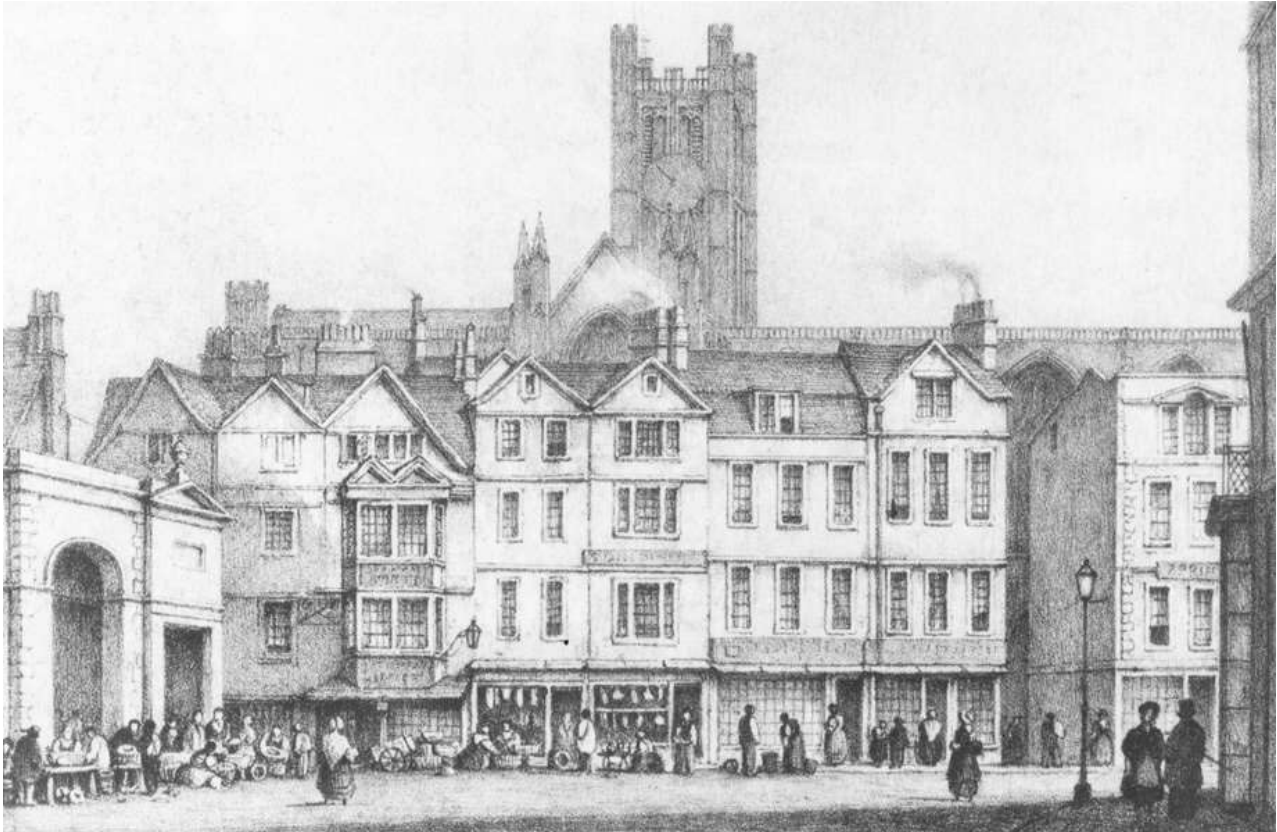


The Survey

of Bath and District

The Magazine of the Survey of Old Bath and Its Associates

No.19, November 2004



THE SURVEY OF BATH AND DISTRICT

The Magazine of the Survey of Old Bath and its Associates

Number 19

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Front Cover Illustration: The Buildings on the north side of Wade's Passage, viewed from the High Street, c.1830. From Mainwaring's *Annals*

Back Cover Illustration: Roland Symons has sent us illustrations of the Chapman arms seen by him on journeys elsewhere –

(left) the arms from a window in a slype in Chester Cathedral, over a St.Christopher window. This window was donated c.1927 by the Chapman family of Ipswich.

(right) a shield from a Chapman war memorial at Eton College. This shield has been described by S.R.Kennedy-Chapman as belonging to his ancestor Abel Chapman, born 1684. With the ermine, it would be blazoned as 'Party per chevron ermine et gules ...'.

CITY NEWS

The Record Office

Our on-line catalogue hosted by Somerset Record Office at www.somerset.gov.uk/archives has been 'live' for almost a year now and currently holds over 25,000 entries, all searchable by personal or place name. We said goodbye in July to our cataloguer for the past three years, James Willoughby, who came to the end of his contract, having completed the cataloguing and in-putting of virtually all our collections from private sources, and the pre-1850 deeds of Council-owned properties. There remains to be added the very extensive amount of other Council records in a future project. To enable our users to access the database we have recently installed in the Searchroom two public-access terminals with free internet access to the on-line catalogue and other useful history websites.

Our visitor numbers remain constant despite now closing on Mondays for behind-the-scenes work. However we have seen over the past year a 38% increase in postal and e-mail enquiries and a 25% increase in telephone enquiries, all attributable to the worldwide availability of our on-line catalogues.

An extension of our activities this year has involved teaching-sessions with local schools, bringing together documents from the archive-collections and artefacts from the Roman Baths Museum on the story of the Pump Room and history of the use of spa water. Our large band of volunteers continues to provide better means of access to some of the more under-used records by indexing or transcribing church and school registers, settlement papers, title-deeds and photographs.

Amongst the assortment of items added to the collections this year are records of the Bath and Twerton Co-operative Societies, a 1920s publicity film for Bath, title-deeds (including an eighteenth-century one for Crowe Hall, Widcombe, naming the occupier as Mrs.Barbara Crowe), and a substantial number of printed maps 16th-19th centuries. Conservation work has resulted in the re-binding of Victorian school Log-books by the local firm of Cedric Chivers (fortunately just before it went into receivership) and digitization of more large-scale city maps by Cotterell (1852) and the Ordnance Survey (1885). This enables us to offer customers colour copies of sections of these maps without the need to handle the originals.

Among our engagements, we were involved in the 50th anniversary celebrations at Fairfield, Newbridge Hill, on 16 October of the presentation of the Freedom of the City to Emperor Haile Selassie. During Open Week on 27 October Colin spoke in the Guildhall on 'Writing from Home', a look at diaries and memoirs written in Bath over the past 200 years. The Record Office also presented a stall at the Historyfest at the Guildhall on 11 September.

Colin Johnston

BRLSI

The BRLSI are continuing their programme of Lunchtime Lectures, to which we have referred in earlier issues. These are held between 1 and 2 p.m. at Queen Square. The contact number for information is Geoff Catchpole, 01225 423338. Admission is £1 for members and £2 for visitors.

On 11 November Stuart Burroughs, Curator of the Museum of Bath at Work, will speak on 'The Economic Miracle - Commercial Bath in the Eighteenth Century'. On 9 December Jon Benington, Curator of the Victoria Art Gallery, will report on the Gallery under the title 'Into 2005 - the Victoria Art Gallery'.

Most of the speakers this year represented museums, the only exception being Trevor Fawcett, who spoke in February on the Georgian Guildhall. Next year it is proposed to invite members of local history groups to speak. Mike Chapman has been approached for a talk.

The Roman Baths Museum

The successes of the Roman Baths Museum have been featured in the media lately. In August 2004 it was announced that it had been granted £100,000 by the government for 'vital renovation work'. The Museum has a three-year project to improve the Temple Precinct and secure it against possible deterioration.

It was also reported in August that for the second year running the organisation known as 'Visit Britain' - formerly the English Tourist Council - had awarded the Museum the status of Quality Assured Visitor Attraction. The Museum of Costume, Victoria Art Gallery and the Assembly Rooms are also recipients of this award.

Visitors to the Roman Baths have commended the audio guides, which enable one to select a programme on whatever subject one chooses. More information about the Baths is available on their website at www.romanbaths.co.uk. The contact phone number is 01225 477785.

The Museum of Bath at Work

The success of the book on Stothert and Pitt's is reported under 'Publications'. Also successful was the sponsored walk by Stuart Burroughs and Russell Frears along the former tramway routes. In a *Chronicle* interview published 3 July 2004, Stuart remarked that it was ironical that cities across the country were re-introducing trams because they do not pollute the atmosphere. Several members of the Friends of the Museum accompanied Stuart and Russell and over £700 was raised.

The Museum continues to make improvements. Volunteers created a ramp for disabled access at the rear of the building. Audio guides have been introduced, helping the partially sighted to enjoy the Bowler Collection better.

A series of Lunchtime Lectures will be held in November, given by Graham Vincent under the title 'Travels with a Camera 1959-2004', with slides from his collection of 25,000 items taken at home and abroad, for instance in India, China and South America. The dates and titles are:

Wednesday 3 November **1959/68 – British Rail runs out of steam**
Wednesday 10 November **Australia to Zimbabwe via Inner Mongolia** – steam on the world stage
Wednesday 17 November **The Train now Departing** – BR operations and infrastructure
Wednesday 24 November **Mainline Steam Renaissance** – achievements in preservation

Lectures take place from 1-2 p.m. The standard price of admission is £3.50 but pre-booked tickets offer a discount. Soup and sandwiches are available from 12.30 p.m. Contact number of the Museum: 01225 318348.

A leaflet on display at the Historyfest featured the Education Activities of the Museum, including the following:

- Guided tours of the factory displays
- Slide shows, Victorian magic lantern performances
- Handling Sessions
- Drama Activities (Autumn Term)

Walcot Street

Rae Harris, one of our members from Walcot Street, has written to tell us of progress in restoring the 19th century Cornmarket building. This is 'slow but positive' - a Building Preservation Trust is being set up (the Walcot Street Trust) and has now been registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee. The next stage will be applying to become a charity, and for funding for a Feasibility Study. This may seem a long-winded approach, but if the job is worth doing, it has to be done properly, Rae writes.

Rae was featured in the local papers in the summer, with headlines such as 'Fight to rescue market', we

noted. The objective then stated was to turn the Cornmarket into 'a thriving arts centre'. He also had a letter in the *Chronicle* on 9 September 2004 concerning the proposal to build 11 houses on Walcot Yard and Walcot Reclamation. Rae feels that an increasing number of historic buildings are beginning to become the focus of local community interest - for example the Cleveland Baths, the Octagon, Churchill House - and wonders if this may be the beginning of a new wave of organisations to complement the broad-based approach of the Bath Preservation Trust. Have other members of the Friends noticed this development - possibly resulting from the BBC's Restoration series - and would anything be gained by groups such as this talking to each other?



The Cleveland Swimming Bath in the late 19th century. Originally it was only for the use of men, the first subscribers in 1814 being Bath business people such as George Stothert's sons and the architect John Pinch, who provided the architectural designs.

The Combe Down Stone Mines

The Mines have been in the news this year, and have been featured in the media more than once. Visitors have been impressed by the extent of the workings which stretch in all directions rather like the London Underground. Mrs. Mary Stacey, director of the project, has stressed the urgency of obtaining funds to carry out the proposed work. B&NES has given its approval, and Government funds are looked for. A grant has already been assured for those areas where bats congregate. Councillor Jill Attwood also had a letter in the *Chronicle* on 9 September, in which she wrote: 'The bats are a rare species and, as such, are protected by legislation. English Nature is insisting that a number of underground roadways be left open for the bats to fly along. These roadways will have to be monitored and may, over time, require maintenance work'.

Bath Abbey Archives

Initial cataloguing of the archive collection is complete; and we are now planning the best way of converting this to an electronic catalogue. A significant accession this year has been a large collection of photographs of the wall memorials in the interior of the Abbey. For the past few months a volunteer has

been identifying and arranging these photographs; and amending the memorials catalogue. This September the Archives and the Heritage Vaults have opened a new exhibition in the Vaults Museum, entitled 'The Necessity of Mortality: Bath Abbey Cemetery, 1844-2004'. This tells the story of the Abbey Cemetery on Ralph Allen Drive from its consecration to the present day; and displays some items from the archives.

Bath Abbey Archives are open to the general public by prior appointment with the archivist, Dr.Lucy Rutherford, The Abbey Office, 13 Kingston Buildings, Bath.
Tel: 01225 422462. Email: archives@bathabbey.org

Lucy Rutherford

Historyfest, 11 September 2004

As our readers know, Radio Bristol, in conjunction with B&NES, organised a Bath History Festival in September. A number of events were arranged near the Abbey, with bands in the Parade Gardens and an Abbey concert at 2 p.m. During the day, walks were led by the Mayor's Guides. Inside the Guildhall, there were talks during the day, including those by Stephen Clews and John Wroughton, and events were arranged in the Alkmaar Room and the Aix En Provence Room. History groups from the areas encircling Bath presented displays in the Brunswick Room downstairs.

The Bathwick Local History Society presented items on its members' interests, and the Batheaston Society featured Daniel Brown's study of the Batheaston Coalmine. The Widcombe and Lyncombe History Study Group also had a stall, and the Weston and South Stoke Local History Societies, and Keynsham and Saltford. The Freshford and District Society invited one to handle their pieces of pottery. Several other groups also had their work on show.

Upstairs in the Banqueting Hall, a display by the Mayor's Guides met one on entering, as seems appropriate. Near it the Bath Heraldry Society showed some of its beautiful drawings such as are done by Roland Symons. B&NES and Bath Preservation Trust had stalls. Dr.John Wroughton had a display on Stuart Bath in the north-east corner of the room, with the display boards from the Battle of Lansdown, his own copy of Gilmore's map, Michael Bishop's model of the Stuart Guildhall, and of course, copies of *Stuart Bath*. The Survey of Old Bath was placed next door, with our new diagram of Wade's Passage, and our publications. The Family History Society came next, though unfortunately Mrs.Ruth Haskins was prevented from taking her station there on account of illness.

Across the way we could see Peter Davenport and Marek Lewcun with their photographs of Bath Archaeological Trust's recent work, and next to them, Stuart Burroughs with the Museum of Bath at Work. The Roman Baths and Pump Room had installed a gentleman in Roman soldier's gear. At the south end of the room Colin Johnston was featuring the proper care of old documents. There were some decayed items on show, from days gone by. We saw a similar display at Gloucester County Record Office once, though in their case their archives had included a preserved dead rat.

Sally Lunn's was in the south-west corner, still insisting on being the oldest house in Bath. A young lady was handing round buns which apparently originated from there. Across the north end of the room were the refreshment stalls, with a very fine line in home-made cakes.

It was an enjoyable day, but we also enjoyed the History Fair in Queen Square two years ago, and we used to enjoy the Stuart evenings in former times held at King Edward's by kind permission of Dr.John Wroughton. It is always agreeable to meet old friends and make new ones. If anyone for any reason wishes a more complete list of the participants, we could forward them a photocopy of the official brochure.



CITY NEWS II: BATH ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

Marek Lewcun

The Trust has been busy on a number of sites since November of last year, with work taking place both across Bath and out into the surrounding counties. Several sites have made it to the *Bath Chronicle*, and in September the editor wrote a few words in the Editorial Comment column with regard to how much still awaits discovery below the streets and houses of Bath.

In the city itself, watching briefs have been carried out on a number of small developments, most of which consist of extensions to existing properties. It is not unusual to find nothing at all, but negative evidence can be useful in redefining the limits of activity. A good example of this was on a building site at Westfield Close, off Englishcombe Lane, where no finds were made in an area near the junction with Bloomfield Road where numerous Roman and medieval finds have been made in the past to indicate a settlement there. At the Bath Racecourse on Lansdown, where Bronze Age burial mounds were levelled out in the past, a number of trenches excavated before the construction of new stable blocks found no barrows but did find several flint blades, which are quite plentiful on the Bath downs.

High Common Golf Course

By contrast, a particularly productive site was the Approach Golf Course on the High Common, Bath, where a new irrigation and sprinkler system has now been installed. Bob Sydes, Archaeological Officer for the council, advised the owners, Bath & North East Somerset Council, and the operators, Aquaterra Leisure, that it would be appropriate to carry out a watching brief during the work. Three areas of archaeological importance are not very distant from the site. The first of these is a Roman road, given the name of the Via Julia during the 19th century, which runs close to or on the same line as the present Weston Road, and alongside the golf course. The second is an area to the east on which a cluster of Roman buildings and large number of burials have been found at the point where the 'Via Julia' meets an extension of the Fosse Way behind Royal Crescent. The full extent of these buildings and burials westwards is not yet known. The third area lies on Sion Hill, where a number of Iron Age sites and a Roman building with associated burials have been found over the last 100 years.

Although most of the new plastic pipe on the High Common was going to be 'moled', whereby it is drawn into the ground and then pulled through it without the necessity for a continuous trench, a number of small trenches were still necessary in order to connect pipes and sprinklers to the system. An initial walk over the site was very enlightening. Previously, archaeological knowledge only extended to the fact that traces of a medieval ridge-and-furrow field system at the bottom of the 12-hole course (the west half of the golf course) had been seen from passing cars. It was subsequently found that the ridge-and-furrow extended all the way up to Sion Hill, where two lynchets were also found. On the 18-hole course, opposite Cavendish Road, more ridge-and-furrow was found at the top of the course, where the slope eases. A number of banks and enclosures were also noted prior to the work starting.

An alarming discovery before the work started on this part of the course, however, was made on an aerial photograph taken in April 1942, which showed that one of a number of bombs which fell here during the blitz appeared to have not gone off. Research on the internet revealed that in fact two bombs failed to explode on the golf course. With casualties in the city being a higher priority, they were left there and not searched for again until 1945, when it was not clarified whether or not they had been found. A specialist in subterranean metal detection was subsequently brought in by B&NES council and gave the all clear. The crater of one of the bombs was very large, and can still be seen today between the 9th and 10th greens.

Once work got under way, only on rare occasions did the moling machine encounter any below-ground obstructions. At the top of the 18-hole course, however, it met with resistance from a large quantity of stone in one area. After a trench was opened up here it became clear that the stone belonged to a demolition horizon and was Roman in origin, being accompanied by a quantity of pottery dating to the 1st and 2nd centuries. A limited amount of archaeological excavation was then carried out, which almost immediately revealed a column drum lying on its side, complete with a recess to accommodate a

wooden shutter and a mortice hole to receive a bolt to lock it. A large upright block of stone nearby, still set into the original ground surface, was possibly part of a wall around a small formal garden. As very little else was going to be exposed by the machine, the Trust asked the Bath & Camerton Archaeological Society if it would be interested in carrying out a non-intrusive geophysical survey in order to establish the extent of the building. Bob Whitaker, the Society's chairman, set the wheels in motion and a survey using the Society's equipment was soon underway. The geophysical survey revealed that the Roman building was probably a small house, possibly a farmstead, terraced into the hillside and not dissimilar to others in the region. A number of ditches were also shown, including a small enclosure next to the house, and circular features which might be earlier Roman or Iron Age roundhouses.

The column drum probably belonged to a verandah at the front of the building. From here there would have been spectacular views over the Roman town and surrounding countryside. The vista would have extended from the Roman quarries below Bathampton Down in the east to the Roman villa at Newton St. Loe in the west, with a full view of the Fosse Way as it entered Bath from the crest of Odd Down. The building was ideally situated, between several springs of fresh water (see the Survey's *The Lost Streams of Bath* by Mike Chapman) and close to a source of building materials, whilst being close to two of the more substantial Roman roads serving the Roman town. Towards the end of the project, during which there had been very dry weather, a linear band of grass appeared to go brown more quickly than the surrounding area. With a short terrace at one end and a bank at the other, this may indicate a Roman road below the surface which would have connected the building to Lansdown Road. A hollow way further down the slope may be the remains of a trackway which once connected it to the Roman settlement on the Lower Common.

The watching brief on the High Common golf course was an extremely valuable and informative exercise. It had been recognised that given the evidence of Roman activity not too far away there was a chance of remains being found, even if only piecemeal. The overall result, however, has been the discovery of a rich and varied archaeological landscape which has been spared by the 18th century and later expansion of urban Bath. The building at the top of the 18-hole course is an important discovery, and confirms a belief that Roman Bath was ringed by a mixture of both simple and well-appointed medium-to-large size houses, too close together to be the seat of country estates, but more like a group of comfortable suburban houses just a few hundred metres apart.

To appreciate the location of the Roman building here, it is well worth a walk to the top of the golf course, where the well-preserved ridge-and-furrow can also be seen. To do so, start at the main entrance and follow the tarmac footpath which runs up to Sion Hill. Halfway up, where the path from Cavendish Road joins, move onto the grass and walk uphill and alongside the iron railings to avoid low-flying golf balls. On reaching the wall at the top of the course, follow it to the right until you reach a small corrugated iron shelter from where the best views are obtained of both the ridge-and-furrow and the city beyond it.

Southgate Street

At the north end of Southgate Street the Trust were called in by Wessex Water to monitor a 3.5m-deep trench which was dug to replace a sewer. Here it was possible to see a very useful cross-section of the deposits, which included old road surfaces at 1.25m (4ft) and 2.6m (8ft.6in). Surfaces at similar depths were recorded by the Bath & Camerton Archaeological Society at the south end of Southgate Street some years ago, and it may be that the lower surface relates to a period in the history of Southgate Street which predates the Old Bridge, whereby outside the South Gate the road descended to a greater depth in order to reach the edge of the river bank.

Wessex Water Mains Rehabilitation Scheme

More details of Bath's archaeological heritage have come to light during work on Bath's water mains system. Wessex Water are currently part way through an 18-month-long project to reline the water mains, and have employed Bath Archaeological Trust to monitor the excavation works. The present part of the scheme is concentrating on the Lansdown area, including Upper and Lower Weston. In order to avoid large scale disruption to the city's roads, Wessex Water have minimised the excavations to small trenches, from which specialised machinery then operates below ground to make the connections. This

has provided the archaeologists with key-hole insights into the old ground surfaces, and a percentage of each area is being monitored and recorded to give an overall view of what remains lie buried.

Bath Archaeological Trust has just completed work in the Sion Hill area, where discoveries have been made in the past. It was already known through the work of Bill Wedlake and the Bath & Camerton Archaeological Society that there were Iron Age and Roman remains in the area, including the tessellated floor of what was probably a villa. Finds made during the Wessex Water work have included evidence of a structure which probably belonged to the Roman building, a yard on one side of it, and pottery. Finds in general suggest that the remains here might be quite extensive. Elsewhere, more information on Roman activity in the Partis Way area has also been discovered. Part of a Roman building, burials and a Roman road heading towards Upper Weston were found at Partis College in the 19th century. The archaeologists have recently recorded part of a Roman pit nearby, and have received information from a local resident about other finds made by builders in more recent years but not reported. It has long been held that a Roman road ran from Julian Road (a name which it only received in the 19th century) to Weston and on to Sea Mills in Bristol. The remains of a metalled surface to substantiate that theory have now been found near the junction with Cranwells Park and close to the junction with Marlborough Buildings. Similar materials have also been seen on the western half of Weston High Street. Coupled with the other recent finds on the High Common, these have helped considerably with building a clearer picture of the western suburbs of Roman Bath.

The project has reinforced an important working relationship between the water service industry and local archaeologists. Wessex Water have kept the Trust aware of when and where excavations are taking place, providing one-off opportunities to learn more about Bath's past.

Elsewhere in Bath

The Trust has continued to monitor building works at the former Oldfield Boys School site on Wells Road, where a fuller picture of the Roman villa there is gradually coming together through additional bits and pieces of information found in trenches for new foundations and services. Small areas of ground clearance and digging work were monitored behind numbers 11 and 23 Royal Crescent, but no remains were exposed.

Outside Bath

The Trust has carried out a number of monitoring exercises (watching briefs) in places outside the city. Amongst others, these have included Babington House, Dodington Park, Stanton Drew, Cheddar, Langport, Portishead, Taunton, Chippenham and Salisbury. A larger excavation this year took place in Glastonbury, where medieval deposits on a property fronting the High Street were recorded. Garden deposits of 11th century or earlier date and a 12th-13th century pit were found, and the plot does not appear to have been built upon until the 16th century, despite its central location within the town. The earliest feature found was a Romano-British ditch, but to what it was related is unknown. A number of building surveys have been carried out in the last year, including the Manor Court House in Chard, built in 1593 and added to in the 1620s, and Longfords Mill in Minchinhampton, where a mid-18th century mill with 17th century origins was gradually added to until an extensive range of buildings existed, which finally ceased trading in the 1990s.

Current projects

Although a number projects are in the pipeline, the Trust is currently monitoring works at the site of the recently demolished Robins Cinema on St. John's Place in Bath, where the Theatre Royal is expanding to include a youth theatre on the site.

The Roman column drum discovered in one of the trenches on the High Common golf course in Bath



Part of the view which would have been enjoyed by the Roman building on the High Common, looking south-west towards Twerton, with the striped effect of the medieval ridge-and-furrow field system in the foreground



The view across Aquae Sulis which was afforded by the Roman house on the High Common golf course, Bath, looking south-west towards Prior Park

DISTRICT NEWS

Saltford

In August a 'rock and fossil' event was held at Saltford. 200 Million years ago, it was reported, the area was submerged under the sea, so that local rocks contain many fossils of marine life-forms. The event was run by Bristol Museum in conjunction with local groups.

Bathampton and Marshfield

Its clean streets and colourful gardens have helped Bathampton win the coveted title of Calor Village Of The Year for the fifth year running. Judges scoured the village for evidence of community activities as well as taking stock of its well-kept gardens and public buildings before naming it large village category district winner for Bath and North East Somerset. The competition was organised by the Avondale Campaign to Protect Rural England.

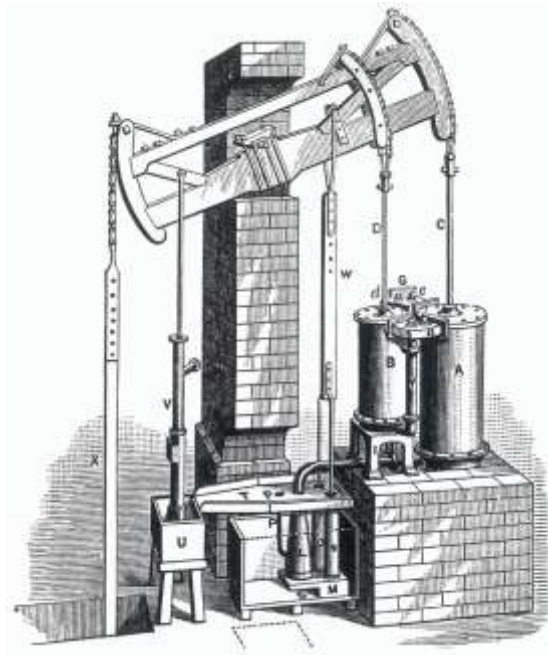
Bathampton was praised for the absence of litter on its streets, and judges said the village's well-tended domestic gardens were a colourful background as they made their inspection tour. Highlights they noted included the parish church and taking tea at the Methodist church as well as a stop at the local pub. They commented that all the people they met were friendly although that was not something measured on the marking criteria.

There is cause for celebration in Marshfield too, which has won the large villages category in the South Gloucestershire district, as well as the Avonside Wills Cup in the competition. Judges were impressed by Marshfield's community centre, and described the local school and three playing fields as excellent. They saw evidence of a high level of community activity, which is one of the key factors that the awards measure. They noted the village's three pubs were all well kept and did not have litter outside, and that the village's industrial site and two garages were well maintained. A high point they mentioned was Marshfield's unusually large number of pleasant-looking shops.

The awards ceremony for the competition will take place at Cleeve Village Hall in North Somerset on Saturday, November 27.

Batheaston

Visitors to the Historyfest at the Bath Guildhall in September will remember the striking display presented by one of the Friends, Daniel Brown, illustrating the search for coal in Batheaston in the early 19th century and its significance in the career of pioneer geologist William Smith. Daniel has finally brought together his extensive research on this venture in a paper which has now been submitted to the Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society for their biannual Brunel Prize. We wish him luck and look forward to seeing this work published in the next issue of the *BIAS Journal*. As a result of this research Daniel is now investigating new findings relating to the location of the pit shaft and other colliery remains, which he hopes to announce in the near future.



A Hornblower engine, of the type used in the Batheaston coal-mining venture

REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES

The Survey of Old Bath

The Survey of Old Bath is a research venture which first adopted its title in 1979. Its aims are to study the topography of old Bath, and the lives of its actual citizens. The Chapman family has been chosen as its sample group, although it welcomes information on other Bath families. The Survey has published a number of historically reconstructed maps, brought out with funding from B&NES, and also other booklets and articles. It works on commission as well as on a voluntary basis.

The Survey has attended a number of functions since the last magazine was published. In November 2003 there was the launch of the new Pevsner guide in the Banqueting Room at the Guildhall. Early this year, the launch of John Wroughton's *Stuart Bath* at The Empire. In September, *Bathwick A Forgotten Village*. We also attended the Historyfest on 11 September, which is described under City News. We presented a diagram of Wade's Passage, which is enlarged upon further in this issue.

We have stopped creating our proposed index of the pictures in our collection at the Record Office, Accessions 170 and 350. Now that the Record Office is computerised as described in Colin Johnston's report, it does not really need card indexes, but is happy to receive typed lists to place in their files on accessions and eventually incorporate in their computer index.

We are continuing to collect wills and other documents. These enable us to enlarge upon sites which we have already studied, such as Widcombe Manor. Details from some of these documents are included in this issue. Allan Keevil has also transcribed three of the Fisher wills from Batheaston, as recorded in the article here published.

Mike Chapman continues to carry out commissions actually instigated by other bodies but relevant to the work of the Survey. Most important of these is an Historic Study of the River Avon through Bath which will be completed very soon.

The Friends of the Survey of Old Bath

We regret to announce the deaths of Colonel Agar and Mrs. Phyllis Thomas. More is said under 'In Memoriam' below. Mrs. Denise Walker has also written a letter to Leslie Holt about the funeral of Colonel Agar.

A report by Neil Cridland, Secretary, on the Lunchtime Lecture on 6 November 2003 appeared in our March newssheet. Mrs. Elizabeth White gave an excellent talk on Partis College of Newbridge, Bath. The meeting, chaired by Mrs. Denise Walker was very well attended, and once again the team of helpers served a welcome lunch in advance. Thanks are due to them and everyone else. Dr. John Wroughton's talk at the AGM in April 2004 on his new book, *Stuart Bath*, was noted in the July newssheet. This also carried a review by Peter Davenport, which is reprinted in this issue since the magazine is read by some who do not take the newsletter.

In August Mike Chapman repeated his walk around some of the Streams sites, since in 2003 it had to compete with the Three Tenors.

Mrs. Gillian Cope most kindly arranged a special walk for members of the Friends. Neil Cridland has provided the following account of this occasion:

On 30 June 2004 Gill Cope led nine members of the *Friends* on a walk around the city centre of Bath. Gill has been a Mayor's Guide for many years and, indeed, was the chairman of the Guides a few years ago. Rather than giving us one of her regular walks as provided for tourists she prepared a special walk looking at Bath particularly as it would have been in Stuart times and therefore linking to some extent with the lecture John Wroughton gave at the AGM this April on *Stuart Bath* and his book on the same subject.

Starting from Abbey Churchyard she pointed out the position of St.Mary de Stall Church which was the Corporation's official church until the Abbey assumed this role. It was located on the corner of the "Throng" - or lane - opposite the (now) Pump Room which links to Cheap Street. It was to be dismantled in 1656 but finally fell down in 1659. We progressed from there across what is now Kingston Parade where was the tennis court in the place where the concert hall of the Pump Room is now, and round the Abbey where we were shown the roof marks on the North Transept where in the 1600s houses abutted the Abbey from the bottom of the High Street. It was surprising to learn that the Abbey and its precinct took up one third of the area of the old city. We then went around the line of the walls, past St.Peter's Gate in Orange Grove to the High Street with the old Guildhall, the Stocks and the Market Cross - which was believed to give divine protection to the market - to see the Christopher Inn, the oldest in Bath. Gill here mentioned that there is a house in Combe Hay with the actual half-round elaborate window from the old Guildhall.

Looking over the parapet opposite the front of the Empire into Parade Gardens we saw the remains of the Monks' Mill, which are limited to some bricks disguised in the bamboo, beyond which the whole of the area south was an orchard in Stuart times. We then had a lovely surprise because Mark Rutherford had managed to get the key to the East Gate and we walked down Boatstall Lane through the gate right down to the colonnades above the Weir and Pulteney Bridge. We were able to look through a gap in the wall to see below the Empire, to the foundations which have not yet been developed, but which we were told may be converted into shops, to be approached via the East Gate and roadway.

Then back up to Mallory's in Bridge Street where St.Mary's Church was situated, regressing into a prison and the site of the original King Edward's School. Miracle players frequented the area and even Shakespeare is rumoured to have visited (see his Sonnets numbers 153 and 154).

We then walked up to Northgate and along Upper Borough Walls with Locks Lane, Bridewell Lane and Vicarage Lane, the three turns off this street. The "Butter Pat" opposite the entrance to the Mineral Water Hospital was the site of a mortuary. Bridewell had a prison and Gascoigne's Tower was at the end of the walls in the Sawclose. Thence to Westgate, the main entrance to the city with fields beyond, and from there to Abbey Church House - 'Mrs.Savil's Lodging House' - and where argument still continues as to whether the Hungerfords lived there. We stopped, at Nowhere Lane, had it explained and saw the 20th century red brick walls through the foliage.

Bilbury Lane (or Bimbury) - meaning "within the fortified place" - was next. St.Catherine's Hospital, refounded by the grant of Edward VI for 14 residents (called Black Alms), was originally at the bottom of the lane and later moved to its present position. On to Bellotts the original house being 17th century, which was founded in 1609 by Thomas Bellott, steward to Lord Burghley, whose arms are over the present door; it was a predecessor to the "Min", where patients could stay for no longer than 28 days. Now senior citizens reside there.

Gill showed us the site of the St.James' Church, where Southgate and Stall Street meet. It was moved to this position in 1279. The Victorian St.James Church, on the same site, was bombed in World War II. Behind the bottom of Marks and Spencers was the Lear Gate where people came for charity and the Ham Gate where cattle were led out of the city. The 'Bum' ditch ran, ironically, more or less along the line of the present toilets. In the M&S loading car park one can still see a section of wall with a plaque set in it recording that it is part of the mediaeval wall of the city. A doorway to the east of Sally Luns in Lilliput Lane led to the old Bowling Green in Stuart times.

We were shown where the Bull gardens were at the back entrance to M&S and where a small piece of wall with hinge pins survives. In Abbey Gate Street were two arched gateways, the larger for coaches and the smaller for pedestrians. Between Swallow Street and the Abbey Green lay the Bishop's Palace.

At the end of the walk we all agreed that it had been most interesting and informative. Neil Cridland thanked Gill for all her efforts which were greatly appreciated by us all.

Neil Cridland

Dr.Susan Sloman, a member of the Friends whose book, *Gainsborough in Bath*, published by Yale University Press, has attracted a great deal of well-deserved attention, writes to say that she has the good fortune to be the Robert R.Wark Fellow at the Huntingdon Library, USA, for the space of a month. The Library with the Art Collections and Botanical Gardens, is situated in San Marino California. Dr.Sloman will be carrying out research for a sequel to her book, to be called *Gainsborough in London*, which she will be writing over the next five years. On the eve of departure, Susan sent her best wishes for our day at the Historyfest.

IN MEMORIAM

COLONEL JOHN AGAR (1927-2004)

Colonel Agar, who was a keen member of the Friends with an abiding interest in history, died tragically in a road accident in Warwickshire on 12 July 2004. After joining the Royal Corps of Signals in 1945, he worked in intelligence with M16 before serving in the Middle East, where he developed a great affection for the Arabs. He then spent two years in the Arctic as Signals Officer with the British Greenland Expedition - service which resulted in the award of the Arctic Medal. On leaving the army in 1980, he worked for a time as a school bursar before finally retiring to Bath (which he promptly nicknamed 'Saga City'). Latterly, of course, he lived in The Empire, where his kind, modest and good-humoured nature greatly endeared him to other residents. A loyal member of Bath Abbey, he was a man of forthright views and pithy judgments - 'From my armchair', he would say, 'I can still rule the world as I like'. His funeral at Haycombe, attended by a wide circle of friends, was a moving occasion with an address given by Major-General Alexander and The Last Post and Reveille sounded by a bugler from the Royal Corps of Signals. The Friends of the Survey were represented by the President, Chairman and Vice-Chairman, together with several other members.

John Wroughton, July 2004

MRS.PHYLLIS THOMAS

Tony Cairns has e-mailed us with the news of the death of Phyllis Thomas. He speaks of her interest in family history and her wonderful memory for the ramifications of different branches of the clan. He hopes that he and his partner will be able to continue her work.

Phyllis Thomas has sent us many valuable papers and pictures, and also it was she who put us in touch with Ludwig Becker, leading to his gift of calotypes to the city, and the provision of more pictures, including the painting of Queen Square by Captain John James Chapman featured in this issue. She was a person of never-flagging energy and enthusiasm with a keen interest in all around her.

The Bathwick Local History Society

2004 saw a successful venture by the Society, the launching of its publication *Bathwick A Forgotten Village*. This was celebrated on Friday 24 September at Bath Central Library in the Podium. Addresses were given by Stephen Bird, Head of Heritage Services, and Colin Johnston of the Record office. A small exhibition displayed items connected with Bathwick.

The group also ran a stall at the Historyfest on 11 September 2004, in the Brunswick Room, by the door. Items illustrating the members' interests were on display on the table provided and also on a large screen.

On 11 October Mike Chapman addressed the society on the Lost Streams of Bath. On Monday 8 November Kirsten Elliott will speak on Bathwick Pubs. Meetings start 7.30 p.m. at St.Mary's Church Hall at the bottom of Bathwick Hill. They will recommence on Monday 10 January 2005.

Contact numbers - 01225 332267; also Mrs.Sheila Edwards, Secretary, 463902.

History of Bath Research Group

In October 2003, Marek Lewcun addressed the group at the Museum of Bath at Work on the recent investigations of the Archaeological Trust in the Bath area. November saw Robert Bennet speaking on John Pinch, at St.Stephen's Church, Lansdown.

In January Michael Lee reported on 'A Bath Family Firm' (J.J.Lee & Sons, Cardboard box manufacturers and printers), at Manvers Street Baptist Church, and in February Michael King and John New, again at St.Stephen's, gave an account of another firm, this time legal. In March Cathryn Spence discussed the archives and other resources of the Building of Bath Museum, at the Museum. For instance it holds the Peter Coard drawings used in his series on Vanishing Bath. From the beginning the Museum has aimed to be a resource for serious students of Bath architecture, as well as providing an interesting display for visitors.

The AGM on 14 April was held at the Building of Bath Museum again, the new display cabinets forming an attractive background. Refreshments were served, and Stuart Burroughs spoke on recent developments at the Museum. Members discussed the best location for a collection of Post Office Directories which had been acquired.

May and June saw outings. In May Stuart Burgess and Michael Rockey of the Weston Local History Society led a walk round Weston Village, meeting first at the Weston War Memorial. In June Dr.John Wroughton led the party over the site of the Battle of Lansdown, after meeting at the Grenville Monument. Dr.Wroughton has expended considerable effort towards having this site recognised and preserved.

South Stoke Local History Group

Following the Historyfest at the Guildhall, 11 September 2004, the South Stoke Local History Group, who had a stall in the Brunswick Room, have sent the Survey these details about their group: -

What is the 'South Stoke Local History Group'? We started in 2002 to continue the work of a group known as 'South Stoke 2000' who were responsible for the millennium exhibition and the writing and publication of 'The Book of South Stoke with Midford'. Objectives - to promote research into the history of the parish - to make provision for recording and storage of information, documents and photographs - to enable those interested in the history of the parish to meet for discussion and information.

What have we achieved so far?

- (a) An extensive Parish Archive has been assembled and catalogued. It is available to the public in the Guildhall as well as in the County Record Office at Taunton. Written material, documents and photographs are all recorded on CD. Two valuable private archives are included, the work of Dr.John Broome and of Edward Smith.
- (b) A detailed survey of all memorials in the church and the churchyard has been completed. This is available as a book or on CD.
- (c) Work has been started on an analysis of the 1881 and 1891 censuses.
- (d) We are supporting archaeologist Ceri Lambdin in her work on Roman and other remains in our area.

Current and future work:

- a) Study of Churchwardens' accounts dating from 1662 will start as soon as we obtain a copy promised by Somerset County Record Office.
- b) A more detailed research into South Stoke Brewery.

Lectures and meetings:

We meet usually on two occasions each year to report progress and hear a talk. We try to keep in touch with other groups and to inform members of anything of interest. Contact numbers: Chairman, John Brooke 01225 833153; Secretary/Treasurer, Sylvia Williams 01225 832921.

Weston Local History Society

Weston Local History Society was founded in February 1992 and now has over 70 members. We gather on the third Monday of each month at the Parish Hall in Weston village to be entertained by a range of guest speakers. In the previous months we have been honoured to play host to the likes of John Page, Elizabeth Devon and Lorraine Morgan Bankhurst.

In April 2003 John Page came and talked about 'The life of Hannah Moore'; she was a writer of books, poems and plays and also used her time to help with many community projects including starting Sunday schools in the Cheddar area.

May - We were fortunate to have a second visit from Elizabeth Devon, the first being last year when she spoke on climate change. This year we enjoyed her lecture titled 'Geomorphology and Geology of the River Avon'.

June - We were privileged to hear Lorraine Morgan Bankhurst on 'Life as Mayor of Bath', highlighting the pleasures and drawbacks of this distinguished office. In June members also enjoyed a visit to Berkley Castle and the conducted tour of the house which was really interesting. Members were also able to visit Jenner's House and The Butterfly House and the village.

July's meeting - Members were able to make a choice between visiting the Guildhall where they were received by the Mayor and Mayoress and were shown the parlour with its many treasures and the council chambers, or, the remaining members were treated with an entertaining viewing and speech at the Abbey Vaults conducted by Linda Jones.

At our August meeting Dr.Frank Thorne talked about the Domesday Survey in our locality, demonstrating that life in Weston village was like any other village of its time.
Contact number: Prue Brice 01225 315342

Prue Brice

The Widcombe and Lyncombe History Study Group

The group now completes another interesting year. In April Pauline Hanna described the research which had been carried out on Beechen Cliff. The mention of Isaac Titley prompted Elizabeth Holland to forward, later on, the plan of the Salt House, owned by him at the north side of St.James's Church, Bath. Fay Briddon also described the career of her brother the scientist Sir Gordon Cox.

In May Mrs.Joyce Helps spoke about the Skrine family of Warleigh and Claverton Manors. She provided a ground plan of Warleigh Manor in 1937 as a guide to her reminiscences. Marion Martin then spoke on recent research on Perrymead, and displayed a Roman coin and some pottery found when her father built his house there.

June saw a walk along the riverbank from Thimble Mill to Bathwick. July featured another tour of old Widcombe, chiefly intended for those who had missed the last excursion there, followed by lunch at Margaret Burrows' home in Widcombe Crescent. Again, in September Marion Martin led a walk along Perrymead as background to her talk.

In October Margaret Burrows continued her study of sanitation and disease. On 11 November Stuart Burroughs is booked to speak on Stothert and Pitt's, while 9 December will be the usual mince-pie night, with contributions by individual members.

The group meets at 7.30 p.m. at St.Mark's Community Centre, St.Mark's Road, Widcombe. The contact numbers are: Doreen Collyer 01225 311723, and Fay Briddon 01225 310127. An archive is housed in the church tower, Archivists Jenny and Tim McGrath 01225 447204.

PUBLICATIONS

Mike Chapman's study, *The Lost Streams of Bath*, has been selling well and a reprint is planned. It is available at Whiteman's in the Orange Grove and at the Oldfield Park Bookshop.

The Bathwick Local History Society launched *Bathwick A Forgotten Village* on Friday 24 September 2004 at Bath Central Library. This covers part of the history of the village of Bathwick prior to Georgian redevelopment and is the result of some of the research done by members since the group began in 1999. Extensively illustrated, it is available in bookshops at £8.50. We hope to be able to publish a review of it later. The Museum of Bath at Work reports that the book by Ken Andrews and Stuart Burroughs, *Stothert and Pitt: Cranemakers to the World* is their best-selling non-fiction book ever, earning £800 in royalties. They add, 'The recent reprint is selling out fast'.

The following reviews of Dr. John Wroughton's *Stuart Bath*, and the new Pevsner guide compiled by Dr. Michael Forsyth, are reprinted from our July newsheet:

Dr John Wroughton, *Stuart Bath. Life in the Forgotten City, 1603-1714*, 209 pp. plus index, 143 figs (approx.), March 2004

In the last few years it seems that there has been an awakening of interest in the forgotten centuries of Bath's history, though members and friends of the Survey have always been more than aware of them, and have been instrumental in rescuing them from oblivion. This is John Wroughton's contribution to reminding us all that there was something happening, and not second rate either, between 410 and 1714.

A chronological history of the 17th century in Bath would hardly be possible: even with the Civil War, not enough 'happened'. Rather, what we learn here is what the city and its people were like in the 17th century. How did they make their living, what were their politics, how was the town governed, how did people amuse or improve themselves? Asking these questions, John Wroughton has divided the book up into a series of themes which form the basis of his chapters. Fifteen sections tell us about religion, education, leisure, politics and so-on, and little by little, we build up a picture of this 'little citty', its parochial and personal concerns and the occasional intrusion of national affairs. The main impact of the latter was, of course, the Civil War. Having treated the subject at length elsewhere, the author here describes the impact of the war, both personal and corporate, on the daily lives and pockets of the citizens: the depredations of the soldiery of both sides, official and unofficial, is well-described, along with the difficulties and consequences of having to decide on which side to fall, or whether fence-sitting was advisable.

Stuart Bath cannot escape being, in our eyes, the precursor to Georgian Bath. The huge changes in society in the decades after the Civil War and the slow ending of the Stuart political system are reflected in the changes in local politics and priorities of the Corporation which increasingly seem to make the late 17th century look as if it knew what was coming and was preparing for it. Nevertheless all these events and processes are described on their own terms.

Appropriately for a professional historian, the story is told dispassionately, or at least objectively, but never dryly. The book is an enjoyable read. However, the author, as a past and distinguished headmaster of King Edward's School, cannot prevent his pride and affection shining through. King Edward's boys made a striking contribution to all aspects of life, local as well as further afield, in the 17th century. This is required reading for anyone with an interest in the 17th century, the Stuarts or the history of Bath.

Peter Davenport May 2004

Michael Forsyth, *'Bath', the Pevsner Architectural Guide*,

This latest volume in the uniquely scholarly and comprehensive series of *The Buildings of England*, created by Sir Nicholas Pevsner back in 1951 is a worthy addition to the set. But more importantly, in the new format it gains legibility, and with Michael Forsyth's lucid prose and keen perceptions,

adds delight and interest to Pevsner's unique mix of scholarship and comment.

The first impressions are of a book very different in appearance from its progenitors, one that has been beautifully and carefully conceived, and that understatedly shouts quality. Not that the old Penguin Pevsners were shabby, their format is conservative and familiar, but this current presentation signals a worthy change. Yale University Press, using an Italian printer, have produced a volume of very high technical quality, and this impression is not let down within. The tall guide book format, dark cover with dramatic view of a fragment of Royal Crescent in evening light, all foretell the quality that pervades the rest. Minor quibbles are that the high quality paper does make the whole volume that bit heavier for carrying on a 'walk', the print is semi-reflective making it hard to read under certain lighting conditions and the 'paper back' covers will no doubt be asked a lot of, if given the use the volume deserves (mine is already comfortably 'worn-in'!)

Inside, the format lives up to expectation. Throughout the text is extremely clear, well spaced, easy on the eye, with green/bronze coloured titles running through linking the cover, frontispiece, titles and fascinating inserted 'topic boxes' (for example who previously knew that the pinnacles for Manners' restoration of the Abbey cost £4.10s each?)

The use of bold type as a highlighting tool considerably aids reference and location. The use of colour in photographs and maps and the interspersing of illustrations within the text are further departures from the original format all adding to the delight in use. The coloured maps, potentially over-stripped of non-essential detail for ease of reference, are an aspect that improves with familiarization.

All these departures from the original Penguin Pevsner format are significant. They will no doubt raise the audience for these books, while the content retains its attraction to the more serious reference readership. But the price (£10 as opposed to £34) coupled with the appearance is set to attract a much wider readership, as well as being no put-off to the less-pecunious student (Hooray for that!).

Inside, the contents page shows us a more familiar pattern. Pevsner's 'Introduction' remains but his 'Gazetteer' is replaced by a series of three groups of descriptions, Major Buildings, Walks and Excursions. A chapter on Further Reading is extremely usefully added, followed by the glossary and indices of people and places much as before.

The Introduction sections of original Pevsners I often enjoy most, but refer to least. In this volume the section consists of a masterly synopsis of the story of Bath in five chapters, covering the Roman, Mediaeval, Georgian, C19 and C20+ periods. Stephen Bird contributes the chapter on the Roman Period and no doubt gave much valuable assistance elsewhere. It opens with clarity and insight, features that are continued right through to make it as good a distillation as could be. The loss, if any, is of a wider geographic context of the less 'special' surroundings. Where Pevsner originally gives county wide context, this volume is, understandably, more focussed. There is little also about pre-history, and the pre-Roman times, but for a general reader or a specialist wanting a refresher, there is no lack of fundamental detail here.

However it is in the main body of the book that the new clarity shines through. The division of Bath into Major Buildings, Walks and Excursions is clearly identified in the 'How to use this book' preamble. The inclusion of Brunel's railway station in the illustrious group of Major Buildings shows a breadth of approach that this comprehensive guide can and does bring. Forsyth's descriptions, though, have a great readability, a delightful flow, in his masterly mix of Pevsnerian enumeration of architectural detail with lively comment and historical background. He is far more of the engaging companion than Pevsner's rather more dry, didactic guide. Using the guided walks and excursions as a line on which to thread the individual and collective built forms, he manages to maintain the reader's interest with perception, observation and anecdote, making this at once a good read and a wealth of scholarly information. Some may winkle out in time an error of detail or attribution, hardly avoidable in a book of this magnitude, (but I have yet to find, within the buildings I know best, anything to complain about) but these should be considered as grit to the oyster of further debate,

analysis and research. At least History is not a dead subject! But for observation and context Forsyth is spot on and equals the master at his best.

Being able to concentrate on a single identifiable entity (ie. the city and immediate environs) allows this volume to penetrate much deeper into the lesser charted, no less important and in many ways more vulnerable fabric that surrounds the great set pieces. It is here that, from an urban design perspective, the book has most to offer giving at last a clear airing to the 'genius' of Bath, that continuity and complexity that can only be skirted over if there is only space to consider and describe the great icons.

That the 'Excursions' sections are comparatively light, more of a return to the Pevsner blueprint, is disappointing but necessary (to avoid too big a tome). Descriptions as diverse as the Voysey house ('the most important c20 house in Bath and one of Voysey's most significant late buildings'(paperback, p.286)) the University (familiar no doubt to Forsyth, the Director of the Architectural Conservation course there, but given such an even treatment as to raise doubts in those that fear to approach it (like me) that there is a heart of kinds that beats there) to the Ethel Pocock headstone, clearly show the range of critique that makes Forsyth's take on the Pevsner's approach so relevant to the contemporary audience.

The volume concludes with a Further Reading chapter which is ideal, being less an exhaustive alphabetical bibliography, but more a companions guide to a particular selection of the many books that could have been included based on topic. Then follows the Glossary, perhaps not as full as some, (a selection of the usual unusual arches and description of 'setts' but no help as to their 'boasting') followed by the extensive Indices of people and places, all which define the full reference capabilities to this excellent book.

Comparisons with the familiar Pevsner originals are instructive as they show Forsyth and the publisher's commitment to the remarkable original, yet bringing improvements (for example the fore-mentioned interspersions of colour photographs - beautifully taken, mostly by James O. Davies of English Heritage) appropriate to the new age of communication and (dare I say) travel guides. For a book of such high scholarship to reach a wider audience is a worthy goal that I believe the Bath Pevsner will and should achieve. It is a great tribute to Forsyth and all who have contributed.

This book is an essential 'must have' and can be better recommended as a 'unbeatable must give' (to anyone you know who doesn't have one yet!)

Peter Carey May 2004

Forthcoming

It is hoped that *Bath History* Volume X will be published in the spring, and the usual advance orders discount offer will be circulated and made available in due course. Titles will include:

The discovery of the 'Symbolick Head of Sol'
The Hundred of Bath around the time of Domesday
The seamy side of Bath in the 17th century
The Old Guildhall
Lawyers and property speculation in the second half of the 18th century
Female historians in mid-18th century Bath
The education of young gentlemen in the early 19th century
Brunel in Bath

LETTERS PAGE

Letters Editor: Leslie Holt

Bath 12 August 2004

Dear Leslie,

I am sure there will be a very worthy obituary for Col. John Agar elsewhere in the magazine, but I should just like, if I may, to say how moving and illuminating was the service which I, the President, and several members of the Friends, attended recently for Col. Agar.

It was 'standing room only' in the Chapel at Haycombe - a beautiful day, splendid address, which amongst other things demonstrated his Christian faith, spirited singing of a number of hymns, and meaningful prayers. All largely thought out by him, we gather - a very far-thinking soul!

He was a founder member of the Friends, and we shall greatly miss his loyal, friendly and generous support.

Yours sincerely,

Denise Walker
Chairman

Bath 22 May 2004

Dear Leslie,

I had quite an amusing incident the other day when taking some eleven year old school children around Bath in my capacity as Mayor's Guide. They only wanted about an hour's tour and towards the end the toilet became important for two of them, so I quickly shepherded them down to the Roman pavement in the Min. The toilets were there, the kids were happy but time had run out so we wended our way quickly back to the Pump Room and had no sooner got there when one of the girls discovered she had left her bag behind.

Panic stations. I immediately volunteered to take her back and retrieve it. On the way I asked for a description and got the answer, 'It's black with diamantés'. Back at the Min. I sent her into the toilets, but no luck, so I headed for the reception desk where two 'old' ladies (possibly younger than me) sat. I went up and asked if they had come across a black bag with diamantés. They grinned widely and gave me the bag. It was black and it did have diamantés. They spelt out the word 'SEXY' in large letters on both sides!

Yours sincerely,

Gill Cope

Bath 20 June 2004

Dear Leslie,

The Friends of St. Mary's-next-St. John's Cemetery held an open morning on 13 March and attracted over 100 visitors. The undergrowth has been cleared from about half the cemetery so far, and it is now possible to walk between the gravestones. Unfortunately, some of the inscriptions are now unreadable, but there are many interesting ones. This area contains the grave of Dame Eleanora Brisbane whose husband gave his name to the city of Brisbane. I also noticed the grave of Elizabeth, Anne and Mary Frowd. Mary was the friend of the authoress Hannah More. (There is a memorial to Sir Philip Frowde, d.1674, in Bath Abbey and I wondered if there was any connection.)

There are graves of members of the Kilvert family, also that of the great granddaughter of Sir Christopher Wren. A Roman coffin, excavated in Bathwick, was placed in the southern boundary wall in 1852. The area surrounding the ruined mortuary chapel has yet to be cleared, but John Pinch's grave can be seen nearby. The Friends hope, eventually, to tidy the rest of the cemetery and open it to the public.

Yours sincerely,

Hazel Symons

Bath 23 June 2004

Dear Leslie,

Looking through boxes of old books on Somerset at a Family History Fair, I came across a small book about Courts-Leet and the Courts of the Borough of Taunton, written by H.Byard Sheppard, F.M.S., Steward of the Manor of Taunton and Taunton Deane in 1909. Price 1/-. This awakened my interest in the subject so I purchased it, now priced £5.75!

It has proved a mine of information, starting with the early history of the Borough of Taunton Deane from 721. Then how the Leet Courts started, and why, how they worked. Several Appendices of Accounts, Lists of Stewards, Portreeves, Constables etc. from 1426-1908.

I already knew my Blackmore ancestors had held various offices in the Leet Courts since that period, according to A.L.Humphrey's Wellington history and to research I did in Somerset Studies Library in Taunton. So this book is invaluable.

By strange coincidence, in the 1970s I attended a Leet Court held in Abbey Church House, because the rights to graze cattle on the Common Land at Knowle Hill, Chew Magna, needed to be transferred from the Lords of the Manor to the Parish Council as the Manor was to be sold. So the old Court Leet had to be revived.

We were then living in the wing of the large farmhouse adjoining the land. The brother and sister who owned the farm asked me to be a witness and attend with the sister, as her brother was in poor health. We had a barrister to prove their rights, but we had to repeat an oath, and affirm when called upon.

It was quite awesome; the wigged barrister instructed us on procedure as we awaited the representative of the Lord Chancellor to arrive. The Court Usher knocked on the door, entered and called us to order; we stood and bowed. His Lordship wore Court Dress including breeches. We repeated the swearing-in after the Usher; it didn't make sense to us being couched in old English. Then a long speech in Latin from his Lordship, which we answered 'Yea' each time our names were called.

We thought it would be very short, but it took two and a half hours as each barrister had to put his client's case. It was an interesting experience for me. Now I have this book, I fully understand the procedure and hope to produce an useful paper on the subject in the near future. I hope this might interest the Friends of the Survey of Old Bath.

With best wishes,

Ruth Haskins

♪♪♪♪♪

Our thanks go to these four contributors for their most interesting letters. Would all readers please maintain a watchful eye for any other matters of general interest, and write in with details to: Leslie Holt, 'Westwinds', Hayesfield Park, Bath BA2 4QE

NOTES AND QUERIES

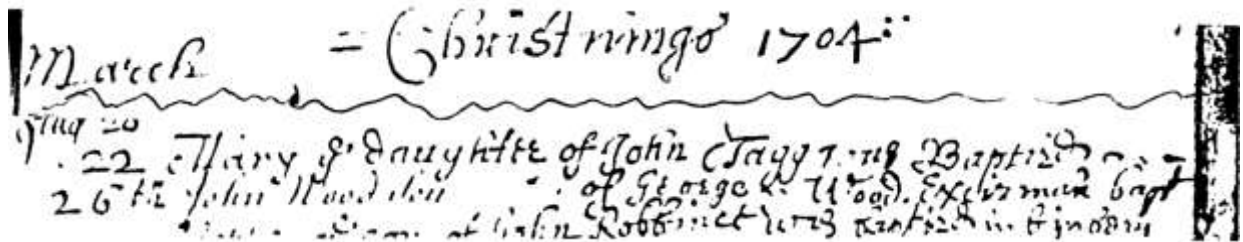
A recent article on John Wood raised the question of his parentage again, and referred to his father as a builder. Philip Jackson has already published in our magazine a copy of the registers in which his supposed baptism is recorded. Notes by Philip are published below.

John Wood, architect of Bath.

Before coming to Bath in 1727, there is ample evidence to show that John Wood had been responsible for building the stable block at Bramham Park, Tadcaster, and this has probably led to the suggestion of that Yorkshire background, but after discovery of the entry of a baptism on 26 August 1704 many writers referred to John Wood returning to his native city. As recently as August 2004 *The Bath Magazine* claims that the circumstantial evidence is probably true. There are oddities in that entry in the St James' Register, which suggest further investigations would be useful. If the Bishop's Transcript for the relevant period had not been missing it might have helped to settle some of the following questions:-

1. The entry is dated 26th August, 1704, cf. final page, of issue 5 of *The Survey of Bath and District*
2. The entry is the only one on that page in the register to omit the word "ye" before son or daughter
3. It is also the only one on that page with a gap between "son" and "of"
4. George Wood (the father) is recorded as an "exciseman"
5. John Wood refers to his sister in his will. The family needs further investigation

Philip Jackson



The entry in the St.James' register

Editor's note:-

Allan Keevil points to the burial of Agatha, daughter of George Wood, on 21 December 1698. She seems to be the Agatha Wood christened 1696. An Elizabeth Wood was christened 1694. Philip Jackson points out that Customs and Excise personnel moved every 3 years. As seen, further investigation is needed.

Documents on Widcombe Manor

It is amazing what a difficult subject the site of Widcombe Manor has proved to be. When Connie Smith began studying it some years ago, there was nothing there on the early years of the site except legend, and legend, being slippery and elusive, is always harder to deal with than is working in a clear field.

Mrs. Bernadette Kondrat has been downloading relevant documents from the Internet. Once again statements have had to be modified, so it is just as well we have never attempted a definitive publication on this subject! Scarborough Chapman's marriage settlement of 1678 makes it plain that after his death the site was occupied by his second wife until her death (1720 or later). It also makes it feasible that 1678 is the date the core of the house was erected. The document confirms that Scarborough inherited the 98 acres. Francis Swanton's will of 1676/7 makes the Bennets his executors and shows how the Bennet family came to hear of Scarborough's daughter by his first wife, Jane, Francis Swanton's granddaughter. Jane Swanton's will of 1695 (second wife of Francis) shows that Scarborough did not inherit

the mill and mill grounds and other lands like the Glasshouse site until her death, though no doubt he shared in the use of them.

We have also found the will of the second Scarborough, presumably a godson, apothecary in the British Field Hospital in Flanders at the end of the War of the Spanish Succession, 1712. He cuts off his relations with a shilling each, except his sister Mary. The will of Scarborough's second wife, Ann (Brinsden) Chapman, 1720, also appears vindictive - perhaps the Bennets had said too much about her occupation of the site. The Bennet family receives nothing except a gold ring which Ann received from Scarborough, for one of the daughters. Philip Bennet I's will of 1722 refers to his manor of Maperton, supporting our claim that he did not live in Bath. It also appears possible from these documents that Scarborough's daughter Jane Chapman never inherited the main site at all, but that it passed directly to Scarborough's male heir, Philip Bennet II, on the death of Ann.

Alistair Durie has brought us Collinson's version of the tombstone of Philip I and Jane. The churchwarden of Maperton reports to us that it is currently on the floor of the boiler-house, following 19th century rebuilding. We have also purchased the registers of Maperton on microfiche and lodged them at Bath Record Office, where Alistair hopes to consult them for Bennet and related entries.

Finally, in the will of Mary Wrench, 1835, she leaves £1000 for attendance on herself and her late deceased brother. Presumably therefore Captain Wrench of Widcombe House was the brother and not the father of Miss Wrench as we had supposed. What we say is, with such a famous house, why were points like this not settled long ago?

Perhaps one day we can publish a volume on the documents of 'Widcombe Manor' and 'Lyncombe Hall' and then all these points may be discussed in detail!



The site of the later 'Bennet's Mill', left to Scarborough Chapman by the will of his aunt Jane Swanton. The road on the right runs through the old mill ground.

TO INVADE OR NOT TO INVADE - DID IT HAPPEN?

To: Peter Davenport
Director of Excavations,
Bath Archaeological Trust.

Dear Peter,

I have been watching Channel 4's *Britain AD: King Arthur's Britain*. Francis Pryor put the case, in the last programme, for the Anglo-Saxon invasion being an invention of Bede's so as to give the English an identity. He did not explain however why the 'British' inhabitants of what is now England suddenly decided to start speaking Anglo-Saxon and using Anglo-Saxon artefacts.

On p.19 of your book, *Medieval Bath Uncovered*, you mention the writings of Gildas, 'mid-sixth century'. Surely he understood the subject better than any later commentator? Is he inventing?

I am interested in Arthur, on whom I have very clear views as a figure of legend, and am anxious to understand the period better. Others will also be interested - your pieces on the Roman Baths and on Calleva Atrebatas were much appreciated.

Yours,

Elizabeth
21 September 2004

To: Ms.Elizabeth Holland
Editor,
The Survey of Bath and District.

Dear Elizabeth

Re Francis Pryor and the Anglo Saxons

Francis Pryor is a controversialist and enjoys attacking orthodoxies. Knowing this allows one to take much, if not most of what he says with a pinch of salt. He is also a very distinguished and competent field archaeologist, who has contributed hugely to our knowledge and understanding of Prehistoric Britain. I believe, however, that he is out of his depth in early medieval Britain.

The first point is the continental background. The period AD 400-700 is in Europe called the Migration Period (*Volkerwanderungzeit*). There is voluminous and good evidence from settlement studies, contemporary historical sources and church documents (the Dark Age is not all that dark in Europe - many sources survive) for huge movements of population, mostly of Germanic tribes into the south and west, but also of Britons into Brittany (giving it its name and language - another controversy). France, Italy, Spain and North Africa were all ruled by Germanic kings in this period, who it is clear had large (for the time) armies with them. Land was expropriated and settled by their followers. There is also clear archaeological evidence for depopulation in precisely those areas that Bede says the Angles and Saxons came from, Saxony and Jutland.

The careful analysis of "Anglo Saxon" burial practice in England shows that while there is ground for arguing that the Saxon way of life was adapted (note the "a") in much of England in the late 5th to 7th centuries (and not in the west, where late Roman style continued for centuries) and that not all people by any means who are buried in this way are necessarily "German", nonetheless in East Anglia and the Midlands the distinct and overwhelmingly predominant burial rite in the late 5th and early 6th centuries is cremation in every respect identical to that in Friesland and North West Germany. Even the pots are the same, let alone metalwork, site plan etc. And what is the (admittedly currently inconclusive) DNA evidence? That the closest match of the present population of Eastern England is to the Friesians. It is also the case that the Friesian dialect is the closest modern German dialect to English: it even sounds like English when you half hear it in a crowd. Applying Occam's razor means that the users of these cemeteries are Germans.

It is possible to argue that the continental countries were conquered by an elite (say many thousands in a population of a few million each). There is clear evidence of fashions in burial and clothes, weapons and other accoutrements being Germanic but in Italy, Spain and France the Germanic languages disappeared with slight trace - about the same as British in English - leaving the Romance languages to develop from late vernacular Latin. This only strengthens the case for large-scale immigration in England. If you remember, the analysis of the influence of British on the structure of English indicated the presence of large numbers of British people speaking a foreign language (English) but the point is that this, in contrast to the Continent, must suggest large numbers of Germans, otherwise, as in those countries, the native language would have prevailed. While languages are adopted because of their elite power (think British India) this does not usually filter all the way down the social scale. Similarly, the elite nature of German language in those countries did not allow its survival as the vernacular.

The famous “groans of the Britons” to the Roman consul Aetius asking for help against the barbarians in AD 446 and the comments of Gildas, c.AD 540 make it clear that contemporaries thought that something rather more than friendly day trips and trade were taking place across the North Sea.

Against all this we must admit that Bede was writing history, and it is an academic truism that this means “telling stories”, shaping and organizing events into a coherent narrative with often a subtext. Bede was clearly writing a tract to support the Roman church, what became the medieval church in England, against the British Church, who, at first refused to accept the foreign interlopers. In this, the English kings are the heroes and the British the black-hats who deserve defeat because they are, in effect, heretics. He undoubtedly tidied up loose ends and, as his only source for the period before c.600 was oral tradition, his version of the *adventus saxonum* was bound to be a bit dodgy. Tribal oral tradition and traditional lineages would always be subject to mythologizing. So to that extent, Bede was “inventing” his history, but that is not quite the same as making it up. His claim to be the father of history is that he did apply scepticism and care in using his sources, but also that he shaped it into a story.

The Anglo Saxon Invasion was certainly not a proper invasion, like D-Day. It may not have realized that it was Anglo-Saxon until much later, but large numbers of people came from Angeln, Jutland and Saxony in the 5th and 6th centuries, and both settled among, displaced, married and slaughtered the British, until, like the pigs and farmers in Animal Farm, it was not possible to tell the one from the other.

Best wishes,

Peter
23 September 2004



“The Saxon invaders arriving in London about the year 530, and finding the city deserted”, by A.Forestier (from an old history book)

A RESTORATION CLINIC – DR.ROBERT PEIRCE AND THE ABBEY HOUSE

Roger Rolls

The open space to the south of Bath Abbey, now the haunt of buskers and street performers, was formerly occupied by the Abbey House, one of the grandest buildings in the city. It was here that members of the Royal Court of King Charles II were accommodated on their visit and the nobility and gentry of Restoration Britain strolled peacefully in the formal garden and dined in style within the spacious lodgings. Ailing aristocrats were able to receive expert medical advice about taking the waters from the physician, Dr.Robert Peirce who lived there throughout the second half of the 17th century.

Before the Reformation, the Abbey House had been part of the Prior's lodgings. Its last ecclesiastical resident, Prior Gibbs was ordered to leave in January 1539. The priory buildings and cloister were offered to the city council for £500 but the site was finally purchased by a Taunton man called Humphrey Colles who sold it on to Bath's Member of Parliament, Matthew Colthurst. Colthurst realised the potential of the building and with very little conversion work, the Priors' lodgings became the grand residence known as the Abbey House, whilst the cloistral area was transformed into its elegant garden. It was sold on again to John Hall and ultimately acquired by the Duke of Kingston. Although it may have been occupied in the reign of Queen Elizabeth by a physician called John Sherwood, there is some doubt about the occupancy of Abbey House before Dr.Peirce took up residence there in 1659 with his wife and young family (the rent for the door to the baths was paid by the Hall family).

Robert Peirce was born in 1622 at Combe Hay where his father was rector of the parish¹. The Peirce family originally came from Devizes where the surname appears quite commonly amongst the town's 17th century records.² Robert's grandfather, John, was a mayor there and several other mayors were called Peirce.³ The family's wealth and influence in the town was displayed by another John Peirce who left a sizeable bequest to the town on his death in 1664 in order to finance a school and pay for improvements to roads and other buildings. Richard Peirce, probably Robert's uncle was a draper in the town during the Cromwellian period and Richard's brother, Thomas, who is mentioned by John Aubrey, kept an inn called the Swan which achieved local fame for selling metheglyn, a liqueur made from honey.

Robert's father married Elizabeth (1597-1657), the daughter of Chidioc and Grace Tutt who lived at Salisbury in one of the houses on the Cathedral Close⁴. They had three children: Elizabeth, Grace and Robert, their only son. Throughout his childhood, Robert suffered repeated ill health⁵. He became seriously ill at the age of ten when his whole body was grossly bloated with fluid, probably due to a kidney disorder which was then a common complication of tonsillitis. A Bath physician called Ralph Bayley, who was married to one of Robert's maternal relatives, attended him. The treatment at that time was regular blood letting and purgation, a remedy which might have had some beneficial effect on reducing the oedema but often hastened death in more severe illness. Robert was lucky and recovered, but two years later, in 1638, he was stricken by a smallpox epidemic which was sweeping the country, disfiguring and killing its young victims.

At the age of six or seven, Robert was sent to King Edward's School, a few miles away in Bath. At thirteen, he moved on to Winchester College where he continued his education until he was 16. He had hardly recovered from the smallpox, when he was taken ill again, suffering from what he called a "tertian ague"- recurrent headaches and fevers, pains in his teeth and jaws and swollen glands in the neck sometimes so enlarged as to make breathing difficult.

He survived his infections and was able to pursue his education at Lincoln College, Oxford under the tutelage of Robert Crosse⁶. Oxford had lately improved its status as a centre for medical education largely due to the impetus it received from Dr.Thomas Clayton, who was appointed Regius Professor of medicine in 1611⁷. The first physic garden in England had been established at Oxford in 1621 and three years later a readership in anatomy was founded. King Charles I granted a charter allowing the bodies of persons executed within 21 miles of the city to be used for dissection at the University. Clayton also arranged for students to be apprenticed to physicians practising in Oxford. As a result, students had a

good grounding in human anatomy and were not reluctant to examine their patients or perform autopsies when they died.

Robert gained his BA degree on 15 July 1642, just before life at the University was disrupted by the Civil War. His father had died in the previous April. His mother died 16 years later at Cheston (Cheshunt), Hertfordshire⁸.

Shortly after his twenty-first birthday, Robert fell ill once more, this time with measles, a much more severe disease in those days and often fatal. He nearly died after a torrential nosebleed. He moved from Oxford to Bristol in 1646⁹. He may have enlisted in a regiment, though this is not mentioned in his Memoirs. The Civil War was raging and in July 1643, Bristol had surrendered to the Royalist army. Men were pressed into service to join the armies of both sides. In Bristol sympathies lay predominantly with the Parliamentarians because the favouritism shown by the Crown in creating a monopoly for wealthy London companies had brought provincial traders to the brink of ruin, so it must have been to the relief of many that the city surrendered three months later in September after a successful rout by Col. Fairfax and his Parliamentarian troops.

War and outbreaks of plague had devastated Bristol's economy and decimated its population, leaving many of its citizens ill, wounded and destitute. Medical practitioners must have been very busy at this time. Peirce may have practised under the supervision of an experienced physician before returning to university to take his MA and bachelor of medicine degrees which he took on 21 October 1650, aged 28.

Whilst in Bristol he made friends with William Curre who later became physician-general to the English army in Ireland and was also the Duke of Ormond's personal doctor¹⁰. Curre frequently travelled between Bristol and Ireland. One of Robert's university friends Christopher Bennett (1617-1655) also joined him in Bristol before moving to London where he was elected Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians.

Robert Peirce had left Oxford under a cloud for failing to pay his college fees though he seems to have disputed this while he was in Bristol¹¹ and by the time he took his final degree, the matter had been resolved. He was now a fully qualified medical graduate and needed to look for somewhere to practise independently. He chose the eastern edge of the Somerset Moors, possibly in the village of Wookey. The manor house at Wookey was occupied by a man called David Trym whose daughter, Anna, married Robert in 1651¹². The Trym family came from Hutton, near Banwell in North Somerset and Robert may have known Anna before moving to Wookey. Although receiving no formal training, Anna enjoyed a reputation locally for having some knowledge and skill in treating illnesses and making dressings, as did many country women at that time.

A year after their marriage their first child, Elizabeth, was born. Robert was 30 and Anna a year older¹³. Amid the excitement of parenthood, Robert was once again struck down with illness, this time a "quartan ague" which he describes as being a common illness in the area and seldom lasting less than six months. He had known some persons residing in the marshy part of Somerset to suffer from ague for three years; one person had had it for seven. Robert's illness could have been malaria as this disease was still endemic in the Somerset levels at that time. Cases of malaria were recorded as late as the 17th century though one cannot be certain that all diseases described as agues were due to malaria. The name was given to any intermittent fever. Dr Claver Morris, a physician in practice at Wells during the latter part of the 17th century frequently mentions in his diary patients with tertian (3 day) and quartan agues¹⁴.

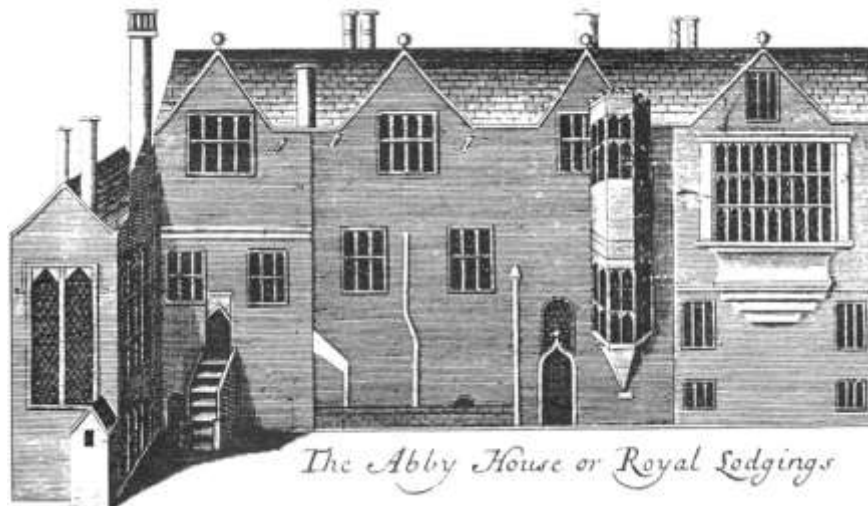
Illness in a physician was not a good advertisement and Peirce's practice suffered as a result. Fortunately he recovered in three months having prescribed himself "preparation of steel"¹⁵ and Aaron root. He applied leeches to haemorrhoids which he had developed during the course of the illness. Despite his recovery, he remained in a debilitated state and was not prepared to risk another autumn in the area lest he should succumb to the "ill steams of that marshy country". So in 1653 he and his wife and young daughter moved to Bath.

Bath in the time of Cromwell was a very different place from the modern city. Apart from the Abbey Church, little now remains of the 17th century town. Walled and gated, its 2000 inhabitants lived along crowded streets which the diarist John Evelyn described as narrow, uneven and unpleasant¹⁶. Plague and smallpox were no strangers to the place and the lower parts of the town were subject to serious flooding. The baths, in the ownership of the corporation since the Reformation a century earlier, were shabby, unhygienic and public. But despite its neglected appearance, Bath had become an important health resort in the early 17th century owing to the recommendation of medical authors such as Dr. William Turner, Dr. John Jones and Dr. Edward Jorden, and it was further popularised by visits from royalty and nobility.

On his arrival in Bath, Peirce found three established physicians in practice besides “several interlopers both from Oxford and from London and other parts of the nation”. There were also a number of surgeons and apothecaries who permanently resided in the city. The three resident physicians were Tobias Venner (1577-1660), Samuel Bave (1588-1668) and John Maplet (c.1611-1670). All had considerable practices. Dr. Venner divided his practice between Bath and his native Somerset town of Bridgwater. Dr. Maplet practised both in Bristol and Bath whilst Dr. Bave commenced practise in Gloucester and moved to Bath when aged 52, remaining in the city as a full-time resident. He bought property on the south side of the city near the Hot Bath which was occupied by members of his family over the next 100 years. Division of practice between Bath and elsewhere seems to have been necessary because of the seasonal influx of visitors to the city. Presumably there was not enough work to support most physicians during the winter months. Important families and royalty were usually accompanied by their own physicians or surgeons when visiting the city.

The terms surgeon and apothecary are often interchanged when referring to the same man and this habit led to the combination term surgeon-apothecary. As medical practitioners, these men were far more “hands on” in their approach to patients than the physicians. They were not allowed to prescribe internal medicines - that was the prerogative of the physician. The medicaments were mostly compounded from herbs, often grown in a garden. The garden of the apothecary George Gibbes achieved some fame through the writings of Thomas Johnson, a well-known London apothecary who can claim fame for introducing bananas into England. Johnson visited Bath in 1634 with a party of botanically-minded friends and wrote about his travels in a publication entitled *Mercurius Botanicus* in which he described Gibbes’ garden and gives a list of 117 exotic plants which he saw growing there. The site of Gibbes’ garden has not been determined though it may have been on land behind houses on the north side of Cheap Street belonging to the Perman family, related to Gibbes by marriage¹⁷. The list of plants in Gibbes’ garden certainly contains some medicinal herbs, for example absinth, garlic, autumn crocus, liquorice, hyssop and rue.

Major surgery was rarely carried out and a surgeon’s main concern lay with dressings, blood letting, cupping, making issues, cauterising and making and applying medicinal plasters. Surgeons also embalmed the dead and aided physicians when dissecting bodies for post-mortem examination. Peirce describes five autopsies in his Memoirs, three of which he describes in considerable detail¹⁸.



In addition to the fees earned from medical work, it was not unusual for members of all three branches of the profession in Bath to enjoy a second income gained either directly or indirectly from property. Pierce's residence, the Abbey House, had several desirable features. It was large and although in the centre of the town it was quieter than many of the other lodgings. It also had a door which led directly into the Abbey Church which Peirce described as being very convenient for lame brides. There was a covered gallery which led the short distance to the King's Bath, terminating in the "Great Stairs" which descended directly into the thermal water. Dr Peirce paid the corporation a rent for this facility, an investment repaid many times over with the fees he gained from the gentry and nobility who used his house as a private hospital.

During his first few years in practice, the majority of Peirce's patients were minor gentry and tradesmen. He often provided his services free to the poor for, as a new physician, he had to establish his reputation "in charitable cures". His early years in practice involved a considerable amount of travelling. The more senior physicians in Bath were glad to shed some of their country visiting so that they could concentrate on the more lucrative city work and Peirce's respectful approaches to his senior colleagues paid dividends as he built up an extensive "riding practice" within a thirty mile radius of Bath¹⁹. This meant he could be absent from the city for several weeks at a time²⁰. He was sometimes called out at night. On one occasion he was summoned to see a woman in Chippenham who had tried to take her own life by swallowing arsenic.

He mentions several visits to London in the Memoirs. A coach trip to the metropolis in 1658 cost him £1. In 1677 he stayed with Humphrey Henchman, Bishop of London, at his house in Aldersgate Street (Henchman's daughter had formerly been Peirce's patient at Bath) and he was in London again in April 1689 when he called on three of his former patients.



Dr.Venner

In March 1660, the venerable Dr.Tobias Venner died in his 83rd year. Venner had been appointed "Physician to Poor Strangers" seven years earlier. This appointment was funded from a gift given to the Corporation by Viscount John Scudamore in memory of his wife Lady Elizabeth so that free medical advice could be available to poor strangers arriving in Bath. It also included patients admitted to Bellott's hospital. Peirce was regarded as the natural successor to Venner and, with the exception of a two-year break, held the appointment until 1705.

By 1662, life was beginning to take off for Robert and his family. He had the best lodging house in the city. His practice had grown as a result of Dr Venner's death, and in September 1661 Robert gained his doctorate of medicine from Oxford. Anna had given birth to their fourth child, Charles, who was christened in the Abbey. Perhaps they chose the child's name in honour of their king, newly restored to the throne. What they may not have realised was that the monarch was about to become Robert's next patient.

After two years of marriage, Catherine of Braganza, wife of Charles II had failed to conceive despite the obvious fecundity of her husband whose affair with Barbara Villiers had already produced a fruitful outcome. The royal physicians advised the queen to visit Tunbridge Wells where they hoped that her infertility would be cured by drinking the iron-laden waters discovered there by Lord North in 1606.

Even by 1663, accommodation at the Wells was meagre and the royal party had to camp on Bishop's Down. So great was the number of personnel who accompanied the queen that Catherine's entourage occupied forty tents. The visit, which cost £2,590 and three pence,²¹ proved fruitless so the royal party moved on to Bath in September.

The king and queen, and their immediate attendants were accommodated at Abbey House whilst the rest stayed in other lodgings and inns. Sir Alexander Fraizer²², the queen's physician, had not previously visited the city and Peirce had to explain to him how the waters were used and enlighten him on their chemical composition. Fraizer was a graduate of Aberdeen and had acquired a reputation for general scholarship but particularly in medicine. He accompanied the king during the Civil War. After the Restoration in 1660, he sat in the Scottish Parliament. He is mentioned by Samuel Pepys in his diary. He maintained a correspondence with Peirce for some time afterwards and realised that the composition of the Bath Waters was very similar to the waters of the French spa at Bourbon where he had attended Queen Catherine's mother and where he had previously recommended many of his patients to travel. Now that the similarity of mineral content had been established, Fraizer resolved in future to send patients needing spa treatment to Bath "saving them the expense and hazard of a voyage by sea and a long journey afterwards by land". He also decided that the English climate was more suitable for English bodies.

Death held considerable dominion over life in the 17th century. Between 1664 and 1666 it cut a swathe through the Peirce family. Anna's father, David Trym, died on 6 January after a miserable two years following his cataract operation. A month later, their four-year-old son died. Then, two years later their small son Charles died and was buried in the Abbey. As a medical practitioner Robert Peirce lived in particularly close proximity to the extreme human experiences of birth, disease, and death. Although his professional experience exposed him to a greater awareness of mortality, death stalked every household. Fear of the terrible consequences of epidemic disease and the abrupt loss of a young child was probably no less poignant than it is today. Mothers who managed to survive their childbearing years bore an average of eight children, although it was extremely rare for all of them to reach adulthood. Only one of Peirce's four children managed to stay alive that long. There is a poignant memorial of these family tragedies engraved on a tablet amongst the many on the Abbey's north wall.

Though life had been extinguished at a personal level for Robert, the uneasy familiarity with mortality was more than usually present in English society in 1665. Plague was decimating Londoners on an unprecedented scale with as many as 3000 deaths a week. Despite previous plague epidemics in the spa town, Bath escaped lightly during the year of the Great Plague. One result was an influx of people who, by quitting the capital during the plague months, hoped to escape the clutches of the disease. One of these, the physician Thomas Guidott, was encouraged to stay in Bath by Dr. John Maplet who was the most senior of the resident Bath physicians. Guidott quickly set himself up as an authority on the Bath Waters, publishing a treatise on the subject.

Guidott was by all accounts a conceited and loud-mouthed character, particularly after a few glasses of wine. His unguarded and libellous statements proved too much for Peirce who accused him of "prosecuting malice and envy rather than truth"²³. He later left Bath under a dark cloud and returned to London, but still visited the spa in the summer months to avail himself of the lucrative medical trade. With the austerity of the Cromwellian years receding, the spa had become a magnet for seekers of both health and pleasure and, in their wake came the multitude of medical practitioners to administer to their needs. As Peirce commented "Where the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered".

It seems extraordinary that people already in a debilitated state were prepared to set out on hazardous journeys which often took weeks to complete. Highway robbery was common. Most roads in Great Britain were poorly maintained and wheeled transport frequently broke apart after a short time in service. The suspension of these vehicles was primitive and the rough surface of the carriageways, worn away by the pounding of drovers' cattle and horse riders, meant that the traveller was continuously jolted throughout his journey. Not all journeys were made over land. Later in the 17th century many patients travelled by boat from Ireland.

Peirce was often asked to treat children. Wealthier families often entrusted their children to the care of a nurse or servant who accompanied the child on their journey to the spa. A course of bathing could last many months and arrangements were sometimes made for children to receive tuition in Bath. One such case was that of six-year-old Gershom Carmichael who arrived with his mother in 1679²⁴. Gershom's limbs were distorted and crooked. He had been under the care of so-called bodymenders to try to straighten his limbs and was supported in iron braces. He visited the spa over the next three or four summers where he regularly bathed in the King's and Queen's baths and was able to leave off his iron braces and was settled at a school. Gershom Carmichael eventually became Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow University.

Peirce was now 46 and was attracting an increasing number of aristocratic patients. London physicians were sending many of their patients to him and he appears to have been held in high esteem by the leading physicians of the time. Wealthy patients often travelled to the spa with their personal physician and this gave Peirce the opportunity to make their acquaintance. The elderly Elizabeth Butler, wife of James Butler, 1st Duke of Ormond was a regular visitor to the spa and was recommended to Peirce by her London doctors, Sir Alexander Fraizer and Sir Charles Scarborough who had met Peirce during the royal visit in 1662. Peirce later looked after Scarborough's wife, Lady Mary who suffered from some sort of arthritis and made several visits to Bath²⁵. Fraizer also arrived in Bath at this time, suffering from a persistent cough and looking decidedly ill.

Peirce sometimes consulted with other physicians, usually those who were visiting the city like Dr.Edward Baynard from London, Dr.John Mayow from Oxford and Dr.Nathaniel Highmore from Sherborne. He was also in correspondence with many of the leading physicians of his day including Sir Thomas Browne of Norwich who in a letter dated 12 July 1677 recommended a woman from Suffolk to his care, suggesting her condition would benefit from mineral water drinking as well as bathing. Most of the Bath physicians prior to the Restoration had been reluctant to recommend drinking spa water, except for the few who had travelled to continental spas like Aachen or Bourbon.

In an era of political and religious division, Peirce treated Royalists and Parliamentarians, protestants, catholics and dissenters with equal concern. His Memoirs give no clue to his political persuasion and his success as a practitioner was probably due to a tolerant attitude to religious diversity and a pragmatic attitude to treatment. He remained a pious physician amongst the increasing number of agnostic medical practitioners and this may have helped him bear the vicissitudes of his personal life as well as maintaining care and concern for his patients.



Dr.John Mayow

On 1 February 1679, Peirce's only surviving daughter Mary died after giving birth to a son. She had married John A'Court, a barrister at the Inner Temple and a graduate of her father's college at Oxford University²⁶. John A'Court had been born on 23 June 1643 at Rodden, a tiny parish on the south-eastern outskirts of Frome. It is probable that Mary died from some obstetric calamity. Her baby was named Peirce A'Court and was nurtured by a wet nurse who Robert and his wife employed. The woman

omitted to tell her employers that she had become pregnant fearing that she would lose her job. She attempted breast-feeding despite her dwindling supply of milk and the child almost died. Peirce A'Court was brought up by his grandparents and at sixteen he was sent to Oxford where, like his father and grandfather he matriculated at Lincoln College.

It is not clear whether Robert Peirce was involved in the visit of Mary of Modena who arrived in 1687. Both King James II and Queen Mary were in Bath in October²⁷ and were attended by Robert Chapman, the surgeon-apothecary who frequently worked with Peirce.

In the following year, Robert's wife Anna died after 37 years of marriage. Her health had never been good. At one time shortly after their marriage Robert thought she might have been consumptive because she was spitting blood and within the space of two years, her two brothers, two sisters and a sister's daughter all died of consumption. However, she recovered from her chest problems but was subject to recurrent abdominal pains. These were particularly troublesome in the years when royalty were staying at Abbey House. She had consulted the Court physicians who were in attendance during these visits to no avail. In the end, Robert out of desperation suggested she should drink mineral waters. At that time in the 1660s, drinking the Bath waters was not in fashion, those of Epsom and Tunbridge Wells being then considered more suitable. Anna had been quite upset that her husband had made this suggestion, thinking he no longer cared about her health but he persuaded her to try them and indeed they seemed to ameliorate her condition. She had remained in reasonably good health until the last 18 months of her life when she had a relapse of her bowel trouble. By May, her husband suspected she had an ulcer in her bowel. She was in great pain and extremely weak and was ultimately bed-bound. She died on 23 May 1688²⁸. Robert had lost all his closest family members apart from his grandson, Peirce A'Court.

Robert lived at Abbey House for another 22 years and saw many more patients. His grandson eventually married Elizabeth Ashe, the daughter of a wealthy clothier and sheep farmer. The wedding took place in 1705 at St.Giles in the Fields in London. In 1722 Peirce A'Court became MP for Heytesbury. He took over the tenancy of Abbey House when his grandfather died in 1710. He survived until his 46th year (1725) and is buried at Rodden. His son who was also known as Peirce A'Court, though later called Peirce A'Court-Ashe continued to hold the Abbey House tenancy until 1754. Through the Ashe family, his descendants inherited the Heytesbury estates and acquired the Baronetcy of Heytesbury. There are direct descendants of Robert Peirce alive today. By a curious coincidence one of Robert's patients was also an ancestor of the present A'Court family: Sir Robert Holmes, Governor of the Isle of Wight visited Bath on several occasions and became a good friend of his physician after being battered and bruised in sea battles and suffering from lead poisoning and gout.

As for the Abbey House, it was demolished in 1755 to make way for a suite of baths named after the Duke of Kingston, the owner of the land. In the process the eastern range of the Roman baths was discovered ten feet beneath its foundations as well as some Saxon coffins. The excavation was recorded by Dr.Charles Lucas, an Irish physician and patriot, and then covered over again for another century and a half before being re-excavated. They now lie below Kingston Parade and are called the Lucas Baths. The only remaining evidence of the Abbey House is the doorway "so useful for lame brides" leading into the Abbey Church.

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24. Gershom Carmichael (1672-1729). Gershom Carmichael was born in London - the son of Alexander Carmichael, a Scottish Presbyterian clergyman, who died in 1677. His mother, Christian Inglis, later married the Scottish theologian and mystic James Fraizer of Brae.
<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/cssp/GershomCarmichael.shtml>
25. Mary Scarborough was daughter of Thomas Daniel, of Newberry, Bedfordshire
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27. Peirce, *op.cit.*, p.266
28. *Ibid.*, p.350



A wedding party emerging from the west side of Abbey House in the days of Dr.Sherwood.

Illustration by Stephen Beck

‘SION HOUSE’ NO.1 SION HILL, CLIFTON, BRISTOL

Mike Chapman

In the article ‘Letters from Philadelphia..’ in the last issue of the *Survey*, a letter to John James Chapman from America shows that in 1840 he was staying at Sion House, Clifton, in Bristol. This building has an interesting history which is detailed below.

‘Sion House’, now merely known as No.1 Sion Hill, is the first of a row of houses built in the 1780s on Clifton Down which overlooks the Avon Gorge above the famous Hotwell spa and St.Vincent’s Rock. In the early 1790s it was owned by a solicitor called Morgan who, sinking for a well in the garden, found water at a depth of 245 feet with the same medicinal properties as the Hotwell below. Sure enough, in 1796 a ‘spacious’ pump room known as ‘Upper Hotwell’ or ‘Sion Spring House’ was built over this source, with bathing facilities attached. The ‘Public Baths (Warm & Cold)’ were housed in a separate single-storey building called ‘Sion Spring’ erected between Sion House and the pump room. Other amenities included a newspaper room (later a reading room and circulating library) and reception gardens. This venture enjoyed a limited success, and in 1816 advertisements periodically appeared in local newspapers such as the *Bath Weekly Chronicle* announcing that ‘J.Schweppe ... still continues to manufacture the SODA WATER from the UPPER SPRING, or SION SPRING, Clifton’, on sale from Samuel Webb, Chemist, Cheap-street, Bath.

For users of the new ‘spa’, Sion House itself was converted to a lodgings which, by 1820 was being run by the owner, a Mrs.Richbell, who appears to have taken over the adjoining property (Nos.2 Sion Hill) for this purpose, leaving the management of the baths to a Mr.James Aitken, perfumier. In about 1834 the premises, then known as the ‘Misses Richbell’s Lodging and Boarding House’, with the spring and baths, were taken over by a Mrs.Minifie, recorded in the 1841 census for Sion House as ‘Mrs. Sarah Minifie’, aged 50, together with her husband John, ‘boarding house keeper’, aged 70 (presumably in retirement), their son Charles Minifie, ‘Hosier’, aged 25, and Guy Parsons, ‘Navy’, aged 45. The ‘staff’ consisted of one male servant and five female servants. There were also 16 residents of ‘Independent means’ (including a John Paul and his wife, listed as ‘foreign’), together with a Solicitor, a Professor of Music and his wife, a Naval man, and one personal servant. Unfortunately John James Chapman seems to have moved on, and there is no mention of any ‘foreign’ engineers.

Spring House was occupied appropriately by a ‘Librarian’, James Atkins, aged 50, and a ‘Physician’, Alfred Fairbrother, aged 25. There were also three female servants (presumably the ‘staff’ of the pump-room and reading room), and two female residents aged 35 and 40 of independent means. Mrs.Minifie’s other neighbours at Nos.3 to 5 Sion Hill were also mainly persons of independent means, except for two physicians and, at No.7, a ‘school mistress’. More interestingly perhaps was the occupier of No.6 Sion Hill, John Loudon McAdam, ‘Surveyor of Roads’, aged 42, with his wife Marianne, aged 35, son Charles, aged 10, daughters Alice, aged 5, and Selina aged 3. As surveyor of the Bristol Turnpike Trust, McAdam had settled in Bristol in 1815 (operating from 15, Small Street), and eventually took over various other trusts in the area, including Bath.

Sion Spring (‘and Engine House’) was occupied by Arthur Palmer, ‘Engineer in charge’, aged 55, and Ann his wife, aged 60. By this time a steam engine had already been installed, and sufficient water was being pumped to the surface to provide a private supply to 340 houses in Clifton and Hotwells for domestic use. However in 1846, when the Bristol Waterworks was formed, this supply was bought up and there are now no surface remains of the spring. It was probably also at this time that Mrs.Minifie retired and moved to No.7 Sion Hill. Although ‘Mr.C.Minifie’ still occupied Sion Spring House for a few more years, in 1853 the whole property had been acquired by a Mr.Thomas Bathurst and in 1868 became ‘St.Vincent’s Rocks Hotel & Baths’ under a manageress, Mrs.Harrill. This business was set up by a newly formed joint stock company to exploit the popularity of the new Suspension Bridge, opened in 1864. A similar establishment appeared in 1894 when the Clifton Rocks Railway was opened opposite Sion House, which included a ‘Hydropathic Institute’, ‘Grand Pump Room’ and, in 1898, became the ‘Grand Spa Hotel and Hydro’ (later the ‘Avon Gorge Hotel’). Both hotels remained in business throughout the 20th century until recently, when St.Vincent’s Rocks Hotel reverted once more to a private dwelling.

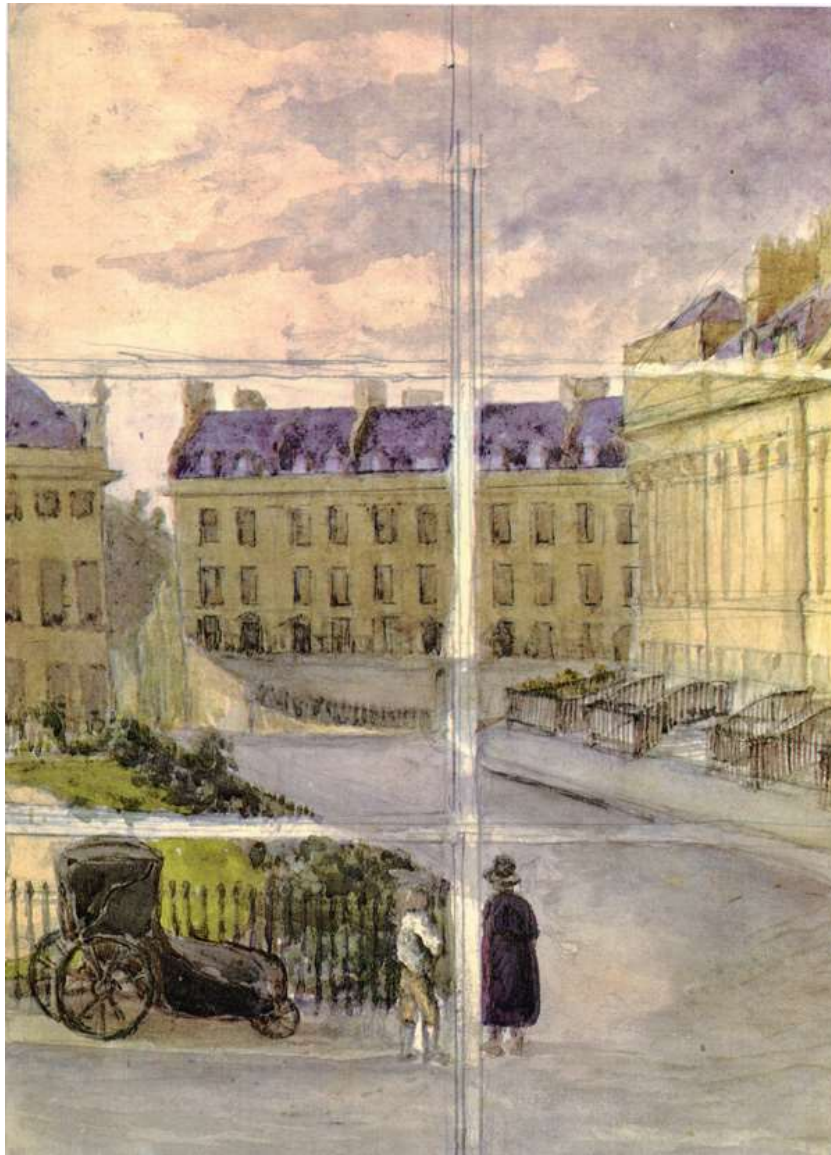
It is interesting to speculate whether John James' nephew Thomas Harvey found profitable employment in Bristol in the late 1830s and early 1840s when many important projects in the history of engineering were taking place. Brunel was not only completing his Great Western Railway, but the *Great Britain* steamship was under construction, and the piers of Clifton Suspension Bridge were already taking shape opposite Sion House.



St.Vincent's Rocks Hotel in the early 20th century, looking north, showing the Clifton Suspension Bridge and Observatory on the summit of the hill. Sion Spring House pump room is the building on the right with the balcony. The bath house is the intervening single-storied building

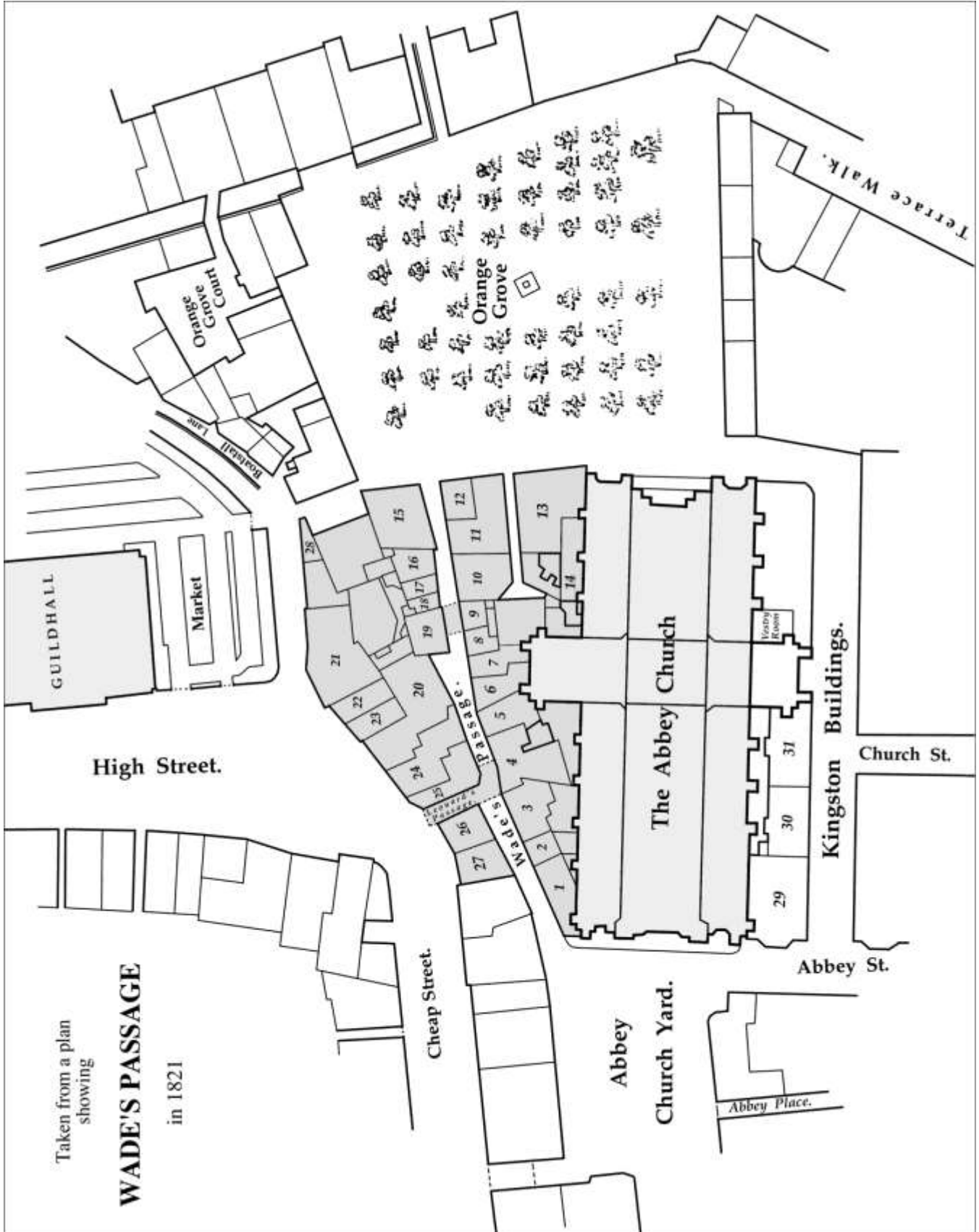


Sion House (No.1 Sion Hill) in 2004, looking south towards the Avon Gorge Hotel (right)



Above is a watercolour sketch by John James Chapman which has recently been forwarded by Ludwig Becher. It is a view of the north side of Queen Square, Bath, probably in the 1840s, looking westward towards Queen's Parade and taken from a window (the glazing bars are shown) on the corner next to his house in Old King Street. Although the window can be identified today, the view is nowadays obscured by trees, and is better seen in the photograph (right) of the same scene in the early 20th century. Note the Bath Chair and chairman talking to a boy on his stand on the corner of the square.





Taken from a plan showing

WADE'S PASSAGE

in 1821

WADE'S PASSAGE - A LOST STREET

Two rows of buildings once stood on the north side of Bath Abbey, separated by the alley called Wade's Passage. Deeds refer to a through-way before the time of Marshal Wade. It is possible he paid to have it cleaned out and paved.

This map is a redrawing of a survey made by G.P.Manners in 1821. It was displayed, surrounded by suitable illustrations, by the Survey of Old Bath at the Historyfest on 11 September 2004, annotated from lease plans of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Of course leaseholders were not necessarily the people actually using the site. In its heyday Wade's Passage was the abode of fashionable shops catering for visitors to Bath. Studies of a number of the shops have been made by Trevor Fawcett. See *Bath History* V, 1994, for an article by Trevor Fawcett and Marta Inskip which refers to shops at the eastern end of Wade's Passage.

The Corporation removed the houses in the 1820s and early 1830s. Earl Manvers also demolished houses on his land south of the Abbey, as part of the project to create a clear space around Bath Abbey.

We have made a detailed study of many of the leases connected with these houses and will be glad to supply schedules to anyone interested in their history, as with other areas studied. The proposed volumes of records (*Records of Bath History?*) might contain some of the detail unsuitable for a magazine article or a booklet. It seems possible also that Trevor Fawcett will one day publish a further study as a companion to his article in *Bath History*.

Meanwhile we can note that No.24 was once the *Star and Garter*, home of Walter Chapman the saddler II (see the table in Ruth Haskin's article), where in 'the Shop' he sold leather goods and gold and silver lace for liveries, possibly obtained from the Coward family. (Cf. his will of 1729). By 1777 it was held by his son John Chapman the saddler, Mayor six times. East of No. 24, in No.20, Benedict Masters the goldsmith, father of the mapmaker Harcourt Masters, held a lease of 1779.

No.21 was the *Cross Keys*, one subject of the letter of complaint from London transcribed below. East, the territory partly labelled 28, was the holding taken by Leonard Coward II in 1762.

In Nos. 10, 11 and 12 lay the property which became known as *Morgan's Coffee House* and then the *Grove Coffee House*. Against the Abbey, unnumbered, is the *Ring O'Bells*, once called *Sot's Hole*, as in the Bath Rent Roll of 1746-1750, BRO.

13, 14, the *Ring O'Bells*, 6, 7, and it seems, 1 and 2, were apparently cleared away early in the improvement scheme, though we have not finalised the details yet. The land near the east end of the Abbey is shown vacant in pictures. A report of 1826 (not reprinted here) complains that the Abbey has for some time been using space against the Abbey as a depository for bones, wheelbarrows and whatever. This report suggests railing off the area and creating vaults, together with the alteration of a water closet now forming part of the scenery under the 'Grand Eastern Window of the Church' in the north transept.

The names Clement, Brickman and Webb which appear in a report of February 1834 refer to Nos.27 and 26. The surrender of these properties took place in 1834. The new lease for the east end of Cheap Street, as rebuilt, is dated 24 December 1841.

With thanks to Colin Johnston, Archivist, for allowing us to use the 1821 diagram, and to the Record Office for its assistance throughout the study.

THE WADE'S PASSAGE DIAGRAM

Nos. 21 and 17: The Cross Keys

Elizabeth Holland

Once the exact site of a property has been outlined, it is possible to investigate it further. It can be related to archaeological remains, and its development and use through the years can be pieced together.

In Stuart times, the basic plot on which the later Cross Keys stood seems to have extended farther to the east, but less far south. South of the property at that time lay an area referred to as Walley's garden at the north end of the Litton.

In 1763 Thomas Bishop held the Cross Keys (Furman No.2284), and also a piece of ground with a cellar and garret (F.2283). In his will of May 1772, Thomas makes Henry Fisher, gentleman, and Arthur Trimnell, upholsterer, his executors and trustees. His dear wife Ann is to have the messuage and tenement in Broad Street where he now lives. After her death, his silver Punch Bowl with its top and the best silver Punch Ladle are to go to his sister Ann Russell. After his wife's death the money raised through the sale of his properties is to be divided among those named, with careful directions in case any of these legatees should themselves die - except that no extra share is to go to the present child of his sister Marta Bishop or any other child she may have, born out of wedlock.

Besides the unmarried mother Marta Bishop, and Ann Russell, he had a sister Hannah Berrisford, and Elizabeth, the widow of Matthias Walter, late sexton of the Abbey. He also had a deceased brother John. Like so many wills of the time (though not all of them) the will is full of family feeling.

By 6 July 1773 Fisher and Trimnell were already acting as Thomas Bishop's executors. On 4 October 1773 they took out a lease for the Cross Keys, replaced by 7 August 1780 (BRO:BC/153/DP3482). This lease of 1780 names Leonard Coward as one of its eastern neighbours, on a spur of land which seems once to have been part of the plot - see Ruth Haskins' article in this issue. The Cross Keys itself can be identified on pictures of the southern end of the High Street.

The Corporation's plans for reconstruction began in the 1820s and continued to the 1830s. The City Archives contain various reports on the progress of this work. With the permission of the Archivist, we are reproducing some of the material. Douglas Bernhardt has also discussed the project in his study of the work of G.P.Manners.

The first extract, from a report dealing with other properties as well, discusses the north-eastern corner of the 1821 diagram, i.e. the Cross Keys and the houses east and south-east of it.

To the Mayor Aldermen and Common Council of the City of Bath.

The Committee appointed on the 11th day of March last to treat for and enter into Conditional Contracts (subject to Confirmation by this Corporation) for the purchase of the Leasehold Interests in Premises extending from Leonards Passage to the Premises in the occupation of Mr Scovell in Wades Passage REPORT that ... The Cross Keys Public House with an adjoining Shop occupied by P.Ferbrache, Hairdresser, and a Tenement behind occupied by Mr Scovell belong to Mrs Sainsbury and are now full stated. She has lately leased them to Messrs Sainsbury, Brewers, for a term of 21 years at £200 pr ann. They require for the Leasehold Interest of all parties the sum of £3000, and will accept a Lease of the Beef Steak House adjoining the Market for a term of 21 years at £70 pr ann.

The next adjoining Premises occupied by Mrs Ayliffe, Pork butcher, and Mr Crane, Shoemaker belong to Mr Thomas Hales, Butcher, and are now full stated, for which he required £1400. [These appear to occupy the ground of Leonard Coward's lease of 1762, partly numbered 28 on the 1821 diagram.]

The Premises next adjoining, in the passage leading to the Orange Grove belong to and are in the occupation of Mr Thomas Hales, Butcher. He declines treating for sale of them until he has provided another eligible situation for his Business.

The Residue of the Premises extending from Mr Hales to Mr Scovells are now full stated and belong to Mrs A.Loder, from whom the Committee have been unable to procure any Terms of Sale. They are in Mortgage to Mr Moysey for £924.9.6 who will sell his Mortgage Interest to the Corporation for £800 ...

28th June 1833

WILLIAM CLARK,
Mayor
(On behalf of the Committee).

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To the Mayor Aldermen and Common Council of the City of Bath.

The Committee appointed on the eleventh day of March last for the purpose of treating and concluding with the Owners and Occupiers of Houses at the bottom of the Market Place for the purchase of the same with a view to their removal REPORT that they have encountered great difficulties in effecting arrangements with Mrs Sainsbury, the Lessee, under this Corporation, of the Cross Keys Public House, and an adjoining Tenement in the occupation of P. Ferbrache; also with Messrs I. P. G. and C. Sainsbury her Sub Lessees, principally on account of their inability to procure an eligible situation for the continuance of the business; The Committee have however lately received a proposal from them for the payment to Mrs Sainsbury of the Sum of Four thousand Pounds for the Cross Keys and the adjoining Tenement, which are held for the remainder of a term of 99 years determinable on three lives, now in existence, on condition that the Tenants may be allowed to remove the whole of the Materials of the Buildings; and that the Corporation will grant to Messrs J. P. G. and C. Sainsbury for their 3 lives a Lease of the Buildings immediately behind and adjoining the House occupied by Mr Munday at the corner of the Orange Grove, including the Eating House in the occupation of - - Prangley which they purpose removing and erecting a Public House on the site thereof agreeably with the accompanying Plan, with Liberty also to make the necessary Cellarage in Boatstall Lane and in the Grove. The Committee have agreed to purchase the Cross Keys Premises and Tenement adjoining for the sum of Four thousand Pounds and to allow the Materials to be used by the Tenants, but being unable from the Terms of their appointments, to conclude the Treaty for the Lease of the Premises adjoining Munday's without the confirmation of the Corporation, and having fully considered the Terms of the proposal recommend it for their consideration and approval.

DATED this 16th November 1833.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,

J.PHILLOTT, Mayor.

These papers have dealt with the last days of the Cross Keys, before it was apparently removed wholesale and re-erected as part of the complex called Orange Court, on the north side of the Orange Grove. Papers in the Philip George Correspondence, Bundle No.1, BRO, illustrate why the Corporation were not too anxious to retain the houses around the Abbey. They are published by permission of the Archivist. Paragraphing has been added to the second letter.

[Footnote to Page 1 below] The Mayor of Bath

Whitehall 18 February 1828

Sir,

I am directed by Mr.Secretary Peel to acquaint you, that it has been intimated to him by a person, on whose accuracy he places considerable reliance, that there are at present in the City of Bath several Public Houses of notoriously bad character, and which were known to be so previously to the last renewal of their Licenses. The Houses more particularly alluded to, are "The Smiths Arms" and

“Lord Nelson” in Avon Street, “The Pig and Whistle”, and “The Cross Keys” at the bottom of the Market Place:

As Public Houses of bad character are generally the resort of the profligate, and thus tend materially to encrease crime and impede the due execution of the laws, I am directed by Mr Peel to draw your attention to this subject, and to request, that you will state to me, for his information, your opinion as to the mode in which these Houses are conducted; and also whether you are aware that any Public Houses in the City of Bath have had their Licences renewed by the Magistrates, notwithstanding that they have been at the time known to be frequented by persons of bad character.

I am Sir

Your most obedient humble Servant

S.M.Phillipps

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Bath 21 Feby 1828

I have to acknowledge the Receipt of yours hwi [herewith] of the 18 inst relative to the licencing of certain public Houses in this City particularly the Smiths Arms, the Lord Nelson (sometimes called the Pig & Whistle) and the Cross Keys which have been represented as being, at the Time, of notoriously bad Character. The Houses in question were licenced at the last general licencing day, but certainly not under the Circumstance alluded to, the Magistrates not being in the possession of any facts which wou^d. justify in their Estimation the Discontinuance of a Licence.

The neighbourhood of Avon St.is bad, and the entire Exclusion of persons of suspected Character from these Houses is almost impossible - With regard to the general Conduct of the public Houses in this City I can assure you that under the Directions of the Magistrates they are frequently visited by the Police Officers and that their attention is most promptly given to the Investigation of any Complaints which are made ag.st them; in proof of which I beg to refer you to the Esheats of fines which are returned to the Treasury by the Town Clerk from every quarter Session held in this City, and which contain, almost exclusively, those imposed on licensed Victuallers for offences ag.st the Tenor of their Recognizances under the Powers of the licensing Act which invests the Magistrates with discretionary power as to the amount of the fine according to the Nature of the Offence.

The increase of Crime, particularly amongst the younger Classes, is much to be deplored - Every Exertion is made and no Expen^ce is spared by the authorities here to establish an effective police, as well as for the Prevention as for the punishment of Crimes. It is a most difficult undertaking, but the various Calendars will show that by the activity of the police officers, great Numbers are now brought to justice, who would otherwise escape.

I have the Honor to be Sir

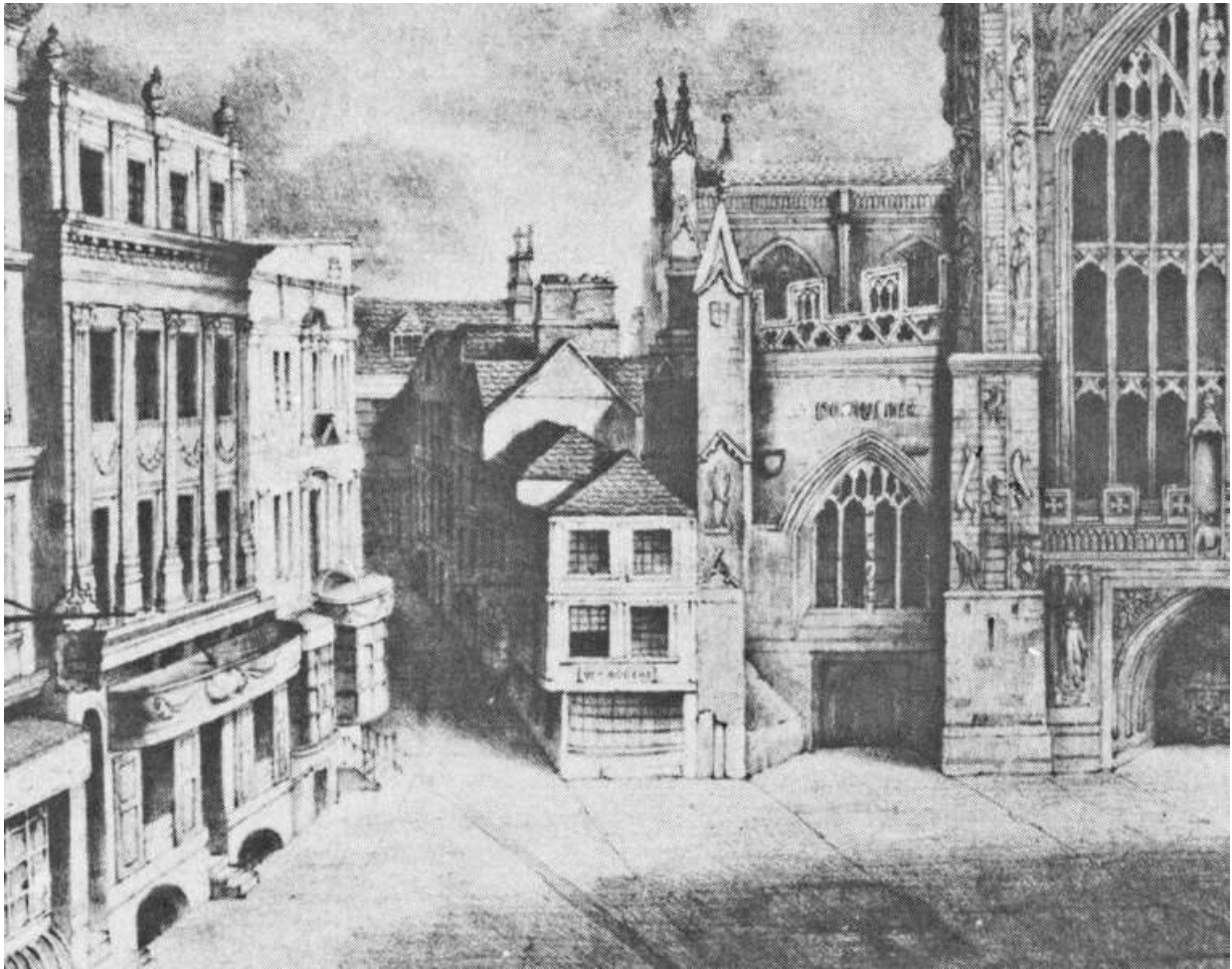
Your Serv.

G.N.Tugwell, Mayor

S.M.Phillipps Esq
Secr. of State Office
Treasury.



**The houses on the north side of Wade's Passage viewed from the High Street in the 1770s. The Cross Keys is the last house on the extreme left (see also the front cover of this issue).
Courtesy of Bath Central Library**

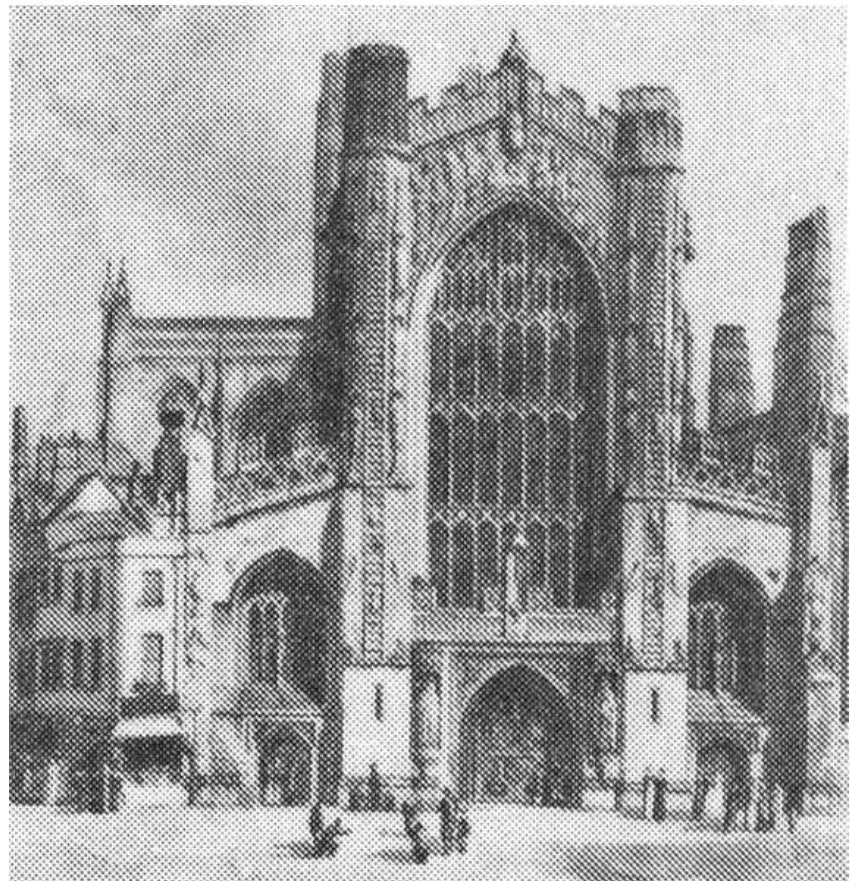


Above:
The entrance to Wade's Passage in the mid 18th century, viewed from the Abbey Church Yard.

Courtesy of Bath Central Library

Right:
A similar view in the early 19th century, showing alterations to the shop at the entrance to Wade's Passage.

Courtesy of Bath Central Library



LEONARD COWARD, GENTLEMAN, 1717-1795

Ruth Haskins

Reprinted from the publication of the Mayor's Guides, *Guidelines*

This Leonard Coward was the Mayor of Bath on three occasions in the 18th century, a prominent businessman with interests in the city and a councillor. He was a lace merchant as was his father and grandfather before that. They were connected with the family of the same name in Bruton during the 15th century.

It seems he never married but devoted his time to business, land and property deals, as did many other merchants in the city. He dealt mainly with the Chapman family, to whom he was related by the marriage of his sister Margaret to John Chapman the saddler, alderman and Mayor, which took place at the Abbey 23 December 1736.

Council minutes show many property deals, some of which were originally his father's leases on property in Stall Street, dated back to 1726, and also involving John Yerbury of Bradford on Avon. From the mid 1720s to 1773, the family ran a successful lace shop in Stall Street with a sign of two lappets of lace and three cards. Also, No.6 on the map of the Kingston Estate, and *Bath History* II, page 122, show the shop in Terrace Walk, which is now the Birmingham Midshires Building Society.

In 1762, he paid sixty-five pounds for a lease of a messuage in the lane leading from the Market Place to the East Gate, between a shop belonging to the Cross Keys West, the way leading from the lane to the Walks or Orange Grove East, and a messuage or tenement in possession of Mr. Edmund Hutchinson, apothecary, South (Furman No.2230, 5 April 1762). This was for the life of John, son of John Chapman Esq., the Mayor. Two months later, Leonard Coward was elected Common Council Man in place of Thomas Palmer, who died.

In 1777, Leonard was elected Commissioner of Superintending the Regulations of the Market, widening of streets, removing obstructions and for the better supply of water. In 1782, he leased a messuage and land in the lane that ran from Westgate Street to Cross Bath at a rent of four shillings. There are many other deals from 1782-85.

In 1785, when William Street, the Mayor died, Leonard was elected in his place. He leased the Pump Room at six hundred and forty pounds per annum in 1787 and 1788. In the same year as he was Mayor, he visited King George and Queen Charlotte at Cheltenham, travelling there by coach with other members of the Corporation. Until his death in 1795, he was very active in city life and made charitable donations to and investments in the Blue Coat School, the General Hospital (later the Mineral), Bath Navigation and the Bath Turnpike Trust.

His will makes very interesting reading. After instructions about his burial (he wished to be buried with his parents), he left instructions about mourning clothes, with sums of money from ten to twenty pounds each for the same to the Rector of the Abbey, the Rector of Walcot, and other clergy and other officials. They had to wear a black silk headband and gloves, black outer wear, with a silk armband. He left money for his family and heirs so they could fulfil the same obligation. He instructed Mr. Thomas Coward, his namesake, a silk merchant and linen draper of Bath, to 'provide all the mourning and bury me'. (NB, Thomas Coward is my husband's great, great, great grandfather so hence the interest in the Coward family, which we have researched thoroughly for more than ten years). He left money and shares in Commissioners Bonds for Improvements of the City of Bath worth a hundred of pounds each plus houses to all his many nieces and nephews, mostly Chapmans. An interesting bequest to his niece Elizabeth, wife of Thomas Baldwin, architect, was a house in North Parade, rented by a Mrs Marriott, hosier and perfumer, and five Commissioners' Bonds. He stated that she might sell the house if she so wished but added a proviso that her husband, Mr. Thomas Baldwin, may not have control of any of it!

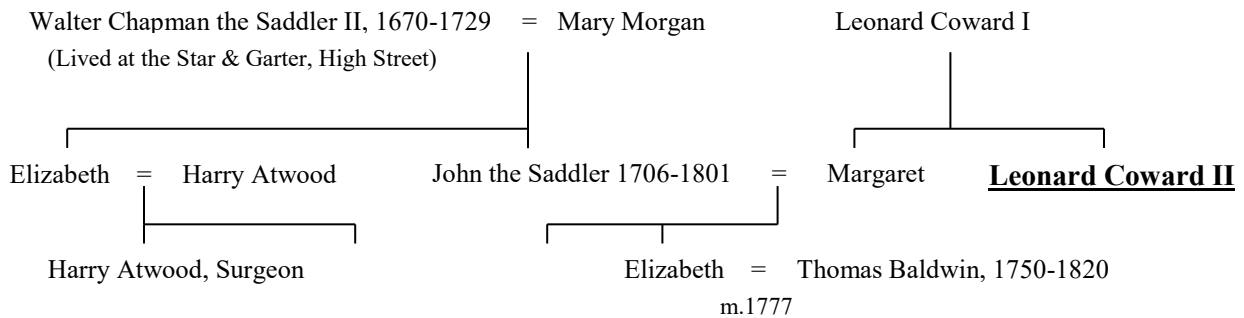
The General Hospital received one thousand pounds to carry on their charitable designs, the Blue Coat School received the same sum, and he made himself responsible for the education and upkeep of the

four orphaned sons of the late Thomas Redmond, miniaturist painter. These boys also inherited five hundred pounds each on attaining the age of twenty-one. One of them, George Lewis Augustus also received his gold watch, all his books, bookcase, extra shares and money for when he had attained his apprenticeship, to obtain further training as a surgeon.

The residue of the estate was left to the city of Bath for the improvement of the city. This proved to be over seven thousand pounds. A few years later, a passageway was named after him as a tribute but this disappeared in 1836 when the road was widened. It ran from Wade’s Passage to the junction of Cheap Street and the High Street.

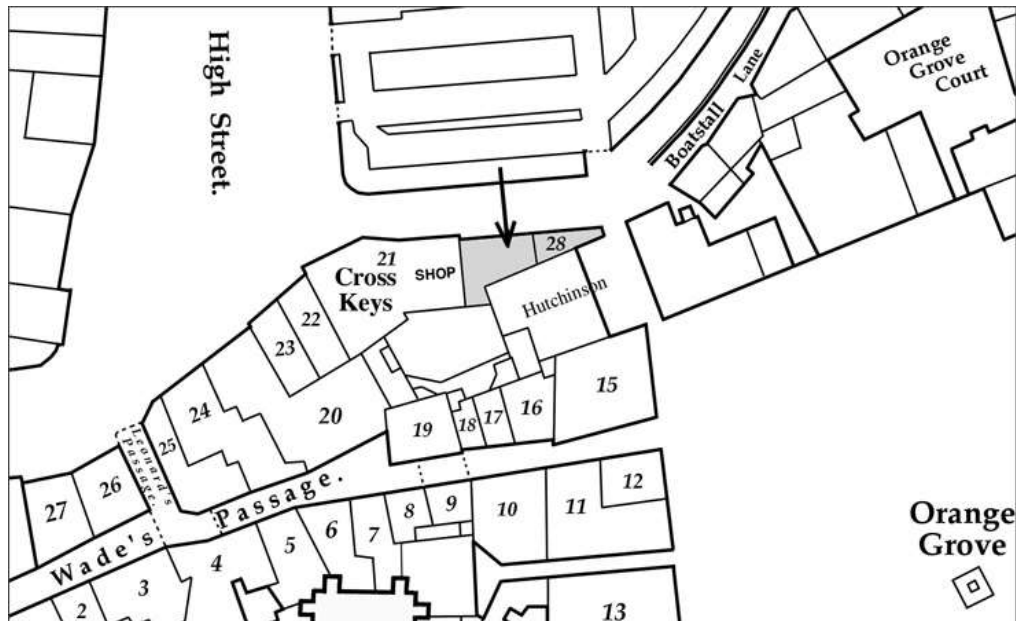
There is no record of any portrait of this man of Bath but there are many in store without a name. Perhaps Thomas Redmond made a miniature of him for there are several in private ownership without names.

My thanks to Elizabeth Holland for her constant help and interest also Mr.Trevor Fawcett.



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Furman’s Repertory, Bath Record Office, Guildhall
 J.King Austin and B.H.Watts, *Municipal Records of Bath, 1198 to 1604*, London 1885
 Elizabeth Holland and Mike Chapman, *The Kingston Estate within the Walled City of Bath, a composite plan of the 1740s*, Survey of Old Bath, 1992
 Trevor Fawcett, ‘Chair Transport in Bath’, *Bath History*, Vol. II, 1988



(hatched) Leonard Coward’s Lease of 1762, Furman no.2230

THE LINE OF WEALTHY BATHEASTON CLOTHIERS, ALL NAMED JOHN FISHER

Allan Keevil

B.M.Wilmott Dobbie in *An English Rural Community: Batheaston with S.Catherine* (Bath 1969 - Dobbie) her comprehensive history of the area, outlined a succession of John Fishers in direct line, most if not all of whom were wealthy clothiers. She could not determine which of several documented medieval Fishers had been the origin of the line (Dobbie p.75). It can now be shown that it was in fact 'John Fisher of Hampton' who was the originator of the Batheaston line of clothiers.

Proof that the originator of the line was 'John Fisher of Hampton' and that he was the father of 'John Fisher of Batheaston, clothier' is to be found in the will of 'Johann [Joan] Goodhind (daughter of Richard Fisher, husbandman, of Bathampton), widow, of Saltford, dated 14 March 1600, and proved at P.C.C, 1600 (PRO, Prob 11/95), in which she appointed her 'brother, John Fisher, the Elder, clothier, of Hampton, and her nephew, John Fisher, the Younger, of Batheaston' her executors¹. These two were father and son, the former being the 'John Fisher of Hampton' who leased the Batheaston manorial mill in 1566, and the latter, the 'John Fisher, clothier, of Batheaston', whose will of 1612 is set out below, with probate being granted to his eldest son and executor John, on 13 January 1612/13.

Dobbie refers to him as the 'first John' (and for convenience her numbering has been retained). She seemed to believe that he had died in 1615; the will shows that this date cannot be correct. The testator's death must have occurred within the three months between the two dates given. She also stated that her 'first John' Fisher was well established before the end of the 16th century, holding of John Harington a copyhold which included common for 100 sheep on Holts Down. He was a freeholder, too, and in 1598 with Thomas Blanchard (his cousin - see will of his aunt, Agnes/Anne Blanchard, 3 August 1612, SRO, D/D/CT)² contested the right of common of Robert Pile and Thomas Stockes in their (Fisher and Blanchard's) freehold lands (*ibid.*, pp.75-76).

The will of this 'first John' Fisher, who died in 1612, shows that although describing himself as 'clothier', he was also farming his acres in a serious way. He left a widow, Eleanor, to whom he left his farming equipment and stock; an 'eldest son, John', his executor, who seems likely to have been in his early twenties, unmarried and without children, at the time; a married daughter (perhaps in her mid-twenties), with one daughter, his only grandchild and probably very young; a younger son and two other daughters, all minors at the time of his death.

The second John, 'eldest son' above, added substantial possessions (Dobbie, p.76). His will (also now transcribed and set out below), in which he too described himself as 'clothier', was made in October 1625, and probate was granted to his widow, Edith, his executrix, on 15 May 1626. According to Dobbie he died in 1625 (if so, perhaps early March 1625, Old Style), and was the owner of nine properties, eight in Batheaston, one in Tadwick. His Batheaston holdings amounted to about 300 acres, between one quarter and a fifth of the agricultural land of the parish, among them 'the Seven Acres at North End', the earliest mention of Northend that has been noted.

He cannot have been very old at the time of his death, for, apart from his widow, his will shows he left only a young family (son, John, and two daughters), all of whom, as he stated, had 'many years to undergo in minority', and even his own brother, Francis, was also still a minor. He also refers to his 'Uncle Henry Fisher' (his father's brother, born c.1570, still living 1640; he was 'gent., of Bathampton, aged 65', in 1635 - PRO, *Chancery Proceedings*, C21 C5/22)³ 'and cousin William Fisher of Bathford' (born c.1577, William was buried at Bathampton, 15 August 1667 (transcript, Bathampton Parish Register - BRO), he was son of John's grandfather's brother, Thomas, and, as a chancery deponent in 1621, was described as 'yeoman, aged 40, of Bathford - PRO/C22)⁴, apparently holding various properties under him, in Colerne and Box, in trust for his three children, when they came of age, the income in the meantime to his widow for the upbringing of the children. Dobbie stated that it is remarkable that the parish register yields such incomplete information about this family, but as the earliest Batheaston register does not begin until 1634, the early members of this line will not appear anyway.

After this second John's death, his widow, Edith, was rated for the main holding at Northend until 1631, but it was not until 1642 that the son, the third John, then aged twenty-nine, paid a somewhat larger rate 'for his means [mansion] at North End', suggesting 'that the young heir had built *Northend House* for himself' (Dobbie, p.76, and see Peter Coard's 1969 drawing of the mansion - *ibid.*, p.78).

This third John Fisher's will (also now transcribed and set out below), in which he describes himself as 'John Fisher, the elder, gentleman', was made in 1681, probate being granted to his son John, his executor, in 1693, at the Prerogative Court in London. Despite the date, there can be little doubt that the entry in the Batheaston parish register for 26 April 1684, 'John Fisher, gentleman, buried', refers to this third John Fisher, as the burial of no other 'John Fisher, gentleman' has been found in the register within the next decade. However, the delay of nine years before probate was granted seems very strange. His wife had already died - the Batheaston Parish Register shows 'Mrs. Jane Fisher, buried', on 9 January 1677/78 - the title 'Mrs.' being reserved for wives or widows of notable persons; she was almost certainly Mr. John Fisher's wife.

This third John Fisher's will left legacies to his married sister, and to his two brothers, surnamed Sheppard (indicating that his mother, Edith, had married again and had more children, after her husband's early death). He also left large legacies to each of his ten grandchildren, offspring of his three married children, two of whom had predeceased him. Five of these legatees were children of his eldest son John, all of whose baptisms, as children of 'Mr. John and Joyce Fisher' are listed in the Parish Register between 1670 and 1675. He also left to his unmarried daughter living at home, beds, bedding, etc., 'in the room in which she lyeth'.

In 1665, this eldest son, being the next John Fisher, the fourth in this line, as 'John Fisher the younger' bought 'the New Mill', for £105 (Dobbie, p.76). This was the Batheaston manorial mill on the brook below the church, and was adapted for grist and fulling, so he, too, was evidently trading as a clothier. Nearby, in 1670, he built Middlesex House; Dobbie remarks that his initials JF on one side of the entrance porch (see Peter Coard's drawing of the porch - Dobbie, p.79), and a blank shield on the other, suggest that he was at the time unmarried.

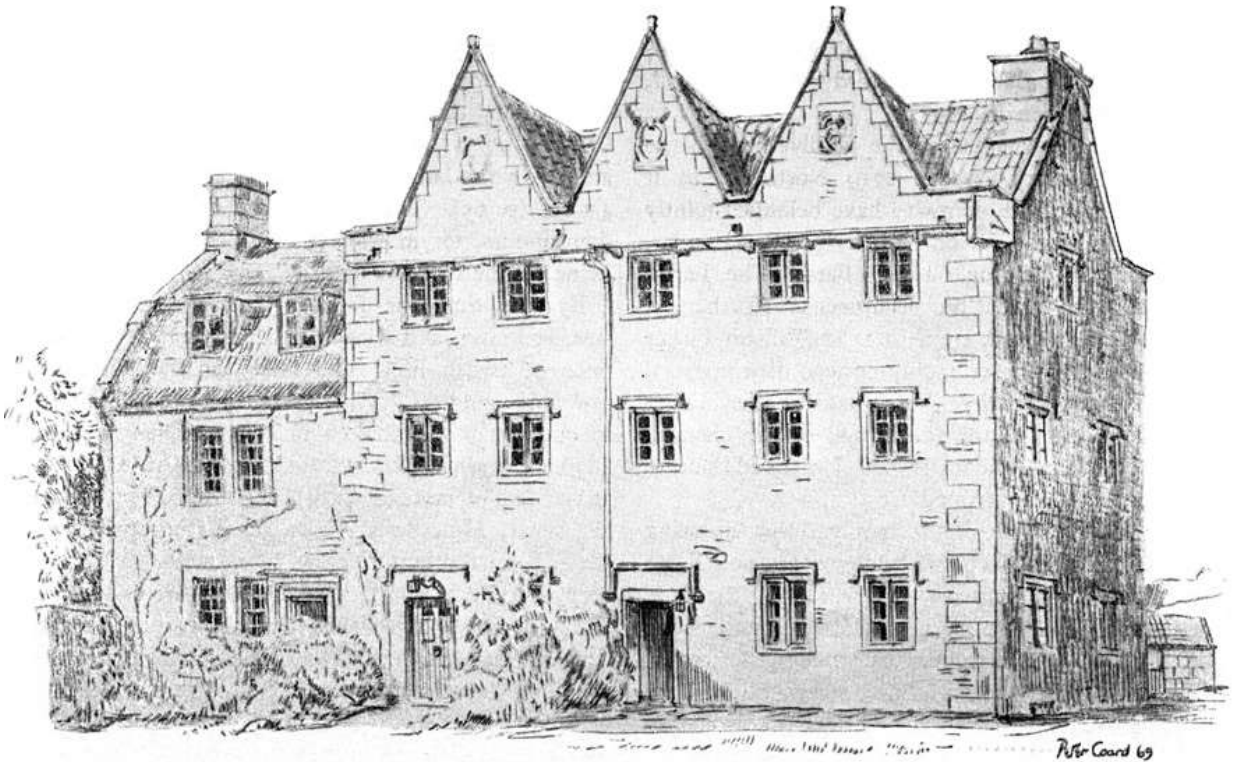
It is to be noted that his father (will proved 1693 - transcript below) had named among the overseers of his will 'my kinsman, Mr. Edward Midellsett of Warminster'. As Dobbie pointed out, it is an obvious clue to the origin of the name of Middlesex House, and she believed that John the fourth, the builder of Middlesex House, may have moved to Northend House after his father's death, because in 1698, a parish note shows that the churchwarden was then William Harford 'of Middlesex'; presumably Harford was Fisher's tenant. Both Northend House and Middlesex House remained in the Fisher family throughout the 18th century.

It seems from Dobbie that from the 18th century the senior branch of this Fisher family, John following John, continued to live at Middlesex House. From the third John onwards they assumed the title 'gentleman'. There seems to have been some doubt of their accepted status though, for when in 1750 John Fisher was fined 40 shillings for swearing twenty oaths, he was described as 'yeoman', and fined at the rate for a yeoman, but the entry adds 'commonly called Mr. John Fisher'. The Fishers were hearty swearers, for in 1751, John 'the younger' (the fifth John Fisher) paid for 'six profane curses' at 5s each, the rate for a gentleman. Similarly two years later, William (a son) paid £7 10s for '30 profane oaths', while in 1793 the record shows William's son, 'Mr. Thos. Fisher, being a fine in drunkenness' paying 5s.

Dobbie believed that by this time the family, though still wealthy, was declining, and thenceforth made little appearance in parish life. The last John died in 1827, probably childless, and Middlesex House was then let to a market gardener. However, by 1836, the last John Fisher's widow, Mrs. Jane Fisher, was in residence again, and continued until her death about 1863, her sister, Mrs. Sarah Price, the last proprietor of the mill on the brook below, living with her. Since then Middlesex House has had a number of owners, while the later history of Northend House is obscure, but at some time was divided into four dwellings, the present Eagle Cottages.



Middlesex House, Batheaston, 2004



Northend House, Batheaston, 1969

(by permission of Peter Coard)

It is difficult to know to what extent Dobbie had had access to the three wills mentioned above, which have now been transcribed and set out below. She seems to have seen the one made in 1681, by the third John Fisher, for she gives brief quotes from it. In the preface to her book (*ibid.*, pp.vii & viii), she states that Batheaston is fortunate in possessing an exceptionally complete set of parish records (now at Somerset Record Office), and expresses her gratitude to the vicar (in whose custody they were at that time) for granting her full access to them. She used them extensively and her book is full of interesting references to them.

Notes

1. John Goulstone, *The Fishers of Bathampton and Batheaston* (1989, Stoke-on-Trent) - Bath Record Office (BRO), PP 376/5, pp.1 & 2 - setting out summary of Johanne Goodhind's will. See also J.Goulstone, *The Goodhinds of Saltford: notes, wills, and pedigrees* (1989, Stoke-on-Trent) - BRO, PP 376/3, p.3)
2. J.Goulstone, *The Fishers of Bathampton and Batheaston*, p.2 - summary of will of Agnes/Ann Blanchard. See also J.Goulstone, *The Blanchards of Marshfield, Old Sodbury, Bradford-on-Avon, St.Catherine's and Batheaston* - BRO PP 376/7 (i)
3. J.Goulstone, *The Fishers of Bathampton and Batheaston*, p.5 - pedigree showing Henry ('Uncle Henry')
4. *ibid.*, p.7 - pedigree showing William ('cousin William')

In the following transcripts of wills, modern spelling has been used, except for words in inverted commas, when the spelling in the document has been followed.

erererer

Will of John Fisher of Batheaston, clothier, dated 15 October 1612 (PRO, Catalogue Ref. prob/11/121)

In the name of God Amen. I, John Fisher, of Batheaston, in the county of Somerset, clothier, being well in body and perfect in mind (thanks be given unto God), yet knowing all men subject to mortality, do make and ordain this my last will and testament. Firstly, I bequeath my soul unto Almighty God, faithfully believing to be saved by the death and merits of Jesus Christ, my only Saviour and Redeemer, and my body to be buried at the discretion of my wife and executor, here in my will named; and, as touching my worldly goods with which God hath endowed me withal, I give and bequeath in manner and form following: first, I give and bequeath unto the Church of Batheaston three shillings and fourpence. Item: I give and bequeath to the poor, four bushells of wheat, two bushells of barley, and two bushells of malt, to be bestowed where my wife and my executor shall think fit and most worthy. Item: I give and bequeath to Eleanor, my wife, all the bedsteads and bedding in the hall chamber, together with all other furniture the said chamber belonging; and also the one half of all my household stuff through the house, beside the said chamber. Item: I give and bequeath unto Eleanor, my wife, four oxen, five kine, one hundred sheep, one dozen of silver spoons, one silver bowl, and one silver salt, and all the corn that shall be growing in the fields upon the tenement that I now dwell in, together with all the corn that shall be in the barn, or malt in the house, at the time of my death, and all the straw of the said corn in the barn, and all the hay that shall be either housed or cut upon the said tenement, at the time of my death. Item: I give to Eleanor, my wife, my best 'Weane'¹, two Plough ropes, two yokes, one 'Sullowe'², one pair of 'Aythes'³, 'one Dragge'⁴, a 'Reeke Stathell'⁵, and 'my best gueldinge'⁶. Item: I give and bequeath unto my son, Francis Fisher two hundred pounds, to be paid within three months after my decease, the which I will to remain in my wife's hands, to be employed that the profit hereof may be for the breeding and bringing up of my son, in good sort, until he shall come to the full age of four and twenty years, except my wife think convenient finding my said son towards to try him with some part of his stock, before he shall be of the full age aforesaid, provided always that my wife keep herself and remain so long unmarried, but if my wife shall happen to marry, then my will is that at the day of her marriage, the said two hundred pounds so by me given unto my son, Francis, to be delivered by my wife to my brother-in-law, Henry Davison, of Freshford⁷, and Mr. William Blanchard of [St.] Catherine, with my son, Francis, desiring them then to take the like care for his breeding and education, as I hope my wife will, if she keep herself unmarried, until my said son shall come unto the age of four and twenty years, as before is mentioned. Item: If my son, Francis, shall happen to depart this life before he shall come to the full age of four and twenty years, then my will is that the two hundred pounds, so to him, the said Francis, given and bequeathed, shall be equally divided, the one half unto my daughter, Anne Fisher, and the other half unto my daughter, Eleanor, or if one of them die before my son, Francis, then his whole portion to remain unto the survivor. Item: if my wife should happen to depart this life before my son, Francis, shall be of the full age of four and twenty years, then my will is that my executor shall make up the portion for my son, Francis, one hundred pounds more, if he shall live to the full age of four and twenty years, as aforesaid, to make

the portion of my son, Francis (if it so happen), full three hundred pounds. Item: I give and bequeath unto my daughter, Anne Fisher, one hundred and fifty pounds, to be paid at her day of marriage, if she shall marry to the liking of her mother and the rest of my friends, whom I shall put in trust for her placing in marriage, but if she shall make her choice contrary to the liking of her mother and the rest of my friends, put in trust as before said, then her husband for marrying her shall not receive her portion by me given and bequeathed, at the day of marriage as before is mentioned, but it shall lie in my executor's hands, as an assurance for my said daughter for her continual maintenance, until her husband shall assure her in living ten pounds by the year, during her natural life, provided always that my executor, immediately after my death, shall take charge for the maintenance and education of my said daughter, until she shall come to the age of twenty years or shall be married, or, if she be more desirous to place herself with her mother or any other friend to her liking, then my executor shall give my said daughter, for her maintenance yearly, six pounds, thirteen shillings and fourpence, until she shall be either married or be of the full age of twenty years; but after she shall be of the full age of twenty years or married, then my will is that my executor shall give unto my said daughter, Anne, ten pounds yearly for her maintenance, during the time that the said stock unto my daughter bequeathed shall remain and be in my executor's hands, or if my daughter, Anne Fisher, shall happen to depart this life, before the time limited in my will for the payment of the stock by me unto my daughter, Anne, given and bequeathed, then my will is that the said portion shall be equally divided, the one half to my son, Francis, and the other half unto my daughter Eleanor, or if one of them shall happen to die before my daughter, Anne, then the whole to remain to the survivor. [Similar provision made for a legacy of £150 to Eleanor, with restrictions on the disposition of the money. See will of 1625: Ann Pirry and Eleanor Stephens.]

Item: I give unto my father twenty shillings. Item: I give to every of my brothers and sisters, ten shillings a-piece. Item: I give and bequeath unto my daughter, Margaret Grant, five pounds. Item: I give unto Eleanor Grant, the daughter of my daughter, Margaret Grant, five pounds. Item: I give unto my son-in-law, George Grant, twenty lambs. Item: I give to every of my godchildren, twelve pence. Item: I give to each of my servants, one sheep. All my other goods, movable and unmovable, ungiven and unbequeathed, my debts and legacies being discharged, I give and bequeath unto John Fisher, my eldest son, whom I do make and ordain my true and lawful executor. Item: I do appoint for the overseers of my will, Mr. William Blanchet [Blanchard], my brother-in-law, Henry Davison, my brother, Thomas Fisher, and my brother, William Fisher, desiring them, as much as in them lieth, to see my will performed, and to every of them, in token of good will, I give ten shillings. In witness hereof, I have hereunto put my hand and seal, the fifteenth day of October, in the year of the reign of our sovereign lord James, by the grace of God, King of England, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc., the tenth, and of Scotland, the six and fortieth, 1612. [signed and sealed by] John Fisher. Witnesses: George Grant; William Fisher; Anthony Townsend.

Probate of the above will was granted at London, in the presence of the most worthy Sir John Benet, knight, Doctor of Laws, in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, on 13th January 1612 [Old Style - or 13 January 1612/13], to John Fisher, the son, lawful heir, and executor of the deceased.

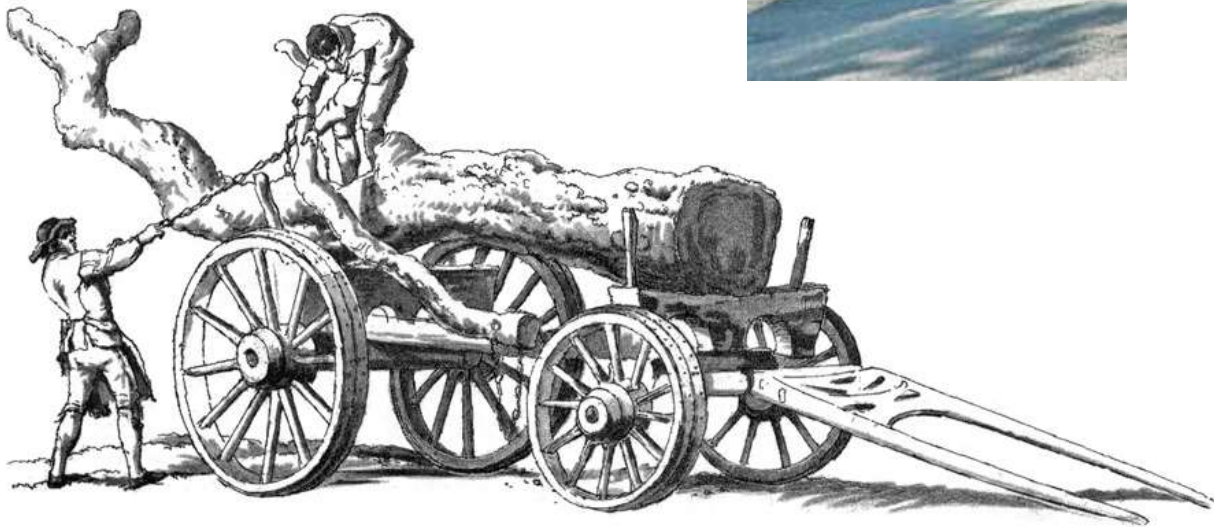
Notes

1. 'weane' is one of seven forms of 'wain', an obsolete and poetic term, meaning 'wagon' - *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)*
2. 'sullowe' - chiefly western and south-western dialect, meaning 'plough' - *OED*
3. 'aythe' - meaning 'harrow', and sometimes two linked together were used, hence, here, 'a pair of aythes' (see 'eythe' - *OED*)
4. 'dragge' - although it could mean 'a heavy harrow', its meaning in various counties, including all the south-western ones was 'a usually four-wheeled vehicle for the conveyance of heavy timber', or, sometimes, 'a cart' (Joseph Wright, *English Dialect Dictionary (EDD)*, six volumes (1898-1906))
5. a 'reeke stathell' - 'stathell' is an obsolete and dialect form of 'staddle' (*EDD*). Thus by 'a reeke stathell' the testator meant 'a rick foundation' formed by staddle stones, in order to keep the corn in the rick out of reach of vermin. Graneries were also raised on staddles.
6. 'guedling' is 'gelding' - a neutered horse (*OED*)
7. See Kenneth Rogers, *Warp and Weft: the Somerset and Wiltshire Woollen Industry*, Buckingham, 1986, p.32, referring to 'Henry Davison, a Freshford clothier ... in the 1620s'

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(right) A staddle-stone at Newton St.Loe, now used as an ornamental feature

(below) An early 19th century timber-wagon, from Pyne's *Rustic Vignettes*



Will of John Fisher of Batheaston, Somerset, clothier, dated 20 October 1625

PRO, Catalogue Ref. prob/11/149

Headed:- 'Vice'simo Die Octobris Anno Dni 1625' [i.e. '20 October AD 1625' - the date of the will]

In the name of God, Amen. I, John Fisher of Batheaston in the county of Somerset, clothier, being in good health of body, and of perfect mind and memory, I thank my gracious God for it, nevertheless knowing that all flesh is grass, and desiring therefore so to settle and establish my worldly goods in this my perfect memory, that no confusion may arise thereof after my death, and that I be not therewith perplexed in mind, when it shall please God to call me out of this mortal life, to the disquieting of my soul and conscience, which I labour to prepare for God's most blessed visitation, I do, therefore, make and declare this my last will and testament: first bequeathing my immortal soul into the merciful hands of Almighty God who hath vouchsafed me by the working of His holy spirit, in constant faith and assurance in the merits and passion of his most blessed Son, Our Saviour Jesus Christ, that my sinful soul, clothed in His righteousness, shall be received into His Glorious Kingdom so soon as it is departed out of this, my vile and corruptible body, and that the same body also, at the great day of the Lord, shall be glorified and reunited to the soul, and live in the Kingdom of Glory with my blessed Saviour and all God's elect forever, and even my body, earth to earth, I do commend to Christian burial, in the Church of Batheaston, or elsewhere at the discretion of my executrix. Item: I give to the Church of Batheaston 6s.8d. Item: I give to the poor people of Batheaston four bushells of wheat, two bushells of barley, and two bushells of malt, to be bestowed where my wife shall think fittest and most needy. Item: I give to the poor of Batheaston aforesaid five pounds for a stock, to continue and be disposable for their use by the overseers of the poor within the same parish for ever. Item: whereas my uncle Henry Fisher and my cousin William Fisher of Bathford¹ and their heirs do, by good conveyance and assurance in the same, stand seised of and in all those four tenements lying in 'Shakmoore' within the parish of Colerne in the county of Wilts, now in the occupation of Walter West, John Ford, John Edwards, and William Houlder, their assign or assigns, and of and in all those five tenements with their appurtenances lying in Colerne aforesaid, now or late in the occupation of Elizabeth Tily, widow, Henry Smart, John Bishop, Robert Melsom, and John 'Sowburne' [?], their assign or assigns, and of and in all that meadow ground situate in Box in the county of Wilts aforesaid, called Hulbert, now in the occupation of Elizabeth Tily, widow, and one cottage thereunto adjoining, now in the occupation of John Harding, their assign or assigns, with all and singular their appurtenances

(and which I purchased of William Sherston of Bromham in the county of Wilts aforesaid, gent.), to the uses in my last will and testament limited and appointed. My will therefore is, and I do by these presents give and bequeath unto my son, John Fisher, and unto my two daughters, Eleanor Fisher and Anne Fisher, and to their heirs for ever, all and singular the before recited tenements, meadow ground and cottage, and every part and parcel thereof with their appurtenances equally to be divided between them. And I will the part and portion which shall be allotted unto my son, John Fisher, upon an equal division made thereof, be delivered unto him, when he shall attain the age of twenty and one years, when my will is that my said Uncle Henry Fisher and my cousin William Fisher do by such conveyance and assurance in the law as counsel shall advise, convey and assure unto my said son and to his heirs for ever, such part and portion as upon the same division made shall be allotted unto him, and in the meantime, my said wife and overseers taking and employing the yearly rents, issues, and profits thereof, at their discretions, for and towards the maintenance and education of my said son in a fit and decent manner during his minority. And I also give and bequeath unto my said son, my blue cloth mark², and the one half of my household stuff throughout my whole house, to be kept and disposed of for his use by my wife and overseers, until he shall attain his said age of twenty and one years, and also I will that my said daughters shall receive their same several pieces and portions of the said premises which shall be allotted unto them by the same division made into their hands, at their attaining their several ages of twenty and one years, or several days of marriage first happening, when I will that my said uncle Henry and my cousin William Fisher do assure and convey the same unto them and their heirs severally, in such manner and form as I have appointed my son's part and portion to be assured unto him by them, and in the meantime the yearly rents, issues, and profits thereof to be employed as I have appointed the yearly rents and profits of their brother's to be employed, provided always that if either of my said daughters shall contract herself in marriage contrary to the good liking of my said wife and overseers, or the survivor of them, then my will is that the whole part and portion of my daughter which shall so contract herself shall be settled and conveyed by my said uncle Henry and cousin William Fisher and their heirs, as counsel shall advise, for the only use and benefit of her and her children, to preserve her and them from want, by the care and discretion of my wife and overseers, so that the husband of such daughter so contracting herself, may not have power to sell, alien, or encumber the same. Item: my will is that if one of my said children shall depart this life before their receiving of their said several parts and portions, then the whole part and portion of him or them so departing shall remain equally unto the survivors or only the survivor of them, and that if it shall happen all my said children to decease before their receiving of their said several parts and portions, then I give and bequeath all and singular the said tenements, meadow ground and other the before recited premises and every part and parcel thereof, with the appurtenances, to my said wife, to hold unto her for the course of her natural life, without impeachment of waste, and after her decease unto Francis Fisher, my brother, to hold unto him and his heirs for ever. And I do especially commend the education and bringing up of my said children to the blessed and fatherly protection of Almighty God, who hath most graciously promised to be a father to the fatherless and widowed, not doubting but my wife and overseers after her will take a godly and neighbourly care of their education and bringing up also in the fear of God and in all Christian duties. I pray God to bless them, and my blessing rest upon them and their children. Item: I will and appoint that the sum of three hundred pounds, part of my brother Francis his portion now remaining in my hands, be paid by my executrix unto him, at his full age of twenty and one years, if my wife and overseers do think it fit for him then to receive it, otherwise not until his age of twenty and four years, according to my father's will, unless my said wife and overseers think it fit to place it in living and paid for his use sooner. Item: I give to my sister, Margery Grant, ten shillings. Item: I give and bequeath to my sister, Anne Pirry, five pounds. Item: I give and bequeath to my sister, Eleanor Stephens, ten shillings. Item: I give and bequeath to my said brother, Francis, five pounds. Item: I give and bequeath to every one of my godchildren twelve pence apiece. Item: I give and bequeath to every one of my servants five shillings apiece. All the rest of my goods, chattels, debts, and credits (my debts and expenses being discharged) I do give and bequeath to Edith, my wife, whom I make and ordain my true and lawful executrix of this my last will and testament. Item: I do constitute and ordain my wife's father, Giles Rudman of Swainswick, Mr William Sandell of Batheaston, George Grant of Monkton Farleigh, and Mr William 'Pryn' of Swainswick, my faithful and loving friends, to be overseers of this, my last will and testament, whom I assure me will do their best endeavour to see this, my last will and testament truthfully and honestly to be performed. And I give to each of them ten shillings in remembrance of my love unto them, hereby also willing, desiring, and ordaining that forasmuch as my children are young and have many years to undergo in minority, my said overseers and every of them departing this life during the minority of my said children would be pleased to make and ordain in the place of him so departing, one fit and honest neighbour and friend after his death, to join with the survivor and survivors of my said overseers, together with my executrix, in and about the performance of this my last will and testament. And to everyone so ordained and appointed I do also give ten shillings in token of my love, giving him the same power of an overseer, as I have given to my overseers before named, and hoping also of his care in the performance of this trust hereby reposed in my overseers. And, even so, I do commend this, my last will and testament in the fear of God, this 'pdte'³ twentieth day of October in the first year of the reign of our sovereign lord, Charles, now King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland,⁴ by me, John Fisher, signed, sealed, and published, in the presence of: 'Signum'⁵ 'Egidii'⁶ Rudman, Francis Fisher, Barnaby Gibbs, John Sandell.

Probate of the above will was granted in London, before Sir Henry Marten, knight, Doctor of Laws, at the Prerogative Court, on 15 May 1626, to Edith, the widow and executrix of the deceased.

Notes

1. For 'Uncle Henry' and 'cousin William', see 'The Line of Wealthy Batheaston Clothiers' (above), Notes 3 & 4
2. The testator, John Fisher, was bequeathing to his son, John, the right to use his 'blue cloth mark', or symbol, which would be applied to the cloth to be made by him. 'The price made by cloths depended, not only on the visible quality, but on the reputation of the mark (hence our phrase "up to the mark")' - Kenneth H. Rogers, *Warp and Weft: the story of the Somerset and Wiltshire Woollen Industry* (Buckingham, 1986), p.28; further details concerning marks of clothiers, pp.29, 30, 32, 34, 53. Although coloured symbols were sometimes used in cloth marks to denote differences in quality, the colour in this case probably referred to that of the cloth. '... and bequests of woad in the area between Wells and Bath are sufficiently frequent to suggest that it specialised in blue cloth' (*ibid.*, p.21).
3. 'pdcte' (abbreviated Latin for *predicte*) i.e. 'aforesaid' - see the date written above the beginning of the will.
4. i.e. 1625
5. '*signum*' (Latin) i.e. 'signature'
6. '*Egidii*' (Latin) i.e. 'of Giles'

ererererer

Will of John Fisher of Batheaston, Somerset, gentleman, dated 1 June 1681

(PRO, Catalogue Ref.prob/11/145)

In the name of God, Amen. I, John Fisher, the Elder, of the parish of Batheaston, within the County of Somerset, gentleman, in health of body and of good and perfect memory, I give God the praise, this first day of June, AD 1681, make and declare this my last will and testament, in manner and form following: first and chiefly, I commend my soul into the hands of my gracious God, with a full assurance of the pardon and forgiveness, by the precious Death and passion of my alone good and all sufficient Saviour, Jesus Christ, and my body I commit to the earth, to be buried in Christian burial. Item: I give to the most aged, poor people of the parish of Batheaston, five pounds, to be given within five years, as my executor think fit. Item: I give unto my sister, Hester Baldwin, five pounds, to be paid as my executor think fit. Item: I give unto my brother, Philip Sheppard, five pounds, and all the debts he oweth me. Item: I give unto my brother, Thomas Sheppard, twenty shillings. Item: I give unto my son, John Fisher's five children, one hundred pounds a-piece, to be paid unto them as their father think fit, or laid out for them. I give unto my son, William Fisher's daughter, 'Jaine' [Jane?] Fisher, all my time to come in my chattel house at Worthy, to be deployed and laid out for her best advantage. Item: I give unto my son, William Fisher's, three children, 'Janne' [Jane?], William, and Winifred, one hundred pounds a-piece, to be paid to them at their several ages of one and twenty years. Item: I give unto my grandson, William Fisher, my silver tankard, and his sister 'Janne' [Jane?] Fisher, my silver cup. Item: I give unto my daughter, Winifred Fisher, the two beds in the chamber she lyeth in, and all that do belongeth to them, both linen and woollen. Item: I give unto my granddaughter, Margery Hawkins, my lands at Harnish, for her life, if she marry with the consent of her father and my executor, and the fee of it after, I give unto her brother, Thomas Hawkins. All the rest of my goods and chattels, money, plate, and household stuff, I give unto my son John Fisher, whom I make the sole executor of this, my last will and testament. And I hereby revoke and make void all former wills. I desire my son-in-law, Mr Thomas Hawkins, and my kinsman, Mr Edward Middelset, of Warminster, and M[essrs] James Fisher and Francis Fisher, of Bristol, to be my overseers of this, my last will, to whom I give twenty shillings a-piece, to buy them a ring. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, John Fisher - signed and delivered, in the presence of Phil. Sheppard, Robert Hawkins, Winifred Fisher.

Probate was granted at London, by the distinguished Sir Richard Dames, knight, Doctor of Laws, in the Prerogative Court, on 8 July 1693, to John Fisher, the son of the deceased, and executor named in the will.

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Acknowledgements

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