

Local History Bulletin

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GATCOMBE PARK

From the engraving by J. & H. S. Storer

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EDITORIAL

May I remind readers of our Annual Local History Conference on Saturday, 19th September at The College of St. Paul and St. Mary, The Park, Cheltenham; 2 p.m.—5 p.m., admission 60p including light refreshments.

The theme of the Conference will be Gloucestershire Personalities — “Fredrick Harvey — Poet”, “Hook, V.C.” and “Sir Charles Dilke”.

Also on Saturday, 10th October will be our first Regional Conference and will be held at St. George’s Hall, Blockley, with the kind assistance of The Blockley Antiquarian Society. It will be from 2 p.m.—5 p.m., with a small admission charge, and promises to be a most interesting afternoon.

G. J. STOCKHAM,
Editor.

RICARDO AND REBECCA AT STROUD

DAVID RICARDO OF Gatcombe Park near Minchinhampton was one of those landowners who saw his social duty to lie in taking an active part in local affairs for the benefit of the whole community.(1) But the way of a benefactor is sometimes hard: people do not always want to be improved. In the early 1850s his scheme for rationalising the chaotic system of road administration in the Borough of Stroud(2) sharply rebounded in his face and he was the target for much vilification and unpopularity.

Rebecca? No lady — the name was given to certain riots in the early 1840s in South Wales against an attempt to put the burden of the repair of turnpike roads onto the rates.(3) The name is associated with Ricardo because he published a pamphlet in 1847 with the title of “Rebecca at Stroud” in which he pointed out the confusion, inefficiency and cost to the local trade and travel of the middle of the turnpike system in the Stroudwater valleys.(4) What he seems to have overlooked is that the late riots in South Wales were directed against the very changes he was proposing. The story which follows is mostly taken from the pages of the Stroud Free Press, which was first published at the very end of 1850, and which came out strongly in favour of Ricardo’s attempted reforms — and which did not long survive the collapse of the scheme.

Ricardo had a personal interest in the plan he put forward to eliminate waste and possible maladministration in both parish and turnpike roads. The completion of the Great Western Railway down the Stroud valley had diminished

the tolls on the turnpikes by nearly half: the more profitable through traffic now went by rail, and local travellers and traders were faced with the need to pay for repair entirely out of local trade and travel.(5)

This might have been borne, but what made the situation worse was that the toll money did not go wholly and solely to the Trusts for repair. Almost since the start of the turnpike system, Trustees had tended to rent out the tolls for a twelve-month: the person who offered the highest price at the annual auction had then to make his profit from the surplus of toll revenue over the sum he had paid out. When revenue dropped drastically with the advent of the railways, the toll renters had to tighten the collection of tolls and use every means to make everybody pay who should pay. These renters or "farmers" were not necessarily local people: Mr Joseph Spire was the toll renter for the Stroud-Chalford Road, and he lived in the 1850s at Selly Oak, Birmingham. His employees had the job of maximising his income.

Ricardo claimed that to drive from Gatcombe Park to Brimscombe, about 3 miles, cost him 2/4.(6) Moreover, check points seemed to have been set up, without proper justification, to catch travellers entering the main road from the side roads. "Little ragged boys on every corner", as he put it, would rush up to him with a board and a bundle of tickets, whichever route he took. In October he was fined 2 guineas, with 17/- costs, for failing to stop and pay the toll — of 2d. — at The Bourne, near Brimscombe, on the Stroud-Chalford Road. He seems indeed to have driven or ridden past the persistent youthful toll-taker without due care to safety: "Conservator Legis" in the issue of the Stroud Free Press for 21 November 1851 accused him of rudeness and bad driving.

This seems to have been a test case, and possibly the straw that broke the back of Ricardo's patience. He now undertook a vigorous campaign to persuade his fellow citizens of the Borough of Stroud to support a private Bill to put road administration into better order.(7)

From its beginning, the Stroud Free Press gave much room to letters about the roads ("a disgrace to a civilized community" said one); but also and increasingly letters rebutting Ricardo's scheme, not always abstaining from personal abuse. For this Ricardo himself must have been partly to blame; it is always a risky thing to attack headlong the status quo, and Ricardo did not hesitate to condemn not only the officials and the committees of the various Trusts, but also the administrators of the parish roads. He was only trying to apply the advice of Parliament which was renewing the powers of Turnpike Trusts for only one year at a time, and urging them to straighten out their accounts which were usually in an appalling state of debt — and also rather weakly trying to get parishes to group themselves into larger units, in the way that parish poor law unions had been set up 20 years before.

In its issue of 17 September 1852 the Stroud Free Press reminded its readers that some time before a "large and respectable meeting" had been held in the Subscription Rooms, which had appointed a committee to look into this question of road reform.(8) It was time, the editorial said, to make an application to Parliament. Ricardo must have been the moving spirit: he had got himself qualified in March as a commissioner for the Stroud-Chalford Road itself and was able as it were to work from the inside. The appointed committee included several prominent local people: Messrs. Winterbotham, Dorrington, Capel, S. S. Marling, T. C. Croome, the last-named being one of Ricardo's most faithful supporters. But significantly two other influential people refused to serve — Mr Playne and Mr Stanton. The latter indeed wrote to the Free Press to refute an argument put forward just before by Mr Croome. Mr Croome had

suggested there should be one board for the whole Borough, and that road repairs should be paid out of rates, retaining tolls to pay the interest on the capital originally borrowed to finance the construction of the turnpike roads. Mr Stanton said, that this would mean that the user of the roads would not be taxed, while the main burden would fall on all those who paid rates, whether or not they made use by vehicle or animal of the toll roads.

This was to prove the crucial issue of the campaign.

The Plan for the Management of the Roads in the Borough of Stroud was published in the Free Press on 11 March 1853. Briefly it suggested that all roads whether parish or turnpike, should come under one board (as the Home Office had long been urging). "Waywardens" should be elected (like the "guardians" of the Poor Law), meetings should be frequent, officials should be paid a fixed salary, and the accounts be audited by the Home Office. There should be two separate funds. Money raised from tolls should be used to wipe out (over 30 years) the accumulated capital debt, paying 3% interest; and should be used also for salaries and road maintenance. The parishes should raise a Highway rate which should be used only for road maintenance. In fact, this wasn't very different from the existing system: parishes individually paid for their own non-toll roads, but also had to pay something towards those toll roads which went through the parish.⁽⁹⁾ A similar system had been adopted for the relief of the poor — but this time more than just the poor were affected. Those who signed were D. Ricardo, C. Stanton, N. S. and S. S. Marling, J. E. Dorrington, W. Capel, W. H. Withey, R. Winterbotham, T. C. Croome — all local notables. Business as usual, one might say: the landowner and the manufacturer and professionals comfortably arranging matters by themselves with some show of public display.

Ricardo followed up with a long letter published on 8 April 1853, repeating much of what he had put in his pamphlet six years before. There were, he wrote, no less than 13 different Trusts in the Borough of Stroud, with no uniform method of raising money or getting the roads repaired. There were 51 gates or bars, of which only 15 were "legitimate". He made the mistake of strongly criticising the administration of the Trusts, saying that meetings were seldom held, that a quorum was often not reached (using his experience on the Stroud-Chalford Road committee), and that in many cases the whole business of a Trust was run by the Clerk without proper supervision or control. The implication was that not only was the administration incompetent, but also possibly in some cases "bent"; he also emphasised the restrictions placed on local trade by such out-of-date methods of running the affairs of what were public utilities — Stroud tradesmen he said were often using hand-carts to avoid the trouble and expense of paying toll on horse-drawn vehicles. At the very least, he had not been very tactful: he may well have thought that Reason was sufficient in a good cause: Pride, Prejudice, and the power of the Purse tend however to be unreasonable — particularly one may suspect, Pride. Among the J.P.'s who had heard Ricardo's case for failing to pay toll were: H. W. Newman, R. Wyatt, W. H. Stanton and R. Winterbotham. Some of these names we shall meet again shortly — not a few of the prominent local people were on the various Trust committees. Ricardo was isolating himself from his own class.

Having published his proposals, Ricardo's next move was to hold a public meeting (in the Subscription Rooms of course). He took the chair and in his remarks said "At present anyone travelling through Stroud and making a circuit of half a mile would pay five, or in a circuit of a mile, eight tolls."⁽¹⁰⁾

"Not by a labouring man!" was shouted from the body of the hall. It was an ominous start to the meeting. Then Mr Croome was given the task of ex-

plaining the plan, but was interrupted by an "apparently intoxicated labouring man."

Then one of Ricardo's other supporters, Mr Winterbotham, tried: "If any burden was created by the plan it was one that would be felt most injuriously by the very gentlemen who had submitted the particulars for their consideration." This statement was, not unnaturally, greeted with shouts of "No! No!" and there were so many interruptions that Mr Wyatt rose to move that anyone disturbing the proceedings should be "gently removed from the room." (By whom, one might ask?) It sounds very much like certain recent courts of enquiry for motorway schemes.

By contrast, loud applause greeted the remarks of Mr Hyett: he opposed the idea of relieving the toll payer at the expense of the ratepayer, and another gentleman coming out strongly against the plan was Captain Townsend of Steanbridge — who was loudly cheered when he said that those who used the roads should pay for their maintenance.

A valid objection raised in the body of the hall was that to hold such an important town meeting in the afternoon virtually excluded the labouring man. "Why not call a meeting in the evening? I beg to move that the meeting be adjourned till next Monday evening at seven o'clock." We may note that one J. Harper, described as a factory operative, was able to put the case for the labouring man from the platform. Further attempts to prove that the proposed new road rate would not be all that high, and that it would benefit the locality by reducing transport costs were greeted with shouts of "Soft soap!" "We have only 7/- a week, and how could we pay it!"

A very uncomfortable, and ominous, meeting for Ricardo and his supporters. It broke up in acrimony and was duly adjourned.

Somewhere along the line things had gone wrong. Possibly Ricardo had used the wrong tactics, and possibly his thinking was rooted in the rational benevolence of the enlightened 18th century. The enfranchisement of the working man was yet to come, but the ground swell of popular democracy seems evident in this minor affair in the Borough of Stroud. What *is* interesting however is that members of the landowning or factory-owning classes now could combine forces with the mass of the people and form a temporary and somewhat spurious alliance against Ricardo. There followed accusations and counter-accusations in the columns of the Free Press. For example, Thomas Baldwin of Minchinhampton in the issue of 6 May openly contradicted some of Ricardo's facts, and amongst other things unkindly (and somewhat unfairly) asked who had wanted the turnpike roads in the first place? The rich with their carriages, and the opulent clothiers, in order to have good approaches to their houses and factories. What was wanted now, went on Mr Baldwin, were meetings either central or in the outlying parishes to mobilise opinion against the Bill.

The Stroud Roads Bill was printed in the Free Press of 28 October 1853 as a free supplement, and another meeting was called at the Subscription Rooms. For 1 p.m.! (There was obviously a lack of a good public relations man on Ricardo's side.) The attempt to open the meeting at that time just had to be given up as for 30 minutes there was yelling, stamping and whistling. The meeting was adjourned till the evening, and the resolution for the Bill was lost by a large majority. No surprise!

Meetings were now held to oppose the Bill. One at the Royal George(11) was chaired by Major Newman, at which it was resolved to hold meetings in the parishes to raise and combine opposition. The appointed committee carried some heavy local guns, and many of them. (*This looks like good staff work*).

On it were: G. Edwards, R. C. Paul, W. Playne of Longfords, R. Townsend of Stanbridge House, Charles Hooper of Eastington, the Rev. G. Williams of Mugmoor House(12), John Mills of Miserden, W. Davies of Stonehouse, the Rev. T. Peters of Eastington, the Rev. H. Cripps of Stonehouse, R. S. Davies of Stonehouse, Major Newman of New House, Thrupp, F. Eycott of Stonehouse, W. H. Paine M.D. of Stroud, J. H. Warman of Ebley House, G. Edwards (another?) of Stroud, J. Wise of Woodchester, C. H. Fisher of Stroud, C. B. Smith of Backhouse, W. Fryer of Stroud, P. Smith of Field House, Bisley, E. Witchell of Stroud, G. Smith of Nailsworth, Charles Baker of Painswick, John Young Sandys of Slad Lodge, J. Sutton of Stroud, W. Mills of Stroud, W. Bishop of Stroud, Daniel Spring of Painswick, Marshall Rowles of Bisley, George Hazle of Bisley, George Young of Througham, and W. H. Freston of Stroud.

Mr Freston, of the firm of Edwards and Freston, was one of Ricardo's most active opponents. His firm acted as Clerks for more than one Trust so one can forgive perhaps the note of rancour that shows up. In a letter published 9 December, he offered a scant few counter proposals (for the Cainscross Road), said that all this ferment on the Roads Bill was distracting attention from the reform of far more vital matters in the Town of Stroud itself, and accused the Plan of being "nothing but a device to lessen the tolls at the expence of the Ratepayers."

On the day this letter appeared, a further meeting was held. This one was at the Victoria Rooms, as the Subscription Rooms had already been booked, and was timed for 6 p.m., to ensure the attendance of those who were most against the Bill.(13) In the chair was Mr W. H. Stanton. It was resolved to fight the Bill even in Parliament, and to gather opposition from the whole area of the Borough. A note sent in by Ricardo offering to stay away if it would promote freer discussion, was met with groans and hissing. When Mr Winterbotham (one of the faithful few) tried to speak in favour of the Bill, the meeting broke into uproar for 15 minutes (according to the Free Press reporter) and he was not allowed a hearing. What does *that* remind us of today?

Ricardo and his no doubt disheartened supporters put a brave face on it and said they would carry on. It is doubtful if they were helped by a letter from Mr A. R. Fewster of Nailsworth (20 January 1854) who wrote to the Free Press that "it is the duty of the poor to bear their privations with patience." The Free Press, sticking to the side of reason and reform to the last, indignantly declared that the Bill had just *not* been discussed: the parish meetings were held merely to excite opposition to the Bill. By February Ricardo had to acknowledge defeat, and the Stroud Roads Bill was abandoned.

So Ricardo did not get his reform. Were the roads any better? In that same month "Viator" wrote to the Free Press pointing out that the Stroud and Nailsworth Road was "bad, very bad, wretchedly bad, almost dangerous. We are very tired of waiting for them to make it better . . . Is there no means of getting the road trustees to look after their roads?"

To which the answer must be — yes. Parishes must be amalgamated, Highway Boards set up, turnpike trusts closed down, and a Highways rate instituted. Just what Ricardo had been suggesting. But it had to be done by outside means. 25/26 Vic. c.61 of 1862 gave J.P.'s compulsory powers to compel parishes to unite, or for separate parishes to become road "Districts." For example, see the accounts for the Stroud Highways Board for 1866, in the Gloucester Public Library.(14) During the 1870s the Trusts were wound up (their liabilities exceeding their assets) and their properties, mostly pike houses, sold off.(15) The names of some of the Trustees who sold them are familiar: W. Capel,

W. H. Withey, S. S. & W. H. Marling, F. Eycott, C. Playne, W. Playne are among them. One may conjecture that earlier sale would have raised rather more than they actually got 20 years later.

Joseph Spire, then at 23 Villa Road, Handsworth, was still renting tolls in the area: he had a relative in the building trade at Eastington, and there was also a George Spire, solicitor, of Stroud.

The Stroud Free Press would seem to have been the major casualty of the failed campaign. According to P. H. Fisher, it closed down in 1856. A rival paper, the Stroud Journal, was begun in May 1854, and it seems unlikely that the Free Press would have held much support after its advocacy of the unpopular Bill.

David Ricardo died in 1864.

CHRISTOPHER COX.

*(Extracts from the Stroud Free Press are by courtesy of
the Stroud News and Journal.)*

NOTES

- (1) David Ricardo was the son of the great political economist, David Ricardo the elder. The younger was one of the first two M.Ps. for the Borough of Stroud. For names of local people mentioned in the text, see especially Victoria County History XI, Index.
- (2) The Borough of Stroud was created by the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1832. It was not a continuous built-up area, but a mixture of industry and rural areas, covering more or less the hills and valleys of the Stroud-water system.
- (3) 4/5 Vic. c. 59.
- (4) Gloucestershire Collection R 295.55 in the Gloucester Central Library.
- (5) The G.W.R. line down the valley began as the Cheltenham & Great Western Union (see G. Coll. JF 14.79(1)). It got to Cirencester by 1841, and to Gloucester by 1845. Tolls both of canal and turnpike road fell by about half immediately. See e.g. Gloucester Records Office D 2637.
- (6) Stroud Free Press for 20 May 1853.
- (7) Stroud Roads Bill: G. Coll. JF 9.76-79.
- (8) The Subscription Rooms at Stroud were built in 1833; the portico was not added until 1869 (J. Tucker, *Stroud As It Was*, 1978).
- (9) Parishioners still had to pay a "composition" (in place of actual physical labour) on toll roads, in addition to a rate for the parish roads. 5/6 W. iv c.50 of 1835 however had abolished not only statute duty on parish roads, but also this composition fee and substituted a rate, together with powers to combine parishes into a Highway District under a single surveyor. Needless to say, this was seldom done.
- (10) Reported in the SFP for 15 April 1853.
- (11) When the George in Stroud High Street closed down in 1819 (P. H. Fisher, *Notes & Recollections of Stroud*, 1871), its place was taken by the Royal George on the corner of King St. and what is now King St. Parade. It became a cinema (the Picture House) in the 1920s, but was later replaced by a chain-store man's outfitter.
- (12) Mugmoor House was renamed Moor Court (Amberley).
- (13) The Victoria Rooms were close to the Royal George, roughly where Woolworths now is, on King St. Parade.
- (14) G. Coll. RX 293.17 (1).
- (15) See Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Transactions vol. 86 for 1967, Turnpike Houses of the Stroud District.

Ricardo's personal complaint was that it cost 3/8 just to drive from Gatcombe Park to Stroud (and back). For comparison, the return railway fare from Stroud to London was 31/- first class, and 23/6 second class (express trains cost more). SFP for 20 May 1853.

A poster attacking the **STROUD ROADS BILL**

THE STROUD ROADS BILL

The attention of the **RATE-PAYERS** is requested to a few points connected with the above Bill, on which every man can form a judgment for himself.

The object of the Bill is to confer a benefit on persons riding in Carriages, and using Waggon, Carts, etc. at the expense of those who do not. That is the meaning of the Bill in plain English. To do this, Mr. Ricardo proposes to raise the Poor Rates 6d. in the pound **AT ONCE**; and in Stroud the Ratepayers will **HAVE TO PAY THIS IN ADDITION** to the **PAVING AND LIGHTING RATES**. The Money thus raised is to be spent by a Board of Waywardens, to be elected like the Guardians and to sit like them with **CLOSED DOORS**, but who will not be subject to annual re-election. This Board will have power to levy Rates on you and your Property, **ON THEIR OWN AUTHORITY**, to the extent of half-a-crown in the pound, without question. The management of every Road in the Borough, the streets as well as Highways and Byeways, to be given to this Board, who are to employ paid Surveyors and manage every thing. The Public are to be allowed to **LOOK** at the Accounts, but the **POWER OF STOPPING UNNECESSARY OUTLAY** is taken from them.

Mr Ricardo states that the greater part of the wealth, intelligence, and influence of the Borough of Stroud, have agreed to all this !!!

At the **MEETING** on **FRIDAY** next, at the **VICTORIA ROOMS, NEAR THE GEORGE HOTEL, STROUD, AT SIX O'CLOCK**, you will be called upon to say whether Mr. Ricardo's Statement is true, and also solemnly to decide the question whether or not you **THE RATE-PAYERS** are willing to be taxed in order that Mr. Ricardo and other Gentlemen may ride about in their Carriages for less Toll, and in order to save the pockets of the Brewers, Manufacturers, and Halliers? Also, whether or not it is expedient that the controul of all the Roads should be placed in the hands of a few persons with Mr. Ricardo at their head, and with uncontrolled power to tax your pockets?

This poster in the Gloucester Reference Library, is annotated by an indignant hand: A Pack of Lies! and with other remarks against its tendentious and malicious remarks. Its inflammatory personalities and congestion of half-truths must have greatly helped to turn the Victoria Rooms meeting into what we can only call a howling success.

CHELTENHAM'S "HOMES FIT FOR HEROES"

LLOYD GEORGE'S CALL for "a land fit for heroes to live in" succinctly expressed the widespread public concern for a range of social issues which undermined the mood of victory in 1918. The housing sector was a major focus of this concern, as the familiar 19th century slum problem was exacerbated by a marked slump in building activity.

Dr. J. M. Martin, the County Medical Officer of Health, estimated that before 1914 350 houses were built in Gloucestershire each year. The war therefore led to a deficiency of about 1,000 new homes. Furthermore, the county required 2,000 additional dwellings to provide permanent accommodation for the land workers who had moved in to farm the expanded cultivated area, with another 500 homes needed to house the families of married soldiers, who were then living with parents and in-laws. As building costs had risen by 50% during the war, Dr. Martin saw little likelihood of a satisfactory response to this shortage from the private sector.(1) The shortfall in the county's housing stock formed the framework in which local authorities moved tentatively towards the provision of municipal housing. However, the tenor of central government legislation led initially to a focus on the long-standing problem of slum clearance, as this was the only aspect of housing action which qualified for financial assistance from the Exchequer.

In November 1918 the Local Government Board issued a circular to local authorities requesting that they draw up plans for the provision of houses. Cheltenham Borough Council responded rapidly with the formation of a Housing Sub-Committee (of the Public Health Committee) to prepare such a scheme.(2) The motives behind the alacrity of the Public Health Committee's response were challenged by the political opponents of Dr. Richard Davies, an alderman serving on the committee and Liberal parliamentary candidate for Cheltenham. Councillor Betteridge saw it as a vote-catching exercise, while the 'Echo' commented unfavourably on Davies' 'shamelessly barefaced' electioneering.(3) In the face of such cynicism, the Borough Medical Officer of Health, Dr. J. H. Garrett, identified the town's housing problem in December 1918 in terms of the need to demolish 174 of the worst dwellings and to build 100 new houses to accommodate the displaced population.(4) The latter figure was stated, perhaps more realistically, as 200 by the 'Echo' in January 1919(5) while in his report for 1919 Dr. Garrett suggested that in the short-term as many as 1,000 houses would need replacing.(6) The formation of the Housing Sub-Committee was, in fact, a stage in the long-standing concern with the town's slum housing problem which had reached a crucial level in the Spring of 1918 with the inspection and issue of closure orders on houses in Stanhope, Waterloo and Worcester Streets. Initially Stanhope Street was seen as the potential site for an improvement scheme, but the cost of acquiring the land was considered too high and replacement was delayed until 1925.(7)

Additional, legislative complications arose in 1919, as the preparation of the housing scheme ran parallel with the Parliamentary debate on Addison's Bill which contained radical proposals to alter the degree of obligation of local authorities to build, as well as widening the scope of housing subsidies.(8) The consequences of these changes were reflected in the up-grading of Cheltenham's

plans for limited slum clearance to a major project of housing provision.

As well as governmental concern, further impetus for improving housing conditions came from local pressure groups including the Railwaymen's Union, the Labour Party, and the Cheltenham Workers' Housing League. The last mentioned was especially active, sending a deputation to the council in June 1919, and holding open air meetings in January 1919 "to end the housing scandal" and in July 1919 to protest at delays in the implementation of the scheme.(9) Indeed, widely held concern with delay and rising costs led to the consideration by the council of short-term cheaper substitute accommodation, including the conversion of houses in Lansdown Crescent into flats, and the acquisition of wooden huts from the army.(10)

The first active step towards starting the development process was taken in January 1919 when the council advertised for offers of suitable land, preferably "in or near the North Ward or other working-class districts".(11) This call met with little in the way of a realistic or practical response, and a further search for land ensued leading finally to the purchase, from Herbert Unwin of Arle Court, of 115 acres at St. Mark's and a revised plan to build 400 houses. This acquisition contrasted markedly with the initial aim of developing only 9 acres with 100 houses and reflected the changed legislative conditions following the passage of Addison's Bill through Parliament.(12)

Having purchased the site for £10,000, the sub-committee instructed the Borough Surveyor to obtain details of the type of accommodation required by intending applicants, this strategy being in line with the Government's aim of providing houses in accordance with local needs. Subsequently the designs of six slightly different types were considered by the architects, Messrs. Chatters, Smithson and Rainger. The houses provided a living room, parlour, scullery, larder, w.c. and coal store on the ground floor; and three bedrooms and a bathroom on the first floor. The living room had a combination oven-grate for winter cooking, with a gas cooker in the kitchen for summer cooking. Some of the houses had 4 bedrooms.(13) Tenders were invited in February 1920, and those from W. T. Nicholls Ltd. (20 houses); A. C. Billings & Sons (30 houses); Collins & Godfrey (30 houses) and William Drew (20 houses) were accepted. The cost of each house varied between £946 and £949.(14) The exterior designs were based on the popular ideal of a "worker's cottage" and incorporated the rural and vernacular features characteristic of the Garden City Movement. The layout of the estate reflected the practical and aesthetic considerations contained in the Local Government Board's Housing Manual of 1919, with careful thought being given to the aspect of each house, the avoidance of long monotonous straight streets, and the planting of trees and shrubs to landscape the area. The naming of the streets after various English poets is another, minor aspect of this broad environmental concern.

Work on the estate started in April 1920, when the Mayor ceremonially cut the first sod, and in January 1921 the development was opened and the first houses were handed over.(15) In addition to the role of developer, the council was also responsible for tenancing the houses. To this end the sub-committee obtained details of the conditions of selection of tenants used in other towns, and subsequently adopted a preferential system favouring ex-servicemen. Accommodation was also made available at the request of Smiths

Systems Ltd. and H. H. Martyn & Co. Ltd. for "key men".(16)

Local press reports in 1920 and 1921 are indicative of the pride in and support for the St. Mark's scheme, and only the nascent local branch of the Middle Classes Union was overtly opposed to spending on the houses.(17) However, to have any significant impact on the town's housing problem, far more new dwellings were required. The decision by the Ministry of Health to restrict the number of houses to be erected under the Assisted Housing Scheme prevented any further building in Cheltenham, beyond the 80 parlour houses and a further 40 non-parlour dwellings, started in February 1921, then under construction. The council was consequently left with a large surplus of land, some used in the short term to provide allotments, a playground, and a council backed work scheme for the unemployed growing potatoes. In 1922 plots were offered for sale to other builders, although only one small area was taken up and used for the Jessie Mary Chambers Almshouses.(18)

Following the change in government in 1922 a new Housing Bill was introduced by Neville Chamberlain. Although primarily favouring private developers, the Bill provided the impetus for a new phase of municipal building, albeit on a small scale and limited to non parlour houses.(19)

In the context of the initial aim to build 400 houses and the probable need to replace 1,000, the early phases at St. Mark's made little impact on the housing problem in Cheltenham and extensive areas of slum property remained. In addition, there is little evidence that the provision of council housing at relatively high rents assisted those at the bottom of the housing scale by the process of "filtering down" which involved "the gradual shifting of tenants from worse to better accommodation as the latter became available".(20) The early houses at St. Mark's therefore only provided accommodation for those heroes in employment and able to afford the rents, others had to wait before being rehoused and then into dwellings which lacked the facilities and the environment of the Addison houses.

R. HOMAN.

Notes

- (1) Report on a conference of Local Authorities on the Housing Question, held at Shire Hall, Gloucester, 27th January, 1919.
- (2) Cheltenham Borough Council Minutes (CBCM), Public Health Committee, 27th November, 1918.
- (3) (4) Echo, 4th December, 1918. (5) Echo, 28th January, 1919.
- (6) Cheltenham Borough Council, Medical Officer of Health Report, 1919.
- (7) CBCM, Public Health Committee, January to July 1918, *passim*.
- (8) J. Burnett, A social history of housing, 1815-1970, 1978 pp 215-243.
- (9) CBCM, Housing Sub-Committee, 10th February 1919, 11th June 1919, 11th July 1919, Echo 13th January 1919.
- (10) CBCM, the Streets and Highways committee, 3rd February 1919. The Housing Sub-committee approved the purchase of 4 huts in September 1919. These were to be converted into accommodation for 6, later reduced to 5, families. This plan was abandoned in February 1920, because of the high costs of conversion and the huts were sold.
- (11) Echo, 24th January, 1919.
- (12) CBCM, Housing Sub-committee, 28th March 1919 and 12th May 1919.
- (13) CBCM, Housing Sub-committee, 11th June 1919 and 11th November 1919.

- (14) The tendering stage was complicated by the builders subsequently changing their terms. This therefore is a list of the firms which carried out the work. CBCM Housing Sub-Committee 1919 and 1920, *passim*.
- (15) CBCM, Housing Committee, 27th April 1920 and 6th January 1921.
- (16) CBCM, Housing Committee, 19th July 1920 and 21st March 1921.
- (17) The Cheltenham Looker-On of 1st May 1920, commented on "the commendable enterprise of the Corporation in acquiring a capacious site for their operation".
- (18) CBCM, Housing Committee, 20th June 1921, 9th May and 12th Dec. 1922.
- (19) CBCM, Housing Committee, 4th July 1923. William Drew was to build 30 non-parlour houses in Tennyson Road.
- (20) Cheltenham Borough Council, Medical Officer of Health Report, 1924.

NOTES ON A WATCH

AN ACQUISITION WITH a history is now on display in the Tewkesbury Museum as a result of a generous permanent loan from the Old Girls' Association of the late Tewkesbury High School. It is a gold watch in the form of a flattened sphere of maximum dimensions $1\frac{1}{2}$ ". It is unusual in that the winder and suspension ring stand opposite the third hour, not the twelfth. The dial is very small, no more than $\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter and displays the hands only behind a glass. The numerals are engraved in black on the outer case. On the back cover is a full-face monogramme engraved 'N' entwined with 'L'. Opening this hinged lid discloses, on its back, a haphazard selection of marks, including a mint mark, what may be a pattern number, the letters '15K' in a hexagon (for 15 carat) and a scratched number which was possibly the retailer's price code.

The now exposed inner case has the inscription: 'Presented to / Nina Luckes / by the past and present pupils / High School / Tewkesbury / July 30 1885'. On an arc of the circumference, faintly, is 'Arthur Jacy Cheltenham'. The watch is suspended from a 9ct. bar brooch inscribed 'Cor Paratum Meum'.

Nina Luckes was Miss Luckes, born in 1856 and educated at Cheltenham Ladies' College from 1871 to 1881. This excessive length of time may be accounted for by some teaching experience. She is also known to have had private tuition in Stratford-on-Avon in 1881 but in view of her age this must have been giving, not receiving, for in 1882 she was appointed the first headmistress of the new Tewkesbury High School, an unlikely event for someone still receiving private tuition. Even so, 25 is very young for a headmistress. She must have been unusually talented. This is borne out by later events.

She left in 1885 to go to Hereford where she founded the Hereford High School. Later, in 1892 she founded Monmouth Girls' School. Ill-health forced her retirement at an early age — 51 — in 1907. From that time until her death in 1925 she was an invalid. During these last years her constant companion was a Miss Lloyd, who had also been one of the original staff of the Tewkesbury High School. She inherited the watch.

Miss Lloyd was a founder member of the O.G.A., to which she gave the watch. They in turn loaned it to the School. For 47 years it was not only the badge of the Head Girl but also the arbiter of all school time, for one of the duties of the Head Girl was to signal start and end of the school day and all lesson times. The school is now closed and, by an odd coincidence, the watch no longer works.

B. LINNELL.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE BULLO PILL TRAMROAD RAILWAY 1809-1872

THIS EARLY NINETEENTH Century Tramroad subsequently grew in importance with the growth of the Iron-ore and Coal Industry situated around the Eastern area of the Forest of Dean, and, along with this, an account follows of its development and the men and Company which developed it and subsequently the railway which followed in its place. The period 1809-1871 encompasses the use of the old styled tramroad (of about 3' 6" gauge) and the standard gauge which replaced many railways in the country after 1850.

The Forest of Dean was never simply a woodland, for the district was rich in minerals, especially Iron-ore and Coal. The extent of the Forest's mineral wealth is indicated by the fact that in medieval times the Forest was the major iron working centre in Britain. Although the Crown's insistence on preserving the timber in the woods prevented iron works exploiting much more land after 1730, the works grew with the introduction of coke smelting towards the end of the Century.

It was on this foundation of mineral wealth, and its need for effective transport, that the horse tramroads were developed, a development essential for early 19th Century enterprise. The tramroads were versatile, and by far the most effective means of transporting raw materials overland at the time, but their operation was to be limited as the century progressed, mainly because of the development of steam power. After 1790 numerous small mining enterprises were building tramroads in the Forest with the aim of linking up the major coal mines, but the important stage was to link the small branch 'pit lines' up to a major line so that coal could be transported to the River Severn.

On the Eastern side of the Forest of Dean, the valley of Cinderford-brook, with considerable industrial potential, required an outlet to the river. This need was met by the Bullo Pill Railway Company which was to build a tramroad from the Cinderford area down to the River Severn at Bullo Pill, partly under its own Railway Act of 1809 and partly privately. Renamed the Forest of Dean Railway in 1828, it was replaced by the standard 'Broad gauge' in 1854, to be replaced by the standard gauge in 1871. The Bullo Company were to continue to run the line as a tramroad for 17 years after many of its 'enterprises' had been superseded by railways. By that time the Bullo Pill Company, serving several industrial concerns, was well to the fore in extending and protecting its interests.

The railway promoters in the 'Forest' were preoccupied with linking the Cinderford region Coal pits and iron-ore mines with the River Severn, the natural outlet which lay South-Eastwards along the Cinderford valley. On September 15th 1806, notice was given of an application to Parliament for a line "from Churchway engine to Bullo Pill".(1) John Rennie, Civil Engineer, made a survey on the scheme and reported that it was favourable. The promoters behind the tramroad — Rayon Jones, landowner, William Fendall and James Jelf (Gloucester Bankers) were determined and influential. Parliament passed the Act and the Hereford Journal announced on July 5th 1808 "From the spirited disposition of three Gloucestershire gentlemen, a railroad (tramroad) is determined and contracted for, from Bullo Pill harbour to Cinderford region in the Forest of Dean . . . about 900—1,100 yards of this line will pass under a considerable mountain, to be completed at about £6,000."(2) The mountain referred to was actually Hay Hill(3) which is one half miles south of Soudley, and the tunnel is the oldest tramroad or indeed (because it was converted for the succeeding railroad) railway tunnel in the world and was a great 'show piece' for the engineer John Hodgkinson, who signed an estimate for the whole line

in February 1809 for £11,780. The Bullo Pill Railway Act received Royal assent on June 10th 1809.(3) Work began without delay on the line northward from Bullo Pill Harbour and the line under the B.P.R. Act was careful to protect Crown interests. Any person could use the line upon payment of rates, except for free miners opening unauthorised pits more than 100 yards from the line. Such interlopers were banned from using the line at all. Crown officials were to supply a list of names to the Bullo Pill Company Clerk, who was to exhibit it at each toll gate, and if wagon loads passed through without prior permission, the offender was to be fined £10, while the Toll Collector was 'at hazard' for £20! As a double check the Clerk was authorised to deliver to the Company officials a list of free miners using the tramroad each month. The Clerk in 1815 was a man named James Johns whose office was at Bullo Pill. Any tax collector using abusive language towards Crown officials was liable to a fine of up to £5!(4)

The men employed by the Bullo Pill Company to build the tramroad were hard pushed; it was scheduled to open in 1812. On 29th September 1810, the *Gloucester Journal* announced "the Hay tunnel is completed along with the line from the River Severn (at Bullo Pill Harbour) to the Forest of Dean, by which the valuable products of the 'Forest' may be brought to market with a feasibility hitherto unknown."(5) The Bullo Pill Railway, north of 'Cinderford Bridge' was probably completed soon afterwards because the B.P. Co. (a mining subsidiary) were offering "coal for sale" at Bullo Pill in June 1811, and in September the first coal arrived at Gloucester Docks via barge from the Harbour. So, in the matter of seven years (a creditable achievement at the time) the tramroad from the Cinderford area to Bullo Pill was in "full swing"; an example of how Nineteenth Century industry co-ordinated all the new innovations with the old. The setting up of the subsidiary indicates that industry at the upper end of the Cinderford Valley was developing too slowly for the tramroad proprietors, but Crown Licences granted in 1811 authorized a steam engine at Upper Bilson in 1815 to pull coal from the pit-face to the line. To ensure that the tramroad would have adequate traffic, the B.P. Railway proprietors developed the Great Bilson Coalmine, which continued to be worked until 1936. Shakemantle Iron-Works increased its output of iron ore, and the old iron works at 'Buckshaft' near Cinderford, also benefited from the tramroad.

The Bullo Pill Harbour itself was no great labyrinth of the waterways, but a small establishment around a modest stone lined basin, approximately 90 yards long and 30 yards wide.(6) Before the tramroad was built the Pill (or tidal inlet) was used for building small fishing boats, but this was declining well before 1800. Rennie, in 1807, described the 'Bolloe Pill' as "Capacious and conveniently approached with a tolerable feeding it, and ordinary spring tides rising from 16-18 feet".(7) He proposed that a little wet Dock should be built. The Harbour was doubtless put in hand by the promoters with their private line the Bullo Pill Tramway by June 1810, when coal was for sale at the Harbour. In 1819, it was said that there was 1,000 tons of coal leaving the Harbour daily bound for Gloucester Docks. William Greening, a Royal Navy pensioner, was appointed Shipping Agent at the Harbour on 21st March 1818, a post which he was to hold until his retirement at the age of 87 in 1872!(8)

In March 1819, it was reported that "The Great Works at Bilson on the Eastern side of the Forest of Dean belonging to the Bullo Pill Railway Co. are now completed and let upon lease for 21 years. These Lessees contract to deliver 300 tons of large coal every day at the Bullo Pill Wharf on the River Severn, at a fixed rate." Clearly the Great Bilson Works were in production, and a Licence of 1816 which authorized the use of steam engines to take the coal from the

pit-face to the tramroad was implemented. An advertisement for the sale of a fourth share in the B.P.R. referred to Collieries worked by and belonging to the Company. The shafts were within 40 yards of the lower 'veins' at the lower Bilson Works, and when these were opened a daily tonnage of 250/300 was expected. So, it can be seen that the early work initiated by the tramroad promoters was beginning to bring success. Soon the Bilson and 'Ayleford Forge' Mines were expanding rapidly along with the Buckshaft and Shakemantle Iron-ore Works.(9)

The fact that the local Mines were producing 'materials' in reasonably large quantities is a credit to the whole tramway system too. The end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, however, brought an economic recession, and in the ensuing years the Bullo Pill tramroad seems to have suffered badly, probably because the development of the Cinderford Valley was incomplete, some of the smaller Cinderford pits remaining inactive. In October 1812 notice was given of a Bill to extend the B.P. Railway. A Licence of June 1823 authorized the B.P. Railway to build a connection (a mere 45 yards long) from Churchway Iron-works. This Licence was effective for 31 years. At last the tramroad was completed and the year 1824 saw plans deposited for a tramroad from the Bilson area to Plump Hill, and from Brimbscombe Port to the Stroud and Thames Water Canal, so linking up with Bullo Pill Harbour by barge across the Severn. However, times were not propitious for such ventures.

After the effect of the recession, caused mainly by the Napoleonic Wars, mines using the B.P.R. began to lose orders, especially the Iron-Works. Things became worse, and by 1824 the B.P.R. was almost at a standstill. Edward Prothero, a prominent coal mine owner from the Parkend area, and Chairman of the South & West Company, purchased the tramroad, including the Great Bilson Colliery, eventually selling the tramroad to the newly formed Forest of Dean Railway Company. An Act was obtained on May 5th, 1826 authorizing the new Company to buy and maintain the B.P.R. The eighteen subscribers included Edward Prothero's three Sons and the capital amounted to £120,000 in £50 Shares.(10)

The track of the Bullo Pill Railway was of L-shaped plate which had been commonly adopted in the Forest of Dean. The line was 3' 6" in gauge and widened by the Forest of Dean Railway Co. in 1826 to the 'Broad-gauge' of 4' 2", when opportunity arose to increase its capacity.(11) The original cast iron plates had a notch at each end of the tread, adjacent notches matching to form a hole for the iron spike which was driven into an iron plug in a stone block. According to H. W. Farr, the space between the rails was cambered slightly and cobbled to provide a stable track for the horses. When the Forest of Dean Railway Co. took over in 1826, the plates were changed to 4' 3", being supplied by a certain Samuel Hewlett at a cost of £6 per ton. The wagons were provided by the traders using the line, and were of an oak base consisting of two longitudinal timbers; the sides of the wagons were also made from local oak. One end of the wagon was removable for tipping. Each of the axles were a square iron bar bolted to the underside of the frame with round ends on which the wheels revolved. These were of cast iron, 2' 4" in diameter and $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide at the rim,(12) with eight spokes. The wheels were secured to the axles by 'pins'.

Each of the wagons used on the tramroad varied in size and usually it was the coal wagons which were the largest. Each had to be marked with the owner's name, each letter being at least 3" in height on a black background. The Act of 1826 permitting the Forest of Dean Railway Co. to take over the line stipulated the same and also added that the wagon owners' name and address were to be entered with the Company Clerk.

As mentioned above, it was the responsibility of the Company Clerk to check that he knew exactly who was using the line; when the Forest of Dean Railway Co. obtained the tramroad such duties were carried out by a certain Marcus Fletcher, a Cornishman, who earned the considerable wage of £30 p.a. Company Committee Meetings were held at the Bear Inn, near Newnham-on-Severn, and were chaired by no less a person than Edward Prothero⁽¹³⁾ who eventually bought the Bilson Works back off the Forest of Dean Railway Co. After 1830 local Iron Works and the coal mines gradually resumed production, and by the year 1833, production was at 95,000 tons, well above the level immediately following the Napoleonic Wars. However, as production increased, so too did the use of the tramroad, indeed by the year 1836 the lack of a double line was causing delays at Hay Hill tunnel. A Company Committee report stated "There is an urgent need for new provisions".⁽¹⁴⁾ The gentlemen who was asked to survey the situation was none other than Robert Louis Stephenson who had recently completed supervising the building of the Birmingham to London Railway. After Stephenson's report the Company decided to apply for an Act for the rendering of a new line to replace the tramroad. The fact that Stephenson was willing to carry out a survey indicates clearly how much significance was placed on the line by local industry.

Unfortunately, the newly proposed line was delayed because of a proposal by the South & West Railway Co. to build a line from the Bilson area to Gloucester Docks. However, fortunately for the Forest of Dean Railway, the proposals were considered impractical. Although the tramroad had served the Eastern area of the Forest of Dean industrial concerns well for 35 years, the arrival of steam in other areas introduced new standards of efficiency and economy. The year 1844 brought a bid from the South Wales Railway Company to purchase the Bullo Pill tramline for £30,000. The Forest of Dean Railway Co., which had previously expressed concern for the tramroad's 'safety', agreed to meet Company officials from the S.W. Railway Co. at Paddington, London, and, following the subsequent meeting, it was agreed that the South Wales Railway Co. should purchase the line for £101,000.⁽¹⁴⁾ The 'climate' was one of change. There was no doubt that the tramroad had served local industry in the Cinderford Valley well since the year 1809, but the horse power used was not transporting enough coal to the Severn, and the decision to change the line to steam saw the end of one of the last 'old-fashioned' industrial tramroads in the country.

Reporting to a Committee in 1847, Daniel Gooch, a well known engine designer, gave a brief account of the agreement for the purchase of the line. The Hay Hill tunnel was to be enlarged from 12 to 15 ft. wide and from 15 to 21 ft. high. The Act for the new line was secured on July 2nd, 1847 and was known as the South Wales Railway Act (Forest of Dean Division) stating 'the S.W. Railway Co. are authorized to purchase the Forest of Dean Railway running from "Churchway engine" near Cinderford to Bullo Pill, and that the above said Co. have authority to construct a locomotive railway to replace the old tramroad'. This news came as a great relief to the Cinderford area industrial concerns, especially the Great Bilson Colliery which only produced 35,000 tons of coal in 1846.⁽¹⁶⁾

It was the same for many other small joint-stock railway companies in the country at that time. The number of larger speculators was on the increase and these speculators such as the South Wales Railway Co. gradually bought out the smaller railway companies. After the turn of the century however the use of steam was to decline. In recent years small railways have been opened notably at Ffestiniog. Interest in the smaller railways and steam locomotives has grown

significantly over the last decade. This interest has led local historians to view the Hay Hill tunnel on the old Bullo Pill line as a prospective tourist attraction.

For the Forest of Dean Railway Co. the take-over was the end of their existence. They held the last meeting at Morley's Hotel, Trafalgar Square, London, on Friday, 10th September, 1852 with Edward Prothero in the chair. Although the original survey for the new railways had been carried out by Stephenson, the actual conversion of the tramroad was supervised by Brunel who gave brief accounts of the operation. He reported in 1853 that the work was proving tedious especially the enlargement of the Hay Hill tunnel. In August of 1853 all the earthworks had been almost completed, there being 253 labourers employed by the S.W. Railway Co. Permanent way materials were delivered and additional sidings and tins were provided for. Whilst the track was being laid down the difficult operation of enlarging and lowering the bottom of the tunnel had been completed at the cost of £17,000. In the following weeks the sidings were installed to serve various coal mines and iron works, and it is likely that the S.W. Railway Co. financed most of this work; the size and potential usage of the new line by these mines justifying the expense. Bearing in mind the completely new route, it is not surprising that the broad gauge railway, 7 miles 20 chains long, cost about £120,000 to build.

The new line was completed in 1854, but was to last less than 20 years. Tram wagons were placed on broad gauge flat wagons by turntable for onward transit from Churchway to Cinderford Iron Works. Special features from the operating point of view were the steep gradients and the large number of sidings, 31 in all. The engines used were similar to the latter and the opening of the line in 1854 must have restricted trade at Bullo Harbour as interchange sidings were quickly joined to the line. During the spring tides, however, no less than 80 wagons (or 1,000 tons) of coal were shipped to Stourport in barges. By 1867 four locomotives were shedded at Bullo Pill and during the same year the S.W. Railway Co. amalgamated with the G.W.R. E. Fletcher, the local Superintendent, stated in 1870 that about 1,500 tons of coal passed down the line from Bilson, Lightmoor and Ayleford Forge Pits daily,⁽¹⁷⁾ and in 1871, 31,556 tons of coal were despatched from the Harbour. So, from 1854, the Cinderford Valley industries had greatly benefited from the new railway. Suddenly, in 1872, plans were made by the S. Wales and G.W.R. to convert the Bullo Pill railway to standard gauge so that a newly proposed junction on the Gloucester-South Wales line could link up with it. This was agreed to, and the conversion took place in 1872, lasting nine months.

The standard gauge brought with it a new era. After the conversion the line was in existence until 1963, although the Bullo Pill Harbour had silted up by 1926 making it impossible to be used for shipping. The link with the G.W.R. South Wales line saved the Bullo Pill railway and the industry down the Cinderford valley. Since 1956 the local lines have closed down, along with the Iron Works, bringing to an end a vital part of our county's industrial heritage.

A. I. BROWN.

References

- (1) Q/Rum 16; Gloucester Record Office (G.R.O.).
- (2) G.R.O. F.2. 27 noted.
- (3) G.R.O. F.2. 27; (Study notes on Bullo Pill Harbour and Tramway 1971. B. Clave, 16 pp.).
- (4) Q/Rum 22, plans for line, Sept. 1807.
- (5) *Hereford Journal*, 20 Sept. 1809, from PARR "Railways in the Dean 1790-1964" (also noted in F.2.27 study notes, 1971 G.R. O.).

- (6) G.R.O. F.2. 27.
- (7) G.R.O. F.2. 27 (p.9).
- (8) G.R.O. F.2. 27 (p.9).
- (9) G.R.O. Report of B. Outram on Forest of Dean Tramways.
- (10) G.R.O. Q/Rum 100.
- (11) 10.6. Tramroads and Rlys of Forest. D.W.J.P.—Shirehampton 1961. (Gloucester City Library).
- (12) PARR '*Railways in the Dean*', p.16.
- (13) Edward Prothero, from Parkend, was a prominent mine owner in the Forest of Dean between 1817 and 1861.
- (14) B. Clave. p.15.
- (15) G.R.O. Q/Rum 73. Extension details 1848.
- (16) Forestry Commission Guide '*Dean Forest and Wye Valley*' (H.M.S.O. 1971).
- (17) Locke, Hist. Soc. Occasional papers of proceedings. 1971.

JOHN GARRISON OF TEWKESBURY, 1814-1876

WHAT STARTED OUT as a study of cases brought before the Tewkesbury Magistrates, 1853-76, was diverted by the appearance of the above-named character, 'a self-made man', as he frequently asserted and, as he was the editor and owner of the *Tewkesbury Weekly Record and Advertiser*, an assertion which he was able to make to many. It was this, added to his public comments upon the people and events of his world that stirred my interest. It should be added that he was his own reporter, proof-reader and, probably, compositor and delivery boy. He certainly sold his paper in person over the counter of his shop, along with a sovereign cure-all for cattle diseases.

For the first seven years after his arrival in the town he was headmaster of the Trinity School. During this time the standards of learning, especially religious learning, rose considerably. He resigned to start his own newspaper in 1853, working from a dingy little shop in High Street, now part of the site of a supermarket. His politics were Liberal, mainly, perhaps, because the only other paper in the town was Tory. He gave full coverage to the courts because his competitor did not. It was the court cases which brought out the comments which, if published today, would surely land him neck-deep in libel suits.

"A dissipated-looking carpenter" was his description of George Badger in 1871. Mr Badger had been undeniably drunk and disorderly the week before. A similar offender in 1869 did not have the benefit of any doubts. He was "A well-known shoemaker of drunken habits" and so he remains in print to this day. "A nymph of the pave" was a puzzler until a little later in the report when "this fair-featured but obviously poor, lost young thing" turned out to be one of the local prostitutes. He gave her much gentler treatment than a bewildered 5 year old lad who was castigated as "a little thief who has escaped the penalties of his crimes". The 'crimes' in this instance were the picking up of coal worth 1d. from the railway lines and taking it home for the winter fire. The case was dismissed but this made no difference to John Garrison's verdict.

A faint hint of regret that the police should have brought the case is to be seen in his description of a 4 year old girl, "a neglected-looking child named Wear accused of stealing 3d. and obviously too young to understand what was going on." A similar touch of sympathy can be found for the two (man and wife) accused of mutual assault, "Both looked half-starved." He was soon back

on form with the case of assault by a deaf and dumb pauper, a youth, "one of violent and savage disposition." The final example, directed at his competitor's editor is more fitting, I believe, to his own work, "The venomous splutterings of his evil pen", from the opening of an editorial inveighing against Toryism.

On the urban scene he was a town councillor and later an alderman but, by contemporary accounts, he refused the office of mayor. Perhaps he was unable to strike a balance between the positions of independent reporter and chief officer. He was always able to report his own comments in council verbatim in his press though denied the modern complaint of our politicians 'I was mis-quoted'. To be fair, he did the same for his fellow councillors, a far more subtle way of destroying his opponents than mere exclusion, or selective editing.

At a time when cholera was advancing rapidly northwards from Bristol he went on record with "Pure water supply, drainage and sewage are all very well but the rates couldn't afford it". The annual rate was 1½p. in the pound.

On the international scene he was just as forceful and just as wrong. Of the German victory in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 he said, "It was necessary to recognise in the German victory assurance of future quietude in Europe."

It may be significant that he was an Oddfellow but nothing of his work in that organisation has come to light.

He died at the early age of 62. The event did not disrupt the issue of his paper on the following day. It was recorded by a black-bordered obituary in heavy type taking up half a column smack in the middle of the front page. I'm positive he wrote it himself!

B. LINNELL.

AUGUSTIN EDOUART'S SILHOUETTES

SUE McKECHNIE in her massive "British Silhouette Artists and their work 1660-1860" (Sotheby, Parke, Bernet, 1978, £68) has gathered much new material including information on Augustin Edouart, the noted French profilist. Edouart born at Dunkerque in 1789, served in the Napoleonic wars and was decorated, though the exact period of his military service is unknown. He married Emilie Laurence Vital in 1814 and in that year came to this country practising as an artist in pictures from human hair.

The Cheltenham Journal of November 15th, 1824 carried an advertisement of Edouart's as the proprietor of "The Parisian Repository" a shop at 5, The Colonnade, Cheltenham, selling French needlework, artificial flowers, ormolu clocks, bronze ornaments and pictures made from human and animal hair, and also noted that he was about to leave the town. The Cheltenham Journal of June 27th 1825 records that Edouart had reopened the Parisian Repository at 4, The Colonaden and the issue of July 11th that Lucius Gahagan, the sculptor from Bath was to share Edouart's premises. The Colonnade, which has since been rebuilt, was that part of the Promenade between Imperial Circus and the High Street.

Mrs McKechnie established that it was at Cheltenham in 1825 that Edouart first began to practice as a profilist and the Cheltenham Journal of November 14th, 1825 in an advertisement for the Parisian Repository mentions the "Likenesses in profile 1/-; full length 5/-." In an advertisement in the Cheltenham Journal of November 12th, 1827 Edouart states that it was at Cheltenham "he commenced his career as a profilist and that his talents met the distinguished

patronage and encouragement which has raised him to the station he occupies as an artist."

Mrs Edouart died at Cheltenham in November 1825 a few days after having given birth to a daughter. She was buried in the churchyard of the nearby village of Prestbury. By Summer 1826 Edouart was bankrupt and on June 6th a sale of his stock was held at the Assembly Rooms. A further meeting of his creditors was held in December 1826 when Edouart was described as a "chapman and dealer in French and Fancy goods." Later that month he removed to Bath. In 1827 Edouart returned briefly to the town but also spent some time at Bath and Bristol.

Two further visits made by Edouart to Cheltenham have been traced, that of June 1829 when he was at 3, The Colonnadd and July to October and December 1836 when he practised at the Arched Buildings, 369 High Street. Edouart died in France in 1861 after a long and distinguished career that had taken him to the United States of America as well as all over the United Kingdom.

A list of 8,000 named and dated silhouettes, including many of those taken by Edouart at Cheltenham, is included in Mrs F. Nevill Jackson's "Ancestors in Silhouette cut by Auguste Edouart" 1921.

Two as yet unidentified silhouettes of gentlemen taken by Edouart at Cheltenham and dated 1827 and 1829, have recently been acquired by Cheltenham Museum.

ROGER BEACHAM.

The frontispiece is taken from a set of 6 prints entitled "Royal Houses in Gloucestershire" available from all Gloucestershire Libraries, price £3.00.