

GLOUCESTERSHIRE COMMUNITY COUNCIL.

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## LOCAL HISTORY NEWSLETTER.

SPRING 1965.

We must first apologise for the lateness of this issue of the Bulletin. Unfortunately, our Editor, Dr. O.M. Griffiths, has been taken ill and is now in hospital, with the result that the Editor's chair is temporarily occupied by the Secretary of the Local History Committee. We hope that Dr. Griffiths will soon be well again and that she will be back in the chair by the Autumn.

The most outstanding event for Local Historians this Spring will be the publication of the new volume of the Victoria History of Gloucestershire. Volume VI covers Slaughter Hundred and the upper divisions of Westminster and Tewkesbury. An appreciation by the County Records Officer is included in this number.

### THE STANDING CONFERENCE FOR LOCAL HISTORY.

The Annual Meeting for 1964 was held on the 19th and 20th November. Miss Powley reported that at the Discussion Groups three topics were discussed, printing and publishing (which included descriptions of the Gestetner Duplicating, the Xerox multi-litho process, letter-press printing, and the photo-litho process) the Industrial Monuments Survey, and the aims of the Standing Conference. The meeting arranged for Secretaries of Local History Committees included a debate on the recording of dialect. All the Secretaries recognised its importance and stressed the need for skilled guidance. The subjects of the addresses were, the Victoria History of the Counties of England by R.B. Pugh, F.S.A., General Editor of the Victoria Histories and the County History of Glamorgan by Prof. Glamor Williams.

### THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE COMMUNITY COUNCIL LOCAL HISTORY COMMITTEE.

The Committee tried a new experiment this year offering prizes for the best essays on a subject connected with Industrial Archaeology. Only five entries were received but the competitors set themselves a high standard of scholarship and their work was based on original sources as the Committee had hoped when initiating the experiment. The first prize went to Mr. H. Household for his paper on the Thames and Severn Canal and the second to Mr. R.L. Rose for his account of Lightpill Cloth Mill and to Mr. Christopher Cox for his description of the Turnpike System in the Stroud District. The third prize was awarded to Mr. R.A. Lewis for his paper on the Navigation to Stroud and a special prize was given to Elaine Marshall (aged 14) for her description of Life as a Clothier at King's Stanley Mill.

The first prize in the Schools Competition was won by S.N. Adam of Marling School for his finely illustrated account of the Stonehouse and Nailsworth Railway. He consulted the British Railway Archives in London as well as local material and gave a most vivid picture of the enterprise which was financed by local shareholders and worked by the Midland Railway and of the extension to Stroud. The reader strongly sympathises with the line's vicissitudes. The second prize was divided between C. Price and D. Tomkins of Severn Vale Secondary School for a straightforward account of the Thames and Severn Canal and to Patric Dickinson of Marling School, Stroud, for a paper on Berkeley and the Berkeley family which showed great enthusiasm. The Group prize was divided between two groups of scholars at Severn Vale School, Mary Camm, Susan Perry and Lorna Herbert for their work on the Stroud water Canal and Wendy Base, Barbara Jackson and Janet Mortimer for a paper on Gloucester Castle. The Committee congratulate the scholars who entered and the staffs who so obviously aroused their enthusiasm, but they would like to see a far wider field of entries. Choice of subject is left to the competitors, though it has been suggested that small local projects for which original documents are available are more suitable than wider topics. Some excellent work has been submitted in the past, not always from history specialists, and the Committee hope next year for a flood of entries. The One Day School for Sixth Formers will be arranged again this year and perhaps this meeting will give an opportunity for the Secretary to answer any queries about the scope of the competition.

## THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE SOCIETY FOR INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY.

This Society's Bulletins show how keen and many sided are the interests of its members. The November number contained a most interesting article by Christopher Cox on Milestones of the Stroud District and as a result of his enquiries the County Surveyor has decided to replace the plates, many of which had been retained since their removal in the last War. A report on the Cardiff Conference showed the task of filling in C.B.A. cards can be successfully undertaken by schools. Delegates were reminded of the need for an inquiring eye, for a manufacturer's name on old lamps or manhole covers could provide clues to the existence of ironworks hitherto unknown. Mr. Wailes pointed out the dangers to industrial relics due to the high price of scrap metal and the rising values of sites and the sweeping changes occasioned by nationalisation and take-over bids. Christopher Bishop contributed an account of the present state of the entrances to Sapperton Tunnel and best methods of restoration and members reported on a building survey they had undertaken of Gun's Mill, Abenhall. The building was originally an early blast-furnace, the dates 1682 and 1683 being cast into external beams. In the mid eighteenth century it became a paper mill and is now a farm.

In the March number the possibility of making the Stroud Valley into a National Park of Industrial Archaeology was discussed. Among the exciting suggestions put forward were the restoration of part of the Thames and Severn Canal with narrow boats moored on the water and a museum in an adjacent building, a railway museum, and the organisation of visits to machinery still in use, such as the waterwheels at Egypt Mill or to see cloth-making at one of the historic mills. Christopher Cox gave a valuable account of Turnpikes in the Stroud area, listing the remaining toll houses. Three of the typical three-sided buildings remain; Stancombe Pike near Bisley, Butter Row Gate, and one half-way between Nailsworth and Horsley. It is encouraging to note so many reports of field-work, records having been made of structures on the Thames and Severn Canal between Stroud and the Western end of the tunnel, of the machinery at Egypt Mill, and of tunnels and stone mines at Balls Green and Nailsworth. Emergency surveys of buildings under threat of immediate demolition were undertaken at Bruton's forge, Nailsworth, and railway stations at Haresfield, Stonehouse and Berkeley Road. A note reminded readers that the last shipment of Forest coal to Frampton-on-Severn by water took place on February 9th. An ancient tipping mechanism was used to load the coal into barges at Sharpness. Now the coal will be conveyed from the Princess Royal Colliery by lorry.

Excursions planned for the Spring and Summer include visits to Newnham where the site of the abortive efforts to tunnel the Severn will be visited, Bristol (exhibits in Technical Museum Store) and Nettlebridge Valley, morning visit to Marling & Evans Mill at Rycroft, a whole day excursion to Ironbridge and the Coalbrookdale area led by Mr. Rix, a day excursion to the Avon and Kennet Canal and a two day exploration of the Welsh valleys to Dowlais and Merthyr.

### A PLEA FOR THE PICTURE POSTCARD.

The practice of sending picture postcards reached one of its greatest peaks of popularity towards the end of the 19th Century. Local photographers throughout the country produced views of town and village in great quantity. Not only did they make cards of the obvious subjects such as the village street, the church, and the "pub", but they also attended local events to record them and to sell the cards to those taking part, for the day of the almost universal ownership of the cheap camera was yet to come. In this way such occasions as village feasts, processions, ceremonies, even local funerals came to be recorded. A photograph of a funeral at Brimscombe Port which was brought to the Museum recently shows in the background a dockside crane, the sort of thing which the industrial archaeologist is anxious to record. There is a wealth of incidental detail of this sort to be discovered in the study of old postcards, and another card, again of Brimscombe, is one of the few known illustrations of the famous barge weighing machine, the engineer's model for which is on show in the Gloucester Folk Museum.

Frequently the cards give interesting information on local customs - and costumes! Such events as May Day parades and Sunday School outings found the villagers in their Sunday best. Often the method of transport on such outings is also of interest, and a postcard I have recently seen of a Sunday School outing shows the children crammed into two farm wagons being hauled by a magnificent Ransome's traction engine.

Street scenes in towns frequently show early public transport, horse drawn trams and buses for example, and there is scarcely an aspect of local history which cannot be furthered by studying local postcard views. There may well be small shops in towns and villages throughout Gloucestershire which have stocks of old postcards tucked away in store cupboards - I have been told that it is still possible to buy pre-1914 views over the counter in the post office of a village in the north of the county. It is even possible that the stocks of negatives taken by photographers still exist, and these could prove most informative on life in town and village 60 or 70 years ago. If anyone knows of the whereabouts of such a collection of negatives or a stock of Victorian picture postcards the Gloucester Museums would be very pleased to hear of it.

#### EMBROIDERY FROM 1500 TO THE PRESENT DAY

(Christmas Exhibition at Cheltenham Art Gallery)

The route of the embroiderer's art seems a side-long approach to Local History, but a visit to the hall of delights staged over Christmas in the Cheltenham Art Gallery, helped by the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Embroiderer's Guild, showed that while contributing nothing to the knowledge of, say, parish boundaries, the exhibition provided a historic view of the art, a sense of living personality almost tangible, and, in the matter of waistcoats, the edge on the Tailor of Gloucester.

The chief impression historically was of the dependence of taste and skills upon economic and social changes. The earliest treasure was a sixteenth-century night-cap - spacious, closely embroidered and significantly well-worn; Jacobean designs were large, handsome, covering the ground speedily and thickening linen hangings with woollen stitching; but as the material arts of eighteenth century living developed, the work becomes finer; nostalgically observant of nature, even to the sophisticated white silk waistcoats embroidered with alternating clumps of bulrushes and roses, or fern fronds backing a panache of tulip and pansy. Earlier, the exquisite dress embroidery reproduces moss roses, mealy auriculas, yellow daisies with minute french knot hearts; but about 1770 a change in technique limits the scope of design and stitch; the increased demand of a wealthier people takes effect; original design gives way to speed of production, and the work achieves miraculous regularity, all in satin stitch; consequently, except for two handsome navy-blue satins of the soberer post-Napoleonic years, the later nineteenth century examples decline disastrously to fine tartan cross-stitch and roses in Berlin wool-work.

The household linens follow suit. A morsel of white quilt, stiff with work, demonstrates the patience of the seventeenth century in converting monotonous foundation material into splendour; the joyous quilt of Elizabeth Woodhead of 1740 is less exacting in its chevron quilting and large chintz appliques, so humourously chosen and lovingly cut; it indicates that a choice of materials and designs, leisure for creative work, were the gifts of technical progress to Elizabeth's prosperous household. The later patchwork quilts reveal great dexterity and elaboration of the tradition; there follows a collapse, interestingly paralleled in the Claverton Manor collection, where industrial wealth tries its untaught hand upon the best materials, disastrously. Tradition recovered was beautifully illustrated in a demure cotton patchwork by the Embroiderers' Guild.

The clever juxtaposition of this twentieth century work spells out the historical lesson of the exhibition - the impact of the machine upon one of the most fundamental domestic arts. In the twentieth century, the machine emancipates completely from essential handwork; it can produce a cheap, quick elegance. The Embroiderers' Guild concentrated upon the pictorial

possibilities of modern techniques; the swing-needle machine becomes a draughtsman's pen; modern materials become the source of texture, light, atmosphere; hand stitchery is like brushwork. The results are living, vigorous, and our wealth of materials and precision engineering have been mobilised to produce works of individuality with which to illuminate the mass-produced back ground.

This lovely exhibition provoked many questions. An explanatory list was issued by the Embroiderers; the V. & A. produced just enough labelling; an Art Gallery sheet intended to provoke the curious to further exploration and perhaps give it a local twist was sorely lacking. It seems worth repeating that the Museums deserve better than always to be short of the ha'porth for tar.

The V. & A. publishes excellent illustrated handbooks; that on English Embroidery has a fascinating historical introduction. Are these not of more value outside London? Why are they never sent for sale at the provincial exhibitions?

E. Vowles.

### SOME FAMOUS TREES

By Thelma Smith

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The Gloucester City Libraries' small exhibition about famous trees in the County covers aspects often forgotten today.

The exhibition usefully reminds us that to our forebears, plentiful timber meant personal wealth and national security. Nineteenth century enclosures were motivated by a desire to conserve wood for naval ship-building. A petition by Viscount Gage to George I indicates the capital involved in forestry operations. Another manuscript on show, a 'stand-still' order of 1618, lights up the struggle between the competing claims of iron-masters and ship-builders. An earlier item, an entry from Bishop Giffard's Register in 1287, reveals how theft of standing timber must have seemed a short cut to riches.

Age, size and situation sometimes combine to lend social status to a tree. The display of a Road Act for 1761, for instance, shows how Isabel's Elm and Pewsdon Ash served as landmarks, in lieu of Ordnance Survey numbers. Cheltenham, still famed for its tree-lined Promenade, had at least three historic trees. Piff's Elm, by Tewkesbury Road, was cut down in 1845, after nine sawyers worked for fourteen days. The timber was found to be perfectly sound. Gallows Oak, at the junction of the London and Prestbury - Bath roads, survived from a royal manor and was mentioned twice in a fourteenth century grant to Fécamp Abbey. Maud's (or Maul's) Elm, on Swindon Road, commemorated the sad story of a village girl wrongfully convicted of murder.

Many of the trees reached astonishing dimensions, despite decay at the centre. The Oak Monarch of Newland, thriving at the time of the Norman Conquest, acquired a very picturesque appearance from the exuberant growth of convoluted bark round a decayed heart. Boddington Oak, burnt down in 1790, had a hollow stem, forming a room 16 ft in diameter. A window had been cut into one side - yet even so in 1783, it produced a good crop of acorns. The Wych Elm, near Lypiatt Park, was a mere shell, which in its time had enclosed a cider press and housed farm animals. The Lassington Oak must have exceeded 600 years in age, but unfortunately sloping ground required increasing use of supports, until fire destroyed it. If sound, it would have contained 300 cub. ft. of timber.

Lassington's other famous tree was the giant pear, which was no less than 18 ft in girth 2 ft from the ground.

It is, however, to Tortworth that we must grant the most interesting of the county's big trees - a giant Spanish chestnut that Loudon considered could have been planted by the Romans. Mentioned as a farmer's tree in John's reign, at the time of King Stephen it was already known as the Great Chestnut of Tortworth. In 1712, Sir R. Atkins recorded it as nineteen yards in compass. There is in the display a letter of 1832, which refers to two scions from it growing at Monkshill and Wortley House. Lastly, there is the famous Woodchester larch, planted on the lawn of the Rectory in 1761, and held to be a direct descendant of the first English larches, the historic trees of Dunkeld, introduced in 1738 by a Duke of Atholl.

The list of exhibition items goes on to include other famous trees like the Painswick oak (a pollarded tree near Edge) and groups of trees like the Painswick churchyard yews. Any article on this subject should not omit the drowned forest at Sharpness, uncovered in the making of new docks at Holly Hazle. Some hazel nuts were actually found perfectly preserved in the top of the peat. One oak measured 80 ft as it lay.

Nowadays people get excited about trees as amenities. Felling of street trees rouses public protest but the policy of "improvements" is seldom altered. A big thing made of genuine timber now causes comment; the exhibition has a charming article describing a block floor made from a yew brought down by a gale at Clearwell. "The sap wood has already turned from cream to honey, and the heart wood to the best of both claret and burgundy" -- this poetic tribute hardly conceals the sad fact that a wood floor is now a luxury.

#### C H E L T E N H A M

FROM DOMESDAY BOOK TO QUEEN VICTORIA.

An exhibition held at Cheltenham Art Gallery, March 1965.

To those who divide the history of Cheltenham into that of The Spa and the market town, and write off the latter, the most striking fact in this exhibition was the evidence of a continuous story in which the Spa was a brilliant episode; here, the pragmatist could seek hope for a future worthy of the Spa; the pure historian could see a remarkable richness and variety of material, even for the pre-Spa days.

A mild dramatic unity in Cheltenham's history suggested itself. If the town was, in 19th century and 20th century a purveyor to the needs of the prosperous, it did also, T.R.E., provide 3,000 loaves for the King's hounds - which must very early have set the Chelt's mills (illustrated at later dates) upon their feet. The Countess of Huntingdon's letter of 1420 demanding 300 lampreys from her manor sounds also like strawberries in February. Was this her year's due, or a party? They could have been accumulated in the beautiful kipeş sunk under water, but Henry III's score for the Lenten fast was only 188; and if 300 parasite lampreys could be collected for a single order, how did there remain enough healthy salmon in the Severn to keep the stock thriving? How like an Orlando extravaganza that the next Lady Huntingdon to leave her mark upon Cheltenham should have put her enthusiasms in the opposite scale as the patroness of John Whitefield. Following the thread, one sees a connexion between the Grevilles of Charlton Kings (shown in documents linking them with the great wool-merchants) and the unusual number of weavers, tailors, and glovers, shown in 1608, in Men and Armour. There seemed to be nothing on the tobacco trade of 17th century, but the trend reappears in the 18th century, when examples of poor-law administration showed pin-making in one work-house, and a parish-apprentice learning stocking frame knitting.

Among the mediaeval documents which caught the eye was John Hare's cautious provision for care in his old age, dated 1421. The problem of care for the aged had obviously made itself felt in 16th century Cheltenham (R. Pates' Foundation Charter); had it already taken shape in the fifteenth century among the mobile and prosperous merchants? Willian Botiller of Corse died in 1455 at over 70;\* John Hare seems to have expected his three score years and ten; the beginnings of this social problem of 16th century and 17th century may therefore have lain well behind the Tudors.

The painting of Cheltenham High Street, shown at an earlier exhibition, greatly charms, but the inadequacy of the road illuminates the documents of town "house-wifery"; in these appeared an interesting process from the discomforts caused by a growing proletariat in the 17th century whose needs the manorial court was inadequate to handle (risks of plague infection, fire, and uncontrolled dogs) to evidences of increasing local responsibility for order in the 18th century, hastened by the necessity of providing decently for visitors to the Spa. This necessity brought its own troubles; one of the more tiresome responsibilities of the Paving Commissioners was to control the many rough characters who carried sedan chairs or drove a fly; their disorderliness became a riot on Boxing Day 1842, and the Beadles' report to Quarter Sessions dwells upon the unhelpfulness of the new Peelers in sorting out the traffic. Chartism does not seem to have marked the town, but order during its rapid expansion remained a problem; the drab streets in St. Peter's needed an extra police station by 1850, and earlier, the Commissioners are reported to have met with resource a deputation of rate-economisers wishing to avoid the expense of a police force; they were welcomed, and heard seriatim, each man privately; Queen's Bench, on appeal, considered 9d. in the £ not excessive. In general, the "housewifery" section exacted respect for the hard-pressed but forward looking commissioners, who, while admitting a lot of sewage to the Chelt before 1831, got by a crucial period of growth without a cholera outbreak.

The exhibition's Oscar must go to the foundation charter of Richard Pate's Grammar School, with its vivid inset drawing of which the moral must be that a boy who wants to get on should choose rich parents. Education was well documented and a cricket ball properly figured in the early records of the College, holing a window of the Lord of the Manor. The mid-victorian view of all aspects of education at once, showed the vast need in every walk of life, the groping efforts and the sericus foundations which were being laid; one felt that 19th century Cheltenham was a vigorous place.

On the beginnings of the Spa, there was an excellent collection of maps and plans illustrating the redistribution of the land; in this group the general specifications for the building of Fanconberg House had special interest for the present day, preoccupied as it is with new methods and materials.

Justice could only have been done to this exhibition by a number of visits. It was beautifully set out and labelled to be seen as a continuous history; generous allowance was made for shortage of time or Latin in the summaries which accompanied the early documents; the visitor was also provided with an admirable pamphlet setting the landmarks of the exhibition in their historical place, thus enabling him to appreciate also those lesser exhibits which took his fancy.

\* B.G.A.S. Transactions. Vol. 64. p.77. A Fifteenth Century Civil Servant  
R. Griffiths.

Elizabeth Vowles.

#### FERDINANDO GORGES.

This year marks the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of Sir Ferdinando Gorges who was first Governor of New England and Lord Proprietor of Maine. Celebrations to honour this great Elizabethan are taking place in the United States and in this country, particularly in Bristol and Plymouth. That these two west country ports should be taking part is not surprising for both played an active part in the discovery and colonization

of North America. From Bristol in 1497 sailed John Cabot, returning a few months later, having discovered the mainland of North America. In 1620 the Pilgrim Fathers left Plymouth to settle in New England, a country which had already been surveyed for Bristol merchants. Indeed, that famous passage was made possible by Ferdinando Gorges, who signed the patent under which they sailed.

In Bristol from May 22nd until June 12th an exhibition illustrating the life of Ferdinando Gorges and his connections with the City will be held in the Red Lodge, Park Row, an Elizabethan house which he would have known well.

Sir Ferdinando grew up in that stirring age of English history when his kinsmen Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Humphrey Gilbert were daring all to found colonies in the New World. Inspired by Richard Hakluyt, who was prebend of Bristol Cathedral, and supported by the desire of the merchants of Bristol to develop trade with North America, Ferdinando Gorges was one of the leading spirits in American colonisation.

At an early age he adopted the profession of arms and joined his countrymen in Holland who were at that time engaged in a desperate struggle with Spain. Later he joined the English under the command of the Earl of Essex who knighted him at the siege of Rouen where he was wounded.

In 1595 he was made Governor of Plymouth Fort which became an important post with threats of invasion from Spain. In 1601, he was unfortunately associated with the Earl of Essex in his rebellion against the Queen and was deprived of his Plymouth command and for the rest of the Queen's reign he lived in banishment in Charlton house in Somerset. On the accession of James I he was restored to his command at Plymouth but this did not last long for the peacetime command of a fort that no longer had any significance and offered little prospect of promotion, was far from attractive.

However, the turn of the century had witnessed a revival of the interest of Englishmen in overseas expansion, an interest which peace with Spain served to strengthen. It was then that Gorges' long connection with American colonization began. In 1605 he took an active part in promoting a voyage made by George Waymouth to the coast of what is now the state of Maine. Waymouth brought back five Indians with him, three of whom he gave to Gorges on his arrival in Plymouth. From them Gorges learnt much about their country. "And the longer I conversed with them, the better hope they gave me of those parts where they did inhabit, as proper for our uses, especially when I found what goodly rivers, stately islands and safe harbours those parts abounded with, being the special marks I levelled at as the only want our nation met with in all their navigations along that coast, and having kept them full three years, I made them able to set me down what great rivers ran up into the land, what men of note were seated on them, what power they were of, how allied, what enemies they had, and the like of which in his proper place."

For the remainder of Gorges' life colonization was his principal passion. He faithfully discharged his professional duties as a soldier, but the establishment of English settlements in the New World was never absent from his mind. Even the money that came to him with the dowries of his wives was spent in this great cause. Many of his schemes met with failure such as the Sagadahoc colony in which he had placed his hopes and invested money, but still Gorges and his friends did not despair of success.

In 1606 Gorges with Popham promoted a company of Bristol and west country knights and merchants to which James I granted a charter empowering it to plant a colony in the northward parts of Virginia. This venture though not successful was followed up by the formation of another company called "The Council for New England" to which, in 1620, the King granted "the whole of North America from the Atlantic to the Pacific between the fortieth and forty-eight degrees of latitude". Sir Ferdinando and his partner, Captain John Mason, here founded settlements which developed into the states of New Hampshire, Maine. Between 1654 and 1679 10,000 men and women from all parts of the British Isles sailed from Bristol to the new colonies in Virginia, Maryland and New England.



In 1629 Gorges married his fourth wife who was his cousin Elizabeth, widow of his old friend Sir Hugh Smyth of Ashton Court. This marriage restored his fortunes and enabled him to expend more money on his schemes. From now on Gorges spent much of his time in Bristol, living either at Long Ashton or at the Great House. In 1639, Charles I gave him the charter to the Province of Maine, conferring on him powers as Lord Proprietor of Maine. He was now near the end of his career. For over thirty years he had been actively interested in the colonization of New England. He had spent at least £20,000 in a life time of endeavour. His health was failing. However, when the Civil War came he and Thomas Smyth, his stepson, raised a troop of horse among the gentry of Somerset and Gloucestershire to support the royal cause in Bristol. The Mayor of Bristol refused to allow him to enter the City when he appeared at its gates on the excuse that the King had ordered him to defend the place and had given no instructions about reinforcements. Bristol fell, and the Royalists retired to Sherborne, later they were obliged to quit the west country. So ended his last campaign. Gorges died at Ashton Court in 1647, saddened by the King's defeat.

Elizabeth Ralph.

THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE COMMUNITY COUNCIL LOCAL HISTORY COMMITTEE.

SCHOOLS ESSAY COMPETITION

Extracts from the winning entry

RAILWAY COMMUNICATIONS IN THE STROUD AREA:

A SURVEY OF THE

STONEHOUSE AND NAILSWORTH RAILWAY.

Introduction.

A study of the railway provides the historian with vital evidence on the social and economic conditions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and at the same time possesses a certain inherent fascination of its own, today not least derived from the inevitable nostalgia that comes of "branch-line browsing", on reflecting that soon the march of Progress will leave but a pile of mouldering sleepers to remind us of what was once an important communication for an area. The Stonehouse and Nailsworth Railway is one such line in the heart of Gloucestershire, thoroughly imbued with "branch-line atmosphere" which is largely created by the wooded hills towering up to 800 feet on either side of the steeply gradiented, sinuous line, hemmed in by an abundance of foliage - all combine to provide an air of seclusion and rusticity which cannot fail to delight the eye of the romantic. Although the branch lost its regular passenger service as far back as June 14th, 1947, it still contrives to retain a sparse goods service. Not surprisingly in this age of road transport, the British Railways Board propose to curtail this, too; thus, this account of the rise and decline of a branch, typical of many in its history, has a certain topicality.

Early Proposals.

The first railway communications in the Stroud area were provided by the Great Western Railway whose line reached Stroud on April 14th, 1845; this provided an important route between London and Gloucester, Cheltenham, Hereford and South Wales, but was at the same time accompanied by difficulties with respect to north-south and through traffic. For the Great Western Company's line was built to Brunel's broad gauge of 7' 0 $\frac{1}{4}$ ", whereas all other through routes were built to the standard gauge of 4' 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". The break of gauge occurred at Gloucester where the Great Western met the Midland Railway and the resulting chaos caused to both passengers and freight can well be imagined. From Gloucester the Midland's line went north to Birmingham and south to Bristol via Stonehouse over the metals of the Bristol and Gloucester Railway, acquired in 1846; it was an obvious step for a railway connecting Stonehouse to the industrial Nailsworth valley to be promoted, and from the first it had the natural support of the mill owners and clothiers of the district;

John Hunt, for instance, who was the largest clothier in the district save for Samuel Stephens Marling, brought his wool from Hull by the Midland Railway and so naturally welcomed the prospect of it being delivered straight to his mill via the Stonehouse and Nailsworth Railway, rather than being transferred to the Great Western's wagons at Gloucester or taken by road to Stroud. The benefits that would accrue from the projected line are even better imagined when it is recollected that a mill-owner in Stroud wishing to have his material brought direct from Birmingham would have to have it transported by the Great Western via Didcot, while Bristol could only be reached via Swindon, although the Midland's Birmingham - Bristol line lay but six miles away at Stonehouse.

#### Authorisation of the Railway.

From the outset it was evident that the Midland Company would have a paternal interest in the railway, not only because it connected with their main-line at Stonehouse, but also because they, in common with most other well-established railways of the period, were prepared to go to almost any lengths to extend their "territory", and had visions of eventually reaching Southampton via the Nailsworth valley; nevertheless, it was as a private company that the railway was authorised by the Stonehouse and Nailsworth Railway Act of July 13th, 1863.

#### Proposals for the Stroud Line.

Although the connection of Stroud with the branch was a secondary consideration, nevertheless it was a vital addition in view of the great traffic potential; at present, traffic to Stroud on the Midland Railway stopped at Stonehouse and passengers had to make their way thence to Stroud as best they could, "whilst the heavy traffic was brought up by Holmes' waggons, frequently causing great delay in the delivery of goods" (John Libby, in his "Twenty Years' History of Stroud").

#### The 1864 Act.

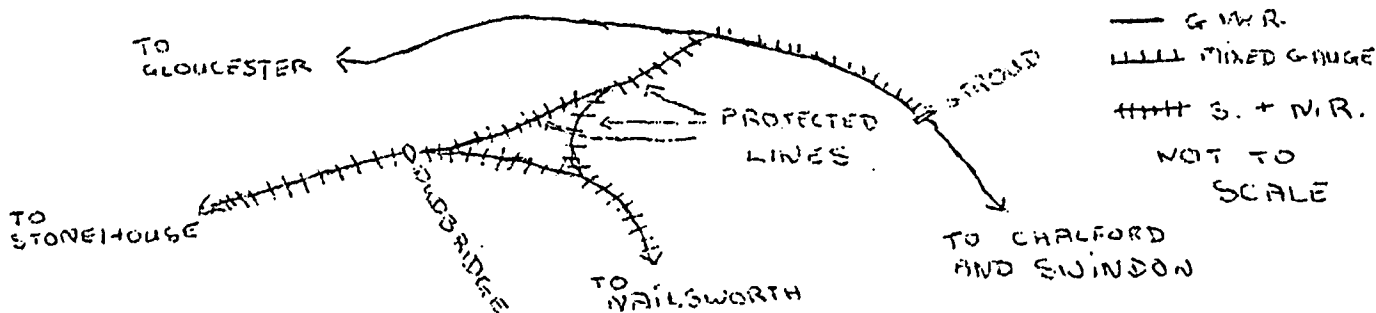
The Bill of 1864 for the Stroud extension had the following objects in view:-

"To make

1) A railway, 1 mile  $4\frac{1}{2}$  chains long, from a junction with their (i.e. the Stonehouse and Nailsworth's) authorised line at Dudbridge to a junction with the Great Western Railway near and to the Western end of Stroud.

2) A Railway, length  $17\frac{1}{4}$  chains, to form a second junction between the Company's authorised line and the former intended Railway; to be completed within five years."

Thus, the Great Western's station at Stroud was to be used by the Stonehouse and Nailsworth Company's trains; access was to be provided by a triangle junction, allowing trains from both Stonehouse and Nailsworth to enter Stroud station along a section of mixed gauge track without reversing:-



Provision was made for working agreements between the Midland, Great Western and Stonehouse and Nailsworth Companies, and the Act also gave the Midland Company power to subscribe or to hold shares to the extent of £35,000 in the Stonehouse and Nailsworth Company, and power to appoint one director, upon

contributing a further £20,000. The Midland subsequently (in November, 1865, and July, 1866) bought £20,000 5% preference shares and £15,000 ordinary shares on the undertaking that construction of the line would not be delayed and it was agreed that the £35,000 invested by the Midland

"Shall be applied in the construction of the proposed extension..... and also towards the cost of doing away with certain level crossings at Stonehouse Wharf over the road leading to Bridge End; and Mr. Bird's private road leading to his mill and dwelling house." (S.S. Marling had previously complained of the danger of these level crossings.)

Bruce, the Engineer, estimated the cost of the extension, which left the Nailsworth line at Dudbridge, crossed the Cainscross Road close to Downfield (near the present site of Marling School) and joined the Great Western Railway north of Upper Ganicox, at £23,294, the sharpest curve being of 16 chains' radius and the steepest gradient half a mile at 1 in 60. Regarding the physical connection with the Great Western Railway, the Great Western were unwilling to have a junction on the level since with their 25 trains a day they considered that it would impede their traffic; a flying junction "as at Sydenham" (on the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway) was proposed.

#### Further Proposals for the Stroud Line.

In the session of 1866, Parliament was approached by the Company of Proprietors of the Thames and Severn Canal who sought an improved connection with the Stonehouse and Nailsworth Railway which was to commence near Ebley and otherwise follow almost the same route as that authorised in the 1864 Extension Act, but with a station on the Upper Canal Wharf, this being part of a through line to Oxford, on a large portion of which the line of the canal was to be substituted by a railway. Despite the severe opposition of the Great Western Railway - who saw their monopoly of the Oxford traffic from the area menaced - the Bill passed the House of Commons, but that Company succeeded in throwing it out in the House of Lords.

#### Financial Difficulties.

The reader will doubtless wonder why the powers to build the Stroud extension - which had been acquired at the considerable cost of going to Parliament - were allowed to lapse, especially after an undertaking had been given to the Midland that work on it would not be delayed; the answer is not difficult to find - despite the assistance of the Midland Railway, both financial and in the working of the line, the railway was not a success. When the line was opened in January, 1867, the "Stroud Journal" described the festivities thus:-

"The first train left Nailsworth at 9.40 a.m., the engine being decorated with flags and evergreens. Crowds welcomed the train as it passed with enthusiastic acclamations. Cannon were fired from High Beeches and from the Subscription Rooms and in the evening bands paraded the streets...."

but in those four costly years from its authorisation in 1863 it had earned nothing; the £88,000 capital was not sufficient; interest on the borrowed capital of £22,000 was constantly due; no dividend on ordinary shares was paid; an error of judgment was made when initially no station was provided at Woodchester (for evidence to confirm this, see the table giving the traffic figures for Woodchester.) More important, it seemed that a serious miscalculation had been made when the Stroud branch was put aside as "a secondary consideration", for Stroud was the centre of the large industrial community and thus an important source of traffic. On November 6th, 1867, a deputation from the Railway approached the Board of Directors of the Midland Railway to seek further financial assistance, but this was refused; two days later, the Stonehouse and Nailsworth Company begged to have at once its percentage of the half-yearly earnings for 1867, £675. 7s. 10d., since it was necessary to pay the debenture interest of £450 which would fall due shortly; and on December 21st, 1867, a receiver, C. Winterbotham, was appointed. The depth to which the Midland was embroiled in the Stonehouse and Nailsworth Railway's affairs can be seen when on January 29th, 1868, in a Bill filed by a landowner against the bankrupt Company for payment of lands

ken, the Midland was named as co-defendant. The Midland kept the line open by constant payment of the Stonehouse and Nailsworth's debts - thus, the Midland Railway was by now the real controlling authority - but in July, 1869, S.S. Marling and other unpaid landowners (their claims amounted to £7,000) applied to the Court of Chancery to rescind their contracts for selling land and to restrain the Midland from working the line; this threat to the Railway's future was successfully parried by the Midland's solicitors (Messrs. Beale, Marigold and Beale) and the line continued in operation, the Midland still paying all its debts, in all amounting to several thousand pounds.

#### Absorption by the Midland Railway.

By now, it was evident that the only solution was for the Midland Railway formally to absorb the Stonehouse and Nailsworth Railway - by reason of the Stonehouse and Nailsworth's financial dependence upon the Midland this had been virtually achieved already. The only alternative was closure of the line; having sunk so much capital into the Stonehouse and Nailsworth Railway without gaining any returns, the Midland did not feel inclined to follow this course. Negotiations for the absorption began on November 6th, 1872, but were not finalised until July 5th, 1877. The terms of the Midland Railway Additional Powers Act of 1878 were:-

- 1) That the Stonehouse and Nailsworth Railway was to be vested in the Midland Railway "in perpetuity, free from all incumbrances and liabilities",
- 2) That the Midland Railway was to pay in cash the amount of the debentures (£28,000) and also £2,000 in payment of the debts and liabilities of the Stonehouse and Nailsworth Company,
- 3) That shares held by the Midland Railway were to be cancelled and the Midland was to pay an annual rate equal to 3% on the remaining ordinary shares, amounting to £40,940.

#### The Stroud Branch.

An important feature of these arrangements was that the branch from Dudbridge to Stroud was to be built without delay, any land belonging to S.S. Marling which was needed for this being acquired for £350 per acre. Indeed, the Midland had been working for this extension, which was so vital for the line's future prosperity, from as early as 1871 when, owing to the death of Mrs. Mansfield, the Fromehall estate came on to the market. Acting on a suggestion by John H. Taunton, M. Inst. C.E., the Midland acquired it for the extension; on December 19th, 1871, the Wallbridge Mill estate was purchased for £8,100 to enable direct railway access to be made from the Stonehouse and Nailsworth line; in June and August, 1875, more land was purchased near the Fromehall estate for £1,800. Thus, private property along the proposed route was acquired and in 1880 Parliamentary powers were obtained for the extension, which was to meet the Stonehouse and Nailsworth line at Dudbridge, the station at Stroud being on the Wallbridge Mill estate. However, in 1882 this latter power was amended, the station being placed further northward and nearer the town, with authority to form a road from Rowcroft to it. In July, 1881, a Mr. Underwood was instructed to prepare plans, specifications and estimates for the extension whilst on October 31st, 1882, nine tenders for the works having been received, that of Thomas Oliver was accepted at an estimated cost of £37,198. 8s. 9d. The extension was opened to goods traffic in November, 1885, but was not completed until March, 1886; it was opened for passenger traffic on July 1st, 1886, the station and buildings at Stroud costing £13,000. The event met with a warm reception from the inhabitants of Stroud - John Libby had this to say:-

"The Great Western, in the face of competition, (for the Stonehouse - Stroud traffic), awoke to their true interest, viz., that of giving the public every facility for travelling; and, judging from the number of people one sees arriving and departing, it seems as if both the railways had doubled their passenger traffic.....The people are not slow to avail themselves of improved locomotion, when liberally and cheaply provided."

## NEWS FROM THE SOCIETIES.

Cirencester Archaeological and Historical Society members are looking forward to Mr. Wachter's excavations at the Abbey this year and other sites not made public when their report was received. At the Society's suggestion the Urban Council have marked out the absidal end of the basilica on the paved edging to a private roadway and have put a small plaque on the wall giving the date and dimensions of the whole basilica. The Forest of Dean Local History Society are arranging an exhibit in a "Leisure time" exhibition organised by the Forest of Dean Technical College and to be held in July. The Society is producing another "Occasional Paper, The Charities of William Jones" by Mr. Tom Bright. The Cheltenham Society is continuing work on its Building Record Scheme.

Last autumn a small group of enthusiasts for the 'science of heraldry' formed a new society under the above name, with the object of studying armory in general and Gloucestershire arms in particular. Meetings are held on the last Wednesday of each month in Gloucester and Cheltenham alternately, and a stencilled bulletin called 'The Tabard' is issued monthly to members, who now number about a couple of dozen. The Society has undertaken to arrange a small exhibition of heraldry in Gloucester during the Three Choirs' Festival at the beginning of September.

Anyone interested in joining should apply to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. D.E. Deakins, 47, Paddocks Lane, Cheltenham. Experimentally, the annual subscription is 10/-.

The Wotton-under-Edge Historical Society has formed a sub-committee under the leadership of Mr. H. Mann to gather together photographs, drawings, and all relevant information so that the changes in and round Wotton may be noted and the picture of Wotton before the changes preserved. The Society of Thornbury Folk protested to the planning Committee about two properties in Thornbury; one, the Chantry, is to be kept externally: the other, the Old Register Office, is apparently doomed, though the Secretary of the Society doubts if there is a comparable building in England.

## ADULT EDUCATION.

A further series of visits to buildings and sites illustrating the architecture and landscape of medieval England has been arranged under the leadership of Mr. R.D. Abbott. The course, entitled 'Medieval Buildings and Landscape', consists of one introductory lecture and four excursions. It is expected that a similar course will be run in Cheltenham.

Although the last date for the course on Industrial Archaeology at Stroud was April 2nd, it is hoped to carry on Field Work and possibly one-day schools during the summer.

## B O O K L I S T.

BELLOWS, J. and HOLLAND, J. A Week's holiday in the Forest of Dean.  
8th edn. rev. 1965. 2s. 6d.  
(Gloucester John Bellows)

FINBERG, H.P.R. Lucerna. Macmillan. 1964. 36s.  
(Chapter on Roman and Saxon Withington)

FULLER, M. West County Friendly Societies.  
Oakwood Press for University of Reading. 1964. 63s.

ROWBOTHAM, F.W. The Severn Bore.  
David and Charles (Dawlish). 1964. 17s. 6d.

BRISTOL ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH GROUP. Survey and Policy concerning  
the Archaeology of the Bristol Region Pt II (1066 onwards to date).  
Obtainable Bristol Museum 6/8d. post free.

## BOOK REVIEW

### The Gloucestershire V. C. H.

Volume II of the Victoria History of Gloucestershire (Volume I has not yet appeared) was published in 1907, and it is pleasing to record that Miss Ruth Butler, of Brimpsfield, who, with her sister Miss C.V. Butler, contributed articles on Social and Economic History, is still actively interested in local history.

Financial difficulties, and finally the First World War, put a stop to progress for many years, and it was not until 1958 that the Gloucestershire County Council resolved to sponsor the completion of the Gloucestershire History. A sub-committee of the County Records Committee, under the chairmanship of Lt. Col. A.B.L. Lloyd-Baker, was formed to superintend the arrangements, and in 1959 Mr. C.R. Elrington, M.A., F.S.A. (previously the V.C.H. General Editor's senior assistant) was appointed local Editor, being joined later by Miss Kathleen Thomas (now Mrs. J.R. Morgan) as assistant editor. The publication is undertaken by the University of London.

The first-fruits of this enterprise are to appear in April in the shape of Volume VI. It should be explained that Volumes I and III will appear later and will be 'general' volumes devoted to various aspects of the County's history. Volumes IV and V will deal with the cities of Gloucester and Bristol, while Volume VI is the first of a series of volumes covering the County parish by parish. In conformity with the general scheme of the Victoria History, the parishes will be dealt with under the historic Hundreds; this first volume covers the Hundred of Slaughter (i.e. Stow-on-the-Wold, Bourton-on-the-Water, and the surrounding area, with the Upper Division of Tewkesbury Hundred (Alderton, Bourton-on-the-Hill, Clifford Chambers - now in Warwickshire - Lower Lemington, Prescott, Stanway, and Great Washbourne) and the Upper Division of Westminster Hundred, comprising Moreton-in-Marsh and Todenham.

Though it has had to wait so many years for the resumption of its history, Gloucestershire benefits from the wider and more liberal scope of the V.C.H.'s modern plan. No longer is the parish story centred almost exclusively round the church and the manor house; a general description of each parish is followed by sections on the Manor or Manors and estates, the Economic History (with a special note on Mills, if any), Local Government, the Church, Nonconformity, Schools, and Charities. Valuable introductory articles deal with the three Hundreds themselves, there are 14 maps and plans, and 36 illustrations ranging from 18th Century drawings and 19th Century water-colours to 20th Century aerial photographs.

During the printing of Volume VI by the Oxford University Press (which takes some 18 months), the editor has been busy with the preparation of another volume. This will contain parish histories for the Lower Division of Tewkesbury Hundred, including Tewkesbury itself, the Lower Division of Westminster Hundred and the Hundreds of Deerhurst, Bishop's Cleeve, and Tibblestone.

#### Review of Final Volume.

A.H. Smith: The Place-names of Gloucestershire Pt. 4. English Place-name Society, Vol. XLI. Cambridge University Press. £2. 2s. 1965.

This fourth volume is at once a guide to the previous three and an analysis and a summing-up of the data presented in them. Here are the bibliography and the index, a list of the elements out of which Place-names and Field-names are composed, comments on their geographical distribution, notes on some less usual modern names, lists of the personal names involved - Welsh, Old English, Scandinavian and from elsewhere on the Continent, feudal, manorial and saintly - a list of people and families who can be identified, a set of affixes, mainly descriptive, groups of Welsh and French place-names, and information about the names that occur in Anglo-Saxon Charters. The preliminary sections of the Introduction show how the topographical and social history of the district can be deduced from the names, and its linguistic history from their phonetic form. There are eight fascinating maps, of the Hundreds, the geology, and the distribution of distinctive Place-name elements.

GRAHAME FARR: The Steamship Great Britain, Bristol Branch of the Historical Association, Local History Pamphlets, No. XI, 1965, 24 pp. 2s. 6d. (Postal orders to Peter Harris, 74 Bell Barn Road, Stoke Bishop, Bristol 9).

To follow his account of The Steamship Great Western, the first Atlantic liner, an earlier pamphlet in the series produced by the Bristol Branch of the Historical Association, Grahame Farr has now produced a history of the Great Western's intended consort, the Great Britain. Both were pioneering ventures, both were ill-fated. The steamship Great Britain was the first large iron vessel, the first large screw vessel and withal several hundred tons larger than any ship yet built. So large, in fact, that only by demolition could she be got through the locks into the river Avon to proceed down river after her launching in 1844. She came into service in July 1845 and for a brief period it seemed as if her owners, the Great Western Steamship Company, might enjoy a profitable period with two steamships on the north Atlantic run and might be able to offer an effective challenge to Samuel Cunard for the mail contract. But, owing to a navigational error, the Great Britain was stranded in Dundrum Bay (Co. Down) at the outset of her fifth voyage. Salvage was difficult, lengthy and costly and the company was forced to dispose of her. After refitting apart from the odd voyage, the Great Britain became a regular on the Australian run where she made 32 voyages until 1876. Converted to a sailing vessel she continued in service until she was seriously damaged off Cape Horn in 1886. She was then taken to the Falkland Islands where as a hulk she still survives in Sparrow Cove. For those interested in the economics of the enterprise or in the motivation of business men, this pamphlet leaves some questions unanswered. But Mr. Farr has written a lively biography of a vessel, built in Bristol, which was a major engineering achievement of its time.

Walter Minchinton.

#### E X C A V A T I O N S .

The digging of cellars and foundations for an extension to the Bon Marché (Gloucester) Ltd., revealed Roman remains beneath a 10 ft. accumulation of human bones in the old churchyard of St. Aldate. The most remarkable finds were the contents of a stone-lined well, 30 ins. across.

Previous work had uncovered a Roman house nearby, abandoned about A.D. 350; in the well were roofing-slates of the latest phase of that house, together with the twigs of shrubs which grew in its ruins. Food-remains included a leg of lamb, a horse's head and edible snails. But at the bottom there lay the complete skeleton of a teenage girl together with four late-Roman bracelets and a severed right arm. The only satisfactory explanation is that the site was already used as a graveyard in Sub-Roman or (despite legal prohibition) in late Roman times; the arm was accidentally introduced from an adjacent grave among soil which was used to cover the girl's corpse, buried in the disused well to save a gravedigger's fee.

The well was excavated by Mr. J. F. Rhodes of Gloucester City Museum with the help of Mr. H. Isherwood.

Excavations for building work on a site adjacent to the Queen's Head Inn, Kingsholm Road unearthed two Romano-British burials which were examined in a brief rescue excavation by the staff of Gloucester Museum. The burials were in shallow graves not far from the line of the former Roman road. A quantity of early pottery was found in the vicinity of the graves and included a base of terra nigra with the potter's stamp BELLI. Very few fragments of this ware have previously been found in the Gloucester area.

An excavation has been carried out on the site adjoining the new Shire Hall building at the corner of Westgate Street and Quay Street, Gloucester. The aim of the excavation was to learn something of the archaeology of this part of the city. The upper levels had been partly destroyed by modern foundations and cellars, but medieval clay and gravel floors were identified,

and are probably associated with the 13th century development of the site. At a depth of some twelve feet were waterlogged timbers which may be associated with the Roman harbour works which are believed to lie in this vicinity. Unfortunately running water made it impossible to discover more about their detail. A massive rubble foundation of Roman date was found close to the corner of Quay Street at a depth of ten feet, and was overlain by layers containing pottery of the 4th century A.D. of a type manufactured at the Sandford Kilns in Oxfordshire. The discovery of Roman structures at this depth confirms previous finds made in the Quay Street area, and is a further indication of the presence of buildings beyond the presumed line of the west wall of Glevum and extending towards the harbour and river crossing. The excavation was sponsored by the Gloucestershire County Council and carried out by Mr. R.D. Abbott on behalf of the Gloucester Museum.

#### MUSEUMS IN OR CONNECTED WITH GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

##### GLOUCESTER CITY MUSEUMS.

The National Art-Collections Fund has presented a fine pen and wash drawing of Westgate Bridge, Gloucester, by Joseph Farington, R.A. (1747-1821). The drawing, which was formerly in the collection of the late Sir Bruce Ingram, was done about 1800 shortly before the Tudor gate-house was demolished to improve the approach to the bridge.

A number of acquisitions of railway interest have been received in recent months. These include one of the headboards carried by the locomotive of the "Cheltenham Spa Express" in steam-hauled days, and stone sleepers and an iron tramway plate from the horse-drawn Cheltenham-Gloucester Tramroad which was opened in 1811. Major C.S.N. Walker has lent to the Museum two apprentice-made models of mid 19th century railway carriages built by the Gloucester Carriage and Wagon Works.

A paragraph in the Local History Bulletin No. 9 (Spring 1964) appealed for a guillotine type chaff-cutter for the agricultural collections. During visits to farms in the Stroud area, Mr. J.M. Strange located one of these implements at Damsell's Farm, Painswick, and it has now been given to the Museum by the farmer, Mr. H.O. Houldey. Mr. Strange also brought to our notice an early Massey-Harris muck spreading machine, formerly in use at Brookthorpe, and this too has been given to the Museum by Mr. R.J. Brake.

A Leeds creamware jug recently purchased is inscribed 'John Benatt, Chaxall, 1777'. John Bennett, the son of Thomas Bennett, was a farmer at Chaxhill, and served as a churchwarden at Westbury-on-Severn in 1819.

Building alterations at Corse Court have revealed traces of wall-paintings which probably date from the 17th century. Unfortunately the remains are too slight to give much idea of the overall decorative scheme, but add yet another feature of interest to a house which has already been shown to incorporate a medieval hall-type building within its more recent fabric.

A large, rectangular fire-back decorated with the Stuart Royal Arms has been salvaged from a house being demolished at Minsterworth, and given to the Museum by Mr. E. Bishop.

At a recent sale in London the Museum purchased three English Delft plates with inscriptions referring to the Tewkesbury Parliamentary Election of 1754. At this election four Whig candidates were nominated, and Nicholson Calvert and John Martin Junior were elected. The defeated candidates were Lord Gage, and his son, Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Gage. Lord Gage, who had represented the town since 1721, took his defeat badly and in November, 1754, submitted a petition to unseat the two candidates who had been elected. Calvert and Martin, however, had strong local support and the petition was unsuccessful. It is probable that the plates were made as a form of propaganda in support of Calvert and Martin at the time of the petition, for their names appear on the plates together with that of Webb, a local dealer, who sold them and who was probably responsible for having them made. It is interesting to note that there is a slight difference in the wording of the inscription on each of the three plates.



The pin-making section of the Museum was featured in the B.B.C. programme for children "Treasure House" on October 13th. The programme included a demonstration of the use of pin-making machines in the Museum's collection. A subsequent broadcast in the same series was illustrated by horseshoes from the collection bequeathed to the Museum by the late Joe Price, the famous Gloucester blacksmith.

Accessions relating to Local History received by Bristol Museum since the Autumn comprise Roman amphora-handles and a Roman bronze bell from the Roman site at Sea Mills, a Bristol Mint gold half-crown of Henry VIII minted under Sir William Sharington and a Bristol Mint shilling of Charles I. The Technology Department have renovated a 1910 carrier's cart from Bibury removing worm eaten timbers and rust from the iron parts and the whole has been repainted in the original colours. Some of the faded tints were chemically analysed so that exact shade of the original could be ascertained.

Excavations have been undertaken at this site (N.G.R. ST.5918 7242) by the City Museum, Bristol, with the aid of a grant from the Ministry of Public Building and Works. The work has been directed by Max Hebditch, Assistant Curator in Archaeology. The aim of the excavation was to locate the Portwall defences constructed in the 13th century. The ditch has been located but it is thought that the wall itself lies under Portwall Lane and not at the moment accessible. The upper levels of the ditch fill include pottery and refuse from houses constructed outside the city wall in the mid-seventeenth century. The ditch remained a visible antiquity until 1844 when it was finally filled up and houses constructed over it.

Among the Winter lectures arranged by the Museum was an account of his work at Glastonbury by Dr. Raleigh Radford. He explained that the pagan sanctuary at Glastonbury was on a strip of land roughly a mile long and half a mile wide enclosed by a prehistoric earthwork. This was the sacred island of Avalon in which third century (B.C.) pottery has been found. The first Christian settlement outside this enclosure did not appear until the fifth century A.D. The native St. Patrick (not to be confused with the Irish saint) raised a cluster of small cells and two shrines with Celtic crosses over them, reminiscent of Tintagel and Glendalough. A Saxon Church was erected in 670 but after a fire in 1184 the whole Church was rebuilt and consecrated in 1213. Dr. Radford pointed out that the legends of Joseph of Arimathea, the Grail and the Holy Thorn did not arise until the thirteenth century. "King Arthur", however, a Christian warrior chieftain, was an authentic figure; he was probably buried at Glastonbury and the description of his exhumation in 1191 described by Giraldus Cambrensis is probably correct (notes received from Mrs. Vinter).

The Cheltenham Museum and Art Gallery have held two notable exhibitions reported elsewhere in the Bulletin.

Stroud Museum has recently acquired a number of old metal working tools from Messrs. Bruton's forge at Nailsworth, demolished to make way for a new road. These included some tin-smithing equipment, a variety of horse shoes and a selection of anvil tools that had not been used within the memory of anyone working at the forge. Some of the larger pieces of equipment have been retained by the firm in their new premises, where they will continue to be used from time to time.

With the closure of the stick and umbrella works at Bourne Mills, Brimscombe, the opportunity was taken, through the kindness of the new owner, to preserve a selection of their products, equipment etc. A somewhat similar series of items has also been gathered from here by the Department of Technology, Bristol Museum.

Objects brought to the Museum for identification have from time to time come to light in rather strange ways. One of the odder finds was a 2½ feet high stone bearing the letters R and S. This appeared one day, propped up on the roadside, apparently dropped from a contractor's lorry. It has been identified as a parish boundary stone (Rodborough - King's Stanley) and will ultimately be re-erected near the point from which it is thought to have been dug up.

Attendance during 1964 totalled 9,518. There has been a marked increase in the number of students working on essays and theses as well as in the number of enquiries about economic and technical aspects of local history.

The popularity of Stroud Museum as a local centre is now creating a new problem - storage. The small store room constructed eight years ago is now full. Additional space is urgently required if we are to continue to render the service to the community that has been expected since our expansion in 1955.

\*GLOUCESTERSHIRE RECORDS OFFICE  
Shire Hall, Gloucester

List of Principal Accessions, 1964

Family and estate:

Ducarel and allied families (Newland): deeds of Newland and Devon, 1714-1875, estate papers, Newland, Somerset, Hants. and Devon, 1806-1861; correspondence and family wills and settlements, 1711-1853; papers relating to public offices, 1706-1837, including Dr. Andrew Ducarel, Lambeth Palace Librarian, and G.G. Ducarel of E. India Co.

Freeman-Mitford (Batsford) (addnl.): A.B. Freeman-Mitford, (aft. 1st Baron Redesdale of the 2nd creation), personal, political and literary letters, 1872-1916, demi-official letters relating to Office of Works, 1875-6, including papers relating to the removal of the Duke of Wellington's statue at Hyde Park Corner, 1882-1884; family, genealogical and estate papers, 1837-1916.

Harward (Cheltenham): estate papers, (1819)-1877, and family papers 18th cent.-1854.

Hayward (Beverstone, Frocester and Stonehouse): copies of farming and family correspondence, 1812-1832.

Lawrence (Shurdington): deeds, 1834-1889, marriage settlements, 1802-1854.

Lysons (Hempsted): deeds, family and estate papers, 1778-1869.

Smirke (Cheltenham): testamentary and trust records, 1861-1925.

Tickell (Cheltenham): testamentary and trust records, 1840-1883.

Solicitors' deposits:

Brookes and Badham: deeds and estate papers of Ireland family of Forthampton and Eldersfield (Worcs.), and of the Beckford Hall estate (now Worcs.); deeds of Tewkesbury and area including S. Worcs.; papers of Tewkesbury Quarter Sessions and Borough; papers of the Key Bridge Trustees, Tewkesbury and Tewkesbury elections; 17th-19th cent.

Mullings, Ellett & Co.: family and genealogical papers of Mullings and allied families, 1566-1929.

Penley, Milward & Bayley: deeds, estate and family papers of Austin family of Wotton-under-Edge, clothiers, 1641-1872, including account book and partnership deeds, 1805-1820; Cooper family of Stinchcombe, North Nibley and Norfolk, 1606-1872; Purnell family of Dursley and area and Monmouth, Oxon., Wilts., and Yorks., 1591-1847, including partnership deeds of Fromebridge Iron Mills, Frampton-on-Severn, 1759-1778; Hale family of Alderley, 1669-1872, and others; Dursley charities and fire engine, 19th cent.

Ticehurst, Wyatt & Co.: a large collection of deeds of many Glos parishes, mainly Cheltenham, 19th cent., estate, family and office papers, 18th and 19th cent., including correspondence about Cheltenham theatre, c.1810-1830 (unsorted and unlisted).

Vizard & Son. (addnl.): deeds and papers, mainly Forest of Dean, including Ducarel family of Newland and David Mushet of Coleford, incl. Forest of Dean Collieries, 17th-20th cents.

Manorial: Alvington court book, 1770-1799; Cirencester manor court books, minute books and Stewards' fines and fees books, 1712-1950; Cirencester and Seven Hundreds court rolls, 1550-1563; Codrington and Wapley presentments of customs, 1653-1676, survey, C.1710; Upper Lypiatt in Bisley court roll, 1581; Chipping Sodbury Borough court papers, 1653-1669; Tetbury Borough court roll, C.1670 (addnl.).

Deeds: c.800 deeds for many parishes from 1560.

Maps: Plan and specifications for building turnpike house, Stinchcombe, C.1780; Upper and Lower Swell, field names, C.1960; Tewkesbury, turnpike roads, 1866; Twyning parish, 1854.

Business: Moore & Sons, estate agents, C.3,000 books containing records of sales and valuations, miscellaneous sale catalogues and copy tithe apportionments, Tewkesbury and area, including S. Worcs., C.1800-1925.

Official: Land Tax Assessments (collectors' duplicates) for 9 Glos. divisions, 1943-4; Petty Sessional records for Berkeley, Dursley, Whitminster and Wotton Divisions, 1930-1950; police personnel files, C.1860-1920, station diaries, 1841-1865, registers and report books, 1894-1960.

Borough: Chipping Sodbury: royal charter of incorporation, 1681, deeds and estate papers of Borough properties, c.1230-1875, Borough court and feoffees' papers, minutes and order book, 1580-1820, accounts and other administrative papers, 1609-1835, papers relating to the Grammar School, 1782-1869; parish and charity records, 1610-1839, including poor law papers and apprenticeship indentures. Tetbury (addnl.): Feoffees' and Bailiffs' accounts and papers, 1641-1775, charity records, 1728-1749, receipts for payment for teaching at the Grammar School, 1737-1749, and papers relating to the Town Races on Tetbury Warren, 1724.

Parish: Bishop's Cleeve (addnl.), 1964; Boddington, 1813-1820; Coln St. Dennis, 1561-1755; Littledean, 1699-1942; Hewelsfield, 1664-1864; St. Briavels, 1625-1818, including Whittington Charity records; Tewkesbury (addnl.), 1842-3.

Parish Councils: Cam, 1887-1954, including Hicks Charity records.

Tithe: Littledean, 1838, 1926 (map); Hewelsfield, 1849; St. Briavels, 1818; Tewkesbury, 1842, 1843 (map); Twyning, 1841 (map).

Inclosure: Cheltenham, 1806; Staverton and Boddington, 1804; Tresham in Hillesley, 1818.

Society of Friends: Gloucester Monthly Meeting Minutes, 1820-1834 (addnl.).

Schools: log books of 5 schools, Managers' Minutes for 3 schools.

Miscellaneous: Tewkesbury play bill, 1823; Staff establishment of the Duke of Beaufort, Badminton Park, 1836; arithmetic exercise book, 1836; E.Glos. election posters, 1834; certificates for salmon fishing 'engines' in R. Severn, with maps, 1866; large collection of notes relating to Nonconformity in Glos., 20th cent.: note books of Rev. A.W. Wade-Evans, Vicar of France Lynch, 1901-1926; 5th Bn. Gloucester Home Guard Order Book and War Diary, 1940-1944; survey of cloth industry in Glos., 1950.

\* Photocopying facilities available for students.

PROGRAMMES OF LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETIES.

SPRING & SUMMER 1965.

Cheltenham and Gloucester Branch Historical Association.

June 19th Claverton Manor and Dodington House.  
July 10th Toddington Manor and Broadway.

Cirencester Archaeological and Historical Society.

June 3rd North Cerney and Rendcomb Churches.  
June 19th Malmesbury and Dodington Park.

In July it is hoped to arrange a visit to Chedworth Villa with Sir Ian Richmond and to Barnsley when Dr. Graham Webster is digging there.

Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club.

June 2nd Caerphilly Castle.  
July 9th Excavations at Upton and Snowhill Manor.  
Aug. 10th Excavations at Alcester and Evesham Battle Area.  
Sept. 3rd Skenfrith, Grosmont and White Castles.

Forest of Dean Local History Society.

June 12th Tour, 'Some Churches of the Welsh Marches'.  
July 3rd 'The City of the Legions'. A tour to Caerleon.  
Aug. Mid-week Evening Tour.  
Sept. 4th North of the Forest, Half day tour in N.W. Glos.

Wotton-under-Edge Historical Society.

June 30th Ragley Hall.  
July 28th Deerhurst Church and Chapel.  
Aug. 11th Stourhead House and Gardens.  
Aug. 28th Daneway House.  
Sept. 20th Bath Assembly Rooms.

Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society.

June 17th Visit to Boddington Manor and Church.  
July 21st -24th Summer meeting at Reading including visits to St. Albans, Wing, Stukeley, Waddesdon etc.  
Sept. 18th Visit to the Stroud Valley

Glos. Society for Industrial Archaeology.

June 11th Evening visit to Owlpen Manor millhouse  
June 19th Day coach excursion to see the industrial sites in the Ironbridge area of the Severn Valley.  
July 24th Day coach excursion to see important features of the Kennet & Avon canal.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETIES  
IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

Cotswold Naturalists' Field Club (Archaeology)

Secretary: G. Clark, Esq., Withyholt Cottage, Moorend Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham.

Wotton-under-Edge Historical Society.

Secretary: Miss D.F. Grimes, 3, Orchard Street, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos

Cirencester Archaeological & Historical Society.

Secretary: Miss M.S. Holland, M.A., 49, Victoria Road, Cirencester.

Pucklechurch Local History Society.

Secretary: V. Imrie, Esq., Meadowside, Castle Road,  
Pucklechurch, Nr. Bristol.

Forest of Dean Local History Society.

Secretary: Rev. R.J. Mansfield, The Vicarage, Newnham, Glos.

Glos. Society for Industrial Archaeology.

Secretary: W. Marsh, Esq., C/o Gleeds, 19, College Green, Gloucester.

Society of Thornbury Folk.

Secretary: B. Stafford Morse, Esq., M.A., Corderies, Alveston, Bristol.

Cheltenham Society.

Secretary: P.G. Newcombe, Esq., 49, Painswick Road, Cheltenham, Glos.

Cheltenham Historical Association.

Secretary: R.M.S. Pick, Esq., ~~Brook Lodge, The Park~~, Cheltenham, Glos

Bristol & Glos. Archaeological Society.

Secretary: Miss E. Ralph, M.A., F.S.A., Council House, Bristol.

Cotswold Naturalists' Field Club.

Secretary: Mrs. Sprague, 7, Hatherley Road, Cheltenham, Glos.

Gloucester Historical Association.

Secretary: Miss Tregaskes, 73, Riversly Road, Gloucester.

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Change of Officers: Bristol & Glos. Archaeological Society.

President: Professor A.H. Smith, O.B.E., PH.D., D.Litt.