

# CHARLTON KINGS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



**BULLETIN 47**  
Spring 2002

## CHARLTON KINGS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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### **Membership of this Society**

Membership forms are available from the Hon. Secretary. Annual subscription £3.50 or £5.50 for a couple. Meetings are held monthly from September to May in the Stanton Room at Charlton Kings Library.

### **Publications:**

The *Bulletin* is published twice a year, in March and September, priced £2.50. Copies of this Bulletin are available from the Hon. Secretary.

Please apply to the Chairman, Mary Southerton, for past issues of the *Bulletin*, Indexes, Parish Register Transcriptions, and other publications as shown below:  
Indexes are available to *Bulletins* 1-7 price £2, to *Bulletins* 8-17, 18-27 and 28-37 price £5.  
Indexed *Parish Register Transcriptions*: I 1538-1634 price £2; II 1634-1700 price £3; III 1700-1760 price £5; IV 1760-1812 price £5.  
*Reminiscences of John Bowen* (1993), *Five Walks Around Charlton Kings* (1997), and *Five More Walks Around Charlton Kings* (1998) all at £1.

Note. Please send £1 for packing and postage on each of the above items if you would like any of them sent to you.

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Cover - Sketch of Telling & Coates Nurseries, when owned by James Wood,  
kindly loaned by John Coates

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## **OBITUARIES - REG SEABRIGHT**

(1) Members of Charlton Kings Local History Society will be sorry to learn of the death of Reg Seabright, who has contributed so many papers on Charlton history. Few *Bulletins* since No 39 have been without a contribution from him, all written with an intimate knowledge of the East End area and its people.

He covered too the development of new roads as proposed in 1931 - had those proposals been implemented, some of our present traffic problems might have been avoided - though others would inevitably have been created and the old pattern of roads and houses would to a large extent have been destroyed.

Reg was born in East End and he could write with the intimate knowledge of childhood about its people, its footpaths, the influence of the Chapel on his childhood, the Neathers of The Hitchins, the Harris family of The Chase. We shall miss Reg's carefully researched papers.

**MARY PAGET**

(2) It was with great sadness that I heard Reggie Seabright has died. We shall miss his wonderful detailed articles on East End Charlton Kings.

When I joined the Society ten years ago, one of the first things I read was Reggie's description of East End and the house he had lived in as a boy. Imagine to discover that I had lived next door at No 8. I was eleven when I moved on.

My great memories of Reggie and Family were their great kindness. In those days 72 years ago we had tramps who travelled from one workhouse to another, completely homeless. The Seabrights kept a small table in the front garden and any tramp walking from Northleach to Cheltenham knew he could rely on a meal at the Seabrights.

**MRS DOREEN BLISS**

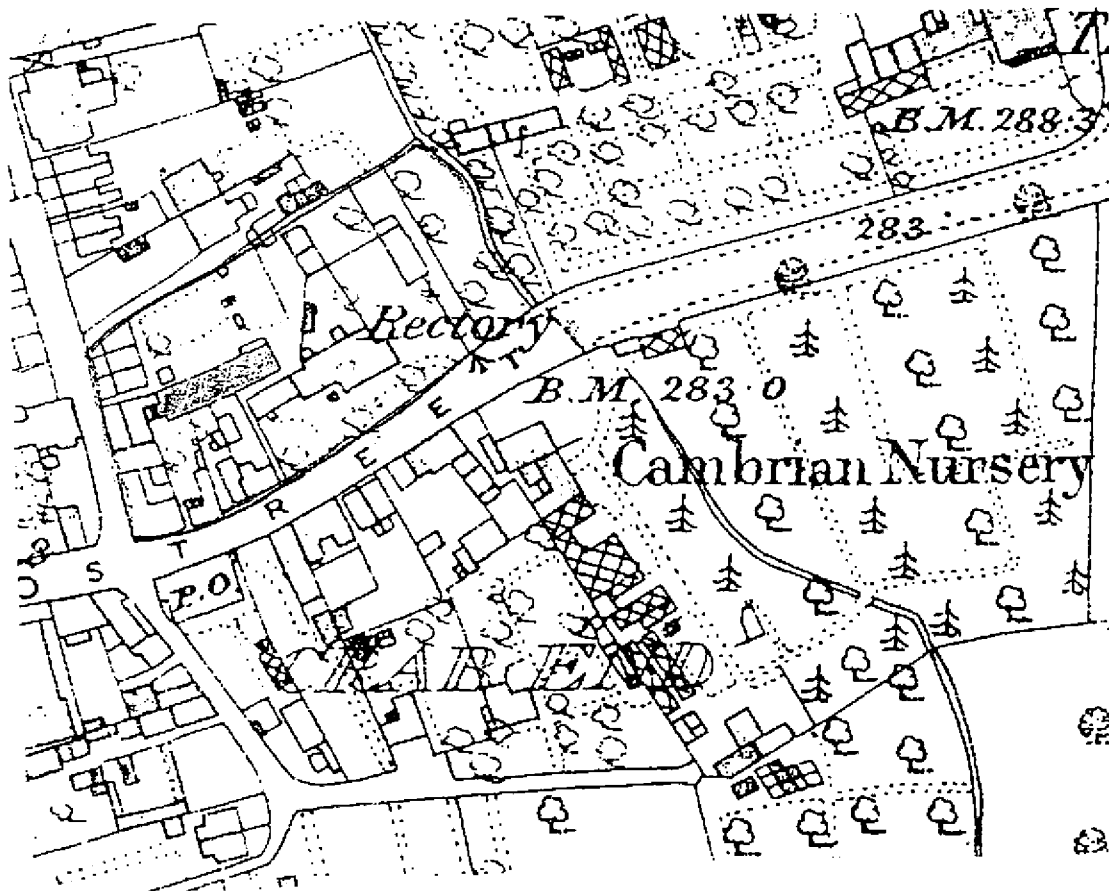
## TELLING AND COATES NURSERY

### (1) Robert Arnott

The Nursery was started by Robert Arnott who, on 29 September 1832, paid £300 to Thomas Buckle and Elizabeth his wife for half an acre, part of an orchard, adjoining the dwelling house of Thomas Buckle (that is Brevels Haye). It was bounded on the north by the public highway (Church Street), east by an "ancient brook" (Hearne Brook), west in part by cottages belonging to Richard Pruen and Benjamin Ballinger (Pruen's Row), in other part by a party wall (still existing) and in the remaining part of the west and the entire south side by other property of Thomas Buckle (part of the land going from 1893 with the house now demolished named Glynrosa), now to be fenced in and occupied by Robert Arnott "whereupon a messuage has lately been erected" (Cambrian Cottage - the name is Welsh, the homeland of the Arnotts), "with right of road way and passage to and for" the incumbent the Reverend Charles Henry Watling (as Arnott's trustee) "and his tenants, servants and workmen upon a certain road of the width of 8 feet fenced and made by the said Thomas Buckle over other land belonging to him, which now extends in length from the gate leading into the same piece of land (Mr Frederick Charles Neather's gate) to a gate leading into the public road at the south west end, 80 yards." (This second gate was removed soon after 1900 but was remembered by Annie Hopkins - she called it the Click-clacks and said she used to swing on it when she was a small child). The road allowed Arnott to cart heavy items (pots, manure etc) to two brick sheds he had built. Arnott was then Watling's parish clerk.

Cambrian Nursery on a map dated 1888

The crosshatching denotes glasshouses behind Cambrian cottage



Tithe was paid on this half acre and on Cambrian Cottage. But half an acre of land minus the site of the cottage and with fruit trees on it, would not be sufficient for a Nursery; and Arnott must at the same time have acquired, or leased, the first section of freehold land across the brook. This was tithe free, and so has left no record of the transaction or conditions. I imagine it will originally have belonged to Charles Cooke Higgs, who owned all or practically all the land east of the brook up to Balcarras Lane.

If not directly from Charles Cooke Higgs, then Arnott must have bought it from Alexander Nicholson of East Court, who had acquired the old house on the site of the Hearne and its 1½ acres of surrounding land (see *Bulletin 22*). We know that Nicholson owned the next section of the nursery above the big gate and sold to Hugh Smyth Mercer, late of the Bengal Medical Service, on 3 January 1843 both The Hearne and its 1½ acres, and also land on the south side of Church Street which Nicholson had let to John Humphris gardener. What is not clear is how much land Nicholson had on this side of the road. John Humphris seems to have been Arnott's tenant.

Besides Cambrian Cottage, the Arnotts had built a much larger house, Cambrian Villa, on their original half acre.

Robert Arnott died on 25 June 1853 and his will was proved that July. In it he describes himself as Robert Arnott of Cambrian Cottage gardener. His wife Elizabeth Frances was still alive, and he had a son Robert Augustus Arnott (to whom the testator left his gardening and farming books) and a daughter Ann, wife of Walter George Parry carpenter, and an unmarried daughter Catherine. During her lifetime the widow was to receive 10s weekly, to augment what she made by running a school at Cambrian Villa (one of her pupils in the 1850s was Miss Buckle, later of 1 Buckles Row). After the widow's death, all the testator's copyhold and his real and personal estate were to be sold and the proceeds divided among the children.

The 1858 Rate book shows Robert A Arnott as owner and Eliza Arnott as tenant of Cambrian Villa, rated at £13 (no 208). Robert also paid £20 rate on Cambrian Cottage and the Nursery Garden, tenant Thomas Wildsmith (no 207).

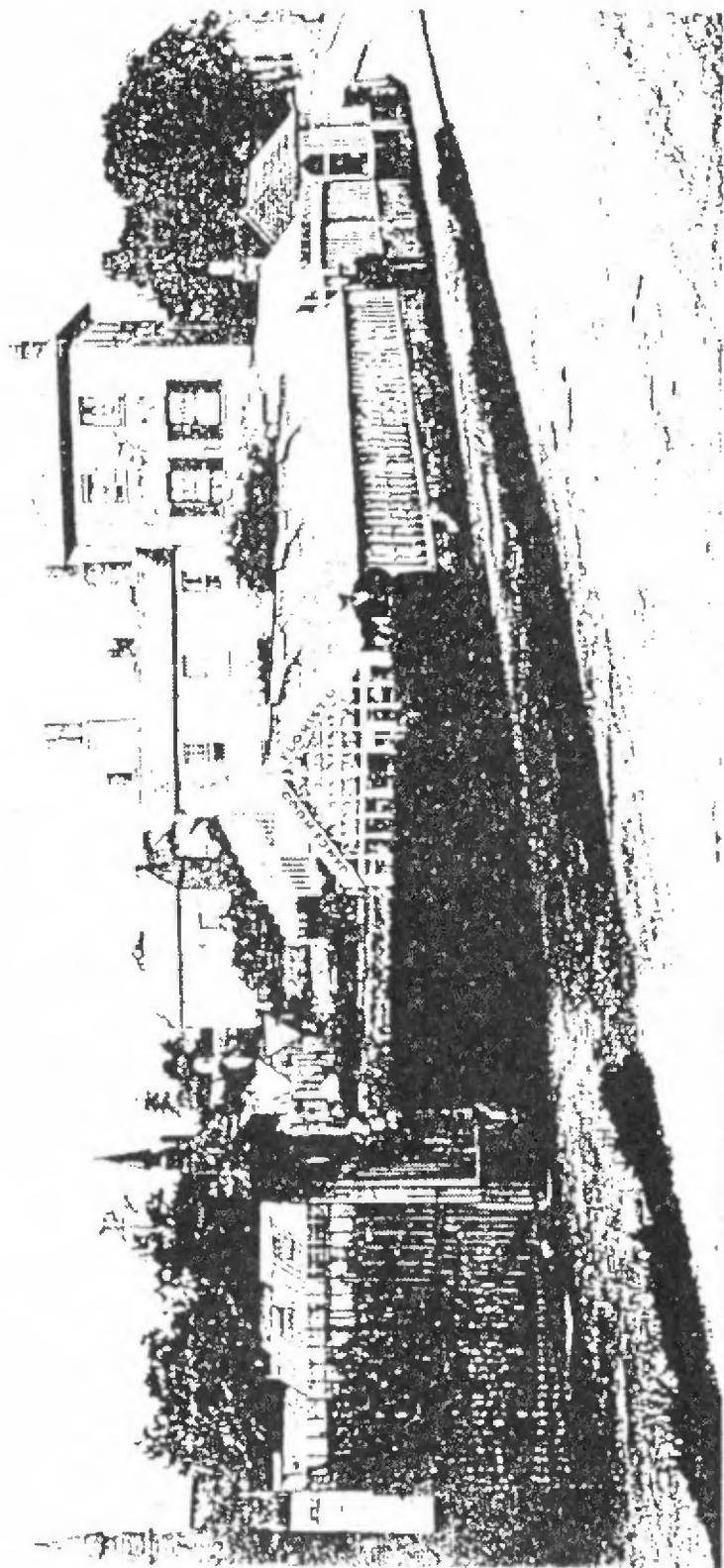
The Arnotts were buried on the east side of the path from the lychgate to the west door of St Mary's church.

## (2) Benjamin and James Wood

The Woods already had a small Nursery at Castlefield on the London Road, on the site of No 360 and adjoining houses (title deeds kindly made available by Miss Barbara Holloway). In addition, they owned Over House on East End Road. It was now divided into cottages which got from them the name of Wood's Cottages.

These sites gave no chance of expansion, so when the Nursery in Church Street came on the market, they bought it. This can't have been till after Frances Arnott's death on 11 November 1881. It is possible, though, that before Mrs Arnott's death, they leased the Nursery from her son.

When the restored church was re-opened on St Mark's day 1878 the vicar, the Reverend Dundas, recorded in the magazine his thanks to Mr Wood for resigning his claim to a seat in the nave, so that it could be made free. This seat will have been his property as belonging to Over House - seats seem to have been allotted as property to use and sell with houses existing when the first seating was put in c1630.



Benjamin Wood died on 3 December 1891, but it is clear that for some years his son James had actually run the Nursery. The *Parish Magazine* for May 1880, in describing the Ascension Day celebrations at St Mary's, says "the sanctuary was made beautiful with azaleas and other fine plants tastefully arranged, which had been lent by Mr James Wood."

It was James Wood who built the glasshouses, two west of the brook and two east of it, with a small shop by the road. He also had a vinery along the south wall of Cambrian Cottage (shown in view on page 5) and several other glasshouses on the site of Rarity and the recently built house where Frank Neather's yard used to be. These enabled James Wood to go in for hothouse flowers - he was especially noted for his pelargoniums. He must have leased the piece of land above the big gates.

Bill and Elsie Keen told me that when General and Lady Norman were tenants of The Hearne, they put a covenant on the Nursery land opposite the house to prevent it being built on. If the idea came from the Normans (which is very likely) the action must have been taken by the Mercers who continued to own The Hearne till 1919, though they did not live there. But preventing any development opposite preserved the value of the property so they may well have been happy to agree.

We do not know exactly when the two views (on the cover and page 5) were taken, but can guess that it was around 1900. The notice says "Seedsman and Florist James Wood established over 60 years" but was he reckoning from 1832 or from the start of Wood's Nursery on Castlefield? The view on page 5 must be after the 1890s because we can identify a corner of Brevel Terrace through the trees to the south west, but Elm Cottage has not yet had its porch added so that it cannot be much after 1900.

I remember Mr Wood from somewhere around 1915 when we were coming back from what seemed to me, aged three, as a very long walk. My father asked Mr Wood if we could cut off a stretch of the road by walking through his gate in Church Street and out at the gate at the top, and he agreed we might. I do not remember that the big glasshouse, seen between the gate piers on the sketch looking west, was still there, but the ones on the road were and, I think, some of the small ones.

He was still alive in 1920 when I was given 2d to buy some mignonette seed for my garden. I was fascinated to see him take a couple of pinches of seed out of a tiny drawer, weigh it carefully, and put it into a packet which he labelled for me. But by then he was, I understand, too fond of nipping up to the Merry Fellow to make the best of the business. He died on 1 April 1921. Father and son are buried near the south porch of St Mary's, just south of Gabb's grave. Appropriately perhaps, the Wood grave is covered with privet which flowers beautifully.

### (3) Amos Morrell

Wood was succeeded by Amos Morrell, who had married the youngest daughter of William Chapman gardener (1833-1902) and his wife Amelia. She was Sarah Ann Sydonia Chapman (see family tree, *Bulletin 6* p21). Amos and Sarah had a son John. There is a photograph of John as a child standing in a greenhouse full of prize tomatoes. But the Morrells used to grow chiefly arum lilies, daffodils and narcissi and were specialists in growing Madonna Lillies - all mainly for sale by the cartload to other florists. So the war, when the growing of vegetables was obligatory, must have been difficult for them and in 1944 they sold the Nursery.



#### (4) Sam Telling and Ron Coates

Ron Coates was home on leave in 1944, when the end of World War II was in sight, and decided to buy the Nursery. He went to see Captain Botsford of The Hearne about a lease of the upper part of the ground. Captain Botsford asked him what he wanted to do with it and when he heard that Ron wanted it as a Nursery, he shook hands on the deal and said the details could wait. So the Nursery was run by Sam Telling (who became Ron's brother-in-law and died 1960) with the help of an Irishman, until Ron was demobbed in 1946.

The winter of early 1947 was exceptionally cold. Ron managed to keep the greenhouse furnace going by cutting down and burning the old pollard willows along Hearne Brook - they went back to the days when a basket-maker worked there.

Ron died in 1998. The shop and one remaining glasshouse on Church Street were demolished to build Nursery Cottage; and now the last of James Wood's glasshouses, much the worse for its age, is to be demolished to make way for a new house for Mrs Coates and John. This will be a great deal more convenient for them and make the work of the Nursery easier. Polythene tunnels have replaced glasshouses and the sale of cut flowers and wreaths was given up some years ago.

I am very grateful to John Coates for the information he has given me and for lending me the two sketches, and to Mary Southerton for lending me these two photos of the Nursery, taken by Peter in 1995.

The Shop and Greenhouses in Church Street



A similiar view to that on page 5 with Cambrian House, Cambrian Cottage and Elm Cottage in the background.



(5) And now - who was Robert Arnott (who started the Nursery and called it Cambrian Nursery) and what previous experience had he?

Looking for something quite different, I came across this entry in St Mary's Banns Book (GRO P76 IN 1/28 0 entry 25). Banns read 26 January, 2 and 9 February 1823: Robert Arnott bachelor and Frances Lovell spinster "who reside in the House of the late Mrs Prinn p Charlton Kings" - that is in the house of Mrs Hester Prinn, widow of William Hunt Prinn i.e. Charlton Park, or possibly the dower house New Court. W H Prinn was buried 22 January 1821 aged 48; and his widow on 12 January 1823 aged 46 - both were buried at St Mary's. A *New Guide to Cheltenham*, S Bettison c1820, spoke of the present possessor of Charlton Park who had "evinced the superior excellence of the improved art of gardening when applied with sound judgement and real taste."

W H Prinn's wife had brought him property in Wales. It seems probable that Arnott came to Charlton Park with Hester Prinn and was gardener to W H Prinn and his widow; he found a wife among Mrs Prinn's servants.

By 1832 he was wanting to strike out on his own.

MARY PAGET

## IVY COTTAGE - CHURCH STREET

My mother, Dr Rivington [see *Bulletin 43*] rented Ivy Cottage from a Mr Smith, who lived in Copt Elm Road, to house her house-keeper - Mrs Eva Davies, her son Linford and her parents, Mr and Mrs Jackson. My memories are mostly childhood "pictures" which perhaps "glorified" it as a cosy rather warm little house, when actually it was cold and impossible to keep clean, with the ivy growing inside as well as out!

I have always thought of it as two cottages as there were two front doors and two staircases. The right hand cottage had a very dark front room - entered by the front door. There was a window next the door and, I think, another one in the right hand wall. At the back was another small room and the staircase.

A door was cut in the wall between the two cottages and a wide passage constructed taking a part of the front room and window of cottage number II; this left a small front room with side window which I had as a "play area" for myself and my friends (I was quite pleased to have the door with the porch) - Milverton being too small to house a "noisy tomboy" during surgery hours. Behind "my room" was the other staircase and kitchen. This was very primitive, stone-flagged and cold! It had an iron bath covered with a large board which served as a table! I think it had a range for cooking as indeed we did in Milverton's kitchen. The "privy" was outside. I believe each cottage had two rooms upstairs with wee windows back and front.

The roof had thatch covered by red-painted corrugated iron. All the outside walls were completely covered with ivy. They were not red brick like Milverton, nor was it a timber construction. Any portion of wall that one could see was a pink/white crumbly surface.

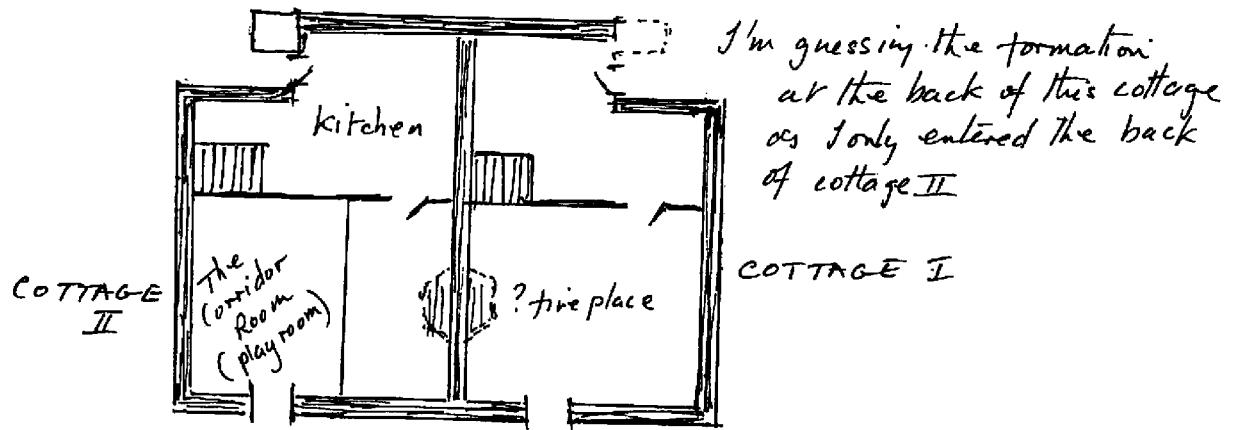
I think, at one time, the whole area might have been a farm as there was a long wooden construction ending in a stable and hay-loft. My mother turned part of it into two "chalets" and a garage. During the war, the chalets became two small bedrooms and were used for mothers about to give birth or anyone she needed "to keep an eye on", to save going out in the blackout and keep her limited amount of petrol for daytime visits.

Behind these "outhouses" was a long strip of garden (rented from Mr Smith) called "the allotment". Here we grew all our vegetables - I remember being disappointed at what I thought were going to be sunflowers turning out to be artichokes - that cheap easy-to-grow alternative to potatoes! An odd feature I remember between the top chalet and the stable was a small, narrow, paved path - used to get from our garden to the allotment. Before the war, when Linford and I were young, it was a sandpit. Once we started "digging for victory" it became a path and, at the top of this very wee path was a solid oak (?) door - beautifully carved - reminiscent of a church door.

When I came back to College at Cheltenham in 1952, I used to visit Mrs Davies each weekend. By this time she was using the nearest chalet as a "bed-sit", because the cottage was uninhabitable, having as much ivy inside as out!! Later she was moved into a council flat in Little Herberts, where she stayed until her death in 1998.

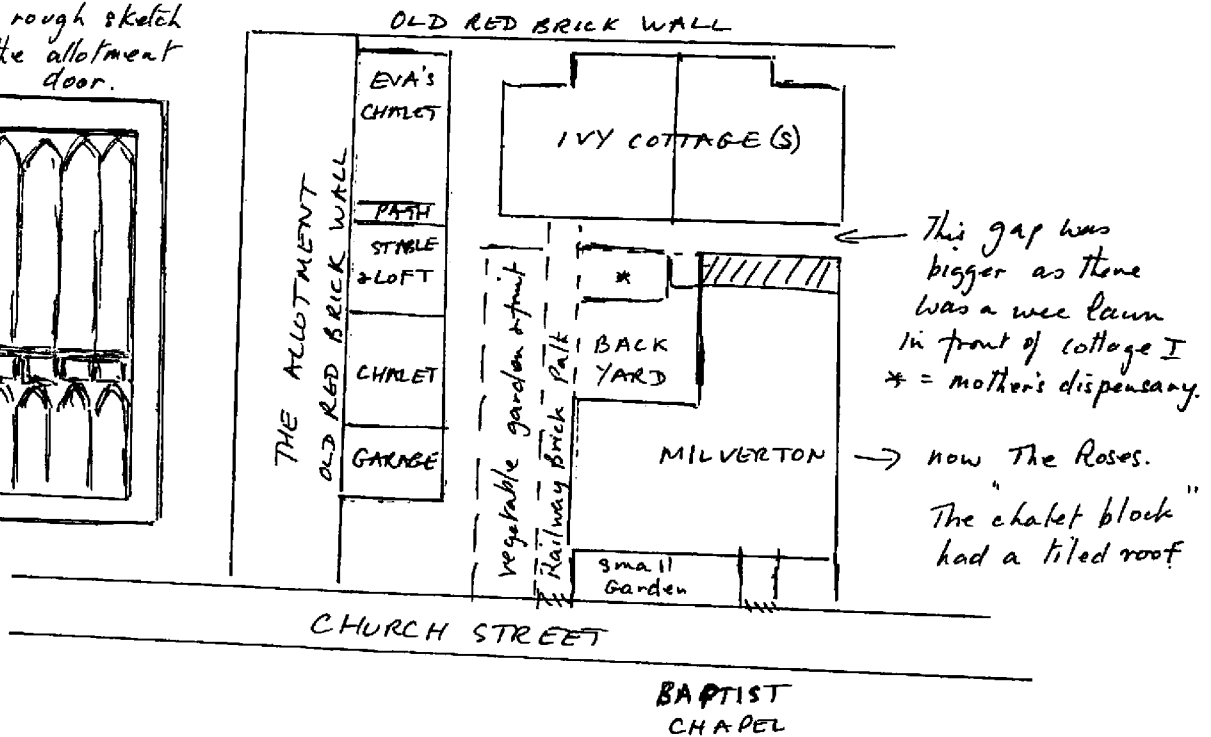
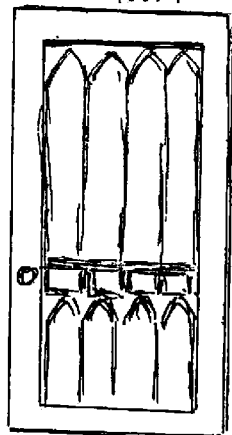
I have drawn the plans of the cottage and the whole estate as I thought they would be of interest to those who live in that part now. Also enclosed are some photos, the only remaining bit that looks the same is the frontage of Milverton with that lovely wisteria. It must have been planted just after the house was built.

FRANCES STOBART



The wall between the two rooms was very thin as I could hear the family talking and running up and down the stairs. I have another photo that shows a block of 4 chimneys in the middle of the roof. But my "memory picture" of the front room of cottage I does not tell me where the fireplace was. Somewhere, I'm sure, there was an old-fashioned mantelpiece - but I cannot "see" it. There was no fireplace in my play room and the chimneys would indicate the middle wall.

A very rough sketch of the allotment door.





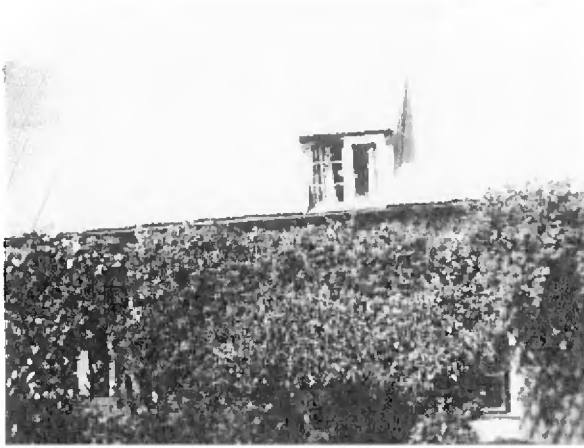
Two Views of  
Milverton

The right-hand  
window was of  
mother's consulting  
room.

The left-hand  
window was of  
the dining room  
which served as  
a waiting room  
in surgery hours,  
note the wisteria!



A picture of the  
allotment -  
showing back  
red-brick wall  
+ me and the  
daughter of a  
Doctor - friend of  
my mother -  
Helen Cross.



Roof of Ivy Cottage  
taken from window  
upstairs in Milverton



Mrs. Eva Davies  
at the door of  
Cottage I



Door of Cottage II  
- and entrance  
to my  
play room.

## THE MANOR AND MANOR COURT PROCEDURE

Many articles in our research bulletins, particularly those concerning the history of properties, refer to the court books of Cheltenham or Ashley manors. But what is known of the history of such manors and their court procedure? This article consists of my 'gleanings' from *Manorial Records* by Denis Stuart and *English Farming Past and Present* by Lord Ernle, together with examples taken from a particular 16th century court of Cheltenham manor. The result is a necessary simplification of a complex system with many local variations. Nevertheless it explains something of the background to manorial courts and the terminology used in their procedure and sets them in a local context.

The origins of the manor are uncertain, but by the time of the Domesday Book the manorial system was established throughout most of the country. A manor could be described as a territorial unit, held by feudal tenure by a landlord who himself was a tenant of the Crown. It usually consisted of demesne land which the lord retained for his own use, and the remainder which was either tenanted or used for common or waste. The two main types of tenant were villeins who occupied their land on condition of rendering services to the lord, and freemen who paid a money rent. Over time the system of labour services gave way to tenures based wholly on money rents. Villein tenure evolved into copyhold tenure, so named because the tenant's title was written on the manor court roll, of which he had a copy. All conveyances of copyhold land had to pass through the court, where an entry fine was imposed in the case of a new tenant, or a 'heriot' or best beast, in the case of an heir to a deceased tenant.

By right a lord of the manor could hold a court for his local tenants. This was called the 'court baron', and usually held every three weeks. Its general business was to state the customs of the manor and enforce payment of all dues owed by the tenants. It had other powers as well, acting in effect as the organ of local government - having jurisdiction over disputes between individuals, the recovery of small debts and complaints of trespass. Many manorial lords also had the right to hold a 'court leet' or 'view of frankpledge'. This court, usually held every six months, inspected the workings of the 'frankpledge', a system of mutual responsibility within a tithing, originally a group of about ten households. It had powers to deal with offences such as common nuisance and affrays. Often these two courts were combined, as we shall see from the Cheltenham example. The tenants who attended the court were known collectively as the 'homage'. The obligation for free tenants to attend courts varied according to the custom of a particular manor, but all villeins owed common suit of court and so were obliged to attend. If they failed to attend three consecutive courts, or to provide an 'essoin' or representative, they were fined.

Sometimes the lord of a manor presided over the court himself, but more usually he employed a steward. The steward summoned the court, which was opened and closed with a formal proclamation. Twelve, occasionally more, jurors were chosen to deliver judgement following an inquiry based on their knowledge of circumstances and the custom of the manor. The head tithingman from each tithing was called to make his presentments of offenders. Among the most frequently found entries are persons who had broken the laws regarding the price and quality of bread and ale. It is generally agreed, however, that this was in practice merely a form of licensing. Any offender was deemed 'in mercy', that is he had to pay an 'amercement' or penalty, the amount of this being decided by assessors at the end of the court proceedings. Much of the seasonal agricultural routine of the manor was collectively regulated at the court and offenders against this routine were presented. New tenants, if any, were formally admitted and swore an oath of fealty to the lord.

The proceedings of the court were carried out in English, but records up to 1733, with the exception of the period of the Commonwealth, were written in Latin. A scribe would make a hasty record, hence the use of many abbreviations. The amount of a fine would be inserted over the offender's name after the closing of the court, but is shown in brackets after the name in transcripts.

Some examples of court procedure, other than the transfer of copyhold properties, can be shown by looking at the roll of a 'view of frankpledge with court' held at Cheltenham on the 4th day of June in the twentieth year of the reign of Henry VIII - 1528. At that time the lordship of the manor was held by the Abbess of the monastery of Sion, having been granted to the monastery by Henry V. Syon was one of the richest abbeys in England and consequently one of the first to be dissolved by Henry VIII. By 1539 the lordship of the manor had reverted to the Crown.

The manor held an area covering the tithings of Swyndon, Arle, Bradwell, Assheley, Leckhampton, Bafford, Charleton, Westehall, Cheltenham and Alston; but only extracts dealing with Charlton Kings are included here, that is for the tithings of Assheley, Bafford and Charleton.

**Assheley** - The head tithingman came, and having sworn fealty to the lord, presented that 5s of common fine was due to be paid according to previous adjudication. It was ordered that in any future year, no tenant or resident within the demesne of Charleton Assheley should allow his sheep to graze in Nulandfield, Blakemorefield, Holbreachfield or Milkwellfield before the feast of St Martin under penalty of a fine of 3s 4d. Also in the present year that all pigs in Charleton Assheley and Bafford should be ringed on the feast of St Bartholomew and continue in rings until the feast of St Martin under penalty of a fine of 12d.

Although Ashley tithing was a manor in itself, it was only a sub-manor and still came under the jurisdiction of Cheltenham manor. The 5s of 'common fine' would be the rents payable instead of labour services, which would have been collected from individuals by the head tithingman. The restriction on sheep grazing is interesting - Nulandfield and Holbreachfield were arable fields on the extreme east side of the parish, while Blakemorefield, or Blackmoor, was on the south. Their names indicate areas which had been cleared and brought into cultivation during Charlton's expansion in the 14th and 15th centuries, and presumably were still arable in 1528, when sheep had to be kept off the land while it was being sown with winter corn. However, the name Milkwell suggests that this field was already pasture land with a good reputation. Was it perhaps being reserved for milch cows? For whatever reason the penalty of 3s 4d was very high. As regards the pigs - Thomas Tusser, writing *Five Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* in 1557, comments on pig ringing: 'For rooting of pasture ring hog ye had neede, which being wel ringled the better do feed' and the footnote adds 'If you let him go unringed in the Woods, ring him be sure when he goes in your Meadow or Pasture.' Our pigs had to be ringed from 24th August until 11th November. Was this because any pasture for them would likely to be in orchards where too much rooting could damage the fruit trees?

**Bafford** - The head tithingman came, and having sworn fealty to the lord, presented that 3s 5d of common fine was due to be paid according to previous adjudication. And that one sheep hogget valued at 6d had strayed on the last feast of All Saints and been in the custody of William Keke, and that another sheep hogget worth 4d had also strayed on the same feast day and been in the custody of John Hickes, and that neither of these men had proclaimed the fact, so now the baillif must proclaim it. It was ordered that no tenant or resident in Bafford should keep his sheep in Ryefield - that is to say between Grendleford and Le Noldemedede before the feast of St Michael



the Archangel under penalty of a fine of 3s 4d. It was also ordered that all tenants and residents should keep their pigs ringed between the feast of St Peter in Chains and the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Mary. The present order shall last until the twelve [jurors] decide at the next view [of frankpledge]. It was ordered that no tenant etc should allow any of his sheep to graze in the corn fields at or near the Lands Ends before the end of the harvest under penalty of a fine of 12d.

A 'hogget' is a young sheep before it has its first lamb. The keeping of a stray animal should have been followed up by proclamation of the fact, then if nobody claimed within a defined time the finder could legally keep it. Grendleford was the marshy track which led from the Sandy Lane to the present New Court Road, and 'Noldemedede', or Oldmead, was on the east side of Horsefair Street, so from this description Ryefield must have been in the area later known as Hempfield, Empfield or Enfield. This appears to be the first mention of rye being grown in this area. Lord Ernle refers to rye being 'the chief crop on tenants land and the bread-stuff of the English peasantry'. Once again we have a restriction on sheep grazing with a heavy fine. This may be an indication of the national concern felt in the 16th century about the growing numbers of sheep being kept. Several Acts of Parliament were passed, for example in 1514, 1515, 1533/4 and 1535/6, to prevent the conversion of arable land to pasture, but without much success. The 'Lands Ends' refer to the headlands at the end of each strip where the oxen would turn when ploughing the strips. In Bafford tithing the pigs were to be kept ringed until 2nd February. Perhaps an indication that there was even less pasture available and therefore it was very important that the pigs manured it but did not damage it by rooting.

**Charleton** - The head tithingman came and having sworn fealty to the lord, presented that 2s 6d of common fine was due to be paid etc. And that John Martin holds a corn mill and charges an excessive toll on the grain and must pay 6d. And that Henry Robarts, Thomas Balinger and Edward Shilde are common brewers and sell beer to the Kings subjects at an excessive price and must pay [no entry] And that the aforesaid Edward Shilde is a butcher and sells meat to the Kings subjects at an excessive price and must pay 3d. And that Richard Smyth, a resident within the tithing has not put in an appearance at the View and must pay 2d. And that John Yate made an attack on Henry Fisher and George Goderich, with a stick of no value and drew blood from George Goderich against the King's peace and must pay 4d. And that Robert Hawthorn had not yet stopped the flow of water over the King's highway near Welynhay, which had been ordered at the last View and must pay 4d.

The Charleton tithing lays more emphasis on tradesmen overcharging. Our mill is one of eight within the manor and all are fined for charging an 'excessive toll', so this is clearly a form of licensing and a source of extra income for the lord/lady of the manor. It is interesting to note that the fine for assaulting a man is so much less than that for letting stock graze in the wrong place at the wrong time - harm to one man was less important than the common harm. The value, or lack of any, of the weapon used in the assault is mentioned because if the weapon had been worth something it would have to be forfeited. The highway mentioned near Welynhay is presumably the old track, traces of which can be seen on the path to Wellinghill Farm and Colesgate, but it is interesting to see it referred to as the 'King's Highway' indicating that it was more important than just a track to a farm. Where did it lead to, I wonder?

**N.B.** - I am indebted to Jill Barlow for her expert help in reading and translating the Latin text, and also to Cheltenham Local History Society who paid for the manor court roll to be photographed in the Public Record Office at Kew.

JANE SALE

## GEORGE RIDGE AND BATTLEDOWN - THE FOUNDER WHO FOUNDERED

We have no picture of George Ridge, the Founder of the Battledown Estate, but there is enough evidence left behind to enable us to form a credible view of him and to follow the chain of events which led to his decline and fall. Exactly when he was born is not known, but he was baptised by the Reverend W Cleminson in Grantham Parish Church on 4 December 1828 and it may be assumed that he was born in the November of that year. His parents were Samuel and Deborah Ridge; the father's "Quality, Trade or Profession" was given as Printer and his abode as Grantham, Lincolnshire. There were seven children baptised in that church in the first fifteen days of December and George was the only boy among them.

The Ridge Family was a large one. In 1851 it resided at 7, High Street, Grantham. Samuel Ridge, who was born in 1794, was certainly successful in his trade and was listed then as a bookseller and printer employing six men and three apprentices. His wife Deborah was three years older than he was and they had six children; Elizabeth, 29, Emma, 28, Susan, 27, Hannah, 24, George, 23, and Lawrence, 21. Of these, only Emma was married at that time; she was the wife of George Dixon, an organist, and had two infant children, Thomas, aged 1, and William, under three months. In the 1851 census all these, plus one domestic servant, were residing in Samuel's house, with the exception of George and Emma's organist husband. George's absence can be explained: his father's relative wealth had afforded him a good education and he had been articled to a firm of solicitors, possibly in Sheffield or London. By 1871 Samuel had lost his wife and was living with his two spinster daughters Elizabeth and Hannah at 21, St Peter's Hill. By 1881 Samuel was, not surprisingly, no longer there; Elizabeth Ridge lived alone with two servants at 7, Avenue Road, next door to her married sister Emma Dixon at Number 8.

What of the absent George? The Law Society has confirmed that he was admitted to the Queen's Bench. The General Council of the Bar cannot confirm that he was ever a barrister, though they admit their records are defective at this period. He certainly did not practise or advertise as such. George was inordinately proud of being a solicitor and usually appended it after his signature. Probably in 1852, following his admittance, George Ridge married Amelia Sarah Pierson, the daughter of Thomas Pierson, gentleman, of Sheffield. It has not been possible to ascertain where the marriage took place; it was not in Sheffield, nor in Grantham. However, by the time the Ridge's first child, Amelia Florence was born, on 6 August 1853, the Ridges were living at North Parade, Little Gonderby, Grantham. But not for long: in 1855, when Ridge was 27, the family moved to Cheltenham.

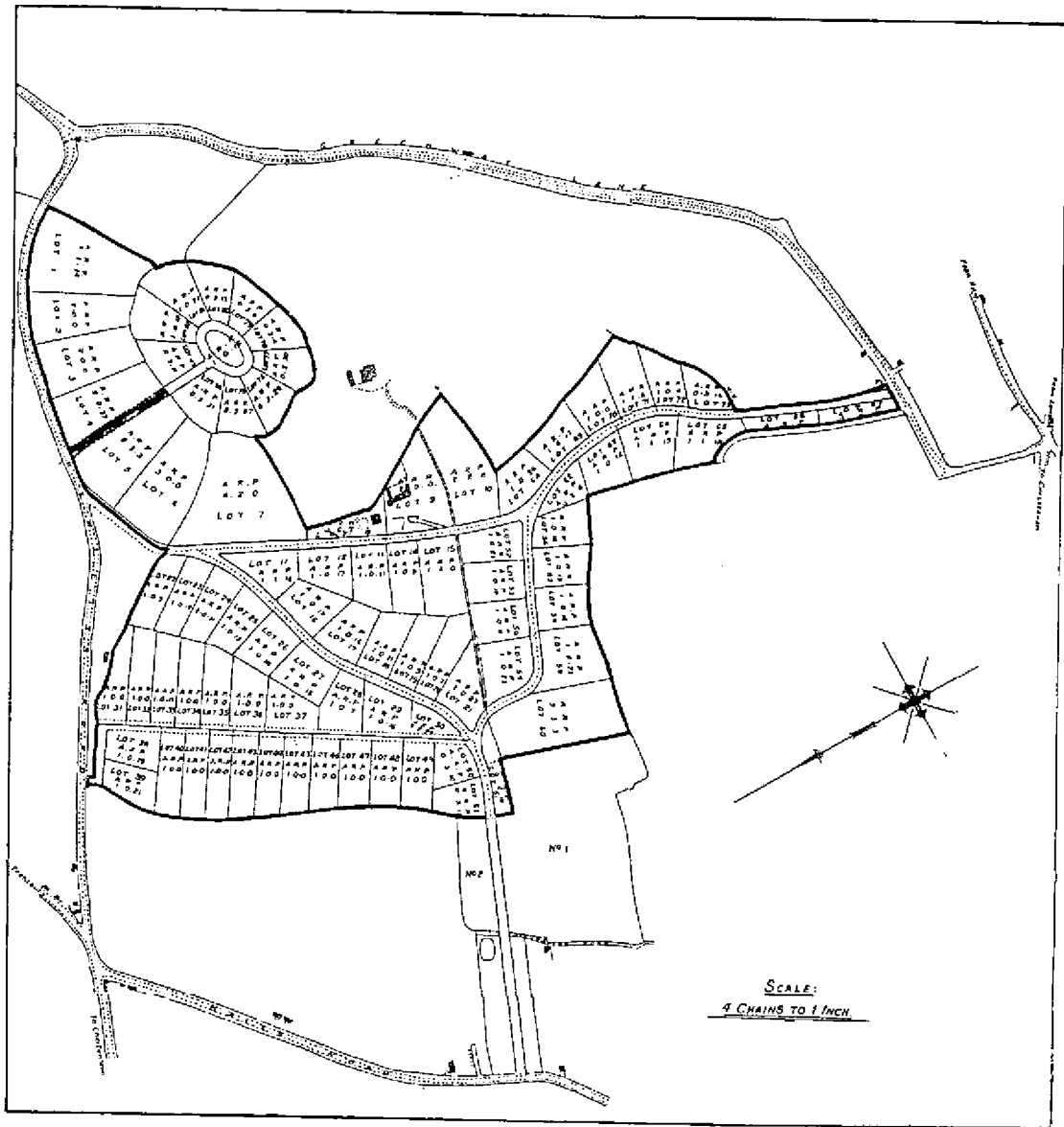
The Ridges moved into 6, Grosvenor Place, a property which has since been redeveloped but was almost certainly similiar to the original houses on the other side of the road, a modest but comfortable residence for an aspiring gentleman. This last he certainly was: his status given on his daughter's birth certificate in 1853 was that of gentleman and not, surprisingly and almost exceptionally, solicitor. He set up his solicitor's business in 11, Grosvenor Place South, retaining a Mr T G Norcutt as his agent in London. The Law List of 1860 shows him to be solicitor to the Equitable Permanent Building Society in Cheltenham and that of 1865 describes him as an attorney, notary, commissioner for affidavits and a commissioner for oaths. In 1856 a second daughter, Constance Edith, was born.

Ridge's move to Cheltenham was plainly a matter of ambition. He rapidly became involved in the business and political life of the Town, taking many posts in local building societies and insurance firms and agencies. On 6 January 1858 he had been sufficiently accepted to become a Town Commissioner, filling the place vacated by Sir William Russell, Bart., Lord of the Manor of Ashley, then MP for Dover and later also for Norwich. A Conservative in politics, in 1859 Ridge became the electoral agent for Charles Schreiber, the Conservative Candidate, who in the 1865 General Election managed to unseat Colonel Berkely by twenty

eight votes, the usual complaint into vote-buying being rejected. An attempt to repeat the performance for J T Agg Gardner in 1868 was, however, unsuccessful, as was Ridge's attempt to win the subsequent, seemingly obligatory, complaint of vote-rigging. Ridge was becoming an accepted figure of note in Cheltenham, and was building a network of friends and acquaintances in local business and political life. He moved his solicitor's business into the centre of the Town, No 1 Promenade Buildings, The Colonnade. In this building were also the offices of Engall, Sanders and Co, Estate and House Agents. George James Engall, who was 16 years older than Ridge, had been Surveyor to the Pittville Estate from 1839 to 1849, and lived in Pittville Villas (now Prestbury Road). Possibly as a result of this acquaintance but certainly as a signal of George Ridge's rising star, was his purchase in June 1860 of a house on the Pittville Estate: 3, Wellington Square East, then known as Daylesford but renamed by him Westville House. For this residence Ridge paid £1,140 in cash to the builder Samuel Broom, the father of David Broom, whom Ridge was to encounter later in the Battledown Estate context. It is worth noting here that the house next door, 4 Wellington Square East, also known as Wellesley House, had been owned until his death in 1842 by Joseph Pitt himself, the Founder of the Pittville Estate.

Since May 1856 local landowner Charles Cooke Higgs had been endeavouring to sell or let Battledowns Farm, with 65 acres of arable land and 25 of pasture, a good dwelling house (Battledown House), stables and a barn. It is doubtful that he envisaged his land as a building site and in any case, for three years he had no takers. However, since the transformation of the rutted and sunken Coltham Lane into Hales Road in 1840, and the expansion of Cheltenham towards Charlton Kings along the London Road and Sydenham Villas Road, this area appeared to offer opportunities for development to those speculators so minded. There was also a movement among the gentry in Charlton Kings to develop a smarter area to the north of the old village. It was said that the parish church was not only at an inconvenient distance from the locality in question but totally inadequate for this rapidly increasing neighbourhood. Battledown Hill offered a chance for such a development, with the added advantage that its north-west slopes provided ready access to the delights of Cheltenham. Inspired by what he saw around him at Pittville and perhaps drawing from his relationship with Engall, George Ridge saw his chance. Exactly when he conceived his grand plan to build the Battledown Estate is not clear; certainly it was common knowledge by October 1858, when the Looker-on spoke of "*first class residences... a bold speculation... a great demand for suburban villas such as those contemplated... building to start without delay... and it is not improbable that, in the course of the next four or five years, we shall see quite a new town in a district at present wholly pastoral, and Charlton Kings emulating Cheltenham in the number and quality of its fashionable residents*".

In fact, it was still early days. There were no existing roads on to Battledown and Ridge had not only to buy Cooke Higgs' land but also ensure that it was firmly joined by roads both to Cheltenham and Charlton Kings. As the order of the sales of lots later showed, Cheltenham was the Front Door of the Estate and Charlton Kings the Back. The Front approach required that Ridge brought into his plan two others who in 1858 owned land strategically placed between the Hill and Hales road. These were Somerset Tibbs, Cheltenham's leading dental surgeon, and William Bain, a solicitor's accountant. Apart from pulling teeth, Tibbs was a man of wide business interests. He was involved in lending money, running building societies and managing the Cheltenham Waterworks Co. He had also inherited land between the Hill and Haywards Lane, on which clay-pits for brickmaking were in operation. Bain had no pretensions to being a gentleman, although his son, William Levett Bain later achieved gentry status by dint of being Secretary to the Headmaster of Cheltenham College for thirty five years. Bain's land lay to the left of what became Battledown Approach. However, there were also others from whom Ridge had to negotiate rights of access.



George Ridge's vision of the new Estate on Battledown Hill, as drawn by Henry Dangerfield, FRIBA, the Town Surveyor and first Surveyor to the Estate. Cheltenham lies to the northwest, and Charlton Kings to the south. The plan dates from 1859 and is included in the original Deed on vellum. Below, the signatures of the three original Trustees on the Deed. George Ridge's triumphant flourish of 1859 contrasts vividly with the miniscule initials "G.R. Solr" which he wrote on his personal copy of the Trust Deed when forced to hand it over in 1876.

*Powcross Fibbs*

*H. Bain*

*George Ridge*

*G. R. Solr*

As far as the Back door to Charlton was concerned, by March 1859, when the sale by public auction of the Estate lots was held, Ridge had not yet secured the land for the road down to Greenway Lane and was unable to put up the adjoining lots. Legal matters moved slowly: Battledown was a patchwork of freehold and copyhold land, and the latter was mixed in no apparent logical way between Ashley and Cheltenham Manors. Ridge, Tibbs and Bain finally paid the purchase price of £6,500 for the 56-acre core of the Estate in September 1859, approximately £115 per acre. The money was paid from a joint account: the three men were now partners in the speculation.

The sale of lots was held on 21 March 1859 at the Equitable Loan Fund in Rodney Place. The Examiner reported *"the announcement of the sale of this splendid estate - certainly unsurpassed in beauty of location by any other found in Cheltenham - very naturally occasioned great interest in the public mind, and by those desirous of acquiring a local investment was esteemed a rare opportunity. It is not surprising, therefore, that so many of our townspeople should have responded to the public advertisement, by attending the sale... ..The Estate consists of nearly 100 acres, and was divided into 61 allotments, of which 49 were sold... ..We are glad to hear that Lot 8 is reserved for a new church, and are no less pleased to learn, as indicating the character of the property to be erected, that no houses are to be built of less value than £500, every house to be detached and to be erected at a distance of 40 feet from the road, the plans to be approved by Mr Dangerfield, Borough surveyor. Each lot was put up at £125 per acre and many of the lots realised from £10 to £15 bonus. From these particulars our readers will gather that there is a prospect of a new town rising in the neighbourhood at no very distant date"*.

Joseph Pitt and George Ridge, although separated by some forty years, had much in common. Neither were gentry, both of them being the products of successful fathers. Both became solicitors; Pitt became an MP and Ridge an MP's electoral agent. The two newspaper reports showed that Ridge was following the Pittville formula. He had produced a Deed of Covenants and Regulations as to the Future Enjoyment of the Estate which reflected much of Joseph Pitt's Deed of Covenants and General Regulations of 1 January 1827, in particular the number and type of houses to be built, approval of design and siting, and limitations on use. Particularly interesting is the insistence that a new town was to be created, not just an adjunct to Cheltenham or Charlton Kings. Joseph Pitt had conceived Pittville as exactly that, and fought hard to achieve it. A new church, envisaged by Ridge adjacent to Battledown House, and using the latter as its Vicarage, was also part of Pitt's plan; in neither case was it built, though the amount Cooke Higgs received from the sale of the Battledown land was close to that he used to build Holy Apostles where it is today. Similarly Pitt envisaged, but never erected his two "grand entrances", Pittville Gates being a later addition. Ridge did erect gates at the end of Battledown Approach at a cost of £24 but they were a nuisance and were sold off within a year or two. However, there were some obvious lessons from the history of the Pittville Estate and its Founder: for all its magnificence, Pittville was faltering by 1850 and the demand for houses was falling. Moreover, Joseph Pitt had died over-mortgaged and heavily in debt; he had avoided bankruptcy only by his death and subsequent debt actions removed the Estate's private status. Ridge was not operating on the same scale as Pitt but he must have known these facts. He chose to ignore them, or thought they would not apply to him. In the last case, he was wrong.

Ridge and his co-speculators had overestimated the demand and underestimated the costs. Whereas between 1821 and 1841 the population of Cheltenham had grown by 18,000, between 1841 and 1861 the increase was only 8,000. Thereafter there was little growth until the turn of the Century. Moreover, the sum of £6,500 the three men had paid for the core of the Estate was not the end of the expenditure by any means. Another £5,500 had to be spent to make the necessary road connections possible, and then the infrastructure costs began to bite. The roads, verges, footpaths and ditches had to be made, every lot had to be fenced off,

trees planted and legal costs and taxes paid. In retrospect it can be seen that the true cost of the land was nearer £180 per acre than the £115 - £125 that the market would bear. By December 1861 expenditure on these items had amounted to £4,790. 8s. 7d. These costs fell on the owners of the lots, and by this date there were sadly not that many. They were not content: George James Cox, later a partner in Engall's firm, wrote to Ridge "*Your a/c has quite frightened me. I had no idea that expenses would have been half that sum. I hope you will be able to make a considerable abatement for me*". However, the bulk of the land was still owned by Tibbs, Ridge and Bain, and thus they had to pay bigger bills than anyone; in fact they contributed £2,434 of the sum to be raised, based on a charge of £44 per acre held. To envisage these sums at today's values, they would need to be multiplied by about 35. It took nearly four years to sell all the lots and, in an attempt to encourage house building, Ridge and his friend Charles Andrews, who owned Brighton Villas at the foot of Battledown Approach, entered into a number of mortgages. They built what became Battledown Tower but were unable to let or sell the house, fell into arrears and the Equitable Permanent Building Society, of which, it will be recalled, Ridge was the solicitor, foreclosed. This was the first sign of impending trouble. Somerset Tibbs saw it coming; in 1864 he sold his land, resigned as a Trustee and moved to Buxton. William Bain died in 1870, by which time, after eleven years of the Battledown Estate, it had acquired only four houses to add to the existing Battledown House.

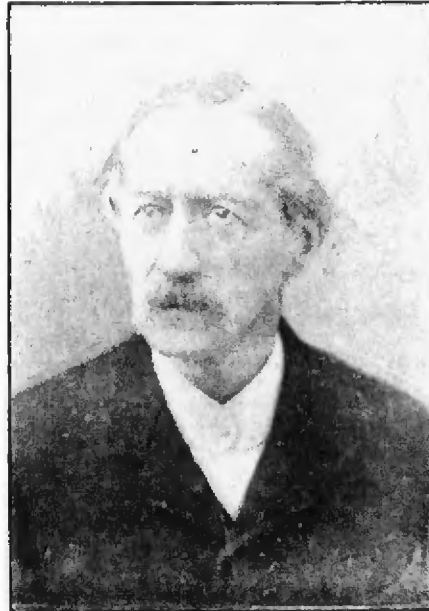
George Ridge was now on his own. Strangely, he remained the sole Trustee for a further two years, contrary to his own Deed of Covenants, which specified a minimum of three. This suggests that he may have had something to hide. In 1872 he was prevailed upon to appoint three new Trustees, Sir Brook Kay, Richard Rogers and David Broom, from whose father he had bought his house in Pittville. Perhaps as a sign of impending financial difficulty, from 1863 the Estate accounts, which had been kept by a neat and tidy clerk were personally maintained by Ridge. They became increasingly untidy and lacking in detail. Then on 13 June 1875 Ridge suffered a personal tragedy; his wife, Amelia Sarah, died at their home in Pittville, at the age of 45. The cause of death was given as uncertain ovarian disease and acute peritonitis. Her death was reported by a servant girl who was present at the death, Ridge apparently not being there. This produced a chain of events. The accounts for the year June 1875 to 1876 were not ready for the Annual Meeting of Owners: they were completed in another hand but were found to be deficient of £6. 6s. 9d. The sum is marked "*To Balance as per contra due from Mr Ridge and considered bad*", the sum seems trivial but would be over £200 at today's values; however that may be, Ridge could not pay it. There was worse to come: Ridge had, for whatever reason, made no attempt to collect the Battledown rate from the owners, and hence there was no income. On 26 June the Annual Meeting of Owners was held in Ridge's office in Cheltenham. He was present but was not recorded as speaking, not even when David Broom proposed that "*it is expedient for various reasons to remove the Plans, Books and Documents belonging to the Battledown Estate from the custody of Mr G Ridge Solr. and that the Trustees be requested to cause the same to be removed to the care of Messrs Engall, Sanders & Co. No 1 Promenade to await further directions.*"

Strangely, there was an interval of three months before, on 30 September 1876, the other three Trustees wrote to Ridge expressing the view that he had disqualified himself as a Trustee. It is possible that they were forbearing to pursue a sick man, since they also made no move to collect the overdue rate, choosing instead to borrow the money from George Engall. Their letter is not available but the grounds for disqualification are set out in Ridge's own Deed of Covenants and the only applicable one was that he had "*become incapable to act*". In his reply on 3 October, Ridge disputed this but said that "*it is not my wish to throw anything in the way of the facile working of the Este.; if it is considered that I am disqualified, let it be so. At the same time, will you allow me to suggest to you that I might remain Solr. to the Este. of which I was the founder, having bought it in the first instance on my own responsibility without conferring with anyone and afterwards requesting the conjunction*



**George Ridge's decline was emphasised by his last three homes: top left, Daylesford, Wellington Square East, Pittville, which he renamed Westville House but which has reverted to its original name (1860-1877); top right, 6, Great Norwood Street, now a Post Office Stores (1877-1879); and below, 2, Victoria Street, Fairview (renamed Fairview Street and renumbered), where he died in lodgings in 1884. In seven years from five to three to two storeys.**





**Charles Francis Gale (1826-1908), solicitor and Registrar of the District Court at Cheltenham, and George Ridge's contemporary and true friend in his adversity. Following Ridge's downfall, Gale took Ridge's spinster daughter into his own family and gave Ridge a place in his legal practice. Sadly, Gale incurred legal liability for the debts of a bankrupt client and was himself made bankrupt in 1893.**



**The grave of Amelia Sarah and George Ridge in Cheltenham Cemetery, half a mile from the Estate which brought about his downfall. The inscribed base is surmounted by a cross. Predictably, George could not resist adding the profession of which he was so proud to his name.**



*of Messrs Tibbs and Bain with me, in the Speculation which has been so disastrous to me".* Ridge went on to say that he would not in this case handle any payments or have any financial transactions with the Trustees. He said that he would attend the Trustees Meeting due on 7 October to discuss the matter unless he was told to the contrary, and that he was sure he would be given consideration for his connection with the Battledown Estate.

The Trustees Meeting was held at Richard Rogers' house in Regent Street on 7 October and Ridge was not present. The three Trustees instructed Engall, Sanders and Co to prepare and collect the Battledown rate as soon as possible. They put in train economy measures, including giving notice to the surveyor, William McIlquham and the two roadmen, and ordered a complete inventory of all the tools and documents pertaining to the Estate to be made. Any legal matters arising were to be referred to the Trustees before Engall Sanders sought legal advice. Plainly, both the finances and the administration of the Estate had become a shambles during Ridge's last years as a Trustee. Founder or not, George Ridge's name does not appear in any Estate documents after these events.

The evidence of George Ridge's decline suggests not dishonesty but incapacity, caused by the pressures of impending insolvency, aggravated by the loss of his wife. It might have been alcoholism but seems more likely to have been nervous illness, probably depression. In the next eight years he faded into the background. He vacated Westville House in 1877, though it remained unsold for a year, and moved into 6, Great Norwood Street, a street which, in the 1860s had been sufficiently smart to feature its genteel occupants in the Cheltenham Directories but which by then was occupied by tradesmen and widows. Number 6 had been empty for some time and it is probable that Ridge took a tenancy and did not buy it. He continued to advertise his solicitor's business but in 1879 left 1, Promenade Buildings and was taken in by his old friend Charles Francis Gale in his offices in the County Court Office. At the same time he changed his London Agent Norcutt to that used by Gale. The latter, a solicitor whom Ridge had known from his training days, and who may have been the reason for Ridge's move to Cheltenham in 1855, was the Registrar of the District Court but had a private practice as well. He lived in St James Square with his large family of eight children. Coincidental with this move, Ridge left Great Norwood Street and took lodgings at 2 Victoria Street, Fairview. He was now no longer listed among the Resident Gentry in the Directories. His younger daughter Constance had married a Henry Cornwell but the older, Amelia, had remained single and she was now taken into the Gale household. In 1833 George Ridge, Solicitor, ceased to practice; he died of pneumonia at 2, Victoria Street, on 26 May 1884, at the age of 55. A brief death notice appeared in the local paper, and he was buried in his wife's grave in Cheltenham Cemetery, in sight of Battledown Hill. His good friend, Charles Gale, was ill rewarded for his kindness; in 1893 he became legally liable for the debts of a veterinarian and horse dealer named Baker and was made redundant, ending his career.

Ridge's will, made after his wife's death in 1875, divided his estate equally between his two daughters. Its grand opening, "*I, George Ridge, Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Judicature in England*" contrasted sadly with the ink comment added by the Probate Office "*Under £100*". The Battledown speculation had ruined him; sadly, he never lived to see his vision of Battledown develop to become one of the premier residential areas of Cheltenham.

DAVID O'CONNOR

### THE SMITH-HARDWICKE WEDDING - "in very smart style"

The Society was very pleased to receive from Mrs Isabel Smith her "Uncle Stuart's" scrapbook, with its collection of photographs, newspaper cuttings, letters etc concerning the Smith family from Battledown House.

Among the papers was an account of the wedding of the daughter and son of two Battledown families - Miss Mary Paget Hardwicke, eldest daughter of Charles and Lilius Hardwicke of Ben Venue, and Mr Frederick Stuart Smith (Uncle Stuart), youngest son of Alexander and Annie Smith of Battledown House, which took place at Holy Apostles church on Tuesday 21st April 1914. There is also a letter to Mrs Hardwicke from The Oriental Café Co. of Cheltenham quoting their estimate for the wedding reception at the Rotunda. Taken together they provide us with an excellent record of a wedding "in very smart style" just before the first World War.

#### Estimate for Wedding Reception at Rotunda to Mrs Hardwicke for April 21

1.	Hire of Rotunda Round and Square Rooms	£3. 3. 0
2.	Furnishing, carpets, curtains & decorations	£3. 3. 0
3.	Plants, flowers & palms for Rotunda	£2. 2. 0
4.	Bijou Band of 3 performers with piano	£2.13. 6
5.	Wedding Cake 3 tiers, dummy centre	£3. 3. 0
6.	Carpets for outside church	10. 0
7.	Tables & drapery for present display ... included	
10.	Teas for band etc @ 1/- per head	
11.	Man for Gents cloakroom	3. 6
	Maid for Ladies cloakroom	2. 6
	Man in livery for carriages	3. 6
12.	Room at Rotunda furnished for dressing room for bride	10. 6
13.	Hire of two private cars as arranged	£1.10. 0
14.	Light van at Ben Venue for presents 9 o/c April 21	3. 6
15.	Man from Messrs Martyns to look after and pack presents	
16.	Champagne - separate a/c from wine merchant About 2 dozen - price will be from 70/-	
17.	Afternoon Tea and Light Refreshments including all necessary hire, full service of waiters & maids and other details	

100 guests guaranteed @ 2/6 per guest, all over 100 in number @ 2/-. Served from a buffet at small tables. Everything to be of the best quality and in ample quantity and carried out in very smart style. Mr Marfill to be personally in charge of all the arrangements.

[The suggested menu followed]

Tea and coffee, cream, hot and cold milk.

Bread and butter (white and brown). Small girdle scones, buttered.

A variety of Dainty Savoury Sandwiches and Fingerbreads with special fillings.

Special Decorated Gateaux & Iced Cakes.

Sultana, Madiera, Cherry & Citron Cakes to cut.

French Confectionery in variety including Japonaise, Nectarines, Tangerines, Petit fours, Bouchees, Pralines, Eclairs.

Small plainer cakes, Shortbreads, Macaroon Fingers, Coffee Batons, Chocolate Biscuits, Fancy Routs, etc.

Strawberry Cream Ice, Lemon Cream Ice, French Liqueur Ice, Ice Wafers & Savoys.

Water Biscuits, Bath Olivers, Coffee Biscuits. Chocolates & Sweetmeats.  
Homemade Lemonade.

**Fashionable Cheltenham Wedding** was the headline of the newspaper report, which gave a very detailed account of the occasion. The Oriental Café got due mention as being "entrusted with the whole of the catering and furnishing at the Rotunda and the church and supplied the handsome three tier bridal cake which was beautifully panelled and decorated."

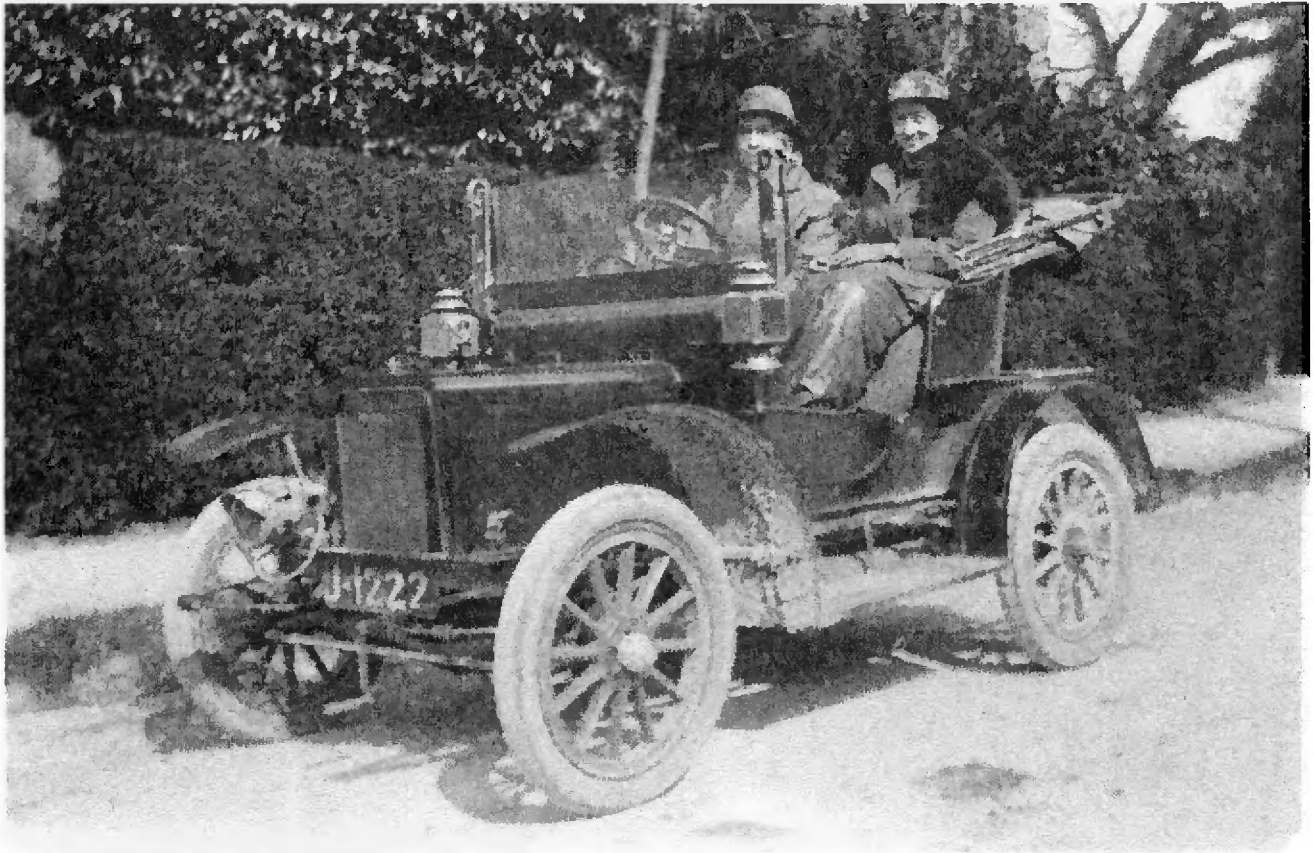
The service was conducted by Rev R Spence Aldridge, godfather of the bridegroom, assisted by Rev H A Corke, vicar of Holy Apostles. The bridesmaids were Mary's two sisters Elizabeth and Lilius. The bride wore a dress of white satin with the bodice trimmed with old lace and the skirt gracefully draped. She wore a separate Court train of white brocade lined with pale pink ninon, with old lace lent by Mrs Drew. [Probably Mrs Drew of Montrose, Battledown.] The bride wore a sapphire and diamond pendant, the gift of the bridegroom, and carried a sheaf of lilies. The bridesmaids wore blue dresses with pink and blue belts and Venetian lace collars and vests, their hats had lace brims and the crowns were of the same material as their belts, carnations finished off the hats, and they also carried bouquets of matching carnations. They wore sapphire and pearl brooches, gifts from the bridegroom. The bride's gown, travelling costume and trousseau, the bridesmaids' dresses and hats and the gown and hat worn by Mrs Hardwicke were made and designed by Mr Ayris of the Promenade. Later in the day the happy pair left for the honeymoon which will be spent motoring in the South of England. The presents, which were exceedingly handsome, numbered about 150.

Unfortunately, the photograph of the wedding is too faint to reproduce, but we have this one of Mary and Stuart - they look like an engaged or newly married couple, dont you think?

Anyone wanting more information about these families should refer to  
*Battledown People 1859 - 1939*  
by David O'Connor.



'Uncle Stuart and Aunt Mary' in their car - a 6HP two seater green Rover. J1222 was registered in the county of Durham on 2nd September 1913 to Frederick Stuart Smith of Battledown House, Cheltenham.



MARY SOUTHERTON

## AN IMPORTANT VISITOR TO CHARLTON KINGS

CHELTENHAM CHRONICLE AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE GRAPHIC,



### EARL PEMBROKE AT CHARLTON KINGS.

On Saturday, March 10, the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery presented the honours for services rendered to members of the Primrose League at a concert at the Clair-Ford Hall.

Standing:—Mrs. Tubbs, Mrs. F. Fry, Mrs. Walter Fry, Mr. F. J. Peacy, General Burton, Mr. W. J. Forbes.

Seated:—Mr. A. Drake, Sir Jas. T. Agg-Gardner, M.P., Earl Pembroke, Mrs. Rose, Mrs. Forbes. "Cheltenham Chronicle" Photo.

We are very grateful to Mrs N Baldwin for the loan of this photograph taken from a copy of the Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic, dated Saturday March 17 1923.

## EARLY LANDHOLDERS IN CHARLTON AND NAUNTON

Mr J Rhodes has informed me that he has found a charter of Pope Eugenius III (pope 1145-1153) dated 1152 which confirms land held by Llanthony Priory<sup>1</sup>. It is of interest in that it appears to give the names of three landholders in Charlton, two of which we did not know before.

The charter states "Ex donatione Mathei militis quinque solidatas in Cherletone, et in eadem villa quinque solidatas terre ex donatione Philippi Alis; item in eadem villa quinque solidatas terre ex donatione Hereberti, concedente Waltero filio comitis de cuius feudo tenebant". [They hold, by a grant made by Walter the son of the earl of this fiefdom, five shillings worth of land in Charlton from the gift of Matthew, knight, and in the same township five shillings worth of land from the gift of Philip Alis; likewise in the same township five shillings worth of land from the gift of Herebert.]

Philip Alis witnessed charters of Walter, son of the Earl of Hereford, dated c1143-1148 and c1150-1160<sup>2</sup>.

Herebert may be the Herbert de Maluenon (Malvern?), noted by Mr F Welch as holding land to the annual value of 100 shillings in "Cherleton" in 1159-1160<sup>3</sup>. Though Mr Welch said "It is not clear if this is our Charlton", it seems likely to be so because the knights held land from Walter. Walter's tenure of land "in Cheltenham was recorded from 1156-1159"<sup>4</sup>.

Mr Rhodes points out that the knights are also mentioned in Walter's charter on page 44 of Dr Walker's 1964 paper - "Concedo quoque et presenti carta confirmo quod milites mei [eisdem] donare voluerint de feudo meo pro salute mea et redemptione animarum suarum". [I grant to whoever is present and confirm by charter what my knights may wish to give of my fiefdom for my salvation and the redemption of their souls.] This charter is dated as 1155-c1160, could it be earlier if it refers to land already given, and confirmed in 1152?

This information is very interesting but puzzling as no evidence has yet been found that Llanthony Priory continued to hold the land in Charlton (or held land other than that referred to in my paper in *Bulletin 45*) and we do not know where it was located.

Mr Rhodes has also shown that Llanthony Priory held a hide [probably 96 acres in Cheltenham] of land in Naunton. The evidence is in a statement in a charter of confirmation issued in 1147 to the Priory by Pope Eugenius III - "In Niwentua ex dono Symonis dispensatoris unam hidam terre"<sup>5</sup> [one hide of land in Naunton from a gift of Simon the dispenser].

Simon Dispenser, Lord of a Manor at Leckhampton, gave the Priory tithes in Leckhampton, presumably after 1137<sup>6</sup>. This is the earliest reference to Naunton yet found. Simon Dispenser was alive during the reign of Henry I (1100-1135)<sup>7</sup>. Some tithes from Leckhampton were still payable to Llanthony in the 1530s according to *Valor Ecclesiasticus*<sup>8</sup>.

Coincidentally, I found the following in the Cartulary of St Peter's Abbey, Gloucester, Vol I page 72. "Conseilardus arcubalistarius domini regis [Conseilardus archer to the lord king] gave to God and St Peter of Gloucester ten shillings "annui redditus" [land worth ten shillings annual rent] in Cherlton in the time of Henry Blond, Abbot [1205-1224]. I know of no holding by the Abbey in Charlton.

- 1 Letter to author, based on GRO Microfilm 1101, PRO C115/75 (=6681) f215 no 24
- 2 Pages 42,44,46,47 of *Charters of the Earldom of Hereford 1095-1201* by D Walker in Camden Miscellany XXII (Camden Fourth Series Volume I) Royal Historical Society 1964
- 3 P149 F B Welch *The Manor of Charlton Kings, later Ashley* pp 145-165 TBGAS 54 (1932)
- 4 D Walker. *The 'Honours' of the Earls of Hereford in the Twelfth Century.* Pp 174-211. TBGAS 79 part II. 1960
- 5 Letter to author based on PRO C115/75 f214v no 23
- 6 GRO Microfilm 1104, PRO C115/77 formerly C115/6683 or A1, V,90. This evidence will be included in my forthcoming paper on *The Church and its Chapels in Medieval Cheltenham.*
- 7 F Welch. *Gloucestershire in the Pipe Rolls* TBGAS 57. 1935 p99
- 8 J N Langston. *Priors of Llanthony by Gloucester.* TBGAS 63.1943. p143

N.B. It is hoped the more detailed paper on Walter Hawlf [see *Bulletin 45* pp2-4] will appear in Cheltenham LHS Journal 18 in 2002.

MICHAEL GREET

## A STRANGE STORY ABOUT THE HOLDER AND PACKER FAMILIES

### A Dying Bridegroom and Under Age Bride.

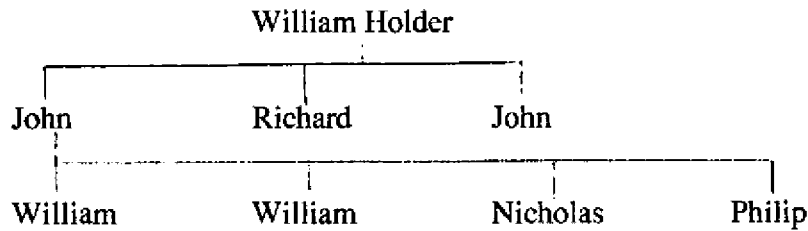
There were two branches of the Holder family in Charlton and others in Cheltenham; and Packers at Ham Court as well as at Arle and in Cheltenham. Here is the story Philip Holder told the Cheltenham Manor Court on 20 September in the 10th year of the reign of Charles I (1635) "in these words in English". (D855 M10 f 94v)

William Holder the great uncle have-ing a wief him surviving wch wief marryeth one Packer & shee dyeth And Packer beeing a Prisoner in Worcester jayle the jayler marryeth him to his daughter under the age of twelve yeares and presently after the maryage the same day the said Packer dyeth and afterwards one Gower maryeth the said jaylers daughter whome Packer had so maryed and they two afterwards when shee came of age surrendered the land at Court to others and their heires & Gower & his said wief are yet living. Packer never made his fyne to the Lord neither could hee because he dyed presently the same day after his marriage & so Gower gayned nothing by the maryage because Packer had by his marriage with the wydowe Holder but onely his lief and yeares wot are long since expired. So as now Richard Holder and John Holder the uncles of the said Phillip being dead without issue, the land cometh to Phillip Holder youngest sonne of John Holder the eldest sonne of the said William Holder the great uncle. This Phillip had notice of his right, now of late, for hee hath lyved in the Lowe Countryses these xx<sup>t</sup> yeares past.

The tenauntes are Richard Bannester, John Lymericke, Zachary Ireland, John Clevely, Thomas Steephens, John Davison, Ed. Ballinger, Ralph Abbotes.

In the margin "the land is borrowd English customary land going to the youngest".

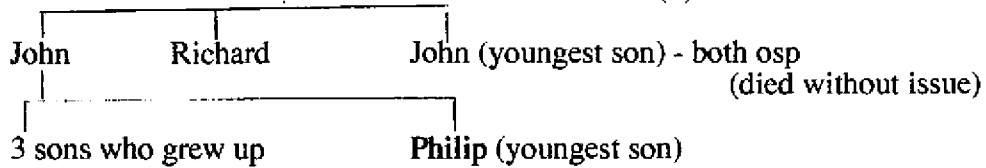
There is a family tree to elucidate Philip's claim:



Of course William Holder senior was Philip's grandfather not great uncle if this tree is correct. We can add this information from his narrative:

**William Holder m --- who m (2) Packer**

He married (2) in Worcester jail  
the jailers daughter & then died.  
She m (2) Gower who claimed.



The land in question (not described) was somewhere within the manor of Cheltenham. By 1635, Cheltenham manor customary property was no longer held by Borough English - the act to change that was passed in 1625. But when these events happened and Philip (if he had been in England) should have claimed, Borough English was still valid and the youngest son still inherited.

**MARY PAGET**

### **THE CHICKEN RUN/ CLAYPIT PATH**

I remember the footpath from Moorend Road to Old Bath Road in 1917-18 as having iron kissing gates at each end. Before I began to cycle to the Ladies' College in 1924 the gates had gone and been replaced by the present posts. Now in the minutes of Charlton Kings Urban District Council I find the exact date of this change (GRO D3 100/13). In an entry for 10 January 1922: "Footpath across Charlton Park. A letter was read from the Chief Constable stating that he had received two letters from Mr Rose complaining that the footpath was used by cyclists and that Gates were formerly situate at either end of the path, when the Surveyor was instructed to erect three posts at each end of the Path and the clerk was requested to write to the Chief Constable accordingly".

This was a nice resolution of the difficulty - the posts facilitated rather than hindered cyclists, but they did and do effectually keep out prams!

**MARY PAGET**



## THE OLD HOMESTEAD AND THE CHURCH FOUNTAIN

Following the suggestion that members have a look at their property deeds to see what they might reveal of general interest, my wife and I duly retrieved ours from our solicitor's care. Apart from their direct relevance to The Homestead, as 27 Ryeworth Road was originally known, they have also thrown up a few items of information which seem worth noting.

The first document is an abstract of title drawn up on 1st January 1922, beginning with the will of Samuel Higgs Gael, of Charlton Kings, dated 8th September 1887. Like the poet Grosvenor in 'Patience', he was a man of property, his holdings being 'Battledown Knoll Estate comprising Battledown Knoll House Castle Farm, Copshed Close and lands on the W&NW of Greenway Lane and the Greenway Farm House The Great Log and The Grove'. There were also 'estates at Deerhurst and in that locality', 'land at Dowdeswell End' and 'property at Prestbury'. As trustees he appointed his two sons, Charles Edward Gael and John Delabere Gael, who had power to lay out land in building plots. Another clause is summarised as 'Directions as to water supply to Church Fountain'.

Samuel Higgs Gael died on 17th September 1887, only a few days after making his will. Probate was granted on 8th January 1888 and, according to an indenture of 19th December 1893, the sons had by then fulfilled the provisions of the will and sold 'a considerable part of the residuary real estate'. They then shared what remained, apart from some which they retained as 'tenants in common' and there is reference to 'certain annuities charged on land of which only that in Haywards Road remained'.

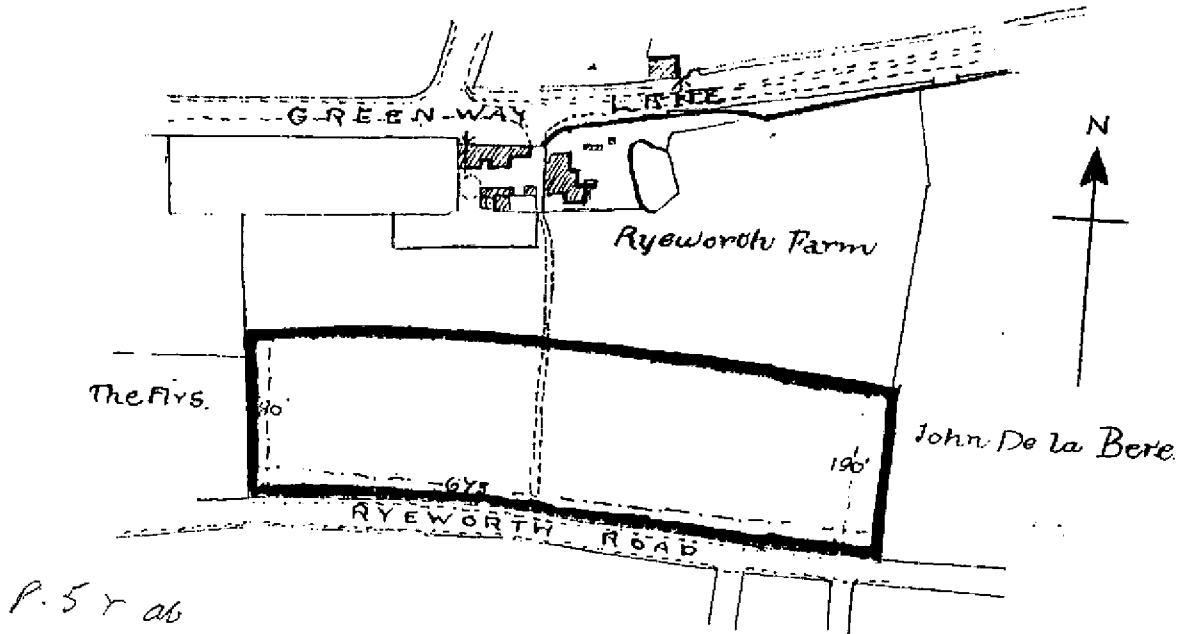
The land acquired under this arrangement by C E Gael included Ryeworth Farm, '7 acres and 2 roods or thereabouts', then occupied by Mr George Mitchell (see *Bulletin* 27, p4), a small amount of the land having been sold by the brothers in 1892 to George Herbert.

Meanwhile, the second brother, John Delabere Gael, who was living in Aberystwyth and appears to have been something of a social climber, had changed his name by deed poll to John De la Bere, on 24th October 1892! C E Gael, of Porteret House, Charlton Kings, died on 5th November 1907, but like his father, he had made his will only a few days before, on 30th October. By then his brother, named as executor and trustee, was the Revd J De la Bere, of Woolfardisworthy Rectory, Morchard Bishop, Devon <sup>1</sup>. He inherited 'the deceased's farm at Ryeworth and the Home Ground in the occupation of Charles Woodward Freed' and the will also mentioned land in Ryeworth Field occupied by A H Wilson <sup>2</sup>.

On 3rd April 1911 the Revd J De la Bere sold all the land shown on the plan (673ft x 190ft) to Charles Dickens of Cuba Villa, Charlton Kings, tobacconist <sup>3</sup>, who was to erect a strong fence on the north side of the land to prevent cattle and horses from straying <sup>4</sup>. Among various other provisos: no business, trade or manufactory was to be carried out in or on any house built on the land, or any part of the land itself within 400ft of The Firs; no factory was to be built on the rest of the land and nuisance to other future occupiers was guarded against. The dotted lines on the plan mark the 'occupation road' leading to the farm and any houses built west of this were to be to the value of £450 at least, if detached, or £400, if semi-detached. East of the occupation road the houses were to be to the value of at least £300 or £250 respectively (we are beyond the pale!) and in all cases values were to be in addition to the cost of the land. In parenthesis, it must have been about this time that the Revd De la Bere sold Ryeworth Farm to the Gloucestershire Dairy (see *Bulletin* 27, p5).

In 1922 Mr Dickins sold the plot on which 27 Ryeworth Road now stands to Mr George Lewis, commercial traveller, of Northampton, for £150.10.0. He sold on to Charles Henry Reason, gentleman, of Highbridge, Malvern Road, Cheltenham, for £180, but not till November 1933. In the following summer the house was built, bought for £1,450 by

Charlotte Hay Sanders, widow, of 4 York Terrace, St George's Road, Cheltenham, and named The Homestead. Between then and 1970, when we moved in, there were four other owners, but from 1940 to 1947 it appears to have been let to various people, and Mr Adrian Norman once told me that a general (Mary Paget thinks General Miles) rented it, though that might have been before the war.



There remains the reference in Samuel Higgs Gael's will to the 'Church Fountain', which, as will appear, was the drinking fountain at the Holy Apostles junction. Holy Apostles School was built in 1872 and the fountain must date from about the same time, being provided by C C Higgs along with the school rooms. The wording on the panel facing Cirencester Road has been eroded by wind and weather, except for a faint 'H 8', presumably the remains of 'MARCH 8th', but no year can be established, even with the help of the index to the *Cheltenham Examiner*, which is being produced by members of the Cheltenham Local History Society, though this has produced two mentions of the fountain. The first is a letter in the issue of 18th March 1874 from A Member of the Humane Society and self-confessed stranger to Cheltenham, who wishes to 'suggest a great want in (the town's) sanitary arrangements, viz., drinking fountains.' The only one the writer has seen is in the London Road and this is still unsupplied with water. Nor, even there, is there any provision for animals. The streets 'being so infested with dogs, surely some troughs ought to be made for them before the hot dry season commences.' No further mention of the fountain (which must have been the one at Holy Apostles) seems to have occurred - nor, indeed, does any action seem to have been taken, or, if there were any, it did not remain effective. This is shown by a report of a meeting of the Charlton Kings Local Board in the *Examiner* of 13th June 18888, at the end of which 'Mr Burgess called attention to the fact that the drinking fountain near the Holy Apostles Church was without a supply of water. Mr Gael remarked that the fountain passed into his late father's hands [though we do not learn how] and under the terms of his will it would shortly be offered to the Board's acceptance on behalf of the parish. The question of the water supply could then be considered. Mr Brydges suggested that Mrs Champion should be requested to present a small cattle trough for the fountain, upon which Mr Jones remarked that drinking troughs were a fruitful source of the spread of distemper among horses. No motion was proposed on the subject. The Board then broke up!'

It is possible that water was eventually piped from Ryeworth Farm, as there would have been just about enough fall, or from some part of the Gael property higher up, and it would be interesting to know how the fountain came into Samuel Higgs Gael's hands, in his son's words; 'perhaps bequeathed (with responsibility for the water supply) by his relative, C C Higgs?' At all events, it is a pity we do not know more about this local feature, which is worth more than a cursory glance. The front of it bids us 'Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow' and above these words there is an attractive carving, still in very good condition, of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. It also reminds us that our society has not changed much in some respects and that vandalism is nothing new, for the panel facing Haywards Road bears the stern injunction: 'The Public are expected to protect from injury that which is erected for the public good.'

<sup>1</sup> - Woolfardisworthy is about five miles north of Crediton and the name is probably pronounced 'Woolasey', like the village of the same name about three miles SSE of Clovelly.

<sup>2</sup> - C E Gael's will also contains a clause giving 'Directions as to cremation'.

<sup>3</sup> - Many will remember Dickins's shop in the High Street with the Scotsman (now in the Museum) standing outside, and another branch on the corner of the High Street and Well Walk, which had a smaller figure of a Scotsman on the side. (one is tempted to suggest that Havana House might have had a more distinguished ring as the name of Dickins residence!)

<sup>4</sup> - There still seem to be remains of this fence at the bottom of the garden of No 29, Ryeworth Road, next door to us, in the form of stout round posts which supported thick wire.

PAT LOVE

### HOW THINGS HAVE CHANGED IN CHARLTON KINGS

I was born in the village but left in 1930 owing to there being very little work. I joined the Grenadier Guards. Little did I think I would return, but did owing to my wife's health. I have seen so many changes. One being where Fuller and Maylams Nursery was at the junction of Croft and Cirencester roads and carrying on up to just short of the New Inn (now the Little Owl). It is now another estate. Charlton Park has also changed. In my time it was one big house and park. We used to march around the village and end up there on our Sunday School outing. That was in the time of Rev Edgar Neal and the curate "Bump" Gardner. That was our highlight of the year.

There was a sand-pit (now a field) between Cirencester Road and the Laundry. Perhaps that is for the better as it was not too safe for us children to play in. The area between the Station and Sandy Lane I fail to recognise now. The top of Little Herberts also has completely changed. Another estate going almost up to Timbercombe Woods.

I could go on like this for quite some time, but to be honest I think I would prefer to think of it as it was when I lived in the village. But I suppose that is only natural.

PERCY BRIDGEMAN

## CUDNALL POST OFFICE

There is no Post Office at Sixways now - but there used to be. I find that the original Post Office was on the corner of London Road and Hamilton Street, and went back at least to 1858, perhaps to the start of the Penny Post. The 1858 Rate book has:

George Russell	owner	
Andrew Kingston	tenant	
Cudnall Post Office, house and shop		£15
3 cottages, Hamilton Place		£5.12.0 each
(later called Hamilton Street)		

The Ashley Manor court book (D 109/5), under 16 May 1889 and 9 July 1889, shows that Edward Russell gentleman was selling the Post Office and 3 cottages as trustee for the mortgagee Edward Moss (under a surrender of 1 and 2 July 1834). So it looks as though the cottage on the corner of London Road and Hamilton Street (at first called Hamilton Cottage, then 1 Jirah Place) was mortgaged from the time it was built. Samuel Harward Brookes was the occupier in 1889. This is the house which in 1910 was a chemist's shop (see *Bulletin 33* pp 31-32) but it still retained traces of its former state - the telephone box for example.

The Post Office moved down the London Road to the corner of Overbury Street. The doorway (now blocked) was across the corner. This shop, now a newsagents, was run as a Post Office by Mr Wills in the early 1920s. We know it was the Post Office by 1914 from the rate book entry -

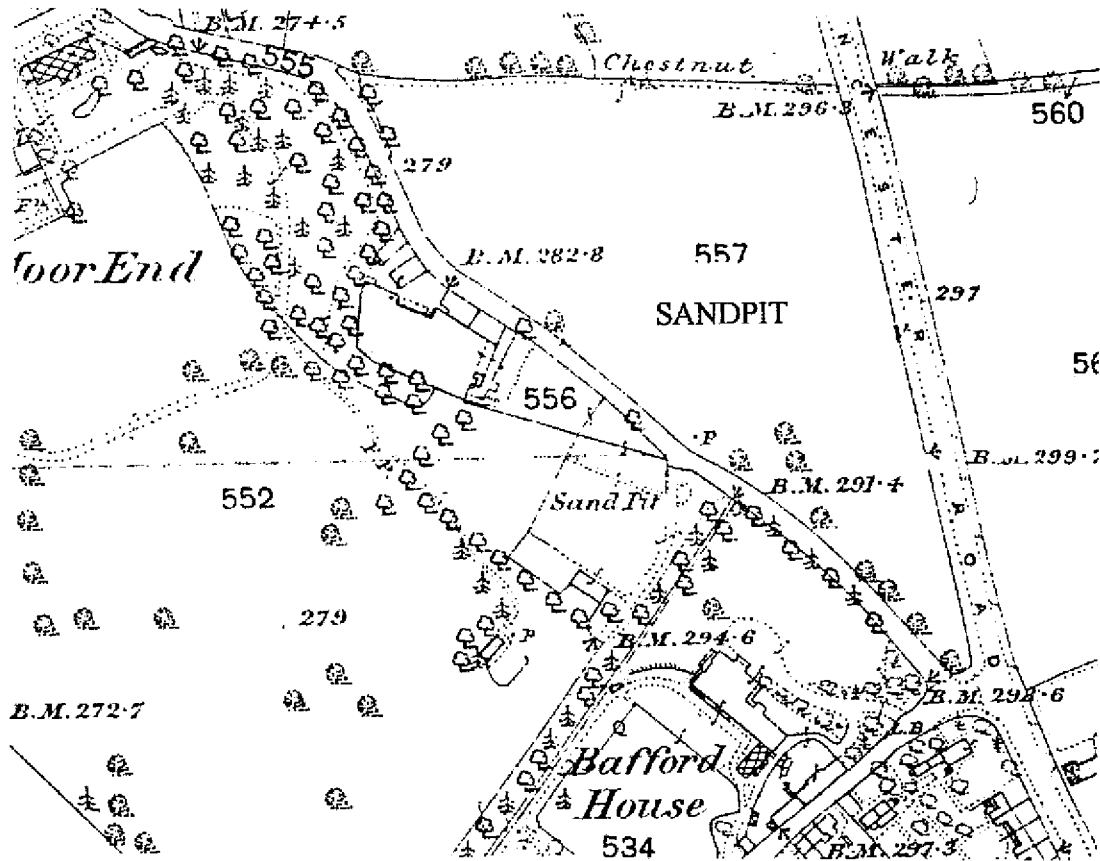
No 159	occupier Sidney Charles Wills	
	owner James Frederick Hancock	
1 Hill Place, house and Post Office,	rateable value £15.15.0 (DA 3/510/6)	

Hancock also owned and ran the forge, No 162 (later replaced by a garage) and house and shops 2-3 Hill Place (Nos 160-1)

**MARY PAGET**

## THE SANDPIT IN LAUNDRY LANE/NEW COURT ROAD (GRO DA 3 100/13)

The deep sandpit extending from New Court Road, then locally known as Laundry Lane, was giving trouble in 1918, partly through sand subsiding into the road. The pit had been made by Messrs Mark Williams. In October 1918 the footpath from Cirencester Road was reported as dangerous and the firm ordered to fence it. By 8 July 1919 the Sanitary Inspector was reporting that "a nuisance exists at the sand hole, Newcourt Road, caused by the deposit of refuse carted from a chemical works in Cheltenham - the premises are owned and occupied by Messrs Mark Williams and Co". The surveyor suggested that the Company should be served with notice "that all refuse received at the tip from Chemical works or similiar places shall be carted to the extreme East side of the tip and buried". The Diamond Sanitary Laundry was complaining about the footpath in December and sending a petition on the subject from its employees. Mark Williams replied in February 1920; the firm stated that "there was only a little sand left in the pit which could be cleared away in a month or so" - their men had been told to keep the roadway and crossing cleared up daily to meet the approval of the Laundry employees. Then on 8 June 1920, a letter was read from Mark Williams and Co " offering to sell the sandpit at £350 and at the same time pointing out that the pit could be used as an Ash tip for many years and that the acreage of the land was nearly 20 acres." The Council resolved to offer £200.



The next stage was a subsidence of land belonging to Mrs Bagnall of Bafford House; this was caused by working the pit. Perhaps it explains the willingness of the firm, reported 14 September 1920, to sell for £200. The Council asked the Ministry for a loan of £513, to cover purchase and fencing; this they got. The draft contract for purchase stipulated that no part of the site should be used for anything that might annoy people on the Moorend estate - but the proprietor of the Laundry, Mrs Eykyn, thought an ashtip might be detrimental to her property and was assured that all precautions would be taken to avoid unpleasantness.

Are you surprised that by 13 September there was a complaint about smells and rats, and that the tip was "much used as a playground by children". (see Percy Bridgeman's memories above)

By the autumn of 1923 the nuisance was enough to bring a letter to the Urban District Council from General Burton, who lived at Bafford Grange, and had to pass the tip on his way to and from his house. He called the council's attention to "the fact that the Ashtip was swarming with Rats". But since the household rubbish and ashes were tipped, just as they were collected by the ashcarts, and not covered in anyway, this was inevitable.

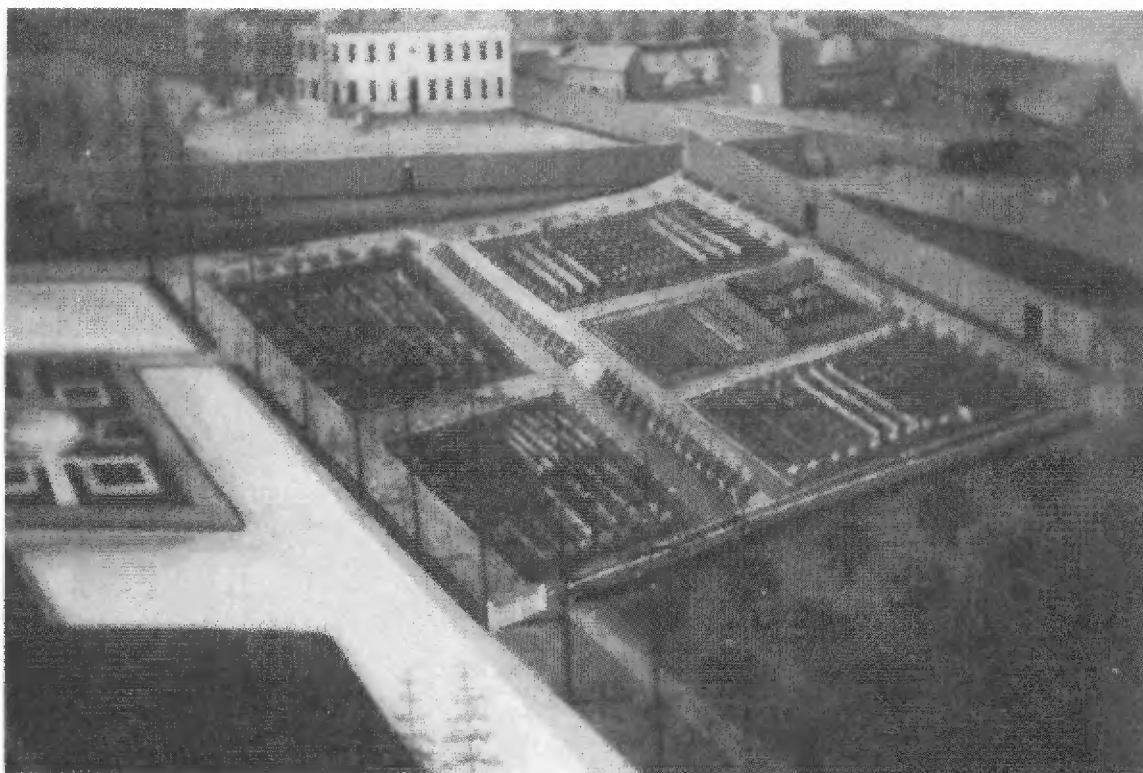
I heard many complaints about rats and smell, and can remember the smell myself. It was years before the tip was full, not I think, till about 1930. Meanwhile the sandcliff on the east side was a wonderful place for sand martins' nests.

When the tip was eventually full, a very thin covering of soil was put over it and it was grassed. All this explains why no building on this site is possible and why a house in Cirencester Road, built too near the edge of the sand cliff, began to subside and had to be rebuilt.

MARY PAGET

## THE WILL OF WILLIAM LARNER

William Larner worked for William Prinn at the Forden (later Charlton Park) from at least 1748 until his death in 1772. He is of interest because he was the estate gardener and would have worked in the garden depicted in Thomas Robins' large oil painting of Charlton Park which hangs in the Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum.



Larner/Lardner was not a Charlton Kings man, he was baptised at Barnsley on 17 February 1705, the son of Drew and Sarah Lardner. It would be interesting to know where he had been trained and worked before being employed by William Prinn. He had obviously achieved a high reputation, as his starting wage was £10 per year, at a time when the other servants were being paid between £5 and £8 per year. In addition Larner received an annual amount for washing of 15s - this may imply that he was expected to act as footman in the house as well. This rate of pay remained the same throughout the twenty four years that he worked for William Prinn. He received his wages at very infrequent intervals, signing William Prinn's account book for the receipt of payments of £30 or £40 pounds at a time and once for £75.5.0, so he was clearly not dependent on them for living expenses.

His financial standing was revealed in his will, which was made in November 1768, two years before his death. Among his property was a freehold estate in Chedworth, the remainder of the 'Chattelless' on a house in Barnsley called Drew's and another house in Barnsley tenanted by a Dr Howes.

After various family legacies, the will moves on to bequests of more interest to us:

I give to John Ballinger Gardner in Cheltenham the sum of five pounds to buy him a Horse and I forgive the sum which is betwixt Ann White of the Parish of Charlton Kings and me beside five pounds to be paid to her ...

If I die at Charlton I give to all my Fellow Servants Ten Shillings each and to Richard Harris late Fellow Servant five Shillings and to Charles Pugh & Bartley Wilson & William Greville five Shillings each and if I die at Charlton Kings I leave Thomas Ballinger Senior William Price Edward Wills & his son John five Shillings each and to Joseph Hiscock John Lawrence William Spencer & William Robbins two Shillings & Sixpence each and Alexander Goodrich Carpenter five Shillings and the sum of Ten Shillings to be paid to the Poor of this Parish to be paid by the Churchwardens to whom they think wants most. And I give to Mr Robert Gale Senior William Ballinger Thomas Robbins Senior now living in Bath William & Thos Pride Brothers the sum of five Shillings each ...  
and if I die at Charlton I give to William Prinn Esqr the sum of one Guinea if he will except it if not to be distributed at his discretion for the poor of the Parish ...'

Larner went on to make requests for the place and manner of his burial - at Winson with his head at his Father's feet - the coffin was to be carried to the church from 'one of my House'es in Winson' by named friends and there was to be 'no Cloath upon my Coffin to the Church'. The Burial Register for Winson shows that William Larner was buried there on 3rd December 1772, and that Drew Lardner of Winson, his father, had been buried on 3rd August 1740.

William Prinn's account books show that Larner was still working at Charlton when he died - his executors were paid his wages up to 1st December 1772. They also show that Prinn received the guinea legacy and passed it on to the poor of the parish:

16 Dec 1773 - Reced of Mr Prinn Twenty pounds for 2 years wages due to Wm Larner 1st Dec 1772 and thirty shillings for 2 years washing. We say reced as above in full of all demands. Signed by Gabriel Adams and William Adams ex of Wm Larner deceased.

17 Dec 1773 - Gave to ye Poor Wm Larners Legacy - £1.1.0

Included in the list of those to whom Larner left money are several who had worked for William Prinn - Richard Harris from 1766 to 1768 at eight guineas a year wages, one guinea for a years washing and one guinea in place of 'vails'<sup>2</sup>; Charles Pugh from 1743 to 1764 at five guineas plus a guinea for washing; Bartley Wilson from 1741 to 1751 at five guineas plus a guinea for washing; William Greville from 1749 to 1757 at four guineas and later five guineas; and Thomas Ballinger from 1761 to 1782 at firstly 45s then 55s, later four pounds and finally seven guineas.

Of particular interest to me was the legacy to Thomas Robbins/Robins Senior 'now living in Bath' - further evidence that the artist did not move to Bath as early as 1740 which had been claimed by John Harris. Larner also left money to Bartley Wilson, Thomas Robins's son-law and a William Robins, presumably another member of the family. It leads me to wonder whether Robins and Larner were friends before the painting was done, and if so is that why the garden is given so much prominence, or did the friendship blossom as a result of the painting?

Lamer was a bachelor, and although there is mention of a nephew and niece and friends in Winson, it would seem that his fellow workers at Charlton Park and his friends in Charlton Kings constituted his 'second family'. He must have had a regard for his employer to have left him a guinea, but felt an embarrassment about doing so, so made the proviso 'if he will except it'. In all the specified legacies amounted to about £50 and that was in addition to his houses and their contents. William Lamer was clearly a man of some substance.

Footnotes: (1)'Chattelless' or chattel lease - piece of property other than real estate or freehold.(O.E.D.) The house in Barnsley called Drew's was in fact held for the lives of Mary Lamer and Elizabeth Davis, probably members of his family. (2) 'Vails' - a gratuity given to a servant, specifically one given by a visitor on his departure to the servants of the house in which he had been a guest.(O.E.D.)

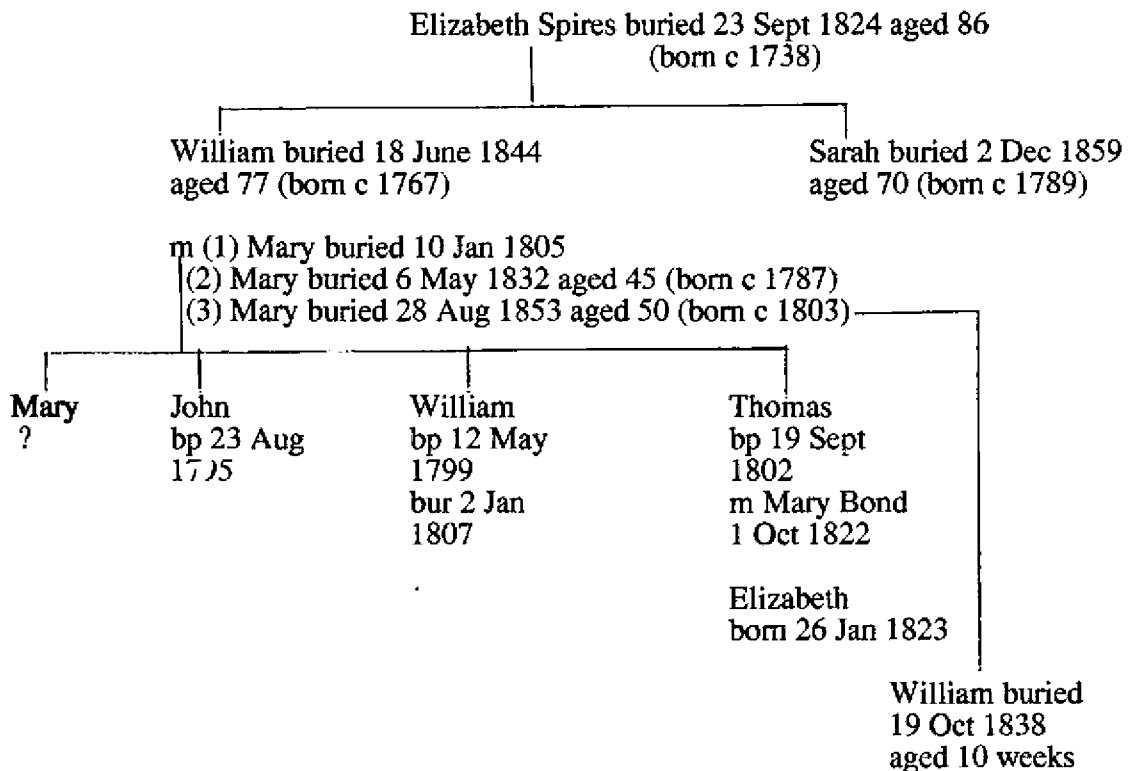
References: The will is in Gloucestershire Record Office - 1772/191. Other information from the Prinn account books GRO D7610 Box 3, and Barnsley and Winson Parish Registers.

JANE SALE

### THE ORIGINAL CRAB END COTTAGE AND THE SPIERS FAMILY - ADDITION

In *Bulletin 37* pp 5-8 I described the original Crab End Cottage (behind the Merry Fellow) after it was divided into three dwellings by Mary Spiers a little before 1858. The Registers of electors for 1832-3 and 1842-3 show William Spiers claiming a vote for the whole property, not yet divided.

The Spiers or Spires were not an old Charlton family - they first appear in the registers in 1795. I think this is the probable Tree.





There are two other references to the Spire family at Charlton Kings - in St Mary's banns book (P76 IN/1/28). Thomas Spire bachelor of Crabend was marrying Mary Bond spinster of Churchend, banns called 8, 15 and 22 September 1822; and John Spire bachelor of Ryeworth Farm was marrying Mary Lovesy spinster of 16 Gloucester Place, Cheltenham, banns called 15, 22 and 29 September 1822. Thomas and Mary were married here on 1 October 1822 by Henry Hunt officiating minister. John and Mary will have been married in Cheltenham.

Mary, the daughter who inherited the old house, was probably the eldest child born before the family settled here. After her father's death in 1844 she presumably sold the corner plot on which three cottages were built. Two of them were shortly afterwards acquired by Samuel Hogg for the transferred Merry Fellow. Then before 1858 Mary divided the old house.

Hogg's decision to move from Cudnall to Church Street/School Road may have been prompted by competition from a more up-to-date house, the London Inn. Perhaps there was a tradition of the Crab End house having formerly been an ale house. Hogg had married his second wife Mary Bradshaw in 1838.

This takes the history of the property back one generation; but we are no nearer to discovering who lived here in the 18th century.

There was, however, another Elizabeth Spiers. How she fits in we do not know; that she does fit seems likely. Elizabeth Spiers married John Turner of Charlton Kings at Cheltenham Register Office on 5 September 1844. This event took place after two of their children, the eldest daughter Ann and the son William James Turner, had been born (the latter in 1843). It seems obvious that they had to wait to marry until Elizabeth reached the age of 21 - she had been born 26 January 1823.



This William James Turner was I believe, my very dear Mr Turner (grandfather of Annie Hopkins) who died January 1924 aged 80. I have written about him in *The Hill Story V*.

This photo was taken outside the garden shed at Elm Cottage

MARY PAGET

## **RESTORATION OF BATTLEDOWN HOUSE**

An article in *Bulletin 45* envisaged the probable demolition in 2001 of two of the older houses on the Battledown Estate, Battledown House in Ashley Road and Temple Garth in Oakley Road. As was only to be expected from such a bold prophecy, both houses have survived 2001.

Of the two, Battledown House has had a full reprieve. The Council turned down the proposal to demolish and develop and the House was subsequently put back on the market and bought by an individual purchaser, who has begun full restoration. This is a task of great magnitude, since although the House is basically sound, it has been neglected in recent years. The owner hopes to be in occupation by March 2002. He has promised access to the House documents, which should help in determining the true age of this residence.

Temple Garth remains unsold and awaits its fate.

**DAVID O'CONNOR**

## **MORE ABOUT THE QUARRY RAILWAY**

In October 1920 the Quarry Company applied to Charlton Kings Urban District Council for permission to put their railway over Sandy Lane. The Council appointed a sub-Committee to examine the site; they reported on 14 December. (GRO DA 3 100/13)

A bridge on this site was not possible. But the Sub-Committee considered "that this part of the parish would probably never be developed so far out" and were disposed to recommend that leave for a level crossing should be given. This was done 11 January 1921 on the condition that a gate should be provided "which would automatically lock against the Public when the Quarry Co's trains were crossing the Road a distance of 12 yards from the outer Rail, the Rail to be a single one only where it crosses the road". The gates were not to be kept closed for longer than 5 minutes at any one time.

This licence could be revoked on 3 years notice and on revocation the Company were to take up the rails and restore the road.

Alas for the wisdom of sub-Committees. The agreement was sealed on 8 March 1921 and almost immediately houses began to be built on the Great Field and cottages at Southfield - within 30 to 40 years the whole, except for the golf course, had been built-up. But long before that, of course, the quarry railway had ceased to exist.

**MARY PAGET**