

Local History Bulletin

AUTUMN 1985 — No. 52



“A Corner Shop” — Auntie Min, Edie, Mrs. Smith.
(After the improvements, about 1950).

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
EDITORIAL	1
THE ENIGMA OF HOLLOWAYS — <i>David Bick</i>	3
HISTORICAL WESTGATE STREET, GLOUCESTER — <i>Barbara Drake</i>	6
A LUDDITE LETTER, TRUE OR FALSE? — <i>Christopher Cox</i>	12
SHOVELLING OUT THE CAMPDEN PAUPERS — <i>Geoffrey Powell</i>	13
KEEPING A CORNER SHOP IN GLOUCESTER — <i>Marjorie Burden</i>	18



COMMUNITY HOUSE, COLLEGE GREEN,
GLOUCESTER GL1 2LZ
Tel. Gloucester (0452) 28491

EDITORIAL

Besides using the resources of the County Records Office and the County Reference Libraries it is clear from this edition that contributors are prepared to follow the fundamental approach of field work as a basis of study. The articles by David Bick and Barbara Drake are in this tradition while Marjorie Burden uses a technique of increasing significance to local historians—using the reminiscences of the elderly to build a quite unique perspective of the past. Oral history has proved a growing approach in many counties outside Gloucestershire; it is a technique used successfully by students at school at Lydney who have published elsewhere and which Marjorie Burden here outlines its value. It is a development to be commended by both individuals and local history societies.

Christopher Cox may have found evidence of some nineteenth century misinformation, and Col. Geoffrey Powell combines both local and national sources to remind us that an interest in the poor is always with us. No attempt has been made to translate the traditional denominations of money and space in this edition. Any objections to this from young readers should be addressed to the editor!

BRYAN JERRARD (*Editor*)

THE ENIGMA OF HOLLOWAYS

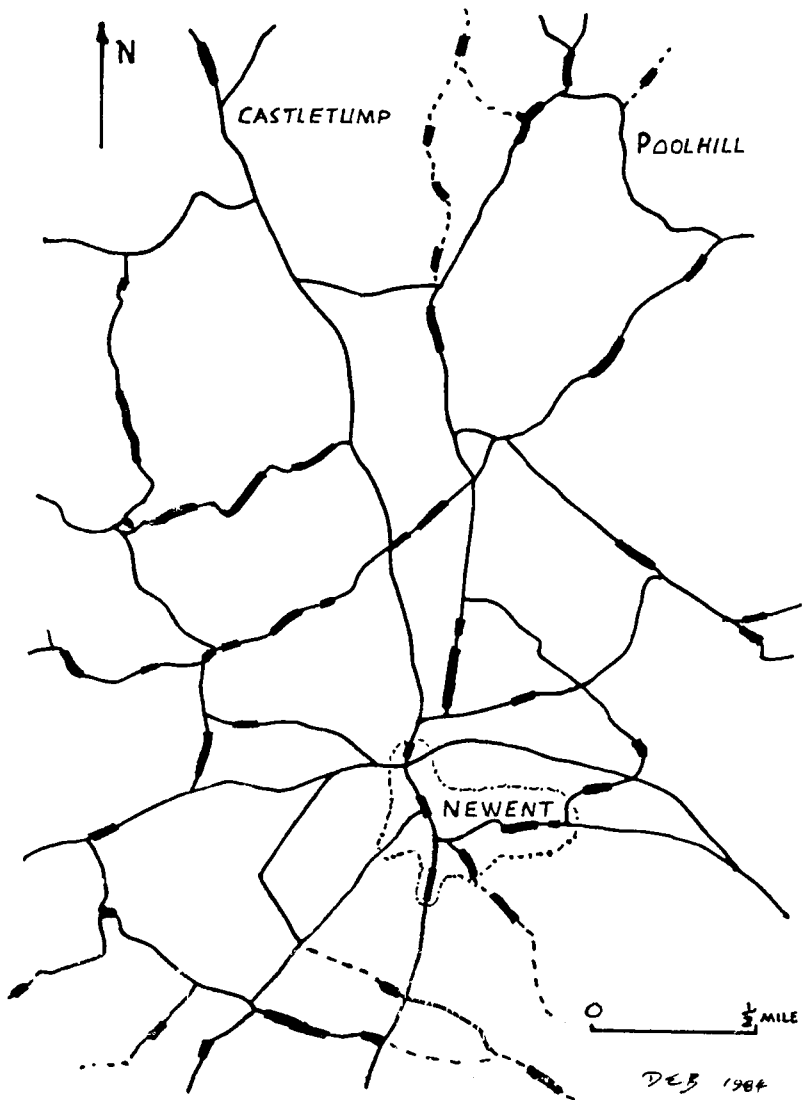
In many regions of England and Wales holloways, or sunken lanes, are as much part of the landscape as the hedgerow. Often bounded by venerable oaks and yews and lined with ferns and mosses, they possess a maturity that seems to stretch interminably into the past. It is therefore a surprise to find not a single book, nor even an article, solely devoted to the subject. The usual explanation, endlessly repeated, is that of wear due to animals and man, and wheeled traffic augmented by rainwater which washes away the debris and sometimes creates erosion in its own right. Many holloways, it is said, are medieval, because of their use in that period. But the argument is as logical as to say that a house is Georgian because a man of that period is known to have dwelt there. Where holloways occur in the vicinity of iron age camps and hillforts archaeologists inform us that they are prehistoric and created over long periods by cattle driven down for water. It may be so; but when we begin closely to study hollow roads by the gross, and in many parts of the country regarding the general topic of antiquity and origins, a host of doubts and queries arise.

Firstly, how is it explained that in some regions, like Devon, holloways abound, yet in others such as the Cotswold interior, they are scarcely encountered, notwithstanding that 'these high wild hills' as Shakespeare described them, have been inhabited for countless centuries. Neither can the anomaly be explained by geology, for Cotswold limestone is probably less resistant than the sandstones and shales of Devon. And further, how is it that although holloways are mainly confined to hilly or undulating country, remarkable examples occur on practically level terrain, sometimes ten feet deep in rocky strata. Armies marching day and night for a thousand years could scarcely create attrition such as this. Wear caused by cattle or man on rocky surfaces is a slow process, as any inspection of farmyards trampled for centuries on such ground will reveal. Even the ironshod wheels of carts and hooves of horses produce but limited impression, as is testified by scarcely sunken quarry trackways over which many thousand loads have passed.

As to the fate of the material removed, except in rare cases, we search in vain, either for soil dumped along the sides, or for evidence of a depth of detritus on land at the foot of the hollow. One example in the chalk of Oare Hill between Marlborough and Pewsey resembles a railway cutting over a distance of half a mile. In places it is 25ft deep; it averages 10 or 12ft with the spoil seemingly spirited away. And when in areas prolific in holloways their pattern proves practically random, with no preference for through and long distance routes, and in the same district where roads used since Saxon times are hardly sunk at all, the mystery is indeed compounded.

Houseman's Welsh Border, 'the country for easy livers, the quietest under the sun', carries almost no traffic today, and never has. Yet here are holloways eight feet deep in nearly solid rock and aligned merely between one anonymous place and another. An answer is not attempted except to observe that some natural gullies or depressions, often worn by streams, have been taken over and adapted as trackways. Proof of this is furnished on the eastern edge of the Black Mountains in Herefordshire, where a road climbs out of such a feature and goes its separate way.

The influence of rainwater on the formation of holloways can be exaggerated. Whilst heavy storms sometimes produce spectacular washouts in certain types of ground, the action is generally of a secondary nature. It merely removes debris already loose, or loosened by other agencies, and is often insufficient to keep abandoned holloways clear of



These holloways suggest a continuity of settlement over thousands of years.
 The sunken roads in the town probably precede its establishment.
 Abandoned roads shown as broken lines.

leaves and other fallen material. In rocky strata not even mountain streams make much impression, except over very long periods. Thus it is tempting to turn to the theory of excavation, regardless of what purpose such labour may have served. Near Sidmouth are a number of rural lanes in soft

sandstone which there is good reason to suppose were dug in days before wheeled vehicles became common, if they existed at all; but proof of such origins is generally very difficult to establish.

It is in fact the holloways in harder strata which present the greatest enigma. An example near Woolaston in West Gloucestershire is still 10 or 12ft. deep in old red sandstone on a shallow gradient, although abandoned prior to 1769 by construction of a parallel road. And from the evidence of counting species in the hedges of the latter, this ancient track may actually have fallen into disuse in the Middle Ages. Its section is V shaped, hardly two or three feet wide at bottom, that wheeled vehicles have never seen. Many other examples long forgotten in favour of newer routes may be cited. However, greater testimony of antiquity is to hand in the same county.

The Dean Road is a route attributed to the Romans and paved throughout from Mitcheldean to Lydney, near the banks of the Severn. Near Mitcheldean its course followed a prehistoric holloway and the proof is found in Roman paving revealed in sections sunk up to six feet below the ground. The objection, that the way was dug by Roman engineers, is inadmissible, since it does little to ease the natural gradient, which in any event is minimal. Further south, near its intersection with the Gloucester-Lydney road, this road runs alongside another holloway 10ft. deep which it chose to ignore. It appears from inspection that this holloway was actually blocked up by the Gloucester-Lydney road (which itself is also attributed to the Romans), and has been disused ever since.²

Here, it is worth pausing to note that it is this potential dateability by virtue of their physical form which distinguishes holloways from nearly all other early roads, and which renders their study of such importance.

Sufficient has been said to suggest the remarkable conclusion that some, at least, of our holloways were much as we see them now, before the Roman Occupation. And since in these particular areas of Gloucestershire, holloways are common, it may be inferred that most if not all of them were also extant before that time. Such a conclusion will come as no surprise to many landscape historians.

Thus our ideas on the development of prehistoric and later population and settlements may need revision, to say nothing of possible implications of holloways encountered along the course of Roman roads — a subject too lengthy for inclusion here.³

Other relevant facets might be mentioned but in short, the fact remains that many of our holloways are inexplicable. To account for those in rocky terrain by conventional views would presume a continuance of use stretching back thousands of years before the Roman Conquest. Perhaps that indeed is the solution. But certainly these deep and furtive passages trodden by our ancestors from time immemorial, deserve a greater study and respect than has hitherto been afforded them.

DAVID BICK

REFERENCES

- 1 For a good introduction to the history of roads, with many references to holloways, see Christopher Taylor, *Roads and Tracks of Britain*. Dent 1979.
- 2 A. W. Trotter *The Dean Road*. John Bellows, 1936.
- 3 Ivan Margary *Roman Roads in Britain* dismisses holloways on the course of Roman Roads as due to subsequent wear. There is however evidence that many actually pre-date a Roman usage. Further research is needed to settle this important question.

HISTORIC WESTGATE STREET, GLOUCESTER

The City of Gloucester has much to say of its ancient past, and in Westgate Street particularly there is a wealth of interest.

Starting at The Cross, here stood a medieval High Cross at the meeting of the four principal streets. Constructed from Cotswold stone, it stood some 34½' high and had eight niches each containing an English monarch with city connections. It was a conduit referred to as early as 1223 using piped water from Robinswood Hill. It was demolished in c1750 as a traffic hazard, obstructing the flow of an increasing number of vehicles.

To the south stood the Tolsey, the town hall or tollbooth where tolls were collected. It stood on the site of the Roman military HQ or Principia, later to become the Basilica or administrative centre and market place of the Colonia, Glevum. Beside it to the west stood All Saints Church which became redundant after the Civil War and its chancel was incorporated in a rebuilding programme of the Tolsey in 1648. It consisted of 'a wooden piazza or walkway under a roof supported by pillars, with grotesque figures over the capitals, an overhanging storey with immense sashes and a balustrade above'.¹

In 1750 the Corporation paid a total of £1099 on a magnificent brick building, ornamented with stone columns and mouldings. The city arms adorned the triangular pediment facing onto Westgate Street, and Grecian vases topped the balustrade. Many important proclamations were made from the steps or an upper window. In 1643 a proclamation of pardon to the citizens was read from Charles I, if they would surrender the city and admit a garrison of his troops.

In 1815 the triumphs of the Battle of Waterloo were proclaimed, thus ending the Napoleonic Wars. In 1872 it was announced that the Prince of Wales had recovered after serious illness.

By 1891 the building was inadequate and the City Council moved to a purpose built Guildhall in Eastgate street on the site of the Blue Coat School which closed in 1889. Up to 1894, when the building was demolished, it was used as a Post Office. The Wilts & Dorset Banking Co. constructed the building that stands there today.

The Midland Bank on the north west corner was built in the early 1900s. Displayed in the recent extension window is a Roman column base. The column was removed to the foyer of the city Museum in Brunswick Road. A colonnade of columns at 12' intervals has been traced along the north of the street for 200', from a monumental building.

Another building to make way in the road widening programme of 1750 was the King's Board, a medieval market house standing in the centre of the street between two other buildings that also had to be removed, namely the Mercery and Butchery and Holy Trinity Church. In Archdeacon Furney's 'History of Gloucester,' he says: 'The Kings Board (now assigned for the selling of butter and cheese) was built (or repaired) by King Richard II: 'twas a magnificent market house and is, says Dr Stukeley, of Gothic architecture, uncommon and ancient, but finely adorned over the arches and the sides and ends of it are many historical parts of the Holy Scriptures curiously carved. At each corner is a large statue and on the upper part was a cross upon a pyramid between four effigies and it has battlements round it. In 1572 the upper part (which was decayed) was amended and about 1691 was taken down for the erecting a large cistern for the conveniency of reserving water conveyed thither from near Westgate'.

All that can now be seen of the market house is a small section of the frieze worked into a structure the size of a small summer house, standing in Hillfield Gardens in London Road.

On the north east corner of St. Johns Lane is Meeks, the shoe shop, with a fine 19th century facade on an early 17th century building. The first floor room at the rear has a fine moulded ceiling c.1600.

The Fleece Hotel is one of three pilgrims' hostels set up by St. Peter's Abbey to accommodate pilgrims visiting the shrine of Edward II, murdered at Berkely Castle in 1327. It is much altered, but 16th century timber framing is visible in the courtyard. The Bierkeller (or Monk's Retreat) is a 12th century vaulted stone undercroft, once used as a fire proof warehouse for wines and spirits at a time when timber buildings and thatch caused serious fire hazards. It has five bays with arches supported on Norman pillars. These undercrofts were common in medieval times for wealthy merchants and their wares.

Opposite is Winfields Garden Shop, an early 16th century timber frame building of four stories with five gables, Seven of the original windows remain, some with the lead lights still in perfect condition. The 18th century Georgian facade was applied by grocer William Bishop in 1772. At the same time he had external timbers and windows covered up to prevent further deterioration with lathe and plaster. When repairs followed a serious roof collapse in 1955, due to the weight of beams and stone tiles, the fine carved timbers and windows were revealed, visible from the 10th century street alongside to the east.

Internally there was fine panelling which was removed, being unsuitable for the storage of seeds and beans when Winfields began trading in 1886. Rats and mice found an ideal home behind the panels so it was stripped out in 1921 and sent to a French Chateau damaged in the First World War. The Chateau was bombed in the Second World War.

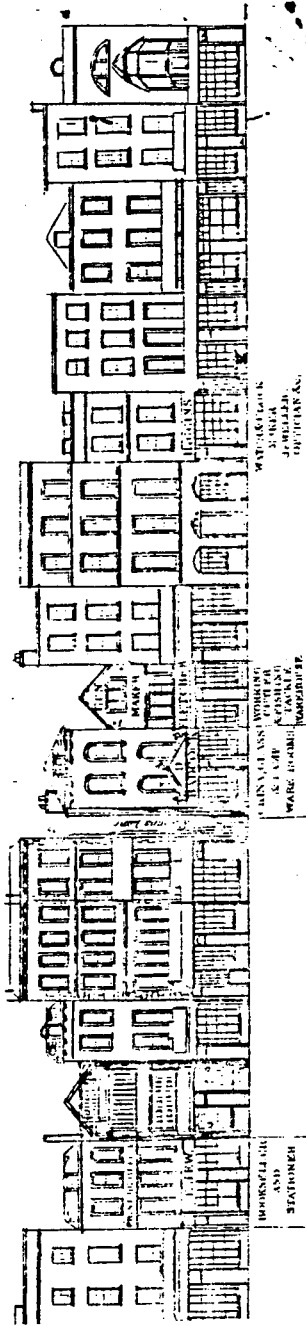
A well renovated 17th century timber framed, originally double jettied house is to be seen at No. 30. It was occupied during the siege of Gloucester of 1643 by James Commeline, apothecary. His family had fled from religious persecution in Holland in 1621, only to settle in Gloucester and become involved in the Civil War. The Royalist battery in Llanthony was firing hot shot into the city and one fell through the roof here. Pails of water were thrown onto it, to no avail, so it was dropped into a bucket of water to cool.

In 1799 it was known as the Theatre Vaults Public House until 1958, with access to the Theatre Royal through the pub. Here could be heard Sir Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, and Charles Dickens and his famous readings.

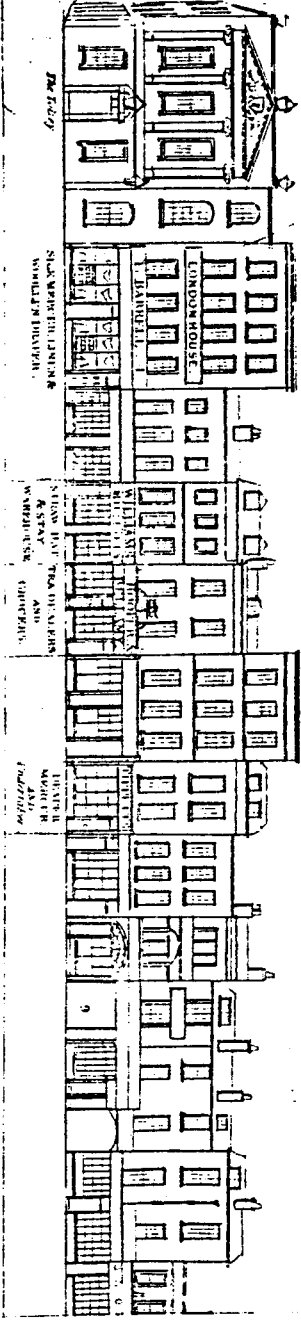
Another well preserved 16th century timber framed building is to be seen opposite the Shire Hall. In 1975 No. 66 was Gloucester's contribution to the European Architectural Heritage Year. Interesting floral wall paintings were uncovered during the restoration. It was originally two buildings with first floor windows inserted later. In the 19th century it was known as the Queen's Head. The shop windows are the original Victorian plate glass made following techniques learned building the Crystal Palace for the Great Exhibition.

At the west end of the Shire Hall a plaque mentions the Boothall stood on the site of today's open space. Demolished in 1957, it began its life as a medieval market hall and later became an important 18th century coaching inn. Here Guild merchants traded to strict standards, assize courts were

N V M V L V K V J V I V H V G V F V E V D V C V B V A V



E E T



Q V P V Q V R V S V T V U V V V W V X V Y V Z V

WESTGATE STREET, GLOUCESTER

REFERENCES

- A 1 Fouracre. 1977 Midland Bank.
 B 2 ? Dike, tailor. 1977 Midland Bank.
 C 3 ? Belwood repository. 1977 Midland Bank.
 D 4 Millard. 1977 Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society.
 E 5 Higgins, watchmaker. 1977 Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society.
 F 6 Walker, printer. 1977 Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society.
 G 7 Morse & Flux, linen dlr. Frisby, shoes. 1977 B.C.A. Travel.
 H 8 Fletcher, cutlers. 12 Bristol Tramways Ltd. 1977 Cards Galore.
 I 9 Badcock, chinaware. 14 1936 Lawleys. 1977 Meek, shoes.
 J 159 Southern, glazer. 161 Timothy Whites.
 K 158 Hickman, bookseller. 181 1977 Timothy Whites.
 L 157 Thompson, hosier, haberdasher. 20 1977 Tesco.
 M 156 National Westminster Bank. 20 1977 Tesco.
 N 155 Jew, bookseller. 24 Minchin & Gibbs (SPCK). 1977 Bradford & Bingley B.S.
 O 11 Martin, Grocer. 19 1977 Severn Vale Estate Agent. 21 Fred Wright, tobacconist.
 P 10 Hook, tailor. 17 Leeds Permanent B.S.
 Q 9 ? 1914 George Mason Ltd. 17 1977 Leeds Permanent B.S.
 R 8 Jones, mens tailor. 15 1977 Unique, Easter Fashions.
 S 7 1858 T. Wooster, seedsman. 13 1977 The China House.
 T 6 Tippets. 11 1977 Charles Dickens Ltd., tobacconist.
 U 5 Hughes, wool, linen etc. 9 1977 Stables, mens tailors.
 V 4 Hooper & Bellamy, later Bellamy & Vickers. 7 1977 Mothercare.
 W 3 Williams, milliner. 5 1977 Evans, Ladies fashions.
 X 2 A. Lea, bookseller. 1977 National Westminster Bank.
 Y 1 J Barrel. 1869 Fishers. 1977 Williams & Glyn Bank.
 Z Former building 1565, rebuilt 1602, enlarged 1648, 1685. rebuilt 1751.

held, and travelling players performed to vast audiences. Rebuilt in 1528, Henry VIII gave permission for stone to be used from the Castle, leaving enough to repair the Gaol. Municipal business passed to the Tolsay when it became the seat of Common Council in the 17th century. 1606 saw another rebuild making it more spacious and comfortable. The interior was one large hall supported by two ranges of chestnut pillars having a gallery at one side.

George Whitefield, the evangelist, preached here in April 1739. On the night of March 7, 1769, the Boothall was so crowded with members of 'The Histrionic and Musical Academy for the Improvement of Learning and Literature,' that there was scarce room for the players to come upon stage. Suddenly someone in the pit heard a board crack and called out, "The gallery is coming down." Others in fright called out, "Fire, fire," which threw the whole gallery into confusion and many who were in the front jumped down into the pit. The number of people pressing to get down the stairs also broke the rail, and the confusion existed for ten minutes until the audience could be convinced that the danger existed only in their imagination.²

The Corporation sold off the property when the Shire Hall was under construction in 1816. As the railway took trade to the east of the city, so interest waned and the hotel deteriorated, leading to demolition. Here in 1902 was the King's Theatre & Opera House, becoming King's Kinema by 1927.

St. Nicholas House opposite now trades under the name 'The Dick Whittington Tavern.' Extensive restoration has saved the life of a medieval building mentioned in the 1455 Rental of city property, the town house of Richard Whittington, Lord of Staunton. Dick Whittington himself died in 1423, but this would be a relative, possibly the son of Dick's brother Robert. Here in April 1604 an Alderman, John Taylor, not only concealed the fact that one of his servants lay dead of the plague in his house for three to four hours, but also that another servant suffered plague boils in a highly contagious state for a whole week, during which time both Taylor and his servant came into contact with civic dignitaries, even entertaining them in his house. For a man of his rank, this was intolerable. 'As a result, other persons and houses were already infected and it was feared many more would be infected . . . to the great and dangerous hurt of the state of the whole city and hazard of many lives.' He was expelled from the Council and fined £100 for the relief of those to whom he had caused such suffering. House and inhabitants were shut up in quarantine but his son broke down the door and 'offered to discharge firearms against such as were appointed to keep them in . . . and also delivered railings and rude terms against the Mayor.' He was ordered to pay 100 marks and to be put in the stocks in the Wheat Market on three separate market days.³

The west side shows the jettied structure behind an early Georgian facade, the balustrading supporting five very handsome carved urns.

St. Nicholas church, redundant since 1971, is vested in the Redundant Churches Fund and is thus preserved. Of 11th century foundations, massive Norman round pillars support the west end of the nave, and 13th century stiff leaf capitals adorn the east end of the nave's arcade columns. The tower of 1450 was originally full length but had to be truncated in the 18th century as it had developed an alarming lean. There are many interesting monuments and a diversity of trades mentioned on the inscriptions because of the nearness of the Boothall. In the 17th century the corporation had argued with the Dean & Chapter, so they regularly worshipped at St. Nicholas instead of the Cathedral.

No. 91 has a Georgian facade concealing 16th century timber framing, the gable end of which can be seen west of the building. This was the former medieval Crown Inn of note, and here it was, probably, that Colonel Massey, garrison commander for the Parliamentarians here in the city, had his headquarters. In 1737 the property passed to the Hyett family of Painswick, who had close business and civic connections with Gloucester. They owned much property in the city, notably Marylebone House, site of the present Police station, in Longsmith St.

Nos 95—99 still bear medieval characteristics. The Folk Museum is an early 16th century timber framed building. During the 18th century it was used as a pin factory, pin making being one of Gloucester's main industries at that time. Many children of the poor were employed from the age of eight, or illegally, earlier, and their task was to stick pins on papers. Robert Raikes's concern for children such as these led to the popularisation of the Sunday School Movement, giving them elementary education.

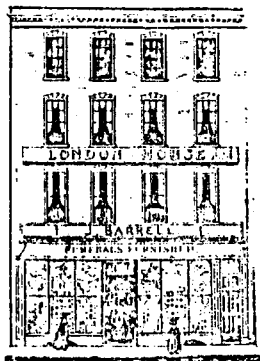
The Westgate flats stand on the site of two interesting buildings, the Duke of Norfolk's Lodgings and the early Gloucester Infirmary. Both of these are mentioned in detail in Local History Bulletins, Spring 1979, 1980, 1982.

Finally, by Westgate Bridge, stands St. Bartholomew's Almshouses, now trading under the name The Westgate Galleria. Built in 1788, the Gothic almshouses replaced the 12th century hostel erected for the workmen constructing the Westgate bridge. It became a religious community in charge of the maintenance of the river crossing, collecting tolls in place of St. Nicholas church, that had this task earlier. Poor persons were tended by the brethren and expenses were high, so by the 14th century it was in a state of decay. Appeals resulted in repairs being carried out and extensions made in 1564 under the new Queen Elizabeth Foundation.

This article touches on just a few places that have made up the city's past and space does not allow more, but it encourages one to investigate further.

Excerpts from a lecture for the Gloucestershire Civic Trust on November 16, 1984.

BARBARA DRAKE



JOHN BARRELL,
WHOLESALE & RETAIL SHIRTS, COATS,
LINEN & WOOLLEN DRAPER, BOSTONIA,
1 WESTGATE STREET, GLOUCESTER.

REFERENCES

- 1 Rudge, *History of Gloucester*, 1814.
- 2 Fosbrooke, *History of the County of Gloucester*, 1807.
- 3 *Gloucester Journal*, 21 July, 1761.
- 4 *Glos.R.O GBR 1406/1521*, f.18

A LUDDITE LETTER — TRUE OR FALSE?

In 1802 Paul Wathen, clothier at Rooksmoor mill in the Nailsworth valley, is said to have received the following letter.

Wee Hear in Formed that you got Shear in mee sheens and if you Dont Pull them Down in a Forght Nights Time Wee will pull them Down for you Wee will you Damd infernold Dog. And Bee four Almighty God we will pull down all the Mills that have Heany Shearing me Shens in We will cut out Hall your Dam Hearts as Do Keep them and We will meak the rest Heat them or else We will Searve them the Seam. Thear Read This and Weep Do you For your Time is but Shourt Hear you Damd Villain Raskell.¹

It is true that at this time the previously well-paid shearers were alarmed and furious at the possible introduction of machinery which would have taken their jobs. But as K. G. Ponting points out, they were well-paid, actually hired an attorney — Mr Jessup of Stroud — and took their case as far as the House of Lords, claiming that the clothiers were breaking the law. After several years they lost.²

It is incredible that men like these would have composed the letter above. The spelling gives it away. This is the sort of English that a literate person might compose, thinking this was how the lower spoke (in Gloucestershire?). For example, see how the footmen spoke at the swarry in Bath attended by Sam Weller. But even if you speak in this affected way (imitating an effete upper-class accent), you don't write like this. And why should someone who can't spell 'before' or 'any' have no difficulty with the word 'Almighty'?

By contrast, here is a letter dropped in the courtyard of Mr Roberts' mill at Lightpill (also in Nailsworth valley) some 50 years earlier.

To Mr Thomas Roberts post paid. This is to give notice to all weavers not to put their hands to any paper made by Mr Roberts or any other clothier, if you do, we the weavers of each parish are fully resolved to meet in a body and car(ry) him on the wooden horse, and throw him into his masters mill pound where he sign't the writing. And as for you clothiers we think it not worth your while to trouble yourselves with any such thing, if you do be it to your peril, though it is our desire to be at quiet.³

In this letter the spelling is correct, the syntax quite acceptable, the sentiments what one might expect, that is directed against any weaver who went against the majority and accepted the master's terms. The wooden horse was the beam from the loom in the weaver's cottage: the offending worker would be set on it and taken to the mill pond and thrown in.

The Wathen letter is either a bad joke that went wrong, or quite possibly a provocative frame-up, concocted to put the shearers in the wrong at the start of their struggle to keep their jobs. Paul Wathen offered 100 guineas reward (and a free pardon) for information as to the author. But I wonder who really wrote it?

CHRISTOPHER COX

REFERENCES

- 1 Quoted by Esther Moir, *The Gentlemen Clothiers* (Gloucestershire Studies, edited H. P. R. Finberg 1957 p248), from D. M. Hunter, *The West of England Woolen Industry under Protection & Free Trade*, 1910 p217.
- 2 K. G. Ponting, *The West of England Cloth Industry* 1957, pp159, 125—239.
- 3 See *Victoria County History* vol XI p227 and footnote, *Gloucester Journal* 29 Oct 1745, 5 Oct 1756.

SHOVELLING OUT THE CAMPDEN PAUPERS¹

William Cobbett did not exaggerate too much when he wrote in 1830, 'As to the labouring classes, hunger and rags, and filth, are now become their uniform and inevitable lot'.² With pauperism further encouraged by the Speenhamland System, by which the wages of the agricultural worker were subsidised from the rates, there was often not much to choose between the standard of living of the worker and the workless. A man's wages could be ten shillings weekly, or even less. Bread would cost him four or five pence a pound, and the subsidies from the rates were set at such a level that if he bought a pound and a half of bread each day for each member of his family, he would have nothing left in his pocket for rent, or for fuel, or for clothing, let alone an adequate diet.³

As the Speenhamland subsidies burdened parishes with crippling rates, it was hardly surprising that emigration was often seen as the panacea for the ills of both the community and the individual, offering as it did the chance of a new life in the empty spaces of the New World for the unwanted mouths of the parish. In 1815, the year of Waterloo, no more than 1,889 persons emigrated from England to North America. That year, however, saw the end of Britain's war-quicken economy. Depression followed, and by 1832 the outflow had risen to 77,134; eighteen years later it had to be more than trebled to an annual figure of 277,134.⁴

An entry in the Churchwardens' Account Book of St. James's Church, Chipping Campden, dated 11 November, 1834, puts life into these stark statistics. It reads:

THE PARISH OF CAMPDEN TO MR FREEMAN

For Expence for Conveying Sixteen Persons from Campden to Liverpool for Emigration to Jamaica: Viz. W^m Rouse and 4 Children, Edward Hughes and 6 Children, John Howl, David Dee, Richard Williams and John Jumpson, and paying Freight, etc at Liverpool for John Sharp, his Wife and 5 Children to go to Canada.

1834		£	s	d	
Oct.	8th	Paid at Stratford for Board and Lodgings	0	13	0
		D ³ for Provisions, etc from Stratford to Birmingham		12	0
		D ^o at Birmingham for Conveyance from Campden	2	10	0
		D ^o at D ^o for Conveyance to Liverpool	5	8	2
		D ^o at D for Cartage of Things from the Warehouse to Wharf		2	6
	9th	D ^o at D ^o for Board and Lodging	1	0	6
		Paid Expences on the Canal 3 Days for Provisions etc from Birmingham to Liverpool	1	4	6
		Cartage of things from Dukes Dock to Lodging		1	0
	15th	Paid at Liverpool for 4 Days Board and Lodging Self, Howl, Williams, Dee and Jumpson	2	3	0
	26th	Paid at Liverpool for Board and Lodging for Myself eleven Days and Nights and for some Beer given occasionally to the Emigrants	3	5	0
	30th	Expence for Self 4 days from Liverpool to Campden	13	11	½
				17	13
					8

EXPENCE OF JOHN SHARP & FAMILY

Paid Sharps passage from Liverpool to America	1	11	6
D° Provisions for 50 Days Passage	5	2	6
D° Provisions at Liverpool to subsist on while waiting for the Ship	1	3	0
D° Cartage of things from Duke's Dock to Princess Dock		1	2
D° Cash		15	0
		<hr/>	
	22	13	6

EXPENCE OF CLOTHING WM. ROUSE & FAMILY

4 Pair Hose 4s one pair hose 1s 2d	0	5	2
2 Pair Buck Trousers 6s Two Buck Frocks 8s		14	0
2 Jackets 6s Two pair Boys Buck Trowsers 4s		10	0
2 Caps 2s 2d 12 Handkerchiefs 4d each		6	2
2 Shawls 5s Two Bonnets 6s		11	0
3 Yds Fustian 7½d		1	10½
6 Yds Shirting 7d		3	6
3 Waistcoats Two at 4s each, one at 3s		13	0
3 Yds Canvas 8½		2	1½
4 Yds Duck 8d		2	8
1 Large Bed & Pillows 8s Two small Beds & Pillows 7s		15	0
4 Rugs 2s 6d		10	0
W ^m Rouse 1 Pair Shoes 8s 6d John Rouse 2 Pair 16s 6d	1	5	0
Rich ^d Rouse 1 Pair Shoes 4s 9d Elizabeth 1 Pair 5s 9d		10	6
Ann Rouse 1 Pair Shoes		5	0
		<hr/>	
	6	13	0

EXPENCE OF CLOTHING EDWD HUGHES & FAMILY

	£	s	d
W ^m Hughes 1 Jacket 4s one Frock 3s		7	0
Tho ^m Hughes 1 Jacket 4s one pair Trousers 3s		7	0
D° 1 Frock		3	0
Paid Edw ^d Hughes 10s towards Shoes		10	0
		<hr/>	
	1	7	0

EXPENCE OF CLOTHING RICHD WILLIAMS

	£	s	d
½ Shirts 2s 7d		7	9
1 Waistcoat 4s Four pair hose 4s		8	0
4 Handkerchiefs 2s Two Braces 1s		3	0
2 Pair Trowsers 2s 8d		5	4
1 Jacket 4s one Frock 3s		7	0
2 Caps		2	4
1 Yd Canvas			8½
1 Bed & Pillows 3s 6d Rug 2s 6d		6	0
16 Yds Strong Calico Sheeting 6½		8	8
2 Pairs Shoes		16	6
Medicine		1	4
		<hr/>	
	3	6	7½

Then follows the lists of clothing bought for John Howl, David Dee and John Jumpson, the items being much the same as those purchased for Richard Williams, except that Dee and Jumpson were provided with boxes to lock their clothes in and five shillings were laid out for each of them for washing and mending their things. The total spent by the Parish was £67 5s 5d., including £6 5s 0d. to Mr Freeman for his twenty-five days' absence, not too large a sum to rid himself of twenty-three paupers. The total cost of poor relief that year in Campden was to be £1524 9s 2½d., excluding the cost of emigrants.⁶

The exodus had been organised quickly. Sharp, who lived in Broad Campden, had first applied for help to emigrate on 19 August, and Hughes did the same on 29 September, as did Howl. The Vestry family finally approved Sharp's application on 6 October, authorising a sum not exceeding £20 to be spent on him, and at the same meeting they agreed that Williams should accompany the Hughes family and Jumpson should go with the Rouses.⁷ Hughes was a widower, his wife having died the previous June, aged forty-one, probably the consequence of an epidemic or the after-effects of a confinement, her three month old son having been buried a fortnight earlier; the couple had lost two other babies in recent years, one in 1829 and one in 1831.⁸ Rouse's wife, on the other hand was living in the Parish, the Vestry having given her husband permission to leave his wife behind. It was all a little odd. On 16 September she had applied to the Parish to have the settlement of her husband determined,⁹ suggesting that he and her children were leaving with her approval and that she was taking a leading part in making the arrangements. Was she abandoning her husband and her four children, or did she intend to join them later? The mystery is unresolved.

The Parish had found it necessary to all but reclothe the Rouses and the four single men, but the Hughes and the Sharps needed little or nothing. Were the latter families a little further removed from the abject poverty line? It is interesting to see how well the Parish did clothe and equip its people for the journey. Some of them may have never been so well dressed before.

For those emigrants who had an inkling of what awaited them at their destination, the United States held out a far greater appeal than did Canada at this time. Opportunities in the Republic were greater, the climate less rigorous, bureaucracy was less and land allotment therefore simpler.¹⁰ However, emigration to British North America rather than to the erstwhile rebellious Colonies received official support, and when parishes paid for the passages, it was often stipulated that Canada should be the destination.¹¹ Whether Campden made such a stipulation to Sharp is not known.

Jamaica, on the other hand, was a different problem. At the time the number of white immigrants to the island was not large, and the writer has failed to trace further examples of assisted passages. The situation was as follows. When the British Parliament abolished slavery in the Empire in August 1834, a system of apprenticeship had come into force in the West Indies, which was in effect semi-slavery, planned to last four years until full emancipation in 1838. During this time the 'apprentices' would be paid, and masters and slaves would have the opportunity to adjust their relationships in anticipation of complete freedom. One consequence of this was a move to encourage the importation of white labourers to work on the upland plantations, the object being to discourage the black slaves from settling in the cooler mountain districts. The first of these white labourers, among whom the sixteen Campdonians must be numbered, arrived towards

the end of 1834. These immigrants were brought in by individual planters and the fact that the Parish paid nothing for their actual passages suggests that the Campden people were so sponsored. In the next eight years a total of only 2,685 immigrants arrived from Britain and 1,033 from Germany. It is understandable that few of them settled to labouring. Some were to join the police, some left the island, some wandered off into the coastal belt, and the Jamaican rum killed off a lot of them.¹² It would be interesting to try to trace the names of Jumpson or Rouse in Jamaica to-day.

These accounts tell us quite a lot about travel between Campden and Liverpool, the embarkation port. From Campden to Stratford, and from Stratford to Birmingham, the party would have moved by carrier, each leg of the journey lasting a day and the total cost amounting to £2 10s 0d. Then followed a three day canal journey from Birmingham to Liverpool, a distance of some 100 miles covered at a total cost of £5 8s. 2d. for the twenty-four persons. It was in fact, not too slow a journey.

In charge of the party was Mr Freeman, one of Campden's eight overseers for the poor.¹³ His presence would have ensured that his people were spared the depredations of the rapacious Liverpoolians, the usual lot of the uneducated and unsophisticated emigrant. Dishonest porters would seize their boxes and bundles and would convey them to villainous boarding-house keepers where they would be mulched of every possible penny or even robbed. Responsible as he was for his Parish's money as well as his charges, Mr Freeman would have protected them from such perils. He would also have ensured that they did actually depart. He seems to have been a man of some sympathy, buying as he did 'the Beer given occasionally to the Emigrants.' He also provided the Sharps with fifteen shillings cash, thus further exceeding the Parish's authorised spending of £20 on the family.

Clothed and equipped for the journey though the emigrants were, the Parish did not provide them with food for what might be a six-week or longer voyage, and one can only hope that they were able to take something to eat with them. Although the passengers were supposed to be victualled on board, the ships' captains were frequently as evil as the boarding-house keepers, and the food which was handed out was often decayed, small in quantity and infrequent. Ships sometimes put into small Irish ports where the captains would exchange their sound provisions for rotten ones, pocketing the difference. To semi-starvation were added the other horrors of the voyage, vividly described by one who experienced a steerage passage: 'Hundreds of poor people, men, women, and children, of all ages, from the drivelling idiot of ninety to the babe just born, huddled together without light, without air, wallowing in filth and breathing a fetid atmosphere, sick in body dispirited in heart, the fevered patients lying between the sound'.¹⁴ Six foot square bunks, arranged in tiers of three, each held four persons, the different sexes vomiting over one another with dysentery rife.

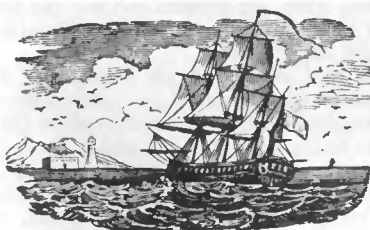
With both typhus and cholera bred from such squalor, many ships arrived in America ridden with disease. In a dead calm an emigrant ship could be distinguished by its stench alone at a gun-shot's distance.¹⁵ The burden on the inhabitants of Canadian ports of coping with such numbers of sick, dying and often destitute individuals was so great that, in 1832, a levy had been imposed on shipmasters to help pay for the care of the sufferers.¹⁶ This levy was duly recovered from the passengers, and the 'hospital money' of £1 11s 6d., laid out by the Parish for the Sharp family was to pay for this charge.

So what happened to all these people? Did all of them survive the voyage? Did rum kill them in Jamaica, or did they move elsewhere? Did the Sharps remain in Canada or journey on to the United States, the ultimate destination of a high proportion of those who landed in Canada? Did some of them find fame and fortune? The answers would be fascinating.

GEOFFREY POWELL

REFERENCES

- 1 The expression 'shovelling out paupers' was first heard in Parliament in a speech criticising the views of an early emigration propagandist, Wilmot Horton (H. J. M. Johnston, **BRITISH EMIGRATION POLICY 1815—1830: SHOVELLING OUT PAUPERS**, Clarendon Press, 1972, p168 quoting Hansard, 1843, 1xviii, col 522). The phrase was later to become hackneyed.
- 2 William Cobbett, **THE EMIGRANT'S GUIDE**, London, 1833, p7.
- 3 Ibid pp11 and 12.
- 4 Stanley C. Johnson, **A HISTORY OF EMIGRATION FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM TO NORTH AMERICA 1763—1913**, George Routledge & Sons, 1913, pp15 and 345. The accuracy of the statistics is doubtful but they are almost certainly an understatement.
- 5 Kept in St. James's Church, Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire. I am extremely grateful to Mr E. D. W. Owen-Jones, the Church Archivist, for drawing my attention to these entries and for his permission to reproduce them in this article. The Account Book, the first entry in which is dated 1626 is being transcribed by Mr C. Leighton Bishop and it is hoped that his work will, in due course, be published.
- 6 St. James's Church Poor Relief Account Book.
- 7 St. James's Church Burial and Baptism Registers.
- 8 St. James's Church Select Vestry Book.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Johnson, p21.
- 11 Ibid, p181.
- 12 Douglas Hall, **FREE JAMAICA 1838—1865**, Yale University Press, 1959, p21.
- 13 Four of the overseers were for Chipping Campden, two for the hamlet of Broad Campden and two for the hamlet of Westington.
- 14 Terry Coleman, **PASSAGE TO AMERICA**, Hutchinson, 1972. p100 quoting a letter from Mr Stephen de Vere, an Irish landowner and philanthropist, reproduced in the **First Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Colonization from Ireland H.C., 1847—1848**, Vol. 17.
- 15 Johnson, p107 quoting **Report of Land and Emigration Commissioners on Passenger Acts**, 1842, p3.
- 16 W. A. Carrothers, **EMIGRATION FROM THE British isles**, P. S. King & Son, 1929, p153—4.



KEEPING A CORNER SHOP IN GLOUCESTER

1933 — 1965

Based on a tape, recorded by Edith Winter 1984—1985
and transcribed by Marjorie Burden.

Miss Winter was born and brought up in Armscroft Road, Gloucester. After working in an office for some years she used all her own savings and a loan from her father to take over the general shop almost opposite her home. Times were hard in 1933, with much unemployment. Money was short and families rather large. In the small community of about ninety households one family had nine children and another had ten. These families were always grateful for help from the shop with remnants such as ham bones. But there was a steady trade, and after a few years Edie Winter was joined in the shop by her friend, who soon became known to everyone as 'Auntie Min.'

Then work begun on three new roads on the old apple orchard. The builder's men came to buy plenty of pop and crisps and pork-pies. The houses, when finished, were mostly bought by families with three or four children, and they too began to come to their local shop. They could afford higher quality food, and Edie had to change her stock, as she found it paid to keep the better brands. One customer asked for Gruyère cheese, and Edie didn't know what it was! But she soon found out, and in the end she kept a wide variety of cheeses.

It was a very mixed trade. As well as families there were workmen who lived in big vans down by the lane. They drove the traction engines for the threshing contractor, Mr H. Price. They earned good money and would buy anything that was ready to eat. So sausage rolls, meat pies and even rice puddings were made to provide them with ready cooked-cooked meals. Then gradually some of the unemployed found work at the Brockworth Aerodrome. It was surprising how much these families would spend on food then, although there were still some who were relatively hard-up.

When the War came most food was rationed and Edie was responsible to the Ministry of Food for the coupons, which were rather a bugbear. Bacon, cheese, butter, margarine and lard were rationed, and meat which Edie did not sell. There were 8 ounces of sugar but only 2 ounces of tea a week, and 1 pound of jam or marmalade a month. Edie and Min found ways to help those who had little, and there was a great deal of kindness among neighbours, particularly to those who lived alone. Edie used to sit by the fire at home and count the coupons on a tray. A few bad words were spoken one evening when she sneezed and half the tea coupons flew up the chimney. It took some time to persuade the official at the Food Office, but in the end, Edie got her permit.

The men in the yard worked for the Ministry of Agriculture during the war, but their traction engines and steam rollers were also needed when new airfields were being laid. Edie was asked to allow the shop telephone to be used for messages to the boss, and she had to go to the Guildhall to swear secrecy for this work. She felt she was doing something useful as long as she could get enough food for the men. They would bring an empty box and their ration books and say "Put in all you can, Miss", and it was very good trade. By this time all the new estate houses were occupied and soon every home had two families. The owners had billeted with them either evacuees or personnel from R.A.F. Records Office, Gloucester. In the

shop were more coupons to count, more rations to cut and weigh. There was no deliberate effort to increase trade, it was just that food would sell, and sell quickly.

The ladies could not lift a hundred-weight, and they always dealt with a farmer from Newent who supplied potatoes in half hundred-weight sacks. Sometimes he would arrive after dark with farm eggs, off ration, full price, no questions asked. (In 1943 the ration was one egg a week). Edie would distribute these very carefully where there was illness or to a family with young children. Sometimes he arrived with ten or twelve rabbits, at 2s 6d. each; these were a luxury and a blessing. Edie went round delivering them to selected registered customers. It was a hilarious trip in the blackout, the warm welcome on each doorstep hampered by a stray mongrel sniffing at the rabbits dangling by their little paws crossed over a stick.

As well as the blackout to see to, there was fire-watching. Edie was responsible for the duty rota and had to check that all the equipment was in place, the stirrup-pump, sand, tin helmets and the whistle, which she called 'the fire-witcher's wassail.'

The shop was the natural centre for the organisation of the many wartime fund raising efforts held in the street. On one occasion a Red Cross train halted on the embankment across the end of the road. The nurses and soldiers stood at the windows and clapped and cheered and joined in the fun. At the end of the War there was a street party with an iced cake and as many goodies as could be contrived, although it was several years before rationing ended.

The business continued to grow and two part-time assistants were engaged. Just as Edie was planning some improvements, along came an inspector from the Ministry of Health demanding complete redecoration. While the work was being carried out one of the big living vans was a temporary shop parked in the road. No 'Special Offers' could have attracted more customers than the novelty of this shop on wheels with steps up to the door. The children crowded in to 'help'. When the work was finished, with new shelves for the dry goods, a glass counter for the cooked meats and an ice-cream fridge, the shop was more convenient and attractive.

After sweet rationing ended in 1952 a girl who worked in a city laundry asked Miss Winter to help her run a chocolate club for Christmas. This was an enormous success for many years and a useful side-line in a small business beginning to suffer from the competition of the supermarkets. A bemused traveller from Cadbury's told Edie that she was doing more trade than the bigger shops in the City, which made her feel quite set up.

In the late 1950s and 1960s business became very competitive. The practice of buying wholesale case-lots was worrying. The wholesale price was less for a five-case or a ten-case lot than for a three-case, and the travellers were under pressure from their employers to get the shopkeeper to accept more than was really needed. One day a van delivered ten cases of soap powder. Edie rang the firm and told them that she hadn't ordered ten cases, did not want ten cases, had no room for ten cases and was leaving them outside the shop — and it looked like rain! The extra cases were soon collected and she had no more trouble from that particular firm. Sweets and chocolates were also 'pushed' in this way, there being slightly more profit to the shopkeeper if she bought five jars of sweets rather than two. The travellers were not happy, Edie was not happy and it was not a healthy situation. After thirty years she began to think of retirement.

She had paid back her father's money long ago. She enjoyed her life at the shop and was never in financial difficulties. She and Min lived simply, but their work at the shop provided a pleasant degree of comfort at home.

The business had thrived helped by fuller employment, new housing both before and after the war, wartime billeting and the comparative prosperity of the 1950s. But trade was becoming more competitive, people more mobile as they acquired cars, and a corner shop more difficult to run. A prospective buyer worked with Edie and Min for a while and then bought the business. The time had come for farewells. Even the toughest of workmen came to say, "Ah! We shall miss you, Miss!" The children, who had been so welcome at the shop, took to visiting at the house across the road instead. After a year or two Edie and Min moved to Hucclecote, and although Edie is alone now, she is well content; and those children still come, bringing their own children, to visit their friend from the shop in Armscroft Road.