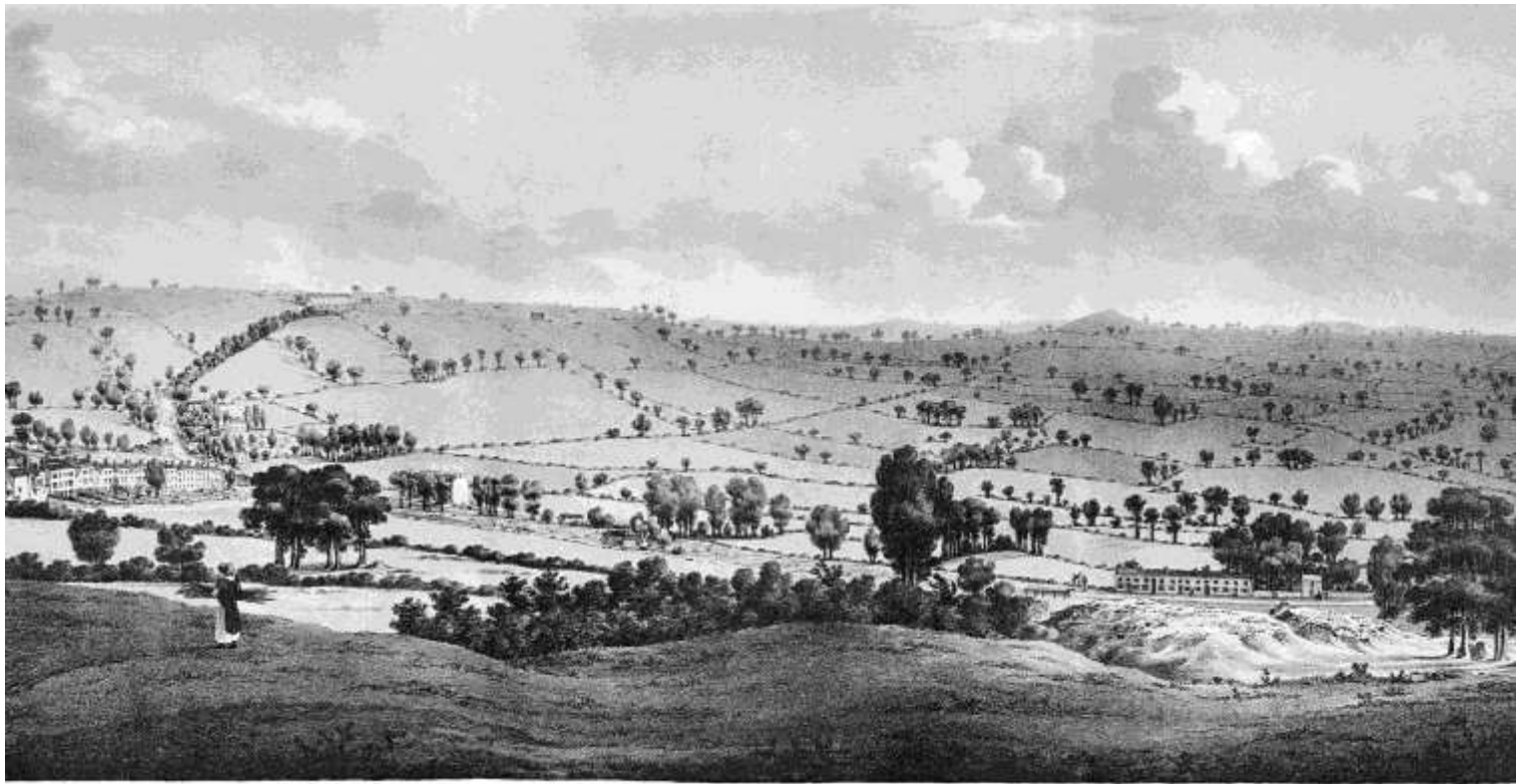


# The Survey

of Bath and District

The Journal of the Survey of Old Bath and Its Associates

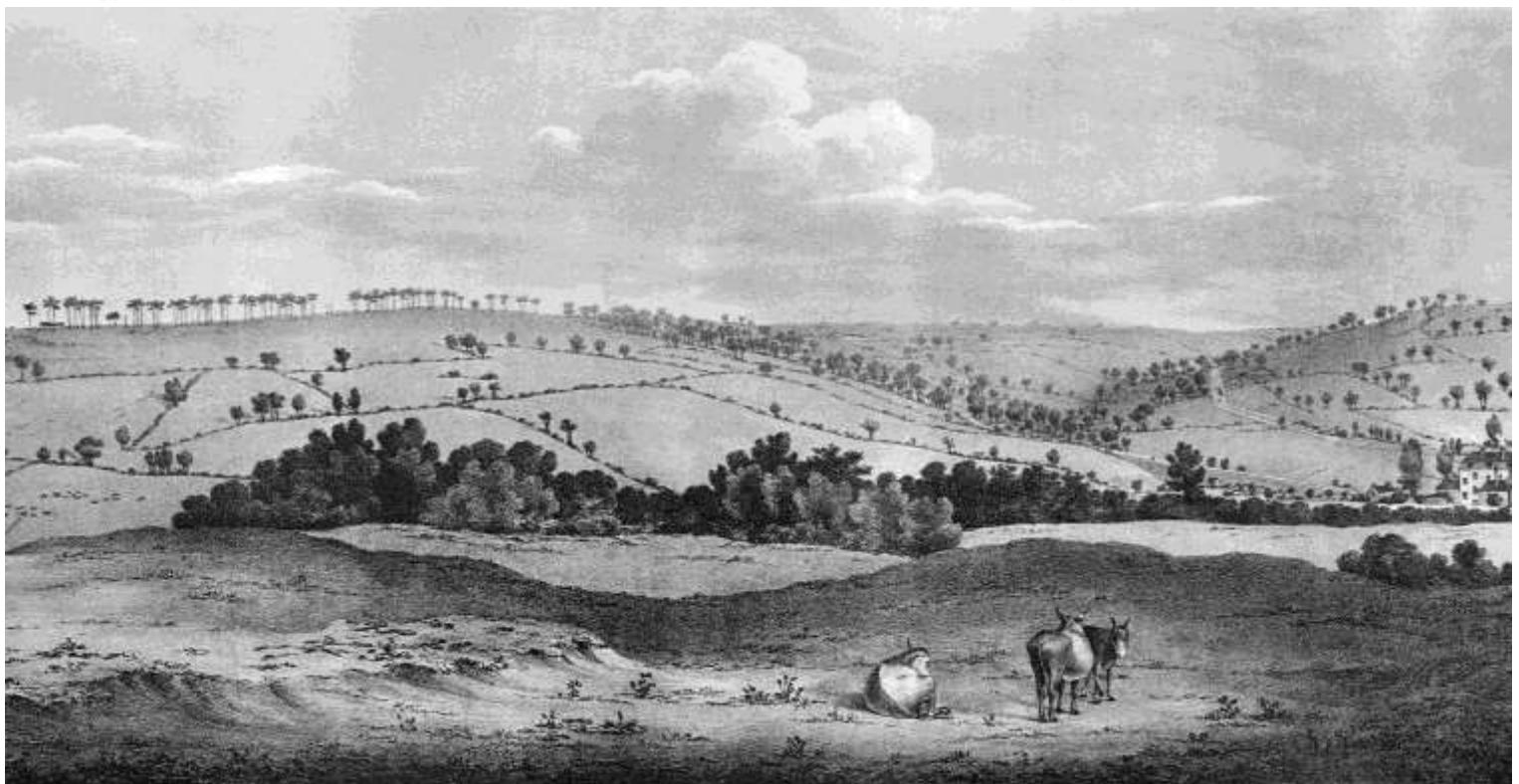
No.26, October 2011



Ward Town,  
Dorsetshire Buildings

George Cowan, Blenheim Place

Englishman's Barrow



Wind in Trees

Wind in Trees

## **THE SURVEY OF BATH AND DISTRICT**

### **The Journal of the Survey of Old Bath and its Associates**

**Number 26**

**October 2011**

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#### **Editors:**

##### **Mike Chapman**

51 Newton Road, Bath BA2 1RW tel: 01225 426948, email: [mike@chapman76.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:mike@chapman76.fsnet.co.uk)

##### **Elizabeth Holland**

16 Prior Park Buildings, Bath BA2 4NP tel: 01225 313581

**Typesetting and Graphics:** Mike Chapman

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**Front Cover Illustration:** Section of Harvey Wood's 1824 'Panoramic View of Bath, from Beechen Cliff', looking West. To the right can be seen Bloomfield Terrace and Elm Place on the Bear Flat, and the turnpike house at the junction of Bloomfield Road. The Bear Inn is out of sight behind the trees on the right. Indicated on the left are Bloomfield Place, Cottage Crescent and Devonshire Buildings.

**Back Cover Illustration:** From the same Panorama, continuing south. The new Wellsway and the Entry Hill viaduct are visible on the right, and on the extreme left, Fox Hill Lane leading up to Combe Down.

## **CITY NEWS**

### **Bath Record Office**

Visitors to the Archives in 2010/11 were the highest in number for five years, largely due to an increase in student users from Bath's universities. Particularly in demand was the extensive collection of building plans.

New services for customers include the sale of historic maps on CD including Cotterell's large-scale city maps of 1852, the 1885 Ordnance Survey sheets, and Blitz damage of 1942.

The Record Office website [www.batharchives.co.uk](http://www.batharchives.co.uk) has been extended with a new section *Explore the Archives* where for the first time documents from the collection can be read online. Currently on view are the Victorian diary of Workhouse schoolmaster William Winckworth, and the Langton family letters between Bath and Cadiz during the Peninsular War. We will be adding many other transcripts and indexes made in recent years by our volunteers.

The Langton letters were catalogued this year after we successfully obtained grant funding of £4,500 and over the summer we have publicized this collection in the press and local radio using extracts describing life in Bath and abroad around 1810.

Since January we have introduced 'Collection Weeks' whereby the Record Office closes for the third week each month to enable much sorting and cataloguing work to be completed by staff. We have made good progress and have advertised the results online and in our office, notably records of Bath City Police, the Burial Boards, planning reports, and two schools.

Significant new collections received over the year are: account book of the Ford family estate 1822-1837; research notes of Dr.K.E.James for his Ph.D thesis 'Concert Life in 18th century Bath'; log-books of Twerton, Oldfield Park and Moorlands infants' schools 1893-1991; Freemasons' records of Keynsham and Brislington 18744-1959; student records from Bath Art Secondary School 1942-1973; papers of Major Jackman, director of Bath Military Tattoo 1940s-1990s. And finally ninety-six account-books of Duck, Son & Pinker, music and instrument sellers, covering 1842-2000 were rescued from damp cellars after the premises were vacated and will be available to view after drying and mould-treatment.

**Colin Johnston**

### **Two Exhibitions**

The exhibition on Gainsborough's landscapes organised by Friends member Dr.Susan Sloman has already been mentioned in our last newsletter. When it opened on 24 September, this journal had already been compiled. We hope to be able to report on it in the February newsletter.

The Museum of Bath at Work has held an unusual exhibition from 8 July to the end of September, comprising filmed interviews of working people in Somerset, produced in association with the Somerset Rural Life Museum in Glastonbury. Double life-size images were projected onto the wall in the Display Hall of the Museum, while the Museum's newsletter described the display as 'Portraits that move and speak'.

Meanwhile the Museum is looking for new members of the Friends of the Museum. With Government cutbacks, museums have to look for extra funding. Really dedicated people can become Benefactor Members at £100 a year, but other levels of membership are naturally more in line with usual society subscriptions.

### **The Rebecca Fountain**

The Rebecca Fountain by the Abbey was unveiled in 1861, so that 2011 marks its 150th anniversary. On Thursday 16 June 2011 the *Chronicle* carried a feature on the fountain, p.73, recounting its history, with the assistance of 'local historian Philip Bendall'. In 'Notes and queries' in this issue of the *Survey*, Philip Bendall and Mike Chapman have provided comments on the fountain.

The 19th century saw an active Temperance movement. On the one hand efforts were made to improve public hygiene and to render town water safe to drink. On the other, overcrowding and poverty within towns led citizens to seek solace in drink and 'gin-palaces' sprang up everywhere. *Danesbury House*, which received a prize from a Temperance Society, was an hilarious account by the social novelist Mrs. Henry Wood of the evils of drink, where even small children drink wine and beer and almost everyone overindulges except the upright hero and his sister.

The nurse in the tale is legitimately allowed 'strong ale' at supper. Her sin is that she tipples gin all day. The idea of tolerating a Norland Nanny who regularly indulged in beer-drinking in her employers' house would not be acceptable today.

### **Local History Societies**

More than one local history society has cut back its activities - currently the Bathwick group and the South Stoke group.

Sheila Edwards reports that in May 1999, at her group's inception, 'little was known about the old Village of Bathwick'. The 1980s and 1990s were pioneer years for local history in Bath. The Survey of Old Bath took its title in 1979. The History of Bath Research Group was founded by Trevor Fawcett in 1986, and other groups also sprang up. As part of their 'impact on the community' local museums also began organising local history events.

For many the impetus lay in applying the methods of scientific urban studies to Bath local history, instead of Peach-like legend, anecdote and gossip. Everyone was filled with a sense of adventure, searching for the truth behind the anecdotes on Bath. Most of these anecdotes were extremely dubious. For instance the story about Beau Nash discovering a chicken leg in someone's pocket (or was it Marshall Wade? - one forgets). Exactly the same story is told about someone else altogether in a completely different setting in *The Argosy*, 1874 ('Ensign Ranson'). So where did *both* these stories originate?

There came a time when, with publications like those of Dr. John Wroughton, President of the Friends of the Survey, the urban history of Bath had begun to be well understood. We were present at a meeting of one local group (which actually still exists) where it was asked, 'Shall we go through the same subjects again, for the sake of people who weren't here at the beginning?' In several cases, local societies have been replaced by small committees of those still intent on research.

Computers have brought a fresh impetus for some. We see for instance Dr. Philip Bendall's work on the cemeteries of Bath. Elizabeth used to wish that someone would put all the Stuart registers onto computer and then run them off by surnames, so that all the old families could be reconstructed and not simply the Chapmans. In these days when family history is increasingly popular, perhaps someone will come forward to do it.

### **'Prior Park Buildings Promenade'**

Every second year Widcombe Association holds a week of events; the alternate years centre round Widcombe Rising, a street party organised by Ralph Oswick of the Natural Theatre Company, who is otherwise known as 'Lady Margaret'.

The Committee of the Prior Park Buildings and Cottages Residents Association were invited to hold an event connected with their locality, and so the Prior Park Buildings Promenade was organised for 2 July, lasting from 6.30-8.30 (the Cottages are on a steep slope and not suitable for promenaders). The railings by the stream were decorated with bunting and greenery and wine and refreshments such as barbecued sausages and home-made cheese straws were served. Music was provided by residents of the terrace as well as others. History exhibitions were mounted in three of the houses; the organisers of these were glad to draw on the article on the general development and the Cottages by Guy Whitmarsh, published in the *Survey* No.16.

The duck then currently resident obliged by sculling her family up and down the stream, instead of departing in terror. Harry Chapman, Treasurer, reported later that approximately £476 had been raised towards the upkeep of the stream, while over 100 people attended the event apart from residents of the terraces. A number of Friends of the Survey were to be seen who are also members of the Widcombe Association. Guy Whitmarsh was of course a star of the evening, having written the only published history of this development.

The question of whether Pinch actually designed Prior Park Buildings was discussed. His elevation, if he did design the terrace, is not available. Harry Chapman has written us a note on the subject, to be seen in 'Correspondence'.

Elizabeth was gratified by a visit from Ralph Oswick who walked up her garden path to congratulate her on the garden. Just recently a Mayor's Guides walk came along the terrace, led by Angela Hathaway, who remarked to one of the residents standing by, 'The gardens grow more lovely every year'.



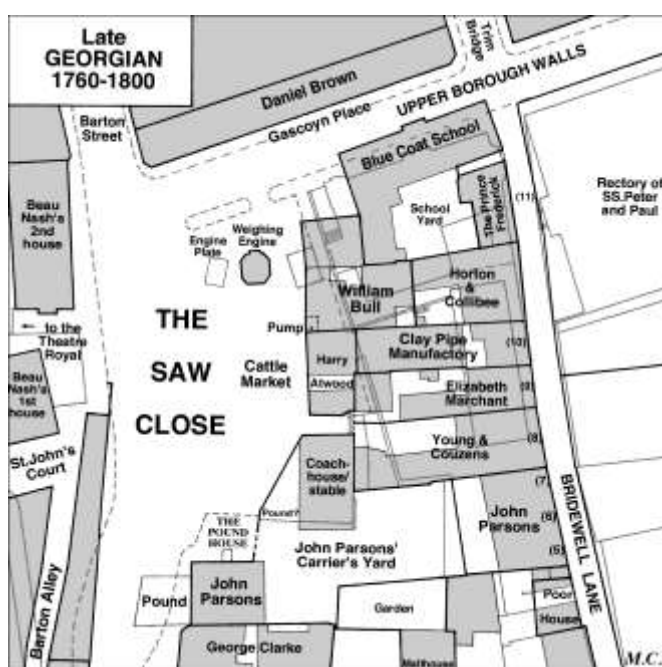
**The Garden of 16 Prior Park Buildings, July 2011.**

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## ARCHAEOLOGY

### Saw Close

An application to develop the Saw Close Clinic site in Bridewell Lane and improve the Saw Close itself as an attractive urban space has required the excavation of trenches to evaluate the archaeological potential of the site. These were carried out in July and early August 2011. An historical and topographical study was commissioned some years ago by Bath Archaeological Trust from Elizabeth Holland and Mike Chapman and from this it was known that properties and tenements were in existence along Bridewell Lane (known as Plum Tree Lane and Culverhouse (Dovecote) Lane in the middle ages) from the 13th century at least. Archaeological work from the 19th century up to the 1990s (the last work done by Marek Lewcun and published in *Avon Archaeology*) showed that not only would Roman deposits exist at depth, but that four mosaics were known within about 25m, some as close as five metres from one of the trenches. In the 17th century the fringes of Saw Close were developed and in the 18th century a row of cottages was built along the Saw Close side of Bridewell Lane. The Bluecoat school was built in the early 18th century, replaced by the present building (Bluecoat House) in 1854.



The trenches were on the site of the cottages (plus a small one against the northern side of the Regency Garage). A third small trench is planned in the area of the old Saw Close weighbridge. They showed that the cottages were not cellared and that early levels therefore remained in relatively good condition. It was known that the northern trench was located over the site of a clay tobacco pipe factory run by the Sants family in the first half of the 19th century. They were forced to leave the site by an act of 1850 banning the carrying on of noxious businesses in the centre of town. The site became the playground for the rebuilt Bluecoat school in 1854 and consequently was found to be well-preserved. Once this was established, excavation ceased, as it is expected that if development goes ahead the factory will be

fully excavated. What was found seemed to be a kiln, in the backyard behind the Bridewell Lane cottages, with evidence of changes, property boundaries and drains probably pre-dating the kiln (around 1800 or before), with evidence of the production process, such as a muffle, part of the kiln lining using broken pipes as filler and reinforcement, and large quantities of Joseph Sants pipes.

The southern trench was intended to be carried down to natural ground level, so as to get a clear view of the archaeological sequence. Under the 18th century buildings was a considerable thickness of garden soil and deliberate dump of 17th back to c.14th century date, probably representing the gardens and open ground generally indicated by the documentary evidence. Below this level the requirements of shoring meant that it was only possible to excavate a small area. Dry stone walls of 13th and 12th century date were found at about 3m down, probably representing the bases of timber-framed buildings. Below these more dark organic silts probably represented the Saxon period and a probable period of abandonment, some time after the Roman occupation. Its lower levels contained fragments of demolished Roman buildings of high status, with evidence of tessellated floors and hypocausts, interesting in view of the known presence of mosaics nearby. A solid mortar floor of Roman date may represent a hypocaust basement, but this must remain speculation. At this great depth (over 3.5m. with natural ground at about 4m down) it is likely that these early deposits will be preserved under any development, although some limited work may be required.

**Peter Davenport**, Cotswold Archaeology

## **Bath Abbey**

The PCC of St.Peter and St.Paul have a series of improvements to the facilities in the Abbey in mind. These consisted, as far as the archaeological implications are concerned, of a new level floor in the church, and the acquisition of extra space for a variety of parochial requirements. Information on ground conditions was needed, under the church floor and in positions where new basements might be constructed. A series of trenches were dug, largely to provide engineering information, but also to see if there were any archaeological ‘impediments’ to excavation. The trenches were all dug archaeologically, although the positions were largely chosen for non-archaeological reasons. Four trenches were dug in the church itself, two in the ‘Memorial Cloister’ of 1923 (better known to most people these days as the shop and the choir vestry) and one outside just south of the south choir aisle.

The trenches in the church revealed the expected burials. The nave of the present building served as a covered cemetery from c.1600 to 1860 and only the present choir was used for services. Consequently, the trenches, designed to provide information on the subsidence of the modern floor (concrete, dating from 1867) and data to enable the design of a stable one, were essentially a record of the burials. Surprisingly, there were very few stone or brick tombs, most burials being in wooden coffins or merely shrouds, in earth cut graves. Voids resulting from decay of coffins and bodies were common, and, of course, expected. In the nave, the burials extended deeper than expected, and had removed nearly all trace of the Norman floor, although some small patches of mortar bedding survived. The foundations of the outer walls of the present nave, built c.1500, were seen to use the old Norman walls, and the arcade piers rested on the old footings, extended where necessary by rough construction of re-used masonry. This much was known from the 19th century excavations by James Irvine. However, the recent investigations did show that the medieval church nave had been re-floored at a higher level at some time before its reconstruction under Bishop King, something not realised before. These floors seemed to be in better preservation at the east end (the present choir, but in the nave before 1500) where far fewer burials had taken place.

Outside, south of the choir, a trench was dug to investigate the condition of a presumed west wall of the transept, the existence of which was inferred from evidence uncovered by Bath Archaeological Trust in 1993. In the event, no wall was found, but the whole area had been thoroughly disturbed by the quarrying of the stone from the footings after the Dissolution. Such robbing was documented in the excavations in Orange Grove in 1979, but there the ghost of the wall was still evident. Here even that had gone as further disturbance of an uncertain nature had continued. Above the dumps of soil that covered the site of the transept was evidence for the old bowling green that existed here in the last half of the 17th century. This had been laid in a terrace excavated out of the sloping ground south of the church and was bordered on the east by a stone wall and a clay bank. These and the soil for the lawn still survived. Pottery and clay pipe of the appropriate date confirmed the identification. Above this was more make-up dumping for Kingston Parade, and evidence of the wall that existed along the south side of the church into the early 19th century.

Two trenches were dug in the Memorial Cloister. A small trench in the choir vestry, east of the shop, revealed some slight traces of the 18th century houses that had been built here in 1755. More interestingly, the excavations uncovered the mid 16th-century pitched rubble path laid over the north walk of the medieval cloister when it was converted into a private garden after the Dissolution. This was also seen in 1993 under the clergy vestry, along the east walk of the cloister. The excavation ceased before medieval levels were reached. The larger trench under the shop was also revealing. The retaining wall of the ‘moat’, the sunken area around the church, and filled in when the Memorial Cloister was built, was seen cutting across the cellar walls of the 1755 end house of the 18th-century terrace. These had high quality Pennant sandstone floors and signs of fittings for wine bins or larder shelves. Immediately under the floor was a raft of mortared rubble, at the same height as and superficially similar to the post-medieval garden path described above. However, it became clear that it was not stratigraphically possible to be the same item, and was indeed, almost certainly part of a mysterious but well-known Roman structure recorded (and mostly destroyed) when the Concert Room in the Roman Baths Museum was built in 1893-4. It was also seen by Irvine in 1867, a few metres north-west of our trench. This is thought to be a massive podium for a monumental building, perhaps a temple. Only a small area was seen, but it is the first time the upper part, surviving perhaps two metres above the Roman floors in the Baths, has been seen in modern excavations. Some of its

south wall may have been found in limited excavations in the 1991 and 1993. It seems to have survived as it provided the footings for the medieval prior's lodging and its 18th century replacement. Further west, it was removed for the cloister. Excavation ceased at this point, as no proposals for improvements will involve going deeper than this.

**Peter Davenport**, Cotswold Archaeology

## Roman Baths

Recording was undertaken by Marek Lewcun and Bruce Eaton during February and March 2011 in cellars below the west end of York Street, where it is hoped that public access can be extended to include views of a *laconicum* and paved court.

Detailed elevations were drawn of the stonework of the internal wall of the *laconicum*, a circular steam room with heat once controlled by an adjustable vent in its domed roof, together with a plan of the surviving *pillae* which had once supported the floor. Close examination of the pennant slab in the doorway on its east side by way of low level lighting also revealed the base of a borehole coring, consisting of an circular incision containing a low domed interior. Left when masons were searching for the uppermost beds of suitable building stone, the dimensions are similar to those of the two other Roman boreholes known in Bath, one in the stonework of the hot spring and the other at the blocked entrance to a stone mine below the western edge of Bathampton Down.

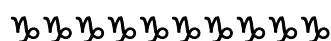
A thick deposit of 20th century detritus was excavated from between the walls of the ante room to the east of the *laconicum*, revealing a paved floor of similar pennant sandstone. The removal of an obsolete drainage pipe which had traversed the area also enabled the identification of a doorway linking the *laconicum* and ante room to the paved court to the east, explaining how access to the former was gained when the original doorway on the north side of the ante room was blocked. Laid over the infilling of an earlier bath and possibly representing an exercise or changing area of later Roman date, the paving of the court had been drawn by Bath Archaeological Trust in 1983. This has now been subject to additional surveying in order to establish the varying level of the floor, a feature which is not fully understood, while the surrounding walls have now been drawn in detail to include the breaks between original Roman structure and the 19th century walls constructed directly on top.

**Marek Lewcun**

## Lime Grove

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Bruce Eaton and Marek Lewcun on the site of Lime Grove School, Bathwick, Bath. A substantial lias clay quarry was identified. Finds from the backfilling deposits, in particular a John Clarke clay pipe bowl that can be no earlier than 1804, along with cartographic and documentary evidence suggests that the quarry was active between 1804 and 1805. It is likely that the clay was being extracted for use as puddling clay during the construction of the stretch of the Kennet & Avon Canal that connected Sydney Gardens Wharf to Bath and the River Avon via a flight of locks (1802-1805). The quarry was systematically backfilled from its eastern edge with domestic waste as well as clay re-deposits which are likely to represent up-cast from the K&A's construction stockpiled for the purpose. There is good evidence for market garden activity across the site with dating evidence for the drainage beds being laid out between 1810-1840.

Marek Lewcun





## **REPORTS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES**

### **The Survey of Old Bath**

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

As reported in the newsletters, the Survey has been finalising its study of the High Street. This includes the western side of the street north of the Corridor. The area south of the Corridor, with the Katherine Wheel and the Christopher, has already been studied in detail as the result of a commission from Bath Archaeological Trust.

The Survey is now turning its attention to Broad Street and Walcot Street, the remaining streets of the old city. Frog Lane, on the site of New Bond Street, was the point at which the Survey as such began. Allan Keevil made a brilliant study of the Cornwell area, published in the *Survey* No.13. We hope to cover the remaining areas in detail and perhaps bring out an annotated version of Manners' map of 1818. The Survey also created an exhibition for the Museum of Bath at Work giving an overview of the history of Walcot Street, and published a summary in the *Survey* No.17.

### **The Friends of the Survey**

At the AGM of the Friends of the Survey on 15 April 2011 Dr. Michael Rowe spoke on William Pulteney and the making of the Bridge and Bridge Street, a topic which he repeated later at the Victoria Art Gallery. A summary of the address appears in this issue of the *Survey*. Refreshments were served in the interval by Sheila Edwards and Margaret Burrows.

On 28 October 2011 the group looks forward to hearing from the Chairman, John Macdonald, on the subject of Philip Charles Sheppard. Notices will be distributed enabling Friends to book lunch in advance.

It is hoped that at the AGM in 2012 Mike Chapman will speak on the Survey's High Street project, especially the growth of the markets and the history of the slaughterhouses by the river. Studies of the markets have been made for instance by Trevor Fawcett and Ruth Haskins, but he will be enlarging on the topic.

For the Lunchtime Lecture at the Autumn Meeting in 2012, it is hoped that Professor Parfitt will speak on Monsignor Parfitt, who was important both at Prior Park College and in Bath itself.

Malcolm Hitchcock has left Bath as already reported. Sadly we have to report the sudden passing of Arthur Green, a keen fellow member of the Friends. Sheila Edwards had provided the following notice:

### **IN MEMORIAM**

**Arthur Humphrey Green**

14 September 1929 - 24 June 2011

Arthur's interest in history, particularly historic buildings, stemmed from the years when, as an apprentice plumber, he toiled up and down the hills of Bath with a push-bike and his tools to undertake various jobs in properties large and small. This work gave him the opportunity to observe and appreciate a wide variety of architecture and building techniques.

He went on to become a qualified teacher of plumbing, lead beating and allied subjects and also a silversmith. As an Assessor for the City and Guilds he was well known throughout Colleges in the West Country where he tested students in practical and oral examinations. His critical standards and

keen interest to detail came to the fore when, in later life, he became involved with the historic building surveys of Newton St.Loe, Stanton Prior and more recently Bathampton.

It was after his retirement that he became a Mayor's Guide, a member of the Friends of the Survey of Old Bath, Co-founder of the Bathampton Local History Society (now Bathampton LH Research Group) and the Bathampton Footpaths Association.

Although due to recent illness his activities had to be curtailed somewhat, he remained an enthusiastic and passionate member of these various groups and in the many other interests that he held dear.

His numerous friends and colleagues will miss him, his humour, kindness and keen eye for detail.

**Sheila M. Edwards**

**Gillian M. Huggins**

August 2011



### **The Bathwick Local History Society**

June this year saw the completion of our long running task of documenting all surviving memorials in the Bathwick Churches and churchyards. The project was funded by profits from our two books *Bathwick: A Forgotten Village*, published 2004, and *Bathwick: Echoes of the Past*, 2008, and has taken several years to accomplish.

The work in the churchyards proved rather difficult at times and on several occasions had to be put on hold for various reasons, however thanks to Philip Bendall who in 2009 took on the enormous challenge of the Smallcombe graveyards, the records are now published. There are thousands of people buried in the Bathwick graveyards and these records comprise seven volumes including an introduction and a comprehensive index. A full set was presented to the Bathwick Churches of St.Mary the Virgin and St.John the Baptist and another set has been donated to the Bath Record Office. Somerset Record Office and Bath Central Library have received copies in disk form.

When the society first started in May 1999 little was known about the old Village of Bathwick and the huge changes that took place in the parish over decades. Our aim has been to raise the awareness of our historic environment and research and record for the future some of its past. Our monthly meetings have been most interesting, the speakers excellent and we have learnt a lot. However documenting history is a never-ending process and although there is more information still awaiting discovery we feel that during the last twelve years much has been achieved.

The society has a large membership that takes time to plan for and administrate. Unfortunately despite appeals nobody has come forward to take over the running of the group and we find it is impossible to continue in its present form. Therefore at our AGM in February it was resolved that the society will draw its activities to a close in November with a celebratory social event.

Research will continue and it is hoped to form a small informal group where individual research subjects can be explored, anyone interested in joining us will be welcome. For further details contact 01225 463902. Our collection of papers and photographs will eventually go to the record offices and who knows; maybe one day a few years hence someone will think it a good idea to start a Bathwick local history group!

**Sheila Edwards**

## **Widcombe and Lyncombe Local History Society**

We continue to be a successful society and once again we have had eight meetings in the year.

Our first meeting was in April when Margaret Burrows gave a talk on '1911'. With the Royal Wedding imminent, it seemed suitable to call it 'A Coronation not a Wedding'. On 22 June 1911 Bath celebrated the coronation of George V and Queen Mary in some style, Beechen Cliff and Alexandra Park featuring prominently with gun salutes, torchlight processions, fireworks and a big bonfire. It was the 'Edwardian Summer' but the suffragettes were very active here and even the *Chronicle* discussed the future of the House of Lords, the Parliament Act and Home Rule for Ireland.

In May we walked around Claverton Village, mentioned in Domesday Book, with its fascinating history and connections with Ralph Allen, who bought the Manor in 1758. Ralph Allen built a carriageway from Prior Park to the Manor and visited it once a week. He did a lot for the church, where he was later buried. The house dated from the early 17th century and was built by the Bassett family. The connection with the Allen family ended when his great nephew, Tucker died in 1816.

The next owner after Tucker, John Vivian, was persuaded by his architect, Sir Jeffry Wyattville, to rebuild on a new site higher up, but Vivian's son insisted that the gates and steps be preserved. The new house is now the American Museum.

Two of our society members, Lynn Cole and her sister Mrs. Combes, were brought up in the village and gave us interesting recollections. The Skrine family of Warleigh Manor had purchased the estate in 1873, and built the school and a hospital for infectious diseases, and were excellent landlords. The last owner, Miss Skrine, who died in 1956, allowed tenants to buy their houses for what they could afford.

In June we collaborated with Widcombe Association for a meeting on Memories of Widcombe, particularly the canal and the building of Rossiter Road. Stuart Burroughs told us about the industrial importance of the river, canal, road and railway, and members of the British Waterways team explained the plan to make an open-air museum of the canal in our area. More than 45 people enjoyed tea and home-made cakes.

In July Margaret Burrows gave a talk on the history of Alexandra Park, which opened in 1902, to our group and people living in the area. More than 70 people in all attended, in the afternoon at the Methodist Church Hall in Shakespeare Avenue, or in the evening at the Bear Inn. On the Sunday following, the newly formed 'Forum to protect Alexandra Park' held a picnic and festival, which many of our members attended. Our society provided pictures and maps for the Widcombe Association stand.

On Sunday 15 September at 7.30 Colin Johnston, B&NES Archivist, has agreed to talk about the Royal Bath and West Agricultural Show, with particular reference to the centenary show held in 1877. This was sited on the land where the Park and Poet roads now are.

On 13 October at 7.30 Fay Briddon, one of our members and our treasurer, will talk about the history of Crowe Hall, which has been in the news recently. Following the death of the owner, John Barrett, his niece inherited the house and its contents. She decided to sell up the house, its fine furniture and works of art. Surprisingly, one garden urn turned out to be Roman and sold for £445,000!

On 17 November Stuart Burroughs has kindly agreed to talk to us about Henry Stodart, a mid-19th century pioneer recycler. Much new archive material has recently been discovered about this enlightened character.

Our Christmas meeting will be on 15 December 2011. Members and visitors will tell us about interesting objects, pictures, photos, &c. they have discovered. As we get older it becomes more important to collect memories, particularly of the war. Members will tell us about their experiences, not just in our area but wherever they lived. Wine, coffee and other refreshments will be served.

Our last four meetings will be held at Widcombe Baptist Church, in the lower hall. The entrance is down the sloping path by the canal. All are welcome. Visitors pay £1 which includes coffee and refreshments. For more information about our Society contact:

Ainley Wade 462807, Philip Bendall 334067, Fay Bridden 310127, Margaret Burrows 480749

**Margaret Burrows**

### **East Twerton and Oldfield Park Local History Society**

Now in its eighteenth year, the East Twerton and Oldfield Park Local History Society meets monthly, September to May, at Oldfield Park Baptist Church Hall, commencing at 7.30pm.

The majority of our members are East Twerton or Oldfield Park residents, but we also have members from other areas of Bath and beyond. Some contributed to this year's Oldfield Park Exhibition at The Museum of Bath at Work.

We are interested in the history of the Bath area with recent talks including 'Life and Strife in Tudor Bath'; 'The Cleveland Baths'; 'The Bathwick Estate'; 'Archives at the Bath Record Office'; and 'Council Housing in Bath'. Future programmed talks include 'Bath Guildhall and its Markets'; 'The Glory Days of the Empire Hotel'; and 'Gustav Horstmann'. Our new session begins with a local subject - 'Bath New Gaol' [now Governor's House].

#### Autumn Meetings:

15 September: Bath New Gaol, by Chris Noble

20 October: Competing Images of Victorian Bath, by Dr. Graham Davis

17 November: The Mission Theatre, by Ann Garner

Visitors are always welcome. Admission £2.00. For further information contact the Chairman on 01225 313271.

*[Reproduced by permission of Pukka Bath, from p.8 of the August issue.]*

### **The Combe Down Heritage Society**

Our core activity continues to be our programme of meetings with interesting speakers, outings and guided walks. During the year we embarked on a series of talks on the theme, 'My House' consisting of presentations by members who described the history of houses or a street.



**Ralph Allen Yard, previously Gammons Yard, to house a new village centre.**

Further progress has been made in the establishment of a Community Centre on the site of Ralph Allen Yard, previously Gammons Yard. The Homes and Community government agency, who funded the mine stabilisation, owns the Yard and it is now confirmed that the development of the site will include a small Centre. The Society stresses that this will be for the use of the whole community but that we will occupy some space as a part-time visitor centre in order to tell the story of the village as well as that of stone quarrying. There will also be archives and research facilities. Ownership will be by a Trust on which the Society will be represented.

Firs Field, the village park for the past century, is at last being restored and as well as being re-seeded with the appropriate limestone flora, a planning condition, has more trees and benches and will mark its history with 'Legacy' displays. A new wall has been built along the Field's western edge and there will be a series of Interpretation Panels. Also, to display an artefact of our mining heritage, we hope that a wall surrounding what was a shaft head in the park might be restored.

Our restoration plans for Bath's only Jewish Cemetery, in partnership with 'the Friends', progress slowly. Having previously restored the Prayer House roof, we have now installed electricity in the building and, as funds allow, plan to have urgent repairs carried out on tombstones whose inscriptions have suffered from recent wintering. The Friends will now apply to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant towards the necessary work. Our Open Day in 2011 will be held on Sunday 23 October.

Our desire to set up a genealogical data base of Combed Down residents was given an important stimulus by a very informative talk by Pat Hase, Weston-super-Mare's well known genealogist, entitled 'Family history - let's make a start'.

Our publications, now six in number, continue to be sold at meetings and from local bookshops.

**Dr.Malcolm Aylett, Secretary**

### **Bath's Jewish Cemetery**

The Bath Jewish Burial Ground is one of many religious sites which developed in the Georgian era as visitors to Bath, and the local community which served them, increased in number. This cemetery was established outside the City in the suburb of Combe Down; the site is on the corner of Bradford Road and Greendown Place.

In 2006 the Combe Down Heritage Society collaborated with the local Jewish community to form the 'Friends of Bath Jewish Burial Ground'. This aims to restore the site for safe public access and as an educational resource. Members, working with the Board of Deputies whom we asked to take on ownership, have been clearing the considerable undergrowth in preparation for annual Open Days.

The burial ground has been neglected and was very overgrown. The Prayer House is becoming dilapidated and many tombstones have lost part or all of their inscriptions, in particular those of pennant stone.

2006 was the 350th anniversary of Oliver Cromwell's decision to allow Jews to return to England, though there is evidence that communities were already established in some of the major cities, including Bristol. This was therefore an appropriate year to launch this initiative.

The Bath Hebrew Congregation (of Ashkenazi Orthodox persuasion) was formed in 1742 but a Synagogue was not opened until 1836, or possibly earlier, in Kingsmead Street. This closed in 1894 but one source states that the lease ran out in 1911. The Congregation was re-established in the early 20th Century and services were held in the 1930s and 1940s in Kersteins Private Hotel at 10 Duke Street. The burial ground land was purchased in 1812 from Henry Street, who had an open cast quarry on the site, and was enlarged in 1862, the extra land being bought by the Rothschild family. There are fifty gravestones, the earliest date being 1823.



**Tombstone inscription – being restored.**



**Prayer House – roof recently restored.**

The prayer room in the corner of the cemetery has a plaque, no longer readable, and there are other wall plaques. It is as yet uncertain as to whether it was an 'Ohel', for prayer, or a 'Taharah', used for laying out the dead. This building is of considerable historic importance and the Society asked English Heritage to have it 'Listed'. The last interment is said to have been in 1942 but the latest gravestone date is 1921. There were thought to be unmarked graves but a recent geophysical survey carried out by the Bath and Camerton Archaeological Society found no evidence of any.

A history of the cemetery was published by Judith Samuel, with Malcolm Brown, 'A History of the Jews in Bath' (*Bath History* Volume I, 1986, pp.150-171). The Heritage Society and 'Friends' continue this research and have visited several other similar sites elsewhere. The Open Day this year is the 23rd October, but visits can be arranged at other times.

**Dr.Malcolm Aylett**, Secretary of the 'Friends'

### **History of Bath Research Group**

Music, art, industry, agriculture and a little known hamlet: our programme encompassed a range of topics.

On Thursday 9 September 2010 we began our new session at the Central United Reformed Church at Argyle with a talk on 'Bath Nineteenth Century Organ Builders' by Gordon Curtis, an old boy of the City of Bath Boys School. The Bath organ builder William Sweetland's instruments are in several churches in Bath and elsewhere in England, and we were treated to a recital by Nicholas Stuart on that at Argyle.

In 'Freemen of the City' Bill Hanna traced their role from what could be seen as a guild defending their trading interests to the current civic honouring of outstanding contributors to the city's life, ranging from Yehudi Menuhin to members of Bath Rugby and an Olympic gold medallist.

The Postal Museum celebrates Bath's unique place in postal history, and its founder Audrey Swindells told us of the innovative rôles of two 18th century Bath mayors, Ralph Allen and John Palmer, who did much to give the postal system a new and more effective (and profitable) shape. Bath claims too the first recorded posting of a Penny Black letter in 1840 and was later involved in the development of air mail.

Next, to the Victoria Art Gallery designed by J.M.Brydon to mark the monarch's Jubilee in 1897 and completed in 1900. Welcomed by the Gallery Director, Jon Benington, and the Keeper of Collections, Katharine Wall, we were guided not only round the main gallery, but also the print and painting store in the basement.

Professor Angus Buchanan OBE reminded us of the Industrial Heritage of Bath in three categories: those enterprises which had disappeared, such as the Newton Park coalfield, Twerton Mill and Stothert and Pitt; those enjoying a renewed life, such as the Kennet and Avon Canal and Green Park Station, and those which had had a continuous existence, such as the GWR and Bath's bridges, of which the historic Victoria Bridge was now closed and under threat.

The origins of the Royal Bath and West Society were traced by Colin Johnston through four of its leading figures. Edmund Rack moved from his native Norfolk, where he had become interested in

agriculture, to Bath. He saw that efficient agricultural methods were essential not only to farmers but to the country and he influenced the formation of the Society of which he became the first Secretary. Augustus Voelcker's work ensured the quality of fertilisers, and also contributed to scientific cheese-making. Caleb Hillier Parry, a successful Bath physician worked on the cross breeding of Merino sheep for improved wool production, and Thomas Plowman saw that, as the number employed in agriculture was declining, shows would have to be attractive to the general public. The speaker also dealt with the 1877 centenary Show (presented in the current issue of the *Survey*.)

Stuart Burroughs looked at the significance of the Kennet and Avon Canal to Bath, showing how the interlinking of businesses through cross directorships - for example Stothert and Pickwick in the K&A and the Somerset Coal Canals - brought profit to individuals and prosperity to their interests in the city.

Dave Pearce, author of '*An Unsatisfactory and Disorderly Set*' – *An Affectionate History of Bailbrook*, and Richard Clist, a contributor and long-time resident, led us on a walk through the hamlet, once known as Pigacre and thought by some to be the site of the cure of Bladud's swine. Most inhabitants were 'ag labs' working in the surrounding nurseries and the orchards that grew 'Beauty of Bath' apples; their wives worked as laundresses on the clothes and sheets brought in from the hotels and houses of Bath. The school, opened in a single-room red brick building in 1836, is now a residence; the 'tin tabernacle' was delivered in kit form to provide a mission to the 'disorderly'.

Walking the Somerset Coal Canal from Midford to Combe Hay under the expert guidance of Mike Chapman allowed us to see on the ground the imagination and vision of its conception, design and construction. In its lifetime it prospered in linking many collieries of the North Somerset Coalfield and transporting their products to the K&A and Bath. Now it remains as a monument to a local industry of geologists, engineers, navvies, quarrymen, carters and masons who took a pride in their professions and artisanship.

**William Hanna**

July 2011

### **South Stoke Local History Group**

The contents of the exhibition held in July 2010; *South Stoke Church & Parish through 800 Years*; were edited and collated and deposited with the Guildhall Record Office. Two illustrated Talks were enjoyed by the membership:

'Images of South Stoke Parish' by Bob & Judy Parfitt, and

'The Lost Roman Villa of Paulton' by Ceri Lambdin

The collection of Hodshill Pottery, which was found during excavations there in 1911 and during the 1930s, was taken to BRLSI, where it will be stored. Whilst remaining the property of South Stoke Parish Council, the collection will be in the care of Bath & Camerton Archaeological Society. Their offer to catalogue each piece is most welcome. The collection will then be used for educational purposes.

With the assistance of Mike Chapman, the Commentary on the Churchwardens' Accounts (which appeared in last year's edition of the *Survey of Bath and District* has been published on its own. Copies are available for £3.

Regrettably, it has not been possible to sustain this Group as a membership organisation. There remains, however, a nucleus of enthusiasts for local History in the community, who will continue as a committee to do historical research, collect written and pictorial items for the Parish Archive and arrange an occasional Talk. The Parish Archive is stored at the Guildhall Record Office in Bath and is available to the public for study.

Currently, individuals are studying the Wansdyke, a scheduled ancient monument which forms part of the parish boundary, and Wills of local residents from 1614 - 1854.

**Jenny John**, Chairman of the Committee, 01225 833387

June 2011

### **Weston Local History Society**

The Society's Annual General Meeting was held in March when Chairman Roy Smith and Secretary Pru Brice reported on last year's activities while the Treasurer was able to report that subscriptions remain unchanged despite not having increased since the Society was formed in 1993 and that we continue to cover our costs and retain a reasonable reserve for any funding that may possibly be required for local history research.

Secretary Pru Brice presented the Programme for 2011/12 and we have since had talks ranging from Musical Memories to Suffragettes and will, in June, be hearing from Dr.Francis Burroughs on 'Bristol Blue Glass'. July will see two outside visits - the 'Matthew' in Bristol for a Harbour Cruise and Tea, and later in the month a Day Trip to Portsmouth with its Naval Dockyard including HMS Victory, HMS Warrior and the Mary Rose.

The remaining programme to the year is equally wide-ranging and interesting. Enquiries are welcomed by Secretary Pru Brice (01225 315342) and visitors always welcome at our Monthly Meetings at Weston Parish Rooms normally on the third Monday of the Month.

**John T.Wetherill**

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**Red paint being removed from the Rebecca Fountain - one of a number of prominent features in Bath which received anarchist attention in December 1967.**



## NOTES & QUERIES

### **Robert Fryar, Bath Publisher**

Dr.Sydney Chapman has written a study of a Bath publisher not frequently mentioned in Bath histories, entitled 'A Victorian Occultist and Publisher: Robert H.Fryar of Bath'.

This has been published this year in Elizabeth's other journal, *The Road*, No.4, which as its sub-title states, centres on 'History, Myth and Legend'. The present issue deals particularly with Rosslyn Chapel near Edinburgh and reprints an 1825 guidebook to Rosslyn Chapel and Castle donated to Elizabeth by Friends member Alistair Durie.

Copies are obtainable from Elizabeth at the address on p.l. at £6 per copy plus £2 postage and packing if posted. A copy will be available at the Central Library.

Dr.Chapman's article records that Robert Fryar 'was born in Marylebone in 1845, was residing in Bath when he married in 1867, and at Bath progressed from being a decorator's clerk to an accountant and died in the city aged 64 years in 1909'. He became well-known among Victorian occult revivalists through his republication of esoteric works in his 'Bath Occult Reprints'. Copies of some of his publications are in the Central Library. A full list of known publications instigated by Fryar accompanies the article in *The Road*.

The works republished by Fryar cover a wide range of esoteric topics, some of which appealed to fringe and speculative Freemasons interested in Rosicrucianism, Hermeticism and Templarism, to the latter of which the present cult of Rosslyn also likes to allude. Elizabeth's essay meanwhile takes the view that Rosslyn was never meant to be occult, but depends on known Christian symbolism, an attitude also discussed by Dr.Robert Cooper of the Scottish Grand Lodge in *The Rosslyn Hoax*?

Dr.Chapman will be glad to hear from anyone who can add to his information on Robert Fryar and his sojourn in Bath. Email address: chapman.sydney@ymail.com.

### **Rushton Walker (1808-1864) — Rebecca's sculptor**

The *National Gazetteer* of 1868 in its section on Bath describes the Temperance Association's drinking fountain by the Abbey as 'the work of Thomas Sheppard, of the Kingston Marble Works'. In documenting the history of my family, this came as a surprise as Thomas Sheppard was not known to be a sculptor. The Thomas Sheppard in question was born on 9 October 1832 at 7 Dorchester Street, Bath, son of James Sheppard & Harriett Sheppard (née Bendall). He was a stone merchant and had a stone, slate and marble works at 7 Dorchester Street and later at Broad Quay.

The *Bath & Cheltenham Gazette* of Wed. 12 Jun 1861 gives an account of the formal presentation of the drinking fountain by Jacob Henry Cotterell of the Bath Temperance Association to the Mayor, Thomas Jolly, and the Council, representing the citizens. The article is more specific about those responsible for it and has: "Mr. Sheppard has ably executed the work; the figure was modelled and cut by Mr. Walker; and the steps, pedestal and basin (which display much taste) are from the design of Mr.C.E.Davis, architect." There remained the question about 'Mr Walker'. Searches of census entries and Bath directories have established that the individual was Rushton Walker (1808-1864). Born at Bristol, he worked as sculptor in Bristol but went bankrupt in 1838 and in 1841 was a draughtsman living at Box. However by 1849 he is listed under 'Statuaries, Sculptors and Marble Masons' with premises at 17 James' Street, Bath and in 1852 had additional premises at 6 Borough Walls (Upper or Lower not specified). When the drinking fountain was handed over in 1861 he and his wife were living at 12 Kingston Buildings, his wife Mary Ann (née Pugh) was running a servant's register office. In the 1862-3 directory, Rushton Walker had an advertisement for his business in which, in the obsequious form of the time, 'he begs to inform the Nobility and Gentry that he is carrying on the monumental and marble trade'. Significantly he describes himself as 'The Modeller and Sculptor of Rebecca, for the Temperance Society's Drinking Fountain'.

At the time of the unveiling ‘a general opinion [was] expressed that the Bathonians were Goths and would not respect a figure of this kind. But they had faith in their fellow-citizens, and left the fountain to the good feeling of the inhabitants to preserve it.’ The *Survey* No. 11 (1999) p.12 referred to a letter to the *Bath Chronicle* published on 12 Dec 1998 which reported that the monument was renovated circa 1985 with money donated by David Beeton. This year sees its 150th anniversary.

**Philip Bendall**

It is now strange to imagine that, at the time of its inauguration, the Rebecca drinking fountain, and the whole matter of statuary in the streets of Bath, was a controversial subject, - brought about by the outcry against the state of the Bath Street Mineral Water fountain (see *The Survey* No.22, 2007). After many months of deliberation, improvements to the Bath Street fountain were eventually agreed which included the addition of a statue of Bladud and other figures, but the *Bath & Cheltenham Gazette* on 10 August 1859, noted that

... we are inclined to doubt the sufficiency and the propriety of certain arrangements in our own city which are now in operation. A drinking fountain is about to be erected, or rather, a figure of “Rebecca at the Well” is to be carved for such a useful accommodation. We hear, further, that the intended beautifying of the Hot-Water “Fountain” is so far forwarded, that four figures of the “Seasons” are being executed in Bath stone for the purpose of being placed on or attached to the edge of the basin. We have purposely refrained from inquiring with much minuteness into this matter, and have no wish to mark the progress of either the one or the other work, because we have no wish to give the subject a personal application. It is possible that both may prove to be executed in a style which will stand criticism – it is equally possible that this may not be the case; and we notice the subject in the confident hope that either the Mayor or the Town Council, or both combined, will insist in all such productions being supervised, in marine phrase, overhauled, by competent criticism, before they are suffered to be placed in a public situation.

This matter is of more importance than may at first appear. The city of Bath has the repute of being a polite city, a city where the arts are cultivated, and where music especially is practised and studied to high perfection. The tone of society here is refined, and it need not be said how seriously any ill-executed statuary in the streets would detract from the city’s reputation in the eye of every stranger of educated taste. We all know that when any monstrosity, styled artistic (such as the Hot Water “Fountain”), is erected, an incalculable amount of trouble is necessary before the removal of the thing can be brought about. We need not repeat what we have often urged respecting this disgusting, ugly, and ferruginous abomination – so much harder to pull down than to put up; and we are strongly inclined to doubt whether the cementing of four figures on its edge will at all tend to make that tolerable which is now positively intolerable. Let four mis-shapen and ill-designed creations be erected, and though the public opinion might condemn the whole affair in this its improved form, yet, judging from past experience, where, we ask, is the security that, however bad the effect may be, the space would ever again be thrown open to the public? The same remark would apply to the intended drinking fountain. A “Rebecca” in marble, if executed by Baily, Theed, or one of only four or five other sculptors, would be a graceful ornament. But if a mistake were made, and an ill-chiselled statue set up, we beg to inquire what certainty there is that it would be removed so soon as its defects should have been established?

We do not know that there is any overwhelming reason why the subscribers to the drinking fountain should strive after originality in carrying out their plan: and for our own part, we confess that, rather than encounter the risk of another mistake in the way of embellishing the streets, we should not be sorry to hear that the Committee had determined to accept a copy of some well-known appropriate figure. Such an erection could not be unacceptable, and would be sure not to displease the most fastidious – presuming, of course, that the situation which has been selected would in every respect be in good taste. But this is one of the points which should come under the consideration of two or three men of established reputation as judges in everything relating to art.

It later transpired that the *Gazette* was well justified in its misgivings. Within 12 years of these arrangements the Bath Street Fountain had again fallen into such a state of dilapidation that it was finally decided to do away with its statuary altogether. Fortunately Rebecca escaped the same fate, although not to the satisfaction of all, as indicated by a correspondent to the *Bath Weekly Chronicle* on 29 May 1873:

SIR, - A good citizen has kindly relieved us from King Bladud in Bath-street.

Will he, or any other good friend, take off our hands the lady in front of the Abbey Church. She ought to be had cheap.

CITIZEN

Nevertheless, after a period of exile to the outskirts of the town of nearly 140 years, Bladud of Bath Street too has been 'pardoned', and now stands re-erected (with modern pig) in the Parade Gardens.

**Mike Chapman**

### **Alexandra Park**

It is interesting to see in Margaret's article that the park was very nearly called 'King Edward's'. Local folklore holds that Queen Alexandra had been booked to open it. It is impossible that the Queen should have agreed to open a park in Bath on the day of the Coronation. Also royal visits have to be booked months ahead, and it was only shortly before the opening that the name 'Alexandra' was decided upon.

Alexandra Park occupies the western part of the land known as 'Blakeley' (spelt Brakely on the J.Charlton map of 1799). The schedule to the Charlton Map lists it as 'Colthurst's - now Farley'. Ralph Allen once held the eastern portion of Blakeley (now allotments), also once Colthurst's. In the 1788 rent roll of Ralph Allen's former estates, Mrs.Farley is renting 'Blakely' from the estates. Blakeley appears to be 'Bleachly' of the 1737 Vestry Survey.

In 1824 a 360-degree *Panoramic View of Bath from Beechen Cliff* was taken by Harvey Wood from the summit of the hill, roughly in the centre of the Park, some 417ft (127m) above sea level. This large lithograph, 13ft long by 1ft high in seven sections and annotated to show key sites in the town and surrounding landscape, would have been a considerable undertaking for its time, providing an almost photographic view of the countryside around Bath at the end of the Georgian period. Since then, most of this view has disappeared behind the growth of trees on the cliff and around the perimeter of the park.

Readers may remember a similar panorama being produced in the 1980s, when the artist, Roger Hallet, then living in Twerton, overcame this problem by ascending above the trees in a balloon. On this occasion the result was a 360-degree panoramic canvas painting, 200ft long by 20ft high (said to be the largest painting in the country), which was exhibited at the abandoned Fuller's Earth Works on Odd Down. However, despite the formation of a consortium of shareholders (Bath Panorama Ltd.) to raise the £50,000 capital for its housing (perhaps in an inflatable tent or even in one of the old city gas holders), it only appears to have been otherwise exhibited at the London Barrage and is thought at present to be in store. Fortunately the Bath Record Office kept in contact with Mr.Hallet for some time after these events and was even presented with his notebooks which we understand now make for some interesting reading. It would be a great attraction if this view could be restored, perhaps (in true Georgian fashion) by a Camera Obscura.

### **A Note on Maps**

In the *Survey* No.25, October 2010, we published a piece on the Devonshire Place 'Temple', as investigated by Brian Coward (*Survey* p.6). John Toplis, using research by the same author and by Mrs.Judith Samuel, produced a booklet, revised 2005, on this same Temple. On p.6 it shows, very much enlarged, a small piece of Mike Chapman's copy of the J.Charlton map of 1799, relating to the site of the Temple.

The note below this extract suggests that the origin of the drawing is unknown since it is not exactly like the known copies of the Charlton map. This means that someone copied and distributed part of our version of the map without attribution, a habit popular in the anecdotal approach to Bath history, where sources are not regarded as particularly relevant. As Mike remarked on seeing that particular page, 'It seems that maps are simply something which falls from the sky'. Or as the hymn-writer put it:

Waters in the desert rise,  
Manna feeds us from the skies.

Our booklet\* on the Charlton map of Lyncombe and Widcombe, published 1998, makes our sources perfectly clear. To quote from p.1:

Three copies of J.Charlton's Map of Lyncombe and Widcombe are deposited at the Somerset Record Office on permanent loan from the Sexey Estates. The first is the original map (as described in the Steward's letter of 1944, Section 11, below) with [almost] the same title as used on this publication, and coloured in yellow and green. The second is a copy of this, almost exactly the same, but with letters added to the plot reference numbers, and a slightly different title (the lettering does not always appear to be correct). The third copy is only a draft, but it carries the schedule to the lettering, as printed in this booklet.

The map here published is based chiefly on the first and original drawing, with one or two additions from the others, and includes the lettering, and the schedule. There are also copies of the Sexey map at Bath Record Office and Bath Central Library, without the lettering and numbers, and with some later items added.

\* Mike Chapman, John Hawkes and Elizabeth Holland, *The J.Charlton Map of Lyncombe and Widcombe, 1799* (Survey of Old Bath, 1998).

The Steward's letter referred to above appears on p.6 of the booklet:

Philip Bennet,  
3rd May, 1944

Dear Mr.Wardle,

Many thanks for your letter of the 28th April. I have compared your tracing with Hugh Sexey's Hospital Plan of the Manor of Lyncombe and Widcombe and should say that the plan from which your tracing was made is a copy of the original plan in my possession dated 1799. This plan is titled "Plan of the Manor of Lyncombe and Widcombe in the County of Somerset belonging to the Feoffees of Bruton Hospital. Surveyed by J.Charlton 1799".

With this plan is an old Brown Leather covered Terrier on the inside of which is the following inscription - "A Survey and Rental of the Manor of Lyncombe and Widcombe in the County of Somerset belonging to the Feoffees of Bruton Hospital, surveyed by J.Charlton 1799".

On the subject of maps, the supposed map of Stuart Bath attached to the copies of the transcript of the Survey of 1641 lodged with the Record Office and with the Central Library, is as far as we know a copy of a map drawn by P.R.James and attached to a thesis by him in the Library. It is sometimes attributed to us but we must disown it. It was based on the information in the Survey of 1641 without apparently checking the result from sites and deeds, and is full of errors. As Elizabeth said on first seeing her name connected with it, 'It's good to be famous, but one prefers to be famous for one's own mistakes'.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elizabeth,

In the 1980s my daughter and her husband were moving from London and looking for a house in Bath and eventually bought a semi-detached house reputedly designed by John Pinch and built in 1817. The walls were about 18 inches thick and the windows of the main rooms had shutters which folded back against the sides of the recess at an angle of 45 degrees approximately to the window.

Over 10 years later my wife and I had our attention drawn by our daughter to the house with the address below which had been made back into a single dwelling from two maisonettes. When we moved in I noticed that the main facade of the terrace was only about 9 inches thick. The terrace was believed to have been designed by the said John Pinch and built around 1825 and so I visited the Building of Bath Museum.

I was told that John Pinch had designed a T-shaped stone by which the walls of two dwellings and their partner wall would be tied together for greater strength. Such stones can clearly be seen along the terrace and the condition of the terrace more than justifies his theory. He was clearly also an astute business man because a second course of stone was then deemed unnecessary!

**Harry Chapman**

14 Prior Park Buildings, July 2011

*All readers are encouraged to write in at any time, on any relevant subject. Please send to: Leslie Holt, 'Westwinds', Hayesfield Park, Bath BA2 4QE.*

## PUBLICATIONS

***Brief Batheaston Lives*** (The Batheaston Society 2011, A4 format, 59pp., b/w illustrated, £4.00).

Unlike the Society's previous historical publications, this book consists of a number of short essays written by Society Members about people who in their time have called Batheaston their home. Although Batheaston can boast some very notable historical residents, the authors have followed their own interests and avoided those that have already been well written about. However, these lives are not represented as a typical cross-section of Batheaston society, and often their stay was brief as a result of early death or of being constantly on the move.

Many were noted for their talents, such as Patrick Alexander (pioneer balloonist and aeronautical engineer), Douglas Earle Marsh ('brilliant but flawed' railway engineer), C.E.Broome (noted scientist and botanist) or Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott (architect and designer); while others made some special social contribution such as Richard Carr-Gomm (former guardsman turned charity worker) or the Tollemache Women of Batheaston Villa (pillars of the suffragette movement), but even the less fortunate are not excluded, such as Douglas Sealy ('Tragic Submariner') and Joseph Garraway ('Highway Robber'). In all, this book well illustrates the variety of residents that have come to live in the Bath area over the years. (Copies available from Ron Russell – 01225 859357)

***'Finished Labour of a Thousand Hands' The Archaeology of the Combe Down Stone Mines, Bath, Somerset*** by Lynn Willies, Neville Redvers-Higgins and Ianto Wain (Oxford Archaeology Monograph 13 2011, 341 pp., A4 format, colour illustrated, £25).

Following the completion of the Combe Down Mines infill project, this lavish report comes as a result of the thorough (and possibly unique) archaeological analysis that preceded it. Whilst being a 'weighty tome', containing much important technical data, this book nevertheless provides a clear and comprehensive history of Bath Stone mining around the city and will be an essential resource for anyone with an interest in the subject.

## BATH'S EIGHTEENTH CENTURY COACHING INNS

**Trevor Fawcett**

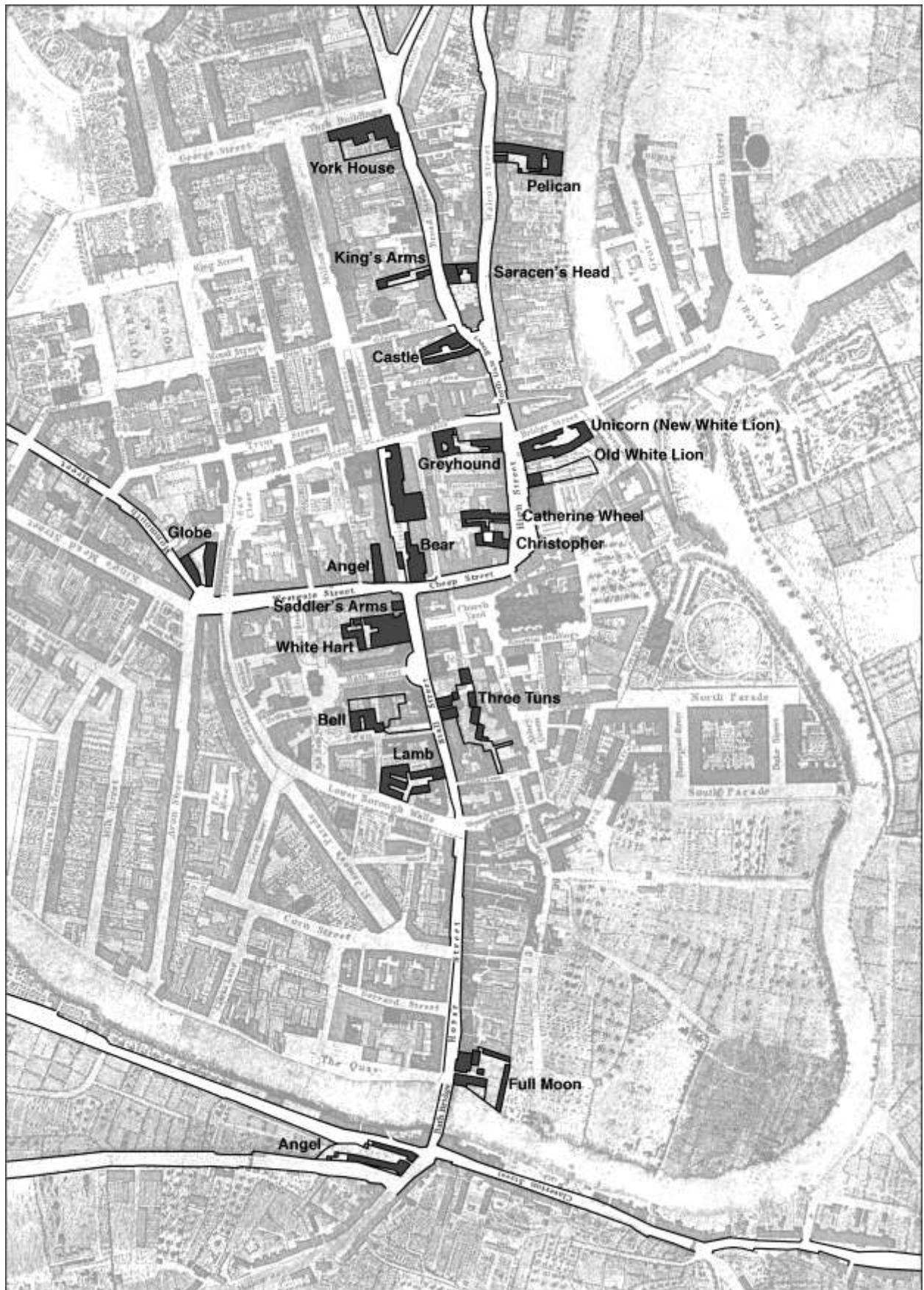
Out of Bath's many Georgian inns offering visitor accommodation, around twenty advertised a scheduled coach service at some point in the 18th century, acting either as a regular terminus for coaches or an intermediate pick-up and refreshment stop on a through run (e.g. London-Bath-Bristol).<sup>1</sup> To these might be added the *York House* hotel which started its Cheltenham coach in 1809. Such services brought them useful trade, especially overnight and other short-stay customers, even though it required considerable effort to set up and maintain a reliable operation in partnership with other inns on the route.

It is hardly surprising that coaching services came and went, nor that they took time to develop in the first place. The earliest of them operated to London and to Bristol, perhaps starting with a lumbering summer coach plying between London and the old *White Lion* in Bath Marketplace in 1667.<sup>2</sup> Before 1735 other inns had become involved – the *Bear*, *White Hart*, *Catharine Wheel*, *Bell* and *Saddlers Arms* – yet even by 1755 only 37 coaches set out weekly from Bath to London, Bristol, and a few other places, with a similar number of course returning. As demand grew, and as turnpiked roads improved, travelling time reduced, and vehicles became more comfortable, so did regular services increase in their frequency and spread of destinations, rising to 58 departures per week in 1762, maybe 89 in 1773, and eventually to as many as 227 in 1800 when 92 left for London, 91 for Bristol, and the remaining 44 for Exeter/Falmouth, Shrewsbury (connecting with Holyhead), Birmingham (connecting with the Midlands and North), Oxford, Salisbury/Gosport, and Weymouth in summer. Eight different Bath inns were then participating, though no longer the *Bear* which had ceased to function, and with the *White Hart* easily taking the lion's share, being responsible for as many as 64 different coach departures per week.

Despite inevitable rivalry among the providers, there is also much evidence of inns collaborating. Thus in 1754 the new two-day London 'flying machines on steel springs' left jointly from three different inns (the *Bear*, *Lamb* and *White Hart*) and could be booked at a fourth (the *Saddlers Arms*). A similar joint operation between the *Lamb* and *Three Tuns* in 1786 inaugurated Palmer's fast mail coaches to London and Oxford; and around the same date the *Christopher* and *Greyhound* were promoting their London post coaches, 'Royal Blue' and 'Mercury', together. Meanwhile quicker, more reliable timings were also making travel and coach connections more efficient. By 1775, for instance, the *Pelican* in Walcot Street could confidently announce a day return to Bristol in two hours each way, allowing a full eight hours at Bristol for passengers to transact their business.

Not surprisingly, most of the coaching inns could be found located along, or close to, the principal highway through the city that passed down Broad and Walcot Streets into the Marketplace, twisted through Cheap Street into Stall Street, and then continued south towards the *Full Moon* and the *Widcombe Angel*, the two inns stationed at either end of Bath bridge. Among the few exceptions, the *Globe* stood just outside the West Gate. The majority of these inns originated before the coaching trade really developed. The *Bear* and *White Hart* dated back to Tudor times, the rest mainly to the 17th century. The one great Georgian newcomer to the list was the *York House*, opened on George Street in 1769 and much appreciated by the snobbish Philip Thicknesse in his 1778 guide to Bath:

YORK HOUSE. An excellent Hotel, the only House of Reception which is situated in an open, airy Part of the City; and to the Advantage of its excellent Situation, the Stranger will find what can be found scarce any where else in *England*, a sensible honest Host, who is not only a Man of good Family, but one who has had a liberal Education: From such a Man, every Person who comes to his House is sure of meeting with Politeness, Diffidence, and a proper Reception ... When York House is full, the *Bear* is the next best Inn, and, for People of inferior Rank, the *Greyhound*, or the *White Lion* in the *Market Place*.<sup>3</sup>



**Bath's 18th century coaching inns and principal thoroughfares, outlined on Harcourt Masters' map of the city in the early 1790s.**

The omission of the *White Hart* in this context may seem surprising but is explicable enough, because around the time Thicknesse was writing the place was being substantially rebuilt and seems to have been under transitional management. It would acquire its very high reputation only after Eleazor Pickwick took on the tenancy towards the end of 1780, moving here from the *Angel* on Westgate Street and bringing his coaching business with him.

Although Thicknesse names only a few establishments, he suggests a hierarchy of inns with the five-star *York House* at the top. Any ranking was subjective, of course, and changed over time. Earlier in the century, for instance, the *Three Tuns* and its associated lodging house rated quite highly. A large Stall Street property of timber-framed brick and stone construction, it was singled out for mention by several visitors, including one in 1718 who heard an impromptu concert in the great new dining room.<sup>4</sup> It was frequented by members of Bath Corporation and under its prominent tenant Thursby Robinson in the 1720s-1730s seems to have attracted the Claverton horse-racing set. In 1760 Mrs. Delany could still recommend it to her sister as ‘a very good inn’.<sup>5</sup> By the 1770s, however, there

were signs of decline. One tenant went bankrupt; around 1782 it closed for a time; and then the London and Exeter coaching services it shared with the nearby *Lamb* inn were briefly lost. Pride itself as it might on its well-aired beds, good larder, excellent cellar, and large coach-house and stabling area, it was no match now for Bath’s two or three top establishments.



**Left: York House in 1829.**  
(Images of Bath)

On Bath inns generally the Rev. James Woodforde was in a good position to judge. While he never had more than a glass of rum at the *Three Tuns*, he did stay at nine other inns during his fairly frequent journeys through Bath in the 1760s-1790s – from the *Full Moon* in 1764 (‘and very good entertainment I met there’) to his particular favourite, the *White Hart* (‘kept by Pickwick & Wife ... and a very excellent House it is, everything so good & neat &c.’), several times in 1793-5. He and his niece also commended their accommodation at the *Castle*, near St Michael’s church, in 1786, and he thought the new *White Lion* a very good institution, if very expensive, when he had to sleep there in 1793 in order not to miss his Oxford coach leaving at 6am the next morning.<sup>6</sup>



**Left: The Full Moon, c.1800.**  
(Images of Bath)

This represents a high level of satisfaction on Woodforde’s part, yet coaching inns did not suit everybody. For one thing they tended to have a rapid turnover of guests, so there was always much coming and going. Anyone intending to stop at Bath for more than a few days usually regarded their inn as quite temporary accommodation until they found quieter, cheaper lodgings elsewhere. Thus in



1793, as soon as her booked lodgings near the Upper Rooms were free, Hester Piozzi was only too glad to leave the *York House* with its ‘noisy Concourse of ... Gamesters, Rakes &c’.<sup>7</sup> Elizabeth Noel was equally relieved to escape the *Bear* in 1774 (‘so very noisy & dismal & so very indifferent that I cd not forbear crying’) for airy, peaceful rooms in Milsom Street.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, during an overnight stay in 1794 at the *White Hart* while the family hunted for lodgings, Katherine Plymley echoed Parson Woodforde in thinking it ‘an excellent Inn, the business very great but everything managed with regularity & comfort’,<sup>9</sup> and certainly more comfortable, cleaner, and with better beds than the *York House*, where she spent a couple of nights two years later and which had recently (and aptly, given its name) put up the Duke of York and his suite. Only fairly well-heeled guests, such as John Wilkes and his daughter in 1788 and the historian Edward Gibbon in 1793, could afford the *York House*. In 1801 one visitor and his son paid an enormous £200 for five weeks’ bed and board there: tea alone cost them six shillings a day.<sup>10</sup>

Noise and disturbance were always a hazard at inns, especially with coaches and passengers frequently arriving and departing in the night hours. They were bustling places anyway, with multiple functions. Indeed, providing guest accommodation was only the start. As a rule they offered dining and bar or taproom facilities throughout the day not only to resident guests but to casual customers of all kinds. They commonly possessed large, hireable rooms for public and private meetings, exhibitions, auctions, concerts, and other events that attracted a very mixed clientele, and sometimes held horse sales and the like in their outside yards. Besides accommodation for stage coaches and their teams and perhaps a booking office, they kept considerable stabling and standings for visitors’ mounts and private vehicles, as well as for the saddle horses, coaches and chaises that many inns had available for hire on short or long journeys, complete with drivers. Some were involved too in the carriage of goods (and some passengers) by wagon and caravan.<sup>11</sup> Inn yards were therefore often busy places. The *Lamb* in Stall Street and new *White Lion* in the Marketplace (until recently called the *Unicorn*) each had room for around a hundred horses in 1773, as did the *Pelican* in Walcot Street in 1799. And along with the stabling, coaching and carriage hire facilities went a need for fodder stores and accommodation for ostlers, drivers and postilions. Several inns had other attractions as well, such as the cockpit at the *Lamb* with its periodic cockfighting matches c.1729-73, the short-lived theatre at the *Globe* in 1747, and of course billiard tables and coffee rooms. A few advertised ‘ordinaries’ (meals at set times) or an outside catering service, while the *Bear* and *White Hart* excelled in supplying food, drink and table settings for sumptuous Corporation banquets at the Guildhall.

**Right: The White Lion (formerly the Unicorn), in 1779, with lion sculpture over the coach entry. The original White Lion stood a few doors further down the High Street, next to the site of the new Guildhall. Not long after this date the inn was given a smart new frontage with a rear coach entry around the corner in Bridge Street. (Images of Bath)**



All this required a large staff to carry out. In 1798 Eleazor Pickwick at the *White Hart* was employing at least 53, ranging from barmaid and wine porter to hairdresser and chief ostler.<sup>12</sup> He probably had apprentices in training besides, as other inns certainly did. But did he pay his regular staff? A traveller in 1810 claimed that servants at the *White Hart* depended wholly on generous tips, yet a servant there under a previous tenant, Samuel Woodhouse, definitely received a modest wage of three shillings a week plus board.<sup>13</sup> Undoubtedly inn servants did expect gratuities, however, and we find Parson Woodforde recording in his diary the amounts he paid – 6d. apiece to the chambermaid and waiting boy and a shilling to the ostler at the *Full Moon* in 1764; 2s.6d. to all the servants plus 6d. for shaving at the *King’s Arms* in 1765; and 1s.6d. to the chambermaid, 1s. to the waiter, 6d. to the deputy waiter,

and 6d. to the boot-catcher (who pulled off his boots) at the *Christopher* in 1779. A busy inn gave unscrupulous staff opportunities for theft and fraud. One young servant at the *Bear* in 1775 was caught robbing a waiters' box, and a porter at the *White Lion* in 1789 faced dismissal for altering the price set by the clerk of the coaches for transporting a passenger's trunk. There were certainly other cases reported.

Innkeepers needed first-rate organisational skills to keep control of such multifarious businesses and at the same time to make a decent profit. Not all managed it and some went bankrupt. By contrast, Eleazor Pickwick (helped by his wife Susannah) was one who built a highly successful career as he rose from lowly postboy at the *Bear* to become the wealthy occupant of the *White Hart* with a place on Bath Corporation. There were other examples too of effective, well-respected Bath innkeepers, including Thursby Robinson at the *Three Tuns* and later also the *Bear* (c.1722-55), Joseph Phillott at the same two inns (1743-85), Thomas Cook at the *Castle* (1782-93), John Dover at the *Lamb* (from 1774), William Davis at the *Saracen's Head* (1774-88), George Arnold at the new *White Lion* (from 1774), and Robert St.John Lucas at the *York House* (from 1770). Thicknesse's eulogy of the genteel Lucas is some indication of the rising status of innkeepers. Some sixty years earlier it was rather different, when the sister of the then tenant of the *Bear* could be thought disreputable merely for having been 'bred up always in a publick House ... [a] Method of Living not favour'd in the World'.<sup>14</sup>

Generally the innkeeper was only a tenant, not the actual lessee/owner of the property concerned, but was responsible nevertheless for its furnishings, equipment, consumables (including expensive stocks of wines and spirits), and the horses, carriages and gear necessary for the coaching and hire side of the business. All this tied up a good deal of capital. The auction of goods from the *Christopher* when it changed hands in 1782 gives some idea of its contents – four-poster, tester and other bedsteads with cotton, check and linen furnishing; fine goose-feather beds, bolsters, pillows, blankets, quilts and counterpanes; fine bed and table linen; side tables and chairs; chests of drawers, double chests and dining and card tables; basin stands in mahogany and other woods; large Wilton, Turkish and Scottish carpets; pier and swing mirrors in carved and gilt frames; marble slabs and fine boards on iron frames; excellent kitchen equipment; and a huge cellar of wines and spirits (with 1800 bottles of 1775-vintage port given special mention).<sup>15</sup>

Similar items were listed at the *Bear* in 1794, plus lustres and girandoles, ornaments, a patent water-closet, register stoves and grates, a fire engine, a secure iron closet and a safe, and a stock of famous wines – red and white Burgundy, Champagne, Hermitage, Frontignac, Claret, Port, 30-year-old Mountain, and more.<sup>16</sup> The *Bear* went in for quality and even boasted Wedgwood ceramic wine labels, plates and chamber pots.<sup>17</sup> For years a portrait of Beau Nash hung behind the bar until it was stolen in 1794. This was the same year as the auction of contents just referred to when the inn's so-called 'Black Work' was also disposed of – a funeral package consisting of three hearses, four coaches, a chariot, and twelve black horses with sets of harness.

The site of the *Bear* in Cheap Street had long blocked the passageway from Milsom Street into Stall Street, so that even pedestrians could only cross the inn yard at their own risk 'betwixt the heels of a double row of horses, wincing under the curry-combs of grooms and postilions, over and above the hazard of being obstructed, or overturned by the carriages which are continually making their exit or their entrance'.<sup>18</sup> The sale of the inn's contents advertised in 1794 had been ordered in the expectation that the buildings would soon be demolished in order to make the Union Street link, but the Phillott family who held it were demanding an extortionate sum in compensation. The question lay unresolved for a decade, but meanwhile other street improvement schemes of the 1790s were carried out and included setting back and rebuilding the frontages of five inns, among them the *Three Tuns*, *Lamb* and *White Hart* (whose lessee, Samuel Webb, and tenant, Pickwick, received nearly £1900 in return<sup>19</sup>). The actual inn premises and outbuildings were ultimately the responsibility of the lessees to maintain and insure. These were mostly well-to-do residents of Bath and the surrounding area who saw inn properties as a sound investment. Indeed it was common for Corporation members to have a stake in inns, giving them an obvious advantage in negotiating rebuilding projects, land deals, and renewals of lease.

Vital though their function was in regard to the visitor trade, inns played an equally key role within the community as social hubs, meeting places, and centres of business and entertainment. Public meetings often brought in custom from the surrounding district, as Samuel Curwen, travelling over to Bath from Bristol in 1776, well demonstrates:

... alighted at the *Bear Inn*, said to be the best, most frequented, most expensive, and therefore most unsuitable for me ... but in some measure made necessary by my company: these were clothiers, and came to attend a large body of the same occupation from the neighbouring towns in Somerset and Wiltshire, to concert measures to establish, if practicable, the use of the machine called the *Spinning Jenny* ... in this part of the Country, which the weavers &c. did raise a mob to prevent ...<sup>20</sup>



Left: A calotype of the 1850s showing the Greyhound on the west side of the High Street, with sculpture of a greyhound over the entrance.



Right: A deed plan showing the layout of the Greyhound in 1767.

Proprietors of the new hotel at Weymouth gathered at the *Bear* in 1780, and canal company committees at the *Greyhound* and *White Hart* in 1796 and 1798. Bathforum magistrates used the *Angel* in Widcombe, where local residents also got together in 1791 to discuss burning issues. The charitable Pauper Scheme was promoted at the *Bear* with an annual dinner from 1751; Bath artists launched their academy at the *Three Tuns*; and the campaign for Sunday Schools and the Bath & West Agricultural Society both originated in meetings at the *York House*, though the latter body thereafter usually held its annual dinner at the *White Hart*. Masonic lodges, friendly societies, and clubs of all sorts regularly met at their adopted inns for business and pleasure and sometimes to dine, and notably among them the gentlemen's glee-singing groups variously at the *Greyhound*, *Pelican*, *White Lion*, *Bear* and *White Hart*. Old Harrovians and Wykehamists held school reunion dinners at the *White Hart*, and Old Etonians at the *York House*, while William Pulteney entertained the Bathwick builders and their friends at the *Bear* in 1788 after laying the foundation stone of Laura Place. Dozens more examples of such public and private gatherings could readily be quoted.

The ample spaces of inn premises could also accommodate sales and exhibitions. Property auctions and horse or carriage sales were often advertised, as were sales of books, drapery, carpets, glassware, and other goods. More intriguing were some of the shows – oversize oxen, an American bison, a bottle-nosed dolphin, a 'learned canary', or human freaks like the well-known 'Irish giant'. Powell the fire-eater was at the *George* in 1753, and Henry Jenner, nephew of Edward Jenner, at the new *White Lion* in 1789 to vaccinate against smallpox. From the stud stallions available at the *Three Tuns* in the 1730s to the backword contests held outside the old *White Lion* in the 1750s-1760s or the model guillotine on display at the *Angel* on Westgate Street during the French terror of 1793, there was often some spectacle or other to be met with at one of the inns.

In sum then, they were multi-purpose, multi-tasking institutions, of which a short article can convey only a general impression. There is no question they were of central importance to the 18th- and early 19th-century spa economy and social life, and main agents in sustaining the flow of visitors that Bath so depended on. This by no means came to a stop in 1800, for the coaching business was then still in its heyday and the chief Bath inns long held on to their reputation. Speaking of 1814, the actor W.C.Macready remembered the various hotels 'of the first order, but conspicuous among them ... the *York House* and the *White Hart*' with their excellent *table d'hôte* dinners and the high-class company they attracted.<sup>21</sup> Commendations of this kind can be found for decades to come, and of course Charles Dickens's stay at the *White Hart* in 1835 would have lasting repercussions in that joyful celebration of the coaching era, *The Pickwick Papers*.



The White Hart Inn, Stall Street, shortly before demolition in 1867.



'Eleazer Pickwick', by John Sanders. (VAG)

## Notes

1. Much of the evidence for this article comes from otherwise uncited references in the *Bath Chronicle* and *Bath Journal*.
2. Stella Margetson, *Journey by Stages* (London, 1967), p.12.
3. Philip Thicknesse, *The New Prose Bath Guide for the Year 1778* (Bath, 1778), p.62.
4. Claver Morris, *The Diary of a West Country Physician*, ed E.Hobhouse (Rochester, 1934), p.64.
5. *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, ed. Lady Llanover. 2v. in 6 (London, 1861-2), series 1, v.3, p.624.
6. James Woodforde, *The Ansford Diary*, ed. R.L.Winstanley (n.p., 1979), entry for 27-8 Feb 1764; *The Diary of a Country Clergyman*, ed. J.Beresford. 5v. (London, 1924-31), entries for 29 Jun 1786, 12-16 Oct 1793, 29 Jun 1795.
7. *The Piozzi Letters: Correspondence of Hester Lynch Piozzi, 1784-1821*, ed. E.A. and L.D.Bloom, 6v. (Newark, Del., 1989-2002), v.1, letter of 11 Feb 1791.
8. Malcolm Elwin, *The Noels and the Milbankes: their letters.. 1767-1792* (London, 1967), pp.34-5.
9. Ellen Wilson, 'A Shropshire lady in Bath, 1794-1807', *Bath History* v.4, 1992, p.96.
10. *The Piozzi Letters*, v.3, letter of 10 Feb 1801.
11. For a sense of the key role of horses in the city's economy see Trevor Fawcett, 'Georgian horsepower', *Bath Magazine* no.69, Jun 2008, p.42.
12. See the list of contributors to the Voluntary Defence Fund, *Bath Chronicle* 1 Mar 1798.
13. Louis Simond, *Journal of a Tour and Residence in Great Britain 1810 and 1811* (Edinburgh, 1817); *Calendar of Bradford-on-Avon Settlement Examinations...*, ed. P.Hembry, *Wiltshire Record Soc.*, v.46, 1990, no.141, 26 Oct 1773.
14. 'Diary of Thomas Smith, Esq. of Shaw House, Melksham', *Wiltshire Archaeol. and Nat. Hist. Magazine*, v.11, 1869, entry for 16 Sep 1721.
15. *Bath Journal* 21 and 28 Jan 1782.
16. *Bath Journal* 30 Jun 1794.
17. Trevor Fawcett, 'Wedgwood's Bath showrooms' in *Pickpocketing the Rich* (Bath, Holburne Museum, 2002), p.111.
18. Tobias Smollett, *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (London, 1771), Matthew Bramble's letter of 23 April.
19. Jane Root, 'Thomas Baldwin of Bath, architect, 1759-1820; final report to the Awards Panel of the Architects Registration Council ... May 1993', f.23.
20. *The Journal of Samuel Curwen, Loyalist*, ed. A.Oliver. 2v. (Cambridge, Mass., 1972), v.1, p.237, entry for 1 Oct 1776.
21. William Charles Macready, *Macready's Reminiscences*, ed. F.Pollock (London, 1875), v.1, pp.90-1.



## **MR.PULTENEY AND THE MAKING OF PULTENEY BRIDGE AND BRIDGE STREET**

**M. J. R. Rowe**

*At the AGM of the Friends of the Survey on 15 April 2011 Michael Rowe presented a study of the making of Bridge Street and the Bridge. He expressed thanks to those who had helped him in his research, including Mike Chapman and Elizabeth Holland, and to Dan Brown of Bath in Time for provision of images, and Philip Bendall for assistance with slides. This article provides a summary of the talk.*

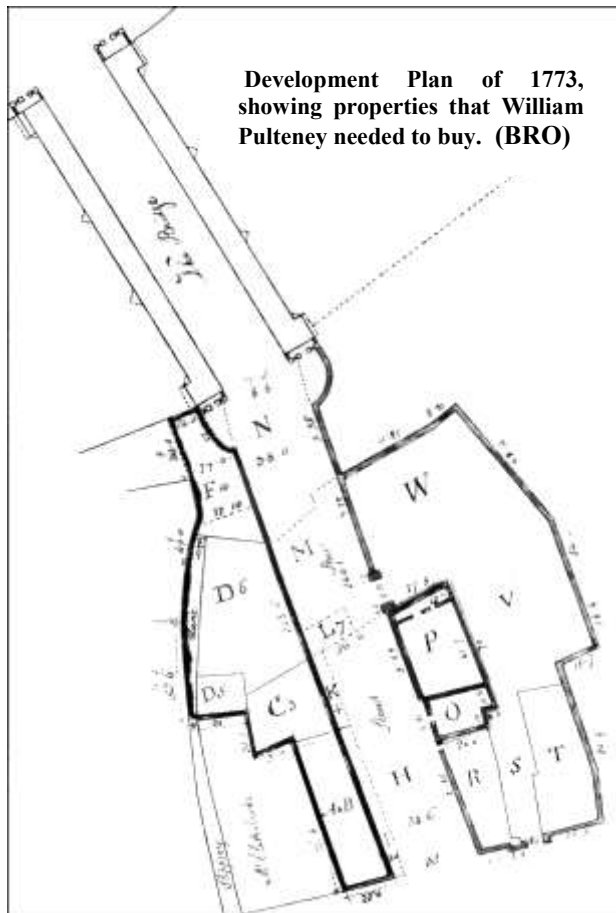
Dr.Rowe pointed out that the quirks of inheritance law on the death of Viscount Pulteney in 1764 gave William Johnstone Pulteney control over the income of his wife Frances who had inherited the huge fortune of William Pulteney Earl of Bath. Before the development of the bridge and Bathwick, the only vehicular crossing from the city to Bathwick was the St.Lawrence Bridge, on the site of the present Churchill Bridge. Early watercolours by Lenz, Robbins and Grigg were used to illustrate the existing situation in 1764 and the proposed site of the redevelopment. Other pictures showed the original passenger ferries across to Bathwick.



Above: 'The City Weir, Bath, looking towards Walcot' by Thomas Ross, showing (inset below) the Bathwick Ferry, later the site of Pulteney's Bridge. (VAG)



From the death of Lord Bath in 1764 negotiations with the council were under way to build a parade along the riverside, from Orange Grove to Walcot, to enhance the access from the Lower Town and Pump Room to the new Upper Town. This suited Pulteney well, as his ownership of abundant springs on Bathwick Down allowed him to negotiate with the council for compulsory purchases and transfers of property between the High Street and the river, in return for a new water supply and support in Parliament for bridging the river.

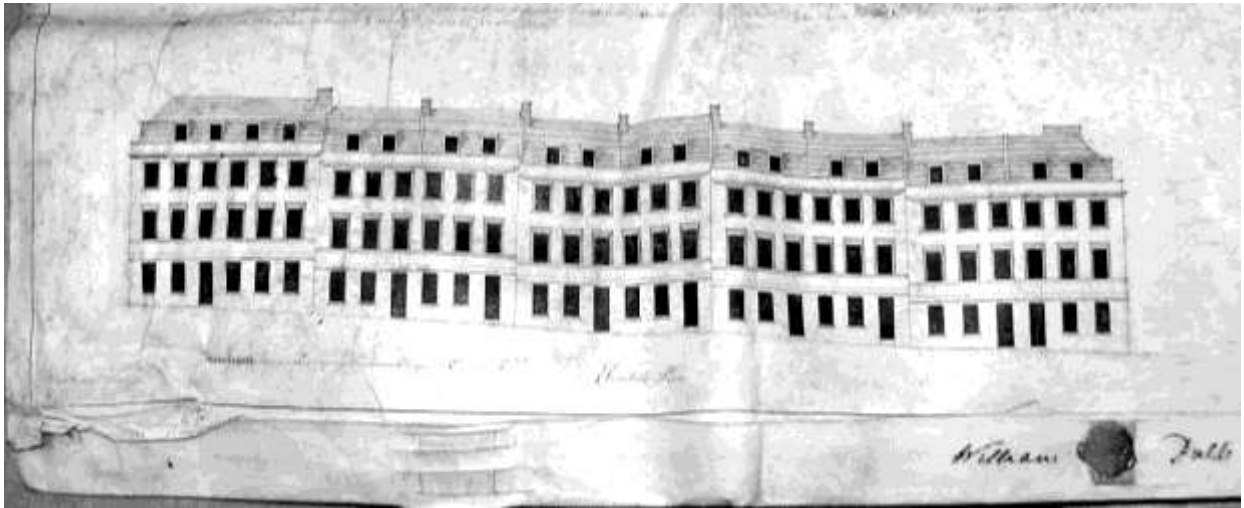


The White Lion Inn and property owned by Messrs, Grace, Bishop and Brookman, and the properties owned by Alderman Collibee were central to the scheme as were the site of St. Mary's church, partly used as a prison, and Slippery Lane. Deeds, drawings, and the development control plan were shown, and the sums demanded by the owners demonstrated. Colin Johnston kindly brought to the meeting the original main deed for the whole street. This bears Pulteney's signature and the family seal showing the Pulteney arms.

Those parts of the site owned by the council were transferred to Pulteney, but he had to pay £6,190 to buy out Collibee and the others and he was required to provide the site of a new prison on Bathwick. The cost was more than twice the mortgage raised by Pulteney by the 1769 Act of Parliament. To secure the development he had to raise further money and put in some of his own. By the end of the project in 1774 he had spent over £11,000 almost as much as the Earl of Bath spent on the whole of the Bathwick estate in 1726.

**Below: Detail from Thomas Robins' 'Prospect of Bath', c.1750, showing the churches of St. Mary and St. Michael (centre and right), together with the buildings cleared for the Pulteney Bridge. (British Museum)**





**The elevation of the north side of Bridge Street shown on the lease to William Pulteney. (BRO)**

Such was the difference in levels between the High Street and Bathwick that the Bathwick side had to be raised on double basements and Pulteney had plans for extensive underground stables beneath what was to become Laura Place. Pulteney also had to cross the route of the city wall but there is no specific record of permission being granted by the council. Correspondence exists, however about a 'parapet' that Pulteney thought he had purchased. More research is required.



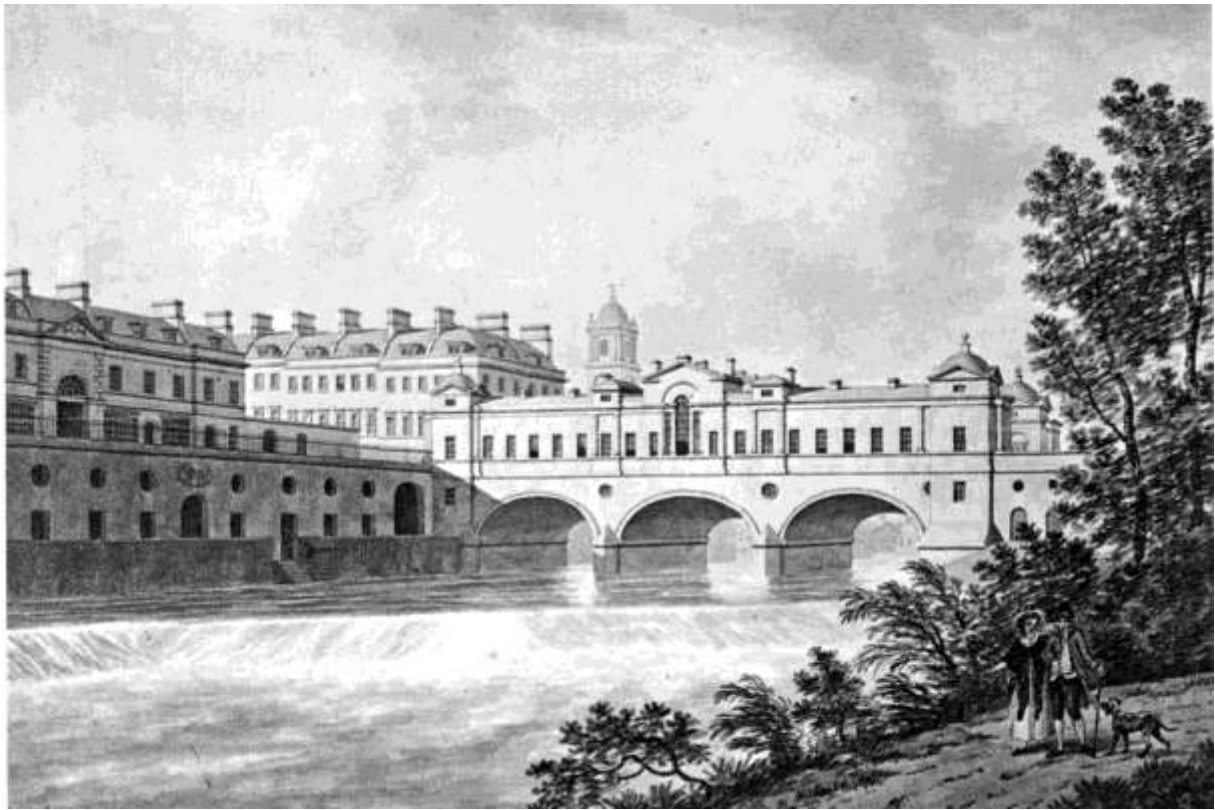
**The south side of Bridge Street, left, on the north side of the White Lion, in 1850. (VAG)**

Having gained control of the property on the south side of the proposed Bridge Street, Pulteney used only a small part of it and sold on the major part of the White Lion at a profit, although this was insufficient to make up the shortfall in costs. New pictures were shown of the basements of the Victoria Art Gallery, built in 1899/1900 after the final demolition of the White Lion. Richard Mann's description of the excavation of the site does not appear to include drawings despite Roman and other remains being found.

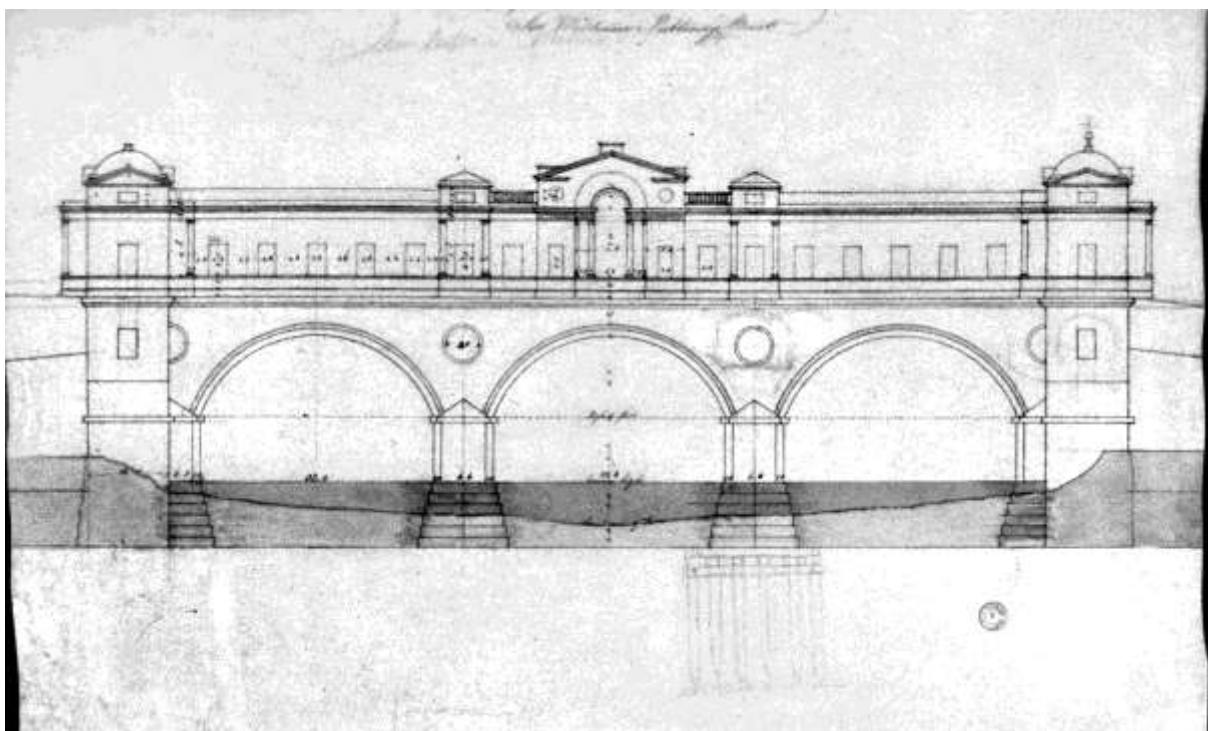
Much of the extensive stabling at riverside level behind the inn still survives. The oblique course of steps and atypical masonry under the Gallery were shown which may contribute to the understanding of the location of remains of the wall. The work of Peter Davenport on St.Mary's church and the route of the wall was published in the recent issue of *Bath History* and the Survey's Journal and is in accord with these observations. Pictures were also shown of surviving vaults underneath the Gallery and



Bridge Street over which Pulteney retained control, and he entered into negotiations for their future use. The vaults and early masonry require further appraisal.



**White Lion Stables (left), shown on a 1785 watercolour of Pulteney Bridge by Thomas Malton. (VAG)**



**The Adam elevation of Pulteney Bridge.**

**(Sir John Soane's Museum)**



The original proposals for the bridge were explored showing Paty's drawing and the Adam drawings from Sir John Soane's Museum. The controversy over the alteration in the scale of the bridge and the addition of shops was further examined; the delays occasioned by increasing the width of the bridge by 20 feet and the weakness in foundations at the time were revealed by the Adam letters. The contribution of the subsequent collapses, during flooding, to the current appearance of the bridge after rebuilding, and later conservation and restoration projects, were outlined.

Dr. Rowe indicated that further appraisal of the surviving masonry beneath the Gallery and a search for drawings by Richard Mann offer opportunities for further extension of this work. The chance to study the Duck, Son and Pinker site would be welcome now that the premises are vacant. These include part of the property purchased by Pulteney, and his intention to purchase the two sites on the High Street now occupied by Milsom's and the next door shop, to allow construction of a small terrace, needs further assessment.

[Note: Milsom's is advertised for sale, summer 2011.]



**Pulteney's vaults below Bridge Street, under the bridge abutments. (MJR)**

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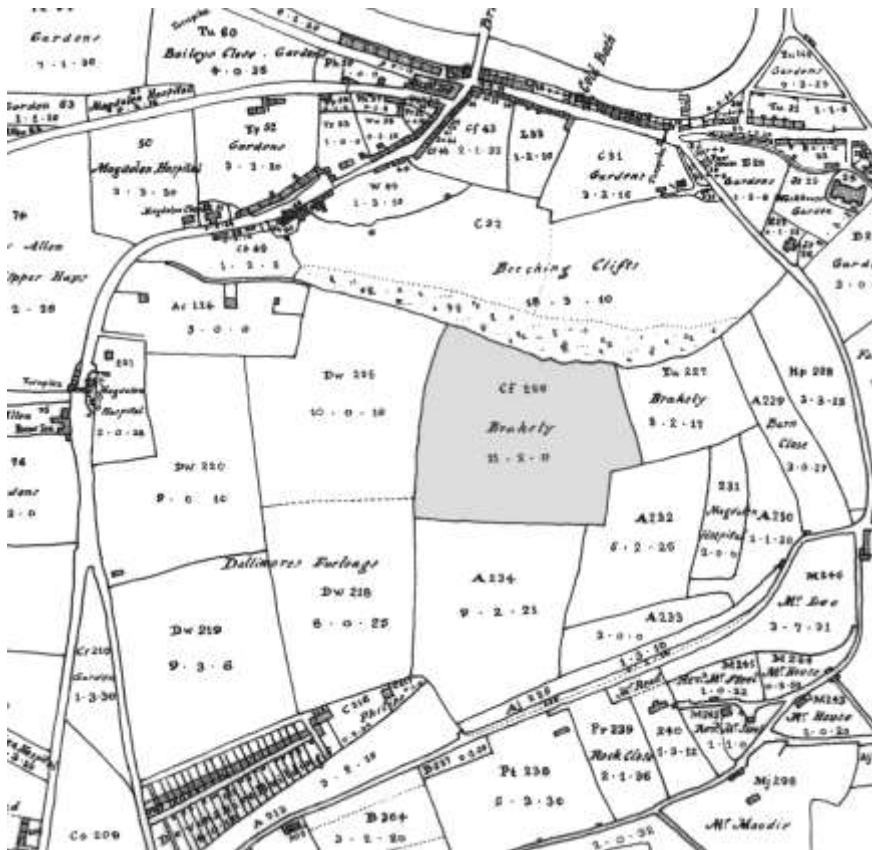
## ALEXANDRA PARK

### Margaret Burrows

Last year a number of residents, in the area around the Council-owned Alexandra Park and Lyncombe Hill fields, formed an organisation to preserve and help maintain the park. On 10 July 2011 they held a special festival. The views are spectacular and, but for the enthusiasm of some councillors in 1896, the area could have been covered in houses.

The idea of a public park was first discussed at a meeting of the Pleasure Gardens Committee. The owners of Holloway Farm, mostly Mr.Hole, adjacent to Lyncombe Hill fields and adjoining Wellsway, were taking steps to develop their land for housing. Not much happened until 1898 when the Council resolved that the Committee should ascertain 'upon what terms a portion of land could be acquired by the corporation for the purpose of a public park or cliff drive or both'. Such a spectacular viewpoint should be freely available to the public.

The surveyor to the owner of a plot (Mr.C.F.Hole) offered to arrange the sale of a field of about 11 acres at the rate of £300 per acre and some building land at £500 per acre. This was exactly the plot shown on the Charlton map of 1799 then owned by a Mr.Colthurst and still the same shape today. It was then the major part of what was known as Blakeleigh, leased out as grazing land.



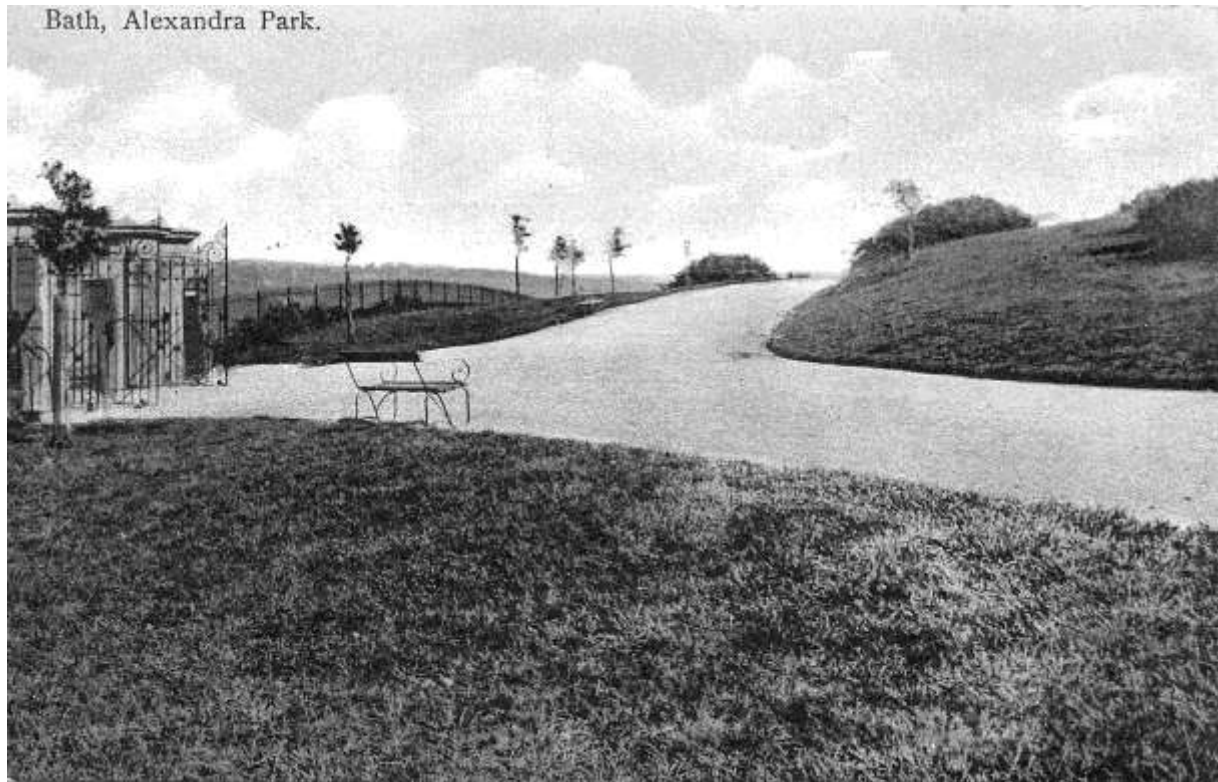
Extract copied from the Charlton map showing plot 226 'Brakely' (shaded), later the site of Alexandra Park.

Plots 218, 219, 220 & 225, 'Dallimore's Furlongs', were the grounds occupied by the Bath and West Agricultural Show

It wasn't until July 1899 that a provisional agreement was made with Mr.Hole to purchase the land for £2750. The surveyor estimated that a further £1000 would be needed for the drive encircling the land and for fencing, and £250 for laying out the park with plants and trees. By January 1900 a loan was agreed and sanctioned by the Local Government Board for

all but £40.

Work was soon going ahead and in August tenders were sought for a fine pair of gates for the entrance. In 1877 the centenary Bath and West Agricultural Show had been held on the fields close to the plot. Another show was planned for 1900 and the council were concerned to arrange with the show promoters to fence off the park to protect it. They hoped that at 5 feet it would be an 'unclimbable fence'. The circular drive was completed by 1901 with an area set aside in the middle of the park for children to play.



**Above: An early postcard view (colour tinted) of the Alexandra Park Gates. Although postmarked 1906, the original photograph was probably taken soon after the opening of the park, similar to the view of the approach road shown below. (Courtesy of John Brushfield)**

**Below: The same view today.**



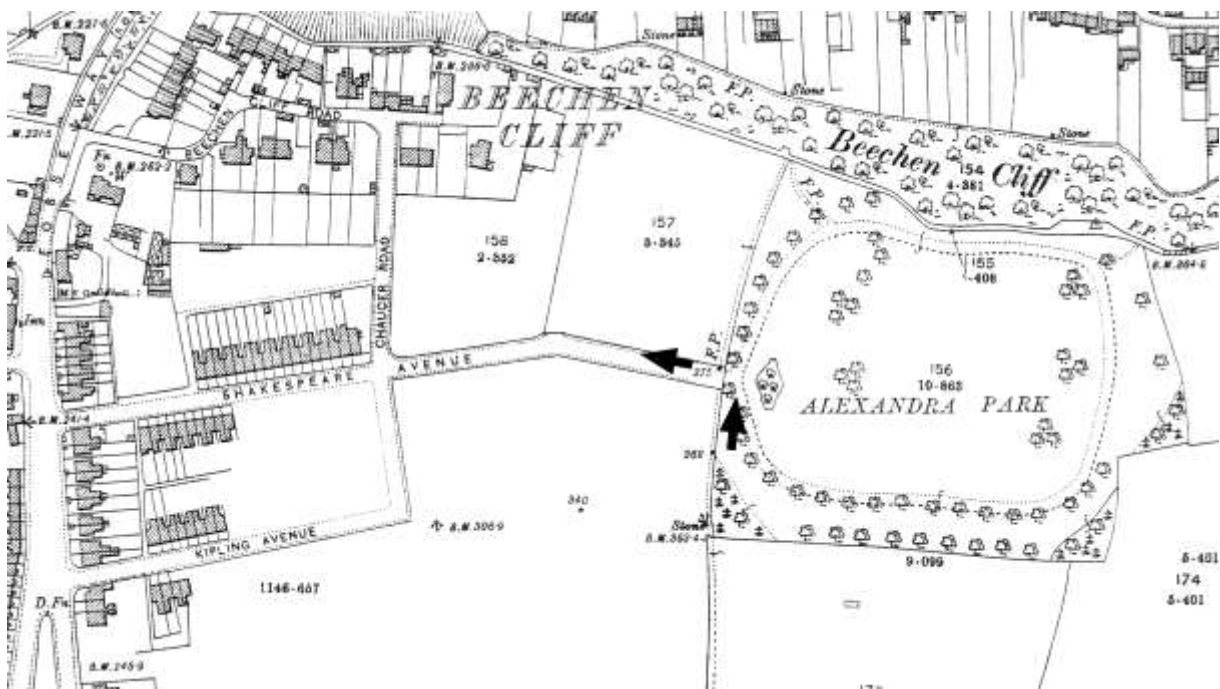
The Council had realised the need for a vehicle route up to the park and had agreed with the owners of the building land, mostly Mr.Hole (once Dallaway's land) for access from Wellsway. This was to be Shakespeare Avenue and by 1901 the first few houses were completed.



Photo by) ROAD LEADING TO ALEXANDRA PARK. (W. Rossiter,

Above: A photograph of the approach road to the new park (Shakespeare Avenue), published in the August 1903 edition of the *Bath & County Graphic*.

Below: Detail from the 1902 OS 25 inch map. The two views shown above are marked with arrows.



Near by the park, bordering Holloway, the wood and land above the horse trough were called Magdalen Gardens, purchased by the Council in 1868 from the Bruton Estate, who had owned them since the death of Hugh Sexey early in the 17th century. The gardens had always been leased out for grazing and for the springs. The Council had leased it because of the water and at times sublet it but maintained rights over the springs. Cotterell's map of 1854 shows the water tanks and adits under the ground, used until the building of the Somerset and Dorset railway led to pollution and the drying-up of the springs. By 1901 the land was in need of a 'tidy up'. Members of the Council suggested that the Pleasure Gardens Committee should take charge of it and turn it into a park linking up with Alexandra park above. A zig-zag path was to be made and shrubs to be planted.

By April 1902 Alexandra Park was almost ready. Bye-laws were very strict. Hardly any games were allowed and it wasn't until much later that a bandstand was built, and a bowling green in 1914. The plan was to call it Beechen Cliff Park but then King Edward's Park was suggested. This was followed by (Queen) Alexandra Park. The opening was planned for 26 June, the day of the coronation. The King was taken ill with appendicitis and the nation feared for his health. The opening was delayed but only until the following Monday. It was felt that 'the inauguration of so acceptable an open space should no longer be delayed'. Messages were sent to Edward wishing him a speedy recovery and on 30 June the opening ceremony took place.

A procession led by the Mayor (Mr.E.E.Phillips) in his scarlet robe and chain of office, with the city swordbearer, the mace bearers, the Town Clerk and various councillors, approached the gate at the top of Shakespeare Avenue. The chairman of the Pleasure Gardens Committee (Colonel Arnold Davis) presented the Mayor with a special gold key bearing the civic crown and enamelled arms of Bath, with which to open the gate. The Mayor addressed the company, saying, 'We must congratulate ourselves- on the splendid weather, which I feel sure is a happy augury for the enjoyment which will be given to those who use the park. The park will be open for ever to the public of Bath.' The Mayor then planted an oak tree with a special spade.

The Mayor and City Council decided to use Henrietta Park and Alexandra Park for the next coronation ceremony after King Edward, that of George V and Queen Mary. At 7 a.m. on 22 June 1911, people in the new avenues were awoken by the royal salute of 21 guns fired from Beechen Cliff, while simultaneously a peal was played on the Abbey bells. The spectacular evening event took place in the park. At 9 p.m. a torchlight procession assembled in Queen Square and proceeded up Wells Road entering the park through the Shakespeare Avenue gate. There were 500 men organised by the Friendly Societies, half carrying Japanese lanterns and half with torches (paraffin guaranteed to last 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> hours). They formed a circle round the bonfire which covered an area of 12ft x 12ft. It was lit at 10 p.m., as well as coloured fires to light up the foliage. Then there was a firework display. This was probably the biggest event ever to take place in Alexandra Park. There have been other bonfires to mark special occasions.

In April 1942 bombs fell in Beechen Cliff Road and the Poet avenues, destroyed the toilets in the park and damaged trees. (The big Air-raid shelter in the park had saved the lives of up to a hundred people.) A week later George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited the park to view the damage done to the city.

The special attraction of the park was the amazing 360 degree view, especially looking north over the city to the top of Lansdown and the more rural views to the East, over Widcombe and Lyncombe with its grand houses, Prior Park, Crowe Hall and Widcombe Manor and the church of St.Thomas à Becket.

## **Sources**

*The Bath Chronicle* 1901-1903

The Minutes of Bath City Council, 1896 onwards.

Maps: The Charlton Map of 1799: Cotterell 1854, O.S.1904.



## THE ROYAL BATH AND WEST CENTENARY SHOW 1877

Colin Johnston

*Based on part of a talk given to the History of Bath Research Group on Thursday 17 March 2011. The speaker did not offer a consecutive history of the Bath and West, since this had already been done elsewhere, such as in Kenneth Hudson's volume published in 1977 (also in Helena Lim's article covering the Society from 1777 to 1851, in Bath History Volume VI, 1996). The talk began with details of some of the outstanding members of the Society, as described in the Newsletter of the History of Bath Research Group (Issue 63, Spring/Summer 2011). As well as being Principal Archivist of B&NES, Colin Johnston is Honorary Archivist of the Royal Bath and West Society.*

The Society could not have chosen any other location than Bath for its centenary Show in 1877. Heavy rains during the setting up of the Showground gave way to a week of fine weather for the Show, which lasted for a full six days, Monday to Saturday, contributing to what was then judged one of the most extensive and successful Shows to date. The only cloud over events was the disaster of the Widcombe footbridge collapse, killing a number of Show visitors. This is well documented and this article will concentrate on the truly 'Bath' events of the landmark Show, drawing largely on the *Bath Chronicle* reports of the week.

The Monday morning opening is described in the *Chronicle's* own style of the day: lyrical prose with a smattering of hard fact:

The Exhibition was opened on Monday under the most favourable circumstances. The weather was as fine as could be desired and consequently large numbers of people attended the Show, which in some departments was the largest ever held by the Society. The implements on the ground are equal in quantity to those shown at Bristol (in 1874) and Falmouth (in 1868) together, and the entries of livestock are also remarkably good. In connection with the latter part of the Show, it is pleasing to be able to record that the animals are of a superior character, there being scarcely anything which is not fit to come into a Showyard.

The fields, parts of which two days before were like rivers of mud, had become nearly dry, and as it had been rolled into something like a level condition, it was impossible to conjecture what it had been so short a time before.

The site chosen was at Bear Flat, then open fields, but today covered with the housing of Poets' Corner (Kipling, Longfellow, Shakespeare Avenue etc.).

Although widely reported as one of the Society's biggest Shows ever, from the number of exhibits and entries, this centenary Show would have been even greater were it not for an outbreak of cattle-plague in England earlier that year so that the consequent restrictions on cattle movement in certain areas prevented some exhibitors from attending.

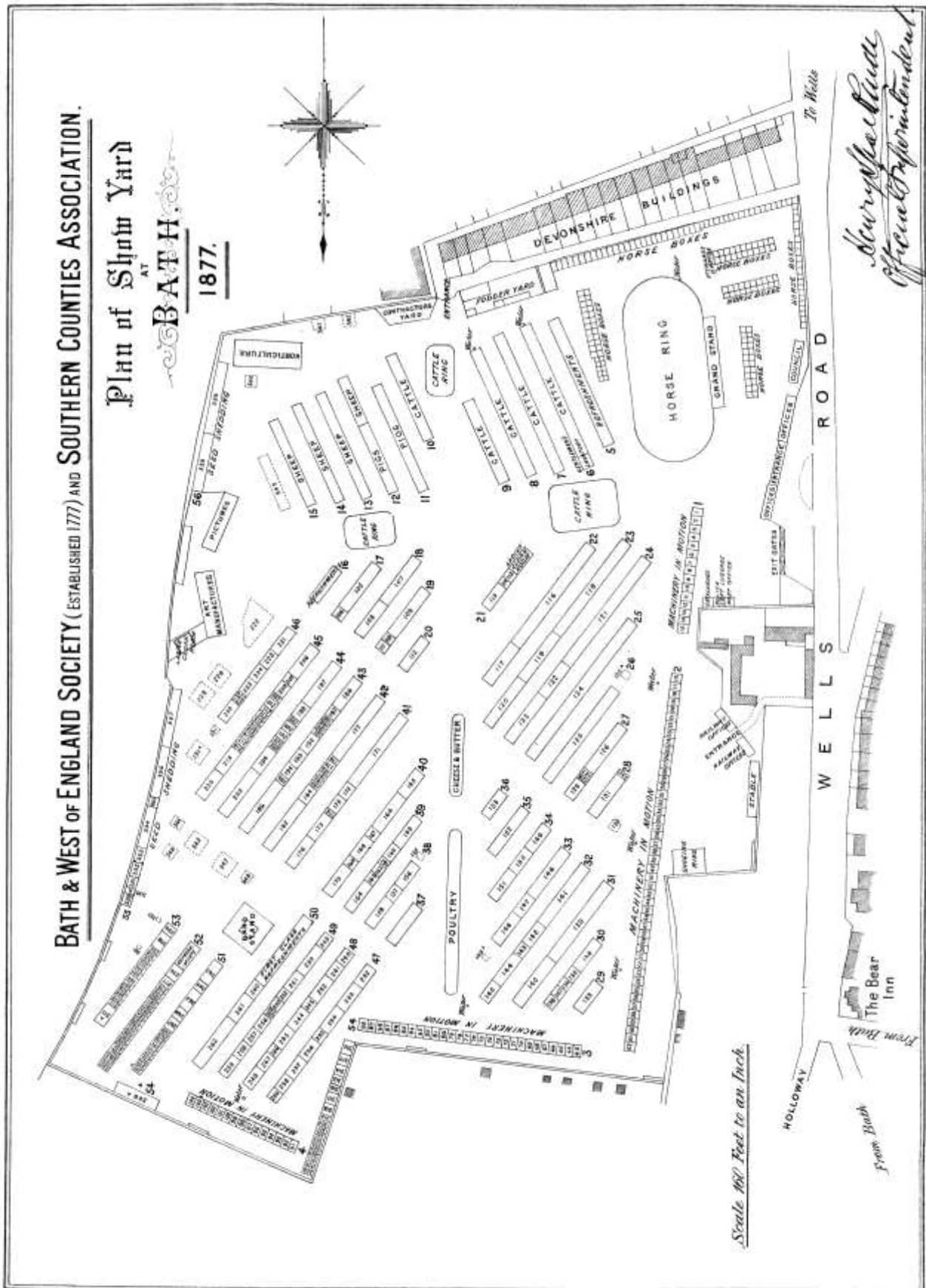
The Society's Secretary, in presenting his annual report that week, listed the record-breaking elements of the Show's success:

|                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| cattle entries | 325 |
| sheep          | 221 |
| horses         | 163 |
| pigs           | 106 |
| cheese         | 79  |
| butter         | 48  |
| poultry        | 339 |
| pigeons        | 81  |

[TOTAL = 1,362]

Exhibitors of implements and other goods = 289.





**The plan of the layout of the showground published by the Society**

In addition to the horse-shoeing competition, there was a competition for Honiton lace, and a very large art competition. This was supplemented by a loan exhibition of fine art from local owners, and manufactured goods such as fine china, furniture and horse-drawn carriages from manufacturers and retailers.

It is no surprise that in that age of mechanization of agriculture, the exhibition and demonstration of farm implements occupied by far the greatest space on the Showground. Almost all the manufacturers were from elsewhere in the UK, a long distance from Bath.

The evidence seems to show that whichever town was chosen for the Show in the 19th and 20th centuries, the Society believed in 'showcasing' local manufacturers and retailers, giving them the opportunity to exhibit the best of their goods to a local audience. We can therefore highlight the Bath content of the 1877 Show. From the *Chronicle*:

Mr. Samuel Griffin, of the Kingston Iron Works Bath, exhibits at stand 96 several [steam] engines, two of which of vertical shape are newly designed by the maker. The intention of the designer has been to produce a greater simplicity in combination with efficiency, and the noticeable feature about them is that the bearings are closed up, and consequently free from dust and dirt. These engines will moreover, run for a whole day without requiring a second application of oil.



Samuel Griffin, who started his business in Bath in 1869, later became well known as an inventive designer of internal combustion engines, as can be seen from the letterhead above. One of his engines is preserved in the Bristol Industrial Museum, bearing the nameplate shown above.

The *Chronicle* demonstrates that people were cooking with gas as early as 1877:

Mr. Charles Hall, of 39 Broad Street, Bath, exhibits specimens of his atmospheric gas-cooking stoves, one of which presents some new features, viz. an oven on one side for baking and another opposite for roasting, with a broiler in the centre which can be converted into a cheerful fire. It has a boiler for hot water, and seems well capable of securing what its designer claims for it - a maximum amount of heat at a minimum cost of gas.

Digressing from Bath manufacturers, another item on a domestic theme catches our attention:

Stand 145. The visitor, particularly of the softer sex, will be tempted to linger over the articles of household utility exhibited by Messrs. Bradford and Co. of the Crescent Iron Works, Manchester. The washing machines of this firm are so well known as to scarcely need any description in these columns, but we may briefly refer to two which come under the category of new implements. The first is their patent 'Shuttle' machine, the operative principle of which, as the name implies, is that of a shuttle or shuttle-dash, which upon the slightest oscillation of the lever handle (almost without an effort) is self-acting, the user standing in the easiest possible upright position operating at will either in the gentlest manner upon the most delicate and costly lace, or - according to the angle of working and the increased momentum of the shuttle-dash - upon the heaviest fabric, with, as the makers affirm, certain cleansing effect, while the advancing wave of suds follows up the stroke of the dash, and the receding or returning wave constantly changes the position of the clothes.

In an effort to outshine its competitors, another exhibitor even offered to wash your clothes for you, as a demonstration:

At Stand 305, the exhibitors are Messrs. Wolstencroft and Co. of Ludgate Hill, London, who have on view a washing and wringing machine, with which they offer to cleanse all the dirty clothes which may be brought to them at the Show. The washer consists of a couple of corrugated and two smooth carrying rollers placed on a tub, and these work together and act upon the clothes in the same way as the knuckles in the 'old' plan of washing. An 'endless cloth' around the lower rollers prevents the clothes from becoming entangled, and supplies the soap. The makers claim for their wringer that it turns with half the labour of other machines of a similar character.

Particular prominence is given to Bath manufacturers in describing exhibitors of horse-drawn carriages; five local makers are listed:

Messrs. S. & A. Fuller of Kingsmead Street displayed 30 different models including landaus and phaetons;

Messrs. E. & H. Vezey of Milsom Street and Long Acre, London Road, showed a number of phaetons with various novelty refinements;

Also exhibiting were: - J. Swaffield of Walcot Street and F. B. Smith of Green Street.

Greatest space was reserved for the firm of B. T. Newnham of Broad Street, whose novelty of the year was a landau with removable front-facing glass windows, 'The Mimosa Patent Glass-Front Landau'.

The *Chronicle* reports:

They have constructed the front part of this landau of glass instead of leather, in such a manner as to avoid the slightest difficulty in folding up; and, without trouble, the coachman by rising and lifting slightly his seat, can lower the entire upper part of the landau into a horizontal position underneath his seat.

When closed, the charms of a glass-fronted carriage are found to be very great - from affording not only a good light but an admirable view of surrounding objects.

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POST OFFICE BATH

**BENJAMIN NEWNHAM & SON**  
**COACH MAKERS**  
**BLADUD BUILDINGS & SPRING GARDENS,**  
**BATH.**

INVENTORS AND PATENTEES OF THE  
**"MIMOSA" WAGONETTE,**  
WITH FOLDING HEAD.



By this perfect invention the entire Head is lowered beneath the Coachman's seat, so simple are the Automatic Fittings, which are inserted under the trimmings, that a lady may open and close the Head, and the roof will carry luggage without any fear of derangement. Light and handsome character.

The Patent "**COMBINETTE**" LANDAU, with new French Glass Frame Holders, which enable the occupants to open the doors without lowering the glasses. Three cwt. lighter and wheels 20 inches closer than the ordinary Landau. The "**REWSDEN**" Phaeton (Registered), a newly designed light and elegant driving phaeton of immense utility for road, park, or station work. This new Carriage will supersede all Stanhope Phaetons. Built in three sizes

|                                      |                               |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Patented Inventions.</i>          | <i>Registered Inventions.</i> |
| The "Mimosa" Glass-front Landulette, | The "Gadolette,"              |
| The "Ladies' Step,"                  | The "Sulkette,"               |
| The "Signal" Phaeton,                | The "Rewsden,"                |
| The "Combinette" Landau,             | The "Gadabout."               |

The comparative weights of various models of carriages were clearly a concern, and lightness was evidently a selling point:

While not discarding old and approved models, Messrs.Newnham have the boldness to introduce improvements where their experience and taste shows them to be needed, and by employing hickory wheels and mild steel in lieu of iron, they have been able to bring out some of the lightest works to be found in the market.

You would of course expect a major manufacturer of Bath such as Stothert & Pitt to feature somewhere in this showcase of industry, and it appears with a surprising product, indicative of the firm's wide-ranging interests at that period. This quote comes from the Society's *Annual Report*, with an article by Joseph Darby on implements and machinery exhibited:

Messrs.Stothert & Pitt exhibited an interesting set of photographs of machinery constructed at their works in Bath for making large blocks of Portland-cement concrete, and building with them breakwaters, sea-walls, and harbour-work. These massive machines travel upon rails laid on the finished work as it advances, and will deposit a block of 40 tons weight at 50 feet in advance; being self-propelled, they steam back inland on the approach of heavy weather. This plan, first introduced by Mr.Parkes at Kurrachee, and recently at Madras, has been adopted by Sir John Coode at East London Harbour in Africa, at Colombo, and at Jersey. It has entirely superseded the old expensive mode of timber staging, which was constantly being destroyed by the sea.

Messrs.Stothert & Pitt also exhibited the 'MESSENT'S PATENT CONCRETE MIXER', used for making the blocks, and the travelling steam-crane used for quarrying the stone; also a piece of rivetted work cut through the middle to show the perfection of steam-rivetting; and a boiler of 'Siemen's steel', flanged and twisted in every direction.

The flower-tent is always the most dazzling display at today's Bath and West Shows, and it is likely to have been equally true in 1877, although priority seems to have been given the Victorians' love of palm-trees and ferns. The *Chronicle* reported:

The horticultural tent, which was opened at 2 o'clock on Monday, is generally one of the most popular departments of the Show, and the display this year is no exception to the rule. The number of plants is not great, not so large as one may at least have expected, the exhibition lacking the tempting inducement of money-prizes, but some grand plants are stored, and make a very imposing display. The centre of the tent is occupied by some splendid palms and tree-ferns, the former from the houses of Mr.Pilgrim of Cheltenham, who carried off the premier honours at the Bath Show last month. [The Bath Flower Show, still nowadays held in May.]

Besides the palms already mentioned, he sends 3 large and handsome trees, which grace the upper end of the tent. They are the fan-palm, the *Cycas revoluta* or King Sago Palm (a magnificent specimen in bloom, measuring some 12 feet across, and the *Cycas circinalis* or Queen Sago palm, almost equally large.

Picking out local names from the exhibitors, we have:

Mr.H.W.Tugwell of Crowe Hall (and his gardener William Carmichael), contributes a superb collection of the favourite Clematis, several very fine heaths, a very pretty Pimelia and a striking Hederoma ...

Mr.R.B.Cater staged several stands of choice roses. On Tuesday, a small, but excellent collection of tea-roses was added; for amateurs' prize, Sir Frederick Bathurst of Clarendon Park, Salisbury, and Mr.Richard B.Cater of Bath were the competitors, the former being awarded the cup. Mr.Cater's show, though considered by the judges to be inferior to that of Lord Bathurst [sic], did the exhibition great credit.

Interestingly, the latter's gardener is also listed, getting the credit he undoubtedly deserved. He is Joseph Hann.

The Art competition was heavily over-subscribed, and from near 600 pictures submitted, the Art Committee nevertheless found room to hang 176 oils and 198 watercolours.

More interesting to study is the report on the loan-exhibition of fine-art from local owners; who were the local art-collectors, and what calibre of art were they willing to lend, for exhibition in a shed, in a field, for a week?

Looking through the list, there are works by artists famous today: a Zoffany, Benjamin and Thomas Barker, and Herring. John Stone, Town Clerk of Bath, lent a Breughel. The mayor, Jerom Murch, lent a picture by Henry Murch (clearly a relative). The Shum family lent works, as did Mr.J.T.Rainey, auctioneer, who clearly had his own private art collection (as well as advertising the fact that one picture on display would later be sold by him on behalf of the Rev.Wm.F.Shaw of Beechen Cliff Villa).

The shed housing 'Art Manufactures' gave local retailers the opportunity to display high quality artistic wares. These would appear to comprise mainly fine furniture and china, but it is an insight into Victorian shopping to see what the few selected Bath retailers were exhibiting. The *Chronicle* reports:

The Art Manufactures are arranged in a commodious building at the far end of the Showground, and though it is as distant from the entrance as possible, it is one of those portions of the exhibition which are best patronized.

One of the most striking stands in it is that belonging to Mr.Carey of Northgate Street, where persons who have a love for art in pottery can pass a very pleasant half-hour ... there are charming specimens of the work of some of our best painters on china ... Worcester-ware, and Minton.

Mr.Carey ... has another stand ... where are displayed some of the finest specimens of majolica sent out by our present manufacturers, notably perhaps fountains, and life-size representations of deer, dogs, etc., many of which were modelled from creatures which had a history. For instance, a fox-hound is described as a facsimile of a favourite dog belonging to the Duke of Sutherland, and a stag and deer are copies of majolica presented by the Marchioness of Ely as a birthday gift to her Majesty the Queen.

Also exhibiting were:

Messrs.Knight and Son, of Milsom Street: 'Some fine cabinets, with Wedgwood medallions, and a Queen Anne chimney-piece, show the excellent taste and cleverness of design which characterize the work of this firm, which produces articles noted for solidity as well as beauty'.

Mr.Kendall, of Milsom Street: ' ... had on show a handsome fire-grate of electric plate and ormolu, set in a beautiful white marble chimney-piece. The gas chandeliers, too, are worthy of notice.'

On the stand of Mr.W.B.Bartrum of Milsom Street is a nice collection of furniture, including a fine ormolu cabinet bearing plaques by Minton.

Messrs.Milsom and Son exhibit a number of improved pianos and American Organs, on which performances are given morning and evening by Mr.H.M.Higgs of London.

Messrs.Jolly and Son of Milsom Street, who are widely and justly celebrated for their black silks, show the mode of manufacture with a loom, at which a workman is producing the fabric for which this firm is so famous.

A collection of silver plate, including the trophies given at the Bath and West meeting, is exhibited by Messrs.Payne & Company of Milsom Street.

As one can picture, this part of the Showground was almost a Milsom Street in miniature, with the additional entertainment of performances on the American Organ, and the Silk weaver in action. As one of the most crowded and popular venues, the noise must have been at times unbearable.

Not only was the Showground at Bear Flat packed with displays to be viewed, for those of a more serious agricultural interest there were trials of machinery and implements on fields nearby. The *Chronicle* reports:

The reaping and mowing commenced on Monday, the former in a 20-acre field of rye at Southstoke (near the Cross Keys public house), in the occupation of Mr.Andrews. 19 Makers intimated their intention of engaging in friendly rivalry, but two of them did not put in an appearance, and another collapsed. [The machine, presumably, not the exhibitor.] Otherwise the trials were highly successful, and some most excellent work was performed.

The mowing took place in a couple of adjoining fields in the occupation of Mr.Tucker of Englishcombe Lane, consisting of 28 acres. The same firms who engaged in the reaping trials were represented in the mowing [17 in number.] Both trials were well attended by agriculturalists, and much interest appeared to be taken in the contests.

There were fewer present to watch the trials of the steam-ploughs on Mr.Wason's land, doubtless owing to its being at such a great distance from the Showground [Inglesbatch], nearly 3 miles. Two firms only were represented.

On Tuesday the trials of implements were continued, no less than four different contests taking place. The mowing began at 10 o'clock in the adjacent fields in Englishcombe Lane of Mr.H.Spackman and Mrs.Tucker. The crops of grass in both instances were perhaps the best that have been grown for many years for these trials.

With 11 mowing-machines, and 8 hay-makers, even the horses used to power these were hired locally and their owners credited in the press: Mr.Gibbons of Tunley Farm; Mr.Mason of Englishcombe; Mr.Keeling of Priston; Mr.Hooper of Wellow; Mr.Corner of Englishcombe; and Mr.Hedges of Southstoke.

The *Chronicle* provides lengthy descriptions of how nearly every street displayed bunting and lights for the visitors to the Show, and although one may have seen 19th century postcards or photographs of the Guildhall lit up for royal anniversaries, the newspaper reports reveal a much bigger picture of how tradesmen and householders all entered into the spirit of decorating the city for the Bath and West's centenary. On 5 June 1877 the *Chronicle* wrote:

Under the superintendence of the Decoration Committee, the city has during the past few days been rapidly assuming a gay and festive appearance. Each of the streets radiating from the centre of the city seems to strive not to be behindhand in giving a hearty welcome to the great Society which started here, and, still bearing the city's name, has come back more vigorous than ever to spend its centenary.

The damp weather of the past week greatly retarded the progress of the decorations. Cartloads of evergreens have been deposited in the streets, and the attention of passengers for the past few days has been attracted by the somewhat difficult work of raising the arches which now span our principal streets. Though fears were expressed that they would be unable to withstand the heavy currents of wind, yet we have heard of only one instance, that in Charles Street, in which the elements had the victory, the storm on Thursday night bringing the arch to the ground with a crash.

Standing at the foot of the Wells Road on Saturday evening, we noticed a circular arch decorated with evergreens and flags, with a shield at its apex, whilst a similar arch was thrown across the bottom of Holloway. In Southgate Street, three circular arches cross the street,



bearing shields and flags of various devices, each arch having underneath a row of gas-jets well calculated to illuminate it at night.

A very fair show of bunting has also been made by the private residents both in Southgate and Stall Streets. A similar display is made on the Broad Quay.

Avon Street has gone ahead in the matter of arches and evergreens. Many a time have the inhabitants of this street been heard to refer to it as 'one of the leading streets of the town', and in this instance at least the boast proves in some degree correct. Most of the arches in the other streets, while very imposing from their broad and lofty span, are similar in construction, but the four erections in Avon Street are each of a different design, of two and even three stages, and illuminated in different ways. This warm-hearted colony, whatever may be its defects in other ways, has certainly done even more than its share to the general display, and is quite proud of it.

But 'the arch of the period' is most undoubtedly the one erected at the Saw Close, and known as 'The Marble Arch', and 'Mr. Butcher's Arch', each description being not quite in accordance with fact. It is however a most substantial-looking structure of three arches, two narrow ones for footways, and a broad one for the road. It is of woodwork coloured white, the arches being outlined with evergreens, and trophies of flags very tastily arranged over each of the side arches. In front of the parapet over the central arch are placed gas-jets, the motto on one side being 'Success to Agriculture' and on the other, '1877 centenary', while a plough is most fitly placed on the top. The gas-jets facing the Sawclose were lit on Saturday evening and attracted a large crowd of persons, who were unanimous in their expression of approval of the result of the cooperation of businessmen of that locality.

At the Grand Hotel jets of gas were placed round the principal entrance, above which were the Prince of Wales plumes. In the High Street, we notice preparations to illuminate the facade of the Guildhall, Municipal Offices, and Markets.

The Christopher opposite was capitolly lighted with the letters 'V.R.' and a crown, and other devices.

The *Chronicle* also wrote:

Over Pulteney Bridge, the chief attraction in this direction is, the fountain in Laura Place designed by Mr. C.E. Davis. Remembering that, although Bath is a city of waters, it has been by no means successful in trying its hand with fountains, we were rather dubious about the result. Mr. Davis has however produced a circular basin some 24 feet in diameter, the edge being composed of Portland cement, coloured, & with a margin of turf. A jet of water will rise from the surface, and it is intended to illuminate it with gas-jets. There can be no doubt that there is ample room in Laura Place for some such structure to be placed permanently there.

The original version of the fountain we have today was installed a couple of years after the Show by public subscription to mark the centenary.

To continue the *Chronicle*:

In our walk through the city we noticed that the good wishes of the inhabitants for the success of agriculture and trade were well-developed. But no rule holds well without an exception, and we noticed that some misguided individual in Morford Street had the bad taste to hang out a flag bearing the 3 ostrich plumes with a picture of a puppy, and the words 'Here I am' underneath.

This 'bad taste' was a slight to the Prince of Wales who had declined an invitation to the centenary Show, despite his having held the position of Patron for many years. Official records make several references to the non-appearance of the Prince on such an auspicious occasion, and it is clear this absence was resented by some.



**SHOW YARD**  
**OF THE BATH, WEST OF ENGLAND, & SOUTHERN COUNTIES SOCIETY'S**  
**CENTENARY MEETING.**  
**HELD AT BATH, JUNE 1877.**

During Show week, a centenary banquet for 200 was hosted by Mayor Jerom Murch at the Guildhall, and the guest-list and toasts, proposed and replied to, are reported in great detail. Meanwhile the speech given by the Society's President that year, the Marquis of Lansdown, with its insight into pressing concerns of the day typifies the outward-looking stance of the Society, still in evidence today.

After recounting notable achievements of the Society during its first hundred years, the Marquis turned his attention on current concerns which demanded action, and which he felt the Society should engage with: cattle plague; sewage; and the education of children. To quote from the Society's *Annual Report*, and the President's keynote speech:

1. I venture, however to observe that if a great deal of work has already been done through the agency of the Society, there is not a little that remains yet to be accomplished. There are one or two points which are very fair subjects for the consideration of a Society such as this.

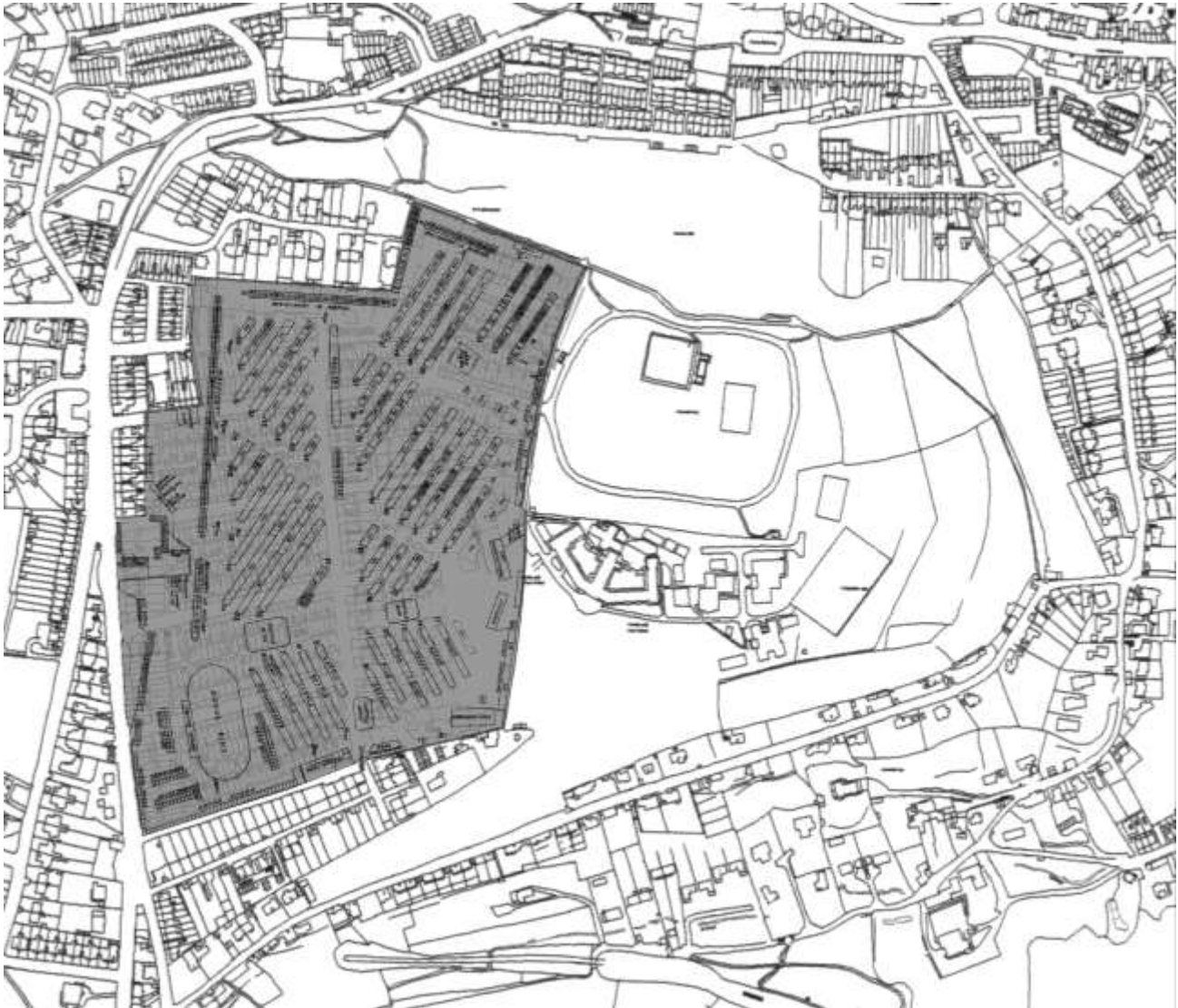
The Show on this occasion has been very nearly jeopardised by an outbreak of cattle-disease, and I believe scientific men cannot have a more useful subject to occupy their minds than the consideration of the best means of limiting the area, and preventing the spread, of that unfortunate disease, and also mitigating its virulence on occasions of outbreak.

2. Let us take, again, the application of agricultural chemistry to the great question of dealing with sewage. Recent Acts of Parliament have excited in most of us a very considerable amount of interest on the subject. There are towns in your close neighbourhood which have been in the habit for a long time past of sending their sewage into the adjacent river, but Parliament will not allow that to be done, while at the same time proprietors do not like much to have sewage on their land.

3. There is one other subject on which I would say a word before I leave off. I mean the subject of education, and chiefly the education of farmers' sons. Manufacturers live together in towns, and probably have schools within easy access; farmers, on the other hand, are scattered over the country in rural districts, and experience in too many instances the greatest difficulty in finding an education for their sons. If you come to reflect over the work which a farmer's son has to do in the course of his life, while attending to his pursuits, I think you will find that what we may call versatility of accomplishments is more necessary to him than to many men who are engaged in other and perhaps more ambitious occupations. He must have a fair general education ... reading, writing and arithmetic; he must also be a little bit of a chemist (or he will not understand the properties of those fertilizing agents which he will be obliged to use); he ought to have some knowledge of geology (to judge the various kinds of soils that will come under his attention); he should know something of natural history (to understand the nature of the animals which he has to breed and to select).

The farmer's son requires a great amount of information, and he gets but little. In many cases his education is limited to what he can pick up about his father's homestead. If the discussions which take place in connection with this Society result in throwing some light on this question, it will deserve, and will receive, the thanks of the public at large.

The Marquis's choice of areas for continuing research by the Society as it faced its next one hundred years is an illustration of the relevance to society (the agricultural world, and society at large) which the Bath and West has always held, a role it continues today.



**The Showground superimposed onto present-day details.**

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