

# The Regional Historian

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

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## EDITORIAL

So much interest was generated in this issue of *The Regional Historian* that it could easily have been twice the length and we were in the unusual position of having to omit four articles. This was not for lack of quality or relevance, but because, even with eight extra pages, we ran out of space. They will of course appear in the next issue and we apologise to the authors who worked hard to meet our deadline.

This edition (with the honourable exceptions of June Hannam's analysis of photographs of Batheaston suffragettes and Peter Fleming's thoughts on tree hugging in South Gloucestershire) has a particular focus on the City of Bristol. We are especially pleased to be able to feature two collections of sources for Bristol historians. Madge Dresser's discussion of two pictures from the Braikenridge collection held by the City museum should encourage you to read Sheena Stoddard's recently published book, (reviewed here) which features more than a hundred prints from the collection annotated by the author. Sue Gordon's article on Bristol luxury glass manufacturing also introduces us to her database of over 4,000 entries on the industry from Bristol and Liverpool. This will be accessible from the new Regional History Centre's web site due to be launched in the spring. Finally, residents of north Bristol may find a history of Narrowways Hill in St Werburghs, from Neolithic times to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, brings a whole new perspective to their journey home on the Avonmouth railway. If you want another copy of this issue you can now download it from our web site at <http://humanities.uwe.ac.uk/Regionhistory/rhc.htm>

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**FROM IMITATION TO INNOVATION: THE ART AND INDUSTRY OF BRISTOL  
GLASS MANUFACTURE IN THE LONG EIGHTEENTH CENTURY**

**Dr. S.E. Gordon, Leverhulme Research Fellow  
Warwick Eighteenth-Century Centre**

The period between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries in the city and county of Bristol, in particular the long eighteenth century (roughly 1660 to 1830), witnessed a great transformation in the character and history of luxury glass.

At the beginning of the Tudor Renaissance, what contemporary Bristol residents considered as the great centres of luxury glass making lay in the Mediterranean and in the Low Countries. It was luxury glass objects created in places such as Venice that were coveted; not those made in Bristol.

Venetian glass had set the fashion amongst the well to do in Bristol, as it had done so in the rest of Britain (and indeed Western Europe) at this time. Such glass was desired as a signifier of wealth, knowledge and social standing. Writes one Elizabethan gentleman of the preference for such glass in 1568:

*...Our gentilitie as lothing those mettals (because of the plenty) do now generallie choose rather the Venice glasses...such is the nature of man...that it most coveteth things difficult to be atteyned...and as this is seen in the gentilitie, so in the wealthie communtie the like desire of glasses is not neglected...the poorest also will have glasse if they may; but sith the Venician is somewhat too deare for them, they content themselves with such as are made at home of ferne and burned stone.<sup>1</sup>*

Despite the extra cost, or perhaps because of it, it was luxury glass from Venice that Sir Nicholas Poyntz, a Bristol merchant, had ordered to impress King Henry the VIIIth and his wife Anne Boleyn on their visit to his country estate at Acton Court, near Bristol, in 1535. Archaeological excavations in the moat of the estate, undertaken in 1986, revealed a glass goblet, decorated with glass threads, and two glass tazzas, or shallow bowls, with opaque white glass decoration, belonging to the mansion dating to this period.

Painted enamelled 'lattimo' (i.e. opaque white) glass from Venice had been in the possession of Henry VIII at this time as evidenced by the fact that such glass is listed amongst his household goods in an inventory of Nonsuch Palace undertaken less than a decade later in 1542.<sup>2</sup> It was on this point, that of a shared, well crafted, fragile, Italian luxury glass commodity, that Nicholas Poyntz was able to stress to the King while on his visit that, in fashion at least, he too was like him: a Renaissance man of the world.

Despite the spread of the growing taste for luxury, particularly of glass, at this time, the inhabitants of Bristol had to wait a further century and a half before the city would finally itself be in the business of the production of glass of any similar craftsmanship or design. It was not until 1651 that glass making in Bristol was first recorded. In that year Edward Dagney (or Dagnia), an Italian glassmaker, is said to have kept a glasshouse in 'Bristow'. Before this date, fine table glass was almost exclusively imported from the continent.

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<sup>1</sup> W. B. Honey, *English Glass*, London, 1946, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Dan Klein and Ward Lloyd, eds. *The History of Glass*, 1984, p. 72.

By the time of the Georgian Era (c. 1714-1830), a century later, however, everything had changed. Whereas before in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the inhabitants of Bristol had seen little that was admirable in the luxury glass goods being produced in their own city, Bristol luxury glass in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was greatly esteemed and admired.

Whereas Bristol had previously been heavily dependent on imports for the supply of glass luxury, the situation had, by the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, reversed. Bristol had become a leading supplier of such goods to the rest of the world. This was not only through its port, but also through its own production of glass. The huge diversity of luxury glass objects created in Bristol at this time was being used and displayed throughout Britain and the world.

It was luxury glass from Bristol that Harriet Keyser had imported in order to impress her friends at a summer dinner party she was hosting in America in 1808. Eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Americans, like their Renaissance European counterparts, communicated perceptions of status and politics to others through items of everyday material culture. As the American historian, Tim H. Breen has demonstrated, social status was defined through commodities. These provided Americans with what Breen has termed a 'common framework of experience, a shared language of consumption'.<sup>3</sup> They showed their taste and knowledge of trends in their purchasing of new 'novelties'.<sup>4</sup> One item eighteenth-century colonists demanded in the latest fashion was English manufactured glass. Much of the glassware imported to the colonies at this time was either produced in, or originated from, Bristol.

Harriet, a native of Bristol, in a letter to the Jacobs Glass Manufactory in Bristol, requested:

*...I stand for jellys or any other glasses in the middle of the table. 2 doz. good cut bonnet rummers. 2 do cut lemonades. 2 do jelly glasses. 1/2 do blue and gilt edge wine coolers. 1/2 do finger cups. 1pr quart decanters to match the last sent. 2 pr pint do. 1 do champagne glasses. 1 water jug with initials JHK on a rais'd medallion. 1 pr handsome cut butter glasses...*

The letter reads:

*My Dear Punch, ...you were kind enough to promise me faithfully (and I know I can depend on you) to send me some Glass which we are very much in want of-Please God the 24th June we are going to have a large party to Dinner if you do not send it before then you never shall have one kiss of me anymore your own Darling ... a present promised by you. Do my dear Davy let us have it before the 24 or really we must buy here in town and don't forget the pretty little things... HK.<sup>5</sup>*

Such a transformation in the history and character of Bristol's luxury glass was visible in not only Bristol's export trade, and the different importance its luxury glass was given by natives and by foreigners, but also in its methods of luxury glass production.

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<sup>3</sup> T.H. Breen, 'The Baubles of Britain', *Past and Present Society*, May 1988, pp. 73-105.

<sup>4</sup> See Maxine Berg, 'New Commodities, Luxuries and Their Consumers in 18<sup>th</sup> Century England', in Maxine Berg and Helen Clifford, eds., *Consumers and Luxury*, 1999, pp. 63-75.

<sup>5</sup> Letter, Harriet Keyser to David Samuel, June 10<sup>th</sup> 1808, Bristol Records Office.

I am stressing the word 'luxury' here in order to separate decorative from useful glasswares. Crown window and bottle glass was also produced in the city in great quantities. Both were well esteemed, traded and exported around the country and the world as early as the seventeenth century and this trend continued into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Whereas previously, the techniques employed by native British glassmakers, in the production of luxury glass objects, had been dependent on the skills of immigrant craftsmen from continental Europe, Bristol trained artists and makers now produced luxury glass objects to the highest international standards of technique and design. Whereas in the sixteenth century innovation had come mainly from abroad, Bristol in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had become a leading innovator in technique, design and style. The shift was from imitation to innovation.

The commercial applications of art techniques in Bristol to luxury goods in the eighteenth and nineteenth century greatly assisted its luxury glass to achieve this transformation. Cutting, colouring, gilding, etching, engraving, printing and painting techniques borrowed from the art of the jeweller, potter, pewterer, silversmith and painter combined in the city at this time to create glass objects that were truly delectable consumer goods.

This transformation could be seen not only in the methods, but also in the objects of Bristol's luxury glass production. The glass goblets and tazzas made in Venice, ordered by Nicholas Poyntz in 1535, had been of a light, thin-walled, lime soda glass. Soda glass, as used in Venice, lent itself to the creation of such thin-walled vessels, to decoration with trailed lines and to delicate complicated stems and handles.

The glass made in Bristol, ordered by Harriet Keyser in 1808, on the other hand, was requested to be of a heavy, thick-walled, lead glass. The bonnet rummers, lemonade, jelly and butter glasses were asked to be cut. This would reduce the weight of the glass for tax purposes and increase light refraction. The wine coolers and finger cups were requested in a coloured blue glass. Their edges were asked to be gilded. The water jug was requested to have a medallion that was raised. On this, Harriet's own initials were asked to be engraved.

William Greethhead's Phoenix glasshouse contingent from the 'Coronation Procession for William IV', 1831, (**Figure 1**) illustrates just some examples of such Bristol made luxury glasswares. The glassworkers of the Phoenix glasshouse are shown displaying a series of held aloft works in clear, opaque white, blue, purple, green, and red flint glass exhibiting their skills in glass moulding, gilding, blowing, enamelling in colours, cutting, engraving, etc.

The works are illustrative examples of the types of wares Phoenix glasshouse were known for producing and of the manufacturing and decorative techniques its glassworkers were known to have employed. They visually translate a fashionable assortment of Bristol produced luxury glasswares, which were available to home and foreign consumers.

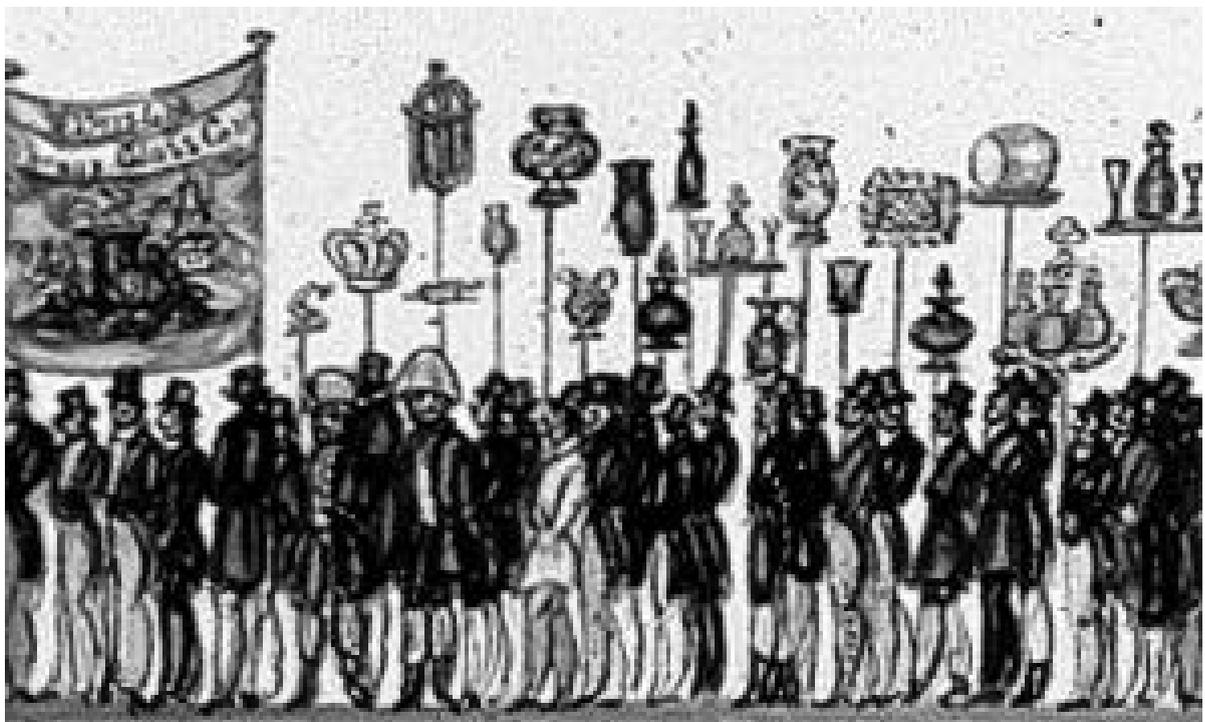
This great transformation in luxury glass objects made in Bristol was undoubtedly influenced by an alteration in the way in which Taste was formed and objects judged.

The period between 1530 and 1830 witnessed a significant change in Bristol, in the identity of those who had the power to lead taste and shape current notions of what was correct, pleasing, and desirable.

Such power had initially rested in the hands of the monarch, the Royal Court and the Church. As the long eighteenth century progressed, however, a widening spectrum of people including professional designers, manufacturers, societies and retailers came to wield this very same power. Thus in 1535 Nicholas Poyntz had wished to impress the King, while in 1808 Harriet Keyser had wished to impress her friends.

In 1831, with the coronation procession of William IV, the Phoenix glasshouse had wished to impress both King and country, whetting the appetites of both the new royal and the on looking purchasing public. It was through such public display that the glassmen of the city were able to publicly advertise and market their designs and skills, both in person and in the round, as opposed to verbally through word of mouth or impersonally in 2-d form in print, in advertisements and in illustrations on trade cards and bill heads.

With such changes in the way Taste was being formed came a great expansion in the variety and range of luxury glass artefacts available. Such innovation greatly modified the ways people lived. New ways of eating, new modes of entertainment all relied on specific kinds of objects. Thus, in 1535 it was glass goblets and tazzas that Poyntz had ordered, while, in 1808, it was jelly stands, water jugs, bonnet rummers, wine coolers, finger cups, decanters and lemonade, jelly, champagne and butter glasses that were ordered by Keyser. Greethead's image as well shows us dolphins, crowns, lanterns, vases, flowerpots, pitchers, sauce bottles, drinking glasses, decanters, trays, bowls and other ornamental lassware of all sizes, shapes and colours.



*Figure 1: William Greethead, 'Coronation Procession for William IV', published 1831. Watercolour on paper, Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery.*

The period from the Renaissance to the Regency witnessed a progressive refinement of both domestic and public life in Bristol, and an elaboration of ideas of comfort. Almost every manifestation of this growing refinement entailed the use and display of highly decorated luxury glass objects whether it be drinking glasses on the table, looking glasses on the wall or glass lanterns on the ceiling.

The transformation in the character of luxury glass objects available in Bristol during the period 1530-1830 was thus a many-faceted one. It included not only the way luxury glass objects looked, but also how luxury glass objects were judged, utilised and designed.

The author would like to take this opportunity to announce to readers that the Warwick Eighteenth-Century Centre has recently undertaken a study of the history of the glass making industry in Bristol. This investigation is part of a wider case study examining the commercial application of art techniques on English fine earthenware and porcelain, together with parallel applications on glass and ornamental metal-wares. The study forms part of the Eighteenth-Century Centre's latest initiative, the Art and Industry Project, led by Professor Maxine Berg and funded by the Leverhulme Trust. This is a two-year project focussed on the investigation of the creation of a modern consumer goods manufacture in this country.

The results of this research have produced a database. This is intended to be placed on the Centre's web page. The main purpose of the database has been to record the relationship between artists and manufacturers, designers, decorators, retailers and finishers, in the ceramic, glass and metal-ware trades in Britain during this period with a focus on the cities of Bristol and Liverpool. The database was compiled over the course of a year and comprises of over 4,000 entries taken from sources held in a variety of libraries, archives, record offices, universities and museums.

For those interested in the history of the Bristol glass industry and its place in the socio-economic and artistic development of the city and country as a whole, the database provides easy access to detailed information about the people, places, products and techniques of Bristol's glass manufacture, including wherever possible, extracts or descriptions taken from contemporary literary and visual sources. The data has been gathered from a wide variety of primary and secondary source material. This includes items from the collections of the Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery as well as trade directories, poll books, fire insurance records, custom accounts, newspapers, business and personal papers, letters and diaries held in both London and elsewhere and in the Bristol Records Office and Bristol Reference Library.

*For further details please contact: The Art and Industry Project, Warwick Eighteenth Century Centre, Room H449a (Humanities), The University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL.*

**REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION: BRISTOL CHILDREN'S HOMES**

**Did you work at or live in the Downend Children's Homes (later known as the Crescent Homes) in the middle of the last century c1920-1960? Do you have any information about them? If so Kath Holden would like to talk to you.**

My research interest is in the involvement of single women in welfare and social work with children before and after the Second World War. This was quite extensive. For example in Bristol City Council Children's Department, between 1948 and 1950, six out of eight children's visitors were unmarried women and at least two of these were over thirty and professionally trained as health visitors. Records show that the matron who ran the Downend Home during the war was also a single woman as were most of her staff (including a number of older women) but it was taken over by a married couple after she retired in 1946. There were also labour shortages at the Home, both during and after the war, with the expansion of the welfare state. These led to recurring recruitment crises.

**I am seeking information about the Homes during this period from the perspectives of the children and workers (single or married).**

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**Does anyone recognise this photo?**

**Steven Saunders** is trying to trace a Home in Bristol where his grandmother was an inmate from 1908 to 1914. Her name was **Rose Mary Leonard**, born London 29 Jan 1900. His only information is that one the staff was called Miss Stevens, a teacher who left in 1914 to get married to **Mr Evans of Welshes Farm, Clatworthy, Somerset**. His grandmother left the Home at the same time and went to the Evan's farm as a housemaid. The Stevens Family lived at 87 St Michael's Hill, when Mr Saunder' father used to stay with them as a young child c 1936. The Home was near the City Centre but was not either Barnardo's or the Muller Homes.



**If you can help with either request contact the editor - details are on the back page**



**Interior of the Upper St James Arcade Bristol, Braikenridge Collection, by permission of Bristol Central Library**

**REMARKS ON TWO PRINTS:  
THE 'VIEW OF THE ENTRANCE TO THE LOWER ST. JAMES'S ARCADE, BRISTOL'  
AND THE 'INTERIOR OF THE UPPER ST. JAMES'S ARCADE'**

**Madge Dresser, University of the West of England**

These two delightful prints portraying the Upper and Lower St. James's Arcades in Broadmead seem particularly appropriate for inclusion, in this issue of *The Regional Historian*, since they are from the Braikenridge Collection the subject of Sheena Stoddard's new book reviewed here. They celebrate too the luxurious properties of glass - a subject discussed in Sue Gordon's article on the Bristol glass industry.

The St. James's Upper Arcade, drawn by S. Hague in the early 1820's was situated, somewhere between where the present House of Fraser and Debenhams Department stores now stand, and was destroyed during the Blitz. The Lower Arcade, drawn during the same period by the better-known local artist, Edward Cashin, still remains, a graceful survivor in a largely brutalised precinct. Both men were probably commissioned by George Weare Braikenridge to record what were at the time new developments. The accompanying piece of anonymous verse celebrates 'BRISTOLIA'S fam'd ARCADES' and along with the drawings themselves, vividly documents the social aspirations and divisions in early nineteenth century provincial society.

The drawing of the entrance to the lower arcade demonstrates the various social groups to be found on the city's streets-the well-dressed bourgeoisie, the disabled soldier, the porter and, is that a Jewish peddler hawking his wares by the arcade steps?



**South Entrance to the St James Arcade, Bristol**

Such a social mix brought its tensions as the poem implies—for it was only *inside* the ‘long lofty canopy of glass’ that ‘‘dear charming WOMAN!’ and ‘the spruce Adonis’ could ‘walk secure’ and unfrightened, safe from the

‘...pollution from the contact close  
Of sooty SWEEP—or brawny Porter, who,  
Replete with insolence, rush often by  
Unceremonious, rudely jostling those  
Who pass them....

The poem documents too that the changing city with its ‘rapid mail-coach[es] , ‘swift rattling chaise[s], and high pil’d coal carts’ also posed a constant threat to the ‘expensive suits’ and fashionable garb of the well-heeled consumer.

Inside the Arcades, by contrast, ‘art and elegance conspicuous shine’ The interior of the Upper Arcade is shown to be a relatively un-crowded and socially exclusive place. There, in mirrors placed between each shop expressly for the purpose, people of quality could check that no particle of ‘dirt or mire’ had sullied ‘their raiment neat’. Refinement, luxury and social exclusion are conflated in these drawings and doggerel, not only with the pure lines of the new glass arcades, but with civic patriotism. Readers are enjoined to remember (and thereby honour) those entrepreneurs who ‘liberal loos’d ...Their purse-strings’ to provide, these translucent shrines to retail, for an increasingly genteel and numerous middle class and who thereby helped to create a new type of urban space.

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## FROM NORWAY TO NARROWAYS : A SHORT HISTORY OF NARROWAYS HILL IN ST WERBURGHES, BRISTOL

Harry McPhillimy

### Early History

Narroways Hill is the southernmost outlier of the Purbeck Ridge in N.E. Bristol. It is a hundred foot high hill composed of red Keuper Marl – a sticky red limey mudstone. Once the entire region was covered by oakwoods. Neolithic farmers probably began the woodland clearances, opening up the first fields. Roman finds were made at nearby Mina Road; the Roman road, the Via Julia from Sea Mills to Bath probably crossed the River Frome at Baptist Mills. There are ancient Strip Lynchetts (medieval terracing) on the slope above Boiling Wells valley, running obliquely up and down the valley. There was once a large medieval mound nearby.

The area we now know as St Werburghs was formerly part of an estate called Asselega, later Ashley. The Name comes from the old English ‘aesc’ an Ash tree, and ‘leah’ means a wood, woodland or clearing. This suggests that by medieval times, the oakwoods had substantially gone, to be replaced by the faster seeding Ash trees, which are well adapted to the basic soils of the area and predominate to this day. A charter of 1170 records that Earl William of Gloucester gave his lands at Ashley to the monks of St James Benedictine Priory whose church still stands in the Haymarket. In 1184 at the Assize of the Forest, Henry II decreed that no penalties should be imposed on the monks for asserts, i.e. the grubbing up of trees and bushes for agriculture at Ashley.

Henry VIII confiscated St James Priory estates in 1544 and granted them to Henry Brayne, a London tailor and church plunder-broker for £667.7.6 and a yearly reserved rent of £3.10.9. From Henry Brayne it passed first to his childless son Robert, then to daughters Eme and Ann, who married Sir Charles Somerset and George Winter respectively. In 1579 they carved up the estate between them which at that time was mainly countryside, both enclosed and open, with two mills, some farm buildings and two substantial houses, Ashley Manor and Lower Ashley House (both since demolished).

Since the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, the neighbouring high ground towards Purdown, the Heath House Estate, belonged to one of the smaller religious houses of Bristol, the Hospital of St Bartholomew, whose western edge was the Boiling Well. By 1561 the St Bartholomews Hospital was dissolved and the estate passed to the Thorne family. The Walter family then brought it in 1572 for £100.

In 1626 Thomas Walter expanded the Heath House Estate to take in part of the former St James Priory lands. A deed refers to “ *other land including...the tythes, profitts and fruits of a certain hill and land called Northeway*”. This seems likely to be what became known later as Netherways and later still Narroways Hill. (Northeway presumably described a northward leading path. Netherways suggested a far-off place and Narroways perhaps referred to the width of the path or to the railways.) A further part of Northeway field was purchased in 1668 for £2 and a deed of 1691 referred to “*a certain hill and lane called Norway*” – possibly the same hill.

In 1767 the enlarged estate passed into the hands of the Smyth family of Ashton Court. Jane Smyth wrote in 1813 to a neighbouring land owner “ *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” (i.e. Mina Road) “which has much contracted a driving way from a field of mine called Netherways hill inasmuch as to prevent a loaded wagon with corn or hay to be taken through.”* Not wishing to confront an important local landowner, the butcher backed down. Much of Narrowways Hill was still in the possession of Jane Smyth’s heir, Sir John Henry Greville Smyth, when the railway companies formed in mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and started to plan their routes through there. Other local landowners of this time were J & H Nash, John Clerk, John Hemmings and William Player.

### **The arrival of the railways**

The major change to the local landscape was the construction of the railways in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The carving of deep cuttings and building of substantial embankments must have left the ground looking raw and obtrusive for years after, much as with the modern construction of trunk roads. The engineer Charles Richardson described how he set about building the cuttings and embankments of the South Wales railway. The line was cut deeply through the new red marl and rock beds of Narrowways, then crossed Boiling Wells Valley upon a high embankment. With Brunel’s approval Richardson took cautious measures to prevent landslips on the embankment- he took the red marl extracted from the Narrowways Hill and sunk it in two ten foot deep trenches under each side of the embankment for foundations before building it up further. This line to South Wales was opened on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 1863, built originally on a single broad gauge for Great Western Railways. Later, extra passing loops were provided at Narrowways.

An 1870 bill approved the extension of the Port and Pier Railway from Sea Mills to the South Wales line at Narrowways-two companies were involved- The Great Western and The Midland Company. The line came in through a tunnel built below Montpellier, over a large embankment crossing the then marshy Ashley Vale. This embankment early on suffered serious landslips which caused the railway arch at Mina Road to need major repair. The Great Western line was curved to join the South Wales line at Narrowways while the Midland line crossed an iron bridge over the South Wales line and opened a further cutting through Narrowways on its way to Fishponds. In 1873 the South Wales line was converted to narrow gauge and doubled to receive the new line which opened for passengers on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1874.

Narrowways Hill was used for various working class leisure pursuits in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century – people used to gravitate to the hill for prize-fighting and Rev. Rawnsley of St. Agnes organised football matches up there. Inner city Bristol was becoming increasingly overcrowded and social reformers were pressing for open spaces to be provided to improve the health & morals of the poor. Land on Narrowways Hill belonging to Sir J.H.Greville Smyth was considered by the public parks committee of Bristol city corporation in the 1870’s but despite the accessibility and prospect of the site it was rejected.

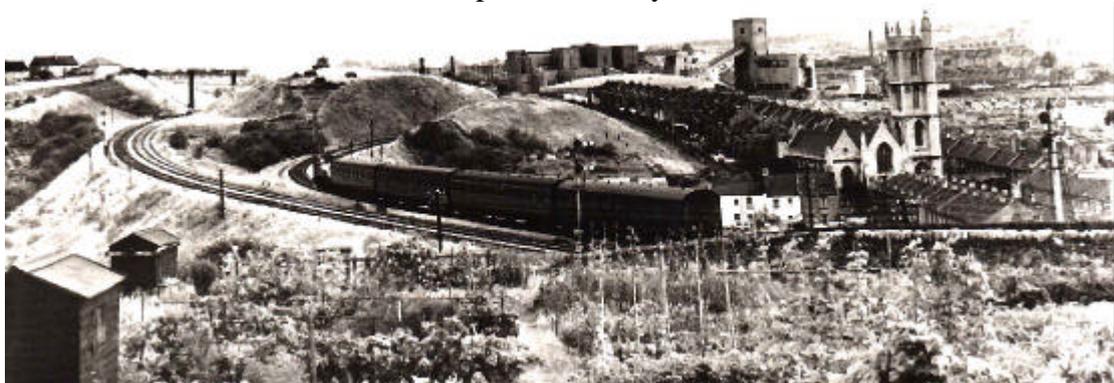
So by the end of the last century, Narrowways Junction was the meeting place of three railways lines crossing through deep cuttings in the rolling countryside of hedged fields stretching North and East of there. Arthur Salmon described how *’the sides of the cutting and of the embankment, once a yellowish earth-colour, have for many years been thick with grass and boys, in spite of all prohibitions, love to scramble*

*around them. Sometimes in summer the grass is fired” (as still happens) “and the green crumbles away before a low red flame... there are great black patches.... the grass grows better for it in the end.”* The usual cause was burning cinders from the stream trains. Charlie Portingale remembered how as a young lad between the wars, he and other children used to place 1/2d on the rail track at a point where trains slowed down so they ran over the coins flattening them as big as 1d, hence fitting the gas meter.

The Church Path alongside the track up to Ashley Hill still has some old gas lamps, one still working. A white wicker gate used to restrict access along this path every Good Friday when a way-leave fee was levied.

Narrowways was the scene of a serious crime on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 1913. Ted Palmer murdered his fiancé Ada James on the footbridge over the Severn Beach line. They had gone for a lovers walk but a row broke out and Ada threatened ‘to go on the town’ and threw off her engagement ring. Palmer became violently jealous and slit her throat. She managed to stumble over the stile that was once there and down the hill to Mina Road by the church. Here she was found, still alive and she just managed to scribble Palmer’s name on a scrap of paper and speak her last words, ‘my fiancé did it’. Palmer was caught and executed two months later. The lane by the church was known for some time as ‘cut-throat lane’.

Before WWI, the only allotments in the St Werburghs area were behind what is now the site of the Ashley Vale self-build housing project. Where there is now scrubland, there was also an orchard including apple and plum trees. At this time, the other slopes of Ashley Vale were picturesque, grassy, wooded estates until the land was turned over to growing vegetables on allotments for a country at war. There was even an allotment with strawberries on top of Narrowways Hill. The rural nature of the area



**Narrowways hill in the 1950s**

was being lost. On the site of the old Watercress beds a stoneworks and firelighter-making factory were set up, to be followed by the SGB scaffolding yard. Garages were built in the early 20’s where a small wood and lake once were. The Sweet Brothers bottle-washing plant, then Tower scaffolding were constructed on what became the city farm new barn site (burnt down in 1992). The field by the church became the Wren family’s allotment.

Around 1920 there was a terrible accident on the South Wales railway line when half a dozen railway workers stepped out of the way of one train and into the path of an express. Only one man survived. There have been other fatal accidents on the railway

lines nearby. During WWII the railways had an essential role in the country's transport system. Some remember the carriages full of Dunkirk survivors returning back to Bristol in 1941. Despite Narrowways Junction being an obvious strategic target for German bombers, many people chose to shelter in Mina Road tunnel each night, apparently feeling safe there.

### **Since the War**

Just after the war, in 1948, the railways were nationalised and British Railways Western Region took over. The ash on which the Midland line had lain was replaced with ballast. With competition from road transport, the railways started their gradual decline. In 1963, Dr Beeching proposed that all passenger services on the Avonmouth line should be withdrawn. Opposition and a reassessment by the British Railways Board preserved the Avonmouth line, but the Sunday service was cut by April 1965.

The Midland line to Fishponds closed entirely by January 1970. Material from the line between Ashley Hill and Narrowways was reused at Filton in 1971, the iron bridge over the South Wales line was removed and the deep cutting later filled in by dumping. By the late 60's, the last scheduled steam trains had also gone (although occasional 'specials' still pass through). A subsidy from the Avon County Council was by now necessary to keep the Avonmouth service going.

In the 1970's, Narrowways was infrequently visited although one local resident kept a small herd of goats up there.

### **Modern Times**

Bristol City Council produced a policy report for the Lower Ashley Vale area in February 1980. It recognised the value of the open space at St. Werburghs (although it described the railway cutting and gas tower as unsightly features that needed screen planting) and they recommended more access to Narrowways Hill by the footpath network.

By now the city farm at St Werburghs was being built, reclaiming derelict land in the area. By the mid-80's British Rail, under increasing commercial pressure, attempted to get planning permission to build a couple of three storey blocks on the field by the church, once the Wren family's prize allotment, but now overgrown. Local opposition and the council's area plan ensured this proposition was rejected but it created an awareness of the need to protect the open space in the area. The city farm negotiated with British Rail to rent the 'church site' and the whole of Narrowways Hill. British City's Parks Department offered to construct the necessary fencing around the site- originally 720 metres of 3 bar post and rail fencing but B.R. insisted upon 6ft chainlink and so it was. This high fence on the skyline produced some local resentment- the fence was vandalised and was for some time a source of controversy. It was at this time that the track to Narrowways from near the second tunnel was built, to bring the fencing materials onto the hill.

For a while the farm grazed its donkeys and sheep in the field above the church and took the goats up to Narrowways to browse the brambles but a savage attack by dogs on the sheep meant the farm animals had to be kept safely within sight. A further threat to Narrowways as open space came from the Advanced Transport for Avon Metro

scheme, in December 1989. They announced that they wished to compulsorily purchase 5 acres of the hill as their storage depot for heavy equipment and lorry access. A local coalition formed to resist this and wildlife surveys by Avon Wildlife Trust revealed the astonishingly rich flora that existed. By February 1990, resistance from St Werburghs and elsewhere stalled the progress of the half-baked A.T.A. scheme and it collapsed.

Meanwhile, the Countryside Commission and the City Council had been doing a lot of improvement work to the network of footpaths, surfacing them, signposting and putting up information signs designed by the former local arts group, Vizability. The Parks Department neighbourhood renewal assessment stated the need to protect wildlife sites, wildlife corridors and protected species and habitats and Narrowways was denoted as a site of nature Conservation Interest. The vulnerability of urban wildlife sites was shown when developers used bulldozers to destroy part of nearby Royate Hill but public protest and eventual nature reserve status helped to inspire St Werburghs people to form Narrowways Action Group in 1996 to afford similar protection to Narrowways.

In 1997 Rail Track tried to sell Narrowways in an open auction but Narrowways Action Group helped to get people organised. Thousands of local people signed petitions and 800 demonstrated on the hill on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1997. People raised funds and with the help of Bristol City Council the land was saved. It became a Millennium Green in March 2000, safe for the next 1,000 years. Some site improvements have been made and way marker signs, interpretation boards and a sculpture are being installed but Narrowways Hill will remain a little fragment of wild space in the city, cherished by local people.

## References

- ❖ Foot, David, 'Bristol Boxer' (from 'Murder in the West Country')
- ❖ Members of Clifton College, *The History of St. Agnes Parish* (Arrowsmith 1890)
- ❖ Richardson, Charles, *On Landslips* (Bristol Naturalist Society 1891)
- ❖ Salmon, Arthur 'Bristol, City Suburbs and Countryside' (*Bristol Times & Mirror* 1922)
- ❖ Uptonway, Lewis John, *Account of the Heath House Estate, Stapleton, Gloucestershire* (Bristol & Glos, Archaeological Society, 1912)
- ❖ Young, Colin, *The making of Bristol's Victorian Parks* (Bristol & Glos, Archaeological Society 1998)
- ❖ Vincent, Mike, *Lines to Avonmouth* (Oxford Publishing Co. 1979)
- ❖ Charlie Portingale (oral history interview)

**And thanks to local residents who shared their knowledge.**

## Place names referred to:

- ❖ **Northway, Norway, Netherways, Great Northway Field** – probably all refer to Narrowways Hill.
- ❖ **Baptist Mills** – Southern end of St Werburghs, divided by M32
- ❖ **Mina Road** - The lane from Baptist Mill to Glass Mill
- ❖ **Boiling Wells** – the valley and former lake North East of Narrowways Hill
- ❖ **Heath House Estate** – area of land south of Purdown near Stapleton
- ❖ **Asselega, Ashley** – area formerly called Ashley Vale, now St Werburghs

- ❖ **Glass Mill** – former watermill next to where Mill Cottage remains at the end of Mina Road.

### LOCAL ACTION WORKS

 **T**o Bristol City for trying to remove the oldest gas lamp in Bristol on Ashley Hill footpath by St. Werburghs Road . It was working well until the council removed all the gas fittings in the autumn. There are only 20 working gas lamps left in Bristol

 **T**o Harry McPhillimy for instigating a campaign to save it. The council were bombarded with calls and emails and as a result of local pressure the gas lamp is in working order again.

### TV OPPORTUNITY

**T**he History Channel is calling for groups to send in ideas for programmes based on the history of local places or people. Call 0845 450 1144 or go to [www.thehistorychannel.co.uk](http://www.thehistorychannel.co.uk) or [www.ourhistorymyheritage.co.uk](http://www.ourhistorymyheritage.co.uk)  
*But before you sign up with a TV company, read Peter Fleming's and June Hannam's experiences of participating in the History Trail series (see p 21 in this edition and RH no 7, p 4).*

### PUBLISHING OPPORTUNITY

**Tempus Publishers would like to publish a photo history of the chocolate making industry in Bristol.**

They have already published titles on the Bristol Aeroplane Company, Bristol Channel Shipping, Filton and the Flying Machine, and Bristol Transport and would like to extend their list to look at other Bristol-based companies. As well as the chocolate making industry of Bristol, they would be interested in publishing titles on histories of shipbuilding companies and shipyards (specific or general), motorbikes and scooters, and makers of railway engines and rolling stock. Other suggestions regarding Bristol industries are welcome.

They are ideally looking for a knowledgeable person who either owns or has access to a collection of about 200-240 good-quality images of the industry from different periods. He or she would also need to write a potted history of the industry as well as supply captions for each of the photographs.

The books follow a pattern as far as size, length and overall design are concerned, but there is scope for introducing variation into the layout and choice of images. They encourage the use of different media including photographs, postcards and advertisements and would ideally like to see a mix of items and images. The book should ideally have images from periods ranging from the early days of the industry to views of more modern times. There should be a reasonable number of images with people and activity in them as well as non-photographic images where available.

All of the costs of production are borne by the publisher, including publicity and marketing. They pay a royalty to the author based on sales and supply six free copies on publication. They also provide as much editorial advice as the author may need.  
**For further information contact Wendy Tse on 01453 883300**

## SUFFRAGETTE PHOTOGRAPHS

**Dr June Hannam, University of the West of England**

As a small provincial city Bath is not the sort of place that historians would expect to find militant suffrage activity. And yet the city had a thriving branch of the militant group, the Women's Social and Political Union. Among its members were Mary Blathwayt and her mother Emily who lived at Eagle House in nearby Batheaston. Nearly all of the leading activists from the WSPU stayed at some point in Eagle House where they could rest after exhausting speaking tours or recuperate from their experiences of prison and forcible feeding. When they visited the house suffragettes were encouraged to plant a tree in 'Annie's Arboretum', also known as the 'suffragette', field where their photographs were taken by Mary's father, Colonel Linley Blathwayt, who was also a supporter of the movement. The three photographs reproduced here are from Colonel Linley's extensive collection. Although we know about the suffragette field and the tree planting from documentary sources, the photographs can provide an added dimension to our understanding of the militant movement

Edwardian suffragettes were among the first protest groups to make extensive use of visual propaganda. Tickner has argued that the imagery of the movement should be seen not just as an 'illustration of the "real" political history going on elsewhere', but as an integral part of the conflict 'with its own power to shape thoughts, focus debates and stimulate action'. Women artists produced drawings and cartoons for posters, postcards, banners and newspapers, but photographs also had a key part to play in drawing attention to the cause. Who can forget the striking image of Mrs Pankhurst being lifted off the ground by a policeman as she was arrested during a demonstration outside the House of Commons. Images such as these ensured that, while women for years were 'hidden from history', this could not be said of the suffragettes who retained their place in the history books and in popular memory.



Colonel Linley's photographs provide us with less familiar images. In the first picture Annie Kenney watches Teresa Garnett plant a tree. Annie Kenney, a former mill worker, was an organiser for the WSPU in the West Country and was a key figure for the Blathwayt family. They found her to be a charismatic personality and Mary lived with her for several months in Bristol to help with organising work. Annie was a frequent visitor to Eagle

House, where she had her own room, and the suffragette field was named after her. Teresa Garnett was very active from 1909, when in that year she attacked Winston Churchill with a riding whip in Bristol and went to prison for disturbing the peace. The photograph is clearly staged so that the viewer gains the impression that women who had a tree named after them actually visited the field and took an active part in the planting. The photograph also gives a sense of the size of the field, which is extensive, and provides a glimpse of the summer house in which suffragettes were

able to rest. The other two photographs show Annie Kenney and Elsie Howey, one of the women who hid behind the organ in the Colston Hall and disrupted the cabinet minister, Augustine Birrell's speech. They are standing by their trees, which are clearly marked with a metal plaque, recording the species of tree, the date of planting and the names of the women associated with the trees.



The clothing worn in the photographs provides points of interest for the historian. In many publicity shots Annie Kenney is dressed in typical mill workers' clothes, such as shawl, apron and clogs, in order to emphasise that the movement attracted women from all social classes. In the photographs reproduced here the style of her dress and the material used is plain in comparison to the other women, but there is no attempt to differentiate her from the others. Indeed all of the women are wearing clothes which are relatively simple and unostentatious. This may have been a way to draw attention to the similarities between them, regardless of their class, and also to indicate their seriousness of purpose. At the same time they are depicted as 'feminine', in soft blouses and with their hair pinned up in the latest fashion. Annie Kenney in particular is photographed in a

conventional female pose as she gazes wistfully at her tree, holding the top branch as gently as possible. The suffragettes were anxious to use imagery to counter the stereotypes put forward by their opponents that they were 'unwomanly', 'mannish' or a 'shrieking sisterhood'. As part of their own definition of womanliness, however, they emphasised women's ability to take militant political action and most of their photographs depict women engaged in direct propaganda in a public space, such as demonstrations or selling their newspapers. The photographs reproduced here are unusual in showing suffragettes in a more domestic space, in peaceful and contemplative mood. They provide a reminder that suffrage campaigners also had another life in which they socialised and stayed for weekends with friends. Suffrage work took over much of their lives, but not all of them. They were in fact 'ordinary' women engaged in extraordinary events.

Suffragettes were aware of being members of a collective group, working together for a common cause. On the other hand the willingness of individuals to take risks and to display courage was vital for the success of the WSPU. The photographs draw attention to both these sides of the movement. The women wear the purple, white and green colours of the WSPU on their brooches, while the trees and plaques symbolise both their collective and their individual struggle. In the pictures of Annie Kenney and Elsie Howey the trees are much taller than those which have been recently planted which suggests that the movement was also growing stronger and spreading.

The photographs also celebrate the achievements of individuals, in particular those who are less well known, such as Teresa Garnett and Elsie Howey. To get a real sense of the large number of different women involved, however, it is essential to look at the whole series of photographs taken by Colonel Linley which provide a unique record of the rank and file.



It is impossible to know whether Colonel Blathwayt ever intended that his photographs should be published. Unlike photographs placed in the press or sold as postcards, these were not used for direct propaganda purposes. On the other hand the fact that they were taken suggests that even in the thick of the fight contemporaries were aware of the historical significance of what they were doing and wished to ensure that the individual women who took part should not be forgotten. It is ironic that Colonel Linley sought to record the planting of trees which he must have assumed would be a long-lasting reminder of the actions of individual suffragettes. Instead, in the 1960s the trees were cleared to make way for a housing estate and it is the photographs which have remained to provide historians with a reminder of the varied women who took part in the struggle for their rights.

#### FURTHER READING

For more on the Blathwayt family, see B.M. Willmott Dobbie, *A Nest of Suffragettes in Somerset* (Batheaston Society, 1979) and J. Hannam, "Suffragettes are Splendid for any Work": The Blathwayt Diaries as a Source for Suffrage History', in C. Eustance, J. Ryan and L. Ugolini eds., *A Suffrage Reader* (Leicester University Press, 2000). For a discussion of suffrage imagery, see L. Tickner, *The Spectacle of Women: Imagery of the Suffrage Campaign, 1907-14* (Chatto & Windus, 1987) and D. Atkinson, 'Six Suffragette Photographs', in M. Joannou and J. Purvis eds., *The Women's Suffrage Movement: New Feminist Perspectives* (Manchester University Press, 1989)

**Photos reproduced by kind permission of Mary Frayling.**

**REGIONAL HISTORIAN REPORT ON THE MUSEUM OF BRISTOL MEETING**  
**Madge Dresser**

How much has the history of ordinary Bristolians been portrayed in the city's Museums? Blaise House, it is true has some charming material about childhood and rural life and the Industrial Museum does look at the history of the industrial and port work force. Temporary exhibitions at the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery have also, at times, attempted to widen their usual focus on the Great and the Good. But these exceptions only prove the rule. For the most part, the lives of the mass of the city's inhabitants, and the way the city itself has evolved —has been ignored.

This stunning gap in our collective remembrance may soon be redressed. Bristol City is currently bidding for Heritage Lottery Funds to build a Museum of Bristol Life (or 'MOB' as it is termed by some). The Museum has also seconded academics from the Regional History Centre at UWE to assist with the bid.

To this end a consultative meeting was called last November 10th, to begin to sound out members of the public about what principles should guide the proposed new Museum. This meeting, organised jointly by the Museum Service and UWE, and aimed at those most actively involved in local history, was the first in a series of wide-ranging public consultations planned by the museum. This particular conference, which was soon oversubscribed, opened with an introduction by the Deputy Head of Bristol Museum, Deborah Boden, who explained to the audience that this event was the first of many planned as part of a consultation process which would ultimately reach the widest possible range of interest groups and individuals in the city. A series of short talks took up the rest of the morning session. These were given by a range of speakers (Dr. Stephen Poole, Dr. Peter Fleming, Madge Dresser (all of UWE's School of History), Dean Smart (UWE's Faculty of Education), Dorothy Brown (civic activist), Sheena Stoddard and Andy King (curators with the Museum Service), Bob Jones (City of Bristol Archaeologist). These talks were designed to raise issues about the proposed museum for subsequent discussion.

Among the many points made by both speakers and delegates were the following: that there was a need for revenue as well as capital funding to be made available to the new museum; that museum exhibition organisers needed to have outreach exhibitions as well as liaison with schools, community groups and the Tourist Board on a regular basis; that it was essential to ensure that the growing constituency of older people, many of whom had a deep interest in local history, was also catered for in the Museum's plans and that sound academic research should underpin the most creative, imaginative and accessible of approaches.

There seemed to be some consensus about what themes the permanent exhibition should address: architectural and topographical development, work, political power, religion, family life, poverty, leisure and play were mentioned by all the groups. The city's achievements and the role of its elite should be featured, though there was general agreement too, that class and gender divisions, the contributions of the many different ethnic groups and the legacy of the Atlantic slave trade needed also to be made explicit when representing the city's past.

**A full report was submitted to the Museum and passed on to the planning team. It should soon be distributed to those attending the Conference.**

## OF TREES AND KINGS: SOME THOUGHTS ON *THE HISTORY TRAIL*

**Peter Fleming**

Occasionally, I have one of those moments when I stop and think, 'how on earth do I find myself here?'. Last summer, in a field in South Gloucestershire, as I attempted to circumnavigate an oak tree with a piece of string, was just such a moment. I was accompanied by my colleague and fellow medieval historian Keith Dockray and local historian David Tandy (holding the other end), while the whole spectacle was being recorded for posterity by a film crew from the Available Light production company, to be broadcast as part of HTV's *The History Trail*. We were, in case you hadn't guessed, attempting to uncover the 'true' story behind the 'battle' of Nibley Green, fought in 1470, 'the last private battle fought on English soil' (my apologies for so many quotation marks: a combination of post-modern sensitivity, and doubts about the exact status of the historical events themselves).

I would be the first to admit that tree hugging does not often appear in the methodological toolbox of medieval historians, but in this instance we were assured – by our producer – that it would provide a vital clue to understanding this clash between Lord Berkeley and Viscount Lisle over a disputed inheritance (for which, see the last issue, pp. 28-31). For this particular tree stood in the very field (perhaps) where the two sides clashed (maybe) in March 1470, and if we could prove that it was over six hundred years old, then it *might* have been one of the trees from which the local youths *may possibly* have watched the battle, if indeed, the event in question could be described as a battle. The way to establish its age – short of cutting it down and counting its rings – was to enter its vital statistics into a complex formula – which I confess I never even tried to understand – provided by the Forestry Commission. In order to avoid inducing unnecessary tension in the hearts of those readers who have not seen the programme, I shall now reveal that the tree was indeed of the necessary antiquity.

In the last issue, June Hannam wrote about her experiences filming *The History Trail* programme on the Blathwayt Diaries. That series has now been transmitted, and it is perhaps a good opportunity to ponder on the value of local history on TV. I sat down to write this after reading David McKie's excoriating review of Tristram Hunt's BBC2 series on the Civil War in *The Guardian* (17 January), in which he recommended that the series be pulled halfway through its run to save what remains of the young Cambridge historian's reputation. A *frisson* ran down my spine as I read McKie's advice to would-be TV dons to have nothing to do with directors who want you to do silly things. Was tree-hugging in the same category as Dr Hunt's train ride to Edinburgh to illustrate Charles I's march to Berwick, his visit to a barber's shop to impress upon us the difference between cavaliers and roundheads, or his game of billiards to illustrate (... I'm not sure what that was supposed to illustrate)?

Well, maybe. I certainly had – have – my misgivings, and found the whole process of filming faintly absurd: but also by turns fascinating, challenging and, certainly, exhausting. By the end I was genuinely impressed by the film crew's professionalism, even taking into account such episodes as the mad dash to Cribb's Causeway to buy two water melons to use as targets for the arrow shooting sequence (water melons, we were reliably informed, were not to be had in that part of Gloucestershire). Keith Dockray and I attended the premier broadcast of our programme at our local:

stretched limousines, police straining to hold back adoring fans and autograph hunters, glittery starlets and press from around the world were just a few of the features missing on the night, but we were accompanied by a few friends and relatives, the landlord and many of the regulars. Half-an-hour of embarrassment later, the audience gave their verdict. Coming from a group of people not known for sparing our feelings, their reactions were on the whole pretty favourable. While I would guess that most of the historians who took part in these programmes squirmed at the liberties that had to be taken with their stories and rankled at the extent to which often complex matters had to be simplified – Keith and I were told in no uncertain terms that to mention two kings in one sentence would only confuse the viewers – it does seem that the programme makers knew what they were doing. There are strict limits to how much can be absorbed in the space of 25 minutes of early-evening viewing, and these programmes were supposed to be *entertainment* (they were scheduled against *Eastenders*, after all: Lisa - ‘Yes Phil, you can ‘ave a photo of baby Louise, but first I want you to take me darn the Queen Vic and tell me all abaht the revisionists’ take on the outbreak of the civil war’). And I can stand the ridicule if tree-hugging encourages just one refugee from Albert Square to pick up a history book.

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**FAST TRACK JUSTICE FOR A HIGH FLIER.**

**John Lyes**

Fast track justice is to be introduced in the near future but our twenty-first century administrators would find it difficult to match the speed with which their Edwardian predecessors brought offenders before the Bristol justices.

An example occurred in 1902 in the case of ‘Professor’ William Finney, a noted high diver, whose brother and sister were well known tank performers and had appeared at the Bristol Music Halls. During the weekend proceeding Monday 15 September it was rumoured in the city that Finney was planning to launch himself from the Suspension Bridge into the River Avon, a height of some 250 feet. High tide was due at 5.24 am at which time the depth of the river was said to be 27 feet. Consequently a couple of hundred people had assembled on the roadways on either side of the river and a small boat was manoeuvring underneath the bridge, no doubt intending to fish the professor out of the river after he had completed his feat.

The rumours had also reached the ears of the constabulary and the *Bristol Mercury*, whose intrepid reporter had left his bed at an early hour and was lurking in the vicinity of the bridge; this account is based on his report. At 5.45 Finney, who was wearing a chest protector, was standing on the bridge with three companions, and a few minutes later he climbed on to the chains in the middle of the bridge intending to spring over the footpath and the parapet in one leap. No sooner had he started to climb however than Detective Slade appeared, seemingly from nowhere, and the following conversation ensued:

**Detective:** ‘Hullo! What are you going to do, Mr. Finney?’

**Finney:** ‘Nothing. I wish you’d leave me alone for ten minutes.’

**Detective:** ‘Well you had better come with me.’

And so Finney went along with the constable and left the bridge, but not without an objection from the toll taker; Finney had not thought it necessary to take a return ticket and the official took the view that he should purchase another one. He was taken to Brandon Hill Police Station and informed by Inspector Robertson that he would be charged with attempting to commit suicide. He did not appear too troubled by this development, his main concern being for his 'pals' who had turned out of their beds at an untimely hour only to be disappointed.

Later the same morning the professor appeared in the Police Court before Messrs. Howell Davies and E.B. Colthurst. On the sheet the charge had originally been 'attempting to commit suicide' but the clerk had amended it and when read over it was found to be one of 'wandering about on the Suspension Bridge and being there for an unlawful purpose'. The defendant made no audible reply and the detective gave his account of the morning's activities, adding that the professor smelt strongly of whisky. Finney denied being intoxicated although he did admit that he had taken a drop of brandy before going on to the bridge. He told the bench that he was a professional high diver and had dived from Tower Bridge into the Thames but conceded that he would not repeat his attempt to dive from the Suspension Bridge.

The magistrates decided to bind him over on his own undertaking but Superintendent Croker requested an additional surety in the sum of £10 to ensure that he would be of good behaviour for six months. He told the bench that in all his experience no man who had jumped from the bridge had survived and that he had no doubt that some betting men had had something to do with the affair. Later in the day a person willing to act as surety was found and Finney was liberated.

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#### THE BRISTOL RECORD SOCIETY'S NEXT VOLUME

This year's volume produced by the BRS will be an edition of Bristol Probate Inventories, covering the years 1542 to 1650, edited by E and S George with the assistance of Peter Fleming. Probate inventories listed the moveable possessions of those recently deceased with the purpose, among other things, of assessing the total wealth available for the settlement of debts. They provide an invaluable source of information for economic, cultural, social and architectural historians. The present selection includes inventories giving details of clothing, furniture, shop stock, books, and weapons and, since the appraisers noted the rooms they traversed in order, they can also be used to reconstruct the internal structure and function of houses. The book will be published in April 2002. Inventories from 1650 to 1804 will be the subject of a future publication.

**The AGM of the Bristol Record Society will be held at the Council House on Monday 29 April at 5.00, and is open to all members.**

## **THE FILTON MILLENIUM-FUNDED COMMUNITY HISTORY PROJECT**

**Jane Tozer, Filton Community History Project**

**This project, which ran from November 1999 to November 2000, had been awarded £25,000 with which to build within our community and, especially, within our schools, a deeper knowledge of Filton's extraordinary history.**

A group of ten year olds from two primary schools explored the history of Filton from 1825 using resources researched and prepared by two project workers to fit into the school curriculum. They learned about agriculture, education, health, Shield's Laundry (the first big employer) and everyday life in the Victorian period, and then about the trams, aircraft and defence industry which grew up from the early 1900s. The schools now also have a permanent resource pack and a CD-Rom. Children visited important sites in their town, to see for themselves (what is left of) our heritage, and also visited the Bristol Aero Collection at Kemble.

Seven exhibitions, using as much as possible of the huge archive material (photographs, maps, aerial photographs, newspaper cuttings, school logbook, and of course the children's own response to all this in artwork, writing and sculpture) have been mounted in various venues in South Gloucestershire, and we were present at the BBC's History Fest in 2001. As a result of this project a large archive of material has been created, some of which will be held at Gloucester Records Office, and some eventually added to with Filton Library's present collection. They now hold for public use equipment which was used in the building of the exhibitions. (A digital camera and a CD-Writer are also now both available for public use) The library also holds an illustrated book, *Filton Talking*, containing interviews done by our Oral History worker and which was part of the project. While carrying out these interviews we identified more willing participants than we were able to cope with in the time scale. To carry on with this vital work we have recently been granted funds by 'Awards for All' (we got every penny we asked for!)

Other results of the project were three permanent artist's panels, now on view at the library, which showed Filton's day to day life from the 1930s to the 1990s; and murals were produced at all three primary schools in Filton. During the year 2000 we also invited local organisations to take photographs showing their activities and to make these into A3 collages. These are in the form of a bound book, which is also destined for the library. We have thus created not only a permanent record of Filton's past for future generations, but a snapshot of Filton today.

As important as any of the material products of this massive and far-reaching project were the less tangible results: the goodwill of the many volunteers; a renewal of old memories; an increased awareness among us of Filton as a community, and of its less known early history, and of course, an increase in community skills - this was a real learning process for us too. I think if any of us had realised just how much work it was going to mean, we might have thought twice about embarking on the project! But it has, as we hoped, made a permanent and lasting record for the future, and allowed many people to relive their own past.

The Community History project leaders are currently giving talks about the project, and are willing to do so to other interested groups, as well as mounting an exhibition.(0117 9694378)

***Awards for All, Beaufort House, 51 North Road; ExeterEX4 4EQ 01392849705***

### **RHC on the Web**

The Regional History Centre is currently revising and redesigning its web site which should be relaunched by mid March. In addition to improving navigation and adding more information to the site, we will be creating a lot more links to local and regional history web resources. If you know of any electronic repositories of local records please to which we could create links, please let us know. One of the links will be to the recently created web site of the Bristol Record Society which hopes to make some of its volumes available electronically in the future. We'll keep you posted. The site address is <http://humanities.uwe.ac.uk/Regionhistory/rhc.htm>

**If you want any more copies of the Regional Historian (including some of the back issues) you will be able to download and print them from our site.**

### **Gloucestershire Local History Web site at [www.gloshistory.org.uk](http://www.gloshistory.org.uk)**

A further three sets of computer guidelines have been added including information on digital images and creating web pages. **The local history speakers' list is now available on this site.**

### **Wiltshire Local Studies Web Page**

There is now a local studies web page on the Wiltshire Libraries site. The address is: [http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/libraries/html/local\\_studies.html](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/libraries/html/local_studies.html) At the moment this is under construction and does not contain a great deal of information but there are plans to include the following pages:

\* Local Studies Libraries \* **Events** \* Books about Wiltshire \* **Parish history**\* Victorian censuses \* **Newspapers** \* Local authors \* **Photographs** \* Maps \* **Ralph Whitlock Collection**\* **Family history** \* Information for teachers and students \* Publications\* **Links to other sites**\* .

### **Wiltshire Intelligencer goes digital**

The Wiltshire Intelligencer contains news of local studies initiatives and events in the county plus a Wiltshire List of all new publications found in the preceding month. These include not only books and pamphlets but also videos, CDs, cassettes, calendars, etc.

**Since last August the Wiltshire Intelligencer has been published on the Wiltshire County Council's web site. You can find it at**

**<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/libraries/html/intelligencer.html>**

### **Access to Archives (A2A)**

Wiltshire archivists have joined a nation wide initiative to convert the catalogues of historic archives held by record offices, museums and libraries in the region into electronic format. The project aims to make all catalogues available on the internet in a searchable form. The current project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Treasury. By the end of March 2002 it should be possible to see all the catalogues of church and school records from South-West England by logging on to [www.a2a.pro.gov.uk](http://www.a2a.pro.gov.uk)

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Madge Dresser, *Slavery Obscured: The Social History of the Slave Trade in an English Provincial Port, The Black Atlantic*, editor Polly Rewt, Continuum, London and New York, 2001, 242 pp.**

The next time you are walking through Queen Square in Bristol, or visiting country houses in the area, such as Dyrham Park or Codrington Court, discount the elegant facades of the buildings and consider the connections with the infamous African trade. In 1730, 10 out of 24 substantial ratepayers in Queen Square and 30 out of 65 of the country houses around Bristol had business connections with it. Madge Dresser, in a grim but fascinating new account of Bristol and the Slave Trade, has rescued the subject from the economic historians' focus on ships and cargo or the authorities in thrall to urban elites and written a humane account of the people involved. On the one hand, that includes the merchants, plantation owners, captains and crewmen who made profit from their human traffic. On the other hand, we learn of the endemic brutality of the system, the often harrowing tales of slaves who escaped to Bristol, and of the local abolitionists (marked by 'intense religiosity') who campaigned against the iniquitous trade. Dresser challenges earlier work showing the involvement of Bristol merchants in Iberia as early as 1480 and substantial links with the West Indies and South Carolina before 1698. For a brief period, 1713-1730, Bristol took the lead as a slave port from London and Liverpool.

*Slavery Obscured* has six main chapters, plus an introduction and conclusion, and illustrations that are interpreted intelligently. For instance, the cover painting of 'The Death of Colston' in which the kneeling woman, ('black Mary' named in his will?) holding his hand, is sensitively discussed as symbolic of the way Bristol's slave past has been sanitised. A particular strength is the use of poetry, ballads and theatre playbills in documenting contemporary opinion. An interesting degree of British ambivalence emerges as noble, as well as primitive, qualities are identified among African slaves. This parallels American attitudes to Indians and Mexicans in the nineteenth-century. Predictable ideas that rationalised economic interest on grounds of racial inferiority were countered by an acceptance of Africans into the human family only when redeemed from 'savagery' by conversion to Christianity.

In addition to the indictment made against those who grew rich from the sale of human flesh in the eighteenth-century, Dresser, as historical advisor to the Bristol City Museum's exhibition, engages in the current debate on the public history of Bristol Slavery. How should Bristol people understand and remember this chapter in the city's history? The author sets out her stall in affirming that: 'The evidence shows that Bristol's urban renaissance was exceptionally reliant on the exploitation and dislocation of African labour.'(p 118) This argument provokes discomfort and denial in some quarters and, commercially, Bristol might prefer a maritime focus on Cabot and Brunel, but the Slave Trade represents an uncomfortable, yet vital part of the city's past.

Finally, the publishers should be congratulated on allowing the provision of a very useful bibliography of unpublished primary sources and very full notes. The book will appeal to students who will want to explore the primary sources themselves and might be required reading for the citizens of Bristol and the wider region. Madge Dresser

has not only told the story of the Slave Trade in Bristol, she has offered an explanation of post-emancipation attitudes that link up with Commonwealth immigration in the 1950s. Readable and highly recommended.

**Graham Davis, Bath Spa University College**

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**Body, G., and Gallop, R., *Dunball Village Works and Wharf, Cardiff*, Fiducia Press 2001, ISBN 0946217106, £3.00 23. 10 pp illus.**

This short volume makes for an interesting read. Detailed in its descriptions, it gives a clear picture of the life of an industrial location in coastal Somerset. That the wharf at the core of this monograph is still working gives it an added interest.

The conjunction of clay and lime deposits, river access and the later additions of fertiliser works and, in the twentieth century a Royal Ordnance Factory, all served by the railways indicates a thriving industrial location. Based on local investment, labour and business sense the small but profitable roots of industrial development in the UK are demonstrated in practical detail.

Many hours of work with a wide range of oral and written sources give it an authoritative voice and some more reference details would have been welcome. I know that this is a practice more usually associated with academic history but it is a useful one and an appropriate record of the authors' hard work. I would not have wanted them to clutter up the text but some endnotes would not have gone amiss. Overall, this is a well-written descriptive local history which has added to my personal knowledge of the industrial development of the Somerset region.

**Kieran Kelly**

**University of the West of England**

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**Trevor Fawcett, *Bath Administered: Corporation Affairs at the Eighteenth Century Spa*, Ruton Press, Bath, 2001, £8.00, 141 pp.**

Since the founding of the History of Bath Research Group some twenty years ago, the city's Hanoverian past in particular has continually attracted local scholarship of great quality. In *Bath Administered*, one of the Group's founders, and probably the spa's most consistently readable historian, has compiled an invaluable directory of the institutional bodies which gave it shape and form. Few people have acquired a more comprehensive knowledge of eighteenth century Bath than Trevor Fawcett, and in this alphabetically arranged work of reference, every conceivable aspect of Corporate administration is clearly and expertly catalogued. Entries, each long enough to be useful, yet short enough to entertain, range from the expected (aldermen, police and markets) to the unexpected (fire control, traffic control and swans...) The style is lively, sometimes humorous, and illustrated throughout with evidence carefully culled from the Corporation archives in the Guildhall Record Office or the pages of the local press. A useful bibliography is included at the end.

One can, of course, quibble over the detail. Fawcett's interest in aspects of urban life beyond the direct influence of the Corporation has permitted him to include journeymen, charity schools and royalty. But this mild expansion only raises

questions about the criteria for exclusion. If we're looking at institutional culture more broadly, why not include the dissenting churches alongside the Abbey Church and the rector of Bath, for example? Secondly, the conflation of such large areas of public experience as prostitution, drunkenness, poverty and vagrancy into the unspecific category of 'social problems' seems less than helpful. Too much emphasis on the city's 'official' and institutional culture always runs the risk of marginalising those areas of popular experience that existed alongside rather than within the polity of the Corporate elite. There may be important questions to be answered here about the respective primacy of custom and law in the governance of eighteenth century England, but I'd happily settle for a revised second edition with separate entries for revels, backsword, pornography, bonfire night and rioting!

None of this prevents *Bath Administered* from being indispensably anchored to my desk however, and it has already proved its weight in gold. Now that we have such a handy, concise and usable guide to the institutions of the city, what's really needed is a thoroughly researched Dictionary of Bath Biography. Over to you, Trevor.

**Steve Poole, University of the West of England**

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**Sheena Stoddard *Bristol before the Camera: The City in 1820-30: Watercolours and Drawings from the Braikenridge Collection*, Redcliffe Press in association with Bristol Museums and Art Gallery, Bristol, 2001, £12-99, 112 pp.**

So much of what we know about Bristol's historic buildings and topography we owe to the dedication of George Weare Braikenridge (1775-1856). This scion of a Scottish family whose fortune was derived from a Virginian slave plantation and the West Indian trade, was able to retire early from business to devote himself to collecting and recording local antiquities. He also commissioned such artists as Samuel Jackson, Francis Danby, Thomas Rowbotham and Hugh O'Neill to record the city's changing townscape. His vast collection of over 1400 drawings, 36 portfolios of local materials (which also included broadsides, published work, and family papers) and a diverse range of architectural remnants has since been dispersed. One imagines that his now demolished house in Brislington full of 17<sup>th</sup> century furniture and medieval gargoyles would have rivalled Sir John Soanes' museum had it survived. Thankfully, however, much of the documentary and visual material is still in Bristol, enriching the collections of the Bristol City Record Office, the Central Reference Library and the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery.

This beautiful book is an annotated collection of over 100 of the drawings and watercolours from the Museum's Collection, selected mainly on the grounds of their artistic merit and their relevance to the theme of the historic city. Sheena Stoddard, who is the Museum's fine arts curator, introduces her subject well, and though I would have liked to know more about Braikenridge's West Indian connections and his political and religious views, I was fascinated to learn about his devotion to 'the gentlemanly hobby' of 'grangerizing' or extra-illustrating already published books. Stoddard also describes each picture with such admirable clarity that even the most spatially-challenged reader should be able to grasp precisely which bit of contemporary Bristol is portrayed—no mean feat given that the city has been so transformed by both the Blitz and post-war civic vandalism. Evident too, is the

guiding hand of one of Bristol's unsung heritage heroes, John Bryant, whose guidance Stoddard generously acknowledges.

Of course many pictures in the collection had to be excluded and I understood but rather regretted not to have been offered a glimpse of at least one of the drawings of one Miss Bird, 'the daughter of the Bristol artist Edward Bird RA (1772-1819)'. Miss Bird's imaginary street scenes of Bristol were deemed too crudely inaccurate for inclusion, but they might have been interrogated to reveal something of the social assumptions of the time. But aside from such quibbles, this is an excellent book. The erudition embedded in each caption and in the commentary of the two fold-out city panoramas included at the back of the book, is impressive, utilising as it does the insights both of Braikenridge himself and to a wide and well-mediated range of contemporary sources.

### **Madge Dresser, University of the West of England**

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#### **BOOK REVIEWS BY JOHN LOOSELY**

**Lower Slaughter Village History Group, *Lower Slaughter – Life and History of a Cotswold Village*, 2001, 52 pp., illustrated.**

The village of Lower Slaughter is today seen, by the many tourists attracted by the picturesque river Eye meandering through the village and the beautiful Cotswold stone buildings, as an affluent retirement community, but go back 50 years and this was a working agricultural society. In a series of chapters the book examines the history of the manor held by the Whitmore family from 1611, the Church, substantially rebuilt in 1867, and many noteworthy buildings in the village (35 of which are listed as having special architectural or historic interest). There is an interesting chapter on the history of the Whitmore family starting with Sir William Whitmore, M.P. for Bridgnorth, and member of a prominent Shropshire family to whom the manor was granted in 1611 and continuing to the present day. Reminiscences of village life show that up to the Second World War the village was mainly self-sufficient and employment was provided by the several farms. Families such as the Wheeler's, Keen's and Mosson's have lived in the village for generations. Finally a chronological chart from 1066 to 2000 shows events in the history of the village. A well written book which gives the reader an insight into the life of a Cotswold village community of only a generation or two ago and which is so different today.

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**Gloucestershire Family History Society *1851 Gloucestershire Census*. CD priced £20 plus £1.50 post and packing from Dr Hugh Kearsley, Windmill Place, Windmill Road, Minchinhampton GL6 9EE.**

It may seem strange to find a review of a CD amongst books and particularly of a database but this work by the Gloucestershire Family History Society gives a wonderful snapshot of Gloucestershire in 1851. Everyone resident in Gloucestershire on 30 March 1851 was listed together with their place of residence, their relationship with the head of the household, their age, occupation and place of birth. Users of this CD can search for any individual or can see the census as enumerated, household by household, in a town or village. They can search for particular occupations or people

who were born in a parish but moved elsewhere. The data is in three formats, its own search programme, portable document format read by Adobe Acrobat and as a Microsoft Access database. This all sounds very technical but the installation and use is easy for anyone with Windows 95, 98 or NT and a PC with at least a 486 processor, 16MB of RAM and 5MB of free hard disk. This CD can give hours of interest in finding out who lived where and what they did 150 years ago in Gloucestershire.

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**Nicholas Kingsley & Michael Hill, *The Country Houses of Gloucestershire, Volume III, 1830-2000, 2001, 336 pp. illustrated, ISBN 1 86077 120 3, Phillimore & Co Ltd., £30.00.***

The third and last volume of this comprehensive work on the Country Houses of Gloucestershire has been long awaited and it is worth the wait. As in the previous volumes, it is divided into three parts. An introduction examines the owners, builders, and architects together with the changes in design of the houses both internally and externally. Part 2, arranged alphabetically, describes each of the major houses. Part 3, again arranged alphabetically; provides shorter descriptions of the smaller houses.

The introduction provides an interesting examination of the effects of world wars, agricultural depressions and Margaret Thatcher's years on the building of new houses or the major remodelling of existing houses. The change of owners, during this period from gentry inheriting family estates to new purchasers who had created wealth from industry or professions led to considerable changes in the design and accommodation required. Gloucestershire has been fortunate in attracting people with sufficient wealth to build and maintain these houses and the book shows that this continues to be the case.

Many well known houses are described in part 2 from Rodmarton Manor by Ernest Barnsley of the Arts and Crafts movement and the unfinished Woodchester Park by Benjamin Bucknall to the grand mansions of Tortworth and Westonbirt. Of equal interest are the smaller houses, many of which are the result of considerable rebuilding during this period to meet the owners' changing requirements.

There are over 200 black and white and 16 colour illustrations including many original plans, engravings and early photographs.

The original volume I, 1500-1660, first published in 1989, has been extensively re-written and re-illustrated and is now re-issued by Phillimore also at £30. With volume II published in 1992, the complete period of country house building from 1500 to 2000 is now covered from which can be seen the remarkable collection still remaining in Gloucestershire.

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**David Welander, *Gloucester Cathedral – Visitor's handbook, 2001, 166 pp. illustrated, ISBN 0951059211, £16.95.***

Many books have been written on Gloucester Cathedral, as there have been on other cathedrals in the British Isles. Their history and splendour attracts detailed examination by historians, architects and ecclesiastics. One may therefore ask why should another guidebook be published? The answer perhaps is the continuing new

discoveries and interpretations of evidence of earlier building. This handbook follows two earlier works by Canon Welander on the Stained Glass and the History, Art and Architecture of the Cathedral together with an earlier guide written with David Verey in 1979. The opening chapter covers the history of the Cathedral and then subsequent chapters take the reader on a tour of the cathedral starting in the great nave and ending with the precincts. The generous use of plans, drawings, photographs and early illustrations of aspects of the cathedral assist in the understanding of changes which have been made over the many centuries. This is a book which should be read whilst exploring the building where the features described can be examined, recognised and understood.

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**Roy Palmer, *Folklore of Gloucestershire*, 2001, 320 pp., illustrated, ISBN 0752422464, Tempus Publishing, £14.99**

This is a very welcome revised and updated edition of the book, which was originally published in 1994 and is now out of print. As Roy Palmer states, Gloucestershire is extremely rich in historical traditions, stories stemming from river, spring and standing stone, village lore, church legends, superstitions, tales of the supernatural, sporting passion and working wisdom, song, dance, drama and calendar custom. This book covers all this and more and I doubt that any part of Gloucestershire is not included. Folklore perhaps gives us an understanding of how ordinary inhabitants lived and thought in the past, which is not possible from other sources. The differences between the Forest, Vale and Cotswolds contribute to the wealth of stories in this book, which are both entertaining and instructive.

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***Towpath Map of the Stroudwater Canal and Thames and Severn Canal from Framilode to Sapperton*, 2001, Stroud District Council £3.50.**

This is more than a map it is a guide to the stretch of canal from the Severn to Sapperton Tunnel. Many places of interest along the canal are described and illustrated including cloth mills, bridges and locks. There is a list of all the locks and bridges on this section and the map shows riverside and connecting footpaths. A brief history of the canals and their future restoration is included together with mention of the two detailed guides to the canals by Michael Handford and Humphrey Household.

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**Leckhampton Local History Society, *Research Bulletin No.2*, 2001, 55 pp. illustrated, ISSN 1467-1344, £4.00 from Amy Woolacott 01242 522566.**

Following the successful first research bulletin published in 1999 the society has produced a second bulletin full of interesting articles. The major article is by the bulletin's editor, Eric Miller, on pottery and brick making in Leckhampton. Here he has researched the Cotswold Potteries, the Pilford Brickworks, Smith Brothers' brickyard and William Caudle's brick kilns and describes the once flourishing industry in Leckhampton of which there is little visible evidence remaining. Another trade described is that of the coal merchant William Farrar whilst leisure pursuits are represented by pieces on the North Gloucestershire Golf Club and Foxhunting and the Leckhampton Court Foxhounds. Terry Moore-Scott traces the Old Roads and Tracks of Leckhampton inspired by Amy Woolacott's article in the first research bulletin on the Evolution of Leckhampton Street Names and Owen Stinchcombe gives a history of the Leckhampton Free Reading Room established in 1894 in what was locally

known as the "Early Cowshed". The publication of the results of research by members of local history societies and groups is so important as often in the past many years' work has disappeared to the great loss of future generations. We, therefore, wait with eager anticipation to the publication of the third research bulletin.

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***Minchinhampton Life and Times Part 1 History, 2000, 44 pp. and Part 2 Places, School, Organisations and People, 2000, 64 pp., Minchinhampton Local History Group £2.50 each.***

These two booklets contain articles from the first fifteen years of the group's annual bulletin. As many of these bulletins are no longer available these booklets are extremely useful in allowing the research and writings of members of this local history group to reach a wider audience. The early history of the manor and parish is covered by articles by the late Cyril Turk whose knowledge of the history of Minchinhampton is legendary. Other members of the group have contributed articles over the years on all aspects of life in Minchinhampton. One feature which will please all family historians is a name index. The group continues to publish Annual Bulletins, the current issue No. 17 contains a history of the Sheppard family together with articles on the Baptist Church, the Cloth Trade and Railways at Brimscombe.

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***The New Regard No. 17. The Journal of the Forest of Dean Local History Society, 2001 68 pp. illustrated ISSN 0950-8236 £5.00.***

Another feast of interesting articles on the Forest of Dean professionally produced and excellently illustrated. The pleasure in reading *The New Regard* is the wide range of subjects covered. This edition includes a piece on The Feathers Hotel, Lydney, which was demolished in 1999 to make way for a supermarket, an examination of the area called Brockaditchies with its tracks, tramroads and leats, the Chemist and Optician Alfred Quinton Barton in Cinderford, the Dean Forester Training School in Parkend and a charming personal view on the Lydney born composer Herbert Howells. These together with short pieces on toll houses, Church Cottage, Mitcheldean and the Joiner Family and Forest Products Ltd.

## **REGIONAL NEWS, EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **LOCAL HISTORY WEEK 4TH - 12TH MAY 2002: A CELEBRATION OF LOCAL HISTORY**

This is being co-ordinated by the Historical Association in association with BBC History Magazine. Hundreds of events will be taking place across England, Wales, Scotland and N. Ireland. These will include:

- ❖ Local and Family History fairs
- ❖ Museum and Archive discovery days
- ❖ Talks and debates
- ❖ History projects
- ❖ Re-enactments and demonstrations
- ❖ History adventure walks
- ❖ Special exhibitions
- ❖ Conferences and events
- ❖ Online activities
- ❖ Competitions and prizes

## NATIONAL AND LOCAL EVENTS IN LOCAL HISTORY WEEK

### KEYNOTE EVENT:

**A Day Conference in London: A Celebration of Local History Sat May 11th 2002  
Senate House, Malet St. London 9.30-5.30**

*Session 1 The Local History of Minorities: Black, Asian and Jewish Histories*

*Session 2 Landscape and Buildings: Urban and Rural Spaces*

*Session 3 Individuals and Communities: Local History Now*

**All welcome Cost: £15. For booking or details contact Debra Birch Fax 0207  
862 8745 email [d.birch@sas.ac.uk](mailto:d.birch@sas.ac.uk)**

### FAMILY HISTORY FAIR

Sat 4<sup>th</sup>/Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2002

Royal Horticulture Society, New Hall and Conference Centre, Greycoat Street,  
Westminster London SW1

### COMPETITION FOR LOCAL HISTORY BOOK OF THE YEAR

The best proposal for the history of a place (population over 10,000) based on old photographs will win £500 from the Historical Association and a publishing contract from Sutton Publishing. **For details see *The Historian*, Winter 2001 or check [www.history.org.uk](http://www.history.org.uk) or [www.suttonpublishing.co.uk](http://www.suttonpublishing.co.uk)**

### WILTSHIRE

The National Monuments Record in Swindon are planning a series of events. Mike Marshman from the Wiltshire Local Studies Library and Steve Hobbs from the Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office are planning an event in Trowbridge and workshops with local historians in every library which can accommodate them. Contact Mike Marshman email [mikemarshman@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:mikemarshman@wiltshire.gov.uk) or Steve Hobbs email: [stevenhobbs@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:stevenhobbs@wiltshire.gov.uk) for further details of these events.

### GLOUCESTERSHIRE

**Kingswood Heritage Museum, Tower Lane, Warmley.**

**Sunday 5 - Monday 6 May,**

Museum Open Days. An exhibition of the industrial and social aspects of Kingswood's history in the 18th century brassworks. Guided walks in the 18<sup>th</sup> century industrialist's garden, including a grotto. **Admission £2.00 11.00am-5.00pm**

**Please phone 0117 967 5711 for further details**

### Downend Local History Society

**Wednesday 8 May**

Guided History Walk around Downend Village 7.00pm Admission £2.00

**For further information and to book please send SAE and cheque made payable to Downend Folk House Association to: M. Coles, 69 Heathfields, Downend, Bristol BS16 6HT**

**Friday 10 May May,**

Guided History Walk around Mangotsfield Village 7.00pm Admission £2.00

**For further information and to book please send SAE and cheque made payable to Downend Folk House Association : M. Coles, address as above**

### **Sunday 5 May - Tuesday 7 May**

Local History Exhibition with photographs of Downend, Mangotsfield and Staple Hill, artefacts and archival material. Kingswood Heritage Museum  
2.00-5.00pm. Admission £1.00 **For further information and to book please send SAE and cheque made payable to Downend Folk House Association : M. Coles,**

### **Marshfield Local History Society Marshfield Churchyard Survey:**

**Saturday 4 - Sunday 12 May.**

An exhibition showing the results of a survey of memorials in the churchyard and families still living in the village. Marshfield. Time to be confirmed.

**Please contact: The Secretary, Marshfield Local History Society, Weir Cottage, Weir Lane, Marshfield, South Glos. SN14 8NB**

### **Stroud District Local History Fair**

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2002 10am to 4pm.**

at the Stroud Subscription Rooms. Organised by Stroud Local History Society. Entry free. Many local history societies in Stroud District participating.

### **Forest of Dean Local History Fair**

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2002 10am to 4pm** at the Miners' Welfare Hall, Cinderford. Organised by the Forest of Dean Local History Society. Entry free.

## **OTHER LOCAL HISTORY MEETINGS, EVENTS AND PRIZES**

### **Local History Computer Workshop on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2002**

The Gloucestershire Local History Committee and the University of Gloucestershire are running a local/family history workshop at Park Campus, Cheltenham. This will take the form of demonstrations by individuals and societies on current computer projects and an opportunity to exchange information on latest programs and developments on the use of computers in local/family history. The University of the West of England and the University of Wolverhampton will be showing their historical databases. **Further details from John Loosley, Stonehatch, Oakridge Lynch, Stroud GL6 7NR. Tel 01285 760460. E-mail [john@loosleyj.freerve.co.uk](mailto:john@loosleyj.freerve.co.uk)**

### **Gloucestershire Local History Committee's Regional Meeting**

**on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2002 Wotton-under-Edge Local History Society will host the event this year.** Details from Dr Syd Harris, Beechwood, Tabernacle Road, Wotton-under-Edge, GL12 7AP.

### **A Closer Look at Church Records**

These five workshops, to be held at Gloucestershire Record Office 2-4 p.m. fortnightly from 29 April, are intended to give family and local historians who have some experience of using parish records the opportunity to become acquainted with a wider range of church records. Each 2-hour workshop will focus on a particular topic (including Probate, Church Architecture, the Clergy, Non-Conformist Records and Church Courts) and will include an introductory talk, a chance to examine documents and an activity session in small groups. **For further details, please contact Helen Neal at Gloucestershire Record Office [01452-425296].**



**AVON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY EVENTS**  
**For further information contact harlows@bun.com or BogB@classicfm.net**

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| <p><b>12 Feb Bristol &amp; Gloucester Arch Soc (Glos)</b><br/>Talk: Amy Wollacott<br/><i>Evolution of the English Windmill</i></p> <p><b>12 Feb Clutton Local History Group</b><br/>Talk: Rob Ladd<br/><i>Saving Historical Buildings</i></p> <p><b>12 Feb Thornbury Society</b><br/>Talk: John Penny<br/><i>Defence of Bristol Port 1793-1815</i></p> <p><b>12 Feb Weston-super-Mare Arch &amp; NH</b><br/>Talk: Louise Loe<br/><i>Early Medieval Skeletons at Landough</i></p> <p><b>13 Feb Bristol Museum Service</b><br/>Lecture: Matthew Tanner<br/><i>SS Great Britain - Glorious Post, Glorious Future</i></p> <p><b>16 Feb Mendip Society</b><br/>Winscombe Walk</p> <p><b>16 Feb Stoke Lodge History &amp; Archaeology Group</b><br/><i>Coach trip to Hartlebury Castle and Harvington Hall, Worcestershire</i></p> <p><b>18 Feb Historical Association, Bristol Branch</b><br/>Talk: Dr Brendan Smith<br/><i>Women &amp; War in the British Isles 1050-1250</i></p> <p><b>18 Feb Marshfield &amp; District LHS</b><br/>Talk: Stephen Bird<br/><i>Roman Roads around Bath</i></p> <p><b>18 Feb Weston LHS</b><br/>Tenth Anniversary</p> <p><b>19 Feb Downend LHS</b><br/>Talk: Anton Bantock<br/><i>The Berkeleys of Berkeley Castle</i></p> <p><b>6 Feb Bristol &amp; Avon Archaeological Society or 20th to be announced</b></p> <p><b>20 Feb Congresbury History Group</b><br/>Talk: Mrs Anne Bowring<br/><i>Secret Hiding Places (priest Holes etc)</i></p> <p><b>21 Feb Mendip Society</b><br/>Winscombe Talk: Andrew Sheppey<br/><i>Conservation Breeding using rare breeds</i></p> <p><b>23 Feb Mendip Society</b><br/>East Mendip Walk from Nettlebridge Inn, GR ST648486</p> <p><b>25 Feb Bristol &amp; Gloucester Arch Soc (Bristol)</b><br/>Talk: Alan M Rome<br/><i>Sir George Oatley, architect of Bristol University</i></p> <p><b>27 Feb Alveston Local History Society</b><br/>Talk: Pip Jones<br/>Group <i>Marriages, Relationships and Offspring of Henry VIII</i></p> <p><b>28 Feb Bristol and Avon Archaeological Society to be announced</b></p> | <p><b>28 Feb Clevedon &amp; Dist. Archaeological Soc</b><br/>Talk: Prof Ronald Hutton<br/><i>How pagan was medieval England?</i></p> <p><b>1 Mar Mendip Society</b><br/>Cheddar Talk: Vince Russett<br/><i>Charterhouse Archaeology</i></p> <p><b>2 Mar Bristol &amp; Avon Archaeological Society</b><br/>Annual General Meeting</p> <p><b>2 Mar Mendip Society</b><br/>Cheddar Walk</p> <p><b>4 Mar Avon Local History Association</b><br/>Executive Committee Meeting</p> <p><b>4 Mar Historical Association, Bristol Branch</b><br/>Talk: Madge Dresser<br/><i>Bristol Seamen's Tales and the Slave Trade</i></p> <p><b>5 Mar Downend LHS</b><br/>Booking Evening: Jeanette McCormack<br/><i>Researching my local family history</i></p> <p><b>7 Mar Chew Valley LHS</b><br/>Talk: Pat Hase<br/><i>Researching your Family History</i></p> <p><b>7 Mar Long Ashton LHS</b><br/>Talk: Roger Angerson<br/><i>Beaufort &amp; Cleve Hill Military Hospitals 1914-19</i></p> <p><b>9 Mar Mendip Society</b><br/>North Mendip Walk, Ubley</p> <p><b>11 Mar Historical Association, Bristol Branch</b><br/>Sixth Form Conference 5 -7 pm at Bristol Grammar School (book, 01179 736006)</p> <p><b>1 Mar Nailsea &amp; District LHS</b><br/>Talk: Peter Goodchild<br/><i>Bristol Blitz</i></p> <p><b>12 Mar Bristol &amp; Gloucester Arch Soc (Glos)</b><br/>Talk: Alan Brooks<br/><i>Late 19th early 20 C Stained Glass in Glos</i></p> <p><b>12 Mar Clutton Local History Group</b><br/>Talk: Ken Pierce<br/><i>The SS Great Britain</i></p> <p><b>12 Mar Thornbury Society</b><br/>Talk: Dr Ray Wilson<br/><i>Gloucestershire's Industrial Heritage</i></p> <p><b>12 Mar Weston-super-Mare Arch &amp; NH</b><br/>Talk: Dr John Wroughton<br/><i>An Unhappy Civil War</i></p> <p><b>16 Mar Mendip Society</b><br/>Winscombe Walk</p> <p><b>16 Mar Stoke Lodge History &amp; Archaeology</b><br/>Coach trip to Cothele and Tavistock, Devon</p> <p><b>18 Mar Marshfield and district LHS</b><br/>Talk: Robert Bell<br/><i>Acton Court: a Tudor courtier's Mansion</i></p> |
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## CONFERENCES

**RUSKIN PUBLIC HISTORY GROUP: THE THIRD PUBLIC HISTORY CONFERENCE  
'Unofficial and Official History'  
Saturday May 11<sup>th</sup> 2002**

For further information contact Hilda Kean at Ruskin College, Walton Street, Oxford,  
OX1 2HE Email [hkean@ruskin.ac.uk](mailto:hkean@ruskin.ac.uk)

**The Ruskin Public History Group also meets regularly throughout the year on  
Saturday mornings. For details of this and our MA in Public History please see  
our website: [www.ruskin.ac.uk/pub-history](http://www.ruskin.ac.uk/pub-history)**

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**AVON LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2002  
hosted by University of the West of England Faculty of Humanities at St Matthias  
Campus, Oldbury Court Road, Fishponds  
Saturday, 23rd March 2002 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

### LEISURE AND PLEASURE

Researching for records to find out how people over the centuries spent their leisure time is not an easy matter. The evidence is often hidden in many different documentary sources and, of course, as today people spent their time in numerous ways. In medieval days the church provided the focal point for leisure time activities and also the reasons for celebrating the frequent holy days of the Christian calendar. Tourism has become an increasingly important national industry, particularly from the 1940s when many stately homes opened their doors to the public, but for centuries men and women have been making journeys to see these architectural monuments. In the 19th century many sporting and other activities became more organised including the founding of libraries, art galleries and museums, the theatres and music halls. In appreciation of some of these leisure pursuits the Association is pleased to present the following speakers:

- ❖ **Dr Joe Bettey:** former Reader in Local History Bristol University (Medieval and Tudor Leisure Activities in the Bristol Region)
- ❖ **Adrian Tinniswood:** author and architectural historian (The Polite Tourist)
- ❖ **Maurice Hopkins:** Clarke lecturer and Blue Badge Guide (Bath Theatre Royal)
- ❖ **Eunice and David Elsbury:** members of the Magic Lantern Society (From Magic Lantern to Cinema)

This is the eighth local history day to be held at the St Matthias campus, home of the University of the West of England's Faculty of Humanities and of its Regional History Centre. 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. **Admission by programme**

**Member Societies and individuals are welcome to set out their stalls. Full Programme, with location and parking maps £7. 50. Members of UWE, ALHA and affiliated societies, Senior citizens, students and unwaged £6.**

**To book a place, contact: The Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Parry's Grove, Bristol BS9 1TT. Cheques may be sent in advance or you can pay on the door.**

**LOCAL POPULATION STUDIES & THE LOCAL POPULATION STUDIES SOCIETY  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE: SATURDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2002,  
The Law Faculty, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield Road, St ALBANS  
MIGRATION IN LOCAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES  
Sponsored by The Centre for Regional and Local History, University of  
Hertfordshire, LPS & the BSPS.**

- 9.30-10.30** Registration and coffee.  
**10.30-11.30** Migration, mobility and meaning: does migration matter? – Colin Pooley (University of Lancaster).  
**11.30-1.00** Regional and Local Migration Panel  
Surnames and the Hearth Tax returns as evidence for mobility and stability – David Hey (University of Sheffield).  
Patterns of internal migration and the search for cultural regions – Kevin Schürer (University of Essex).  
Migration trends in late 19<sup>th</sup> century Winchester – Mark Allen (King Alfred's, Winchester).  
**1.00-2.00** Lunch.  
**2.00-3.00** Immigrants in Britain 1900-2000: local and national perspectives – Colin Holmes (University of Southampton).  
**3.00- 4.30** International Migration Panel  
Migration and the 'New Cultural History' – Raingard Esser (University of the West of England).  
Reflections on the French-speaking communities of Southampton – Andrew Spicer (University of Exeter).  
Migration and British society 1500-1700 – Lien Luu (University of Hertfordshire).  
**4.30-5.0** Tea  
**4.30-6.0** Conference closes.

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**WEST OF ENGLAND AND SOUTH WEST WOMEN'S HISTORY NETWORK  
presents**

**A WORK-IN-PROGRESS SEMINAR**

**at the University of the West of England St Matthias Campus Fishponds, Bristol  
On the morning of Saturday March 16<sup>th</sup> 2002**

Every year the West of England and South Wales Women's History Network hosts informal work-in-progress days in different venues which allow new researchers a forum to receive constructive feedback on their work.

**All members and non-members welcome to attend**

**For further information email [Katherine.Holden@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Katherine.Holden@uwe.ac.uk),  
Tel 0117 344 4395 or contact:**

**June Hannam, Faculty of Humanities, University of the West of England,  
St Matthias Campus, Oldbury Court Road, Fishponds Bristol BS16 2JP  
Email: [June.Hannam@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:June.Hannam@uwe.ac.uk)**

**PUBLIC REPRESENTATION AND PRIVATE MOURNING:  
COMMEMORATION AND MEMORIAL AT THE WATERSHED MEDIA CENTRE  
BRISTOL MARCH 15<sup>TH</sup>-16<sup>TH</sup> 2002**

**This two day transdisciplinary conference is hosted by The Research Centre for Contextual, Public and Commemorative Art, Faculty of Art, Media and Design, University of the West of England.**

The conference will explore relationships between ritual and function of memorial and arts practices that engage with the place and role of commemoration within the public and the private sphere:

- ❖ How does memorial to ‘The Unknown Prisoner’ or ‘The Unknown Soldier’ function within the public and private sphere?
- ❖ Can memorial provide a focus for grieving, a place of remembrance?
- ❖ What is the relationship between memorial, remembrance, forgetting and absence?
- ❖ What is the function of memorials that attempt to explore the history of Slavery or the Holocaust?
- ❖ What means of representation can address the conditions found within repressive societies – is it possible to give public representation to the ‘Disappeared’ within Argentina or Colombia, for example?
- ❖ What ethics are involved when the private becomes public through the display of personal objects, as in the filming of the wreck of the Titanic, or the display of the shoes, spectacles and other belongings of the victims of the Holocaust?

**Welcome and introductory paper by Professor Paul Gough Dean of the Faculty of Art, Media and Design, University of the West of England.**

Paul Gough has made art and written and broadcast extensively on the iconography and spaces of conflict.

**Other speakers**

Edna Aizenberg	Mark Cousins	Madge Dresser	Barbara Hunt
Katja Jedermann	Dr. Hilda Kean	Prof. Neil Leach	Paul Martin
Dr. Malcolm Miles	Clive Myer	Alison Rowley	Judith Rugg
Dr. Andrew Spicer			

**For more information, please contact:**

**Jane Calow Research Fellow, CPCA Research Centre, Faculty of Art Media and Design, University of the West of England, Bower Ashton Campus, Kennel Lodge Road, off Clanage Road, Bristol BS3 2JT  
E-mail [jane.calow@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:jane.calow@uwe.ac.uk)**

**THE WEST OF ENGLAND AND SOUTH WALES WOMEN'S HISTORY NETWORK**  
**8<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE: GENDER, LEISURE AND IDENTITY**  
**University of Glamorgan, Pontypridd Wales**  
**29 June 2002**

In recent years leisure has become a major topic of research in history. This conference aims to correct some of the imbalances in this research by exploring the intricate relations between leisure, gender and identity. Individual papers or panels are invited from academics, postgraduate students and independent scholars. We encourage submissions on a wide range of topics, which could include:

- |                                  |                              |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ❖ leisure and religion           | ❖ leisure and respectability |
| ❖ leisure and education          | ❖ leisure and the body       |
| ❖ leisure and class              | ❖ leisure and urbanisation   |
| ❖ leisure and family             | ❖ the economy of leisure     |
| ❖ leisure and politics           | ❖ the politics of leisure    |
| ❖ leisure and national identity  | ❖ girls, boys and leisure    |
| ❖ leisure and space              | ❖ idleness                   |
| ❖ leisure and social empowerment |                              |

Proposals for papers and panels on any region or period are invited but we particularly welcome papers on the Medieval and Early Modern period. Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be sent to

**Fiona Reid or Henrice Altink University of Glamorgan, School of HASS  
Pontypridd CF37 1DL Wales email freid1@glam.ac.uk or haltink@glam.ac.uk**

The deadline for abstracts is **30 April 2002**. When submitting your abstract, provide your name, preferred mailing address, email address and phone number

**WANTED! CAVES, GROTTOS AND HOLES IN THE GROUND UNDER BRISTOL, BATH AND  
SURROUNDING AREAS**

The popular book "Secret Underground Bristol" is to be up-dated, expanded and republished in Spring next year, and the author needs your help! "Secret Underground Bristol" explores caves, grottoes, mines, cellars, medieval conduits, springs and sewers. If you know of any new discoveries, up-dates on the information included in the first edition (in 1991) or any interesting underground features that were omitted, I would be delighted to hear from you. The book is being extended to include Bath, and possibly Weston and nearby villages too, if there is anything interesting to cover. I am particularly keen to hear about these areas. "Secret Underground Bristol and Bath" has the financial backing of the Bristol Junior Chamber of Commerce and will be very attractively produced with quality photography and illustrations. **So please contact me, Sally Watson, on: Telephone: 01179422711 Fax: 01179422711 e-mail: sally@watnot.free-online.co.uk**

**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:

**Dr Kath Holden, Regional History Centre,  
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 or Regional.Historian@uwe.ac.uk**