

# The Survey

of Bath and District

The Journal of the Survey of Old Bath and Its Associates

No.30, October 2015



**THE SURVEY OF BATH AND DISTRICT**

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**Front Cover Illustration:** Lower Broad Street in the 1930s, looking South.

**Back Cover Illustration:** Lower Broad Street in the 1940s, looking North.

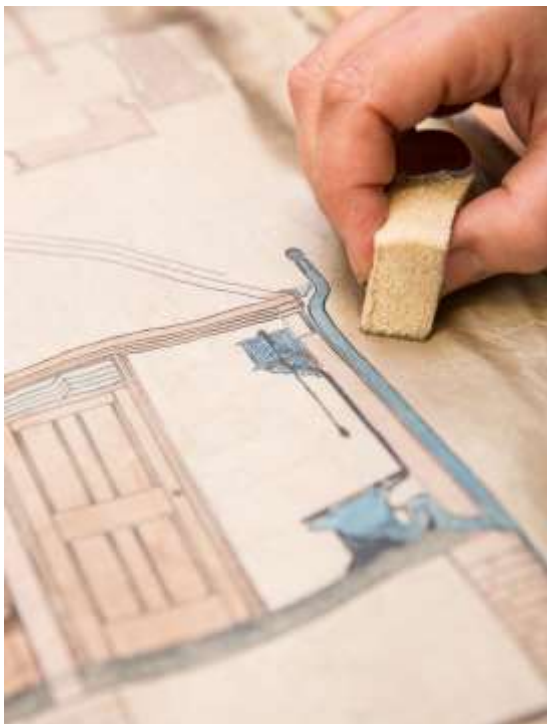
## CITY NEWS

### Bath Record Office

We have made major progress this year on cataloguing the huge quantity of Council records held in the Record Office. This has been made possible by a significant grant in 2014 from the National Cataloguing Grant Programme for archives, and another in 2015 from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Collections which can now be searched online on our website [www.batharchives.co.uk/our-collections](http://www.batharchives.co.uk/our-collections) include many functions of the Council over past centuries. These cover Coroner's registers, Surveys of Corporation property, plans of premises leased from the Council, and files from the mayor's office.

In addition, the online catalogue provides a background history to all the categories of Council records for which we hold material, and for which detailed catalogues will be added over the coming months.



Our project archivists and volunteers have also completed catalogues of other major archive collections: Bath City Police, Bath Quarter Sessions, and records of the Workhouse and Bath Board of Guardians. These are now fully listed and described online.

With the help of our team of 25 project volunteers, many thousands of books and files have been sorted, cleaned and electronically listed ready for uploading to our online archive catalogues.

The project funding will enable this work to continue until September 2016 by which time an immense range and quantity of our historic Council records will be opened up and ready to be discovered by our customers from Bath and across the world.

**Colin Johnston**

**Left: Close-up of cleaning an archive drawing by a volunteer.**

**Below: A prisoner's "mug-shot" taken from recently catalogued Police records.**



## **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.*

Although the Survey of Old Bath has no plans to undertake any major projects for the time being, there is still much to be done. As a result of their research undertaken for the North Gate exhibition at the Museum of Bath at Work last year, Elizabeth and Margaret have been able to provide an analysis of the historical layout of Broad Street, including Frog Lane and Northgate Street, for inclusion in this issue of the *Survey*. Naturally there is a considerable quantity of information here, so it has been decided on this occasion to deal only with the west side of the street, the east side to follow in the next issue.

Also started last year was the transfer of back issues of the *Survey* onto the History of Bath Research Group website. We are now happy to say that every issue up to No.27 has been completed, starting from No.1 in 1993, so that from now on it will only be necessary to transfer the penultimate issue each year. Since this facility appears to be much used, it might be helpful to make other SOB material available, particularly those studies involving the use of maps (technology allowing).

In the meantime the SOB continues to answer many enquiries on the historical topography of Bath. One relating to the 18th century tennis court in Claverton Street for example, of particular relevance to the Survey's study of Lyncombe and Widcombe, led to new light being shed on its approximate location. From our studies of the Kingston Estate we were also able to assist the Abbey who are looking to extract energy from the old hot water drains from the King's Bath spring to fuel a new heating system for the Abbey and the other adjacent buildings. This involved reference to Major Davis's reports to the Corporation on his discoveries of the Roman system in the 1880s which deserve to be better known and may provide the basis of further study.

Mike has also continued to give talks, some of the most popular over the past year being on Bath Fairs and The Development of the Area outside the East Gate. However, new talks have been now added to the repertoire, such as the Bishop's Park, the Development of the Parade Gardens, and the Assembly Rooms in the early 20th century. An historical walk was also arranged with the History of Bath Research Group along the riverside through Bathwick and the Grosvenor and Kensington meadows.

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

The autumn meeting of the Friends of the Survey was held on Friday 31 October 2014 at St Mary's Church Hall, Bathwick. To a large audience, a presentation was given on the recent archaeological investigations in Bathwick Street by representatives of Context One who undertook the work.

This was a preliminary talk, consisting of a description of the work and findings before analysis of the results was completed. As a result of the interest shown in this potentially important investigation, it has been agreed that Context One would provide a follow-up talk dealing with the final analysis, to be presented at St.Mary's, perhaps at one of the History of Bath Research Group meetings.

The AGM was held at St.Mary's Church Hall on Friday 22 April 2014, when Mike Chapman gave a talk on the Development of the Parade Gardens, based on his report for the B&NES Parks Department.

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

The main achievement for HBRG this year has been the entry onto a searchable database of Bath Trade Directories; one for each decade from 1840 to 1920. The eventual entry of the whole collection has been a long-term aim, but the work is of fairly heroic proportions for those members engaged on

the project. Choosing one volume for each decade as a start is, however, giving a very good over-view of this record of nearly a century of trading and residence in the city. Soon, the completed volumes will be available to HBRG members on the website; <http://historyofbath.org.uk>.

The website goes from strength to strength with increasing numbers of hits from the UK and abroad. The addition by Mike Chapman of the long series of Survey of Old Bath magazine reports, now including the first 27 issues, adds enormously to that resource and gives wider publicity to the extraordinarily valuable work that SOB has done over the years.

Members of the committee supported by members of the group also provide help to other organisations with research projects and the Victoria art gallery in particular is very grateful for HBRG and SOB members assistance, particularly in researching the topographical collections.

The new lecture series has started, is proving very popular, and is published on the website. Summaries of the lectures are published in the Proceedings for HBRG members and after one year also go onto the website.

Membership of HBRG is holding up very well as are attendance numbers at meetings but we will always welcome new members and visitors to meetings which usually are held on the first Monday of the month at St. Mary Bathwick church hall.

**Michael Rowe, Chairman**

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

With a decline in our numbers through age, illness, etc, we decided to work with the Widcombe Association, part residents association and social events organization, to draw in more people. Since then, numbers have increased, with over forty people at some meetings.

In March, Mike Chapman gave a fascinating talk on the Prior Park and Claverton Down deer-hunting park, from its creation in Norman times through to Ralph Allen's day.

Later talks included Tony Coverdale, ex naval engineer, on the Grade II listed Saltford brass mill and its restoration, and also the mills of Widcombe and Lyncombe and how they worked. Margaret Burrows continued her research on Claverton Street from the Old Bridge to Spring Gardens Road, once an area packed with houses and shops – all gone. In November she will report on her research into dirt, disease, insanitary conditions and floods. Stuart Burroughs talked about Real Tennis from Mediaeval times to the 18th century when his museum was a Court. He explained as much as is known about the Widcombe Tennis Court near the river.

Our walk was attended by about 50 people, taking us up Church Street and Church Lane, with a visit to the 'Bowling Alley' Cemetery, unknown to most people, down the Dell, ending at Thomas à Becket for wine and a chance to climb up the tower (very popular).

The Widcombe Association organised a 'Beating of the Bounds' and a Church and Chapel Trail. The Baptist Cemetery was opened by its fairly recent new owner, Bath Preservation Trust.

**Margaret Burrows 01225 480749**

### **South Stoke Local History Committee**

Professor Bob Parfitt has researched and published an archive monograph on *The Johnson family of South Stoke Vicarage 1792 – 1843* for the Bath and Somerset Record Offices. In addition a journal paper on the subject will appear before the end of 2015.

A further article on the *Mercer family of South Stoke*, also to be published later in the year, illustrates how Wills and particularly Churchwardens' Accounts may be used in genealogical studies. He is currently transcribing the Wills of the Vicars and other notable residents of the Parish, and writing a commentary on each of the Wills. Research by other members of the committee continues into the lives of the fallen during WWI who are listed on the memorial in St James's Church.

**Jenny John (Chairman)**

### **The Freshford & District Local History Society**

The Society has members in Freshford, Limply Stoke, Westwood, Norton St. Philip, and Hinton Charterhouse, thus crossing the borders of Wiltshire and both Mendip and B&NES in Somerset.

Eight meetings are held during the year, three in the autumn, September to November, and five between January and May. Over the last year talks have ranged from 'The Long History of Bradford on Avon' by Michael Marshman and 'The Great Island, Muchelney, its Abbey and the Somerset Levels' by Stephen Honey, to a talk in September by a member of the Society, Geoffrey Parkes, on his experiences on recent expeditions into Mongolia in the search of the graves of the Mongol Khans!

Although most talks are relevant to local history, it is felt that from time to time a member with a special interest should be invited to share it. Visitors are welcome to any of the meetings which are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7.30 in Freshford Memorial Hall.

## **NOTES & QUERIES**

### **The Diaries of Fanny Chapman**

In the early years of the 19th century Batheaston Villa was occupied for a while by a group of ladies, members of the Neate family, which included a young woman, Christiana Fanny Chapman, who kept diaries while she was living here between 1807 and 1812 and later, in Bath, from 1839-41. These diaries, describing her everyday life as a gentlewoman and the people she met, were preserved by her family and now survive as a notable archive amounting to some 400,000 words. Fortunately the arduous task of transcribing these diaries, together with contemporary letters and relevant family papers, has been completed by a descendant of Fanny's family, George Rosenberg, and his wife Amanda who live in Nice.

It was also fortunate that George came across Allan Keevil's article in the *Survey* No.21, 2006, on Francis Greenway, 'father of Australian architecture', in which Allen quotes a publication by George's great grandfather which drew on Fanny's diaries regarding Admiral Phillip, Governor of Australia, who she knew well. As a result, he was able to contact us and inform us about the transcription.

Since there is so much information in the diaries, it has not been possible to publish them in print, but George has arranged for the early diaries to appear on line at:

<https://georgianera.wordpress.com/2015/07/12/the-diaries-of-miss-fanny-chapman/>

- the remainder to be added fairly soon, and we hope he will be able to provide an outline of her story which can be included in the *Survey*. In the meantime, we recommend members to visit this site, as there is a considerable amount of detail which may be useful and certainly familiar. Besides her own family, which at that time was largely supported by Lt-Col. John Hutton Cooper, later Baronet, who served for some years as a member of the Bath City Council, many of her neighbours and acquaintances are still well known. These not only include Valentine Jones and family from Bailbrook House next door, but also the Wiltshires of Shockerwick, Walters of Batheaston, Allens of Bathampton, and the Chapmans of Bathford.

The diaries therefore provide a valuable social portrait of the community of local gentry living around Bath during the Regency period, many having considerable historical influence. Following Fanny's constant movements whilst visiting and shopping in and around Bath, it is also possible to identify topographical features which are no longer recognisable.

Naturally George is interested whether any of the Friends know of an ancestor or research subject with a connection here and whether there are still in existence any letters or diaries which mention the same people from a different angle. There are a lot of questions arising out of the diaries which some

of our members and other local researchers may be able to answer, and provide him with a bit more information to fill in the Fanny Chapman story.

### **A Bit More about the Old Labour Exchange in James Street West**

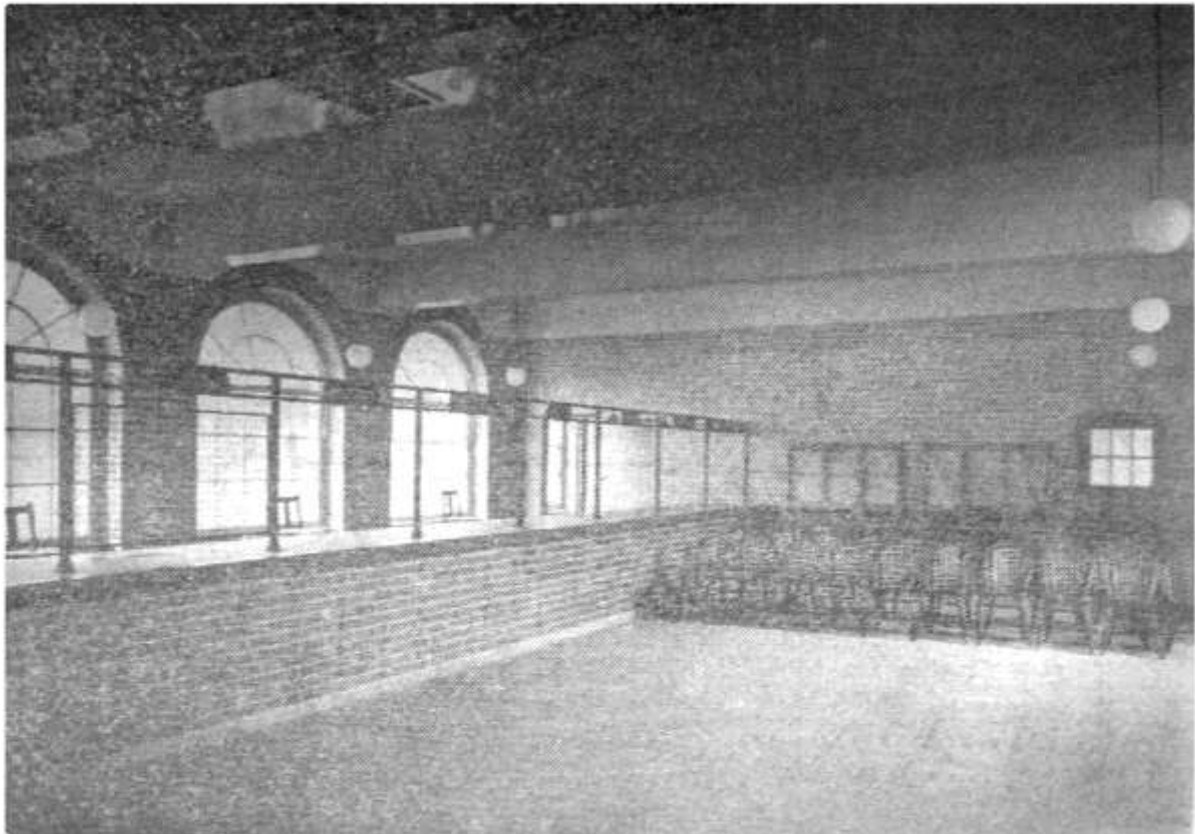
With planning permission now granted for the development and preservation of the blitz-damaged former labour exchange building in James Street West, mentioned in the last issue of the *Survey*, curiosity was aroused about its origin. Fortunately a great deal of information, included below, was provided by a report on its formal opening on Tuesday 4 October 1938 by the then Mayor, Capt. Adrian Hopkins, in the *Bath Weekly Chronicle and Herald*.



TURNING THE KEY: The Mayor of Bath opening the main doorway of the city's new labour exchange.

The event was marked by a ceremony held at the main door, which the Mayor unlocked declaring the building open, and was presented with a golden key as a memento of the occasion. The company, attended by many representatives of the Corporation, social service and labour organisations as well as the business community, 'then returned to the men's waiting room and spacious office which had been decked with flowers' for speeches.

**The Mayor opening the new Employment Exchange on 4 October 1938; published in the *Bath Weekly Chronicle and Herald***



**BATH NEW LABOUR EXCHANGE:** The men's department of the new employment exchange, officially opened by the Mayor this afternoon.

**The men's waiting room in the new employment exchange.**

*Bath Weekly Chronicle and Herald*

Since the Mayor's Fund had been set up to assist in the matter of unemployment, the Mayor was well equipped with statistics. The unemployment figure in Bath that year was only 3.5 per cent, 'probably the lowest it had ever been', of which half were over the age of 45, 'which meant really that there was no unemployment in the city among able-bodied young persons'. He also referred to the increase in the number of insurable persons in the area, which he said was due to a large extent 'to the enormous number engaged in the works at Corsham, where the figure had run from a few hundreds to nearly six thousand in a very short space of time'. The guests were also reminded by the chairman of the Bath and District Employment Committee that Bath was a pioneer in the registration of the unemployed in the city, dating back to 1906.

As to the building, thanks were expressed to the architect, Mr.C.M.Childs, A.R.I., B.A. (H.M.Office of Works) and the contractors Messrs.F.J.Amery and Sons, Ltd. of Grove Street who used almost entirely local labour. Escorted by the Manager, Mr.A.C.Baker, the Mayor and other guests then inspected the premises and afterwards were entertained at tea.

The Mayor, describing the new exchange as a 'magnificent building' and 'the very last word in the handling of employment' with its 'ample waiting rooms', was glad to see 'that it does away with the "crying scandal" of men and women having to wait outside in inclement weather'. Another point mentioned by the Mayor was that 'this was the first new building in a derelict area which they hoped in the very near future would become a centre of beautiful buildings (hear, hear)'. The newspaper agreed that 'the erection of this impressive building was one more step in the reconstruction of this portion of the city', and they too hoped that a further stage in this development would soon proceed with the building of 'the New Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases' on the adjacent site.

This last comment refers to a scheme which had been brought to our attention only recently by Daniel Brown who has identified many plans on Bath in Time showing the design for this hospital which was intended to be built on the cleared 'slum' area of Avon Street, demolished under the authorisation of the Bath Corporation Act 1925. Unfortunately, only a few years after its opening, the Labour Exchange was reduced to something less than 'magnificent' during the Bath Blitz, and the 'derelict area' was to remain derelict for another thirty years or so until the appearance – not of a hospital – but of the Bath Technical College.

### **Portway House, Weston**

John Ennor recently brought to our notice a selection of photographs (some included here) which he took of Portway House in Combe Park, Weston, prior to its demolition to make way for the St.John's Hospital Residential/Nursing Homes, opened in 2003. Although the site has an unusual history, little is known about the building, and as far as we are aware this is the only visual record that exists of it.

Portway House was built in the late 18th century in what was then an isolated country location, remote from the city of Bath, on land mostly belonging to the estate of the Oliver family, then manorial owners of Weston. The house was named from its situation on the northern boundary of a pasture ground called Portway Close (or simply, Portway) which lay between the main road to Bristol (i.e. the 'Port Way', now Newbridge Hill) and the road leading off to Weston (now Combe Park).

In the early 1840s the western half of Portway was turned over for quarrying limestone and subsequently became known as 'Quarry Ground', and in 1865 the field to the north became the home ground of the Lansdown (Bath) Cricket Club, where their pavilion still occupies its original position adjoining the former site of Portway House.





**Two views of Portway House from Combe Park road before demolition.**

**Photos: John Ennor.**



By 1874, when the first plans for building development in this part of Lower Weston were being drawn up, Portway House, together with Portway Close, was occupied by Albert Browning BA, a ‘School Master’, who used the premises for a private academy - one of three large boarding schools he ran in the parish of Weston. Like other parishes on the outskirts of Bath, Weston was then considered an ideal location for such establishments, No.63 Newbridge Hill nearby being also a ‘School for Young Ladies’. However, having acquired Portway Quarry in 1875, Browning was able to start his own residential building development there, fronting Newbridge Hill, which he completed over the next 20 years. It was during this time also that he became a director of the Bath Gas Light & Coke Company, later serving as Chairman for many years.

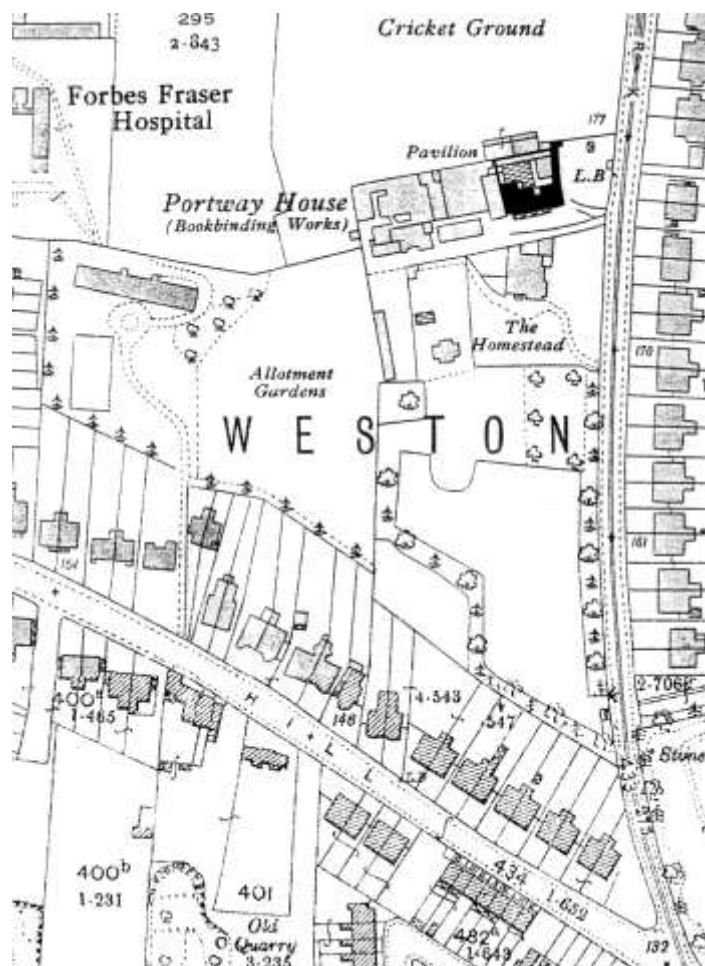
In 1882 Browning purchased from William Oliver the leasehold of large areas along both sides of the road to Weston for the residential development known as Combe Park, completed between 1888 and 1899, and in 1899 leased Portway House and its premises to Cedric Chivers who moved his bookbinding business there. With Portway House being put to new purposes, Chivers built a fine new residence on the south side of the works in Portway Close called The Homestead, complete with ornamental gardens. At about this time also the remainder of quarry behind the Newbridge Hill residences was abandoned and converted to gardens.



**The Homestead, before demolition. Photo: John Ennor.**

On the death of Browning in 1922, Cedric Chivers acquired the freehold of the premises, thereby enabling him in 1924, when Mayor of Bath, to donate the western part of the quarry to the newly-built Forbes Fraser Hospital to the north for a Nurses Hostel (now 'Bath NHS House' mental health centre).

By the 1930s Chivers had made considerable alterations to the rest of the premises, with new workshops on the west side of Portway House, followed in the late 1930s by the separation of the formal garden in Portway Close for the Combe Grove housing development. When St.John's Hospital eventually acquired Chivers' works, all the buildings, including Portway House and the Homestead, were demolished, the new Nursing Home being built on the site of the workshops and the quarry adopted for a car-park.



**Portway House (in black) and its premises in the early 1930s, including the Nurses Hostel on the west side of the Allotment Gardens.**

## ARCHAEOLOGY/PUBLICATIONS

We have been alerted by Marek Lewcun to an archaeological open day in the Saw Close which is due to take place on Saturday 31 October - the day after the annual lunchtime meeting. Marek has been employed in the archaeological excavation of the site, between the Saw Close and Bridewell Lane in advance of building development, which is being undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology.

Readers may remember that the Survey of Old Bath carried out an initial historical survey of this area in 1998, in advance of a preliminary archaeological investigation by Bath Archaeological Trust. This site, until now occupied by the old health centre in the former playground of the Bluecoat School, holds significant archaeological potential, and we look forward to the results. We include below the press release by Cotswold Archaeology:

### Meet the Archaeologists: Saw Close Open Day, Saturday 31 October 2015, 10am- 2pm

This month Cotswold Archaeology, in association with Deeley Freed Estates and Sanctus, are offering a unique opportunity for the public to see a different side of **Bath's Heritage**.

On October 31<sup>st</sup> we will be opening the doors of the development site for the public to view the early stages of an archaeological excavation which has already revealed fascinating insights to one of the less well-known aspects of the city's past – the manufacture of clay tobacco pipes right in the centre of the city in the 18th and 19th centuries. As work progresses we expect to reveal further remains associated with the medieval, and later Georgian, houses that once stood along Bridewell Lane.

The site will be open from 10am for the public to come along and view the excavations in progress, and our archaeologists will be on hand to talk about the history of the site and show off some of the artefacts recovered from the dig so far.

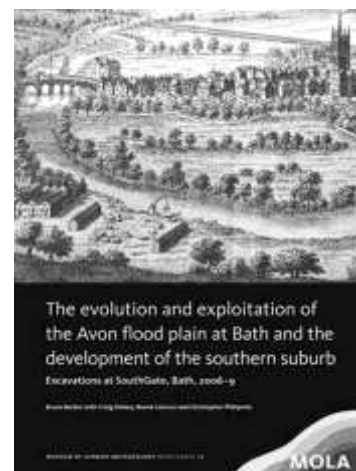


Press enquiries should be directed to Simon Cox at Cotswold Archaeology in the first instance.

**Bruno Barber with Craig Halsey, Marek Lewcun and Christopher Phillpotts, *The Evolution and Exploitation of the Avon Flood Plain at Bath and the Development of the Southern Suburb: Excavations at Southgate, Bath, 2006-9*, Museum of London Archaeology Monograph 68, MOLA 2015. Hardback, 300pp with CD-ROM, 194 black/white and colour illustrations. Price: £30. ISBN 978-1-907586-28-6.**

The recent re-development of the Southgate Area covered a substantial sector of Bath which has hitherto received little archaeological (or for that matter, historical) attention. It was therefore gratifying that an appropriate large-scale and detailed archaeological investigation was commissioned while the works were in progress, undertaken by Museum of London Archaeology. This book is the result of their findings.

Covering changes in this area from geological periods through to the 1960s and dealing with all aspects of human activity, this report will provide a significant contribution to understanding the overall development of the city, and therefore an essential tool for future historical researchers. Although there is a great deal of specialist





information here (much of which is included in an attached CD-ROM), the archaeological sequence is clearly followed, complete with thematic discussions, extensive bibliography and index, and even French and German summaries.

Although this might be described as a 'weighty tome', it is finely and clearly produced, with ample colour illustrations, and therefore accessible to anyone with an interest in the history of Bath.

## THE BLADUD SPA

**John Macdonald**

A mineral spring was discovered at Swainswick, near Bath, while sinking a well for a brewery in 1833. The owner, Mr Joseph Blackwin, caused the water to be analysed, and finding it to contain a high proportion of Iron, he erected a Pump-room, which he opened in 1835. The enterprise was short lived. In 1839, Blackwin was declared bankrupt. The building became a private residence (and briefly, in the early 1850s, a Wesleyan Chapel), until 1901, when it was sold with the adjoining properties. It was also used as a Mission Hall from at least the 1890s, until finally being demolished in about 1972. The site then became a children's play park. While the inhabitants of Swainswick were apparently supportive of the Spa, there are hints of opposition from within the Borough. Over the years, information about the Spa became distorted, and the following is an attempt to separate fact from fiction.

The City of Bath is well known for the mineral springs which gush from the earth giving an endless supply of hot mineral water, first commercially exploited during the Roman occupation and still continuing to attract tourists today. Less well known are the outlying springs of both hot and cold mineral water. The subject of the present enquiry is located on the borders of the villages of Swainswick and Larkhall, to the east of the historic city. Larkhall is a comparatively recent settlement and while the entrance to the site was from Larkhall, it actually lay within the neighbouring, ancient parish of Swainswick or Swanswick.

A brook, historically the western boundary of Swainswick parish meanders in a south-south-easterly direction down the slopes of Lansdown connecting with tributaries. Just below an old mill, known as the Dead Mill, the brook is joined by a major tributary and then runs briefly beside the road now called St. Saviour's Road, which it then gradually distances from, before finally running under the old A4 trunk road from Bath to London at Lambridge and then across the meadows beside the former Bath Horseshow Ground, now a sports field, and into the River Avon. The site of the Bladud Spa was on the Swainswick side of the brook, opposite the bottom of Brooklyn Road in Larkhall, shortly before the brook and the road part company. A narrow lane leads from St Saviours Road at this point in an East North Easterly direction and this road is known as Spa Lane.



Ordnance Survey Somerset Sheet XIV. N.W. 1st Edition 1886.

John Wood says;

‘MONS BADONCA or Lansdown sends forth a Brook from its South Side, which formerly turned a Mill; it now bounds the Berton of Bath, to the Westward, by the Name of Muddle Brook; and the Source of this Brook is made partly by a Spring of Water, which, for some Mineral Quality, was, in former times, dedicated to St. Winifred; the Fountain still bearing the Name of WINIFRED’s WELL; and it is much frequented in the Spring of the Year by People who drink the Water, some with Sugar and some without. MUDDLE BROOK is augmented by a second SPRING of Mineral Water breaking out of the Ground on its eastern Bank, about two hundred and forty Yards from the River Avon: About half a Mile to the West of this Spring, there is another which now bears the Title of the LIME KILN SPAW, from the Water rising just by a Lime Kiln: And about two Miles and a half further Westward, SPRINGS of Mineral Water break out of the Ground in the middle of the common Road that leads from Bath to Bristol on the North Side of the Avon.

THE East end of Mons Badonca yields a remarkable Spring of Water, which is conveyed into an Alcove built by the side of the great Road leading from Bath towards London for the Use of the Publick, and from the remotest Times, it hath borne the Name of the CARN-WELL, the Water of which was always looked upon as impregnated with some fine Mineral, and therefore so highly esteemed, that People from far and near were used to flock to the Fountain to fill their Bottles and Pitchers at it.

FOR the first DISCOVERY of the Lime-Kiln-Spaw, and the medicinal Virtues of the Water, was no earlier than about the Year 1729; in which Year, or near it, one James Hellier, a Carpenter of Bath, having been troubled with a Diabetes, he was directed to drink the Bristol Water for its Softness; but the Cost of that Water prevented him from doing it, and set him upon enquiring for a soft Water nearer home. He was not long before he met with the Spring now called the Lime-Kiln-Spaw; of which Water he no sooner began to drink, than he found great Relief in his Disease. Mr. John George, an Inn Keeper of Bath, having had the same Disorder at that time, he drank of the same Water, and it had the like Effect upon him: So that the Case of these two Persons DISCOVERING a medicinal Virtue in the Water of our Lime-Kiln-Spaw, several People began to drink of it for other Complaints, and thus that Spring, as well as the Virtues of the Water, were first rescued from Oblivion.

THE Proprietor of the Fountain, Mr John Hobbs, a Merchant of Bristol, conceiving great Advantages from the Water, made a Cistern about the Head of the Spring, together with proper Conveniences for drinking the Water and bathing in it; erecting at the same time, a dwelling House near it: but all this was scarce done before an Attempt was made to draw down the Spring into lower Land belonging to the late Sir Philip Parker Long; and the Experiment so far succeeded, that part of the Water of this Spaw rose up in a slip of Meadow Land belonging to that Gentleman, who thereupon caused a small Porticoe to be erected, wherein People that came to drink of the Fountain might shelter themselves: And thus the Lime-Kiln-Spaw was divided in its Infancy into the upper and lower Wells; and a Spring that began to stand in Competition with Saint Vincent’s Well near Bristol was reduced to little or nothing.’

Peach chose to identify Wood’s Muddle Brook as the Brook bounding the west of Swainswick and he placed the Lime-Kiln-Spaw about 3/8 of a mile upstream from the Dead Mill, where early editions of the Ordnance Survey show a spring. He completely misunderstood Wood’s description (above), which locates the Lime kiln spa much further west and nearer to the River Avon (see below).

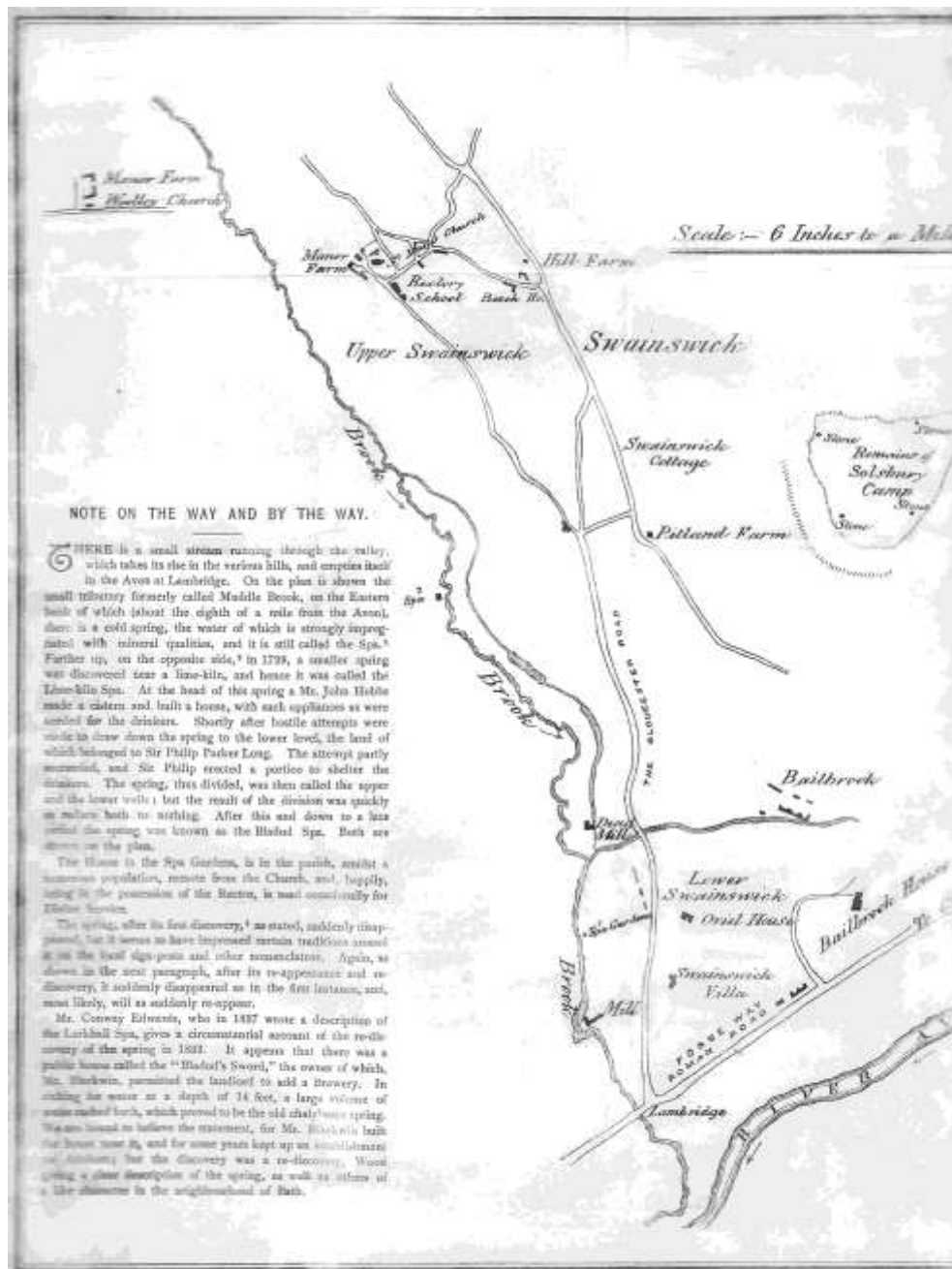
Mike Chapman has more recently confirmed that Wood’s Muddle Brook was also known as Mud Brook, the course of which eventually runs down Marlborough Buildings to the Avon and says ‘On the west side of the Common, John Wood mentions a spring called Lime Kiln Spa which gained some fame in the early 18th century for its medicinal properties and where facilities were provided for drinking and bathing.’ He locates this spring next to a lime kiln about half a mile to the west of the Mud Brook, evidently in Kiln Close which lay between Lime Kiln Lane (now Park Lane) and the boundary of Weston Parish (at the back of Coronation Road).

The Bladud Spa was actually situated beside the Lam Brook which forms the western boundary of Swainswick. Chapman says that ‘The main tributary of Lam Brook is Whitewell Brook which arises

from a group of springs under the edge of Lansdown at the head of Mutcombe (alias Mudcombe) valley in Charlcombe parish.' It is possible that this was the cause of Peach's muddle! Although as a resident of Swainswick, he should have known better!

Bladud Spa, then was just one of a number of mineral springs issuing from the slopes of Lansdown:

'The Spa is situated in one of those beautiful and romantic vallies [sic], with which Somersetshire abounds. On the right, and looking towards the South-west, it is bounded by one of the most elevated of the numerous hills in the county, Lansdown; on the left, by undulating land, which extends to the river Avon; before you lies the beautiful City of Bath, ever famous for her warm medicinal springs, from which it is distant about one mile; to the North-west, the valley becomes more and more lovely, being intersected by a sparkling stream, which like a gentle spirit, here silently, yet brightly, glides along - there hurries down little precipices, in mimic cascades, overshadowed with the oft and silvery foliage of the mimosa, or the more graceful and elegant salix caprea and fragilis, it presents features of attraction equalled by few other places. The air, which circulates through the valley, is mild and salubrious; while the Spa itself, sheltered on every side by hills, is admirably adapted for the permanent restoration of that blessing, without which the mind of man finds little to engage its attention, or interest its affections, in this sublunary scene.'



from R.E.M.Peach, *Annals of Swainswick*

An inn, called Bladud's Sword, stood near the brook. The attention was to sink a well for an associated brewery. This was accomplished in 1833, but the workmen encountered at a depth of 14ft a bed of dark blue clay from which sprang an enormous body of water. This spring was too heavily impregnated with minerals, chiefly iron, to be used for brewing.

'The circumstances which led to the discovery of this medicinal Spring, were very remarkable. In the year 1833, Mr Blackwin, the proprietor, purchased a considerable quantity of uncultivated land in the lower part of the Parish of Swainswick, where he erected a house. The individual, to whom he let this building, converted it into a public-house, which went by the name of the "Bladud Sword." Shortly after the tenant had been in possession of the premises, he was desirous that a suitable building should be added for the purpose of brewing. Mr Blackwin complied with his wishes.

In sinking for water to supply the brewery, the workmen, at the depth of fourteen feet from the surface, struck upon a bed of dark blue clay, from which sprung an enormous body of water, apparently adequate to any demand which might be made upon it. With this water the Innkeeper commenced brewing, and his consternation may be more readily imagined than described, when it was found to have produced a fluid, more approaching to the colour of ink, than malt liquor. In the early part of the ensuing year, the water was, with immense labour, pumped out of the well, and a further sinking of sixteen feet effected. At that depth, a second bed of blue clay was arrived at, from which another spring, equal in magnitude to the first, burst forth. An experiment was then made, to test the effect of this water upon malt, when, from the extreme darkness of the liquid produced, its quality was not considered to be purer than that of the other. Mr Blackwin now felt perfectly convinced, that this water contained compounds which materially affected its purity, and it was, consequently, a matter of the first consideration with him, to have it analysed as speedily as possible. An application was, therefore, made to Dr. Wilkinson, a gentleman well known in the scientific world, as possessing talent of the first order, for his opinion on the subject; - when his analysis proved the water to be a MOST POWERFUL CHALYBEATE.

This property of the water, that turned the brew black, had been observed elsewhere in the area. Wood recounted that about a hundred years earlier, three or four drops of water from the Lyncomb-Spaw was found by its proprietor, Mr Milsom, to turn a Glass of Brandy a purplish hue, and three or four Drops more turned the Brandy as black as Ink and in 1737, he produced the same effect in a bowl of Punch.

Mr Blackwin was now satisfied, that he had in his possession a very valuable natural medicine; and he soon began to test its virtues by distributing it to a number of poor people known to him, who were afflicted with diseases of the skin, and wounds in the legs.

The rapidity with which their complaints were dispersed and healed, induced an immense number of persons, in the surrounding neighbourhood, to apply for the water, and all received more or less relief from it. Thus convinced of its power over a most numerous class of revolting diseases, the proprietor determined to give it that publicity, which its extraordinary virtues merited. With permission, he advertised a certain series of cases wherein its use had succeeded, detailing, at large, the history of each complaint. He soon, at his own expense, and without the assistance of a single individual, but backed solely by the hope, that one day his Spa would shine like a bright and a beautiful star of the first magnitude, built a neat and convenient Pump-Room, with Baths and Dressing-Rooms; and when he had supplied them with everything requisite for use, he cleared the surrounding grounds, erected a lofty wall around them, and laid out the area in parterres, lawns, and walks, in tasteful arrangement, for the pleasure and accommodation of the visitors. His exertions did not pass unnoticed, nor unrewarded; a Nobleman, whose widely extended benevolence has ever reflected a lustre upon his high rank, gave Mr Blackwin his support, at a moment, when a very strong attempt was made to crush his infant institution, which he fondly hoped would be considered an honour to himself, and would become in time a source of much attraction to the City of Bath. A Lady of distinction, also, gave it her honorary countenance. The effect of all these united circumstances was immediately visible; opposition ceased, and Mr Blackwin, proud in his support, and assured beyond doubt of the virtues of the water, gave it the public for their inspection and patronage.'

As the water was useless for brewing purposes, Joseph Blackwin wrote to the Editor of *The Bath Chronicle* in early 1835:

‘Sir,

I am happy to say, that I am meeting with every support from the principal inhabitants of the parish of Swainswick, to enable me to carry my plans into execution, respecting building a Pump Room, Baths, &c., at Bladud Spa; and as I have not experienced the same favours from the inhabitants of Grosvenor-Place, Beaufort-Buildings, &c., I have been induced to inquire into the cause, and I found that the objection was, the connection of the Spa with a Public-house. I, therefore have made a great sacrifice, by taking that house into my own hands, where I intend to reside, myself, and do away with all public business, whatsoever, fully trusting that the superior qualities of my Spa to any other In the kingdom will be so approved by a generous public as to soon remunerate me for the great sacrifice I am now making; at all events, I will (please God) have my Pump Room, Baths and Gardens ready by the Spring if possible.

I am, respectfully, your obliged servant.

JOSEPH BLACKWIN’

The letter was followed by an advertisement for the sale of SWAINSWICK HOUSE, ‘currently let to Admiral Dacre until Ladyday’, followed by:

‘... at the BLADUD INN, An excellent BREWING FURNACE, as it now stands, containing 178 gallons. MASH TUB, with false bottom and cock. Underback, 2 Coolers, Hop Strainer, Jig Pump, Malt Mill, and all other items belonging to the Brewery, with sundry small Casks, many benches, tables, mugs, &c.

One STORE PIECE	990	Gallons,		7 ½ feet high
One Do	560	do	6	do
One Do	450	do	5	do
One Do	3000	do	5	do

All sweet and nearly new. About 110lbs of HOPS

And to be LET

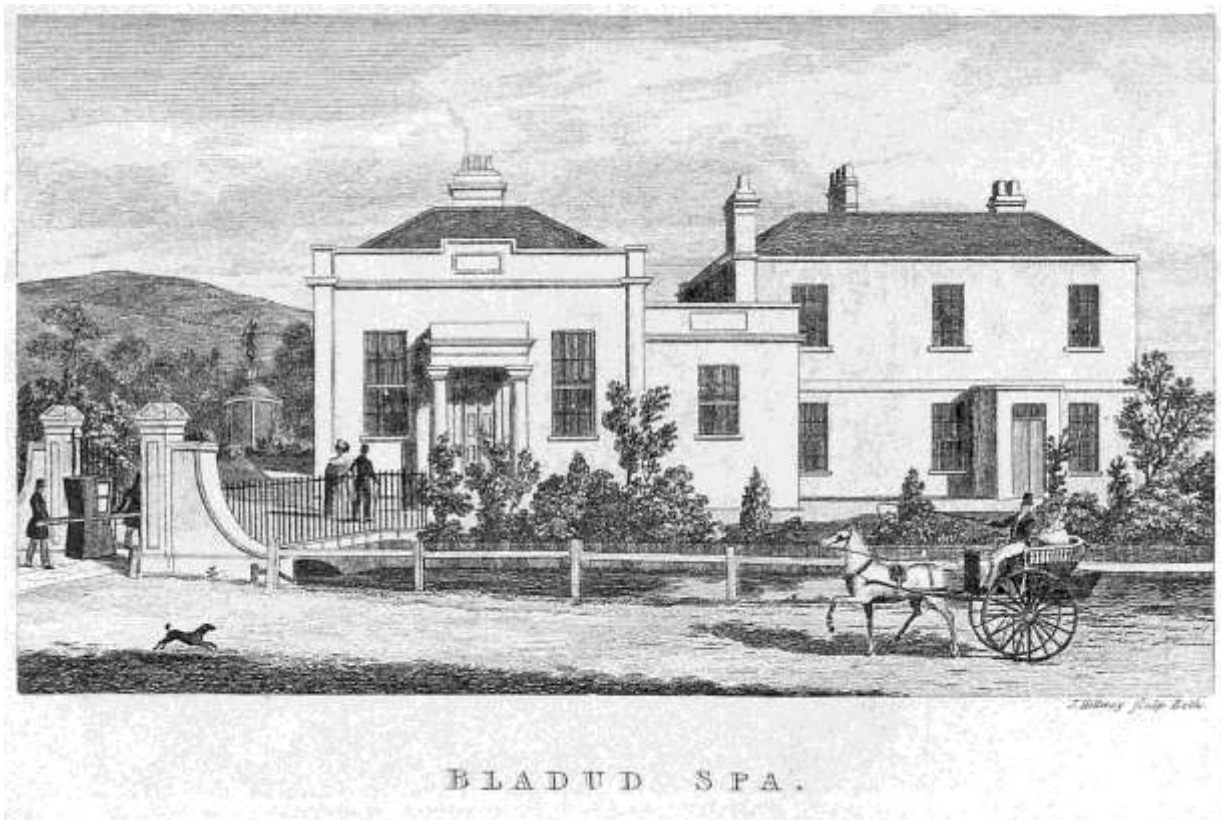
A Commodious DWELLINGHOUSE, at ROSE HILL with extensive GARDEN and Fourteen lots of Building LAND, adjoining the intended Spa Pleasure Gardens. Rose Hill was Joseph Blackwin’s own home prior to his move to the Spa House.’

Blackwin was as good as his word, and on 16 July 1835, the *Chronicle* was able to report that:

‘The Proprietor of the Spa has now entirely carried out his intentions with regard to the erection of a Pump-room, &c., and we are informed that the room is every day numerously attended. Several families of eminence in this city, are now residing in the village in order to try the waters, and, in fact, so numerous are the visitors, that many instances have occurred of persons being unable to obtain lodgings on any terms. The water, we are informed, is the strongest in Europe, a pint of it containing four grains of iron, whereas, the strongest of all the other spa waters which are known, contain but two grains.’

Blackwin had managed to obtain the collaboration of two local medical men, namely; Mr.Conway Edwards, MRCSL, a surgeon who resided and practised in Batheaston but later moved to Kensington, London, where he died in 1862 at the comparatively young age of 52; and Dr.Wilkinson (Charles Hunnings Wilkinson 1763-1850, who, Dr Roger Rolls tells us, had already interested himself in the Kingstn Baths in about 1810.) A note on Dr.Wilkinson appeared in *The Survey*, No 18 for November 2003 and included a calotype view of Dr.Wilkinson’s pump room.

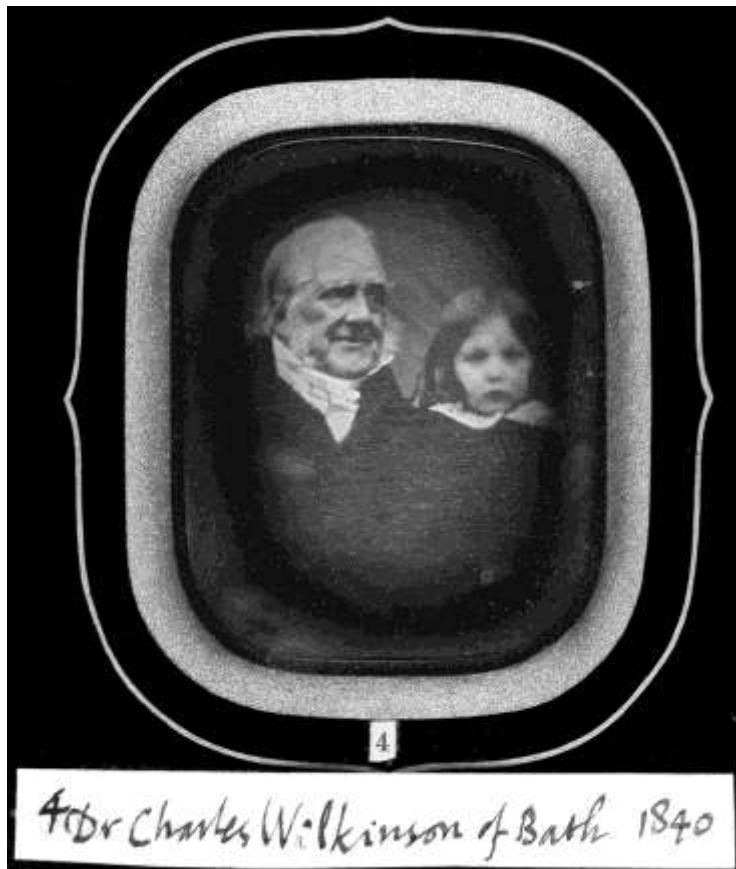




**Bladud Spa in 1837, *Silverthorne's Bath Directory*, courtesy Bath Record Office.**

Part of their role, was to deliver lectures on the Spa Waters. Accordingly;

'... at 2:00 PM on Friday 17th August 1835, Dr. WILKINSON Will deliver an EXPERIMENTAL LECTURE on the properties of this powerful Chalybeate Spring, in which will be introduced the mode of analysing mineral waters. Admission 2s., Miners [sic], half-price.



At 2:00 PM on Friday 24th August 1835 Mr. CONWAY EDWARDS, MRCSL, and Surgeon, Batheaston, will have the honour of giving a LECTURE, at the Bladud Pump Room, on the medical and other properties of the Water, which has recently attracted so much of public attention. Tickets 2s each.

In the following July 'a lecture by Mr. CONWAY EDWARDS, on: The manner in which the Chalybeate water acts upon the System' had to be postponed for a week due to the inclement weather.

**Left: A daguerreotype portrait of Dr. Charles Hunnings Wilkinson of Bath, with his grandchild, by Jabez Hogg, 1840. Reproduced by kind permission of the President and Council of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, ref.**

In July 1836

‘Mr BLACKWIN returns his most grateful thanks to the Inhabitants of Bath and the Public in general for the kind support that he has received towards his great and expensive undertaking at the Bladud Spa, and begs leave to state that his powerful Medicinal Spring still retains the same Chalybeate properties as it did when first analysed by DOCTOR WILKINSON, and the many hundred extraordinary cures that have been effected by it, since its discovery, are raising it into the very highest estimation, not only in Bath, but throughout the country. It is now forwarded to all parts of the kingdom by Mr. PICKWICK’S coaches, at the low price of 10s. per dozen, or 2s. per gallon, including bottles, jars, and hampers. This powerful medicinal water is recommended by 30 eminent medical gentlemen of Bath for curing all kinds of scorbutic and cutaneous diseases, sore or weak eyes, asthma, piles and rheumatism, lumbago, stiff, weak, or contracted joints, and is found very beneficial to all weak and debilitated and nervous constitutions, as it gives strength to the system, cheers the spirits, and creates an appetite. A little aperient medicine is required before and during the time of taking it. This water is remarkably pleasant, having no bad taste or smell whatever. Half a pint to a pint (as the case may require) is in general taken daily on an empty stomach, when in a few days, if persevered in regularly, the patient will soon find its good effects by its removing any internal disease; when by sponging the external parts that may be affected by it two or three times a day with the water cold, seldom if ever fails of effecting a speedy and lasting cure. It proves exceedingly beneficial in all chronic and scrofulous cases, when used as Hot Baths, which are to be obtained at all times of the day, at any temperature; also Shower and Slipper Baths. It is sold at the spring at 4d. a quart, and at Bristol and Clifton by Messrs. FERRIS, BROWN and CAPPER, Chemists to the King, and by Mr. CHARLES KINGSTON, 17, Great Mary-le-bon street, London.’

On Thursday 4 August 1836, *The Chronicle* reported that ‘Last week, Mr Conway Edwards, surgeon, of Batheaston, delivered at the Bladud Spa, an interesting lecture On the Medicinal Properties of the Mineral Spring at Larkhall. The audience was numerous and highly respectable.’ He followed this up by a second lecture on Wednesday 17 August on ‘The ANATOMY of the LUNGS, and the EFFECTS of CONSUMPTION upon their Structure’.

In October 1836, describing the Bladud Spa as near Grosvenor-place, Bath, Joseph Blackwin, in a fulsome description of the Spa and his own achievements, provided a summary of several analyses of the water by Dr. Wilkinson and other chemists: ‘Three times stronger than any other chalybeate spring in this kingdom, and the most powerful Medicinal spring in Europe. The following are the contents in one pint:

Carbonate of Iron	3 grains
Carbonate of Lime	1½
Sulphate of Lime	1½
Muriate of Soda and Magnesia	<u>2</u>
	8 grains’

He then proceeds: ‘This celebrated spring is patronised by Lord James O’Brien, Lady Jervis, Archdeacon Moysey and George Norman, the late Mayor of Bath, and many of the nobility; and the water is recommended by thirty eminent medical gentlemen, for leprosy, scorbutic and cutaneous diseases, sore eyes, asthma, rheumatism, lumbago, stiff, weak, or contracted joints, and is found very beneficial to all weak, debilitated and nervous constitutions, as it gives strength to the system, cheers the spirits, and creates an appetite.’

Lord James O’Brien (1769-1855) is perhaps better known as the Third Marquis of Thomond. He was a Naval Officer, becoming an Admiral. On the accession of William IV, he was made a lord of the bedchamber, and nominated G.C.H. on 13 May 1831. He succeeded his brother, William O’Brien, on 21 August 1846 as the third Marquis. He died at Bath and was buried at St.Saviour’s Church in Larkhall. Conway Edwards dedicated his book on the Spa to him.

Lady Jervis (1795-1865), Martha Honora Georgina Jervis, was the great niece and heir of Earl St.Vincent, from whom she took the name Jervis as a condition of the inheritance, but she was the daughter of Captain W.H. Ricketts R N. She married the widowed Osborne Markham, youngest son of Archbishop of York, Dr.William Markham, in 1806, living with him and his two children by his first marriage and their daughter at Rochetts in Kent (left to her by Earl St.Vincent). Following the death of Osborne Markham in 1827, Lady Jervis with her stepdaughter, stepson and daughter moved to Bath, living for a time in Argyle Street, before moving to Oriel Lodge in Swainswick. In 1834, Mary, her stepdaughter, married Philip Charles Sheppard at Swainswick and Lady Jervis remarried to Lieut-General Sir William Cockburn, Bart., of Lansdown Crescent, retaining the name of Jervis. Sir William died eight months later and Lady Jervis moved to Bailbrook Lodge in Swainswick, where she died. She is buried at Swainswick with her stepson, Osborne Markham (jnr), who predeceased her.

Archdeacon Moysey (1779-1859), Charles Abel Moysey DD, was at Hinton-Charterhouse in 1808 and held various other posts. He was Rector of Walcot from June 1817-1839, Archdeacon of Bath from 1820-1839, and Prebendary of Wells from 1826-1839. He died in Bath in 1859 at the age of 80. One of his forebears was an eminent Bath Physician, identified as a candidate for Warner's 'Dr.Fleecem'.

George Norman (1783-1861); his father had founded the Casualty Hospital and he had, himself engineered the amalgamation with the City Infirmary to form the new United Hospital. He was highly respected and so successful that his income exceeded four thousand pounds, making him the best-paid surgeon outside London. He retired in 1857. He was Mayor of Bath in 1834 and 1841 and a City Magistrate. He resided at No.1 Circus. (*RCS Plarr's Lives of the Fellows Online; Diseased, Douched and Doctored; Bath Directories.*)

The article then continues with a list of testimonials or 'More extraordinary CURES by the powerful Healing SPRINGS at the BLADUD SPA.' Here is a selection:

Mary Ann Nicks of Widcombe, a cripple for many years, used the water for only few months and now restored to good health.

James Bryant, late 14th regt. of Foot of Brimble Court, Corn Street, who had been afflicted with violent rheumatic pains in knees and hips for 14 years, restored to perfect health in less than two months.

John Palmer of Brookleaze Buildings, Larkhall, aged between 80 and 90, had a chill in his face for two years, affecting his insteps and legs with numbness, drank the water and it drove it out in his face, and bathed his feet in it and is now able to walk as well as any old man of his age.

Thomas Clatworthy of Grove Street, afflicted with a chill, detention of urine and very bad asthma for twelve years, perfectly restored to health in one month.

Ann Pigot of Swainswick, bad sore eyes for 20 years, cured in two months.

Blackwin goes on to claim upwards of 500 cures effected.

In a telling finish to his book, Dr. Rolls commented 'the utilisation of naturally heated water coupled with the historic reputation of healing springs and a milieu of a modern treatment centre can produce a powerful placebo effect, even if subsequent research fails to demonstrate any special therapeutic quality of the water itself.'

Many of those claiming cures, were living in the unsavoury conditions in the lower areas of Bath, close to the river, where disease and vermin were rife. Add to this the effect of poor people having access to a supply of clean water, perhaps for the first time, with perhaps other changes to lifestyle and diet, recommended by the doctors, and the fact that someone was actually taking an interest, albeit from commercial motives, then, maybe it is not so astonishing that so many cures were claimed, in so short a time.

In December 1836, Blackwin decided to sell Swainswick House, perhaps a sign that, despite his claims, the Spa was already not a great financial success. In January 1837 he

'.. returns his sincere and grateful thanks to his kind friends, and the Public in general, and the Ladies of Bath in particular for their kind support during is great and hazardous, as well as expensive, undertaking. Annual subscriptions are one guinea. Subscriptions will be received by the

Editors of the Bath Papers, by their Newsmen, or otherwise; by Mr.Daniel Howe, Churchwarden of the Parish of Walcot, and all the other Churchwardens in the City and Vicinity of Bath; by Mr Edw.Gibbons, Grocer, Northgate Street, Mr.George Edwards at the Gloucester Inn, Walcot; and at the Bladud Spa. The Water will be delivered to the poor until 9 o'clock every morning throughout the year; they must bring proper and clean vessels, with corks or bungs or the water will spoil.

To be LET - Two Houses at Rose Hill, Furnished or Unfurnished, most delightfully situated upon an eminence fronting the south, surrounded with meadows, with Gardens in front, 170 feet in length; three minutes walk from the Spa, and desirable for invalids.'

*Silverthornes Bath Directory* for 1837 includes a full-page engraving of the Spa and a double-page advertisement. This was also the year in which Mr.Conway Edwards published his *Observations on the Medicinal Properties of the Bladud Spa Water*. This was, in effect, a prospectus for the Spa, as Edwards said himself in his preface – 'The constant applications, which are being made at the Spa, for some guide to the taking of its waters, have induced me to publish the following little work.'

### TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTIONS

At the  
BLADUD SPA  
January 1st 1837

	£	s	d
A Family of two persons -- for a Year	1	1	0
All above two persons, each	0	6	0
Family of two persons -- Half a Year	0	15	0
All above two persons, each	0	4	0
Family of two persons – Quarter	0	10	0
All above two persons, each	0	3	0
Family of two persons – one Month	0	7	0
All above two persons, each	0	2	0
A single person – for a Year	0	10	0
Quarter	0	7	0
Month	0	4	0
Week	0	2	0

Subscriptions paid in advance

Every Annual Subscriber is allowed two bottles of water daily, besides what they use at the Spa Pump House.

Hot Mineral Baths of every description, and to any temperature, at the shortest notice.

JOSEPH BLACKWIN

**ADVICE** will be given at the Bladud Spa, gratis, by MR.CONWAY EDWARDS, to poor people, who bring with them a recommendation from an Annual Subscriber, every Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday, from 1 to 2 P. M.; or at Mr.Edwards's Residence, Batheaston, daily, from half-past 8 to half-past 9 A.M.

But in September 1837 Joseph Blackwin is attempting to sell off a number of leaseheld properties that he holds under St.John's, including 'THREE well built HOUSES and FOUR small COTTAGES, in the village of Lower Swainswick, Rose Hill Cottage, and several other HOUSES and GARDENS at Rose Hill, fit for genteel families'.

There are also references to 'An Archery Ground, open at the Spa every Evening to parties at 1s.each, including Bows and Arrows which, if damaged, are to be paid for. No other admittance to such parties without their sanction'. It has been suggested that the Bath wood and ivory turners John Spreat, uncle and nephew, who made bows, arrows and other archery equipment, were associated with this venture.

Another venture at the Spa was advertised in March 1838: '.. a series of FIVE SUBSCRIPTION BALLS, will take place at the BLADUD SPA this spring, the first will be on the 7th MARCH under Mr ASHLEY, as Master of the Ceremonies. Single Tickets 5s 6d. Subscriptions to the Spa are 1 guinea for a family, 10s 6d for a single person, 7s for three months and 4s for one month'.

But in March 1839 *The Gazette* reported:

‘WHEREAS a Fiat in Bankruptcy is awarded and issued Forth against Joseph Blackwin, late of the Bladud Spa, in the parish of Swainswick, near the city of Bath, in the county of Somerset, Builder, Dealer and Chapman, and he being declared a bankrupt is hereby required to surrender himself to the Commissioners in the said Fiat named; Or the major part of them, on the 28th day of March instant, and on the 26th day of April next, at eleven of the clock in the forenoon on each of the said days, at the Christopher Inn, in the Market-place, in the city of Bath, in the county of Somerset, and make a full discovery and disclosure of his estate and effects; when and where, the creditors are to come prepared to prove their debts, and at the first sitting to choose assignees; and at the last sitting the said bankrupt is required to finish his examination, and the creditors are to assent to or dissent from the allowance of his certificate. All persons indebted to the said bankrupt, or that have any of his effects, are not to pay or deliver the same, but to whom the Commissioners shall, appoint, but give notice to Messrs. Blake and Lewis, Solicitors, 24 Essex-street, Strand, London, or to Mr. Edward Webb Hardy, Solicitor, 2, Fountain-buildings, Bath.’

In May 1839 a certificate was to be allowed unless cause shown to the contrary.

In June 1839, the Spa was put up for sale by auction. The auctioneer’s advertisements that appeared in a number of newspapers are the first time that we have any indication of the interior of the premises

Shortly after this, Joseph Blackwin left Bath. He is recorded in the 1841 census, living at 2 Caroline Place, Clifton, as a Lodging House Keeper. The 1847 Poll Book for Clifton and the 1848 directory show him continuing at this address and role, but in 1851 he died in Bath at the age of 79. His wife, who survived him, died at 5 Fountain Buildings in 1859.

The Spa had, meanwhile, become a private dwelling, but on Thursday 30 January 1851 the *Chronicle* announced that ‘the “Wesleyan Reformers” of this city have opened the Spa, Larkhall, for public worship’. It is unclear for how long, or which part of the Spa was used by the Methodists, as the Spa and Spa House (formerly the Bladud Sword) were in the occupation of two families, named Williams and Adams, by the time of the 1841 census.

**BLADUD SPA, NEAR BATH.—IMPORTANT SALE of the STRONGEST CHALYBEATE MINERAL SPRING IN ENGLAND, with large and commodious PUMP-ROOM, BATHING ROOMS, DWELLING HOUSES, &c. TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION, by Mr. BARTRUM (by Order of the Assignee of Mr. Joseph Blackwin, a Bankrupt), exonerated from Auction Duty, at the Great Room, No. 10, Milsom-street, Bath, on MONDAY, June 17, 1839, at One for Two o’Clock in the Afternoon precisely,**

**T**HAT Capital well-built and newly-erected DWELLING-HOUSE, with the PUMP-ROOM, 22 feet by 18 feet, neatly finished, and large garden beautifully laid out in lawn and shrubbery, containing in the whole about One Acre.

Also TWO BATHING and DRESSING ROOMS, immediately adjoining, and TWO TENEMENTS or COTTAGES, well adapted for the occupation of invalids whilst using the waters. The whole enclosed with high walls clothed with choice fruit trees, and known as the

**BLADUD SPA,**

most delightfully situated in a beautiful valley, 1½ mile from the centre of the far-famed City of BATH, in the healthy Village of LOWER SWAINSWICK, having a stream of water and extensive meadows in front, forming a rural and healthy retreat for the invalid, who, whilst using the waters, also enjoys the benefit of a pure soft air, with the still greater advantage of being within five minutes’ walk of St. Saviour’s Church. Upon the premises there is a judiciously secluded water-closet, with patent apparatus, and a furnace and capital large boilers, with pipes attached for providing warm baths. The whole of the establishment supplies four parlours, seven sleeping-rooms, housekeeper’s room, fitted up with good closets; three kitchens, stable, man-servant’s room, and other out-offices, with a small room used as a surgery by the medical attendant of the establishment. The limits of an advertisement preclude any lengthened description of the virtue and properties of this Mineral Water; suffice it therefore to say that it was discovered by the late Proprietor about four years since, who spared neither labour nor expense to bring it into notice, and it is but justice to him to say that his endeavours have, to a certain extent, been crowned with success. The records of the establishment prove how highly beneficial it has been in all Cutaneous and Scorbatic Affections, particularly old Sores, the Leprosy, Piles, Rheumatism, Worms, Ophthalmia, &c.; indeed there is no one labouring under any of these disorders who has not derived considerable benefit and relief, whilst many have been completely cured by a constant use of the water. It has been analysed at different times by Dr. Wilkinson, of Bath, and Mr. Henry Noad, of Frome, the result of which shows that it contains Iron, Lime, Sulphuric, Muriatic and Carbonic Acids, with some slight traces of Magnesia. The Brighton Chalybeate Water contains only eight grains of Iron in a gallon, and the Tunbridge Wells and Harrogate Waters only three grains, whilst the Bladud Spa Water contains 24 grains in a gallon. On the representation of this valuable discovery to the Bath and West of England Society, a vote of thanks to the Proprietor was proposed by the Marquis of Lansdowne, and unanimously agreed to by the Society. The Bladud Spa has since been patronised by Lord James O’Brien, Lady Jervis, Sir Wm. Cockburn, Bart., the Members for the Eastern Division of the County of Somerset, and for the Borough of Bath. It is recommended by upwards of 24 of the most influential Physicians and Surgeons of Bath, and supported by the Gentry and Tradespeople of the City. A very excellent little Treatise on the nature and properties of this Spring has been published by Mr. Conway Edwards, the Consulting Surgeon of the Establishment, which can be obtained from him for the small charge of 2s.

The proximity of this property to Bath, and the never-failing supply of water which the Spring produces, gives it great advantages, and presents a golden opportunity for any Medical Gentleman desirous of establishing himself in his profession. The property is held under St. John’s Hospital, in Bath, for three young lives, is subject to three small ground rents, amounting to 5l. per Annum; and will be sold in one or more Lots, as may be agreed upon at the time of Sale.

For further particulars, and to treat by Private Contract, application may be made (if by letter, postage paid) to the Auctioneer, No. 10, Milsom-street; or to Mr. E. W. HARDY, Solicitor, No. 2, Fountain-buildings, Bath.

George Williams was a retired builder and John Adams was variously described as a Slater, Painter and Decorator, but the Bath Annual Directory for 1852 and 1854 both list Larkhall, Spa Chapel with Services, Sunday, 11 am, and 6 pm.

However, it would appear that part of the Spa was used from time to time as a meeting room or chapel, even if the rest of the building was residential, as can be seen from the following sequence of events:

**1848.**

Directory

Adams, John

Painter and Plasterer

Spa Swainswick

Williams, George

Spa House, Swainswick

**1856.**

Directory

Adams, J

Slater and Plasterer

Spa, Lower Swainswick

Williams, George

Spa House, Lower Swainswick

**1860.**

**DESIRABLE INVESTMENT FOR SMALL CAPITALISTS.**

*LOWER SWAINSWICK, BATH.*

**TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,  
By Mr. TUTTON,**

*At the WHITE LION INN, LARKHALL,*

On MONDAY NEXT, 30th day of APRIL, 1860, at Two for Three o'Clock in the Afternoon precisely (subject to such Conditions as will be then produced),

**THE** following Commodious and Well-Built COTTAGES, with GARDENS, pleasantly situated at LOWER SWAINSWICK, without the Borough :—

Lot 3.—BLADUD SPA (late in the occupation of Mr. ADAMS, deceased), with Out-Premises, and large Garden well stocked with Fruit Trees (small portion whereof is at present let off to tenant of Lot 5.) This Lot is sold subject to a Ground-Rent of £6, payable as aforesaid, as other portion of the said original Ground-Rent, and to be deemed the apportioned part thereof charged on Lot 3.

The whole of the above Property is held for the terms of 99 years, under Lease dated 24th day of December, 1848, now determinable upon Two Lives, aged 23 and 38 years, or thereabouts. The Lease is now renewable.

**For further Particulars, apply to the AUCTIONEER.**

**1863, 25 February.** Died, Paul Scudamore, second son of Mr Geo. Williams, sen. Spa House, Swainswick, near this city.

January 1865. At a lecture, given to the Bath Literary and Philosophical Association by Charles Moore, the Rev. John Earle, who was Rector of Swainswick, asked if there was any doubt existing in reference to there being mineral water in the parish of Swainswick, just at the end of Larkhall, where there was a spa erected? He was under the impression that it was generally acknowledged to be a perfectly exploded idea, but he was informed there were persons who thought otherwise. In his reply,



Mr. Moore remarked that it was very likely there was a mineral spring at Swainswick; there must be some reason for building that spa.

**1867, 4 May.** Died, at his residence, Spa House, Swainswick, near Bath, Mr George Williams, senr., aged 84.

**1868, 13 May.** Died, at Bladud Spa, Lower Swainswick, Bath, Sophia, widow of the late Mr. John Adams, aged 75.

**1874, April.** The *Chronicle* commented, in an article entitled THE MINERAL SPRING at BATHEASTON, AND ITS CONNECTION WITH THE BATH MINERAL WATER by Mackay Heriot FCS:

‘Many people may remember the Bladud Spa at Larkhall closed up some 20 years ago. This spring was intermediate between the city Baths and the spring at Batheaston, and would be further evidence of the course underground that these mineral waters take.’

**1888, 16 March.** Died, at Spa House, Swainswick, near Bath, Jane, eldest daughter of the late George Williams, senr.

**1895.** The Clerk to the Weston Highway Board reported on correspondence with Mr. Fortune, representing the Borough, respecting the repair of the Spa Bridge at Larkhall: The Clerk said the boundary dividing the borough and the county was in mid-stream and both the Board and the Urban Authority were responsible for half the cost of repairing the bridge. Mr Fortune wrote that if the Surveyor could prove that a part of the bridge had been hitherto repaired by the Corporation there would be no difficulty about it.

**1897, 26 October.** A public meeting of the Good Templary, Handel Cossham Lodge, was held in the Spa Rooms, and in March 1898 the *Chronicle* reported that ‘The meetings at the mission rooms, at Stable-Lane, Bridewell-Lane, and Spa-Rooms, are well attended. In March 1900 the committee of Bath City Mission, thanked Rev. Prebendary Earle for giving the use of the Spa room.’ (Rev. John Earle was the Rector of Swainswick).

**1901.** The Census shows that the Adams family were still in occupation, but for not much longer because in 1904 it was reported that the Bath Coroner held an inquiry on Tuesday 1 March relating to the death of Mary Eva Matthews aged 45 who had gone out to the Spa Mission Room, of which she was caretaker. There was a service every Sunday evening commencing at 6:30, but she never went to the service. This is the first reference to the use of the building as the Spa Mission Hall, which was not only used for services, but as a community hall for other activities.

**1901, 13 June.**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>HORTON BROS.</b> Comprehensive and Reliable <b>MONTHLY REGISTER OF HOUSE PROPERTY</b> For Bath and District. Gratis on Application. <b>AUCTION AND HOUSE AGENCY OFFICES,</b> <b>8 and 9, NORTHGATE STREET, BATH</b> <b>REMOVAL CONTRACTORS. ESTIMATES FREE.</b> <b>TWO BE SOLD, Lower Swainswick, SPA</b> <b>HOUSE, Spa Rooms, and 4 Cottages. Re-</b> <b>mainder of Lease 17 years at Rent £1 17s. 8d.—</b> <b>Further particulars and Orders to View from</b> <b>Horton Brothers, Northgate-street.</b></p>
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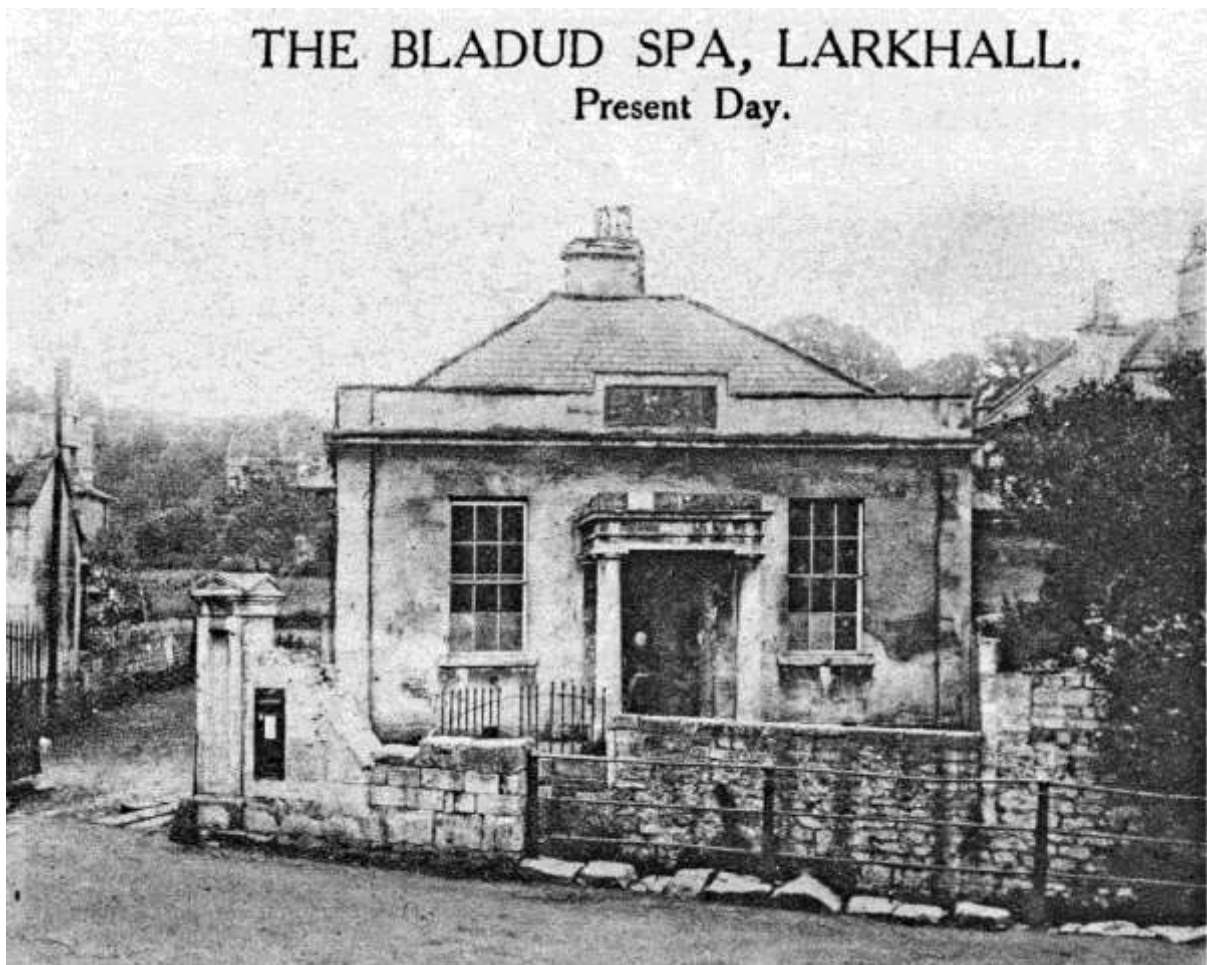
1901, 22 August.

## SALE OF PROPERTY.

At the Larkhall Inn, on Monday evening, Messrs. Horton Bros. sold for £215 Spa House, with lawn, greenhouse, and garden, the Spa Rooms, adjoining, No. 2, Swainswick-buildings, and Nos. 1, 2, and 3, Spa-cottages. The whole premises are held for the remainder of a lease from St. John's Hospital, Bath, at the yearly rent of £1 17s. 6d. Mr. Francis Glover, of The Paragon, was the vendor's solicitor.

1906, 27 September.

The *Chronicle* reported that 'in the later fifties the Bladud Spa ceased to exist as such. Since then it has been used as a private dwelling place, and later as a Mission Hall. At present it is the property of Mr.G. Phippen of Meadow Farm, Charlcombe.





From the *Bath Herald*, 30 August 1924.

Bath in Time – Bath Central Library, ref.13400.



Some time after the 1935 floods.

Bath in Time – Bath Central Library, ref.18381.

In 1930 the *Chronicle* reported that the Spa had dried up, but it did not make clear how long ago. Then, in 1935, summer flooding caused major damage. The gate pillars and the attached wall, including the later posting box were swept away, almost exactly 100 years since they were built. Compare the two photographs, above, taken at times before and afterwards. 'Throughout the evening the water cascaded down to the river. Its furious passage could not be stayed, and with it went a letter box, two sturdy stone pillars, a long stretch of walling and innumerable domestic furnishings ..... the Spa Mission Hall, but there was no mission meeting held there on Tuesday evening, since it was impossible to gain access to it except by wading!'



**The Larkhall Floods.**

**Bath in Time – George Love Dafnis Collection, ref.25494.**

Once again, the Spa bridge was in need of repair. Together with repairs to the cottages at Dead Mills, at a meeting of the Trustees of St John's Hospital, the Surveyor stated that he had gone into the question of reconditioning these cottages, rebuilding walls and the bridge leading over the brook at the Spa Mission Hall, and that the cost would be about £600. The Trustees instructed the Surveyor to have the work put in hand at once.

The Spa Mission Hall continued through two world wars, but on 10 July 1968, Bath and the surrounding areas, were again hit, by a sustained tropical rain storm, in which bridges were swept away and several lives were lost. The Lamb brook was in full flow like the other water courses in the area, breaking its banks and flowing along the road. It seems that the resulting inundation spelled the end for the Spa buildings, for in the early 1970s they were demolished. All that now remains are the bridge over the Lamb at the entrance to the Spa and the narrow lane called Spa Lane running along at the side of the site, which is now a children's playground. The site was once more brought to public attention in 2009 when two local councillors, Bryan Chalker and Richard Maybury, carried out their own researches into the Spa and arranged for a prominent street sign to be erected in Spa Lane.

#### **Notes: Analyses of the Bladud Spa Water:**

##### *Dr. Wilkinson's Analysis*

From the evaporation of a Pint were produced, of solid matter,	8 grains.
A subsequent experiment with two pints	16 grains.

##### **TESTS**

Nitrate of Silver	White precipitate
Solution of Baryta	White precipitate
Prussiate of Potass	No effect
(On the addition of Nitric Acid, an intense blue was produced)	
Oxalate of Ammonia	White precipitate
Acetate of Lead	White precipitate
Tincture of Galls	Dark Purple
(Nitric Acid also produced a purple tint when used to decompose any Carbonate of Lime.)	

Pure Ammonia

A slight discoloration.

From these tests it appears that there exist iron, lime, sulphuric, muriatic, and carbonic acids. The dried ingredients produced from a pint of water were

Carbonate of Iron	3 grains
Carbonate and Sulphate of Lime, of each	1 ½ grains
Muriate of Soda	2 grains.

(There were also some slight traces of Magnesia.)

These experiments were repeated several times, with invariably, similar results.

*Mr. Henry Noad's Analysis*

Mr Noad, of Shawford, near Frome, conducted his experiments at the Spa and was asked to repeat his tests.

Carbonic Acid Gas, variable in quantity.

Temperature of the Spring

48 (Fahrenheit)

Specific Gravity

1.0014

Solid contents of 16 ounces

7½ grains

Which consisted of Iron held in solution by Carbonic acid

3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>24</sub> grains

Carbonate of Lime

1½ grains

Sulphate of Lime

1-27 grains

Muriate of Soda, with Magnesia, probably as a muriate

1-75

Total

7-31

Loss

21

The analyses of the Bladud Spa water were compared with analyses from other places, not reproduced in full here:

Dr. Saunder's Analysis of the Brighton Spa.

Phillips' Analysis of the Bath Waters.

Analysis of the Tunbridge Wells Water.

Analysis of the Harrowgate Water, Oddie's Chalybeate.

Reference was also made to other Spa Waters which contained little or no iron, namely Leamington, Buxton, Cheltenham and Melksham. The purpose of the analyses and comparisons being to prove that the Bladud Spa contained an exceptionally high proportion of Iron.



Site of the Spa at the foot of Brooklyn Road in October 2014.

Author

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## **THE JOHNSON FAMILY OF SOUTH STOKE** **A Remarkable Parsonage Family**

**Robert T.Parfitt; South Stoke History Committee**

The Reverend Charles Johnson vicar of South Stoke 1792-1838 conducted the funeral of Elizabeth Kilvert at St James' Church, and in his memoirs Robert Kilvert<sup>2</sup> wrote the following description of Johnson<sup>3</sup> on that occasion '*... the clergymen in surplice and hatband with his clerk in attendance, waiting at the church door to perform the last office over the arriving dead. I can see the fat comfortable face of Mr. Charles Johnson the then Rector, and even the wrinkles and folds of his well-padded neckcloth ...*'.



Charles Johnson's grandfather, John Johnson (b. 1707), was a Leicester carpenter and joiner, his father, also John (b.1732), rose in society to become an 'architect and banker'. Architect John and his wife Frances moved to London in about 1760 where he established his architect's practice at Berners Street. In 1782, at the age of 50, he was appointed surveyor to the county of Essex; several buildings designed by John Johnson still survive including Chelmsford Shire Hall, the County rooms at Leicester and County Hall Lewes. He also erected a 'consanguinarium' in Southgate Street, Leicester on the site of the house where he was born; this charitable venture was intended to house impoverished relatives. John himself died there in 1814, a wealthy man having accumulated a considerable London property portfolio<sup>4</sup>; the building survived until 1926.

**Left: John Johnson b. 1732. (pdi)**

The Reverend Charles Johnson (b. 1767), the second son of John and Frances Johnson was baptised in the church of St. Marylebone. He studied at Exeter College, Oxford, became B.A. in 1790 and M.A. in 1793. On 25 March 1790 he married Mary Willes at Christian Malford, Wilts., where her father, the Venerable William Willes, Archdeacon of Wells, was the Rector. Mary's grandfather, the Rt. Rev. Edward Willes, had been Bishop of Bath and Wells (1743-1774). The Bishop's brother, Mary's uncle, Sir John Willes became Lord Chief Justice of Common Pleas in 1737; he is believed to have organised a bodyguard for the Royal Family at the time of the 1745 Jacobite rebellion. A cousin, also called Edward Willes, was Solicitor General from 1766-1768. Ancestors of the Willes family included Sir Thomas Vyner, Lord Mayor of London in 1653 and Sir Robert Vyner, Lord Mayor in 1674. Mary's sister Harriet married Admiral Sir Davidge Gould in 1803. Thus, through his marriage to Mary Willes, Charles had moved the artisan-yeoman Johnson family of Leicester deep into the English establishment.

The involvement of Bishop Edward Willes' family in the Diocese of Bath and Wells could be regarded as an astonishing example of ecclesiastical nepotism. His eldest son Edward was appointed Vicar General and Official Commissary Principal in 1753. These were the specific offices to which the general title 'Chancellor of the Diocese' was given. His second son William (father-in-law of Charles Johnson) was made Prebendary of Wells in 1757, Chancellor of the cathedral from 1758-1760, Archdeacon of Taunton 1760-1767 and Archdeacon of Wells from 1767 until his death in 1815. Another son, Henry, was made Prebendary of Wells cathedral in 1750, Chancellor of the cathedral 1755-1758 and Preceptor from 1755 until his death in 1772. A grandson, Edward, brother of Mary (Willes) Johnson was made a Prebendary of Wells in 1793. One son-in-law, Edmund Aubrey was Archdeacon of Wells from 1749 until his death and another, Lionel Seaman, was Prebendary of Wells 1743, Archdeacon of Taunton 1753-1758 and Archdeacon of Wells in 1758. A less direct relative



Charles Willes was Chancellor of the cathedral from 1764-1783. Bishop Willes' favouring his immediate family for appointment to posts within Wells Cathedral may have been an expedience, simply a matter of trust. He was engaged in secret activities for successive Kings and governments described as being '*in clouds and thick darkness*'<sup>5,6</sup>. His work as a cryptanalyst<sup>7</sup> '*required very active, laborious, and incessant exertion, admitting scarcely a moment's time for anything else*'. Thus, he needed to be able to trust implicitly the people he left in charge of the work of the cathedral when he was busy with affairs of state. He chose to trust members of his family.

Having married into such a family it is hardly surprising that within six months Charles Johnson chose to enter the church. He was ordained Deacon to the curacy of Allerton Somerset at Wells



Cathedral on 18 September 1790, but must have held that office for a very short time, as in December of the same year his name appeared in the South Stoke registers as curate. On 5 March 1792, he was ordained priest to the cure of South Stoke. On 23 June of that year John Wood, the retiring vicar of South Stoke who was the patron of St.James' Church, appointed Johnson to the living; he was admitted by the Bishop on 24 July 1792. It is possible to detect a lack of humility in Charles' make-up, because on a list of fees, until the 1960s displayed in the St. James' church vestry, he had signed himself as 'Vicar' in 1791, when in fact he was a curate and in Deacon's orders. On 23 October 1792 he was instituted to the Rectory of Berrow near Burnham-on-sea and on 22 July 1793 to that of nearby South Brent (now Brent Knoll).

**Left: Bishop Edward Willes. (pdi)**



**Southstoke Hall (rear).**

**Courtesy Jenny & Trevor John**

These livings were both in the gift of Charles' father-in-law the Archdeacon of Wells, and he held them in plurality with South Stoke. For a short time the Rev. John Skinner, antiquarian and author of the *Journal of a Somerset Rector* was his curate at South Brent before becoming Rector of Camerton in September 1800. The registers of Berrow parish church show that Charles paid fairly frequent visits to that parish, but there is no such evidence with regard to South Brent.

Charles Johnson greatly enlarged the vicarage at South Stoke, which is now Southstoke Hall. The work was probably carried out in about the year 1800 and no doubt he had the assistance of his architect father and elder brother John, who was also an architect. There is good reason to believe that the vicarage had originally been a medieval building, which had been altered and enlarged by John Harris (vicar 1594-1618); he added chimneys, something of a novelty in those days. Johnson's alterations converted the vicarage into a country mansion with an entrance lodge at the top of the drive. Over the door of the lodge is what may be a badly eroded carving of a Johnson family crest. From surviving family letters Charles would appear to have been a keen gardener and probably laid out the gardens of the vicarage; he is also believed to have planted the beech copse at the top of the drive.

In 1831, during their tenure at Southstoke Hall, Charles & Mary Johnson acquired No.9 Gay Street, Bath, formerly owned by Mary's cousin Jane Somerville<sup>8</sup>. That property had passed to James Somerville Somerville from his mother Jane in 1832. In the same year, James S. Somerville sold the house to Mary's son Francis Charles Johnson and her brother Francis Willes jointly to be held in trust for Mary Johnson. Mary had been bequeathed the contents of No.9 Gay Street in the provisions of Jane Somerville's will<sup>9, 10</sup>. Charles and Mary used the property as their townhouse until Charles retired from his South Stoke living in 1838. For Mary, the house was her principal residence until her death in 1843 when 9 Gay Street reverted to Francis Charles Johnson and Francis Willes.

In 1808 Charles became Chaplain to the Prince of Wales, later the Prince Regent, holding that office until 1818. He may have been introduced to the Prince through family influence or may have met him in the neighbouring village of Combe Hay on Saturday, 11 April 1799 when '*a very splendid entertainment was given by Colonel Smith at his seat at Combe Hay to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Lord Gwydir, and several other noblemen and gentlemen*'.<sup>11</sup>

Charles was instituted to the Prebend of White Lackington in June 1816 and this made him the patron of the living of that parish to which, in August 1825, he appointed<sup>12</sup> his son the Reverend Francis Charles Johnson.

### **The Parishes of South Stoke, Monkton Combe and Combe Down<sup>13</sup>.**

The development of stone quarrying on Combe Down by Ralph Allen and others in the 18th and early 19th centuries, and the residential growth that followed, created the need for a new church in the area. The parish church at South Stoke and the chapel of St. Michael at Monkton Combe were considered remote, and the latter was too small to accommodate the increasing congregation of Combe Down, albeit the small Norman building had been replaced by a larger one in 1814. From medieval times<sup>14</sup> the Parish of Monkton Combe had been attached to that of South Stoke, although it had kept a separate parish identity e.g. it had its own churchwardens and registers. Charles Johnson, as Vicar of South Stoke and the annexed parish of Monkton Combe, was deeply involved in the negotiations for the separation of the latter parish from South Stoke. Johnson was also instrumental in the formation of the new parish of Combe Down. In the spring of 1831 residents of Combe Down, with the approval of the Bishop of the Diocese, requested the Rev. Charles Johnson for his agreement to the building of a church on Combe Down. Johnson agreed and a committee was formed consisting of himself, the Rev. Edward Willes (his brother-in-law), the Rev. M. Fenwick and others. Although a building, known as Holy Trinity Chapel or Combe Down Chapel, was consecrated in 1833, the church was not completed until more than 40 years after Charles Johnson's death<sup>15</sup>.

In the same year (1833) Charles Johnson was preparing a house called The Grange in the grounds of the Manor House, South Brent, for his pending resignation from the living of South Stoke. He did not retire until 1838 and continued to hold the livings of Berrow and South Brent until his death in August 1841. Mary Johnson died at 9 Gay Street two years later and was buried at South Stoke on 28 October

1843. There is a memorial to Charles and Mary Johnson on the north wall of the chancel within St.James' church, the couples' grave however was probably removed when the south aisle was added to the church in 1845 by the Reverend Henry Calverley.

Of the twelve children of Mary and Charles Johnson, nine survived into adulthood. Caroline (1792-1794), Henry Lionel (1805-1806) and Francis Decimus (b.1806), who died in infancy, are buried in the chancel of South Stoke Church. Little is known of either Edwin Joseph Johnson<sup>16</sup> (1800-1821) or William Frederick Johnson<sup>17</sup> (b.1807). The former became an ensign in the 51st Regiment and died, presumably in active service, in 1821. His older brother William Frederick enlisted in the navy and reached the rank of Captain. Captain F. Johnson (presumably William Frederick) was one of the chief mourners at the funeral of Captain George Gosling in South Stoke on 27 February 1841, and is named as a trustee and legatee in the 1838 will of his mother.

### **Mary & Lucy: Wayward Husbands**

In the late 18th/early 19th centuries Bath was the bright light that attracted so many male predators seeking to entrap a wealthy heiress into what might, at first sight, appear to the lady's family to be a 'suitable' marriage. At the age of 23 Mary Johnson, the first-born child of the Reverend and Mrs Charles Johnson of South Stoke, had all the attributes of a 'good catch'. Young Mary's paternal grandfather was a wealthy London architect with many influential contacts, but it was her mother's family that was both wealthy and at the centre of 'respectable society'. Richard William Glode Douglas was the man Mary attracted. Douglas' aunt Lady Glode had a house in Bath and while there Richard met and courted Mary. Although the Johnsons may have been concerned by the youth of the groom and the swiftness of the wedding, they appear to have consented to the match. The couple were married at Marylebone, London on 29 May 1814. Richard Douglas was only 16 at the time, but he was tall, handsome and possessed of a smooth tongue; he claimed to be a friend of the Prince Regent. His father was the Reverend James Douglas, Rector of Lichborough, Northants, and later of Middleton, Sussex, who had been appointed a chaplain to the Prince Regent in 1787. His uncle by marriage was Sir Richard Glode, a sheriff of the City of London. In view of his subsequent history there is little doubt that Richard Douglas would have lied about his age during his courtship of Mary. Not only was Richard under-age at the time of their marriage, but he also fell short of the required parish residential qualifications. Clearly, Richard Douglas realised that the doubtful legality of the marriage would jeopardised his access to any future inheritance Mary might receive. The couple married again, this time legally, on 13 March 1817 at Churchill, Somerset.

According to Douglas/Turner genealogical data<sup>18</sup>, Mary mothered seven children by Richard, the first two and probably the last two appear to have died in infancy. From 1828 the three surviving sons received a sound education at boarding schools, perhaps supported by Mary's parents. One of them, William Bloomfield Douglas, became associated with Raja James Brooke of Sarawak (*see later*).

In earlier times Richard Douglas would have been described as an 'incorrigible rogue', because for much of his life he was a criminal engaging in all manner of fraud and deception; he was constantly in debt. In 1825 bankruptcy proceedings<sup>19, 20</sup> were started in London against Douglas in which he was described as a 'coach proprietor' of Woodcote, Essex. There is little doubt that his occupation was a deceit as on many occasions later he used his 'business' and his gentlemanly presentation as a means of defrauding unsuspecting suppliers out of horses and associated equipment, as well as other saleable goods.

Some time after 1824 Mary and Richard became acquainted with the Reverend Robert Bree of Chichester, a widower with a 16-year-old daughter, Julia Nugent Bree<sup>21</sup> (b. c1808). By the time Julia was 19 Richard, who left Mary in January 1828, had started an adulterous affair with her, the couple living together as Mr. & Mrs. William Smith at several addresses in London. In December 1828 Richard was arrested again for debt and was committed to the Fleet Prison; his 'wife' Julia chose to join him there. According to Johnson family anecdote Mary suffered the indignity of taking her older boys, the Rev. Johnson's grandsons, to visit their father in the Fleet. By the time Richard and Julia married, at St.George, Hanover Square, on 12 December 1829, Julia had already given birth to two children. However, one or both may have been the children of an earlier husband William Teasdale. Mary sued Richard Douglas for divorce in the Consistory Court<sup>22</sup>; the proceedings began on 18 May



1829 when Richard was described as a ‘debtor now in Fleet Prison.’ Although Richard claimed that his marriage of the 29th May 1814 to Mary was invalid as he was under-age, the court was satisfied that the marriage was valid, that adultery was fully proved and separation was granted. There was no mention of Douglas’ bigamous marriage to Julia Bree or of hers’ to William Teasdale! Many times over several years Richard Douglas was convicted in numerous cases for fraud<sup>23</sup>. In later years he was aided and abetted, not only by his sons by his second wife Julia, but by Julia<sup>24</sup> herself.

In 1843 Mary Douglas<sup>25</sup> brought a Chancery case<sup>26</sup> to determine her share of the part legacy left in trust to her mother by her aunt Mary Seaman<sup>27</sup> who died on 24 March 1825. Mary Johnson, widow of the Reverend Charles Johnson, died in 1843 and under the terms of the Seaman will the legacy should pass to his widow Mary Johnson’s daughters (one of whom was Mary Douglas). The court declared ‘one third of the funded property of the testatrix is divisible amongst the daughters [equally]’.

Julia and Richard with their six children migrated to Australia in 1853, disembarking at Melbourne in July of that year<sup>28</sup>. They moved north and settled in Queensland where Richard became a customs officer. Richard died and was buried in the small outback town of Banana, Queensland, on 10 June 1862; Julia survived him by 17 years dying in Sydney in November 1879.

The marriage of the Johnson’s eldest child Mary to Richard Douglas would have been a considerable worry for Charles and Mary Johnson, but they could hardly have foreseen that their last-born Lucy would follow a similar path.

Lucy Margaretta Seaman Johnson<sup>29</sup>, the youngest of the children of the Reverend Charles and Mary Johnson was born at South Stoke on 6 May 1809<sup>30</sup>. At age 17 she was living with her parents at Southstoke Hall, her siblings having all left home, so for a young girl in her teens life would have been quiet, even dull. At the time Lucy was resisting her parents’ wish that she should marry former army officer, 25-year-old Sir Lewen Powell Glyn, Bart.<sup>31</sup> of Ewell in Surrey. However, during the Bath season she met Bryan Stapylton (b. 1805) son of Martin Stapylton, a Yorkshire landowner of Myton Hall, Boroughbridge near York. Towards the end of 1825 the Stapyltons, a long established English family, were living at No.35 Rivers Street, Bath, having taken the house for the season of 1825/26.

The ruddy and jovial demeanour of the Rev. Charles Johnson must have been severely shaken by the events of 7 May 1826. On that day, at the age of just 17, his youngest daughter Lucy eloped to Gretna Green with Bryan Stapylton. Lucy contrived to stay with friends at Laverton and made some excuse to her hosts for a brief return home, but instead she met Bryan in Bath where they began their dash to Gretna Green. Several letters relating to the incident have survived<sup>32</sup>. Martin Stapylton, Bryan’s father, assured Charles Johnson of his prior ignorance of the affair, and set off in pursuit of the couple. He arrived at The Crown Inn, Penrith, several hours before Lucy and Bryan and tried to dissuade Lucy: ‘*Whilst I was endeavouring to break kindly to your daughter my determination to retain them, my Son suddenly seized me with great violence, forced your daughter from me in which he was supported by the Waiters etc*’. Then, with a deputed constable, Martin Stapylton chased the couple with the intention of apprehending his son for assault. All to no avail, the couple reached the border before their pursuers and were duly wed. During a honeymoon at Myton Hall Lucy wrote to her parents begging forgiveness and for the acceptance of Bryan, but above all, the plaintiff cry ‘... allow your maid to pack up my cloathes and send them direct...’. She had with her only the garments in which she had eloped.



Lucy Stapylton née Johnson. (pdi)

Charles Johnson's letter of 15 May 1826 to the Rev. Martin Stapylton<sup>33</sup> shows clearly the anguish suffered by the family at South Stoke:

‘Sir,

The unmanly pitiful and cruel scheme adopted by Mr.B.Stapylton unknown to me to steal away our only remaining child at a time when we most needed the comfort of her society to support us under the recent separation from her brother, at a time, too when her Mother was suffering from severe Indisposition & great depression of spirits and myself and Domestics piously engaged in the duties of the Sabbath these things, Sir, added to the refusal I had given to the proposals of Mr.B.S. have awakened such feelings in our Breasts, as the few remaining years of our lives may not have power to allay. Such being the state of our minds, it were foundless to expect our concurrence in any proposition whatever connected with the parties and as they have lowered themselves already in the estimation of their friends they cannot be much more degraded having their names announced in a Parish Church, I am Sir

C. Johnson.

We shall order our Domestics to forward a Trunk to Myton Hall as speedily as may be.’

Back in England, and being under age, Lucy was made a ward of court whilst arrangements were made ‘... *to have the parties ... married according to the rites of the Church of England ... that the odium may in some degree be removed which now attaches to their Characters.*’ The couple were properly re-married at St. Marylebone Parish Church on 21 August 1826. Both the Johnsons and the Stapyltons had old family associations with Marylebone which was, no doubt, the reason why the church wedding took place there<sup>34</sup>. Although the couple were reconciled to Lucy's parents, the course of true love did not run smoothly; Bryan was an inveterate gambler and the Johnsons had to intervene repeatedly with financial help to keep them from prison for debt.

Lucy and Bryan remained together for the rest of their lives, Lucy becoming President (Vice-President?) of the RSPCA<sup>35</sup>. The Stapylton baronetcy died out with the failure of the male line and Bryan's step-brother, the Rev.Martin Stapylton, inherited Myton Hall and its estates through the female line. He changed of his name by Royal Licence from Bree to Stapylton<sup>36</sup>.

### **The White Rajas of Sarawak<sup>37</sup>**

Through the 1822 marriage of the Reverend Francis Charles Johnson, the second son of the Charles & Mary Johnson to Emma Frances the sister of Sir James Brooke<sup>38</sup> (1803 – 1868), a relationship was forged between the Johnson family and the White Rajas of Sarawak<sup>39</sup>.

The first Raja of Sarawak Sir James Brooke (1803 – 1868) started his army career in the service of the East India Company in 1819 as a young lieutenant. He was seriously wounded at Rangpur, Assam in 1825 and received an army pension of £70 p.a. during a five-year period of convalescence leave. Brooke resigned his commission in 1831 and began the life of an adventurer and trader.



**Right: Raja Sir James Brooke. (pdi)**

From his father's will of 1838 he received a legacy of £30,000 and embarked upon a sailing expedition around the East Indies. Whilst in Borneo in 1841, he helped the Sultan of Borneo suppress an uprising in the province of Sarawak and, in gratitude, the Sultan conferred upon him the title of Raja<sup>40</sup> giving rise to a dynasty of Brooke Rajas which became known as the ‘White Rajas’ of

Sarawak. Raja James Brooke did not marry, and the sons of his sister Emma & the Reverend Francis Charles Johnson became his heirs apparent. Francis Charles and Emma had four sons & three daughters, their eldest son John Brooke Johnson and second son Charles Anthoni Brooke Johnson added the surname Brooke<sup>41</sup> when they anticipated becoming heirs to Sir James.

Arthur Chichester Crookshank b. Ryde, Isle of Wight, 24 April 1825 was amongst the earliest members of the Johnson family to join Raja James Brooke in Sarawak. He was the youngest son of Charlotte Johnson (b.1796) and Lt. Col. Chichester William Crookshank. For most of the period between 1843 and 1862 Arthur Crookshank was magistrate and Resident (1863-1873), and at various times was a member of the Council Negri (Legislative Assembly) or a senior official of that body. He married Bertha Jane Lechmere in 1860 and died without issue in 1891. His memorial is coupled with that of his father in South Stoke churchyard.

William Bloomfield Douglas<sup>42</sup> b. Aberystwyth, 6 October 1822 the son of Mary Johnson and Richard William Glode Douglas is, perhaps, an unexpected member of the Johnson family to be associated with Raja James Brooke. However his long and impressive marine career throughout the world suggests that he was a man of ability and something of an adventurer in the Brooke mould. For a short time (1843-1844) he was the master of the Raja's personal sloop, *Royalist*, and took part in the suppression of local pirates before he returned to England, *via* Australia. He became Chief Coastguard Officer of HM Coastguard (1847-1852).

John Brooke Johnson Brooke<sup>43</sup> (b. 1823), was a Captain in the Connaught Rangers in 1848. In a letter<sup>39</sup> to his sister Emma Johnson dated 1 June 1848 Raja James Brooke wrote: *'I do not write to Brooke because I presume he is on his way out; but, should he be still with you, tell him it was a mistake asking for the A.D.C.-ship<sup>44</sup> to me. There is a higher destiny for him than holding my cocked hat, as I mean at once to place him in charge of Sarawak, and he will gradually be the real effective representative of his uncle'.*

### White Rajas of Sarawak

Relationships to the Family of Rev. Charles & Mary Johnson

**Sir James BROOKE**

1803 – 1868 **First Raja** 1841 - 1868

Mary Johnson  
m. 1811 & 1814  
R. W. G. Douglas

Charlotte Johnson  
m. 1818  
C. W. Crookshank

Francis Johnson  
m. 1822  
Emma Brooke  
Sister of Sir James Brooke

William Bloomfield Douglas  
Raja's staff 1843 – 1844

Arthur Chichester Crookshank.  
Magistrate, Resident,  
Council Negri Sarawak 1843 - 1873

John Brooke Johnson Brooke  
Deputy Raja 1848 -1858

Charles Anthoni Johnson Brooke  
Second Raja 1868 – 1874  
m.1869  
Margaret de Windt (née Johnson)

Charles Vyner de Windt Brooke  
Third & Final Raja 1874 - 1946

Harry Willes Darell de Windt  
( Brother of Margaret de Windt )  
Aide-de-camp to Raja Vyner Brooke  
1876 - 1878

Later the same year John Brooke Johnson was appointed deputy to his uncle Raja James Brooke and as heir apparent he was granted the title, *Tuan Besar* (Senior Lord). On 19 September 1861 he became *Raja Mudah* (Viceroy or Little Prince) of Sarawak. During the 1850s Raja James Brooke suffered several serious setbacks, political, financial and health; in several letters<sup>39</sup> he often complained about having a 'fever', probably malaria. Then, in 1853 he succumbed to the ravages of smallpox, a disease that left him badly scarred both physically and emotionally. Just a few years later (1857), Chinese miners aired their grievances by revolting causing Brooke and his entourage to flee. Largely through the efforts of his nephew Charles<sup>45</sup> the rebellion was crushed, but not before the Raja's house and precious library were destroyed. Sir James Brooke's troubles were far from over for on a recuperative visit to England in 1858 he suffered a stroke. Before that blow, and because of the heavy debts he had incurred, he started negotiations with several European governments for the sale of Sarawak. His successive misfortunes meant that, for long periods, James Brooke had to leave the government of Sarawak in the hands of his elder nephew John (Brooke Johnson Brooke) who, reasonably, expected to succeed James as Raja. That was not to be; James' debts, political weakness and increasingly strange behaviour culminated in his announcement in 1858, that his stable-hand Reuben Walker was his illegitimate son. This was the last straw as far as John Brooke Johnson Brooke was concerned, not only was his uncle trying to sell his inheritance but now James had presented Reuben Walker as a prospective heir. After some acrimony, in January the Raja disinherited John and banished him from Sarawak for opposing his authority.

Charles Anthoni Johnson Brooke<sup>47</sup>, (GCMG 1888) the second son of the Reverend Francis Johnson and Emma, was born at Berrow Vicarage in 1829 and enlisted in the Royal Navy in 1842. On his first tour of duty he served on *Wolverine* under his uncle, Captain John Samuel Willes Johnson<sup>48, 49</sup> and in 1848 adopted the surname and arms of Brooke. Soon after his promotion to lieutenant in 1852 he joined Sir James Brooke and his older brother, John Brooke Johnson Brooke, in Sarawak; clearly a planned career move. Charles was made deputy to Sir James with the title *tuan mudah*<sup>50</sup> (Little Lord) upon the death of his brother John aged 45 (d. 11 June 1868). Earlier in the 1867 will of James Brooke, Charles was named as the Raja's successor. Charles Johnson Brooke was proclaimed Raja at Kuching on 3 August 1868.

The following year (1869) the second Raja returned to England to secure a wealthy bride and during a visit to his cousin Mrs. Willes de Windt (*née* Johnson) found a candidate very close to home. She was Margaret Alice Lili de Windt<sup>51, 52</sup> the 21 year old daughter of Mrs. de Windt & grand-daughter of Rev. Charles & Mary Johnson. Raja Charles Johnson Brooke married Margaret at Highworth, Wiltshire on 28 October 1869 and the couple returned to Sarawak in 1870. The match does not seem to have been a happy one and they spent much of their lives apart.

One of the many adventurers associated with the Johnson Family was Captain Harry Willes Darell de Windt (b. 9 April 1856 in Paris) who was the brother of Margaret de Windt. He became an aide-de-camp to his brother-in-law, Raja Charles Johnson Brooke between 1876 and 1878, but he is better known as an explorer and author of many travel books. He was one of the first men to travel eastward overland between Paris and New York<sup>53</sup>.



**Raja Sir Charles Anthoni Johnson. (pdi)**

Charles Antoni Johnson Brooke was succeeded by his eldest surviving son, (Charles) Vyner de Windt Brooke, as third and last raja of Sarawak in 1874. When Sarawak became a British Crown colony in 1946 the reign of the Brooke 'White Rajas' was over.

## **The Gosling Family**

For a tiny parish such as South Stoke it must be unusual to find three graves of men who were honoured for their '*signal service to King and Country*' with the highest rank of an Order of Chivalry that was only made in Great Britain between 1815 and 1837, the knighthood of the Royal Hanoverian Order of Guelph<sup>54</sup> (K.H.). Their graves are situated along the west wall of the churchyard. The first grave is that of Sir John Meade, who died in Bath on 9 April 1842, aged 68. He was a relative of the wife of the Reverend Henry Calverley, the then Vicar of South Stoke. Sir John was the former Deputy Inspector of military hospitals. The second grave is that of Captain George Gosling R.N.<sup>55</sup>, who died in Bath aged 50, and his wife, Felicia Jane, daughter of the Reverend Charles and Mary Johnson<sup>56</sup>, who died, aged 75 in Cologne on 1 September 1878. A surviving executor's funeral expenses account<sup>57</sup> dated July 1841 for the South Stoke interment of Captain George Gosling on 27 February 1841 suggests that the funeral must have been a truly splendid affair. The horses drawing the hearse and mourners' carriages were dressed with black '*feathers and Velvets*'; appropriate garments and accessories were provided for processional mourners, servants, undertakers and their staff, and cash, *in lieu* of breakfasts, was paid to 23 men. The total bill of £101.3.3d was paid<sup>58, 59</sup> by Captain Gosling's brother-in-law and executor the Reverend Francis Charles Johnson. The burial service was conducted by the Reverend Henry Calverley<sup>60</sup>.

Adjacent to Captain Gosling's tomb is that of another son-in-law of the Reverend Johnson, Lt. Col. Chichester William Crookshank, who died on 1 September 1838 having served with distinction in almost all campaigns of the Napoleonic wars. Within the church, to the left of the door there is also a bronze memorial tablet<sup>61</sup> dedicated to him. Chichester Crookshank married Charlotte, daughter of Charles and Mary Johnson on 26 August 1818. Also in the grave is their youngest son Arthur Chichester Crookshank who served Raja Sir James Brooke in various capacities over many years.

Felicia Jane Johnson married George Gosling R.N. in the chapel of Monkton Combe<sup>62</sup> on 20 October 1821; four years later Lieut. Gosling was promoted to Captain. At the age of 11 young George had served as midshipman upon *Ganges* at the Battle of Copenhagen with Horatio Nelson in command of the boy's division of the fleet. Felicia and George had three sons and a daughter. Captain Gosling died at 4, The Circus, Bath, on 24 February 1841. The Gosling family seem to have had a long-standing residence at The Circus, as Felicia, aged 68, was living there as '*head of household*' in 1871 with her son army Captain George Frederick Gosling and his four children. Felicia died in Cologne on the August 1879, leaving a will dated 11 August 1874. The three sons of Felicia and George Gosling had successful army careers.

William Clarke Francis Gosling rose to become a General in the British army. He was decorated for his actions in the Crimea (1856), the Indian Mutiny (1857) and received the 4th Class of the Turkish Imperial Order of Nobility (1858). He married Harriet Caroline Morton at St. James' Church, Westminster on 29 April 1857.

George Frederick Gosling, a Major in the Royal Madras Fusiliers, married Bellerma Alice Lloyd at Carshalton, Surrey on the 5 February 1862. The middle window adjacent to the south aisle of St. James' church is dedicated to the memory of Bellerma who died aged 31 on 11 December 1869.

Audley Charles Gosling<sup>63</sup> (b. 1836), the youngest son of George and Felicia Gosling, was knighted (KCMG) in 1901 after a successful army and diplomatic career. He resigned his commission in 1857 and joined HM Diplomatic Service where he served in Copenhagen, Madrid, and St. Petersburg. These posts were followed by Minister Resident<sup>64</sup>, appointments to Central American Republics & Santiago, and finally Ambassador to Chile. On 12 October 1858, at the British Legation, Stockholm, he married Countess Augusta Sofia Vilhelmina Gyldenstolpe (b.1837) at Stockholm, who died in Marstrand in 1900. Sir Audley's second marriage in 1904 was to Ebba Augusta Posse, widow of Count Arvid Posse, a former Prime Minister of Sweden. Audley Gosling died in London on 7 December 1913.

## **The Wills of Charles and Mary Johnson**

Mary Johnson (Will, 1838; d. 1843) outlived her husband by two years and, following the inheritance custom of the day in such cases, Mary's bequeathing power was somewhat restricted by the provisions in her husband's will (Will, 1834; d.1841). But Mary was wealthy in her own right receiving income from trusts set up through the wills of members of her own family; those wills usually made provision for Charles and Mary's children.

Because of the provisions of her relatives' wills, Mary Johnson's testament was long and tortuous. Early in their marriage Charles Johnson received a loan of £800, secured by his bond, from Mary's father William Willes. In his will of 1814 Willes required that the bond was for the '*sole use of Mary and her children*'. Charles Johnson had not discharged the bond by the time of his death and in her will Mary inserted the statement that it was '*inconvenient for the said Charles Johnson to pay off and discharge*' the debt. Then she gave exhaustive instructions on how that debt must be treated.

The unwise marriage(s) of Mary (legal marriage 1817), Charles and Mary Johnson's first-born, was history by the time her parents made their wills. The divorce and re-marriage of Richard Douglas had put Mary's legacies beyond the reach of her former husband.

The situation regarding their last-born Lucy Johnson (Stapylton) (b.1809) was quite different; Bryan Stapylton was a habitual gambler. Bequests left to Lucy were put into the hands of her brothers, the Reverend Francis Charles Johnson and Captain Frederick William Johnson, whose duty it was to protect their sister's income and to prevent Stapylton borrowing against her trust investments. At the time of her marriage Lucy had received a settlement in trust of £600 and that amount was to be repaid to her mother's estate at the time of Mary Johnson senior's decease. Anticipating that the trust sum would not be repaid, Mary wrote into her will that in that eventuality her son Francis (trustee) was to be indemnified against any loss<sup>65</sup>. A codicil of the will suggests that Lucy herself needed from time to time to raise loans, presumably to cover her husband's debts. The codicil directs that: '*... the said sum of £800 shall be as between him (Frederick William Johnson) and his said Sister be deducted out of any share of the said stocks and trust monies to which my said daughter Lucy Stapylton may become entitled under any appointment already made or to be made by me*'.

The otherwise little heard-of son Frederick William Johnson was a trustee and legatee in his mother's will.

## **Acknowledgements**

I am grateful to Trevor & Jenny John for permitting me to use the images of Southstoke Hall and the Lodge. *Pdi* acknowledges, with thanks, the use of *Public Domain Images* from various sources.

I am indebted to the late H.G. (John) Canvin, a former churchwarden of the church of St. James the Great, for his archived research notes on the history of South Stoke parish.

## **Notes**

1. Expanded, edited, referenced & annotated in part from the papers of former South Stoke Churchwarden, H. G. Canvin. See also the archive publication: Parfitt, R.T., *The Johnson Family of South Stoke*, A South Stoke History Group Monograph (with Appendices & Transcribed Wills), 2015, in the Bath Record Office (BRO).
2. Father of the diarist Robert Francis Kilvert (1840-1879).
3. Kilvert, Robert, *More Chapters from the Kilvert Saga*, Kilvert Society, Hereford, 1971.
4. For a portion of that portfolio left to the Rev.Charles Johnson see: Somerset Record Office (SRO), DD\PLE/ BX14.
5. Cassan, Stephen Hyde, *Lives of the Bishops of Bath*, 1829 (Google ebook).
6. Marshall, William, *Edward Willes 1694-1773*, Oxford National Dictionary of Biography (ONDB), Oxford University Press, 2015.
7. He was paid between £300 & £500 p.a. for this work.
8. Wife of the Reverend William Somerville of Devizes.
9. Will of Mary Johnson, Probate 20/2/1844. Nat. Arch. Ref: Prob 11/1993. Image ref: 174.
10. For an inventory of the contents of No.9, Gay St., see: SRO, DD\PLE/ BX14; a transcription is available in the Monograph cited in ref. 1.
11. Notes of John Canvin.

12. *The Quarterly Theological Review & Ecclesiastical Record*, Vol. 2, 1925, p.519.
13. For a fuller account see the archive publication: Parfitt R.T. *The Johnson Family of South Stoke*, A South Stoke History Group Monograph (with Appendices & Transcribed Wills), 2015, BRO & SRO.
14. Thorn, F.R., "'That Most Famous Monasterium at Bath", its Hundred Hides and its Estates, viewed from South Stoke', *Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society Proceedings*, 153, pp.13-51, 2010.
15. Parfitt, Robert, Ed., *The Book of South Stoke with Midford; Companion Volume*, South Stoke, 2002. Parsons, C., *The Parish Church of St. James the Great, South Stoke*, South Stoke, 2008.
16. The death of Edwin Joseph Johnson could be the event referred to in the letter of Rev. Charles Johnson to Rev. Martin Stapylton regarding Charles' daughter Lucy.
17. Baptised William Frederick but usually known as Frederick William.
18. [www.orthodoc.com.au/family/turners/409.htm](http://www.orthodoc.com.au/family/turners/409.htm),  
(also [www.orthodoc.com.au/family/turners/sources.htm](http://www.orthodoc.com.au/family/turners/sources.htm)).
19. *Birmingham Journal*, 24 December 1825 & 4 February 1826; *Westmorland Gazette*, 4 February 1826; *Bell's Life in London & Sporting Chronicle*, London.
20. National Archives. Ref: B 3/1385. Bankruptcy Commission 16 December 1825.
21. There is primary parish evidence from All Souls Church, St. Marylebone that Julia Bree was also married. The record indicates that Julia Nugent Bree married William Teasdale at All Souls by licence on 9 November 1826. See [www.ennever.com](http://www.ennever.com) for the original parish record slip for the Bree/Teasdale marriage. We have only an approximate date for Julia's birth, so cannot tell what age she was when she married Richard Glode Douglas in London on 12 December 1829.
22. *Douglas v Douglas*, *Times*, London, 17 July 1829.
23. Richard William Glode Douglas has been confused on some genealogical web-sites with ('Sir' or 'Lord') Richard Douglas who appears in chapter 10 of Charles Kingston's *Remarkable Rogues*, Project Gutenberg ebook, 2014. See original: Kingston, C., *Remarkable Rogues*, Bodley Head Ltd., London, 1921. Kingston's book has no citations or dates and it is possible that the account is partially fictitious.
24. [www.orthodoc.com.au/family/turners/409.htm](http://www.orthodoc.com.au/family/turners/409.htm),  
(also [www.orthodoc.com.au/family/turners/sources.htm](http://www.orthodoc.com.au/family/turners/sources.htm)).
25. Mary Johnson former wife of Richard Douglas retained Douglas' name after their divorce.
26. See National Archive Ref: C 14/65/D14 & B3/1385. Also Pollock, Frederick, *The Revised Reports, English Courts of Common Law & Equity*, 1846-1848, Sweet & Maxwell, Boston, 1905.
27. Wiltshire and Swindon Archive Catalogue; ref. 161/35.
28. Immigrants to Australia (Melbourne) 1853. PRO Victoria. <http://prov.vic.gov.au>.
29. Jane Seaman (aunt of Mary Willes) was the eldest daughter of the Reverend Edward Willes, Bishop of Bath & Wells; she married the Reverend Lional Seaman, Vicar of Frome who became Archdeacon of Wells.
30. See Parfitt, Robert, Ed., *The Book of South Stoke with Midford*, Halsgrove, Tiverton, 2001; & ref 28.
31. Sir Lewen Glyn died in Bath, unmarried, at the age of 38 after a long illness. *London Standard*, 31 July 1840.
32. The letter selection published (*The Book of South Stoke with Midford; Companion Volume Ed. Robert Parfitt, South Stoke 2002*) was all that was in the Canvin archive. Altogether some 40 family letters and documents have survived and are in the hands of Mrs. Ruth Waddington, a great great grand-daughter of Preb. Charles Johnson.
33. Bryan Stapylton's step-brother.
34. It is clear from the next surviving letter written by Lucy from No.1 Vittoria Walk, Cheltenham (now demolished), that all had been forgiven. Lucy wrote about a forthcoming visit to South Stoke, hoping that her parents would not be inconvenienced and adding '... fortunately we have no chicks'.
35. From Canvin's notes - I can find no evidence for this (rtp).
36. The Rev. Martin Stapylton Bryan's elder step-brother was formerly Martin Bree!
37. Runciman, Steven, *The White Rajahs: A History of Sarawak from 1841 to 1946*, Cambridge University Press, 1990, Cambridge.  
(also: <http://www.brooketrust.org/#!/genealogy/c1510> & <http://www.royalark.net/Malaysia/sarawak3.htm>).
38. Reece, R.H.W., *Sir James Brooke (1803-1868) Army Officer & 1st Raja of Sarawak*, ONDB.
39. *The Private Letters of Sir James Brooke, KCB, Rajah of Sarawak*, Ed. John C. Templer, Richard Bentley, London, 1853. For family letters from James Brooke to his sister Emma and other family members.
40. Often spelled Rajah.
41. By deed poll.
42. P.L. Burns, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Volume 4, (MUP), 1972.
43. Eldest son of Emma & Francis Johnson, known as Brooke Brooke.
44. Aide-de-campe
45. Charles Anthoni Johnson Brooke, Second son of Emma & Francis Johnson.
46. The relationship between James & Reuban has been the subject of a great deal of speculation.
47. Reece, R.H.W., *Sir Charles Anthoni Johnson Brooke (1829-1917) Naval Officer & 2nd Raja of Sarawak*, ONDB.
48. William Bloomfield Douglas was serving on *Wolverine* at the same time.
49. See: Johnson, John Samuel Willes, in *A Naval Biographical Dictionary* by William Richard O'Byrne, J.Murray, London, 1849.

50. Heir presumptive.
51. Margaret Alice Lili de Windt, she was the daughter of Captain Joseph Clayton Jennyns de Windt, of Blunston Hall, and his wife, Elizabeth Sarah Johnson. Elizabeth Johnson was the daughter of John Samuel Willes Johnson & Elizabeth de Windt
52. Brooke, Margaret. *The Raine of Sarawak, My Life in Sarawak*, Methuen, London, 1913.
53. De Windt, Harry, *From Paris to New York by Land*, Thos.Nelson & Sons, London, 1903. Also *Kindle Edition* (free), Public Domain Book, 2012.
54. The title 'Sir' should not be used as a title by those awarded this knighthood, unless they have also been created Knights Bachelor.
55. A portrait purporting to be that of George Gosling is available on [www.bathintime.co.uk](http://www.bathintime.co.uk).
56. Although Felicia was baptised Felicia Jane Johnson, strangely, she is referred to as Felicia Clare in her mother's will.
57. Parfitt, Robert, Ed. *The Book of South Stoke with Midford; Companion Volume South Stoke 2002*, p.27.
58. An endorsement is inscribed at the foot of the account in FCJ's handwriting: '*I paid this Bill out of Money rec'd by me out of G. Gosling's Estate by order upon Stuckey's Febr. 19th 1842*'.
59. Around £5,000 in 2015.
60. Known at that time as Henry Blayds.
61. 'In memory of Lt. Colonel Chichester W. Crookshank, Knight of Hanover, Born 24th May 1783. Ensign 68th Foot 12th Jan. 1799. War Services West Indies, South Africa, South America, Walcheren. 1st and 2nd Peninsular Wars brevet Lt. Colonel 24th June 1814. Died 1st September 1838.'
62. Then part of South Stoke parish.
63. For a glimpse of life in the Audley Gosling household during the early years of his adventurer son Cecil Gosling's life, see: Gosling, Cecil, *Travel & Adventures in Many Lands*, Methuen & Co., London, 1926.
64. Lowest level as Head of Mission appointment.
65. In equity, Mary's daughter Felicia was treated in a similar manner.





## THE HISTORY OF BROAD STREET: A STUDY OF THE SITES

### PART I – THE WEST SIDE

**Elizabeth Holland and Margaret Burrows**

*In 2014 the Museum of Bath at Work presented an exhibition by the Survey of Old Bath on Broad Street, Frog Lane and Walcot Street. The material on Broad Street was assembled by Margaret Burrows and Elizabeth Holland, approaching it chronologically. Meanwhile an article by Margaret Burrows in Walk Back in Time highlights point of interest in Broad Street, the Paragon and Walcot Street, while publications like Pevsner's Bath discuss architecture.*

*The present study instead deals with individual sites. When a site is identified, it is possible to understand how it has been utilised; a knowledge of location provides the basis for social and industrial studies. Some disputed sites have, we hope, been finally settled.*

#### **The Medieval Street**

Broad Street and Walcot Street ('the way that leadeth to Walcot') were two ancient routes leading to the North Gate of Bath. In the Corporation Survey of 1641, the area immediately outside the North Gate was accounted part of Broad Street, later to be called Northgate Street, though a medieval deed suggests that the way to Walcot reached the North Gate.

In the Poll Tax entries of 1379, 47 taxable names are listed for Broad Street ('Brade Stret') compared to 64 for 'Walcote Stret'. The richest man in the city, the Mayor John Natton, was assessed at 10 shillings. The second richest man was John Gregorye, also mayor on occasion, assessed in Broad Street at 6 shillings 8 pence, or half a mark. His son John is also listed there, and two of his servants, so that he appears actually to have lived in Broad Street.

With John Gregorye, five members of Broad Street were assessed at one shilling or over, against eleven for Walcot Street: Walcot Street therefore had the higher proportion over one shilling. Like the rest of the city, they were streets of artisans.

It has been suggested that the medieval gate stood farther north than in Stuart times: it is not possible to place exactly the smithies 'outside' or 'by' the North Gate. On the west, the buildings have now swallowed up the old city wall, and the 'way' later known as Barton Lane that once ran by the wall. Where New Bond Street curves to the south, lay Frog Lane and the buildings south of Frog Lane. Frog Lane itself was a narrow route, entered by an arch under overhanging rooms. Dr. John Wroughton has described how schoolboys would use this entrance on their way to the first King Edward's School, at the west end of Frog Lane. The second site of the school was of course inside the North Gate, in the nave of St. Mary's church.

In the Survey of 1641, item 2:2 comprised the corner site at the head of the lane, held by John Biggs, alderman, by lease of 1633. *Ancient Deeds* V:18, issued in 1452, appears to be the same site, where John and Margery Honybrygge have to rebuild the cottage with timber within a year.

Indenture by which William Drayton, Mayor, and the Commonalty of Bath, grant to John Honybrygge, citizen, and Margery, his wife, for their lives, a cottage in Brade street, between Frog Lane, on the north, and which extends to the tenement which William Walley holds of the proctors of St. Michael without the Northgate, on the south; and in width it abuts upon Brade street, in front, on the east, and below, on the west, the same tenement. Rendering yearly 2s. of lawful money of England. And the said John and Margery shall build the said cottage anew with timber within one year at their own expenses (with clause of forfeiture for non-payment or neglect).

*Witnesses:* William Drayton, Mayor; William Hogekeyns; Roger Stanborowe; Thomas Abell; John Ster; John Whytyng, the younger; John Herford, Citizens.

**Shickle, *Ancient Deeds*, V:18, 1452.**

North of this, at the north-east end of Frog Lane lay a holding which Marta Inskip suggested was once part of the medieval rental of the Prior, since the measurements tallied. In *Ancient Deeds*, V:88, 1413, the Prior granted what was apparently this land to the Mayor and Commonalty 'for ever', at a yearly rent of 1/-. Earlier, this plot was connected with the barony of Alba Mara, mentioned in *Ancient Deeds* II:1, attributed to the late 13th century.

Sale, for 10s. of silver, by Walter de Costantin, with the assent of Holysancta, his wife, to John, son of Miles de Bath, of a yearly rent of 12d. to be taken at Michaelmas from land in the suburb of Bath, which is of the barony of Alba Mara. Which said land lies between the land of the said Miles on the north and froggemere on the south, and extends from the high street to the land of the Prior and Convent of Bath.

*Witnesses:* John de Porta; John Coc; Henry Cissor; William de Clafferton; Randolph Archer; William Slegh; Robert Buche, and others.

**Shickle, *Ancient Deeds*, VI:1, late 13th century.**

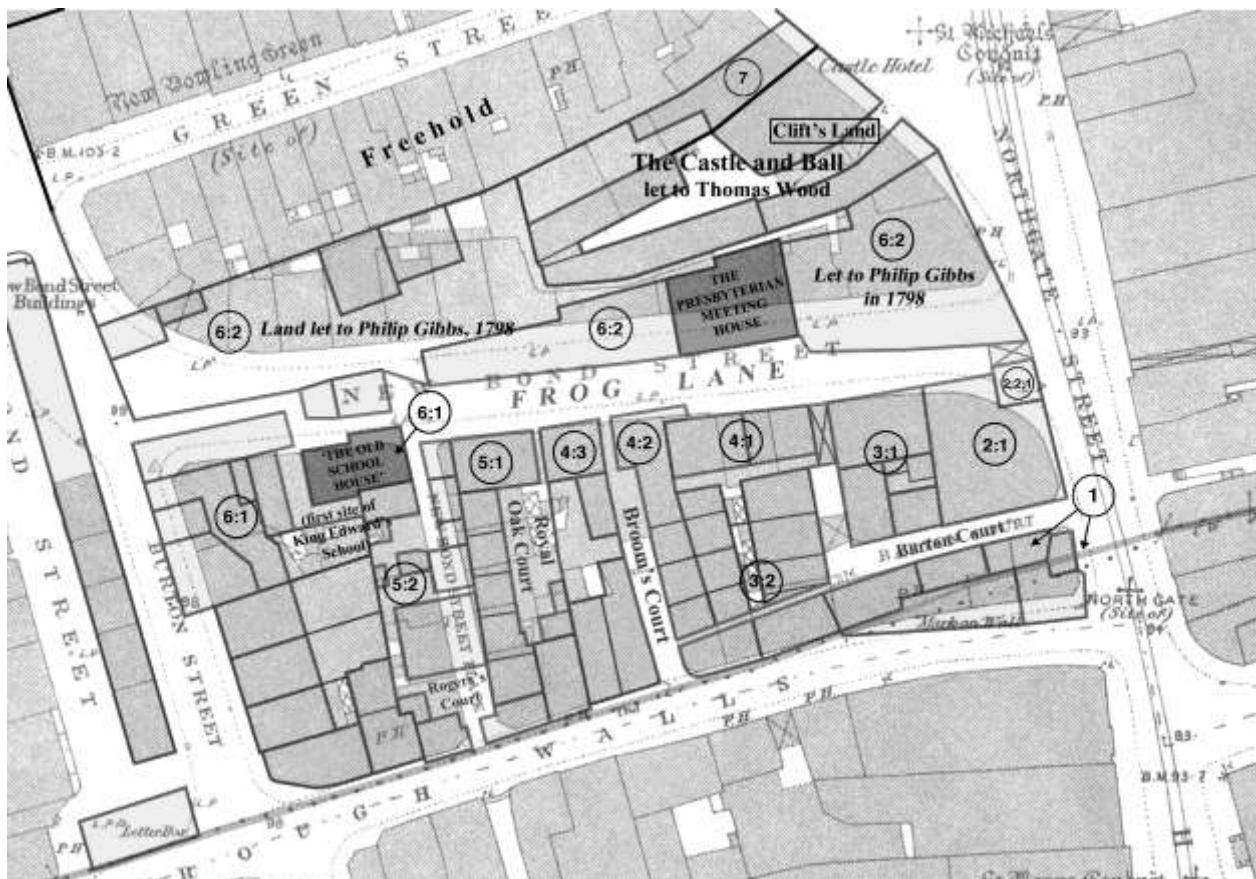
The family of Alba Mara have been described as French knights. Apparently they arrived in England before the conquest, as Devonshire records report John de Alba Mara as holding a fee 'of the honour of Totton' in 1063, and again as holding land in 1064/5, while later someone held land of Ralf de Alba Mara in 1067 and 1068. The family were also referred to as d'Aumarle, Aumale, Damarell, de Albemarle, and so on. It has been suggested that 'the last Albemarle' died in the Black Death. They are associated particularly with Devon (Robert de Alba Mara was High Sheriff of Devon in 1218). That at one time they held land by Bath seems not to have been noticed.

### **Changes since the Middle Ages**

As discussed later in this study, Tudor references give the impression that at that time, when Bath had been referred to as a decayed city, the Broad Street houses lay near the city, while the northern stretch of the street was flanked by open land.

The Survey of 1641 lists the leaseholders of Corporation and St.John's land in Bath. Once the plots are established, their reference numbers, derived from the pages of the Survey, provide a fixed guide to location, in contrast to the shifting street numbers. The 1641 Survey suggests that the street was now chiefly built up.

It is difficult to sum up the development of Broad Street since that time, as its development was opportunist and piecemeal. Some grand buildings were erected, like King Edward's School and the York Hotel, but meanwhile slum courts began to appear, and continued in the 19th century. The 20th and 21st centuries were marked by clearances. What remains of the old buildings of Broad Street is of considerable interest: the cleared area is not so easy



**Late 18th century details of the Frog Lane area superimposed on the OS 1886 map, prior to its replacement by New Bond Street, together with the item numbers from the 1641 Survey.**

### Frog Lane and New Bond Street

Item 1 in the Survey of 1641 lay by the gate. Item 2:1 and the numbers from 3 to 6:1 were allotted to Frog Lane, item 6:1 being the Old Schoolhouse. 2:2 has already been mentioned, at the east end of the lane. Immediately north of it lay the land once belonging to the barony of Alba Mara, part of item 6:2.

William 'Shereston' held the land, the old GPO site, by lease of 1633, together with 'Certayne lofts or Roomes over frogg lane erected and built', along with a 'Backside orchard and garden'. He also held land to the west. By the time of the leases of 1775 and 1798 to Philip Gibbs, the Presbyterian Meeting House occupied the 'orchard and garden' on a separate lease, though Gibbs's lease included the land to the west, as far as Burton Street.

New Bond Street was developed on the site of Frog Lane at the beginning of the 19th century. A plan by John Palmer was approved in 1802/1803. The south-eastern corner, now 'Anthropologie' has building leases of 1806 and 1807, and redevelopment proceeded westwards from there. The sites on both sides were set back to widen the street, as part of a plan to provide carriage access to the old town.

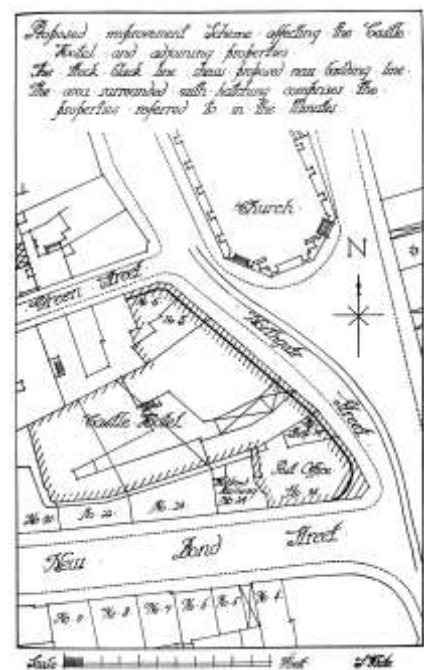


The Post Office is not shown on the OS 1886 map. A public house is marked - a wine merchant's belonging to John E. Tylee at No.3 Northgate Street - but Council Minutes in 1914 show a post office at the corner, then No.25 New Bond Street, with a scheme for setting back the corner and the land north of it.



Left:  
Northgate Street in 1905, showing the wine merchant's on the corner of New Bond Street (Paul De'Ath collection).

Right:  
Plan from the Council Minutes of 1914, showing the Post Office on the corner together with the proposed new building line in Northgate Street.



The former GPO building as known today was developed 1923-7 by the Office of Works, involving the closing of the Castle Hotel and the creation of a Telephone Exchange. An £100,000 facelift was advertised in 1992, with the creation of a Postshop retail sales area. In 2003 plans for complete redevelopment were invited. By 2007 'Chris Davies Premier Lettings' was advertising nine

apartments in the Old Post Office site, as the GPO had been moved to the corner of Green Street. The former GPO building is now in flats and shops.

### **The Castle Inn**

North of the GPO, in the location which in modern times housed the Telephone Exchange, lay the Castle Inn. Although this was Corporation property, it had no entry to the Survey of 1641, but was referred to by neighbours as belonging to the Clift family.

In 1746 the site was let to Posthumus Bush (BC152/1905). This land lay north of that in the Philip Gibbs leases of 1775 and 1798; the Castle Inn did not lie on the GPO site. South, lay 'Gibb's passage Court and Tenements'. North lay Morris property, item 7 in the Survey of 1641 (the only entry for that page). In 1746 the tenement was already called the Sign of the Castle and Ball.

In 1794, when let to Thomas Wood of Ross in the County of Herefordshire, wool stapler, Sarah Morris is north and Philip James Gibbs south and west. The lease of 17 April 1809, to John Physick, gentleman, and Henry Walker, draper, (BC153/2617B), states that at considerable expense they have taken down and rebuilt the premises, also setting back the frontage in order to widen the street, thus improving the whole property in value. The inn had now taken over item 7 in the 1641 Survey. The



two frontages are marked on the plan, 61ft 8in for the Castle, 14ft 8in for the land north, item 7.

The extended inn appears on OS 1886, marked Castle Hotel, a guide to the layout of the inn in its later days. The 1840s panorama shows the Castle, with the wide entrance for the coaches. The Castle was a famous coaching inn, assisted by the development of New Bond Street; the redevelopment of the inn followed logically on the expansion of the street.

### **Green Street**

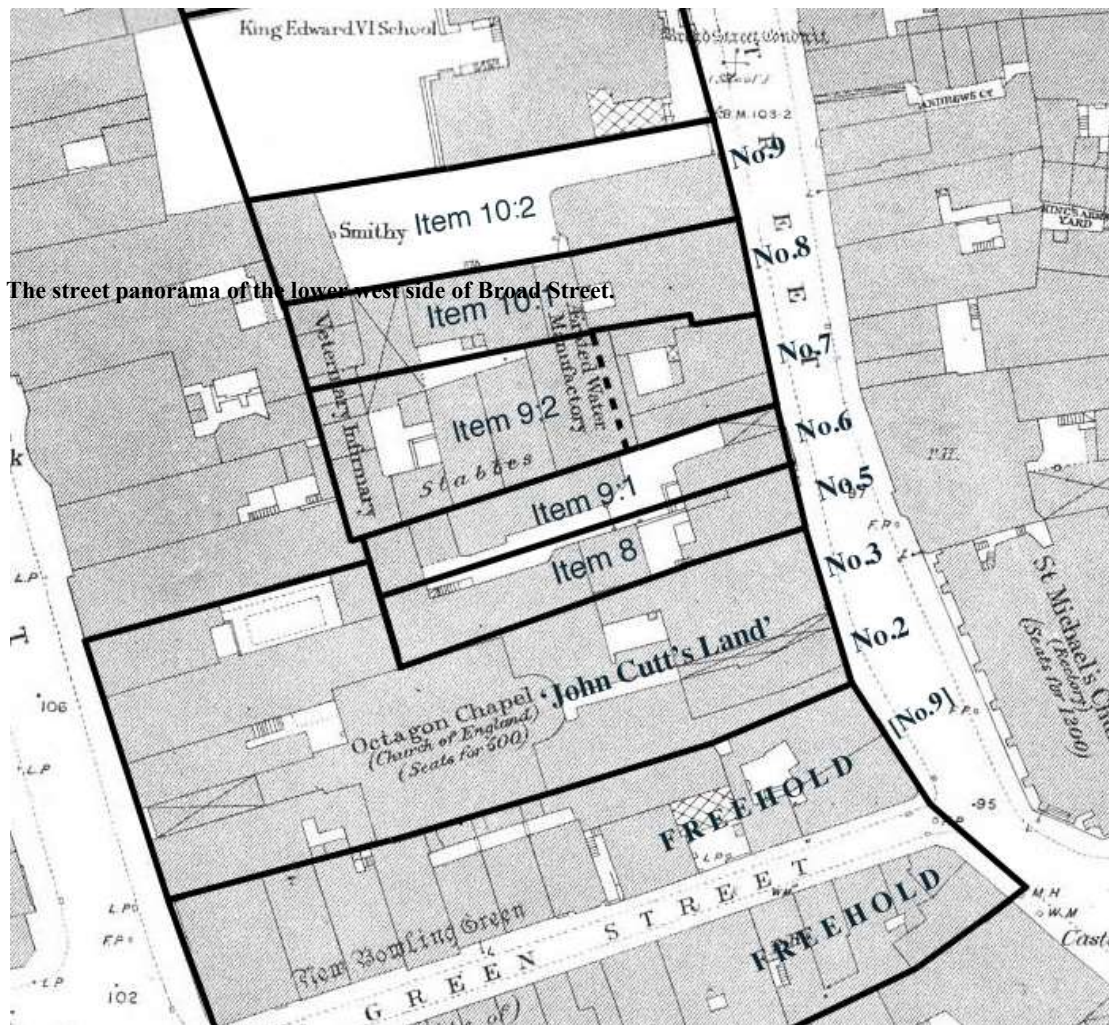
The Post Office is now at the south-eastern corner of Green Street, with the Postal Museum beneath. The site was once part of the freehold land on which the Bowling Green was created, but the Corporation had acquired the corner site by 1809. In the 1914 plan referred to above, the corner houses are numbered 5 and 6 Northgate Street.





The opposite corner, where Belushi's now stands, is still on the freehold land. There has been confusion as to whether it represents Green Street or Broad Street. The street sign reads 'Broad Street', and it has sometimes been numbered as such, but it is now numbered for Green Street. In 1850 for instance, John Wiltshire was listed at No.1 Broad Street, which must have been at the corner, but Oliver's and Belushi's have both been listed as No.9 Green Street.

The Bath Oliver biscuit factory once lay on the north side of Green Street. Old photographs of the corner site show advertisements for the enterprise. The Oliver Inn commemorated the biscuit-loving worthy, with a medallion which still remains. By 2003 it had been renamed the St.Christopher, with accommodation for backpackers upstairs. In 2004 it offered internet bookings at £1 a night, £13 for those who 'turn up at the doorstep'. As indicated, the site is now Belushi's bar and restaurant.



The lower west side of Broad Street as shown on the OS 1886 map, superimposed with the outlines and item numbers from the 1641 Survey, together with current street numbering.



#### **Nos.2 & 3: Sir Thomas Estcourt's House**

Although Belushi's is numbered as No.9 Green Street, the house north of it is No.2 Broad Street, not No.1. In 2013 it was occupied by a dress shop Phase Eight, with the passage into 'Milsom Place'. North of the passage is No.3 Broad Street, in 2013 a Cath Kidston shop.

The site of Nos.2 & 3 Broad Street is omitted in the Survey of 1641, but is referred to by neighbours as belonging to John Cutt, alderman. In the later 17th century it was held by William Sherston. At the close of

the century its neighbours refer to it as belonging to Thomas Estcourt.

Sir Thomas Estcourt (1645-1702), was chosen MP for Bath in 1695. He had been knighted in 1674, and succeeded his father, Sir Thomas Estcourt of Sherston Pinkney in 1683. In politics he is regarded as Tory. He stood down as MP in 1698, to favour Alexander Popham. (His grandson, through his daughter Elizabeth, was, incidentally, found later to have three wives, two of them bigamous.)

Sir Thomas Estcourt's house is illustrated in the right-hand border of Gilmore's map. It is suggested it belonged to the late 17th century. At the rear of No.3 Broad Street, the extension still shows half-timbering. When the wall was restored in 1979, a date of c.1500 was proposed. Roof timbering is also suspended within No.3. It is suggested the timbers do not belong on site: possibly they come from Estcourt's original house.

By 1710 William Street, clerk, had the site, succeeded by 1739 by William Street, apothecary, who held several properties. The lease of 1765 to William Street shows the site's L-shaped layout, wrapping at the west round item 8 in the Survey of 1641 and part of item 9. Its southern boundary adds up to 250 feet, the then distance from Broad Street to Milsom Street. William Street agreed that before March 1769 he would build three substantial tenements, fitting in with the others of Milsom Street, and undertook to create well-built houses if he redeveloped those on the Broad Street side. In the 1840s panorama, Nos.2 and 3 seem to have been lowered and refronted since Estcourt's time.

#### **Nos.4, 5 and 6**

There is no No.4 Broad Street nowadays, and No.5 follows No.3.

This table shows some of the numbering available;

	<b>Estcourt's</b>	<b>Landick's</b>	<b>King's Arms</b>	<b>Wiltshire's</b>	<b>GRAMMAR SCHOOL</b>
Survey of 1641, Items	"John Cutt's"	Items 8: & 9:1 (Orchard) (Collibee)	9:2 (Mary Baber)	10:1 (Bernard) 10:2 (Parker)	11:1.1 (Chapman) 12:1 (Swan)
Panorama, 1840s	2. 3.	4. 5.	6.	7. 8.	9.
Cotterell 1853/4	2. 3, 4.	5. 6.	7. 8.	Post Office. 9.	-
Modern number	2. 3.	5. 6.	7. (7a behind)	8. 9.	-

When the Grammar School lost its numbering as 9, numbers began to shift. It is not feasible to pursue the numbers all the way at the present stage. One suspects that at some time No.4 became allotted to part of No.3, as Cotterell suggests, and was lost in the days of Monk & Co., who held Nos.3-6.

"No.4" advertised itself pictorially in the Post Office directory of 1867 as being the home of James Heath, with illustrations of his wheelchairs. He was already there in 1850, and remained there, joined in the 1870s by William Minett, until the directory of 1882-83 shows W.Monk & Co., wheel and invalid chair manufacturers. They were still there in 1955 at 3-6 Broad Street, baby carriage and toy dealers, but by 1968 were listed as toy dealers only, again from Nos.3-6.

William Orchard, clothier, held the site of the modern No.5, item 8 in 1641, by a lease of 1619. In 1699 Elizabeth Landicke held it; this lease mentions Sir Thomas Estcourt as being south and west. Elizabeth Landicke was the daughter of Alderman Edward Bushell, gentleman, and was buried by him in the Abbey in January 1725, aged 69. Edward Bushell had married Hester Chapman of Weston, daughter of John Chapman of Weston, and was buried in the Abbey in 1700. In 2013 No.5 was occupied by Kiss the Frog, offering second-hand and recycled items.

In 1641, item 9:1, the site of the present No.6, was held by William Collibee as an assignee of Matthew Clift, one of the leading citizens of mid 17th century Bath. Later a William Collibee married Elizabeth Landicke's sister Ann. Elizabeth Landicke held No.6 in 1699, as well as No.5. The lease passed on to other family members.



In 1756 came a change. One lease for the present Nos.5 & 6 together was granted to William Bridgen, coach maker. The lease speaks of one new-built messuage or tenement with coachhouse, workshops, stable-yard and adjoining premises. The King's Arms is north, the Street property south, and the wall of the Poor House garden west.

The plan with the lease is perfectly clear. The messuage or tenement referred to is on the site of the present No.5. The site of the present No.6 is empty: this area is called 'Vacant Ground'. There is room there for coaches to pass, and stand in the courtyard. The plan shows coachhouses, stables, and a 'Countin House'. Again in 1777 John Glazier, coachmaker, held the two sites, this time on two leases.

This suggests an on-going coach-building business on the premises. In the latter 18th century the present Nos.5, 6, 7, 8 & 9 must have represented what is called a hive of activity. Coach-making was carried on in the premises of the present Nos.5 & 6. No.7 held the coaching inn, the Kings' Arms – Nos.8 & 9 as well as No.7 fronted Wiltshire's carrier's business. The boys of King Edward's must have had plenty to amuse them near the school. One wonders how often they lingered round the stables instead of attending classes.

By 1837 the present No.6 Broad Street had been built. Its frontage on Broad Street was 21 feet, of which the passage on the north occupied 8 feet 2 inches. The layout can be seen on OS 1886. This passage once led to the well-known restaurant, the Moon and Sixpence, which presumably used at least part of the old coachhouses. In the 1990s it was described as 6a Broad Street. In 2013 the sign read, instead, 'Côte Brasserie'. No.6 itself in 2015 housed Robert Welch, selling superior household items, especially in silver and stainless steel, with the motto, 'Designed for Life – Built to Last'.

#### **No.7: the King's Arms**

No.7 today represents item 9:2 in the Survey of 1641, held in 1629 by John Dallamore, weaver. By 1640 it was owned by Mary Baber, widow. ('Mr. Robert Baber' was buried in the Abbey in 1640.) She is listed in the Survey of 1641 as holding a lease of 1 October 1640, though it does not survive in the collection of old deeds. 'Payne and Sons, Old Established Shoe Shop', reported a stone marked

<u>MB</u> 1640
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'in the wall of the ancient building at the rear of 7 Broad Street', which is thought to refer to her.

Her entry in 1641 stated that William Button's orchard was west, which may account for Payne & Co's belief that one of the Button family lived in No.7 'in 1593'. The Button land west of 9:2 was a freehold piece which intruded into the field called Rack Close.

The lease of No.7 passed through various hands, including the Chapmans of 'Bawdrip', until it came to the Wiltshires. Walter Wiltshire the carrier was married to Charity, daughter of John Dallamore, malster. All three 'lives' in the previous lease, granted 1721 to Bernard Gardiner, Warden of All Souls' College, Oxford, were Dallamores.

In 1751 one neighbour referred to 9:2 as 'Sir Sebastian Smith's house', suggesting it was some grand place like Estcourt's. The Smythe family held the manor of Cuddesdon until it passed to the Gardiner family. Sebastian Smith or Smythe, a lawyer knighted in 1685, was the brother-in-law of Bernard Gardiner. Gardiner died in 1726, Sir Sebastian Smith in 1733.

The 1751 reference must have been retrospective. In 1752 the other neighbour called 9:2 the Trooper. By this time the site belonged to Walter Wiltshire.

Walter Wiltshire junior, described as 'Common Carrier', obtained the lease of 9:2 in 1743. Walter Wiltshire was elected to the Council in 1746. He became a friend of Gainsborough's, as is discussed by Dr.Susan Sloman in her work, *Gainsborough in Bath*. He is said to have admired Gainsborough's paintings so much that he carried his canvases to London without charge.

In 1764 the neighbour renamed 9:2 'The King's Arms'. Walter Dallamore, malster, Walter Wiltshire's brother-in-law, was named as a life in the lease. By 1800 the lease was held by John Wiltshire of Shockerwick, Esqr. He owned Shockerwick House, now a nursing home. He was a friend of the Chapmans; The *Survey* No.17 published a letter by him, to one of the Charles Chapmans.

In *Historic Houses in Bath*, R.E.Peach (not always reliable) adds a footnote on p.13 which relates how the Rev.E.W.L.Davies was viewing some of Gainsborough's pictures at Shockerwick in the summer of 1860, when the John Wiltshire of the time, owner of the house, told him how the news of the defeat at Austerlitz came to William Pitt there, and how Wiltshire, a boy in 1805, had to fetch him some brandy. This story has been retold for other houses, but Shockerwick is perhaps the most convincing. Shockerwick is an imposing building in extensive grounds, evidence of the prosperity of the Wiltshires.

The King's Arms became another famous coaching inn, presumably using Wiltshire's buildings created west of it for its coaches. By 1800 the site is described as formerly the King's Arms but now a private house. The plan for 1800 (BC153/2468/1) illustrates how the building had lost its western land. This was repeated in 1823 when the lease went to William Baskett, cheesemonger. This lease reports that he had taken down the messuage and buildings on the plot and, at considerable expense of course, erected one messuage on the site and was erecting another – housing which became known as Nos.7a and 7 Broad Street. The lease gives John Wiltshire north and west. A note enclosed in the 1823 lease confirms that Jesse Baskett, aged 22, resided at the Broad Street house with his mother and father, confirming that the main part at least was a private house. It appears that William Baskett made cheese elsewhere.

What is seen from the street today is therefore not the frontage of the King's Arms, but a building which in 1823 had been created to conform with Nos.8 & 9 next door, which were rebuilt by Walter Wiltshire in the 1750s. It was only however a refronting, typical of the treatment of early houses in Bath. From the passage running by No.6 Broad Street, the 1823 rebuilding can be seen on the right, with an older wall on the left. This older extension to No.7 Broad Street has been dated as belonging to the 1680s, judging from the 4-light mullioned windows on its northern side.

The upstairs window is visible from behind, from Shires Yard. The ground floor window appears in the well-known indoor photograph issued by Payne's, together with the boots, showing also a door which would have opened into the courtyard behind No.7. Two-light mullioned windows are visible externally on the south side of the extension behind No.7.

As indicated, Payne's shoe shop became established at No.7, making handmade boots and shoes for the gentry. It was still listed in the directory of 1968. In 2013 No.7 Broad Street was occupied by a dress shop called Grace and Mabel. No.7a now opens into the passage, behind No.7: the building contains residential accommodation, like many others.

### **Nos.8 & 9: the Carrier's Yard**

Walter Wiltshire acquired the lease of item 10:1, the present No.8 Broad Street, and item 10:2, No.9, in 1752 (BC152/2024). The plan shows that he had, this time, cleared the premises. He erected the present Nos.8 and 9 on an uniform design, and created his carrier's yard behind using as well the rear land of No.7. By 1756 the lease calls him 'gentleman'. His son John Wiltshire of Shockerwick held the lease in 1800, as he did that of No.7. On OS 1885/6 the area is shown as partly veterinary premises. A veterinary surgeon, Thomas Dike Broad, appears at No.8, changed to No.9, in the directory of 1858-59, and is still there in 1884-85. In the 1930s and later the site was used by Ware's Garage.

No.8 Broad Street, at the time called No.7, housed the Post Office from 1821-1854. It was from this site that the first stamped letter, with a Penny Black, went out in May 1840. The Bath Postal Museum was begun at 51 Great Pulteney Street in 1979, but in 1984 moved to the Broad Street site, where the Council had offered a reduced rent. It opened in 1985. In 2009, when its 15-year subsidised lease had expired, it moved to the basement of the present Post Office on the corner of Green Street.

In 2013 No.8 housed another dress shop, called Long Tall Sally, while No.9 was the Salcombe Trading Co. In 1641 item 10:1, No.8, was held by Richard Barnard. Item 10:2, No.9, belonged to

**Below: A calotype photograph of Broad Street in the 1850s (left), compared with the same view today (right). Besides the altered shop-fronts, the entrance to the Post Office has since lost its pediment, and the building beyond the school has been set back with a new front and raised roof.**

Richard Parker.



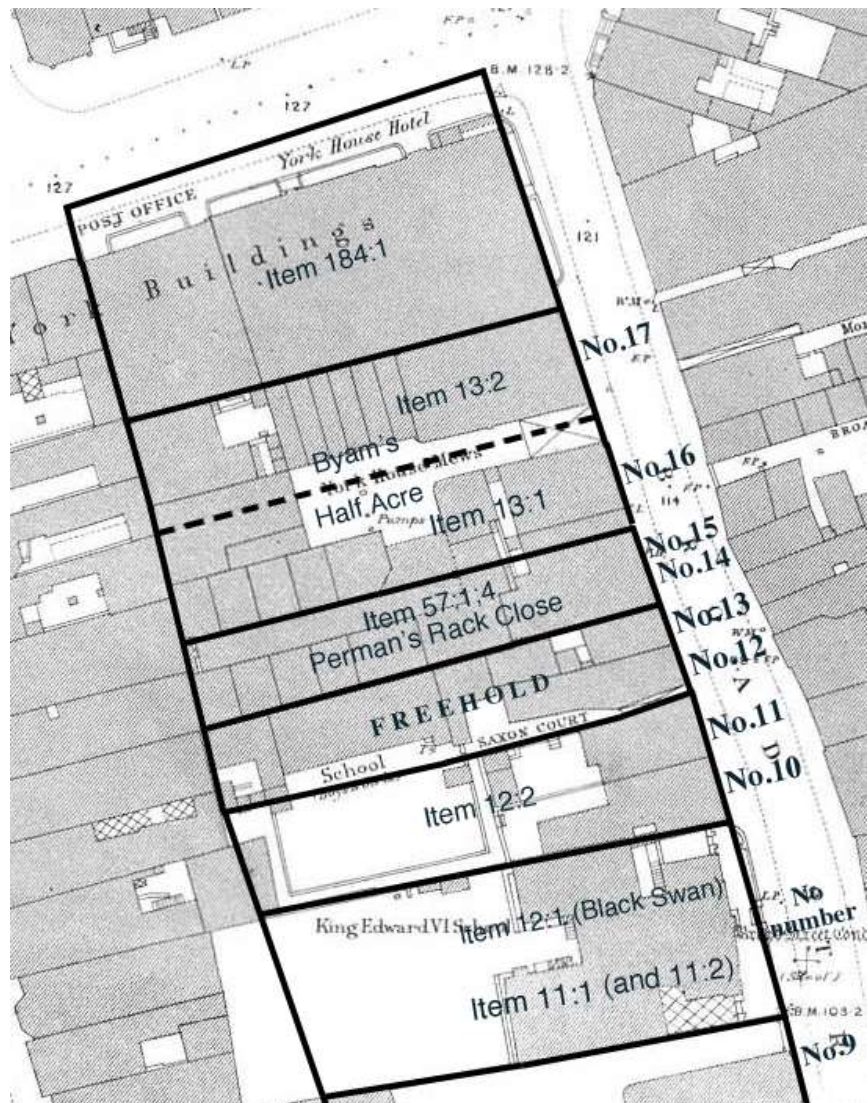
*Post Office and Grammar School.*



### **King Edward's School and the Black Swan**

A passage to the shopping area called Milsom Place lies north of No.9. North of this is the former King Edward's School, on its third site, the first being, as said, in Frog Lane, and the second in the nave of the church of St.Mary by the North Gate.

King Edward's is built on two sites from the Survey of 1641, items 11:1 (11:2 is a reversion) and 12:1. In the mid-18th century both were used for the inn, the Black Swan, and so it is said King Edward's 'took over the Black Swan'. Item 11:1 was held in 1585 by William Chapman of Shockerwick, who is apparently also William Chapman of Barton and William the elder, alderman, of the early 17th century (BC152/1). We decided eventually that he was probably not a son of Peter Chapman, restorer of the Abbey, but of Richard Chapman the clothier.





**Above: The upper west side of Broad Street as shown in the 1851 street panorama.**

**Below: The upper west side of Broad Street as shown on the OS 1886 map, superimposed with the outlines and item numbers from the 1641 Survey, together with current street numbering.**

The site seems to be the same as that once held by Edward Ludwell, mayor in 1552, friend of Richard Chapman the clothier, who was also a mayor, and an MP, elected burgess in 1553.

Grant by Anthony Screpe, Mayor, and the Commonalty of Bath, to Edward Ludwell, citizen, "clothemaker," of their tenement and garden adjacent, in Brade street, between the tenement of the Lord the King on one side, and the tenement of the Mayor, etc., on the other side; and also of a close, called Racke Close, adjacent, and one acre of arable land called le Towne acre in the common field. To hold from the Annunciation for 40 years, at an annual rent of 26s.8d.

**Shickle, Ancient Deeds, V:21, 1544.**

By 1633 George Chambers held the site. By 1729 it was held by a Deborah Chambers, widow (BC152/1565). Two Walter Dallamores, one at least a malster, were lives on the lease. Next door, in 1607, John Smallcombe held item 12:1, known as the Swan. In 1659 what seems to have been his son John held it. In 1670 he (or another John) is referred to as of London, feltmaker. By 1707 George Chambers had it, and by 1729, Deborah. By then it was called the Black Swan.

By 1745 the prospect of buying the Black Swan for the use of the school was already being discussed. In 1752 it was resolved to use Thomas Jelly's plan for the building. The school was opened in 1754.

The history of King Edward's has been dealt with in several publications by Dr. John Wroughton, former headmaster. When the main school was moved to North Road in 1961, the Junior School remained in Broad Street. A *Chronicle* photograph of July 1990 shows Dr. Wroughton in a horse drawn carriage, leading the final departure of King Edward's to North Road accompanied by the chairman of the governors, Mark Rutherford.

### **Nos.10 & 11**

North of King Edward's, Nos.10 and 11 stand on the eastern part of item 12:2 in 1641. The rear, western part of 12:2 is now part of the car park, which stretches down to the wall of King Edward's. George Chambers acquired the land of 12:2 by 1719. The property was later broken up into small tenancies, but Deborah Chambers held the front rooms by 1743. After King Edward's took over the Black Swan, the inn name continued at 12:2.

In the directory of 1858-59, George Cottle is entered for the Post Office Tavern, at No.11. He was already present at No.11, without mention of the Post Office, in 1856.

The passage between Nos.10 and 11 became known as the Black Swan Court, or the Swan Court. This was a typical slum court of tiny holdings. A lease of 1882 (BC153/2471A) shows the eastern part in two houses, as today, in a lease issued by George Morris, builder, and Emanuel Chancellor of Twerton, builder. Nos.10 and 11 are absent from the directory of 1882-83. They reappear in 1884-85 with a hair-dresser and a grocer, and without the tavern. The new houses were designed by Charles Edward Davis, who also drew the lease plan. *Pevsner* describes them as Victorian baroque.

In 1968 No.11 was occupied by W.H.Davies and Sons, decorator's merchants, who also held 39 Walcot Street. One could purchase 'oil, colour, paint, varnish, cellulose, glass and wallpaper'. In 2013



No.10 housed a fashion shop called Definition and No.11 an enterprise named Fixed Earth, selling earthenware tiles and so on.

### **Nos.12 & 13: Saxty's Court**

Immediately north of No.11 lies a passage called Saxon Court, though it was originally called Saxty's Court after Robert Saxty, tailor, who held the lease. It now leads to the car park but once led to St.Michael's Parochial Schools. Peter Coard published drawings of St.Michael's in *Vanishing Bath*, Part I, with a note that the school was dated 1841 and designed by G.P.Manners. His second drawing, showing a side wing, suggests an early gabled house on the site.

Dr.John Wroughton described how, needing to expand, King Edward's School obtained the lease of St.Michael's premises in 1949. The school had 'recently been used by the Admiralty as a printing centre'. The school was refurbished and in use by King Edward's by 1950. Dr.Wroughton described it as 'light, airy and quiet'. Page 230 of his work illustrates the new Physics and Biology Laboratory there.

### **Nos.12 & 13: Freehold Land**

Nos.12 and 13 Broad Street, with the western land now part of the car park, lie on what was once freehold land called 'the land of Mr.Long of Box'. Broad Street had several pieces of freehold land, on both sides; some were part of the medieval Blount rental which passed to the Button family. Notes on this land are included in Milsom documents. By 1708 it passed from George Chambers to Daniel Milsom. In 1755 item 12:2 states that a tenement of Daniel Milsom is north. Charles Milsom succeeded him and built further on the land, and by 1791 there was seven messuages there, in fact another slum court. By 1800 Robert Saxty held it.



**Peter Coard's drawings of St.Michael's School before demolition in 1965, showing part of the school front and yard (left), and the attached gabled house (right).**



It was included in John Palmer's 1799 plan for better development of the Broad Street houses. As seen, by 1841 St.Michael's School stood there, behind the Broad Street frontage. Directories include the school in Broad Street, and by 1884-85 have increased the entry to the master, mistress (wife of the master), and infants' mistress. In 2013 No.12 was known as the Best of British Café, and No.13 as Boho, a fashion shop.

### **Nos.14 & 15: the Turk's Head**

Beyond Nos.12 and 13, No.14 and part of No.15 stand on the eastern part of item 57:1:4 of the Survey of 1641. This land was called in 1585 'Perman's Rack Close' ('the Parrocke or Racke Close then in the Tenure of George Perman, Alderman'), and was estimated at being about an eighth of an acre in size. A rack close was of course a place where broad cloth was stretched out.

Medieval deeds are hard to place and it is not possible to state how far up Broad Street the medieval buildings progressed. Bath was accounted a ruined town in the 1540s and houses may have decayed. By the end of the 16th century several comments such as 'Rack Close' suggest that the northern part of Broad Street was not totally built up at that time. In 2013 No.14 housed a music shop called Audience; Nos.15 and 16 were occupied by Mandarin Store.

The site of the Turk's Head has been disputed, but plans shows that it originally stood on Perman's Rack Close, i.e. on 14 and part of 15. Before the arrival of the inn, the site had become another slum court. The Turk's Head frontage was 25ft 7in, and the land extended 170ft east-west. Multiplied, this makes about an eighth of an acre. About a third of the frontage is shown on the way into the coachyard, with rooms overhead.

John Palmer provided a development plan for the area in 1799. It was redeveloped as part of the York Hotel empire, and the way into the courtyard moved north. The Turk's Head was left with a Broad Street frontage of 17ft 5in. By the directory of 1882-83, No.15 was listed as part of the inn; by the early 20th century it was dropped. In 2013 No.14 housed a music shop called Audience. Nos.15 and 16 were occupied by Mandarin Stone.

### **Byam's Half Acre: the York Hotel**

North of 57:1:4 lay a piece of ground called Byam's Half Acre. By the late 18th century no one knew exactly where that had been. In 1791 Thomas Baldwin set out to calculate it, arriving at much the same answer as modern estimates. It appears that both items 13:1 and 13:2 in 1641 were part of Byam's Half Acre. Assessing the house frontages, it seems that 13:1 ended just north of midway in the present entrance to the car park, while 13:2 included the land ceded by the Corporation and now part of the Royal York Hotel.

Byam is a corruption of the Welsh Ap Evan. There were a number of such names in old Bath; it may be that the Welsh were attracted here by the presence of sheep farming. In 1524 and 1525 John Ap Yevan was assessed for the parish of St.Mary Within, presumably for the Katherine Wheel site south of the Corridor. In 1525 Thomas Ap Yevan was assessed at 60 shillings in the parish of St.Michael's Without the North Gate; presumably being the holder of Byam's Half Acre. A Thomas Abyam also held the Katherine Wheel by 1590.

Space does not permit a detailed discussion of 13:1 and 13:2, or the early history of the Royal York Hotel. It seems possible to reconstruct the houses which once stood south of the hotel, and their frontage, but to enumerate exact details of all this area seems more suitable for someone undertaking a study of the Royal York than to the present survey. We would be glad to provide information.

The Corporation wished to widen the Lane to Barton Farm, as the site of the present George Street was called (also 'the way to the Town Acre'). In 1765 they began discussing compulsory purchase: the land at the corner of Broad Street belonged to St.John's Hospital, but had been bought by Joseph Colburne in perpetuity. Colburne argued that to give up his land which was required would spoil his premises. In 1767 it was agreed that he should cede 22 feet along the north of the former St.John's land, and receive a comparable strip from the land of Thomas Brown, carpenter, which belonged to the Corporation. He also agreed to set back his property along the east, by Broad Street. Colburne then developed York House and buildings west of it, to a design by John Wood the Younger, part of which later housed the Post Office. York House was opened in 1769. The Colburne family gathered up the leases of the land south of York House, bit by bit; as discussed they used the way by the Turk's Head for an entrance to the coachyard behind, while after 1800 the area was redeveloped with a new entrance north of No.16, as today. It is reported that on 25 December 1827 fire destroyed part of the York House Hotel premises on the Broad Street side. It is said it spread to the Turk's Head. Rebuilding therefore became necessary.

By 1990 the company managing the Royal York Hotel had run into difficulties. The *Chronicle* reported then that this concern, Henville Ltd., had ceased to trade as a limited company and that the hotel had closed in June that year. By 1996, when the building was owned by Peaston Smith, there was concern about its condition, with fears that the back wall might collapse into the car park. Peaston Smith and the Council failed to agree on plans for the Royal York and by 1997 the hotel had new



owners, described as a team of local businessmen who had set up 'Waterfront House Ltd'. By July 1998 the *Chronicle* reported that work on the premises had begun. The owner spoke feelingly about the damp and dilapidated condition of the premises, parts of which had been vandalised, with for instance period fireplaces ripped out. In August 1999 the *Bath Chronicle* wrote that the hotel was ready for its first customers. It was to be run as a Granada-Travelodge concern, with 68 bedrooms, though no Travelodge café-restaurant. David Jenkins was the new manager. The restaurant 'Ask' was once numbered as 17 Broad Street, but is now regarded as part of the Royal York Hotel complex. At one time it was occupied by Fuller's Wine Vaults.

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GRAPHICS by Mike Chapman

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