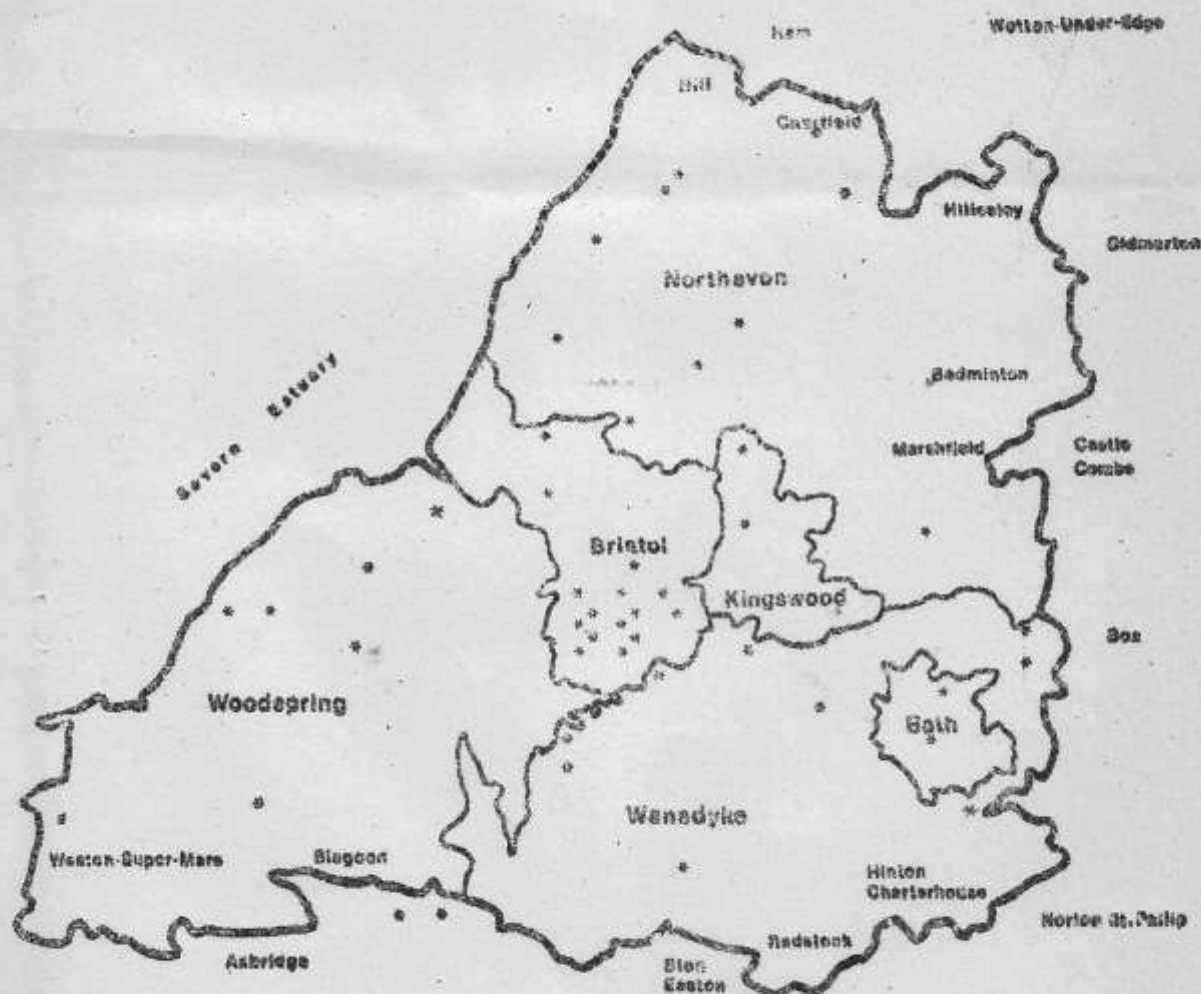


ALPHA QUEST

Issue No. 12

Newsletter of the Avon Local History Association





**WHY NOT VISIT US AT
THE MANOR HOUSE
BISHOPSWORTH, BRISTOL.
AND WHILST ENJOYING THE SPLENDOUR OF
THIS FINE OLD GEORGIAN MANSION,
TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY OF EXAMINING OUR
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QUEST is the official newsletter of the Avon Local History Association.
Articles appearing in Quest must not be reproduced without written
permission from the Association.

Back-copies of all issues of QUEST are available from the Secretary at
17 Whiteladies Road, Bristol 8. Tel: 36822.

The Editor will welcome details of forthcoming events, news of societies and
comments for the new 'Newsletter' and articles for the Journal. Communications
should be addressed to Mrs Sue Barrance, but please note that her new address
is: School House, 21 Wotton Road, Charfield, Wotton-under-Edge, Glos. GL12 8TN
All other correspondence on Association matters to the office.

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This twelfth edition will be the last QUEST. It may have been thought a 'rag-bag' but QUEST could not be designed to please every reader all the time, and by avoiding too select a clientele, parts of it always seemed to please somebody. Its successor will be a superior journal both in format and content but I very much hope that its glossier appearance will not deter the beginner from submitting articles, nor those who read it in the bath!

Perhaps QUEST's most important role has been to draw the various local societies together and to contribute to the development of the county organisation. The creation of the new county presented many problems and it must necessarily have been some years before we could match the long-established counties. The new journal and newsletter should continue to strengthen the Avon Association and keep local societies in touch with county, regional and national activities in local history.

Sue Barrance

REMINDERS

AVON PLACE & FIELD NAME SURVEY:

Contact John Moore, 67 Woodland Road, BS8 1UL or Rob Iles, Conservation Group, Avon County Planning Office, Avon House North; Tel: 290777 x 530

PARISH SURVEYS:

Contact Mary Campbell, Bristol City Museum, Mondays & Fridays. Tel: 299771

ARCHAEOLOGY & THE LANDSCAPE:

Dolebury Hillfort, Churchill: meet at Nelson Arms (OS. ST 445597) - 1st August

Nailsea Industrial Sites: meet at High Street Car Park. - 5th September

Both at 6.30 p.m. Free of charge

VICTORIAN EXHIBITION:

10-26 April in City Museum. Material needed from all societies. Please see separate notice in this issue.

THE LOCAL HISTORIAN

Do you take the Local Historian? This illustrated and very readable journal is published four times a year, and is available from the Local History Department of the National Council of Social Service, 26 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3HU.

Annual postal subscription: £2.50. Single copies: 70p including postage.

ORGANISATIONS & SOCIETIES IN CORRESPONDENCE WITH A.L.H.A.

Almondsbury Local History Society
 Avon Archaeological Council
 Banwell Society of Archaeology
 Bath & Camerton Archaeological Society
 Batheaston Society
 Bathford Local History Society
 Bristol & Avon Family History Society
 Bristol Archaeological Research Group (BARG)
 Bristol Civic Society
 Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society
 Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society (BIAS)
 Bristol Museum
 Bristol Branch of the Historical Association
 Bristol Broadways
 Bristol Record Society
 Bristol Visual & Environmental Group
 Chew Valley Local History Society
 Clevedon & District Archaeological Society
 Clevedon Civic Society
 Clifton & Hotwells Local History Group
 Committee for Rescue Archaeology in Avon, Gloucestershire & Somerset (CRAAGS)
 Corston & Newton St. Loe Local History Group
 Crockern, Pill & District Society
 Downend Local History Society
 Doynton Local History Group
 Filton Historical Research Group
 Frampton Cotterell & District Local History Research Group
 Freshford & District Local History Society
 Gordano Valley Society
 Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society
 Kingston Seymour Historical Society
 Kingswood & District Historical Society
 Malago Archives Committee
 Malago Society
 Nailsea Local History Society
 Northavon Society for Archaeological Study
 North Somerset Archaeological Group
 Norton-Radstock Local History Society
 Olveston Parish Historical Society
 Severnvalle Historical Research & Detecting Club
 Society for a Conservation Area in Long Ashton
 Sodbury & District Historical Society
 Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society
 Somerset Record Society
 Temple Cloud Women's Institute
 Thornbury Historical Society
 Wellow Parish Council
 Westbury-on-Trym Local History Society
 Westbury-on-Trym Society
 Weston -super-Mare Branch, Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society
 Winterbourne Local History Group
 Whitchurch Local History Society
 Workers Educational Association

NEWS FROM SOCIETIES

Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society

- Sunday 22 July Tour of sites on the Somerset canal System:
Langport Wharf, Westport Terminal, Crimson Hill,
Creek St Michael, Taunton Basin, Ninehead Locks.
Meet 12 noon on A378 Langport-Taunton Road at
gateway to former railway station ST 414266.
Leader: Will Harris
- Sunday 5 August Visit to Stourport and Bewdley. Meeting outside
Falfield Church on A38 (ST 683933) to depart at
10.30 a.m. After a picnic/pub lunch there will
be a visit to Avoncroft Museum of Buildings near
Bromsgrove.
- Saturday 11 August Keynsham Walkabout. Meeting at car park to Keynsham's
former railway station in Station Road, ST 655689 at
2.30 p.m. for a tour of Keynsham's industrial archae-
ology. Leader: Joan Day.
- Tuesday 21 August Evening Walk along the River Frome to view mill sites
and quarries. Meet in car park at end of River View,
Snuff Mills, ST 624766 7.30 p.m. Leader: Owen Ward.

BIAS Walkabouts Again, it has been decided to repeat these guided tours
for the general public, but any interested BIAS members will be very welcome.
Prior offers of help with the organisation would also be appreciated as the
large numbers attending these walks have sometimes proved almost overwhelming
to the few BIAS members present. Apart from guides, we need leaflet sellers,
and those willing to help generally. Offers to: Ken Andrews, 35 Kellaway
Avenue, Westbury Park, Bristol BS6 7XE.

- Walkabout No 1 Starting from Neptune Statue: Thursday 5 July
Walkabout No 2 Starting from the Nova Scotia Inn: Thursday 12 July
Walkabout No 3 Starting from Bristol Bridge: Thursday 19 July
Walkabout No 4 Starting Canons Marsh Coach Park: Thursday 26 July

All walks start at 7.30 p.m.

Crofton Beam Engines The 1812 Boulton & Watt and 1845 Harvey's beam engines
will be in steam at Crofton June 30 - July 1 and August 25-26-27.
Admission 50p, children/OMPe 25p.

Bath's Postal Museum Bath's newest museum has been opened at
51 Great Pulteney Street, having received official support from the Post
Office and the Union of Post Office Workers.

BIAS news Membership Secretary LA (Tim) Clarke, 41 Grove Avenue,
Coombe Dingle, Bristol BS9 2RP. Tel. Bristol 682801 (home); Bristol 294941
ext. 2016 (office). He will be dealing with

1. New Membership Applications
2. Changes of Address
3. Resignations.

Our Treasurer, Colin Prayling, of The Old Farmhouse, Laverton, Bath BA3 6QZ
will continue to deal with subscription renewals, banker's orders etc.,
and wishes to remind members that subscriptions for the current year were
due on January 1st.

Dean Forest Railway Society Limited

The Society's main object is to raise money and obtain equipment leading to the acquisition of the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile branch railway line between Lydney and Parkend in the Forest of Dean and then to operate it as a tourist attraction using steam trains.

As at April 1978 the branch line railway was without regular traffic, though not yet being disposed of by British Rail. Coal traffic, arising from open cast mining, could possibly re-start in the future; equally possible is complete closure and disposal.

The society is constituted as a non-profit making "Industrial and Provident Society" and shareholding members are the 'owners'.

They have already formed a collection of full-sized locomotives, coaches, wagons and other equipment and at Norchard, which is just north of Lydney, in the Forest of Dean, they have established a "steam centre" where locomotives are operated to give short public train rides. This site opened at Easter 1978 with car parks, refreshments and souvenir sales.

All the work has been done on a voluntary basis by the railway enthusiast members of the Society. Fund raising, particularly sales and operation of steam rides, has allowed them to purchase a number of locomotives and items of rolling stock and they have worked to restore these to working order. They are also developing the amenities of the site, clearing viewing and picnic areas. Visitors can see the results of these labours at Norchard and there is rewarding work for all those sufficiently interested to join the Society and help.

Railway and other clubs are invited to form working parties and can be sure of a welcome and an enjoyable time.

The A.G.M. is held in March each year, normally at Lydney. There are occasional social meetings at Lydney Town Hall, Parkend Memorial Hall, The Community Centre, Coleford, and Elmscroft Community Centre, Gloucester.

Prospective members are also welcome to meet members at Norchard, during the weekend opening hours (11 am to 5 pm).

Subscriptions are (Jan 1979) Adult £3.00, Junior £1.00, Old Age Pensioner £1.00, Life £3.00.

All meetings are open to any interested persons, but voting, where applicable, is restricted to members holding shares (£1.00 each) in the Society.

The Secretary is C. Bladon, "Laurel Cottage," Northwood Green, Westbury-on-Severn, Tel: W-o-S 559.

The Publicity Officer is P. Skinner, 58 Grimsbury Road, Kingswood, Bristol. BS15. 2SD Tel: Bristol 672493

An illustrated guide is available at 55p, post free, from the Sales Manager, M.J. Harding, 7 Bullfinch Road, Heron Park, Gloucester.

Illustrated talks can usually be arranged for any interested club or society.

Dean Forest Railway Society Ltd.
 Horchard Steam Centre, Lydney.
 1 1/2 miles off A48 at Lydney along B4234)

The centre, operated by volunteer railway enthusiasts, contains a collection of full-size railway locomotives, coaches and wagons. There is a small railway station and some hundreds of yards of railway track where steam rides are operated on certain days through the summer months. There is also a collection of smaller items, signs, signals, photographs, drawings, telling the story of the railways formerly serving the industries of the Forest of Dean. There is a shop selling souvenirs, railway books and models and a refreshment counter selling hot and cold drinks and snacks. The centre welcomes visitors every Saturday and Sunday (11 am to 5 pm) and the shop is open every Sunday afternoon and Saturday afternoons also in summer.

There is ample free parking for cars and coaches and parties are particularly welcome. Visitors may picnic. Nearest B.R. station is Lydney (1 1/2 miles). (Transport can be arranged for parties, subject to availability and given ample notice).

National Welsh bus service 40 from Lydney stops at entrance.

Stock Details for the enthusiasts:-

G.W.R. 2-6-2T No. 5541; Hunslet 0-6-0ST 3806 of 1953;
 Packett 0-4-0ST "Uskmouth 1"; G.W.R. 0-6-0PT No. 9561;
 G.W.R. 10-ton Steam Crane, Selection of G.W.R. and L.M.S.
 passenger and goods rolling stock.

The long term aim of the Society is to operate steam trains between Lydney and Parkend should British Rail decide to dispose of the 3 1/2 mile line. Meanwhile, the enthusiasts are extending and improving the Steam Centre to give an increasing length of ride with viewing areas and picnic sites among the trees.

"Steam Days" 1979

When steam train rides operate within the Centre from 11 am to 5 pm.

Sundays, July 22nd to August 26th inclusive.

Late summer Holiday Monday, August 27th.

Sunday, September 16th & October 7th.

Chargers:	"Steam Days"	Adult 10p	Child 2p
	Other days	Adult 10p	Child 5p
	Reductions for parties by arrangement.		

(Prices subject to review and no liability accepted should technical problems make it impossible to adhere to the programme)

For further information telephone the Centre, Lydney (059-44) 3423, or contact P. Skinner, 58, Grimsbury Road, Kingswood, Bristol. BS15 2SD. Tel: Bristol (0272) 672493.

My Father was born in 1873. He was a sickly child, and Grandmother, therefore, had him christened immediately so that he might be buried in the churchyard. He outlived his ten brothers and sister, dying in 1962. His name was Enoch and he was the middle child of the family - William, Sarah, Alfred, Joseph, Edith, John, May and Harry and Hezekiah the twins.

Grandpa was a tenant farmer, and so the children were well fed and abject Dickensian poverty did not touch them. Grandpa's last tenanted farm was on the land where Donnington Airport now stands. My father would like to have become a farmer, but Grandma determined that some of the boys must be apprenticed to trades, and Father was apprenticed for 7 years to a draper. He left Grammar School at 14 - I believe Grandma paid 6 pence per week for him to attend. He recalled a strong buxom, red haired girl in his class who was very insolent and ordered to apologise to the teacher - she stood up and said loudly "I beg your parsnips and all the carrots you've got as well"!!

Father did not see tap water till he was 12 - but he knew how to shoot and he bagged his first rabbit long before then. As the children grew up, they helped in the house and on the farm. Grandma was always busy - indeed when asked "what were nerves" her answer was that she'd "never had time to find out". She had to cook for herself, Grandpa, eleven children and two Irish labourers living in the attic. She baked all the bread - she made all Grandpa's shirts (he would not wear a bought one) - she looked after the chickens, the cade*lambs and made butter and cheese.

Grandpa's head waggoner, Munton, was quite a character - an old bachelor, unable to read or write and threatening the children that "Boney would get them" (NAPOLION, of course) - one day, Grandpa rebuked him and he turned round and said "I neither likes work, nor them as sets me on". Once he was enjoying Grandma's cheese, and Grandpa offered him some bread to go with it - "It's good enough wi'out" he said. He went to London once only and saw Edward VII - disappointed, he said - "He's nowt but a man". Yet he was devoted to Grandpa, and when Grandpa was lame and dying, Munton left his bedroom in tears, - "I'll not go to see old maister again" he said and asked to be buried near him if possible.

Grandpa was a strict Methodist. He used to lock the farmhouse doors at 10. p.m., whether the children were in or out. Grandma used to wait till he was asleep and then go downstairs and unlock them.... His first wife had died after 3 or 4 children. He married again (another Anne) almost at once, for he just could not manage the farm, and the family without a wife. Father told me that nobody could tell which were my Grandma's children and which were the first wife's children. A remarkable woman small and dainty, wise and much loved.

In 1894, at 21 my Father finished his apprenticeship and was offered a job at £12 a year - increased to £14 as he looked a likely lad. So he went home and began his own business on borrowed money.

Father was joined in his business by my uncle Joseph, but when at first they did not prosper, in 1904 Uncle went to farm near Lloydminster in Saskatchewan, Canada (John and Harry Salt also went to Canada in 1903 with the Bass Colonists, John became a butcher and was later joined in business by Harry who failed in his farming meantime.) Auntie Mary used to scrub out the shop - now Munton, my Grandpa's old Head Waggoner came to Father as a delivery man with horse and dray and as he could not read the labels on the parcels a lad had to travel with him and found this rather an indignity. One day he said "Your sister May's a lovely woman but she's got a very dirty habit "Oh!!!! said Father, whats that" "She eats her food with the same hand she wipes her bottom with" said Munton.

My uncle Kozzy later joined Father, he served in World War 1 in the Infantry, going over the top - I believe 14 times - he was shot through his thigh and also gassed. My Father was over military age then, but he used to drill on the common in the evenings with older men (a pre-historic Home Guard, indeed) and one day, the Sergeant (retired) in exasperation shouted "Thank God we've got a Navy".

At first the brothers lived in a flat over the shop - on Sunday evenings they & their friends used to sing round the piano. Father signed the Pledge but did drink sherry and whisky in his old age, on his Doctor's advice. He loved children above all else. The business prospered. Father declared that "Cheating gets no cheese" and he was always fair and honest. He did not like the never, never system, but strictly cash terms and "small profits, quick returns". It still exists, run by two elder brothers and one of their sons. Of course it seems old-fashioned (pleasantly so to me) and no super market then, and lately trade has not been good, equal pay for women has NOT helped here. Father became a J.P. - if he thought an offender couldn't afford a fine he would pay it for him anonymously. He gave away so much to charity. I was dear to him, as my sister died when only 14 months old - in 1912, her name was Winifred Irene, and as a child I thought she was beautiful - but how dated it seems now. He was a very cultured man - I remember quoting Milton - "Hail, heavenly light" and his continuing - "Offspring of heaven first born" and it was always a thrill for me. He always read "The Methodist Recorder", "Punch" and "The Farmer & Stockbreeder". He formed a tennis club for his staff and bought a big old railway carriage to use as a pavillion. As soon as he could afford it, he had a small farm as a hobby and relaxation.

Often I went to farms and butchers with him, and to local cricket matches. He worked hard, and he always played to win, whether it was auction bridge, tennis, billiards or croquet. He went shooting as well into his 80's, but he always gave the game a sporting chance and he never left a wounded creature. I used to sometimes go ratting with him, putting the ferrets down the hole, while he stood watching with his gun. I was told after his death, that the day after Mafeking's relief, he gave every boy at the local school a new cap to celebrate.

Once when Grandma was ill, Father galloped to the nearest Doctor. Grandma was very angry when he also galloped the horse back to the farm again. Grandma had leeches applied to her on that occasion.

On Father's farm there was a powder house, standing in isolation, and visited when necessary by a man from the local clay pits. Alas! one day the powder house blew up and neither man, horse nor cart were ever seen again. The rebuilt one fascinated me, a brick-tiled house with no windows and iron railings all round it.

One of Father's school friends was nicknamed "Kiss me Fanny". Apparently, returning from the pub, he had embraced a lamp post entreating it to "Kiss me, Fanny" - Father really loved that tale.

"I am very prejudiced, for the view depends on where one is standing and from where I stand there are no wants* to be seen."

He spoke little of religion but daily knelt to pray at his bedside - and then did some exercises with dumb bells! He believed in practical christianity and was a great supporter of Lax of Poplar. His name was always at the head of local charity lists, and I attended all the local Chapel Sunday School Anniversaries (the "Sermons" we called them) with him. I do not recall him singing at all but his wedding present to my mother was a lovely piano complete with candelabra.

* wants = moles

He had many books which I wish I had now - but at his death I was too upset to come, and they went to the sale. One book that amused him was "Letters from a self-made merchant to his son" by George Horace Lorimer (1903). My Grandpa read the Bible a great deal and was convinced the Great War - despite its terrible slaughter - was NOT Armageddon (Revelation XVI:16). She died in 1922, a smart old lady, always wearing a little lace cap. I still possess my Grandpa's velvet smoking cap! When prosperous, Father donated a hand-stand to the local park - and the Chairman of the Councils' chair of office was his gift too. He once said to me, "Nora, I've always had my own way, at business and at home". He went to his office the day he died, interested to the last moment of his life. He always had about 3 dogs - and when children we had two cades, lamos every year - always called Billy and Archie and then I thought they were the same ones who went away "on holiday" - I also believed for many years that a cow was mated to a horse! - I suppose I never noticed a bull - we always had a horse on the farm, Kitty and Tommy. I remember well we had a see-saw in the garden, a large hump back switch back and of course a swing. We had ferrets and pet rabbits and cats. It was a wonderful loving childhood and looking back from a far less happy time now, I am so grateful for it. Times have changed but those early happy days can never be taken from me. I remember how my Father comforted me when I had whooping cough - and how upset I was when the dentist arrived to extract all his teeth (in the dining room!) and then my tonsils were removed at home, too. What did he look like? - not tall but slim and very straight - beautiful truly blue eyes - white hair with a wave at the front - large ears - a fresh complexion. I remember I was ^{horrified} when he had to wear glasses, and his legs were pathetic - so thin.

When my eldest son was born, my Father really took him over - the child was playing bridge before he went to school, and helping to clean the gun and was going out shooting with the old man.

Father loved children - indeed he could and did talk to everybody, whatever age and type of person. He told me of Grandpa meeting a man who had been through bankruptcy court and he was still driving his pony and trap -

"Eh, I thought you'd been through" said Grandpa.

"Aye" was the answer "but the mare and gig went round"

Uncle Albert once went to the aid of a woman whose husband was attempting to strangle her. Whereupon she turned and hit my Uncle.

"leave my husband alone" she screamed.

"thats the last time I interfere between husband and wife" said Uncle bitterly.

We cannot live in the past - and it is unhealthy to attempt to do so - but yet the present and the future are built on its foundation. Do we learn from history at all? I seriously doubt it. Each generation has to make its own mistakes, its own miscalculation - different - yet strangely similar in so many ways.

Nora Parker (Mrs)

NOTE ON COMPETITION WINNERS This article is the winning entry in the over-sixties section of our essay competition. Two other entries are also included in this issue. Our thanks to all contributors and to Mr. Spittal for judging the entries.

The winner of the other section of the competition for the best entry in this year's Quest, chosen by the Executive Committee, is Cluny Brown for her article in Quest 9, 'The Use of the Small-Scale Map in Local History Research.'

Daytime and Evening Courses run by the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, University of Bristol, commencing Autumn 1979.

THE BATTLE OF LANSDOWN

Tutor: J. Wroughton, M.A., F.R.Hist.S. Course No: A79 B01 SX.

A joint University/W.E.A. course, to be held on Saturday afternoon, September 22nd 1979, 2.30-6.00 p.m., at The School, Marshfield, Avon. Fee: 50p (includes tea). Prior enrolment to Mr. T.J. Clayton, The Thatched House, Cold Ashton, Nr. Chippenham. Cheques to be made payable to the W.E.A.

PROJECTS IN INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Tutor: Mrs Joan Day, F.S.A. Course No: A79 P01 SX

A University course of six evening meetings, to be held on Thursdays, 7.30-9.00 p.m. at Pill Junior School, Westward Drive, Pill, Nr. Bristol, commencing 4th October 1979. Fee: £2.40, payable at the first meeting. Cheques payable to University of Bristol.

This course will study methods of recording and research on local industrial sites.

PARISH CHURCHES OF SOMERSET

Tutor: R. Ashley, M.A., B.Litt. Course No: A79 J02 SX

A University course of ten meetings, to be held on Tuesdays, 7.30-9.00 p.m., at The Methodist Meeting Room, Ubley, Nr. Bristol, commencing 2nd October 1979. Fee: £4.00 payable at the first meeting. Cheques payable to University of Bristol.

WEST-COUNTRY RURAL LIFE

Tutor: Dr. J.H. Bettey, M.A. Course No: A79 J04 SX.

A joint University/W.E.A. evening course, of ten weekly meetings, to be held on Thursdays, from 7.30-9.00 p.m., at Wellaway School, Keynsham, commencing on 27th September 1979. Fee: £4.00, payable at the first meeting. Cheques payable to the WEA. Further details from Mrs E.L. Keast, 17 Oakfield Road, Keynsham.

FRAMPTON COTTERELL, WINTERBOURNE & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Tutor: B.J.S. Moore, B.A., F.R.Hist.S. Course No: A79 J06SX.

A University course of ten fortnightly meetings, on alternate Wednesdays, from 7.30-9.30 p.m., at Highcroft School, Lower Stone Close, Frampton Cotterell, Avon, commencing 10th October 1979. Fee: £4.00 payable at first meeting, although prior enrolment helpful but not essential. Details from T.W. Crowe, 130 Watley Road, Winterbourne, or C.J. Spittal, 162 Church Road, Frampton Cotterell. Cheques payable to University of Bristol.

SOURCES FOR THE LOCAL HISTORY OF ALMONDSBURY & DISTRICT

Tutor: B.J.S. Moore, B.A., F.R.Hist.S. Course No: A79 J03 SX.

A University course of ten fortnightly meetings, on alternate Mondays, from 7.30-9.30 p.m., at The Church of England School, Almondsbury, Avon, commencing 1st October 1979. Fee: £4.00, payable at the first meeting, although prior enrolment would be helpful. Cheques payable to the University of Bristol.

WEST-COUNTRY PARISH CHURCHES & PARISH LIFE

Tutor: Dr. J.H. Bettey, M.A. Course No: A79 j21 SX.

A joint University/W.E.A. course, of ten weekly meetings, to be held on Thursday afternoons, 2.00-3.30 p.m., at The Lecture Theatre, 4 The Circus, Bath, commencing 27th September 1979. Fee: £4.00 payable at first meeting. Further details from WEA Bath branch Secretary. Cheques payable to W.E.A.

CURRENT WORK ON LOCAL HISTORY IN THE BRISTOL REGION

Panel of lecturers. Course No: B79 D01 SX.

A day-course, Saturday 10th November 1979, from 10.30 a.m.-4.45 p.m., at The Department of Extra-Mural Studies, 32, Tyndalls Park Road, Bristol BS8 1HR. Fee: £1.20, and prior enrolment essential by 2nd November, to the Staff Tutor in Local History, at the Department of Extra-Mural Studies. Cheques payable to The University of Bristol.

This course is intended to show some of the interesting and varied work which is being done on all aspects of local history in the Bristol region. The lectures will range over a number of different historical problems and sources, and will show some of the results which have been achieved by modern research. The area to be covered will include the former south Gloucestershire and north Somerset now within the county of Avon.

DOWNEND LOCAL HISTORY RESEARCH GROUP

Tutors: Miss J. Close, B.A., Dr. J.H. Bettey, M.A. Course No: B79 E01 SX.

A University course of five fortnightly meetings, to be held on alternate Tuesdays, from 7.00-9.00 p.m., commencing 9th October 1979, at the Record Office, Council House, College Green, Bristol. Fee: £2.00, and as numbers will be strictly limited, prior enrolment is essential, by 28th September to the Staff Tutor in Local History, at the Department of Extra-Mural Studies, 32, Tyndalls Park Road, Bristol. Cheques payable to University of Bristol.

New members will be welcome to join this group which will continue working on historical records relating to Downend and district. There will be no formal lectures, but members of the group will be able to use the relevant records in the Bristol Record Office, with help and guidance as needed.

A STUDY OF BRISTOL ARCHIVES

Tutors: Professor P.V. McGrath, M.A., Miss M. Williams, B.A. Course No: B79 J12 SX.

A University course of twenty meetings, to be held weekly on Wednesdays from 7.00-9.00 p.m., at Bristol Archives Office, The Council House, College Green, Bristol, commencing 3rd October 1979. Fee: £7.00, and as numbers will be strictly limited, prior enrolment is essential, by 21st September, to the Staff Tutor in Local History, Department of Extra-Mural Studies, 32, Tyndall's Park Road, Bristol. Cheques payable to the University of Bristol.

This is a research group, and there will be no formal lectures. Early enrolment is advised.

OLIVER CROMWELL: GOD'S ENGLISHMAN?

Tutor: Prof. P.V. McGrath, M.A. Course No: B79 J12 SX.

Ten weekly meetings, on Tuesdays, 7.30-9.00 p.m., at Stoke Lodge Community Education Centre, Shirehampton Road, Stoke Bishop, Bristol BS9, commencing 2nd October 1979. Fee: £4.00, prior enrolment advisable at Stoke Lodge after mid-September. Cheques payable to County of Avon.

A study of Cromwell's personality and achievement with special reference to contemporary sources, including his own letters, and to the judgement of modern historians.

INDUSTRIAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Panel of lecturers. Course No: B79 L01 SX.

A University course of twelve meetings, to be held fortnightly on alternate Fridays, from 7.30-9.00 p.m., at Room 28, Wills Memorial Building, The University of Bristol, Queen's Road, Bristol, commencing 28th September 1979. Fee: £4.80 payable at the first meeting.

HISTORY OF BRISTOL AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

Tutor: Bryan Little, M.A. Course No: B79 T03 SX.

A joint University/North Bristol Institute course of twenty evening meetings, to be held weekly on Thursdays, from 7.30-9.00 p.m., at Lockleaze School, Hogarth Walk, Lockleaze, Bristol, commencing on 4th October 1979. Fee: £7.00, payable at the first meeting.

UNIVERSITY CERTIFICATE IN ARTS.

FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY AND LOCAL HISTORY.

Following the successful completion of the first Certificate Course in this subject, it is intended to begin another course in January 1980, provided that there are sufficient enrolments. The course will consist of two years part-time study leading to the University of Bristol Certificate in Arts.

No formal educational qualifications are required for the course, although evidence of previous work and interest in archaeology, history, local history or landscape studies will be an advantage, as will evidence of willingness and ability to undertake the work demanded.

Further details of the course and an application form are available on request to: the Staff Tutor in Local History, Department of Extra-Mural Studies, 32, Tyndall's Park Road, Bristol BS8 1HR.

The closing date for applications is 1st October 1979.

HOW TO ORGANISE AN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Stephen Humphries

Many 'Quest' readers will no doubt be familiar with the recent and rapid growth of local history booklets published, to name a few, by the Bristol Broadside group and the Batheaston and Malago Societies. The production of these fascinating and valuable booklets is a reflection of the growing interest in what has become known in academic circles as oral or community history - the tape recording and transcribing of conversations or interviews with people who would normally not have either the opportunity or the inclination to document their recollections and opinions in a written form. In this short article I will briefly outline the importance of this type of history and how other local history societies might plan their own projects and produce their own oral history booklets.

THE IMPORTANCE OF ORAL HISTORY

The most important feature of oral history is that by giving a voice to those who are rarely heard or listened to, it makes the writing of history a more democratic process. Most history and most documentary evidence has been written 'from above' - from the viewpoint of those in positions of control in social and practical life - rather than 'from below' - from the viewpoint of those people without power, prestige or money. Thus we have extensive documentation of the power struggles and lives of the ruling class, but comparatively little documentation of the lives and struggles of working class people. And, the little evidence we have has to a large extent been written by government or social investigators who have been concerned principally with statistical or quantitative analyses of, for example, wages, prices, unemployment rates, family size, and so on. Admittably, there are a number of essentially institutional accounts of the more successful trade unions and political organisations. However, when it comes to the everyday life and experience of poverty, work, the family, schooling and leisure, there are huge gaps in our knowledge. The potential power of oral history is that it offers a viable method, available not just to the professional historian but to anyone interested in history, of adding to our knowledge and understanding of these neglected areas. Oral history not only adds a qualitative dimension to history by documenting in depth the wide range of personal and emotional responses to various social situations which most official records, in their very nature, cannot take account of. Also, it makes possible a fairer reconstruction of the past, enabling us to call witnesses from the underprivileged and the defeated, so that we can challenge established views.

Further reading on the importance of oral history: Paul Thompson - The Voice of the Past (1978) Chapters 1-3
George Ewart Evans - From Mouths of Men (1976) Chapter 1

CHOOSING A WORTHWHILE PROJECT

We have seen how there is enormous scope for useful and interesting oral history projects. The first and most important decision which must be made is the choice of subject matter. The exciting element in this is that you are not limited to surviving documentary evidence and you can choose whatever aspect of local history which interests you most - it may be poaching in the Edwardian era, the work and lives of miners in the Bristol and North Somerset coalfield, memories of a country childhood in South Gloucestershire, family life on council housing estates in the inter war period - the possibilities are endless.

For more ideas for oral history projects see,

Paul Thompson, The Voice of the Past, Chapter 5
D. Steel and L. Taylor, Family History in Schools (1973)
R. Samuel, "Local History and Oral History", in History Workshop,
Journal No. 1

SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEWING

Successful interviewing involves three basic skills - discovering and selecting interesting informants, asking them relevant questions in an informal and open ended way, and achieving the best possible sound recording from your equipment. Many articles have been written on techniques of interviewing, but I will here briefly attempt to summarise some of the main points.

Firstly, some simple ways of discovering interesting informants. Begin with elderly relatives and neighbours and their contacts, then there is the pub, post office or corner shop, often all a gold mine of information about elderly locals - perhaps put some advertisements in shop windows. After this, you might try contacting elderly people's homes - the wardens are often very knowledgeable about their residents. The local press and local radio are usually extremely helpful in publishing or broadcasting requests for information. You might also try writing to appropriate institutions, possibly a trade union or voluntary organisation, for information concerning potential informants.

Once you have discovered a number of people with experiences and memories relevant to your project, say for example retired miners, select the people to interview according to the clarity, detail and vividness of their recollections. Before committing yourself to an interview it is advisable to sound out your potential respondent, possibly by asking them a few key questions over the 'phone, by letter or in an informal meeting, to ensure that a tape recorded interview will be worthwhile. It is very disappointing and time wasting to arrange an interview in which the respondent is unco-operative, offers only monosyllabic answers, or simply does not remember the type of information in which you are interested.

Next, we come to the interview itself. It is impertinent and pointless to arrange an interview unless you have done some basic reading and have a basic knowledge of the area in which you intend to question the respondent. This initial reading should enable you to formulate a range of questions which will form the backbone of your project. The most comprehensive outline interviewer's guide, providing several hundred model questions on schooling, family life, work, leisure and politics, is contained at the back of Paul Thompson's "The Voice of the Past", available in paperback at £2.25 - essential reading for anyone wishing to take oral history seriously. However, it is a cardinal sin to arrive at an interview brandishing a questionnaire and then proceeding to work through it in a methodical and inflexible manner. This approach not only frightens your respondent, making it difficult to establish a rapport and an informal and relaxed atmosphere, it also stifles the natural flow of a person's memory and imposes a rigid framework on the unpredictable and surprising twists and turns which all good interviews take. Try to memorise the key questions you wish to ask beforehand, then let the conversation run its natural course. The two most important rules in interviewing are to phrase your questions simply and clearly, and to resist the temptation to continually make yes or 'mm' noises whilst your respondent is talking, as this can destroy the atmosphere of an interview - instead, show you are interested by smiling or nodding frequently.

Finally the sound quality of your recordings will depend to a large extent upon the equipment you use. Most local history societies cannot afford to spend several hundred pounds on Uher open reel recorders as used by the B.B.C., which undoubtedly give a far superior reproduction to any other machine on the market. However, it is possible that the Uher which the Bristol Central Library has purchased and loaned for use in the Bristol People's Oral History Project, will be made available to local history societies for their own projects from April 1980 onwards. For immediate purposes though, most

cassette machines, even the cheapest ones, will produce reasonable recordings - the quality tends to improve the more you pay for the recorder and the cassette tapes. Remember to place the microphone about 18 to 24 inches away from the respondent's mouth.

Further reading on interviewing:

Paul Thompson - The Voice of the Past, Chapter 6

Michael Winstanley - "Some Practical Hints on Oral History
Interviewing" in the Journal "Oral History",
Vol. 1 No. 4, Vol. 5, No. 1.

Transcription and Publication

Most local historical societies, operating on a limited budget and with limited time, cannot hope to transcribe their tapes fully, as would be expected in a comprehensive public collection, for it takes a professional typist at least 12 hours to transcribe a two hour tape. Probably, the most viable method is to type or write up the most interesting and relevant extracts from each interview which you feel might be worthy of inclusion in the booklet which your society is aiming to produce. This booklet could take the form of a collection of typewritten sheets stapled together and deposited in local libraries, or if you are more ambitious and wish to produce a couple of hundred copies for sale locally, perhaps the best advice is to consult the Avon Community Council or A.L.H.A. Executive Committee members for information on cheap community publishing. Due to shortage of space it has not been possible to deal with the difficult problem of the interpretation of oral evidence, especially in its relation to documentary evidence - I will be discussing this problem with particular reference to Bristol social history in a forthcoming article in the A.L.H.A. Journal.

LOOKING AT OLD CHURCHES

On Friday, 12 October, Dr. Joe Bettey will be giving a talk on this subject at the redundant church of St. James, Church End Lane, Old Charfield, to be followed by light refreshments.

Tickets, price 75p, are available from Mrs S. Barrance, School House, 21 Wotton Road, Charfield.

MEMORIES OF MALAGO - TOUGHENING UP -

by Mr. Wallace Tucker of
156 South Liberty Lane, Bristol 3.

Born in 1907 into a family like thousands of others, where, if not poverty stricken, we were desperately poor, I think the years that followed until the late 30's were the ones that toughened and moulded a person's character. We were brought up to respect everyone and the strict code of discipline at home and at school imposed on us all, ensured that we kept to the straight and narrow - no good complaining that you'd had the cane at school, as you got another from your parents for deserving it, and sometimes they would thank the teacher concerned for doing it.

Every boy or girl had a household chore to carry out before or after school - running errands, chopping sticks for the fire, washing up, black-leading the grate, filling the oil lamps and cleaning the lamp glasses - dozens of jobs which ensured we were not idle and the word NO was never used - you could only say 'Yes, father' or 'Yes, mother'.

Midway through the first war, when most of the fathers and elder brothers were in the army, life got a little tougher for some of us - one instance was that coal was almost unobtainable for the household, as it was needed solely for the trains, power stations and the naval ships, and we had to go out and find it. This meant that winter and summer mornings just after 6 o'clock, us lads from the neighbourhood - perhaps a dozen or so - would set off with hand carts of all shapes and sizes to South Liberty Colliery to await the first tubs of waste coming up from the pit waste tip, to pick it over for the odd lumps of coal. Some of the miners below would purposely put in a few good lumps, knowing we were up there to pick it out. On a good morning we could pick up three quarters of a hundredweight, and then it was one mad dash to get back home for a quick swill under the cold tap (no hot water), a slice of bread and dripping, lard or margarine, then a dash to school - no excuse for being late.

Although everyone had ration books there was no special shop to get food - you went after it, and I myself have got an early tram to queue up at a shop as far away as Mary-le-Port Street, to keep a place for my mother or eldest sister, and when they arrived at about 8 o'clock, it was again the rush to school repeated - no tram car home then, but run and walk to Parson Street.

Bakers, grocers and other shopkeepers never saw you go short of essentials though, even if their bills weren't paid, because they would say "I know you'll pay as soon as you can - don't let the children go short".

Everyone had great respect for the police then, simply because they knew everyone personally on their beat - most of them by name - and they would think nothing of clouting you across the ear with their rolled up cape or kick you up the backside and send you home.

Our one treat was the Saturday 2d. rush, as we called it, to the local cinema - even this 2d. had to be earned some way or another. Serials featuring Pearl White, Tom Mix and other old time stars were shown - also comedies with Charlie Chaplin, Ben Turpin, Harold Lloyd etc. - one could talk about them for ever. I always favoured the Town Hall cinema in Cannon Street (House of Holland are occupying the site now), because in the foyer was generally a woman with a basket of oranges or a couple of bulls-eyes in a small bag, which she would hand out to all who went in. The excitement inside while waiting for the film to start would be intense. The projectors invariably broke down several times during the performance, and this would lead to a lot of jeering and foot-stomping.

.../..

Sundays were Church or Chapel days, according to our parents denominations - no wriggling out of that either, as one of your parents or an older brother or sister literally frog-marched you there, and as soon as you returned, off came the little bit of tidy clothes you owned, ready for next week.

Incidentally, for bath night, the copper was lit up and we sometimes bathed one after the other, standing up in it, with the fire still going underneath. After drying off, we had the customary spoonful of brimstone and treacle, senna pods, or some other concoction to 'keep the bowels open' - it invariably did!

As for schooling - Parson Street School in the first quarter of the century had a reputation second to none for elementary education - good teachers who knew their jobs plus strict discipline which we accepted, ensured that the great majority of the pupils passed their final exams with flying colours.

At the end of the war, Bedminster Down School (still standing at the entrance to the allotments just at the top of Bedminster Road), closed down, and the pupils transferred to Parson Street. One of the teachers who came with them was Mr. Smallcombe, who ruled with a rod of iron, or rather a cane like a walking stick. On one occasion one of the lads who had disobeyed, dived out the window into the playground, to escape him, but he was just as quick and after a couple of minutes chase, caught the boy and the rest of us stood by the windows and watched as he laid him across his knee and made the dust fly from the seat of his pants.

The only pupils who had sports lessons were the school football team, the rest of us were marched with spades, forks and rakes for an afternoon's gardening on allotments run by some of the teachers. A teacher in those days also acted as a father counsellor between scholars and parents in regard to their future and also gave them a boost in the right direction when they left school.

By the way, how many of the old scholars remember Viscount Alexander, then an officer in the army, who when he was on leave, would come and collect his sister in an old car? In the later years, she was made Headmistress.

One could go on and on about these very interesting times, and if permitted later on I would like to talk about the 20's and 30's which were a little easier in many ways, but the one main lesson we learned was that every succeeding generation has it better than the last - these were the infancy days of the Health Service - dole queues were the common thing, housewives were little less than drudges with cooking, washing, ironing - the children ill-clad with clothes passed down one to another - plenty with boots or shoes sizes too big, or none at all.

These are the things I remember.

Wallace Tucker

TAKE THE RAMBLER'S BUS

17

SERVICE 375
to the Chew Valley
and Mendip Hills
Go on a Guided Walk



SUNDAY, 19 AUGUST:

VISIT TO THE STEAM PUMPING ENGINES AT BLAGDON

followed by a walk around the south side of Blagdon Lake and a visit to the TROUT HATCHERY at UBLEY

Charge: Adults 30p Children 10p

Meet at the public car park, Station Road, Blagdon (if coming by car); bus passengers will be met at the Seymour Arms. (O.S. Grid ref: 501592)

The walk will start shortly after 11 a.m., when the 375 bus that leaves Bristol bus station at 9.40 a.m. arrives, and will last 3 - 4½ hours, so that bus passengers can return by the 3.37 p.m. from the Seymour Arms.

Bring a picnic lunch; Wear suitable footwear - it may be muddy; No booking necessary - just turn up on time; No dogs allowed in view of the potential hazard to livestock.

For further information ring Bristol 290777 ext. 320 (Mon. to Fri)

SERVICE 375

**Operates Summer Sundays
and Bank Holidays**

**On May 6th and 7th and from
May 27th to September 16th**

TIMETABLE

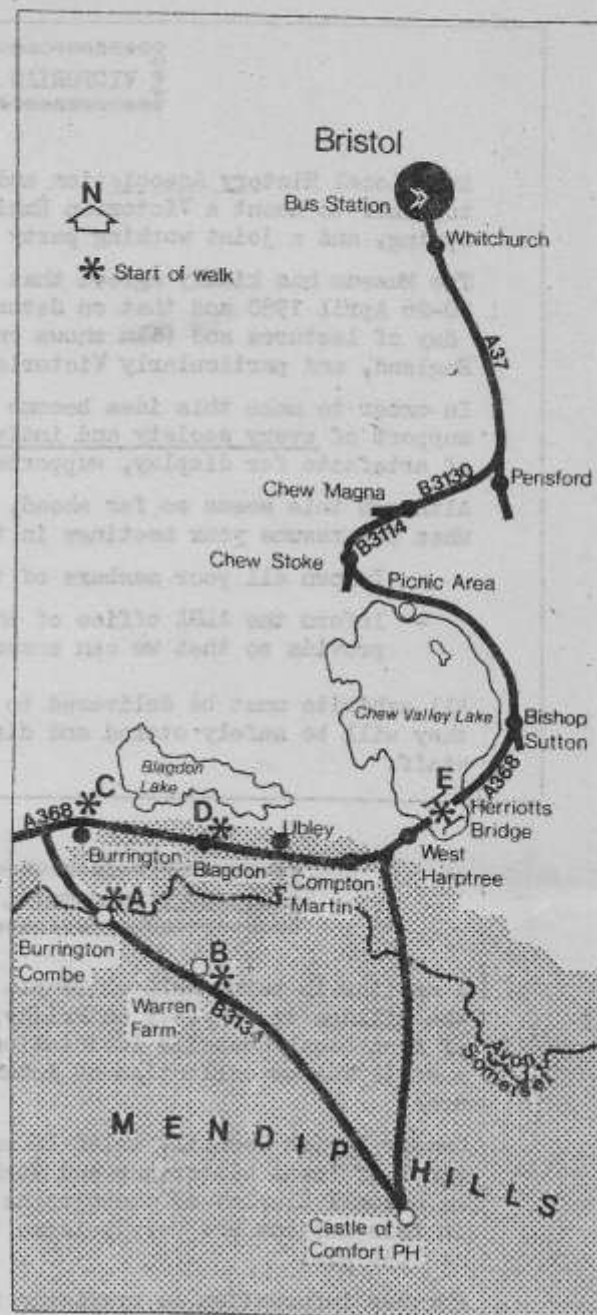
BRISTOL, Bus Station	0940	1715
Whitchurch, Black Lion	0958	1733
Pensford, Hill Top	1005	1740
Stanton Drew, Round House	1010	1745
Chew Magna, Post Office	1014	1749
Chew Stoke, Inn	1019	1754
Bishop Sutton, Red Lion	1027	1802
West Harptree, Crown	1035	1810
Compton Martin	—	1813
Ubley, Saw Mills	—	1817
Castle of Comfort Inn	1042	—
Burrington Turn	1058	—
BLAGDON, Seymour Arms	1103	1824

BLAGDON, Seymour Arms	1110	1837	1832
Burrington Turn	—	1542	—
Castle of Comfort Inn	—	1558	—
Ubley, Saw Mills	1117	—	1839
Compton Martin	1121	—	1843
West Harptree, Crown	1124	1805	1846
Bishop Sutton, Red Lion	1132	1813	1854
Chew Stoke, Inn	1140	1821	1902
Chew Magna, Post Office	1145	1826	1907
Stanton Drew, Round House	1149	1830	1911
Pensford, Hill Top	1154	1835	1916
Whitchurch, Black Lion	1201	1842	1923
BRISTOL, Bus Station	1219	1700	1941

Foot note

Cheddar Connection-Service 371

CHEDDAR, Twentown	1602	1955
BRISTOL, Bus Station	1719	2103



The bus travels along the eastern edge of Chew Valley Lake where you can alight at the picnic site. A number of sheltered picnic hollows have been constructed in the grassed slopes and you can watch sailing and fishing, or identify birds with the help of the bird chart on display. There is also an amenities building with a shop, viewing gallery and toilets. It is hoped a new lakeside walk will be opened during 1979 linking this with a new picnic area.

The bus continues alongside the lake and then climbs up on to the top of the Mendip Plateau. It is a rewarding walk from here to the very top of Blackdown where there are spectacular views. There are great opportunities for walking in this area of outstanding natural beauty. The area has nature reserves to visit at Long Wood, Black Rock, Velvet Botton and Blackmoor, archaeological remains of great interest such as Dolebury Warren Fort, Gorsey Bigbury Henge and Priddy Stone Circles and a very distinctive vegetation and wild life associated with sandstone and limestone. The Mendip area is covered by OS maps 172 and 182 which show public footpaths by red dotted lines.

Family tickets can be used on the 375 bus route, with up to 2 children travelling free with 2 fare-paying adults.

 * VICTORIAN EXHIBITION *

Avon Local History Association and The Victorian Society are working together to mount a Victorian Exhibition at Bristol City Museum next spring, and a joint working party has been set up to plan the details.

The Museum has kindly agreed that the exhibition may be held from 10-26 April 1980 and that on Saturday 19 April there will be a special day of lectures and film shows on various aspects of life in Victorian England, and particularly Victorian Avon.

In order to make this idea become a reality we are relying on the support of every society and individual member in supplying all types of artefacts for display, supported by a note of its origin and use.

Although this seems so far ahead, we would ask you to do two things when you resume your meetings in the autumn :

- Inform all your members of the dates
- Inform the ALHA office of the likely type of displays you can provide so that we can ensure a good variety

All exhibits must be delivered to the Museum on 27 or 28 March, where they will be safely stored and displayed and annotated by the Museum staff.

 * WANSDYKE INDUSTRIAL & MINING ARCHAEOLOGY *

A meeting is being held at Temple Cloud Primary School (in the centre of the village on the A37) on Friday, 5 October, by the Wansdyke Area Group of Avon Local Councils Association to discuss the possibility of creating a small museum collection of industrial and mining archaeology of the area.

Cameley Parish Council, which is organising the meeting, is inviting a panel of local historians and archaeologists to speak, and there will be a small display of photographs and artefacts. All those interested in this subject are very welcome to attend. The meeting will commence at 7.30 p.m.

Further information is available from Mrs Elizabeth Bruegger, Cholwell Farm, Stowey Road, Clutton. Tel: Temple Cloud 52314.

 * WOOLLARD TANNERY *

Mr. F.G. Cross of Old Tannery Farm, Woollard, Pensford, has written to the Secretary kindly offering to take any ALHA members interested round the Old Tannery. He will be happy to show them items connected with the history of the building and to explain his researches. He may be contacted at the above address or by telephoning Compton Dando 288.

THE INFLUENCE OF J.L. McADAM ON THE BRISTOL TURNPIKES

by Harry Lane

John Louden McAdam, together with Thomas Telford, probably shares the distinction of making the greatest contribution to highway engineering in Britain. Of the two, however, only J.L. McAdam has strong links with the turnpike system in and around Bristol.

In 1801 he moved to Park Street in Bristol and four years later (July 1805) the Common Council assented to his becoming a freeman on paying a fee of 38 guineas. Also he became a Trustee of the Bristol Turnpike Trust and persuaded the Trust to give his methods a try.

From 1802 to 1812 only two of the Bristol Turnpike Roads were able to maintain themselves in the state they were in in 1802 - these were the Aust and Horfield Roads. However, neither was able to pay £100 off the debt they then owed and neither had been able, in any degree, to support itself but had greatly increased its debt.

In 1812 the total debt for the Bristol and District Turnpike Road Trust was £44,065, and the only means of liquidating that debt and prevent further accumulations was discussed. The erection of additional Toll gates, bars, and the cessation of further extensive improvements, were voiced as possible solutions.

At the General Meeting of Trustees on 4th December 1815 at the Guildhall, Bristol, a proposal was moved

"that for the purpose of pursuing a more uniform effectual and economical system of management and repair of the several roads included in the Bristol Turnpike Act, one General Surveyor for the Bristol District of Roads be technically appointed".

The duties were to include:

- attend Trustee meetings and report on road status
- proffer opinion on repairs or improvements
- form specifications for all contracts
- carry into effect resolutions and directions of Trustee meetings
- attend all General Meetings
- superintend other appointed Surveyors
- on the 1st Monday in March of each year present a written report to the General Meeting.

The salary recommended was "a sum not exceeding £400 per annum". A further proposal at the meeting also moved that "Mr. J.L. McAdam be the Person recommended to the Office of General Surveyor".

McAdam in the following 10 years proceeded to make the Bristol Roads famous across the length and breadth of England and by his methods they were improved beyond all recognition.

In March 1817 the salary for the General Surveyor was increased to £500 per annum, exclusive of the Clerks salary.

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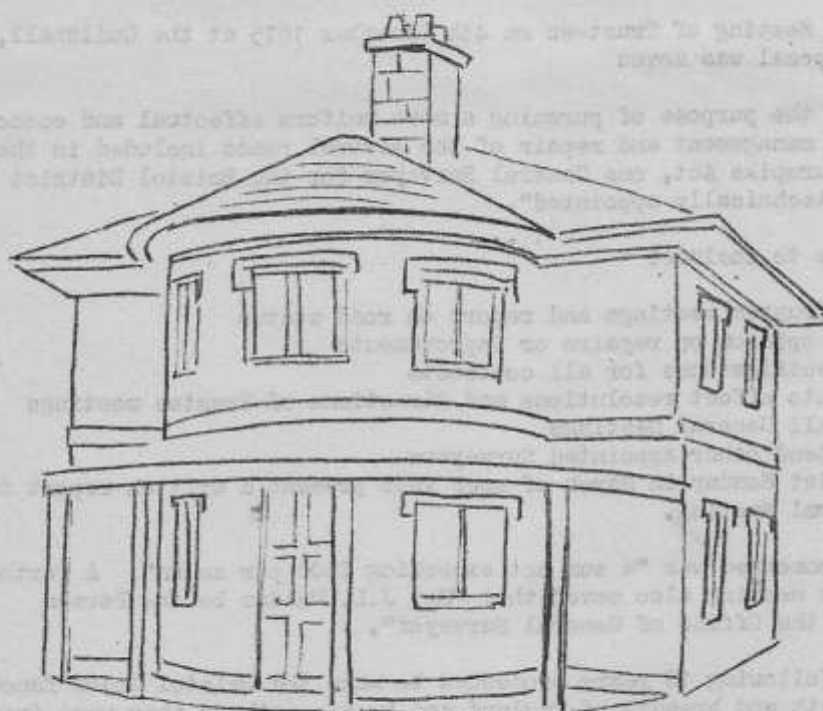
At the General Meeting of June 3rd 1817, McAdam reported that

"The amendment of the roads has proceeded with success and there was no part of the roads in the Bristol District in a bad state; that much had been done in permanent improvement; that the floating debt of £1400 was paid off; that the balance of Treasurer's Accounts, from being against the Trust £365, was turned to be in favour of the Trust £614 and that the principal debt was diminished by £729".

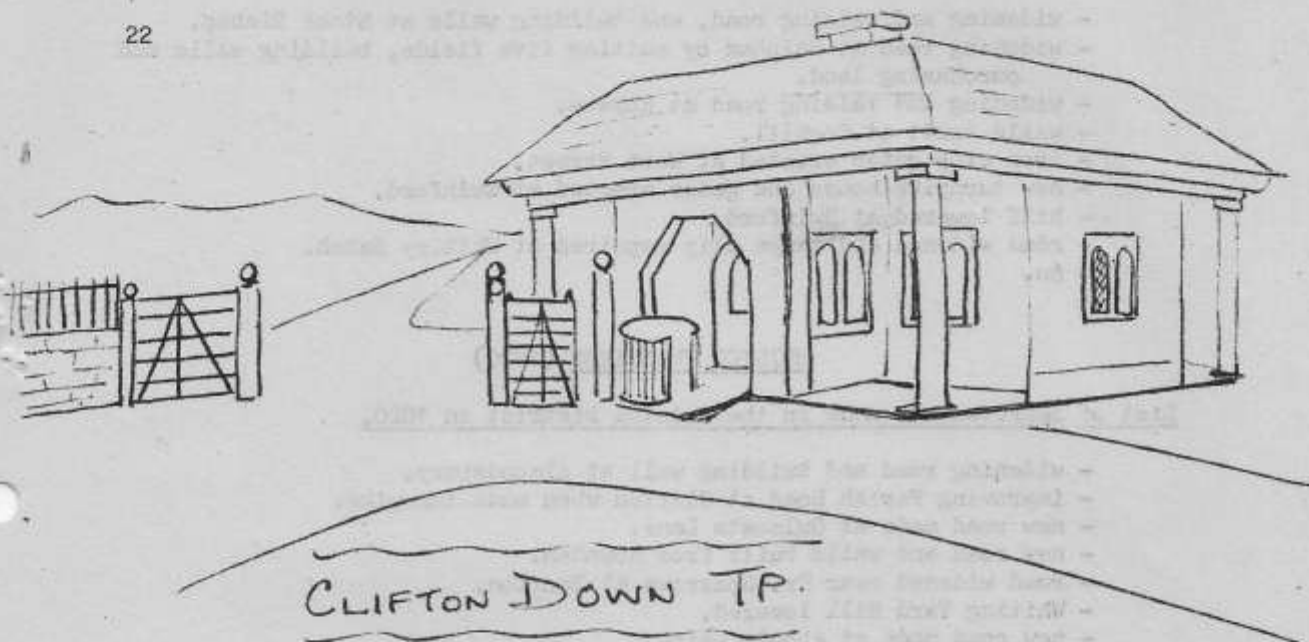
The Trustees agreed that with this encouraging evidence and justified confidence they would continue to afford McAdam their "zealous and unwearied support".

His influence on the state of the roads was impressive and at the December 7th 1818 General Meeting McAdam was appointed to the General Surveyors Office for a further term of three years, at the same salary.

In 1819 a new Act of Parliament (59 GEO III C95) was procured which added a further 28 miles and authorised new roads. All the expenses attending the Act were paid by the Trust. At the March 22nd 1819 meeting McAdam recommended that "this Trust be divided into two separate Districts or Trusts, one comprising the Roads in the County of Gloucester, and the other in the County of Somerset, and that this be confirmed and carried into effect".



ASHTON GATE TOLLHOUSE.



One letter dated 2nd December 1824 from McAdam to the Trustees highlights the Income for the Trust during the preceeding 8 years:

March	1817	£ 16742	} Statute labour by kind - 149 miles
	1818	£ 16317	
	1819	£ 16215	
	1820	£ 19733	
	1821	£ 21783	} Statute labour reduced to small proportions and paid in money termed - 177 miles
	1822	£ 21582	
	1823	£ 21678	
	1824	£ 29141 *	
* Tolls collected	£	20,692-18-11	
Composition	£	925-0-0	(in lieu of statute labour)
Borrowed	£	1,200-0-0	

The following annual lists show the kinds of improvements that were made.

BRISTOL TURNPIKES (1817) (1818) (1819) (1820)

List of improvements made in the Bristol District in 1817

- Westbury Hill, lowered.
- widening road at new Gouts, near Kings Parade.
- Black Boy Hill, lowered.
- two branches of road on Durdham Down.
- widening, lowering and building walls at Lamp Black Hill.
- new line of road made near Haviatts Green.
- lowering and widening hill at Sidcot Batch.
- lowering and widening hill at Slow Batch at Shipham.
- lowering and widening hill at Churchill Batch.
- new conduits and road widened near Stapleton Church.
- dam made near Cock Mill to prevent flooding.
- lowering road at Toghill.

List of improvements made in the Bristol District in 1818.

- widening and raising road, and building walls at Stoke Bishop,
- widening road at Shipham by cutting five fields, building walls and purchasing land.
- widening and raising road at Royate.
- walls built at Toghill.
- iron stop gates erected at West Street.
- new turnpike house and gates erected at Swinford.
- hill lowered at Swinford.
- road widened and large slip repaired at Whitley Batch.
- &c.

BRISTOL TURNPIKES (1820)

List of improvements made in the Bristol District in 1820.

- widening road and building wall at Almondsbury.
- improving Parish Road at Clifton when made turnpike.
- new road made at Gulcoats Lane.
- new road and walls built from Rownham.
- road widened near Mr. Sparrows at Bourton.
- Whiting Yard Hill lowered.
- new road made at Abbots Leigh.
- new Turnpike House and walls built at Easton.
- footpath made at Stokes Croft.
- roads widened and walls rebuilt at Stapleton.
- road and bridge widened and walls built at Hambrook.
- road widened at Winterbourne.
- road widened, new culverts made and river cleared at Cock Mill.
- road at Fish Ponds House widened and high walls built.
- new Turnpike House and Stop Gate built at Bridge Yeat.
- two miles of new road from Bitton to Bridge Yeat made.
- long wall built across Common.
- &c.

List of improvements made in the Bristol District in 1819.

- improving parish road from Kingsweston to Henbury when made a turnpike.
- Thornbury road (2 miles) repaired, bridges lengthened and hills cut, when made a turnpike.
- road widened to Aust Pill.
- road widened and raised at Harfords Bridge.
- Winterbourne Hill lowered and valley raised.
- road raised at cross-roads to Stapleton and Mangotsfield.
- Whites Hill lowered and widened and walls rebuilt.
- Cock Mill bridge widened and walls rebuilt.
- new footpath to Downend made.
- new Turnpike House and Gates, with side walls built at the Fire Engine.
- &c.

BRISTOL TURNPIKES (1821)(1822)(1823)(1824)

List of improvements made in the Bristol District in 1821

- road widened and walls built at top of Park Street.
- road widened at Westbury.
- hill lowered and walls built at Princes Buildings, Clifton.
- hill lowered at Kings Weston Hill.
- new branch road made on Durdham Down.
- summer road made at Marsh Common.

- raising road and large wall built at the Old Passage.
- road raised at Cross Hands.
- road widened and walls built at Richmond Terrace.
- new line of road made at Horfield.
- road raised at Stokes Croft.
- Tanyard bridge and road widened.
- road widened and footpath and conduits made at Stapleton.
- footpath leading to Fish Ponds lowered.
- two miles of new road made from Bridge Yeat to Hambrook.
- Bridge Yeat Hill lowered and walls built.
- bridge built and road raised at Goose Green.
- Rodway Hill lowered, valley raised, walls and bridge built.
- wall rebuilt at Mr. Brice's Plantation.
- land purchased at Oldland.
- &c.

List of improvements made in the Bristol District in 1822.

- widening and lowering Black Horse Hill.
- widening and lowering Cribbs Hill.
- new footpath at Kingsweston Lodge.
- lowering and reforming Clay Pits Road, when turnpiked.
- two new Patent Weighing Engines and Houses erected on the Horfield Roads.
- road leading to Hambrook widened and walls rebuilt.
- old Gloucester Road repaired.
- new Turnpike House, gates and boundary walls erected at Siston Common.
- hill lowered at Downend, road widened and valley raised.
- old bridge at Frenchay widened and raised, hills cut down and approaches to bridge levelled, road and walls raised in front of Mr. Brice's House, conduits and footpath made.
- walls built at Kingswood Hill.
- arch built at Wick bridge.
- &c.

List of improvements made in the Bristol District in 1823.

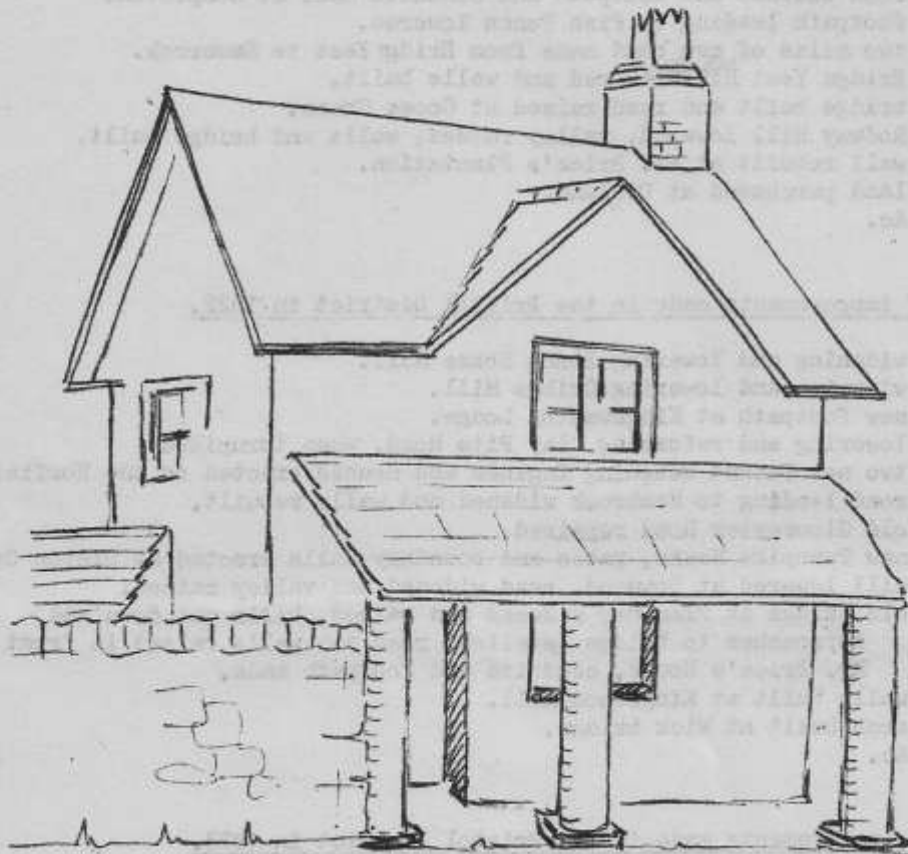
- new line of road made at Compton.
- road widened and walls built near Mr. Harford's at Henbury.
- new road made up at Bridge Valley.
- new Turnpike House and gates erected on Clifton Down.
- road raised and formed at Redland.
- road widened and walls built at Winterbourne Hill.
- Broom Hill lowered and conduits made.
- Toghill Bridge repaired and walls built.
- road widened at Keynsham by removing several houses.
- road widened by Folly Lane, Saltford.
- &c.

List of improvements made in the Bristol District in 1824.

- road lowered at St. Michaels Hill.
- new line of road made from Cutlers Mill to Stokes Croft.
- road raised at end of Gloucester Lane.
- road raised near Le Beck Inn.
- road widened and wall rebuilt near Masons Arms Inn, Stapleton.
- road raised and conduits made at Stokes Lodge.

BELL HILL TOLL HOUSE.
Bottom Bell Hill, Stapleton.

25



- Stapleton Hill lowered and walls built.
- Kendleshire Hill lowered.
- Bitton Bridge widened.
- Bitton road widened and house removed.

At the March 1824 General Meeting it was reported that the total debt of the Trust had risen to £47,072-9-5, an increase of £1836-0-2 over the 1816 figure. This did not appear to deter the Trustees, for at the April meeting they confirmed the appointment of Mr. Loudon McAdam as General Surveyor in conjunction with his father. Unfortunately, however, his activities in other turnpike trusts (a total of 32 trusts were under the advice of McAdam and his sons), were so numerous that he was under constant criticism for not spending enough time on his Bristol appointment and finally an enquiry was called for.

From the enquiry that followed, in September 1824, a number of the local trustees representing the Bristol Council, attempted to summarily dismiss him. He was given no hint of their intentions and the motion was only lost by the casting vote of the Chairman. In his following address to the Trustees, McAdam pointed out that he had accepted the post with no view to profit, and that his salary barely covered his travelling expenses. When he accepted the Surveyor's position the roads in the district were all but impassable in bad weather and the Trust had been on the verge of bankruptcy. Through his exertions its funds had become flourishing and the roads were an example that had been followed and imitated from one end of the country to another. Despite the apparent vindication McAdam resigned his office in the following year protesting against what he termed "the mean persecution by his enemies in the Common Council". He was then nearly 80 years old.

His contributions were recognised, however, by the House of Commons who regarded him as the greatest benefactor to both the public and to beasts of burden. In 1834 the Commons voted him a grant of £10,000 and the title of Surveyor General of the British Isles, in lieu of a Knighthood which he declined and asked for it to be granted to his son. Two years later the Metropolitan Road Trustees (who had adopted his systems since 1823) gladly appointed him their Superintendent.

His connections with local Trusts were not completely severed for in 1826 he was appointed to the Trust of the Bath Turnpike and chose his grandson William as his deputy. Most of the effective work was carried out by the grandson but the elder McAdam continued to submit special reports on the Bath Roads until 1834. Two years later at the age of 90, and only a few months before his death, he wrote at length to the Trust about the proposed general legislation for the amalgamation of their Trusts. He died in comparative poverty.

The most useful course for this article was "Narrative of Affairs of the Bristol District Roads" 1816 - 1824. BRISTOL ARCHIVES 3811 (17) & (18).

The following have been consulted and will be of use to anyone wishing to pursue the subject further:-

- "Annals of Bristol" - John Latimer
- "Gloucestershire 1590-1640" - W. B. Wilcox 1940. Local Government Study.
- "Survey of the High Roads" - John Cary 1799.
- "Matthews Directories 1814-1840".
- "Survey of Principal Roads" - John Ogilby 1719.
- "A Guyde for English Travellers showing in general how far one Citie in many Chire Towns in England are distant from one Another"-Norden 1625.
- "New Itinery of Great Roads, Direct and Crossing of England and Wales" - John Cary 1812 & 1828.
- "Paterson's British Itinery" 1785.
- "New Travellers Guide to English Counties" - Lewis (undated)
- "Directory of Stage Coach Services 1836"- A. Bates 1969.
- "Travellers Companion or a Delineation of the Turnpike Roads of England and Wales" - Cary 1791
- "Roads and Vehicles" - A. Bird 1969.
- "Journey by Stages" - S. Margetson.
- "Industrial Archaeology in the Bristol Region" - Buchanan and Cossons.
- "John Loudon McAdam" - R. Devereux 1936.
- "Turnpikes and Toll Bars" - M. Searle.

BILL ELMS REMEMBERS - BISHOPSWORTH VILLAGE LIFE

Some of my earliest memories were when we lived on the corner of Headley Lane where now stands the Church Hall. Ours was one of two cottages and Mr. and Mrs. Carter lived next door. My brother George was blowing a tin whistle one day and the mouth-piece came adrift and he swallowed it! It was panic stations! Mother said, 'Go and ask Mrs. Carter to come round'. When she came, she turned George upside down and slapped his back and out came the mouthpiece. She saved his life.

I remember the time when some of the housewives went to Weston by Russets horse-break. Outings in those days were few and far between. The most exciting part of that outing to me was when we were returning from Weston and hearing the horses galloping up the 'Rhoddy'. Mrs. Crane was playing the accordion and Mrs. Cox, who was the life and soul of the party, was singing. Then they all joined in with 'Oh, meet me, Oh, meet me by the moonlight, Meet me by moonlight alone. I have a sweet story to tell you, Must be told by the moonlight alone'.

Aunt Alice did daily work at the schoolmaster's house. Friday night she would call round to take me to our grandparents where I stayed most weekends. A blanket and pillow would be placed in the hand-cart and off she would go with me to Highridge Common. The ride was not very comfortable as the roads were rough. On winter nights a hurricane lamp would be tied to the shafts. There were no street lights in the village in those days, but it was safe to walk about then.

Grandfather worked for Mr. Froud at Castle Farm on the Bridgwater Road. When he went to Ashton Gate Brewery for a load of grains (spent hops), he would take me with him and let me drive the horse when we reached the main road. Sometimes my playmates and I would see Mr. Gardiner of Bishopsworth Lodge coming along his drive in his horse and carriage, then we would chase down the lane to open the gate. He always gave us a penny - sometimes we would wait for him to come back for another penny! During the conker season he would gather baskets of conkers from his trees and bring them to Bishopsworth School. When we were out to play he would throw them out of the baskets so we had to scramble for them.

Soon after the 1914-18 war started, Uncle Arthur with some of his mates went to join the Navy, but he didn't pass the medical. Mr. Pursey, the village policeman, got word of it and came to investigate. Aunt Alice saw him pass the window and said to Uncle Arthur, 'Get through the bedroom window and down across the fields'. In the meantime, Pursey tried to push himself in the house for a search, but Aunt Alice told him it was none of his business and to be on his way. As he was determined to get in, Aunt Alice caught hold of him, dragged him outside and ducked his head in the rainwater barrel, and Fincher the dog had him by his trousers. As he was going, he said, 'You've burnt my fingers, now I'll burn yours!! But Pursey must have had a dressing down when he reported, as an Officer from Flax Bourton came and apologised for the incident. Uncle Arthur joined the Somersets. His regiment was sent to France and within three months he was killed.

During the month's holiday from school in the summer, some of us boys would go bird starving on the farms. That meant you walked around the cornfields shaking stones in a tin can and shouting at the same time to frighten the birds off the corn. I worked for Mr. Britton of Highridge Farm. Mr. Britton would sometimes walk around with his gun.

During the 1914-18 war years food was very scarce. At the local grocers there was Celestino instead of tea - it looked like confetti mixed with brown powder. There was apple orchard jelly in earthenware pots, and lardine which was dark in colour and only fit for cart grease. No wonder we came out in sores, eating the rubbish. I don't know how we should have got by without father's allotment.

A favourite place to go on Saturday morning was Mr. and Mrs. Hill's, next to the Kings Head. She always found us jobs to do, either in the house or helping Mr. Hill in the garden. Very often he'd take one of us on his round delivering coal. There was always a hot meal when we finished.

I left school when I was 14. I didn't fancy working on a farm as there was very little time off at weekends. It was all day Saturday and Sunday; there was milking in the mornings and again in the afternoons. I tried the factories. No luck there. It was all the same with these permanent jobs. If any of the family worked there, you were in. I started work at the Lime Kilns on the Bridgwater Road. Sam Groves was in charge. There was Jim Groves, his son, Fred Hill, and George Wheeler. We were having our tea break one morning when in the distance we saw an airship - it was either R.100 or R.101 on its way back from America.

At times trade was slack and the lime that was heaped up would go to powder. Then Durnfords steam wagon would come for a load. As we were loading, we'd be spitting and coughing as the lime dust got down our throats. One occasion, this happened. I was coughing and spitting and I felt something blocking my throat. After the loading was finished, I caught hold of a lump in my throat. So I said to George Wheeler, 'George, have a look and see what's in my throat'. He said, 'My Christ, Bill, I shouldn't like to be thee. Don't touch it. Thee'se bin and pulled thee bloody tonsils out!' Off I had to go to see Dr. Nevil. He gave me some tablets and told me to lay down and take it easy for a few weeks.

I first remember the Kings Head when Bill Needham was landlord. He worked for his father during the day delivering bread, and served behind the bar in the evenings. The favourite place was the Tap Room, where games such as rings, table skittles and cards were played. The cider drinkers usually warmed their drink in a pan over the fire, or put a red-hot poker in it. At times one would bring in a bag of snails which were cooked over the fire on a shovel.

It was usual to see horses and trolleys hauling hay to Bristol for the various firms, as they relied on horse traffic. On their way back, some would stop at the Kings Head for a drink. When starting off again, they would put sacks down in the trolleys for a bed and the horse would take them home.

It was not unknown for hayricks to catch fire. During a bad spell of weather at hay-making time, some of the hay could be damp, causing the trouble. One hayrick caught fire in a field where Bedminster Down School now stands. The hayrick was only a matter of yards from the boundary stone on the Somerset side. Along came Bristol's fire engine and stopped at the boundary. Two of the firemen went along the miners' path and saw where the hayrick was. 'Can't touch it', they said, 'It's over the boundary'. In the distance we could hear the bell of Bishopsworth's Fire Brigade clanging, but by now the hayrick was well alight and beyond saving. When they arrived, they looked all in. No wonder, after pulling that cart from the Elm Tree Inn, around the Common to the Kings Head then up the Bridgwater Road to the boundary. This was the first time I saw the Fire Brigade. Why wasn't it made for a horse to pull around? Then the men would be fit to do their job when they reached the scene of a fire. There was quite a lot of mickey-taking about that outfit - but it should have been directed at the masterminds on the Council who voted to have this monstrosity.

The roads were very bad in those days. They were more or less cart tracks to the farms, all mud and slush through the winter months. If a horse and cart came along, the wheels would go up and down in the ruts and you'd be plastered with mud and water if you didn't get out of the way in time. In the summer the roads would dry up and everywhere would be covered in dust. The first road dressing was tar-spraying - this was a great improvement as it kept the dust down.

During the making up of roads, horses and carts would haul block stone from the quarries. The loads would be stacked at intervals by the roadside. If you take notice of the wall around Barrow Tanks, you will see it is set back in places - this was used for the stacking of stones. Afterwards the stack would be measured and was paid at so much a yard. It was usual to have three hammers. A sledge, a pointed stone hammer and a snapping hammer to finish off breaking into about three inch stones.

At one period, like thousands of others, I was on the dole. The Labour Exchange at that time was in Victoria Street and queues would stretch to Bristol Bridge, four deep. It would take up ^{to} two hours at times before reaching the counter to sign on. One day the clerk said, 'You have got to report upstairs to go before a court of referees'. I was ushered into a room where there were about eight people sitting around a table. Then they started asking questions in their turn. 'Where have you been seeking work?'. I'd tell them where I had been, perhaps several places on different days. Then they would try and catch you out by saying, 'And where did you go last Monday?' etc. 'Is your father working?' 'Yes', I said, 'He's a miner'. As I was single my dole was stopped, as father was expected to keep me.

Soon afterwards I got a job, on the roads for the Council. Bedminster Down was like Dundry Downs then, all mounds and hollows on both sides of the main road until it was levelled off by relief workers. They were directed there by the Ministry of Labour, as they'd been on the dole for a long time. Ground was taken over for allotments too, where the Corporation tip is now. There were so many men on the dole walking the streets, an allotment gave them something to do. I remember the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) visiting the site.

When South Liberty Pit closed down, father became unemployed. He was never out of work before, as worked in the pits. He liked his pipe, so he made his own tobacco by collecting coltsfoot leaves on waste ground in the quarry. He would put them in the oven to dry, then soak them in beer. After a good soaking he'd bind them in a strip of sacking until it was fit to smoke. You get the same ingredients in herbal cigarettes, but without the beer. Father wasn't out of work for long - he started for the Waterworks and was there until he retired.

During the summer months you would see crowds of people alighting from the trams at Hotwells. Some would be going on the Rocks Railway on their way to the Zoo. Others would be boarding Campbells Paddle Steamer for a trip down the Channel. I went on most of them over the years and my favourite trip was to Lundy Island. In the bar there was usually singing and very often someone would be playing an accordion. The Brighton Queen and the Brighton Belle did service on the South coast. There were also the Britannia, Glen Avon, Glen Usk, Glen Gower, Westward Ho!, Devonian, Ravenswood, Waverley and Lady Moyra, which served the Bristol Channel ports. During the last war they were mine-sweeping in the English Channel and several were sunk. The ones that came back were in grey war paint. They were painted again in their original colours, ran for a few seasons, and then were sent to the scrapyard. After the last war, two new paddle steamers were built - The Bristol Queen and The Cardiff Queen - they ran for quite a few years. Then came the Empress Queen, a screw vessel and much bigger than the paddlers. She only did a few trips

and ran at a loss. She was berthed at Narrow Quay and never moved until she was sold. The Bristol Queen and the Cardiff Queen went as well. Then the Balmoral took over and is in service now.

Before the last war the Castle Street area was the main shopping centre. It would be crowded on Saturday nights. There was all the entertainments you wanted - two picture houses, the Regent and the Queens; four pubs: The Cat and Wheel, The Bear and Rugged Staff, The Standard of England and The Cups and Salmon. Other attractions were auction sales and a Billiards Hall. Once there was a sixty foot whale on exhibition. The few cars that were about would give Castle Street a wide berth as it was so crowded on Saturday nights. We'd make our way to the Fish Market about nine o'clock, where the fish was almost given away. You could get all the fish you wanted for a few shillings. The butchers shops too would be open until they sold out. You could get a big joint quite cheap. Fish and meat were cheap because there was no refrigeration then. After leaving the market, we would catch a tram at Bristol Bridge to Bedminster Down - the terminus was by the Miners' Arms - and then go on our way over the Down, back home to Bishopsworth.

Bill Elms,
34 Queens Road,
Bishopsworth,
Bristol 3.

AVON LOCAL HISTORY HANDBOOK

The Handbook is selling well; out of 1000 copies, the Association only has 40 left, which are available for £2.50, or £2 to society members.

A number of societies have copies on sale or return and the Secretary would be grateful to know whether these have been sold as the publisher is pressing us for payment of our order and we do not have any spare cash in the bank!

SUBSCRIPTIONS

There has been a good response to the subscription letters sent out with the last issue, especially from individual members, but a number of societies' subscriptions are still outstanding....please check whether yours is one.

POETRY & PROSE EVENING

In view of the difficulty of finding a producer for this event, it has now been postponed until Saturday 28 June 1980, when Dyrham House has been booked. Further details nearer the time, but please note the date when you buy next year's diary.

SOUTHERN HISTORY - A review of the history of Southern England

SOUTHERN HISTORY will be a major addition to the study of regional and local history in England. As such, it will cover work in progress on the historic counties of Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Dorset, Berkshire, Surrey, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, Kent and Sussex, and the Channel Islands.

Many of its contributions will demonstrate the use of new methods of interpreting local sources, which should encourage considerable further work; where relevant, papers from related disciplines, such as archaeology and geography, will be included. In particular, a number of themes will be followed in successive issues of the journal, such as social crime and the southern townscape.

One notable feature of the first three issues will be a series on regional and local history in the south, through the work of archive repositories, institutions of tertiary education and local organizations and societies. These will review the state of existing provision and the more promising developments in different parts of the region, as well as the apparent shortcomings. There will be an extensive reviews section, covering recent books on the area, a select list of local history pamphlets and an annual review of periodical literature.

Publication will be annual, the first issue appearing in autumn 1979. Thereafter, it is expected that it will appear in the spring of each year. Each issue will contain eight or more long articles, some of which may be illustrated.

Copies can be obtained from Dawson Book Service, Cannon House, Park Farm Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5EE (payment with order).

Frequency: annually, the first issue appearing in October 1979 but subsequent issues each May.

Annual subscription: £10.00. ENCOURAGE YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY TO ORDER IT!

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AFFILIATIONS & DONATIONS 1979-80

The financial year of the Avon Local History Association, and consequently the annual subscriptions, runs from 1 April to 31 March, and it would be helpful, therefore, if societies who have not done so could forward their subscriptions or donations for the year 1979-80 as soon as possible.

You will recall that the scale of affiliation fees is as follows:

For clubs with up to 50 members	-	£1.50
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The person named on the form as your correspondent will receive one copy of QUEST quarterly, together with any other periodic mailings and the minutes and agendas of meetings of societies.

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