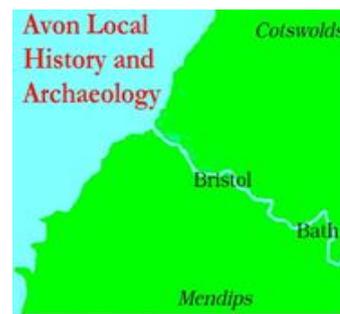


Edward Hopper, 1950

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e-update 31 August 2020

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ALHA ITEMS

LUCY HAMID

Lucy Hamid, who has been associated with ALHA since its inception, has resigned from the committee following the death of her husband. The committee offers her its deepest sympathy, and thanks her for her services to the charity.

SUBSCRIPTIONS 2020-2021

Many thanks to all who have paid this year's subscriptions, and a double thank you to those who, deliberately or inadvertently, have paid twice or added something extra and have asked ALHA to treat it as a donation.

KEEPING GOING

The government's restrictions on gatherings and other forms of personal contact will have led some groups to wonder whether it is worth continuing. There are good reasons to continue.

1. Meetings and talks to an audience are only one way of doing local history. We can still read, research, write, visit places and communicate with other local history people by various means. We should not confuse local history with, or confine it to, just one way of doing it.

2. That the government's restrictions, and individuals' own personal apprehensions, stop gatherings taking place does not mean that other local history activities cannot go on. ALHA, for example, has not been able to hold its annual local history day, general meeting or lecture, but members of the committee have continued to manage the website, maintain the facebook page, sell booklets, compile and distribute the speakers list, edit and publish the newsletter and e-updates, and have continued to answer enquiries and have responded to requests for information.

3. It is not unreasonable to expect that sooner or later vaccines or other means of preventing people catching the virus will be found and made available. That may make it safe for gatherings to resume. Some drug manufacturers and distributors will seek to profit from demand, and if there are not enough supplies to inoculate everybody the government will have to decide priorities, and local history people are not likely to be high in the list. There is no knowing when vaccines will allow gatherings to resume in safety or with acceptable risk of infection. But it is important that when gatherings can take place, groups and societies are in a position to resume activities promptly and without difficulties.

4. It is not difficult to keep an organisation ticking over if it is not doing much. What is much more difficult, and hard work, is to start an organisation from scratch, or to revive one that has totally ceased to exist. People with the time, energy, abilities and determination to create an organisation from scratch are not numerous, and those that are around tend to be busy. Once gatherings can resume, those who want to attend them will be grateful for the efforts of those who kept the organisation going during lockdown(s?), enabling normal activities to pick up from where they left off. Keeping a group or society in existence, even if it is just ticking over, will help.

TO ZOOM OR NOT TO ZOOM

Further to the mention of *Zoom* in last month's e-update, news has trickled in of ALHA member groups and societies experimenting with what to many will be an unfamiliar medium. **Bristol City Museum** has put three talks on *Zoom*. **Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society** is using *Zoom* for the meetings of one of its working groups, and plans to offer three talks via *Zoom*, one of which has taken place. Its **Bristol** section has canvassed members on whether they favour talks via *Zoom*. **Yatton Local History Society** has asked its programmed speakers whether they would be willing to deliver their talk via *Zoom*. **Marshfield & District LHS** has a programme of *Zoom* talks from September to December, for members only. New members are welcome and they can apply via the contact page on M&DLHS's website. It will not be possible for non-members to access individual talks only because of the logistical problems involved. **Thornbury History Society** has surveyed its members and is trying to arrange for some of its programmed talks to be on *Zoom*. **Frampton Cotterell & District LHS** has arranged a *Zoom* talk 16 September for members only and is considering further events. **The Mendip Society** successfully held its first *Zoom* talk, on the Monarchs Way (the route taken by Charles II after the battle of Worcester in 1651). *Judith Tranter writes* that the talk was planned for April, but had to be postponed because of the virus. The talk, which will be repeated in person when feasible, is on the speaker's website at <http://www.the-fugitive-king.uk/index.php/the-fugitive-king-in-the-south-west/>.

EVENTS AND SOURCES

BRISTOL ARCHIVES REOPENING

Bristol Archives plans to reopen **Tuesday 8 September, Tuesdays and Fridays only**, 9.30am – 4 pm. Booking (online only: no booking by telephone) is required, open from 1 September, and there will be restrictions. Details at <https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/blog/re-opening-news/>.

BRISTOL CITY MUSEUMS REOPENING

MShed also plans to reopen **Tuesday 8 September**, Tuesdays to Sundays 10am to 5pm. Booking is required, open from 1 September, and there will be restrictions. More at <https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/m-shed/opening-times/>.

Bristol Museum and Art gallery in Queens Road plans to reopen **Tuesday 15 September**, Tuesday to Sunday 10am to 5pm. Booking is required, open from 1 September, and there will be restrictions. More at <https://www.bristolmuseums.org.uk/bristol-museum-and-art-gallery/opening-times/>.

If you do not have internet, bookings can be made by telephone in the case of the museums only on 0117 922 3571.

FACE MASKS REQUIRED IN MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES AND OTHER INDOOR HERITAGE AND CULTURAL SITES

Jane Marley reminds us that face masks are now required by law in ‘indoor settings where you are likely to come into contact with people you do not normally meet’ which now includes museums and galleries and other indoor heritage and cultural sites. The government’s guidance is at [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own/face-coverings-when-to-wear-one-and-how-to-make-your-own)

HANNAH MORE MURAL UNVEILED

A mural by Zoe Power depicting Hannah More has been unveiled at Hannah More primary school in **St Philips, Bristol**, to mark the 275th anniversary of the birth of **Fishponds**’ playwright, versifier, tract writer, moralist, school founder and anti-slavery campaigner: <https://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2020-06-26/mural-unveiled-to-mark-the-275th-birthday-of-bristol-playwright-and-anti-slavery-campaigner-hannah-more>. Recognition of HM’s influence on elementary education is welcome, but the mural, simple and stylised, bears little resemblance to any of the known portraits of HM.

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2020

A leaflet is now available on the SGC webpage for downloading or printing: <https://www.southglos.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/museums-and-galleries/heritage-open-days-2020/>

BRISTOL & AVON FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY WEBSITE

ALHA member **B&AFHS** has a new website: <https://bafhs.org.uk/>

BRITISH HISTORY ONLINE SURVEY

Jane Marley draws attention to the London University Institute for Historical Research's digital library, *British History Online* (www.british-history.ac.uk), which is about to be redeveloped. To help the team prioritise the improvements to BHO that you would like to

see, please take the short survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/MTP6ZNR>. It is only 13 questions and should be very quick to fill in.

WALTER CRANE

A piece about the Arts and Crafts Movement in e-update 31 July 2020 mentioned Walter Crane, who painted the lunettes in the stairwell of the Royal West of England Academy in Queens Road, **Bristol**. More about WC, born 175 years ago this month, on **The National Archives** website at https://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/the-art-of-learning-to-read-with-walter-crane/?utm_source=emailmarketing&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=weekly_mailer_27_august_2020&utm_content=2020-08-27. More about the movement on the same website at <https://blog.nationalarchives.gov.uk/arts-and-crafts-at-the-archives/>.

BOOKS AND OTHER ITEMS NOTICED

Rose Hewlett, ed., *The Gloucestershire Court of Sewers 1583-1642*, Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society 2020 (Gloucestershire Record Series no. 35).

A new book about Gloucestershire's coastal communities. These remarkable Court of Sewers records open a window on communities of the Gloucestershire Levels between 1583 and 1642, and their struggles against encroachments from the sea in a changing political climate. They touch all walks of life from the peasantry to the county's elite. The extraordinary detail they contain about people and places make them a valuable resource for family and local historians. They are almost unique in their survival, and of national significance. The records survive because of a long-running legal dispute at Oldbury on Severn regarding responsibility



for the sea defences. From mud walls to grass embankments fortified with stone, sea walls have defended coastal Gloucestershire since Roman times, and management of flood risk and drainage on the low-lying land they protected is documented from the medieval period. Maintenance was a constant draw on labour, materials and finances, especially following the great Severn Estuary flood of 1607 and another significant inundation in 1636. This fully indexed edited transcription reveals the condition of the sea walls and drainage systems before and after these events. 'Sewers' here are watercourses, natural or manmade. Courts of Sewers were the forerunners of today's Internal Drainage Boards, and their form of local government deserves wider attention not only from historians, but from scientists and policymakers who seek a better understanding of historic floods. A comprehensive glossary assists the reader with unusual terminology. Rose Hewlett's doctoral research at the University of Bristol into the 1607 flood is underpinned by these records which shed new light on how communities on the Severn Estuary Levels coped in its aftermath.

Full UK price £30.00. Postage extra, but free delivery may be possible. Copies available from Rose Hewlett: rose.hewlett@bristol.ac.uk or 01452 740894. Alternatively, become a member of B&GAS and receive this publication and other benefits of membership of B&GAS for £25: <https://www.bgas.org.uk/about/membership.html>

A filmed talk by RH on the subject will be online as part of the Gloucester History Festival **Saturday 12 September 2020** 2 to 3pm:

<https://www.gloucesterhistoryfestival.co.uk/events/gouts-itches-and-pillheads-the-work-of-the-gloucestershire-court-of-sewers/>

Mike Oakley has compiled a 32-page booklet of photographs and other images to mark the 180th anniversary of the opening of **Bristol Temple Meads** station. £6 from MO, 0117 969 2351 or mro6085@virginmedia.com

COMMENTARY

The Nature of History

John Stevens writes: The historian's life would be simpler, but less interesting, if causes led inevitably to their intended effects, eliminating the aspect of chance, untoward events and the play of individual character. Life, however, does not happen that way.

Too much should not perhaps be made of the famous suggestion that had Cleopatra's nose been a couple of inches longer, she would not have attracted the attentions of Caesar or Mark Antony and the course of world history would have been profoundly different. This is perhaps the *reductio ad absurdum* of a theory which nonetheless contains more than a grain of truth and is as applicable to local history as to national and international affairs.

Whether or not John Cabot (c1450-c1500) discovered North America (and leaving aside the possible political incorrectness of the word "discovered"), he did not set out to do so. His patron, King Henry VII, sent him to find a passage across the northern seas to the wealth of the Orient. The finding of a "new found land", lapped by cod-rich waters, was a by-product.

The devotion of the noted merchant William Canynges (c1399-1474) to his wife Joan may be reckoned as a pleasing facet of his private life, but his grief at her death was such that he turned priest and devoted considerable wealth to the interior of the Church of St Mary **Redcliffe**, later beloved of the first Queen Elizabeth and an architectural jewel in Bristol's crown to this day.

Sir Charles Wetherell (1770-1846) was by no means the buffoon portrayed by his political enemies, and his career may be due a reappraisal, but he was unquestionably highly bibulous and it would not be surprising if, as has been suggested, his wish to earn his Recorder's fee of a hogshead of sherry was a strong reason behind his fateful decision to preside at the City's Assizes in October 1831. (The participants in the consequent riots were, as events showed, as fond of liquid refreshment as was Sir Charles.)

Wetherell, fortified by copious draughts of brandy, later argued the case of the unreformed **Bristol** Corporation as Counsel before the House of Lords. He was unsuccessful in this but would have been relieved when the Conservative Party narrowly secured control of the new **Bristol Town** Council, when two Liberal councillors defected, giving the Conservatives a majority when it came to the election of aldermen, at the end of 1835. They maintained this control until the end of the nineteenth century, the Liberals blaming what they saw as the inequitable allocation of councillors to the various wards. In fact, a bill to reform this allocation was introduced in the House of Commons by the Home Secretary Lord John Russell in May 1837, but was got no further on account of another untoward event. William IV died in June, and



Parliament was dissolved in consequence. The ensuing elections reduced the Whig government's majority and left them dependent on their Irish allies. Political priorities were necessarily different and the **Bristol** Town Council was not heard of again. Perhaps readers can think of other examples from our City's history.

Legacies

A history can take the form of an account of the life of an individual. It may be a biography, or a 'life and times of ...' narrative and description, or it may use the individual as a perch from which to look at events or changes in the individual's lifetime. Monarchs and prime ministers get the treatment, as do others.

Histories of that sort are usually good reads, if only because people are more interesting than the abstractions, generalisations and theories that professional historians use to deter readers from taking an interest in history. They are also fun to research, because you never know what connections an individual may have had. Family history techniques open up areas of information and lines of enquiry that you may not have thought of or considered relevant. The same applies to a house: look at the people ramifications of 10 Guinea Street, **Redcliff** that David Olusoga's researchers and helpers turned up.

Sometimes the author may say what happened to surviving characters, as do some novelists (unless they have a sequel or II in mind), but such histories usually end with the death of the individual subject, or his or her funeral and obituary notices or will.

That's a pity, because what an individual did while alive may have important historical consequences, perhaps over centuries later. What later happened to what was started by Confucius, Aristotle, Jesus of Nazareth, the Cabots, Martin Luther, Francis Drake, Isaac Newton, Karl Marx and so on is far more important than anything they did during their lives. Different terms describe their consequences: legacy, after-life, reception.

The after-life of an individual is not always simple. What the founder started may be inherited by later generations, who then adopt, adapt, modify, expand, develop, transform and sometimes distort out of all recognition what the deceased started. Many of today's large institutions started off small: schools are one example of small beginnings. Colston's in **Stapleton** now has about 500 pupils but started with fewer than 50, QEH with fewer than 25, and the Red Maids with four. The diocesan school for training schoolmistresses that later became the college of St Matthias in **Fishponds** started in 1853 with four pupils who transferred from another establishment: their names are marked in the college's admissions register with a little x. In nursing, what later became the Chesterfield Hospital in **Clifton** started in 1864 in a back street near the cathedral as Bristol Nurses' Training Institution with four trainees. The **Bristol** infirmary started in 1735 with one surgeon: look how many there are now.

Something similar can be seen with businesses. Newspapers rarely mention Marks & Spencer without reminding us that it started as a market stall. Fry's at **Somerdale** at one time



employed over 5,000 people but Joseph Fry started making chocolate in 1759 on his own. Douglas motorcycles at **Kingswood** began in 1882 when two brothers started blacksmithing or repairing bikes, depending on which oral tradition you follow. Parnall of **Fishponds** started as a one-man business in a cellar in Wine Street in 1820. Bristol Co-op started as one shop in **St Paul's**, founded by a few trade union members. Avery's the wine merchants started as a sole trader, as did Harvey's, Jolly's in **Bath**, Thomas Ware the tanner in

Bedminster, and Britton the **Kingswood** shoemakers. Alexandra Workwear of **Patchway** started in **Redcliff** as a husband and wife team. The *Western Daily Press* started with two men hand-feeding a printing press in Broad Street, Bristol. Mardon's, Robinson's, Stothert & Pitt, Hargreaves Lansdown and Gardiner Haskins all started off in a small way.

Charity schools founded for small numbers of children from poor families have been subverted into large private fee-charging schools for children from affluent families in an exclusive social bracket. Hospitals that were run by volunteers now pay consultants and surgeons the highest of local salaries, and are now part of a nation-wide organisation under state control. The early medics' private practice subsidised their voluntary work; now the reverse is the case.

Edward Colston must be an example if ever there was one of the observation Wm Shakespeare put into the mouth of his character Antony, that 'The evil that men do lives after them. The good,' he added, 'is oft interred with their bones.' All the more reason for local history people to investigate it and write it up.

Offices

Media commentators predict the end of the office. So, for example, *Simon Jenkins*, 14 August 2020 in <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/aug/13/office-future-britain-commuter-towns-home-working>; *J Turner* at <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/heres-to-the-end-of-office-life-as-we-knew-it-vfchtbxxl> and *Ruth Barnes* at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0003rlq>. The coronavirus, they say, has killed the office off, because people who do office work can, and prefer to, do it at home (avoids commuting, public transport, traffic jams, unpleasant working conditions and unwelcome colleagues); and employers will take advantage of that to save costs, especially on office space.

As well as speculating about the future and attempts to drive it in particular directions, local history people might be interested in how we came to have offices in the first place. Congregating to work is not all that old. Medieval **Bath** had no office blocks; **Nailsea** did not get one until 1974. Weavers and framework knitters worked at home, as did many garment makers into recent times. Not until the industrial revolution did workers in mining and manufacturing get herded.

If we want to explore the office's past in our area, it might be helpful to distinguish between (1) the sorts of work done in offices; (2) offices where that work was done; (3) buildings used wholly for office work; and (4) the modern rectangular multi-storey high-rise office block.

Office work has always involved writing or calculating, using pen and paper and their mechanical and electronic equivalents. Lords of manors or their stewards kept records, of which some, like those of St Augustine's abbey in **Bristol**, survive. Merchants (or their wives or other family members) often kept financial records, but in their own homes above or behind the manufactory or shop. Only when a business grew large would it have warranted a counting house employing clerks who could read, write and add.

For some people office work has been preferable to manual labour, because it does not involve dirty hands or physical effort. For many women office work was preferable to working at a machine or on a production line on a factory. Office work gave rise to class distinctions, and to divisions in education: within living memory some **Bristol** secondary schools had a commercial (as distinct from an academic) stream. In local government, office and manual workers had different terms of service, pension arrangements and trade unions. In some businesses, office workers had a separate canteen.

Offices, in the sense of buildings or sets of rooms where the only activity was writing and calculating, seem to have arrived with government. Did Robert Ricart have assistants, or did he do it all himself? In Florence the Uffizi, now an art gallery, started, as its name implies, as offices, designed about 1560 by Giorgio Vasari for Cosimo I's administrative servants. Courts and councils needed to keep records and accounts. In London Somerset House dates from about 1776. At Leigh Court in **Abbots Leigh**, however, the building contract (1812) stipulated that the 'offices' were to be separate from the main house, and it is clear that they included most of the servants' quarters and workplaces, workshops and the stables.

The modern office probably came into our area with manufacturing businesses in the early nineteenth century. Their offices will have been part of the firm's main building, externally indistinguishable from the rest of it. Offices were probably strategically located, so as to afford security of cash and to protect trade secrets, but also to facilitate command and to exercise surveillance and control. Derham Bros' shoe factory (1866) in **St James's** had offices on the ground floor, manufacturing above. In the first Robinson building on the corner of Victoria Street and Redcliffe Street **St Thomas** the boss's suite and the drawing offices were on the first floor, other workers above.

As Peter Malpass explained in ALHA's 2017 local history day on streets, a cluster of offices formed in Bristol's **Corn Street, Broad Street and Small Street** from the early nineteenth century. Banks, insurance companies, newspapers, the post office, the guildhall and professionals such as lawyers, architects and accountants, added to office space, often in converted buildings.

Stand-alone purpose-built office buildings appeared not later than 1833 with Albion Chambers off **Corn Street**. Guildhall Chambers followed, and later Liverpool Chambers. As those names imply, those buildings housed many small firms. Big purpose-built one-firm office buildings did not appear until the number of employees to work in them grew. That depended on the size of the business, with banks and insurance companies leading the way.

Modern design arrived with Northcliffe House (Ellis & Clarke 1929), the Friends' Provident offices in Corn Street (Giles Gilbert Scott 1931), the SW Gas Board's Colston House (Whinney & Hall 1935), Electricity House (Giles Gilbert Scott) and the Council House (EV Harris, both started 1938).



Bristol's first modern severely rectangular unadorned office tower block was Gaunt's House (Alec French 1953) tucked away behind the lord mayor's chapel, followed by Bristol Waterworks Company's low rise offices in **Bedminster Down** (Watkins Gray 1963). Height came with the second Robinson building in Victoria Street **St Thomas** (DRG Group Architects 1960), vilified at the time because of its repetitive and unadorned regularity, but now seen by architectural critics as dignified and restrained, even a bit classy. Then came Colston Tower (Moxley Jenner 1973), Avon House (1973), the Scottish Life building in Temple Way (DRG Group 1976), and the massive Greyfriars (Waterford Jerram 1974) and Whitefriars (Goldfinch 1976) along Lewin's Mead. Horizontal spread came with Lloyds Bank's HQ on **Canons' Marsh** (Arup 1992) and the Ministry of Defence's **Abbey Wood** (1996). The last was prevented from being high-rise by the MoD's insistence on keeping buildings low around **Filton** airfield.

What will happen to vacant offices post-virus? Avon House became a hotel, Clifton Heights and Avon House North became flats. The former Somerfield offices in Whitchurch Lane (**Hengrove? Hartcliffe? Whitchurch Park?**) having lain empty for years now have planning permission for flats. Given **Bristol's** shortage of housing, that seems a socially useful recycling of redundant offices. Student accommodation? Some American skyscrapers contain many uses, including hotels, schools, shops, and leisure facilities at different levels in the building. Another bit of local history in the making?

The past obscured

In her *Slavery obscured* (Continuum 2001) Madge Dresser points out that many of the traces of slavery, the slave trade and their consequences are obscured, hidden – sometimes deliberately but more often unconsciously, inadvertently or by default. The argument is convincing, and has wide ramifications.

In one sense, nearly all of the past in every locality is obscured or hidden. At the top of **St Michael's Hill** in **Bristol** you would not be aware, unless you had learned about it, that in 1556-1557 people were burned to death because they expressed religious beliefs not those of the monarch; along the coast of our area you could not tell that in 1607 hundreds of people and animals drowned in an exceptional flood; at **Hanham Mount** you would similarly not be aware that in 1739 George Whitefield and John Wesley preached to thousands; or in **Bath**, that Jane Austen lived there from 1801 to 1806.

Some of the past has survived, for example in buildings and pieces in museum collections. Some reminders of the past exist in sculptures or plaques commemorating a person or event. Some explicit traces remain, such as in accounts, letters and newspapers. Some of the past we can infer from those survivals and traces, or from the style of a building, the line of a street, or the name of a pub. Some of the past is highlighted, or shoved in our faces, by local authorities, chambers of commerce and businesses eager to exploit the past for economic reasons.

Such highlighting tends to be selective. The rest is hidden. Most of what we know about the past we and our predecessors have had to work hard to discover. Huge tracts of the past would be unknown to us were it not for people investigating, finding things out, writing them down, and making them available for others to read, see or hear about. Apart from personal memory, which can go back no more than one lifetime, most of what we know about our past is in archival records, museum collections and books which may record the past or contain narratives to explain it. Most of these assets are held and looked after for us by people in public or community institutions: libraries, record offices, museums, local groups and societies. Whatever the outcome of the present difficulties, we must ensure that such institutions continue, and that what they hold continue to exist and be available for us and for those who come after. That must happen, not by accident or default, but by conscious and deliberate decision.

Divisions of knowledge

A piece in the ALHA e-update 31 July 2020 drew attention to recent work on sedimentary deposits in central **Bristol**, and the conclusion that the course of the river Frome before 1240 may not have been where archaeologists and local historians have presumed it to have been. The piece suggested some local history implications should the theory be correct.

Does analysing samples of sedimentary deposits near a river count as geology or archaeology? From the point of view of someone investigating the past of a locality the question is irrelevant: whether you call it geology or archaeology, the data are the same, the

conclusions that can be drawn from the data are the same, and the implications for local history are the same.

The course of the Frome example illustrates the proposition that all human knowledge is one, and that the ways we divide it up and label it in order to help make sense of it do not alter it and ought not to affect how the knowledge is used. The range of human knowledge is such that in every age people have needed to divide it into subjects in order to understand it, record it, store it and teach it; all the more so nowadays when the amount of human knowledge is so vast that division of labour is required just to manage it, and no-one can sensibly expect to know it all, let alone understand it all.

The categories and labels applied to particular sections of knowledge have varied over time. Until Herodotus the ancient Greeks had no concept of history as a subject of study. There was no division between what we now call science and philosophy. There have always been spurious divisions and labels such as astrology and alchemy, and various forms of superstition and pseudo-science.

In modern times people may disagree about how a particular branch of knowledge is to be classified. Carbon-dating is now an important tool of archaeology. Is it archaeology or chemistry? If it is chemistry, is it organic chemistry or radiochemistry? Is dendrochronology archaeology or biology? The answer may be relevant for different purposes, eg to librarians, encyclopaedists, teachers and others whose job it is to organise information and make it accessible to people, but from the point of view of the end user the category or label ought not to matter.

Even if knowledge is divided up and labelled, the boundaries between the divisions can be indistinct. Much theoretical physics is hard to distinguish from branches of mathematics. Maths and logic overlap, as do physics and chemistry. Is pharmacology chemistry or medicine? Some archaeology is hard to distinguish from anthropology. Literary theory impinges on historical writing, including local history, and is now making inroads into archaeology as in

https://www.academia.edu/36476701/Postmodern_archaeology_with_a_dash_of_magic_realism, though we may have missed the Association of Critical Heritage Studies 5th Biennial Conference. Archaeology and local history interact.

Whilst recognising such divisions and labels, we ought to be open to information from outside our own disciplines and comfort zones. Science can help archaeology. DNA studies can help family history. We all benefit from co-operation and exchange of information and ideas.

QUOTE

I now began to consider seriously with myself concerning my own case, and how I should dispose of myself; that is to say, whether I should resolve to stay in London or shut up my house and flee, as many of my neighbours did. I have set this particular down so fully, because I know not but it may be of moment to those who come after me, if they come to be brought to the same distress, and to the same manner of making their choice; and therefore I desire this account may pass with them rather for a direction to themselves to act by than a history of my actings, seeing it may not be of one farthing value to them to note what became of me.

I had two important things before me: the one was the carrying on my business and shop, which was considerable, and in which was embarked all my effects in the world; and the other was the preservation of my life in so dismal a calamity as I saw apparently was coming

upon the whole city, and which, however great it was, my fears perhaps, as well as other people's, represented to be much greater than it could be.

Daniel Defoe, *A journal of the plague year* (London 1722)

CAN YOU HELP?

PENSFORD AND BROMLEY COLLIERIES

Lyndsay Cooper writes: Following the recent success of ALHA member **Pensford Local History Group's** (PLHG) flood book *We Remember It Well: Stories of the Great Flood of 1968 from Pensford, Publow and Woollard* which captured stories and memories of those impacted by the 1968 flood of **Pensford** and the surrounding areas, members of the same project group are now looking at producing a mining book, on similar lines, on **Pensford (Broadoak) & Bromley Collieries**.

To assist the project group in bringing this together, they need stories and memories from people who worked at the collieries, or even handed down stories from family or friends. Together with these, any photographic images or written documents would be of assistance in the production of this book. All material will be returned following its compilation.

If you have anything to contribute, this can be done via the email address at the end of this communication but, if you do not have email access, then you can post it or they can potentially come to you to capture your stories. Though, in the short-term with the virus in our communities, this will not be possible at this time. You can contact them on the telephone number below and they will log your details.

The project group needs your stories to make production of the book viable. If you know anyone who you think would also be able to contribute, please pass on this communication.

Thank you. Email: ppw.publishing@gmail.com Telephone: 01761 490418

[The flood book is available to purchase via the PLHG or at **Pensford** Post Office]

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE STONE STILES

Louise Williams writes: A volunteer of ours has started to record how many stone stiles we have in Gloucestershire, starting off with where he lives in Stroud. So far he has compiled around forty, and we are investigating others across the county. We want to be able to record these for historical reasons – many are not used and have been replaced by more accessible wooden stiles. But our volunteer feels that they form part of our rural heritage and need to be recorded and preserved where we can. We wondered if any of your societies would like to be involved? Is this an area of interest for you? Louise Williams, director Campaign to Protect Rural England, 01452 309783, Louise.williams@cpreglos.org.uk; www.cpreglos.org.uk. I work Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays.