

# CHARLTON KINGS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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2005



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### **Membership of the Society**

Membership forms are available from the Hon Secretary. Annual subscription £4.50 or £6.50 for a couple. Meetings are held monthly from September to May at 7.30pm, and also twice a year in October and March at 10.30am, all in the Baptist Church in Church Street.

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**Publications:** Copies of the following publications can be obtained from the Chairman. Prices apply to Society members. Postage and packing for each item £1. (Except Probate Records)

Charlton Kings Probate Records 1600-1800 (2003) - £12.00  
Charlton Kings Tudor Wills - Supp to Probate Records (2004) - £2.50  
Charlton Kings Parish Rate Books for 1858 (2003) and 1882 (2004) - £4.00 each  
Charlton Kings Registers of Electors for 1832/3, 1842/3, 1862 (2004) - £1.00  
The Hole in the Ground - Battledown Brickworks (2002) - £6.00  
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Indexes to Bulletins 18-27, 28-37 and 38-47 - £5.00 the set  
Indexed Parish Register Transcriptions for the following years:  
1538-1634 - £2. 1634-1700 - £3. 1700-1760, 1760-1812, & 1813-1834 - £5.00 each

Some copies of past bulletins are available at a price to be agreed with the Chairman.

**Cover - Photograph of Hare Coursing Ring by John Bromley**

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## EDITORIAL

The cover of this issue features a gold ring engraved with hare-coursing scenes, found by John Bromley in a field bordering Greenway Lane. It has been chosen to illustrate the main article - John's account of his fascinating finds using a metal detector. I think this is the first time that anybody has researched in this way in Charlton and I look forward to future articles as John widens his area of search.

I am delighted to report that David O'Connor's article in last year's *Bulletin 50*, on the Burtons of Hambrook House and Bafford Grange, won the annual Bryan Jerrard Award for the best published article on Local History in Gloucestershire. The presentation took place during the annual Local History Meeting held in Gloucester and organised by the Gloucestershire Rural Community's Local History Committee. The photograph shows David receiving his award from Bryan Jerrard with John Loosely, chairman of the Local History Committee, on the right.



With the help of some members David has completed the Society's latest publication *Lives Revisited*, a collection of 232 biographies of people buried at St Mary's. Interesting and often surprising individually, together they form a fascinating picture of life in Charlton Kings in the Victorian period. *Lives Revisited* is at the printers and will appear shortly.

In this issue of the *Bulletin* David has given us some excerpts from General Burton's diary written during the last years of his life which concentrate on the flora and fauna in his garden at Bafford Grange. It makes one wonder how many of the birds mentioned we would see today - certainly not corncrake.

The theme for this year's Local History Meeting was 'Crime and Punishment' and our chairman produced a very interesting display on the subject. I am pleased therefore that Mary has used the information gathered for an article for us.

Mary Paget's article about Charlton Kings in the 1930s reminds us of a very different village to the one we know today and Geoff Bridgeman's account of his schooldays at the Junior School in the 1960s will bring back some happy memories I hope.

I should like to express my thanks to everybody who has contributed to this issue and especially to John Bromley and Tony Sale for their help in preparing photographs.

Sadly the Society has lost some good friends during 2004.

In February Harrold Booty died after a long illness during which he never lost interest in the history of Charlton Kings. He wrote an article on his maternal ancestors Charles and Lydia Smith, which was published in *Bulletin 40*. Mr Booty kindly donated to the Society a microfiche of the 1851 census.

Sheila Purnell was a much loved member of the parish of St Mary's and her funeral service held on 12 August was a moving occasion. Sheila had endured poor health for several years but was always wonderfully cheerful and thoughtful for others. She was nominated to be a recipient of Maundy money in 2003 and readers will remember her very interesting account of the service held in Gloucester Cathedral. Writing this article for the bulletin was really hard for Sheila but she persevered and was very pleased to see it in print.

Those of us who worked in the Gloucestershire Record Office were very sad to hear of the death of Kate Haslem, who had been in charge of the searchroom there. Kate was always very helpful and encouraging to those new to the record office and I shall always remember her with gratitude. She and her husband also ran a secondhand book shop specialising in local history books and were regular attenders at the October Local History afternoons in Gloucester.

Jo O'Neill, a fairly new member of our Society, died during the summer. We offer our condolences to her husband Shane and hope to see him at our meetings.

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In November a group of Society members paid a special visit to the Gloucestershire Record Office to view a large map of the Charlton Park estate made in 1843. This was a map which had been presented to the record office by descendants of the Russell family after the sale held at Stokesay Court in 1994 [see *Bulletin 50* p29]. The map was in such poor condition when it arrived at the record office that it could not be made available for anybody to view. Our committee decided that a contribution to the cost of its conservation would be a very worthwhile use of some of our funds and £500 was donated for that purpose. Now at last we were able to see it and delight in its detail. The map was produced by Woolans and Carpenter of London with an attractive vignette of Charlton Park in the bottom corner. An earlier map of the estate dated 1746 had also been put out for us so we were able to make comparisons. We asked about the possibility of the 1843 map being digitally scanned so that print-outs could be made, but it is too big even for the record office's latest equipment. However, the smaller 1746 map can be scanned and we shall be receiving a CD of it shortly. Print-outs of that one can be obtained from the record office at a cost of £48, if collected.

David O'Connor took these photographs of the group gathered outside the record office and some members examining the map. Those in the main group, reading from the left, are:

Malcolm Lomas; Joan Lomas; Don Sherwell; Andrew Baynes; Jane Sale; Tony Sale; Margaret Walkers; Carolyn Greet; Ian Harris; Ann Hookey; Mary Southerton; Christopher Fletcher; Suzanne Fletcher; Mike Greet; Patricia Morgan; David Morgan.

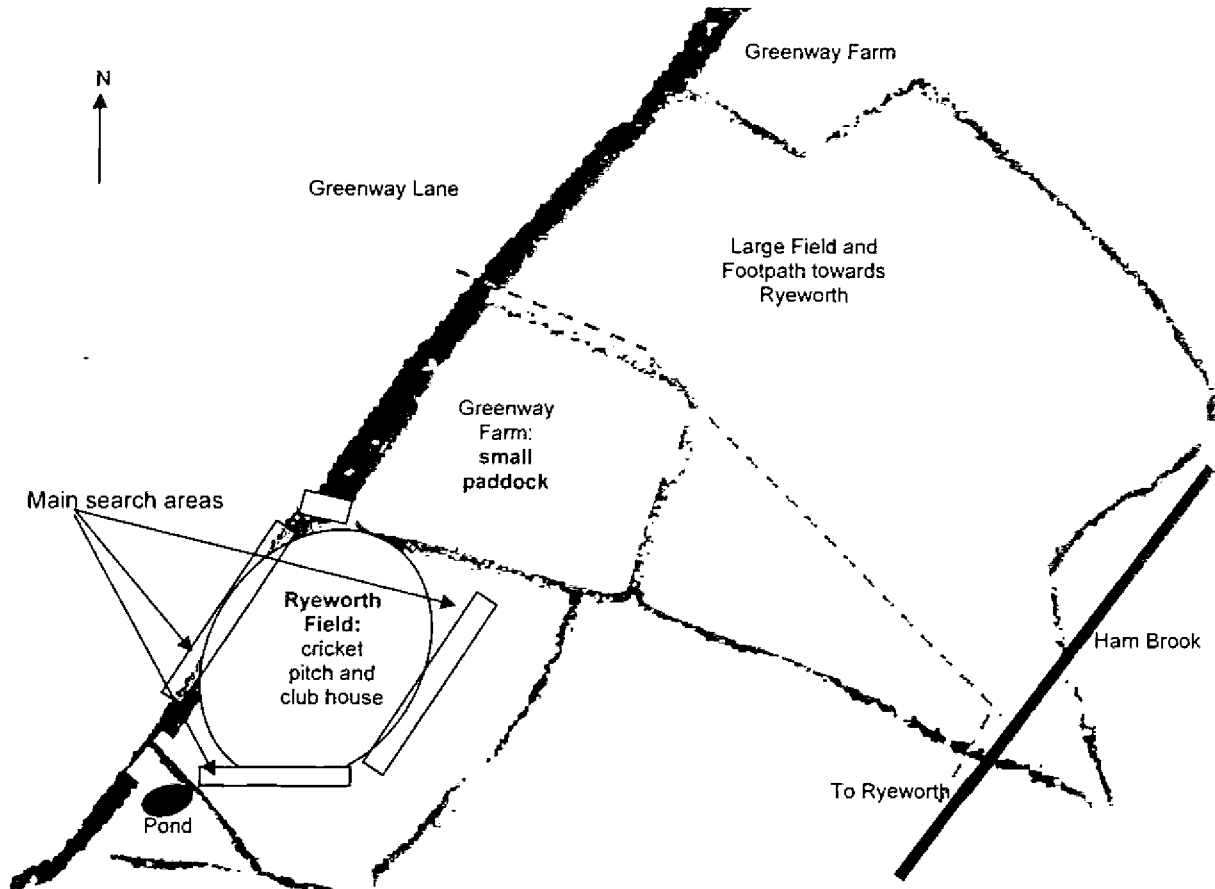


## HISTORY OUT OF SIGHT - GREENWAY LANE

by John Bromley

I use a metal detector to search for coins and artifacts. I must express my gratitude to Mike Barfoot and Julian Terry of the Whitefriars and Charlton Kings Cricket Club for giving me permission to search some of the cricket ground on Greenway Lane. I am also very grateful to Mr Gordon Phillips of Greenway Farm who gave me permission to search the small paddock adjacent to the cricket ground.

Fig 1 Rough Plan of Ryeworth Field and Greenway Farm



Both the fields were at one time farmed using the strip cultivation method which was popular in medieval England where the common field was divided into strips for distribution between villagers. This method of farming is actually much older with the word 'furlong' originating from Anglo Saxon times and literally translating to 'furrow-long' referring to the 220 yard length of a typical strip<sup>1</sup>.

The prominence of the fifteen ridges in each of the two fields indicate that they went from strip cultivation to paddock so they have probably not seen a plough for 180 years or more. As a result many of the older items will have settled too deeply into the soil to be found by a metal detector.



The average metal detector picks up items up to 8 or 9 inches deep. However any metal left in the ground, especially copper and bronze, reacts with moisture over time and oxidises the soil surrounding it so it becomes possible to find older items sitting a little deeper in the ground due to the area of 'detector reactive' soil around it turning it into a larger target. If these two fields were to be deep ploughed a whole new array of items would be brought nearer to the surface and would be within reach of a metal detector.

Both field boundaries contain numerous oak trees which were planted during the reign of George III to provide wood for ship building to replace ships lost through battle<sup>2</sup>. Close to the south west corner of the cricket ground is an ancient pond that would have been popular with drovers herding livestock along Greenway Lane. Not far away to the east is Ham Brook, another source of water which was so important in ancient times. I was therefore confident of finding items covering a vast range of time thus giving some insight to the people using this area over the last two millenia.

**Greenway Lane:** As a drovers' track Greenway Lane was probably 40 feet or more wide at one time, with the main thoroughfare moving across this width as people tried to keep to the cleanest route, in much the same way as paths move in modern times because walkers instinctively walk around muddy areas. By the time the current route of Greenway Lane was defined strip cultivation would no longer have been practised so it is probable that the field boundaries would have been based on the line at that time. Some of the larger 'greenways' are recorded at 132 feet wide giving some indication to the volume of livestock being driven along them.

**Ryeworth Field (Whitefriars and Charlton Kings Cricket Club):** The game of cricket dates back to the 16th century but the sport did not become popular until the late 18th Century. The original rules were drawn up in 1774 but were modified with the forming of the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) in 1787. MCC is the oldest cricket club in the UK.

A parish club was formed in Charlton Kings in 1879 and in the early 1900s it became the Ryeworth Cricket Club, and more recently Whitefriars and Charlton Kings Cricket Club. The club ground is Ryeworth Field on Greenway Lane which was purchased from Arthur Mitchell of The Glenfall around 1923, although the field was almost certainly used by the club from around the time of its formation, as borne out by finds made<sup>3</sup>.

I was allowed to search the outer reaches of the field so I concentrated on the areas bordering Greenway Lane and also along the opposite side of the field. As I searched the area furthest from the lane I became aware that I was finding older items so extended my search towards the south east corner. The main search areas are indicated by grey shading in figure 1. Approximately 65% of the items found in the cricket ground came from the area bordering Greenway Lane, and talking to club members it seems that most fans tend to congregate along that side of the field.

**Greenway Farm (small paddock):** Mr Phillips let me search the entire field over a number of visits. It is noticeable in this paddock that the furrows run at an angle to Greenway Lane with the first and second strips being incomplete where they effectively run under the lane, therefore the third strip is the first one to run its full 'furrow long' length. There is significant disruption to the fourth strip which I believe was caused by a bomb during the second world war. This field has not seen the same footfall in more recent times as the adjacent cricket ground so it is not surprising that overall fewer items were found (see coin summary at the end of the article for details). It was again very noticeable that the majority of the items found came from the areas bordering Greenway Lane and also bordering the cricket ground, however the most interesting finds came from the furthest areas from the lane.

**Miscellanea and Ferrous Items:** As with most agricultural land there was a large amount of iron in the ground where bits have broken or fallen off machinery. Much of this is unrecognisable although a hammer head, gate hinges, nuts, bolts and washers did turn up with what looks like bits of a broken cast iron cauldron plus a miscellanea of aluminium, copper, lead and, of course, the inevitable horseshoes, eleven from the paddock and four from the cricket ground.

Amongst the miscellanea were a few more interesting or unusual items. One such was a 2lb lead 'teardrop' shaped weight which was most probably a pendulum from a large clock. How it came to be in the middle of a paddock is anyone's guess. A large number of brass rings came to light which turned out to be curtain rings. Old curtains may have been chopped up and put on the ground to rot down as compost and it seems that some still had their hanging loops attached.

As mentioned earlier the two fields gave up items covering a wide time scale. whilst there is some repetition I have decided to deal with finds in their chronological order starting with the oldest items.

**Celtic Britain:** To my surprise and delight I found a single Celtic coin, although I do still have some unsearched areas left to explore so others might be forthcoming. It is a cast bronze coin probably belonging to the Dubonni tribe (mid 1st century BC to mid 1st century AD) The Dubonni territory stretched over Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire and also south into Somerset and west to the Welsh borders.



Fig 2.  
Celtic coin

Although a lot of Celtic coinage was minted from gold and silver the growing stranglehold of Rome over Gaul led to rapid loss of trade, and therefore wealth, so copper and other alloys became more common in these later coins.

**Medieval to 16th century England:** The next datable finds are medieval in the form of distinctive D shaped belt loop (and probably other similar items although their date has yet to be confirmed). There is also an item that could be a medieval finger ring but this is awaiting identification.



Fig 3 Elizabeth I Threepence 1561

An Elizabethan item came to light in the form of a hammered silver threepence dated 1561. The coinage of Elizabeth I is particularly diverse. The term 'hammered coin' refers to the traditional method of coin minting whereby the metal flange was placed between two metal dies and a hammer blow was used to emboss the pattern onto the flange. This method often led to poor quality impressions because it was difficult to hit the top die square on. The top die was also prone to breaking so, as a rule, there were two top dies for every base die. Also the flanges were rarely circular, as illustrated in the coin I found, so the impression was often incomplete. It was common practice to 'clip' slivers from the edges of gold and silver coins and the

clippings collected and melted into a flange to create a further coin. The clipping was sometimes hard to detect due to the irregular shape of hammered coins.

**17th and 18th Century England:** Artefacts from this area were prolific and varied. A number of buttons appeared, especially 'tombac' ones, named after the copper and zinc alloy from which they are made. Tombac, an American term, contains enough zinc to give the button a shiny silver finish, but they were obviously much cheaper than silver-plated buttons and so were very popular. A number of copper and gilt-plated buttons also appeared.

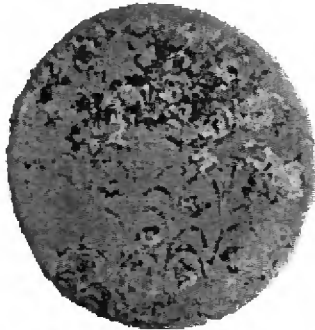
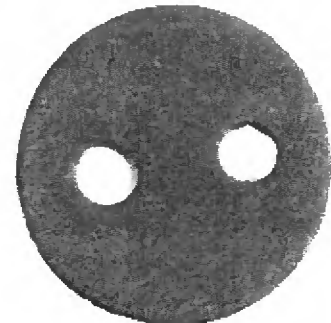


Fig 4 Engrave copper button  
17<sup>th</sup>C



Engraved 'tombac' button  
18<sup>th</sup>C



George III halfpenny  
used as a button 18<sup>th</sup>C

A large number of buckles were also found. Some were large iron fittings that would have come from the harnesses of plough teams. Up to the late 1700s a team of eight to twelve oxen would have been needed to plough land. Agricultural innovations by Robert Ransome (1753 - 1830) led to the introduction in 1789 of ploughs that could be pulled by a team of just two or four horses. Other buckles would have come from clothing. By the late 18th century buckles had become essential fashion accessories appearing on shoes, hats and belts.



Fig 5 Cartwheel penny 1797

The coins from this era give some insight to the turbulent events affecting England, especially during the reign of George III who ruled through Trafalgar, Waterloo, the American War of Independence and the French Revolution.

A number of copper halfpennies and pennies were found bearing the heads of both George II and George III. I also found a single 'cartwheel' penny, so named after the excessive size and weight of the coin with its distinctive flange like a cart's wheel. There was also a two penny cartwheel coin produced. Both coins were only minted in 1797, using steam press technology developed by Matthew Boulton. Even at this time the face value of a coin was equivalent to the base value of the metal used in the coin, which is why the cartwheel coins were so large.

The significance of this particular coinage is that this is the very first copper penny to be produced in this country. Prior to the cartwheel coinage penny coins were minted from silver. Copper pennies were not minted again until 1806 when it was a smaller coin worth less than its face value.

I found a George III one guinea gaming token dated 1788. These brass tokens are styled after the Guinea and Half Guinea coins of his reign and were used as betting tokens in the gaming halls in the same way as plastic chips are used in modern casinos. They were almost certainly



**Fig 6: 1 Guinea gaming token**

minted into the 19th century and for as long as gaming remained fashionable and popular, although the date on them rarely changes. They are often called 'Jetons' which is derived from the French verb 'jeter' meaning to throw, another indication of the gaming link. These gaming tokens should not be confused with the token money issued around the same period due to a chronic shortage of small change in circulation. The inscription on the reverse reads "In memory of the good old days", but there is uncertainty as to the meaning of this. During the reign of George III, English currency underwent significant changes including the replacement of the Guinea and Half Guinea with the new Sovereign and Half Sovereign coins, and more significantly the introduction of the first true 'token' currency where the face value of the coin was less than the base value of the metal used. There is speculation that the inscription marks the passing of an era, whereas others suggest that it may refer to a gaming hall called 'The Good Old Days'.

As mentioned previously there was a lot of unrest during this period and little small currency was minted during the second half of the 18th century. As a result England simply ran out of small currency and between 1788-95 and 1811-15 private individuals were compelled to produce their own small currency, usually as a copper halfpenny or sometimes a penny. The introduction of the gaming jetons helped this idea take off and soon the private token money became a means of advertising their business in the process. There was also an amount of Spanish currency, Dollars and Eight Reales, restamped and put into circulation in this country during this time. The crisis in 1811-15 was more serious and the Bank of England had to issue tokens to the value of nine pence, eighteen pence and three shillings.

I was lucky enough to find a local token from this period dated 1811. It is a silver one shilling token issued by the County and Town of Gloucester. The inscriptions read: 'For XII Pence' and 'Gloucester County and City Token MDCCCXI'



**Fig 7: 1 shilling silver token 1811**

19th Century England: Yet more buttons came to light especially livery buttons which were the essential requirement on the uniforms of house staff who worked for anyone of status. The more glamorous the buttons the wealthier the employer. Livery buttons often bore heraldic coats of arms of the family.

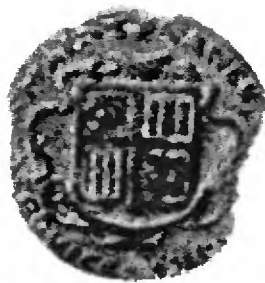


Fig 8 Cuff button with coat of arms. late 19<sup>th</sup>C



Livery button of the Atkinson family 19<sup>th</sup>C



Livery button with a heraldic design 19<sup>th</sup>C

No coins were found from the reign of George IV (1820-30) nor William IV (1830-37). The reason being there was simply not a huge amount of new currency minted during the reigns of these two monarchs.

However one interesting item dating to George IV came to light in the form of an 18 carat gold ring depicting a hare coursing scene. The ring has the mark of the London assay office and the year letter is 1828. Between 1784 and 1890 a duty was imposed on silver and gold. To prove that the duty had been paid an extra stamp depicting the head of the reigning monarch was made. In 1797 the duty was double so for a time two George III heads were stamped on such items. For more insight into hare coursing and the possible origin of this ring see the appendix at the end of this article.

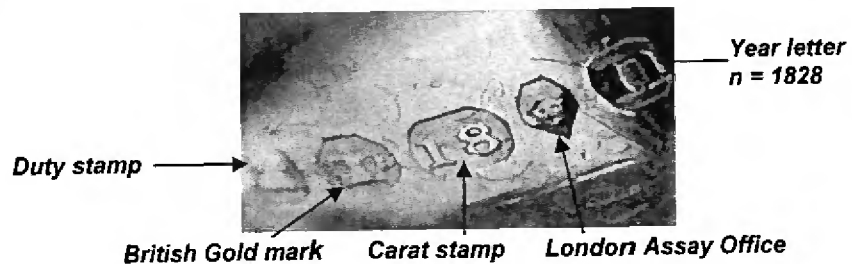
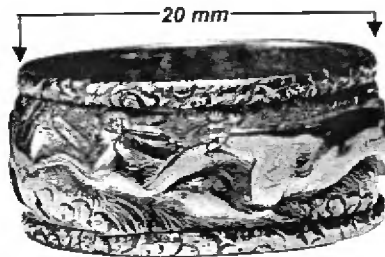


Fig 9 18 carat Hare Coursing Ring and Hallmarks

Due to the length of time that Victoria was on the throne it is very difficult not to find coins from her reign. A number of copper pennies and half pennies surfaced, and it was interesting that most of the Victorian coppers from the cricket ground were dated 1880 or later (after the club was formed) whilst those coming from the small paddock ranged from 1861 to 1900. A young head silver sixpence was also among the finds.

The small paddock also yielded a Queen Victoria 60th Anniversary commemoration medal with the inscription: "The longest and (most) illustrious reign on record Victoria Queen and (??) 1837 - 1897". Vast numbers of such commemoration medals were manufactured and distributed to public officials and people of rank, as well as to school children and certain members of the public.



Fig 10 Victoria commemoration medal

**20th Century:** Not surprisingly coins were most bountiful from this century especially from the cricket ground where both cricketers and fans seemed to lose coins with ease. Having found only three silver coins dated pre 1900, the cricket ground delivered a large number of silver sixpences and shillings as well as the odd florin and half crown. English silver coinage has seen a variety of fineness standards adopted as the norm over the years but by Elizabethan times silver coins were made from sterling silver (0.925 fineness) with only the odd 0.916 fineness creeping in. The 0.925 standard of silver remained until 1920 when the silver content was reduced to 0.500 in the reign of George V. This reduction was brought about by a sudden and steep rise in the cost of silver which was mined overseas. After the second world war, as the silver was needed to repay the bullion lent by America, all silver was replaced by cupro-nickel coins of the same weight and size from 1946.

One interesting find from the cricket ground was a French 50 Centimes dated 1916, a USA 5 'Buffalo' Cents, date indistinguishable but the 'buffalo' 5 cents were minted between 1913-29, and a Royal Engineers button all found together. Just who dropped these three items is anyone's guess.



Fig 11 Selection of Silver coins found



Fig 12 French and USA coins found with Royal Engineer button

Two other items of some interest from the cricket ground are a silver jubilee commemoration medal for King George V and Queen Mary dated 6 May 1935. Unfortunately the medal is rather battered. There was also a single HM Royal Household button from the cricket ground.



Fig 13 King George V & Queen Mary Silver Jubilee medal 6 May 1935

HM Royal Household button with crown of George VI

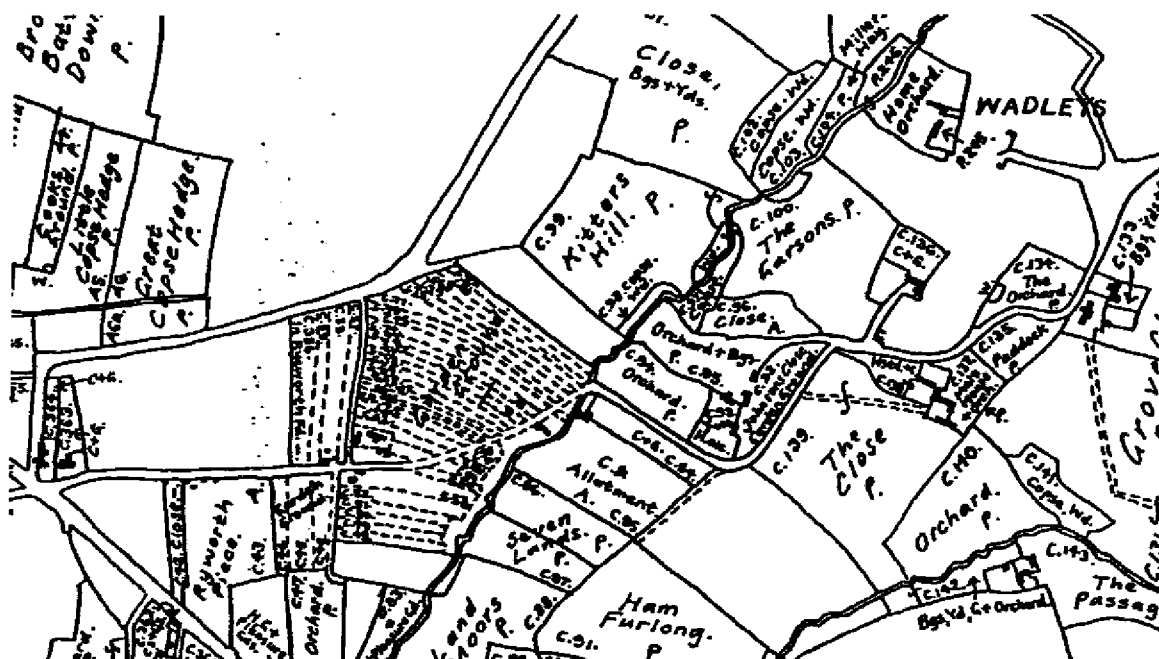
Summary of Coins Found.

		Ryeworth Field	Paddock
Elizabeth II	1971 - current (decimal)	64	17
Elizabeth II	1952 - 1967 (pre-decimal)	4	2
George VI	1936 - 1952	27	13
George V	1910 - 1936	52	19
Edward VII	1901 - 1910	4	2
Victoria	1837 - 1901	8	5
George III	1760 - 1820	8	9
George II	1727 - 1760	2	0
Elizabeth I	1558 - 1603	1	0
Celtic (late iron age)		1	0
Foreign Coins		2	0
Unidentifiable		1	3
		<hr/>	<hr/>
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>70</b>

### An Observation:

I had completed the search of the small paddock by the end of October 2004, but had only completed the area of the cricket ground adjacent to Greenway Lane by this time. In January 2005 I returned to the cricket ground and concentrated my search on the side furthest from Greenway Lane. Over two visits, a week apart, I discovered the shilling token and then the Elizabethan coin. It was not until I had the Elizabethan coin that I realised the coursing ring, the 1811 shilling and the 1561 threepence had all come from the same line across the two fields starting at the SE corner of the small paddock. Looking more closely at the furrows in the cricket ground I realised that they ended short of the allotment end of the field and a series of faint short furrows ran at 90 degrees to the main furrows. Where these two sets of furrow meet there is a distinctive curved dip in the ground leading to this junction. I suspected there might have been an old thoroughfare across the field and so spent a few hours detecting along this line. It was within this 'track' area that I found the George II coins, the only ones to come from the fields, together with the Celtic bronze, and also the two engraved buttons, the copper one of which is almost certainly 17th century. The 1865 OS maps do not show such a path but there is a possibility that such a path existed as an access route to the other fields but was forgotten in Victorian times. The other possibility is that Greenway Lane was once much wider or even ran along this line for a while.

[John's theory that an early road or track ran from Greenway Road in the direction of Ham is very interesting. I discussed it with Mary Paget, who felt that he could well be right. She had no archival proof of such a road but had always felt this to be a likely possibility. The tithe map of 1838 shows how such a track could lead to the area near Ham Square and thence to Ham Court, a very important house in the area. (see *Bulletin 20 p16* for Paget's discussion of its age.) John's finds may be the best 'proof' of such a way that we shall have. - Ed]





### Appendix on Hare Coursing and the Hare Coursing Ring:

Hare coursing evolved as a sport whereby the object was to test the speed of the pursuing greyhounds rather than to catch the prey, unlike hunting where the kill is the aim. Hare coursing dates back to around 2000 BC when 'Gazehounds', the forerunner to greyhounds, were raced against the hare. Because coursing is done by sight the hounds tend to pull up once they lose sight of the hare, and as a result over 90% of hares escape with only old or diseased hares being caught.

By Elizabethan times the sport had become fashionable in England. The Queen requested the Duke of Norfolk to establish rules of the sport and these became known as 'The Laws of the Leash'. Coursing was seen as second to stag hunting because it was such a supreme test of speed and skill of both greyhounds and the dog handlers called 'slippers'. A course involves two hounds and usually lasts only 35-40 seconds after which time a judge determines the winning hound based on speed, overtaking of the other (go by) and making the hare turn at 90 degrees. The hounds will have covered a distance of about one third of a mile in this time.

The first public coursing events were staged during the reign of Charles I (1625-49) yet it was not until 1776 that the first public coursing club was founded by Lord Orford at Swaffham. Naturally other clubs quickly evolved, and perhaps the most famous of these was the Altcar Club founded in 1825 by Lord Molyneux in Lancaster. Lord Molyneux later became the Earl of Sefton.

Interclub competitions soon followed and in 1836 William Lynn, proprietor of the Waterloo Hotel in Liverpool, organised a course meeting called the Waterloo Cup as an extra event to the annual steeplechase run at Aintree. The Waterloo Cup was staged at The Altcar Club estate and went on to become the course event of the year with the results sent by carrier pigeon to major cities. The steeplechase went on to become the Grand National.

Our interest in all this lies in the name Molyneux. In 1828 Edward Iggulden leased the Glenfall estate to Lt General Thomas Molyneux, who lived there until his death in 1840. The Glenfall estate at that time included the field where the ring was found. *Burke's Peerage* for 1840 lists Lt General Thomas Molyneux, by then Sir Thomas, having succeeded to the baronetcy on the death of his brother in 1832. It also describes his family as being a junior branch of the family of Molyneux, Earls of Sefton.

It is therefore conceivable that Lord Molyneux, one of the leading names in the world of coursing, commissioned a gold ring depicting the sport that was his passion. It is equally possible that he had visited his 'cousin' Thomas at Glenfall, taken a walk or ride around the estate and the ring had slipped from his finger in a paddock off Greenway Lane.

[John kindly allowed me to take the ring to London to show to some museum curators and leading dealers. None of them had seen a ring like it, though snuff boxes with coursing scenes are occasionally found. The general opinion was that this ring was of very high quality and workmanship and had probably been a special commission by a person of some wealth and importance in the coursing world - Ed]

### References and Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> - O.S. Map 1865 shows details of ridge and furrow in this field. Also see *Bulletin 9*, pp 8 to 11 for an article on Ridge and Furrow in Charlton Kings by Jeremy Hill.

<sup>2</sup> - See *Bulletin 37* p38 for a photograph of one of the Ryeworth Cricket Club oaks and a discussion about their possible age.

<sup>3</sup> - Information about the history of the Ryeworth Cricket Club comes from *A History of Charlton Kings*, edited by Mary Paget, p197.

### Bibliography

*British Buttons - Civilian Uniform Buttons 19th - 20th Century* by Dennis G Blair

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*Buckles 1250 - 1800* by Ross Whitehead

*Coins of England and the United Kingdom: Spink Standard Catalogue of British Coins*, 37th Edition.

*A History of English Country Sports* by Michael Billet

I acknowledge the help and advice given me by Mr K Adams, Finds Liaison Officer, Gloucester County Council

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[John Bromley is a member of the Federation of Independent Detectorists and abides by the rules governing the finding of any precious metal item over 300 years old. He is in regular contact with the Gloucestershire Finds Liaison Officer to ensure all such items are reported and recorded. Some of his finds are on the national database ([www.finds.org.uk](http://www.finds.org.uk)), which provides a dynamic research tool for the public and researchers alike.

John is always looking for new land to search, be it a garden, building site, paddock or 1000 acre farm. Comprehensive public liability insurance (£5m) is held in case of any accidental damage. There is no cost involved and the owner of the land is automatically entitled to a share of any valuable item. Most finds are not particularly valuable in financial terms but just the knowledge of their existence and a glimpse of their history is truly fascinating.

He also offers a free recovery service for anyone who has lost a ring or metal object of sentimental value, provided the approximate location is known and permission to search for the item has been granted by the landowner.

John can be contacted at 07788 774909 email: [johnbr@fsmail.net](mailto:johnbr@fsmail.net)]

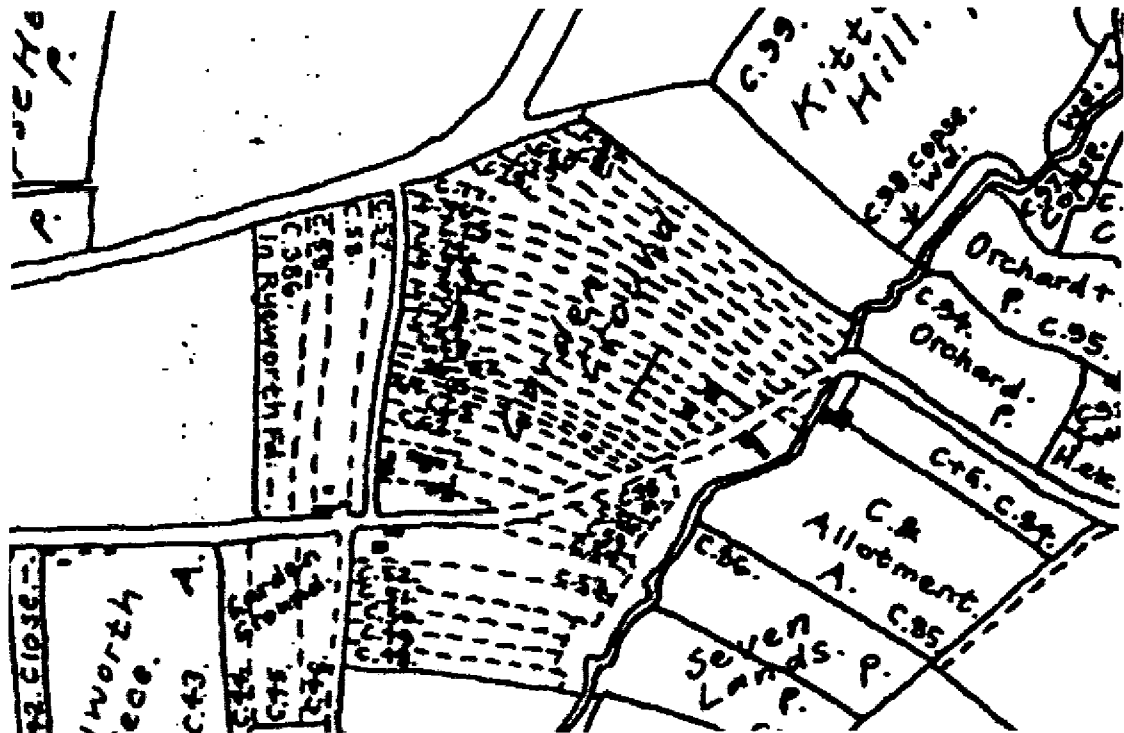
## A COMMON FIELD CALLED RYEWORTH FIELD

by Jane Sale

Mary Paget, when writing about the end of the open field system<sup>1</sup>, explains that some strip farming still existed in Charlton Kings in the 19th century: the tithe map shows strips on Coltham, The Ewen, Ryeworth and Lilleyfield. An Ashley manor enquiry, in 1836, about the right to turn ploughs on the headland in Ryeworth shows that there was still doubt and disagreement about the change to individual ownership. That enquiry was answered by a statement that 'no commoning had been exercised on that field for the last thirty years'. However, the sale particulars for a house in 1809 refer to "also, all those Five Lands and Three Butts of Arable Land, lying dispersed in a common field called Ryeworth Field, containing together 1a 3r 33p"<sup>2</sup>. So when exactly this field ceased to be farmed on an open field system has been open to doubt. Further light on the subject can be shed by an entry in the Cheltenham Manor records dated 6 November 1846, when again there was an enquiry about the right to turn ploughs<sup>3</sup>.

A complaint was raised by Samuel Higgs Gael against Robert South Bennett, the occupier of selions<sup>4</sup> in Ryeworth field abutting on land belonging to Gael and occupied by John Rouse, and on Gael's private road shooting along the land. It was claimed that Bennet had, within the last ten days, with his ploughs and horses, cut into and trampled over Gael's land and road to the extent of 20 to 30 feet. Bennet claimed he was exercising his rights on and over the land while ploughing his selions.

The 1838 Tithe Apportionment, which accompanies the map shown below, gives the names of the owners and occupiers of each numbered piece of land. Gael's private road separates the north to south strips from those running west to east and his land occupied by John Rouse is the strip immediately to the left, or west, of the private road. Robert South Bennet was occupier of most of the west to east strips, which were owned by Jane Cook of Cheltenham. It is easy to see how Bennet could have encroached on Gael's road and land as he turned his ploughs.



Gael asked that a jury should ascertain whether any such rights of turning now exist in that field, and if they do that the jury should ascertain and set out reasonable limits as to what extent of land is sufficient for the purpose and whether the Margin and Roadway used in other parts of the field for that purpose are eight feet in width only and whether twenty to thirty feet be an unreasonable extent, and also whether there are fixed times and seasons when such rights apply. He also asked that meerstones, which had been removed, should be set up to mark his boundaries.

A jury of six men was sworn in for the purpose, consisting of William Nash Skillicorne, John Benjamin Churchill, Thomas Haines, Thomas Taylor, William Hasall and George Russell. Their detailed reply provides us with interesting information about the way the land had been farmed and what changes had occurred over recent years.

We find that it is thirty years or so since there was 'opentide' or commonable rights used in Ryeworth field<sup>5</sup>. During the last thirty years or so proprietors and occupiers of land in that field have been accustomed to enclose parts of the said field and several proprietors of land have erected houses and other buildings thereon. Also, except for the headland mentioned, all the lands have been cropped including potatoes and other vegetables and cultivated as lands held in 'severalty'<sup>6</sup>. And that between the time **when opentide or commonable rights ceased to be used in 1827 or thereabouts** crops were raised yearly on every part of the said headland but such crops were early ones or were removed in sufficient time for the crops on the selions abutting on the east side of the headland to be hauled and carried away over the headland.

In or about 1827 a public footway on the west side of the headland was stopped and in lieu thereof the eastern extremity of the headland of a width of eight feet was set out and has ever since been used as a public footway. This public footway has also been used as a cart road to and from a Lime Kiln erected by William Turner, the former owner of the said headland, upon a selion on the East side of the road and abutting thereon. We find that the Cart Road is a private Husbandry Road to and from lands in the field. And that ever since 1827 the whole headland, other than the said road of eight feet width, has been cropped as a land held in severalty without interruption by any occupier or proprietor of other lands in the field.

We also find that the occupier of the selions, now occupied by Robert South Bennet, since 1827 generally used the said road for turning their horses and ploughs but that sometimes when no crops were growing or standing on the headland the occupier also used a portion of the headland on the West side for turning. No defined width for turning was ever used as Ancient Customary Right. No right of using twenty to thirty feet in width of the headland for turning now exists and such a width is unreasonable. The Ancient Right of using the said headland as a road for carrying off crops or of turning horses and ploughs could be used only between the time the crops were being carried off and the same selions were again sown or planted according to the Ancient System of Husbandry used in that field of three crops all of one grain and a fallow in each successive year according to a 4 Field system and not at any other time.

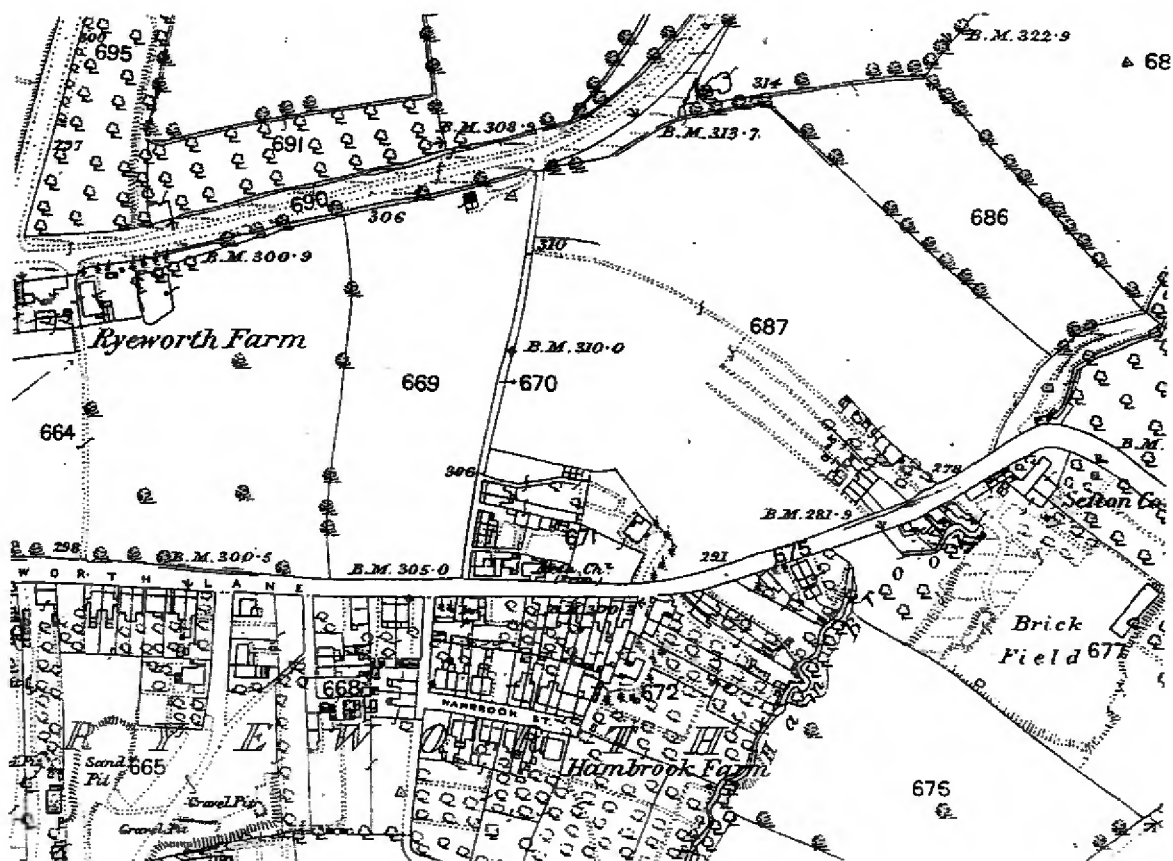
We find that two of the middle meerstones which marked the eastern boundary of the headland have been taken up or carried away but by whom we have no evidence. We have caused two other meerstones to be put in the same positions.

Our conclusion is that the Advantage of having a road of eight feet in width as a Husbandry Road at all seasons and the enjoyment of the selions abutting on the Eastern side of the said road as Land held in Severalty is far greater to the proprietor and occupier than any Common Field Rights of turning horses and ploughs. We recommend, to the parties interested, that the said road of eight feet width may at all times be open and used as a public footpath and Husbandry Cart Road and also as a space on which to turn horses and ploughs at all times of the year but that all other rights over the said headland be extinct.

The map below, dated 1888, shows that considerable development has occurred and how some of the west to east strips have had houses built on their ends. Gael's private road is the present Havers, the road/footpath which links Ryeworth Road with Greenway Road. It is interesting to note that the individually owned strips of land to the east of The Havers were described in 1838 as 'garden ground', very similiar to the allotments which are on this piece of land today.

References and Footnotes:

- 1 *A History of Charlton Kings* p36
- 2 *Bulletin 41* p34
- 3 GRO D855 M29/1
- 4 'Selion' - another word for ridge.
- 5 'Opentide' was the time after harvest when common fields were free and open to all manner of stock.
- 6 'Severality' - land held by an individual as opposed to in common.



## CRIME AND PUNISHMENT IN THE 19th CENTURY

by Mary Southerton

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When considering crime and punishment during the 19th century we need to look briefly at the way in which law and order had been maintained previously. In medieval times the manorial courts were mainly responsible for keeping order - theft, unpaid bills, poaching and fighting would be dealt with and fines levied. During the 16th and 17th centuries Parish Vestries gradually took over from the manorial courts. The Vestry appointed constables who were responsible for local taxes and accounts. They also looked after the stocks and lock-ups, collected rates for the local house of correction and generally oversaw law and order in the parish. The job of constable was undertaken by members of the parish - not a popular job as the constable could himself be fined if the Vestry did not feel he was carrying out his duties correctly.

**Rural Police force** - by the 19th century a more centralised form of keeping law and order was required. In 1839 the rural Police Act was created, at first a voluntary act it was made compulsory in 1856. Charlton Kings came under Cheltenham which had formed a constabulary in 1839. However we see from a newspaper report that the people of Charlton were not happy with the situation. At a meeting of ratepayers, held in 1841 to consider a petition for the "discontinuance of the Rural Police Force", they felt that the present force was "useless, unnecessary and an expense to the ratepayers", and the petition was agreed by the thirty one ratepayers present. The report commented on this number being considerably higher than for a number of years - an indication of the strength of feeling about this matter. Things would change though, by 1902 Charlton Kings had its own Police Station with a sergeant and police constables.

**Stocks** - many villages had stocks as a punishment for petty offenders. Ours are still to be seen on the grassy area next to the Parish Room in New Street although originally they were in the churchyard. They have six holes so could accommodate three people at once.



The use of stocks faded out during the latter half of the 19th century but the following case reported in the Free Press in 1857 shows that they were still used as an option to a fine in this parish: Three men were summoned by Police Constable Fowler and the accusation was that "during divine service on Sunday they did play an unlawful pastime, pitch and toss with money in a certain highway in Charlton Kings". PC Fowler had been instructed by some of the Charlton inhabitants to complain of "one of the evils of the day" as this desecration of the Sabbath was prevalent around the area. An unrepealed Act of Charles I was used to prosecute the men who were fined 3s 4d plus 3s costs each or three hours in the stocks if unable to pay. It was hoped that this would be a caution to Charlton Kings boys. Unfortunately the report did not relate whether they paid their fines or sat in the stocks.

**In Default** - if criminals could not pay their fines they were said to be 'in default' and would be sent to prison or to a house of correction. One wonders how many could pay their fines? Being a mainly agricultural village Charlton saw hard times in the 19th century. Meat and wheat were now being imported, consequently farming was no longer as profitable. Wages dropped and money was often very short. The temptation to steal must have been great and finding the money to pay a fine very difficult if not impossible. A labourer would get about 9s [45p] per week, but less if he was laid off for bad weather or lack of work. A more skilled worker such as a gardener might be paid between £1 and £2 per week. We can assume that a number of our petty criminals went to prison either in Gloucester or to the Northleach House of Correction. The caption of this *Punch* cartoon underlines the true 'pettiness' of petty crimes and the impossibility of payment.

"Conviction: Larceny of water-cresses. Fined 1/6 and ordered to pay 10/6 costs"  
29th March 1882



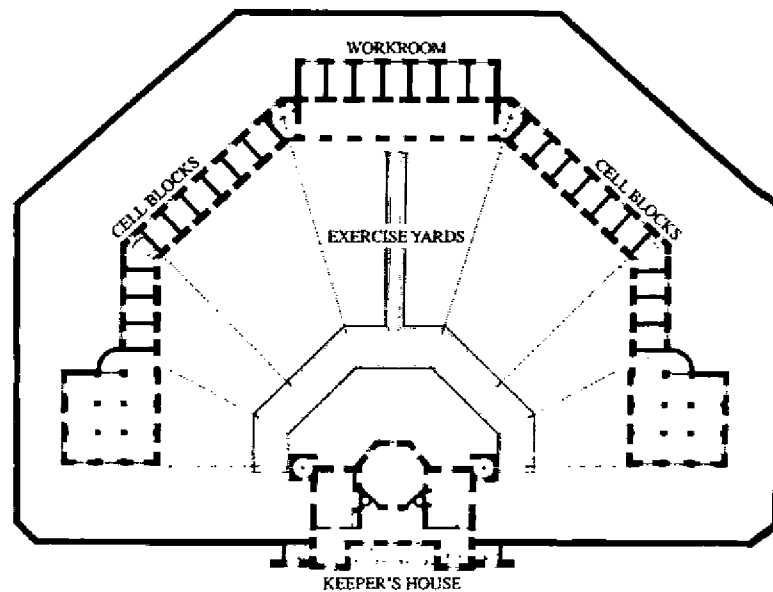
Some Examples of Petty Crime

<u>Date</u>	<u>Crime</u>	<u>Person</u>	<u>Fine</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Default</u>
1838	Stealing watercress	Man - Rogue & Vagabond	-	-	2 mths Northleach
1839	Stealing 4 napkins	2 Females Bone gatherers	-	-	1 mth Northleach
1847	Stealing Boots & Waistcoat	2 Lads aged 14 & 19	-	-	2 mths Northleach
1857	Assault	Small Boy	2/6	8/5	10 days in prison
1858	Stealing Iron wedge	Labourer	-	-	7 days in Gloucester prison
1863	Stealing Apples	Labourer	10s	4s	3 weeks in Gloucester prison
1864	Stealing Straw	Tramp with previous convictions	-	-	14 days in prison
1866	Stealing 2 yds Calico & a Book	Servant	-	-	10 days in prison
1866	Stealing 2 Loaves of Bread	Boy	-	-	14 days in prison 4 yrs Reformatory School
1867	Stealing Timber	Labourer	-	-	21 days Hard labour
1867	Allowing Horse to Stray on Road	Man	1s	7/6	-
1868	Stealing Tea Caddy & 4s in box	Lad aged 13 years	-	-	14 days in prison & 5 years in Reformatory School
1869	Begging	Lad aged 13 years Mother a drunkard	-	-	8 years at Industrial School
1873	Drunk & disorderly	Labourer	5s	-	10 days in Gaol



**Houses of Correction** - petty offences were often dealt with by subjecting the culprit to a short sharp sentence in a house of correction where strict discipline and hard labour would, it was hoped, deter the offender from a life of crime. The nearest one to Charlton Kings was at Northleach and many of our petty criminals would have been sent there. The exterior must have looked very daunting to a first offender when they eventually arrived after the long walk from Charlton. But in fact this purpose-built prison, opened in 1791, was a model innovation with its airy cell-blocks, workrooms, exercise yards, chapel and infirmaries. Inside their cells the prisoners had an iron bedstead, a hair mattress, two hempen sheets, two blankets and a rug. Prisoners were kept on their own, or if together in complete silence so they could reflect on their wrongdoings. Work was considered beneficial, both to prevent prisoners from wasting their time and also to prepare them for life after their release. Tasks included plaiting straw, making rush mats and baskets, spinning mop yarn, bottoming chairs, and making wooden skewers. The prisoners' earnings were paid to them when they left, half being deducted for their keep. Their diet was probably better than many of them had outside: 1½ lb of bread and 1 quart of oatmeal gruel, together with vegetable soup, potatoes and cheese for those engaged on 'hard labour'. The concept of hard labour was introduced in 1820, when a hand-operated corn mill was built. All male prisoners were made to work at it for nine hours in summer and six in winter. Work became even harder when a treadwheel was introduced in 1827 with space for sixteen men to work at once. The steps were at 8 inch intervals so in the course of a day each man would climb between ten and twelve thousand feet. Women and old or sick men were excused the treadwheel and given other hard labouring jobs such as gardening, cleaning or laundering.

#### Original Layout at Northleach



In 1857 the status of Northleach changed to a house of remand. The mill house became a police station with an office and living accomodation and part of the keeper's house was converted into a petty sessional court. The exterior remains virtually unchanged to this day.

**Transportation** - more serious crimes earned the criminal the punishment of transportation, sometimes for life. Prisoners were kept in hulks in Portsmouth Harbour or London Royal Docks while awaiting transportation.

Sending convicts to Australia began in 1788 when eleven ships from England landed at Botany Bay with around 750 convicts on board. Van Diemens Land, later known as Tasmania, was established in 1825 and the penal settlement of Port Arthur operated between 1830 and 1877. The life of the convicts was hard, rough and ready. If skilled men such as carpenters, blacksmiths or masons they might be employed on government programmes. The rest would be sent as labourers to work for property owners, merchants or farmers who had often been convicts themselves when first arriving in Australia. Relatively few convicts returned home, partly because the system of reprieves extended to so few and partly because they tended to settle in Australia. When the last shipment of convicts disembarked in Western Australia in 1868 the total number of transported convicts stood at around 162,000 men and women. They had been transported in 806 ships.

It was to Van Diemens Land that several Charlton Kings people were sent:<sup>1</sup>

**George James** - a fifteen year old labourer accused of stealing four shillings and sixpence from the house of Mary Moulder in Charlton Kings. James was brought before the Magistrates on 13th February 1830, tried at the Lent Sessions in April 1830 and sentenced to fourteen years transportation. He sailed on the Southworth on 26th June 1830 for Van Diemens Land, where he died before his sentence was finished.

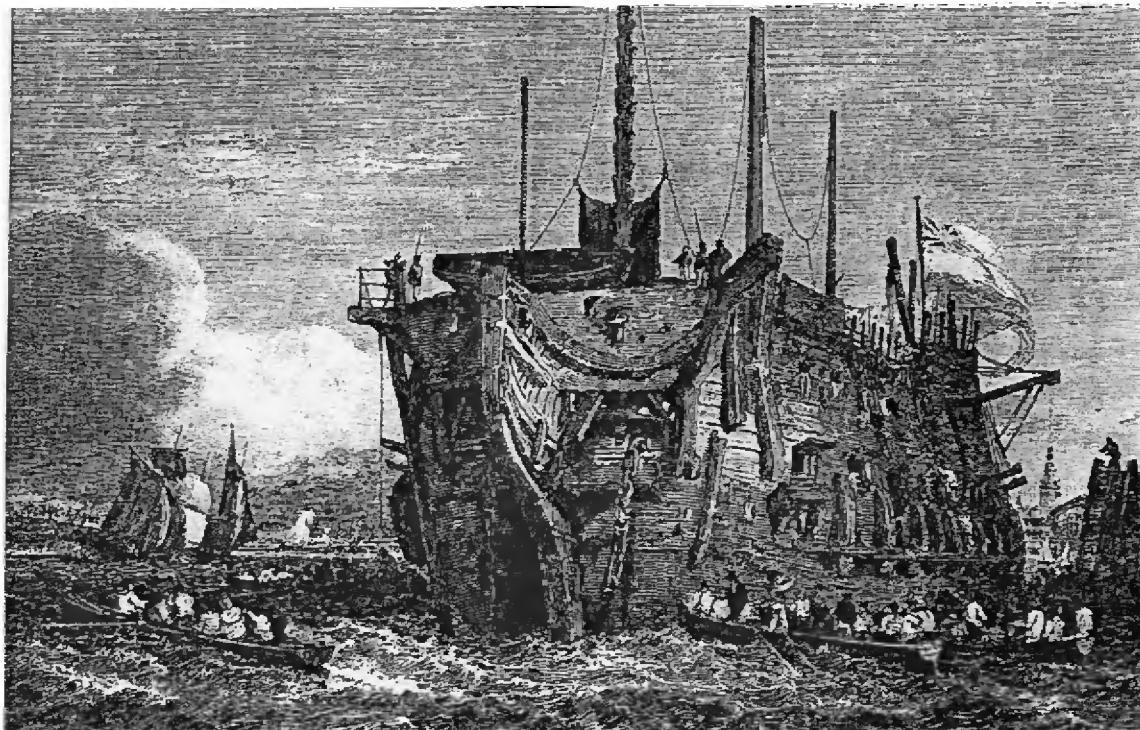
**John Simmonds/Symonds** - a twenty three year old labourer living in Charlton Kings accused of stealing one canvas bag and £4. 1s in silver, the property of William Marshall of Charlton Kings. He was brought before the Magistrates on 20th November 1835, tried at the Epiphany Session on 5 January 1836 and sentenced to six months in prison. He was brought to the Epiphany Session again on 3 January 1837 and sentenced to transportation for seven years. He sailed on the Neptune III on 3rd October 1837 for Van Diemens Land.

**Three Lads** - William Grimes aged seventeen, William Skey aged fifteen and Thomas Lacey aged fifteen, were charged with stealing lead from a building in Charlton Kings the property of Richard Sheppard. All the boys had previous convictions - Grimes with two was sentenced to transportation for ten years, the others with one were sentenced for seven years. There is no record of when they sailed or if, in fact, they did.

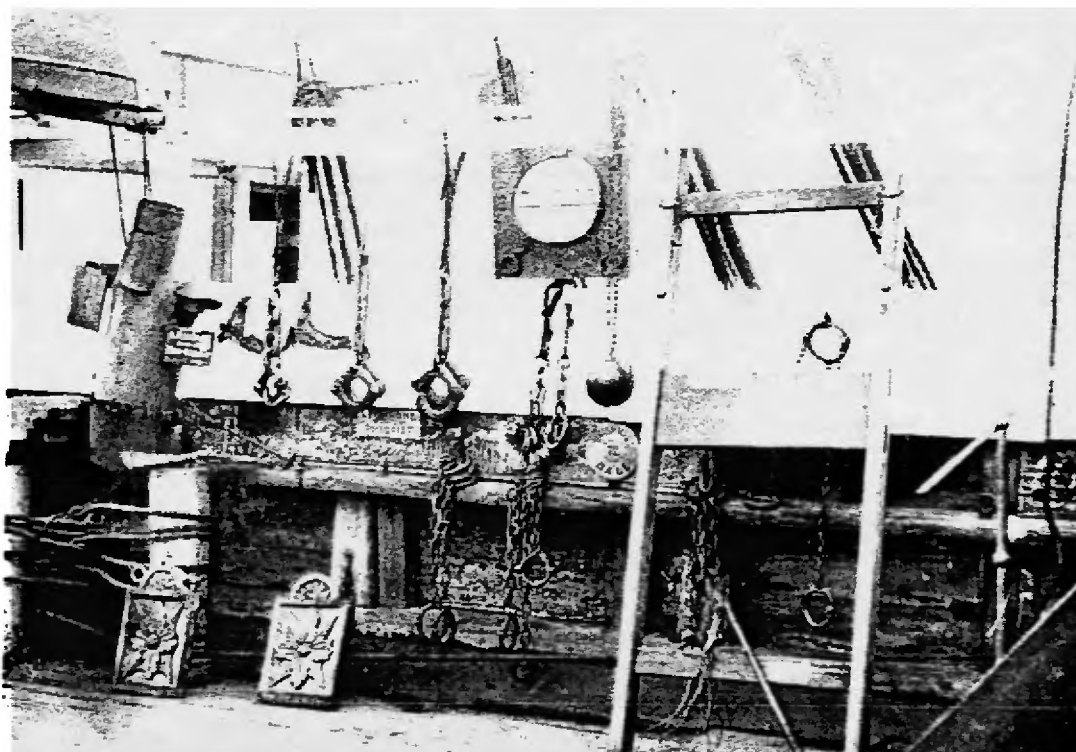
**Mary Southcote** - thirty year old employed as nurse to the three children of Dr W Cary surgeon of Charlton Kings. She was first charged on 28th September 1841 after various things had gone missing from the family home. Linen was found at a house belonging to Southcote's niece; two pawn tickets were found on Southcote one of which proved to be for a silver spoon; she also had a bunch of keys which opened the jewel box and drawers belonging to her mistress. Her reference from a previous employer turned out to be false. She was tried at the Michaelmas Sessions on 19th October 1841 and sentenced to transportation for seven years. She sailed on the Royal Admiral on 5th May 1842 to Van Diemens Land.

We have no details of life aboard the convict ships but a letter from a free settler travelling to Australia in 1852 paints a vivid picture: "There are six of us to a cabin and we have to prepare and eat our food there. The cabins are very hot and smelly. We get a daily ration of water which is the colour of tea. I am glad I brought a filter with me, the sediment is black as ink with plenty of insects."

Prisoners were kept on Hulks while awaiting Transportation



Decommissioned Convict Ship on Show at Gloucester Docks 1906



**Capital Punishment** - the ultimate punishment was execution by hanging. Bryan Jerrard, writing about Crime in Gloucestershire, 1805 to 1833, states that sixty criminals, including four women, were executed in public at the county gaol in Gloucester within this period, with the peak year being 1818<sup>2</sup>. He also reports that there is some evidence of judicial discretion and a certain unwillingness of juries to convict. There were instances of the death penalty being commuted to transportation for life. As far as we know there were no Charlton Kings criminals who were hanged.

**References:**

<sup>1</sup> *Transportees from Gloucestershire to Australia 1783-1842*. Published in 1988 by The Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society as Volume 1 in the Gloucestershire Record Series and *Penitentiary Register* GRO Q/PC2/50/A/45.

<sup>2</sup> *Gloucestershire History* published in 2004 by the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council

I am indebted to Judy Mills and the Cotswold Museum Service for the information about Northleach House of Correction and for permission to reproduce photographs from *Prison at the Crossroads - the House of Correction at Northleach*, published by the Cotswold District Council in 1994.

I am also very grateful to Ann Hookey for her research into the Charlton Kings transportees and to Pat Pearce for her photograph of the decommissioned convict ship at Gloucester Docks with its grim accoutrements.

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Mary Southerton has also submitted the following:

There is nothing new about advertising for a marriage partner, though the wording may be rather different, as I found out when I came across the following in the *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Advertiser* for March 1829:

A young lady of considerable personal attractions, cultivated mind, affectionate disposition and of pious and domestic habits. Wishes for an introduction to a clergyman or gentleman of middle age of competent independence, an agreeable person and refined manners and whose inclinations and pursuits tend to retirement.  
Letters (post paid) addressed to Eliza Post Office Carmarthen.

I wonder if she had any luck!

## MORE ABOUT OXFORD TERRACE

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Oxford Terrace is a group of three houses on the north side of the London Road which, according to James Hodsdon, were built in 1828<sup>1</sup>. These houses, lying to the east of Hales Road, were in the parish of Charlton Kings until the change of boundaries which occurred in 1884. Mary Paget, writing in 1988 about the development of Oxford Place and Oxford Terrace<sup>2</sup>, explained that back in 1784 the southernmost strips of Coltham Field were cut through by the new line of the turnpike road to London. The strip of land on the north side of this road was called Long Furlong as it stretched up to the Beaufort Arms and was consequently nearly a third longer than the one taken for the road. It seems that development had been contemplated as early as 1805 when some of the land had been purchased by Thomas Billings, a land surveyor of Charlton Kings, who was already engaged in the construction of houses in the Cudnall area. However it was some years before building actually took place - 1825 at the earliest. Now Eric Miller has sent us some notes taken from parts of documents which had been framed. They give us further information about the conveyance of part of Long Furlong and the development of Oxford Terrace on the land.

One document describes how Baynham Jones and his wife Merena have agreed to surrender to the Lord of the Manor of Cheltenham for the use of Edward Humphrey Brown 'a parcel of land lying in Long Furlong in Coltham Field'. There is no date shown on this document, but a search through the manor court records reveals that the surrender occurred on 5 May 1826<sup>3</sup>. The 'abstract of title' goes on to explain how Baynham Jones came into possession of the land:

21 January 1805 - indenture between John Smith gentleman and his wife Harriet Sophia (first party) and Thomas Billings land surveyor (second party) and John Gale gent (third party) [probably the mortgagee].

2 February 1805 - indenture between Thomas Billings (1) and John Whitmore carpenter and Charles Williams stonemason (2) and Thomas Fletcher gent (3).

11 June 1805 - indenture between John Whitmore and Charles Williams (1) and Thomas Fletcher (2) and Thomas Smith gent (3).

8 and 9 April 1812 - Lease and release between Thomas Smith (1) and Baynham Jones (2) and Thomas Minster (3).

Gwen Hart's book *The History of Cheltenham* has many references to Baynham Jones - he built and lived in Cambray House and later developed the Cambray Spa; he was one of the Town Commissioners, a member of the Vestry and a Turnpike Commissioner. Perhaps he was too involved in other projects to proceed with the development of Long Furlong - probably he was overstretched financially and needed to sell to raise capital - but he was still concerned with how it should be developed. When he sold the parcel of land to Edward Humphrey Brown he laid down certain conditions: "All buildings erected on the said parcel of ground shall range in front in a line with the house built by Charles Barnett on the ground to the east side and if more than one then it and others shall range in front in a line with and be built on the same plan and elevation as the house(s) erected by Mr Humphries on the other part of the said field called Long Furlong lying east of the said ground near to Rosedale cottage". There was also a proviso that Brown should keep the private back road in good repair. [This private road was described, on 31 December 1827, as 'the new street in the parish of Charlton Kings called Park Street'<sup>4</sup> and later renamed Upper Park Street]

Another document is a copy of the proceedings at a Special Customary Court of the manor of Cheltenham held on 9 March 1868. It relates that John Sadler of Cheltenham grocer received the sum of £250 from Henry Caperton of Birdlip for the purchase of No 3 Oxford Terrace, formerly owned by Edward Humphries Brown since of Rachel Herbert and late of Henry Dyke deceased. The property is bounded on the north by Park Street, on the south by the turnpike road from Cheltenham to Charlton Kings, on the east by property of Mr Bloxome and on the west by garden ground and outbuildings recently contracted to be surrendered to Edith Sadler. The premises have a frontage to the said turnpike road of 66 feet and at the back on to Park Street a frontage of 70 feet.

Copies of *The Cheltenham Annuaire* show that the name 'Oxford Terrace' was not in use until 1845, although E H Brown was listed among the 'Resident Gentry' as living in London Road from 1840 until 1845, the year of his death. After that Mrs Brown or Mrs R Brown is shown at No 3 Oxford Terrace until 1864 when there is the first mention of Mr H Dyke. Mrs R Brown is shown as Rachael Brown in the 1858 Rates Book <sup>5</sup> and Rachael Herbert in the court proceedings. She is believed to be the natural daughter of E H Brown who inherited Brown's property.

Another of the documents from Eric Miller explains how Mr H Dyke comes into the picture. On 17 September 1863 John Home of Tewkesbury agreed to sell to Henry Dyke of Charlton Kings the messuage and dwelling at No 3 Oxford Terrace for £700 .... late occupied by Rachel Brown. John Home, according to Mary Paget's article<sup>2</sup>, was the husband of Rachel Brown, and therefore had the legal right to sell his wife's property.

In 1869 there is a Mrs Thomas at No 3, so it seems that Henry Caperton of Birdlip, who purchased the property in 1868, was the landlord but not the occupier.

Mary Paget writes that by the 1890s No 3 Oxford Terrace had acquired the name Mulberry Villa with No 1 Motcombe Villas on the east side and Wharfedale on the other. The 1882 Rates Book <sup>6</sup> show Wharfedale as the third house from the corner of Hales Road followed by No 3 Oxford Terrace which had a lower rateable value than Nos 2 and 1. Today the name Wharfedale is still in use for the third house from the corner and next to it, on the Charlton side are a pair of more modern houses - presumably built on what had been the garden ground and outbuildings adjacent and belonging to No 3. To the east of this pair is a handsome group of three houses set back further from the London Road than their neighbours on the Cheltenham side, which I believe must be Oxford Terrace.

#### References:

- 1 *An Historical Gazetteer of Cheltenham*. Published in 1997 by the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society as Volume 9 of the Gloucestershire Record Series.
- 2 *Bulletin* 20pp 33 - 37, published in 1988 by the Charlton Kings Local History Society.
- 3 GRO D855 acc 2198/1-7
- 4 *Ibid*
- 5 *Charlton Kings Parish Rate Book 1858*, transcribed and indexed by Mary Paget 2003.
- 6 *Rate Book 1882*, transcribed and indexed by Mary Paget 2204.

## ANNIE'S CHRISTMAS CARDS

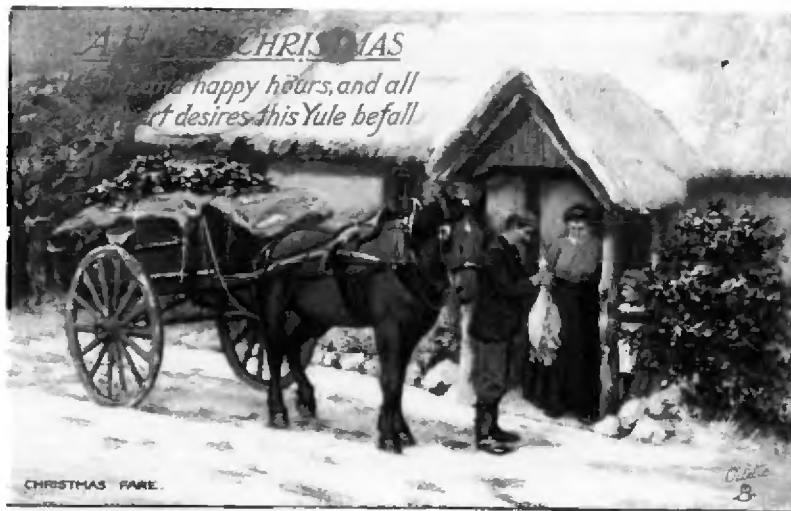
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Annie Hopkins was born in 1897 and lived in Charlton Kings all her life, firstly in Church Street and then at Elm Cottage, opposite Brevel Row. [See *Bulletin 3* for Annie's own reminiscences of her childhood] When she died in 1986 she left a very generous bequest to St Mary's church which was used for the refurbishment of the Parish Centre. One of the rooms upstairs is known as 'Annie's Room' in her memory.

Among some of her belongings, which have been looked after by Mary Paget, is a collection of Christmas postcards from the period 1909 to 1922. Most of these cards had been sent by Annie to her parents and one was to her beloved 'Gramp', Mr Turner, her maternal grandfather who lived with the Hopkins.

Annie left school aged fourteen and the photograph below was taken at that time. She then went to work as a servant for the McLarens at Wager Court, so would not have been at home for Christmas. A selection of the cards she sent are shown on pp 30 and 31. It is interesting to note that they were all posted on Christmas Eve and postage cost ½d. Presumably there was a delivery on Christmas morning at that time.









Some readers will remember Annie as a keen gardener, winning prizes for her Dahlias and Mixed Garden Flowers at the Horticultural, Poultry and Industrial Society's Shows; but she is probably best remembered for one mammoth task. In the 1970s she undertook to paint the railings around St Mary's churchyard on her own. The photograph below shows Annie hard at work with the Revd David Yerburch giving an encouraging word.



[On the question of postal deliveries, some information is given in *Kelly's Directories* for Gloucestershire, dated 1910, 1914 and 1919, which are available on micro-fiche in Cheltenham Reference Library.

In 1910 there were three post offices in Charlton Kings - one in London Road with Sidney Charles Wills as sub-postmaster, one called Charlton Church with Arthur Lancelot Attwood as sub-postmaster and one at East End with Frederick Neterville Dale as sub-postmaster. As regards the first two, letters were received through Cheltenham being delivered four times a day and dispatched six times a day on weekdays, with one delivery at 7 a.m. and one dispatch at 6.15p.m. and 5.55 p.m. respectively on Sundays. The East End office did not have any delivery of letters, only the six collections on weekdays and once on Sunday. Christmas Day would probably have had similiar delivery times as Sundays.

In addition to the post-offices there were Wall Letter Boxes at Bafford, cleared five times a day; at Lyewood Road, (a mistake for Lyefield surely) cleared five times; the Railway Station cleared three times, and Battledown cleared five times. All boxes were cleared once on Sundays.

By 1914 the Charlton Church now had Miss Clara Hettie Poole as sub-postmistress and East End had Edward Francis Farrar as sub-postmaster. Boxes were at Lyefield Road, Bafford, Battledown, Railway and a new one at Sandy Lane.

In 1919 the London Road office was also described as a 'Telephonic Express Delivery Office'. Sidney Mills and Edward Farrar were still sub-postmasters for London Road and East End respectively, but Charlton Church office was now run by Edmund Bond. An extra letter box had been installed in Church Street - Ed.]

## ISAAC BELL IN HAMPSTEAD

by Michael Greet

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Those interested in the activities of Isaac Bell, the gardener and rhymer of Cheltenham, will know that he spent a period of time, c 1824 - 1825, in Hampstead, near London, before he moved to Charlton Kings. From the notes on the four poems about Hampstead in his book, we know that he worked there for a time for a George Collins until his death "in his seventieth year", and then for his widow. Bell seems to have known about some events in Cheltenham before he came to Cheltenham e.g. the sale of Mr Barnes' wife at Cheltenham/Gloucester in March 1825, but as he does not mention the fire at East Court (also in March) I conclude he was not then living in Cheltenham. He appears to have moved here though by November when he wrote *An Inventory of the Golden Pheasant*<sup>1</sup>

Recent research at Camden Local Studies Centre, however, shows that one George Collins was buried in St John's Parish Church, Hampstead on 8th August 1825 at the age of 70 and 2/3. There is a memorial there to his first wife Mary, died 1817; and to his second, Elizabeth Collins (or Collings), died 1864, aged 89. It is not yet known where the Collin(g)s family lived, though George held land on the East Heath, and his wife's name appears in the tithe Map of the 1830s<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> M Greet (Editor) *The Days in Gard'ning and the Nights in Rhyme*. 2001

<sup>2</sup> Letter to me from Aidan Flood, Senior Librarian at Camden Local Studies. 2004

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Michael Greet has also submitted the following:

Notes from *Calendar of the Records of the Corporation of Gloucester*, edited by W H Stevenson, 1893. Page 433.

1227. 1543, July 1. Lease for 70 years from Andrew Whitmaye, clerk, Master or Keeper of the Hospital of St Bartholomew, and the Brethren or Chaplains of the same, to **Richard Goodriche** of Charleton Kynges, in the parish of Cheltenham, gent., of all their lands etc in Myntyte and Hankenton or elsewhere in Wiltshire, lately in occupation of John Rydler, deceased.

Item 474. (Summary) About 1250 John of the Ford (of Charlton Kings) was married to Sarah, daughter of Robert Moryn, and sister of Simon Moryn, Lord of Swindon. (This information is additional to that on page 21 of *Bulletin 8*.)

**Hawlf Measures** - in *Bulletin 45* Mike Greet's article on page 2 was mistakenly entitled: "Hawlf Measures: gifts of Land in Ham and Charlton in C11 and C12" - this should read C12 and C13.

## EMILY PLACE - ITS RESIDENTS & THEIR PROFESSIONS

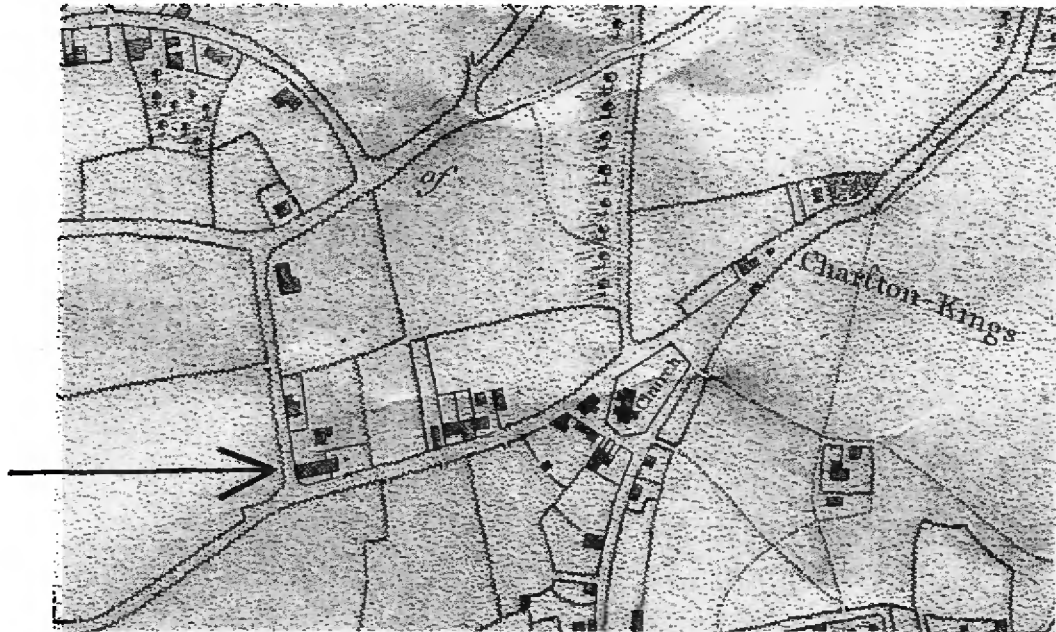
by MARY WILCOX

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Emily Place is a terrace of seven houses on the west side of Horsefair Street immediately to the north of Croft Road. Nos 1, 2 and 3 are the red brick houses at the northern end, then comes No 4, the larger white house also known as Shaftesbury House which has evidence of an older property within it. That is followed by Nos 5, 6 and 7, and a piece of garden ground on which stood a timber-framed house, which unfortunately burned down in 1902. Since 1962 the terrace has been known officially as Nos. 118 - 130 Horsefair Street, but the previous name is still used by old Charltonians.



The earliest document in the bundle of deeds for 1 Emily Place is dated 31 October 1823. It is a copy of court procedure for Cheltenham Manor and states that John Ashmead of Charlton Kings, a breeches maker, and his wife Hester came to court and, in consideration of £103, surrendered to the use of **Walter Parry** of Cheltenham, carpenter, 'all that messuage or tenement wherein William Lea formerly dwelt but now in possession of Henry Russell with garden'. Previous court records show that William Lea had lived in a house on the corner of Croft Road (then called Blind Lane) and Horsefair Street (then called Hollow Lane) - the old house which was burned down and which is shown on Edward Mitchell's map of Cheltenham, dated 1806.



Lea had died in 1808, leaving the property to his daughters who had come to court on 30 October 1818. There, in consideration of £100, they surrendered the property to Henry Russell of Charlton Kings tailor. At the same court, Henry Russell had surrendered to the use of his brother Edward Russell, also of Cheltenham and a tailor part of the garden lately purchased by him, at the northern end, containing forty four feet in front of road leading to Charlton church and forty feet in depth. Then on 27 October 1820, Henry Russell, now of Charlton Kings tailor, surrendered in consideration of £75, for the use of John Ashmeade, but presumably Russell had continued to live in it.

The next document, and perhaps the most important, is dated 11 November 1836 and states that **Elizabeth Lea spinster**, in consideration of £400, surrendered to the use of **Walter Parry** (now builder rather than carpenter) 'that piece or parcel of land situate in Charlton Kings containing one acre, bounded on north by land of Colonel Prinn, on the south partly by a lane called Blind Lane and partly by land of John Ashmeade, on the east partly by a street called Horsefair Street and partly by land of Walter Parry and of Mr Russell, and on the west by the land of Conway Whithorne Lovesy esquire, and of the **cottages and buildings** standing on the said piece of land with the appurtenances and premises in the occupation of Walter Parry.' It seems that Walter Parry had built the terrace sometime between his purchases in 1823 and 1836. Some or all of them had been built by 1832, when his name appears on a Charlton Kings 'register of electors' as the owner of copyhold houses named Emily Place. This ties in with the memories of his granddaughter, Mrs Hatherall, now deceased.

There is a gap of about forty years before the next document in the deeds, dated 3 July 1877, which states that Elizabeth Hill, widow of Walter Hill of Cheltenham, plumber deceased, in consideration of £48, surrendered to the use of Charles Boulter and Adelaide Jane his wife 'all that cottage or tenement in Horsefair Street called No 1 Emily Place, now in occupation of Mr Clevely as tenant, bounded on the east by Horsefair Street, on the west by garden devised to Walter George Parry, on north by property of Mr Wintle, and on south by No 2 Emily Place, together with right of way to and from the said cottage to the garden held therewith lying in northwesterly direction.' The garden is described as being '18 feet in width and 115 feet in length, bounded on the north by land now or late of Sir William Russell, on the south by the garden of No 2, on the east by property of Mr Wintle and on the west by property of Mrs Hill. This is the first mention of the garden being a separate piece to the north west of the house.

How Elizabeth Hill had acquired the property is explained by an article in *Bulletin 42*, p 35, which contains the will of Walter Parry (now gentleman). He had died on 24 December 1875, aged 79, leaving No 1 Emily Place to Elizabeth Hill, and Nos 2 and 3 to his daughter Adelaide Jane, wife of Charles Boulter. He left Shaftesbury Cottage in Emily Place to his daughter Agnes Emily Finch and Nos 4 and 5 to his son Walter George Parry, who died only two years after his father.

Charlton Kings Rate Books for 1858 and 1882 (transcribed and indexed for the Society by Mary Paget) help to fill out the story of Emily Place and its residents in the nineteenth century. In 1858 Walter Parry owned six cottages with gardens in Emily Place, including Shaftesbury Cottage which had a considerably higher rateable value than the others. Walter Hill, the husband of Elizabeth Hill, owned three more cottages in Emily Place. It seems there were nine in all at this time, probably the old timber-framed house had been divided into two. The tenants, starting at No 1, were Luke Withers, John Peacey, Alexander Steward, nobody at Shaftesbury House, then Walter George Parry, - Brookes, Susan Freeman, George Blanford, and John Townsend. Walter Parry himself was the owner and occupier of Balcarras with 2 acres of garden and orchard. By 1882 Charles Boulter owned Nos 1, 2 and 3 with Henry Williams, Henry Jones and Joshua Ingles as tenants. Thomas Finch owned Shaftesbury Cottage with Frederick Roles as tenant. Annie Parry, presumably the widow of Walter George, owned two cottages, one of which she lived in and the other was let to Joseph Thomas. Elizabeth Hill, widow of Walter, owned the three nearest Croft Road, with George Randle, David James and William Finch as tenants.

The next document in the deeds bundle takes us into the twentieth century. At the court held on 29 May 1912, Henry James Boulter, builder, of Merton in the county of Surrey, claimed ownership of No 1 Emily Place as customary heir of Charles Boulter who had died the previous year, his wife Adelaide Jane having predeceased him. Boulter, in consideration of £35, surrendered the property to the use of Walter Robert Thomas Parry of 1 Church Piece, Charlton Kings. At the time of this purchase it seems that W R T Parry had also purchased Nos 2 and 3, as he had taken out a mortgage of £105 for the three cottages with Frances Grey Gaultier, spinster of Normandie House, Imperial Square, Cheltenham. Later in the year Parry paid the lord of the manor £10 for each of three cottages for them to be enfranchised. After this any transactions regarding the cottages were through deeds rather than court procedure. In May 1917 Parry, a carpenter then living at No 3, sold No 1 to James Ruck, packer, of Corona, Cirencester Road for £95. Alfred James Ruck died on 29 February 1944 and the joint beneficiaries of his will were Ralph Ruck, a welder of 2 Station Cottages, Cirencester Road and Alick Ruck, a carpenter of Belmont, Croft Road.

A change was made to the house in 1953, after Ralph and Alick Ruck had sold it for £500 to James Oliver Reynolds, a builder from Shipton Oliffe. The new owner added an extension to the rear of the house providing a new kitchen and bathroom. In 1957 Reynolds, who was living at No 1, sold it for £1500 to Mrs Winifred May Andrews, widow, of Mill Hill in Middlesex. At this time the house name was changed to No 1 Daisy Bank. Mrs Andrews remarried in 1957, to Arthur Frank Dorling, a major in the Royal Army Service Corps, and they lived at 1 Daisy Bank until September 1969 when it was sold to David Deacon of Cheltenham (thought to be a property developer) for £1800. Two months later he sold it to Richard James Olliffe, retail manager of Stow-on-the-Wold, for £2500. An official notification from the Charlton Kings Urban District Council of the change of name to 118 Horsefair Street is included among the deeds.

Two more changes of ownership have taken place. On 19th May 1975, Richard James Olliffe sold 118 Horsefair Street to Robert William Judd of Queens Road, Cheltenham and Linda Evans of Stow, his future wife, for £8000. They in turn sold it on 11 July 1977 to its present owners and occupiers - Frank Clifford Wilcox, plumber, and Mary Wilcox, pharmacy assistant.

Apart from the tenants named in the Rates books there have been others that we know of. Doris Hawkins told me that her family rented the cottage whilst Nos 108 - 114 Horsefair Street were being built as staff cottages for the Grange opposite. Her father was head groom at the Grange. Mr Gavin, when living at No 116, told me that he once rented No 118 but his family grew and he moved next door.

Throughout the history of Emily Place, there have been quite a variety of owners and occupiers with different professions - 2 Tailors, 1 Cordwainer (shoe maker), 1 Breeches Maker, 2 Carpenters, 2 Builders, 1 Schoolmaster, 1 Welder, 1 Army Major, 1 Property Developer, 1 Retail Manager, 1 Head Groom, 1 Plumber and 1 Pharmacy Assistant.

Long may Emily Place remain.

[Mary Wilcox has emphasised the importance of the deed dated 11 November 1836 which is the first in her bundle to mention 'the cottages and buildings standing on the site'. This deed was between Elizabeth Lea spinster and Walter Parry builder. Further research has shown an interesting relationship between these two parties.

Elizabeth Lea, the daughter of John and Elizabeth Lea (née Burrows) was baptised at St Mary's on 27th August 1815. Her parents had married on 8th November 1814, and Elizabeth was their only child. John owned a small area of land, which included the site of Emily Place. When John died in 1816, his will showed that he had left 'all and singular my real and personal estate to my wife Elizabeth to hold for her life provided she remain a widow'. After her death or re-marriage the estate was to go to their daughter Elizabeth.

But Elizabeth, the widow, did re-marry. She and Walter Parry married sometime between 1818, when Sophia Parry daughter of Walter Parry and Elizabeth Lea widow was baptised, and 1825 when Matilda daughter of Walter and Elizabeth Parry was baptised. Through this marriage Walter gained control of the site but was not the legal owner. That was his step-daughter Elizabeth but she was only a child. However, when she reached the age of twenty one in 1836, it was necessary for Walter to purchase the land, with its cottages and buildings. He paid his step-daughter the sum of £400 - Ed].

## THE SISTERS OF LA SAINTE UNION

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The Community of Sisters of La Sainte Union first came to Cheltenham in 1935. Now the sisters have left Charlton Kings, and their convent, Ravensway in Moorend Road, and St Michael's, the bungalow next door, have been sold for redevelopment. A Mass of Thanksgiving and Farewell was held on 24th January 2004 at the church of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary to mark the nuns' departure. On that occasion the celebrant was the Right Reverend Mervyn Alexander, the retired Bishop of Clifton, assisted by the parish priest, Father Alan Finley, and four other priests. Thirty six sisters of the Community, many of whom had travelled from other parts of England and Ireland, were joined by teachers and past pupils of the convent school and many parishioners to mark and give thanks for the Community's work over sixty eight years of service to Cheltenham and Charlton Kings. Some historical notes about the Community were printed at the time of the service and I am grateful to Elizabeth Macnamara for passing on a copy together with the service sheet.

The Sisters were invited to Cheltenham by Bishop William Lee to form a community in St Gregory's Parish and to teach in the parish school. This school had been founded by the sisters of St Paul the Apostle but when Mother Aidan, the headmistress, reached retirement her Congregation decided to withdraw from the parish.

The new Community in St Gregory's having been established, the Bishop requested a meeting with Mother Marie Therese, the Superior General of La Sainte Union Sisters. They decided that a grammar school should be opened in Cheltenham and eventually, after viewing several large properties on the market, the Congregation agreed to purchase Charlton Park with its forty acres of parkland, as a suitable site for their school.

The property needed extensive renovation which took some time to complete. Finally in 1939 Charlton Park was ready to open as a boarding and day school for girls. A Benedictine monk from St Gregory's celebrated the first Mass for the Community and scholars on 8th September 1939 in the school hall. Before leaving Cheltenham, Mother Marie Therese had donated land for a parish church and parochial buildings together with a substantial sum of money for that purpose. These plans had to be put on hold with the outbreak of the Second World War and during the war years students from La Sainte Union training college in Southampton were billeted at the school and shared the premises.

When the war was finally over it was time to proceed with the building of the new church, which was to be dedicated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, sharing the name of La Sainte Union Congregation. In 1946 Father John O'Donnell was appointed as parish priest and it fell to him to oversee the building of the church and the necessary fundraising. La Sainte Union Community at Charlton Park invited him to live at the convent while work was in progress and this was to be the home of subsequent parish priests for the next eight years.

From its early days the new school had been the centre of parish life - masses were held in the school hall, parish meetings, reflection groups and fundraising events took place there - until, on 30th June 1957, the new church was blessed by Bishop Joseph Rudderham. He was attended by thirty priests and a large congregation. Mother Marie Therese came over from Tournai for the occasion and was proud and pleased to see the people of Charlton Kings had their own parish. She returned to Cheltenham in 1960 and arranged to have a High Mass celebrated at Sacred Hearts as part of her Golden Jubilee celebration. Father Edward McDonnell, who had become the parish priest in September 1953, said the Mass assisted by Carmelite and Benedictine priests.



Now the Carmelites, Benedictines and La Sainte Union have left the parish to work in pastures new, responding to the needs of God's people. The school, always referred to locally as 'the Convent', is now St Edward's Senior School for both boys and girls.

The Mass of Thanksgiving and Farewell was a sad farewell in many ways and certainly the end of an era. During the service there was a reading from the book of *Ecclesiastes*. The first few lines seem particularly apt:

There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven.  
A time for planting,  
A time for uprooting what has been planted.  
A time for knocking down, a time for building....

The last link with the Sisters was broken with the death on 17th November 2004 of Sister Frances Reilly, who had stayed in Cheltenham following the closure of the community house in Moorend Road. Sister Frances had joined Sacred Hearts church as the parish sister in 1997. She spent most of her time working in the presbytery and was a welcome voice for any visitor. Parishioners, clergy and friends spoke movingly of what Sister Frances meant to them at her funeral at Sacred Hearts on 25th November.

#### Ravensway House, now demolished



## ELTON, 153 CIRENCESTER ROAD

by Jane Sale

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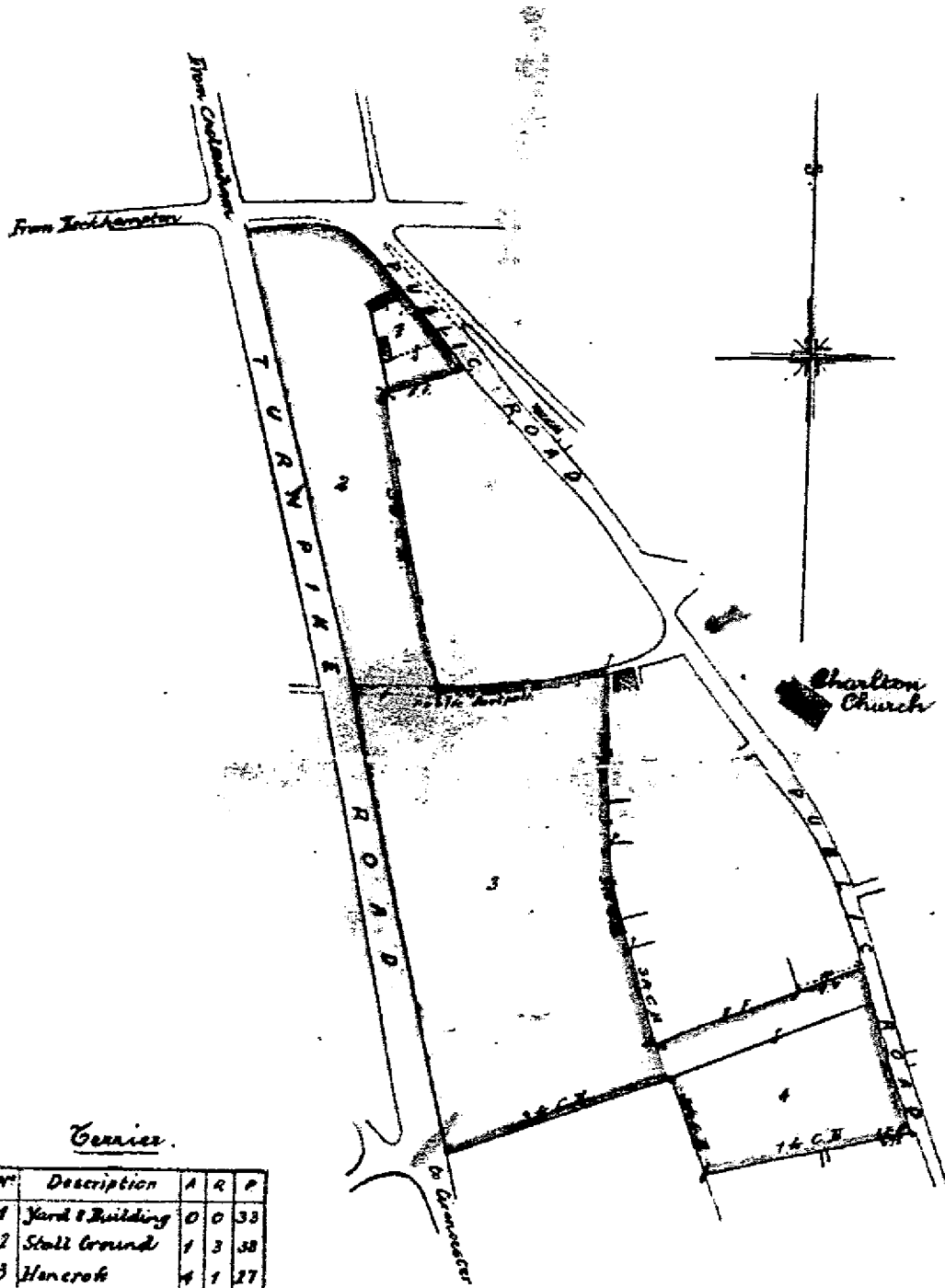
'Elton' is one of a group of twenty six semi-detached houses on the east side of Cirencester Road, running southwards from the footpath through to Gladstone Road. The houses appear identical and all have the same decorative keystone over the front door. They must surely have been built by the same builder and within a year or two of each other. The deeds of 'Elton', kindly lent to me by Margaret Bromley, provide us with some valuable information.



As you walk or drive along this road today it is difficult to imagine the scene before the houses were built and even harder to picture it before the 'new' Cirencester Road was cut through parts of Lye Field and Hempcroft in 1826/7. The name Lye Field is still with us in the road names East and West Lyefield Roads but Hempcroft, which later became Hencroft, has disappeared.

Included among the deeds for 'Elton' is map No 1 which shows that part of Hencroft which lay to the east of the 'Turnpike Road' to Cirencester on which the houses would be built. It formed part of the Charlton Park Estate as it was in 1866 when owned by Sir William Russell. At the time the map was made Sir William had declared that he was entitled to the land in fee simple (that is without restriction on its sale) and that his widow should not be entitled to dower. However the premises, together with other lands, were mortgaged upon trust for raising capital at the decease of Lady Prinn, the mother of Sir William. Lady Prinn died in 1888 and the land, marked on the map and known as the Hencroft Estate, was eventually sold by her legatees in 1898 to James Villar, architect of No 1a Cambray, Cheltenham for £1000.

Map 1



Coarces.

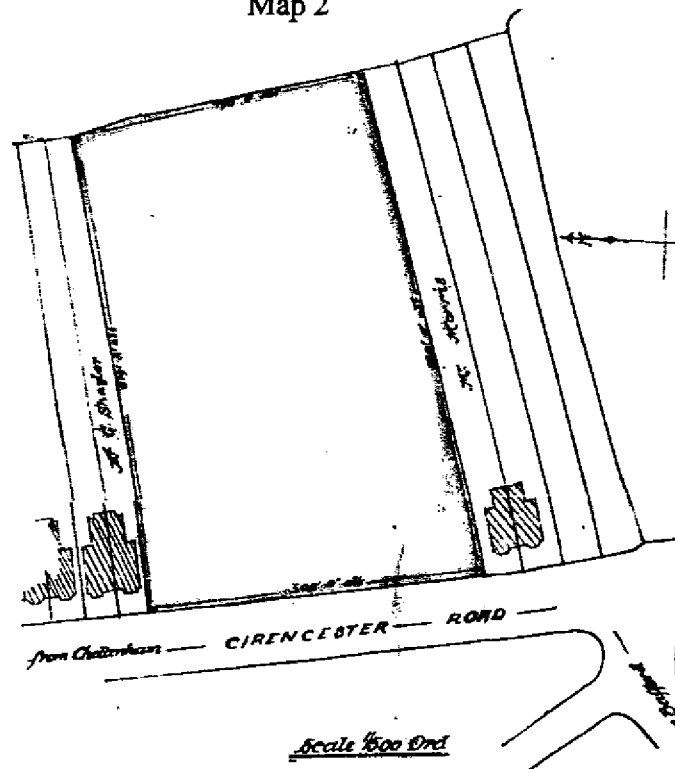
N <sup>o</sup>	Description	A	R	P
1	Yard & Building	0	0	33
2	Stall Ground	1	3	38
3	Hencroft	4	1	27
4	Little Pheasants	1	1	26
	Total	6	0	4

Scale 2 Chains to an Inch.



On 28 October 1902 James Villar sold part of the land, shown on map No 2, to George Shaylor of Charlton Kings builder for £510. The plot is described as being bounded on the front, or west, by Cirencester Road, at the back, or east, by land of - [annoyingly left blank], on the south by a dwelling house and premises of Mr Morris and on north by a dwelling house and premises of George Shaylor. There was a covenant involved in the sale that stated that only private dwelling houses should be built on the land and that they should be of not less than £200 in value exclusive of the land. The frontage of the houses had to be 15 feet from the front boundary and the plans for the houses had to be approved by James Villar. Map 2 shows that some of the houses had already been built by 1902 and it seems that George Shaylor was gradually developing the land and buying up more as he completed and sold the houses. George was a Charlton Kings man having been baptised at St Mary's on 16 April 1854 the son of Richard Shaylor a labourer and his wife Emma. It seems unlikely that he would have had the necessary capital for such an enterprise so perhaps James Villar had provided the backing. Street directories show that in 1902 George Shaylor was living at Selby Cottage in Gladstone Road, but by 1905 he he had moved to 'Endcroft', the house immediately south of the footpath to Gladstone Road.

Map 2



The next conveyance occurred on 5 April 1905 when George Shaylor, of Endcroft, Cirencester Road, builder sold 'a parcel of land, messuage and premises' to Thomas Shearman of Gloucester, a master shipwright. A sum of £340 was paid for a piece of land containing in width at the front 20 feet and at the back 18 feet and in depth 320 feet with the semi-detached house erected by George Shaylor and known as 'Elton'. It was bounded on the east by land of Mr Field, and on the north and south by houses and premises of George Shaylor. We learn later, from Thomas Shearman's will made when he was still living in Gloucester, that his address there had been Elton Villa, so we can presume that he brought the name with him when he moved to Cirencester Road. The street directory for 1906 shows all twenty six houses to be occupied and S N Shearman is living at 'Savona' next door to Thomas Shearman at 'Elton'.

A change of ownership occurred in 1919. Thomas Shearman had died on 5 July 1916 and his will requested that his wife Pamela should have the use of his house until her death or re-marriage. After that it was to be sold by his executors, his sons Stanley Napier Shearman (presumably the S N Shearman listed at 'Savona' in 1906) and Thomas Shearman junior together with his nephew Stephen Lewis, formerly of 'Savona', Linden Road, in the city of Gloucester, builder. It seems as if both house names were brought to Charlton Kings from Gloucester by the Shearman family. The executors sold 'Elton' to Louisa Scudamore Stanford, wife of James Bruno Stanford a motor engineer of Fairview Road, Cheltenham, for £400. The property was described as being bounded on the south by a dwelling house formerly of George Shaylor but now of Mrs Mills and known as 'Chatsworth' and on the north by a dwelling house formerly of George Shaylor and known as 'Savona'.

James and Louisa Stanford stayed at 'Elton' until 1927, when Louisa sold it to George Harold Lewis (commonly known as Harold George Lewis), of 32 Dunally Parade, Cheltenham, a bootmaker. The price was £640 and the description of the property was the same as in 1919. George lived there for many years, until his death at Delancey Hospital on 23 April 1963. His daughter, Olive Gladys Ruddle of Harrow in Middlesex, then sold it to Joseph Ogden, manager of 22 Grosvenor Place South, Cheltenham on 18 June 1964. Prices had risen considerably and the price was then £2000. The houses had by then been given numbers but the neighbouring houses were still called Chatsworth and Savona. Joseph Ogden obtained his mortgage for the purchase from the Charlton Kings Urban District Council - "pursuant to powers conferred by S43 of the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act of 1958".

Joseph Ogden's stay at 'Elton' was very short, perhaps his work necessitated a move. At any rate he did well out of the purchase as he sold the house just seven months later for £2650. The new purchaser was Mr A J Stevens, a schoolmaster from Prestbury. It was Mr Stevens who applied for planning permission for a single storey extension to provide a kitchen and shower room with W.C. Mr R W Scutt of 49b Ryeworth Road drew up the plans and permission was granted. Mr Stevens sold to Mr B Dean, who was already living in Cirencester Road, and then in 1977 he sold to Margaret Bromley, the present owner of 'Elton'.

Mrs Bromley showed me her long narrow garden and pointed out the apple trees in several of the gardens. She wondered if there had been an orchard on the site prior to the building. My search through Charlton Park Estate records could not answer her question but produced some interesting facts.

William Prinn, father of the John Prinn who bought Charlton Park (then called the Forden), is recorded as owning 'strips of land' in Hencroft as early as 1670 - so probably the first Prinn holding in Charlton Kings. In 1710 John Prinn paid William Pumfrey £1 2s 0d for a ridge of land in Hencroft Field and in 1717 recorded that Hencroft was now enclosed and chestnut trees had been planted there. The name of the footpath leading from Newcourt Road through to Gladstone Road was called Chestnut Avenue after the chestnuts which lined it. These trees can be seen in the map on p35. Only one of these trees still remains, on the west side of Cirencester Road, so does this tree date back to 1717 or is it a later addition? (See *Bulletin 27* pp 50 & 51 for Mary Paget's ideas about this tree and a photograph of it)

In the mid-1700s Hencroft was rented by Thomas Lea as an out-lying part of Bafford Farm. It was a piece of arable at this time but in 1785 the current Prinn "took Hencroft into my own hands and laid it down to grass". Three years later he "made the Oxstalls in Hencroft and dug the Well". These oxstalls are shown as 'Yard and Building' on Map 1. A map of 1811 shows the field as arable again but there is no mention or indication that it had ever had fruit trees planted on it. Maybe George Shaylor planted them as an added attraction to prospective buyers of the new houses.

## HORTICULTURAL, POULTRY AND INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

by Don Sherwell

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The Local History Society has recently come into possession of the account book for the Charlton Kings Horticultural, Poultry and Industrial Society for the period 1926-1940. The highlight of its year was the annual Summer Show.

According to the *Cheltenham Chronicle*, the first show was held in August 1870, and was organised and hosted by Mr Potter at his home, East Court. The *Chronicle* enthused: "To the spirited master of East Court and its newly acquired mistress is due the credit of having started, and carried out with no little success, the first Flower Show at Charlton Kings ... It only shows what can be done when the gentry come forward as Mr Potter has done. Taking council [sic], we believe, only with General English, who acted as honorary secretary - and his excellent gardener - *who did all the work* - [my italics] - Mr Potter not only announced the show but he guaranteed all the expenses and contributed all the prizes himself. The cottagers followed almost to a man, nearly every house contributing something ... The result was a show which would not have dismayed many a large town. In his speech, Mr Potter impressed upon the gardeners that the pleasure of cultivating their gardens was a much more profitable and commendable cause than that to which many resorted, the public house." Mr Potter clearly was a true and worthy Victorian gentleman!

On 19 September 1871, the *Chronicle* referred to "the annual exhibition ... scarcely up to the standard of previous years [an odd comment unless there had been shows before Mr Potter's initiative in 1870, presumably there had occasionally been an event, not however as far as I am aware, counted worthy to be reported in the press]. The patrons of the show included Lady Prinn and the vicar, Mr Gabb, and there were three model gardens to be judged as well as the usual collection of fruits, flowers and vegetables. The *Chronicle's* reporter was clearly not in a generous mood: "As may be supposed, the exhibits in the fruit classes were few in number, the cottager's forte being scarcely in that direction". [Interestingly, over a century before global warming became an issue there was a prize for the best outdoor grapes]. What really galled our worthy correspondent was the judging of the cucumber class: Two handsome examples were disqualified because they had been produced in hothouses, and the prize went to "two puny little shrivelled-up gherkins under six inches in size". The winner was instructed "to go home and determine to do better next year". No doubt annoyingly for the reporter, the name of the winner was Mr Merrit.

Three years later, the morning of the show was very wet, or, as the *Chronicle* preferred to describe it "Jupiter Pluvius refused to withdraw his gushing compliments". By this time, some of the ladies of the village were making their contributions, with vases of cut flowers [but for display, not anything so vulgar as to be judged in competition]. The *Chronicle* was at pains to explain to its readers that the principal aim of the show was to inculcate good habits into the minds of the cottagers, and then did its bit to humiliate one of the prizewinners for the poor standard of his arrangement of salad items. At least it did not name him.

Despite the hopes of Mr Potter that the show would become an annual event, it ceased after 1877, but was revived in 1880, not at East Court but at Charlton Park. There were so many entries that one marquee was filled to overflowing. There were eighty competitors alone in the class: "a collection of wild flowers gathered within three miles of Charlton Church". One wonders how many kinds of such flowers could be found today and what the reaction would be if so many people went out to pick them. True to its sense of priorities, the *Chronicle* listed with enthusiasm displays of silk, pictures, water jugs etc given by local gentry.

Clearly the Show did not continue every year. Early in 1905, inspired by Mr Hollingworth, the County Lecturer in Horticulture, a new organising committee was established under the presidency of Mr Lord of Lilleybrook House [although perhaps it would have been more appropriate if Mrs Lord had taken that role]. It held monthly meetings, with talks, discussions and exhibitions of produce. Soon it had a membership of three hundred, and seventy regularly attended meetings, with a successful Show in August of that year. By 1907 the local press was waxing lyrical about "Charlton horticulturists as a clan whose zeal knows no close season ... those most worthy of the lineal descendants of the primeval spadesman who first tilled the soil of a virgin world". The size of some of their produce inspired the prophecy: "Soon scarlet runners will be sold by the yard", and those who had forecast that the organisers of the annual Show would not succeed for more than three years were suitably scorned.

Three years later, the *Journals* praise went even further: "Horticulture is the recreation of Charltonians. While other people are hammering, kicking, driving or trundling balls, the Charltonian's ambition is to lick creation in the produce of his garden". Referring again to the size of vegetables, "giants there are in these days in the gardens of Charlton Kings where the ladies twine the kidney beans round their waists as girdles". One of the judges commented that Charlton Kings Show had often been compared to Shrewsbury to the disparagement of the latter. In that year Mr Lord offered a pig or sheep as the prize in a bowling competition: this caused great merriment when announced, but it became a tradition into the 1930s.

From 1919 until 1925, it rained remorselessly on Show Day, leaving the Society in debt, but its supporters battled on regardless. The *Chronicle* in 1925 tells us that the show had always been interesting because it "has objects and ideals", and "the tents proved well worth the scrutiny of anyone interested in the garden, the needle or the kitchen". Despite the better weather, the show remained in debt after the 1926 Show. In the next year the number of entries eclipsed all previous records, with over five hundred and fifty entries for the floral tent. In 1928, the *Chronicle* described the show as "formerly one of the most magnificent but at the same time one of the unluckiest in the district" because of the weather. In that year, its principal claim to fame was, evidently, the quality of the honey on display - "quite the best exhibition in this district since Gloucester honey was first recognised according to its true merits ... especially due to the unflagging energy of Mrs Edgell", who had donated, and most satisfyingly, won a cup for the honey classes.

In the 1930s, during the Depression, the Charlton Kings Show survived, unlike similiar shows in other parts of the county. Financially, however, it was a struggle: the net balance in the accounts after the Shows of 1937 and 1938 did not reach two shillings.

George Ryland wrote in *Bulletin 10* about the importance of the Flower Show in its prime: "It was the village 'day out'. Free, to a great extent, of social differences and religious divisions, the community entered into friendly but serious horticultural competition and then really let its hair down for an afternoon and evening's fun. A 'fair' with roundabouts, coconut shies, and the exhilarating if somewhat penetrating 'calliope' [a set of steam whistles played by a keyboard] - and of course athletics, generally of a high standard. The high spot, as a rule, was the engagement of the band of some popular regiment and if it were a horse regiment they frequently brought with them a squad who did musical rides, tent pegging and trick riding".

In 1939, "the one fine day of the summer", over eight thousand attended - up two thousand on 1938, with "the best collection of vegetables and hardy flowers that I have seen in fifteen years" according to one judge. All garden-lovers will concur with the judge who declared that "a show of flowers contributes a great deal to the happiness and contentment of mankind". Optimistically if less accurately, Mr Lipson, [the MP for Cheltenham from 1937 to 1950] assured the assembled crowd that "the more you can continue to cultivate your gardens

... the less likely it is that any attack will be made on us" ... within four weeks the Second World War had begun.

The Society survived, but the Show held in 1945 was organised by the committee of the Charlton Kings Services Appreciation Society at East Court, then belonging to Miss Evelyn Maud Bubb, an ardent spiritualist. The Horticultural Society ran the annual Show in later years, but they seem not to have been on the same scale as before: they received scant attention in the *Cheltenham Chronicle*, which now seemed interested mainly in the gymkhana events. However in 1955, Captain Hayman, the President of the Society since 1942, declared that the Show was "still going strong, and apparently getting younger every day". In 1960, it was reported that "the Show had never seen better entries", despite the wet weather; but in the following year Captain Hayman called for greater interest if the show were to survive: "we are on a shoestring financially" he declared.

Sadly it appears that 1961 was the final year the Show was held .... unless, of course, dear reader, you know differently.

□ □ □ SEASON 1921 □ □ □

**CHARLTON KINGS**  
: HORTICULTURAL AND :  
COTTAGE GARDEN SOCIETY  
(Affiliated with Charlton Kings  
Allotment Holders' Association)

.. Schedule of ..  
ANNUAL  
SHOW

—TO BE HELD AT—  
**Ashley Manor, Charlton Kings,**  
(By kind permission of Lady Dixon Harland)

**ON WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 1921.**

President: MRS. W. GRIFFITHS, Battledown.  
Hon. Secretary: F. R. MARTIN, Endfield, Cirencester Road,  
Charlton Kings.

SHEPTON. PRINTER, CHELTENHAM.



## MEMORIES OF CHARLTON KINGS SCHOOL DAYS

by Geoff Bridgman

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I was born in October 1953 at the Sunnyside Nursing Home weighing just over 5lbs; I was told that I was small enough to fit in a shoe box but still put out in a pram in all weathers. We lived in the Police House opposite what is now Charlton Kings Junior School. Our next door neighbours were called Jenkins.

My family had had links with Cheltenham and Charlton Kings since the early 19th century and one of my ancestors owned property and another was a Dissenter. My great uncle and great aunt lived in Copt Elm Road and my great-grandparents lived in Cudnall Street. My great Gran was alive when I was born but died soon after. She was looked after by great aunt Win, who was a chorister with the Three Choirs' Festival for many years. She worked as a civil servant.

My mother's name before marriage was Doreen Oakley and her parents were Percy and May. They lived in Garden Road. Both my parents and uncle were married in the parish church of St Mary's and I was baptised in the same church. Reverend Deacon was the vicar at the time.

We lived till around 1955 at East End Road, when we moved to Gloucester where my sister was born in 1956, and then to Coleford in the Forest of Dean. We moved to Up Hatherly in 1960 and then back to Charlton Kings in 1962. My father used to have an allotment opposite the Polices Houses and bought many of his plants from Ron Coates. He and Ron and Betty Adams were amongst my parents' friends, also Wally Peart who had a bull terrier.

I arrived at the Junior School in the summer term of 1962 and was put very briefly into Mr Ivor Williams' class. He later moved, nothing to do with me I hope. I believe he went back to Germany to teach in service schools.

My first proper teacher, from September 1962 to July 1963, was Mrs Sims. I remember her as being strict but fair. We used to have colourful posters to put on the walls of the classroom, showing for example Iron Age hill forts. We did not have many television programmes for schools, but when we did we used to go to the Metal classroom to watch. After one lesson we had built an Iron Age fort or some such thing, and I knocked it off the table. Mr Ballinger made me rebuild the damaged parts in my lunch time - not a happy person. That summer term was a hard one for me; loved my History but not very good with Music, Sport or Arts and Crafts.

My next teacher was undoubtedly my favourite teacher, Mr Rayner. He was tall, had a beard and read Swallows and Amazons to us. I made a Tudor house out of match boxes and old cigarette packets, all very Un-politically correct these days. We also had to pick a Football team to check on the scores each week, I chose Sunderland. We did a play in which I played an Ogre, a large giant type of part, having been type cast now for years with a loud voice. I had to hide under the table to do my part. I was accused of day dreaming, but really I was looking at the church clock and thinking of my girl friend, Rachel, ah youth and puppy love. She lived, I believe, in Ham.

Mr Rayner used to take us for sports which was mostly done in the school playground or in the hall. I was never any good at sport, being "built for comfort not speed", but one memorable sports day I managed to break the bamboo pole over the high jump. This event was then cancelled as we had no spare. Mr Rayner was great at explaining things.

I remember going up Timbercombe woods on nature trails and having art classes in the churchyard. My writing was terrible and I was even told to write in pencil again.

My final teacher was Miss Tatum, was she strict, she did not take any trouble from us. Miss Tatum had a scooter on which she used to over hang on both sides. I remember we had an entrance to the classroom in which we had a stalactite growing down. I had another mixed year, History and English were my best subjects. I still have a book cover made by my own fair hand with designs made by using a potato, and we also made various models out of papier-maché. Can anyone help me with the married name of Miss Tatum? I believe she married in 1965.

Mr Wilkins was our music teacher. I did once try to learn the recorder but was not much good. All our classrooms had a brown wooden box on the wall, which was our radio and we often listened to music programmes on it. Mr Wilkins used to enter the recorder group into the Cheltenham Music Festival.

There were other teachers in the school. Mrs Coleman, who took us for science, I think, but my memory is not too hot on this; Mrs Kirkland who taught both Juniors and Infants; Mrs Greet; Miss Gregory, who I did not have; and Mr Checketts, this being his first school. He was primarily a French teacher, and also organised the knitting of squares for blankets for charity, and sponsored silence - I lost there. Our school nurse was Nurse Asher and I seem to remember we had a travelling dentist come to the school. The school caretaker, I believe, was a Mr Abslom, an ex-Navy man, he was brilliant with us kids.

Mr Ballinger I have left to the end. He was a superb head and also taught us especially for the 11 plus exams. When he came into the classroom we all stood up or sat to attention in our seats; a great man, he always had time to talk to you and ask how you were - a Charlton Kings man though I believe he was born in Winchcombe.

Most of the staff had cars: Mrs Kirkland a black Hillman Minx, Mr Ballinger a Vauxhall Cresta, Mr Wilkins a yellow VW Beetle. A couple had scooters, namely Mr Williams and Miss Tatum, and Nurse Asher had a pale green VW Beetle.

School meals - I do remember macaroni cheese and pink custard; also the 1/3rd pints of milk or orange juice which was often frozen in winter. Playtime the girls played with skipping ropes, both the ordinary and French skipping. For boys it was Cowboys and Indians or war games. We played with conkers in season, marbles, exchanged cards, played with cars and probably played kiss chase with the girls. Even in those early years we would try and chat the girls up if possible, all harmless fun. We had two playgrounds; one was by the bike shed, and we had a green door on which we used to put our names. When the bad winter of 1962-3 happened we had a very large pile of snow in the playground which lasted for months well into the spring and early summer. Getting to school then was fun, not being driven to school we had the usual snow ball fights. I remember one day falling into a snowdrift in Little Herbert's Road and my sister running home to get Mum to drag me out. We were, by the way, wearing short trousers, even to eleven or above.

School trips - in my time we went to Dudley Zoo in 1963, the Royal Tournament in 1964, and in 1965 some people went on the Devonia education cruise. On any trips from school we always had the brand new Black and White coaches.

I was also involved with a Road Safety competition in which my team managed to get to the quarter finals. When you passed your Cycling Proficiency test, you were allowed to cycle to school. My bike was red and came from Hammonds in Cheltenham.

Assemblies were held in the hall - a favourite hymn was 'I vow to thee my country'. There were film shows at the end of term - good old woody woodpecker. Each year we had a speech day when a well-known person or someone connected with education presented the prizes which were given for many things including attendance, improvement, needlework and many more. There were four school houses or groups: blue Jupiter; red Saturn; yellow Mercury and white Mars.

We had several characters in school, one being Ernie Randall who owned a pair of winkle picker shoes and a beetle wig. Bill Nichol was certainly someone you got to know - everyone knew and still knows Bill. I had many friends or acquaintances: Ian Kear, Lewis Boys, Chris Adams, Chris Barton, Mike Smith and Victor. Of the girls Margaret Hopkins, Jackie King and Joanne Skinner were among my best friends.

#### Mrs Greet's Class - 1963/4

Names reading from the left.

Back Row: - ?-, Nicholas White, Bill Nichol, Francis Harvey, Anne Graham, Kim Morgan,  
Susan Mustoe, Mrs Greet  
3rd Row: Martin Lewis, Paul Godwin, Anthony Godwin, Raymond Angiers,  
David Thomas, Robert Eastman,  
2nd Row: Diane Brooker, Elizabeth Fry, Jacqueline King, Christopher Barton,  
Helen Herbert, Marquita Brunsdon, Kathleen Hickling  
1st Row: Jacqueline Kelsall, June Churchard, Joanne Skinner, Susan Read,  
Nichola Godwin, Valerie Coates, Tim Churchard



### Recorder Group - Winners 1965

Names reading from the left.

Back Row: Mr Ballinger, Mr Wilkins, Mrs Greet,

4th Row: - ? -, Pamela Wilde, - ? -, - ? -, Diane Brooker, - ? -, - ? -, - ? -, Helen Herbert,

3rd Row: Margaret Hopkins, - ? -, - ? -, Valerie Coates, - ? -, - ? -, - ? -, June Churchard,  
Tim Balty,

2nd Row: Sandra Comfort, - ? -, - ? -, - ? -, - ? -, - ? -, - ? -, Jane Beames,

1st Row: Amanda Wright, - ? -, - ? -, - ? -, - ? -, - ? -, - ? -, Shirley Bond, Diane Robbie,  
Julie Herbert, - ? -,



[Geoff Bridgman is the great nephew of Bert Bridgman whose writings on Charlton Kings can be seen at Cheltenham Reference Library. Geoff is anxious to hear from anybody who was at school with him or knew members of his family. He is organising a reunion for those who left the Junior School in 1965.

His address is 22 Cricketts Lane, Chippenham, Wilts, SN15 3EF or he can be contacted on 01249 658373 or email [geoffbridgman737@msn.com](mailto:geoffbridgman737@msn.com). - Ed]

## BAFFORD GRANGE

by David A O'Connor

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The following is an edited extract from *My Life* by Brigadier Reginal George Burton written towards the end of his life in the period following the 1939-'45 war.

In September 1919 we heard that Bafford Grange was for sale. We found that the house and garden in Charlton Kings, at the foot of the Cotswolds close to the main Cirencester Road and within a mile of Cheltenham College where our son had been at the Junior School since January, was just what we wanted and I bought it... The long period of so-called exile had been filled with strenuous activities of both mind and body.... Here where the world is quiet we found a home little disturbed by wheeled traffic, situated at the end of a short drive leading from a country lane connected with the main road three hundred yards away.

The house dates back perhaps two or three hundred years, the approach bordered by gigantic beech trees... and the whole small domain secluded with its wooded walks, gardens and orchard. A comparatively modern addition to the house is a high glass veranda along the sixty foot front which faces south towards the hills. The west side of the house, enlarged by a bow-shaped addition with french windows to the drawing-room a century ago, is extended towards the orchard, having a westward aspect from the high ground on which the house stands. From the western wing the ground slopes steeply to the Lillybrook stream which taking its course from where it gushes out three miles away at the head of the valley, runs the whole length of that side of the domain, running from south to north. The side of the house is picturesque while its frontage to the south is plain and austere; in spring and summer a fine wall hydrangea climbs thickly up to cover the whole wing, its spreading leafy branches and white blossoms surrounding the dining room outlook and tending to blot out some of the upper windows. An ancient yew conceals the back premises, which are further sheltered from view by a pergola with its American pillar, and by hops, jasmine white and yellow, clematis and travellers' joy, relieving the sombre foliage of the yew. Here also are scarlet japonica turning to golden fruit in the autumn, while climbing roses, white choisia and cianotus [sic] grow in profusion, and the balcony over the french windows is decorated in summer with masses of purple wisteria.... Outside on the terrace, not far from the Rhus cotinus, stands a sun dial thinly veiled in a mist of copper fennel, the tall stems in late summer with saffron bloom rising high above the grey stone.

Part of the house and very substantial cellars beneath are old, and the ancient outbuilding, formerly a stable and coach-house, now serves as a garage. It is a primitive structure of rose-red bricks covered by a roof of moss-clad Cotswold stone tiles, quarried in our hills long ago, supported by immense and massive oak beams. At the back of it are two stalls with mangers still in place, a small harness room with fireplace and a tall brick chimney-stack, and a hay-loft over the roomy coach-house, a massive double door as old as the building swings on pivots and is secured by an ancient lock. In years gone by the building was a small dower-house; some acres of land have been added and the whole estate greatly enlarged and improved.

Inside the house from a spacious tiled hall the staircase, with Hepplewhite-fashioned balustrade, winds upwards past a dozen rooms to the top storey. The walls are hung with tiger and leopard skins. On the stairway, at the top of the first flight, a grandfather clock beats out the swiftly passing hours of life. At the back of the house a lozenge-shaped tablet built into the wall bears the date 1774, when perhaps a new slate roof replaced the one of Cotswold tiles; close to this a tocsin bell can be reached by hand from a window in the top storey.

Wild life in this small domain is of interest and has here in general found a sanctuary. The brook was well stocked with trout, some up to a weight of two pounds, and more used to come by way of the Chelt to spawn on the gravel beds, but heavy traffic on the main road during the second world war and surface drainage tainted with bitumen played havoc with the fish and other wild life of the stream. There are enticing pools where trout found shelter under the banks beneath the great wych-elm and other trees that grow upon the verge; from the summer house we used to watch and feed the fish congregating beneath the waterfall; they shared the sanctuary accorded to all harmless wild things in our domain.

For some years a badger, whose sett is in the bank lower down the brook, unseen for its habits are strictly nocturnal, has scratched holes while seeking beetles and leatherjackets in the lawns; it also digs out and devours the contents of wasps' and bumble bees' nests, resorting for purposes of nature to the herbaceous borders and elsewhere making quite large excavations. Foxes are frequent visitors and we have watched a vixen and her cubs gambolling in the nearby park. Our badger killed a cub one night. The gardener, a very keen naturalist, put up the fox from the bamboo-brake at the bottom of the dell, from where it made off across an open field and ran head on into the approaching badger, an uproar of angry growls and squeals ending when the badger seized the fox by the throat.

Even stoats and weasels are generally left alone, for they kill rats which come in sometimes from a neighbouring farm, though we did try to catch one which killed our tame magpie. But the grey squirrel is not spared, being wholly pernicious. This alien robs birds' nests, nips the young shoots off trees and eats strawberries when it gets under the nets, while it has displaced all the English squirrels in the neighbourhood. The walnut-tree is the chief attraction; there numbers have been shot or caught black-handed by the juice.

The stream affords endless interest, but like the trout, much life is gone. It used to be a pleasure to see the water-voles, miscalled rats but more like beavers, swimming under water leaving a trail of bubbles or peeping out of their shelters in the banks with beady eyes. In a summer of drought when the grass was gone they soon ate all the king-cups and then nibbled the osmunda whose tall fronds floated down the stream, but now they are gone. Around us are the most melodious voices on earth, the song of birds and the sound of running waters where the brook flows over pebbly shallows, although alas!, it is not for many years given to me to hear much. But there are many birds deserving of notice for the sight of them; many woodpeckers both green and spotted of two species, the yaffle awakening the echoes with its laughing cry, and the spotted ones with their whining call on the dead or dying branches of an oak, while nose-red, grey-backed nuthatches shout from the tops of the tall beeches. Big-beaked haw-finches frequent the orchard and kitchen garden, building nests yearly in pear and apple tree and rearing their broods, and the tiny tree-creeper nests behind the sprung bark of a tree, while between firs and cedars goldcrests dip in flight. More than once a kingfisher has flashed past, and water-ouzels once built their domed nest under the falling stream; the hen bird, the chief builder, would always float some distance on the current before taking wing.

We have two species of wagtail, the pied and the grey, which is also yellow and makes its nest close to water but this dryad of the dell differs in its habits from the pied one which builds in ivy in the garage wall and runs along the lawns with its young. In summer spotted flycatchers nest for preference on the pergola in front of the house. One winter we saw a pied flycatcher, here a bird of passage but on our visits to the northern Pennines found common on the becks of Crossfell. Moorhens like our stream and the small ponds in the rock-garden; they are about on the lawns, not nesting on the premises but counting in the sixty five species observed; they haunt the rushes which stand waist deep, shivering in the current and the breeze, hiding sometimes under the eight-foot wide leaves of the gunnera, that noble and decorative plant with its thick thorny stalks, like a gigantic rhubarb....

There are many tragedies in nature, but none so tragic as those human tragedies of our time which have their origin in the political ideas of mankind and their consequent ambitions' outcome. A sparrow-hawk recently pounced down on a green woodpecker close to a hedge where it was feeding on the ground and lifted the screaming and struggling bird a few feet into the air amid a cloud of green feathers; but the claws had not struck home for the woodpecker freed itself and fled away, while the discomfited hawk flew in the other direction. The same hawk carried off a tame blackbird that was feeding with the fowls and also struck down a cornrake at the end of the dell. So this predatory bird is left to perform its task in the maintenance of the balance of Nature. Man marks the earth with ruin.

I once saw a blackbird behaving like a bird of prey. It was a cock bird, attacking on the ground what looked like a large moth; on my approach it left its prey which was then seen to be a wren lying on its back, fluttering and disabled; its legs were strong and it clutched my fingers with sharp claws and compulsive grasp. It was put in a caterpillar cage with a hope of survival as no severe injury was apparent, but in the morning it was dead.... Blackbirds were very numerous that year; one for several reasons 'decorated' its nest with purple aubretia, probably not for artistic design but finding this to be a suitable building material. Another sitting henbird was so tame that it would take food from my hand while brooding on its young in a nest built in the woodpile at the back of the house. One morning the four young ones, half-fledged, were found dead on the ground below the nest, with their heads bitten off and presumably devoured; the culprit was thought to be perhaps an owl or a grey squirrel or more probably a stoat which haunted the locality.

But there was reason to suspect owls; both Little Owls and Tawny Owls were plentiful in the neighbourhood. Little Owls were active and noisy in the dell and orchard but in my experience fed mainly on beetles.... A pair of Tawny Owls had a nest in the stump of an elm containing a number of dead rabbit and fledgling birds. From another nest of the same species we adopted two young, which grew up to be tame and were named Bubble and Squeak, coming down at call, perching on us and taking food from the hand. Bubble, venturing too far from home, met an early death; Squeak would sit on the apple tree and the sundial, invading the kitchen and sometimes the school room, perching very appropriately on the back of my son, his master's, chair. He haunted the premises until the following spring.

Hedgehogs are numerous walking the lawns and moonlit paths on summer nights, tamed easily, finding warm winter quarters under a hen's nest in the fowl-house, perhaps stealing the eggs found buried, for it will rob and sleep in a bird's nest. Fowls fear grey squirrels and rats but kill field-mice, nor do they like snakes. One day they crowded round the open door of their house in the orchard making a great cackle, fearing to enter; a grass snake lay coiled up near the nesting box. One snake lay in a corner of the veranda on a hot summer day and frequently visited the rock-garden ponds where a blindworm hides among the water lilies. This particular snake was known by its large size and its favourite resorts, but there were many. We find their skins brittle and transparent, with tails wound round the stems of plants where they have shed them in the spring.... My cocker spaniel was recently engaged in an excited hunt in the hedge when he suddenly dived in and pulled out a big grass-snake. Another cocker barked incessantly at an adder on an ant-hill in a distant wood. He had so far as I know, never seen a snake but seemed to have an instinctive fear of this poisonous one.

But I have been running rather ahead of my time in my love and thoughts of the wild life of our garden and have described these creatures very much as though they were seen and observed all at once just as we entered our domain ....

## CHARLTON KINGS UDC - ITS WORK IN THE 1930s

by Mary Paget

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The Urban District Council was filled by sensible, conscientious men; but its task was not an easy one. It fended off attacks by Cheltenham, which wanted to absorb it, by appeals to the rate-payers - "We will keep the Rates down" was its slogan. But this meant that it had a very tight budget to work on and little money for improvements.

### Refuse Disposal

The tip between Cirencester Road and New Court Road was full (too full according to one Inspector) and only covered with a slight layer of soil. There were still some complaints about it. Luckily for the Council, St Mary's churchwardens in 1932-3 decided to sell the house which had been bought in the 1890s as a vicarage. Our vicar had no private means and was a bachelor, so the Grange had been let. When Mrs Heberden died the churchwardens panicked and in 1933 the house with a good two acres of land was sold for far less than its value to Mark Williams a contractor. He sold the timber, the turf, the top-soil and the underlying sand - built houses on the roadside, largely with the bricks from the demolished house; and finally sold the hole to the Urban District for its rubbish. This is why no building is now possible on the Grange Field except on piles. Refuse collection continued to be by horse and cart from the Depot in Horsefair Street.

### Water and Sewage

Town water was laid on to the larger houses and since the late 19th century they had been connected to Cheltenham sewage. But there were still many older houses dependant on wells and cess-pits. Generally speaking these included almost all the cottage property in the village and older farm houses (mostly timber-framed) which had been divided into cottages. These properties were frequently owned by people who could not afford to improve them to reasonable standards and did not, often, see why they should. The occupants liked living there because the rentals were low.

The Urban District had power to condemn property as unfit for human habitation; but no power to take into consideration the age of the property, its history or amenity value. As a result we have lost much of our 14th century building since 1930. There were areas of old housing - notably Crab End (behind the Merry Fellow), Pruens Row (on the south side of Church Street), Yew Tree Cottage in School Lane and three houses in Spring Bottom rebuilt in the 1870s; houses in East End (especially Wood's Cottages originally Over House); Nelmes Row (off London road) poor building though only about 100 years old; individual houses in London Road and Ryeworth Road. Many 19th century cottages such as Buckles Row, Grange Cottages, Hamletts Yard, Chestnut Row (called in Charlton "Bug Alley") were capable of improvement.

### Bad Housing

Pruens Row on the south side of Church Street, set back from the road, consisted of one 14th century timber and thatch cottage occupied by the Bloxsome family and other cottages built around it in the early 19th century. They depended on a well and privies. In spite of the primitive conditions, the children always seemed fit - I remember when I did some teaching practice at Pates Grammar School for Girls (still in the building in St Margarets Terrace) in 1935, the eldest Bloxsome girl had just won a scholarship there and staff were discussing how she could possibly do her homework in the single dwelling-room. She was apparently



well nourished and was not thought in need of special help when a medical inspection was undertaken (though the child of a wealthy couple was!)

There was much overcrowding as well as lack of common amenities. But none of this could be remedied till the UDC could build council houses, and the first set built in Little Herberts in the early 1920s had been so badly designed and built that they gave continual trouble. Few Landowners were willing to sell land for cottage housing. The only land the Council owned was used as allotments, very much needed for growing vegetables to supplement the diet of families on low wages or unemployed.

Eventually the Council decided to take a strip of the playing field land on the east side of Little Herberts Road. Presumably the donor, Mr Martyn of the Hearne, agreed. The design was a great improvement on the first council houses. So by 1938 it was possible to move the Pruens Row families and demolish the old property. Mrs Rose Bick of Ridgeway told me she wanted to re-use some of the old timbers from the half-timbered house, but found them too buggy.

Efforts had been made at the same time to clear the worst cottages in Crab End. But the tenants were unwilling to move - and where could they be moved to? As fast as one family left another moved in; and when in 1939 all the original families had gone, tramps began to doss in the empty buildings. It was not until 1953 that the last (and oldest) house was demolished.

Not all bad housing was reported. Two houses by Grange Walk (on part of the present Library site) had badly leaking roofs - one house, part of my mother's Parish District, was occupied by a bed-ridden man and his wife. I remember being told of the rain dripping into buckets alongside the bed. Eventually that couple moved into a better house in Buckles Row; and all that remains of those two dwellings is a grass patch, once their kitchen gardens.

Even houses owned by the Cooper-Higgs Charity Trustees were open to criticism - for example Woodbine Cottage, next to the almshouses, where the roof and spouting on the scullery were in a bad state. Such was the housing shortage that as soon as a little repair had been done to make the house approaching habitable, some new tenant had been accepted.

Hamletts Yard and Nelmes Row, by dint of continued urging and writing, were eventually put into order. But Hill Place on London Road (partly used as a shop) continued in an unfit state for years, with defective ventilation. The drains of Cambrian Villa and Ashley House in Church Street discharged straight into the Hearne Brook.

## Health

The Medical Officer of Health every month gave the Council the number and causes of deaths with the ages of those dying; and the number of births. He also reported infectious diseases, showing that scarlet fever, measles and diphtheria (the virulent type) were always present among the children - there were cases every month. The Delancey Hospital was still being used for its original purpose of taking infectious cases. In 1938 a school inoculation scheme against diphtheria was proposed.

Among older inhabitants there were always TB cases which could not be segregated - no very great effort was made to do so.

But we may conclude that the Urban District Council did its best, for both housing and health, within its means and according to its lights.

## Preparations for War

And then a new and even more difficult task was imposed on the UDC, to prepare Charlton for a war situation, which seemed all the more dreadful because the Councillors only dimly realised what a war might involve, their realisation partly based on memories of World War I and partly on novels - there were several around which purported to describe in horrid detail a possible World War II. I remember reading at least two, in which gas played a major part, as the Government feared it might do in fact. So their precautions were mainly against a gas attack, which never happened. It is possible that the precautions taken were one reason why it did not.

The first use of the initials ARP (Air Raid Precautions) came in June 1938, when the Health committee was required to provide a record of all wells in the district "especially those fit for drinking purposes"<sup>1</sup>. This was an almost impossible demand - besides a great many wells in use, there were many no longer used but usable. Glynrosa alone had two, one under the house and one down the garden believed to be therapeutic! Neither were included in a very sketchy list<sup>2</sup>, which is interesting because it records the amount of water available at the Diamond Sanitary Laundry, Spring Cottage and Mill Cottage, besides listing many other wells without any estimate of the amount of water produced.

It is not surprising that when the first crisis arose in September 1938, the Council passed this resolution to be sent to the Prime Minister<sup>3</sup>: "We the Charlton Kings Urban District Council desire to express on behalf of all Parishioners our heart-felt gratitude to you as Prime Minister for the wonderful untiring efforts in the cause of peace, words fail to convey the feeling of appreciation not only of this small District of about 5000 souls but of all the world over".

Not all of us younger ones would have agreed. But Chamberlain's action did win a short respite.

### References:

- <sup>1</sup> DA3 100/20 p324
- <sup>2</sup> DA3 100/20 pp415-7
- <sup>3</sup> DA3 100/21 p9

## CHARLTON KINGS OFFICER AWARDED V.C.

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I am grateful to Mike Grindley of the Cheltenham Local History Society for passing on this report in the *Echo* of August 17th 1915.

The *London Gazette* of Monday night contains a list of awards to naval officers for their heroic work in landing troops on the Gallipoli Peninsula, and first among them all is commander Edward Unwin, upon whom the King has bestowed the V.C., and whose home is at Charlton Lodge, Charlton Kings, which he took through the agency of Messrs Young and Gilling two years ago on retiring from the Navy. During his service career he served in the punitive naval expedition commanded by Rear-Admiral Rawson C.B., and landed from the squadron to punish the King of Benin for the massacre of a political embassy in 1897. The expedition ended in the capture of Benin City, and Lieut. Unwin, as he then was, of H.M.S. *Theseus*, received the African Medal with the Benin Clasp. When the present war broke out Commander Unwin was appointed to Admiral Sir John Jellicoe's flagship, H.M.S. *Iron Duke*, but was later transferred to the fleet co-operating with the forces at the Dardanelles in effecting a landing upon the Gallipoli Peninsula.

Commander Unwin was in charge of the collier *River Clyde*, which he had specially prepared for the purpose of landing troops at "V" beach, the story of which has already been graphically described and is retold in Admiral de Roebuck's despatch. He had cut large ports in the boat's sides and built gang-ways whereby the troops could reach the lighters which were to form a bridge on to the beach. "V" beach was subjected to a heavy bombardment, and when the first trip attempted to land they were met with a murderous fire from rifle, pom-pom and machine gun, and practically all were killed or wounded, a few managing to find some slight shelter under a bank on the beach. The *River Clyde* was run ashore under heavy fire rather towards the eastern end of the beach, where she could form a convenient breakwater during future landing of stores etc. As the *River Clyde* grounded, the lighters which were to form the bridge to the shore were run out ahead of the collier, but unfortunately they failed to reach their proper stations, and a gap was left between two lighters, over which it was impossible for men to cross; some attempted to land by jumping from the lighter which was in position into the sea and wading ashore; this method proved too costly, the lighter being soon heaped with dead, and the disembarkment was ordered to cease. The troops in the *River Clyde* were protected from rifle and machine gun fire, and were in comparative safety.

Observing that the lighters which were to form the bridge to the shore had broken adrift, Commander Unwin left the ship, and under murderous fire, attempted to get the lighters into position. He worked on until, suffering from the effects of cold and immersion, he was obliged to return to the ship, where he was wrapped up in blankets. Having in some degree recovered, he returned to his work against the doctor's order and completed it. He was later again attended by the doctor for three abrasions caused by bullets, after which he once more left the ship, this time in a lifeboat, to save some wounded men who were lying in shallow water near the beach. He continued at this heroic labour under continuous fire, until forced to stop through sheer physical exhaustion. Assisted in the work by two middies and two seamen (to all of whom the V.C. has been awarded), he made the bridge passable to the shore. But it could not be used by the troops, anyone appearing on it being instantly shot down, and the men in the *River Clyde* remained in her till nightfall, when they were able to disembark under cover of darkness and obtain some shelter on the beach and in the village of Seddul Bar, for possession of which a most stubborn fight began.

"The capture of the beach", says Admiral de Roebuck, "called for a display of the utmost gallantry and perseverance from the officers and men of both Services - that they successfully accomplished their task bordered on the miraculous". '

[Charlton Lodge is at the Cirencester Road end of Cudnell Street, on its north side. It seems extraordinary to include the name of the letting agency in a report about the award of a Victoria Cross - perhaps the reporter got commission! - Ed]

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## WE HAVE BEEN WARNED

by Don Sherwell

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While browsing through the *Cheltenham Chronicle and Parish Register* dated 16th September 1856, my eye was caught by an unexpected heading: 'Twelve Ways To Commit Suicide'. No reason was given for this rather alarming topic, and there were no introductory comments before the list, of which a somewhat shortened version follows.

1. Wearing insufficient clothing and especially upon the limbs and extremities.
2. Leading a life of enfeebling, stupid laziness, and keeping the mind on an unnatural state of excitement by reading trashy novels. Dancing until in a complete perspiration then going home without sufficient over garments in the cool, damp air. [clubbers, take note]
3. Sleeping on feather beds in small rooms without ventilation.
4. Surfeiting on hot and very spicy foods; eating too hastily and too heartily just before going to bed.
5. Tempting the appetite with bitters and niceties when the stomach says no; gourmandising between meals.
6. Beginning in childhood with tea and coffee, progressing to chewing and smoking tobacco, and drinking intoxicating liquors.
7. Marrying in haste, getting an uncongenial companion, and living the remainder of life in mental dissatisfaction
8. Keeping children quiet by giving them cordials, teaching them to suck candy, and supplying them with raisins, nuts and rich cake; when they are ill, giving them mercury and arsenic under the impression that they are medicines.
9. Letting the love of gain absorb our minds to the detriment of looking after our health.
10. Contriving to keep a continual worry about something or nothing; giving way to fits of anger.
11. Being irregular in all our habits of sleeping and eating: going to bed at midnight and getting up at noon.
12. Neglecting to take proper care of ourselves, and to applying early for medical advice; taking quack medicines. [of which, one may say, the newspaper advertised quite a number]

The article continued "The above causes produce more suffering, sickness and death than all epidemics, malaria and contagion combined with war, pestilence and famine. All commit suicide and cut off many years of their natural life who do not observe the means of preventing disease or preserving health".

## REVIEWS

**Society Publications** - Three new works were published during 2004, two of which were presented to the Society By Mary Paget free of charge which enables them to be sold at very reasonable prices. [see inside cover]

*Charlton Kings Parish Rate Book 1882* transcribed by Mary Paget follows the format of the Rate Book for 1858, with an explanatory introduction by Mary together with indexes for people and places. It gives information about every property in Charlton Kings - whether it is house, cottage, workshop or piece of land together with the names of the owner and occupier. A really valuable addition to our publications and of particular interest to anybody studying the history of their house.

*Three Registers of Charlton Kings Electors 1832-3, 1842-3 and 1862* again transcribed by Mary Paget with a very informative introduction together with indexes for people and places. Each list of electors is in alphabetical order and gives the property for which votes could be claimed. In addition Mary has added her own notes in brackets e.g. 'Peacey, Thomas freehold house and garden, Providence Place [Horsefair Street, part of car park]', which is invaluable to people less familiar with an earlier Charlton Kings.

*Charlton Kings Tudor Wills* edited by Tony Sale, has been published as a supplement to *Charlton Kings Probate Records 1600-1800*. Eighty three wills have been transcribed by Tony which cover the period from 1542 to 1598, but no inventories as none have survived in Gloucestershire for this period. There are indexes to persons and places and a supplementary glossary to that in the *Probate Records*. It needs a practised eye to read wills of this period, so this publication would be very useful to anybody whose Charlton family history goes back this far or to readers wanting to know more about those living in the area in the 16th century.

**Other Publications in 2004** - Two new books on Cheltenham have been published recently:

*Cheltenham's Lost Heritage* by Oliver C Bradbury, published by Sutton Publishing Ltd with Simon Fletcher as commissioning editor. The author is a former Listed Building Consultant for English Heritage and, more recently, has undertaken research for the London Blue Plaque scheme. Being a London-based researcher meant he had to rely on a great deal of local help, which he freely acknowledges. This book, in the author's own words, "is a selective and in the process subjective, but I hope representative, account of the town's architectural losses". It is a book of photographs but different from other such publications in that it shows the past and the present on the same page. This enables the reader to identify small reminders of what had been - such as a boundary wall pier or otherwise unexplained doorway. I would have appreciated a map to find my way around, but otherwise can really recommend it - you will want to explore Cheltenham with the book in your hand.

*Cheltenham A History* by Sue Rowbotham and Jill Waller, published by Phillimore & Co Ltd. The authors are known to many of us through their activities with the Cheltenham Local History Society. Sue is editor of their Journal and Jill has produced several Chronologies to coincide with the topics of the annual Local History day in Gloucester. This book includes two 19th century maps as endpapers and has excellent illustrations throughout which go right up to date with a view of the inside of the GCHQ 'Doughnut' and the 'Hare and Minotaur' sculpture in the High Street. Covering, as it does, an enormous time span this book cannot go into very much detail for any period, but it includes a very extensive list of 'Further Reading' for those who want to delve more deeply.

## NOTES AND QUERIES

**Tim Ward - England Football Player** - *Bulletin 49* (page 40) shows a photograph of three boys taken in 1923 when they were at the Infant School. They are T Ward on left, D Slee in the middle and E Brown on the right. Now John Summers has given us the following information about Tim Ward: "Tim lived in East End. He started off playing for Charlton Kings School, then moved to Andoversford and thence to Derby County before the war. After the war he played for England in a match against Belgium in 1948 or '49."

**John Burgh Rochfort** - *A History of Charlton Kings* (pages 132-6) has an article about the Baptist Church including a photograph of John Burgh Rochfort. He had come to Charlton Kings in 1865 and started to preach in a house in Moreton Terrace. The congregation he collected later became the founder members of the Baptist Church with Rochfort as the first pastor. He left Charlton Kings in 1888, on account of ill health, and little was known about him afterwards. Sylvie Pierce has written to Mary Paget enclosing an excerpt from *The Changing Faces of the Bartons* by Audrey Martin. This describes the Primitive Methodist Chapel which is still in use today. Inside are two wall tablets dedicated to John Burgh Rochfort and his wife Hilare, who was a daughter of Henry and Catherine Hall at the local 'big house' Barton Abbey. The Rochforts were particularly active in chapel life and he was a preacher. Hilare died on March 1st 1907 and John on August 17th 1908, "whose holy example and labours of love in preaching the gospel and visiting the sick will ever be remembered by the people of this church and parish."

**Dead Man's Penny** - Pat Love has sent the following note: On page 26 of *Bulletin 50* the description of this memorial plaque evidently referred to the original design, with a lion slaying an eagle on the reverse. However, as produced, the plaque has a plain back and the lion and eagle are in the small space below the main part of the design.

**Bill Leonard Court** - in *Bulletin 50* I asked why the group of houses in Hamilton Street had been so named. Several people wrote or rang me with information and I will summarise the replies: Bill Leonard ran a local shop on London Road, where the Co-op Swift shop stands now. He is described as 'Charlton King's entrepreneur' who started out as a barrow boy in the late 1940s, then bought a small shop in London Road, and later its neighbour, ending up with almost a supermarket. All the family worked in the business. The area where the Court stands was the back entrance to his shop. It is uncertain whether the family had the houses built or if a developer built them, but it was the family's wish that they be named after Bill. My thanks to you all.

**Evelyn Close** - another query in *Bulletin 50* concerned this group of houses. Again my thanks go to those who responded. These houses were built, certainly before 1960, to rehouse the ex-service men and women who had lived at Evelyn Court in Cheltenham. The owners of Evelyn Court (the Officers Families Association) wished to sell the property as it was on a valuable site in the Malvern Road area of Cheltenham, but the move did not please those who had to move. The houses in Evelyn Close are now owned by 'Haig Homes'.

**Bucklehaven Almshouses** - *Cheltenham A History* states that in his will John Charles Buckle provided for these homes for deserving aged and infirm men and women in reduced circumstances. Can anybody add any thing further on these almshouses?

**Charlton Kings Field Names in South Africa** - Kingsley Chapman wrote from South Africa to say that he had named several fields on his farm there after the names of the fields farmed by his ancestor Edwin Chapman - a nice thought that.