

GLoucestershire COMMUNITY COUNCIL.

LOCAL HISTORY

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LOCAL HISTORY NEWSLETTER

AUTUMN 1963.

It has become more and more clear as material has been sent in that this will be our Industrial Archaeology number. Mr. Minchinton's article on the history of Gloucestershire Railways was quickly followed by the C.B.A. report on the National Survey of Industrial Monuments begun last April, a project which is of the greatest urgency since it must be completed within the next two years. Then came reports of the highly successful conference on the subject at Stroud and the formation of the Gloucestershire Council for Industrial Archaeology. It is greatly to be hoped that this keen interest in the physical remains of early industries will arouse an equal enthusiasm for the story of the men and women whose lives they so greatly influenced. For this work there is abundant material in print and manuscripts and much remains unrecorded in older people's memories. As Arthur Bryant noted in a recent article, the growth of heavy industry brought its hardships but it bred a magnificent race of men so its local history would be a fascinating subject. The impact on the quiet countryside of the unruly gangs of "navigators", answering only to their nicknames, "Duke of Wellington", "Mary Ann" or "Cat's Meat" and who were as ready to fight a rival gang or the police as to carry out their gigantic feats of canal digging and carving out railway cuttings, could prove a thrilling tale. The skill of the Works' engineers who could persuade a "tricky old girl" like the veteran steam-engine which maintained the water-level in the canal between Daneway and Sapperton to give of her best must be remembered. Even more memorable is the courage of the labourers who were often pioneers in experiments and took unprecedented risks, such as the hero of the Severn Tunnel who, using a knapsack of compressed air in conditions which its inventor declared quite impossible, dived to reach and shut the flood-gates. The accounts of early industries given in our Competition on Life in the last Hundred Years were full of delightful and unexpected details from the picture of Nailsworth carts in winter hurrying ice into the ice-houses of the local sausage works "till the countryside looked like an ice fair" to memories of the delight of small boys entering Blockley silk mills as child-labourers at escaping cold and lonely hours bird-scaring. The efforts of the Vestries and local officials to feed and clothe the unemployed in times of depression have interested many local students recently. The struggles of the capitalists who might be obliged, as in the Thames and Severn Canal project, to sell their assets and raise a new issue of red shares to replace the dishonoured black script, or, as in the Nailsworth Valley, to open a dozen new enterprises to replace a major industry which had failed, would be equally worth recording. We might even try to discover why, when the men were unwilling to use machines in the textile trade, Gloucestershire women were on the whole co-operative. We hope our Old People's Competition will produce helpful information on bygone trades but inevitably large districts will be still uncovered by such schemes and there is still much work to be done. Business records are often in as great danger as the buildings with which they were concerned and field-workers may do yeoman service by reminding the owners of unwanted papers that they would be welcomed at the County Record Office. Our good wishes go out to all who join the emergency work needed to preserve and record industrial relics and particularly to the younger volunteers whose energetic help will be so greatly needed.

THE STANDING CONFERENCE FOR LOCAL HISTORY.

The Annual Conference will be held on November 14th and 15th and the subjects chosen for discussion will include the preservation of family portraits and the need for combined representations in the counties on planning schemes. The theme of the addresses to representatives will be "The Country-side in the Middle Ages." In the Spring and Summer numbers of "Amateur Historian", the series on O.S. maps has been continued showing the great importance of the early editions of the 25 in. maps which show such minute detail as a tree in a field or bay-window on a house and of the early town-plans which may give a complete ground plan of a contemporary workhouse or the number of sittings in a church. The Spring number contains an article on Proofs of Age, those delightful records which can give us a complete picture of a medieval village's day from the return of the pilgrims to the accident to a local pig. Excellent examples can be found in the volumes of Gloucestershire Inquisitions reproduced in the Index Library volumes. The Summer number gives a tantalising glimpse of the material as yet

uncalendared in the Memoranda Rolls and an account of the Enumeration Schedules for the Census in 1841 and 51, which does justice to their value but rather overstresses the difficulty in obtaining a photo-stat. Unless a very small detail is to be pinpointed, this is usually a straightforward matter as the Bulletin of the Thornbury Folk bears witness.

A most valuable popular article in the October number of the Readers Digest is evidently drawn mainly from information supplied by the Standing Conference. In "Why not join the History Hunters?" a most fascinating survey of the possibilities open to amateurs shows that in weekend schools students now are trained in practical work ranging from drawing architectural plans of old buildings to deciphering sixteenth century catering books. We see amateur Archaeological detectives keeping in touch with local workmen and builders and finding thirteenth century cooking-pots and school children making colour films of the history of a New Forest village. The possibilities of photography are discussed with a special reference to the Glos. Federation of W.I's competition for slides illustrating the history of their villages and good examples of the importance of scrapbooks and pamphlets are included. The value of a chance find when placed in the hands of a skilled investigator is well illustrated by an account of the tiles unearthed by a tractor-driver in a Sussex hop-garden which proved to an historian that the Roman fleet sailed inland as far as Bodiam to collect iron-ore. This article should be widely used to create interest in "history-hunting" and should make many converts.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COMMUNITY COUNCIL LOCAL HISTORY COMMITTEE.

Some years ago Dr. Joan Evans suggested that a survey and photographic record of the carved tombstones of the County would be a very rewarding enterprise, as these monuments are particularly susceptible to wind and weather and a series of illustrations could provide raw material for research work on traditions and craftsmanship at different times and places and into the history of individual firms of masons. A Sub-Committee was formed of which Mr. G.M. Robins was Secretary and this summer four bound volumes of lists of these monuments in the Cotswold district and photographs of the most outstanding examples together with notes and correspondence relating to this Collection have been deposited on loan by the Committee in Gloucester City Library. The bulk of this work has been carried out with great energy and skill by Mr. L.J. Jones of Swindon who worked out a method for the project. He made a plan of each churchyard he visited, listed the carved monuments with notes on their merits and himself took many fine photographs. He has recorded a number of curious epitaphs and compiled notes on early ledgerstones and on the 18th and early 19th century engraved brass plates on tombstones in the Stroud and Minchinhampton area. The result is a most remarkable achievement which will, as the Chief Librarian declares, form a valuable addition to the Gloucestershire Collection.

This summer a second One Day School for Sixth Form history specialists was arranged in conjunction with the Gloucester and Cheltenham Branch of the Historical Association. This year the programme was repeated on two successive days to avoid over-congestion and an invitation was extended to all Grammar Schools in the County. About 50 pupils attended on each day, representing Chipping Sodbury Grammar School, Rendcomb College, East Dean Grammar School, King's School, Gloucester, Denmark Road High School for Girls, Gloucester, Stroud Girls' High School, Westonbirt School and Wycliffe College. The Dean of Gloucester welcomed the visitors and Mr. Elrington gave an introductory talk on "The Historian and his Sources". The staff of the County Records Office explained the documents on display and the Curator showed the party round the Folk Museum. In the afternoon Mr. John West lectured on "Local History in Perspective" and the meeting ended with a short discussion period. The School was again a great success and plans for next year are already under consideration. It has been suggested that the documents on exhibition might illustrate some special topic and that some way of improving the quality of the discussion might be found.

THE COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY.

The Council in their Annual Report regret the continued threat to scheduled buildings and it is sad to see that Gloucestershire heads their list with 26 instances. A high proportion of these buildings were, however, in Gloucester City and their fate will, therefore, be reconsidered by the Gloucester Redevelopment Scheme Consultative Committee so it is to be hoped that the price of progress may be lower than first appears. The type of building which is most liable to destruction is, of course, the early industrial relic as it probably still occupies a valuable ground site. It would be a particularly serious loss to archaeology if these "monuments" are lost as England was the pioneer of the Industrial Revolution and many early experiments in buildings and machinery were not repeated elsewhere. The Ministry of Public Buildings and Works and the C.B.A. are therefore undertaking a national survey of these relics which will be co-ordinated by a Consultant, Mr. Rex Wailes, appointed by the Ministry. Archaeological Societies throughout the country have been alerted and C.B.A. Committees are forming their own Sub-Committees to help in this task. It is evident that the more keenly intelligent public interest can be aroused, the more material will be available for consideration. Railways are obviously on the danger list under the Beeching Plan, but every Englishman is an engine-driver at heart and will serve the Railway cause devotedly in any capacity except that of normal passenger. It was, for instance, the workmen uncovering a site in Killingsworth New Town who recognised a stretch of early rails and other relics connected with Stephenson's Workshop there. Canals also have their devotees, though as our own county bears witness they are often unable to prevent acts of vandalism, and the Railway and Canal Historical Society has offered to prepare a list of early structures worthy of preservation. These interests however only represent a fragment of the field to be covered and the Council is issuing a list of "type-monuments" for field workers which will arouse enthusiasm for a wealth of material from horse-gins to shipyards and from milestones to mills, rope-works and glass-houses.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL FOR INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY.

In our own county, the urgency of this work has been fully realised and on September 21st the Extra-Mural Department of the University of Bristol and Group XIII of the C.B.A. held a Conference at Stroud Technical College. The meeting was attended by the Secretary of the C.B.A., Mr. Wailes, Mr. M. Rix (C.B.A. Committee on Industrial Archaeology) and the President of the Newcomen Society, representatives from the Universities, Public Schools, Museums, and learned Societies and enthusiastic amateurs. The demand for invitations was so great that numbers had to be limited for lack of accommodation.

Mr. Kenneth Hudson discussed "The Scope of Industrial Archaeology" emphasising the urgency of the work because of the rapidity of the destruction, particularly by the most progressive firms. Impatience at being saddled with unwanted machinery, false modesty and unwillingness to provoke "backward thinking" by the staff were among the reasons for this vandalism, and Mr. Hudson stressed the need for recording and photography by local people who are often alone in a position to act before the bull-dozer moves in. Among his slides, Mr. Hudson included the "magnificent" broad-gauge coaches found at North Cerney serving as hen-houses with the birds perching on the ornamental latches and mills associated with the almost forgotten cotton industry in the Bristol district. Mr. L.T.C. Rolt, the biographer of famous engineers, pointed out that we could not direct the future and control the way technology was taking us unless we understood the history of the past so he felt the subject was of enormous importance and would attract the enthusiasm of young people. Dr. E.R. Green traced the development of the buildings needed for textile-processing and manufacture on a factory scale. He outlined the growth of the linen industry in Ireland and the development of factories in eighteenth century England, such as the silk mills of Macclesfield and the mills in the Derby Valleys. He also commented on the ~~iron~~-framed factories, of which Stanley Mills, Ryeford, is one of the finest early examples, showing that they reduced fire-risks and provided more floor-space for newer and larger machinery, and pointed out that the typical urban landscape of factory surrounded by streets of artisan dwellings had begun to take shape in such cities as Manchester by the beginning of the nineteenth century.

These papers were followed by visits to Egypt Cornmill, Nailsworth where two undershot water wheels proved of special interest, Dunkirk Mills, where three overshot waterwheels survive, and Strachan's Mills, whose records include the order given to Prince Rupert to impound cloth for the Cavalier army. The excursion was organised by the Curator of Stroud Museum who has been one of the pioneer workers in this country on the C.B.A. survey.

The Conference was evidently a roaring success and so much enthusiasm was shown that the formation of a Gloucestershire Council for Industrial Archaeology has quickly followed, Mr. G.H. Andrew, M.A., to whose energetic support the Conference owed so much, being Chairman and Mr. W.R. Taylor acting as Secretary. A set of lectures is now in progress at Stroud Technical College which includes two papers by Mr. Wailes and talks on Textiles in the South West by Mr. Ponting and Mr. Archer, on Railway and Canal Architecture and the Great Engineers by Mr. Rolt, Company Museums and House Journals by Mr. Hudson and the Metal-framed Building by Mr. Rix. Field-work is being planned which will include a one-day survey of Monks Mills at Wotton-under-Edge and some small scale studies in the Stroud area such as man-hole covers and factory chimneys. Within the next six months it is hoped to hold one or two specialised conferences and visits and all who are interested in the activities of the Council and in taking part in field-work are urged to contact Mr. Andrew whose address is Rosare, Woodchester, Nr. Stroud. (Information from the Council, Miss Sears, County Record Office and Mr. R.D. Abbott, Gloucester Museum).

WOODCHESTER ROMAN PAVEMENT.

The people of Woodchester worked hard and enthusiastically this year to show us the Pavement and over 50,000 visitors enjoyed this splendid mosaic. On July 24th the opening ceremony was performed by Professor Ian Richmond who greatly increased our appreciation of the sight before us. He pointed out how unusual it is to find a great Roman pavement, a churchyard and a Norman chapel within a stone's throw of one another, combining to make a very beautiful and very English scene. He then explained how the Pavement fitted into the scheme of the buildings of which it formed a part. Woodchester was one of the largest villas in Britain and its dining room, of which the Pavement formed the floor, was again one of the biggest in the country. The room was so vast that columns were needed to support the wooden roof; the stone base of one column is still in position, though the shaft which would have been made of timber, covered with stucco, has perished. The patterns of the mosaic were delightfully conventional and so in keeping with the traditions evolved by carpet makers that one wonders if there is any connexion between the two arts. The mosaic floor of one Romano-British Villa was copied after its excavation by the ladies of the neighbouring house and showed that a delightful embroidered carpet could be evolved from such a design. In the Woodchester Pavement, Orpheus with his lyre has charmed the animals who parade in concentric circles, the duck taking advantage of the God's presence to tread on the tail of her old enemy, the fox. In the centre within the octagonal border there must have been some important motif and Professor Richmond felt there were two possibilities; there might have been a representation in mosaic of Orpheus with Eurydice but this theme is usually connected with sepulchral monuments or the space may have been occupied by an octagonal basin and fountain such as was found at Bignor and Professor Richmond considered this alternative far more probable. The Naiads pouring water from their jars which appear in the design would then be very appropriate. There was room for such a centre-piece as in Roman dining-rooms guests lay on couches and were provided with individual tables so the furniture could be arranged to leave a vast amount of space for musicians and dancers who amused the company throughout the meal. Tacitus pointed out that one of the advantages of Romanisation was the elegance and refinement which was part and parcel of Roman social life, indeed its very hall-mark; this centred round the evening meal with its accompaniments of good conversation and attractive entertainments. Professor Richmond ended by discussing the date of the Pavement. Lysons, who first excavated and described it, was well in advance of his time in the way he excavated and published his results, but he had no comparison by which to date it. He chose the most prosperous moment in Roman history which he knew, the reign of Hadrian. Now we know that it is not likely to have appeared before the beginning of the Fourth Century and may possibly be much later

than that. Most villas began in a very modest pattern in the First Century and grew with prosperity, reaching their largest size and most sumptuous decoration in the Fourth Century. So this magnificent establishment had nothing to do with the encampments and entrenchments of the neighbourhood from which it was separated by a space of time as long as that which divides us from the reign of Elizabeth I. When this prosperous and wealthy estate came to an end, the site was occupied by nothing but weeds for six or seven hundred years and then, bringing with it fresh life and purpose, the Church was built.

THE FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE, FRENCHAY.

Mr. Russell Mortimer has sent us the following appreciation of the history of the Meeting House by Mrs. D. Vinter (obtainable from the author, 14 Royal York Crescent, Bristol 8., post free, 1/9d.)

"The Quakers would not come into any great towns but lived in the fells like butterflies." This was the burden of a charge against the early Friends by an Alderman of Newcastle upon Tyne at the time of the Commonwealth, and there was a certain element of truth in it. In the sparsely inhabited fells of the North in the 17th century were men and women whose spiritual needs were not being met by the scattered parish system of the established church. South of Trent likewise, when the Quaker preachers penetrated the more populous and industrial areas of the South and West after 1653, there were still hamlets and scattered settlements with no place of worship, and people waiting for just such a message as that which the Quaker preachers brought.

Frenchay was such a place - and others around, like Sidcot and Claverham in Somerset, spring readily to mind. Quiet, secluded, three miles from the parish church at Winterbourne; here sure enough Friends came, and Mrs. Vinter's illustrated and documented short account shows the pattern of life in the Quaker meeting from the beginnings in 1654 up to the present day.

Four illustrations from National Buildings Record photographs show the exterior and interior of the present Meeting House (built 1809, with additions in 1814) and a general view of the graveyard at the back. The present Meeting House replaced one built in 1673, earlier meetings having been held in private houses.

Quakers in many ways - through attire and speech - were a conspicuous sect, a 'peculiar people'. Over the years they have attracted attention out of all proportion to their numbers, and the amateur etymologists who, in the early 19th century, wrongly traced the name Frenchay to the Friends only pay a tribute to the strength of the Society in the village. Unfortunately Mrs. Vinter does not give any information about the actual numbers of Friends in the district at any time, but her account well illustrates a history which could be repeated for a good many quiet Quaker meetings in country districts:- the rapid growth and firm establishment of the movement in the 17th century, the grant of toleration, and then a decline, with the passing of early enthusiasms and lack of a continuous following up with an active ministry. Mrs. Vinter tells how Thomas Story, friend of William Penn and a great traveller and minister among Friends, visited Frenchay and found things at meeting "a little heavy for a time, but the sun at last broke through and dispersed the clouds."

Later on in the 18th century the Methodists attracted many who formerly might have become Friends, and in some places the Quakers quite died out. Not so, however, in Frenchay, whither some Friends from Bristol moved to settle to enjoy the country air while maintaining their business activities in the city. They kept the meeting going. Mrs. Vinter ends on a more hopeful note, and records the revivification of the Frenchay meeting as more and more the residential belt round Bristol stretches out into the suburban countryside.

As more and more people come to live in the country, it is helpful to them, to the community itself, and to the county at large, to have salient points of history of the bodies and institutions which go to make up the total village or town life readily available in usable form. This, for the Friends' Meeting House and the community that worships there at Frenchay, Mrs. Vinter has done admirably. It is perhaps churlish to add that one

might have liked to see a short note on sources, or an address where additional information might be obtained - more for the benefit of students in general than for the local people who would know well enough where to ask."

THE BRISTOL SLAVE TRADE.

To turn from the gentle Quakers to the Bristol Slave Trade is not so utterly incongruous as it may first appear, for Professor McInnes, who has written a pamphlet on the Slave Trade for the Bristol Branch of the Historical Association, would certainly agree that it was the energy of a body of local industrialists, many of whom were staunch Nonconformists which diverted Bristol shipping from carrying slaves to importing sugar. In the early days of the development of the Plantations, the African trade, including the export of slaves was a monopoly of the London Company and Bristol's contribution to the labour problems of the Colonies consisted in shipping English indentured servants. Professor McInnes shows that Bristol, like other outposts, resorted to kidnapping to swell the supply of white labourers and Judge Jeffreys, not usually erring on the side of humanity, was so shocked at the extent to which members of the Corporation indulged in this practice that he turned the Mayor off the Bench, set him in the dock and made him plead like a common rogue.

When after vigorous efforts of the outport towns the London monopoly of the African trade was broken at the end of the Seventeenth Century, Bristol became, for a short period, one of the three leading slave-ports of the country and in 1725 carried 16,950 slaves from Africa. As Professor McInnes points out, the morality of the trade was unquestioned at this time and it seemed to merchants as fitting that a Bill of Lading listing slaves should end with the words "and may God send the good ship to her desired port in safety" as if the holds were filled with ivory, apes and peacocks or household commodities. The trade was, however, subject to great risks and losses and it was the importation of sugar from the W.Indies rather than the provision of slaves to the plantations which brought Bristol wealth in the Eighteenth Century. The city was, in fact, ruled by its "sugar lords" who competed eagerly for sites for their refineries within reach of the river, built up firms based on partnership and turning with the same vigour to other sides of life became prominent on the Council and in the work of their Church or Meeting and tasted the delights of hard-won luxury and social success. Their industry depended, of course, on the use of slave labour on the plantations but Bristol allowed the "blackbird" traffic to pass to Liverpool merchants who increased their profits by filling their outgoing vessels with local textiles and between 1795-1804 only 29 ships cleared from Bristol for Africa compared with 1,099 from Liverpool.

Incidentally, Professor McInnes explodes the legends of large slave sales in Bristol and of negroes huddled in Redcliffe caves or the cellars of the inns on the water-front. As he points out, no-one in their senses would involve a highly perishable cargo destined for the W.Indies on an unnecessary journey to Europe and if the romantics who enjoy these stories could return to Bristol Quay at this time they would find shipping discharging dairy goods, leather from Ireland, sugar from the W.Indies and merino wool from Spain but not droves of shackled slaves or bevvies of attractive little black page-boys.

Professor McInnes gives us a fascinating account of the trade itself, carried out in small weather-beaten ships which were brutally over-loaded. Six feet by eighteen inches was considered sufficient space for a man and proportionally less for women and children. He gives details of the cargoes of trade goods taken to Africa, the methods of purchasing slaves, the hazards of the voyage and the variety of complications which could attend the sale of slaves in the Colonies. This scholarly study reads as readily as any historical novel and is an excellent example of the proper combination of sound learning and lively writing.

("Bristol and the Slave Trade" is obtainable from Mr. P. Harris, 4, Abley Drive, Bristol 9., price 2/8¹/₂d. post free).

AN EARLY START.

One of the most striking changes which has resulted from the present emphasis on Local History is the opportunity now given to young people to undertake really useful historical research. In my school-days, there were field clubs for the "bug-hunters" and bird's eggs and butterflies were equally available for the school-child and the savant. History, however, was taught from text-books written on very broad lines; it was, after all, a study with a far shorter history of its own than Classics or the natural sciences and we were concerned with the outlines laid down by the great Nineteenth Century pioneers in the subject. No-one felt that a VI Former could add to the nation's knowledge on the fiscal policy of Henry VII or the causes of the American Revolution. Even at the University, the Calendars of the State Papers might produce a lively anecdote or quotations from contemporary accounts of the Virginian voyages adorn our tale, but too often we dashed through the major works of great scholars in hot haste, chastising Freeman with arguments from Stubbs or hurling Maitland at Vinogradoff, criticising and appraising their merits with vast presumption and gaining in knowledge but certainly not in scholarship.

But now that history has entered a second phase in which a national picture is being built up from a vast mass of small pieces of individual research and local archives are becoming more and more accessible, it is possible for really useful work to be done by school-age students if they select their subjects sensibly. The first entrants for our Local History Competitions chose projects far wider in scope than they could adequately cover and their efforts invited the criticism given by a wise Quaker to an aspiring biographer of John Wesley, "Friend, thee has nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." But now under the guidance of our Judge, Mrs. Baber and their own staffs, competitors are offering modest and promising subjects such as the Children's Friend School at Hardwicke or the architecture of Bishop's Cleeve, and in the last competition Brian Palmer of Dursley Grammar School produced a piece of work which might well help to humanise the study of industrial archaeology in this district.

Brian Palmer's paper on "The Decline of the Cloth Trade in the Dursley Valley" had a most promising list of original sources. He had consulted such material as Smyth's "Men and Armour" whose entries he carefully analysed, three early Directories, the Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law in 1834 and on Hand-loom Weavers in 1841. He digested papers from Hardwicke Court and a mass of letters and other records relating to clothiers and weavers in Gloucester City Library. He went to the Shire Hall and the Parish Chests to examine a select Vestry Book and the Churchwardens' and Overseers' Accounts for Dursley, a Rating Valuation of this town for 1795 and the Overseers' and Churchwardens' Accounts for Cam. He has made excellent use of his material.

His paper opened with a very thorough and interesting analysis of the reasons for the early success of the industry, ranging from the quality of the water to the number of natural dye-plants found locally. He used the Dursley Valuation to prove the high degree of mechanisation which existed at that date alongside the original cottage system. He gives a vivid account of the ups and downs of the industry; the rapid expansion during the Napoleonic Wars in which manpower was so short that "ex-service men" were accepted for the looms without normal terms of apprenticeship, followed by a slump when peace was declared, the strikes by the weavers against lower wages and the introduction of machinery and the conservatism of the masters who could not appreciate the new demand for lighter and cheaper woollen materials. But the best part of his work is the very careful description of the history of Poor Relief in the neighbourhood during the resulting Depression, supported by tables compiled from the original records he consulted. He has fully recognised the drain on the rate-payers' pockets caused by out-door relief and the improvement wrought by Uley Workhouse, and can show from population figures for Cam and other districts that no relief system compensates for the loss of a staple industry.

Some of this work will need reconsidering. A study of such authorities as Mr. Ponting's "West of England Cloth Industry" and Dr. Carus-Wilson's article on the fifteenth century industrialisation of the Stroud Valley would enrich his preface and a wider reading on the history of the Poor Law would improve that section. His lists of statistics need clearer headings and better arrangement to bring out their full importance but the remarkable fact is that Brian Palmer has compiled them at all, working through material which far older and more experienced students have sometimes found unmanageable. To have produced a junior entry on which the judge expresses the hope, not only that he will continue to research but that he will develop this particular piece of research, is no mean feat. If pupils still at school can study history by these methods they will better appreciate the work of the great historians as the amateur artist from his own struggles with a refractory medium can win a warmer enthusiasm for the palette-knife strokes of Van Gogh or the foreshortening of Mantegna. They will share the moments of sympathy and illumination, the frustrations and limitations which face the student of history and realise why humility is the hall-mark of good scholarship, experiences which came to many of us only in our post-graduate days.

NEWS FROM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETIES.

The Bristol and Glos. Archaeological Society continue the valuable work of obtaining reports on the historical and architectural merits of threatened buildings when requested by the Ministry of Works and communicating these assessments to the Ministry and the Local Planning Authority. The Bristol Archaeological Research Group's Autumn Bulletin (Annual subscription for Bulletin for non-members 7/6d. payable to C. Browne Esq., Bristol City Museum) contains notes on the Summer Meeting of the Prehistoric Society in Denmark and a report on the Group's Course on Air Photography and the Past held last May. The Junior Section describes the conditions under which Archaeology can be offered as a subject for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Both practical excavation and field work and the writing of a village history in outline or at one special period can be offered. The Cirencester Archaeological and Historical Society Bulletin contains a vigorous editorial pleading for humour and humanity as well as careful reasoning in archaeological papers. A memoir of Samuel Lysons is followed by the obituary of another great and friendly scholar, Professor Donald Atkinson, by the editor of "Roman Studies". Members are working on the non-Roman Museum and on the collection of photographs of all recent excavations and have provided tea for workers and guides for visitors during the Corinium excavation this year. The Cheltenham and Glos. Branch of the Historical Association are arranging special lectures for schools and Colleges as well as their usual Sixth Form Forum. The Society of Thornbury Folk's August Bulletin contains the Star Chamber records of an assault on James Eddis and his family by the High Constable of the Hundred in 1604 and a riot led by the same offender whose followers armed with staffs, swords, and javelins, burnt the ducking-stool and threatened orderly citizens with boiling lye and hot water. The Forest of Dean Society has added a mobile section ready to investigate any object of interest, natural, archaeological or historical, which they meet on their excursions.

ADULT EDUCATION.

Besides the lectures on Industrial Archaeology already noted, there are two courses on "Local History of Gloucestershire" being held in Gloucester and Cheltenham directed by Mr. B.S. Smith, M.A. The first term in each case covers the general history of the County from the early settlements to the nineteenth century and methods of research, and the second term will be spent in practical work on documents by the class-members. A one year course on "The Smaller Churches of Gloucestershire" will be given at Cheltenham by the Rev. R.J. Mansfield who will give a shorter course on Churches of Gloucestershire at Duntisbourne Abbots. Tewkesbury will have a course on Railways of Gloucestershire by Mr. Woodfin and Ashchurch a more general course on Railways past and present. Mr. Waldron will lecture on Industrial Archaeology at Alderley and on Textiles in the Stroud Valley at Stroud where Mr. Baty is also describing Gloucestershire History in Domestic Buildings. Mr. Baty is also lecturing on the History of the Forest of Dean to a class at Yorkley Slade. At Up Hatherley Mrs. Hart is taking a class on the Background of the history of Cheltenham. All students will be glad to know that the first volume of the V.C.H. undertaken by Mr. Eyrington is now in the press and that he and his assistants are now working on the Tewkesbury area. It is to be hoped that this winter the weather will allow both industrial archaeologists and students of history to work without danger to life and limb and that a good season of work lies in front of us all.

B O O K L I S T.

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| Foster and Alcock. | Culture and Environment. Essays in Honour of Sir Cyril Fox. | Routledge Kegan Paul £5. 5. 0.
(Pantin, "Medieval Town Houses" incl: Canynge's House and Colston's House, Bristol). |
| G.E. Mingay. | English Landed Society in Eighteenth Century. | Univ. of Toronto. 40s. |
| F.M.L. Thompson. | English Landed Society in Nineteenth Century. | Routledge Kegan Paul. 45s. |
| W.G. Hoskins and L.D. Stamp. | Common Lands of England and Wales. | Collins 42s. |
| W.G. Hoskins. | Provincial England. | Macmillan. 42s. |
| B. Perry. | Lost Roman Road. | Allen & Unwin. 18/6d. |
| R. Welldon Finn. | Introduction to Domesday Book. | O.U.P. 21s. |
| I. Eberle. | Edward Jenner & Smallpox Vaccination. | Chatto & Windus. 12/6d. |
| N. Chadwick. | Celt and Saxon.
(sp. St. Peter of Gloucester and St. Cadoc of Llancarfan). | C.U.P. |
| K. Hudson. | Industrial Archaeology. | Baker. 36/- |

REPRINTS.

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| A.H. Johnson. | Disappearance of Small Landowner. | O.U.P. 21s. |
| J. Neale. | Elizabethan House of Commons. | Peregrine 12/6d. |
| E. Power. | Medieval People. | Unwin 10/6d. |
| I. Origo. | Merchant of Prato. | Penguin 12/6d. |

ARTICLE.

No. 5. Short Guides of Records. "Guardians Minute Books". History. Offprints available.

B O O K R E V I E W.

Politics and the Port of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century edited by W.E. Minchinton. Bristol Record Society's Publications Vol. XXIII (Bristol, 1963).

The history of Bristol commerce in the eighteenth century must be written without the aid, the Pinney papers excepted, of any extensive collection of private records. It is therefore particularly fortunate that the Society of Merchant Venturers should have now permitted the publication from their archives of documents which, in some degree, serve to alleviate this dearth of source materials. Mr. Minchinton's volume assembles all the petitions presented by the Society between 1698 and 1803: their contents reveal the wide variety of problems which affected both the domestic and the foreign trade of Bristol. A formal procedure inevitably requires formal expression, but the cost of petitions, mainly to the House of Commons, was too great for its adoption without good cause. These documents are for the most part the measured assertions of commercial self-interest. Practical, commercial advantage, not theoretical, political consistency, provides the unifying theme. The West African slave trade, a major subject of concern, demanded, in the opinion of the Society, freedom from restrictions, whether in Africa or the Caribbean, but similar liberty to dispose of North American steel or sugar was vigorously resisted. The claims of monopolies and of London commercial privileges were a constant cause of protest, but an equally vigilant watch was maintained to ensure that Irish legislation did not endanger the prosperity of an established trade. The effect of the petitions, as the

editorial notes demonstrate, was far from futile. Alliances were formed on occasion with other ports and towns, while the presence, except between 1742 and 1768, of at least one member of the Society in the House of Commons, must have assisted the consideration of its views. Certainly, the petitions were attended with a fair measure of success.

The Society's fortunes were not uniform throughout the century. Mr. Minchinton shows that the membership, which stood around 100 at the beginning of the period, rose to a high point of 132 in 1737, and then steadily declined to no more than 89 by 1800. Prominent merchants were always to be found outside its ranks, but the fluctuation seems generally to reflect the condition of Bristol commerce. As Mr. Minchinton points out, the Society represented a significant group, rather than the whole body of the city's merchants. This distinction becomes increasingly apparent in the change in number and tone of petitions after 1766. The agitation for the repeal of the Stamp Act called forth exertions not to be emulated at any later date. The Society, now a social oligarchy, became politically conservative and economically cautious: petitions are largely reduced to addresses of loyalty and defences of the slave trade.

Mr. Minchinton's introduction and editorial notes are admirably designed to place the Society and its petitioning activities in perspective. Moreover, the notes provide a valuable guide to recent historical research on eighteenth century Bristol. It is apparent that, since the war, historians, and notably Mr. Minchinton, have been engaged in the systematic recovery and use of widely scattered and previously unknown sources. It is to be hoped that this volume will prove a necessary prolegomena to a more general account, which may now be within sight, of Bristol in the eighteenth century.

Peter Marshall

GLOUCESTERSHIRE RAILWAYS.

Within the historically brief compass of a century and a half the railway age has waxed and waned. In the early nineteenth century contests were waged about the construction of railway lines, now the battles are about their closure. The steam locomotive is no longer the monarch of the iron road but has yielded pride of place to the diesel locomotive and the internal combustion engine. Once the tentacles of the British railway system reached into the far corners of Great Britain, now they are being pruned back and in many places only the main lines remain. When lines are closed, the railway stations and other buildings are abandoned, the rails are removed and grass and other vegetation soon encroaches on the track. As a result transport archaeology has joined industrial archaeology as a subject of study in Gloucestershire as elsewhere.

By the end of the seventeenth century, wooden tramways were fairly common in colliery areas but the expansion of tramroads for the carriage of coal came a century later when cheap iron rails became available. They were then developed as ancillaries to the existing water transport system, whether by canal or river, because of the deplorable state of the roads. In Gloucestershire, as in other mining districts, the expanding market for coal provided a stimulus to the construction of tramways to carry coal from pits in the Forest of Dean to the Severn. The difficulties which faced the promoters of the first railway or tram road from Lydbrook to Lower Forge via Mierystock and Parkend (together with the more recent history of railways in the Forest of Dean) have recently been described by H.W. Paar in his The Severn & Wye Railway (David & Charles, Dawlish: MacDonald, London, 173 pp. 30s.) based on the work of 'Dean Forester', a triumvirate consisting of Mr. Paar himself, Mr. L.E. Copeland and the Rev. D.A. Tipper. For those who wish to trace the tramroads of the Forest this book is an excellent guide. The first Act was obtained in 1809 and traffic started on the tramroad of the Lydney and Lidbrook Railway a year after. Twenty or so years later two other tramroads were authorised to tap the resources of the south Gloucestershire coalfield. One line was to run from Coalpit Heath to Bristol and another, along whose course I remember walking as a boy, from Rodway Hill, Mangotsfield, to Bitton on the river Avon. Another tramway, which had a briefer life, operated between Gloucester and Cheltenham for a few years from 1808.

But the tramway along which horses pulled trucks on iron rails was only a stop-gap solution of the growing transport problem. The application of steam to rail transport was the key to further advance. The possibility of steam was demonstrated on the Stockton & Darlington Railway in 1825 but the railway era really began with the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway in 1830. Quickly four trunk lines out of London were projected, the last of which, the Great Western, launched in 1835, was to link London and Bristol. Then followed a feverish effort to extend railways in all directions in 1836 and among the cross-country routes undertaken was that from Gloucester to Birmingham, which was open to traffic in 1840. The following year, 1841, another line from London reached Cirencester and four years later it was continued to Stroud, and soon afterward to Gloucester. Bristol and Gloucester, too, were linked by a line which was absorbed by the Midland in 1845 and thus came to form part of George Hudson's kingdom. Thus by mid-century, east Gloucestershire had the basis of its railway network.

The history of the Gloucestershire railways thus far reveals many of the features of general British railway history. First, it provides an illustration of the contest between railway companies for routes linking the same places. Following the passage of the Great Western Railway Bill, a Cheltenham & Great Western Union Railway Company was proposed to build a line from Swindon to Cheltenham, with a branch to Cirencester. When the Bill for this line was promoted in 1836 it was opposed by a rival concern which planned to link Cheltenham with London via the Chilterns, Tring and the London and Birmingham Railway. The Great Western Union scheme triumphed but at a cost. This same line illustrates a second feature of early British railway history, the great expense of construction because of the opposition of landowners. Robert Gordon of Kerble House, who opposed the building of this line, secured £7,500 as compensation together with an undertaking from the company that the line should be carried through his grounds in an unnecessary tunnel. Thirdly, Gloucester was one of the centres where the battle of the gauges was most acute. Here the broad gauge Great Western Railway met the standard gauge Midland to the discomfort of passengers and the disorganisation of goods traffic. Bristol was another such point. Temple Heads Station still looks a little lost, deprived as it is of its broad gauge tracks.

Progress was slower west of the Severn. There steam was resisted longer. The proposal for the Purton Steam Carriage Road to link the Severn & Wye Railway and the Forest of Dean lines in 1826 came to nothing. Twenty years later, the plans of the South Wales Railway, with Brunel as engineer, to build a broad gauge line from Chepstow to Gloucester was delayed by opposition and it was not opened until 1851. Within the Forest, the conquest of steam was slower still. The Forest of Dean branch of the Bullo Pill Railway, which served the eastern valley from the Cinderford area to the Severn, was acquired by the South Wales Railway and converted to broad gauge in 1854, and to standard gauge in 1872. But despite the growth of traffic not only of coal but of iron and stone, the conversion of the narrow-gauge tramways of the Severn & Wye Railway proved a formidable task. Although an Act for this purpose was secured in 1853, the first narrow-gauge locomotive was not delivered to this railway until 1864. Five years later the Severn & Wye built a broad gauge line, for goods traffic, from Lydney through the Forest to Wimbury Slade (Speech House Road) and in 1870 it converted the Lydney tramroad to steam. The Coleford branch was opened in December 1875. But the changes had come too late. The iron trade began to decline in the 1870s and though the coal traffic was maintained, operating costs were always high because of difficult colliery layouts and severe gradients and the distance of haul on the Severn & Wye was so short that it gave the Company only a small proportion of the receipts.

Meantime moves were on foot to link east and west Gloucestershire. The Severn Bridge Railway Company was formed in 1872 and seven years later the first train crossed the bridge from Lydney to Sharpness. That year the construction of the Severn Tunnel began, to be completed after considerable difficulty in 1886 as part of the Great Western main line between London and South Wales. The tunnel was always more important than the bridge but from 1923, until two of its spans were brought down by an oil barge in October 1960, trains to South Wales were regularly diverted across the bridge on Sundays while maintenance was being carried out in the tunnel.

Upon the construction of the Severn Bridge, the Severn Bridge Company and the Severn & Wye Railway amalgamated but this did little to strengthen the position of the small concern which found itself caught in the rivalry of the Midland and the Great Western Railway. Proposals were therefore put forward in 1893 for the sale of the Severn & Wye Railway jointly to the two larger companies and agreement was reached in the following year. Joint operation has continued despite the changes of overall organisation in 1923 and with the formation of British Railways. While passenger traffic has always been important on the routes linking Bristol and Gloucester to London, South Wales, the Midlands and the west country, passenger services were never of much consequence in the Forest of Dean. Even before the first World War the opening of alternative services and the development of road transport had brought a reduction of passenger services by train in the Forest. This process was accelerated between the wars and has proceeded apace since. Created to minister to one set of economic needs, the railways, painful though the process sometimes is, are being adapted in our own time to meet another set. Constructed to remedy the deficiencies of alternative forms of transport and particularly the roads, the British railway network is now being curtailed because of the increasing facilities provided by the new roads. For Gloucestershire there is no more eloquent reminder of this than the contrast between the mute and silent spans of the broken Severn rail bridge and the bustling activity of construction of the new Severn road bridge. The one marks the end of one era as effectively as the other the opening of a new.

W.E. Minchinton.

THE MAKING OF CHELTENHAM SPA.

(Exhibition at Cheltenham Museum commemorating bicentenary of death of Capt. Skillicorne the founder of first Spa.)

In 1838 the Royal Old Well celebrated its centenary with a public breakfast (tickets 7/-) and enchanting illuminations of the walk in Gothick arches under the now well grown elms.

The local history material which celebrates one more century passed consists mainly of pictures, reminders of a rural holiday, portraits, caricatures; plans and maps, monuments to the developers' hopes, a small number of documents, and dominating all, excellent reproductions of Henry Skillicorne's epitaph and of his likeness. The epitaph is so full of historical meat that the text deserved to be cyclostyled and sold for further digestion; its most striking aspect is the apparent discrepancy between the image of the flag-captain of a distinguished Bristol merchant's fleet, 40 years at sea, and the portrait itself. Here is charm of look, an open controlled face, sweet-tempered, wide across the eyes and mouth, firm of chin, startlingly like recent photographs of the present Conservative member for Kinross. Plainly he was "of great regularity and probity, and so temperate as never to have been intoxicated", but less easily "tall, erect, robust and active"; but as developer of a Spa on his wife's property, the Skillicorne of the portrait could well conceive the delightful pastoral setting sketched by Lady Somerset in 1748, where a gravelled path led from a white bridge and gate along an avenue of youthful elms to a little eminence, crowned by a central brick porch supported by an assembly room and a trinket shop; gentle views of sheltering hills and ordered valley farmland, sparsely dotted with commodious white villas present the ideal of sophisticated rusticity. This sketch, and a later picture of the Pittville Pump room provide admirable evidence of what we still owe to the foresight of the eighteenth century tree planters.

Among topographical pictures an early eighteenth century oil of the High Street pleases; wide as a wool-town's street, a brook runs in its central kennel, well provided with stepping stones; about the site of the old Royal George, a farmhouse of irregular roofline stands; before it, a horse pond; a coach changes horses at the Plough, and the houses have steep pitched roofs with dormer windows; there is no competition with S.Mary's spire.

Had the dreams of Henry's son, William, borne fruit, Bayshill would have been a magnificent estate; the plan survives, handsome in itself, for a triangular area, based on a new Well Walk and the present Parabola Road, its apex a circus upon the hill top having as its eye an observatory.

Of the few portraits, perhaps those of the two "pumpers" of the Old Well take the sympathy most; Hannah Fortey (1744-1816) may have been a beauty, and her young days are commemorated in a little acquaint memento suggesting the friendly holiday atmosphere of "the Spaw". Her successor, Mrs. Rous looks as if discretion were the better part of pumping in the post Waterloo years, in her vast calash hiding a white natch and a nunlike dress.

Cheltenham's present concern for entertaining its visitors started early; rural rides, such as George Torrington records, to places like Sandford Mill, painted here with a romantic cascade and gloomy thatched barn, or to Alstone's ford and packbridge (1819) were supplemented by a pretty museum building, open by 1809 in Montpelier, the property of Messrs. Maine and Tatlow; William's Library formed part of the Assembly Rooms in High Street by 1816, and in 1822 the town boasted a handsome Literary Saloon there, furnished early Club style; by 1841 the Literary and Philosophical Institution had also a Picture Gallery full of heavy gilt frames. This range of pictures shows well the progress of the little village spa to fashionable watering place and thence to the permanent home of well-to-do retired people.

The famous visit of George III which sealed the Spa's success is well documented; a picture of Bayshill Lodge, not apparently larger than many villas later built in Lansdown to contain mid-Victorian families, explains fully the incognito charm of the pictures of the Family, afoot at the Well, and Fanny Burney's need to have her tea-table at a passage window.

During my visit a school party arrived from the country; if "Notes for Schools" such as formed such an excellent feature of the earlier "Railways" Exhibition could have been distributed, they would have greatly added to the value of the excursion.

E. Vowles.

EXCAVATIONS 1963.

FROCESTER COURT ROMAN VILLA.

After three seasons' work we now know a great deal more about the arrangements and history of this villa. The full story will not be completed for at least another two years - longer if more large additions are found.

The original house, built soon after 270 A.D., was a solid construction containing only the bare essentials for a farmer who evidently intended to expand. The foundations were massive so as to allow sufficient height for the rooms to be lit by clerestory windows after more rooms had been added to both front and back. This building contained a large parlour, a hall, 50 feet long, and a smithy, all in a row, and a passage through from front to back between the parlour and the hall. The hall had all the kitchen arrangements at one end and may have been divided into three by light partitions. There were no bedrooms, but they may have slept in the attics as well as in the living rooms.

The next generation added a long corridor in the front with a second parlour at one end and a corn-drying room at the other. At the same time a row of narrow rooms was built along the back of the house. One of these was occupied by the 'agent'. He had a large, heavy, iron-bound strong box sunk in one corner and a hearth in the middle. The floor had been patched with old roofing tiles and many small coins had been lost in the cracks. No fewer than 23 were recovered from this little room, 20 feet long by 10 feet wide.

Along the eastern end, backing up against the parlour and the agent's room, was a long lean-to shed with one side open except for the row of pillars supporting the roof. A channel in this shed contained a quantity of fullers' earth, which shows that the wool from the home flock of sheep was treated here. Spindle whorls suggest that the spinning was done here too, but no loom weights were recognised among the finds.

At a later date a new east wing was built. It was much wider than the shed but the pillars were retained, possibly to support an upper floor. The wool was still worked in the same place but in a much larger room. An extension northwards has not yet been fully excavated, but it contains one heated and one unheated room and may turn out to be the bath suite.

The small finds show that the family had become wealthy, cultivated and leisured. They include painted wall plaster in many shades, delicate glass beakers, elaborately decorated pottery, brooches, rings, hairpins, a stylus for writing on wax tablets and ivory dice.

Occupation continued into the fifth century, but in a less sophisticated form. In the end there are signs of Saxon squatters who patched the roof of the smithy, already converted into a stable, with wattle and daub and eventually set it on fire.

The end of the first century is very late for the original construction of a villa in Gloucestershire. There are hints, however, of an earlier building about 100 yards away in the same field. Following the plough we have found a suggestion of a stone floor together with early pottery and a brooch of first century type. But investigation here must wait until the excavation of the later house has been completed.

H.S. Gracie.

BARNSELEY PARK ROMAN VILLA.

This year work has been concentrated on completing areas already begun and opening out larger ones in an attempt to uncover complete buildings or extensive parts of them. The latter has led to the discovery of a large farm building (16' 6" between walls and at least 44' long) in the south-west part of the site. The walls of this building have been constructed with alternate pitched and flat stones and at least three floors were observed, the uppermost having been largely disturbed when the whole site was levelled in more recent times. The intermediate floor consisted of very large irregular flat slabs, some of which were re-used. One of these had two channels cut into it forming a cross, very similar to a door step in position at the Great Witcombe villa. When this stone was lifted, a barbarous coin of FEL TEMP type (c. 360 A.D.) was found below it. This floor also appeared to have a drain down the centre which had been deliberately blocked.

Further examples of dry stone structures were found, and at one point at least four periods were noted, but their precise function remains obscure.

A new discovery was a well (3' to 2'9" diameter); this was emptied to 22' when the side was found to be dangerous and left until better resources are available next year. The well was clearly associated with the building of the house and had been deliberately filled in with building stones, presumably when the western part of the house went out of use. The stones included a large millstone, a trough and voussoirs. Investigation of the house was on a limited scale, but modern disturbance in the north-east corner of the site revealed the existence of a hypocaust system which had been wrecked when this part of the building was converted to farm use.

Another useful discovery was a yard surface showing wheel ruts, which was in its original condition undisturbed by any levelling operations.

The basic chronology of this part of the villa has been clarified and no appears as follows:

- 1) Nothing earlier than pottery of the second half of the second century has yet been noted but no structures can yet be associated with this early material. An occupation layer has been found below the dry-stone structures and includes coal.
- 2) The dry-stone structures appear to have a very long life and it has now been possible to demonstrate stratigraphically that they continued in use after the building of the house. A yard with at least two surfaces has now been found below the house.

- 3) The house can now be securely dated by at least four coins to C.340 A.D. and had considerable life - long enough for the step to receive much wear (40 to 50 years?) and for a hypocaust flue to be relined.
- 4) At a date not yet established, this part of the house went out of domestic use, heavy stone packing was introduced, apparently for conversion to farm use.
- 5) The dry-stone structures went out of use and were covered over with a yard which has produced a coin of Valens (c.380 A.D.) Over this, a massive pitched foundation which abuts the larger building. But the date of this and its subsequent relationship to the chronology of the house remains to be established.
- 6) The coins, now totalling 98, show a peak of prosperity between c.340 and c.380. The latter date may be that of the reduction of the house, but occupation continued with an increase of farm buildings.

Graham Webster,
 Dept. of Extra-Mural Studies,
 University of Birmingham.

W I N C H C O M B E.

During August an excavation was carried out at Winchcombe under the direction of Mr. B.K. Davison, on behalf of the Ministry of Works and Public Buildings. The aim of the operations was to examine the rampart on the north side of the town, which had previously been excavated in the 19th Century, but had remained unrecorded, and to test a large area threatened by proposed school building.

The rampart proved to have been cast up over an old ground surface containing 4th Century Romano-British pottery and two 4th Century coins. No dating material was found in the rampart, which was apparently of one period. Subsequently, the face of the rampart was cut back, and a dry-stone revetment wall, 3 ft. thick, constructed at its scarped face. This wall was later robbed away, half a silver groat (Richard I ?), being found in the robbing trench. This would seem to suggest that the rampart was thrown up sometime between the 4th and 12th Centuries, most likely during the middle-late Saxon period, since no post-Conquest pottery was found in it, although such occurred in quantity elsewhere in Winchcombe.

Trial trenching in the fields to the south of the rampart showed that much of the old ground surface had been cut away by numerous ditches and gullies, varying in width from 1 ft. to 8 ft. some intersecting, but mostly running parallel to one another. In the areas not so affected, numerous pits and post-holes were found; these produced much bone, but little sign of domestic habitation. Finds here were of Romano-British, and 11th - 12th Century date, but were not sufficiently numerous to account for the number of post-holes, etc. The post-holes give the impression of being those of extensive farm buildings, the lack of associated pottery possibly indicating a date when pottery was scarce (i.e. pre 11th-12th Centuries). One oval hut, 15 ft. x 13 ft. was found, constructed with alternating 12" and 6" diameter post-holes. Unfortunately there were no associated finds with this hut.

EXCAVATION ON A MEDIEVAL SITE AT CHEDWORTH.

During April, an exploratory excavation was carried out in the grounds of Old Farm, Chedworth, by kind permission of the owner, Mr. J.R. Milford. A large number of medieval sherds had previously been discovered during gardening activities, and the purpose of the excavation was to find out whether there were any traces of medieval structures, and to elucidate something of the history of settlement on the site.

Five trenches were dug over the area in which the greatest concentration of pottery had been found, and additionally a further excavation was carried out to investigate an area indicative of iron working activity, which had been revealed during the digging of a garden pond.

Three of the trenches contained rough stone floors of medieval date and it was possible to examine these and their associated occupation layers. Although traces of post-holes and tumbled stone walls were found, sufficient work has not yet been carried out to enable a plan of the building to be made.

The two other trenches proved unrewarding, no indications of medieval buildings being discovered in them.

The area of iron-working produced high quantities of slag, and this together with associated burnt material suggests that the industry was carried on on quite a considerable scale.

Much pottery was excavated from the stratified levels ranging in date from the 12th to the 14th Centuries, and it is tentatively suggested that the site was occupied throughout this period, and was centred upon the building, perhaps a farmhouse, whose presence was shown by the discovery of medieval walling several years ago. It is proposed to investigate this and associated floor levels at a future stage of the excavations. It seems probable that in the 14th Century the focus of the site shifted to the spot on which the present Old Farm now stands, for although this building dates from the 17th Century, it appears to incorporate earlier foundations.

R.D. Abbott
Deputy Curator
Gloucester Museum.

REPORTS FROM MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

IN AND CONNECTED WITH GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Visitors to Bristol Museum in July must have been greatly impressed by the quality of work sent in the Childrens' Summer Competitions. The end of the gallery held colossal models of prehistoric monsters made by children under 12 and I remember a most lively illustrated account of the life of a Bristol sailor in the Napoleonic Wars entered for another section of the competition for this age group. The 12 - 15 group were invited either to make an illustrated study on Costume using the Blaise Castle Collection or on Armour studied in the Museum or on local statues, effigies and brasses, and some very delightful albums were submitted. These competitions have long formed a part of the Museum's summer programme. This year 44 entries were received most of them from groups of not less than 4 children so the interest is evidently well maintained and the standard is very high. The Museum Newsletter "Mosaic" included notes on the model of Brunel's dredger now on display; the original scraped Bristol Harbour until 3 years ago removing ten tons at a time. The arrival of the 0-6-0 saddle tank engine, made by Fox, Walker of Bristol in 1874, was described and the Museum policy on steam locomotive preservation explained. We were reminded that two cases of Bristol pewter are now in the Wills Hall and that though Bristol pewterers could produce work of the quality exhibited they were not above fraudulently marking their wares "Made in London". One case holds the pewter dinner service used at Dr. White's Hospital (Temple) for the "Pease and Pork" Dinner on St. Thomas' Day, ordained by the founder in 1615 and continued till the last War. Among the Winter lectures will be "Recent Excavations in Bristol" by P.A. Rahtz (Jan.15) "The Church and the People in the Middle Ages" by Prof. H. Rothwell (Feb.19) and "Severn Fisheries" by Mr. J. Neufville Taylor (Mar.18). Accessions include the Bagstone Gate Toll Board, a Bronze Age stone axe-hammer from Cromhall and Roman Pottery from Sea Mills and William I Bristol mint silver penny (type V), Henry I Bristol mint silver penny (type XI), electrotype of unique specimen found near Cardiff, Henry II Bristol mint silver penny (no eye, Elaf), Edward IV (2nd reign) Bristol groat, 19th century Bristol inn checks and trade checks (several), casts of rare Bristol coins in the National Museum, Copenhagen, and a few Gloucestershire 17th century tokens.

Gloucester City Museums report that,

"The late Mr. Stanley Marling, who died on April 18th, bequeathed to Gloucester City Museum the greater part of his large collection of period furniture, silver, paintings, barometers, clocks and watches, glass, and much else besides. The bequest includes eleven examples of the work of Richard Wilson, R.A. (1713-1782), a thirty-day chiming long-case clock by Christopher Pinchbeck, a number of superb pieces of early silver and two ivory-cased portable barometers by Daniel Quare.

The bequest is a truly munificent one and adds a completely new section to the Museum's collections. Selected displays from the bequest are now on view but full justice cannot be done to the collection until the Museum's new galleries are completed early in 1965.

FOLK MUSEUM.

During recent months a number of interesting additions have been made to the collections. Of particular local interest are a canal plate from the Thames and Severn Canal inscribed, "Wallbridge 1 $\frac{1}{2}$, Inglesham 27 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", and a notice board from the Hereford and Gloucester Canal carrying warnings against unauthorised fishing by boatmen. This latter was salvaged from a barn by two local children, and affords a good instance of co-operation between Museum and general public, which is essential in fostering the development of the local history collections in the Folk Museum.

The collection of local paintings continues to expand, and the most important recent accession to this section of the Museum is a fine oil painting of Gloucester from the south west, attributed to the well-known topographical artist, Julius Caesar Ibbetson (1759 - 1817).

During the summer a new guidebook to the Museum was published, and has proved very popular with visitors."

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COLLECTION: GLOUCESTER CITY LIBRARY.

Accessions, 1963.

Gloucestershire County Handbook 1963-64.
Gloucester City Directory 1963.
Moore, J.C. The Welsh Marches.
Bailey's British Directory 1784. Includes Gloucestershire.
E.R.P.B. Nursery rhymes of Gloucestershire.
Handbook to the parish churches of St. George, Falfield and St. Oswald, Rookhampton.
Grinsell, I.V. A brief numismatic history of Bristol.
A Guide to Chipping Campden parish church.
Roe, E. Bishops' transcripts in the diocese of Gloucester. Marriages 1813-1837. Vol. 5.
Parr, H.W. The Severn and Wye Railway - a history of the railways of the Forest of Dean, pt.1.
Pugh, T.B. The Marcher lordships of South Wales.
Beddington, H. Forest Acorns.

The exhibition on the growth of Cheltenham Spa arranged by the Museum and Art Gallery has been reported elsewhere. The Museum has recently received a Roman pendant in bronze and blue glass found at Battledown, Cheltenham, and an unstratified Roman coin of Allectus from Birdlip.

The Curator of Stroud Museum informs us that,

"To coincide with the opening of the Woodchester pavement, a series of comparable photographs of mosaics from other sites was arranged, together with a number of small finds from the villa itself. It is unfortunate that since its excavation, 1793-96, the bulk of the pottery etc., found by Samuel Lysons has gone astray, so the material shown was in the main found during subsequent excavations.

During October an exhibition of Church Plate was organised in conjunction with the Stroud Festival of Religious Drama and the Arts. Items shown were all obtained in the central area of the county, and ranged in date from a copy of the famous Boleyn Cup of 1535 to modern work not yet dedicated. Minor plate, including an 18th century knife, a baptismal shell and a 19th century wine strainer, was included. Apart from the high aesthetic quality of the pieces themselves, an outstanding side-feature of the exhibition was the large amount of local material of secular origin given to the church either when new or after several years of use as a treasured possession in the home. Over 900 visitors came to this exhibition in the one week it was on display.

Gifts to the Museum have included a further series of local fossils, a human skull from Randwick thought from the condition of the teeth to be Neolithic; and numerous clay pipe fragments bearing makers names. A local coin collection has yielded another ancient British silver quarter stater of the Dobuni similar to one in our collections from the Horsley area. The find spot is unknown, but the father of the collector lived for a time in Nailsworth district, suggesting a possible common origin for both coins.

Of more recent date are a water colour by W.F. Randall of the well known house, The Greys, Bisley, demolished in 1890, and a number of glass bottles made to contain DICKENSONS STAR SAUCE dug up near the site of the sauce factory at Sudgrove near Miserden."

PROGRAMMES OF LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETIES.

AUTUMN AND WINTER 1963-4.

BRISTOL AND GLOS. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

- Nov. 11 "Bristol and Chartism." Dr. J. Cannon.
 Dec. 2 "Roman Fishbourne." H. Cunliffe, F.S.A.
 Feb. 3 "Cirencester Excavations." J. Wachter, F.S.A.
 Mar. 9 "Open Fields and Inclosures in the Cotswolds." C.R. Elrington, M.A.

CHELTENHAM AND GLOUCESTER BRANCH HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION.

- Oct. 10 "Communism". M.C. Morgan, M.A. (Schools and Colleges only).
 Oct. 11 "The Eighteenth Century Electoral System". Dr. J. Cannon.
 Oct. 28 "Capt. Henry Skillicorne and his Times". Gwen Hart, M.A.
 Oct. 31 "Chatsworth and its Owners". Prof. G. Potter.
 Nov. 8 "Emergence of the Renaissance in Architecture". R.W. Paterson,
 A.R.I.B.A.
 Nov. 14 "Wars of the Roses". Mrs. J. Devereux, B.A. (Schools and
 Colleges only)
 Feb. 21 "The Gunpowder Plot". P. McGrath, M.A.
 Mar. 6 "A Free Church in a Free State". Rev. J.S. Nurser, Ph.D.
 Mar. 21 "Sixth Form Forum" at Cheltenham Grammar School.

CIRENCESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

- Sept. 30 "Strange History of the Borough of Cirencester". Dr. C.D. Ross.
 Oct. 28 "The Excavations at Glastonbury Abbey, 1951-63". C.A. Raleigh
 Radford, F.S.A.
 Nov. 11 "Archaeology and the Bible, with special reference to the
 earlier walls of Jerusalem". Dr. K. Kenyon, C.B.E., F.S.A.
 (by invitation of Cricklade Historical Society)
 Dec. 30 "Later Anglo-Saxon Sculpture" (900-1066)." Prof. D. Talbot-Rice.
 Jan. 20 "Industrial Archaeology". N. Cossons, B.A.
 Feb. 10 "Roman Ilchester". J. Stevens-Cox, F.S.A.
 Mar. 2 "Cotswold Villages and Inclosure". C.R. Elrington, M.A.
 Mar. 23 "Cirencester Excavations, 1963". J. Wachter, F.S.A.

COTSWOLD NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB.

- Oct. 23 "Open Fields and Inclosures in the Cotswolds". C.R. Elrington, M.A.
 Nov. 21 "Ogam Stones of Wales". Rev. J. Jones-Davies, R.D.
 Dec. 12 "Traditional Timber Barns". R.P. Nicholson, Esq.,
 Apr 10 "Pilot Survey of Industrial Archaeology". R. Sherlock, Esq.,

