



Green Park: Residence, Residents and Change in the 19th century

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Green Park Buildings – a micro study

Before it was bombed in 1942, number 6 Green Park Buildings displayed a bronze plaque telling us that essayist Thomas de Quincey had lived there. His mother, the relatively well-off, widowed Mrs Quinsey [*sic*] rented this new house from 1797 until 1801, while Thomas was a pupil at King Edward's School.¹ Three years later, in 1804, George Austen, his wife, and his two daughters, Cassandra and novelist Jane, moved into number 3. Who else lived in Green Park Buildings, for how long, and what residential changes took place? This essay aims to answer these and other questions through a micro study of social structural change from Georgian to late Victorian Bath, through the focus on the inhabitants in this street.

The view is set against the broader background of the city, particularly that described in Graham Davis and Penny Bonsall's *A History of Bath: Image and Reality*.² Chapter 5 looks at the city



fig 1: Green Park Buildings, Bath, pub. 16 July 1860. Steel engraving
Bath in Time - Bath Central Library Collection

Facing: Green Park Buildings, 1969. Photograph by Lesley Green-Armytage
Bath in Time - Bath Preservation Trust: Building of Bath Collection

between 1820 and 1910, as a place of 'Genteel Residence' and an emergent small-scale industrial city. Bath was undergoing significant change. The population increased by two-fifths from 1811 to 1851, suburbs were built, and there were changes to transport, including the arrival of three railways between 1840 and 1874. Abandoned by the aristocracy, it was no longer a fashionable place to visit and attempts at revival were largely unsuccessful. Increasingly, however, the wealthy upper class, and later the middle classes began choosing it for long-term residence.

At the time construction of Green Park Buildings commenced, Shropshire visitor Katherine Plymley recorded in her diary: 'Bath is on the whole a good retreat for elderly ladies, elderly gentlemen, widows, and single women'. She could have added retired military officers and clergymen.³

Numbers - Houses, Population, Males and Females.

Green Park Buildings was constructed on land known as Kingsmead, west of Bath city centre, outside the city walls and on the flood plain of the River Avon, not an ideal place to erect houses [fig. 1]. Building work began at a bad time; there was a severe financial crisis,



fig 2: Green Park Buildings, East and West (with numbers indicated in blue), 1881 Ordnance Survey
Bath Central Library Collection

which lasted for well over ten years. This bankrupted speculators, builders and two of Bath's banks. It is not surprising, therefore, that it took from c.1793 until 1809 before all forty houses were complete. A *Bath Chronicle* advertisement for a sale at the White Hart Inn in June 1794 exemplifies the problems: 'Property: Fennell bankruptcy, contd - lot 1/3, f/hold dwelling house being erected & known as 6 Green Park Bldgs, Bath ...' ⁴ Early residents, whatever their status, lived adjacent to a building site for many years.

Originally, there were two uneven rows, diverging southwards from Seymour Street to the River Avon. Both rows had smaller and larger four-storey houses with basements and vaults. The eastern row (now demolished) was always consecutively numbered 1 to 19, from the north. The western row, initially 1 to 21 in the same direction, was renumbered 20 to 40, the opposite (present) way, in 1830. Here, the later numbers, are used as shown on the map, and the present name, 'Green Park'. [fig. 2]. ⁵

From completion in 1809 to the 1841 census, rate books indicate that, essentially, all houses were continuously occupied. From 1841 to 1911 only the 1861 census, with 290 residents, the highest recorded, showed every house occupied. This accounted for approximately 0.5% of Bath's population. ⁶

If population numbers in Green Park were similar at the beginning and middle of the nineteenth-century, early totals would have been about 280. Table 1 shows the variations in population, the average numbers of people per house and information about the numbers of men and women. These figures hide large differences: for example, Ann Errington's 'Boarding Academy' at number 22, had twenty residents in 1851 while at number 4, in 1901, there was only a lone lodging-house keeper.

Table 1 Green Park Buildings Census Data Houses, Population, Males and Females

Census	1841	%	1851	%	1861	%	1871	%	1881	%	1891	%	1901	%	1911	%
Total Houses	40		40		40		40		40		40		40		40	
No. Houses occ	38		39		40		37		36		32		34		30	
Total population	262		266		292		260		255		232		186		157	
Ave per house	6.9		6.8		7.3		7.0		7.1		7.3		5.5		5.2	
FullHseEquiv (Ave x 40)	276		273		292		281		283		290		219		209	
Head of hshld (HoH)	39	14.9	46	17.3	54	18.5	41	15.8	39	15.3	32	13.8	31	16.7	28	17.8
Males (HoH)	21	8.0	22	8.3	24	8.2	21	8.1	25	9.8	18	7.8	23	12.4	21	13.4
Females (HoH)	18	6.9	24	9.0	30	10.3	20	7.7	14	5.5	14	6.0	8	4.3	7	4.5
Prportn Fem. HoH	0.46		0.52		0.56		0.49		0.36		0.44		0.26		0.25	
Males Total	56	21.4	52	19.5	62	21.2	61	23.5	63	24.7	50	21.6	49	26.3	47	29.9
Females Total	206	78.6	214	80.5	230	78.8	199	76.5	192	75.3	182	78.4	137	73.7	110	70.1
Married			23	8.6	29	9.9	27	10.4	23	9.0	21	9.1	22	11.8	26	16.6
% Married/All F				10.7		12.6		13.6		12.0		11.5		16.1		23.6
Widows			26	9.8	20	6.8	17	6.5	17	6.7	22	9.5	10	5.4	12	7.6
% Widows/All F				12.1		8.7		8.5		8.9		12.1		7.3		10.9
Unmrrd others			165	62.0	181	62.0	155	59.6	152	59.6	139	59.9	105	56.5	72	45.9
% Unmrrd others/ALL M+F				62.03		61.99		59.62		59.61		59.91		56.45		45.86
% Unmrrd others/all F				77.1		78.7		77.9		79.2		76.4		76.6		65.5
Ratio 1M:x F x=	3.7		4.1		3.7		3.3		3.0		3.6		2.8		2.3	
No. of Female-Only houses	9		11		10		9		2		8		6		7	

Rates and directory data from the earliest days indicate, and census data confirm, that females were always by far the greater proportion of residents. Until 1901, they outnumbered males by more than three to one, roughly twice the figure for some parts of Bath.⁷ Almost 90 per cent of women, including widows and children, were unmarried. Unsurprisingly, we find that in five out of eight census years, one fifth or more of all occupied houses had only female occupants. Generally, they lived in the smaller properties. These high numbers of single women in Green Park would clearly reinforce any image Bath had as a place for 'maiden aunts' (though how many Green Park actually contributed to that idea is not obvious).

Residents and Residence

Information from directories, newspapers, deeds, wills and family histories gives helpful insight into the origins, backgrounds and occupations of early residents. A clergyman arrived in 1797, two colonels in 1799 and then more clergymen, including the retired George Austen. Other early arrivals were local printer and bookseller, Samuel Hazard, who took in lodgers; Sir William Addington, a retired London lawyer, and the earliest with a title; Lady Louisa Lennox, perhaps the most elevated of all Green Park residents; the Moncks, George and Lady Araminta, who had substantial lands and property in Ireland, and two local attorneys, both involved in transactions

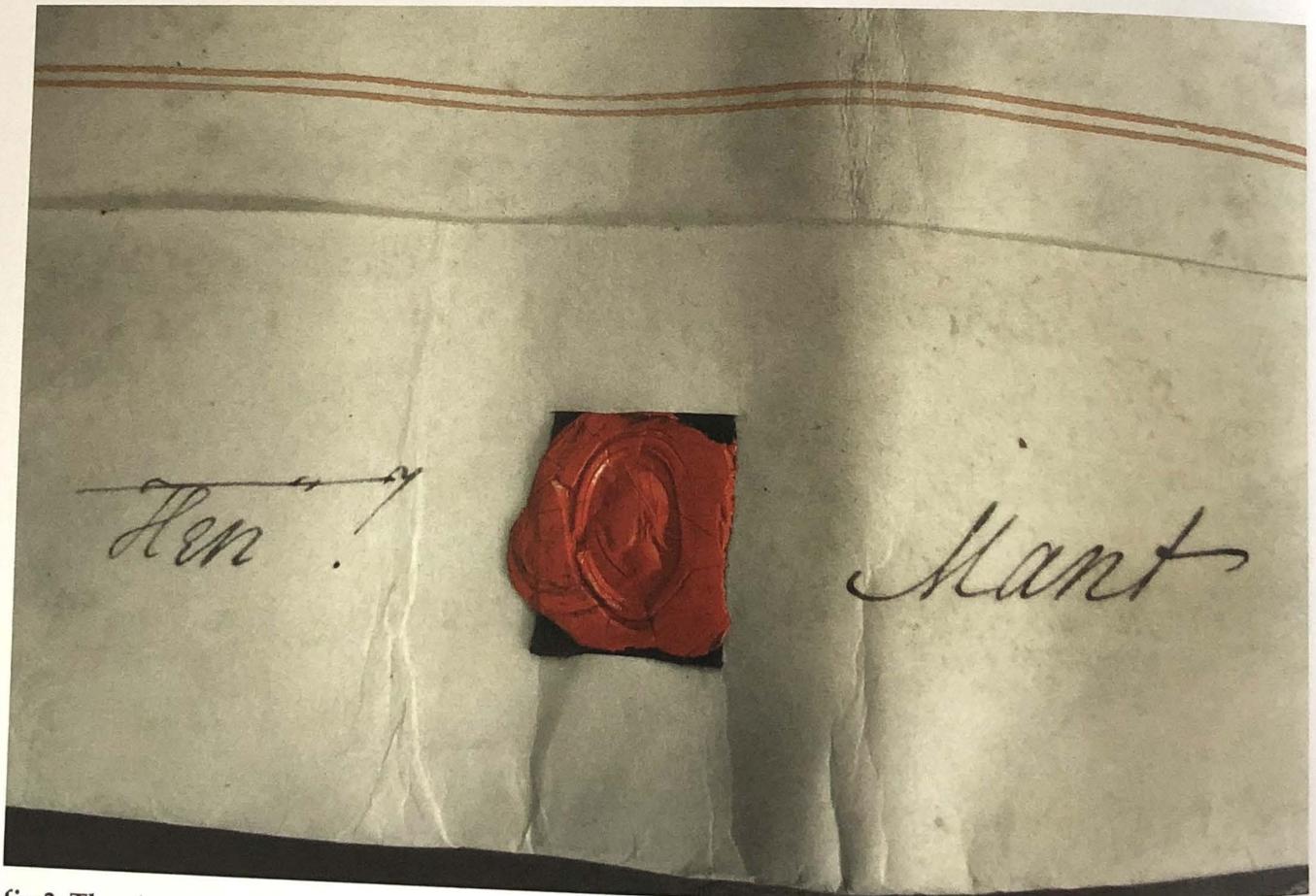


fig 3: The signature and seal of Henry Mant, Attorney, on a 'Grant Release and Assignment' dated 30th June 1802 relating to 4 Green Park Buildings.
Bath Record Office - Bath & North East Somerset Council

relating to properties in Green Park. One of them, Henry Mant, 'Gentleman' and Freeman of the city, owned land in Widcombe. [fig. 3]. He also had industrial interests.

Lack of adequate data means that durations of residence can only be determined very approximately. The following statements are, therefore, only indicative. Of 325 selected residents (or families) between 1797 and 1895, a quarter stayed less than two years, half less than five years, and almost three-quarters less than ten years.

Some, like the de Quinceys, moved away; others, like George Monck and the Revd. Austen, died soon after their arrival. Within seven months, after one of the shortest of all stays, the remaining Austens had to move to somewhere cheaper, whilst Lady Araminta and her daughter could afford to stay until Araminta's death in 1818.

In 41 cases residence appears to have exceeded twenty years. Relations succeeded earlier occupants. Henry Mant died in 1845, at the age of 70 after 44 years at number 4, and was followed by descendants. The Trails were next door for 45 years and their Wemyss relations for another fifteen. At number 34 lived the five Ladies Keith [fig. 4], three sisters, a sister-in-law and her daughter, family of the Earl of Kintore, from 1817 until they died, the last in 1864. Other cases include those who lived in more than one house, each for long periods. Priscilla Rowe was there, in two houses, for a total of fifty years. But all were outdone by Cécile, youngest daughter of Roman Catholic, French Revolution refugees, the Marquis Auguste and Marquise Agathé de Sommery. The widowed Agathé, moved to 37 Green Park Buildings with her daughters in 1829. Seventy years later, aged ninety-five, Cécile died at number 35.

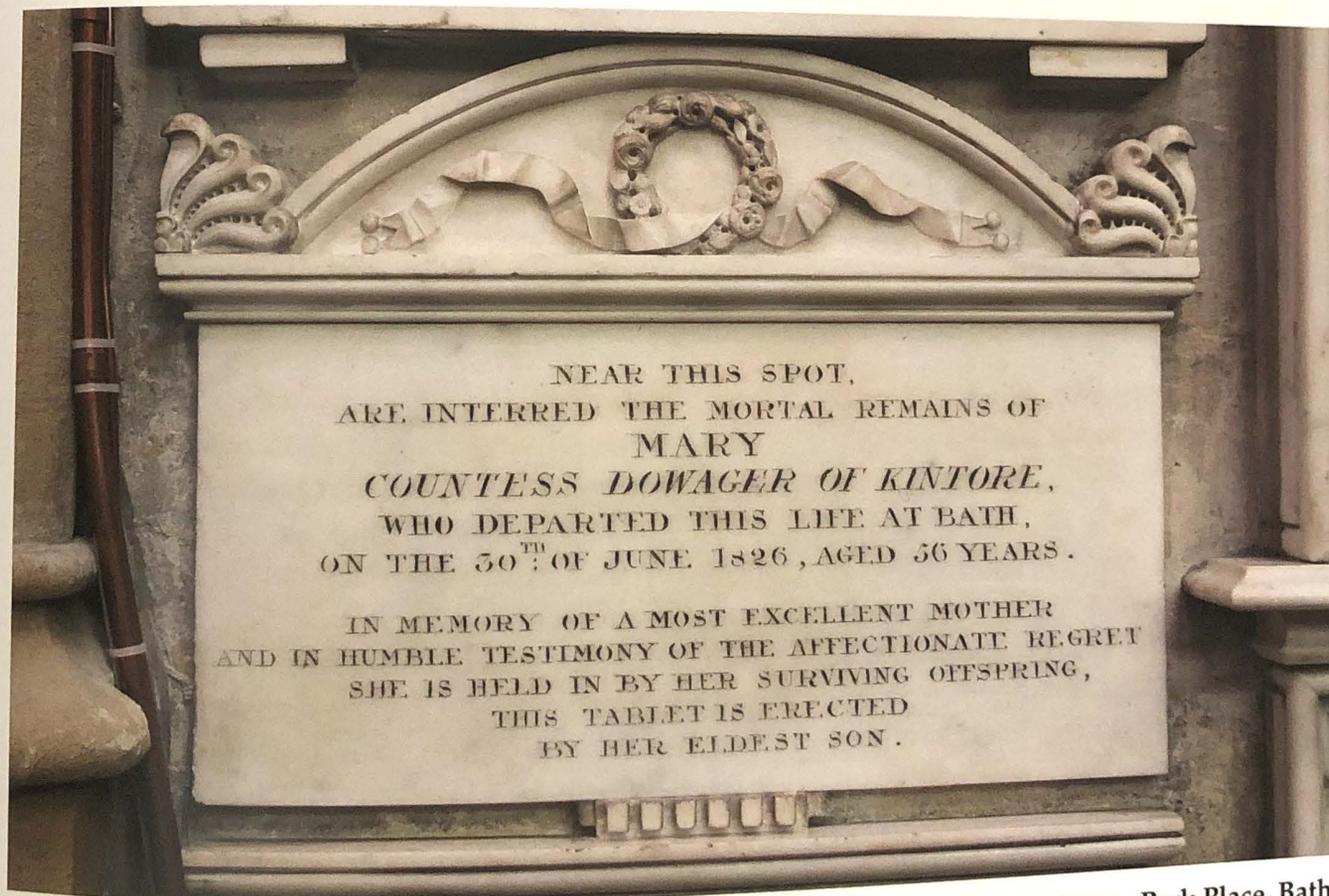


fig 4: Lady Maria (otherwise Mary) Keith-Falconar, née Bannerman, died at 37 Green Park Place, Bath, on 30 June 1826. Memorial Inscription, Bath Abbey

Photograph by Dan Brown

Other residents were well known in the local scene; for instance General Donkin, Henry Mant, and the de Sommers, who made their mark as vigorous supporters of the new Catholic Church. Fanny Burney records the de Sommers and the Ladies Keith in her diary, as her friends.⁸

As for Bath being a place for retired military men, Green Park certainly played its part. More than thirty, with ranks from naval captain to admiral and army major to general, lived in one or other of twenty-seven houses at sometime during the century. At the end of the first decade and in the 1840s and 1860s, as many as seven were in residence at a time, but in 1891 only one remained. The most notable may have been General Robert Donkin [fig. 5] and Sir

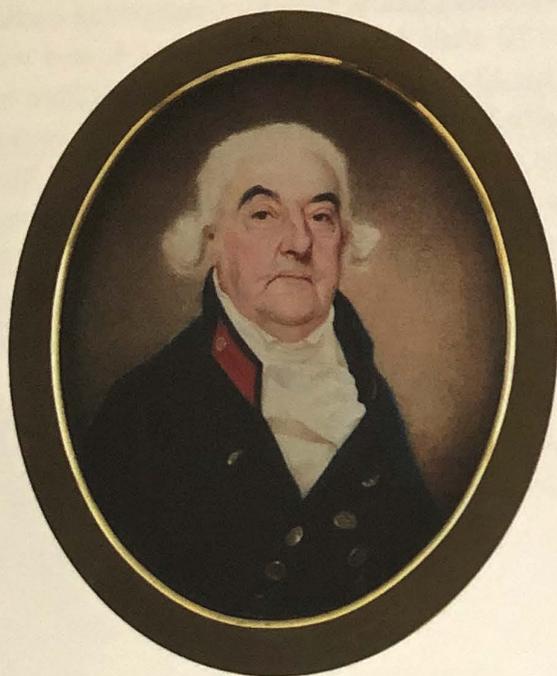


fig 5: Miniature of General Robert Donkin (1727-1821), born in Morpeth, Northumberland, who was the first occupant of house number 17 in 1808
Holburne Museum, Bath

William Napier. Aged 81 in 1808, Donkin became the first occupant of number 17. He died there thirteen years later; St Swithin's Church, Walcot, displays his memorial tablet. Briefly, during 1841, Napier, famous for his history of the Peninsular Wars, lived at number 19. In the 1880s. Surgeon Major T E Hale, awarded the Victoria Cross for Crimean gallantry, lived at number 15.

Clergymen came to Green Park in similar numbers to military men, and lived in as many houses. Davis and Bonsall's *History* explains part of the story: before 1871 the number of clergymen increased as the city grew and new parishes were created. For much of the century, at least three clerics were in residence at any one time. The most erudite was the Revd Dr. William Trail, who, before taking the cloth, had been professor of mathematics at Marischal College, Aberdeen. He retired from the church through ill health then lived at number 3 until eighty-five years old, dying in 1831. Sadly, his memorial in Bath Abbey is obscured. His well-connected wife Lady Frances, daughter of the Earl of

Wemyss, remained there until 1848. Two ministers were responsible for new parishes carved from Walcot parish. High-church priest, Father Sissmore, rector of Holy Trinity Church, James Street West, [fig. 2] lived at number 31, a small house, for two decades from 1890. At the same time, Angus Clerk, evangelical vicar of neighbouring St Paul's, on the corner of Monmouth Place and Chapel Row, lived in a larger house, number 12. Others were retired and some, like Morris Yescombe, had 'no cure of souls'. He lived at number 21 for over thirty years from 1854.

Bath had many lodging houses. Green Park sometimes had as many as eight, often run by women. Frequently, they accommodated more than one household. In the mid-century decades, the proportion of 'heads' who were women hovered around half [table 1]. By 1911, it was only a quarter. In 1851 and 1861, widows and unmarried women were practically equal in number (about a dozen of each), then the balance tipped in favour of widows.

A 'Useful Servant'

Throughout the century, the most common single occupation in Green Park was that of servant. Helpfully, Samuel and Sarah Adams' *Complete Servant* of 1825, lists 'the number of servants usually employed, according to income.' With an income of £100 or guineas a year 'a Widow or unmarried lady may keep a Young Maid Servant'. For £200 a year, a couple with no children may afford a 'professed Servant-Maid of All-Work'. A 'Gentleman', with a family and an annual income of £500-£600, may have 'three Females and one Man', and so on. Male servants, on whom tax was payable, indicated wealth and status.⁹

At least two-fifths of the Green Park population appear as servants in the four census years from 1841, and it seems reasonable to assume that this was so from the 1790s. Table 2 gives the numbers of male and female servants, the average per house, and how many houses had how many servants, for each census year. There were governesses and housekeepers but most appear simply as 'servant', general or domestic. More specifically, there were house, kitchen, parlour, nurse and ladies' maids. One hopes that each was a 'Useful Maid', as Doctor James Wigmore described his 26-year-old servant Louisa Bray, in 1901. Roughly a fifth were described as 'cook', though others must also have had this responsibility.

The age-range of servants was wide. The four youngest included Annie Snook, aged fourteen, from Bath, Orpha Wilcocks from Durham, Sophy Ashley from Hertfordshire, and Thomas Stanafer from Nantwich, all aged fifteen. Thomas, a page, was one of five servants looking after Augusta Pennington, her two nieces and a nephew at number 19 [fig. 6]. At the other end of the scale were Mary Hudson, 73, Hannah Steeds, 77, and Miriam Cordery from Somerset. Employed since before 1851, Miriam was, twenty years later, at the age of 82, still a 'ladies maid' to Mary Pitman, a widow half her age.

Table 2 Green Park Buildings Census Data Servant Numbers

Census	1841	%	1851	%	1861	%	1871	%	1881	%	1891	%	1901	%	1911	%
No. Houses occupied	38		39		40		37		36		32		34		30	
Total GP Population	262		266		292		260		255		232		186		157	
% Srvts-ALL / GP popln.	119	45.4	118	44.4	122	41.8	113	43.5	76	29.4	84	38.2	54	29.0	36	22.9
No. / House	3.13		3.03		3.05		3.05		2.11		2.63		1.59		1.20	
Male Servants / % GP Popln	15	5.7	16	6.0	9	3.1	7	2.7	1	0.4	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Female Srvnts / % GP Popln	104	39.7	102	38.3	113	38.7	106	40.8	76	29.8	83	35.8	54	29.0	36	22.9
No./Hse	2.7		2.6		2.8		2.9		2.1		2.6		1.6		1.2	
% F-Srvnt/All Females		50.0		47.7		49.1		53.3		38.5		45.6		39.4		32.7
No. of Houses with																
0 servants	1		1		0		2		2		2		7		11	
1 servants	1		0		5		1		7		1		10		10	
2 servants	10		10		6		7		12		11		9		5	
3 servants	11		20		16		16		12		12		6		4	
4 servants	12		3		8		7		1		5		2		0	
5 servants	1		4		5		2		1		1		0		0	
6 servants	2		1		0		2		1		0		0		0	
No. of Vacant Houses	2		1		0		3		4		8		6		10	

Successive census data are revealing in measuring social change over the Victorian period and in the personal lives of residents. Mothers worked with daughters and sisters worked with sisters. Longevity of service also becomes evident. Sisters Ann and Elizabeth Mills worked for Priscilla Rowe for over ten years from the 1830s, then Elizabeth left when Priscilla moved from one side of the park to the other, in 1852. When Priscilla died in 1877, Ann, aged 70, was probably still there. Of all the servants, she was the one employed continuously in the same household for the longest time; over half her life. Next door, in 1861, at least five servants continued to serve the last of the five Ladies Keith. Three were there for more than twenty years: the housekeeper, Cecilia Brown, Scottish born like her ladies, George Cullen, the butler,

from Westonzoyland on the Somerset levels, and lady's maid Ann Pinkett, from Bath. The de Sommers had numerous servant changes over a much longer period, but only one appears with long service: Sarah Cordy was housekeeper to Cécile for over twenty years from 1871. In contrast, from before 1841 and for well over 30 years, Colonel John Potter Hamilton, at number 10, employed between three and five servants at a time, even as an 83 year old widower. They appear to have changed relatively frequently. In four consecutive censuses, no names recur.

Many servants were women of marriageable age, which may be one reason why domestic staff changed relatively often. Others will have moved to better themselves. They worked long hours, with little free time to meet other people. When they did meet, few would have anticipated the experience of governess 'Mademoiselle' Louisa Koch. The Revd Morris Yescombe, her employer, accused 'a gentleman of fortune', John Roche of Queen Square, of abducting her. Roche lost the ensuing court case, which 'should never have been brought', paid a one-farthing fine and still got Louisa.¹⁰

Davis and Bonsall state that 'No full-scale study of servant-keeping in Bath has yet been undertaken' but a study of Northampton and Rivers Streets from 1851 to 1881, 'revealed

that the lower-middle and professional middle-class homes of employed on average only one resident female servant'. This supports a view that 'many of Bath's genteel residents seem to have made economies by reducing the number of servants employed.'¹¹ This contrasts with an average of 2.8 resident servants in Green Park over the same period. Servant numbers in Green Park peaked at 122 in 1861. They made up over two fifths of the occupants. In the years to 1871,



fig 6: William & Anna Harriette Pennington, c.1861. After his sister-in-law, Augusta (alias Elizabeth) died in 1886, he became owner of No.19. Photograph.

Provided by and reproduced with the permission of Stephen Swaby

there were, on average, more than three servants per house. Numbers then dropped dramatically, clearly symptomatic of major changes taking place. These included less wealthy heads of household, a diminishing population, and houses used as offices and for other non-residential purposes. By 1911 there were only 36, a proportion marginally above one-fifth of residents and one-third of the female population. Almost all were English, mainly locally-born and half were under 30 years of age. The number of men servants was always low. There were none by the end of the century. Nevertheless, it seems that most of Green Park's residents, at least until 1881, were 'genteel' without being too poor.

Birthplaces

The attorneys Mant and Salmon, with printer Hazard, were locals. From the earliest days, however, 'outsiders' lived in Green Park. With diverse backgrounds, they came from far and wide, but where they were born is often unclear. Some brought servants with them. The de Quinceys came from Salford, the Austens from Hampshire, Sir William Addington from London and General Donkin from Northumberland. The Trails came from Scotland via Ireland, where the Moncks had ancestral property. The Marquise Agathé de Sommersy was French, her daughter Comtesse Cécile, English.

Table 3 summarises information on where all residents and servants were born. In Green Park, if not Bath, the population of those locally-born (in Somerset, Gloucestershire, and

Table 3 Green Park Buildings Census Data Birth Locations

ALL RESIDENTS																
Numbers / Percentage of total population																
Census	1841	%	1851	%	1861	%	1871	%	1881	%	1891	%	1901	%	1911	%
Local (in Sset/Glos/Wil) *Sset only	69*	26.3	117	44.0	146	50.0	130	50.0	145	56.9	131	56.5	120	64.5	100	63.7
Othr Eng cnty (◆incl Glos + Wil)	156◆	59.5	95	35.7	83	28.4	77	29.6	66	25.9	63	27.2	43	23.1	27	17.2
Wales	0	0.0	9	3.4	12	4.1	5	1.9	7	2.7	7	3.0	9	4.8	5	3.2
Scotland	9	3.4	15	5.6	4	1.4	1	0.4	2	0.8	2	0.9	2	1.1	0	0.0
Ireland	23	8.8	17	6.4	23	7.9	15	5.8	10	3.9	4	1.7	3	1.6	2	1.3
Foreign	5	1.9	13	4.9	24	8.2	32	12.3	23	9.0	24	10.3	9	4.8	12	7.6
Others Unknown	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.8	1	0.4	0	0.0	11	7.0
Totals	262	100.0	266	100.0	292	100.0	260	100.0	255	100.0	232	100.0	186	100.0	157	100.0
SERVANTS																
Numbers / Percentage of total population																
Local (in Sset/Glos/Wilt)	40*		74	27.8	81	27.7	79	30.4	59	23.1	62	26.7	48	25.8	26	16.6
Othr Eng cnty	u/a		34	12.8	26	8.9	26	10.0	15	5.9	17	7.3	2	1.1	5	3.2
Wales	u/a		1	0.4	5	1.7	3	1.2	1	0.4	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Scotland	u/a		5	1.9	1	0.3	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Ireland	u/a		3	1.1	7	2.4	4	1.5	1	0.4	1	0.9	0	0.0	1	0.6
Foreign	u/a		1	0.4	2	0.7	1	0.4	0	0.0	1	0.4	1	0.5	2	1.3
Others Unknown	u/a		0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.4	54	29.0	36	22.9
Totals All Servants	119	45.4	118	44.4	122	41.8	113		76	29.8	85	36.6	54	29.0	36	22.9

Wiltshire) increased as the century progressed. In 1841, a sixth of the heads of household and a quarter of the whole population were Somerset-born. From 1851 to 1911, the proportion of locals increased, from 44 to 63 per cent. The contribution from 'other English counties' fell, correspondingly, from 36 per cent to half that figure. Similarly, the total from Ireland, Scotland, and Wales dropped from a mid-century high of fifteen per cent to less than five per cent. In contrast, the number born abroad peaked in 1871 before dropping more modestly. More details of the 'foreigners' and the Irish follow. Changes in the status of heads of household and residents are dealt with later.

Green Park had residents who were Irish or had Irish connections from the earliest days, for example the Moncks, in 1804, and the Revd. Morris Yescombe's wife in the 1850s. The Irish presence was more prominent than the Welsh or the Scots for most of the century and it is worth comparing the position of Green Park with that of Bath given by Graham Davis, in his article '*Social Decline and Slum Conditions: Irish Migrants in Bath's History*'.

The Irish in Bath formed part of a national pattern: 'Irish migration to Britain developed progressively in the first half of the century, reaching a climax during the famine years, 1845-52. In 1841, the number of Irish-born resident in Britain was over 400,000 and in 1861 a peak figure of 806,000 was recorded.'¹²

The proportion of Irish residents in Green Park did not mirror this pattern. The peak probably occurred in 1841, at 8.8 per cent (23 people in 10 houses, including eight heads of household), fell in 1851, rose again to 7.9 per cent (23 people) ten years later, then dropped to virtually nothing by the end of the century. Their backgrounds and status varied from those of the gentry to domestic servants (only a small proportion) and at least two female boarding school pupils.

Foreigners, those born outside England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, made up seven-and-a-half per cent (144) of those registered in the 1841 to 1911 censuses. The largest groups, spread over the last five decades of the century, were from the East Indies (65), including 50 from India, and the West Indies (16), of which ten came from Jamaica.

Most of those from the West Indies lived in Green Park during the 1850s and 1860s. Some may have arrived following the decline in sugar production and diversification into other occupations, but this is not obvious. Only four were men: three 'fundholders' and a 'Lieutenant Colonel Army Retired'. Eight of the women were 'fundholders' or 'landowners', though it is not clear where their lands were. None were children.

The Indian Uprising of 1857-8 and the abolition of the East India Company could have contributed to the move to Bath of East-Indian-born British. However, only nine from there lived in Green Park in 1861. Of these, five were children and none were men. The only military officer recorded was the Welsh-born father of two of the young girls. The peak numbers of these residents occurred from 1871 to 1891; the total was 42. Seventeen were children under the age of fifteen years, overlapping eighteen described as 'scholars'. Only six were heads of household, including three widows and two men, the long retired Major-General James Kennedy and Lt-Col Charles Blair, who were both resident in 1891.

France, with fifteen, headed the places in which other foreigners were born. In much smaller, often only single figures, they came from America, Australia, Belgium, Canada, the Channel Islands, China, Germany, Malta, Singapore and South Africa.

From 1841, servants generally came from the three local and the next nearest counties.

They contributed significantly to the increasingly local bias. In 1851, only one third came from local counties; ten years later it was twice that. By 1901 it was 89 per cent. Few came from far afield. The Isle of Wight was one extreme, Essex and Kent to the east were others. In all, less than ten came from England north of Birmingham; Northumberland and Durham each contributed one. In 1851 there was one from Belgium (and another later, both employed by the *de Sommers*), and three from Ireland. Of five from Scotland, three served their Scottish mistress Margaret Dalrymple at number 15.

Life expectancy

By 1840, the national norm of life-expectancy had just reached 40 years for both sexes, and it remained virtually the same until 1871. Then, expectancies rose slowly, reaching 48.5 years for men and 52.4 for women by 1901. People living in rural areas and non-industrial towns could anticipate a significantly longer life.

Data, from all censuses provides many examples of Green Park residents who, at birth, probably had a short life expectancy yet achieved longevity.¹³ They include George Monck, who died at 68 and Revd. George Austen at 73. William Trail was 85 and at least two of the Ladies Keith were over seventy. Then there are the very old servants, already mentioned. Many residents were certainly past the 'meridian of life', but there was a 'continuous migration of young women into the city' and certainly into Green Park.¹⁴ There were also newborn children.

The average age of heads of household in 1851 was marginally below 50 years and for the rest of the century to 1911 it is in the high fifties, indicating that many survived well beyond 60 years. Some, like General Donkin and Cécile de Sommers lived into their nineties, more than double national life expectancy. Through the second half of the century, the average age of all residents fluctuated around 35 years. The proportion of those aged 60 or more was, with little variation, a seventh. Residents' sons, daughters, and grandchildren under the age of fifteen made up roughly ten per cent of the total population from 1841, except for a low figure in 1851. The highest numbers occurred from 1861 to 1881, the maximum being 36 children. These figures suggest that while 'Bath's population [was] subject to a process of gentle ageing', an age-balance was being maintained in Green Park.¹⁵

A mid-century Cameo

A snapshot of some households in 1851 gives a fleeting view of Green Park. House number 1 was small with an unusual, kite-shaped plan. Its main occupant was a lodging-house keeper living with his wife, daughter and a 76-year-old servant. His lodgers were of two households. One included a 72-year-old widow, living on an army pension, with two of her daughters in their forties, one also widowed. In the second, a nineteen-year-old housemaid served another widow and her visiting friend, both in their seventies and living on annuities. In a conventionally shaped house two doors away was a single household of fifteen. Successor to Lady Frances Trail, Major General Thomas Wemyss lived with his much younger wife, his mother-in-law who was an 'annuitant' in her eighties, four unmarried daughters aged 15, 17,

20 and 23, and an older daughter, a clergyman's wife, with her two young children. A cook, housemaid and two house servants and a nurse looked after them. Less crowded but also in two of the smaller houses, numbers 34 and 37, were the Ladies Keith and the de Sommers with their servants. Nine people lived at number 19. Widower and 'Fundholder', 74-year-old Madras-born William Taswell, was doing very well as his is the only family recorded with three male servants: a footman, groom, and coachman. William and his two visitors also received service from three more servants, the housekeeper, housemaid, and cook. The *Complete Servant* suggests his income was at least £1,000 to £1,500 a year.

At number 23, opposite, widow the Right Honourable Gertrude Tollemache presumably did nothing for herself; she lived 'alone', with her butler, his wife, a footman and three other servants. Two doors away, at number 21, 50-year-old widowed charwoman, Rosina Bond, was in sole charge; the family was away. Their neighbours included seven military officers and three clergymen, all with servants. The ratios of those above and below stairs in these homes highlight those of the 'quality'. As we shall see, the view 'over the garden wall' in Avon and Milk Streets was quite different, especially from the late 1840s. It may have been a contributing cause to the changes which took place in Green Park from the 1860s.

Owners and Tenants

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, only ten per cent of people bought their own house, rental was the norm.¹⁶ In Green Park ownership was much higher; rates records show that more than a quarter of houses were owner-occupied in the 1840s. A contrary case is the de Sommers' long-term whole-house rental. After renting number 37 for 26 years, they moved to and rented number 35 for another 44, from 1855. Others simply required rooms rather than a whole house, as lodging provision in Green Park demonstrates. The Bath Directory of 1854 shows one-fifth of the 40 houses in the 'List of Lodging House Keepers', all but one being smaller properties, mainly on the eastern side. Only at number 31 was the owner, Mr Aquila Pippen, resident.

At various times during the first 100 years, half the houses, including eight in the 1860s, were owned by one or other of at least 33 women; some had more than one. As Gillian Tindall says in her book *The House by the Thames*, 'owning a few houses had long been a popular way of securing an income, especially for respectable widows'.¹⁷ Examples include widows Frances Wemyss and Harriet St Barbe, formerly of Lincoln, who owned and lived in numbers 3 and 18, respectively. Unmarried Priscilla Rowe first tenanted her deceased parents' abode, number 13, before buying numbers 32 and 33. She rented the first and moved into the second. Another case was spinster Ann Errington's academy, set up by 1830 at number 2, which she later moved to the larger number 13 and eventually to number 22, opposite. In 1851, she and her sister ran the school with two governesses and three servants. They educated thirteen girl pupils, born as far away as London, Liverpool, Colchester, Newcastle Emlyn and Ireland.¹⁸

The general picture is of ownership for longer rather than shorter periods, with many properties being retained and let by executors of a will, long after the owner's death. This occurred in at least eleven cases. The name of William Phillips, who died in 1804, was associated with number 1 for 62 years. It appears that, from first occupation in the period 1796 to 1809, 22

houses were in the same individual ownerships until 1860, then, between 1859 and 1864, for reasons not clear, thirty-six changed hands. Despite this, new purchasers also tended to hang on to their property for years. Morris Yescombe held his house for almost 30 years, until his death in 1883, when it passed to his son-in-law, James Baldwin. His family lived there into the 1940s.

All Change

Bath's population decreased by eight per cent from 1851 to 1901, then rose slightly by 1911.¹⁹ The Green Park population dropped by nineteen per cent and further decline followed; in 1911, the number was only three-quarters of its 1861 maximum. Other indications of change become increasingly apparent, especially after 1871, when the number of houses standing vacant for increasingly long periods, grew. One cause may have been the 'migration of wealthy citizens to [the growing] suburban areas', which 'tended to increase the geographical segregation of the different social classes' in Bath, particularly so from 1880s into the earlier twentieth century.²⁰ Data relating to heads of household certainly tells us that the status of this group changed significantly. Until 1881, a quarter or less of heads came from the three local counties. Then came a rapid increase, to a half by the end of the century. Correspondingly, fewer came from the other English counties while the number of foreign-born residents decreased gradually from the middle of the century.

Of the 242 heads of household from 1851 to 1901 inclusive, 169 (70 per cent) were non-local and all but eighteen of these were of the gentry (those with a title, a private income, landowners, the clergy, army and navy officers, and 'gentlemen'). Of the 95 from elsewhere in England, approximately one third came from Middlesex (London) and two-thirds from 26 other counties between Cumberland and the South Coast. 27 were born abroad and the rest in Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

Early, pre-1851 data indicate that Green Park was favoured by significant numbers of the gentry but a dramatic change is visible in the last quarter of the century. The census data for 1851 shows that 37 of the 46 heads of household (80.4 per cent) may be classed as 'gentry'. From then onwards the proportion decreased continuously. In 1871 it was 71 per cent, a half in 1891, and only a quarter at the end of the century. In this period, never more than four 'locals', in any year, were of the gentry.

Heads in 'Trade' and others of lower-status had always been present, and their numbers gradually increased until about 1860, when the number of those locally-born rapidly increased. This and the previous point, emphasise a process of social descent. Those with the money either moved out to the new suburbs or did not come.

In 1851, residents included Charles Danvers, a wine-merchant, and William Whaite, a 'Photographic Artist', both at number 5. Ten years later, a 'Conveyancer', an 'Engineer' and a young upholsterer were in residence but Errington's academy had closed. By 1881 there were at least eleven cabinet makers, colliery proprietors, a grocer, a pianoforte vendor and a stone merchant, and another ten in 'professions' (legal work, teachers, surveyors and architects), as well as the usual lodging house keepers (eight). The types and figures for 1891 appear similar but are unreliable. In the census years 1841 to 1911, there was no recorded occupation for roughly twelve per cent of individuals over fourteen years of age.

Another indicator of social descent is the number of servants. From a maximum of 122 servants, when every house had at least one, we find that, by 1911, one-third of occupied houses had none. Even if all 40 houses had been occupied, there would then have been only about 48 servants. It was now reminiscent of the earlier situation in Northampton and Rivers Streets.

The trend was to business and other non-residential use and a lower class of resident, whose occupations became more commercially orientated. Early on, when Ann Errington's academy moved, Miss Strachan's 'Ladies Establishment' appeared at number 2. By the end of the century other teachers and schools had appeared, providing education in music, dancing and calisthenics. From 1880, the Somerset and Dorset Joint Railway Company used number 13 (later with number 14), as offices until 1930. Then, in April 1895, the 'Committee of [Bath Education Authority] Science, Art and Technical Schools' occupied number 19 [fig. 7], pending construction of new buildings.²¹ By 1900, the Free Church House had taken number 3.

Medical men had been occasional residents from the early days. From 1881, there was a continuous presence, often of more than one practice at a time. Surgeon Edward White's family successively practised at number 2 from the late 1880s until the 1950s and, opposite, Mr Pitt provided 'Electro-hydrotherapy' in 1895. Other occupations and 'professions' indicate the way things were moving. Architects and the City Coroner [*sic*] arrived, as did a colliery owner, draper, pianoforte vendor, stationer, wholesale druggists, railway workers and wine merchants. The retired still sought refuge here: they included a fruiterer, grocer, stonemason, surveyor and



fig 7: A tinted postcard, c.1902 of Green Park Buildings (West), looking south from Seymour Street, showing the park gate.

Bath in Time - Bath Central Library Collection

an innkeeper. Residents also included, an artist, a tailor, a silk mercer's apprentice, articulated clerks and, at the end of the century, an undertaker. At the rear of a number of the western houses, stables were let to non-residents, for either their original purpose or conversion to a 'warehouse and shed'.²²

The events that drove change or those that resulted from it have yet to be analysed, but the following may have influenced some transformations that occurred. Conditions in the adjacent area of Avon and Milk Streets had deteriorated since the 1840s. Twenty years later the area was described as 'a constant source of anxiety' having 'the most abject poor in the city - skewer makers, gipsies, beggars ... and loafers of every description'.²³ On the evening of January 18th 1853, Lewis Perran, an Avon Street lodger, murdered Honora Hanaford near Green Park ferry. Her body floated four miles down-stream.²⁴

On the morning of Tuesday October 24th 1882, the sudden rise of water of 'The Great Flood' inundated the city centre and, at the end of Green Park, even 'Midland Bridge was impassable'.²⁵ This filled the basements and vaults of Green Park. Similar events, which spread water and noxious waste, occurred throughout the century.

In 1857, confirming that Bath was an increasingly industrial city, Stothert and Pitt built their new iron foundry and crane works on Lower Bristol Road, affecting the view from Green Park itself. The Midland Railway proposed a line to Bath from Mangotsfield; it received consent in 1864. Queen Square station ('Green Park' from 1954) replaced nine houses on Seymour Street, and opened in 1869. Traffic increased there when the Somerset and Dorset Joint Railway opened in 1874.²⁶ Residents also suffered from the building of the large area of sidings, timber and cabinet works, cattle pens, coal and goods yards as well as two smoky locomotive-sheds. Aggravating the effects further, Midland Bridge and a new road were built immediately behind the western row in 1870, for the transport of goods between the railway yards and the town. Another problem lay half a mile to the west. In July 1882, the Town Council heard 'complaints from Sion Hill, Green Park [and] St James's Square' about the 'dreadful smells ... emanating from the Gas Works'. The gas works blamed the adjoining 'Scavenger's Yard'.²⁷ The inevitable traffic, noise and smells made the area a significantly less desirable place in which to live.

As we have seen, Green Park was a place of residence from the outset. For much of the nineteenth century, it fitted the general picture of Bath as a town to which the clergy and military men retired, and as a genteel place in which to live, especially for single and widowed women with some wealth and perhaps a title. For those of lesser means or only requiring a few rooms for residence, lodging houses were available, but not boarding houses for visitors. The lengthy durations of residence by some and moving house, yet remaining within the Park, by others, are significant indicators that Green Park was a favoured place.

The last resident with a British title died there in 1864, leaving only Comtesse Cécile de Sommery. Military personnel and clergymen lost interest in living there. Some, as already mentioned, migrated to the suburbs. For example, soon after 1891, Coroner Craddock moved to Greenway Lane, Widcombe and Col. John Doveton moved to Springfield Place, Lansdown. The location fell out of favour and the clientele and tone became evidently different from that of a hundred years earlier.²⁸

Another pointer to substantial change was the huge drop in servant numbers in the last quarter of the century. This accounted for almost the whole reduction in the resident population, proportionately, a fall much greater than that for Bath. Green Park was not itself industrialised,



fig 8: Green Park Buildings on fire during the Bath Blitz, April 1942. Photograph
Bath in Time - Bath Central Library Collection

but was clearly affected by the proximity of industrial developments. These might account for the gradually increasing use of houses for purposes other than simple residence. Despite this, there were those who still aspired to the 'genteel', and probably hired one of the increasing numbers of charwomen in the city rather than pay for a live-in servant.²⁹ At the end of the century, educational provision grew in the city and Green Park certainly contributed to this. Similarly, the increase in Bath of wider opportunities in the commercial sector for merchants, clerks, accountants and medical men, was reflected in the occupations of Green Park residents.

It would be surprising to find exact correspondence between the changes in Bath and those in Green Park from 1790 to 1900, but there are clear parallels. The essential change in Green Park was from a place bordering on 'Upper Class' to one definitely tending towards the middle class. There was worse to come. Dwellings became warehouses, number 19 was replaced by a utilitarian single-storey building, and stables were used for a pickle factory and workshops. Then, in 1942, the eastern side was badly damaged by bombs [fig. 8], subsequently demolished and a new road was built over the remaining vaults.

Notes

- 1 Mrs Elisabeth Quinsey (both spelt with an 's') temporarily changed her name to 'de Quincey' then, soon afterwards, to 'Quincey'.
- 2 Graham Davis and Penny Bonsall (D&B), *A History of Bath: Image and Reality*, (Carnegie, 2006).
- 3 Ellen Wilson, 'A Shropshire Lady in Bath', *Bath History vol. IV*, (Millstream Books, 1992), p.102.
- 4 *Bath Chronicle*, 5 June 1794 p.3
- 5 Bath Police Rate Book, Michaelmas, 1830, p.186, Bath Record Office. The name of the western row was also changed from Green Park 'Place' to 'Buildings'.
- 6 D&B, p.159. The population of Bath in 1851 was 54,240 and that of Green Park 266 (0.490 per cent).
- 7 D&B, p.163. In 1891 the highest ratios of females to males in the inner city were in St Michael's parish at 148:100; Lansdown, 251:100 and Bathwick, 210:100. In Green Park, it was 364:100.
- 8 Warren Derry, *The Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney*, (Clarendon Press, 1982), Vol. X, Index, p. 1026, Keith, and p.1036, Mesniel (the de Sommery family name).

- 9 Samuel and Sarah Adams, *The Complete Servant; being a Practical Guide to the Peculiar Duties and
business of all descriptions of Servants*, (Knight and Lacey, 1825), pp. 5 and 6.
10 *The Times*, Tuesday Dec 30th 1856, p. 10; Tuesday Jan 06th 1857, p. 11.
11 D&B, p.196-7
12 Graham Davis, 'Social Decline and Slum Conditions: Irish Migrants in Bath's History', *Bath
History vol. VIII*, 2000, pp. 134-147.
13 Censuses of England, Bath, Walcot, from 1841 to 1901; Kent and Medway Public Health
Observatory, Annual Report 2006; BBC History, Overview: Victorian Britain, 1837 - 1901.
www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/victorians/ (Accessed: 31 October 2011).
14 D&B, p.162.
15 D&B, p.162
16 Maxwell Hutchinson, *Number 57 - The History of a House* (Headline Book Publishing, 2003), p.25.
17 Gillian Tindall, *The House by the Thames and the people who lived there*, (Pimlico, 2007), p.64.
18 Pigot and Co's National Commercial Directory, Somersetshire, 1830, pp. 672 and 682, Bath
Library; Hunt & Co.'s Directory and Court Guide for Bath, Bristol, and Wells, 1848, p. 117, Bath
Library. The 1841 census asked 'Whether born in same County', from 1851 censuses the
question was 'Where born'.
19 D&B, p. 159.
20 D&B, pp.159-160.
21 Post Office Directory, 1895, p.639, Bath Library.
22 Poor Rate Book, October 1895, Bath Record Office.
23 Sissmore, T. L., *Annals and Records of Holy Trinity Church, Bath, from its consecration in 1822, down
to the year 1890*, Bath 1893. www.holytrinitybath.org.uk, Accessed: November 2nd 2009.
24 *The Times*, February 3rd, p.6; February 7th, 1853, p.8.
25 Bruce Crofts, *Forgotten Year: News from Bath in 1882*, (Bath City Council, 1982), p.46.
26 The *Bath Chronicle* of 'August the 5th 1869' reported that the, 'far from complete' station, opened,
with the railway line, the previous day. The Somerset and Dorset Joint Railway,
www.sdjr.net/locations/bath_history.html Accessed: August 16th 2010.
27 Bruce Crofts *Forgotten Year*, p.5; Stuart Burroughs, 'End of an era for the Bath Gas Works', *Bath
Chronicle*, March 3rd 2011.
28 Bath Post Office directory, 1895, p.75 and p. 91.
29 D&B, p.184.