

# The Regional Historian

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## EDITORIAL

The first two articles in this edition focus on local action in very different ways. In our document in context series, Steve Poole's analysis of a food protest at the beginning of the nineteenth century reveals the remarkable tenacity and cohesion of the labouring poor in the Stogursey area. In 1801 a thousand men and women gave up work for a day to march twenty two miles, demanding just prices at a time of severe economic hardship and spiralling prices. Moira Martin's account of middle-class Bristol women's work as Poor Law Guardians in the late nineteenth century, and their involvement in educational and philanthropic networks, has a much less overt political agenda. Yet these women's commitment to local action can also be viewed in the context of shared ideals and common goals, which empowered them as women and enabled them to make important contributions to the civic culture of Bristol. Peter Fleming's analysis of the late Medieval *Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar* also focuses on Bristol. His close reading of the document is enlivened by some fascinating insights into the political tensions surrounding this particular version of Bristol's origins. Finally Eric Winter's article, of particular interest to local historians in the Slimbridge area, reveals the links the Bridger family from Slimbridge had with Virginia and considers the reasons why this connection arose.

This edition has no general web site news, but reports from the record offices and local history society programmes show that a surprisingly high number of groups in the region are digitising local records and becoming 'web-wise'. This of course also includes the Regional History Centre. Our redesigned web site, launched in April, is still in the process of expansion. We any welcome suggestions and comments you may have. The web site can be viewed at <http://humanities.uwe.ac.uk/Regionhistory/index.htm>.

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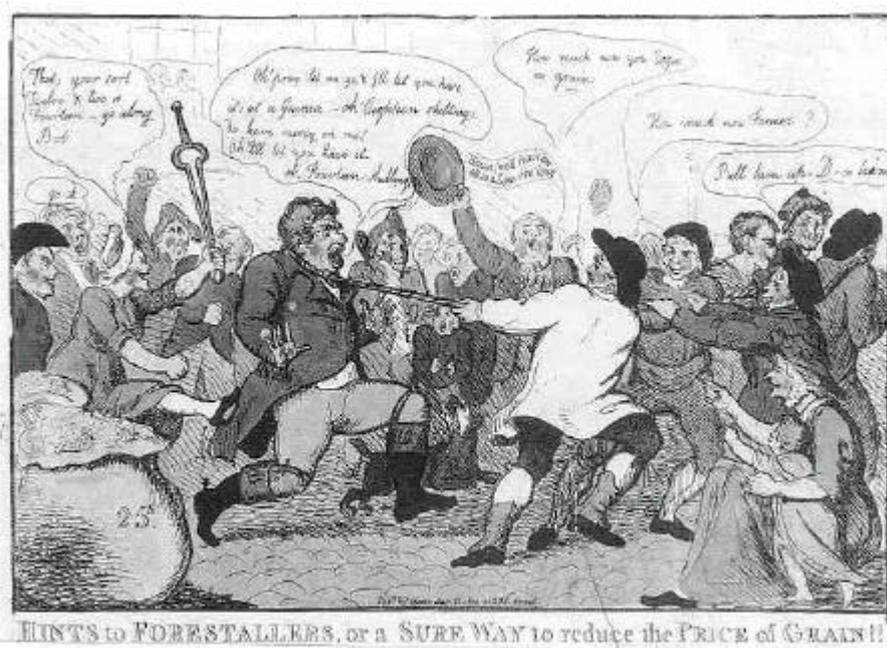
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## DOCUMENTS IN FOCUS: THE STOGURSEY RISING OF 1801

*In the second of an occasional series in which practising historians take a detailed look at a single item of historical evidence, STEVE POOLE introduces a 200 year old letter recording tumultuous events in a small West Somerset village.*

### INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 1801, the county of Somerset was convulsed by some of the most severe and sustained food rioting ever experienced in the southwest region. Against a background of wildly spiralling prices in every basic commodity, large crowds toured the county's mills, markets, baker's shops and farms demanding cheaper bread and forcing fair-price agreements on both producers and local magistrates. Although the immediate cause was the disastrous harvest of 1799, the wartime blockade of continental supplies made corn doubly scarce and the Pitt government's sudden conversion to the economic principles of *laissez-faire* only compounded the problem. Ministers were reluctant to organise relief shipments from America and India (as they had during the previous scarcity of 1795-6), and they expressly warned JPs against interference with market forces. Bread prices should not be set by law, nor farmers ordered to lower their prices. Troops of militia were despatched to the south-west to protect markets and prevent organised urban workers stirring revolt amongst rural labourers.



Pitt's advocacy of Adam Smith was less than cheering for the beleaguered magistrates of Somerset however. *Wealth of Nations* was not required reading in the empty parlours of the labouring poor, and the crowds who now demanded intervention and economic 'justice', looked not to *laissez faire* for salvation but to the customary practices of moral economy. Unconvinced that the scarcity was genuine, consumers largely blamed farmers for hoarding or exporting grain to inflate its domestic value. Popular calls on the county Bench to compel farmers to bring corn to local markets at an affordable price placed magistrates in a quandary. Home Office guidelines were clear enough: price protesters were to be dispersed by military force, not indulged or placated. On the other hand however, Volunteer and militia units were notoriously unreliable against civilian crowds; their introduction as likely to inflame a difficult situation as calm it. And the county Bench knew better than anyone that the maintenance of order was too complex an issue to be resolved at bayonet-point. Grassroots negotiation and compromise were inevitable in practice, regardless of the wishes of government.

This is the contextual background for a remarkable series of documents in the Somerset County Record Office recording food price disturbances in the Stogursey region between March 1800 and April 1801. In the letter reproduced below, a gentleman of the county sends word of recent developments to John Acland of Fairfield House, Stogursey, a county magistrate currently (and perhaps fortuitously) away from home at Bath. In its rich language and detailed evaluation of the problem, the letter offers a rare glimpse of the workings of law and order in a rural area at the end of the eighteenth century.

**David Davis to John Acland, 1 April 1801; Somerset County Record Office, DD/AH, bundle 59/12**

April 1st 1801

Dear Sir,

My fears suggested that the people of Stogursey would not be long quiet after you were gone to Bath and the event has justified my apprehensions. On Monday morning, they collected to the number of 100 or more and proceeded from thence to Stowey where they were joined by a still greater number. The articles of their grievances were read there in the market place and by all approved. The next object was to fix on a redress which consisted in the following particulars:- the wheat to be sold at 10s a bushel, the barley at 6s, beans and pease at 6s and potatoes at 5s the 3 bushel bag. On settling this business, they thought it the most prudent step they could take would be to entreat the magistrates to take their distressed case into consideration. They therefore went first to Major Tynte and Mr Parsons, but they were gone to Petherton to settle a similar affair between the farmers and inhabitants of that parish. They consequently marched there, but they came too late, as the business was settled and the magistrates gone to Taunton.

On this disappointment they walked to Bridgwater, snowball-like, to the number of 1000. Two or three were deputed to wait on Mr Noller with their petition. They desired him to sign it and to be their friend. He very deliberately read it and put it in his pocket, and told them that they were acting in a very illegal manner, and, unless they immediately dispersed, he would commit some of them. As they found he would not countenance their proceeding, they begged he would be kind enough to return their petition. On his refusal I should suppose some words ensued, that he collared Symons, the mason who worked with you, and gave him a black eye. A scuffle was the consequence and the Justice's coat was rent from top to bottom. He ordered them out of the house, but they told him they would not go without their petition, which for some time he imprudently refused to give them. However, when he became a little cool and saw, perhaps, the consequence that would ensue should he persist in keeping it, he delivered it to them with the gratuity of a shilling apiece. This, in my humble opinion, he should not have done, as it was a tacit acknowledgement that he was in the fault. If he had not returned it, as they were very much incensed at his conduct, they would in all probability have pulled down his house.

The military were called out, but the greatest part assured the people that they would not fire on them. The sailors placed their little swivel guns in such direction as to command Castle Street and declared that if the soldiers fired, they would immediately discharge their pieces. However, all this was prevented by the orderly behaviour of the petitioners, for I will not call them a mob. They protested to the inhabitants and to the soldiers that it was their intention not to commit any riotous act, which they really fulfilled if I can give credit to what I have heard. For they had no bludgeons or sticks of any kind in their hands.

At last they came to Mr Everard's at Hill, who assured them, with tears, that he felt for their distresses and promised to exert his utmost to relieve them. With this assurance they were very well pleased and immediately returned to their homes. What he intends to do I have not heard, but something he must now do as his faith is pledged to them. However, he gained their affection as they declare they will, at any time, spill the last drop of their blood in his defence.

Thus I have given you, sir, a detail of this disagreeable business. I cannot help thinking that the farmers are to blame, as they had strong intimations given them of their intentions. In such a case they should have voluntarily met the wishes of the poor halfway. But what impression can be made on hearts hardened not through avarice, but from fear? It is dangerous for such people to be made sensible of their power; for on another occasion they may be guilty of outrage. I most heartily congratulate you on being at Bath. Had you been at Fairfield, if you had given sanction to their proceeding, you would have been by many condemned, and that you did it from the motive of fear. If you had not, on the other hand, you would have been subject to the resentment of these people...

I am, dear sir, your obliged and grateful servant,

D. Davis.

#### **AN APPRECIATION**

Two things in particular are very quickly apparent in Davis's text. Firstly, it is clear that institutional authority was thinly spread and that the art of effective law enforcement depended heavily upon a magistrate's rhetorical skills of communication. Secondly, it is equally clear that crowds did not simply 'riot' in eighteenth century England; they acted assertively and with energy, but violence was only offered here in one very particular and transgressive circumstance. A well understood and collectively recognised set of procedures and protocols may be seen underpinning customary readings of law and dispute in eighteenth century Somerset, deeply embedded in the social structure of the community via a shared language of negotiation.

The problematic spatial diffusion of the county Bench is highlighted in Davis's first (and very knowing) remarks to Acland; the magistrate's presence on his estate considered inseparable from the exercise of social control in the surrounding parishes. But the rising was no chance event. The rendezvous of 100 Stogursey labourers and a 'still greater number' from elsewhere at the market town of Nether Stowey indicates forward planning and regional co-ordination. Their agreed list of 'just' prices had presumably been prepared in advance; its emphatically public adoption in the market place before an audience of farmers and tradesmen a theatrical flourish, challenging the 'official' market clerk's declarations of cost.

The crowd was pragmatic enough to understand, however, that popular regulation required magisterial approval. Two regulators who 'fixed' bread prices at nearby Old Cleeve without the compliance of magistrates would discover the truth of this maxim a few days later when they were both hanged at the scene of their crime for constructive theft. The fact that the nearest county JPs had decamped to Petherton, eight miles to the south east, 'to settle a similar affair between the farmers and the inhabitants of that parish' shows once again the importance of the magistracy's mediatory role, as well as the danger of their becoming overstretched. The crowd's determination to speak with them is clear from their decision to march on, although they drew the line at continuing unnecessarily to Taunton. Magistrates

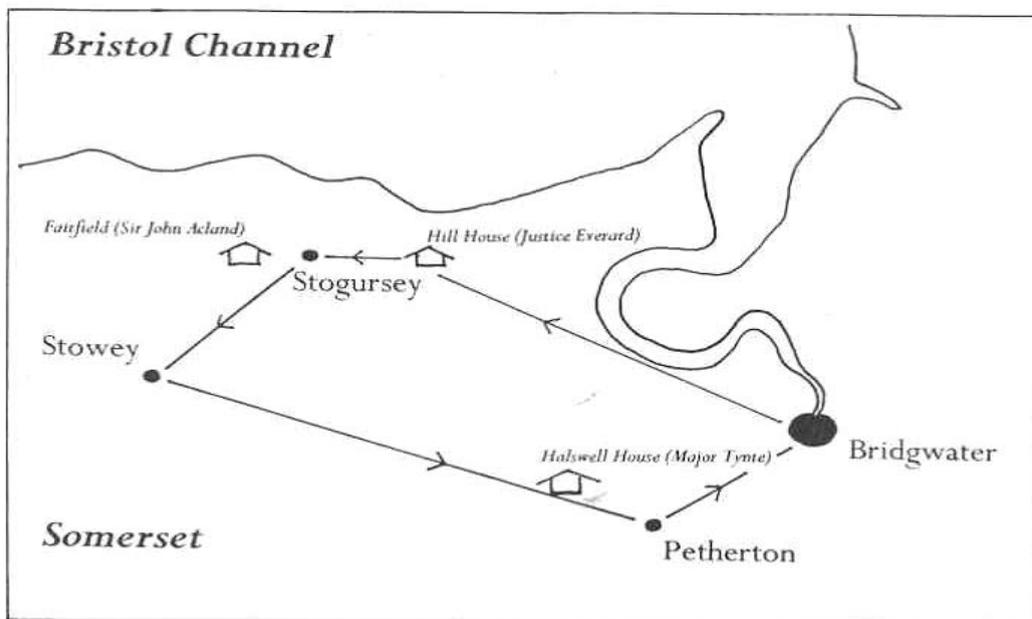


Fig 1. Western Somerset, April 1 1801: the route taken by the crowd.

now lay closer at hand in Bridgwater. The ensuing confrontation between Justice Noller and the crowd is fascinating. Their selection of deputies to approach the magistrate with a petition soliciting his support for the price reductions agreed at Stowey is typical of the legitimating forms adopted by them throughout. As Davis is keen to emphasise, they were unarmed and so orderly that 'I will not call them a mob'. But, secure in his urban stronghold and perhaps emboldened by the presence of soldiers, Noller's uncompromising and confrontational response dispensed with every unwritten rule of community polity and accommodation. His threatening language and behaviour was, quite simply, unacceptable, not only to the crowd's deputies, but to Davis as well. The presentation of grievances by petition was a right protected from all charges of unlawfulness by the 1689 Bill of Rights, and this was a constitutional knowledge embedded deeply into the residual memory of every 'freeborn Englishman' of the period. When Noller responded to the Symons's 'words' by punching him in the face, he betrayed the reciprocal rules that bound patricians to plebs and vice versa, and showed profound disrespect for popular constitutionalism. All deference lost and the rules abandoned, the unseemly scrap that followed was a symbolic enough struggle.

Noller's ineptitude is further amplified by Davis's critique of his subsequent actions. He confused reconciliatory gestures ('a tacit acknowledgement that he was in the fault'), with an attempted military dispersal; an ill-judged decision as it turned out. The mutinous disposition of the militia, together with the unasked for and potentially explosive intervention of armed sailors from the town quay left Noller in an extremely dangerous position, saved only, it seems, by the calm assurances of the crowd and their willingness to move on independently after regaining their property.

The contrast between Noller's interaction with the crowd and Justice Everard's is illustrative of the gulf between crass and effective policing. Everard, caught unawares on an isolated estate three miles from Stogursey, was certainly in no position to square up to the crowd as Noller had, but the language and gestures he chose to deploy brought about an immediate, if temporary, resolution to events. By the histrionic use of tears to express empathy with the sufferings of the poor, Everard revealed himself as a gentleman of feeling and sensibility, and by his promise of assistance sealed a compact with the crowd. It was a classic performance, pulled from a vast repertoire of theatrical responses and declarations, as familiar in its form to Everard as it was to Noller, Davis, Acland and the labouring poor who formed the appreciative audience. In practical terms, magistrates in Everard's position were often required to think fast and act in the here and now without too much regard for the

future. As Davis was all too aware, the poor of the parish would probably hold Everard to his word, 'as his faith is pledged to them', and failure to deliver on his promises might provoke further disorder. To meet the crowd's demands, however, Everard and his brother magistrates would have to negotiate with the farmers either to reduce prices or increase pay, and these were precisely the sort of steps central government had warned the county Bench to avoid.

In such a set of circumstances, ministerial announcements about the death of the moral economy were premature. Within days of these events, the county Bench initiated a number of meetings with farmers and landowners and impressed upon them the need for price reductions and abundant markets. Prices were accordingly pegged for just long enough to see the crisis through, backed by a series of tough resolutions to use soldiers without recourse to the Riot Act in any repeat disturbances, and the vengeful decision of the Assize judges to capitally convict the Old Cleeve food 'rioters'. The Stogursey document makes a considerable contribution towards an historical understanding of the experience and drama of the eighteenth century social equipoise. Its record of the purposeful procession of up to a thousand labourers, few of whom could afford to abandon their work, upon a twenty-two mile, day-long odyssey for economic redress is remarkable enough on its own. But its timing, a few short years after the publication of Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, makes it more valuable still, for it offers us a glimpse of a passing social and economic order at a key moment of transformation, but in the throes also of a robust resistance to innovation.

**FURTHER READING:**

E. P. Thompson, 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present* 50 (1971) and *Customs in Common* (1994).

A. Randall and A. Charlesworth (eds), *The Moral Economy and Popular Protest* (1999).

R. Wells, *Wretched Faces: Famine in Wartime England, 1793-1801* (1988).

R. Wells, 'The Revolt of the South West, 1800-01', *Social History*, 6 (1977) and, with J. Rule (eds), *Crime, Protest and Popular Politics in Southern England, 1740-1850* (1997).

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**GUARDIANS OF THE POOR: A PHILANTHROPIC FEMALE ELITE IN BRISTOL**

**MOIRA MARTIN**

This study examines the entry of women into one sphere of local government, the administration of Poor Relief. Being a Poor Law Guardian was an elected position which was open to certain middle and upper class women from 1869 and to women in general after 1894. The work was unpaid and in that sense similar to much work undertaken in the voluntary sector. As Guardians women had responsibilities for the poor of the Union, but were also expected to safeguard the economic position of those who paid the poor rates. Prior to 1894, when the property qualification for public office was abolished, only those women who held property in their own right could stand for election as Guardians of the Poor and even after this time the majority of women Guardians were middle class. Thus, this examination of the role of women Guardians in Bristol in the period 1870 to 1914 is essentially an exploration of a female elite.

For many women, working as Poor Law Guardians was a continuation of their philanthropic work in the community and a development of their particular role within the private family. In some cases women had a background in political activism, both in terms of party politics and campaigns for the vote for women. In the last decades of the nineteenth century the local

administration of the Poor Law became the nexus of women's activities with regard to charity, local government and suffrage. An examination of the role of female Guardians of the Poor demonstrates the complex networks which linked these women.

### **BRISTOL WOMEN'S INVOLVEMENT IN POOR LAW POLITICS**

As several historians have demonstrated, Bristol played a key role throughout the nineteenth century in a number of radical campaigns, with leading Quaker and Unitarian families being particularly supportive of such causes.<sup>1</sup> Political, philanthropic and religious activities frequently overlapped and men and women of different persuasions worked together for the abolition of slavery or in support of political rights for women. Similarly, the desire to improve the character and circumstances of the Bristol poor was an ideal which inspired a range of charitable endeavours and specific forms of political action.

As Patricia Hollis states, 'Bristol possessed one of the most impressive women's movements in the country'.<sup>2</sup> A key factor in the success of the movement for political reform was the number of women who were already entitled to vote in local elections and to stand for office. Although women were unable to vote in parliamentary elections, in 1869 the municipal franchise was granted to female ratepayers and the first female Guardian was elected in London in 1875.

In January 1881 a meeting was held in Bristol to consider what action should be taken locally to secure the election of women Guardians. Dr John Beddoe of Clifton had previously written a letter to the Bristol press making the case for women Guardians and the local branch of the newly formed Women Guardians' Society had issued a pamphlet listing the principal reasons why it would be beneficial to have female Guardians. Ladies, it was claimed, had relevant experience of visiting the poor and of household management, they were better suited to dealing with the particular needs of pauperised women and children and they had the leisure to undertake this work. John Beddoe had earlier dismissed the claim that women might be over-indulgent at the expense of the rates, by reminding his readers that the ladies were also ratepayers.

Several meetings in support of women Guardians were held throughout the country and in January 1882 Lewis Fry held a drawing room meeting at his home, Goldney House, Clifton, which was attended by the Bishop of Bristol, several clergymen and numerous women, such as Mary Clifford, Lady Harding, Miss Elliott and Miss Fry. Despite the support of influential men and women, there was still considerable opposition to the idea of women Guardians and when Miss Ball stood as a candidate for Westbury on Trym in 1881 she was defeated. The following year a leaflet was published in Clifton entitled 'Why women should not be elected as Guardians'. One of the arguments against women Guardians was the problem of discussing 'cases of vice' in the presence of ladies. The double standard with regard to middle and working class women was criticised in the *Englishwoman's Review* which claimed that the only indecency was that of female applicants for relief being required to discuss their personal circumstances and their sexual history in front of men.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See J.Hannam's and Madge Dresser's essays in M.Dresser & P.Ollerenshaw (eds), *The Making of Modern Bristol* (Bristol, 1996); P. Hollis, *Ladies Elect: Women in Local Government, 1865-1914* (Oxford, 1987); H.Meller, *Leisure and the Changing City, 1870-1914* (1976) and E.Malos' essay in I.Bild (ed) *Bristol's Other History*(Bristol,1983)

<sup>2</sup> Hollis, *Ladies Elect*, p.156

<sup>3</sup> *Englishwoman's Review(ER)*, 1882., pp.194-5

Women had been members of Bristol School Board since 1877 and Mark Whitwell and Lewis Fry, leading members of the Board, were key supporters of female Guardians. In March 1882 a meeting was held at Redland House, the home of Mr and Mrs Whitwell, and it was argued that ‘where numbers of women, children and aged persons are gathered together in need of the sympathy and help women can give, there should be women in power and not merely as visitors’.<sup>4</sup> Although women such as Mary Clifford and Frances Power Cobbe had undertaken workhouse visiting in Bristol and had made small changes to workhouse life, as visitors they could do little to influence Poor Law policy or practice.

It was decided therefore that three women should stand for election to the Barton Regis Board of Guardians and the choice of women illustrates the existence of a network associated with education, philanthropy and the Poor Law. Miss Clifford was persuaded to stand by Thomas Pease, the former Chairman of the Barton Regis Board. Mr Wilson of Clifton College suggested Miss Alice Winkworth, one of three sisters who were active and influential in Bristol. Mary Clifford encouraged Miss Catherine Woollam to stand and finally, a fourth woman agreed to stand for election in 1882, Mrs Prentice Manning. Winkworth and Woollam stood for the Clifton ward, Clifford stood for Westbury on Trym and Prentice stood for St Philip and St Jacob’s. All four were elected to the Barton Regis Board of Guardians and Clifford and Winkworth headed their respective polls. Bristol returned more women Guardians in 1882 than anywhere else outside London. At subsequent annual elections the four women were elected on each occasion and when elections became triennial in 1886 they were once again elected. Mrs Prentice declined to stand in 1899 because of ill health, but her place was taken by another woman, Mrs C.H.Terrell, who was successful.

Three of the four women elected in 1882 were unmarried. This partly reflects the tendency for single, middle class women to become involved in philanthropic and community-based work, but also the difficulties faced by married women in establishing their right to stand for election. Prior to the abolition of the property qualification for public office in 1894, married women had to demonstrate that they were qualified to stand for election ‘in respect of other premises than those where residing with husband’. Between 1882 and 1893 there were only four women Guardians in the whole of Bristol, while in 1895 this number increased to twelve and all three Bristol Poor Law Unions returned women Guardians. In Barton Regis Union Clifford, Winkworth and Woollam were re-elected and they were joined by four new female representatives: Mrs Hester Hawkins, Mrs Mary Ann Trebilco, Miss Caroline Nightingale and Miss Mary Davis Gotch. Two women were appointed as Guardians for the Bristol Incorporation of the Poor: Mrs Mary Graham and Mrs Mary Ann Wethered. In Bedminster Union two new women Guardians, Sarah Terrett and Miss E. Evans, joined Miss S. J. Pedder, who was first elected in 1893.

The Bristol women elected as Guardians in 1882 proved to be particularly popular with the voters. Mary Clifford served for 25 years, Alice Winkworth served for 37 years and Catherine Woollam served for 27 years, until her death in 1909. With the amalgamation of three Bristol unions in 1898 to create an enlarged union for the City of Bristol, five other women were voted onto the new board: Mrs Mary Ann Trebilco, Mrs Hester Hawkins, Miss Caroline Nightingale, Mrs Mary Graham and Mrs Sarah Jane Terrett. Again these women served as Guardians for many years: Mary Ann Trebilco failed to be elected on a couple of occasions, but served almost continuously through to 1914; Mary Graham served without a

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<sup>4</sup> ER, 1882, pp.127-8

break until 1919; Caroline Nightingale served until 1914 and Hester Hawkins and Sarah Jane Terrett both served until 1904. Of the eight women elected to the new Board in 1898, four were spinsters, three were married and one, Mrs Graham, was a widow. Nationally about 50% of female Guardians in the early twentieth century were married.

As Walton states in his study of women in social work, most women Guardians were the wives or daughters of upper middle class and professional men.<sup>5</sup> This is true in Bristol with some of the female Guardians being members of influential families such as the Fry, Pease and Winkworth families. For some, assisting a husband or father in parish work, had provided the necessary experience of service. Thus, Mary Clifford's father was an Anglican vicar and Mrs Mary Ann Trebilco was married to a vicar. Whether or not families were prestigious, it was common for there to be other members of the family involved in social or political action. Mrs Sarah Jane Terrett was married to William Terrett, who in the municipal elections for Bedminster East in 1897 was described as 'at the front in religious, social and municipal work' and Hester Hawkins' husband, Frederick, served on St George Urban District Council. In 1907 a working class socialist woman was elected as a Guardian; Jane Tillet was the wife of Ben Tillet, formerly a leader in the London dock strike.

Having spent some time examining how the first cohort of women Guardians came to be elected, it might be useful to consider the social and political networks which connected individual women and their families. It is not possible in an essay of this length to explore the complex interconnections which sustained the female elite, so I have chosen to focus on one woman in particular, Mary Clifford.

#### **MARY CLIFFORD AND HER NETWORKS**

As one of the first women to be elected as a Poor Law Guardian in Bristol, Mary Clifford was highly regarded by her contemporaries. Her influence on other women can be read in the numerous tributes to her work and to her as a person. Some years earlier, Mary Carpenter had inspired a generation of women in Bristol to undertake philanthropic work and in due course Mary Clifford provided an example of how women could combine charitable work with public office, or move from one to the other.

Born in 1842, Mary was the eldest child of Reverend John Clifford and his wife Emily. Like many middle class women of her generation Mary chose to remain single and for much of her adult life she was involved in domestic duties and assisting in her father's parish, St Matthew's, Kingsdown. Though deeply religious, in her early twenties she found the life of a vicar's daughter rather circumscribed. Nonetheless, parish work provided some opportunities to put her Christian ideals into practice. She described the aim of her parish work as 'not moulding their lives but helping their souls'<sup>6</sup> and this concern for the spiritual welfare of the poor became evident later in her Poor Law work.

#### **EDUCATIONAL LINKS**

In the 1860s, Catherine Winkworth and John Percival of Clifton College set up the Clifton Association for the Higher Education of Women and Mary Clifford and many other women supported this association and participated in the educational programmes that were organised. Elizabeth Sturge recalled in her *Reminiscences* how courses were arranged on a variety of subjects, with eminent speakers giving lectures and commenting on students'

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<sup>5</sup> R.G.Walton, *Women in Social Work* (London, 1975).

<sup>6</sup> G.M Williams, *Mary Clifford* (Bristol, 1921).

papers.<sup>7</sup> Meetings were held at Clifton Hill House, the home of John Addington Symonds, and he gave a number of lectures on Greek literature. Mary Clifford took one of his courses in 1869 and became a devoted friend to his wife. Thanks in part to this campaign for female education, University College, Bristol was open to both male and female students in 1876 and Marion Pease was one of the first to take advantage of this and went on to become a member of staff at the Day Training College. The movement for higher education for women and for high schools for girls united women from some of the leading Bristol families, including the Sturges, the Peases and the Winkworths.

#### **LINKS BETWEEN POOR LAW AND CHARITY**

Following her father's retirement in 1879, Mary was able to extend her charitable activity in other directions. She began to visit the workhouse, paying particular attention to the sick and elderly inmates in Barton Regis infirmary. When she became a Guardian of the Poor, Mary's main influence was in promoting policies she considered would enhance the moral and physical well being of particular classes of paupers. She remained concerned to improve the welfare of elderly inmates in the workhouse and thought charitable assistance could be better organised to help the more deserving aged, however, she disagreed with the move to introduce old age pensions. She was keen to see children removed from the workhouse, or from family homes she considered unsuitable, and she promoted fostering and child emigration as the means to remove children from moral danger and neglect. Similarly, she was concerned about the plight of unmarried mothers and of women who were considered to be mentally defective.

Generally Mary and the other women Guardians elected in Bristol in the nineteenth century favoured the strict administration of Poor Relief and supported moves towards better classification in the workhouse and further investment in additional institutions, such as hospitals and children's homes. In promoting these policies Mary worked closely with her female colleagues on the Board of Guardians, but each of them was also part of a wider network of individuals and organisations. What Helen Meller refers to as the 'civilising mission to the poor' excited considerable support amongst the upper and middle classes and a study of Poor Law and philanthropy in Bristol suggests the existence of a relatively cohesive female elite.

With regard to the care of pauper children, Mary was involved in two organisations: the National Committee for Promoting the Boarding Out of Pauper Children and the Bristol Emigration Society (BES). Florence Davenport Hill, who lived with her family in Bristol for many years, was an influential supporter of boarding out or fostering. Several other people in Bristol were involved in promoting the policy of boarding out and in many ways the emigration of children to Canada was an extension of this scheme. The Governors of two industrial schools, Mark Whitwell and Dr Goodeve, had been involved in the emigration of children from these schools in the 1870s and in 1882 Mrs Agnes Beddoe had set up the Bristol Emigration Society to encourage families and institutions to consider emigration. When elected as Guardians that same year, Mary Clifford and Catherine Woollam worked closely with Mark Whitwell and the BES, and Barton Regis Board of Guardians adopted the policy of emigration for selected pauper children.

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<sup>7</sup> E.Sturge, *Reminiscences of my Life*, (Bristol, 1928)

As a result of the initiatives of Frances Power Cobbe and Mary Elliott in the 1860s, two organisations were set up to help girls and young women who had no suitable family support. The first was the Female Mission Society and the second, the Ladies Association for the Care of Girls, with Mrs Susan Pease as President. Mary Clifford became a member of the Female Mission Society, as did Helen and Catherine Sturge, and numerous women in Bristol were involved with the Association for the Care of Girls, including Mrs Goodeve. In addition to her work with the BES, Mrs Agnes Beddoe also set up a Home for Working Girls.

### **WOMEN'S POLITICAL ASSOCIATIONS**

Philanthropic work of this kind not only made it possible for women to be actively involved in the public sphere, it also encouraged the growth of new women's associations. The National Union of Women Workers was an umbrella organisation which drew female representatives from a broad range of philanthropic work concerned mainly with women and children. Annual conferences were held in different towns and provided the opportunity for women to present papers on social issues and to extend their local networks by linking with women from other areas. When the Conference of Women Workers was held in Bristol in 1892 over sixty women in Bristol were involved in the organisation of the conference and a total of 250 delegates attended. Mary Clifford, Catherine Woollam and Alice Winkworth were all active members of the NUWW. Some female Guardians, such as Mary Ann Trebilco were also members of the Bristol Women's Liberal Association and some, including Clifford herself, were supportive of suffrage societies.

Mary Clifford was involved with several female associations or societies, but also worked with men who shared similar objectives. The involvement of men such as Lewis Fry, Mark Whitwell and Dr John Beddoe in the Women Guardians' Society has already been noted, but concern about the poor state of working class housing led Mary Clifford and Catherine Woollam to join the Bristol Committee for the Better Housing of the Poor in 1903. Other members of this Committee included Elizabeth Sturge, Lewis Fry and Reverend Trebilco. A second committee on working class housing was set up which drew representatives for trades union and labour organisations and the existence of the rival pressure groups illustrates something of a class divide on social issues.

As noted earlier, many of the female Guardians who were elected in the 1880s and 1890s served through to the First World War. These very experienced female Guardians were joined in the early twentieth century by some younger women, of whom Miss Rosa Pease and Mrs E.A. Webb were the most notable. Pease became Chair of the Board of Guardians in 1920 and by 1930, when the Local Government Act abolished Boards of Guardians, she had served for 24 years, while Mrs Webb had served for 30 years. Mary Clifford retired from the Board of Guardians in 1907, but remained an active member of organisations such as the Bristol Civic League.

The women who served as Guardians in the period 1882 to 1914 were almost all middle class and generally well connected. Despite differences in age, religious persuasion and politics, there was a high degree of cohesion within this female elite, which found expression in shared ideals and common associations. Philanthropic and political action served to extend and reinforce connections associated with family and local community and provided opportunities for women to make a significant contribution to civic culture.

## CORRESPONDENCE

**A response to the article by Harry McPhillimy, 'From Norway to Narroways: A Short History of Narroways Hill in St Werburghs, Bristol', *The Regional Historian*, Issue No. 8, Winter 2002.**

For some considerable time now I have been researching the contents of a book which has existed since 1522, a section of which contains the record of a Survey of the Barton of Bristol 1553. A microfilm of the whole volume within the Sackville collection, which is lodged with the Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone, was purchased by the Kingswood History Society and this has enabled me to take note of copyholders' properties of the Manor from 1508 - 1553 at a time when the Poyntz family (the Sirs Robert, Anthony and Nicholas) of Acton Court were successively landlords. The corresponding Court Roll is within the Gloucestershire Record Office collection.

The tithing of Easton (together with Stapleton and Mangotsfield which formed the royal manor at this time) contains many names of people and places which I have been able to identify but many, of course, I have not, nor have I been able to follow up promising leads. I was therefore delighted to read your article in Issue No.8 of the Winter edition of the *Regional Historian* on Narroways Hill and the deed of 1626 which refers to its connection with Northway.

The Survey of 1553 records that several members of the tithing of Easton possessed land at Northway including John Tylley and his son, William, who held 3 acres of land at Northway together with 2 acres of mead worth 10s (as well as other property) under an agreement with Sir Anthony Poyntz dated 23rd November 1525.

In an agreement dated 30th September 1528 Harry Curtys and his wife held two acres of land at Glass Mill (Glaste myll in text), also referred to in your article, and three acres in Newfield adjoining Hambroke (sic) field.

My book, written on behalf of the Kingswood History Society, also contains my interpretation of other records of the volume - that of the Cathedral Priory of Bath (1522-26), the licensing of alehouse keepers of Highworth, Wilts. and the Manor of Siston now within South Gloucestershire, together with comments on how such a locally produced record found its last resting-place. Copies of the book entitled the *Sixteenth Century Court Book of Siston* (Publication Able Publishers) Price £12 (inc.p&p) are available from Barbara Tuttiett, Tel. (0117) 9671362.

**BARBARA TUTTIETT**



**For those of you who were puzzled by the photograph of Narroways Hill in the last issue - it was the wrong way round! This is how it should have appeared**

**SLIMBRIDGE AND AN AMERICAN CONNECTION**  
**E. W. CARPENTER**

On June 30<sup>th</sup> 1996 a new window in the North wall of the chancel and adjacent to the altar of St. John the Evangelist Church in Slimbridge was dedicated in memory of Lawrence Bridger who was Rector 1577 – 1630. The Dean of Chapel and choir of Magdalen College, Oxford, took part in the service. The window, which incorporates the Bridger coat of arms ('ar, a cheveron engraved, sa, between three crabs, gu.') was made possible by the generosity of American descendants, several of whom attended the ceremony.

The purpose of this note is to give the historical background to the event and to identify some possible reasons for the original emigration of the Bridgers to the New World. Most of the material used is from the church records, Bishop's Transcripts and Bridger family wills transcribed by members of the Slimbridge Local History Society but with some material abstracted from American sources listed in the bibliography.

The involvement of Magdalen College reflects an association with Slimbridge Church which goes back to the time of Henry VII who gave Magdalen the advowson of Slimbridge, i.e. the right to nominate the rector, with the condition that the rector paid £10 pa to the College (a custom which has only recently been put in suspense)



**The Bridger Coat of Arms in the Memorial Window light  
in Slimbridge Church**

### **LAWRENCE BRIDGER**

What we know of Lawrence Bridger's background comes largely from a research note by Elmer Oris Parker. He was born in 1550 at Godalming and entered Oxford in 1568 where he was, unusually, elected a fellow of Magdalen College before receiving his B.A. in 1570, and then an M.A. in 1577. He was recommended to the office of Rector and Clerk of Slimbridge by the President of Magdalen with the approval of the Bishop of Gloucester. Again somewhat unusually, maybe uniquely, he was invested with the office by Queen Elizabeth at Windsor Castle on 11<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1577. In 1586 Lawrence was installed as a Prebender of the 3<sup>rd</sup> stall at Gloucester Cathedral, a post which he held until resigning in 1625. Of his secular activities we learn most from the thirteen references to Bridgers in Vol 3 of 'The Berkeley Manuscripts', written by Lawrence's contemporary John Smyth (1567 – 1640) Steward to the Berkeleys. For example, Smyth (V3 p203) sold Gossington Hall to Lawrence Bridger, clerke parson of Slimbridge, with 60 acres of land. There were also several other substantial sales to Lawrence by Smyth who also records that Lawrence Bridger, Parson of Slimbridge, clerke, was one of 'the persons charged to finde horses for the trayned band under Sir Gabriell Lowe, Knight, and Captaine of Dragoons of Berkeley Hundred in Anno 1626'. In what is a rather nice epitaph Smyth says that Lawrence died 'a very rich and honest man'.

Lawrence married twice but died in 1630 a widower. In his will he makes bequests to nine children, Samuel, Lawrence, Joseph, Benjamin, Arthur, Elizabeth, Faith, Mary, and Anne with Samuel being the eldest son by his first wife and Joseph the eldest by his second wife, neither wife having so far been identified. From the 61 entries in the combined church

records and Bishops' Transcripts and seven transcribed Bridger wills it has been possible to construct with some confidence if not total assurance a Slimbridge family tree which terminates in 1730 with four deaths in the remaining family. However for the purpose of this note we need next to consider only son Samuel.

### **SAMUEL BRIDGER**

Samuel was born in 1584 and at age 18 he matriculated at Magdalen College. He was Auditor to the Dean and Chapter (or College ) of Gloucester Cathedral, a lay post. To correct an impression of American writers, it is worth noting that the College is the body corporate of clerics and is unconnected with education. Samuel died whilst resident in Gloucester and was buried in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral with a rather clever epitaph;

Here lyes the body of Samuel Bridger, gent, who  
Departed this life upon the 21<sup>st</sup> day of July, An.1650.  
Receiver of this College Rents, he paid  
His Debt to Nature, and beneath he's laid,  
To rest until his Summons to remove,  
At the last Audit, to the Choir above.

Having crawled over the floor of the Lady Chapel I can reveal that, contrary to American reports, the epitaph is not there. It was removed during a restoration at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

We currently have few details of Samuel's life which encompassed the Civil War. His father bequeathed him several parcels of land but not the majority which went to Joseph the eldest son of Lawrence's second wife with severe strictures on Samuel against going to law to appeal against this decision. Smyth was acquainted with him and sold him land, and we can learn and deduce a great deal from his lengthy and complex will. He left his dear and loving wife Mary the benefit of all his householdstuff and plate' and 'that part of my dwelling house wherein I myself lately lived at Woodmancott in the parish of Dursley', later referred to as the Dower house.

He makes other bequests to Mary 'for the enlargement of her maintenance for the better education and placing abroad of my children' with another injunction to 'at her own charge carefully bring up my children, such as be not yet disposed abroad, in the fear of God and in good learning' Eight children are mentioned in the will; John and Samuel who had clearly attained their majority, daughters Martha and Mary who if over twenty one were unmarried and, in descending order of age, Joseph, James George and Jonathon. Mary his wife and executrix was to recover substantial monies from 'cosen William Newce of Much Haddam in Hertfordshire' and distribute it between the two daughters and the four under age sons.

To John the eldest son he bequeathed the Auditors office at the Cathedral. John also received the manor or farm of Woodmancote and its lands, and all of the other sons received parcels of tenanted property in the surrounding parishes, notably Slimbridge.

At least in part, 'sending abroad' was interpreted as sending overseas and very soon Joseph, and later at least James, set sail to the New World. The story now switches to Virginia, with the information mainly drawn from American sources.

### **JOSEPH BRIDGER OF VIRGINIA**

Joseph was brought to Virginia in 1652 by Colonel Nathaniel Bacon with whom he later served as a 'Councillor of State in Virginia to King Charles II '. He soon became one of the most prominent men in the Isle of Wight county, Virginia, carrying out major land deals involving many thousands of acres and building a seventeen roomed brick house, 'Whitemarsh', on his estate. He was a member of the House of Burgesses from the Isle of Wight in the 1657-58 session and also in 1663.

He served during (another) Bacon's rebellion in 1676 under the Royalist Governor Sir William Berkeley (1606-1677) of the Gloucester Berkeley family (small world !). This was the losing side and he was denounced as one of the 'wicked and pernicious councillors against the Commonality in these our cruel commotions'. However when King Charles sent over commissioners to report on Governor Berkeley's rule, Joseph was described as a very resolute gentleman who after fleeing with Governor Berkeley was 'active and instrumental' in restoring order. He was a member of the Governor's Court in 1677 and was a witness to his will. In 1680 he was commissioned to raise men to protect the frontiers against Indians and commanded some of the troops.

Excavations at Whitemarsh have recently revealed a wine bottle seal bearing a strong resemblance to the Bridger coat of arms. Earlier his gravestone had been unearthed with a lengthy epitaph from which is abstracted the following:-

'Sacred To The Memory of  
The Honorable Joseph Bridger, Esq., Councillor of  
State in Virginia to King Charles ye 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Dying April ye 15; A. D. 1686; Aged 58 years  
Mournfully leaving his wife, three sons and four daughters  
-----  
To Charles his counsels did such honour bring  
His own express fetched him to attend the King  
--etc -----'.

Parker believes that Joseph was one of the Royalists in the Gloucestershire area who helped Charles's remarkable escape to France after the battle of Worcester but no evidence of this is apparent despite the very detailed accounts of the event. He married the well connected Hester Pitt and their children were named Martha, Mary, Elizabeth, Hester, Samuel, William and Joseph with obvious echoes of their aunts and uncles back in Dursley. In his will he makes a bequest to his mother Mary, still living in Dursley 36 years after her husband's death.

### **SUBSEQUENT AMERICAN GENERATIONS**

There is no record of Joseph's brother James's career and family but Joseph's recorded grandchildren total at least 20 and it is therefore of little surprise that it is claimed that Lawrence the Slimbridge Rector has now some 4,000 descendants in America, some of whom have formed Bridger groups and have regular reunions. Descendants still visit the church at Slimbridge to, as they say, 'feel the atmosphere of their heritage' .

### **WHY THE EMIGRATION?**

With most of the facts relating to the Bridger family established it is a natural question to ask if, aside from the general seventeenth century economic pressures of population and food

supply, there are any specific factors why Samuel was keen to send his sons abroad. The main reason is probably most apparent from Joseph's epitaph. He was an ardent Royalist and almost certainly so was his family. No evidence of their involvement in the Civil War has been found but the connections with Oxford, a centre of Royalist support, were strong. Lawrence's successor as Slimbridge Rector, Nicholas Richardson another Magdalen Fellow, was taken to Gloucester gaol and vigorously interrogated by the Parliamentarians on suspicion of communicating with Prince Rupert. He died immediately on returning to the Slimbridge Rectory, which with the church was then garrisoned by the Roundheads. It is of passing interest that the site was visited by Col. Massey the commander of the Gloucester garrison who challenged one of the pioneers to try and hit the weather cock on the church spire with a shot from his musket. He succeeded and Massey gave him half a crown.

What is evident from the records of the 1650s is that known Royalists were being harshly treated and their wealth confiscated. Better then to send your children abroad to seek their fortune. No evidence has been found to support Parker's view that Joseph was involved in contriving the remarkable escape through the West country of King Charles II after his defeat at the battle of Worcester in 1650. However this defeat would certainly have diminished any expectation of an early return of the monarchy.

#### **WHY AMERICA?**

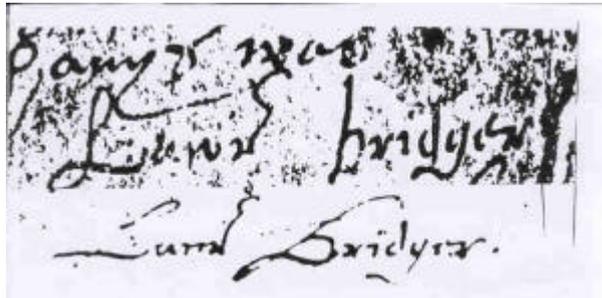
It would certainly have been known to the Bridgers that access to Virginia had been opened during the previous 30 years and moreover detailed information would have come from two very local sources. The first was from John Smyth, well known to the Bridgers, who was one of the founders of the Berkeley Company, established in 1618 to transport emigrants to Virginia (Gethyn-Jones, 1982). The company's ventures were lead by George Thorpe of Wanswell near Berkeley and most of the emigrants came from Gloucestershire. Unfortunately many were killed in the 1622 Indian massacre and only fourteen members of the company's 1619 and 1622 expeditions survived. The company survived until the 1630s, with the remaining immigrants being absorbed into the thriving Virginian population.

The second would be from an even closer source. The identity of Samuel's wife had long been a mystery. Based upon 'Cosen William Newce', who was referred to in Samuel's will, Parker has deduced that she was likely to have been Mary Newce whose brother was the father of 'cosen' William - cousin being the term used for nephew. Mary's father was Thomas Newce who shortly after her marriage to Samuel Bridger sailed c.1618 for Virginia with settlers of the Virginia Company of London. He was made a Councillor of State in 1621, a post also to be occupied some forty years later by his grandson Joseph. He was one of the survivors of the Indian Massacre and records show that he and his wife were extremely generous in sharing their possessions to save other survivors from starvation. He died in 1623, but his exploits would certainly have been known back in England from the son who had travelled out with him and also survived.

Whilst these two links provided information about Virginia were not exactly encouraging, by 1650 the situation in Virginia had rapidly improved and the knowledge and interest generated by the contacts must surely have influenced Samuel and then a fortune seeking Joseph who now presumably had the means from his fathers estate to establish himself. On a silver mace commemorating the names of the influential first settlers in Virginia, illustrated in Gethyn - Jones's book, the names Newce and Thorpe can be found adjacent to each other. Another interesting Newce family connection is that the mother of Mary Newce Bridger was Anne Seymour, daughter of Sir Thomas Seymour and Jane Berkeley. Since the

Berkeleys had owned Woodmancote manor it seems entirely plausible that the manor came to Samuel by the dowry of his wife.

For now, that completes the story. Most is derived from available records but inevitably there are some deductions. With time new information will probably emerge to enlarge the data base and challenge the deductions but that is both the pleasure and challenge of Local History studies



The signatures of Lawrence and Samuel Bridger from early 17<sup>th</sup> Century documents

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.**

Thanks are due to the Slimbridge Local History Society, particularly Margaret Weeks, for help with the church records and wills and to my American correspondents, Elmer Parker and Ed Thomas.

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**A NEW LOOK AT THE MAIRE OF BRISTOWE IS KALENDAR**  
**PETER FLEMING**

*The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar*, begun in 1478/9 by the town clerk, Robert Ricart, contains the first fully developed chronicle to be produced in an English provincial town. The book represents a considerable investment of time, money and intellectual effort. Its conception was unusually ambitious, and it was the product of a prosperous, sophisticated and self-conscious urban community.

The *Kalendar* begins with an invocation to God, Christ, the Virgin and the saints, and a Prologue. Thereafter, it is composed of six parts. The Chronicle is divided between the first three. The last three parts contain a Bristol customal, a collection of charters, and a copy of a London customal. The last three parts – particularly Part Four’s account of the duties and installation procedures of the civic officers – are of undoubted interest, but it is the Chronicle that makes the *Kalendar* exceptional: collections of customals and charters had been around for some time before 1478/9; provincial town chronicles had not. Ironically,

while the customal in Part Four has been widely used by historians of urban government, the Chronicle has been largely ignored. The reason for this neglect is immediately apparent from even the most cursory reading, since the Chronicle has nothing original to say on national affairs, and its coverage of events in Bristol is extremely patchy before the 1440s. Significantly, Lucy Toulmin Smith omitted most of it from her edition of 1872. However, it becomes much more interesting if read for what it tells us of *mentalité* rather than *elements*. In addition, while the importance of the *Kalendar* as a whole has been widely acknowledged, study of the circumstances of its production has not progressed significantly since Smith's edition. Her introduction and notes display exemplary scholarship by the standards of her time, but 130 years on there is naturally room for reappraisal.

In his Prologue Ricart sets out a plan of the book. He states that the intention behind Part One is to describe the foundation of Bristol and the reigns of all the pre-Conquest kings. The second part will take up the story to the death of King John, and the third will extend from Henry III to Ricart's own day; in fact, later contributors continued the history up to 1698.

The pre-Conquest history is a heavily abbreviated version of an English *Brut*, a genre of chronicle which begins with an account of the mythical foundation of Britain by the Trojan refugee prince, Brutus. *Bruts* were very popular among later medieval readers, and Ricart may have found his copy either in the library of a local manor house or monastery, or in London. In Ricart's version, one of Brutus's descendants, called Brennius, 'first founded and billed this worshipful Towne of Bristut that nowe is Bristowe, and set it vpon a litell hill, that is to say, bitwene Seint Nicholas yate, Seint Johnes yate, Seint Leonardes yate, and the Newe yate'. Immediately after this passage comes the famous depiction of Bristol within its wall pierced by the four gates, the whole dominated by the High Cross. The view is probably intended to represent the town as founded by Brennius, Ricart being as untroubled by the existence in the original, pre-Christian settlement of a 'Newe yate' and other gates named after Christian saints as the artist was by churches and a cross erected to commemorate Bristol's 1373 charter. The story then continues, broadly following the *Brut*, until 1066.

Between Part One and Part Two are three short sections, all in Latin. The first is a series of couplets giving extremely brief summaries of all the English kings up to Henry VI, along with the length of their reigns. The next two sections consist of an account of Joseph of Arimathea's foundation of the church at Glastonbury and a list of *notabilia diversa*.<sup>18</sup>

Verses on kings were very common, and it has not proved possible to trace Ricart's original. The Latin account of Joseph of Arimathea appears to have been copied from parchments pasted into a tablet, or wooden display box, set up at Glastonbury Abbey for the instruction of Latinate pilgrims. The inclusion of this account in a chronicle structured around kings and mayors needs some explanation. The legend of Joseph's visit to Britain enjoyed a resurgence of interest in the later fourteenth century, and with it came the widespread acceptance of his association with Glastonbury. The growth of interest in Joseph as the founder of British Christianity was more than simply an attempt to improve Glastonbury's pilgrim potential, or the expression of new fashions in chivalric mysticism: it had a very pragmatic political purpose as well. The Joseph story, dating the establishment of Christianity in Britain to within a few years of the Crucifixion, gave a useful bargaining chip to the abbots of Glastonbury, in their efforts to establish their primacy among English abbots, and to the English delegations to the Church Councils of Pisa, Constance and Basle, for whom it provided proof – at least, as far as they were concerned – that Christianity had been

introduced to England before its establishment in France at St Denis, and what is more, by a more exalted personage than the French could muster. While literate Bristolians would have been aware of the legend, there still seems no particular reason why one of them should wish to include it in a civic chronicle. The connection may lie with the diocese of Bath and Wells. The diocese included not only Glastonbury but also the southern part of Bristol: the important suburbs of Redcliffe and Temple Fee which lay beyond the river Avon. The Joseph legend shed glory not only on Glastonbury, but also on the diocese as a whole, linking it – and by extension Bristol – to England’s foundation as a Christian nation, just as the Brennius story links Bristol to the nation’s secular foundation legend.

The third section, *Notabilia Diversa*, is a list of events in ecclesiastical history, beginning with Joseph of Arimathea’s foundation of a chapel in Glastonbury, ‘*ut superius recitatur*’. What follows are brief notes giving the dates of foundation of religious orders – the Carthusians, Cistercians, Knights Templar, and the Franciscans – and of particular houses. Of these, six out of eleven were located in the West Country: Muchelney, Tavistock, Tintern, Ford, Kingswood, and Bruton. In addition, there are notices of the great fire at Glastonbury Abbey in 1184 and of the unsuccessful attempt by Savaric, bishop of Bath (1192-1205) to move the See to Glastonbury and claim lordship over the abbey. While far from conclusive, the balance of evidence would seem to indicate that the original of this section also derived from Glastonbury, or at least from within the diocese of Bath and Wells. This raises the further possibility that all three sections – the only parts of the Chronicle written in Latin – were copied from the same manuscript.

How a chronicler based in Bristol might come by such a manuscript is suggested by one of the *aide memoire* of the Bristol-born antiquarian William Worcestre. In 1478 he noted that certain chronicles of the bishops of Wells were in the keeping of Richard Vowell (probably the same man who was master of the borough of Wells from 1474 to 1487), and that Vowell had recommended that he consult the chronicles at Glastonbury Abbey. Was Vowell also consulted regarding materials for the *Kalendar*? Or, to push speculation a little further, did Worcestre help Ricart? It is possible that Worcestre at least knew about the compilation of the *Kalendar*. He made a brief visit to Bristol in 1478, the year in which work on the *Kalendar* may have commenced, and he was back there in August 1480.

Part Two does not fulfil the Prologue’s declared intent that it should tell how, ‘this worshipfull Toune hathe be enlarged, fraunchised, and corporated, by whate kinges daies, and by whoos sute and coste’; instead, we have a continuation of the chronicle of national events from 1066 to 1216, drawn largely from the *Flores Historiarum* of Matthew Paris. Textual evidence suggests that Part Two had been translated, along with its marginal commentary, from a copy of the *Flores Historiarum* that had been owned and annotated in a religious house, possibly a Dominican friary, and even perhaps the one located in Bristol’s suburb of Broadmead.

In addition, there are four short sections which do not appear in the *Flores Historiarum*. The first, coming after the account of William I’s reign, is entitled ‘Why William conquero[u]r was callid W. Bastard’ and gives his descent from Duke Rollo. This is immediately followed by two sections: one deals with the earls of Gloucester and their building of Bristol Castle and foundation of Tewkesbury and Keynsham abbeys and St James’s Priory in Bristol; while the second is an account of the Fitzhardings and their foundation of St Augustine’s Abbey outside Bristol.

The section on the earls of Gloucester is an English translation of part of the *Chronica de Fundatoribus et de Fundatione Ecclesie Theokusburie*. The *Kalendar* section is a close paraphrase, rather than a literal translation, of the Tewkesbury Chronicle, beginning with Robert Fitzhamon and ending with Earl William (d. 1183). The Tewkesbury Chronicle was written in four hands, all of the latter half of the fifteenth century, and its final entry refers to the year 1476. Ricart may have used it before its continuation to 1476, but if he used the final version, written only a few years before he began his work, then his awareness of the latest products of the abbey's scriptorium is most impressive. Such knowledge may have been gained through contact with St James's Priory, which was a cell of Tewkesbury, or Bristol's St Peter's church, of which the abbey was patron.

The Fitzharding/St Augustine's interpolation is probably derived from a chronicle of the Fitzharding lords of Berkeley and their patronage of St Augustine's Abbey. In 1489/90 Abbot Newland produced another English version of this chronicle - 'Abbot Newland's Roll' - which was continued after his death in 1515. Copies of the Roll may well have been found both at Berkeley Castle and St Augustine's Abbey. The two English versions are not identical, so perhaps Abbot Newland did not know of the *Kalendar's* text, or perhaps his is a different translation from the same Latin original.

The final addition occurs at the end of Part Two, following the account of King John, and is a summary of the privileges granted by his charter to Bristol as count of Mortain in 1188. The charter was of great significance to Bristol's constitutional development, a fact acknowledged by Ricart, who described John as one 'that moost freest and moost largiest enfranchised this worshipfull Toune'.

In Part Three the Chronicle is organised by mayoral rather than regnal years, with the names of civic officers - *prepositi*, stewards, sheriffs and bailiffs - joining that of the mayor at the head of each year's entry. As such, it takes on the appearance of the London chronicles, which provided most of the source material for this part. Entries are sporadic in this part of the Chronicle. Among those with a local connection, for the first year, 1216/7, we are given an account of Henry III's coronation at Gloucester and how 'he came to Bristowe and hilde there his grete Counseile in maner of a Parlement'. In 1232/3 the death of the abbot of Keynsham is noted, but more significant, in 1239/40, is the account of the building of the new channel for the river Frome. A massive effort, giving Bristol one of the best harbours in thirteenth-century Europe, it was only accomplished through royal pressure on the township of Redcliffe to co-operate in its building. This is noted, along with the grant by St Augustine's Abbey of land for the new channel. This, and Henry III's mandate to the men of Redcliffe, Ricart would have found readily enough among the civic archives.

There is little else of local interest, and long stretches of blank mayoral years, until the Chronicle reaches the fifteenth century. Surprisingly, the charters of 1373, which incorporated Bristol as England's first provincial urban county, are not mentioned. Only from the 1440s, when memory could supplement written record, does the Chronicle pick up a steady rhythm of both local and national events. Royal entries into Bristol are noted, along with some of the battles and executions of the Wars of the Roses. Locally, bad weather, grain prices, the deaths of mayors in office and the loss of ships have their place, as does the occasional bit of gossip: 'This yere [1466/7] the saide William Canynges Maire shulde haue be maried, by the kyng our souerain lordes commaundement as it was saide. Wherefore the said Canynges gave vp the worlde, and in al haste toke ordirs vpon hym ...'.

**Ricart's Plan of Bristol C. 1479,  
(reproduced courtesy of Redcliffe Press Ltd.)**



The medieval section of the *Kalendar* is illustrated by eighteen drawings and miniatures, mostly probably executed by London artists. Thirteen of these depict kings, mostly shown in half-page drawings, and placed at the beginning of the Chronicle's account of that king's reign, or of the first mayoral year of the reign. The others depict the plan of Bristol at its foundation, the mayor-making ceremony, Bristol's first sheriff, and the Annunciation and the Adoration of the Holy Infant. This last appears immediately above the invocation at the beginning of the text. The plan shows the town contained within its walls, dominated by the central High Cross which commemorates the 1373 charter, from which radiate the four principle roads. The street pattern therefore forms a cross, and the symbolism is probably deliberate: despite being depicted as imagined at the time of its foundation,

centuries before the Incarnation, Bristol is a Christian town. The town walls also have their symbolic importance, suggesting that Bristol is self-contained and independent of outside authority. This message may also have been conveyed by what was left out. While the containment of the town within its walls helps to create a strong and compact visual image, it also excludes certain features with which contemporary Bristolians would have been very familiar. These include the abbey of St Augustine's, to the northwest of the town walls, and the suburb of Redcliffe and Temple, south of the Avon. Both of these, at various times, represented separate – sometimes rival – jurisdictions to that exercised by the mayor and common council of Bristol. Another feature that would have dominated the topography of fifteenth-century Bristol was the castle, to the east. This is perhaps suggested in the plan by some towers at the far side of town, but the real thing would have been much more obvious. The castle was largely deserted and in disrepair by the late 1470s, but doubtless still impressive. More to the point, perhaps, it represented an earlier phase in Bristol's history, before the granting of the 1373 Charter, when the town's lack of autonomy was symbolised every September as the new mayor appeared at the castle gate to swear his oath of office. The depictions of the mayor-making ceremony, where the new mayor swears his oath not to the castle constable but to the outgoing mayor (immediately preceding Part Four's textual representation of the same event), and that of John Vyell, the first Bristol sheriff (placed under the year 1373 in the Chronicle, and marking the grant of the charter which created Bristol's shrievalty), impress upon us that Bristol is now enjoying its new dispensation as an incorporated, independent county-borough.

Turning from the book to its author: in his Prologue Ricart draws a distinction between conception and execution. The idea for the *Kalendar* came from Mayor William Spencer; Ricart's role was to 'devise, ordeigne, and make' the book. A third party must be added: the scribe, or rather scribes, since a comparison of the hands in the *Kalendar* with Ricart's signed contributions to *The Great Red Book* shows that they are not identical.

Of Robert Ricart's life we know very little. He ceased to be town clerk by 1497. He may have been a merchant, active in the 1450s, and associated with members of Bristol's governing class. Mayor William Spencer's biography is a much easier proposition. A prominent Bristol merchant, he was a member of the common council from at least 1450, sheriff in 1461/2, after having been nominated for the previous six years, constable of the staple in Bristol from 1479 to 1483, mayor of Bristol in 1465/6, 1473/4, and 1478/9, and MP in 1467/8. He also sat on numerous commissions in Bristol and Somerset. He was a considerable benefactor to the local poor and the church, and died in 1494.

While Ricart is undoubtedly an obscure figure next to Mayor Spencer, he was no lightweight. Assuming that he did the work of identifying, collecting and ordering, even if not actually transcribing, the material for the *Kalendar*, he must have possessed a good working knowledge of Latin and French. As well as exploring Bristol's civic archive, he had access to chronicles or related materials from the abbeys of Glastonbury, Tewkesbury, and possibly St Augustine's (if not here, then Berkeley Castle), along with a *Brut*, at least one London chronicle, and a copy of *Flores Historiarum*. These last three could all have come from London, along with the customal copied into Part Six. The use of London artists for the illustrations might also have necessitated trips to the metropolis. Spencer could have been of assistance here, since he was no stranger to the city. He was associated with London merchants, while his friendship with William Canynges, witnessed above all by his activities as executor to Canynges's will, may have extended to William's brother Thomas, a London grocer and alderman.

To what end was all this effort expended? Ricart gives us one answer. He explains how Mayor Spencer had commissioned the work, 'in maynteyng of the said fraunchises hereafter more duely and freely to be executed and excercised, and the perfaitter had in remembraunce'. In other words, this is most certainly not a work inspired merely by antiquarian interest in the past. Rather, it is a practical guide by which civic officers might more effectively defend their town's liberties in the future. For Ricart – and Spencer – the future defence of interests depended on an awareness and understanding of the past. The *Kalendar* continued to serve as a register of events until 1698, when the last Chronicle entry was made. Its continuing utility to generations of Bristol's governing elite is also shown by the marginal annotations and '*Index contentorum in hoc libro*', probably added by Robert Saxcy, mayor in 1556/7.

Such uses of history were common in later medieval and early modern towns. In 1478/9 however, there may have been more particular reasons why Mayor Spencer wanted to have his version of history established as definitive. In 1471 Bristol had found itself on the wrong side in the Wars of the Roses, after having given substantial assistance, with both money, supplies, artillery and men, to Margaret of Anjou's army on its way to defeat at Tewkesbury in May. For this miscalculation, Bristol had to buy a pardon, which was granted eight days after the battle. Some leading Bristolians were exempted, presumably because they had been

leaders of Bristol's Lancastrian faction. Among them was the former recorder, Nicholas Hervey, who seems to have led the Bristol contingent to Tewkesbury, where he was slain.

The record of these tumultuous events in the *Kalendar* is terse in the extreme: 'And the same time londid in Devon Quene Marget with Edward hir son, geding grete people came to Bristowe, and met with kyng Edward at Teuxbury, where the Kyng had the fiede'. There are no further entries until 1474/5. Bristol's part in the politics of 1471 is afforded as minimal a treatment as possible without breaking the bounds of credibility, given the notoriety of these events.

Bristol's governing elite had every right to be sensitive about their actions. None more so, perhaps, than William Spencer. He was among those exempted from the pardon of 1471. Spencer was bound in £100 to appear before the king and council, and while he was pardoned in December 1471, the events of that year would continue to haunt him. On 12 March 1479 Thomas Norton, royal customer of Bristol, entered the mayor's court and accused William Spencer to his face of having been a traitor to Edward IV. The precise nature of Norton's accusation is not recorded, but it is very likely to have been connected with his actions in 1471. Spencer, we are told, responded to Norton's accusation by standing down from his office and presenting himself to the sheriff to be held in the town gaol until the case could be tried before the king. This was done, the king found in Spencer's favour, and the mayor resumed his office. The recorder was ordered to punish Norton as he saw fit.

Spencer was a man naturally concerned with his reputation, particularly in view of his – to Yorkist eyes – shady political record. When Thomas Norton marched into his courthouse in March 1479 he was made to appreciate the dangers of a past unexorcised. If Spencer was unaware of the political dangers and possibilities of history when he commissioned the *Kalendar* in the winter of 1478/9, he very soon would be. The *Kalendar* was begun at least eight days before Norton's accusation was made, so there is no way in which the accusation can be said to have prompted Spencer's commissioning of the work. But the researching, compilation and transcription of the *Kalendar* must have taken several months, and by the time of writing the Chronicle entries for the fifteenth century the Norton affair may well have been a recent and painful memory. Whether or not we can read these sections of the Chronicle as reflecting one man's personal anxieties, there is little doubt that they are not an innocent, impartial record.

*An extended version of this article will appear in a collection of papers given at the 2001 University of Illinois Conference on Fifteenth-Century England, edited by Sharon Michalove. The Maire of Bristowe is Kalendar, ed. L. T. Smith, was published by the Camden Society in 1872. The original manuscript is held by the Bristol Record Office, to whom I am grateful for their help and permission to reproduce illustrations from the book. I also wish to acknowledge help and advice from Dr David Smith, Dr Clive Burgess, Mr James Lee, and the staff of the Bodleian Library, Oxford.*

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## **RECORDS OF HONOUR: THE SOMERSET LIGHT INFANTRY ARCHIVE LISTING PROJECT**

The Somerset Record Office has received a grant of £38,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund towards cataloguing, preserving and providing access to the records of the Somerset Light Infantry (SLI). The project, whose total cost is £47,000, will enable historians to have access for the first time to the rich archive of the SLI.

The SLI have a long and colourful history. They were formed in 1685 by the Duke of Huntingdon, and saw early action at Killiekrankie, the Battle of the Boyne, and Culloden. Their association with Somerset began in 1782, when they became known as the 13<sup>th</sup> Foot or 1<sup>st</sup> Somersetshire Regiment. During the latter half of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries they saw action around the globe, including Egypt, the West Indies, the American/Canadian border, and in the First Burmese War. Perhaps their finest hour was during the first Afghan War, 1838-1842. In the autumn of 1841 the Regiment formed part of a force which struggled from Kabul to Jellalabad, where they were besieged. There they stood firm against great odds, including earthquakes, and went on to defeat the enemy forces on 7 April 1842. Their heroism earned them the nickname 'The Illustrious Garrison' from the British public, and Queen Victoria, in public recognition of their achievements, officially renamed them Prince Albert's Regiment of Light Infantry. Since then they have been involved in major conflicts including the Crimean War, the Zulu Wars, the Burmese Wars, the Boer War, the Malayan Emergency, and the First and Second World Wars.

The archive reflects much of this activity, and includes photographs, diaries, muster rolls, and other papers relating to the military campaigns. The project will create a detailed catalogue of the archive, which will be available over the internet via the Somerset Record Office site. The papers will be moved to the Somerset Record Office, where essential conservation work will be done, and will be housed in high quality storage facilities. The muster rolls and other campaign records, as the working documents of the regiment, were frequently used on the front line, and have suffered in consequence. In order to publicise the archive a travelling exhibition will be created to tour Somerset, and a booklet published to accompany the archive.

The treasures of the archive include watercolour drawings of the defences at Jellalabad, drawn by Sergeant Kent in January 1842. Insight into First World War trench warfare is provided by the diary of Corporal Arthur Henry Cook, which includes a description of action during the first day of the Battle of the Somme in 1916. Among the hundreds of names and details of men who served in the regiment, is that of the scholar and author CS Lewis, who is listed in 1917. Altogether the collection creates a unique view of the activities of Somerset's regiment over the last two to three hundred years.

The Somerset Record Office is grateful for the grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, which has made this project possible, and to the Somerset Military Museum Trust who have given their enthusiastic support. Work to move and catalogue the records is due to begin in September this year.

**JANET TALL**

## **BRISTOL RECORD OFFICE IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

Bristol Record Office in 'B' Bond Warehouse down at Cumberland Basin has introduced a new range of services. It hopes that these will show that, although its main business is the preservation of the past, it is not stuck there - it has entered the 21<sup>st</sup> century along with its users.

### **INTERNET**

First of all it has installed four PCs (with more to come) to give its users access to the Internet. A recent survey showed that 69% of record office users throughout the country had access to the Internet and this is evidenced by the ever-growing number of web sites created by or for historians, especially family historians. At Bristol Record Office users are given a choice of archives-related web sites via a handy on-screen menu; if the site they want isn't on that list they can enter its address and access it that way or access one of the search engines like Google or BBCi.

### **CENSUS**

When the current difficulties with the Census Online are resolved, researchers will be able to access it via the four new PCs in the Record Office Searchroom and buy the vouchers necessary to make full use of the facility. In the meantime the Record Office has bought microfiche copies of the Census returns for Bristol and much of the surrounding area so that people can access the census information free of charge in a self-service, first-come-first served system in the record office Searchroom. There is no overall alphabetical index of names until the online facility is up and running but the Record Office does offer street indexes and the 1901 Bristol street directory which lists a lot of Bristol residents at the time.

### **CD ROMS**

The new Searchroom PCs also have 20 CD ROMs available on them which have been selected to be of maximum use to local and family historians. These include several street directories for the Victorian era and various helpful indexes. Very soon further PCs will be installed specifically to allow access to more useful CD ROMs.

### **BRISTOL RECORD OFFICE PICTURE LIBRARY (BROPIX)**

The new Searchroom PCs also give access to over 5,000 images of Bristol which can be accessed on a new development called BROPIX, the Bristol Record Office Picture Library. Although at present BROPIX is only available in the Record Office, the facility is set up via a web browser so that those using it will find that it is just as easy to navigate around as being on the Internet.

Copies of the pictures can be provided, both on ordinary paper and glossy card (for those wishing to frame their copies).



**M Jetard in flight Over Clifton Suspension Bridge (by permission of BRO)**

The Record Office is very excited about this project and intends to expand it over the coming months to take in not only more pictures, but maps and documents too.

### **BRISTOL RECORD OFFICE ON THE INTERNET**

Those with access to the Internet might like to know that information about records to be found at Bristol Record Office can be accessed in two different places on the Web:

1 The Record Office's own web site ([www.bristol-city.gov.uk/recordoffice](http://www.bristol-city.gov.uk/recordoffice)) where there is a searchable index of wills proved at Bristol between 1793-1858. Copies of these can be ordered and this facility has proved extremely popular to people all over the world with Bristol ancestors.

2 The Access to Archives (A2A) web site ([www.pro.gov.uk/archives/a2a](http://www.pro.gov.uk/archives/a2a)) where the records of Bristol's historic court of Quarter Sessions (1595-1972) can be found listed, along with many of the parish records and school records looked after by Bristol Record Office (173 catalogues in all). A2A is a government-backed scheme which aims to create a virtual national archives catalogue. It is intended that Bristol Record office's own catalogue of the documents it looks after will go online by the end of the year.

Bristol Record Office has always striven to give the best possible service to its users, never shying away from new technology, but embracing it so that it can fulfil its two core functions: preserving Bristol's documentary heritage and making it available to all.

Bristol Record Office, 'B' Bond Warehouse, Smeaton Road, Bristol, BS1 6XN

Tel: 0117 922 4224 Fax: 0117 922 4237 E-mail: [bro@bristol-city.gov.uk](mailto:bro@bristol-city.gov.uk)

[www.bristol-city.gov.uk/recordoffice](http://www.bristol-city.gov.uk/recordoffice)

Opening hours: 9.30 am – 4.45 pm, Monday to Thursday. No appointment necessary.

**RICHARD BURLEY, BRISTOL RECORD OFFICE**

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## **HISTORYFEST**

Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd of June saw the second Bristol Historyfest, an event designed to show present-day Bristolians the lives and times of their forbears. Historyfest is a joint venture by Bristol City Council and BBC Radio Bristol, timed this year to coincide with the other celebrations arranged for the Queen's golden jubilee weekend. It seemed fitting that a celebration of the past should give way to the celebration of the present that was Music Live.

After the enormous success of the first Historyfest in 2001 when something like 15,000 people visited the Council House on College Green during one Saturday in April, it was decided to 'spread the load' a little by staging the event in two locations over two days. This prevented the crush of the previous year and gave people more chance to programme a visit into their busy lives.

The two venues were the Council House and Bristol Industrial Museum and the idea was to give local services, groups and companies connected in some way to the city's history the chance to present themselves by having a stand from which to sell publications, display what they do and interact with visitors.

At the Council House could be found (amongst many others): BBC Radio Bristol, Bristol Record Office, the Bristol Library Service, Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, Bristol and Avon Family History Society, the Barton Hill Local History Group, the Hotwells and Cliftonwood Community Association, Redcliffe Press Ltd, and the UWE Regional History Centre/ Bristol Record Society (ably represented by Dr Peter Fleming pictured here). At Bristol Industrial Museum were (again amongst many others): Aardman Animations Ltd, the Avon Guild of Dyers, Bristol and Region Archaeological Services, the Glenside Hospital Museum, and Bygone Bristol.



In the Council House a number of talks were given by local experts throughout the weekend on historical themes, for example: ballooning, the Civil War in Bristol, 75 years of radio comedy, Cary Grant in Bristol, archive film, family history, house history. There was even a Victorian magic lantern show. On College Green the Sealed Knot gave spectators a taste of the Civil War.

From the Bristol Record Office perspective it was a great opportunity not only to chat to old friends in the local history community but also to introduce newcomers of all ages to the world of historical research. The latter was made more user-friendly by a display of some of the city's most treasured records, a demonstration of our automated archive cataloguing system (soon to be available online) and non-stop showings of archive film on video and our new picture library. At the end of the two days the exhausted participants pronounced Historyfest a success again and the organisers are giving thought to when Historyfest three might happen and what form it will take.

**RICHARD BURLEY, BRISTOL RECORD OFFICE**

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### **WILTSHIRE WILLS PROJECT (Extracted from Past Matters No 8)**

The Wiltshire Wills Project has moved into an exciting new phase, with the newly installed digital camera now producing digital images of the wills, the culmination of three years' work by the Project Team. We have already produced over 3,000 images. The system creates two sets of master images. These will be stored separately, and on different media, for security. The access images take the form of JPEG files. There are two sets of these, both on DVD. One set of DVDs will be made available in the Record Office, and the other at Swindon Reference Library.

Reaction to the images has been very positive so far. We are really looking forward to making the images and database available in the search room, and, we hope, over the Internet in the future.

**LUCY JEFFERIES, PROJECT ARCHIVIST.**

## **NEW WILTSHIRE RECORD OFFICE**

Chippenham has been officially adopted by the County Council as the preferred site for the new Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office. Swindon Borough Council has also recently ratified Chippenham as its first choice. Chippenham cattle market has been identified as a potential location.

**STEVE HOBBS**

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## **BATH ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST**

Bath Archaeological Trust – one of the country’s most respected archaeological research and education bodies – has won the contract to manage the finds unearthed in the next series of the hugely popular TV programme, ‘Time Team’, due for broadcast in early 2003.

The series will once again see ‘Time Team’ archaeologists with presenter, Tony Robinson, working against the clock as they explore 13 potentially important sites across Britain, seeking evidence of past communities ranging from Neolithic to post-mediaeval times. Once each programme shoot has finished, Bath Archaeological Trust’s experts will take any finds made and ensure they are all logged, cleaned and analysed, and specialist reports prepared. Finally, BAT will ensure that all finds are stored correctly in liaison with appropriate museums. The Trust’s Director, Peter Davenport, commented: ‘We are extremely pleased to have secured this contract. The ‘Time Team’ programme has made a major contribution to British archaeology, and we are looking forward to being responsible for the professional management of whatever they may unearth this year. We see it as an important contribution to maintaining the enormous popular interest in this country’s heritage.’

More information on Bath Archaeological Trust and its work, including recent and current projects, can be found on the Trust’s comprehensive, easy to navigate web site at [www.batharchaeology.org.uk](http://www.batharchaeology.org.uk).

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## **LOCAL AND FAMILY HISTORY COMPUTER WORKSHOP**

On the 8<sup>th</sup> November 1999 a group of local and family historians met in Tewkesbury to discuss the use of computers and how more historians in Gloucestershire could be encouraged to use computers for the storage and sharing of data. Following this meeting a working party was formed and has since met regularly to exchange information and see how help and encouragement could be given to potential computer users. Guidelines have been written on various aspects of computer use and published on the Gloucestershire History [www.gloshistory.org.uk](http://www.gloshistory.org.uk) which the group developed. Subsequently an e-group on local history in Gloucestershire was set up on Yahoo to enable subscribers to exchange information.

The working party also saw the need to hold a workshop where participants could see at first hand the many projects already making use of computers by individuals and societies. The University of Gloucestershire kindly hosted this workshop on Saturday 18 May 2002 and over 40 family and local historians attended.

The day consisted of two workshops one in the morning and the other in the afternoon with a period between when societies and individuals could demonstrate their projects informally on their own laptops. At the first workshop, Dr. David Hussey of the University of

Wolverhampton described the Gloucester Port Books Project where some 38,000 records of shipments from 1647 to the 19<sup>th</sup> century had been recorded on a database using Microsoft Access and demonstrated the many search facilities. The second project in the morning session was the Cheltenham Local History Society's Millennium Map CD project where they have digitised the Old Town Survey of Cheltenham completed between 1855 and 1857. This consists of 84 sheets each measuring 24 × 36 inches and a trial CD has now been produced. Geoffrey North then explained that their plans for the future included the formatting of CDs to enable additional information to be added such as photos of houses, historical data, etc. The final project in the session was a demonstration and description by John Penny of the Bristol Historical Resource CD produced by Peter Wardley of UWE.

In the afternoon Helen Williams of Olive IT gave a session on Web site design and Gloucestershire Library Services demonstrated their new online catalogue of the Local Studies Collection housed at Gloucester Library and the other 6 local study centres in the county. This catalogue, called LOCATE, is to be found on <http://locate.gloscc.gov.uk>. Between the two sessions many societies and the Gloucestershire Record Office demonstrated their projects including the Tewkesbury Database, The Campden and District Community Archive, The Gloucestershire Family History Society 1851 census and Burial Index, the Forest of Dean sites and monuments database and photographic archives of Slimbridge and Minchinhampton.

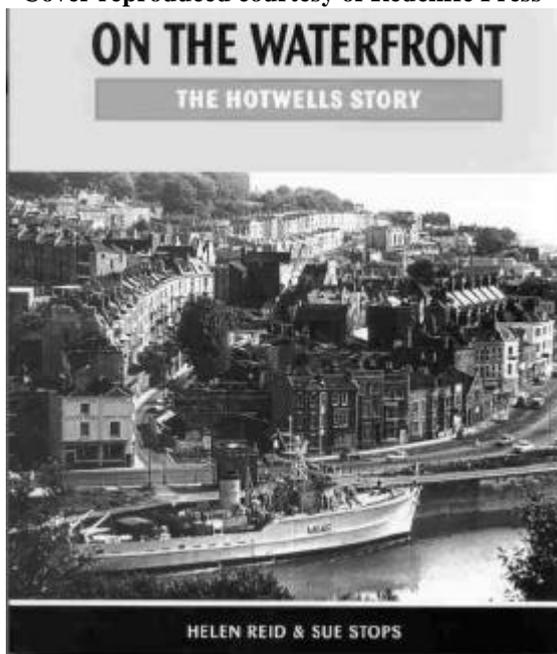
All participants were asked to complete a questionnaire at the end of the workshop where comments were made on the content of the workshop and suggestions for future workshops. Most participants were keen for another workshop next year particularly where the process of translating the data gathered from documents into the finished database on CDs can be followed in detail. **If anyone wants further information on the above please e-mail me on [john@loosleyj.freeseerve.co.uk](mailto:john@loosleyj.freeseerve.co.uk).**

**JOHN LOOSELY**

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**BOOK REVIEWS**

Cover reproduced courtesy of Redcliffe Press



**Helen Reid & Sue Stops, *On the Waterfront: The Hotwells Story* (Redcliffe, 2002) ISBN 1 900178 88 5 £9.99**

Hotwells is undoubtedly one of Bristol's more intriguing suburbs. Its geographical situation, tucked between the heights of Clifton and the River Avon, reminds us of its dual history, as both a resort and a place of trade and industry. It is water that unifies these two aspects of its past. As its name suggests, Hotwells is the site of natural springs of warm water, which, we are told in this entertaining book, can still be detected as plumes of steam rising from the mudbanks under the Suspension Bridge. The springs gave the area a brief spell as genteel watering hole in the eighteenth century and for a while after this hay-day its tourism industry

struggled on. What this book shows, however, is that this was but an interlude in a much longer story that takes us far back into the Middle Ages and is all about water as a means of communication.

Hotwells' Rownham Ferry was an important crossing place of the Avon from at least the twelfth century, and from the eighteenth century dockyards, ship-building and a host of associated trades and industries provided employment for a growing population. The twentieth century brought decline and desolation, while much of the area's historic fabric was swept away during the building of the Plimsoll swing bridge and Cumberland Basin road system in the 1960s. However, the recent trend for riverside living and recreation has brought a new lease of life to Hotwells, with the wealthy once again drawn to spend their time and money where their eighteenth-century counterparts once sought cures and diversions. Helen Reid and Sue Stops' book has grown out of a photographic exhibition at the Hope Centre in June 2000, organised by the 'Living Memories of Hotwells' Group with the assistance of a Lottery Millennium Festival 'Awards for All' grant. The result is a superbly illustrated, lively and attractively-produced volume that will be of great interest to anyone who has had associations with the area, and will also appeal to those with a more general interest in Bristol.

The core of the book is its collection of photographs and drawings, illustrating the physical development and changing character of the place over the centuries, as well as providing insights into the lives of some of its residents. These illustrations are linked by a text which is accessible and well informed. As is the case with works of this sort, one should not expect detailed socio-economic analysis. Instead, this amply fulfils its aim of providing a popular account, stuffed with entertaining anecdotes, that will appeal to a wide range of tastes. Much of this, necessarily, is probably going to be of more interest to Hotwells residents than outsiders. To the latter group, perhaps, the general overview of Hotwells' development will be most valuable, but they are also likely to appreciate the chapter on the area's associations with the famous, or notorious. Here one can read about Frederick (Bartram) Hiles, the Hotwells artist whose arms were amputated as a child, and who painted with a brush held in his mouth, and Anne Yearsley, the 'milkmaid poet' and her stormy relationship with Hannah More. Then there is the image of Coleridge and Southey, high on laughing gas – discovered by their friend Dr Thomas Beddoes and his assistants, Humphrey Davy and Peter Roget (he of the Thesaurus) – prancing along the Hotwell Road 'laughing and tingling in every toe and finger-tip'. Finally, Hotwells was where Patrick Cotter (or O'Brien), the celebrated giant (he measured 7 ft. 1 in.), ended his days, alarmingly lighting his pipe from street oil lamps, being buried in Trenchard Street in 1806. This is another well-produced and competitively-priced volume of local interest from Redcliffe Press. Forthcoming volumes that look to be of equal interest are Tim Mowl and Stephen Morris, *Open Doors: Bristol's Hidden Interiors*; and Douglas Merritt, *Sculpture in Bristol*, both due for publication this summer/autumn.

**PETER FLEMING**

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**Tony Scrase, *Medieval Town Planning: A Modern Invention?* (University of the West of England, Faculty of the Built Environment, Occasional Paper no. 12, 2002) ISBN 1 86043 294 8**

This scholarly work is a reappraisal of the usual dichotomy presented between 'planned' and 'organic' urban development in medieval Europe. Tony Scrase's thesis is that this easy compartmentalisation is the product of modern concepts developed by the planning profession, as it developed from the later nineteenth century, and is not a helpful means of

describing and understanding a variety of complex processes involving negotiation between a number of different parties, including individual householders, seignorial lords, religious houses, kings, and urban corporations. The author is singularly well-placed to offer these conclusions, having qualifications and experience as an historian, geographer, archaeologist and town planner. He is also, if I might speak from personal experience, an inspiring teacher and colleague, of indefatigable enthusiasm and possessed of an impressive range of knowledge in several fields related to the history of urban development. The particular value of this work is that it is written by someone who is at home with both medieval urban history and town planning – a rare combination.

The book ranges across Europe, from Bergen to Barcelona, but there is much here of value to those whose interests focus on the West of England. The author's long-term interest in Wells is well represented, and there are extensive references to Bristol, including a particularly interesting study of its waterfront development in a European context, with more limited treatments of other towns in the region, such as Gloucester, Glastonbury, Bath and Bridgwater. This is not always an easy read – by its very nature, much of the discussion is of a technical nature – but it will fully repay close scrutiny by those with a scholarly or professional interest in the history of urban development. This book can be purchased from the Research Office, Faculty of the Built Environment, UWE, Coldharbour Lane, Frenchay, Bristol BS16 1QY, tel. (0117) 3443209.

**PETER FLEMING**

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**D.M.Palliser (ed) *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain I 600-1540* Cambridge University Press, 2000, ISBN 052144461 6, £90**

The Cambridge Urban History totals three volumes each of around 900 pages so this reviewer looks for understanding of his decision only to tackle one volume. Nevertheless, it is useful to begin with that fact which can be set against the single volume of Dyos's *The Study of Urban History* of 1968 (pub Arnold) as a measure of the development of the topic. We have now reached a stage when an authoritative assessment of the subject can be made.

As regards the Middle Ages, they featured only intermittently in Dyos's work which had a considerable focus on methods but which was weighted also towards the nineteenth century city. This tied in with the contributors. Besides historians there were three geographers, six sociologists, two from schools of architecture and one from fine arts. The biggest single source for the thirty-one historians was economic history. In contrast, the contributors to the present work are twenty-one historians, three archaeologists, one geographer and one architect. Moreover, many of the historians have a background of working with archaeologists. (To complete the comparison with Dyos it is worth mentioning that Volumes II and III involved a further eight geographers and one each from archaeology, the fine arts and cultural studies.)

Volume I is divided into three parts. The first two look at general topics such as government, economy, small towns, etc in two chronological periods. The earlier is from 600 to 1300 and the later from 1300 to 1540. This is obviously uneven but reflects underlying truths. The earlier period is one of expansion despite occasional checks while the second is one of strains and difficulties. Again most of the surviving documents and buildings belong to the second period. As a result the chapters do not exactly balance. Thus we have 'Churches, education and literacy 600-1300' but 'Urban culture and the church 1300-1540' with the cover on the latter definitely subordinate. Similarly we have 'the topography of towns 600-

1300' but 'The built environment 1300-1540'. Also chapters on port towns are added for the second period. The third section is a series of regional accounts and the work concludes with a useful appendix attempting to rank towns.

Probably the regional studies are the weakest part. This arises from two matters. Firstly, there is the difficulty of creating logical regions. Almost inevitably a port like Southampton is severed from its hinterland. But in this case it seems particularly awkwardly done. Thus Bristol is included in the Midlands cutting it off from the southern part of its hinterland (although in Volume II it and the rest of Gloucestershire are included in the South West). Curiously Bedfordshire features in both the Midlands and South East while Oswestry, Ludlow and Hereford get more attention in the chapter 'Wales and the Marches' than under the Midlands. Again the balance in the South East chapter is doubtful given that London had already had two chapters in the earlier parts. Secondly there is the problem of space. The regions are large and the contributors had a word limit. As a result accounts are generalised and often spend much time on internal comparisons such as that between the West and East Midlands. However, one must accept that this problem is understandable. Its correction would have necessitated six volumes rather than three!

The Volume illustrates the current academic consensus. For example, continuity of urban functions between the Roman period and the Middle Ages is now definitely rejected having seemed so likely a quarter of a century ago. This certainty is derived from archaeological work, as is much else. The other major source of new information is the detailed studies of many places using documentary and cartographic sources. Such scholarship has provided the mass of information now available on small towns.

Returning to archaeology the degree of diffusion of discoveries is variable. Everybody now seems to know of the discovery of the *wics* at London and York. Similarly the potential of water fronts (particularly at Bristol, London and King's Lynn) is universally accepted. In contrast, not everybody seems aware of Morton's doubts as to whether the layout of *Hamwic* (Anglo-Saxon Southampton) was a gridiron as originally claimed (Morton A.D. *Excavations at Hamwic* Voll CBA 1992). Certainly, a host of less accessible archaeological detail is missing that should illuminate matters such as living standards and the spread of goods. This last is important as networks of towns are rarely mentioned and never defined. The sole evidence is two examples of the spread of debts, a purely documentary measure. The potential of pottery is ignored. For example the writer is aware that pottery from Ham Green (adjoining the Bristol Avon halfway between Bristol and the sea and where boats often tied up for the falling tide) is found up the Severn, on both sides of the Bristol Channel, in Irish ports and at Chester. Obviously this is an area where much work should be done.

There is little to criticise. Geography is at times a problem notably the county boundary around Romney Marsh. The reference on p.468 refers to coastal erosion in Sussex necessitating the re-siting of *Hythe*, *Romney*, *Winchelsea* and *Hastings*. This is perhaps balanced by p.577 referring to *Canterbury*, *Maidstone*, *Rye* and other Kentish towns (my italics). Also from a southwestern viewpoint it is startling to be informed that the southern boundaries of the West Midlands are the Upper Thames and Wiltshire Avon! Was it Salisbury or Wilton they were claiming as a Midland town or could they have meant the Bristol Avon?

In a well written and (for its bulk) a very readable work it was a shock to come up against such an ungainly sentence beginning as 'Two, one of the four leets '. If one substitutes, say,

'secondly' for the initial two it is far easier. But these are minor blemishes. This is a work of first importance. Obviously the price means that it is beyond the reach of most people but press your library to stock it. Study the chapters relevant to your interest and refer to it as necessary. David Palliser, Peter Clark as general editor and The Cambridge University Press deserve our thanks for such a splendid production.

**Tony Scrase**

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

**Jill Chambers, *Gloucestershire Machine Breakers, The Story of the 1830 Riots* 2002, pp.256, £9.00.**

On Friday 26 November 1830 a threshing machine, which was being brought from Wiltshire to Tetbury, was broken to pieces by a mob at Newnton who then proceeded to Tetbury and Beverstone destroying other machines. This was the start of four days of rioting which the establishment thought would engulf the whole of Gloucestershire. The Swing Riots, as they were known, started in the autumn of 1830 in Southern England as a result of low wages and poor harvests. The introduction of threshing machines meant that the agricultural labourer was deprived of his traditional winter work of threshing the corn and these machines provided a ready target for his anger. Jill Chambers has described in her book the riots, the arrest of the rioters and the trial and sentencing of the prisoners. Twenty four Gloucestershire rioters were transported to Tasmania and information on their life there has been collected from the Archive Offices in Sydney, New South Wales and Hobart, Tasmania. The book is divided into four parts. The first two parts are in the form of a diary describing the riots and the trial and the third part lists all prisoners alphabetically with details of their offences, sentences, families and subsequent lives. The last part includes Home Office correspondence, enrolment of special constables, expenses for prosecutions and other material which is in the Public Record Office in Kew. This book is thoroughly researched and comprehensive in its coverage of a violent period which rocked the establishment both in Gloucestershire and the country.

**Averil Kear, *Bermuda Dick* (Lightmoor Press, 2002) pp.168 illustrated, ISBN 1 899889 08 6, £12.95.**

This is the true story of Richard Kear and six fellow miners convicted of rape in the Forest of Dean in 1851 and their experiences of prison life and transportation. Averil Kear has traced the Kear family back to earlier generations and with her extensive knowledge of the Forest of Dean has provided, with a description of the mining community, a background to events leading up to the conviction. Life for the prisoners in Gloucester Gaol awaiting trial in the Assizes and the subsequent sentences in Millbank Penitentiary and in the quarries on Portland have been thoroughly researched and described in detail. Early in 1853 they embarked on the convict ship 'Edward' for Bermuda where they worked for the next eight years on the building of the new dockyard. Averil and her husband visited Bermuda and were able to discover a great deal about the history of the Royal Naval Dockyard and the life on the prison hulks. Two of the Forest of Dean men died on the island and were buried there and Richard Kear and his fellow prisoners sailed back to England in 1861 only to be put to work building the dockyard extension at Chatham. Not only is this an absorbing narrative about Richard Kear and his fellow convicts but it provides a detailed description of prison life both in England and overseas in the middle of the nineteenth century.

**Timothy Mowl, *Historic Gardens of Gloucestershire* (Tempus Publishing, 2002) pp.176 illustrated, ISBN 0 7524 1956 0, £15.99.**

Is Gloucestershire the richest county in Britain for great gardens of almost every period? This is the question Timothy Mowl asks and answers in his book. Starting at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century with examples at Thornbury Castle, Acton Court and Horton Court he describes the development of garden design right through to the end of the twentieth century and Barnsley, Highgrove, Ozleworth and Kiftsgate Court. Many of the early illustrations come from Kip's engravings in Sir Robert Atkyns *The ancient and present state of Glostershire* published in 1712 and more recent gardens are shown in the many black and white and colour photographs and estate maps. A gazetteer lists nearly 50 gardens described in the book and of significant historical importance which are open to the public. A map of Gloucestershire showing the location of the gardens would have been useful but this is a minor criticism of a book which will open up new areas of interest for many people.

**Chris Morris, *Work in the Woods, Dean's Industrial Heritage* (Tanners Yard Press, 2002) pp. 72 illustrated, ISBN 0 9542 2096 0 5, £11.99.**

This is a celebration of the Forest of Dean's industrial past in the form of photographs taken by Chris Morris using a digital camera. This accounts for the semi-graphical effect of some of the illustrations. Although not contributing greatly to the industrial history of the Forest, which is currently being recorded by the Forest of Dean Local History Society amongst others, this book contains some beautiful and atmospheric photographs and invites the reader to explore the remains of the industrial past of the Forest with a list of sites and grid references.

**D.N. Donaldson, *Winchcombe, A History of the Cotswold Borough* (The Wychwood Press, 2002) pp. 272 illustrated, ISBN 1 902279 12 3, £14.95.**

Winchcombe holds a unique position in Gloucestershire as the only place which was at one time a county in its own right. The author has produced a book which traces the history of this Cotswold borough from the earliest time through to the present describing all which makes the history of this town so interesting. Mr Donaldson is not afraid to use material researched by others and gratefully acknowledges the contributions made by Dr Steven Bassett of the University of Birmingham, Professor Nicholas Orme of the University of Exeter and John Moore of the University of Bristol in the study of different periods of the borough's history. The work is fully referenced with footnotes at the end of each chapter and at the end of the book there are a series of maps and plans and a selected bibliography which is useful if the reader wishes to explore further any subject. The photographs are identified as plate one etc and although a quick look at the front of the book enables the reader to identify the subject a short description under each plate would be helpful. This book together with the millennium publication *Winchcombe, our home-our heritage* by the Winchcombe Project Group (2000) and the reopened museum in the town hall shows the increasing interest in the history of this special place.

**Lawrence W. Davis, *Tibberton Gloucestershire, A History of our Village* (Tibberton Parish Council, 2001) pp. 132 illustrated, £8.00.**

This book has probably everything you want to know about Tibberton from the early history including the entry in the Domesday Book and evidence of iron smelting in Roman times through to extracts from the Parish Council minutes in 2001. The author has extracted material referring to Tibberton from a vast number of books and documents. Did you know that a Tibberton man saved Henry V from capture at the battle of Agincourt? There is a very useful chapter recording the history of the buildings in the parish and another on the families associated with Tibberton, particularly the Price family. The correspondence between 1932 and 1935 regarding the proposed Taynton and Tibberton Village Hall to be built on ground donated by Mr. M.P. Price and the opposition by the Rector of Taynton, Reverend Henry

Herrick makes riveting reading. All the village organisations past and present have been recorded and there is a final chapter on memories of Tibberton by many inhabitants. A welcome addition to this book is the publication of aerial photographs of the parish which, with a map, helps the reader to understand the layout of the parish and locate places referred to in the text.

**J.V. Smith, *Where the Cow is King, The Ancient Royal Demesne of Minchinhampton*, (The Choir Press. 2001) pp.154 illustrated, ISBN 0953 5913X.**

This book mainly covers the history of Minchinhampton and Rodborough Commons and runs from Neolithic times to the present day. Many subjects are explored such as the origins of the bulwarks, the pillow mounds and rabbit warrens, the roads, the quarries and sport on the commons including the golf club. There was at one time a golf course on Rodborough common where some of the holes are still visible. Minchinhampton Common has been owned by the National Trust since 1913 whereas Rodborough Common was not purchased by them until 1937. The role of the Commons Committee in regulating the grazing of cattle by the commoners and the ancient manorial court leet and court baron are described together with the management by the National Trust. This book is an excellent companion to an exploration on foot of the many features on the commons.

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## **REGIONAL EVENTS, CONFERENCES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **SIXTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON URBAN HISTORY Power, Knowledge and Society in the City. Edinburgh 5, 6 and 7 September 2002 European Association of Urban Historians**

Plenary lectures from Professor Charles McKean (Dundee University) and Professor Helen Meller (Nottingham University)

A full list of session abstracts together with other details including a registration form has been mounted on the conference web site [www.esh.ed.ac.uk/urban\\_history/](http://www.esh.ed.ac.uk/urban_history/)

Registrations and completed forms should be sent to Kate McIntosh, Index Communications Meeting Services (Scotland) Ltd; 32 Queens Crescent, Newington; Edinburgh EH9 2BA  
Tel (direct line) : +44 131 667 9982 Fax : +44 131 668 1957

E mail: [scotland.icms@dial.pipex.com](mailto:scotland.icms@dial.pipex.com)

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### **WEST OF ENGLAND AND SOUTH WALES WOMEN'S HISTORY NETWORK IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE REGIONAL HISTORY CENTRE**

#### **WORKSHOP ON BRISTOL WOMEN AND PHILANTHROPY Saturday November 16 2002 Venue: UWE, St Matthias**

June Hannam and Moira Martin will present their research on 'Women and Philanthropy in Bristol, 1870 - 1920'. Other speakers working in this area will be invited.

For more information please contact Kath Holden at the Regional History Centre  
Email: [Katherine.Holden@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Katherine.Holden@uwe.ac.uk). Tel 0117 344 4395

**The Annual Local History Afternoon of the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council, Local History Committee will take place on Saturday 5 October 2002 from 2 to 5 pm at Sir Thomas Rich's School, Longlevens, Gloucester.**

The theme is 'Trade and Industry in Gloucestershire' There will be illustrated talks on *Gloucester Industries* by Chris Morris, Manager of Gloucester Folk Museum and *River Trade in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Gloucestershire* by Dr. Nicholas Herbert, Editor, Victoria County History of Gloucestershire. There will also be bookstalls and exhibitions by local history societies on trade and industry in their area.

**Entry, including tea and biscuits £3.50 payable at the door Free to members of the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council. Doors open at 1.15pm Further information from John Loosley, Stonehatch, Oakridge Lynch, Stroud, Glos, GL6 7NR. Tel 01285 760460 E-mail [john@loosleyj.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:john@loosleyj.freereserve.co.uk)**

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### **Wells Local History Workshop**

Members of the Workshop meet fortnightly on Wednesdays to share research and to learn research skills. New members and visitors are welcome. Meetings take place at the Wells and Mendip Museum, 8 Cathedral Green, Wells at 7pm. The Autumn Term begins on 2 October 2002. Membership costs £30 a year or £12 a term and includes light refreshments. Visitors are charged £2 for the evening.

The Workshop publishes a journal twice each year - History Round Wells. It is now in its third year and has included articles dealing with topics in and around Wells from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Annual subscription is £5 and back issues are £3. Enquiries to the Treasurer Nigel Moore, 15 Ash Grove, Wells, BA5 2LX. The Workshop Secretary is Ruth Harris, 57 Thomas St, Wells, BA5 2UY.. Tel 01749 675422.

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## **LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY PROGRAMMES**

### **WESTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY PROGRAMME 2002-3**

**Sep 16<sup>th</sup>** Bath Honorary Guide - Quiz, films  
**Oct 21<sup>st</sup>** Mr J.R.Taylor, 'Hats and Crackers'  
**Nov 28<sup>th</sup>** Stuart Burroughs, 'Harbutt's Plasticine'  
**Dec 16<sup>th</sup>** Cyril Routley, 'Gadgets of Yesteryear'  
**Feb 17<sup>th</sup>** Cyril Platt, 'When the Wind Blows'  
**Jan 20<sup>th</sup>** Stan Hitt, 'From Merlin's Swing to Shady Walks' (a history of Bath's Parks)

### **YATTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY PROGRAMME 2002-3**

All meetings are on Tuesdays held at the Methodist Hall at 8pm.

For more information about the programme phone Marrienne Pitman tel: 01934 838801

**Sep 17<sup>th</sup>** Chris Richard, 'Mining on the Mendips'  
**Nov 19<sup>th</sup>** James Bond, 'The History of Parks and Gardens in Somerset' (Junior School Hall 7.45pm)  
**Jan 21<sup>st</sup>** Stan Terrell, Birnbeck Pier, Weston Super-Mare  
**Feb 18<sup>th</sup>** AGM followed by Marian Barraclough, 'Carvings in Somerset Churches'  
**Mar 18<sup>th</sup>** Julia Elton, 'Clevedon and the Eltons'

**SOMERSET AND DORSET FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY West Dorset Group Programme 2002. Salway Ash Village Hall** Contact address S & DFHS West Dorset Research Centre, 45 West St Bridport, Dorset DT6 3QW. Tel 01308 458061 email [wdorsetdfhs@aol.com](mailto:wdorsetdfhs@aol.com) Web site: [www.dorsetmigration.org.uk](http://www.dorsetmigration.org.uk)

**Sep 14<sup>th</sup>** Census Day. Steve Wilkinson 10.00 Census Records in family History 2.30 1901 Census and others, background information  
**Oct 12<sup>th</sup>** Jill Chambers, 10.30 Dorset and the Swing Riots 2.30 Convicts and Transportation  
**Nov 9<sup>th</sup>** Fourth annual computer day 10 - 4.30pm  
**Dec 14<sup>th</sup>** 11.00 members session 12.30 Christmas lunch 2.30 speaker to be announced

## WESTWARD HO! MOVEMENT & MIGRATION 3 – 6 April 2003 Exeter University, Southwest Family History Societies' Conference ( Residential & Non-residential)

**PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME** - Programme sponsored by the centre for south-western historical studies, Exeter university

### THURSDAY 3 APRIL

**Dinner** Evening speaker **Dr Graham Davis, Bath Spa University College:** Myths and Legends among the Irish pioneer settlers in Texas.

### FRIDAY 4 APRIL

09.30 – 11.00 Opening of Conference - **Prof William Van Vugt, Calvin College, Grand Rapids, USA:** The English in Ohio

11.00 – 11.45 Coffee

11.45 – 13.00 **Prof Eric Richards, Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia:** South Australia and the West Country, or **Dr Andrew Hinde, Southampton University:** Migration from West Dorset in the Nineteenth Century

14.15 – 15.30 Visit to Powderham Castle or **Dr Gordon Hancock, Memorial University, Newfoundland:** West Country Newfoundland Trade or **Peter Towey, Anglo German Family History Society:** Germanic Immigration to Britain 1500-2000

15.30 – 16.00 Tea

16.00 – 17.30 **Dr. Sheila Haines, Sussex University:** Captain Hale, Red Herrings & Brandy: the Petworth Emigration Ship of 1833, & **Dr Mark Brayshay, University of Plymouth:** The role of James B. Wilcocks, Plymouth's mid-Victorian selecting agent, in assisted emigration to Australia from Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset, or **Dr Paddy Fitzgerald, Omagh Migration Centre:** Early Irish Migration into the South West of England, & **Dr Graham Davis, Bath Spa University College:** Irish in Britain in the Nineteenth Century Reception & Social Evening

### SATURDAY 5 APRIL

Joint Day with the Centre for South Western Historical Studies and the Institute of Cornish Studies

09.30 – 10.45 **Prof Bruce Elliott, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada:** Nineteenth-century Emigration to Canada from England's West Country, or **Bernard Deacon, Institute of Cornish Studies, Exeter**

**University:** Barra or Barrow? Butte or Burnley? Why did people in the 19<sup>th</sup> century emigrate and others just migrate?

10.45 – 11.15 Coffee

11.15 – 12.45 **Prof Philip Payton, Institute of Cornish Studies, Exeter University:** Cornish Migration & **Sharron Schwartz, Institute of Cornish Studies:** The Making of a Myth: The Migration of South West Metal Miners to the New World in the Early Nineteenth Century or **Jill Chambers:** Forced Migrants – Swing Rioters Transported to Australia.

14.00 – 18.00 Federation AGM, or Visit/Tour Exeter, or Migration session, **Introduction Dudley Baines, London School of Economics** and chairing short papers from **William Van Vugt:** Migration to the USA in the 1800s **Eric Richards :** Migration to Australia

**Dr Bill Jones, Cardiff University:** 'Not dead but gone to Slough' (or Scranton or Ballarat or...) Leaving Wales c 1800 – 1939.

15.30 – 16.00 Tea

**Regional Migration Studies:** to include Dorset Migration Index, Irish Migration Centre, Cornish Migration, Newfoundland etc.. **Graham Davis and Paddy Fitzgerald:** Migration Studies where are we now? Or **Group sessions,**

**Banquet The Great Hall The Yetties**

### Sunday 6 April

09.30 – 10.45 **Dr Moira Martin, University of the South West of England, Bristol:** Emigration of Pauper Children from Bristol to Canada 1870-1915 or **Dr Diana Trenchard:** Migration within England from the South West in the 1800s

10.45 – 11.15 Coffee

11.15 – 12.30 **Andrea Buttons, University of the South West of England, Bristol:** The Migration of Indentured Servants & Malefactors to the West Indies during the 17<sup>th</sup> century or **Prof. Roger Burt, University of Exeter:** Freemasonry and Migration

**Conference ends with Lunch.**

**Jane Ferentzi-Sheppard Westward Ho! Programme Organiser [jferentzi@aol.com](mailto:jferentzi@aol.com)**

This is the first regional conference organised by the Southwest Family History Societies and is being supported by The Centre for South-Western Historical Studies at Exeter University. Specialists in migration and movement studies are coming from all over the world. Do not miss this chance – book now. **For further details contact Bookings Sec. Audrey Lovell, 784 Muller Rd, Eastville, Bristol BS5 6XA, [secretary@bafhs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@bafhs.org.uk) or [www.cornwallfhs/who](http://www.cornwallfhs/who)**

- 3 Sep **Kingswood History Society**  
02 Talk: Frank Buckley *The Law is an Ass*
- 5 Sep **Fishponds LHS** Talk: Mrs Sheila Keevill  
02 *Dame Clara Butt*
- 5 Sep **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology**  
02 **Group** Talk: Dr John Wroughton *An Unhappy Civil War*
- 6 Sep **Bristol Museum Service** Walk round  
02 Filton works & airfield with Oliver Deardon  
6.30 pm at Reception car park , Golf Course Lane, Southmead £4 (2 hours)
- 6 Sep **Stoke Bishop & Sneyd Park LHG** Talk:  
02 Peter Harris *Bristol and Slavery – Myth and Reality*
- 8 Sep **Widcombe & Lyncombe History Study**  
02 **Grp** I-Spy walk (Signs, Symbols & Devices)  
2.30 from the White Hart
- 9 Sep **Nailsea & District LHS** Talk: Michael  
02 Horseman, *The Kennet & Avon Canal (an armchair journey)*
- 10 Sep **Clutton History Group** Talk: Bernard  
02 Tapp, *China: temples & palaces of Beijing, Great Wall, Xi'an, Terracotta Warriors*
- 17 Sep **Bishopston, Horfield & Ashley Down**  
02 **LHS**, Talk: Michael Manson *Bristol Beyond the Bridge*
- 17 Sep **Felton Local History Group**, Talk: John  
02 Chamberlain, *Tablets on Buildings in the Blagdon Area*
- 21 Sep **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology**  
02 **Group** Visit: Boscobel House, Tong Church, & Whitwick Manor
- 1 Oct **Kingswood History Society** Talk: Carla  
02 Contractor, *Mary Carpenter and the Bristol/Indian Connection*
- 3 Oct **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology**  
02 **Group** Talk: Christopher Richards *Metal Mining in the Mendips*
- 3 Oct **Wick & Abson LHS** Talk: Mrs P Clements  
02 *Toys & Games of Yesteryear*
- 8 Oct **Clutton History Group** Talk: David Pike  
02 *Blind Houses, Lock-ups & Round houses*
- 10 Oct **Widcombe & Lyncombe History Study**  
02 **Grp** Talks: Fay Briddon *Rosemount Farm*;  
Alistair Durie *Lyncombe Hill Poor House*  
and World War II reminiscences
- 12 Oct **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology**  
02 **Group** Visit: Parham
- 14 Oct **Nailsea & District LHS AGM** and Talk:  
02 John Webber *The History of the Curzon Cinema*
- 15 Oct **Bishopston, Horfield & Ashley Down**  
02 **LHS** Gilbert Begbie Lecture: Captain Chris Young *The SS Great Britain Project*
- 15 Oct **Felton Local History Group AGM** &  
02 Planning
- 16 Oct **Avon Local History Association Annual**  
02 **General Meeting** Chipping Sodbury  
Grammar School Watkins Room. 7.30 pm
- 23 Oct **Fishponds LHS** Talk with slides: Mr Roger  
02 Angerson *Inland Waterways of England*
- 5 Nov **Kingswood History Society** Talk & slides:  
02 Jack Britton & Dave Humphries , *A Walk around Hanham*
- 7 Nov **Fishponds LHS** Talk with slides: Mr Peter  
02 Lamb *Bristol's Electricity History*
- 7 Nov **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology**  
02 **Group** Talk: Jane Hill *Iron Age in North Somerset*
- 7 Nov **Wick & Abson LHS** Talk: Mr P Davey  
02 *To Kingswood by Train*
- 11 Nov **Nailsea & District LHS** Talk: Michael  
02 *Oakley Railways, Stations & Halts in Bristol & N Somerset*
- 12 Nov **Clutton History Group** Talk: Edie  
02 Westmoreland *How I became a Guide*
- 14 Nov **Widcombe & Lyncombe History Study**  
02 **Grp** Talk: Stanley Hitt *History of the Parks of Bath*
- 16 Nov **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology**  
02 **Group** Visit: Eltham Palace & Dulwich Gallery
- 19 Nov **Bishopston, Horfield & Ashley Down**  
02 **LHS AGM** and Chairman's invitation  
lecture
- 19 Nov **Felton Local History Group**  
02 Talk: Brian Amesbury *The Trail of the Matthew*
- 23 Nov **Stoke Bishop & Sneyd Park LHG**  
02 Video launch with wine and nibbles
- 3 Dec **Kingswood History Society**  
02 Talk: Karin Walton *Bristol Pottery*
- 5 Dec **Fishponds LHS** Talk: Mr John Shaw  
02 *Traditional Songs & Music of Bristol*
- 5 Dec **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology**  
02 **Group** Talk: Yvonne Bell  
*Edwardian Christmas then American Supper*
- 5 Dec **Wick & Abson LHS Christmas Nibbles**  
02 *Members statistics*
- 9 Dec **Nailsea & District LHS** Talk: John Shaw  
02 *Traditional Songs and Music of Bristol*
- 10 Dec **Clutton History Group** Talk: Mike Horler  
02 *My Life with Shire Horses*
- 12 Dec **Widcombe & Lyncombe History Study**  
02 **Grp** War Years Project display, & members' items
- 14 Dec **Stoke Lodge History & Archaeology**  
02 **Group** Visit: Barber Gallery, Museum & Jewellery Quarter in Birmingham
- 17 Dec **Felton Local History Group**  
02 Social Evening

**ALHA Summer Walks** Peris Jones 01179 561633

**Alveston Local History Society**

7.30 Methodist Church, Woolfridge Ride  
Alveston Jamie Fairchild 01454 417831 £1

**Banwell Society of Archaeology** 01934 632307

**Bathampton LHS** 7.30 Bathampton Village Hall Visitors  
welcome £1 01225 463112

**Bishopston, Horfield & Ashley Down LHS**

7.30 Friends Meeting House, 300 Gloucester Rd, Horfield  
01179 514243 Visitors £1

**Bristol & Avon Archaeological Society**

7.30 St Matthews Church, Clare Rd, Bristol  
50p, non-members £1 01179 519613

**Bristol & Glos. Archaeological Soc. (Bristol)**

7.45 Apostle Room, Roman Catholic Cathedral, Pembroke  
Rd, Bristol £1: 01179 830719

**Bristol & Glos. Archaeological Soc. (Glos)** 7.30 County

Record Office, Clarence Row, Alvin St, Gloucester £1  
01452 526398

**Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery**

For summer walks, you should book  
Tel 01179 223571 Fax 01179 222047  
e-mail [general\\_museum@bristol-ity.gov.uk](mailto:general_museum@bristol-ity.gov.uk)

**Bristol Museum Service** 7.30 Powell Lecture Theatre, H  
Wills Physics Laboratory, Tyndall Avenue, Bristol. Free

**Bristol Threatened History** 7.30 Bristol City Council  
House Mike Ponsford 01179 858109

**Chew Valley LHS** 8.00 Old Schoolroom, Chew Magna  
Visitors welcome (£1) 01275 332520

**Clevedon & District Arch. Soc** 7.30 Room 2 Community  
Centre, Princes Rd, Clevedon 01275 873207

**Clutton Local History Group** 8.00 Clutton Village Hall  
01761 233048 £2

**Congresbury History Group** 7.30 Methodist Church Hall,

Congresbury Chris Short 01934 833764 Visitors £1

**Downend LHS** 7.30 Lincombe Barn, Overndale Rd,  
Downend Bristol. 01179 564326

**Felton LHS** 8.00 Felton Village Hall 01275 472792  
Coffee from 7.30 Visitors welcome (£1)

**Fishponds LHS** 7.30 Conference Hall, Blackberry Hill  
Hospital, Manor Rd, Bristol 01179 658110 Visitors  
welcome (£1.50)

**Frenchay Tuckett Society**

7.30 Friends Meeting House, Beckspool Rd, Frenchay  
01179 957094

**Friends of Gloucester Archives** 7.30 Gloucester Record  
Office

**Historical Association, Bristol Branch** 7.15 Randall  
Room, All Saints Church, Clifton 01179 741779

**History of Bath Research Group** 7.30 Green Park  
Station Meeting Room, Bath 01225 314054

**Keynsham & Saltford LHS** 7.30 St Dunstan's Hall,  
Keynsham 01179 862198

**Kingswood History Society** 7.30 Kingswood  
Congregational Church Hall, Hanham Rd, Bristol 01179  
671362 non-members £1.50

**Long Ashton LHS** 7.30 Keedwell Church Long Ashton  
John Bennett (Hon Sec) 01275 394809

**Marshfield & District LHS** 7.30 Legion Hall Marshfield  
01225 891229

**Mendip Society** Cheddar Talks: 7.30 Kings of Wessex  
Leisure Centre, Station Rd, Cheddar 01934 862402  
Wells talks: 7.30 Bradford Suite, Old Deanery, Cathedral  
Green, Wells  
Winscombe Talks: 7.30 St James Church Hall  
Woodborough Rd, Winscombe  
01934 862402 Visitors £2

Walks 2.00 pm

Cheddar: Gardeners Arms Car Park, Silver St, Cheddar  
GR 459539 01934 743271

North Mendip: Ubley Church

GR ST 529584 01761 221558

Wells: Chamberlain St Car Park, Whiting Way, Wells

GR 547457 01749 677600

Winscombe: Car Park by Woodborough Hotel

GR 421577 01934 842382

**Nailsea & District LHS** 7.30 Conference Room, Nailsea  
School non members £1 01275 852993

**Olveston Parish Historical Society** 7.30 Methodist Hall,  
the Street, Olveston Visitors welcome 01454 612370

**Sodbury & District LHS** 7.30 Masonic Hall, Chipping  
Sodbury 01454 314674

**Stoke Bishop & Sneyd Park LHG** 7.30 Stoke Bishop  
Village Hall Elizabeth Floyd 01179 681759

**Somerset Archaeological & NHS** Wyndham Hall, by  
Taunton Castle

**Stoke Lodge Hist & Arch Group** Talks: 7.30 Friend  
Meeting House, Redland, Bristol 01179 423928

Visits: Coach pick up: Woodland Rd/Tyndalls Park Rd  
junction 8.15 am (early: 7.45); Stoke Lodge, Shirehampton  
Rd 8.30 am (early: 8.00) Book! 01179 626324

**Thornbury Society**

7.30 St Mary's Church Hall, Eastbury Rd

**Weston LHS**

7.30 Parish Hall Weston village. 01225 3315196

**Weston-super-Mare Arch & NHS**

7.15 for 7.30 Carers Centre/Crossroads,  
1 Graham Rd, W-s-M 01934 627108 £1.50

**Whitchurch LHS**

7.30 Whitchurch United Reformed Church 01275 541512

**Wick & Abson LHG**

7.30 for 7.45 Church Room, Wick  
Non members £1 Call 01179 372603

**Widcombe & Lyncombe History Study**

7.30 St Marks Community Centre  
01225 311723 or 4212659 Visitors £1

## END NOTE

### FROM BRISTOL TO THE GAMBIA: THE HISTORY OF THE TRANSATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE AND UNESCO'S SLAVERY ARCHIVE PROJECT MADGE DRESSER

Gambia might seem very remote from Bristol, but its capital Banjul was once named Bathurst, after the West Country family who have also lent their name to Bathurst Basin in Bristol. It's also the case that representatives from Bristol Society of Merchant Venturers helped, in the mid-eighteenth century, to oversee the administration of slave forts on the West African coast, including James Fort in the Gambia River. Indeed, as I recently discovered, a mariner on board a Bristol slave ship was saved from being held hostage on the Gambia River by the wife of the governor of James Fort in the 1760's. Thomas Bowdich, the son of a Bristol hatter, who wrote *Mission to the Ashantee*, died in the Gambia in the early 1820's.

Earlier this July I spent a week in the Gambia at the invitation of UNESCO's Slavery Archive project. My 'mission', as they call it, was to see if there were archives relating to the slave trade there that might merit digitization and inclusion on UNESCO's web. My hosts were the National Record Service in Banjul. Their archive is severely under-funded and contained little original material from before 1816. But there was interesting material concerning the early days of what was then Bathurst- a British outpost devoted to the cause of suppressing the slave trade. Bathurst exemplifies the link between anti-slavery activity and the early colonization of Africa.

Much of the historical inheritance of this tiny country is preserved in its music. A trip to the archives of Radio Gambia (the state radio station) unearthed some fascinating material including a recording of a 'griot' or praise singer detailing the exploits of warriors and kings in the early nineteenth century, a recording of 'Krio' or Creole music and dialect from the descendants of freed slaves who returned to the Gambia via Nova Scotia in the late 1790's after serving the British in the Revolutionary War.

There are some Gambian historians, whose locally published accounts of their nation's history are informed by oral traditions, and their work also merits preservation. I hope that these varying types of material can be digitised and a schools-oriented web site established. I for one, know that the web sites in Bristol will be enriched by my Gambian contact - visiting the dwindling island on which stands the remains of James Fort added a new dimension to the document I found in the Merchant Venturers' archives. But more needs to be done to ensure the Gambians are given the support to build a web site of their own.

#### THE REGIONAL HISTORIAN

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**Dr Kath Holden, Regional History Centre,  
University of the West of England, Bristol, St Matthias Campus, Oldbury Court Road  
BRISTOL BS16 2JP (Tel 0117 344 4395).**

By fax to **0117 975 0402**

By email to **Katherine.Holden@uwe.ac.uk** or [Regional.Historian@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:Regional.Historian@uwe.ac.uk)

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