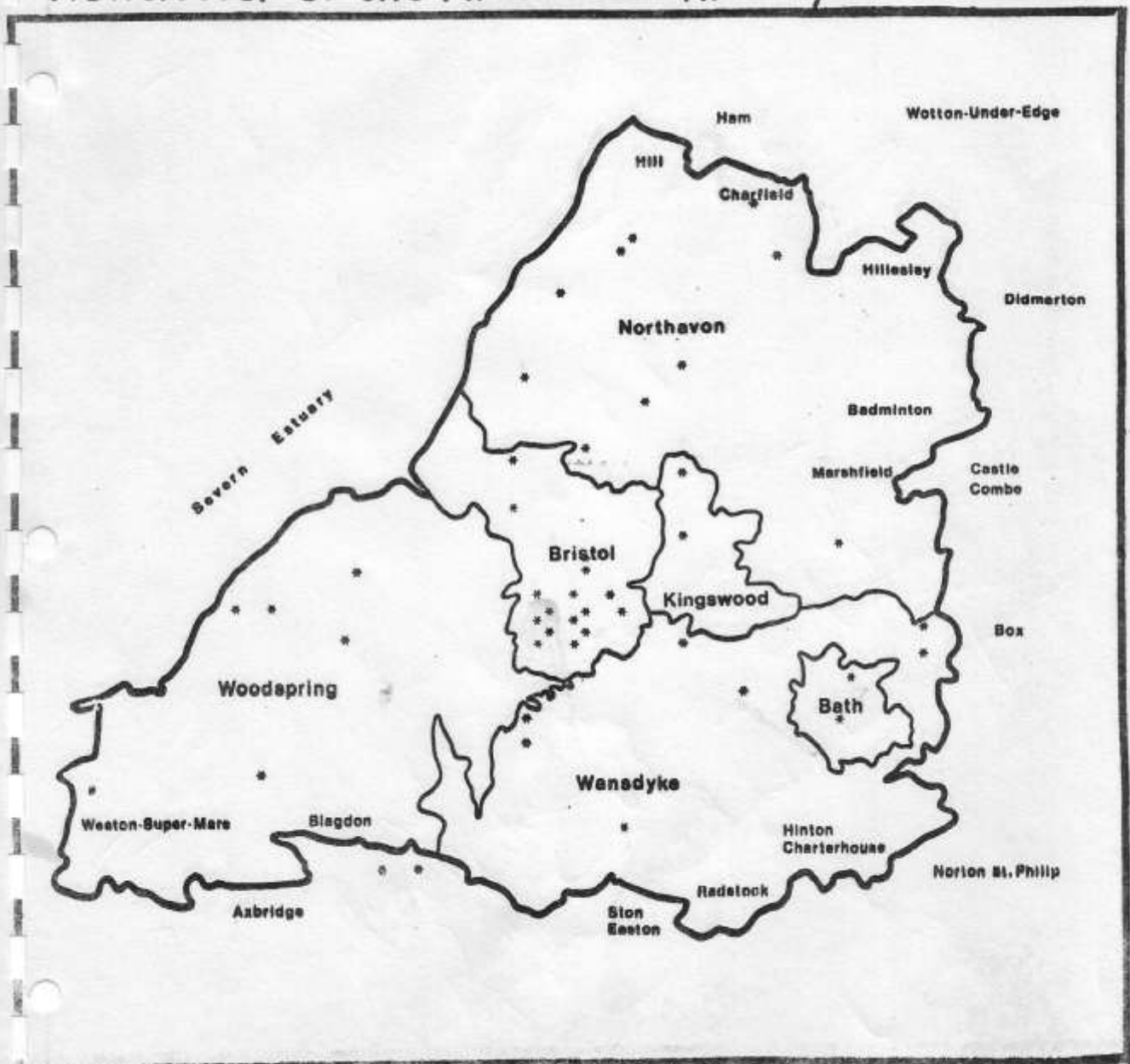


QUEST

Issue No 2.

Newsletter of the Avon Local History Association



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EDITORIAL

I am pleased to report that the first issue of QUEST has been well received. The first run of 250 was sold almost immediately and it was necessary to go into a second 'edition'. Thanks are due to all those involved in its production, and not least to the enthusiastic society secretaries who placed orders and distributed them among their members.

As Editor I am also pleased to say that a trickle (not yet, alas! a flow) of correspondence and comment has begun to reach me. The need for articles and for news of societies' coming programmes is still pressing. It may be that the summer is a time when many societies take a break, but please do not hesitate to inform the Newsletter of your meetings if you feel that they might be of wider interest because this is a service which the Newsletter can willingly support.

Your attention is drawn to our first Conference details of which appear in this issue, and for which your wholehearted support is encouraged.

JOHN WILSON

The Editor will welcome details of forthcoming events, news of societies, articles and comment. Communications should be addressed to Mr. J. Wilson, c/o Bristol Record Office, Council House, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TR. All other correspondence on Association matters should be addressed to the Secretary, Avon Local History Association, c/o Avon Community Council, 2, Berkeley Square, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1HL, Tel. No: Bristol 26420 or 25951.

NEWS FROM LOCAL SOCIETIES

Newton and Corston St. Loos Local History Society

This society was formed a couple of years ago to discuss the changing patterns of the two villages and preserve some record of their past. Several hundred old photographs were collected, enlarged with the help of Newton Park College, and preserved. There have been two seasons of talks and discussions. The subjects have included the rise and fall of the local family estate of the Temples, and the most recent was about the history of the Duchy of Cornwall, given by the Agent for the Duchy in person. Activities are mainly in the winter evenings, although occasional site visits are also undertaken, such as one to the excavation at Newton Castle last year. It is hoped to publish the autumn programme in a coming issue of the Newsletter.

Correspondent: Derek Richards, Dryleaze, Bath Road, Saltford, Nr. Bristol.

Doynton Local History Group

A group of about a dozen active members from Doynton meet at intervals to hear and discuss papers on Doynton. Over the last ten years members have also noted the relevant material in the Record Offices of Bristol, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Worcestershire, and correlated it with local fieldwork and title deeds. At the moment members are in the process of writing a village history based on a demographic reconstruction for the years 1563, 1608, 1671, 1785 and 1861. When this is complete there will be a fresh wave of criticism and amendment. Typical of the seemingly haphazard but effective village ways, most consultation is done whilst waiting for the start of PCC or Parish Council Meetings, or to the background noises of the tractor or milking parlour.

Correspondent: Richard Kent, Diddingtone Firs, Doynton, Bristol BS15 5SU

Filton Historical Research Group

In 1968 a group of people interested in the history of Filton began a dig on the site of Filton rectory, then recently demolished. Having been dormant for some time after this it was felt desirable to re-form the group as part of the Filton Community Association. This was done in June 1975, and members are looking forward to researching into the history of the parish. At a very well attended meeting in February an illustrated talk on the Filton War Memorial Hall and the Filton Folk Centre was given, and a walk round Bristol was arranged for 29th June. The Group hopes that members of other Societies might be willing to talk to meetings of the Group. Although not large, the Group would offer an interested audience.

Secretary: Mr. W.L. Harris, c/o Filton Folk Centre, Elm Park, Filton, Bristol, BS12 7PS.

Clevedon Civic Society Local History Group

This sub-group of Cleveland Civic Society has worked on a variety of local records. The local newspaper dating from 1863, has been particularly useful in that until 1923 it included a Clevedon Directory, which has been partially indexed. During local government re-organisation the Group had the opportunity to work with documents belonging to the Urban District Council. These included a copy of the 1839 tithe map in the Public Library, minutes of the Local Board of Health from 1853, and of the Urban District Council from 1895. Two members made notes from the U.D.C. minutes, which will be copied up and indexed. Other sources consulted include the minutes of the Clevedon Improvement Society and of the Herbert Gardens Society, throwing an interesting sidelight on later Victorian society. Work on field names in the tithe award and map and on leases from Clevedon Court has resulted in two local developers using street names from a list compiled by Mrs. Hedger and Lady Elton. A survey carried out on a derelict farmhouse led to the rescue of a medieval fireplace and doorway now awaiting rebuilding at the Craft Centre. This was done at the developers' expense and they have since suggested that the estate on the site be called Tutton's Close in order to commemorate the farmhouse. Group members are at present working on the 1841 Census returns, on parish records 1830-1860, and on papers dealing with the history of one of Clevedon's most attractive Victorian houses. Negotiations are in progress regarding the restoration of one of the last remaining limekilns in Clevedon. Eventually they hope to produce a history of Clevedon.

Secretary: J.S. Lilly, 45, Copse Road, Clevedon.

Newton Park College Dig

Excavations are taking place in Newton Park, Newton St. Loe, near Bath for the last three weeks of the term - from 21st June to 9th July. It is a follow up to last year's dig and is of a medieval site adjoining the square tower known as the Castle of Newton St. Loe. Readers are welcome to visit the site during daylight hours. The excavation will be carried out by voluntary labour, largely student, and will be supervised by Chris Arnold of Southampton University. There will be a short course for teachers on archaeology and local history in Newton Park, organised in conjunction with the Teachers' Centre in Bath. It is hoped that the problems of constructing an archives teaching unit based on the documentary evidence will be considered. Guided tours may be arranged.

Information: Bath Teachers' Centre, or, Eric Wainwright, Senior History Lecturer, Newton Park College, Newton St. Loe, near Bath.

Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

Mr. B. Little writes: The Society has now started the commemoration of its centenary and the chief events are due at the time of its A.G.M. in July. The Centenary Dinner, held in the Council House at Bristol on April 8th, was a memorable social occasion. The President of the Society of Antiquaries was the Guest of Honour, while others present included the Lord Mayor of Bristol, the Mayor of Gloucester, and the Bishops of Bristol, Gloucester and Clifton.

Essays in Bristol and Gloucestershire History came out early in April (see QUEST 1) and has been very well received. Demand for the book has been brisk but copies (at £3. 50p) can still be had from booksellers or direct (for £3. 80p including postage) from Miss E. Ralph, 9a, Pembroke Road, Clifton, Bristol. 8.

Malago Archives Committee

The recent activities of the Committee which was formed in 1974 at Bedminster Down Secondary School include two exhibitions at Bishopsworth Library, one about Bishopsworth, and the second about Bedminster and Bedminster Down. Both were well supported by the public. An exhibition is planned at Hartcliffe Library in July. Visits have been made to Ashton Court and Bishopsworth Manor.

In conjunction with the Workers' Educational Association the Committee is holding a series of ten weekly meetings on "The Undiscovered History of Bishopsworth and Hartcliffe" at Bedminster Down School, Donald Road, Bedminster, tutored by Mr. Anton Bantock and members of the Committee. The series starts on Tuesday, 28th September at 7.30. p.m. and the fee is £2. 50p. Details are available from David Parker, South Avon Tutor Organiser, Hartcliffe Community House, Hareclive Road, Bristol. 3.

Nailsea Local History Group

Mr. H.E. Dommett writes: Although the Group has been functioning for just one year the village itself has been blessed with several historically orientated people, so that some excellent local histories exist. Nailsea Women's Institute have produced one, and three local historians of note have been John Whiting, a leading seventeenth century Quaker, Rev. Bland in the nineteenth century and Mr. B.J. Greenhill, who has now been researching and writing for close on fifty years. As a result of the year's work the group is evolving indexed records and much topographical research has been completed. A large collection of old and new photographs has been assembled, a study of industrial history has led to the production of artistic impressions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and, as part of the Nailsea Festival Week, a local history exhibition proved highly successful. The Group looks to the future, secure in the knowledge that a reservoir of untapped material ensures years of research!

Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society

Over the years, members of this society have researched into many facets of the history of the area, and an immense amount of work has been done by our archivist, Mrs. Connie Smith. The archives of the society include information and copies of documents concerning; agriculture: the Anglo-Saxon era: the Avon River and Valley: bells and bell-ringing: boundary stones: boundaries: roads and bridges: the Bridges Family of Keynsham buildings and land: charities: the Chew Valley: civil administration: communications: education: folklore, customs and ancient usage: Friendly Societies: genealogies of local families and benefactors: historic events of local significance: the Hundred of Keynsham: local industry: Inns and Alehouses: Manor of Keynsham: leisure and pleasure: maps and plans: mills: Poor Law and poor relief: pre-history: railways and tramroads: Roman era: villages around the area: wells, pumps, drains, culverts and sewage: worship: miscellaneous field names: cattle pounds: press accounts and publications of other societies.

Current research topics by members include: - land and land usage: Saint Keyna: quarries: farms: evidence for Keynsham's medieval past and continuation of 15 years' research into the history of Keynsham Abbey and its possible forerunners.

Several members have worked regularly with the Keynsham Abbey excavation team since 1961, when plans were passed for a by-pass to be constructed through the middle of the Abbey site. One member has specialised in work on the medieval floor tiles of the Abbey, and, in 1970, was appointed, by the Society of Antiquaries, as Director for the whole of Old Somerset for their Census of Medieval Tiles in Britain. That part of the census covering North Somerset (now Avon) was completed in 1972.

Members of Keynsham Civic Society and the Society have drawn up plans for conservation areas in Keynsham and Saltford, and these were submitted to Wansdyke District Council in December 1975.

READER'S QUESTIONS

Village Pounds

Mr. B.J. Greenhill writes: "The village pound was square, oblong, round or triangular, partly covered or fully open. It had a door with a lock and forcible entry was called 'pound breach', carrying a fine of up to £5. Can any reader refer me to a book on the subject? Or tell me where there is a pound in South Avon?"

Information, please to Mr. Greenhill, 52, Silver Street, Nailsea, BS19 2AA.

Early Radio

Mr. K. Harvey of 116 Brynland Avenue, Bristol, BS7 9DY, has been engaged for several years in tracing details of the early days of radio in Bristol and the West. Readers with a similar interest should write direct.

SIDELIGHTS ON PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN BATHEASTON
(Part of an article first appearing in The Batheaston Society Journal,
No: 2).

Eighteenth century Bath was a rendez-vous for Blue Stockings as well as for the more frivolous. The famous Mrs. Elizabeth Montague was a frequent visitor, and in 1740 stayed with her sister, Mrs. Sarah Scott, at her home in Batheaston. Here Mrs. Scott and a relative, Lady Bab Montague, ran a school for poor children. Their work is described in one of her letters, written in 1755:-

"My sister rises early, and as soon as she has read prayers to their small family, she sits down to cut out and prepare work for 12 poor girls, whose schooling they pay for; to those whom she finds more than ordinarily capable, she teaches writing and arithmetic herself. The work these children are usually employed in is making child-bed linen and clothes for poor people in the neighbourhood, which she and Lady Montague bestow, as they see occasion. Very early on Sunday morning these girls, with 12 little boys whom they also send to school, come to my sister and repeat their catechism, read some chapters, have the principal articles of their religion explained to them, and then are sent to the parish church. These good works are often performed by the Methodist ladies in the heat of enthusiasm, but thank God, my sister's is a calm and rational piety. Her conversation is lively and easy, and she enters into all the reasonable pleasures of Society; she goes frequently to the plays, and sometimes to balls etc. They have a very pretty house at Bath for the winter, and one at Bath Easton for the summer; their houses are adorned by the ingenuity of the owners but as their income is small, they deny themselves unnecessary expenses. Lady Bab Montague concurs with her in all these things, and their convent, for by its regularity it resembles one, is really a cheerful place".

It is a pity that we have no clue to the whereabouts of the house at Batheaston.

The early nineteenth century saw the establishment of a National School, but it seems that there were usually one or two private schools in the village, such as "Miss Haywood's" mentioned by Mrs. Dobbie (An English Rural Community). In the mid-nineteenth century there was certainly such a one in Nos. 1 and 2 Prospect Place. The late Miss Mungeam, who lived all her life at No: 1, said that her mother had attended the school.

M.E. BURCHELL.

BOOK REVIEWS

Discovering Avon, by G.N. Wright (Shire Publications Ltd., 1976, 45p.)

This little booklet is No: 212 in the "Discovering" series and is aimed at visitors and travellers wishing to find the main places of interest in Avon. Its eighty pages are divided into nine sections of which a gazetteer giving brief descriptions of some eighty towns and villages, occupies fifty-three. There are two or three pages on each of Bath, Bristol and Weston-Super-Mare. The other eight sections are The County of Avon; ancient sites and historic buildings, museums and art galleries; parks, zoos and nature trails; industrial archaeology, sport and recreation; entertainment; places within easy reach of Avon. There is a very short list for further reading, and a list of information centres. There are a few errors of fact: for example, in the gazetteer entry for Bristol, the Exchange in Corn Street is called the Corn Exchange, while 37 Queen Square far from being the first American consulate in Europe, is now known to be not even the first in England (p. 51). However, this booklet will prove useful for the family holiday season.

Sources for English Local History, by W.B. Stephens (Manchester University Press, 1973, £4. 00, 260 pages).

This book, by the Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Leeds, is designed to help those who are interested in the use of original source material, but who are not equipped with a knowledge of what sources exist, where they are found, or how to use them. Written and printed material from both national and local archives is included. The author looks at various sources arranged under topics which frequently attract attention: population; local government; poor relief, charities; prices and wages; industry, trade and communications; agriculture; education; and religion. The book concludes with a selection of original documents illustrating the text. The book is perhaps a little expensive for some, but can be recommended as an invaluable reference work for any serious investigator. When a dead-end is reached in a local inquiry and the question is asked, "Where could I find out more?", this would be a good book for which to reach.

Book Reviews

Books, histories and pamphlets produced by member Societies can be forwarded to the Editor for possible review. If members have found any book particularly useful they may wish to tell the Editor about it, so that their suggestions could be passed on to other interested readers.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- July 14 Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society - Annual General Meeting at Gloucester.
- July 26 Bristol City Museum - "Wetlands and Wildlife" - an exhibition, until August 30th.
- August 7 Bristol City Museum - "Bristol and America: the Sharples and the Vanderhorsts" - exhibition by Bristol Record Office until September 18.
- August 15 Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society - "The Oakwood Tramroad" - a geological tour of coal and iron sites in the Forest of Dean. Meet at the Fountain, Parkend at 10.30 a.m. with helmets, boots and torches. Inquire beforehand at Bob Martin, Bristol 563194
- August 24 Bristol Industrial Archaeological Society - "Claverton Pumping Station" a visit to view the restored water-wheel and beam pumping engine. Meet from 7.30 p.m. at the pumping station. Inquire beforehand at Bob Martin, Bristol 563194.
- August 26 Bristol City Museum - "Examination of a Church Fabric and Church Yard:" by David Dawson - 1.00 p.m. - 1.45 p.m. at St. Nicholas Church Museum, St. Nicholas Street, Bristol.
- September 2 Bristol City Museum - "Examination of a Church Fabric and Church Yard: 2" by David Dawson - 1.00 p.m. - 1.45 p.m. at St. Nicholas Church Museum as above.
- September 6 Exhibition of local parish maps drawn by Mr. H.A. Lane, at Filton Library, Ends September 25.
- September 9 Bristol City Museum - "Church Building Stones" by Andrew Mathieson - 1.00 p.m. - 1.45 p.m. at St. Nicholas Church Museum as above.
- September 16 Bristol City Museum - "17th and 18th Century Church Furnishings" by Karin Walton - 1.00 p.m. - 1.45 p.m. at St. Nicholas Church Museum as above.
- September 18 Avon Local History Association - 1st Local History Conference at Newton Park, near Bath.
- September 23 Bristol City Museum - "Church Plate and the Reformation" by Cleo Witt - 1.00 p.m. - 1.45 p.m. at St. Nicholas Church Museum as above.
- September 30 Bristol City Museum - "Victorian Churches and their Furnishings" by Clare Crick - 1.00 p.m. - 1.45 p.m. at St. Nicholas Church Museum as above.

1ST AVON LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE

Saturday 18th September 1976

PROVISIONAL VENUE: NEWTON PARK COLLEGE, NEAR BATH

PROGRAMME

- 10.30.a.m. Coffee
- 11.00.a.m. Opening Address
- 11.30.a.m. Talk: "THE LANGTONS OF NEWTON PARK"
by Mr. G. Davis
- 12.30.p.m. QUESTIONS
LUNCH (not provided). A Bar will be available.
- 2.00.p.m. TOURS of Newton Park sites.
Society exhibitions open
- 3.30.p.m. TEA
- 4.00.p.m. BRAINS TRUST (With an invited panel)

I (Name) of Society
will/will not* be attending the Conference. Accompanying me will
be persons.
Name
Address
..... Tel. No:

BUSES

The 339 Bus leaves the Bus Station, Bristol, starting at 9.05.a.m.
and then every 15 minutes.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS Contd....

- October 2 Avon Archaeological Society - Castle Farm Folk Museum
a visit to the Museum and a tour of Marshfield, a
performance by the Marshfield Mummers, members' papers
and a guest speaker. Details forthcoming from the Avon
Archaeological Council, c/o Bristol City Museum, Queens
Road, Bristol. 8.
- October 18 Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society -
"Archaeology in 1984 by Peter Fowler - 7.30.p.m. at
St. Nicholas Church Museum as above.
- November 1 Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society -
"An hour of Bristol and Gloucestershire Music" by
Mr. F. Byard, followed by a social meeting and
refreshments - 7.30.p.m. at St. Nicholas Church
Museum as above.

HAS YOUR SOCIETY AFFILIATED TO
THE AVON LOCAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION?

Name of Society

Address

Number of Members Affiliation Fee.....

Secretary's Name

(Up to 50 Members £2. 00.)
(Over 50 Members £5. 00.)

LOCAL HISTORY ESSAY COMPETITION

The Local History Association is offering prizes of £10, £5 and £3, for first, second and third places for the best studies of local history or historical geography by Avon children. This has already been circulated to Schools but for those children that missed it the details are as follows:-

Class A. for competition by an individual or by not more than two individuals working together.

Class B. for competition by a group of three or any larger number of individuals.

1. Those competing must be resident in the County of Avon and/or pupils of any school in the County, maintained or independent, Primary, Secondary, Comprehensive or Grammar. Under the age of 18 on 1st October, 1976.
2. The subject chosen should deal with some historical subject, or a subject in historical geography, in relation to a particular locality within the County (not necessarily the home district of the competitor). A small and strictly localised study is preferred to a general one. The use of original source materials, not necessarily documents, is important and will be taken into account by the judges - it is not enough simply to extract or condense text books or guide books, though short quotations are permissible where appropriate.
3. The work may with advantage be illustrated by drawings, photographs, maps or diagrams, but it must consist primarily of a written account of the subject chosen. The essay should be written on A4 size paper, and illustrations etc. should not exceed that size. Pages should be numbered, including illustrations, etc. if separate, and the essay should be enclosed in a cardboard pocket folder.
4. Each entry must be accompanied by a statement stating the sources of information used and the methods employed in collecting material.
5. The work must be sent by 15th October, 1976, to the Secretary, Avon Local History Association, 2, Berkeley Square, Clifton, Bristol BSB 1HL. No previous announcement of the chosen subject is necessary. The name of the school as well as of the competitor should be clearly stated on each entry. Please state age of each competitor.

NOTE

Suggestions as to subjects and material may be found in such works as 'Local History in England' by W.G. Hoskins, (Publisher, Longmans Green) 'Exploring Villages' by J. Finberg (Publisher, Routledge and Kegan Paul). In particular 'Local Sources for the Young Historian' R.W. Dunning (Publisher, Muller) is recommended.

Much source material is available in the County Records Office, Shire Hall, Gloucester, Bristol Record Office, Council House, College Green, Bristol and the County Record Office, Ubridge Road, Taunton, where the staff will be glad to assist pupils in their research. There is also a large collection of books on Avon in The Central Library, Deanery Road, Bristol, and a great deal of material in local museums.