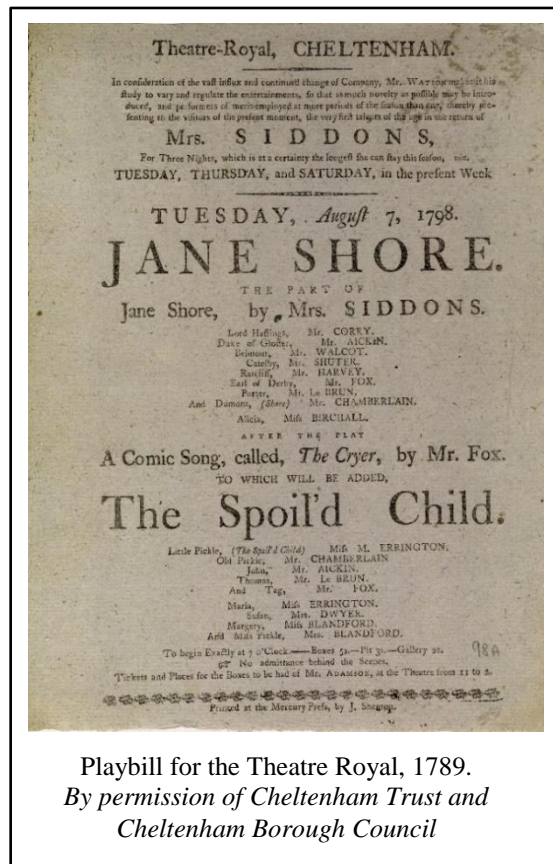
Of the theatre itself, one of the King's court noted,

*'The scenery and machinery were prepared at the Royalty Theatre [sic]. Mr Penn's Don Juan deserved the encomiums of the whole house, and Mr Kelly, brother to the gentleman of the same name at Drury Lane,²⁵ pleased much in soft song ... The theatre is a very elegant and commodious structure erected by Mr Watson, the proprietor and manager. There are two rows of boxes, one in the form of a gallery, behind which in a most ingenious manner is erected another gallery for the servants, etc. The whole of the theatre, scenery etc, is above mediocrity and the performers are equal to the task of doing their parts justice.'*²⁶

On the night before the King's departure on 15 August, the royal party attended a gala performance. The upper boxes were crowded with all the fashion that Gloucestershire and Worcestershire could send,²⁷ including Earl Bathurst and his eldest son Lord Apsley from Cirencester. Mrs Watson, attended their Majesties in the interval for tea, and a 'Farewell Address' composed by Watson was spoken from the stage by his leading actor Mr Charlton. For the occasion, the grandly worded playbills, were printed on white satin recording a 'Dutiful and Loyal Farewell Address' to the majesties. The King had apparently awaited Mrs Jordan's arrival at the theatre before attending any performances, and before departing Cheltenham, presented her with a gold medal bearing on one side an engraving of the Comic Muse and on the reverse, 'Presented to Mrs Jordan, Thalia's sweetest child'.

The theatre continued to play an important part in the town's social calendar and in addition provided benefits for major causes, including the war conducted by the British government against the French republic. In 1793 John Boles Watson devoted the profits from one performances at the Theatre Royal to 'the purchase of comfortable necessaries for our troops in Flanders'.²⁸ In similar vein, benefits were also held for 'Nelson's brave tars' after the naval victories of the Nile and Trafalgar. Some 20 years after George III's departure from the town, his jubilee in 1809 was also celebrated in a special performance at the theatre²⁹.

Sarah Siddons was a regular performer at the Theatre Royal and in 1793 Mrs Neville said:



Playbill for the Theatre Royal, 1789.
By permission of Cheltenham Trust and
Cheltenham Borough Council

*'Mrs Siddons was much admired here not only for her excellent performances ... but for the propriety and elegance of her behaviour... she received 40 guineas for each night except the last when she acted for the benefit of the performers – pit and boxes were 5/- and even the gallery was raised to 2/-.'*³⁰

Not only did Sarah Siddons rate a premium price for tickets, but Watson appended his playbills with probably a standard foreword to the performances. For Siddon's appearance in August 1798 in *Jane Shore* he wrote;

'In consideration of the vast influx and continued change of Company, Mr Watson makes it his study to vary and regulate the entertainments, so that as much novelty as possible may be introduced, and performers of merit employed at more seasons than one, thereby presenting to the visitors of the present moment, the very first talents of

the age, in the return of Mrs Siddons'.

Entertainments were certainly varied and after the main play there often followed songs or other acts and sometimes a light comedy. On the August 1798 playbill, it is noted that not only did Mr Fox appear in both theatrical productions but also sang a song between them.

A return of royalty occurred in 1800 when the Prince of Wales, 'Prinny' visited and attended a performance at the Theatre Royal. Two years later in 1802, *The Heir at Law* was included in the repertoire of Watson's theatres to provide a vehicle for the stage debut of the 15-year old, John 'Jack' Boles Watson junior. Later, he had a benefit at Cheltenham, playing a fiery role in a comedy, *The West Indian*. However, William Hastings, a knowledgeable Cheltenham resident, seeing Jack's performance declared bluntly that 'Jack will never be a Good Actor' being more at home amusing his well-wishers in the interval in a comic skit *The Cosmetic Doctor*, taken from his father's song collection. Later, in 1803 having sat through another Watson benefit performance, Hastings complained to James Winston, that 'it was a disgrace that Jack Watson's [role in *The West Indian*] should have filled the Theatre Royal to the tune of over £50 while the previous evening George Frederick Cooke had harvested a meagre £25 for acting both in the play and the farce on his last night.'³¹

Winston himself, together with his actress wife had performed at Cheltenham as a guest attraction in a benefit operatic farce, *Perseverance*, having been presented by Watson as London stars. However, six weeks previously he had been hissed off the

Covent Garden stage when playing in a comedy and never played in a patent London theatre again, although he became a successful manager of the Haymarket, Olympic and finally Drury Lane theatres. After his 1802 Cheltenham performance, although a 'tour de force', his application to return to Cheltenham the following year was rejected.

Editor's note: it is proposed that Part 2 should appear in the next journal, 2018.

¹ Henry Holland's Theatre Royal, Drury Lane burnt down, 1809 and the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, 1808. During a protracted stay in Cheltenham, Lord Byron submitted verse to commemorate The Theatre Royal's re-opening in 1812. *Letters and Journals of Lord Byron*. 1839.

² R. Brooks, *The Story of Cheltenham*, The History Press (2003).

³ S. Pakenham, *Cheltenham, A Biography*, Macmillan (1971).

⁴ M Hasted, *A Theatre for All Seasons, A History of the Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham*, Jeremy Mills Publishing (2011).

⁵ The 'Tyring' room was the attiring or dressing room for the performers and was traditionally, from the days of Nell Gwynne, open to the public where actresses' admirers often congregated.

⁶ The present.

⁷ *Griffith's New Historical Description Cheltenham*, S.Y. Griffith, (1826), p.68.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ James Winston's manuscript notes for *The Theatrical Tourist* 1805, in the Winston Collection, Birmingham Central Library.

¹⁰ J. Haslewood, *The Secret History of the Green Rooms*, 1790.

¹¹ S Rowbotham & J.Waller, *Cheltenham A History*, Phillimore (2004), p.75.

¹² E.H. Humphris & Capt. E.C. Willoughby, *Georgian Cheltenham*, The History Press (2008).

¹³ Michael Kelly (1762-1826). A famous Irish tenor, composer and theatre manager. A close friend of Richard Sheridan and Mozart, he worked with Salieri, was coached by Gluck and performed for the Austrian Emperor. The role of Don Curzio in *The Marriage of Figaro* was written for him and copies of his songs were in Jane Austen's family collection.

¹⁴ Humphris & Willoughby. Michael Kelly in 1796.

¹⁵ *A Guide to All the Watering and Seabathing Places*. 1813.

¹⁶ A. Denning, *Theatre in the Cotswolds*, Society for Theatre Research, London (1993), p.25.

¹⁷ At 2015 prices: 1 guinea (21 shillings) was £78.50; 2s (shillings) £6.20; 1s £3.14.

¹⁸ *The Cheltenham Guide* 1781.

¹⁹ Humphris & Willoughby.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Later, about 1791, mistress of the Duke of Clarence, who became King William IV.

²² *Arbiter Elegantiarum* – A judge of artistic taste and talent.

²³ S. Moreau, *A Tour to the Royal Spa at Cheltenham*, 1793.

²⁴ S Pakenham. William Skillicorne son of the founder of the first Spa well, 1738, leased the well to Mr Miller in 1775 then jointly built the 'Long Room,' later the Assembly Rooms.

²⁵ S. Pakenham, the reference is to M. Kelly.

²⁶ S. Rowbotham & J. Waller, an account of the additional tier of boxes prior to the Royal visit is provided by *The Gloucester Journal*, 21 January 1787 and a general description of the theatre's interior in *The Cheltenham Directory* of 1800.

²⁷ Humphris & Willoughby.

²⁸ G Hart, *A History of Cheltenham*, Leicester University Press (1965), p.159.

²⁹ Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum [now the Wilson] Pamphlet, 2015.

³⁰ *Ibid* p164. It should be noted that although the performer's fee was generous, the box and seat prices were relatively cheap compared to the modern day. A good seat in the Everyman costs about £35.

³¹ A. Denning, p.70. George Frederick Cooke, a great portrayer of the baser qualities in man, particularly after drink, made an electrifying Richard III.

‘Somewhat advantageous’: Thomas Hughes’ Arrival in Cheltenham, 1741

JAMES HODSDON

A LAWSUIT OF 1744 SHEDS INTERESTING NEW light on the early years of Henry Skillicorne’s time in Cheltenham, and his relationship with the lessees of the spa, including the future ‘Master of the Wells’, Thomas Hughes. For most of 1741, the newly-arrived Hughes had been running the spa in a business partnership with Dr Baptist Smart, a Cheltenham physician, but they then fell out, and Smart sought redress in Chancery.¹ Skillicorne was called on to provide a detailed statement in support of Hughes. This article sets out the background, and summarises the main points emerging from the case: direct quotations come from the depositions made by the parties.

On Henry Skillicorne’s arrival to take up residence in Cheltenham in the latter part of 1738, to become actively engaged in the management of the lands inherited by his wife Elizabeth (née Mason), the day-to-day running of the mineral well at Bayshill was in the hands of a lessee, Arthur Spencer. Spencer was a yeoman, baptised in Cheltenham in 1700, and may very well have been the person to whom William Mason, the first exploiter of the Cheltenham mineral waters, had made the first lease in 1721, at the rent of £61 a year. The lessee (or his employees or subtenants) would receive visitors during the season and take their subscriptions, as well as running the bottling and salt-extraction side of the business, which was less seasonal.

Spencer’s tenure came to an end in 1740. The reason for this is not known for certain, but it is likely that he wasn’t prepared to pay the sharply increased rent which Skillicorne felt was justified by the improvements he had recently made. After 19 seasons, Spencer might anyway have been ready for a change. Be all that as it may, at Michaelmas (29 October) 1740, Skillicorne let the operation to John Cobbe for three years, at the yearly rent of £100, the tenancy to begin at Christmas that same year.

The lease was very specific about the land involved: it covered

‘all that spring or well of water at Cheltenham called Cheltenham Purging Mineral Water, together with the buildings thereto adjoining, and also the gravel walks and that part of the ground on the south side of the said spring as it was then divided from the other part by a quickset hedge then lately planted, and all that piece of ground planted with cherry trees, and the gravel walks leading from the said well to Cheltenham, together with the other buildings and conveniences which were then late built near the said well, together with the appurtenances; all which premises were in the possession of Arthur Spencer’.

Nearly everything outside this defined area would have remained agricultural land. Indeed, sheep are still to be seen in the view depicted on the Thomas Robins fan. The ‘lately-planted’ and ‘late built’ features reflect improvements made by Skillicorne after his arrival in mid-1738, and as hinted above would have been a factor in the increased rent.

John Cobbe was an attorney. Minor payments mentioned in his will suggest that he had probably trained at Lincoln's Inn in London in the early 1730s. He was married at Swindon village in 1733, to Sarah Hatton, and was certainly resident in Cheltenham by 1735.² He was a Cheltenham churchwarden in 1740. He must have had qualities that commended him to Skillicorne as a lessee – perhaps more gentlemanly polish than the yeoman Spencer – but it appears he was

'unable of himself to carry on the business ... of selling and uttering the said mineral waters and of extracting the salts from [them] for medicinal uses and of preparing and making [them] ready for use and sale, and of carrying on the general business of the lease to the best advantage'.

Either for lack of practical capacity, or simply to spread the financial risk, by 21 November 1740 Cobbe entered into a partnership with Baptist Smart, a Cheltenham physician. Under their agreement, which the attorney Cobbe drew up himself, Dr Smart was to pay half the annual rent of £100, and Cobbe was to pay Smart half of the servants' wages, maintenance and necessary expenses of carrying on the business. Smart would run equal risk with Cobbe in any losses, and Cobbe would account for all profits and produce arising from the lease, and pay Smart half of the profits. (Curiously, Cobbe's agreement with Smart was not made known to Skillicorne, who later claimed he only became aware of it in August or September 1743, when told of it by Smart.)

The reference to servants appears to tie in with other advance arrangements Cobbe was making. In November he wrote to Thomas Hughes, later locally famous as the Master of the Wells, but then living in Abergavenny, Monmouthshire. Hughes' recollection was that at the beginning of November 1740 he received a letter from Cobbe proposing that he 'come and take care of and manage the said well and the water thereof' for which Hughes 'should have the use and advantage of a Coffee Room then lately erected at or near the said well, and one third part of the subscription money for the said waters, and a house to live in rent free'. Incidentally this is the first known reference to a coffee establishment in Cheltenham – some 70 years after Gloucester had been so blessed.³

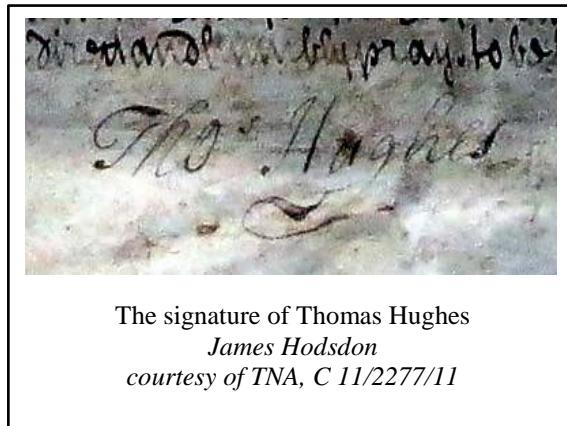
Cobbe's intention, said Hughes, was that he should 'attend constantly at the said well and sell and deliver out and dispose of the said waters there and receive such money as was paid for such waters by subscription and otherwise at the said well, and should account for the same to him the said Cobbe'. Hughes was not to have 'any care or concern of or in the general accounts relating to the said well, or of or in the correspondence thereto relating with persons at a distance'. Cobbe was to provide a boy to assist Hughes from Lady Day to Michaelmas. The 'correspondence' presumably related to sales of bottled water and salts to London dealers and elsewhere.

Baptist Smart recalled the arrangement slightly differently: Hughes was to come and live with Cobbe as his 'servant', 'to look after attend and manage the said spring of water commonly called Cheltenham Wells or Spaw'. Hughes was to have £15 a year for his wages and trouble; and was 'constantly to attend at the wells and to sell deliver out and dispose of the said water and to collect and receive all moneys arising' - accounting to Cobbe for the income and expenditure. Although the accounts differ - Hughes specifically rejected the suggestion he was ever Cobbe's 'servant' (employee), or that he had wages - it is reasonably clear that Hughes' intended role was generally to

be on the spot, dealing with visitors, while Cobbe was to be more concerned with administrative matters.

Although then living in Abergavenny, and very likely of Welsh origin, Hughes had prior connections with the Cheltenham area, which help explain his being approached for the task. In 1733, he had married at Alderton, Gloucestershire. His bride was Katherine Mease, the niece of Henry Mease, the incumbent of Alderton, who had earlier served in Cheltenham.⁴ It was agreed that Hughes should take up his duties on Lady Day (25 March) 1741.

In the event, Hughes arrived in Cheltenham about a week after Lady Day, only to discover that Cobbe was already in his grave: he had died suddenly on 30 March, just three days earlier.⁵ It was rapidly agreed with Baptist Smart and Cobbe’s widow Sarah, that Hughes should nevertheless proceed with the planned arrangement, and from this point on, Hughes appears to have been in practical charge of most if not all aspects of the leased premises.⁶



It was rumoured that the unfortunate Cobbe had died insolvent, and his widow Sarah by all accounts had no appetite for any involvement with the well.⁷ It was even rumoured that she threatened to ‘lock or stop up and ruin’ the well, unless Skillicorne agreed to have Cobbe’s lease cancelled. Skillicorne had been staying in Bristol at the time of John Cobbe’s death, and a few days after he got back to Cheltenham, Sarah Cobbe sent for him. When he arrived at her house,⁸ he found not just Sarah, but also her brother-in-law Mr William Longe⁹ and one Caleb Brookes.¹⁰ They proposed that Skillicorne should take back the premises, pay Sarah what her husband had laid out in carrying on the business, and assume outstanding debts owed to Cobbe for water and salts. Skillicorne rejected this, insisting on the performance of the original agreement. It appears that Sarah then suggested Thomas Hughes should take over Cobbe’s lease, for soon after, he was indeed proposed to Skillicorne as a tenant.

Skillicorne, knowing ‘but little’ of Hughes, would only take him on if his wife’s uncle Henry Mease would stand security for the rent. This the Revd Mease was ready to do, and accordingly, on his instructions, an agreement was drafted by John Trevanion, a Cheltenham attorney at law,¹¹ and a day was set for its execution.

On the morning of the appointed day, Trevanion came to Skillicorne with the original agreement made between him and Cobbe, saying Sarah Cobbe wanted both the lease and counterpart destroyed. This was duly done (possibly by burning), in the expectation that Hughes and his uncle Mease would later execute their fresh agreement with Skillicorne.

But then in the afternoon of the same day, Hughes came to Skillicorne and told him that his uncle refused to sign the agreement. Skillicorne concluded that it had all been a ‘contrivance’ to free Sarah from being answerable for her husband’s

commitment, but it's also possible that Mease had been disconcerted to learn that (in accordance with some private agreement made between Skillicorne and Cobbe), the rent for the remaining two years was to be raised to £110.

In the event, at some point Hughes paid Sarah £33 17s 6d, the sum expended by her late husband on the well and on 'utensils and materials' there – presumably those used in bottling and evaporation for salts. John Cobbe's accounts, presented by Sarah to Hughes, showed receipts for water and other items, amounting to no more than £14 0s 5d. The modest receipts are not altogether surprising, given Cobbe's short tenure during three winter months, and the likelihood that some of the sales of bottled water and salts to retailers in London and elsewhere would have been on credit terms.

The impasse between Skillicorne and Mease left Hughes somewhat in limbo, without a written agreement but in *de facto* possession of the well premises, holding them against Skillicorne's will. Skillicorne was at risk of losing his rent, and would have done so, 'if the season had not proved much better than was expected' - this is probably the year when, according to Goding, 674 subscribers were recorded. Fortunately, Hughes was evidently already showing an aptitude for the business, for although in September or October 1741 Skillicorne gave him notice to quit at Christmas (when John Cobbe's first year would have ended), this seems not to have been intended to eject him, but to get the relationship on a new and sounder footing.

CHELTENHAM SPAW-WATERS,
ARE sent up by Waggon fresh every
A Week, to Mr. Henry Eyre, at his Water-Warehouse, near
 Temple-Bar; as also to Mr. Thomas Davis, at his Water Warehouse
 in St. Alban's-Street, Pall-Mall, and to his Warehouse in Mark-
 Lane, Fenchurch-Street; by me
THO. HUGHES,
Master of the Wells at Cheltenham.
Note, The Salts truly prepar'd from the Waters, may be had at
the above Places.

5 November 1743
*Courtesy of the British Library Burney
 Collection of Early English newspapers.*

On receiving the notice to quit, Hughes and his uncle asked Skillicorne to let them have the premises for the two remaining years of Cobbe's term. A new yearly rent of £130 was agreed, with Skillicorne to make 'some further addition' to the buildings.

Early on in Hughes' first year of tenure, Baptist Smart had approached him and mentioned his previous

partnership with Cobbe, and offered a similar arrangement with Hughes, which was agreed to, although seemingly without formal documentation. This continued until Christmas or late December 1741, by which time, Hughes claimed, he had paid Smart £80 under their agreement, as his share of the profits, and that he had further offered to settle the residue of their accounts for that year.

At the time, Hughes was negotiating with Skillicorne the new rent of £130 for the years 1742 and 1743, he acquainted Dr Smart with the new terms, and asked if Smart wanted to take a joint lease with him. But Smart,

'declared that the premises were too dear at the said rent' and refused to have anything to do with a lease. Hughes, 'having laid out a good deal of money in providing conveniences and utensils for carrying on the business of the said well, and not having any other business or employment whereby to get a livelihood for himself and family',¹²

then agreed to take a sole lease of the premises for the next two years, with his uncle Mease acting once again as guarantor.

Despite his rejection of a continued partnership at the higher rent, Smart took the view that he had some residual right to a share in the profits, for Hughes stated that after about ‘three-quarters’ of 1742, Smart had approached him for an account of his share. This appears to have come out of the blue, for as Hughes recalled, Smart ‘was very frequently at the said wells’ after he had taken the two-year lease, yet ‘never mentioned or said anything’ to him about any account of the profits arising from the new lease before this time.

Hughes rejected this suggestion, which led Smart to approach Skillicorne in ‘August or September’ 1743, informing him – apparently for the first time – about the agreements first with Cobbe and then Hughes to share the profits of the well, and saying that if Hughes would not now pay, he wanted Skillicorne to ‘turn him out’. This did not happen. Unsurprisingly, Hughes felt that Smart

‘never would have pretended or claimed any right or title to any account of share of such profits had he not apprehended from the appearance of the Company that came to the said well in the first season after the commencement of the said last mentioned two years, that the profits arising from the said well might be somewhat advantageous’.

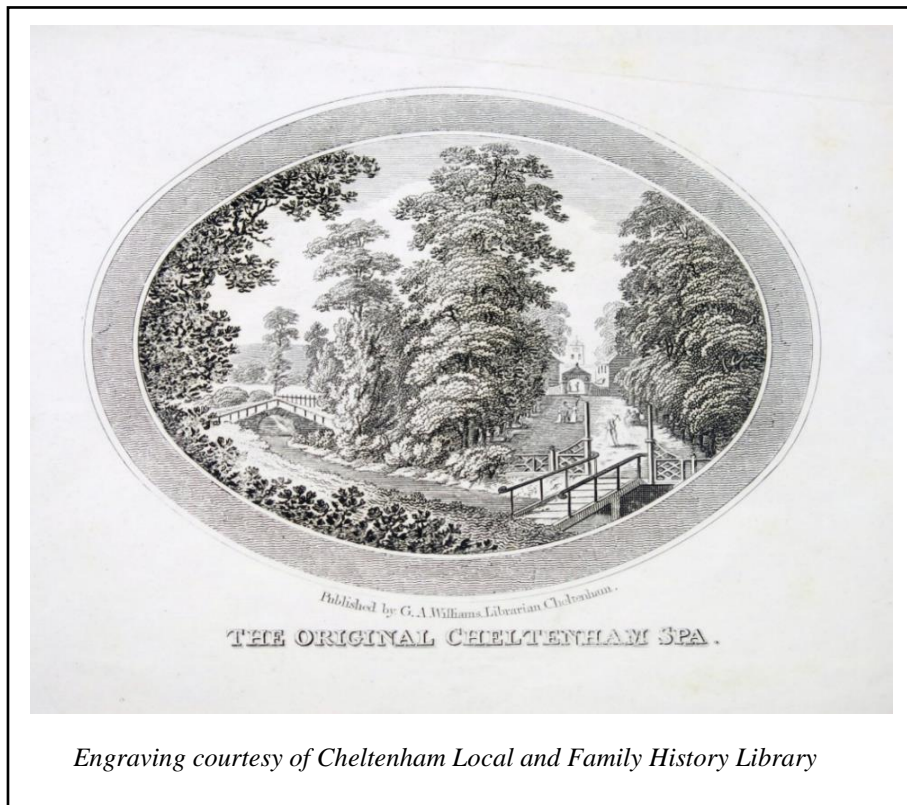
Rebuffed by Hughes and Skillicorne, yet still hoping to secure a share of the profits from the well for 1742 and 1743 – profits that had surely exceeded Smart’s expectations, and doubtless those of others too – in late 1744 Baptist Smart launched Chancery proceedings against Hughes, thus giving rise to the testimonies this account is based on. The outcome of his suit is unstated, yet it is very likely the court concluded that any rights Smart might originally have had were extinguished by Sarah Cobbe’s cancelling of her husband’s lease, and Smart’s subsequent failure to join with Hughes in the new lease entered into in December 1741.

After the expiry of the 1742-43 lease, Hughes renewed again with Skillicorne, this time at the yearly rent of £150 – an indication that the business was doing well. Hughes continued to benefit from a loan of £100 from his uncle Henry Mease, which was cancelled on the latter’s death in 1746.

Reflecting on this previously unknown chapter in the history of the spa, we can easily understand why Smart, a well-connected and successful physician, himself a frequenter of the Spa, and who could probably have counted on good business with spa visitors, might have wanted to enter his original partnership scheme with Cobbe. But it remains puzzling that it was kept private from Skillicorne, and it may also strike us as odd that for the sake of just a few more pounds, he declined to go in with Hughes on the renewed lease. No doubt there are personality factors at play here, which do not all come out in the legal papers. But we do get some flavour of the social atmosphere in 1730s Cheltenham – for example the strong feelings of the recently-widowed Sarah Cobbe; the part that ‘rumour’ played in the town; and how important personal connections were to establishing trust and getting business done.

We also gain further insight into Henry Skillicorne’s careful and business-like control of the spa, and his readiness to mount a robust defence of his interests. Thomas

Hughes was lucky to land his job at the well, and had the talent to prosper in it, but it was Skillicorne's good overall management that allowed him to do so.



¹ A Chancery case, Smart versus Hughes, held at the National Archives (ref C 11/2277/11).

² Cheltenham Manor Court Book (MCB), entry 1701.

³ Victoria County History, Gloucestershire, Vol 4. p.107.

⁴ Also Welsh (hence his connection with Jesus College, Oxford); the Rev Mease, a bachelor, seems to have spent his life in 'no small comfort' – see *Country Counting House*, by A Tindal Hart (1962). He was Officiating Minister at Cheltenham 1709-1716, Rector of Alderton 1724-37, and finally Rector of Swindon, Gloucestershire, from 1738-1746. He was buried at Swindon 15 October 1746.

⁵ He was buried at Swindon on 1 April 1741. Will proved 4 April 1741 at Gloucester; described as gentleman; executrix Sarah Cobbe; brother-in-law John Taylor, clerk; uncle Richard Plaister; had a freehold messuage in Cheltenham, and another adjacent, in the possession of Rev Edmund Meyrick.

⁶ He was already styling himself 'Master of the Wells' by 1743. He is to be distinguished from another Thomas Hughes (1732 – 94), an attorney and entrepreneur, active later in Cheltenham.

⁷ We may also wonder how enthusiastic she was about discharging some of the legacies in her husband's will, which all suggest someone not quite on top of his finances: such as a guinea to Mr Pennicott, surgeon in Cursitor's Alley, London; 2 guineas to 'the apothecary in Brook Street that Mr Pennicott recommended'; a guinea to 'Willoughby' 'who kept a stationer's shop at Lincoln's Inn Gate in 1731'; £3 to 'a gentleman' near St Paul's who in 1731 'I employed in proving a will'; and a final guinea to 'the man who was my barber in 1731' near Lincoln's Inn Square.

⁸ John Cobbe's will shows he had two freehold messuages in Cheltenham, one of them rented out.

⁹ William Long 'of Brockworth' had married Betty Hatton of Swindon, Gloucestershire, on 19 Dec 1719, at Bishops Cleeve (Phillimore); he is described as 'of Swindon' when acquiring a house in Cheltenham in 1728 (MCB, entry 1424)

¹⁰ Of Cheltenham, will proved Gloucester 1766. 'Gent' in 1736, 'Mr' in 1746 (MCB)

¹¹ Presumably the same John Trevanion who is named as a nephew in Baptist Smart's will, proved 18 February 1773.

¹² The family probably including son Thomas, born c.1733, and possibly daughter Sarah, died 1746. At least two children were alive when Henry Mease drew up his will in September 1746.

The Brook House, Alstone and Later Rossley Gate, Dowdeswell

ROSE HEWLETT

FROM TUDOR TIMES UNTIL 1929 The Brook House, Alstone, a copyhold property once part of the manor of Cheltenham, overlooked the river Chelt on the corner of Gloucester Road and Arle Avenue. Today it is known as Rossley Gate and located in Dowdeswell. This article examines the property's history and first, why it was moved.



Rossley Gate,
Dowdeswell,
formerly The
Brook House,
Alstone
© 2016 Rose
Hewlett, by
courtesy of
Dr A.F. and
Mrs S. Jeans

In 1927, two years after the National Playing Fields Association was founded by George V, the land on which The Brook House stood in Alstone was earmarked as recreational space for the adjacent Gloucester Road Schools.¹ The decision was controversial and a lengthy debate ensued concerning The Brook House's future during which it was referred to as the Tudor Cottage.² Its owner, Jesus College, Oxford, was content to sell the land, but made the condition that certain parts of the building should remain the property of the College, including its fireplace. Some people saw no reason to keep a 'dilapidated', 'insanitary' cottage, even if it was 'more or less picturesque', while others favoured moving it to Sandford Park. The Cheltenham Civic Society, adamant that the cottage should be preserved in its present condition, 'would not acquiesce in its alteration or demolition', and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings commissioned a report which suggested that the cottage could be put in good order for an outlay of £200-£300. Eventually the town's Education Committee were told on 29 April 1929 that Mr C. Coxwell Rogers of Rossley Manor, Dowdeswell, had agreed to purchase the half-timbered cottage for £30, take it down and re-erect it on his own property.³ A day later the *Gloucestershire Echo* reported the matter on its front page under the headline 'End of the Tudor Cottage serio-comedy'.⁴



The early history of The Brook House is not entirely certain due to gaps in the Cheltenham manor court records. It is believed, but not proven, to have been connected with the Packer family who owned other property and land in the vicinity, notably the neighbouring Six Chimneys Farm estate. They also held Alstone Upper Mill from the manor of Cheltenham. I suggest below possible details of the early history of The Brook House, its identification in the records being strengthened through the elimination of other possible properties, particularly at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Considering the probable date of the property, Thomas Packer senior (1493-1558), gentleman, may have been the builder of The Brook House on land he held from the manor of Cheltenham.⁵ The house does not appear to have been specifically mentioned in Thomas Packer senior's will although some of his copyhold property is detailed; one of his sons, Edward (1537-1598), was to receive rents from three people, but there is insufficient detail to identify the properties/land concerned.⁶ The residue of Thomas Packer senior's estate was bequeathed to his sons, Thomas junior (1536-1604) and Edward. It is known that Thomas Packer junior purchased the reputed manors of Power's and Compton's within the hundred of Cheltenham.⁷ An Abstract of Deeds dating to 1725, notes the sale of Compton's manor on 6 March 1575 by Thomas Packer junior to his brother Edward and this, somewhat curiously includes a phrase which has been crossed out: 'also one other Messuage or Tenement in Alstone aforesaid with all lands & other the appurtenances'.⁸ It is my belief that this refers to The Brook House, a Packer property which could not be included in the sale because it was part of the manor of Cheltenham, hence its deletion from the document.

Following Edward Packer's death in 1598, Cheltenham manor court recorded his tenure of '3 customary messuages and various parcels of land in Arle, and 1 other messuage in Alstone'. The latter is likely to have been The Brook House, and these properties passed to Edward's son, John (1570-1641).⁹ Surveys of the manor and hundred of Cheltenham taken in 1604 and 1617 appear to describe The Brook House as 'a mansion house, barn, stable, garden, orchard and the backside'.¹⁰ In 1608 John Packer reserved the right to use the chamber above the hall in his mansion house with free ingress and egress for himself and his assigns.¹¹

When John Packer died, the messuage at Alstone passed successively to his sons Edward, William, Richard and Alexander (1616-c.1655).¹² Upon Alexander's death it passed to his daughter, Katherine, later the wife of John Gregory.¹³ At the following court, and also at courts in 1692 and 1696/7, The Brook House appears to be referred to as 'the house of Thomas Packer' when one of the boundaries of neighbouring Alstone Lower Mill is defined.¹⁴ The length of Katherine and John Gregory's tenure of The Brook House has not been determined due to gaps in the records, but the property seems to have been disposed of before John Gregory's death in 1700 for it is neither mentioned in his will nor at the subsequent manor court.¹⁵ Richard Hyett (c. 1657-1724), gentleman of Alstone, acquired The Brook House (presumably from John and Katherine Gregory) sometime after the hearth tax return of 1671-72.¹⁶ Richard Hyett subsequently bequeathed his land and tenements jointly to three of his daughters: Ann (widow of Richard Beckett), and Elizabeth and Sarah (both spinsters).¹⁷

From 1743 the identity of The Brook House is certain for it is named as such. At the manor court on 30 September 1743 Ann Beckett, Elizabeth Hyett and Ann's son, Richard Beckett, surrendered land and property to Boulter Tomlinson, a Cheltenham doctor of physic, including 'a house in Alstone lately in the possession of Richard Hyett the late father of Ann and Elizabeth called the Brook house, with barn, stable, court, garden, orchard, etc.'¹⁸ Following Boulter Tomlinson's death his widow, Sarah, surrendered The Brook House, late in the possession of William Gregory, skinner, on 27 April 1767 for Baptist Smart the elder, also a doctor of physic of Cheltenham.¹⁹ In 1772 Baptist Smart the elder and his wife Elizabeth (née Osborne) entered into a property settlement in which The Brook House was probably described as 'one other Messuage or Tenement with the Appurtenances situate and being in Alstone aforesaid being other part and parcel of the same Manor'.²⁰ Baptist Smart the elder died later that year at the Hot Wells, Bristol, after a long and painful illness and was interred at Clifton and commemorated in the chancel of St Mary's, Cheltenham.²¹ His son, Baptist Smart the younger, claimed the copyhold of The Brook House in 1775 and confirmed it two years later.²² Baptist Smart the younger advertised several properties and land held from the manor of Cheltenham, including The Brook House, in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* on 3 May 1777, ahead of his marriage to Sophia Whitmore on 27 November 1777 St Mary's Marylebone, London. However, the sale of The Brook House did not take place until six years later.

On 24 October 1783 Elizabeth, widow of Baptist Smart the elder, and her son, Baptist, surrendered The Brook House for Jesus College, Oxford.²³ The College had previously bought the neighbouring Six Chimneys Farm estate from James Beckett in 1726.²⁴ An undated 'Description of the Six Chimnies Farm' noted that The Brook House adjoined the orchard of Six Chimneys Farm, and with its own orchard and garden was about two acres in size.²⁵ The Brook House orchard (adjacent to the river Chelt) was said to have been 'thrown open and united' with the farm's orchard; a plan of 1832 confirms the arrangement.²⁶

On 2 April 1810 Mary Tombs and her parents went to live in The Brook House.²⁷ Four generations of this family were the tenants until 1905; Mary's parents, she and her husband Richard Roberts, their daughter Mary Ann and her husband John Young, and finally their daughters Maria Elizabeth and Sarah Jane Young.²⁸



Plan of 1832:
parcel 1 is Six
Chimneys farm
House, parcel 2
the farm's
orchard and
parcel 3, The
Brook House.
By courtesy of
Gloucestershire
Archives,
D8285/Box
3/Bundle3

The 1826 'Valuation of an Estate called the Six Chimnies ...' describes The Brook House as:

Two Rooms on the Ground Floor, two chambers and two Garrets of Timber and lath and plaster in pannels, Slated; The whole is very old, the underpinning is insufficient to keep the building from rocking about by the winds, and considerable repairs to other parts are necessary. There is a good Garden to this Tenement, with about a Dozen Fruit Trees, some of which are but small. And another small Building at the end of the Orchard, and near to the Tenement, formerly a Stables, but now occupied by a Glove cleaner; of bricks and Lath and plaster in pannels, thatched; part of this Building has been converted into a small Cottage, the whole is old, but the Thatch is in tolerable repair.²⁹

In 1859, when still part of the manor of Cheltenham, The Brook House underwent major repairs, including the renewal of some roof timbers, at a cost of £206 15s.³⁰ In 1868 its copyhold tenure was enfranchised and Jesus College then held the freehold.³¹ By 1891 the property was known as Old House and in 1905 Maria Elizabeth and Sarah Jane Young, who had been running their dressmaking business at home for many years, departed for a new life in Australia.³² Shortly after, the newly formed Cheltenham Education Committee opened its first state-run school in Gloucester Road adjacent to The Brook House, on land which had formed part of the Six Chimneys Farm estate. The sisters' letter of 12 April 1928, published in the *Gloucestershire Echo*, makes it clear why they left their much-loved family home: they considered that the 'beautiful spot' in which its solid oak timbers had stood for centuries had been 'spoilt' by the Education Authorities. Let us hope they would have approved of its new location, still much loved and, fittingly, a little further upstream.

Editor's note: We have been searching for a previously seen, but now 'lost' photograph, most likely in a newspaper, of The Brook House, on a low-loader lorry, on its journey to Dowdeswell. Please contact the editor if you know where we can find this illusive image. Thank you, S Self

¹ Gloucestershire Archives (hereafter GA), K45/1/25, p. 66.

² GA, K45/1/25, pp. 187, 198, 210, 229, 234; K45/1/26, pp. 10, 30-31, 103, 107, 111, 129, 132, 154, 195, 198, 217, 235-36; e.g. *Gloucestershire Echo*, 28 May 1928, 4 June 1928, 5 June 1928, 16 June 1928, 19 June 1928, 21 June 1928 and 11 April 1929.

³ GA, K45/1/27, pp. 14, 22, 33, 55.

⁴ *Gloucestershire Echo*, 30 April 1929.

⁵ However, the current owners have been told that the property could date earlier, perhaps to the mid-fifteenth century.

⁶ GA, 1558/503; The National Archives (TNA), PROB 11/41.

⁷ I am grateful to Alex Craven for drawing this to my attention in connection with his research for the Cheltenham section of the *Victoria County History* (forthcoming).

⁸ GA, D8285/Box 3/Bundle 1.

⁹ Cheltenham Manor Court Books 1598, transcribed from GA, D855/M7, p. 92 http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/explore/sites/explore/files/explore_assets/%5Bsite-date-yyyy%5D/%5Bsite-date-mm%5D/%5Bsite-date-dd%5D/Cheltenham%20manor%20courts,%201598.pdf [accessed 3 September 2015].

¹⁰ TNA, E 178/7025, f. 12v; GA, D855/M7, p. 385. I am grateful to Alex Craven for these references and his transcriptions.

¹¹ Cheltenham Manor Court Records Dec 1607 to end-1608, transcribed from GA, D855/M8, f. 21 <http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/explore/assets/cheltenham-manor-court-records-1607-part-only-1608> [accessed 5 September 2015].

¹² Cheltenham Manor Courts 1645-60 - collated abstracts, ff. 20v, 38, 183 http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/explore/sites/explore/files/explore_assets/2013/08/10/cheltenham_manor_courts_1645-1660.pdf [accessed 16 August 2015].

¹³ *ibid.*, f. 164.

¹⁴ *ibid.*, f. 174; Hodsdon, James, ed., *The Court Books of the Manor of Cheltenham 1692-1803* (BGAS 2010), nos. 87, 182. Properties were often known by the name of their builder.

¹⁵ No manor court records survive between 1669 and 1692; GA, 1700/6.

¹⁶ GA, D383/1. For Alstone this lists a Mr Gregory with four hearths (which may involve more than one property) and no entry in the name of Hyett.

¹⁷ GA, 1725/70. This was confirmed by the court of 31 December 1724, Hodsdon, no. 1252. It should be noted that in GA, P1.107GS, *Discovering Alstone, Volume 1*, p. 62, The Brook House has been confused with a house that Richard Hyett built. This is separately accounted for in the manor court rolls, Hodsdon, *Manor Court Books*, no. 1254.

¹⁸ Hodsdon, *Manor Court Books*, no. 1953.

¹⁹ Hodsdon, *Manor Court Books*, no. 2636. Baptist Smart the elder was the brother of Boulter Tomlinson's first wife, Utreria: See the will of John Smart, TNA, PROB 11/532, for details of his children. Utreria was baptised 27 April 1711 at Clifford Chambers, Warwickshire.

²⁰ GA, C/DC/S/2 – attested copy of a Release in Fee by way of Settlement: Doctor Baptist Smart & Ux. to Howe Hicks Esq. 31 January 1772. Certainly The Brook House does not fit any of the other descriptions given in the document, although the name of the tenant does not agree with the court rolls either side of this date.

²¹ Bigland, Ralph, ed. by Brian Frith, *Historical, Monumental and Genealogical Collections Relative to the County of Gloucester*, Part 1 (BGAS 1989), p. 329.

²² Hodsdon, *Manor Court Books*, nos. 2796 and 2843.

²³ *ibid.*, no. 2967.

²⁴ GA, D8285/Box 3/Bundle 1.

²⁵ GA, D8285/Box 3/Bundle 3.

²⁶ *ibid.* The Brook House is parcel 3: 'Cottage and garden 1 rood 16 perch'.

²⁷ *Gloucestershire Echo*, 28 May 1928. Maria Elizabeth and Sarah Jane Young were writing from Australia during the controversy surrounding the future of The Brook House.

²⁸ Mary Tombs married Richard Roberts at Hempsted church in 1817; their daughter, Mary Ann Roberts, was baptised at St Mary's, Cheltenham in 1820. She married John Young at St Nicholas, Gloucester, in 1839. Their daughters Maria Elizabeth and Sarah Jane Young were baptised at St Mary's, Cheltenham in 1858 and 1862 respectively.

²⁹ D8285/Box 3/Bundle 3. The small building must be that shown in pink on the 1832 plan of Jesus College's holdings, alongside Gloucester Road in parcel 2.

³⁰ GA, D8285/Box 3/Bundle 4.

³¹ *ibid.*

³² *Gloucestershire Echo*, 28 May 1928.

James Hill and Son, Stone Masons of Cheltenham, 1650-1734

JILL WALLER

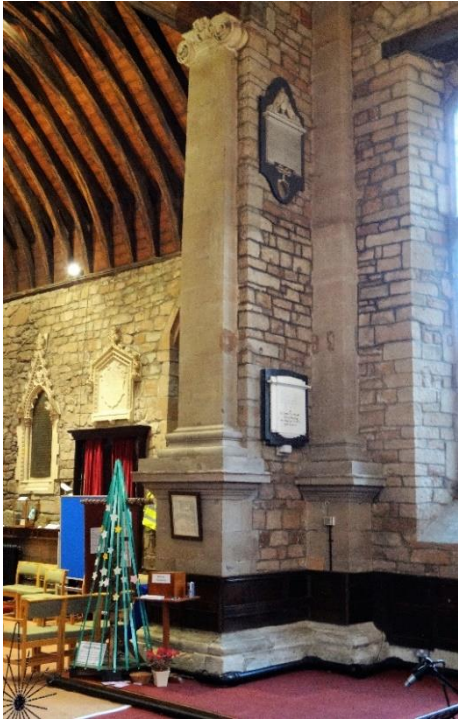
IN THE DAYS BEFORE THE DISCOVERY of its mineral waters, Cheltenham was a small market town, known largely for its malting trade. Few characters from those pre-spa times have come to our attention, with the focus of the town's history concentrated mainly on its development and expansion as a 'watering-place'. However, Cheltenham must have been home to a varied workforce, situated as it is on good sandy soil for market-gardening, and surrounded by quarries at Leckhampton, Whittington, Cleeve Hill and beyond.

James Hill, Senior

One artisan worthy of note is James Hill of Cheltenham, known to have worked as a stonemason specialising in Gothic church repairs in Gloucestershire and beyond during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. He was a free mason, a master mason who was free to travel far and wide to carry out his craft. The skills of stonemasonry were often passed down through generations of the same family, and the tools and techniques used have changed little over hundreds of years. The greatest changes came about during the 19th and 20th centuries, with the introduction of steam power and then the combustion engine, which eased much of the hard work of transporting and hoisting stone into place. The techniques James Hill would have employed had changed little since medieval times, and his tools of mallet, chisel and metal straight edge would have been similar to those used on the Pyramids in Egypt.

Only a few works that James Hill was engaged in have been identified, the earliest being at St Mary's Church, Newent in 1675-79.¹ The nave had collapsed on 18 January 1673, and rebuilding was undertaken by Edward Taylor, a Newent carpenter, with masons Francis Jones of Hasfield and James Hill of Cheltenham. The foundation stone of the new nave was laid in the summer of 1675 by Francis Jones, head mason, and construction was begun on three freestone pillars along a central arcade to support the roof; £25 was allowed for each pillar (£3,450 purchasing power at today's value).² Halfway through this work it was decided that the pillars would take up too much room in the church as the vicar favoured a large, open preaching space – an auditorium with tiered seating for his congregation. The carpenter Edward Taylor, who had worked in London under Sir Christopher Wren, then designed an exceptionally wide, single-span roof for the new nave, apparently constructed on the same principle as that of the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford.³

The auditorium at Newent St Mary's was built across the entrances to the chancel and Lady Chapel to the south, and the church was re-orientated away from the altar towards the pulpit, which stood against the north wall, with galleries and high pews all round. The medieval steeple was retained. The masons finished the work with transom segment-headed windows and an embattled parapet which has classical urn-like finials at the corners. Giant ashlar pilasters with Ionic capitals were used within,



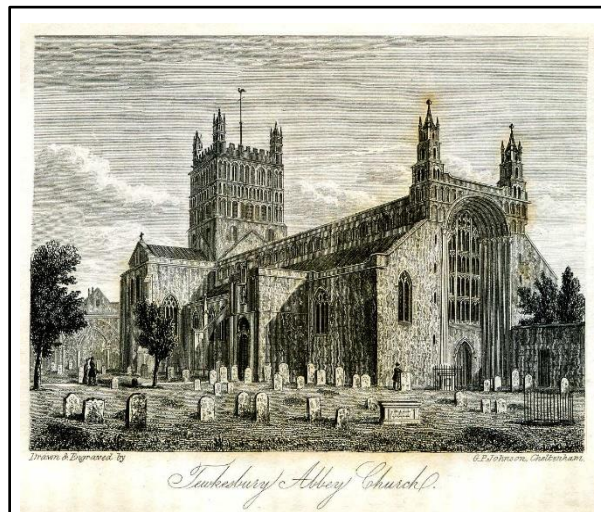
Interior of St Mary, Newent, showing large Ionic pilasters with plinths, now hugely out of scale for modern seating.
© Jill Waller 2017

standing on tall plinths to accommodate the high 17th-century pews. These plinths now seem completely out of scale after an 1884 restoration by Middleton and Son, in which the pews were lowered and reset to face east.⁴ An inscription is incised in the gable at the east end of the nave above the ceiling: ‘Francis Jones of Hasfield & James Hill of Cheltenham Masons were ye Head workmen in Rebuilding this church. The first stones in ye Foundations by them were laid July 31st Anno Dom: 1675. Edward Taylor of ye Towne Carpenter was ye contriver & Head workman in Building this roofof ye church, Anno Dom: 1679’.⁵

The same year that Francis Jones and James Hill completed the work at Newent, 1679, they began rebuilding the village church at Monnington-on-Wye, Herefordshire, for Uvedale Tomkins.⁶ Tomkins’ family had made money during the Civil War, which he used to purchase Monnington Court, and he was a supporter of the Restoration. The rebuild of the church was strongly Puritan in style, having a quiet interior with simplified tracery, windows and finials, similar to those provided by Jones and Hill in the church at Newent. To counteract criticism that the style of the new church appeared

overly Puritan-Presbyterian, Uvedale Tomkins erected an elaborate copy of the arms of Charles II on one of the interior walls.

Francis Jones went on to rebuild the bridge over the River Severn at Over, itself replaced by Telford’s bridge in 1834.⁷ James Hill next comes to our attention in 1686 when he was employed, with Francis Reeve (1639-1715), member of a dynasty of stonemasons and sculptors of Gloucester,⁸ to rebuild the great west window of Tewkesbury Abbey. The great Norman recessed arch is 65ft high (19.8 metres), with six orders (and a seventh hidden in the window rebuild) of roll mouldings supported on shafts with scalloped capitals. The earlier window of c.1340 had been destroyed in a gale in 1661; repairs had been

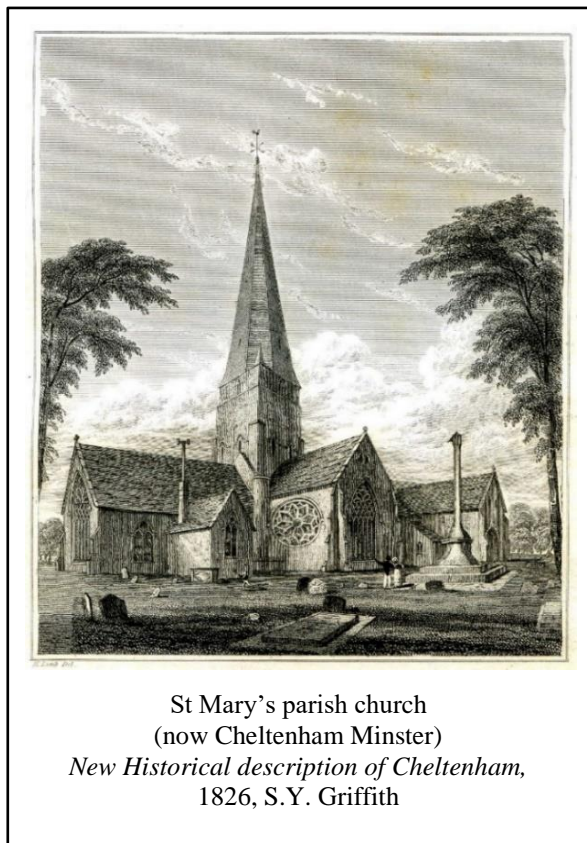


The great west window of the Abbey Church of St Mary, Tewkesbury.
New Historical & Pictorial Cheltenham & County of Gloucestershire Guide, 1845,
G.P. Johnson.

carried out prior to this in 1654 but proved to be inadequate (with understandable reluctance, the contractors were not fully paid for this repair work until 1686).⁹

The earlier 14th-century window had been in a ‘Y-tracery’ pattern belonging to the late Decorated period, and a stub of the medieval mouldings survives internally high up on the frame, discovered when scaffolding was erected for restoration work in the early 2000s.¹⁰ The new window, finished in 1686 by Hill and Reeve using freestone from quarries at Postlip on the northern slope of Cleeve Common,¹¹ was in an entirely new Gothic design, in sub-Perpendicular style. It may have been inspired by the great Perpendicular east windows of Gloucester Cathedral, with which Francis Reeve would certainly have been familiar. Their window was designed to resist future damage by the strong westerly winds to which the Abbey is so exposed; the tri-partite arrangement provides two extremely thick main mullions, and each of the three transoms was reinforced by horizontal wrought iron bars. A stone inscription plaque in the head of the window records their work – ‘Francis Reeve / James Hill / Master Builders 1686’.

James Hill also carried out work in his home town, and in the vestry minutes of St Mary’s parish church, Cheltenham, a memorandum recorded that in 1693 ‘was the steeple of Cheltenham repayed from the upper hole to the top by James Hill of Cheltenham, stonemason’.¹² It was not the only occasion he was called on to repair the steeple (see below).



In 1696 the tower of St Michael and All Angels church, Bishops Cleeve, collapsed, causing some damage to part of the chancel to the east, and in 1699 the churchwarden’s accounts include payment of 16s ‘to James Hill for a draught (plan) of ye tower’, indicating that he was architect of some of his building work.¹³ In 1700 he was employed to rebuild the tower, providing an ambitious Gothic Survival replacement;¹⁴ the original Norman tower was shorter, and according to Samuel Rudder, writing in the late 18th century, it had a spire, and the replacement tower cost £700 (£94,780 at today’s value).¹⁵ Hill’s rather dominant tower, built onto the original capitals below, includes a belfry with Perpendicular tracery windows above simple stone louvres, and is topped with battlements and square

corner pinnacles. It was also necessary for Hill to reconstruct the westernmost windows of the chancel and, internally, the arches of the chancel crossing.



St Michael and All Angels, Bishops Cleeve with
James Hill's tower and belfry.
Internet image labelled for non-commercial use.

Family History

James Hill was born a member of the Hill family of Whittington, quarrymen and masons.¹⁶ A John Hill was recorded in 1608, a mason of about 40 years of age.¹⁷ His descendant Francis Hill was involved in the rebuilding of the spire and south transept of Dowdeswell church in 1632, digging out the stone from one of the Whittington quarries and cutting it to size. For this

he was paid £44 (£6,607).¹⁸ Robert Hill, brother of James, is described as a mason when recorded as bondsman for the marriage allegation of their sister Dorothy in July 1683.¹⁹ The Hill family was quite established in the community and several members served as church wardens at Whittington St Bartholomew church during the 17th century.

James Hill was baptised at the Whittington church on 23 June 1650, son of George and Dorothy Hill.²⁰ In May 1685, aged 34, he married 22-year-old Cloves Ann Mace of Compton Abdale.²¹ The baptisms of his children are recorded from 1686 in the Cheltenham parish records. His children, most of whom died young, included George (June 1686-May 1887), Mary (February 1688-), Dorothy, (April 1690-January 1691), Elizabeth, (June 1692-), a stillborn (May 1695), and James, baptised 21 March 1703.²²

Published sources state that James Hill died in Cheltenham in 1734, suggested by his probate of 11 February 1734 and inventory of 30 March 1734.²³ The parish records of St Mary's, Cheltenham, however, reveal that this James Hill actually died in January 1721, and it was his son who died 1734. James Hill senior, described as a 'Free Mason', was buried in the parish churchyard on 21 January 1721, and a note beside the record reads 'who repayerd ye steple 2 times'.²⁴ An 'Olive Hill, widow' was buried at Cheltenham on 2 March 1728; there are no other references to her in the parish records and it is possible that she is 'Cloves' widow of James Hill senior; James Hill junior makes no reference to his mother still being alive in his will of 1734.

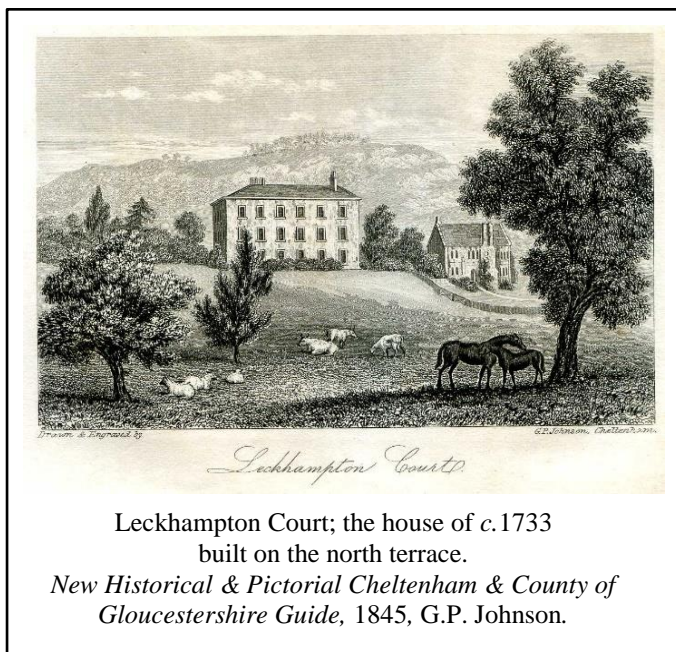
James Hill, Junior

The surviving son, James Hill junior died in early 1734, was buried at Cheltenham on 13 February 1733/4, and it is his probate and inventory that has resulted in the confusion in the published sources. Described as a free mason in the parish records, and as a stonecutter in his probate record, James Hill junior left a widow, Martha, and three young children. Martha was probably Martha Joans of Tewkesbury, married to James Hill at Twyning on 17 March 1724.²⁵ As in the previous generation, several of their children died in infancy, but the surviving children were Edward, baptised 19 February 1726, James, baptised 23 January 1729, and Elizabeth, baptised 6 October 1732, all provided for in James' will.

The Suggested Works of James Hill, Junior

No official documentation of any of James Hill junior's work has yet come to light, but his probate inventory includes reference to 'grave stones and other stones in the yard', indicating the nature of at least part of his occupation. It does not reveal the location of his houses (he owned the neighbouring house, which he rented out) and yard in Cheltenham, and as his name does not appear in the Cheltenham manor court books of the time, his property was almost certainly freehold. Quite a large house is suggested by the fairly significant list of his domestic goods, which included six beds, seven 'old tables', two looking glasses and 54 small printed pictures.

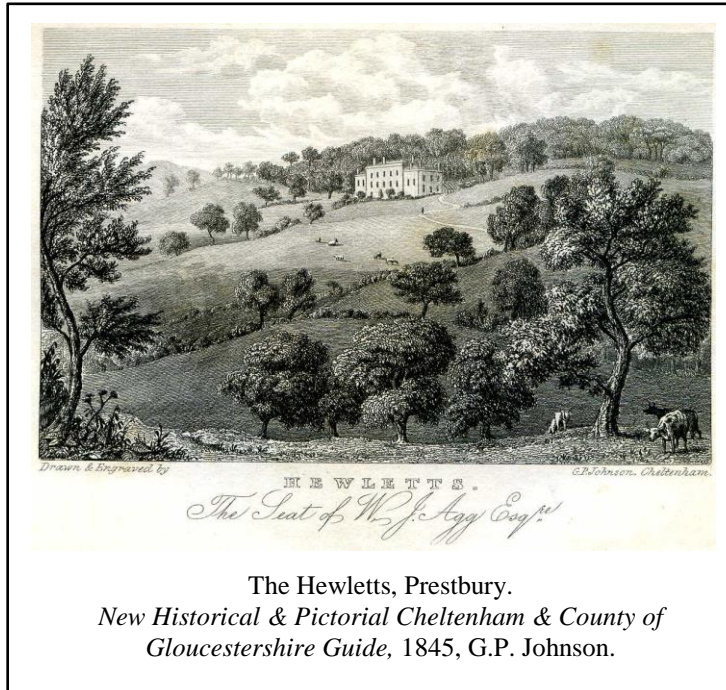
The inventory also includes an account of the extensive debts owed to him at the time of his death, suggesting James was as active and successful a craftsman as his father had been. He was owed a total of £333 11s 7 ¾ d (over £48,500 at today's value) at the time of his death. The list of his debtors includes those for whom he presumably carried out maintenance work – the 'Overseers of the Highways for Cheltenham 1731', the churchwardens of Tewkesbury, the parish of Prestbury, and 'for work done at Leckhampton church'. Many of the smaller amounts may have been for gravestones, or for joint building works; two of the debtors, Joseph Cemett and James Carpenter were bricklayers. There were few stone buildings in Cheltenham at this time, but there would have been a demand for stone lintels and quoins as the town began to grow following the discovery of the spa water.



A significant amount of money was owed by William Norwood – £60 (£8,740 at today's value) – and this was most likely to be for work carried out at Leckhampton Court. In 1732, about two years before James Hill junior died, there was a dramatic fire at the house, started by a dish of lighted charcoal which had been set to dry a newly lime-washed room.²⁶ Much of the central part of the north wing was destroyed and the then owner, the Revd Thomas Norwood, replaced the whole

block with a new three-storey Georgian block on the north terrace. Thomas Norwood died in August 1734, and it was his heir, William Norwood, who owed so much to James Hill. William Norwood went on to carry out further alterations to Leckhampton Court. The Georgian block fell into disrepair in the early 19th century and was demolished in 1848. It was replaced in 1895 in an Arts-and-Crafts Tudor Gothic style by H.A. Prothero for the owner John Hargreaves.²⁷

Judging from the debts owed, James Hill junior seems to have carried out a large amount of work in the Prestbury area. The Right Honourable William Lord Craven owed him £26 19s when lord of the manor of Prestbury. Lord Craven lived at Combe Abbey, Warwickshire, but his family owned extensive property in Gloucestershire, including the manors of Tewkesbury, Bishops Cleeve, Boddington and Elkstone.²⁸

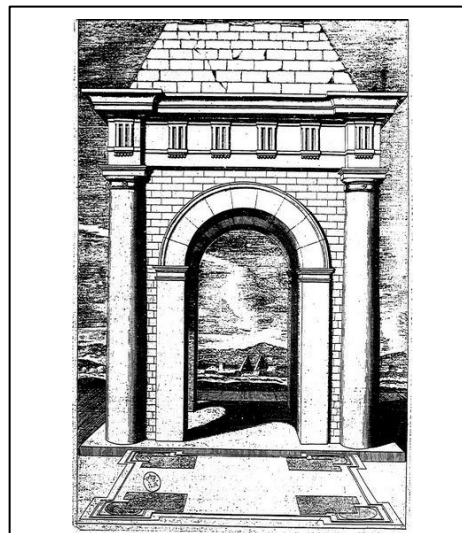


The Hewletts, Prestbury.
New Historical & Pictorial Cheltenham & County of Gloucestershire Guide, 1845, G.P. Johnson.

Another Prestbury landowner was Mr Thomas Baghot, who owed Hill £36 0s 5d (£5,243 at today's value). This was probably the Revd Thomas Baghot, rector of Dumbleton and Allesley, who owned The Hewletts.²⁹ The Baghot family had been associated with the Hewletts for over 300 years. The three-storey central block of the present house is thought to have been built c.1790, flanked by two-storey wings added in c.1820 for James Agg, but the

remains of an earlier house are incorporated at the rear.³⁰ One source suggests the central block was built in the first half of the 18th century, and if so James Hill may have well have been involved in its construction.³¹

By far the largest amount due to James Hill junior was £139 0s 4d (£20,240 at today's value), owed to him by Sir John Guise, member of a prominent Gloucestershire gentry family. Links with this family may have already been established by James Hill senior; there is a wall monument in Elmore church to Sir William Guise, died 1642, thought to be by Joseph Reeve, a member of the Reeve family of Gloucester, and Francis Reeve had worked with James Hill senior on Tewkesbury Abbey.³² In 1695 Sir John Guise inherited the family estates of Rendcomb and Elmore, the former being his main residence at the time. It is thought that Sir John undertook improvements to Elmore Court in the 1720s, installing new windows in the main part of the house and constructing a large single-storey bow window for the drawing room.³³



Design for a mausoleum, copied at Elmore for Sir John Guise in 1733.
Parallele de l'Architecture Antique et de las Moderne, Roland Fréart.



Ruins of the Guise mausoleum,
Elmore Churchyard.
© 2016 Jill Waller

Sir John Guise died in 1732 and in his will he stipulated that a large mausoleum be built in the churchyard at Elmore, and he even dictated the design to which it was to be built – an exact copy of the sepulchre at Terracina near Rome, as illustrated in Roland Fréart's *Parallele de l'Architecture Antique et de la Moderne*, published 1650.³⁴ The mausoleum was constructed in 1733, the year before James Hill's death, and appears to be the likely project for which Sir John Guise, or his son, also Sir John, owed such a large amount of money. This mausoleum is significant as it is the earliest example of

the use of a baseless Doric column in Britain, a fundamental element which helped set the Neo-Classical style of the later 18th century.³⁵ Following Sir John's burial, other bodies of the Guise family were reinterred there. The pyramidal stone roof collapsed in c.1917, and although the monument is Grade II* listed it remains as a ruin much-obscured by trees and undergrowth. Only the piers and columns remain in situ, but the rest of the masonry fragments have been laid out or stacked in the undergrowth. The Mausolea and Monuments Trust is currently (2016) applying for funding to restore the Guise mausoleum, perhaps one of their most ambitious projects to date.³⁶

Conclusions

Despite the lack of documentary evidence, James Hill senior is known to us from the appearance of his name in church records and from plaques at the sites he was engaged on. Buildings and monuments are usually remembered by the name of the patrons or clients who commissioned them, for example the 'Guise Mausoleum', and the actual builders are rarely credited. At Tewkesbury Abbey the arms of the mayor and churchwardens in 1686 are visible on carved and painted shields on the west window's stonework, but the Master Builders, James Hill and Francis Reeve, have their plaque consigned high up to the head of the window, only to be discovered during restoration work over 200 years later. Seventeenth-century churches are quite rare and most of the work on them consists of necessary repairs, so the Gothic Survival endeavours of craftsmen such as James Hill deserve to be better known.

No documents regarding James Hill junior have surfaced, apart from his will and probate inventory, but this has at least given us a clue as to the probable extent and nature of his work, which seems to have been profitable. Sadly James Hill junior died, aged barely 30, before the boom in Cheltenham's development as a spa town that may have provided him with much local building work. Both he and his father deserve a place in Cheltenham's distinguished history of stone-working, which includes the

prolific 19th-century memorial sculptor George Lewis, the Brown family who produced the caryatids for Montpellier, and the firms of R.L. Boulton & Sons and H.H. Martyn & Co. who are remembered for their first-class carving well into the 20th century.

¹ Colvin, Howard, *A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects 1600-1840* (3rd ed. Yale University Press, 1995).

² www.measuringworth.com/ukcompare/ – website provides a simple Purchasing Power Calculator, but also gives figures if you are interested in comparing the cost or value of a Commodity (consumer goods and services), Income or Wealth (flow of earnings or stock of assets), or a Project (investment such as construction, net worth of a company, etc).

³ Nourse, Walter, c.1750 MS account of the building of Newent church; copy made by Conder, Edward, 1898.

⁴ Verey, D. and Brooks, A., (series ed. Pevsner, N.) *The Buildings of England: Gloucestershire 2: The Vale and the Forest of Dean*, (3rd ed., Yale University Press, 2002).

⁵ Gray, Irvine E, *The Church of St Mary the Virgin, Newent*, (Newent, 1962).

⁶ Mowl, Timothy, 'The Wrong Things at the Wrong Time: 17th-Century Gothic Churches', in *Gothic Architecture and its Meanings 1550-1830* (ed. Hall, Michael, Spire Books, 2002).

⁷ Colvin, Howard.

⁸ Gunnis, Rupert, *Dictionary of British Sculptors 1660-1851* (revised ed., Abbey Library, 1951); also Barlow, Jill, (ed.) *Gloucestershire Apprenticeship Registers 1595-1700*, (Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, [BGAS] 2001); also Jurica, A.R.J., (ed.) *A Calendar of the Registers of Freemen of the City of Gloucester 1641-1838* (BGAS, 1991).

⁹ Morris, Richard K, and Shoesmith, Ron (ed.s), *Tewkesbury Abbey, History, Art and Architecture*, (Logaston Press 2003, reprint 2012).

¹⁰ Morris, Richard K, and Shoesmith, Ron (ed.s).

¹¹ Price, Arthur J., *Cheltenham Stone; The Whittington Quarries*, (Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club, 2007).

¹² 'Cheltenham Vestry Minutes', *Gloucestershire Notes and Queries*, viii (i) (1901).

¹³ Gloucestershire Archives (GA) P46 – Bishops Cleeve parish records.

¹⁴ Verey, D. and Brooks, A.

¹⁵ Rudder, Samuel, *A New History of Gloucestershire*, (1779; republ. Nonsuch, 2006).

¹⁶ Price, Arthur J.

¹⁷ Smyth, John, *Men & Armour in Gloucestershire in 1608*, Facsimile ed. (Alan Sutton, 1980).

¹⁸ GA D269a/PA 10.

¹⁹ Frith, Brian, *Marriage Allegations in the Diocese of Gloucester, Vol.II 1681-1700*, (BGAS, 1970).

²⁰ www.ancestry.co.uk in association with Gloucestershire Archives – Whittington parish records.

²¹ Frith, Brian.

²² www.ancestry.co.uk in association with Gloucestershire Archives – Cheltenham parish records.

²³ Sale, A.J.H., (ed), *Cheltenham Probate Records, 1660-1740*, (BGAS, 1999).

²⁴ www.ancestry.co.uk in association with Gloucestershire Archives – Cheltenham parish records.

²⁵ www.ancestry.co.uk in association with Gloucestershire Archives – Twyning parish records.

²⁶ Andrew, Eve, and Brevin, Eric, *Leckhampton Through the Ages* (1984).

²⁷ Kingsley, Nicholas, *The Country Houses of Gloucestershire, Vol.1 1500-1660* (Phillimore, 1989, 2001).

²⁸ GA D184 – Craven family of Gloucestershire; also Cossens, N.K., *Prestbury, The History of a Cotswold Village*, (c.1950).

²⁹ Rudder, Samuel.

³⁰ Kingsley, Nicholas, *The Country Houses of Gloucestershire, Vol.2 1660-1830* (Phillimore, 1992).

³¹ Verey, D., (series ed. Pevsner, N.) *The Buildings of England: Gloucestershire, The Vale and the Forest of Dean*, (1st ed., Penguin, 1970).

³² Verey, D. and Brooks, A.

³³ Kingsley, Nicholas, *Vol.1*.

³⁴ Kingsley, Nicholas, *Vol.1*.

³⁵ Worsley, G., *Classical Architecture in Britain: The Heroic Age*, (Yale University Press, 1995).

³⁶ www.mmtrust.org.uk, The Mausolea and Monuments Trust, a charitable trust for the protection and preservation of mausolea and funerary monuments situated in Great Britain and Ireland.

Was John Wesley Not Holy Enough?

ANTHEA JONES

THE TEMPTATION TO WANDER DOWN byways, opened by a detail encountered in research, is nearly irresistible. This short article is a byway opened while puzzling over where exactly the early Presbyterian, and later Methodist, chapel in Cheltenham was sited, and in the search encountering the name of Samuel Wells. Jill Waller pointed the way into this byway, and supplied help for which Victoria County History, Cheltenham and I are grateful.

The story begins in 1748, when a Cheltenham manor court book (reference 2184)¹ recorded the transfer of a holding by Ezra Wells, hatter, to Samuel Wells, his son. Ezra Wells will be another byway for future exploration. On 11 December 1753, Samuel Wells and his brother Joseph put two handsome displayed advertisements in the *Gloucester Journal*.

‘SAMUEL WELLS,
Writing-Master, in Cheltenham,
is moved to a large House, on the Back-side
of the Town, formerly in the occupation of Mr Trevanion,
very commodious, for taking BOARDERS;
where he will closely attend the Education of YOUTH,
and expeditiously fit ‘em for *Trade and Business*;
BOARDERS at Ten guineas a Year,
OTHER SCHOLARS at *Six Shillings* a quarter.
N.B. *Great Diligence will be used in instructing his Scholars in the
ENGLISH LANGUAGE, both in Speaking and Writing; and the utmost
Pains will be taken to inculcate and preserve Morality.*’

Immediately below is,

‘JOSEPH WELLS
HAT-MAKER, in *Cheltenham*,
Is removed to the House where his Brother SAMUEL lately lived;
by whom Gentlemen and others may be supplied with all
Sorts of HATS AT THE LOWEST PRICES.
N.B. *The Farmers may be served with very good FELTS for keep-ing out the Wet.*’

These gentlemen look to have been both literate and reasonably well-to-do. A court held on 24 December 1753 confirms this transfer of a house to Joseph (ref. 2282), adding that Samuel was also a hatter, that he had a wife Margaret, and that there was a garden, backside, outhouse and workshop going with the house to be occupied by Joseph.

Samuel Wells appears to be an established ‘writing-master’ before this date. There is a hint in the remark about inculcating and preserving morality, that he was a serious-minded man. He proved a ‘very respectable’ schoolmaster, but his success annoyed the master of Pate’s Grammar School, John Chester who arrived in

Cheltenham in 1763 charged with reviving the emaciated condition of the school. Chester complained to the President of Corpus Christi, saying that Wells was looking out for a proper person to teach Latin 'in opposition to me'. 'This fellow has the impudence to put his design into execution'. It appears that Wells was aiming for a good class of pupil. 'Unless therefore you will be so good as to apply to the Bishop for his favourable interposition, my best endeavour to retrieve the credit of the school so long sunk and lost will in a great measure be vain and fruitless. His Lordship told me on the day of his visitation here that he would desire his Chancellor to curb the insolence of this Wells, but as nothing has of yet been done, I presume the Bishop has forgot it.'²

The Bishop was able to close the school because schoolmasters were legally required to be licensed, and as a nonconformist Wells would not have sworn to the articles of the Church of England in order to obtain a licence. The President presented Chester's case to the bishop, saying that Wells was 'a dissenter and a violent Methodist', and not understanding Greek or Latin had to employ someone else to teach these subjects. He noted that it was difficult to rid the church and community 'of these pests'. The Chancellor of the diocese was reluctant to proceed against Wells, because of his poverty; there would be public sympathy for the schoolmaster. However, Chester wrote in October 1764 warmly thanking the bishop, which suggests that Wells had been forced to close his school. An entry in a court book in 1765 (2619) shows Samuel Wells as the occupier of a house belonging to the late Thomas Benfield, presumably the 'commodious' house, but significantly 'the schoolhouse built in the orchard,' with the barn and buildings adjoining the house were not occupied by Wells, which could confirm the closure of his school. Ten years later, in 1776 (2822), Anthony Dawkes was the schoolmaster occupying the house and schoolhouse.

For some years from 1764, Wells is said to have rented the former Presbyterian chapel for Methodist preaching, his school probably no longer being available. He was himself an occasional preacher.³ So far so good. Samuel Wells died in 1783, as his will and the probate demonstrate footnote (GA 1783/47). The date recorded in the Salem church book is 1785,⁴ and might seem trustworthy evidence. It occurs in a paragraph giving some details of Samuel Wells' life, inserted in a manuscript history of the Baptist church in Cheltenham which was written in 1809 by a member of the Baptist congregation. At that time the minister was Revd Hugh Hughes Williams and the same source records that he had married Samuel Wells' surviving daughter Mary in 1801.

The writer of this church history also noted that Wells had two sons, 'very pious characters, one of whom was also a keen Methodist and a preacher in Mr Wesley's Connection but died when about 34 years old.' Neither son was named. The youngest of the two was surely the 'Sammy Wells' whose death on 27 November 1779 was referred to in one of John Wesley's letters.⁵ The Minutes of the Methodist Conference of 1780 recorded the death of Samuel Wells, 'a sensible, honest, upright man, who put forth all his strength in every part of this work. He was particularly zealous in observing discipline and in exhorting believers to go on to perfection'. He was indeed, as a part of the long letter to John Wesley below shows.

'This Samuel Wells junior was active in the 1770s. A short 'Memorial' of his life was published in 1801;⁶ It described him as a local preacher and class leader, who 'came out as an itinerant preacher at the Methodist conference in 1770'. He

was 'a young man of extraordinary piety, strong sense and considerable ministerial abilities. He was converted to God at an early period of life'.

Two letters written by Samuel Wells in 1777 and 1778 to Jonathan Cousins, a young man influenced by him while staying in Cheltenham, were published by Bancroft. They show the young Wells' fervour for a life of Christian perfection. Another letter to John Wesley himself on 10 October 1772, published in *The Methodist Memorial*, exhorts Wesley at some length to lay more emphasis on discipline. To the founder of the Holy Club this is a surprising insight into more extreme Methodism. What might Wesley have thought?

'Our word is too often a mere insipid repetition of doctrinal truths, our conversation sometimes mere impertinence. Nay I sometimes have thought that you, Sir, might do more than you do in promoting the cause of Christian holiness. I do not remember that in conversation or by letter you ever pressed me to expect a deliverance from all the carnal mind except once in a letter and once when you met the class at Cheltenham, though you have exhorted me to press others to it. And yet I think you have given me one way or other far more encouragement than any other Preacher in your Connection, though some of them have not been altogether neglectful of their duty neither. But dear Sir would it not animate us exceedingly if you encouraged us yet more?'

¹ J. Hodsdon, ed., *Cheltenham Manor Court Books 1692-1803*, (BGAS 2010).

² A Bell, *Tudor Foundation A Sketch of the History of Richard Pate's Foundation in Cheltenham* (Richard Pate Foundation, 1974), p.86-7.

³ Salem church book, in the keeping of Salem Baptist church.

⁴ Possibly a copying error by the scribe who wrote out the history in the Church Book.

⁵ G H Bancroft Judge, 'The early history of Methodism in Cheltenham, 1739-1812', *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, (1920).

⁶C. Atmore, *The Methodist Memorial*, 449.

Cheltenham Hospital's Appeal, 1934 – Part 2



A further appeal for funds was made in 1934, with the sale of these bricks. In 1813 The Cheltenham Provident Dispensary opened and in 1839 moved to Segrave House (now Normandy House), Lower High Street, and was renamed Cheltenham General Hospital and Dispensary. The present building in Sandford Road was opened in 1849. (See also page 15)

Courtesy of Bob Leopold, owner of the brick. Image © Sally Self 2014

Recent Books and Articles on the History of Cheltenham - 2016

STEVEN BLAKE

Beacham, Roger, and Cleaver, Lynne, *Cheltenham History Tour*, Amberley Publishing, Stroud, 2016. 92pp. £6.99. 'Then and now' photographs, the former mainly from the *Chronicle & Graphic* (published 1901-42).

Bertocci, Richard A., *Northwick Park. A Few Shiny Bits of English History of Possible Interest to Magpies and Bowerbirds*, published by Blockley Heritage Society, 2014. 128pp. £24.50. Includes information on John Rushout, 2nd Baron Northwick, the owner of Thirlestaine House, Cheltenham.

Brown, Philip & Dorothy, 'Potteries and Brickmaking: Gloucestershire Examples', *British Brick Society Information* **121** (2012), 3-8, includes potteries and brickmaking at Leckhampton.

Cole, Michael, *Prestbury Past & Present Volume One*, published by Prestbury Local History Society, 2016. 139pp. £10.00. Chapters on Lost Buildings, Masters, Servants and Tradesmen, and Prehistoric Prestbury.

Conoley, Christopher, *Patrick Conoley. 75 years of Sculpture*, published by Gloucester City Museum, 2011. 56pp. £4.50. An account of the life and work of the sculptor Patrick Conoley (1924-2011), who worked at R.L. Boulton & Sons of Cheltenham in 1941-9 and 1959-66. Published to accompany an exhibition of his work at Gloucester City Museum in 2011.

Craven, Alex, 'Brawling for Rights in Early Modern Cheltenham', *Regional Historian* **30** (Autumn 2016), 2-4, published by the University of the West of England Regional History Centre. Conflicts re land disputes at Arle in 1551 and Charlton Park in 1693.

Dingle, Audrey, *The Cheltenham Gordon Boys' Brigade 1890-1925*, privately published by the author, 2016. 473pp. Unpriced.

Hodsdon, James, *A bottled history of the Cheltenham waters. Marking 300 years since their discovery in 1716*, jointly published by Cheltenham Civic Society and the Friends of The Wilson, 2016. 12pp.

Mann, Neela, in association with Cheltenham Local History Society, *Cheltenham in the Great War*, published by The History Press, Stroud, 2016. 220pp. £14.99.

O'Connor, David (editor), *Charlton Kings Local History Society Research Bulletin* **62** (2016). 56pp. Articles on Charlton Kings by a number of authors, including Glenure House (David O'Connor and John & Beverly Wisdom), the Ashmeade family (David O'Connor and John & Beverly Wisdom), the Hayward family (James Linton), Sir

William Russell (David O'Connor), billeting in World War 2 (Virginia Adsett) and a local World War 2 hero, Robert Henry Smith (David Adsett).

Tythacott, Louise, 'The Power of Taste: the dispersal of the Berkeley Smith collection of Chinese ceramics at Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum (1921-1960)', *Journal of the History of Collections* **28.2** (2016), 327-43.

Wills, Jan (editor), 'Archaeological Review No. 39, 2014', *Transactions of the Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society* **133** (2015), includes (p.251) notes on watching briefs at 205 Leckhampton Road and in Stoneville Street, Cheltenham.

The street-by-street database of the **Pittville History Works** website (www.pittvillehistory.org.uk) is continuing to grow, and three new articles, all based on original research, have been added to the website. These consider the lives of Florence Earengy (1877-1963), who lived at 3 Wellington Square West and who was active in the women's suffrage movement; Edith Bundy, a servant at 3 Pittville Terrace, who ended up in the Cheltenham Workhouse after becoming pregnant in 1843; and Edmund Selous (1857-1934), who lived at 19 Clarence Square, and who is now internationally acclaimed for promoting the scientific observation of bird behaviour. Also added to the site are transcriptions and many photographs of the memorials in Trinity church that commemorate Pittville residents, and database links showing the location of Pittville houses on the 1855-7 Cheltenham Town Survey.

The **South Town, Cheltenham Spa. 200 Years of Local Trading History** project was created in 2010 to research the history of the shops and business premises in the Bath Road, Suffolks and Tivoli districts, with the aims of informing and strengthening the local community. A richly illustrated website, www.cheltenhamouthtown.org, now contains almost 200 commentaries with photographs, drawings, historic advertisements and maps of the area. The project is progressing well and the focus is gradually changing from documentary research to a call for local memories to augment the existing material. The latest business premises to be included on the website are The Norwood Arms and those located on the north side of Suffolk Road.

Gloucestershire Archives: Cheltenham New Accessions 2016

JULIE COURTENAY

Details of all new 'accessions' (or batches) of archives are added to Gloucestershire Archives' online catalogue within 15 working days of their arrival. The Archives is very grateful for these donations and deposits, and for news of archives held elsewhere, whether in paper or digital format. Members of Cheltenham Local History Society continued to volunteer at the Archives over the last year, helping to list some large solicitors' archives and thus making them accessible for the first time, through the on-line Gloucestershire Archives website.

As many members know, 2017 is particularly exciting for the Archives as we embark on our ambitious partnership project *For the Record*. To keep up to date with the project, especially any changes for visitors during the onsite building works, please see our website www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives. You can also contact or visit Gloucestershire Archives at **Clarence Row, Alvin Street, Gloucester, GL1 3DW**

New accessions for 2016: Please note that an asterix beside an accession means access is by appointment only – these records may not have been catalogued in detail yet or may need written permission from the depositor to view them.

All Saints parish records (additional): annual church meeting minutes, report and accounts, 2015 (GA collection reference P78/2, Accession 14144)

Bailey Donaldsons, estate agents (additional): letter books, 1904-1918 and cash journals, 1960-1973 (D245, Acc 14252)

***Bethesda Methodist chapel (additional):** finance committee papers 1987-1994; church family committee papers 1987-1995; neighbourhood committee minutes 1974-1995 and reports 1990-1995; papers on redevelopment, 1992-1995; worship consultation minutes, 1987-1997; church family committee minutes, 1985-1986; property committee minutes and other papers, 1987-1997 (D7028 Accs 14093.4 and 14168.4)

***Bishop of Gloucester's records relating to the administration of the diocese (additional):** include parish files for Holy Trinity, 1995-2005; St Mary, 1998-2003; St Michael, 1995-2005; Christ Church, 1994-2002; Emmanuel with St Stephens, 1994-2005; St Paul, 1995-2005; St Peter, 1994-2005; St Luke and St John, 1996-2005 (GDR Acc 14118); newscuttings album relating to the National Church Congress held in Cheltenham, 1928 (GDR/A16/33, Acc 14171)

Black and White Coach Station: presentation album produced for Black & White Motorways Ltd containing architect's plans and photographs of the new booking hall, waiting room, administrative offices, cafe, kitchen, ladies lavatories and departure bays. Includes names of the Board of Directors and architects L W Barnard & Partners of Cheltenham and dates of major development phases at Cheltenham coach station, 1953-1956 (D14120). *This album appears to have belonged to 'L H G' [L H Grimmett, General Manager] and was donated to the Archives by Cheltenham Local History Society which holds a digital copy*

Bradbury: deeds of property in Cheltenham belonging to Herbert Lucas Bradbury, tailor, 1838-1922 (D14092)

Cambray Baptist Church (additional): church magazines, 2012-2016 (D2766, Acc 14095)

Cambray Ramblers: photograph albums, 2002-2006; annual programmes, 2002-2016; history of the group, 2016 (D14211)

***Cheltenham Borough Council:** full electoral registers, in force for 2015, 2016 and 2017, with updates and statistics for 2016 and 2017 (Q/Rer Acc 14276)

Cole: William George Cole's 'The Cheltenham Sketch-Book' volume two with original sketch, 1898 (D14190)

Dowty Heritage community archive (part of the *For the Record* project): letter and photographs relating to the late Ted Pattenden's employment at Dowty (1954-1988, including in the drawing office); *sound recordings of interviews gathered by project volunteers, with summary transcripts and photos of the interviewees Graham James and John Herring (Graham and John are both project volunteers and interviewed each other as part of their training), 2015 (D14045, Accs 14045 and 14098)

***Freemasons' Foundation Lodge No. 82 (additional):** membership register, 1817-2013; minutes, 1949-1970 (D9764, Acc 14196)

Glenfall House Trust: minutes with accounts, correspondence, photographs, illustrations, plans and publicity material relating to Glenfall House in Charlton Kings [gifted to the Gloucester Diocese and used as a house of retreat for clergy and worshippers between 1992-2013], 1970-2013; also papers and plans relating to the work of the Glenfall House Garden Committee, 1992-2013 (D14003)

***Morse of Cheltenham (additional):** theatre programmes featuring **Vernon Morse**, drama teacher and long time member of the Cheltenham Little Theatre, 1940s-2000s (D13908, Acc 14000)

Photographs of Cheltenham: *various photos from the archive of H E Jones of 75 Northgate Street, Gloucester, photographer, 1890s-1940s (D14063); photograph of Boyne House by Francis Frith, 1930s (D14204)

St Aidan's parish records (additional): marriage register, 1978-2012 (P78/15, Acc 14217.1)

St Luke's parish records (additional): papers concerning St Luke's Vicarage, 1969-2003; PCC minutes, 1993-2003; annual parish meeting papers, 1992-2004; papers relating to the sale of St John's Church including the sale of the site, nd; correspondence and related papers on St Luke's Church Hall, 1946-2002; inventories and other property records, 1969-2003; suspension of the right of presentation of St Luke and St John, 2002; finance committee papers, 1984-1997; correspondence on church business, 1980s-2000s (P78/7, Acc 14056)

St Peter's parish records (additional): church accounts, 2004-2008; papers relating to organ fund, 1859-2008 (P78/11, Acc 14141.2)

St Silas parish records (additional): marriage register, 1981-1998 (P78/14, Acc 14217.2)

***Sheet Metal Workers Union, Cheltenham branch:** minutes, 1975-1992 (D3128, Acc 14060)

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