

# The Regional Historian

The Newsletter of the Regional History Centre  
at the University of the West of England, Bristol

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## EDITORIAL

Our programme for spring and summer 2003 consists of two day conferences to be held on March 15<sup>th</sup> and June 28<sup>th</sup> (full details on the back page), the former on later Medieval Bristol: Community, Communications and Conflict, the latter on 'Image, Identity and Urban Experience in South West England, 1688-1832'. In response to criticism that our field of historical enquiry has sometimes been too narrowly focused on the city of Bristol, both these conferences seek to broaden our perspective. A paper by Tony Scrase at the March conference 'Living with Big Brother' sets Bristol in a wider context by examining its relationship to Somerset towns while the subject matter of the June conference will range across towns throughout the south west. Unfortunately details of our first 2003 talk by Beth Kowalski Wallace on 'The Spatial Practices of the Bristol Stave Trade Trail' held on Monday March 3<sup>rd</sup> could not be included in this edition but we tried to publicise it as widely as possible and full details were available on our website. Apologies to any of you who missed getting this information.

By combining articles of historical interest with news of local events and reviews of publications across the region, we have made *The Regional Historian* much more than just a newsletter. This issue offers a taster of and introduction to this years' Bristol Record Society Volume - a transcription of the diaries of a 19<sup>th</sup> century Quaker, Sarah Champion Fox. Other contributions add to our knowledge the history of the St Werburghs area of Bristol and offer an analysis of employment relations in the Port of Bristol during the interwar years. We welcome short articles (1-3,000 words) for the next issue from anyone with an interest in the history of the south west of England, whether you are a lone researcher, a member of a local history group or based in an academic institution.

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## EXTRACT FROM THE DIARY OF SARAH CHAMPION FOX

Editor Madge Dresser (Reproduced by permission of the Bristol Record Society)

*This year Bristol Record Society is publishing the Victorian manuscript edition of an eighteenth-century diary written by a Bristol Quaker, Sarah Champion Fox. A passage from the diary is reproduced below. It is followed by extracts from the introduction to the diary by the editor Madge Dresser. If you would like to join the society and/or purchase this volume please contact the Bristol Record Society c/o the Regional History Centre.*

### 1768

**March 20<sup>th</sup>.** Went with my niece and nephew Eliza and J. L. Champion to the inoculating house at Barton Hill, opened by one of Sutton's partners, Abraham Ludlow and John Ford<sup>1</sup> – a very commodious house fitted for the reception of many patients, and under good regulations. After the operation was performed we brought them home till they sickened, and then sent they back with a servant who was to be subject to the rules of the house.

**April 4<sup>th</sup>.** The children being pretty well, whom we had seen most afternoons at the inoculating house, I went to Stoke with my aunt for the summer.

**May 1<sup>st</sup>.** The Yearly Meeting (Bristol) The principal minister C. Payton, with whom on the forth, we spent the evening at A. R. Hawksworth's.

**July 29<sup>th</sup>.** At Frenchay meeting, where was S. Neale of Ireland, with whom I had a few days before, drunk tea at M. Harford's and supped at T. Frank's. After meeting we dined and drank tea with him and John Elliot at J. Beck's.

**Augt 1<sup>st</sup>.** Left Stoke in order to go to Cheltenham with my brother and sisters. We staid there till the 14<sup>th</sup> of September. Having spent so much time with my brother and sister C. and with each other, we found a great reluctance to separate, which produced a resolution in my sister and myself to live with them. There had been from infancy an uncommon affection subsisting between us, it had been my favourite wish that we might live together, and now it seemed as if the desire was almost irresistible. My aunt Lloyd and M. Harford's family had been for some time united, which, I flattered myself set me at liberty; but I did not immediately declare my intentions, fearing her dislike to parting with me, thinking it would come on better gradually (Perhaps inclination alone dictated this change of abode. Every step we take is an important one, and inclination is often a very mistaken guide. Though we were very happy together, yet I fear it was of no real advantage to any of us – to my sister and myself particularly.)

**Oct (?) 15<sup>th</sup>.**<sup>2</sup> In the morning of this day Lydia Hawksworth<sup>3</sup> came to see us. She had been for some months married to A. R. Hawksworth. She was from Alton and her maiden name Waring. A natural reserve made her difficult of access, which often drew on her from those unacquainted with her merit the reputation of pride. She was a woman of very good understanding, and owed little to books. There was something in her manner to those whom she liked and with whom she conversed with freedom peculiarly attractive. She was of the same generous disposition to the poor as her husband, and yet, in many respects, there did not seem to be a suitability between them. But the time drew near in which it pleased his heavenly father to call him home, for on the 29<sup>th</sup> October, A. R. Hawksworth

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<sup>1</sup> This of course predates Edward Jenner's inoculations against smallpox in 1796-8. Intriguingly Edward Jenner had been apprenticed to a Bristol apothecary named Daniel Ludlow, possibly a relation to Abraham Ludlow. See 'Smallpox: an on-line exhibit' staged at the University of California at Los Angeles biomedical library at: <http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/biomed/smallpox/jenner.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Sharp-eyed readers will notice that this entry supposedly dated on the 15th of October discusses an event which happened on the 29th of that same month. This may be due to a mis-transcription by the Victorian editor of the date or to the fact that the original diary entry may have been written retrospectively

<sup>3</sup> She was the daughter of Samuel Waring Esq. of Alton, Hants and her obituary in the *Gentleman's Magazine* 17 Dec. 1788 described her life as of 'self-denial amidst an affluent fortune, in order to supply more liberally the wants of others'. The *Gentleman's Magazine* (1788) cited in 'Obituary of Lydia Hawksworth', *Journal of the Friends Historical Society*, vol. 16 (1919), pp.117-118.

departed this life after a few day's illness of fever The universal regard and respect felt for him by the city in general, as well as by the Society of which he was so usefull a member, occasioned universal regret for his loss. I think I never knew a private person so much lamented. And as he so well fulfilled the duty and followed the precept of visiting 'the fatherless and the widow in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world,' so did the tears of many such give proof of their grateful regard. His remains were interred from Friar's Meeting in Redcliffe Burying Ground. The house was much crowded on the occasion. During the time of solemn silence around the coffin, Lydia his widow, stood up and delivered a few words, in an awful,<sup>4</sup> affecting manner, to the surprise of many, his being the first time of her public appearance. In the interval between his death and burial, Sukey, Hetty, and myself, visited the widow, whose mother was with her.

**November 9<sup>th</sup>.** S. S. and 8 other gentlemen at dinner. S. S. seldom passed unnoticed in company. He had very superior abilities and an address very insinuating, having the art of making one pleased with oneself, without descending to the meanness of flattery. But his good sense and plausible manners wanted their best recommendation, good principles, as his conduct but too plainly demonstrated. He had long loved a very agreeable, sensible girl, eminent for her personal attractions; but though, he had gained her affections, his character was an obstacle she could not overcome. He had been her preceptor in some branches of learning, though by profession a surgeon. Her mother, notwithstanding she was a sensible and worthy woman, acted in this matter like too many inconsiderate parents, who, if they do not push their children to the brink of a precipice, suffer their inexperienced feet to wander to its verge, and are then surprised or disappointed if they fall from it. Those who have the care of young women cannot be too careful how they suffer the other sex to assist in their education.



**Sarah Fox refers repeatedly to Ivy Bridge as a place she enjoyed stopping at en route to Plymouth. This late eighteenth century print conveys some idea of transport facilities available to her at the time. The bridge was enlarged sometime around the 1780's-evidence of the sort of improvements characteristic of this period.**

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<sup>4</sup> Laying her hand on the coffin. {SCF?} See notice of L. H. Piety Promoted. Vol IX. { - J.F. }

Sarah Champion Fox (1745-1811), lived for most of her life in Bristol. She is best known as the sister of Richard Champion, a porcelain manufacturer and partner with the pioneering chemist William Cookworthy and political agent for the then Whig politician Edmund Burke.<sup>1</sup> Sarah Champion was part of her brother's social circle and had a considerable one of her own. She knew a number of the movers and shakers of the late eighteenth century including the evangelist John Wesley, the writer Hannah More and the anti-slavery campaigner Thomas Clarkson. She was on intimate terms with some leading business families of her time: the Frys (chocolate), the Galtons (guns) and the Lloyds (banking) and she knew many more whose names mean little to us today, but who were influential in their time.

On her death, Sarah Fox, as she had then become, reportedly left forty volumes of closely written journals behind her. All that apparently remains of this prodigious source is a 500 page manuscript of 'extracts'.<sup>2</sup> These were made in 1872 by John Frank (1809-1900), a schoolmaster and editor of the Quaker magazine, *The Friend*, whose grandfather had known the Champions well.<sup>3</sup> A fair copy of this manuscript resides in the Bevan-Naish collection at Woodbrooke College, near Birmingham and it is this document which has been transcribed and annotated for the present BRS volume.....

History has to make do with what evidence survives, and as sources go, this is a still a very rich one. If Sarah Champion Fox's letters<sup>4</sup> are more revealing about her personal feelings, showing a playful and spirited side to her only hinted at in the diary, they are relatively few in number. We do not know if others were destroyed by relatives but the ones surviving in the major Champion correspondence were written when she was young and they seem to have been copied out by her own, older, more censorious self.<sup>5</sup> It is left to her diary to inform us about her marriage, at the age of 45 to a Plymouth widower, the banker Charles Fox, and give us a sustained picture of her life-long comings and goings, her religious belief and the wealth of friends, relatives, acquaintances and associates who formed her coterie. This is the first time this document has ever been published.

Although her diary occasionally bears witness to great political events and touches on the lives of the famous, her usual concerns are more modestly focused. Though a life-long

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<sup>1</sup> Hugh Owen, *Two Centuries of Ceramic Art in Bristol being the History of the Manufacture of 'the True Porcelain' by Richard Champion.....*, (Gloucester: John Bellow, 1873); Deborah M. Olsen, 'Richard Champion and the Society of Friends,' *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, vol. 102, (1984), pp. 173-195; P.T. Underdown, 'Burke's Bristol Friends,' *TBGAS*, vol. 77, (1958), esp. pp. 128-135.

<sup>2</sup> There are rumours that these forty volumes do still survive in private hands, but I have not as yet been able to trace them. If such rumours are true, then it is to be hoped that the publication of these extracts might encourage the present owners of the original diary to make it accessible to scholars.

<sup>3</sup> The journal had originally been in the possession of Philip Debell Tuckett (1801-1872) of Frenchay (a relation of Sarah Champion Fox's brother-in-law). John Frank, who made the extracts, was the grandson of the Bristol China manufacturer Thomas Frank, and the son of Arnee Frank a pin manufacturer, both of whom appear in the extracts. Some parts of the original diary are published in *The Friend*, vol. 1, part iv (1874), pp. 72-73, a journal which he edited at the time. See Friends House Library, (hereafter FHL) catalogue entry under Diary of Sarah Fox. According to one source, the full diary was still extant in 1908. See Norman Penney's note on Sarah Champion Fox in E.T. Wedmore, 'Thomas Pole, M.D.', *Friends' Historical Society Journal Supplement*, no. 7 (1908), esp. pp. 44 and 45.

<sup>4</sup> Most of these letters can be found in the collection of the Champion Correspondence (hereafter CC) held at the Bristol Record Office (hereafter BRO)-

<sup>5</sup> A number of the letters are extracted into a digest which seems to be in some sort of chronological order, whilst others are complete with dates and names of those addressed.

member of the Society of Friends, Sarah Fox's name appears only intermittently in the minutes of the Bristol Women's Monthly meetings, and were it not for the diary, one might wrongly conclude she was a marginal member of the city's tightly-organised and largely prosperous Quaker community. In fact the Bristol Quaker who sent the Rutter manuscript to London in 1916 thought no one in her city would be interested in it, since its author had no descendants and the diary contained 'few incidents of particular importance in it'.<sup>6</sup> It is true that the picture the diary affords us is painted on a relatively small canvass, but it spans a full and multi-layered life. It begins with her troubled childhood and an often anxious young adulthood, through to a late and apparently companionable marriage followed by a tragically premature widowhood. It ends only at the beginning of an infirm old age. The diary's ultimate purpose may well have, as Felicity Nussbaum has argued about Quaker women's autobiographies in general, had as much to do with the presentation of an idealised self as with any unvarnished or intimate revelations.<sup>7</sup> But we can still glean much of significance from it by reading between the lines.

Her own particular motives for writing her journal seem to have included a more personal dimension: she enjoyed writing. She had learned to write by the age of nine, and as her teenage self told her brother:

When I am left alone, [writing] is my principal employment and I am very well pleas'd to find that my favourite amusement carries so much Instruction with it and that whilst I am pursuing pleasure.<sup>8</sup>

Indeed the portion of the diary covering the years up to 1784 appears to have been compiled for her brother Richard to take with him when he left Bristol for Staffordshire that same year.<sup>9</sup> It is clearly based largely on notes or journal entries made at the time the events described took place. Although religious belief is a constant theme, it is not the only one. The recurring motifs of death and salvation are present throughout the whole of the surviving extracts, it is true, but they are woven into a detailed record of her quotidian experience.

Certainly, Sarah Champion Fox led a relatively privileged life. The Champions were members of the Society of Friends (i.e. the Quakers), the largest Dissenting group in England. The Bristol Quakers were, by the eighteenth century, relatively prosperous and the Champion family, along with the Lloyds, the Goldneys and the Harfords had been the largest subscribers to the Bristol congregation in the middle of the century.<sup>10</sup> Yet to categorise Sarah Champion or her family simply as members of 'the middling' or 'upper-middling ranks' does not do full justice to the difficult material circumstances which they experienced nor to the role which religion, gender and premature death played in mediating

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<sup>6</sup> Mary Ann Tanner to Norman Penney, 10 October 1916, FHL, MS Box D.

<sup>7</sup> Felicity Nussbaum, *The Autobiographical Subject: Gender and Ideology in Eighteenth-Century England*, (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1989, 1995) pp.58-64.

<sup>8</sup> Sarah Champion to Richard Champion, 17 September 1760, CC, BRO, 38083 (1-3), no. 3.

<sup>9</sup> See Diary entry for September 1784.

<sup>10</sup> M.H. Simpson, 'Bristol Friends and the Friars Meeting House, *Journal of the Friends Historical Society*, vol. 47, (1955), p. 28; 'Proceedings and Cash Accounts of the Committee for Building Friars Meeting House,' Society of Friends Collection, Bristol Record Office {henceforth BRO}SF/A12/1; Roger Angerson, 'Descriptive List of the Records of the Bristol and Frenchay Monthly Meetings of the Society of Friends', (unpublished typescript, Jan. 1963), BRO; Madge Dresser, 'Protestants, Catholics and Jews: Religious Difference and Political Status in Bristol 1750-1850' in Madge Dresser and Phillip Ollerenshaw (eds.), *The Making of Modern Bristol* (Tiverton: Redcliffe Press, 1996), p. 105.

their class position. Sarah's grandparents' generation of Quakers were only just recovering from the intense political persecution the Society of Friends had suffered in Britain up until 1696.<sup>11</sup> Even during the early eighteenth century, Quakers' goods were still being routinely distrained in consequence of their refusing to pay Church tithes, and throughout Sarah's life, they were prohibited from attending university or from holding political office. It is true that her paternal grandfather Richard Champion was a successful soapmaker, member of the Bristol Brass Company and contributor to Abraham Darby's early iron works, and that his second marriage in 1711 to the devout and well-respected American Quaker Ester Palmer, was probably to his material advantage. But all this did not guarantee their children a comfortable life, for both husband and wife died from disease three years after their marriage leaving their new born son Joseph (Sarah's father), and his two year old sister (her Aunt Sarah) as orphans. Both siblings were evidently well-provided for economically, but both, perhaps as a result of their early misfortune, appear to have been troubled and difficult people throughout their lives. Joseph grew up to be a merchant of some substance, and his marriage to Elizabeth Rogers, the daughter of a prosperous Quaker family from Frenchay,<sup>12</sup> at first promised a more settled family life. But this too was cut short. Three years later, Elizabeth was to die from a tubercular fever. The three children of their union were Sarah, the author of this diary, Richard and Esther Champion. As we shall see, they too suffered early in life in both material and emotional terms.

Both as a child and as a grown woman, Sarah's economic security was at times uncertain, or at least dependent on the patronage of others. When her newly-widowed father decamped from Bristol a year after her mother's death to London, Sarah was taken in by her maternal grandmother. (Her younger brother and sister were left to a nurse in the Wiltshire town of Westbury until they were eight and six respectively). Although Esther later joined her grandmother's household, Richard was sent to London to stay with his father, much to his sisters' distress. Up until his re-marriage to a young widow when Sarah was eight, Sarah saw her father once or twice a year, and his relations with his mother-in-law were tense. When the latter died, Sarah, then nine, and her sister were split up again, staying with two different aunts, Esther with her mother's sister and Sarah with her father's. By now, her father's attentions seemed focused on his eldest son and Sarah's new half-brother Joseph. On the plus side, her father's half-brothers Nehemiah and Richard 'Gospel' Champion, both Quaker merchants, kept in contact with Sarah and her siblings and may have provided them with financial support.<sup>13</sup>

It was not until she was fourteen years old that she came to stay for a short time in her father's London household. It is clear that her father and his new wife were part of a more sophisticated and worldly set than her Bristol relatives. Sarah was amazed by London, by its gas lights and its bustle, but ambivalent too. Her not altogether convincing disavowal of

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<sup>11</sup> William C. Braithwaite, *The Second Period of Quakerism* (original edition Cambridge University Press, 1955, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition York : William Sessions Ltd., 1979), p.123; Russell Mortimer, *Early Bristol Quakerism: the society of Friends in the City 1654-1700*, (Bristol: Bristol Branch of the Historical Association, 1967); R. S. Mortimer, 'Quakerism in Seventeenth Century Bristol,' (unpublished typescript in two volumes, University of Bristol M.A. thesis 1946), A170.

<sup>12</sup> Frenchay village, now part of South Gloucestershire is just to the north of Bristol near Winterbourne and is the site of a small local Quaker museum.

<sup>13</sup> This Nehemiah Champion died in 1766 and is not to be confused with his relative and namesake who founded the Warmley brass works. W. E. Minchinton speculates that Richard, at least, may have received a legacy on the death of his Uncle Richard. See the Introduction to the Guide which accompanies the Microfilm of W.E. Minchinton, (general ed.), *The Letterbooks and other Champion Correspondence*, BRO 38083 (1-4), p.4.

the theatre there shows her to have been both shocked and intrigued by the gaiety to which she had been exposed. She clearly expressed her distaste for the spiritual and emotional atmosphere at her father's house. Was it mere priggishness, an adolescent's resentment of a remarried father or deeper family dysfunction which caused her to write the following journal entry?

Much as I loved my brother nothing could compensate for the disagreeable things I met with in a six weeks visit. Every day produced some new scene of confusion, quarrelling and, a neglect of attending places of worship, paying no regard to the Sabbath, never reading scriptures, and profaning the most sacred names by a wonton {sic} use. These and many other things made me earnestly wish to return home.<sup>14</sup>

Sarah then returned to stay with her Aunt Lloyd who first lived in the Castle Green in Bristol's centre and later at a country house in Stoke Bishop, then less than three miles to the north west of the city. In 1762, she records excitedly that her adored brother was dispatched by his father back to Bristol to learn a trade with their uncle Richard 'Gospel' Champion.

It seems likely that Sarah was financially dependent on her father. His attempt to impose an uncongenial marriage settlement on her sister reminds us that fathers remained their children's legal guardian until their marriage. He also fell into a 'violent' rage over his son Richard's elopement at the age of twenty one with Sarah's girlhood friend Judy Lloyd (no relation to her aunt). This leads us to wonder whether he continued to support Sarah financially after she went to live with Richard and his wife. There seems to have been some sort of break with her father possibly around this time as decades later she bitterly describes having just discovered a cache of angry letters from her father whose existence had long been kept from her 'out of kindness' by some protective relative.<sup>15</sup> Unmarried women from the 'genteel' end of the middling ranks had very limited options for supporting themselves independently. In some cases fathers might arrange independent financial provision for their daughters as part of a marriage settlement, but these were usually administered by male trustees, not the daughter herself. Unmarried women had less chance of such provisions being made. By the latter half of the eighteenth century, single women could lose their social status by working outside the home and even when circumstances forced them to do so, they could rarely earn a living wage.<sup>16</sup>

As Richard Champion grew to become well established in Bristol: being admitted to the mercantile elite when he joined the Society of Merchant Venturers in 1767, he was able to maintain a house in the commercial district of Castle Green, near his porcelain manufactory, and a summer residence in Henbury, about five miles to the northwest of Bristol. Sara's social circle widened to include some prominent people outside the Society of Friends.<sup>17</sup> Visits with friends and relatives to the spa at Cheltenham further broadened

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<sup>14</sup> See Diary entry for 1759.

<sup>15</sup> See Diary entry for 2 February 1789.

<sup>16</sup> Bridget Hill, *Women, Work and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-Century England*, (London: UCL Press, 1994) pp.221-239. See also Olwen Hufton, 'Women Without Men: Widows and Spinsters in Britain and France in the Eighteenth Century,' *Journal of Family History*, vol. 9, no. 4 (1984), pp. 361; Olwen Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: a History of Women in Western Europe*, vol. 1. (London: Fontana Press, 1997), p. 500.

<sup>17</sup> See S.C. to Sukey Rogers, 7 May 1761, CC, BRO, 38983 (5), no. 3.

her social horizons. They exposed her to the attractions of pretty dresses and flirtations with dissipated young officers, both of which proved briefly tempting, but made her as anxious as an Austen heroine about how to maintain propriety in such situations.<sup>18</sup> Such encounters with the upper echelons of provincial Society continued as her brother became Edmund Burke's right hand man in Bristol's Parliamentary election of 1774, but her main core of acquaintances and friends remained the staunchly respectable Quakers.

Travelling ministers of both sexes could find a ready welcome in any of the Quaker meeting houses whose network extended throughout Britain and Ireland, North America and the Caribbean. A surprising number of itinerant preachers or ministers came to Bristol. Most if not all of these names will be unknown to readers today and most were probably not much regarded outside Quaker circles in her own era. To the casual reader of this diary, they appear on first acquaintance as unexceptional, rather dull people. But once the identities of these people are investigated, a vibrant, often radical transatlantic network of activists emerges, a surprising proportion of them female. Such wide-ranging investigation has of course been hugely facilitated by the employment of internet search engines, followed up and reinforced by further archival and text-based research. The resulting picture proves Sarah Champion Fox's circle included female as well as male ministers, many of whom were widely-travelled, resourceful and actively involved in bearing witness to, if not overtly challenging, injustice.

These activists, it is no exaggeration to say, were extraordinary individuals who between them travelled with energy and focus throughout Britain, Ireland,<sup>19</sup> America, the Caribbean and continental Europe to bear witness to their faith. Many were connected by marriage, friendship or blood to other reformers. To cite only one example, Catherine Peyton, whom Sarah Fox first met at Cheltenham spa, travelled in her twenties nearly 9,000 miles through America with her fellow minister Mary Peisley. (Their first-hand encounters with native Americans and enslaved Africans in North Carolina radicalised them and her critical observations on the institution of slavery feature in her published memoirs under her married name, Catherine Phillips).<sup>20</sup> Phillips spent a good deal of time in Bristol and features many times in Sarah's diary. ....

Sarah Champion Fox, as I have elsewhere discussed, had links with both merchants and abolitionists, and was won over to abolition by the late 1780's.<sup>21</sup> The fact that all these people came to Bristol confirms the city's status as an important Atlantic port and helps to explain its increasing cultural sophistication as the eighteenth century progressed.

Bristol in the 1760's and 1770's was a place of real intellectual ferment and cultural change. Scientific advances were celebrated by Quaker ministers<sup>22</sup> and exploited by Quaker manufacturers, including the Champions and the Frys. Sarah Fox's diary shows her

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<sup>18</sup> See for example S.C. to M. Dallaway, 9 July 1766, and to Richard Champion, August 1767, CC BRO 38983 (5), nos. 116 and 128.

<sup>19</sup> Mary Ridgeway and Phoebe Speakman for example were among those who worked in Ireland before coming to Bristol.

<sup>20</sup> Catherine Phillips DQB; BRO, Minutes of the Women's Monthly Meeting 6 September 1783, SF/A2/2.

<sup>21</sup> See Madge Dresser, *Slavery Obscured*, pp.146-147.

<sup>22</sup> William Savery's Sermon 'An Age of Uncommon Events' made in 1796, remarks that '...men of science have been exceedingly curious in their researches: they have brought up some new and before unheard-of things to view; and probably some of them may be turned to advantage to their country, in ages to come, though they are not *now* altogether usefully employed in the world.' This can be read by accessing: <http://www.qhpress.org/quakerpages/qhoa/ws05.htm>

to have shared some of this enthusiasm. Whilst in Bristol, she scanned the heavens with a telescope,<sup>23</sup> noted the transit of Venus, expressed intrigued scepticism about animal magnetism, and was literally shocked by an early electrical experiment. She recorded an early balloon flight from the city and gossiped about an experiment at Dr. Beddoes's pneumatic institute. Much has been written about Richard Champion's involvement in the new cultural developments<sup>24</sup> and it was partly through him that his sister was exposed to new ways of thinking. She attended a public lecture he had organised (probably on a medical topic), although she afterwards professed her initial reluctance to do so on the grounds of propriety, since it was commonly considered indecorous for young unmarried ladies to attend mixed-sex public events. Most significantly, her letters and diary record too that smallpox vaccinations were routinely carried out in Bristol by the Quaker surgeon Abraham Ludlow as early as 1768,<sup>25</sup> nearly three decades before Jenner's famous inoculations. Some familial connection seems likely between Abraham Ludlow and Daniel Ludlow the apothecary from Chipping Sodbury to whom Edward Jenner was later apprenticed.

Richard Champion and a number of Quakers were involved in medical charities in Bristol, including the establishment of the Bristol Royal Infirmary and the Bristol Dispensary. The young Sarah Champion took a keen interest in this by the end of the century and was herself involved in a range of philanthropic bodies, including the Quaker workhouse, the 'Magdalen' or 'penitentiary' for seduced girls and the Bristol Blind School. She personally visited Newgate prison and like her brother was particularly concerned by the plight of the small debtors incarcerated there. Although her pronouncements about the poor sound to readers of our century annoyingly patronising, it is evident that Sarah Fox was much affected by the condition of the poor. She was constantly visiting the impoverished, the bereaved and the infirm. Her personal nursing of the dying twelve year old black servant, Ned; her clothing and feeding the destitute young urchin Sally Eady (with whom she kept in close touch for many years); her real distress at the plight of the poor in general all show an undeniable tender-heartedness. This tender-heartedness was matched by more formal activity in her later years. She seems to have been on the management board of the Friends' school for the blind and became an official visitor to the Friends' Workhouse.....

Sarah Champion Fox was neither a celebrity nor a gossip, but her diary affords us a fascinating glance into Bristol's past.

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#### Thesis on offer.

**Frank Smith** (whose article appears on page 18) is offering copies of his thesis on floppy disk to interested parties. The title is '**Decasualisation at the Port of Bristol: Management Control and Industrial Relations**'. It describes the decasualisation process in the Port of Bristol from the days of Ernie Bevin up to the ending of the National Dock Labour Board in 1989. If you are interested in obtaining a copy please e-mail him at [frank.old-duke@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:frank.old-duke@blueyonder.co.uk) or to [ws007e7475@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:ws007e7475@blueyonder.co.uk)

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<sup>23</sup> Although the diary's only reference to a telescope is when Fox used it to witness the eclipse of the moon in 1802, her correspondence indicates she saw 'the planets, Jubiter {sic} Saturn and Venus thro a very good teliscope {sic}' around 1769. See CC, BRO, 83083(5), no. 209-210.

<sup>24</sup> Deborah M. Olsen, 'Richard Champion and the Society of Friends,' p. 179-184. P.T. Underdown, 'Burke's Bristol Friends,' *TBGAS*, vol. 77, (1958), esp. pp. 128-135.

<sup>25</sup> See the Diary entry for 20 March 1768 and accompanying note. Both Richard and Sarah Champion's letters allude to the inoculations which were performed at Barton Hill, Bristol. See for example, S.C. to M. Dallaway, n.d. but c.1769, CC, BRO 38083 (5), nos. 209-210. He is listed as an M.D. in Sketchley's Bristol Directory of 1777.

Madge Dresser

This lovely if naïve watercolour is entitled 'A member of the Pole family at her desk c. 1806 at 14 St. James's Square Bristol' and if its painter is unknown, a little bit more about its context has recently emerged. The picture shows a plainly dressed young woman studiously writing at her desk surrounded by books. She is probably either Eliza or Rachel Pole, one of the daughters of Dr. Thomas Pole a Quaker minister and reformer who pioneered reforms in adult education in Britain. The books in the picture (whose titles are tantalisingly absent) show the viewer that this was clearly an intellectual household. Dr. Pole's son was said to have been a promising young scientist who tragically died in his late teens.



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The picture indicates that at least one of the girls had academic interests-interests which were still uncommon amongst even genteel young women at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Both sisters later married, both to Bristol men (W. Temlett) and Eliza survived both her siblings and her husband at least until 1871. The residence itself was in an upper-middle class part of Bristol, St. James's Square—or 'James's Square' as the staunchly Protestant members of Bristol's Society of Friends preferred to call it. Built in 1707-1716, it was an elegant little square whose houses were graced by the shell doors typical of the period. The Square was destroyed in the 20th century, partly by the blitz and partly by the philistinism of planners in the late 1960's determined to make room for the city's Inner Circuit Road.<sup>1</sup>

Number 14 had previously been owned by Sarah and Charles Fox. Charles Fox, a Plymouth banker, married Sarah Champion (whose life history and diary extract appears above), the middle aged sister of the porcelain manufacturer Richard Champion. Husband and wife were active Quakers who did much to promote and support various charities in Bristol. They were on friendly terms with the Poles and it is through Sarah Champion Fox's diary that we know what we do about the Pole family.<sup>2</sup>

Like the garden in the painting, both the Foxes and the Poles were cultivated, austere, elegant and in terms of the fruits they bore, true ornaments to their city

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Mowl, *To Build the Second City: architects and craftsmen of Georgian Bristol*, (Bristol: Redcliffe Press, 1991)pp. 14-15; Gordon Priest and Pamela Cobb (eds.), *the Fight for Bristol: planning and the growth of public protest* (Bristol: Bristol Civic society and the Redcliffe Press, 1980), pp29-31.

<sup>2</sup> *The Diary of Sarah Champion Fox, 1745-1806: as extracted in 1873 by John Frank of Bristol*, M. Dresser (ed.), the latest forthcoming volume of the Bristol Record Society is due to appear in 2003.

### **A long-lived institution**

The existence of Glass Mill is still recorded on the street plan of Bristol by a 'mill pond' at the northern, dead, end of Mina Road. Alongside it is now a pumping station which continues to supply water to the city from the brooks which have fed both mill and the town for hundreds of years. The mill was situated at the spot where the streamlet which rises behind the gasholders in Horfield is joined by the Boiling Well Brook, filled from a spring to the north-east of the railway embankment under which it is culverted.

In his article in the *Regional Historian*, no.8 (Winter 2002), published by the Regional History Centre of the University of the West of England, Harry McPhillimy tells us about the history of Narrowways Hill, St. Werburghs. In it he mentions a reference (pp.11-12) to the enclosure in 1813 of a piece of waste ground in the lane leading from Baptist Mills to the Glass Mill, which he identifies as Mina Road. Then in the subsequent, Summer 2002, issue (no.9, p.12, Correspondence), Barbara Tuttielt, who has been studying a survey of the Barton of Bristol of 1553, tells us of a reference to land at Glass Mill (described as Glaste Mill) in 1528, when one Harry Curtys and his wife held two acres of land there (not the mill itself). This gives an early date for the mill, which did not finally cease operations until around 1898, while part of the premises were occupied until the 1960's.

In spite of such a lengthy pedigree the history of Glass Mill is virtually untouched since my own brief note in *BIAS Journal* (vol.11, 1978) on 'The mills of the Bristol Frome'. There I chose to call it by its most recent name, Pickering's Mill, perhaps wrongly so, since Glass Mill has been more widely used and recognised in historical documents over such a long period that it can be regarded as the traditional name. Whether we prefer 'Glass Mill' or not, and all the more so if we do, we ought to explain the name -and we can't. The earlier version which we now have, 'Glaste Mill', is itself probably a corruption, and 'Glass' is certainly in turn a corruption of 'Glaste'. Enlightenment would be welcome.

The possible sequence of events in the mill's history as recorded, very sparingly, in the documents is complicated because several different names have been given to the mill. In addition the names seem to overlap in date; we have Glass Mill in documents running from 1528 to the 1890's, but during that time it has been referred to as Ashley Vale Mill, Ashley Court Mill and Green's Mill.

### **The mill shows its true colours**

The most interesting interlude in this long history, indeed the only one in which we have any usable data, is that which is played out around the years 1813 to 1819. The Smyth family were by 1767 the owners of the mill and many of the surrounding fields. The short period in the mill's history we are looking at now begins with the letter, referred to by McPhillimy, written on 18th July 1813 by Jane Smyth to the owner of a neighbouring piece of land, a Mr Master of Knowle, to tell him that:



**1890 Bristol Floods Prevention Act  
Bristol R.O 07711(36)a-b, Sheet 6**

**Reproduced courtesy of Bristol  
Record Office**

I beg leave to inform you a person of the name of Thomas Woolford, a butcher in Bristol, has enclosed a piece of waste ground in the lane leading from Baptist Mills to the Glass Mill which has much contracted a driving way from a field of mine called Netherway hill inasmuch as to prevent a loaded wagon with corn or hay to be taken through'.

McPhillimy goes on to tell us that the butcher 'backed down'. Unfortunately there is no indication here of the use to which the mill was put: but would the Smyth estates have been content to operate a mere corn mill when more lucrative trades beckoned?

A clue to an entrepreneurial development lies in a newspaper report in the *Bristol Mercury* for Monday, 13th March 1815: 'Early Wednesday morning a fire broke out in the Logwood Mill near the Boiling well, Stapleton, which consumed the same, with considerable property'. David Pollard, who culled this reference (in 1982) also found virtually identical accounts in the *Bristol Gazette* on 9th March, and in Felix Farley's *Bristol Journal* and the *Bristol Mirror* on the 11th.

We know that the Boiling Well was just above the mill - it is named on the 6 inch OSO map of 1921 while the map accompanying the Bristol Flood Prevention Act of 1890 (Sheet 6) labels the brook leading to the mill as Boiling Well Brook (although the mill is by then called Ashley Vale Mill). There is no evidence at all of another mill in the vicinity, indeed there is neither the space nor the water for one, and convincing evidence that the Logwood Mill was Glass Mill appears in the press a few years later.



c.1795 Smyth estates;  
 Division 2nd Bristol  
 R.O., AC PU59  
 (Reproduced courtesy of  
 Bristol Record Office)

A brief report was spotted in the *Sherborne and Yeovil Mercury* for 20th September 1819 by Martin Bodman, who also found it in the *Sherborne Mercury* on 22nd September, and sent it to me (in 1993). It reads as follows: 'To be sold by private contract, and entered upon at Michaelmas' [29th September, only nine days away; but the advert had been sent in on the 8th!] 'the LEASE of a valuable WATER MILL,' [The Smyth family retained actual ownership of the mill until the date of the Tithe Map (1842) at least: there should be other references to it in the estate papers] 'about a mile from Bristol, of which lease twenty five years are unexpired; the machinery and buildings erected thereon being almost entirely new.' [This would tie in with the destruction and subsequent reconstruction of the 'logwood mill' four years earlier. Was the mill rebuilt with the help of insurance money? Possibly the insurance registers, especially those of the Sun Insurance Company, in the Guildhall Library in London, would help. But they are not easy to consult: see M. W. Beresford's essay on scanning for insurance documents<sup>1</sup> before starting out.] 'All those MILLS,' [The later text makes it clear that the plural is a manner of speaking, and that we are here simply reading the detailed subtext of the main heading -the 'valuable water mill'. There would in any case be more than one piece of milling equipment in a logwood mill, and it was not unusual to speak of 'mills' when there was more than one machine under the one roof. ] 'WAREHOUSES and ERECTIONS, called GLASS MILLS, in the parish of STAPLETON, being the first on the stream, and abundantly supplied with water. The

<sup>1</sup> *Urban History Year Book*, 1976, p.7

water-wheel is 18 feet diameter' [Inspection in 1968 found a grill in the retaining wall of the millpond over 8 feet above ground level, suggesting a wheel of the size quoted; it could have been up to 4 feet in width] 'has the shaft and arms of iron; the other [cog-]wheels are also of iron, with wood cogs in part, consequently are liable to very little repair. ..' [Then follows a list of outhouses and grounds] 'These mills and large warehouses have been used for the manufacture of ivory black and for chemical operations; they are suitable for the same purposes, or for grinding colours, and drugs, or any other purposes requiring water power and room, and, with a small addition to the machinery, may be used as a corn mill.'

Prospective buyers were asked to apply at the offices of the Bristol Journal. The latter therefore also presumably published this advertisement, which leads the history of Glass Mill through the period from 1813 to 1819. But its business does seem to need some further explanation.

### **The Glass Mill at the eye of Bristol industry, 1813 to 1819**

To begin with, the term 'ivory black' appears to be a contradiction in terms; ivory was especially prized for its whiteness. What exactly ivory black was, and what purpose it served, is explained in several nearly-contemporary publications. One of the more useful ones is Charles Tomlinson's *Cyclopaedia of Useful Arts and Manufactures* published in London soon after the Great Exhibition of 1851 and including an account of it by way of introduction. In the body of the work he has a heading for 'ivory-black', which refers us to 'carbon', where we learn that ivory-black was made from bone in much the way that charcoal was made from wood, but we are now referred to the article on 'bone'. There we are told how the bones are treated to extract, for example, the fat used in soap-making which was a major, though gently declining, business in Bristol. The residual bony material was now called ivory black, bone black or animal charcoal, and once it had been reduced to powder, was 'largely used' in the refining of sugar, another major trade in contemporary Bristol. But if it was made from bone, why call it 'ivory-black'? Here a modern dictionary reassures us that ivory-black 'is a black powder made from burnt ivory, but now from bone' -and this still in 1993, according to Chambers.

Another term for ivory-black we saw in Tomlinson was animal charcoal. Robin Stiles, in his article on 'The Old Market Sugar Refinery', says that 'At the turn of the century conditions began to change rapidly. ..and the restless enquiry of the period brought forth a flood of new ideas and patents, such as the use of wood charcoal for decolourising the syrup, followed shortly after by the more efficient animal charcoal'.<sup>2</sup>

Now, as far as Glass Mill is concerned, we have a chicken-and-egg question: did refineries try out the local ivory-black and find it efficient, or did Glass Mill turn to ivory-black because of the demand from the local sugar refineries? Was it indeed taken over by a sugar boiler for the purpose of producing animal charcoal?

One more name, and another use for ivory-black, is to be found in Edward Blakely's 'Handy dictionary of commercial information' published by him in 1878. He wrote that it was 'otherwise called velvet black', and was 'burnt ivory or bones, which, . . .being reduced to thin plates, are ground in water, afterwards to be used as a watercolour pigment'.

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<sup>2</sup> Robin Styles, 'The Old Market Sugar Refinery', *BIAS Journal* vol.2, p 12.

One purpose of the mill, then, was to reduce the ivory-black, and the other chemicals or drugs which were un-named in the advertisement, to a usable powder. Such chemicals would have had many uses in Bristol's numerous and widely differing industries in the early 19th century. The mill was also advertised as 'grinding colours', clearly a separate matter from the ivory-black business. This trade would have given the mill its name of 'Logwood' mill, although we should properly speak of dyewoods. a more general term to include the generic logwood. The process is described in Buchanan & *Cossons' Industrial Archaeology of the Bristol Region* and in Joan Day's article 'The last of the dyewood mills'.<sup>3</sup>

In brief it involves the reduction of the dyewood, usually imported from South America, to 'small chips [or] raspings that the colouring matter may be more readily extracted by the dyer'. This summary, which omits to mention that the raspings were subsequently ground to powder, is from Rees's *Manufacturing industry' of 1819/20*<sup>4</sup> Rees goes on to tell us that the product went to the wool and cotton textile industries and the leather trade. All of these were represented in the Bristol region in the early 19th century, but, as Joan Day's article says, it was the cloth industry of the Stroud valley which was particularly interested in the dyestuffs available in the district around this date.

Finally, it is worth considering the passing suggestion that 'with a small addition to the machinery, [the mill] may be used as a corn mill'. It is true that one normally expects to find edge-runners doing the job of reducing the raspings to powder in a dyewood mill, but it could equally well be done with a pair of horizontal corn millstones -especially if that is what happens to be in situ. And since the advertiser speaks of only a 'small addition' to enable the mill to grind corn he cannot be referring to rejigging the whole train of machinery and going to the expense of buying a pair of grist stones, which notoriously cost as much as the rest of the machinery in the mill put together.

But, aside from any need to adapt the machinery, and any concern with the comparative profitability of the trade, might a dedicated corn miller really want to enter Glass Mill for grist milling in 1819? Indeed he might have been tempted. By this time three of the mills which had once ground flour on the nearby Bristol Frome had been converted to the more lucrative snuff trade - Witherly's, King's and Frenchay -while Cleeve Mill had been incorporated in Frenchay Iron Company. Other mills on the same river were still working as corn mills, and the need for little local mills still existed so long as the development of the great steam-powered dockside mills was another generation away. Remember that Jane Smyth, for one, grew corn which she was having to carry away from Netherway hill along 'the lane leading to Baptist Mills' when she might have had it ground on the spot.

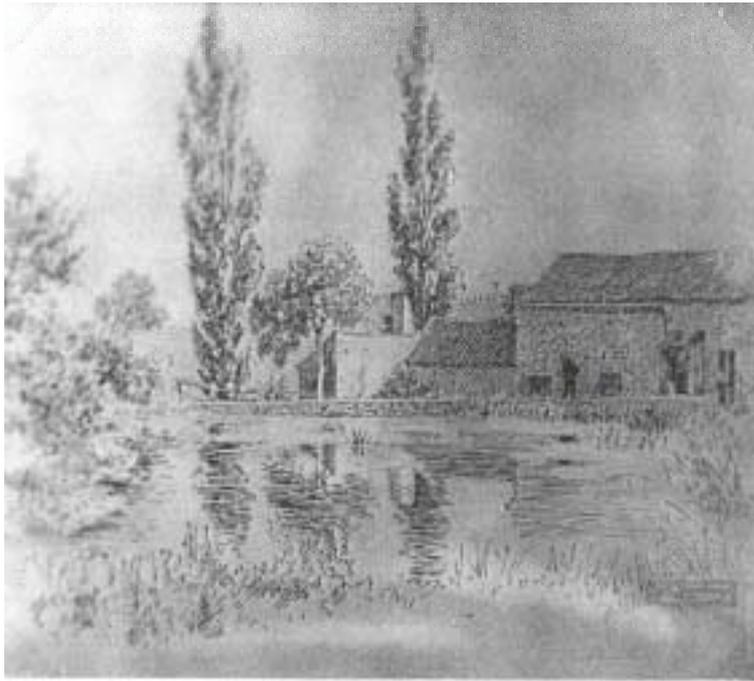
### **Later history -and the lack of it**

At all events, most subsequent references to the mill site provide us with little or no evidence as to what was being done there for the remainder of its life.

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<sup>3</sup> Buchanan & Cossons, *Industrial Archaeology of the Bristol Region*, Newton Abbot, 1969, pp.69-71; Joan Day, 'The last of the dyewood mills', *Industrial Archaeology*, vol.3 no.2, May 1966.

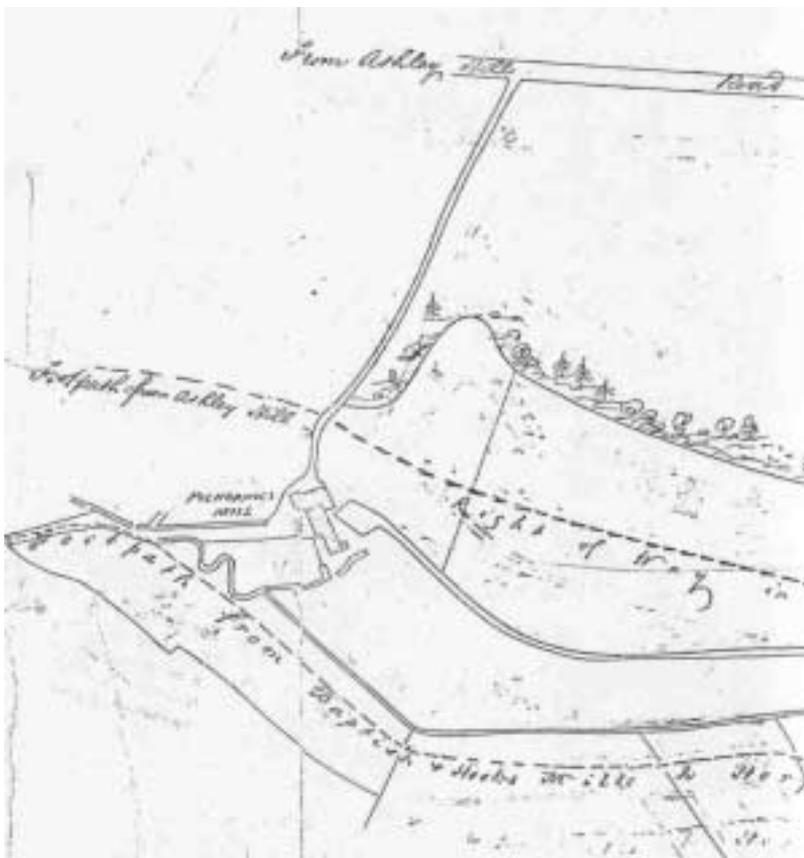
<sup>4</sup> Rees' *Manufacturing industry' of 1819/20*, Cosines edition, vol.3, p.305.



Loxton's picture of about 1820 simply shows a tranquil millpond; the *OSO* map of 1830 calls it Ashley Court Mill, by association with Ashley Court which then stood some 300 yards to the west, but does not say what sort of mill it was; The Tithe map of 1842 has Mary Pickering as the occupant, but with no suggestion that she operated the mill machinery, such as a miller's widow might well have been doing.

**1820s Loxton's drawing: Ashley Vale Mill**

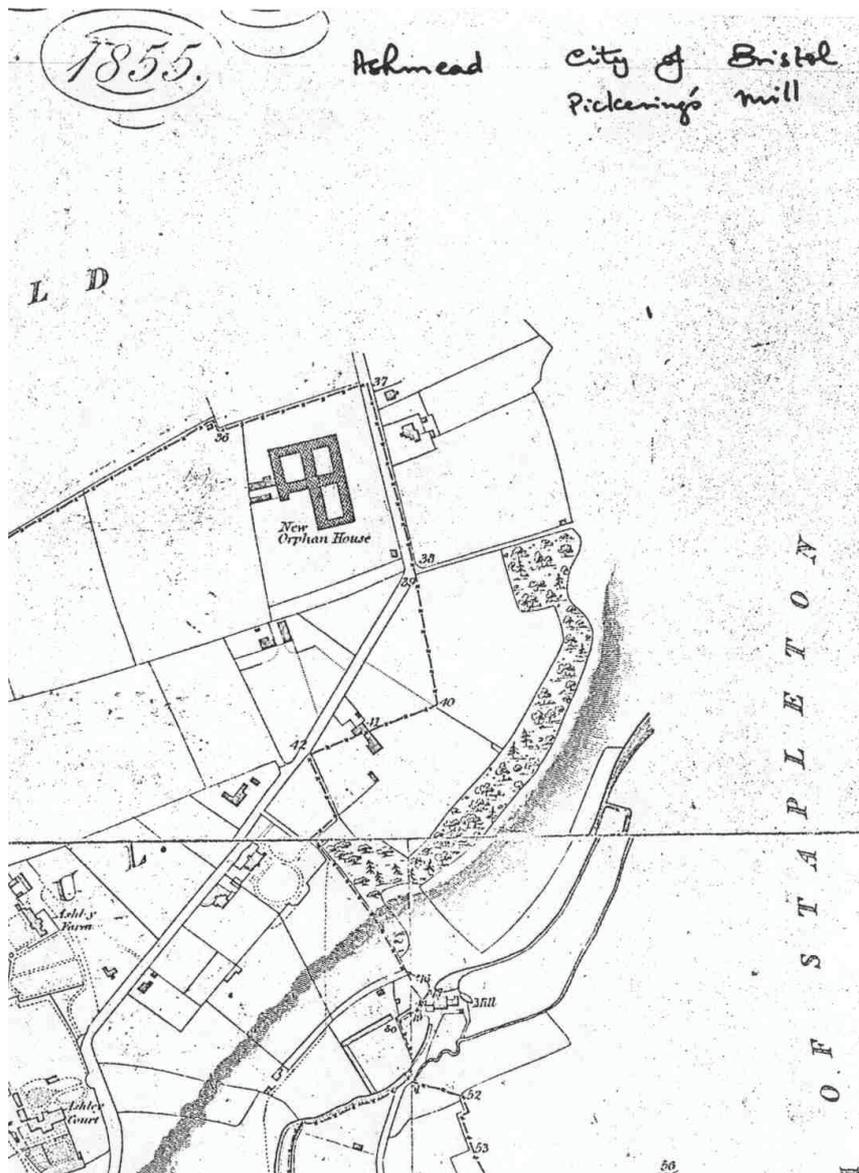
**Reproduced by kind permission of Bristol Reference Library**



**1840s? Pickering's Mill & footpaths**

**Reproduced by kind permission of Bristol Ref. Library, B.23582**

Ashmead's map of 1855 labels it just 'mill'; and although the 1890 Bristol Flood Prevention Act plan has 'Ashley Vale Corn Mill', it was clearly already in the ownership of Bristol Waterworks Co., who would have been interested only in taking the water for their own uses, even though it had two tenants; on the other hand local historian and cartographer Harry Lane has said that by 1898 the mill 'had closed' so that it may have been serving some useful purpose until that date.



1855 Ashmead's, City of Bristol

Maybe the railway records would tell us a little more about the mill whose watercourse they had to conserve; maybe the Bristol Waterworks records secrete some hint of the mill's importance; perhaps the census returns include some useful information. In any case there is still much to learn of the significance of this modest enterprise in Bristol's economic fabric; at least I am now sure that my suggestion in BIAS Journal of 1978 that Glass Mill was always a grist mill is quite wrong; we live and, I hope, learn.

During the interwar period, as the country's eighth largest port, Bristol was bound to be affected by national trends in the port transport industry. Bristol on the whole as an importing port did not experience the same degree of economic depression as London or Liverpool. As a result the unemployment rate was below the national level. While it is true relative unemployment was lower in Bristol, the dockworker in comparison with workers in other industries in the area, was subjected to casual employment, on a half day basis. Like other ports dockers would seek work at call-on points at the shipside at the City docks and outside the main gate at Avonmouth. A social survey undertaken by Bristol University in 1937<sup>1</sup> established that although Bristol was more prosperous than other towns there were 21,000 families having a 'hard struggle' and 11,000 families 'living in poverty.' The latter group represented 40,000 people, out of a total population of around 400,000. Some of those having a hard struggle or in poverty were the unemployed, including waterfront workers. There were no precise figures for dockers or shipyard workers but casual workers formed 5.6 per cent of the 32,000 families below the 'needs' standard. As dockers and shipyard workers made up a good proportion of casual workers it would be reasonable to assume that a good number came into this category. Certainly oral research indicates that dockers and shipyard workers recall the ignominy of applying for public assistance. This along with casual work implanted in their minds that the strata of society to which they belonged was to a certain extent cut off from those with regular jobs. As a result their status would be in some respects below that of a fully employed low paid railway worker.

### **Cargoes, Organisation and Industrial Relations.**

The Docks Committee between the wars was successful in promoting trade and commerce particularly in the decade prior to the Second World War. There was some improvement in the Bristol economy in the late 1930's. Unemployment dropped between 1935-1939. Trade at the Port of Bristol increased by 50% in those five years. The Statement of Traffic report to the Docks Committee at the meeting held on 31st of March 1939<sup>2</sup> gave the following figures. The total of foreign and coastwise imports were 4,314,060 tons. This was a continuous trend throughout the latter years of the thirties. The 1935 total had been 3,367,093 tons. Exports showed a similar trend rising from 582,941 tons in 1935 to 710,017 tons in 1939. The improvement at the port reflected the publicly funded developments carried out on the infrastructure between the wars at Royal Edward Dock. For example the Oil Basin extension created extra berths resulting in the increase in petroleum products. The Eastern Arm extension too contributed, providing extra grain extraction machinery and storage facilities together with general cargo berths. A modernisation programme was carried out at O Shed and the Cold Stores which contributed to the increase in the imports of refrigerated cargoes like meat and dairy products. The Port of Bristol Authority (PBA) had negotiated contracts with the Australian and New Zealand governments to obtain these valuable imports. These improvements along with increased berthage at the City Docks, had been partially financed by the Unemployed Grants Committee (UGC) set up in 1921-2 after the collapse of the post-war boom. In addition the Docks Committee in 1933-1934 acting in conjunction with the Public Assistance Committee, provided work for the unemployed. In this way the city authority could combine public finance with profit to improve the facilities at their port.

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<sup>1</sup> Herbert Tout. M.A. *The Standard of Living in Bristol*, Arrowsmith. (Bristol 1938)

<sup>2</sup> City of Bristol Docks Committee Minutes and Reports 1939 ( B.R.O.)

All registered dockers were members of the TGWU. The four branches in Bristol were located where dockers lived. Two branches covered the central area. The first one met in the TGWU docks office in Prince Street in the heart of the City Docks, the second at Hotwells, a mile down river. There was another branch at Bedminster in South Bristol where a large number of dockers had their homes. Their meeting place was the Dockers Hall, now demolished, where Ernest Bevin and Ben Tillett former leader of the Dockers Union, often spoke. The Kingsley Hall in Old Market Street was where dockers living in East Bristol had their branch, another venue for meetings addressed by Bevin and Tillett, being the headquarters of the labour movement in Bristol.<sup>3</sup> At Avonmouth branches were organised in sections. Registered dockers, casual and permanent, had their own branch. Crane drivers and tally men were organised in a similar manner. The branches were constitutionally organised together in the Docks Group of the TGWU.<sup>4</sup> They were serviced by the Docks Group Secretary and two other full-time officers from the docks offices in Prince St. Bristol and Meadow St., Avonmouth. The same officers looked after the non-registered dock workers. The administrative staff at the higher grades were members of the National Association of Local Government Officers (NALGO). Those at the lower level were members of the Administrative, Clerical, and Supervisory section of the TGWU.



**The Boston City being unloaded at Bristol City Docks**

The Bristol Port Labour Committee had from 1924 issued registration books. These because of their colour were henceforth known as 'black books' and registered dockers were 'black book men'. The registration books were handed in by a docker when engaged for work. The employer would stamp the book for each day or half-day worked. Every six months an exchange of books would take place. Two Port Committee members, one from each side, together with a Ministry of Labour official, carried out an examination of each

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<sup>3</sup> Oral interviews with retired dockers.

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed outline of the constitutional structure of the TGWU see V.L. Allen. *Trade Union Leadership*, Longman Green London. (1957)

docker's record for the previous six months. If a docker had a poor record of attendance he could be summoned before the sub-committee. This could be ascertained by examining his work record and the number of times he signed on the dole, supplemented by comments from employers on the occasions when he had refused an offer of work at the call-stand. Failure to give a satisfactory explanation could lead to disciplinary measures, warnings as to future conduct, suspension, and in extreme cases withdrawal of registration books.<sup>5</sup>

Throughout the inter-war period the register had been gradually reduced by keeping recruitment to a minimum. If however a registered dock worker retired or died his book could be handed on to his son. Nevertheless, there were still too many dockers for the amount of employment available. For example at the exchange of books in March 1936 it was shown that 2,594 men obtained an average of 69.1 % employment in the previous six months. A salient factor in this analysis was the number of older men on the register. There were 313 men in the age group 60-64 who obtained 61.5 % employment, 162 in the age group 65-70 employed 54.3 % of the time and even 55 men over 70 who worked 48.1 % of the period. These latter figures could be explained by the amount of day-work 'turning-out' (loading ex-cargo into lorries and railway trucks) in the transit sheds and warehouses. On the whole, the interwar Port of Bristol's Registration Scheme worked fairly well compared to other ports. Indeed it was commended as a model in the MacLean Committee Port Labour Enquiry Reports.<sup>6</sup>

Before 1939, local and national working agreements, dealing with wages and conditions, were renegotiated from time to time. These were based on the Shaw Court of Inquiry recommendations in 1920, laying down the 44 hour week and sixteen shillings (80p) per day for dockers on time work. The sixteen shillings per day award was not sustained, falling to ten shillings (50p) per day during the slump. By 1939 it had risen to twelve shillings (60p) per day.<sup>7</sup>

How then did the hiring of casual dock labour operate at the Port of Bristol between the wars? It was not a very edifying scene. The dockers reported twice daily at the various calling-on stands at 7.45 a.m. and 11 45 a.m.. At Avonmouth the central calling-on stand was located just outside the main docks entrance in Gloucester Road, in the open air. Superintendents and foremen from the PBA and the stevedoring firms would pick individual dockers from the hordes of men thrusting their 'black books' forward clamouring for a job. When called by name the docker would give his book to the foreman and proceed to the ship or quayside depending whether his employer was responsible for unloading or loading the ship. The employer would retain the registration book until the job was completed. Unfortunately the system of hiring labour did not necessarily lead to a fair distribution of work. This left bitter memories in the minds of dockers during the 1930's. To quote one retired docker:

'The method used for calling men off for a job was degrading and primitive. At Avonmouth there was a line of covered stands built into the outer perimeter fence, while at Bristol gangs were called off at the ship's side or outside the shed where the vessel was berthed. Of course this led to moral blackmail by the

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<sup>5</sup> Bristol Port Committee Exchange of Registration Books.- September 1936. B.R.O.. REF 40194/A/1.

<sup>6</sup> MacLean Report(1931) paras 43-44 pp. 26-27.

<sup>7</sup> City of Bristol. Docks Committee Minutes and Reports 1939. B.R.O.

stevedores...by bribery (leaving a pint over the counter at the bosses (*sic*) favourite pub').<sup>8</sup>

Despite the recommendations of the Shaw Report and the 1924 and 1931 MacLean Reports and the constant efforts of the TGWU to bring these issues to the negotiating table there was still no established system of maintenance for unemployed dockers financed by the Port Transport Industry in the 1930's. As early as 1919 the Bristol Port Labour Committee approved a scheme for out-of-work payments, which was dropped without being put into operation when the Unemployment Insurance Scheme (UIS) was extended to the Port Transport Industry in 1920. One study has asserted that its introduction held up any further progress towards complete decasualisation between the wars.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore the UIS created anomalies peculiar to the docks industry, which suffered the twin problems of unemployment and underemployment. A docker could be picked up for as short a period as half-a-day; this could spoil his record of continuous employment necessary to claim benefit. It was this unique practice which caused the difficulty of fitting the industry into the UIS. Only the ship repairing industry shared this problem.

The Bristol Port Labour Committee had reduced the number of registered dock workers from 3236 in 1925 to 2570 in 1933. At the same time daily employment had dropped to 59.2 % from 66.8 % in 1926.<sup>10</sup> We have already noted the increased tonnage handled from 1935 -1939. Nevertheless the analysis of registration books in March 1936 indicated that the total amount of work obtained had only risen to 69.1 %. The figures illustrate the anomaly of under-employment against the background of improved trade. This apparent increase in productivity can be explained by the development of modern technology at the quayside and in the design of larger and faster ships.

Why did the UIS as applied to casual dock workers attract so much criticism, both at the time and in subsequent studies? It was the application of the continuity rule which was subject to most scrutiny.<sup>11</sup> Despite apparently overwhelming evidence of the way the UIS favoured the dockers, those who worked in the industry before 1939 emphatically deny that it presented an accurate picture.<sup>12</sup> The continuity rule did occasionally work to the dockers' advantage, but the over-riding impression of those who worked on the docks at that time was one of long periods of unemployment and what they perceived to be a pernicious casual system which favoured the employers. Except for timber boats and grain, most cargoes offered short-term employment, one, two or three days at most. This was particularly true at the City docks where ships, except those belonging to the Bristol City Line, were mainly coastal or short-sea traders. Indeed dockers looked forward to unloading timber boats. The entire operation was mainly manual, and could last several weeks. In most dockers' experience, the earnings quoted in the MacLean Report were obtained by a minority of the port labour force. They maintained that twelve shillings a day, the national rate, was the norm. Piecework was limited to grain porters, zinc concentrates (dirt boats), some animal-feed cargoes (pollards) and copper ingots. The first two were arduous, needing very fit dockers to unload. On the other hand pollards and copper ingots were by comparison easy to handle. The high earners were categorised as

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8 Letter from H. Gray, a retired docker.

9 Op. cit. Whyte pp. 73-99 and MacLean paras. 81-84 pp. 47-49.

10 Ibid. Whyte Tables 1 and 2 pp. 58-59.

11 Op. cit. MacLean Report. 1931. paras 90-92 pp. 50-54... also Gordon Phillips and Noel Whiteside. *Casual Labour*, Oxford University Press. (1985) pp. 176-267.

12 Oral interviews with retired dockers.

'blue eyed boys', in other words men who were picked regularly for the few opportunities there were to work piecework. All dockers, whether 'blue eyed boys' or not tended to follow one employer. At Avonmouth the older dockers followed the PBA in order to work in the sheds 'turning out' on day work. Pieceworkers followed the stevedoring firms on board ship, while a few would 'freelance' seeking high paying cargoes.

Because the continuity rule affected weekly income the system stood accused of undermining dockers' work incentives. As one pre-war study on the Port of Bristol describes: 'On a recent occasion the present writer paid a visit to the call stand at Avonmouth during the morning call. It was a busy day and all the registered men who applied were engaged. After expiry of the interval during which registered are given preference, there were still some vacancies which were filled by non-registered men. While this was taking place my attention was drawn to a group of dockers who remained in the background till the call was over and proceeded to the Labour Exchange to sign as proof of unemployment and qualify for benefit.'<sup>13</sup>

The writer goes on to explain that the men concerned had gathered information about the type of cargo to be unloaded. They had avoided the call for several reasons. First, it was a day work job and piece work jobs were in prospect and secondly, it was a cargo they disliked as too dirty or too arduous.

Attempts to circumvent the procedures were not denied by pre-war dockers, but they point out that the secretary of the Port Committee (also the PBELA) Mr.S.C. Parkin and his assistant Mr.J.Cross, together with the manager of the Labour Exchange, were strict and thorough in their scrutiny of day to day labour requirements and the twice yearly assessment of employment records at the exchange of registration books. They also reiterate that the majority of dockers were keen to go to work during the depression to earn enough to support their families. Unemployment benefits were simply not high enough to act as a disincentive to seeking work.

There was however a paradox, both nationally and locally, which, as we shall see, explains the eventual failure to reform industrial relations on the waterfront. The daily struggle and uncertainty of their lot conditioned casual workers in the port transport and related shipping industries into fearing change. The apparent 'freedom' in which they operated made them suspicious of any attempt to discipline/regulate dock work. Few left the industry to work in factories for a more secure existence. What had happened over a long period of time was the shaping of a dockside. They would have preferred regular employment.

For their part the Bristol employers, like the employers in the other ports, had no incentive to disturb the status quo. With the possible exception of the PBA they were content to maintain the casual system. Most of the stevedoring firms being small businesses, their equipment was very basic. Some did not possess lorries, transporting gear around the docks on handcars. Indeed some of them lived in the dockside communities, sharing a social life with the dockers. While this could have led to some degree of corruption, there was an element of mutual understanding, a kind of code whereby a measure of fair play prevailed, particularly in giving employment to older dockers. But of course the main obstacle to decasualisation was that of maintenance which would have added considerably to their overheads and reduced the profitability of the companies engaged in the cargo-

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<sup>13</sup> W.H.Whyte , 'Decasualisation of Labour at the Port of Bristol' in *Economica*. August 1932., pp. 357-364..

handling business. Another factor was those shipping companies like Coast Lines Ltd. who employed dockers directly and Charles Hill who operated a stevedoring business. As shipowners with a vested interest to keep costs to a minimum, they too were not anxious to take on the responsibility of maintaining a permanent labour force.

During the 1930s, both the dockers and shipyard workers assumed that the very nature of the shipping industries, with its trade fluctuations, cyclical and seasonal, and the vagaries of weather and tides, ruled out any concept of regular employment. The individual employers by and large took the same view. Curiously the politicians and the leaders of employers and unions were conscious that something ought to be done from a humane and possibly an efficiency point of view. But the vested interests of both sides of the port transport industry prevailed. Although it is difficult to obtain any evidence from pre-war dockers it is reasonable to assume that all dock workers benefited from working agreements negotiated by the TGWU. Therefore both permanent and casual dockers maintained solidarity on the issue. Perhaps the most significant factor about the 1930s was the complete absence of industrial disputes in the Port of Bristol. The lesson of the 1926 General Strike had an effect on port employers and unions. Collective bargaining seemed to be the order of the day. At this stage industrial relations were based on the sanctity of agreements with unofficial action taken by dockers or shipyard workers in Bristol completely unknown. On the other hand the demoralisation of most workers caused by mass unemployment was probably the real reason for the apparent lack of militancy in other ports. It was to take a world war to change entrenched attitudes towards casual work.

## **NEWS AND REPORTS**

### **FILTON PEOPLE'S ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

In Issue No 8 Filton People announced the arrival of a grant from Awards for All towards an oral history project in Filton. This Lottery-Funded project which collected memories from people who have lived or worked in Filton, has been far more successful than we could have imagined. Jonathan Poole, our interviewer, proved to have excellent interpersonal and interview skills and ace IT knowledge, and his performance was outstanding. Reluctant to lose these skills, I squeezed all possible interview hours out of the available funds, as a result of which he has interviewed 26 people. Ten other interviews have been carried out by members of Filton People.

During the project we attended the BBC History Fest at Bristol Council House and there came across books printed by a local history publisher, Tempus Publishing Limited. They expressed interest in publishing material from our project at no cost to ourselves. The publication date will probably be in the Summer of 2003. Meanwhile an edited version of the interviews will be available at Filton Library. CDs have been produced for archives and research, and the possibility of using them in Filton Library is being explored. During the project we met Trevor Scantlebury, curator of the South Gloucestershire Aviation web site which is part of a national Transport project. He has shown an interest in our material, some of which will be featured on the web site. In return his project has agreed to sponsor work which has to be done in order to meet the publisher's criteria, that is, the digitisation of 100 photographs. The web site has also sponsored making of CDs from the minidisk interviews for ease of access.

This scheme ended triumphantly on 19th October with an Exhibition, and a 'Thank You ' tea party for participants, who were presented with a bound copy of their interview. The extraordinary wealth of personal detail which has arisen from this scheme shows the extent to which history is not only to be derived from official documents, but also resides in the memories of its people.

Filton People are currently giving illustrated talks about their Millennium Community History project, and this oral history project. They are also offering a short course on fundraising and management techniques for local groups, derived from training by Progress initiated by South Gloucestershire Council

**Jane Tozer, Project Supervisor.**

**For further details contact Jane Tozer on 01179694378. For details of the South Gloucestershire Aviation Website contact Trevor Scantlebury on 01454868139 Filton People is funded by South Gloucestershire and Filton Town Councils' Charborough Centre, Charborough Road, Filton, S. G10s, BS34 7AR 01454865728**

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### **3 CENTURIES OF TRANSPORT AVIATION WEBSITE – South Gloucestershire**



New Opportunities Fund  
**funded**

Aviation in South Gloucestershire has it all, from humble beginnings in 1910 to the present day. The triumphs, the disasters, the failures but more importantly the history of people: people who made, and still continue to make, aircraft and engines at Filton since those early heady days at the beginnings of a major industry.



**One of the endangered areas of progress, Filton House with its many historic memories of an expanding aviation industry is in need of support and TLC. Parked in front is another product of the Bristol Factory one of the superb 401's, a supercar of its day.**

When Sir George White viewed an aircraft display in 1909, he had the depth of vision to foresee great beginnings. So much so that he started a business in 1910 with, what was then, a lot of capital, ?25,000 of his own money. He had a workforce, proper buildings and a company structure. At the Tramway sheds he used at Filton, then some distance from Bristol but significantly at the end of a tram route, he began building Boxkites, little realising that within 40 years his company would grow into one of the largest aircraft manufacturing facilities in the world with a workforce of many thousands. He envisaged a country with airfields in many places, people travelling around by air as a matter of course and not just for pleasure. To this end he opened flying schools at Larkhall on Salisbury Plain and Brooklands in Surrey. By default he was responsible for ensuring that we had trained pilots at the start of the Great War.

He began as the British and Colonial Aeroplane Company and it was not until 1920 that he adopted the familiar name of the Bristol Aeroplane Company. In that same year he acquired the Cosmos Engine Company from liquidation at Fishponds and set up the

**This aircraft is very much the forgotten aviation hero of WW2. Whilst the Spitfires and Hurricanes earned honours during the Battle of Britain, the Blenheim proved that air mastery would be the key to winning battles by decimating the barges and shipping that had built up in the channel prior to a German invasion. This lesson proved well learnt when in 1944 the allies gained air superiority prior to invasion. The Blenheim was developed from the Britain First, a civil aircraft of 1934. This so impressed Lord Rothermere that he commissioned further research and eventually donated it to the**



**nation. The aircraft astounded the Ministry experts when it proved to be some 100 mph faster than the current fighters then in service.**

familiar engine division in what became known as West Works alongside the A38. He also acquired the innovative engineer Roy Feddon, later Sir Roy Feddon, complete with his design team; this would prove a remarkable investment. Bristol Aeroplane Company was the only factory where the aircraft and engines were manufactured together. Designers such as Capt. Frank Barnwell, Sir Roy Feddon, Sir Archibald Russell and Sir Stanley Hooker being just a few of the engineers that became Bristol Aeroplane Company. This name for excellence that Bristol gained could not have been achieved without workers, and Bristol workers gained a fierce pride in their products, which continues into Airbus UK and Rolls-Royce. But it was not always the men that made aircraft, back in WW1 with so many away in France, the women of Filton had to learn those manufacturing skills. Through two world wars thousands of women worked at lathes, in dope shops, riveting panels, in fact at all the jobs previously regarded as very much in the male preserve. They worked seven days a week; they married, had children and went back to work; they gave their lives in air raids but they kept the factory and its production lines working and therefore kept supplying the men with the necessary tools to achieve victory.

**This picture shows how times changed in a war torn Europe. 1918 and the unthinkable! Women were needed to keep factory production going. At that time Bristol Fighters had, at last, turned the air war round and the allies were winning the battle of the skies over the Western Front. Back home in Filton, the wives and daughters of many on the front took up the role of their men folk and turned lathes and loved this new freedom. A women working in this environment would have been unheard of before the war. Perhaps not all that happens in war is detrimental.**



Women still work at the factory and have now become an integral part of the workforce. South Gloucestershire and its aviation connections will continue into this millennium and will, like it has in the past, diversify and adapt but will still retain that fierce pride in its workmanship.

**Contacts: Trevor Scantlebury: Aviation Web site curator**

**Jackie Ashman - Research Assistant**

**Email: [Trevor.Scantlebury@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:Trevor.Scantlebury@southglos.gov.uk) [Jackie.Ashman@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:Jackie.Ashman@southglos.gov.uk)**

**Building 1, Riverside Court, Bowling Hill Chipping Sodbury, South Gloucestershire BS37 6JX Tel: 01454 86 8139/8134**

We will be interested to hear from anyone who has a story to tell particularly if you have some images to go with your story. Jackie is also keen to hear stories and anecdotal information from the many ladies who so admirably kept the production of aircraft going through two world wars.

### **AVIATION WEBSITE – South Gloucestershire**



We are pleased to announce that our portal page for our web site was launched during December 2002. The addresses of the three sites that are involved in this project are as follows: You can either go to [www.transportarchive.org.uk](http://www.transportarchive.org.uk) which is the Three Centuries of Transport web site and explains what the project is about and aims and objectives. It can also feed into the three individual domain names:

The Aviation Heritage Partnership - [www.aviationarchive.org.uk](http://www.aviationarchive.org.uk)

The Last Main Line - [www.railwayarchive.org.uk](http://www.railwayarchive.org.uk)

Bridging The Years - [www.canalarchive.org.uk](http://www.canalarchive.org.uk)

These are not the definitive pages just a taster for the main web site which is still being constructed.

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### **PIONEERING WEBSITE BRINGS BRISTOL SLAVE TRADE ALIVE FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN**

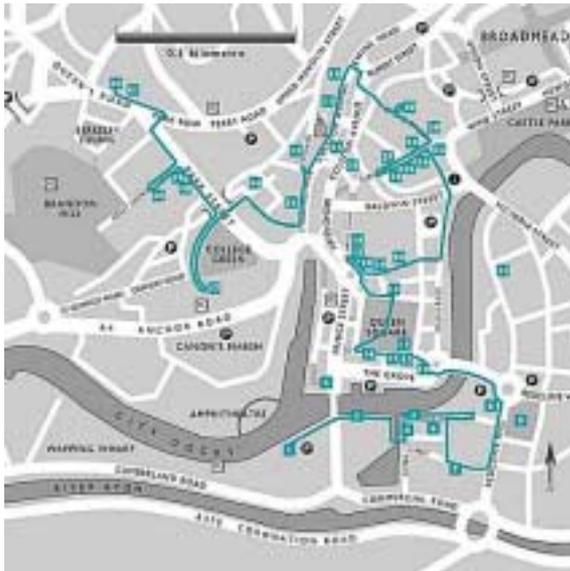
Launched at the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London, 30 January

The Bristol Slave Trade is being brought to life for schoolchildren with the launch of a teaching website developed by researchers at the Regional History Centre at the University of the West of England. The project is sponsored by the Victoria County History Project of the Institute of Historical Research of London University and is part of a larger project on Bristol's History which is currently being considered for Heritage Lottery Funds. The web site builds on the Bristol Slavery Trail and includes teachers' notes, lesson plans and a large range of hitherto unpublished documents.

Madge Dresser, Co-Director of the Regional History Centre has worked with UWE colleagues Dean Smart and Penelope Harnett and web designer Jacqui Eccles of the VCH Project to produce the web site. She said, 'We have tried to make the learning experience attractive to pupils, without trivialising what is a sensitive and serious subject. Final Year students from the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School provided an innovative new dimension to the site by dramatising historical documents featuring actual individuals, including an Afro-Caribbean woman enslaved in Bristol, an anti slavery African activist, a merchant and a Bristol sailor.

'The students appear as 'talking heads' along the trail to help breath life into the history and offer up an insight into how slavery impacted on so many lives in 18th Century Bristol.'

The Bristol Slavery Trail has been in existence in leaflet form for nearly five years. The idea for the web site came about because the researchers thought additional teaching material would be of value to school children who might take part in the walk and follow this through in the classroom. Penelope Harnett said, 'We know that children get more out of learning experiences if the teaching material is presented in an interesting way. Also the project combines history and IT giving children good practice at finding out information using technology.'



The website includes letters from sailors working on the slave ships who died enroute and lesson plans have been devised around these letters. There is also material on Bristol and the legacy of the slave trade including debate around the Colston statue and Pero's Bridge. The website can be viewed at <http://www.historyfootsteps.net/>

**Map of Bristol Slave trade trail**

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The Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office now have a much expanded web site  
The URL is: [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/heritage/html/wsro.html](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/heritage/html/wsro.html)

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## BOOK REVIEWS

Reviews by Steve Poole

**Trevor Fawcett, *Bath Commercialis'd: Shops, Trades and Market at the 18th Century Spa* (Ruton Press, Bath, 2002) ?8.00; 138pp**

The popularity of eighteenth century Bath as a place of entertainment, recuperation and leisure for the comfortably off also made it one of the busiest commercial centres in the nation. The city offers boundless opportunities then, for the historical study of consumption, marketing, and conspicuous display in Georgian England, but also for exploring the lives of the thousands of less privileged service sector workers who earned a living there as small producers and retailers. Retailing and its public spaces, from the noise, stench and bustle of the provision market to the more elegantly fronted pavements of Milsom Street, were a cause of social mixing and cultural exchange that went far beyond the purely functional processes of trade. To those of us with an interest in the broader implications of England's developing commercial culture then, Trevor Fawcett's latest

book is a very welcome addition to his earlier themed forays into the Entertainments and Administration of the Georgian Spa (previously reviewed here in the *Regional Historian*).

Well researched and engagingly written as always, *Bath Commercialis'd* is an alphabetical mini-encyclopaedia of those trades and traders, from apothecaries to woollen drapers, who vied for shoppers' attention on the streets of the city. Fawcett's broad interest in Bath's social history ensures the book never sinks into simple 'catalogue' territory but explores a range of wider concerns and themes; retail and market practices, poulterers and the poaching trade, industrial disputes in the artisan trades, and the by-laws governing street vendors, hucksters and balladsingers for example, all make their appearance here. And Fawcett's account of each trade is enlivened with generous sprinklings of anecdotal evidence and incident, pulled from the pages of the contemporary press and the Guildhall archives.

The trouble with its encyclopaedic format however, is that unless the reader's enquiry is focussed on a particular trade (rather than an issue relating to all trade), it can be difficult to look things up. I spent some time searching for information about petty theft and shoplifting, for example, and I suspect the short references to pilfering found under 'Umbrella dealers' and 'Lacemen' are not isolated exceptions; but a subject index at the back would be a very helpful inclusion for the second edition!

Given his sound contextual understanding of the city's eighteenth century history, it would be good to see future short monographs from Fawcett making more argumentative use of the voluminous information that must still be pushing for release from his filing cabinet; knitting material together rather than sorting it into bundles. That said, *Bath Commercialis'd* still tells us more about custom and practice in the city's retail sector than any previous publication. Like its companion volumes, it's a consistently helpful work of reference, very competitively priced, and sure to be of lasting use to scholars researching the social and economic history of the spa.

**Douglas Merritt, *Sculpture in Bristol* (Redcliffe Press, 2002), 140pp, ?14.99; Stephen Morris & Tim Mowl, *Open Doors: Bristol's Hidden Interiors* (Redcliffe Press, 2002), 94pp, ?11.99.**

These two large format volumes set out to record and celebrate the diversity of Bristol's publicly accessible visual culture. Both of them are well produced and packed with the sort of beguilingly attractive colour photographs (by Stephen Morris and Janet Margrie) that make you wonder whether you've spent half your life walking around the city with your eyes shut. Mowl and Morris's book was produced to tie in with Bristol's 'Open Doors Day' - a now annual event in which one hundred city buildings, from the ancient to the postmodern, permit access to an otherwise excluded public. They take us inside 45 Bristol buildings, including historic gems like the Old Council House, Kings Weston House, the St Vincent's Works offices and the Royal Fort, but beyond whetting the appetite for the annual great unlocking, the book's use is limited. Its artful photography is certainly very pleasing, but the buildings themselves have little in common except limitations on access, and the largely anecdotal text prioritises entertainment over information. It's the kind of book you thumb through and say, 'well, I never knew that was there...'

Far more interesting however, is Douglas Merritt's thorough and readable survey of the city's public statues, frescos, relief carvings and sculptures. The most valuable feature of public monuments like these, of course, is not what they tell us about the person

represented, but what they reveal about the people who put them up, and the part they go on to play in the fashioning and reflection of urban collective memory. After all, they're rarely erected without controversy. The introduction of Rysbrach's equestrian statue of William III to Queen Square (1735) helped define Bristol's premier public forum (and, by inference, the city itself) as protestant, libertarian and Hanoverian, causing rioting around its base by Tory discontents after it was unveiled. A century later in 1831, reform rioters burned down two sides of the Square, but rather than damage the statue, decorated it with a revolutionary tricolor. A statue to George III in Portland Square was less fortunate; pulled off its plinth one night in 1813 by Henry Hunt's crowd, it was unceremoniously dumped, never to be recovered, into the murky waters of the Avon. Statues are no less powerful magic in the modern age, and we are reminded of it no less by the daubing of Edward Colston's statue in the Horsefair with anti-slavery graffiti, than by the more recent removal of Margaret Thatcher's stone head with an iron pole outside London's Guildhall.

Merritt's book doesn't dig very far into the representational politics of public monuments, but it does provide a fascinating catalogue of them in one city. Bristol's 31 public statues honour a surprising variety of figures, from the predictable (Colston, Brunel, Cabot and Burke) to the more unexpected (Raja Rammohun Roy, Cary Grant, Alfred Fagon and Abigail Chute). Then there are the neoclassical statues and relief carvings outside the Commerical Rooms, the old Philosophical Society, the Victoria Rooms and Lloyd's Bank; each a testament to nineteenth century efforts to associate the city's commerical and mercantile history with mythological antiquity. Merritt's informed text, together with Morris and Margrie's excellent photographs (offering the first decent view some of us have ever had of many of these rooftop figures) are woven together here to make an indispensable directory to the city's public art within a broad historical context. A splendid idea, and ably executed.

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**Reviews by John Losely**

**David Verey and Alan Brooks, *Buildings of England series, Gloucestershire 2: The Vale and the Forest of Dean* (Yale University Press 2002) pp 888, illustrated, ISBN 0 300 09733 6 ?29.95.**

This major revision by Alan Brooks of David Verey's book of 1970 follows the publication in 1999 of Gloucestershire 1: The Cotswolds. As in the first volume there is an informative introduction of some 100 pages giving an excellent background to the understanding of the various periods of architecture in this area together with its geology and early history. The description of the many buildings in the Vale and Forest, both large and small, ancient and modern gives the reader a concise accurate record of their history, style and builder/architect. The major centres of Gloucester, Tewkesbury and Cheltenham are covered in considerable detail and the now popular perambulations are included enabling the visitor to take a guided tour of the many interesting buildings. Over 120 photographs illustrate the rich variety of buildings in the Forest and Vale and the use of maps and plans in the text helps to identify the location of these buildings. For anyone with an interest in buildings in Gloucestershire this is an essential guide and will be referred to continually as the definitive source of information. Gloucestershire is fortunate in now having up to date editions of the Pevsner Architectural Guides together with the three volumes on the Country Houses of Gloucestershire by Nicholas Kingsley published by Phillimore.

**Richard Sale, Gloucestershire - People and History (The Crowood Press 2002) pp. 224 illustrated, ISBN 1 86126 533 6, ?25.00.**

Is it a guidebook or a history of Gloucestershire? This beautifully produced book covers the history of Gloucestershire and its place in the nation's history from earliest times through to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As a guidebook it leads the reader through the many places of interest and tells the familiar and not so familiar stories such as the Campden Wonder, Wintour's Leap, the execution of Bishop Hooper and the Battle of Nibley Green. It covers the people who have achieved fame, nationally and internationally, such as Edward Jenner, W.G. Grace, William Tyndale and Laurie Lee. It describes the geology and geography of the county from the Forest of Dean to the Cotswolds and the built environment, the early churches to Berkeley Power Station. As a history of Gloucestershire it is limited by the space available and, as the writer says in his introduction, the approach has been broad brushed. The answer is of course both a guidebook and a history of the county, particularly its people. The photographs are superb, mainly taken by the author, and this book will be an invaluable guide to visitors to the county and those who are new to the area who wish to explore its fascinating history.

**Sandra Ashenford *Voices of Quedgeley and Hardwicke* (Tempus Publishing, 2002) pp.127, illustrated, ISBN 0 7524 2655 9, ?11.99.**

The impression today is that Quedgeley and Hardwicke are large housing estates adjacent to Gloucester but they were and still are individual communities with characters and stories as in many other smaller communities in the county. Sandra Ashenford has collected stories of life in the villages from past and present inhabitants covering the immediate pre war period up to the late 1990's. This tells the familiar story of change in the last 60 years from a predominately agricultural community with a variety local trades and many shops and the influence of the local gentry, in this case the Lloyd-Baker's of Hardwicke Court, to that of a modern commuter community. This book gives a real flavour of life in the not so distant past, told through the words and voices of people who lived then. It also shows that there is an appreciation of history in this 'suburb' of Gloucester and that community spirit is alive and well.

**Eric Miller, *Leckhampton Court. Manor House to Hospice* (Matador, 2002) pp. 63, illustrated, ISBN 0 9524200 3 1, ?6.99.**

Leckhampton Court has been a Care Centre run by the Sue Ryder Foundation for the last 20 years and they were responsible for the restoration of this historic building following some years of neglect. Eric Miller, past chairman of the Leckhampton Local History Society has an extensive historic knowledge of the village and has now researched the history of the Court. The first building erected on the site in the 14<sup>th</sup> century was a simple 'hall house' which was then incorporated into a larger building in the Tudor period. In a fire in 1732 a large part of one wing was destroyed and later a large Georgian mansion erected. Further modifications took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Lords of the Manor of Leckhampton occupied the Court from the 14<sup>th</sup> century to 1894, the Norwoods being the principal family. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Court was owned by Mrs Muriel Elwes, the daughter of John Hargreaves who had purchased the property in 1894, who married Colonel Elwes, the son of Henry John Elwes of Colesbourne Park. The Court was used in the First World War as a Red Cross Hospital and in the Second World War a POW camp. An interesting aside is the considerable clan of Norwoods in the USA and the interest they take in 'their house'.

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## Reviews by Peter Fleming

**William Evans, *Abbots Leigh – A Village History: Manor, Estate, Community* (Abbots Leigh Civic Society, 2002) ISBN 0 95438 750 3 ?9.99.**

Not another village history, of interest to none but the villagers! Quite so: this is not another such history. Instead, we have a well-researched, elegantly written and well-illustrated exploration of the relationship between ownership, resources, ideas and people, as played out in a small corner of North Somerset. The sub-title tells us much about the organisation of material and ideas. After a short section on the – limited – pre-medieval history of the area, the book really gets going with an account of Abbots Leigh as a manor granted by Robert Fitzharding (ancestor of the Berkeleys) to his new foundation of St Augustine's Abbey, outside Bristol. The name means the Abbot's Woodland, or clearing therein. So, the first part is a study of an abbatial manor, touching on its administration, economy, and the lives of its tenants. This part of the story ends with some dirty dealings at the court of Edward VI, resulting in the manor coming into the hands of Sir George Norton, the son of a Bristol merchant and an up-and-coming gentleman.

Thus we come to Abbots Leigh as gentleman's estate. This is a lively story, including poaching, fires, and Charles II's colourful (particularly in later literary embroideries) visit incognito, during his fugitive years. In 1811 the estate was bought by Philip John Miles, wealthy son of another ambitious Bristol merchant, in satisfaction of a need to which Jane Austin narrowly failed to refer, an omission supplied by Evans: 'It is a truth universally acknowledged, that an urban man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a country estate'. Born from this happy relationship was Leigh Court, and its building and architectural features are carefully described. Just over a century later, death duties inclined the family to sell, and Leigh Court, next in the ownership of the Revd H N Burden, entered what is probably its most interesting phase, as part of Burden's network of National Institutions, offering pioneering care for sufferers from mental illness. This section, co-written with Dr Peter Carpenter, tells a fascinating story, tracing the fortunes of the hospital and the Burden Trust up to 1988, when the house and grounds were sold to a property developer: it is now a business centre and conference venue. Part Three deals with various aspects of the life of the community associated with Abbots Leigh in its various manifestations: the tenants, villagers and commuters.

While the broad outlines of the community's story would be familiar from other village or parish studies, there is plenty of illuminating detail here, delivered with style. A particularly intriguing tale concerns 'Abbots Leigh and the abdication crisis': that Stanley Baldwin and the archbishop of Canterbury may have spent a few days here whilst contemplating the constitutional consequences of Edward VIII's desire for Mrs Simpson. Throughout, the history of Abbots Leigh is told with a dry wit and a keen awareness that – even if not always at the centre of the nation's life – this place was never an island unaffected by national and international events.

**Roy Avery, *The Sky's the Limit: The Story of Bristol Philanthropist, John James* (John James Bristol Foundation, 7 Clyde Road, Redland, Bristol BS6 6RG0, 2001) ISBN 0 9541316 0 6**

The name of John James, who died in 1996, is well known in and around Bristol in two capacities: as a businessman and as a philanthropist. Born into a working-class family in Bedminster, James was the epitome of the self-made man. After leaving the RAF he started

work in the fledgling radio and TV business and, by the mid 1950s, he had built up the biggest single ownership retailer of radio and TV sets in the world. Having made his first fortune, he turned his attention to charitable causes. Favourite among these were the old (free coach tours, among other things), the young (help to private, and later state, schools), and the sick (numerous gifts and initiatives to help St Peter's Hospice and a number of hospitals and health projects). In the last twenty years of his life, as he withdrew from direct involvement in business, philanthropy became his main public activity, and the John James Foundation is his lasting legacy. By any accounts, John James was a remarkable man. Roy Avery is former Headmaster of Bristol Grammar School, in which capacity he worked with James as part of the latter's involvement with educational charity.

His book is published by the John James Foundation, and is, it is fair to say, an admiring account of its subject. Mr Avery states in his Introduction that his book 'is not intended to be an exercise in hagiography', but his respect for John James as a businessman, philanthropist and man of principle shines out from almost every page. As he also states, this book does not claim to be 'in any sense a definitive work': it is not, for instance, a business history, and those expecting such a work will read in vain for the financial details of James's companies. We are given the broad trajectory of James's business career, but not the nuts and bolts of management and acquisition. Of course, this is as it should be in what is intended to be an appreciation for a wide audience, but it may leave some wanting to know more about these aspects. James's views on politics were independent, but set definitely right of centre, and he was highly critical of many aspects of Trade Union activity and Labour Party politics. As a family man, he is portrayed as a loving father and husband, but the more prurient or curious may wish to know more about his divorce from his first wife, after a 'long and happy marriage' (and, perhaps, about the legal wrangles and court appearances occasioned by disputes with former business partners and employees), but Mr Avery eschews muck-raking, or critical investigation, whichever one wishes to call it!

This book is, most firmly, a celebration of a life and work. The very many positive aspects are chronicled in great detail, with long quotations from letters and other documents, and the casual reader might find the level of detail sometimes a little overpowering. As one would expect from the author, this is an elegant, erudite and stylish text. The volume is also very well produced, with numerous colour photographs. For those with an interest in John James, this book is essential reading.

**John Lyes, *Bristol, 1901-1913* (Bristol Branch of the Historical Association, 2002) ISSN 1362 7759 ?3.00**

In one sense, this pamphlet represents unfinished business. John Latimer, journalist and historian, died in 1904, leaving behind him a wealth of work relating to the history of Bristol, including his series of *Annals*, a chronological narrative from the sixteenth century to 1900. John Lyes, lawyer and historian, here takes up the story, to chronicle Bristol in the first twelve years of the twentieth century. The material is mainly drawn from a detailed perusal of the *Bristol Observer*. This approach, producing what is in effect a chronicle, was gloriously old-fashioned even in Latimer's day; in the twenty-first century it might appear positively eccentric. But appearances are, in this case, deceptive. The year-by-year arrangement of a host of incidents, selected, it seems, purely on the basis that they are interesting, produces an effect not unlike a soap-opera, with intertwined story lines coming and going as the months roll by, punctuated by intriguing 'one off' episodes. Cumulatively, they produce a vivid impression of life in Bristol before the First World War. Because

there is no 'issue' or predetermined 'theme', what comes across is the tremendous variety of Bristol life: of course, all communities, at all times, experience this variety, but the academic approach to History, isolating a particular issue and excluding reference to material unrelated to it, tends to suppress this basic fact. Enquire within this slim pamphlet for suffrage, industrial relations, social conditions, local politics, the workings of the law, local reactions to national events, and for any number of oddities, like the man who papered his house with postage stamps, or the long-distance walker towing a zeppelin on wheels. Dip into these pages at any point, and you are guaranteed to find something of interest. As Latimer might have said, had he lived in a later age and edited a different kind of newspaper from the *Bristol Mercury*, 'all human life is here'.

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### WELLS LOST IN THE MIST

#### Tony Scrase

Late last year I was reading an article in *Urban History* on 16th-century Chichester<sup>1</sup> which seemed to have a number of parallels to Wells. I was surprised to be assured that Wells was very different on the basis of a chapter by Carl Estabrook, 'In the mists of ceremony: cathedral and community in seventeenth-century Wells', contained in a book *Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Early Modern England*.<sup>2</sup> I therefore obtained a copy.

My misgivings grew when I was still reading the editors 'Introduction'. When they turned to Wells they began (concerning the early 17th-century), 'The bishop owned the market-place and most of the buildings on the main street and was the largest employer despite an active cloth industry'<sup>3</sup> The first proposition is true but the second is totally wrong. Taking 'main street' to encompass High Street and Market Place the bishop had only two leasehold properties (those on either side of the gate towards his palace). In addition he owned a lone canonical house that occupied the south side of Market Place. This was collated on a canon who held it for life or until he moved elsewhere. An enterprising canon had developed the western garden as three tenements to the benefit of himself and his successors. Elsewhere in the two streets the Corporation owned 37 properties, the dean and chapter 19, William Doddington of Breamore 9 (the former hospital estate), the Clarke family 7, the precentor 4 and the Vicars Choral 2.<sup>4</sup> As regards the third proposition I would like to see the evidence. If John Hole's claim of 1607 to employ 500 cloth workers was true it is certainly false.<sup>5</sup>

Moving on to Estabrook's chapter, the central thesis is that the 17<sup>th</sup> century witnessed acute conflict between the citizens and the dean and chapter. Furthermore, as the century progressed the balance of power shifted dramatically. However, the argument is confused by a tendency to draw in other parties on either side. Thus he also cites the doings of bishops and what he calls cathedral associates who stretch to include vicars and chapter clerks. Similarly, to illustrate alleged resistance to paying the chapter rents he cites mainly rural examples as if the action of a farmer at Easton could illuminate attitudes in Wells. His use of Still's Almshouse payments is inappropriate as they owned only three cottages in Wells itself.<sup>6</sup>

There is also a major failure due to a lack of consideration of events before 1600. Much of what he cites as peculiar to his period is actually an ongoing situation. To begin with he never clearly establishes the cathedral-parish church relationship. The Liberty of St Andrew was an extraparochial enclave within the parish of St Cuthbert's. So in the 16th and 17th-centuries most citizens had to attend St Cuthbert's to avoid penalties and accusations of recusancy. Thus when trouble broke out in 1615 it would have been no surprise that the constables were attending the service there rather than in the cathedral.

The dean and chapter had owned the advowson of St Cuthbert's since 1240 (thus the unusually high payments). They installed a series of perpetual vicars. The medieval town guild had no legal powers but was closely linked to Holy Trinity Guild in St Cuthbert's. It gradually built its position there until it was in effect the trustee for the church. Much of what became the Corporation estate originated as bequests to St Cuthbert's, its vicar or guilds.<sup>7</sup> So when William Bull left money to the parish church not the cathedral he was merely doing what his predecessors had done for 300 years. Of the major 14<sup>th</sup> century burgesses Thomas le Devenische and Thomas Tannere benefited only St Cuthbert's, Walter de Compton benefited both the parish church and cathedral while John le Ropere benefited both of these and the Vicars Choral.<sup>8</sup>

Similarly, charity had always been multifaceted. The cathedral, St Cuthbert's and the Hospital of St John were all involved. For example, Tannere's chantry in St Cuthbert's made distributions of 60s of bread to the poor. The dissolution of the hospital in 1539 and the suppression of chantries and obits in 1547 damaged all this but there were efforts to rebuild. Again it was natural to rebuild as a varied system. Thus in 1617/8 James Godwyn left a house near the church to secure ?10 p.a. for the poor divided into a thirds, one part to the Almshouse, another via the churchwardens and the last via the house's managers.<sup>9</sup> So separate alms giving systems were not a post-Restoration novelty.

This failure to refer back also leads to errors on marketing. Thus the pig market in High Street was not a creation of the 1650s. A century before the cross to the west of the middle row was alternatively known as King's Cross or the Pig Cross. Furthermore, the Corporation were drawing rent from the pig market by the time of their 1605 survey.<sup>10</sup> The errors concerning the canonical house in Market Place are more misleading. It is referred to twice although not clearly identified. By 1660 it had for over a century look out on a market house which was a gift of Dean Woolman and Bishop Knight.<sup>11</sup> That building also housed the assize. During the Commonwealth the Corporation acquired the canonical house and converted it to public rooms and for reception of the county at the time of the assize (not for the actual assize). At the Restoration the house reverted to William Piers who reconverted it to a dwelling but soon moved and presumably made a profitable lease of the house. The quoted statement about the great market house was in fact Piers's excuse for living elsewhere. What had happened was that the market house needed a major refurbishment. This was the responsibility of the bishop's bailiff. The Corporation was only involved in that they were granted a new meeting hall on the first floor.<sup>12</sup> So when Estabrook describes this as the citizens transforming cathedral space for their own commercial purposes he is mislocating and misunderstanding events.

These structural faults are intensified by a series of errors. Some are of judgement. Thus nobody who has studied Stokes' careful assembly of relevant documents or Nott's narrative of the conflicts of 1607 could agree that Dean Hayden orchestrated events. He was sympathetic, gave permission for the church ale as a J.P. and allowed cathedral staff to participate but no more.<sup>13</sup> Again given space, I would dispute the significance of the post-restoration charters. Certainly friction with the bishop's bailiff continued until 1779 when the Corporation bought the Market Place canonical house as a site for a new town hall, simultaneously bought out the bailiff and had the whole authorised by Act of Parliament. More are errors of fact. Some are unlucky. Thus the mayor, Richard Godwyn was no relative of Bishop Godwyn but a member of a local family prominent since the 15th-century. Some are gross. Thus the dean and chapter did not have over 140 properties in Wells. The Commonwealth survey revealed a leasehold estate of 59 plus eight canonical

houses and the organist's house. Similar the arrears in Wells could not have been over ?227 in the one year of 1689 as the leaseholds yielded just over ?50 p.a.<sup>14</sup>

So this work is not to be trusted for detail on Wells. Moreover, the errors are so serious as to raise questions about the thesis. Indeed such generalisations are suspect in a century when society was so divided. Thus when Dean Hayden supported traditional ceremonies he was in sympathy with most of the Corporation and citizens but events showed that the puritan party had access to national and county power structures.

### Footnotes

1. S.Thomas, 'Chichester and its cathedral on the eve of the Reformation' *Urban History* 29 (2) 2002, 165-86, for Wells reference 186.
2. Eds. S.D. Amussen and M.A. Kishlanski, Manchester 1995.
3. *Ibid* 9.
4. A.J. Scrase, *Wells; the anatomy of a medieval and early modern property market* Bristol 1993, 103-10, 122-34, 141-7 and 218-22.
5. T. Nott, 'Poxxe, Puncke and Puritane' *History round Wells* 4, 2001, 15.
6. Wells Cathedral Archives AD467-8 and 479-80.
7. D.G. Shaw, *The Creation of a Community* Oxford 1993, 107-40; Scrase *Wells* 141-2.
8. D. Shilton and R. Holworthy, *Wells City Charters* Somerset Record Society (SRS below) vol 46, Taunton, 1932, 8-10, 60-5 and 77; Historical Manuscripts Commission *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter of Wells* (2 vols.) London 1907 & 1914, ii 279-80.
9. Wells Museum *Wick's Mss* 50 and Somerset Record Office D/P/W.StC 3/5.
10. A.J. Scrase 'Crosses, conduits and other street furniture in the South West of England' in M. Boone and P. Stabel (eds) *Shaping urban identity in late medieval Europe* Leuven and Apeldoorn, 2000, 209; A.J. Scrase and J. Hasler (eds.) *Wells Corporation Properties* SRS vol. 87, 2002, 71.
11. T.S. Holmes, *Wells and Glastonbury* London, 1908, 86.
12. D.S. Bailey, *Canonical Houses of Wells* Gloucester 1982 161-2; Scrase and Hasler *Wells Corporation Properties* 15, 27, 147-51 and 155.
13. J. Stokes and R.J. Alexander (eds.), *Records of Early English Drama: Somerset* (2 vols.) Toronto 1996, 236-378, 709-28, 830-47, 928-60 and 1058-1130; Nott *op cit* 2-40.
14. Somerset Record Office DD/CC 111733-5; Scrase *Wells* 218-224.

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## REGIONAL EVENTS, CONFERENCES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Gloucestershire Events in 2003

**Local History Computer Workshop on Saturday 17th May 2003.** The Gloucestershire Local History Committee and the University of Gloucestershire are running a second local/family history computer workshop at Park Campus, Cheltenham. Last year's workshop offered many demonstrations, including the Bristol Historical Resource CD. This year the emphasis will be on more hands on demonstrations of computer projects. Further details from John Loosley, Stonehatch, Stonehatch, Oakridge Lynch, Stroud, GL6 7NR. Tel 01285 760460 e-mail [john@loosleyj.freeseve.co.uk](mailto:john@loosleyj.freeseve.co.uk)

**Gloucestershire Local History Committee's Regional Meeting on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2003.** This year Cheltenham Local History Society will host this event as part of the celebration of their 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary. Details from Elizabeth Bourne, GRCC, Community House, 15 College Green, Gloucester, GL1 2LZ.

**Gloshistory website** [www.gloshistory.org.uk](http://www.gloshistory.org.uk) The latest addition, number 6, to the series of guidelines covers 'A Simple Guide to Copyright'. There is a complete list of society events in Gloucestershire for the winter 2002/3 and links to an increasing number of local history society's websites in Gloucestershire.

**The Annual Local History Afternoon of the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council Local History Committee will take place on Saturday 4 October 2003 from 2 to 5pm at Sir Thomas Rich's School, Longlevens, Gloucester.** The theme is 'In Sickness and Health – a history of medicine in Gloucestershire'. Further details will be given in the summer.

**The Bryan Jerrard Award.** This is a new annual award for the best published article on local history in Gloucestershire. The judges will be looking for style, presentation, original research and contribution to local history in Gloucestershire. To qualify publications must be received by the Secretary or Chairman of the GRCC Local History Committee, 15 College Green, Gloucester GL1 2LZ by the end of July. The award will be presented at the Local History Afternoon on Saturday 4 October 2003.

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**AVON LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2003**  
hosted by the University of the West of England Faculty of Humanities at St Matthias  
Campus, Fishponds, Saturday, 22nd March 2003 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
**CRIME AND PUNISHMENT**

**Dr Peter Fleming** Fur-collar Crime: the Berkeleys in Medieval Gloucestershire;  
**Dr Steve Poole** Police and Thieves in 18th century Bath  
**Dr Graham Davis** Crime and Criminal Portraits **Chris Noble** Banged up in Bath!

This is the ninth local history day to be held at the St Matthias campus. The Association will have the use of a comfortable and well-equipped auditorium, ample free car parking on site and the Traders Bar, serving hot and cold drinks and dishes. Member Societies and individuals are welcome to set out their stalls.

Full Programme, with location and parking maps ?7 50p (Members of UWE, ALHA and affiliated societies, Senior citizens, students and unwaged ?6) **Cheque/POs to the Treasurer and Membership Secretary, 5 Parry's Grove, Bristol BS9 1TT (Places can also be reserved and paid for at door). Please state your Name, Address, Post Code and tel. Number.**

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**RUSKIN 4<sup>TH</sup> PUBLIC HISTORY DAY**  
Ruskin College, Walton Street, Oxford OX1 2HE, Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2003  
10am-6pm ?35 including tea, coffee lunch (?12 concessions). Further details from  
**Eamonn Deeley on 01865 517828 Email: e.deeley@ruskin.ac.uk**

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**YATTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**  
**Sunday April 27th**, Outing to Cardiff Bay and Barrage and Llancaich Fawr Manor, Nelson. Cost 15-50 including entrance and guide fees Coach leaves 9am returns 7pm.

**Tuesday May 13<sup>th</sup>**, Guide Tour of Congresbury by Congresbury History Group, 6.45pm  
Members ?1, Visitors ?2.

**Tuesday June 10<sup>th</sup>** Guided Tour of Tickenham Court and Church. 6.45pm  
Cost ?7 including refreshments.

**Tuesday July 15<sup>th</sup>** Climb the Wills Memorial Tower. Members ?3, visitors ?4  
**Booking essential for all these events - phone Marianne Pitman 01934 838801**

**ALHA EVENTS DIARY**  
(see p 39 for venues)

- Sat 15 Mar **Mendip Society Winscombe Walks**  
Meet Churchill
- Sat 15 Mar **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology Group Visits** Puddletown, Dorchester, Maiden Castle
- Mon 17 Mar **Marshfield & District Local History Society** Talk David Smith *The Berkeleys of Berkeley Castle*
- Mon 17 Mar **Weston Local History Society** AGM apres AGM, TBA
- Tue 18 Mar **Bishopston, Horfield & Ashley Down LHS** Talk Herbert Bowden *More Old Bristol*
- Tue 18 Mar **Downend Local History Society** Talk Peris Jones *The Cave Family of Cleeve Hill*
- Tue 18 Mar **Yatton Local History Society** Talk Julia Elton *Clevedon and the Eltons*
- Wed 19 Mar **Bristol & Avon Archaeological Society** Talk David Aldred *More on the Deserted Medieval Cotswold Villages*
- Wed 19 Mar **Congresbury History Group** Talk with artefacts Stuart Peachey *The Civil War in the West Country*
- Thu 20 Mar **Mendip Society Winscombe Talks** Chris Sperring *Night Skies over Mendip*
- Fri 21 Mar **Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society** Talk Elizabeth Devon *The Mystery of the Avon*
- Sat 22 Mar **Avon Local History Association** Local History Day Peter Fleming, Graham Davis, Chris Noble, Steve Poole *Crime & Punishment* 10-4.00 St Matthias, Oldbury Court Road, Bristol: ?7.50, ?6.00 Bill Evans 0117 968 4979
- Sat 22 Mar **Mendip Society** AGM 2.30 Ubley Village Hall
- Mon 24 Mar **Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society (Bristol)** Talk Dr Graham Davis *The Making of Genteel Bath*
- Wed 26 Mar **Alveston Local History Society** Talk Dr Nicholas Herbert *Carved Headstones of the Vale & Severn Churchyards*
- Wed 26 Mar **Hartree History Society** Talk Nigel Coombes *Bristol Channel Passenger Steamers*
- Thu 27 Mar **Clevedon & District Archaeological Society** AGM Mrs Lynda Halliday *The Statuette Makers of Tuscany*
- Thu 27 Mar **Frenchay Tuckett Society** Talk Peter Goodchild *Fry's Updated*
- Thu 27 Mar **South Gloucestershire Mines Research Group** AGM 7.30
- Fri 28 Mar **Whitchurch Local History Society** Talk Ken Pierce *Aquae Sulis*
- Sat 29 Mar **Mendip Society Wells Walks**
- Tue 1 Apr **BROLI Family History Advice Session** *Ask the Experts*
- Tue 1 Apr **Kingswood & District Local History Society** Talk Christopher Bigg *30 Years of Concorde*
- Wed 2 Apr **Bristol & Avon Archaeological Society** Talk John Drinkwater *The Barrows of Gloucestershire*
- Thu 3 Apr **Fishponds Local History Society** Talk with slides Mr Jack Britton & Mr Dave Humphries *A Historic Tour of Hanham*
- Thu 3 Apr **Long Ashton Local History Society** Talk Peter Knight *Church & Village Life in the 18th Century*
- Thu 3 Apr **South West Family History Society** Conference, with Exeter University *Westward Ho! Movement & Migration* 3rd to 6th April at Exeter
- Thu 3 Apr **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology Group Talks** Nicholas Kingsley *Country Houses in Gloucestershire*
- Thu 3 Apr **Wick & Abson Local History Society** Talk Jean Routley *Queen Alexandra*
- Fri 4 Apr **Mendip Society Wells Talks** Jean Moore *Bishops, Bats & Books*
- Mon 7 Apr **Almondsbury Local History Society** AGM & social
- Mon 7 Apr **Patchway Local History Group** Relaunch Meeting
- Tue 8 Apr **Clutton Local History Group** Illustrated talk Terry Merritt Smith *History of Dance Orchestras*
- Tue 8 Apr **The Thornbury Society** Talk Philip Moss *Historic Gloucestershire*
- Tue 8 Apr **Weston-super-Mare Archaeological & Nat. Hist. Society** Talk Brian Paul *Life of the Falkland Islanders*
- Wed 9 Apr **Congresbury History Group** Talk Gill Bedingfield & Chris Short *The Church at Congresbury* 7.30 St Andrews Church
- Fri 11 Apr **Sodbury & District Historical Society** Talk Mr C Erlebach *An Incas, Peru, Holiday*
- Sat 12 Apr **South Gloucestershire Mines Research Group** Weekend site investigation
- Mon 14 Apr **Marshfield & District Local History Society** Talk Linda Hall *Privies in & around Bristol & Bath*
- Mon 14 Apr **Nailsea & District Local History Society** Talk J C Bond *Origins & Evolution of the English Village*
- Tue 15 Apr **Bishopston, Horfield & Ashley Down LHS** Penny Jetzer Memorial Lecture John Bartlett *The Old Snuff Mill, Stapleton*

- Wed 16 Apr **Bristol & Avon Archaeological Society** Talk Phil Bennett *Presenting the Past at Castell Henllys*
- Wed 23 Apr **Alveston Local History Society** Talk Russell Howes *Shakespeare in Gloucestershire*
- Fri 25 Apr **Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society** AGM & talk the Archivists
- Fri 25 Apr **Whitchurch Local History Society** AGM and discussion of next years programme and Summer Walks
- Sat 26 Apr **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology Group Visits** Wightwick, Boscobel/Tong
- Wed 30 Apr **Harptree History Society** Talk Pat Hase *Axbridge Workhouse: the Poor Laws*
- Thu 1 May **Fishponds Local History Society** Talk with slides Mr Mike Rowland *The Clifton Suspension Bridge*
- Thu 1 May **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology Group Talks** Dr David Hussey *Coastal & River Trade, Bristol region, 1680-1730*
- Thu 1 May **Wick & Abson Local History Society** Talk John Wroughton *Wick and the Battle of Lansdown*
- Tue 6 May **BROLI Family History Advice Session** *Ask the Experts*
- Tue 6 May **Kingswood & District Local History Society** Talk Pip Jones *Haunted Bristol*
- Fri 9 May **Sodbury & District Historical Society** Talk Mr H Conway-Jones *Gloucester Docks, past, present & future*
- Mon 12 May **Nailsea & District Local History Society** Talk Roger Angerson *Diary of Sarah Champion*
- Tue 13 May **Clutton Local History Group** AGM & film Bryan Hayes *Bristol, Gateway to the West*
- Tue 13 May **Weston-super-Mare Archaeological & Nat. Hist. Society** AGM & talk Mr Brian Town *Glassware in Roman Britain*
- Fri 16 May **Sodbury & District Historical Society** Afternoon/evening visit to Wells/Glastonbury Abbey tickets on sale March meeting
- Sat 17 May **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology Group Visits** Coldharbour Mill/Saltram
- Sun 18 May **Marshfield & District Local History Society** Visit to Berkeley Castle Tel 01225 891 229 for details
- Tue 20 May **Bishopston, Horfield & Ashley Down LHS** Talk Peter Goodchild *National Service*
- Wed 28 May **Alveston Local History Society** Talk Hugh Conway-Jones *Cotswold Broadcloth*
- Mon 2 Jun **Avon Local History Association** Executive Committee Meeting
- Tue 3 Jun **BROLI Family History Advice Session** *Ask the Experts*
- Tue 3 Jun **Kingswood & District Local History Society** AGM
- Thu 5 Jun **Fishponds Local History Society** Talk John Bartlett *Some Aspects of Fishponds*
- Thu 5 Jun **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology Group Talks** Visit to Barrow Court Share cars, meet 7.00 p.m.
- Thu 5 Jun **Wick & Abson Local History Society** Talk Roger & Sarah Angerson *Sarah Champion*
- Sat 14 Jun **Sodbury & District Historical Society** Evening visit to Dursely - tickets on sale March meeting
- Sat 14 Jun **South Gloucestershire Mines Research Group** Weekend site investigation
- Mon 16 Jun **Marshfield & District Local History Society** AGM
- Tue 17 Jun **Bishopston, Horfield & Ashley Down LHS** Talk Don Packham *Bristol Zoo*
- Sat 21 Jun **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology Group Visits** Chester Early Start
- Thu 3 Jul **Fishponds Local History Society** AGM & members
- Thu 3 Jul **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology Group Talks** Vince Russett *New light on Charterhouse in the Mendips*
- Thu 3 Jul **Wick & Abson Local History Society** AGM & members evening
- Thu 10 Jul **Wick & Abson Local History Society** Social Evening and Beetle Drive
- Sat 12 Jul **Sodbury & District Historical Society** all day visit: Barnstaple & Arlington Court tickets on sale February meeting
- Sat 19 Jul **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology Group Visits** Woburn Abbey Early Start
- Thu 7 Aug **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology Group Talks** James Russell *Walk around Ashton Court*
- Sat 16 Aug **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology Group Visits** Kirby Hall, Boughton House Early Start
- Mon 1 Sep **Avon Local History Association** Executive Committee Meeting

## ALHA VENUES

*These are the venues for all events in the Diary unless otherwise stated. ?x is the charge for non-members*

**ALHA Executive Committee** 7.30 Colston Almshouses  
Members welcome – call 01179 671362

**ALHA Summer Walks** Peris Jones 01179 561633

**Almondsbury LHS 7.30** Old Lower School, Lower  
Almondsbury Visitors ?1 Secretary 01454 413304

**Alveston Local History Society** 7.30 Methodist Church,  
Woolfridge Ride Alveston Jamie Fairchild 01454 417831  
?1

**Banwell Society of Archaeology** 01934 632307

**Bathampton LHS** 7.30 Bathampton Village Hall  
Visitors welcome ?1 01225 463112

**Bishopston, Horfield & Ashley Down LHS**  
7.30 Friends Meeting House, 300 Gloucester Rd, Horfield  
01179 514243 Visitors ?1

**Bristol & Avon Archaeological Society** 7.30 St Matthews  
Church, Clare Rd, Bristol 50p, non-members ?1 01179  
519613

**Bristol & Glos. Archaeological Soc. (Bristol)**  
7.45 Apostle Room, Roman Catholic Cathedral, Pembroke  
Rd, Bristol ?1: 0117 983 0719

**Bristol & Glos. Archaeological Soc. (Glos)** 7.30 County  
Record Office, Clarence Row, Alvin St, Gloucester ?1  
01452 526398

**Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery** For summer walks,  
you should book Tel 01179 223571 Fax 01179 222047 e-  
mail [general\\_museum@bristol-city.gov.uk](mailto:general_museum@bristol-city.gov.uk)

**Bristol Museum Service** 7.30 Powell Lecture Theatre, H H  
Wills Physics Laboratory, Tyndall Avenue, Bristol. Free

**Bristol Threatened History** 7.30 Bristol City Council  
House Mike Ponsford 01179 858109

**Chew Valley LHS** 8.00 Old Schoolroom, Chew Magna  
Visitors welcome (?1) 01275 332520

**Clevedon & District Arch. Soc** 7.30 Friends Meeting  
House 15 Albert Rd Clevedon 01275 873207 ?1

**Clutton Local History Group** 8.00 Clutton Village Hall  
01761 233048 ?2

**Congresbury History Group** 7.30 Methodist Church Hall,  
Congresbury Chris Short 01934 833764 Visitors ?1

**Downend LHS** 7.30 Lincombe Barn, Overndale Rd, Down  
Bristol. 01179 564326

**Felton LHS** 8.00 Felton Village Hall 01275 472792  
Coffee from 7.30 Visitors welcome (?1)

**Fishponds LHS** 7.30 Conference Hall, Blackberry Hill  
Hospital, Manor Rd, Bristol 01179 658110  
Visitors welcome (?1.50)

**Frenchay Tuckett Society** 7.30 Friends Meeting House,  
Beckspool Rd, Frenchay 01179 9570942

**Friends of Gloucester Archives**  
7.30 Gloucester Record Office

**Historical Association, Bristol Branch** 7.15 Randall Room  
All Saints Church, Clifton 01179 741779

**History of Bath Research Group** 7.30 Green Park Station  
Meeting Room, Bath 01225 314054

**Keynsham & Salford LHS** 7.30 St Dunstan's Hall,  
Keynsham 01179 862198

**Kingswood History Society** 7.30 Kingswood  
Congregational Church Hall, Hanham Rd, Bristol 01179  
671362 non-members ?1.50

**Long Ashton LHS** 7.30 Keedwell Church Long Ashton  
John Bennett (Hon Sec) 01275 394809

**Marshfield & District LHS**  
7.30 Legion Hall Marshfield 01225 891229

**Mendip Society** Cheddar Talks: 7.30 Kings of Wessex  
Leisure Centre, Station Rd, Cheddar 01934 862402  
Wells talks: 7.30 Bradford Suite, Old Deanery, Cathedral  
Green, Wells  
Winscombe Talks: 7.30 St James Church Hall  
Woodborough Rd, Winscombe 01934 862402 Visitors ?2  
Walks 2.00 pm

Cheddar: Gardeners Arms Car Park, Silver St, Cheddar  
GR 459539 01934 743271

North Mendip: Ubley Church  
GR ST 529584 01761 221558

Wells: Chamberlain St Car Park, Whiting Way, Wells GR  
547457 01749 677600

Winscombe: Car Park by Woodborough Hotel GR  
421577 01934 842382

**Nailsea & District LHS** 7.30 Conference Room, Nailsea  
School non members ?1 01275 852993

**Olveston Parish Historical Society** 7.30 Methodist Hall,  
the Street, Olveston Visitors welcome 01454 612370

**Sodbury & District LHS** 7.30 Masonic Hall, Chipping  
Sodbury 01454 314674

**Stoke Bishop & Sneyd Park LHG** 7.30 Stoke Bishop  
Village Hall Elizabeth Floyd 01179 681759

**Somerset Archaeological & NHS** Wyndham Hall, by  
Taunton Castle

**Stoke Lodge Hist & Arch Group** Talks: 7.30 Friend  
Meeting House, Redland, Bristol 01179 423928  
Visits: Coach pick up: Woodland Rd/Tyndalls Park Rd  
junction 8.15 am (early: 7.45); Stoke Lodge,  
Shirehampton Rd 8.30 am (early: 8.00) Book! 01179  
626324

**Thornbury Society** 7.30 St Mary's Church Hall,  
Eastbury Rd

**Weston LHS** 7.30 Parish Hall Weston village. ?1  
01225 315342/315196

**Weston-super-Mare Arch & NHS** 7.15 for 7.30 Carers'  
Centre/Crossroads, 1 Graham Rd, W-s-M 01934 627108  
?1.50

**Whitchurch LHS** 7.30 Whitchurch United Reformed  
Church 01275 541512 Visitors ?2

**Wick & Abson LHG** 7.30 for 7.45 Church Room, Wick  
Non members ?1 Call 01179 372603

**Widcombe & Lyncombe History Study** 7.30 St Marks  
Community Centre 01225 311723 or 4212659 Visitors ?1

**Yatton Local History Society**  
Yatton Methodist Hall 8.00 01934 838801



**REGIONAL HISTORY CENTRE PROGRAMME  
Spring/Summer 2003**

**Saturday 15 March 10am-4pm A One Day Conference**

**Later Medieval Bristol: Community, Communications and Conflict**

University of the West of England, St Matthias Campus, Fishponds, Bristol, BS12 6JP

Dr Christian Liddy (University of Durham): **Bristol and the Berkeleys in the 14<sup>th</sup> century**

Dr Peter Fleming (UWE): **Bristol and the Berkeleys in the 15<sup>th</sup> century**

Mr James Lee (UWE): **Keeping hold of the keys: unlocking the secrets of record-keeping in late medieval Bristol**

Dr Tony Scrase (UWE): **Living with Big Brother Bristol: the Towns of Somerset**

All welcome Cost ?5

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**Thursday 20 March, 6.00 Prof. Sam Davies (Liverpool John Moore), 'The Rise of the Labour Party in Bristol Municipal Elections', UWE St Matthias Campus, Room 9**

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**Saturday June 28<sup>th</sup> 10am - 4.30pm A One Day conference**

**Image, Identity and Urban Experience in South West England, 1688-1832**

University of the West of England, St Matthias Campus, Fishponds, Bristol, BS12 6JP

The conference will explore image, identity and urban experience in Gloucestershire, Somerset, Dorset and Wiltshire.

Provisional programme includes:

- ? **Jonathan Barry** (University of Exeter) plenary speaker.
- ? **Andrew Hann** (University of Coventry) on conflicting images of 'market' and 'leisure' towns.
- ? **Rosemary Sweet** (University of Leicester) on 18<sup>th</sup> century civic histories.
- ? **Henry French** (University of Exeter) on social mobility & authority in a small corporate borough: Lyme Regis.
- ? **Nick Rogers** (University of Toronto) on the politics of the press gang at Bristol.
- ? **Brian Edwards** (UWE) on the construction and the idea of 'Georgian' Marlborough
- ? **Vickie Masten** (University of Cambridge) on working women in Bath.
- ? **Julian Davies** (University of Bristol) on artisans and electoral politics.
- ? **Madge Dresser** (UWE) on slavery, the urban gentry and the 'country house'.
- ? **Richard Sheldon** (University of Bristol) on markets and social protest.
- ? **Steve Poole** (UWE) on crime and sexual transgression.

**Cost: including lunch, teas and coffees ?20 (waged) ?15 (student or unwaged)**

All welcome **For further information about any of these events contact Kath Holden, at the Regional History Centre. Email [Katherine.Holden@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Katherine.Holden@uwe.ac.uk) tel. 0117 344 4395**

**THE REGIONAL HISTORIAN**

The RHC publishes this newsletter twice yearly, containing news, comment and articles. If you wish to contribute to the newsletter, please send material by letter or preferably (especially if it is a long piece) by email or on disk (in word 6 or word 97 if possible) to:

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University of the West of England, Bristol, St Matthias Campus, Oldbury Court Road  
BRISTOL BS16 2JP (Tel 0117 344 4395). By fax to 0117 975 0402**

By email to [Katherine.Holden@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Katherine.Holden@uwe.ac.uk) or [Regional.Historian@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Regional.Historian@uwe.ac.uk)

Our web site address is <http://humanities.uwe.ac.uk/Regionhistory/index.htm>

