

GROUP NEWS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 7 April 1999

1. Twenty-seven members attended. Apologies were sent by Douglas Bernhardt, Angus and Brenda Buchanan, Sylvia Joyce, Alex Kolaczowski, Godfrey Laurence, Angela Marks, Julia Moss, Michael Rowe and Susan Sloman.
2. The minutes of the AGM held on 8 April 1998 were confirmed.
3. In her chairman's report, Philippa Bishop referred to the attractive mix of topics in the current programme, but regretted that some recent meetings had been poorly supported – hence the need to seek members' views in the next item on the agenda.
4. A discussion ensued on such matters as the number of monthly meetings, preferred dates of meetings, alternative formats for meetings, and possible collaborative projects. It was felt that competing organisations often met early or late in the month, that mid-month dates might suit HBRG members better and that the December or January meetings, or even both, might be dropped. The Green Park room was liked as a venue but was not always available. Members should be encouraged to speak on their research (having to give a talk wonderfully concentrates the mind) – possibly in occasional mixed-topic evenings or panel discussions. The Newsletter should specifically invite members to speak or otherwise contribute. The Newsletter, it was agreed, did an excellent job and no changes were asked for. There was some enthusiasm for looking into the possibility of 'updating Peach', i.e. working on a more systematic handbook of Bath streets and buildings. This could bring together existing data, stimulate fresh research and involve not only many HBRG members but other local history groups as well.
5. Colin Johnston reported that the local Record Office's bid for Millennium funding (which the HBRG had written to support) had been delayed by changes in the rules for submissions and the need for carefully tailored revisions to the proposal; it should however be submitted shortly. The plan to transfer property title deeds to Keynsham had not yet been implemented, but in any case CJ had extracted all pre-1850 deeds from the bundles to retain in Bath. (Applause from AGM!) Protests by individuals about any future transfers may be useful in due course.
6. David Crellin described a pilot venture he has undertaken with Bath Central Library to digitise historical photographs and prints from the collection. These images would form the nucleus of a database which might be exploited commercially and so finance the project in the future.
7. Colin Johnston, now speaking as the HBRG's Treasurer, explained the printed copies of the 1998-99 accounts which broadly paralleled those for the previous year. Again there was a small deficit of £50-£60, but the healthy balance of £653.65 meant that subscription rates for 1999-2000 could remain unchanged.
8. The existing Committee was re-elected en bloc except for the post of General Secretary. Philippa Bishop thanked Trevor Fawcett for his work for the HBRG over the years (applause!) and welcomed David Crellin to the Committee as the new General Secretary.
9. Following a written suggestion by Roger Rolls, it was agreed that those members with E-mail addresses should, if they wished, send them to Judith Samuel for publicising in the Newsletter. Amanda Berry proposed a campaign to recruit new members to the Group (the current membership standing at 74).

Once the formal business concluded and before Alex Kelly's talk on the Holburne family (recorded on pages 4/5), wine and juice were served and members had a chance to view a sample of images from Bath Central Library digitised by David Crellin and kindly shown on his equipment. This aroused much interest and may be the focus for a future HBRG meeting.

Following the suggestion in paragraph 9 above, Roger Rolls e-mail address is:-

ybf@compuserve.com.

Other email addresses are shown in the new address list which is enclosed.

MEETINGS HELD JANUARY - APRIL 1999

THE ABBEY AND RELIGION IN BATH, 1600-1750:

John Wroughton, 6th January, chaired by Michael Rowe

This masterly lecture was effectively illustrated by a wealth of slides. By 1617 the former Priory Church, later known as Bath Abbey, was substantially completed, following a national appeal headed by Queen Elizabeth. With the amalgamation of old parishes it had become Bath's leading church. The Abbey's use of space put preaching at the heart of worship, and the absence of the imagery of the old religion helped to preserve it from serious vandalism when civil war came. The Corporation controlled the church as patron. Mostly puritan in outlook, this body ruled Bath as a virtual theocracy, disciplining Abbey clergy, enforcing Sabbath observance and funding godly lectures from the rates. Conflict was inevitable with the Bishop in Wells, William Piers, a vigorous follower of Archbishop Laud (himself a former Bishop of Bath and Wells). Piers forbade the appointment of lecturers and ordered the reinstatement of altars in chancels, instead of the Reformed practice which placed the communion table below. When at length by 1642 battle lines were drawn between King and Parliament, Bath's M.P. Alexander Popham, an active puritan, led a gathering of 12,000 armed and unarmed people at Chewton Mendip - as much a religious convention as an army rendezvous - whilst down in Wells the Marquis of Hertford with a Royal Commission of Array could muster only 900. Bath Abbey congregation was "in the thick of the action".

War brought great changes to religious life. Episcopacy was abolished and the Book of Common Prayer proscribed. The Abbey's rector fled and under the leadership of the puritan lawyer, William Prynne of Swainswick, the church joined a North Somerset Presbyterian classis ruled by elders. Soldiers and prisoners were billeted in the building. Presbyterians and Independents debated in rival sermons; a visitor of the 1640s described the Abbey pulpit as "the hottest bath in town".

The year 1660 brought back king and bishops. There soon followed an exodus into dissent by many ministers and their flocks, taking their zeal with them. The Abbey pursued a middle way between the persecuted extremes of the dissenter and the papist. In 1687 in Bath, James II embodied the papist threat in attempting a revival in the Abbey of Catholic rituals. After the Revolution of 1688/9 and the Toleration Act, Bath settled down to its business of making money out of visitors. Attendance at the Abbey joined the social round along with Pump Room and Assembly. Whitefield and the Wesleys were pointedly excluded. The Abbey adapted to the felt needs of the time, as it had done in the century before. Meanwhile, dissenting chapels flourished, as did proprietary chapels (more exclusive and less draughty than the Abbey) and even a Catholic chapel was listed in the Bath Guide.

STELLA GREENSLADE

THE MILITARY BACKGROUND TO THE BATH BLITZ OF 1942

John Penny, 3rd February, chaired by Kirsten Elliott

The air raids on Bath are well documented from 'the receiving end'. For his talk John Penney went to German records to show how the raids were planned and executed by Luftflotte 3 under Generalfeldmarschall Hugo Sperrle. Britain's Bomber Command was directed that "operations should be focussed on the morale of the civil population [especially] industrial workers □ . Lübeck was bombed, the factory producing oxygen for the U-Boat fleet was destroyed and so was much of the old city. Hitler's response was to direct the Luftwaffe "to attacks likely to have greatest effect on civilian populations □ terror attacks are to be carried out □ ", familiar words to Sperrle who, in Spain, had commanded the Condor Legion which had bombed Guernica.

Mr. Penney's research shows Luftwaffe planners selecting as targets lightly defended towns

comparatively near the coast, easily identified by moonlight, which would allow shallow dive-bombing, with bomb loads proportionately greater in high explosive than in incendiaries. This had significance for Bath, whose surrounding hills accentuated the blast effects. For the Baedeker raids – so called following a German briefing that “We shall bomb every building in Britain marked with three stars in the Baedeker guide” – Exeter, Bath, York, Norwich and Canterbury were targeted. On the night of 25 April 1942, some 80 aircraft attacked Bath, most making two sorties from French bases, using the Y-Verfahren beam for initial navigation; for the second sorties fires in the city gave adequate guidance. The following night the same number of aircraft bombed the city again.

There were ‘war industries’ in Bath including Stothert and Pitt, and reconnaissance flights had produced photographs clearly identifying the Foxhill and Lansdown Admiralty hutments. The bomb plot does not suggest that this intelligence was used. For the Luftwaffe the results were satisfactory; of their aircraft – many elderly and flown by inexperienced crews – only four were reported lost. The force had outflown the RAF which had put up few and obsolete fighters with only rudimentary airborne radar.

For a city conscious of the continuum of its history from pre-Roman times, Bath can seem to suffer selective amnesia about its blitz. Visitors admiring the Crescents, Circus, Lansdown Place and Assembly Rooms may be left unaware that some of the buildings were destroyed or gutted and that behind the 18C façades lies restoration by mid-20C craftsmen. Over 400 people were killed – more than in any other Baedeker raid. Their names are in memorial books in the Abbey and St. John’s; there are graves in Haycombe Cemetery. At the end of the war, Rothnie records, the inhabitants around Queen Square gave it to the city to be a memorial to all the victims. The council has made it an area for playing boules. As local historians we are indebted to John Penney: he has left us no excuse for ‘forgetting’ the Bath blitz.

WILLIAM HANNA

TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF BATH’S OWN “LIT. AND PHIL.” SINCE 1825

Bob Draper, 4th March, chaired by Trevor Fawcett (held at the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution)

The speaker gave a brief account of the earlier attempts to establish a literary and scientific society in Bath. The first society lasted from 1779 to 1787. Its early success prompted its secretary, Edmund Rack, to comment in 1780: “this institution promises much rational improvement and instruction; and has a much more favourable beginning than the Royal Society in London had 100 years ago – there being only five members for more than two years: and those five not superior in learning and genius to most of our members”.

An attempt was made to reconstitute the society in 1799 and a further unsuccessful effort in 1815. Several calls were made by educated members of the Bath community for a further attempt, but raising the necessary money was a problem and the original plan had to be greatly reduced. The disastrous fire in the Lower Assembly Rooms in December 1820 was the event that finally set the scheme on its way.

Earl Manvers generously offered to erect a new building and to rent it to the new Institution. This went ahead and, on 25 January 1825, the new premises were opened under the patronage of the Duke of York and the Marquis of Lansdown. The aims were to provide a place for study, a reference library with information on every branch of science and literature, and a place where lectures, particularly for younger people, might be held. William Lonsdale was appointed as curator of its scientific collection. By 1843 ladies were admitted as members. Papers were presented on a wide variety of topics, including one on “Geology, History and Chemical Analysis of the Waters of the different springs from which Bath is supplied”. Shortage of accommodation, always a problem, now became serious, largely due to the many artefacts donated to the Institution. One notable bequest by the Rev. Jenyns in 1869 was his personal library of books on science and natural history.

The British Association met in Bath in 1864 and again in 1888. On the former occasion one of the

speakers was Dr. Livingstone. At the same meeting a paper was presented on the Metric System and its possible introduction to England. The Institution had connections with Charles Darwin. An important item in its library is a copy of his "*Origins of Species*" which includes a note from the author himself. The Rev. Jenyns was originally recommended to sail on HMS Beagle. He declined and suggested that Darwin should go instead.

Moving to the present century, the depressed economic conditions of the inter-war years began a tragic sequence of events. By 1925 the Institution fell into such a bad state that its centenary celebrations could not be held. In 1932 its building was demolished to make way for a new road scheme and it moved to Queen Square. The outbreak of war in 1939 added to its problems. The entire geological collection was moved out at two days notice, with scant attention to maintaining its order. Some of it went to Bristol and some to the Roman Baths. In 1958 the Institution became defunct, its property now largely packed in tea-chests. The City Corporation, who were now responsible for it, wisely appointed Mr. Ron Pickford as curatorial assistant. He did valiant work in re-classifying the collection, for by now much of the original labelling had disappeared.

More recently, pressure from various bodies has resulted in a revival of the BRLSI. The premises, which had been passed to the County of Avon, were returned to a body of shadow trustees. Yet again, raising the money to restore the collection has become a serious problem, but thanks to a generation of new members, a promising start has been made to restore the BRLSI to a condition in keeping with the position of Bath as a world heritage city.

Tour of the Collection: The Library is stored on steel shelving set on runners to facilitate maximum storage space with ease of access. The majority of the books are in good condition, but many of the older ones, some published as early as the 16C, are in urgent need of repair and binding. The geological collection has undergone a thorough sorting and identification. Items are at present recorded on a card index and are effectively stored and labelled. A minority of specimens of unknown origin remain to be identified. Computer facilities are being applied to catalogue the whole collection. A group of dedicated helpers has sorted the large collection of private letters and has filed typed copies for future research work.

As well as the Library and geological collection, a large number of miscellaneous objects make up the remainder of the accumulated material. This too has been classified, but much further work would be needed before it could be displayed to the best advantage. All in all the work already done does great credit to the volunteers involved.

Dr. W. JOHN
WILLIAMS

NEW RESEARCH ON THE HOLBURNE FAMILY

Alexandra Kelly, following the AGM, 7th April 1999

After the break, the speaker gave a concise and lively account of the Holburne family and the museum that has long borne their name. Beginning at the end of a not uncomplicated story she explained that the family had died out in 1882 with the death of Sir Thomas William Holburne's sister, he having died in 1874. She told how the distinguished collection of "plate, pictures, engravings, china, books and other articles of vertu" he built up during his long life were already on display (in accordance with his sister's instructions) by 1893; housed first in Charlotte Street and from 1913 in its present home, in what had been the Sydney Hotel, at the end of Pulteney Street.

The museum's centenary celebrations in 1993 occasioned new research into the Holburne family and, though tantalising gaps remain, it has been possible to piece together a coherent chronicle. Associated with Bath only since 1801, the family originated in lowland Scotland. In the late 14C, a Thomas Holburne was Vicar of the parish of Tullibole in West Fife but by the early 17C a part of the family

was living in the village of Menstrie, five miles east of Stirling. Here it was that, in 1649, Major-General James Holburne bought Menstrie Castle, which remained the family home for seventy years. He was a colourful figure, fought for the Parliamentarians in the Civil War, subsequently supported the Royalists when Cromwell invaded Scotland and, as a staunch Presbyterian, found himself in serious conflict with the authorities in the 1660s. His son, also James (who had by marriage strengthened an already important connection with the Spittals of Inverkeithing), was in 1706 created Baronet of Nova Scotia and the title passed in due course to his son, also James, and grandson, Alexander. It was inherited by the first Baronet's nephew, son of his brother Francis (1704-1771) who, after a long and distinguished career in the Royal Navy, rose to the rank of Admiral shortly before his death.

It was Francis's only son, also Francis, who in 1772 became fourth Baronet on Alexander Holburne's death and whose seven children included our own Thomas William Holburne. The latter, after a brief career in the navy (during which he served as a Midshipman at Trafalgar) succeeded unexpectedly to the Baronetcy in 1820 since his older brother had died of wounds six years earlier in the Peninsular War.

The family had, after some fifteen years near Swansea, moved to Bath in 1801 where, at first in Lansdown Crescent, and from 1830 in Cavendish Crescent, Sir William and his three sisters (none of whom married) spent the rest of their lives. Comfortably off if not spectacularly wealthy, Sir William devoted his life, from 1820 for over half a century, to building up the wide-ranging, highly regarded art collection which forms the nucleus of the modern museum which perpetuates his family's name.

MICHAEL BISHOP

A BRIEF HISTORY OF DANCE, 1455-1791:

Extra to the HBRG programme, Kirsten Elliott organised a demonstration of early dance on 11 December at Claverton Hall. Explanations of dance development by Diana Cruickshank were interspersed with actual performances by members of the Bath Minuet Company whom she trains – most of them costumed appropriately. Late-mediaeval dance style has to be reconstructed from early choreography books and the accompanying music; the *bassa danza* and *ballo* forms were graceful but employed a limited vocabulary. By c.1600, as costumes became stiffer, there was greater interest in footwork, and dances like the *galliard* and *canario* came into fashion. Soon, 'turned-out' feet and more expressive use of arms signalled the transition to full baroque court dances epitomised by the *courante* and subsequently the *minuet*. Diana Cruickshank regarded these, for all their elegant movement and apparent gallantry, as expressions of masculine dominance. Theatre dances of the time also had some influence on the ballroom, while refining of the English country dance by the French resulted in the figures of the *cotillion* and other *contredanses*, often danced in square formation and so presaging the Victorian *quadrille*. The 18C arrival of the *allemande* brought closer physical contact between dancing couples, a change that would culminate in the modern *tango*. Meanwhile the traditional English country dance retained its high popularity. John Playford's fundamental source-book, the *English Dancing Master* (1651 but frequently republished) detailed over 500 dances and tunes, and other dancing masters, such as the inventive Thomas Bray, published their own collections. Influenced by country-house long galleries, most were danced 'longways' and 'down the line' in standard steps and patterns. Hence they could be readily learned - as HBRG members in fact proved as they took to the floor and managed 'Miss Pulteney's Fancy' (1791) with fair aplomb.

TREVOR FAWCETT

MEMBERS' NEWS

Congratulations to Stuart Burroughs on successfully completing his
Museum Studies M.A. at the University of Leicester.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Peter K. Carpenter, 'St Mary Magdalen Hospital, Bath', *Notes & Queries for Somerset & Dorset* v.34, Sep 1998, 226-32.

Glanville J. Davies, 'Weymouth's choice: Pulteney or bankruptcy', *Proc. Dorset Nat. Hist. & Archaeol. Soc.* v.119 for 1997, pub.1998, 33-40. [Shows how William Pulteney came to dominate Weymouth's corporate finances.]

John Lynch, *For King and Parliament: Bristol and the English Civil War* (Stroud, Sutton Pub, 1999) £25

Weston Village Journal, ed. B. Newns-Wood and M. Rockey (Bath, Mushroom Pub for the Weston Local History Society, 1998).

Mary Ede, *Bath High School, 1875-1998* (Ralph Allen Press) £10. It is apposite that a history of Bath High School should be published in 1998, the year of the merger with the Royal School and even more so that it is written by Dr. Mary Ede, a Governor and Chairman of Governors from 1972-1996. As an historian and a participant in recent events, Dr. Ede guides us effortlessly through the development, growth and vicissitudes of the school.

We learn that after initial encouragement from the Girls' Public Day School Company and with the unanimous approval of a public meeting in the Guildhall a fund was opened to establish a (new) girls' school. Many of the original shareholders, for example Murch, Mallet and Moger, were from the great and good of Bath.

59 girls were welcomed by the headmistress, Miss Susan Wood, a former pupil of Miss Beale of Cheltenham Ladies' College. At first the school roll grew but from the 1880s there were worries over declining numbers, finance and the coolness of Bath's higher classes. The account moves through the early years; a broad curriculum includes William Harbutt as a visiting drawing master; classes are held in the morning only. Then follow years of development; raising the academic standards, introducing extra-curricular activities such as the Dorcas Society with its charitable work of sewing and parties for the poor. Problems occur over sites and buildings while the boarding arrangements also have their ups and downs. The two World Wars show the School responding to opportunities for service; bandages for hospitals, woollies for soldiers in the First, harvest camps in the Second, adoption of prisoners of war in both. The Baedeker raids of April 1942 badly damaged much of the School, leaving Hope House in ruins and laboratories destroyed. Some thought the School could not reopen but it is a testament to the spirit of the times and the effort of many individuals that within days parts were functioning again.

That effort and concern for the School and the girls epitomizes the work over the years of Headmistresses, from Miss Wood to Miss Winfield, and of staff and their lay supporters, who while wanting to concentrate on the work of the School had to deal also with buildings, playing fields, funding and relations with L.E.A.s. Perhaps these problems, while wearying, brought out the best in these remarkable people. Their achievements were recognised in an H.M.I. Report in 1988, "Here □ is a pleasant, hard-working and successful community".

This is an excellent school history and it is more than that, for the author gives the reader an unobtrusive but encompassing history of early developments in girls' education, in the organization of education in this city, in the changes made by political and financial demands on schools, and not least a fascinating segment of the social history of Bath.

PAULINE HANNA

THE BIAS BRUNEL PRIZE

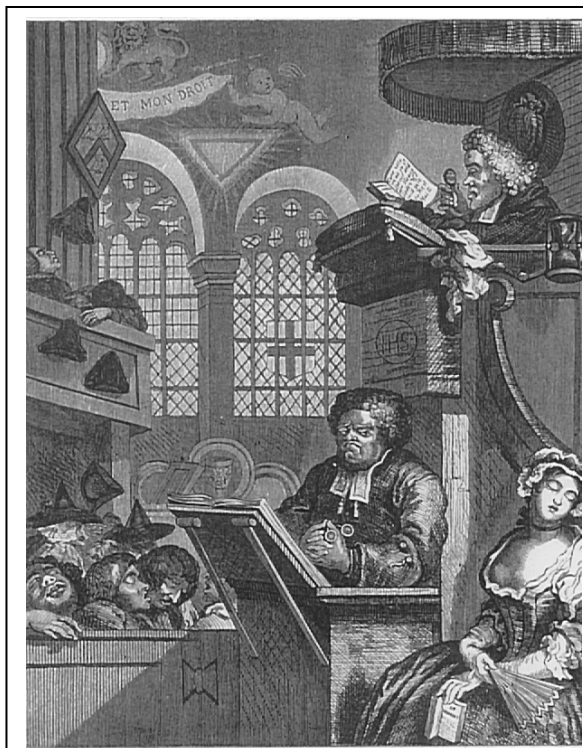
Competitors for this prize, worth £150 and awarded every two years, need not be members of the

Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society. Entries for the 2001 prize should be submitted by 31 August 2000 in the form of an original report or record of work in industrial archaeology in the Bristol region. Further details from Mike Bone, Sunnyside, Avon Close, Keynsham, BS18 1LQ.

JOHN THEOPHILUS DESAGULIERS

Trevor Fawcett's article ("Science Lecturing at Bath, 1724-1800") in *Bath History*, Volume 7, 1998, gives a glimpse of this travelling lecturer and I wondered if a few more details of his life might interest the Group.

He was born on 13 March 1683. His grandfather was a hotelier at La Rochelle, in western France, and his father (also Jean or John) was a Calvinist pastor at Aytré. His mother had been Marguerite Thomas.



THE SLEEPING CONGREGATION

In 1685 Louis XIV's revocation of the Edict of Nantes caused the family to flee from persecution. They escaped to Guernsey. It is said that two-year-old toddler Jean-Théophile was hidden in a barrel during the voyage, presumably to keep him quiet! The family left for London in 1690 and because father John then became a Freemason, they were able to benefit from useful connections. Rev. John became an Anglican and was ordained as Minister of the French Anglican chapel in Swallow Street, London. He later opened a school in Islington, where he died in 1699.

Young John Theophilus started his busy working life by helping his father at the school. He then became tutor to the son of a Member of Parliament and went with his pupil to Oxford, entering Christ Church on 27 October 1705. In 1710, while still technically an undergraduate, he succeeded Dr. Keill as Lecturer in Experimental Philosophy at Hart Hill College. He gained his B.A. on 3 May 1712 and married Johanna Pudsey, daughter of William Pudsey, Esq., a few months later, on 14 October 1712.

The following year he moved to London and set up home in Channel Row (later Cannon Row), Westminster. Here he started running private lectures on experimental philosophy. He became a friend and protégé of Sir Isaac Newton and a fellow of the Royal Society. He was appoin-

ted as demonstrator and curator of the Society's laboratory and landed a prestige position as Chaplain to the Duke of Chandos, who used Desaguliers to help him create

his mansion at Canons and especially to work on the water features in the grounds there. The link with Chandos may have come about because the latter's Secretary/Steward was a John Pudsey, who was possibly related to Desaguliers' wife, Johanna. Desaguliers not only delivered scientific lectures to royalty but also preached to the king at Hampton Court. He was rewarded by Frederick, Prince of Wales, who made him a Chaplain and after some exchanges and re-arrangements the young scientific parson obtained a church living at Little Warley in Essex as well as his Rectory at Whitchurch, Stanmore, Middlesex.

However, it is clear from the church records at Whitchurch that he spent very little time on his duties there and was usually engaged on lecturing, experimenting and advising on hydraulics, engineering or Freemasonry! For example, when his parishioners refused to pay him their tithes, Desaguliers took legal proceedings but the Duke of Chandos pointed out that he was being unreasonable, as "A corpse has lain three days in the church awaiting Christian burial and neither you nor your curate thought fit to attend until today".

According to Percy Davenport, a local historian of the parish of Whitchurch in the 1930s, Desaguliers may have

been the model for the preacher in William Hogarth's famous print "The Sleeping Congregation", where he appears to be short, myopic and "ill-favoured" – this picture bears out the physical description of Desaguliers, although the church portrayed is not the one at Whitchurch (*see portrait above*).

In spite of his appearance, he was undoubtedly an inspiring lecturer and an innovative engineer, being consulted by the government in the building of Westminster Bridge near his home in London. Building equipment was stored in his garden, and his assistant, Charles Labelye, was made Supervisor of the Bridge. Desaguliers' house at Cannon Row was demolished to make way for the Bridge and he then moved to rooms at the Bedford Coffee House over the Grand Piazza in Covent Garden, where he continued to conduct his scientific demonstrations and lectures until his death there on Leap Year Day 1744. Desaguliers' other main preoccupation was Freemasonry: he was well-known as one of the founders of "modern" Freemasonry and he was buried at the nearby Freemasons' Chapel.

MARY WILLIS

Sources: *Dictionary of French Biography, Literary Anecdotes* vols. 6 & 9; *Whitchurch Parish Magazine*, October, November and December 1937; David C. Knight, *Church of St. Lawrence, Whitchurch*.

BATH and NEW DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY

At a joint meeting of the Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution and the Bath Branch of the Historical Association held on 27 January the editor of the *New DNB*, Professor M.C.G. Matthew, gave a progress report on this enormous undertaking which will include some 50,000 articles and – unusually for a biographical dictionary – around 10,000 portrait illustrations. No-one who appeared in the original edition or its various supplements will be dropped from the new one, though every article will be up-dated and rewritten as necessary.

Thousands of extra names will be added, one priority being to secure a better representation of women. The old *DNB* was always less pompous than many of its counterparts in other countries, embracing a wide range of notabilities – for example journalists, actors, sportsmen, eccentrics, and criminals, as well as more obvious historical and establishment figures. Its successor will continue that policy, but will include additional articles on groups (e.g. administrators of Roman Britain; the Tolpuddle Martyrs; particular families). Articles will not run to the huge length of the entry on Queen Victoria in the old *DNB*; only five of those commissioned exceed the normal limit of 20,000 words. Responsibility for coverage of major subject areas has been delegated to twelve consultative editors assisted on specialist topics by 470 associate editors.

All the text is entered into the general database and comprehensively tagged so that all kinds of searches will eventually be possible. Since the entire old *DNB* is now available in electronic form, comparisons can already be made against the *one-third* of the new work that has so far been captured in the new database. The old version mentioned Bath nearly 5,000 times and recorded 106 persons who were born here, 115 who had some education here, and 247 who died here. Corresponding figures for the still very partial text of the *New DNB* reveal 3,829 mentions, with 184 births, 113 schoolings, and 115 deaths (82 actual burials). The editorial office has a file of 88 potential or actual Bath contributors, a number of whom are members of the HBRG. Various Bath worthies not previously commemorated in the *DNB* (Jerom Murch for one) will be represented in the new work and there is still time for anyone to suggest additional names worth inclusion. A serious effort is being made to avoid undue metropolitan bias in the overall selection.

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The Newsletter is compiled and typed by Judith Samuel.