

Welcome from the Editor

Welcome to our July 2017 newsletter in its new style but containing the same familiar wide variety of contributions which show that the hard work by many people continues to fulfil the County Trust's purpose of producing Big Red Books for those areas of the county still not covered. During the next six months we are really looking forward to the publication of a Cheltenham 'short' on the town's history before the spa and making contributions to both the Gloucester History Festival and the Cheltenham Literary Festival. Please keep an eye on and an ear open for the local media for more details closer to the time.

As always my thanks go to all the contributors to this newsletter and as usual to John Chandler, our Consultant Editor, for another excellent production, and to Jonathan Comber, the Trust's treasurer, who has collected the various contributions for me. We hope you find the newsletter informative and enjoy reading what follows. If you have any comments or further ideas please let me know: dhaldred@btinternet.com.

David Aldred
Editor

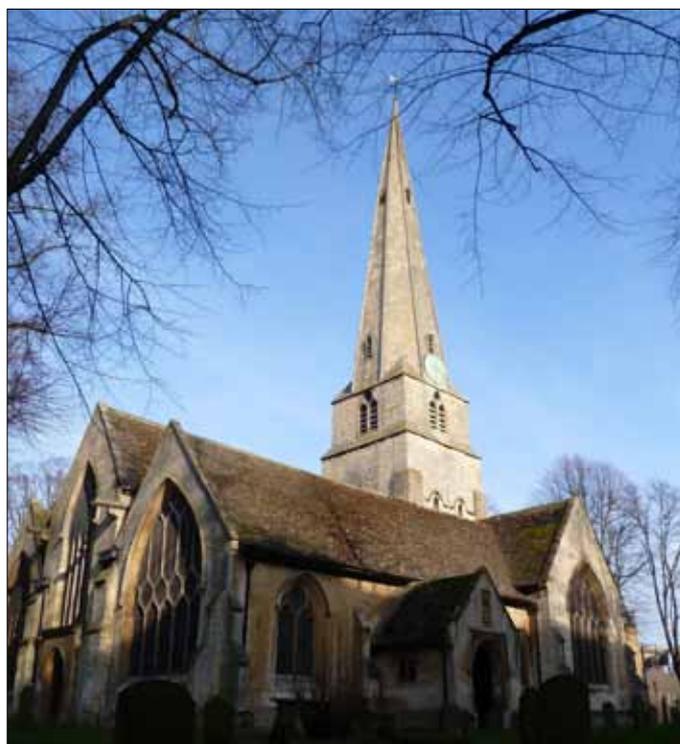
Report from the Trust

The Great Survey of Winchester – what happened next?

We had a full house when Angus Winchester, current general editor of the VCH, visited us back in February as part of his fact-gathering tour of all the active VCH counties. He had several more places to visit after us, so it was not until April that he was

able to summarise his thoughts, resulting in a series of recommendations which the VCH Advisory Board considered in May. These have been fairly widely circulated, and I won't replay them in detail here (but do ask if you would like to see them).

Because of the amount of input from the counties, for the most part the recommendations were very much the sort of thing the Board had been hoping to hear, and there was pretty general support for them – offset by a continuing worry that the central office doesn't have the capacity to make as rapid progress as we would all wish. In this regard, everyone agreed that the leadership of the VCH merits a proper appointment, considerably more than Angus's one day a week, so the university was left in no doubt that Angus's post, once his year is up in November, has to be considerably enhanced. Further changes are under way in the University hierarchy this summer, so it's a case of 'watch this space'.



Not much survives of medieval Cheltenham - the minster church is a notable exception

VCH Gloucestershire

Newsletter 7 July 2017

On publications, the view was that in future all VCH publications should be available in both print and digital formats, and that the branding of what is already online needs a lot of attention – for example, VCH material on British History Online attracts a high percentage of the visits to the site, but there's little to show the casual user that it is VCH they are consulting. The University would like to see some form of income generation from online content; this might be achievable for future productions, but virtually impossible to apply retrospectively – the VCH is very different in character from (for example) the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, which was 'born digital'. For counties that like Big Red Books, they are sure to continue, but in some areas, a series of parish paperbacks may be all that is reasonable to expect. It is generally felt that that the contract with the present publisher needs a thorough review, and Angus is pursuing this.

Several recommendations might be classed as housekeeping, but important enough to warrant specific attention. These included harmonising the guidance templates for VCH contributors (even more important when editorial effort in the central office is so scarce), and putting a little structure round the relationship between the counties and the centre – none of us now has any written agreement with the University, which is perhaps acceptable if everyone knows and trusts each other, but less good if misunderstandings should arise about who promised to do what by when. In straitened times, it was felt there should be active arrangements for experienced VCH practitioners to pass on or share expertise with newbies, and that counties might do more to team up and pool resources to employ professional staff. Once again, this is likely to require some central coordination – by whom?

Angus was vocal on the fact that the national profile of the VCH is almost non-existent, and that serious effort needs to be put into central publicity – an echo of previous pleas, about which frankly little has been done in recent years. His proposal for achieving a big difference here is to roll the 'Cumbria model' out nationally – so that for every parish in every county, there is, at the minimum, a VCH-branded short summary history plus useful links – which for places where the VCH work has been done, would of course lead to those accounts. In this way, the VCH could genuinely represent itself as the national project for local history. The idea is

simply expressed, but of course (taking Glos as our local example) 'someone' would then have to do 300+ parish mini-histories, to a common format, and I have the distinct impression our volunteers feel they are busy enough already, thank you! Anyway, the central office is going to make a bid for separate funding for a central coordinator who might be able to design and lead such a project, so it's very likely we shall hear more on this. If it really achieves the aim of making the VCH better known, it will be worth it.

While the central office team remain very stretched, there's no doubt that a more positive atmosphere now prevails, and I think we can expect to see useful progress on some if not all of these initiatives as the months go by. Fingers crossed! Nearer to home, I hope you all have marked the VCH events at the Gloucester History Festival and the Cheltenham LitFest in your diaries – see elsewhere in this issue.

James Hodsdon
Chairman GCHT

From our County Co-ordinator

Thank Heavens for Volunteers

The central importance of volunteers to the continued work of the VCH throughout the country has again been underlined by the strategic review produced by Angus Winchester. It was heartening, when we discussed this document at our June Academy meeting, to hear such positive responses to the proposals. As well as the volunteers who work on particular volumes, I would like to pay tribute to those people who are contributing to our work more generally. A number of people have transcribed probate inventories, which generally cover the period 1650-1750. As well as providing information about individuals, these sources have also been used to assess levels of wealth, domestic comfort and literacy within and across communities. If you see me disappearing into the Family History Centre on a Monday afternoon, then I'm off to check a transcript against the image of the original in Ancestry. Once I've resolved any issues, the transcriptions are converted to PDF and uploaded to VCH Explore (<https://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/explore/>). I'm currently working my way through South Gloucestershire and so far have loaded about 35 inventories for Little Sodbury, Old Sodbury, Oldbury



Two of our stalwarts - a third seems to have sloped off for a break

and Dyrham. My overwhelming impression is that they were producing an awful lot of cheese... We also have Judy Kimber transcribing early wills for all the parishes covered by Volumes XIV-XVI (except where these are already published). Transcriptions for Cirencester and Cheltenham 1541-1550 are currently waiting for me to upload them to VCH Explore.

Jan Broadway

From our Consultant Editor

Gloucester History Festival and the VCH

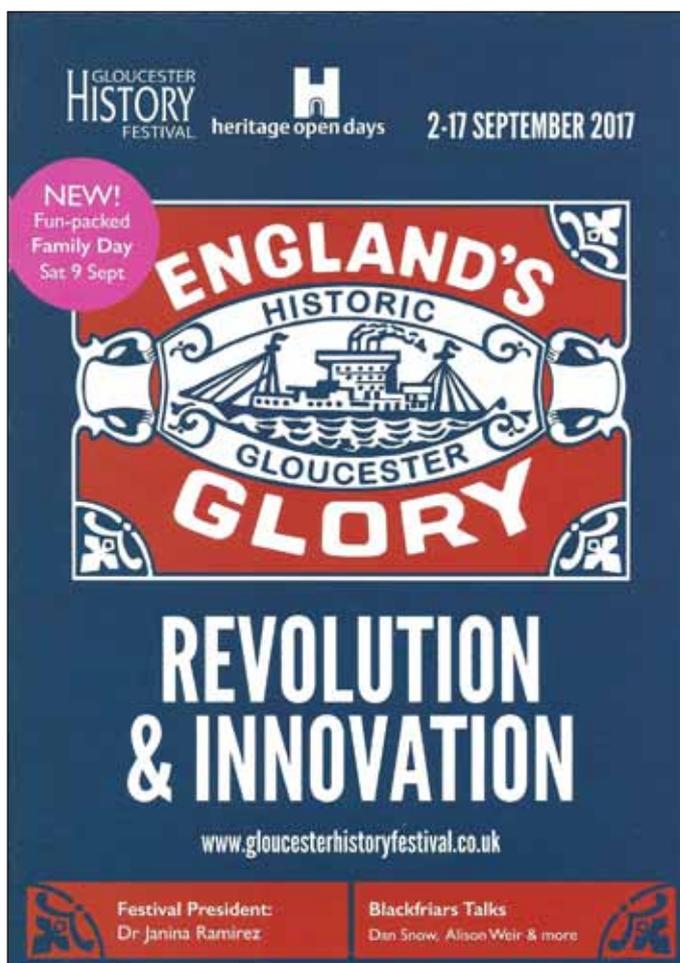
Last year's festival, which everyone declared was a great success, huge fun and a marvellous boost for the city, was also the occasion for launching our red book, Volume XIII. We can't match that this year, but the festival itself promises to be every bit as good. Dovetailed in with Gloucester Day (2 Sept) and Heritage Open Days (7-10 Sept), the festival continues until 17 Sept, presided over by Janina Ramirez and including big names such as Dan Snow, Tony Robinson, Roy Hattersley and Ian Mortimer.

Many of the talks and events are not specifically local, so it seemed a good idea for the VCH, as its contribution to the festivities, to sponsor an event about Gloucestershire history. We have decided to stage a kind of marathon or relay,

on Thursday 14 Sept, from 3pm-8pm, to be called 'Scriptorium Tag' (because we shall have the run of part of the medieval scriptorium of the Blackfriars). A team of ten historians, almost all associated with the VCH project, will deliver a series of short lectures about aspects of the county's history, in roughly chronological order. Each will be linked by a tag or baton – the closing sentence of one lecture will become the opening sentence of the next.

In the spirit of the festival we do not intend our event (which is free) to be too formal or serious. I hope that many of the speakers will hang around to listen to each other's performance, and our audience can come and go, eat and drink, question and heckle even.

For a free brochure and more information visit gloucesterhistoryfestival.co.uk Tel: 01452 396572 Booking opens 24 July. The Festival is delighted to offer a special 25% discount on all Blackfriars Talks tickets to VCH Gloucestershire Newsletter readers, meaning that £8 tickets will cost just £6. To take up this offer simply choose your events by visiting gloucesterhistoryfestival.co.uk to book your tickets or call the Box Office on 01452 396572 after 24 July and quote HHN Offer to receive your discount. This can't be combined with any other offer, discount or concession and is subject to availability.



And if that is not enough, on Friday 6 Oct at midday we have a slot at the Cheltenham Literature Festival, where I shall be talking about and promoting Cheltenham before the Spa, our imminent paperback publication.

John Chandler

Updates from our Contracted Editors

Cirencester

The VCH's work on Cirencester has been coming on apace. I have now completed many more chapters on a wide variety of subjects. Chapters on agriculture in Cirencester take us from John Leland's description of the 'champayn ground' (champaign – level open country) he saw in the 1530s as he rode out of the town towards Malmesbury, to the detailed farming statistics held at the National Archives from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The latter include incredible amounts of detail,

such as the acreage of turnips in the parish or the precise numbers of heifers in milk and of fowl. The agriculture chapters include histories of the corn mills, dairies and plant nurseries around the town.

There are also histories of the ancient Weavers' Company of Cirencester and the attempt made by rebellious townsmen in the sixteenth century to have a guild merchant granted by Queen Elizabeth, against the wishes of the lord of the manor, Sir John Danvers. Another chapter covers the development of Cirencester from 1825, when it had barely grown past its medieval boundaries, to 1945, by which time new suburbs had begun to surround the old town centre. There have also been fantastic contributions from Cirencester volunteers. John Loosley has written about the charities that operated (and in some cases operate) in the town. Anthea Jones has provided a meticulously researched piece on the population of Cirencester. All of the chapters have been posted online in the work in progress tab in the Gloucestershire county section of the VCH website: www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/gloucestershire.

We are currently working on a composite text, which will put all of the chapters in the order they will (probably) appear when they are eventually published as a Big Red Book. This will include all of the chapters about Cirencester previously posted online, covering politics, local government, public services, religion, social and cultural life and communications. We hope that a bit more organisation will make the large amount of finished work easier to follow and will showcase the great collective effort that has gone into researching Cirencester so far. We will be very pleased to hear from any enthusiastic readers, particularly those who are knowledgeable about Cirencester or any topics related to local history, and have comments, suggestions and complaints. Your contributions will be so helpful in ensuring that the resulting book is as comprehensive as possible.

The hard work (and fun of course...) doesn't finish there! I have already started researching Cirencester's history after 1945, to bring VCH coverage right up until the present day. I have picked up such esoteric information as the number of Buddhists in Cirencester in 2011 (58), and the identity of the Cirencester and Tewkesbury MP who was so fond of smoking that he was rumoured to enjoy the odd cigarette under the bedclothes, to really savour the taste (Nicholas Ridley). While this may sound like the preparation for a very particular themed pub quiz, it is just the kind of detail that makes VCH volumes so fascinating for local history

enthusiasts and so useful for academic historians. These chapters will be uploaded to the website soon, as well as more from that talented bunch, the Cirencester volunteers.

Francis Boorman

Cheltenham

We have continued to make good progress on writing the history of Cheltenham over the last six months, and we are now close to having complete drafts for all aspects of the town's history up until 1945. The period currently under study, 1852–1945, comprises the period when Cheltenham became a mature modern town. After the population explosion of the early 19th century, developments during the later 19th century reflected its new status.

Having been given parliamentary representation for the first time in 1832, elections were introduced into its local government in 1852, and it was incorporated as a municipal borough in 1876. The new authority was faced with the same problems concerning sanitation and the provision of clean water that concerned all large towns at this time, albeit in a town that was highly conscious of the importance of its reputation for salubrity as the basis of its wealth. As the importance of the spas waned, the town found for itself a new rôle through the provision of education to the sons and daughters of its well-to-do population. As well as the numerous independent schools that were founded from the middle of the century – Cheltenham College, Cheltenham Ladies' College, the Dean Close Memorial School – the town's ancient grammar was finally freed from the dead-hand of a sixty-year-long legal battle between the parish and the President and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, concerning the original endowment of the school. The town also acquired a reputation for the training of teachers, with the evangelical training colleges founded in St Paul's by Rev Francis Close, and St Hilda's College, founded as an adjunct to the Ladies' College by its formidable headmistress, Dorothea Beale. There were also numerous schools for the town's lower classes, and the first large council schools were built in 1906 after the passing of the Education Act four years earlier.

These themes will all be drawn out in the sections written by myself. In addition, once again the final text will have considerable input by our volunteers. Sally Self has produced a draft text of the

economic history of the period, highlighting the key industries and retailers, identifying the occupational diversity within the town, and also exploring the continuing agricultural nature of fringes of the parish, including the development of important dairying and market gardening enterprises. Tom Carter has contributed a history of the topographical and settlement history of the town, exploring the innovative projects for the provision of housing for the growing population, and highlighting the key developments in the town's built environment. It is anticipated that these draft histories will be finalised by the end of the summer.

Our volunteers continue with the long-standing project to catalogue the collection of the Cheltenham solicitors, Ticehurst Wyatt and Co. In particular, they have been listing the numerous deeds of enfranchisement of the middle of the 19th century, by which copyholders were able to purchase the freehold of their homes from the lord of the manor. Although the majority of these transactions were for comparatively small sums, the number of transactions amounted to several thousand pounds worth of business every year, and explains why the lordship of Cheltenham manor could change hands twice in the middle of the 19th century for tens of thousands of pounds at a time. To the material thus unearthed and enumerated by our volunteers we can add the large file at the National Archives, relating to arbitration between the Copyhold Commissioner, the lord of the manor of Cheltenham, and several prominent copyholders who objected to rights claimed by the lord, all of which will give a much fuller picture of the manor in the middle of the 19th century, by which time convention tells us it should have atrophied into redundancy.

Our volunteers are also busily indexing the scrapbooks of Cheltenham industrialist and local historian, Alfred Miles, which used to be kept at Cheltenham Library but which are now held by Gloucestershire Archives. Volunteer photographer Paul Stewart has now digitised all ten volumes of these scrapbooks, which contain a treasure-trove of Cheltenham history, especially for the period of Miles' lifetime, during the later 19th century and the early 20th century. Once the pages have been indexed, the scrapbooks will be mounted on a dedicated website, to be maintained by Cheltenham Local History Society, to ensure that these popular resources of local history are once again available for the use of the community.

Finally, the work of editing and tying up of loose ends for the paperback of Cheltenham Before the Spa was completed in the spring, and we are optimistic that the paperback will be ready for a launch to coincide with an event at the Cheltenham Literary Festival in October. Consisting of the medieval and early history of Cheltenham, written respectively by Beth Hartland and myself, it is a comprehensive account of Cheltenham's history before 1738. We're also looking forward to taking part in the Gloucester History Festival in September, and Beth and Alex will be speaking to the Cheltenham Local History Society in April 2018.

Alex Craven

Old Sodbury

Researching the social history of the three Sodbury parishes provides a good excuse for writing about, and even visiting, some of their numerous pubs. The Cross Hands hotel in Old Sodbury, which is situated next to the A46 to the east of the main village, is a former posting house with a history that can be traced back to the fourteenth century. The building takes its name from the inscription on an ancient coin that was found in the nearby Roman encampment in Little Sodbury, and during the seventeenth century its cellars were used to house criminals convicted by 'Bloody' Judge Jeffreys. The local court of petty sessions was convened well into the nineteenth century in what is now the hotel's main dining room, and friendly societies used the venue for their meetings in the early 1800s. The building served as a post office during the mid-nineteenth century and was also a working farmhouse on the Beaufort estate into the early decades of the twentieth century. Fortunately, it retained its licence throughout this period as the Cross Hands proved a popular 'watering hole' for the many navvies who built the local section of the Wootton Bassett to Bristol Patchway railway line and tunnel. Another Old Sodbury pub, The Dog on the Badminton Road in the village centre, was also frequented by the navvies, where the barman allegedly saved time serving his thirsty customers by dipping mugs into a bath of ale!

Although many UK pubs maintain that Queen Elizabeth I once stayed under their roof, the Cross Hands has a very genuine claim to fame

in terms of royal visitors. On the evening of 13 December 1981, over 100 people packed into the building when motorists were forced to abandon their cars and seek shelter during a blizzard, one of whom was Queen Elizabeth II. Unable to drive back to Windsor Castle after visiting Princess Anne at Gatcombe Park, the Queen and a small royal entourage were forced to make an extremely rare unscheduled stop at the hotel for some seven hours. To keep her presence unknown to all but the staff of the Cross Hands, the Queen entered the building via the service steps, which also served as the fire escape, and ate her dinner – allegedly chicken liver pâté and Dover sole, washed down with a gin and tonic – in the manager's private apartment. The Queen left the hotel just before midnight but her visit is celebrated in a commemorative plaque in the building, where guests can still ask to stay in the room that was once fit for a queen.

I will be finishing off my work on the social history of the Sodburies over the next few months, after which I will be leaving the VCH, somewhat reluctantly, in order to concentrate on other work commitments. Although my time working for the project has been only fairly brief, it has been an immensely enjoyable and educational experience, learning much about an area of the country that was relatively unknown to me. I wish my fellow editors, the volunteers and everyone else associated with the VCH Gloucestershire Academy my very best wishes for the future, and I much look forward to seeing the planned VCH 'Short' and red book volumes in print over the next few years.

Philip Baker

More from The Sodburies

And finally, since our last newsletter I have been busy editing the text for the Cheltenham short, writing the medieval sections for the three Sodbury parishes, and starting work on the medieval section for the parish of Dodington. I have also been editing the medieval Cirencester sections in conjunction with writing a paper for 'Digging up the Past' an evening of public lectures held in Cirencester on 16 June, which was part of the Abbey 900 celebrations.

Beth Hartland

Where are they Now?

We all wish Phil well for his future career and are grateful for the work he has been doing for us and with us. Of course he is the second of our editors to move on from working on Volume XIV. Dr Rose Wallis, author of *Yate*, now circulates in distinguished company. Here she is at the recent Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival, discussing her work on the legacy of the Martyrs story for the Dorchester Shire Hall project.



A Black and White Issue

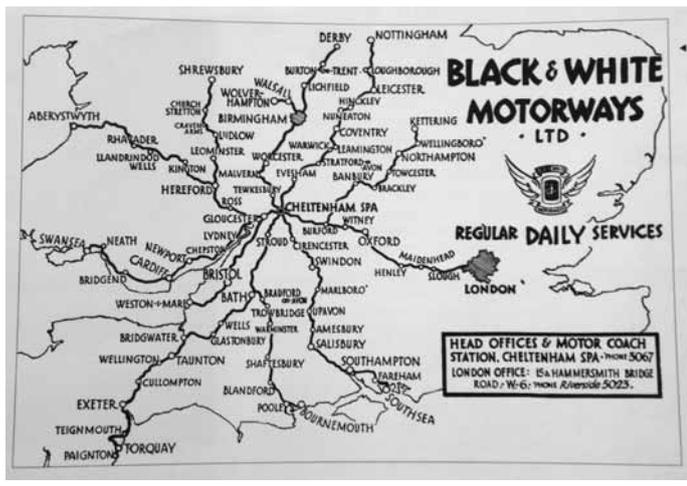
Being invited to lecture to the Cheltenham Local History Society is a sign that you've made it – so it was with some trepidation in April that I stood up in front of them (us, actually, as I am a member too). I'm also a 'frequent flyer' on National Express, and have long been intrigued as to how a partnership of some thirty separate coach companies can pretend to be a single entity, their identical-looking vehicles ebbing and flowing around Digbeth in downtown Birmingham, where for travellers it's all change (and usually wait).

I knew very well that this was not a new phenomenon. In fact it began around 1930 when long distance coach services were in their infancy. Then it was not Birmingham that was the hub, but Cheltenham, and this continued for over fifty years until the early 1980s. Older Cheltonians remember the daily gridlock at 2pm (later switched to 3pm) when the St Margaret's street coach station emptied out as vehicles attempted to set off to all points of the compass. But more than three decades on this is largely forgotten, and what was for decades an important aspect of the town's economic life does

not seem to have attracted much local research.

So I had found my subject. And I could point out more similarities with present-day National Express. The coaches, at least those based at Cheltenham, were uniformly – not white, but black and white, and the operation likewise involved a number of companies who came together to co-operate – as 'Associated Motorways', which was always abbreviated in the trade to 'the pool'. Why Cheltenham? Geographical determinism is an obvious answer – the great Cheltenham/Gloucester cross-roads of the A38 and A40, London to South Wales meets Midlands to the West Country. That also explains why the bonanza came to an end, with the opening in 1967 of the Severn Bridge and the development of the motorway network (and coaches with toilets, so there was no need to stop so often). But it is also the story of an enterprising individual, George Readings, who in 1926 established Black & White Motorways in Cheltenham, and began to operate long distance services to London and elsewhere, with fares which undercut the railways, and elegant coaches with state-of-the-art facilities. George over-reached himself, and his company was bought out in 1930 by Midland Red and a consortium of other bus companies, but they retained the Black & White name and livery, and their headquarters and centre of operations in Cheltenham. George himself opened a motor dealership in Cheltenham, served as mayor in 1956 and died in 1981.

My interest lay in the consequences of all this for Cheltenham, and I dug out some statistics. In the mid-1950s, the heyday of coach travel, up to 475 vehicles were needed on a busy day to run Black & White and Associated Motorways services, and almost all would have visited Cheltenham. More than a hundred coaches were based in the town. In 1967, when past its peak, Black & White still employed 219 staff – drivers, inspectors, mechanics – not to mention the legion of café-workers and others working around the coach station and dépôt. It must have represented a sizeable chunk of the town's economy. Added to this, for millions of travellers it put Cheltenham and the countryside around it on their radar, as they glimpsed Regency terraces and spectacular views through the coach window. Black & White not only stimulated but also catered for the resulting tourist trade, with coach excursions to the Cotswolds, Forest of Dean and other beauty spots, thus keeping Cheltenham's hoteliers and restaurateurs happy.



Cheltonians have always recognized that they are at the centre of the known world

The coach station closed in 1984 and the buildings were demolished in 1990. The site remains open, as a car park. The Black & White name continued to appear on some National Express vehicles until 1993, though there was no black any more, only white – with bits of blue and red, as can still be seen on the occasional long-distance coaches which serve Cheltenham today.

John Chandler

PS: I intend to submit a paper about the history of Black & White Motorways for next year's Cheltenham Local History Society Journal.

From the Archives

The Parents' National Educational Union (PNEU) in Cirencester Schools 1918-36 Part One

Researching the history of education in Cirencester for the VCH, I contacted Powells School and was given access to a number of logbooks, some of them containing references to the PNEU Scheme. The first note relates to a visit to the Boys' Department in 1918 by Mr Household (Secretary for Education for Gloucestershire LEA) and Miss Parish (General and Organising Secretary of the PNEU). There were also references to the 'Mason Scheme' and the PUS, or Parents Union School, and it became clear that the three terms were used almost interchangeably.

Charlotte Mason (1842 –1923) was an educationalist whose aim was to improve children's experience of education; having experience of a teacher training college, she understood the

limitations of the contemporary system and began to develop her own. In 1891 she established in Ambleside, Cumbria, a training school for those working with young children. She then founded the Parents' Union School (PUS), at which the children followed her educational philosophy and methods, and the PEU (Parents' Educational Union - the 'National' was added in 1892). The scheme was taken up in several English counties, with support from Ambleside, including advisory leaflets, conferences and local teachers' meetings.

The 'scheme' or methods rested on the principles that teachers should teach less and scholars learn more, that children are individuals, and that teaching should be directed to the child, rather than the whole class. 'The teacher is not there to thrust second-hand knowledge into the heads of the children. It is his or her duty to open doors in many different directions through which the children may walk in pursuit of knowledge, whilst he or she is there to guide and direct as occasion requires'. It is interesting to see how the issues raised by the scheme remain current 100 years on.

In Gloucestershire the PNEU had an influential advocate in the person of Horace Household 'to whose inspiration and zeal the local spread of the movement is mainly due.' (Wilts and Glos Standard 1927) Household argued against those who advocated a utilitarian curriculum for elementary school children, believing that equality and democracy are best served by a liberal education available to all. He also wanted to ensure that the experience of those in rural schools was not an impoverished one. Household kept a meticulous set of notebooks during his period of office, 1903-36, noting each of his many visits to schools. These provide a commentary on the implementation and impact of PNEU methods in Cirencester's schools. (GA/C/AE/R5/5)

Mason and Household believed in the use of 'books by the best authors' rather than textbooks that talked down to the pupils. The children read these, according to their age and ability, often working in groups. Each text or lesson was 'narrated' (rephrased in pupils' own words) or 'reported' in writing. This was regarded as good for the concentration as well as comprehension, developing a 'good, clear style in speaking and composition'. Powells school records show the arrival of these books on May 20 1927 by an invoice from E.J. Arnold for £3.9s.3d and 'During the holidays ordinary stocks and PNEU books were received from E J Arnold'. Books were also lent between local schools. Older children were given some

responsibility for their own learning as their reading skills developed.

Timetable arrangements were an important element of the scheme – lessons were short, and the ‘bookwork’ was concentrated in the morning. The scheme also had an influence on the organisation of classes - the Boys’ School entry of 1 April 1924 notes, ‘The school has been divided in accordance with the PNEU scheme’. The programmes of work were common across all participating schools and pupils sat the same, non-competitive examinations, set by the PUS team in Ambleside and returned there for what we would now call external marking.

At Powells, the first reference to the tests is in the Girls’ Department logbook of 31 March 1919 while entries for Dec 1922 and 1923 indicate their duration, ‘Examinations in connection with the PNEU scheme commenced this morning to continue throughout the week’. The Infant School logbook 23 March 1923 notes, ‘The examination finished today, for the PNEU School. The set of papers sent up were those of Edith Priest, aged 7 years. The test papers were on the whole well done by the whole form’. Perhaps only selected papers were sent to Ambleside for sample marking or perhaps Edith’s papers were sent as examples of a high standard of work.

In 1921 Household commented that Miss Risely’s class in Powells Boys School ‘are doing thoroughly sound PNEU work’. In 1923 she moved to the Girls’ Council School, where Household hoped she will raise the ‘very low standard’. She asked ‘if she might be allowed to have Miss Mason’s books and methods for they had done such splendid work in Powells Boys’. Of the Boys’ school in the same year, Household said: ‘The boys are reading. All take books home and most go to the Bingham Library’. In February 1923 he commented that Miss Baines wanted to adopt the PNEU programme in the Infant Department. Later he said that Miss Baines has a class of fifty but ‘the reading is marvellous – she is a wonderful teacher and Arnold will publish two of her books’.

Pam Morris

(Part Two will follow in the next newsletter. Ed.)

Gloucestershire Archives becomes the Heritage Hub

As we are all only too aware the building works at Alvin Street are coming on apace. To find out all

about it, and about everything else, do subscribe to the Heritage Hub newsletter, which comes out quarterly: <http://glos-heritage-hub.tfemagazine.co.uk/summer-2017>

From the Gloucester Journal, 23 May 1814

Monday, a female (the wife of John Ratcliffe, of Rodmarton, and the mother of 11 children) with a halter around her neck, was exhibited for sale in Cirencester market! She was received as a bargain, by a young man, for 2s. The parties were secured by order of the Magistrates.

Interestingly the same piece also appeared in:

Worcester Journal, 26 May 1814

Staffordshire Advertiser, 28 May 1814

Bristol Mirror, 28 May 1814

Public Ledger & Daily Advertiser, 30 May 1814

Bury and Norwich Post, 1 Jun 1814

Leicester Chronicle, 4 Jun 1814

Linda Viner

Bring Back Secretary Hand

Exploring the world of fonts and typefaces, as I sometimes do, I discovered that among the many free fonts you can download is one called Ancient Secretary Hand (just Google ‘secretary + hand + fonts’). So naturally I did. The result is somewhat too regular to be wholly convincing, inevitably, and the leading (spacing between lines) is absurdly wide by comparison with documents actually written in secretary hand (that can be overcome by accessing the paragraph menu, set line spacing to ‘Exactly’ and put in a point size roughly half that of the character size). Apart from the novelty of being able to annoy people by sending them reports, memos, etc in secretary hand, it struck me that it is actually quite a good way of improving one’s palaeographical skills. Just convert a piece of text and then try to decipher it. Overleaf is what you have just been reading:

John Chandler

Exploring the world of fonts and typefaces, as I sometimes do, I discovered that among the many free fonts you can download is one called *Ancient Secretary Hand* (just Google 'secretary + hand + fonts'). So naturally I did. The result is somewhat too regular to be wholly convincing, inevitably, and the leading (spacing between lines) is absurdly wide by comparison with documents actually written in secretary hand (that can be overcome by accessing the paragraph menu, set line spacing to 'Exactly' and put in a point size roughly half that of the character size). Apart from the novelty of being able to annoy people by sending them reports, memos, etc in secretary hand, it struck me that it is actually quite a good way of improving one's palaeographical skills. Just convert a piece of text and then try to read it.

Gloucestershire County History Trust

Patrons

Dame Janet Trotter
Mr John Berkeley
Professor Christopher Dyer
Mavis, Lady Dunrossil
Mr David Setchell

Trustees

Dr James Hodsdon (Chair)
Mr John Loosley (Hon. Secretary)
Mr Jonathan Comber (Hon. Treasurer)

Mr David Aldred
Ms Alison Alden
Miss Heather Forbes
Dr Nicholas Kingsley
Sir Nicholas Mander, bt.

County Co-ordinator

Dr Jan Broadway
Gloucestershire Archives
Clarence Row, Alvin Street
Gloucester
GL1 3DW

Website: <http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/gloucestershire>