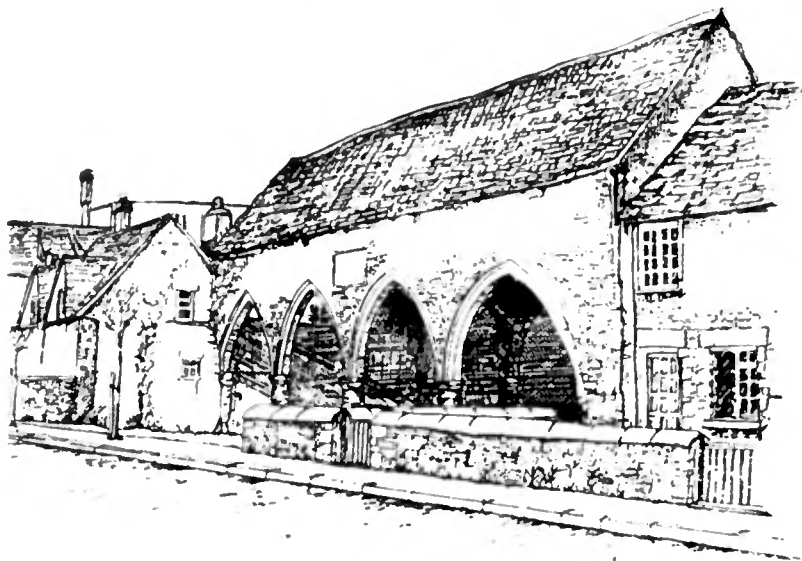


GLOUCESTERSHIRE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Local History Bulletin

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
EDITORIAL	2
THE NEW CORINIUM MUSEUM — <i>D. J. Viner</i>	3
LADYBELLEGATE HOUSE — <i>Margaret Rogers</i>	5
NOTES FROM RECORDS OFFICE, SHIRE HALL	6
THE GLOUCESTER MILITIA — <i>H. G. Beard</i>	7
ARCHAEOLOGY IN GLOUCESTER — <i>C. M. Heighway</i>	9
'HUNDRED' AND 'TITHING'	9
THE MYSTERY OF CONDICOT ISLAND — <i>J. P. Nelson</i>	10
BRIMSCOMBE PORT BANK — <i>Brian Smith</i>	11
ITEMS OF INTEREST	12
BOOK REVIEWS	14
LECTURES AND MEETINGS	16

EDITORIAL

READERS WILL BE disappointed to see that Mrs Mercedes Mackay is no longer Editor, having decided to resign for personal reasons. Mrs Mackay has held the reins since 1966 and has been responsible for many interesting and varied editions of the Bulletin which, under her guidance, has achieved a very high standard. Every effort will be made to maintain this with contributors' continued and invaluable support. Grateful thanks of all concerned are expressed to Mrs Mackay for her very much appreciated work, and it is hoped she will be able to continue Book Reviews.

What proved to be an interesting One Day Local History School was arranged for Vth and VIth Formers on Monday, 24th March at the Corinium Museum, Cirencester, and schools within a limited radius were invited to participate, some seventy students eventually attending.

An increase in the distribution of the Bulletin is very desirable. If all interested Societies would agree to copies being on sale at their respective Meetings, an increase in sales could well be effected. Each copy costs only 10p. Will you please help over this?

Laurie Duirs, *Editor*.

COVER ILLUSTRATION

St. John's Hospital in Spitalgate Lane, Cirencester, is one of the several Ancient Monuments in this attractive market town. The Hospital was founded in 1133 in the reign of Henry I for the destitute and the sick, and was endowed with one-third of the tithe of the royal demesne of Cirencester, and was provided with a chaplain. From a dispute in the 14th century, it is recorded that the Abbot of the Abbey of St. Mary in Cirencester had appropriated the hospital during the reign of Henry II, and that this usurpation had been confirmed by Pope Honorius in 1222. Over-ruling the townsmen's complaints, King Edward III granted a charter to the then Abbot Hereward confirming the usurpation in 1343. Despite the original appointment of a chaplain, it appears that mass had never been celebrated in the hospital until permission was granted in the reign of Edward II, c. 1320, for it to be sung, after mass had been celebrated in the small parish church. After the dissolution of the monasteries, the recipients of the charity were housed in six tenements, incorporated within the arches of the hospital. These were replaced in the late 18th century, and only finally removed within the last decade. The hospital has been restored and landscaped, as a contribution from Cirencester to European Architectural Heritage Year.

Also in 1975, Cirencester celebrates 1900 years of recorded history from the establishment of the civilian town of Corinium.

(Cover illustration by Alison Howard-Drake, Corinium Museum; research courtesy of Cirencester Excavation Committee).

THE NEW CORINIUM MUSEUM

THE DEVELOPMENT OF the Corinium Museum in Cirencester over the past three years must be well-known to the readers of the Bulletin, if only through arriving in the town during this period to find the Museum's doors locked and barred!

Behind the doors was activity indeed, for the Museum has been totally redesigned out of all recognition. Only six of the exhibits have survived in their original positions within the shell of the old Museum, whilst around them what amounts to a new Museum has been designed and built. The site in Park Street is close to the centre of the town, and is in an attractive position from a number of points of view. On the street frontage, a classical archway (admittedly of 1938 vintage) attracts the visitor. As with any town centre development, the opportunity for ground-floor expansion amongst existing buildings was very limited, and it was only the acquisition of closely-neighbouring buildings that enabled Cirencester Urban District Council to launch an expansion programme on the existing site.

Four buildings are involved: Abberley House, an imposing town house of the 18th and 19th centuries, a dominating building of impressive proportions; the single-storey museum erected in the garden of Abberley House in 1938; a former warehouse of three storeys; and a 19th century building, overshadowed by its neighbours but retaining its own peculiar character. Two of the four buildings front onto Park Street, thus providing the Museum with an impressive aspect. The buildings are linked by a large reception/foyer incorporating an open (and welcoming) counter and spacious display areas.

Given the desirability of a controlled circuit for the visitor through each of the four buildings in turn, it was a relatively straightforward task for the Museum's Design Team to formulate a chronological display sequence. The result is that visitors arrive at the reception counter, and proceed at leisure through displays from pre-historic to modern, without realising the control placed upon their movements. One major emphasis has been on space, so that fewer items than previously are on display, but each is given a modern and effective treatment. The advent of display techniques has given museums a shot in the arm, and invariably involves a reduction (often drastic) in the number of objects on display. Not all visitors appreciate this, and several traditionalists have longed for the old and cluttered museum!

From a capital expenditure of £180,000, a budget for display was agreed at £20,000. From the outset, it was accepted that the Museum's emphasis should remain with its outstanding collection of material from the Romano/British town of Corinium (on the site of modern Cirencester) and that this collection should be fully developed. The result is the proud boast that Cirencester contains one of Britain's best collections of R.B. material, e.g. around one of the major mosaics a full-scale reconstruction of a triclinium has been built, to give some idea of the quality of life in the Roman town. This is only one of a number of reconstructions; others include a kitchen, hypocaust and a very effective workshop of a mosaic craftsman. The subject of mosaics is fascinating, and Corinium played an important role in that it was one of the centres of

production of mosaic pavements in the Roman period. Altogether, five major mosaics are on display with sections of several others.

The development in Cirencester was initiated in 1971 by the Cirencester Urban District Council, but inherited after re-organisation by the Cotswold District Council, responsible for a much wider area. Although orientated in the past towards the town of Cirencester, the Corinium Museum has a collection basically Cotswold in character, and the new displays reflect its importance as a regional museum. The introductory display consists of a montage of photographs of Cotswold subjects, with a continuous colour slide sequence forming an integral part. The pre-history display, although limited, examines two major features: man's function as a tool-maker, and his burial practices in neolithic to bronze age times.

In the Iron Age, the importance of the settlement at Bagendon is emphasised; the siting of the Dobunnic tribal capital on the River Churn was an important factor in the subsequent foundation of Corinium. Full scale models have been used in the display to emphasise particular aspects, and no better than the model of a Roman auxiliary soldier which dominates the military display. This section is rich enough in objects, boasting two large tombstones of cavalry men recovered in Cirencester. Because of the wealth of material from the civilian town of Corinium, the displays are arranged by theme, following an introductory section. This latter is initiated by a back projection unit featuring a three-minute slide/tape sequence on "The Roman Army", a feature already well received by visitors, and especially useful as an introductory tool. The large-scale reconstructions dominate the former museum, which is entirely devoted to the theme of 'Town Life in Corinium'. On the old outside walls of the museum (now integrated into the foyer), the Hare mosaic has been restored; this dominates the area, and provides a superb museum symbol.

The third and fourth buildings in the sequence are devoted to the history of Cirencester and the Cotswolds from the end of the Roman period to modern times. The limited Saxon display concentrates on the warriors from the Barton and proceeds to the medieval gallery, currently devoted to the Abbey of St. Mary, Cirencester, excavated in 1964-66. Much of the wealth of the area resulted from wool, and this subject is suitably treated. A further reconstruction is a sheep-fold, the purpose of which is to bring together the inter-locking Cotswold themes of wool and stone. The reconstruction includes dry-stone walling, and a stone tiled roof.

Further displays are flexible in nature, and currently include reconstructed uniforms of the 18th century Powell's School, and an attractive layout of the development of the transport system of the Cotswolds, in turn-pike/canal/railway sequence. The Thames and Severn Canal merits especial attention. Temporary exhibitions are allowed for in a specific section, and already an attractive programme has been arranged.

The Museum's success has already been reflected in its first three months of opening, following an official ceremony by H.R.H. Duke of Gloucester on the 26th November, 1974. Up to the end of February, 1975, over 10,000 visitors have been recorded. Come and see us!

D. J. VINER. -

LADYBELLEGATE HOUSE

LADYBELLEGATE HOUSE in Longsmith Street, formerly the Health Centre, has traditionally been known as the town house of the Guise family of Elmore. It contains a fine staircase, and is particularly noted for its plasterwork which in the ceiling of the first floor landing incorporates the swan crest of the Guise family. Yet the historical evidence indicates that it was occupied only for a brief period by one member of that family, and was certainly not built by them. The house is currently in the news because of its neglected condition and the cost of restoration.

The site and an earlier house was part of the property of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, administered by Gloucester Corporation, and was let on long leases to the Wagstaffe family from 1639 to 1741. Edward Wagstaffe, who first obtained a lease, was a wealthy brewer, member of the Common Council, and twice Sheriff of Gloucester. His son John, who occupied the house until his death in 1697, was Member of Parliament for Gloucester from 1685 to 1687 and twice Mayor. The architectural evidence suggests that the present house was built c. 1700 and it is shown on J. Kip's prospect of Gloucester, published in 1712. The Corporation records indicate that it was John Wagstaffe's son Henry who built the present Ladybellegate House c. 1704 to 1706. After his death in 1725, the house was occupied by his widow Margaret until 1732-3, when she sub-let it to Robert Raikes the elder, founder of the *Gloucester Journal*. Robert Raikes senior, and his son Robert, the reputed founder of Sunday Schools, continued as sub-tenants until 1772, with one brief interval. The house was conveniently near their printing press which was situated in Southgate Street, or in the Blackfriars during this time.

The short break in the Raikes's occupation of the house was from 1740—1743, when Henry Guise of Gloucester was both tenant to the Corporation and occupier while building a new house on a site near the corner of Parliament Street and Brunswick Road. He was brother-in-law of Dennis Cooke of Highnam Court. Some of the fine plasterwork at Highnam dates from this period, and may have prompted Henry Guise to remodel the interior of Ladybellegate House. The ceiling with the Guise crest presumably dates from this time.

It has generally been assumed that in 1758 Robert Raikes junior moved his printing press to 'Robert Raikes's House' (36/38 Southgate Street), and lived there until 1801. The documentary evidence, however, shows that his mother, Mrs Mary Raikes, became a tenant of this house, which at that time was owned by Powell Snell of Guiting Grange, in 1768-9. Robert Raikes ceased to occupy Ladybellegate House after 1772, and in 1777 bought from Powell Snell the house with which he is associated today, together with adjoining premises in Longsmith Street, where he set up his printing press.

MARGARET ROGERS.

Editor's Note:

On the initiative of the Gloucester Civic Trust, investigations are now in progress in conjunction with the Post Office (who are the present owners), the Gloucester Corporation, and a local architect, with a view to restoring the building and finding a suitable occupant.

NOTES FROM THE RECORDS OFFICE, SHIRE HALL

TWO NEW ARCHIVE Teaching Booklets, *Signals*, are being prepared by the Gloucestershire Record Office for publication during 1975/76. 'Waterways' is planned to appear in the Autumn of 1975 and 'Inclosure' early in 1976.

'Waterways' includes documents, maps and notes about the rivers Severn and Wye, the Port of Gloucester, the Stroudwater-Thames and Severn Canal link, and the lesser Herefordshire and Coombe Hill Canals. 'Inclosure' will deal with inclosure of both open fields and commons, together with the special matter of encroachments in the Forest of Dean. Part of the booklet will deal in greater detail with the process of Parliamentary inclosure of one Cotswold village.

There is a strong demand for the other Signals on 'Cloth Industry', 'Turnpike Roads' and 'Poor Law'. The first is now out of print, but will be reprinted as soon as possible in 1976.

Three *local history exhibitions* are planned by the Gloucestershire Record Office in the Summer 1975.

- (1) Cirencester, 4th—21st June. An exhibition of original documents, maps and printed material on the history of Cirencester to mark the opening of the new Bingham Library. The County Archivist, Brian S. Smith, M.A., F.S.A., will give an illustrated lecture on "The History and Landscape of the Cotswolds" on the 9th July, as part of the Bingham Library's season of local history events, which will also include an exhibition of old photographs of the Cotswolds.
 - (2) Newent, 10th—13th July. An exhibition of original documents and maps, including manuscripts from the Foley collection in Hereford, will be held in the Church during the Millenary Festival. The Newent Sword and other exhibits not normally seen by the public will also be on display.
 - (3) Gloucester, July/August. It is hoped to mount an exhibition on the History of Gloucester in St. Mary's Gateway (adjoining Community House).
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In November 1974 the Gloucestershire Record Office embarked on a *business archives survey* in the City of Gloucester. The aim of the survey is to find out what records have been kept by local industrial or commercial firms, with a view to preserving them for a longer term. It is also hoped that this will make business people aware of the value of their records and of the service offered by the County Record Office.

A checklist was drawn up of about 70 firms which have been established in the City for over 75 years, and half have been contacted. The response was good in that most were interested and helpful. About 15 firms were visited by an archivist in order to discuss their records and to list them. Of these six have so far deposited material in the Record Office.

Amongst the most interesting deposits are the records of Gardiner Bros. Ltd., of 1 Alvin Street, who set up a leather curriers' business on that site in

1877. Although Gardiners have now progressed into the wholesale footwear business and the building has been modernised, an attic in the old part of the building is still used to store the old tools of the curriers' trade and, until recently, the records. Ledgers, order books, day books, stock lists and letter books were collected from that attic amounting to some 90 volumes covering a period from 1877 to 1964.

The process of contacting old firms which are still in business is straight forward, but records of local industries which have closed down, especially family businesses, may have survived in private hands. Anyone who knows of the whereabouts of such records, is asked to contact the County Record Office (Glos. 21444, ext. 229).

THE GLOUCESTERSHIRE MILITIA 1758-1796

(Courtesy R.H.Q. The Gloucestershire Regiment).

THE MILITIA WAS first raised in Gloucestershire in 1758, and with considerable difficulty. The magistrates, headed by Lord Ducie and Earl Bathurst, published repeated declarations of the terms upon which recruits joined the Service, and likewise contradictions of reports propagated with the view to deterring their enlistment. The substantial inhabitants of several towns offered sundry inducements to young men to join and everything possible appears to have been done to make the Service popular. Various presents were offered, for example the City and County of Gloucester issued a notice in the Gloucester Journal of the 2nd October, 1759, as follows:—



“To wit. At a Meeting of the Common-Council held on Thursday the 27th Day of September 1759. It is unanimously agreed and ordered, That a Bounty of TWO GUINEAS be given by this Corporation to every able-bodied Landman, who shall, within One month, voluntarily enter into His Majesty's Service, in the Regiment of the Royal volunteers commanded by the Hon. Colonel Crawford.

“To every such Man, being approved of by a Magistrate of this City, and delivered to Captain Nugent, or any other Officer of the said Regiment, the said Bounty shall be immediately paid by the Chamberlain of the said City.

Sgd: Payne, Town Clerk.”

About the same time, Josiah Tucker, Dean of Gloucester, offered gifts in the following terms:—

“And whereas divers good marksmen in the Forest of Dean, and other Parts of the County of Gloucester, might be of singular Use at this critical Juncture,

and compose a Body of Light Infantry the most capable of annoying our Enemies in their present desperate Designs against the Protestant Religion and British Liberties; Therefore the Dean of Gloucester, willing to shew a Disposition towards promoting the Publick Service, and for the better Encouragement of such skilful Persons to engage immediately in that Defence of their King and country for which they are peculiarly qualified, doth hereby offer an Additional Reward of One Guinea to every Volunteer that shall be inlisted by the said Corporation of Gloucester in the manner and according to the Conditions above described; Provided that such Volunteer will give those Proofs of his Dexterity in shooting at a Mark, within Three Days after his Enlisting, as shall be satisfactory to the afore mentioned Captain Nugent, or to any other Officer of the Regiment of Royal Volunteers: And the said Dean doth further promise to each good Shotsman enlisted and approved of as above, a warm Flannel Waistcoat to defend him from the severity of the approaching Season.



*Drawing by
Garry Russell,
Gloucestershire College
of Art and Design.*

Sgd: Josiah Tucker, Dean of Gloucester."

Inspired by the presents they had received, the Militiaman of Captain Pettat's Company wrote to Lord Ducie as follows:—

"We, the Militiamen of Captain Pettat's Company (now doing duty with The Gloucestershire Regiment at Winchester), beg leave to return our most grateful thanks to Lord Ducie and the gentlemen in or about the neighbourhood of Stroud, for their charitable donation of flannel, as also for money sent to our Captain to pay for the making the same into waistcoats, which we find extremely comfortable, and hope, if ever an opportunity occurs, to return the obligation by a brave defence of our King and Country."

A Militia Insurance was established in Stroud, as appears from this advertisement:—

"A Militia Insurance is now opened by John Grime, of Stroud, in the County of Gloucester, who, on the payment of 10s. 6d. into his hands, does hereby promise an indemnity to any person liable to serve in the Militia for Stroud and the adjacent parishes, from any future balloting for three years, by providing him a substitute or payment of his fine."

By July, 1759 the County had furnished its quota of 960 men; the Lord Lieutenant at the time, Lord Chedworth, having apportioned the quota between the north and south of the County, raised the latter division first. Exertions were then made and on the 4th April, 1761 the North Gloucestershire Regiment of Militia was embodied as a battalion of Fusiliers, consisting of seven Companies; the facings of their uniforms, we are told, were blue, with lace gold and remained so until 1805, when they were changed to silver.

Soon after embodiment "the North" joined with "the South" at Winchester, and for a time were commanded as one Regiment. In November, 1761 the North Battalion of the Gloucestershire Militia found themselves at South Moulton on

the march to Bideford, where they remained until June, 1762 guarding French prisoners of war. They were relieved and returned to Winchester and three months later marched to Gloucester, spending six days on the road. At Gloucester the Battalion remained until disembodiment in 1763.

From 1778 to 1782 the North Battalion of the Gloucestershire Militia was again embodied. The American War was at its height and England in those trying days, was obliged to trust the defence of her coasts almost entirely to the militia regiments. In 1792 the Militia was again re-embodied, and 1795 found both the South and the North Gloucesters encamped near Weymouth. It was in that year that the King, who was spending summer at that watering place, appears to have been so struck by the smartness and good discipline of the battalions, that he granted them the title "Royal".

In 1796 the North Gloucesters ceased to be Fusiliers.

H. G. BEARD.

ARCHAEOLOGY IN GLOUCESTER CITY

PRESERVATION OF GLOUCESTER'S East Gate, the subject of archaeological investigation last year, is being discussed: in the meantime the remains, at present visible to the public, will be filled in with soil to protect the ancient masonry from rain and frost.

During the winter the Museum Excavation Unit, from its base in the Old Bridge Inn in Llanthony Road, is working on publishing the medieval and Roman pottery amassed over the last five years; on writing reports on the East and North Gates excavated last year, and on preparing for the excavation of St. Oswald's Priory, which will commence in April.

St. Oswald's is dedicated to the seventh century King of Northumbria, slain by pagan Penda of Mercia in 642. In 909 the Priory at Gloucester was founded by Aethelflaeda and Methelred of Mercia, and the remains of King Oswald were laid here. The Priory was by the twelfth century, a free chapel royal, being closely connected with the Kings' Palace at Kingsholm. The early history of St. Oswald's is therefore of unique interest, and excavations are expected to reveal late Saxon and medieval remains of the successive Priory buildings.

C. M. HEIGHWAY.

'HUNDRED' AND 'TITHING'

The words *hundred* and *tithing* appear in many old documents. Their meanings are clearly explained below by Michael Sumner, of Whitefriars School:

"While the medieval unit of land ownership was the manor, an important unit for administration was the 'hundred'. This was a division of the 'shire' or county, and so named because it was originally able to furnish one hundred armed men for the king's purpose. The 'tithings' or subdivisions of the hundred, which was named after the principal township, were indicated upon an 1824 map in capitals. There were always approximately ten tithings, 'tithing' deriving from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning a tenth part. Each sent representatives to the 'hundred moot' an assembly held every three weeks and presided over by the bailiff of the hundred and the hundred court. It was here that decisions affecting the government of the hundred were made and offences were tried."

THE MYSTERY OF CONDICOT ISLAND

A FEW MONTHS ago I was given a copy of 'A Gloucestershire and Bristol Atlas' and as I eagerly examined the maps which it contained, I saw with some surprise a large island in the river Severn, roughly between Awre and Slimbridge, marked on Isaac Taylor's prize winning map of 1777. It was named 'Part of the New Grounds' and was nearly a mile long and about a quarter of a mile across. I have canoed this stretch of the river on several occasions, taking channels on both sides and there is certainly no island there today. I checked on another map in my possession un-named and undated, but produced between 1779 and 1827, as the Stroudwater Navigation is marked but not the Gloucester to Sharpness Ship Canal, and found that it had acquired a name, Condicot Island. The map was very much in the style of J. Carey. I could not find it marked on any other map in my possession, except the one in Rudder's 'New History of Gloucestershire, 1779'. A friend of mine has a number of early maps of Gloucestershire, which he allowed me to examine, but it was not shown on any of them.

Next I contacted Mr Anthony Wherry, Senior Assistant Archivist at the Gloucestershire Record Office, to find out if the island was marked on Carey's maps or the first edition of the Ordnance Survey, and he kindly sent me Xerox copies of them. The island was marked on Carey's maps, but not on the first O.S. map, surveyed between 1811 and 1817. He drew my attention to the fact that the tidal channels on the O.S. map were marked as variable and suggested that the opening of the Ship Canal might have caused changes, but this, although started in 1794, was not completed until 1827.

From all this the following pattern emerged. Saxton, Hole, Speed, Blaeu, Blome, Morden, and whoever was responsible for the map in Sir Robert Atkyns' County History (my copy lacks the map) did not show the island. This covers the period from 1579 to 1712. Admittedly this is not absolute proof as Saxton did make errors and many later cartographers simply copied his maps, but as the whole course of the river was so much used for navigation in those days, I feel that somebody would have marked it.

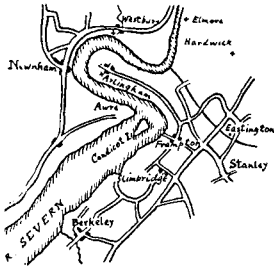
It was marked on Isaac Taylor's map, 1777, on the map in Rudder's 'History of Gloucestershire, 1779', and on Carey's maps of 1787 and 1805, being named on the former, but it was not marked on the map of J. Ellis, 1796.

It was not marked on the first O.S. map, published in 1831, although surveyed earlier, or on the maps of Greenwood, 1824, or Mowle 1836-1839. So the map of J. Ellis showed the only discrepancy between about 1770 and 1810, and I don't think that he rated very highly as a cartographer and was probably more of a copyist, so I felt that I could safely assume that the island existed in that span of years.

I went to discuss the mystery with Eric Wynter, a canoeing friend who farms at Bushley and has a great knowledge of the river. He wrote a very graphic account of canoeing the Bore for 'The Countryman' magazine. He knew nothing of the island, but did say that in his travels by canoe up and down the river, he had noticed that quite a large island had grown up for a limited period on the sands off Longney Point. However, he did make the very sensible suggestion, and I can't think why I had not thought of it myself, that I should consult Fred

Rowbotham, until recently the Chief Engineer to the Severn River Board, who has a vast knowledge of the river and its history and wrote 'The Severn Bore'. He provided the explanation in general terms and I will quote his letter:—

“Condicot Island was simply a naight-alias naite, ait, or eyot (and he referred to Chiswick eyot on the Thames, familiar to all who follow the Oxford and Cambridge Boat-race) and these are created on tidal rivers when the configuration of bends causes the flood stream to take one direction and the ebb another”



“There were a number on the Severn-Deerhurst Naight, one at Gloucester on which the lock house now stands, Minssterworth Naight, and Oldbury Naite, all still known by name but no longer islands. Twice in my memory a naight has formed and completely vegetated at Longney Sands. If they are formed of muddy silt they can become permanent, but in the sandy estuary, where the body of the naight is pure sand, they erode easily, their duration depending on an intricate inter-play between

tidal cycles and freshwater flows. At a guess I would think Condicot Island would assist navigation because it would have the effect of confining the flow (and scour) to two narrower channels rather than over the whole width. Also while the naight lasted the channels would be substantially fixed instead of being constantly on the move as they are now.”

So the fact that the channels were marked as variable on the first O.S. map, and Eric Wynter’s story about the temporary island on Longney Sands, were both valuable clues as to the appearance and disappearance of Condicot Island, one of the many naights which have existed for short periods on the tidal Severn, but apparently the only one to have found its place on the map, and existing for about forty years. It was fortunate too that it existed during the time of the accurate surveys of Isaac Taylor and John Carey.

I only hope that I shall have one more chance to canoe the area where the island once stood, for the intricate channels, the great sandbanks, and the speeding flow of the ebb and flood tides, with all the bird life and the occasional glimpse of a seal under the magnificent skylines, have a tremendous attraction for me. You really have to be afloat on the water with all the forces of wind and tide around you, to appreciate the Severn estuary to the full. Perhaps I should add, to give the other side of the picture, that many of my friends, whose nearest view of the river is when motoring and they see the brown and turgid water swirling under Severn bridge, find my fascination quite incomprehensible.

I am most grateful to Mr Rowbotham for his help over this article, but can anyone tell me why it was called Condicot Island?

J. P. NELSON.

BRIMSCOMBE PORT BANK

"I PROMISE TO pay the Bearer on Demand the Sum of One Guinea . . ."

The words are familiar enough, but the bank note, grubby and creased, was signed not by the cashier of the Bank of England, but personally in ink by Richard Miller. The note is headed Brimscombe Port Bank.

The short history of the Bank is described in H. G. W. Household, *The Thames and Severn Canal* (David & Charles, 1969) 120. Richard Miller, who had been apprenticed to the Canal Company in 1793, established himself later as a carrier and barge-owner, coal merchant and auctioneer. Unwisely, he branched out further and founded the Brimscombe Port Bank, issuing his own notes, as was then the usual practice of country banks. But the Stroud area was suffering from both agricultural depression and difficulties in the cloth trade, and the bank failed after only a few years' existence in 1822.

An interesting feature of this note, however, was its date, 1st December, 1817, providing evidence that Miller started the bank a few months earlier than had been believed.

This particular banknote belonged to Mr T. Willavoys of Gloucester, who had been brought up at Chalford. He is probably one of the few people alive who can remember sailing trows coming up the canal to Brimscombe in the days before all traffic was power-driven, and his reminiscences have been tape-recorded by Mrs Turner of Frampton Mansell for her collection of recordings of Gloucestershire craftsmen and memories. Mr Willavoys, after visiting the 'History of the Stroud Valley' exhibition, gave the banknote to the Gloucestershire Record Office.

BRIAN S. SMITH.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

A project which it is hoped to carry out in *Cirencester* sounds worthwhile and could, perhaps, be followed by other Societies. The idea is to undertake an indexing of the local weekly newspaper, presumably chiefly on matters of interest to the archaeological and historical societies.

Although there is at present no local Historical Society in *Lechlade*, the District Society has arranged a series of lectures on the Archaeology of the Upper Thames Valley, by Bristol University Extra Mural Studies Department, which are very much appreciated and well attended.

A recent air survey which showed up a large crop mark complex on a field near *Lechlade* encouraged further investigation. A number of girls from the local Convent School were rewarded and thrilled by picking up a considerable amount of Roman pottery from the site.

1976 is the Five Hundredth Anniversary of the completion of *Lechlade* Parish Church. A Committee has been formed to organise an exhibition of items of historical interest as part of the celebrations, and possibly a history of *Lechlade* will be written.

As we go to print, we learn that *Mickleton* are shortly arranging to show a collection of slides illustrating the Story of the Village 1850—1973, and to hear a talk about the changes that have taken place during that period.

Blockley Antiquarian Society was formed ten years ago with the object of establishing the Blockley Collection to preserve records of the Village history. The Collection has grown to some 500 items, and in 1974 the Society became a registered charity.

During 1974 the Society devoted most of its time and energy to getting H. E. M. Icely's "Blockley through Twelve Centuries" into print. The Author, a 90 year old retired Oxford Don, now living in Kent, who formerly spent about 20 years in Blockley, had devoted nearly 30 years research to the first history of the village to be published for a century. The work is certainly a notable achievement and copies are still obtainable.

The *Gloucestershire Federation of Women's Institutes* is organising three competitions for members in connection with European Architectural Heritage Year: a photographic record of listed buildings; an illustrated portfolio of the village, with special reference to the buildings; and a survey and record (rubblings drawings and photographs) of tombstones. The entries will be on display at the Gloucester City Museum and Art Gallery, Brunswick Road, Gloucester, from the 6th September until the 18th October.

Parkend Station was once an important centre on the old "Severn and Wye" system, and dates back over a period of 150 years, during which time the gauges were altered three times and five separate companies assumed control. The *Dean Forest Railway Preservation Society* was formed in 1970, when British Rail announced that the Lydney-Parkend Branch Line would be closing completely. In the event Lydney is still served by a daily freight train, but the Society continues in its objects of preserving a full size section of railway in the area and to operate trains representative of the days of industrial prosperity in the Forest. It is hoped that "Engines in steam" will be open to the public during 1975.



We look forward to a book being published later this year in Lancashire on *Old Cotswold Recipes and Photographs*. This is expected to contain old stories and anecdotes, etc. The Author urgently requires to borrow, or buy, copies of pre-1920 photographs of people involved in everyday activities, such as farming, dairying, kitchen scenes, or in shops and markets, etc. — can anyone in Gloucestershire please help? Any information should be sent to the Editor.

We learn that the *Nailsworth Society* was formed within the last year and the Local Studies Group, the largest in the Society with a Membership of about 50, aims to encourage people of all ages to search for interesting and historical facts concerning the environment. Several interesting projects are envisaged, such as a survey of buildings; a collection of anecdotes; a register of elderly and disabled people, etc. The Group Leader is Mrs B. Newman whose late Husband came to live in Nailsworth in 1970, which had been his Family's home since 1830, his first ancestors having arrived there in 1756.

BOOK REVIEWS

RESCUE ARCHAEOLOGY

Ed. Philip Rahtz. 90p. Penguin.

THIS BOOK HAS been most aptly published to coincide with the European Architectural Heritage Year. It concerns the attempts to rescue the many valuable sites which are being lost forever by the onslaught of bulldozers while they make motorways, resevoirs and building sites, and by the deep ploughing of farm tractors.

The book consists of twenty excellent articles, which are described by the Editor Philip Rahtz as personal statements, written by professors and lecturers in Universities, schoolteachers, Museum officials and professional and amateur archaeologists. "Among them", he writes, "are some of the most eminent British Archaeologists of our day, especially of the younger generation (which in archaeology means under fifty!)" They are nearly all of them on the committee of RESCUE, the Trust for British Archaeology, which was founded in 1971 to try and save the rapidly vanishing treasures.

Unfortunately, Gloucestershire does not feature very much in the book, as it of course had to go to Press before Miss Heighway's remarkable dig in Eastgate Street. This is particularly important, because the property owners have agreed to let the massive and magnificent Roman walls stay forever on display to the public, even although it meant a change in the architect's plans. This is a perfect example of rescue at its best. The book contains many more examples, but, alas, many of them amounting to a hurried race with the bulldozers before the site was lost for good.

Peter Fowler mentions the discoveries near Alveston on the M.5, where excavation was possible only on a narrow strip between machines and the fence.

The last three chapters are in the form of a plea to the public to help save valuable sites, and there are most useful details as to how to form committees, organise digs, enroll volunteers, and raise money. The best start is to join RESCUE for a minimum subscription of £2 (students £1). The address is: The Secretary, Rescue, 25a The Tything, Worcester (Worcester 20651).

This book will appeal not only to archaeologists, but to everyone interested in the history of man, and the preservation of ancient culture.

MERCEDES MACKAY.

LOCAL HISTORY

IN RESPONSE TO popular demand a second edition of the Gloucestershire Local History Handbook has been printed. Mr Brian Smith, County Archivist has completely revised the text and all material has been brought up to date in the light of changes in the county boundaries.

There are fresh illustrations and a wealth of detail for historians and others interested in sources of information. Indications are given where relevant records can be traced and there are references for further reading. A section on museums and field studies will be useful for teachers and students alike.

The Handbook may be obtained from the Gloucestershire Community Council, 15 College Green, Gloucester, GL1 2LZ, price 50p or from booksellers throughout the county.

CIRENCESTER QUAKERS, 1655-1973

THE LIST OF references and the index of this short history quickly show that Leslie Stephens, as well as giving a vivid and intimate picture of local Quakers, has related their situation to both national and inter-national events.

A student of eighteenth or nineteenth century social or ecclesiastical history will find here intimate occasions illustrating the broader controversial issues of those times. Incidents of Bishop and Rector versus Quaker (at Siddington), a lively sketch of Henrietta Whatley, who became a convinced Quaker contrary to the beliefs of her solicitor husband; local visits of John Bright, the radical reformer; toleration and persecution; a peep at the Fettiplace family; missionary visits to India by local concerned Quakers; everything intensely local in origin and yet with the widest possible connections.

The text is easy reading, full of fact, with no idle imaginings or flights of fancy. The illustrations are well done and particularly delightful is the study of Henrietta Whatley, with her steel-rimmed spectacles lodged on the head-bank of her day-cap.

It is very refreshing to find a book on Cirencester which has forgotten the Romans; Corinium has had more than her fair share of publicity (no doubt this will continue) and it is hoped we shall hear more of the varied life of this small dynamic town, which in each era seems to have had something unique to offer the outside world.

Cirencester Quakers is available from the Friends Meeting House, at Cirencester, price 65p. Enquiries by post to: No. 49, Thomas Street, enclosing two first class stamps for extra postage.
JOYCE BARKER.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE POOR LAW

“THE POOR LAW in Gloucestershire”, a “Signal Teaching Aid”, which was first published in the County Records Office in 1970, has been completely revised and re-issued. It can be obtained at the County Records Office, Shire Hall, Gloucester, for 75p and will doubtless be bought by nearly everybody interested in local history.

After a general section giving in short the history of the Poor Law nationally, follow notes on the 29 documents which are reproduced in facsimile.

Many of the documents relate to Forest Poor Law. They include a resolution passed by a vestry meeting at Awre in 1821 at which it was resolved to build a workhouse, a partial inventory of goods, furniture, etc. in 1877 at Newland Workhouse, which was situated at Coleford between St. John Street and Bank Street and which commenced in 1786, and the farming out of poor law relief in the parish of Newland to William Harris of Coleford, in 1821, the establishment of a soup kitchen at Newent in 1800 and methods used by the Vestry there to deal with unemployment after the Napoleonic wars.

Two very interesting pages from the Mitcheldean accounts show how William Piff was maintained from his illegitimate birth in 1751 and his apprenticeship to a Ruardean farmer in 1762.

A map shows the division of Gloucestershire into unions, following the 1834 Act. Most of the Forest area was in unions outside the county whose headquarters were at Chepstow, Monmouth and Ross.
T. B.

EASTLEACH MARTIN AND EASTLEACH TURVILLE

A. P. Ledger. £1.50p. County Archives.

THIS EXCEEDINGLY ERUDITE study was mostly written while the author was a student at St. Paul's College, Cheltenham, which led to his C.E., and an Honours Degree in Education at Bristol University.

So detailed is the study of the two beautiful Norman churches, that I found myself turning gratefully to the included glossary. The study includes reproductions from old and new photographs, aerial photographs, maps, and details not only from the village buildings, but of windows, pottery and other remains painstakingly traced to remote houses or museums.

The writer naturally concentrates a lot of attention on the two Norman churches, which are separated from each other only by the width of a road and a bridge over the River Leach. He also delves deeply into the history of all the farms and manors and school records of the two villages from Norman times to the twentieth century.

It seems a pity that this work is in the form of a study, for, in a less erudite and compressed form, it would make a popular historical paperback. Among the details of various ownerships, one is fascinated, for instance, by the Macaronis, with a field and a farm named after them. There was a late eighteenth century craze for all things Italian, with a Macaroni Club in London. There is a sketch of the special costume with an exceedingly high wig, off which the tiny hat was doffed by means of a tall cane.

Whether or not a reader might find this work rather heavy going, it will certainly set him off, as it did me, to visit the delightful and not too well known villages which are very well worth exploring.

I wish that Mr Ledger would do the same for other Gloucestershire villages, because it takes great perseverance and a very exploratory mind to unearth such detailed history

M.M.

ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, CHELTENHAM

A PLEASING GUIDE to the Church of St. Stephen, Cheltenham has recently been published.

The Church, which took ten years to build, was consecrated by Bishop Ellicott of Gloucester and Bristol in 1883, and the guide contains an extensive account of both the laying of the foundation stone and of the consecration itself.

The story of the church is well told, and there are comprehensive descriptions of its fabric and ornaments with accounts of the many benefactors of the building over the years.

Five pages of pictures together with a sketch of the exterior on the cover give a good impression of the church and its contents, and there is a useful list of Incumbents, Assistant Clergy and church officers since the consecration.

The latter part of the guide is devoted to the stories and descriptions of the secular buildings connected with the church in the parish such as the school, the hall and the coffee tavern and institute.

Attractively printed and laid out, the guide should prove a useful companion to parishioners and visitors alike. Obtainable at 25p from the Church or 30p post paid from Mrs Dennis, 32 Hatherley Road, Cheltenham. R.J.M.