

MINCHINHAMPTON LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

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MINCHINHAMPTON LOCAL HISTORY GROUP COMMITTEE 1998/99

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PROGRAMME OF PAST EVENTS

1998	Nov.	A.G.M. & "Local Radio" - Mr. Ivor Ward-Davies
1999	Jan.	"Dean Heritage Museum" - Mr. David Evans
	Feb.	"Minchinhampton Miscellany" - Members
	March	"Archaeology in the Minchinhampton Area" - Mr. Toby Catchpole
	May	"The Air Transport Auxiliaries - Aston Down and Elsewhere" - Mr. Eric Viles
	July	Guided Walk Around Brimscombe - Mr. Stan Dyer and Mr. Jim Doel
	Sept.	"Whiteway Colony" - Mrs. Joy Thacker
	Nov.	A.G.M. & "Minchinhampton in old Photographs" - Mr. Mike Mills

PERSECUTION OF QUAKERS IN MINCHINHAMPTON

from notes by the Late Cyril Turk

In the 17th and 18th centuries, Quakers were always liable to be attacked. Here is an incident from 1653.

In that year Thomas Goodyear of Nailsworth was drawn to go “to Hampton and declare the Truth there”. But he found the people “exceedingly rude” especially Samuel Butt, a shopkeeper. (There were two Samuel Butts in Minchinhampton at that time. One had a cottage in West End, the other one in Parsonage Court. Only the fortunate survival of a deed to one of these cottages will distinguish between them) Samuel Butt “stirred up” the rude people of Hampton so that the Friends were “greatly abused, stocked, stoned and imprisoned”. Butt also broke up meetings in Nailsworth and continued to do so for several years. “Yet” says the writer of this account, which was published in 1707 “Truth got round and prevailed”. The wicked man “blasted” and “came to little and they also that joyed with him”.

The antipathy towards Quakers on the Government side after 1660 was due to the fear that they might encourage anti-monarchical sentiments, and the Quaker Act put severe restrictions on their meetings; to be caught for a third time at a meeting could result in transportation. These conditions, however, were eased by the Act of Indulgence in 1672.

For the ordinary people of a village or town the Quakers were a group set apart by their dress, their habits and their obstinacy - or determination - in opposing rites or ceremonies of organised religion and social customs. Hence, as usual people ganged up against the strangers.

This can be seen in the story of Samuel Clift, a clothier of Avening. He came to Minchinhampton one day in 1657 and, whether from curiosity or with time to kill, went into the “steeple house” where Samuel Heiron was preaching. He stood quietly among the people about an hour - in

that age it was often over an hour before the preacher reached “seventhly and lastly”. But at last Samuel Heiron began a prayer, when, noting Samuel Clift still covered, ordered him to be removed. The constable thereupon took matters into his own hands, and, though without a warrant, evicted him from the church and set him in the stocks, only to come back a little later and recognising the illegality of putting him in the stocks, freed him and asked him not to make any trouble.

All should have ended there. But some five weeks later, Samuel Clift was taken up by a warrant before a J.P. who brought up the Hampton affair and asked “whether he heard Mr. Heiron praying or preaching while he was there”. To which Clift’s answer was “he did that thou mayest call preaching”. The next question was whether he kept his hat on, to which he replied “I bought my hat to wear” whereat the Justice, enraged, struck him three blows and ordered his ????? to Gloucester Goal. The end for Samuel Clift was much better than it would have been three years later, when Quakers were in ill-repute, for, on it being proved that he did neither “molest or interrupt” Samuel Heiron, he was acquitted.

Another outrage against Quakers occurred in 1741. Round about 10 o’clock one evening in June that year Mr. Connock, a Quaker, arrived in Hampton to find a group of Friends waiting for him. He held a short meeting and arranged for a further full meeting on the following day. Accordingly at 9 o’clock the next morning he was in Mr. Adams’ house (I think this was in Well Hill. Several houses at this time were licenced for non-conformist worship, notably Thomas King’s in West End, Edward Danford’s in Well Hill and Dan Fowler’s. In 1746 the Quakers asked for the Market House to be licenced).

There was a large congregation awaiting him and the meeting began, but “the devilled on his soldiers” who beat drums in the street outside the house. When this no effect in preventing the people “from hearing”, the gang then exploded gunpowder so that “the poor folk were startled” but “soon waxed bolder few moved”. The “devil’s soldiers” then got an engine and sprayed the meeting “with stinking water” mixed with

“hogswash and grounds from a barrel” Mr. Connock reported the incident in a letter to Mr. Lewis, wrote “I never saw so great a Power of God” as the congregation stayed in silent prayer and “scarcely looked at their persecutors” and even squibs thrown among them “caused no confusion”. When the water supply ran out after about an hour and a half Mr. Connock spoke to the rabble about “the Terrors of the Lord and the Judgement to come” Some laughed and threw wet dust until they “were suffered no further by the Lord” and the meeting ended. Mr. Connock ended his letter “since I came from Hampton I hear one of the chief men of the town was the head of the persecutors! Though he would not be seen in it, yet lent the blind fools the engine”. Eighteenth century Minchinhampton was not unfamiliar with outrage and affray.

This article is taken from the account in the records of the Society of Friends, kept in the Gloucestershire Record Office.

LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION

During this year the collection has moved to a new location within the Library Building. It can now be found in the alcove off the Parish Office. New shelves have been installed, and thanks to a grant from the Parish Council proper storage files and boxes have been purchased for many of the items.

There is not space to list all the recent acquisitions but some major donations have included:

Set of 1:2500 maps of the Parish (Library donation)

Photographs of the U.S. Army camp on the Park in 1944 (Phil Beradelli)

Books on the Cotswolds (Jane Courtis)

Leaflets on Gloucestershire, conservation areas and postcards (Maggie Colwell)

Collection of work by Cyril Turk, including transcripts of Manor Rolls, Customals, Church Terriers, Ministers Accounts, and written histories of Box and Minchinhampton (Elizabeth Law - Cyril's daughter)

Indexed Transcript of Minchinhampton 1891 census (Hugh Kearsy)

Richard MONK - A PIONEER - Reminiscences Of The Early Days

This is an extract from the New Zealand CANTERBURY TIMES, March 4, 1914 contributed by Roger Kelly who is a descendant of Richard Monk. It describes the exploits of a Minchinhampton boy who left the town and finished up in New Zealand. The latter part of this article has been omitted due to its length, but the full extract can be seen in the Local History Collection.

New Zealand In The Fifties

Between the range of hills which fringes the coast towards Kaikoura and the sea there is a strip of level country, sometimes a mile or two wide, sometimes broken into sections by a long spur reaching right to the beach. On either side of the Conway River at its mouth there is a stretch of good level land, and on the southern side of the river there is a small settlement mentioned in few maps but known in official productions such as the *Telephone Directory & Post Office Guide* as Conway Flat. To reach the settlement the visitor must go to the terminus of the main trunk line, Parnassus, and then proceed by coach to the Fingerpost, which overlooks the last ford of the Conway River. There he alights, and by buggy proceeds down the riverbed a mile or two, fording the river many times, and at last reaches the group of houses that comprise the settlement. When the river is in flood the visitor waits, days probably, until it goes down, for there is no entrance to Conway Flat, if one excepts a sheep track or two over the ranges, except by way of the river.

For nearly half a century Mr Richard Monk has lived at Conway Flat and although 85 years of age he has no doubt at all that he will live there for many years to come - after a career full of incident and adventure the old pioneer is bold and hearty. His hair and beard are quite white, and a heavy stick is requisitioned when he walks - life in the early days was conducive to rheumatism - but his eye is bright and keen, and he takes a great interest in many things. Recently a *Lyttleton Times* reporter visited Mr Monk at his home and, sitting on his verandah, the patriarch of the settlement recounted many of his experiences.

Boyhood Days

I was born in Minchinhampton Gloucester, "Mr Monk said. "My father was a farrier, who at one time held the appointment of farrier to King George III at Hampton Court, He was a strange man, and thought more of having his sign painted afresh every year than he did of anything else, even his family. I left school when 12 years of age, and one of my first jobs was to take three horses to a fair at a town nearby. I started off in the early morning and on the way I saw a sight I shall never forget. Many a time I've laughed about it. The rector had a finishing school for young gentlemen, and my word they were proper rascals. That morning, as I passed along, I saw that they had got a bull tied to a tree in a paddock. The farmer had deliberately put the bull there to prevent people going through his fields. Well, they had this bull tied to a tree. Some of the boys were up the tree, but two of them were on the ground. Then, like a flash the two disappeared, the bull was let go and I saw what was up. They had tied a live cat to the bull's tail. That bull went through three live hedges and disappeared, pussy hanging on firmly, and later on he was found dead. When the culprits found out I knew what had happened they kept me well supplied with pocket money.

"An effort to make me a baker failed badly, chiefly owing to an over-fondness for pastry, I think, so I was apprenticed to a butcher. I might have got along alright but one day I heard the boss threatening to deal violently with me when he got me, and so, without any hesitation I set out to walk to London, 104 miles away. My cash amounted to 2s 10d, and I was then 15 years of age."

The Navy In 1844

"When I got to London Town I kept asking for the Queen's Head, Tower Hill, for I had heard that it was a sort of recruiting place for the Navy. Here I met a quartermaster, a big burly fellow, and asked him how I should go about getting into the Navy. He said that boys only got about 12s 6d or 12s 9d a month, but added that as I was a big chap, I could safely tell the captain that I was nineteen years old. Then he took me upstairs to the captain. He was sitting at a round table, and on it I

remember was some blue paper, some red tape and a decanter of rum. The old man was a link to the very distant past and he had a terrible gruff voice.

"What do you want?" he growled, and I said, "To go in a man-o'-war sir." "Some young, runaway apprentice or other," he snapped out, and I owned up that he was right. Well, I passed the doctor, who had a room downstairs, and the captain ordered the quartermaster to take me to the receiving ship, *Perseus*, lying in the Thames off the Tower. When I got to the hotel I only had 2d. I spent that on something to eat, thus joining the Navy absolutely penniless. I didn't like the look of things aboard the *Perseus* at all, and as for the hammocks, I couldn't get into them until a fellow showed me how. The rations were none too good. We got 1lb of biscuits and a pint of cocoa for breakfast; a pint of soup, 1lb of meat, a few vegetables and ½ pint of grog for dinner, with a pannikin of tea, and some grog and what biscuits we had saved from breakfast for tea. Then we went to Sheerness to the hulk *Minataur* to wait until the *Vanguard* had fitted out of Plymouth."

An Early Steam Squadron

"All the vessels of the line were sailers in those days and the real wooden walls of old England right enough. I boarded the *Vanguard* at Plymouth in 1844, and the next year we cruised in the Bay of Biscay. There were eight steamships when we started, seven paddle boats and one screw. I think it was the first steam squadron in the Navy. Anyhow it was an experiment. The names of the paddle boats were the *Terrible*, *Retribution*, *Siden*, *Odean*, *Bulldog*, *Gladiator* and *Polyphemus*, and there was the *Battler*, a barque rigged screw driven ship. After an 8 week cruise the *Battler* was the only one of the lot with us, the others having developed engine troubles and put into the nearest ports.

"For the most of my time I served in the Mediterranean. They were rough days. Nearly every week, men were flogged and on one occasion that I know of a man was hung from the yardarm. Part of the outfit of our ship would make sailors laugh nowadays. All round the orlop deck below the water line were hung shot plugs. These were made of wood,

and when the boat went into action the carpenters had to walk round and round, so that if a shot came through they could grab a plug, cover it with oakum and grease, and drive it into the hole with a maul."

A Whaling Cruise

"Early in 1849 I was paid off and in the same year I shipped aboard the whaler *Norwhal* for a cruise in the south seas. She was a wooden barque of about 400 tons and was commanded by Captain Baker. We carried six guns for our protection. Early in 1850 we arrived in the Bay of Islands. There must have been 18 or 20 whalers in at the time. I remember going aboard the American ship, *Swift*, hailing from New Bedford, and the *John Franklin*, which was a full ship. We had 760 barrels of oil. In those days Kororareka consisted of two hotels, two stores, and a few shanties. The 65th Regiment was camped somewhere in the neighbourhood, if I remember right, and there were thousands of Maoris.

"I left the *Norwhal* at the Bay and shipped in a 10 ton hooker trading along the coast as far north as Awanui, near the North Cape, and six weeks later I landed in Auckland. It was only a small place. On the right hand side going up Queen Street there was a large ditch and you had to walk across a plank to get into the stores."

Work In The NZ Bush

"Well after working in Auckland for a while I went to work in the bush at a place called Muddy Creek, down the Manuka. They put me to driving bullocks and although I knew nothing about it, I had to go. I've always been mightily glad those bullocks were quiet ones. I boarded with a sawyer and his family in a slab hut. The bush was all Kauri, and some of the trees were grand, 60ft and 70ft without a branch. We hadn't been there long when the Maoris came down and stopped all operations. By good luck our hut was just off the land they claimed. The leader was dressed in proper clothes but the 40 or 50 men with him were not. They asked all sorts of questions and my mate's wife was terribly frightened. I said, "Sling the bully and give them a feed". We had plenty of wild pork, damper and taters, and the tucker soon made them our good

friends. The palings we used to cut were used to make boxes to ship potatoes in to California. In the days of the gold rush over there, NZ used to send over potatoes. Well, the darned Maoris had stopped the work, so my mate with his wife and family and myself put what we owned in a boat we had built and set out for Onehunga. There I shipped on the barque *Victory* for Wellington, getting £12 for the trip. My mate did the same, getting £8. We sold our boat and left the money to keep my mate's wife and two children."

Early Wellington

"It must have been about 1853 when I first landed in Wellington. It was a queer place and at certain spots you couldn't find room for two carts to pass between the stoves and the small embankment that ran down on to the beach. Where Lampton Quay now is, there was a sort of Maori pa. I soon got among the horses and for a while looked after a mare called Kate McCarthy owned by Brigade Major O'Connell who afterwards owned the Mount Grey run in North Canterbury."

Roger has made a little progress in tracking Richard Monk's parents: William MONK born Minchinhampton (blacksmith, supposedly onetime farrier to George III at Hampton Court) and Mary HERBERT born Prestbury (teacher). Their 3 sons were born in Minchinhampton, where the likely butcher's shop of Richard's apprenticeship stands next door to this day.

Roger found that William and Mary seem to have been married at Rowington, Warwickshire (by the Grand Union & Stratford canals) in 1825. Perhaps Mary (who'd be around 35) was teaching there at the time. William was around 47. Farriers would find plenty of work by canals no doubt also.

BRIMSCOMBE

Jim Doel

It was not until the late 18th Century that Brimscombe became significant. Its importance grew as the scattered Cottage Woollen Industry took advantage of water powered machinery in the Mills built adjacent to the River Frome.

The Stroud area was one of the foremost woollen areas in the country and coal was needed to supplement water power. As a consequence the Stroud Water Canal was constructed from the River Severn at Framilode to Wallbridge, Stroud, to carry coal via the Severn from Staffordshire and from the Forest of Dean. The Canal was completed in 1779 at a cost of some £40,000 - twice the estimated cost.

In 1789 the Thames & Severn Canal from Lechlade, via Brimscombe, to Wallbridge was completed thus linking the two great rivers. The combined length of the two canals was approximately forty miles and was of prime importance to industry and commerce.

It was at Brimscombe Basin, which measured approximately 230 yds x 80 yds that the Headquarters and Warehouse of the Thames and Severn Canal Co. were built and the Port developed. In addition to the Warehouse, the Company Offices, the Managers House, Stables, a Transit Shed and a Weighbridge were also constructed. Where necessary goods were transferred here between Severn Trows and Thames Barges as the width of the locks in the two canals differed. Those in the Stroud Water were 15 feet to take the Trows whilst those in the Thames section were 12 feet to accommodate the Thames Barges. The transfer of cargo at the Port greatly increased the revenue of the Company.

The Port, with an island in the middle on which coal was stored to prevent pilferage, could hold up to 100 vessels. The important adjacent

Salt House still remains, as do the nearby three Inns, namely the Port Inn, the Nelson Inn and the Ship Inn, but only the latter continues in business.

The Canal with adjacent Mills in which a variety of goods were produced brought years of prosperity. For example in 1889 M/s P.C. Evans & Co. had 124 looms in use at Brimscombe Mill and from 1878 - 1933 M/s Edwin Clark & Co, followed by Abdela and Mitchell Ltd built Boats at the site now occupied by Air Plants Ltd. Many of these boats were used world wide. However Canal traffic diminished as Road and Rail links developed. The A419 road was built in 1815 replacing the old hilltop mule road from Thrupp to Chalford and in 1845 the Paddington to Gloucester and Cheltenham rail line (GWR) was routed through the valley at Brimscombe.

Brimscombe Station with busy sidings at the eastern end of the Parish and a Railway Halt unique with platforms on opposite sides of Brimscombe Hill were in use up to 1964 when they were axed by Dr. Beeching.

The Canal was abandoned in 1933 but was little used much before this date. In 1905 the Headquarters building of the Thames and Severn Co. at the Port were bought by Glos. County Council and used as a Polytechnic. From 1944-1962 it was used as a Secondary Modern School until pupils were transferred to a new school at Eastcombe. In 1964 the buildings were demolished by Bensons Ltd, the Basin was filled in and a large factory built there. During recent years many of the old Mills have been regenerated by a variety of smaller Companies and the Port area is active again.

Holy Trinity Church built in 1839 near the Pike, by David Ricardo of Gatcombe Park together with the Methodist Church built in 1804, serve the Spiritual needs of the Parish. A Baptist Mission Chapel built in 1870

near Brimscombe Corner closed in 1980 and is now used commercially.

The Village Church School built in 1840 was closed in 1996 when it was superseded by a new Primary School opposite the Methodist Church.

In their turn the River Frome, the Canal and Port, the Railway and the A419 have all boosted the significance of Brimscombe.

JOHN CROOME “Threw himself down a well”

On the Internet, there is a system known as “Email lists” where Family Historians can ask questions and exchange information about Family History. On the Gloucestershire List, a Gil Croome heard that we have a “Village Archive” and was asking about her Great great grandfather John CROOM .

In 29 June 1844, the Coroner in Minchinhampton, John G. Ball, found that John CROOM, age 60, labourer "threw himself in a well and was killed" on 12 June 1844 in the Parish of Minchinhampton.

His widow was Eleanor (nee Freeman, widow of Samuel Elliotts) and there was only one living child, Isaac (aged 3). They later moved across the valley

to Chalford where Isaac married Emily Whiting and among their many children Gil's grandfather was born.

In 1851 the widow and child were living at Littleworth. If anybody knows of a report of the incident, I would like to know to be able to pass it on.

CHANGING GARDEN DESIGN – GLIMPSES FROM MINCHINHAMPTON

Diana Wall

For the first gardens in England we are indebted to the Romans, when villas like those at Woodchester and Chedworth were laid out with ornamental courtyards. Our climate, much more severe than that of the Mediterranean lands, probably meant that they were far simpler than their European counterparts, but the Corinium Museum has an exhibit of some of the plants grown. After the Romans withdrew, it is likely that few gardens, as we understand the term, were in existence – all available land was cultivated for food. There were, however, plots in monasteries where herbs and medicinal plants were grown – alongside roses, lilies, violets and some other favourite flowers. At Tewkesbury Abbey an attempt is being made to re-create one of these plots.

From the sixteenth century the garden or pleasure ground became more important. There were small enclosures with knot-like patterns, orchards and alleys, arbours and summerhouses. The Elizabethan age took these designs further, exotic plants were introduced from the Near East and the New World, and water was introduced as a garden feature. In the late C17th and early C18th design was influenced by the French, in the form of terraces, parterres and avenues of trees, and the Dutch in the form of canals, topiary and orangeries.

In Minchinhampton we have only glimpses of the evolution of garden design; written or drawn descriptions which evoke particular periods, or tantalising remnants which suggest forms long-vanished. By their very nature even large gardens are constantly changing, and the student has to put together a fragmentary jigsaw in an attempt to interpret the landscape.

The first glimpse comes from the Sheppard Manor House, which stood close to the church until the early C19th. Three writers indicate the nature of the surroundings of this house. Bigland¹, writing in 1791 says that “*The large mansion near the Church ... was occupied by the firmarius or receiver of Abbey rents*” and that this was the house that Philip Sheppard made his residence in the mid C17th. Atkyns² describes the house and “*a spacious grove of high trees in a park adjoining to it, which is seen at a great distance.*” Abel Wantner in about 1710 writes “*Just behind Squire Sheppard’s most pleasant habitation groweth one of the finest groves of pine-like ash and beechen trees in all ye County; County do I say, nay, in all ye Kingdom.*” All of these writers are commenting on the park, (now Great Park) which lay to the north of the house and had been demense land belonging to the Lord of the Manor.

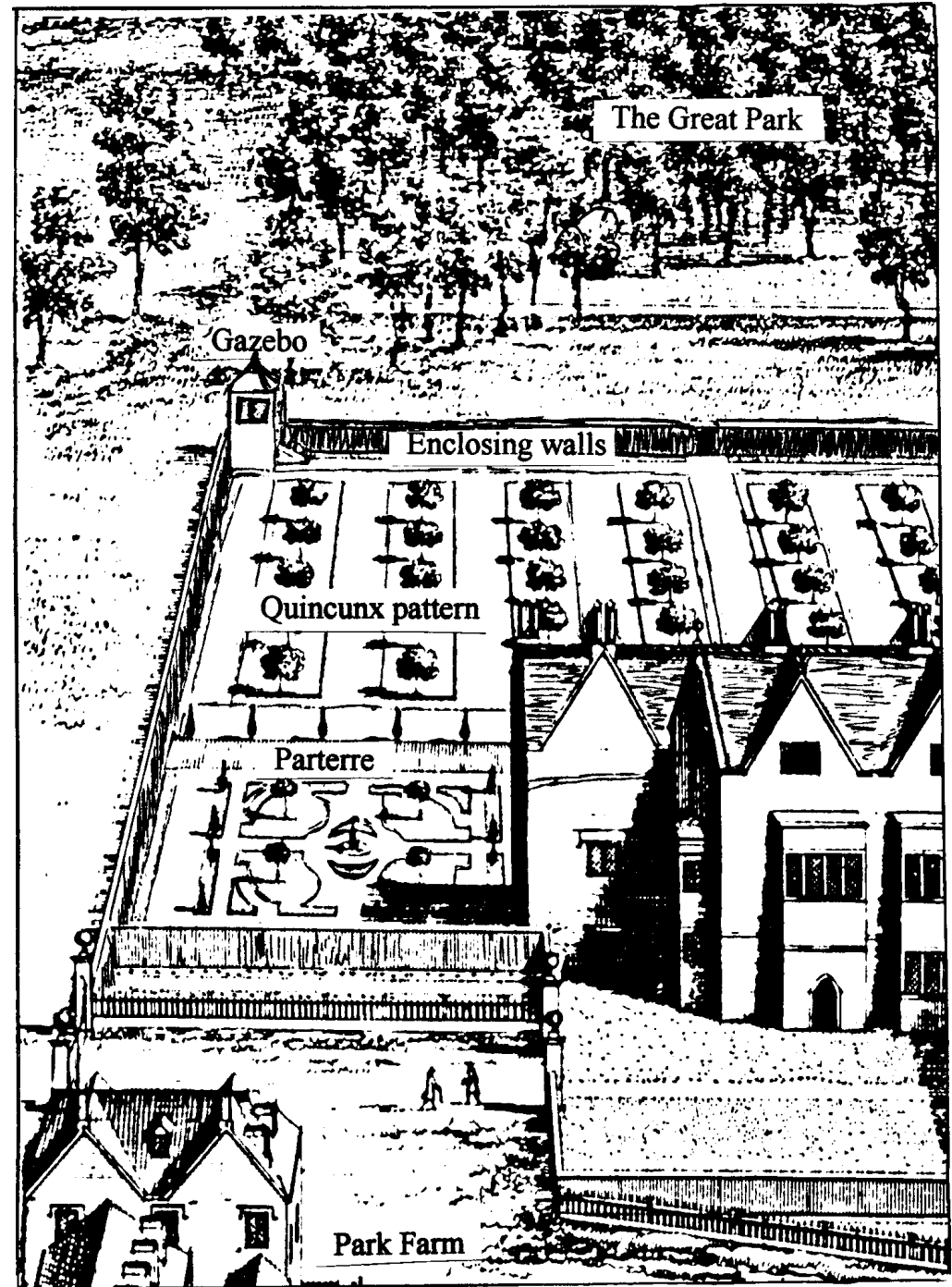
The park was being enclosed in the C12th by Simon of Felsted, and the men of Hampton complained of damage in making the enclosure³. The Victoria County History states that it was enclosed before 1176. The purpose of the park was to provide wood and meat (through hunting) and by the time the Sheppard family gained control, although these were still important, other walled pleasure grounds were constructed close to the house.

The main evidence for the appearance of these pleasure grounds comes from an engraving by Kip dated 1712, one of a series of illustrations which appeared in the history of Gloucestershire written by Atkyns. Other gardens of the area have more detailed inventories, or further

¹ Ralph Bigland “Historical, Monumental and Genealogical Collections relative to the County of Gloucester” 1791

² Robert Atkyns “The Ancient and Present State of Gloucestershire” 1712

³ Cyril Turk “The Manor of Hampton in the C12th and C13th” 1988



descriptions, and comparison suggests that he produced a fairly accurate representation of the scene.

This engraving shows a walled pleasure ground almost surrounding the house. In the northern corners are two summerhouses or gazebos, with steps for access. Gardens of the C16th and C17th were designed to be viewed from above, so that the intricate patterns could be best appreciated. Thus the upper floors of the gazebos would contain chairs and small tables, but if the weather were inclement, the owners could survey their gardens from the principal rooms of the house, on the first floor. Large mansions would have a long gallery overlooking the terraces, although there is no evidence to suggest one at Minchinhampton Manor House. The gazebos overlooked a formal tree garden, in a quincunx pattern where the trees form lines in whichever direction they are viewed. Evidence from other properties suggests they were probably fruit trees, with varieties of medlar, quince, mulberry and cherry being grown at the time.

To both the east and the west of the house Kip has drawn formal parterres. These terrace gardens would include geometric beds separated by gravel and planted ornamentally. At the centre of each the engraving shows what could be a fountain, and topiary trees in each bed. The edges of the parterres are outlined by conical trees and a path which appears to run across the north front of the house but ends 'blind' at the outer wall. The main approach to the house is via the farmyard to the south (Park Farm) between gatepiers surmounted by stone balls, and across a gravel, stone or grassed courtyard. Beyond the walled pleasure grounds lies the park, with "*plantations of beechwood, particularly large and fine*"⁴

Fashions fluctuate, sometimes violently, and both architecture and garden design underwent major changes in the C18th. Classical themes

⁴ Samuel Rudder "A New History of Gloucestershire" 1779

were adopted in house building but in the garden there was a move towards a landscape mirroring nature as far as possible. The poet Alexander Pope was a vociferous critic of formal gardens, and influenced Lord Bathurst in the layout of Cirencester Park. It was a time of greater prosperity, as the agricultural revolution brought higher profits to larger landowners. At Badminton Lancelot "Capability" Brown advocated bringing lawns right up to the front of the mansion, and planting trees in a parkland setting leading to a lake. Humphry Repton, working at Dyrham a few miles to the south, was in favour of some form of flowerbed or terrace close to the house, before the more natural landscape was seen. Like many of his contemporaries Edward Sheppard chose to build a new house for his family at Gatcombe Park in 1771–1774, preferring the rural location to that of his old property in the centre of Minchinhampton, and enhancing the new with landscaped grounds.

No evidence has so far been found as to the name of the designer of Gatcombe Park grounds. Gatcombe Woods are of ancient origin and are mentioned in the Domesday Book, and these, with the natural shape of the land, set the scene for the garden design. In the early C19th Brewer⁵ wrote that Gatcombe "*is placed on the ascent of a narrow valley, bounded by high beech wood, with intermingled oak and ash, on the one side whilst the rising ground in the opposite direction, is decorated with clumps and other efforts of the landscape gardener. The house looks down on a spacious and fine lawn, which terminates in waters, expanded by the hand of art to an ornamental breadth of space. The present elegant house is a well-proportioned and spacious mansion, handsome on the exterior and internally well designed and arranged*".

⁵ J.N. Brewer "Delineations of Gloucestershire" 1827

An engraving dated 1825 shows a small area in front of the house containing a lawn, a few shrubs and gravel paths. Beyond a small decorative fence of chains the park falls away to the south; here the trees have been pruned to look as though naturally grazed by animals and a few sheep enliven the scene.



ENGRAVING OF GATCOMBE PARK

Contemporary maps show other features, which were added for interest: the pyramid folly and the icehouse, both of which can be seen today. The former was purely decorative, but the icehouse was a necessary feature for the preservation of food in the days before electrical refrigeration. A curving conservatory is another prominent feature of the view, and was possibly added at the same time as the extensions of David Ricardo c1820. George Basevi, who was also responsible for the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, designed these. The glasshouses could provide fruit and flowers for the house, as well as being a source of interest to visitors in inclement weather.

The house was approached by a curving drive, past a lodge on the Tetbury road. All of the grounds were shown to guests of the Sheppards and later the Ricardos, and maps show traces of winding paths through the woods. Even Longfords Lake (or Gatcombe Water), created to power the waterwheels driving machinery at Longfords Mill, was enhanced with a boathouse and made to look part of the natural scene.

During the C19th taste in gardens was to undergo a further period of change, reverting to the use of formal elements, further introductions of flowers and use of plants from the Southern Hemisphere. The remains of these can also be seen in Minchinhampton, and the greater variety of contemporary sources should provide greater detail than earlier gardens. For the moment it is hoped that the two examples cited above provide glimpses of changing garden design in the C17th and C18th.