

MINCHINHAMPTON LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

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2011

List of Contents:

Minchinhampton Local History Group Committee	2
Programme of Past Meetings	2
Brian Keen - An Appreciation	3
A "Gatcombe" marriage 100 years ago	5
1597: Famine hits Minchinhampton	6
Land Survey 1909 (Lloyd George Act)	12

MINCHINHAMPTON LOCAL HISTORY GROUP COMMITTEE 2010/2011

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PROGRAMME OF PAST MEETINGS

2009	November	A.G.M. and “Magic Lantern Show” - Patrick Furley
2010	January	“The Home Guard in South Gloucestershire” - Peter Grace
	February	“History of a House” - Hugh Kearsey
	March	“Fore and Aft - The Story of the Purton Ship’s Graveyard” - Paul Barnett
	May	“Edward Jenner in Perspective” - Les Mitchell
	June	Wallbridge Walk with Ian Mackintosh
	September	“Life in Coronation Year - The World of Fortnum and Mason’s” – Gill Wimperis
	October	“Firemarks” – Nick Hurst
	November	A.G.M. and “Memories of Gloucestershire” – John Greene

Brian Keen – An Appreciation

In July a great many local people were saddened to hear of the sudden death of Brian Keen. Since coming to Amberley in the late 1940s he had become immersed in the local area, maintaining his love of the Gloucestershire countryside even when his professional life in the army took him many miles away. Retirement was not a word that sat easily with Brian, and one of his many interests over the past thirty years was local and family history.



In April 1983 a meeting was held to gauge the interest in setting up a local history group in Minchinhampton. Brian was one of the handful of founder members still “on the books” in 2011. Like many others at that meeting, he was already a member of the Minchinhampton Society, and, alongside the first Local History Group chairman, Cyril Turk, had already been instrumental in writing and publishing the definitive history of Minchinhampton Market House. He was always a willing volunteer, whether it was overseeing the door at Cecily Court for the regular meetings, helping to set up and dismantle the local history exhibitions, or setting out chairs for the A.G.M. in the Market House. In 1997 Brian was elected a committee member, and continued as such until his untimely death.

Brian spent many years researching the history of his home, White Lion House in the Market Square, which led him to become interested in the pubs and inns of Minchinhampton, contributing articles on this topic to the Country Fayre magazines. He was meticulous in transcribing deeds and other documents. On more than one occasion his research was displayed at a local history exhibition, and it is hoped that in the future his notes might form the basis of an article for this publication.

His search for his family roots led him to Measham, on the border of Leicestershire and Staffordshire, and when a small museum was opened in the former railway station, Brian contributed to its collections; his name is inscribed inside the door as a benefactor. He would often discuss with others the small finds here in Minchinhampton – a bottle dug up in the garden, a coin found in a wall, a piece of pottery in his field. It is these small items, as much

as the research into house history or his published articles that made Brian the consummate “local historian”. He will be greatly missed.

Diana Wall
Chairman, Local History Group

A “Gatcombe” Marriage 100 years ago

100 years ago another Gatcombe daughter was married, at that time in our church! From the Church Magazine May 1911:

Marriage of Miss Ricardo

Minchinhampton was the scene on Thursday, April 20th, of an event which has caused much interest in this Parish; the Wedding of Miss Marjorie Adela Ricardo, eldest daughter of Major and Mrs. Ricardo of Gatcombe to Captain James Miller Gibson Watt of Doldowlod, Radnorshire. There was more than the ordinary interest in “a grand Wedding”, as the Bride's family have lived at Gatcombe for nearly a century, and have won the respect and affection of the people of Minchinhampton; and although many of its present inhabitants can recall the festivities held in connection with the Weddings of her Father and Grandfather, we do not think anyone can remember the last Wedding which took place from Gatcombe, that of her great great Aunt, Mrs. Austin, in our old Church.

The Town was-gaily decorated. with flags, and crowds assembled to watch the Motor Cars arrive! The path from the Church gate to the West door was covered with an awning , and many of the villagers from Avening, as well as Hampton, who had known “Miss Marjorie” from her childhood, waited long to see her pass up into the Church, which was prettily decorated with flowers.

Punctually at 2.30 p.m., the Bride and her father arrived, and preceded by the Choir and Clergy, walked slowly up to the Chancel steps, where the Bridegroom awaited them, attended by Mr. Edward Faunce de Laune as “best man” " The Bride was followed by eight Bridesmaids, Misses Stella and Rosalind Ricardo(sisters), Lady Ursula Cairns, Misses Adela Monins and Winifred Cobbold (cousins), and the Misses Evelyn, Hanbury, Eckstein, and two Pages, Masters Gerald Thompson and Francis Lowsley-Williams.

As the procession advanced up the Church the Hymn "O God our help in ages past" was sung. The Service was taken by the Revd. Edward Dupuis, Rector of Alphington, near Exeter, who was the Bride's great Uncle, and who had performed the same office for her parents. He was assisted by the Rev. J. Evans, Vicar of Llanwethwl, who gave the Address, and by the Rev. J. F. O. Lewis, curate of Minchinhampton .

The Rector, we regret to say, was unavoidably absent through illness.

Whilst the Register was being signed, the hymn, "O perfect love", was sung, and the Bride and Bridegroom left the Church to the strains of Mendelssohn's "Wedding March".

Gatcombe was soon reached by a long procession of Motor Cars, and there Major and Mrs. Ricardo entertained a large party of over 200 guests, till a little before 6 p.m., when Mr. and Mrs. Gibson Watt left for London en route for Paris and Venice.

The presents, which are too numerous to mention, filled a room. The Bridegroom's gift to the Bride was a diamond tiara with other jewels, and the Bride's to the Bridegroom, a fur coat. Major Ricardo -- Leis field glasses; Mrs. Ricardo -- Ghent lace veil; Servants at Gatcombe -- silver tea-caddy; Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Breadmore -- silver tea knives; Mr. Arthur Breadmore -silver pen-holder. Several of the Tradespeople of Minchinhampton joined in the presentation of a silver fruit-basket; Mrs. Stayt, Miss Webb, and Miss Hamlet -- silk umbrella with silver handle; Miss Gertrude and Miss Katherine Ricardo -- silver inkstand; Mrs. Simmonds, Mr. and Mrs. R. and Mr. and Mrs. F. Simmonds -- silver candlesticks; Miss Stella and Miss Rosalind Ricardo -- long gold chain; Mr. and Mrs. G. Harris -- silver and glass jam-jar; but space forbids us to mention more. We can only say the valuable and useful gifts were all accompanied by very hearty good wishes, in which the people of Hampton join, that Mr. and Mrs. Gibson Watt may long live to spend a happy and useful life.

On the previous Tuesday, Major and Mrs. Ricardo invited many of the Tradespeople, Tenants, and Employees, from Hampton, Avening, and Nailsworth, to Tea and to a view of the Wedding Gifts.

The Hampton Brass Band played selections of music, and a very pleasant afternoon was enjoyed by all the guests.

1597: Famine hits Minchinhampton

by Sarah Harris

Minchinhampton is an ancient settlement on the Cotswold escarpment mentioned in Domesday and gifted by William I to the convent at Caen, in Normandy. It was a centre of sheep farming and by the later Middle Ages had a growing cloth industry that was to form the basis of the town's significant wealth in the seventeenth century. In 1608 the parish already boasted 4 clothiers, 24 tuckers, 33 weavers and one dyer. There were three open fields to the north and southwest of the town. By 1597 most of the demesne land had long been given over to sheep which were also extensively grazed on the common lands at Ashton Down. The Victoria County History reports that there were approximately 500 communicants in 1551 and 134 households in 1563. By 1650 the number of families was 400, which suggests considerable growth in population. However we know that the expansion of the town and the extension of some of the village settlements within the parish took place in the 17th century, probably after 1620 when the cloth industry expanded. A significant amount of building in the town and parish dates from the mid 1600's. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the population in 1597 was closer to that of 1563 than that of 1650. Tudor and Stuart historians regard it as reasonable to assume that an average household size in 1563 was 4 people. Some households would have been larger and some smaller but based on Geoffrey King's assessments a century later, this is an acceptable average figure. This generates a total population for Minchinhampton parish of 536 people. Using the communicants figure from 1551 we might reasonably assume two adult communicants per household on average and then an additional communicant per household (over 16) to account for servants, apprentices and older children still living at home. This assumption suggests a community of 170 households, generating a population of 680 for the Parish.

Minchinhampton parish register runs from 1558 to 1835, and from 1572 to 1642 has no significantly missing or defective data. Between 1590 and 1610 the parish was served by the same incumbent, George Birch. Though he also held the living of Uley (about 8 miles distant) the register for these years is written in the same hand and in Latin, which suggests an educated person, quite possibly the priest himself, made the entries. In 1597 the parish register records a significantly higher number of burials than in any year from 1558 (the first year from which records survive) to 1722. The average annual burials for these years is 30 whereas in 1597 91 people were buried. This would appear to be a demographic crisis of quite enormous proportions.

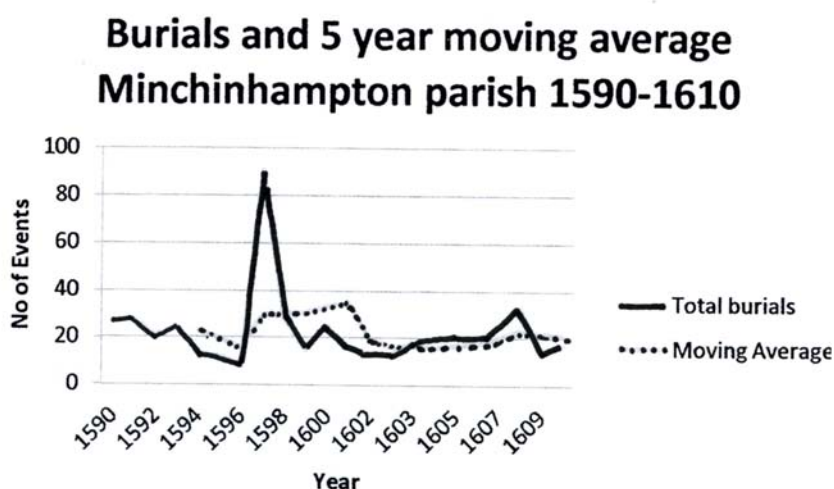
The Minchinhampton data is reliable enough for us to be able to argue that there was a significant increase in burials in 1597 and we can assume the figure of 91 burials (and others in the series) is a reasonable approximation of the number of deaths in the parish. What the death rate was in the parish is more difficult to determine and depends on the assumptions described above about the population of the parish at this time. Whichever population figure is used (536 or 680) the significance of 1597 is reinforced rather than challenged.

Year	Total burials	CDR/536	CDR/680
1594	13	24.2	19.1
1595	12	22.3	17.6
1596	8	14.9	11.7
1597	91	169.7	133.8
1598	28	52.2	41.1
1599	15	27.9	22.1

Table 1 showing Crude Death rates for Minchinhampton 1594-1599

The figures recorded in 1597 show a huge increase in the crude death rate.

Was this surge in numbers just a quirk or is it really significant? Historians use the idea of a moving average to assess whether figures are significantly different from the general trend or not. The moving average for Minchinhampton between 1590 and 1610 clearly shows the impact of the burials in 1597, though the very low figure in 1596 delays the full impact until 1601. The figure of 91 burials is close on 3 times the ‘average’ for the highest years of the moving average calculation. Something devastating happened in Minchinhampton that year.



The 1590's were a difficult time for the people of England. The first three years of the decade had brought good harvests but then disaster struck.

The rains fell incessantly all over Europe from Ireland to Silesia. The 1594 harvest was bad (average price nearly 30 per cent above the norm); 1595 was even worse (average nearly 36 per cent above the norm); and 1596 was a disaster, with an average price of 83 per cent above the norm. Even so, it was far worse in the west (Hoskins, 1964)

The famine that the rains of 1594 triggered led to a major food crisis. Rain destroyed the grain crop and grain was at this time the primary source of food for the poor. The price of peas and beans which in times of hardship were used to bulk out the grain reached unprecedented levels as well. Cheese and butter may also have been more expensive; indeed the prices of all these commodities were noted in the State Papers in April 1597¹. In a community such as Minchinhampton the implications of this were devastating. An upland community such as theirs would have depended more on the profits from their wool and their income from related cloth trades than from selling their surplus produce. Now, not only were the prices for foodstuffs rising but the income from wool and cloth trades was in decline as the widespread harvest disaster at home and abroad slashed the demand for fleeces and cloth goods. By the winter of 1595 the poor may well have been driven to eating their seed corn to stave off starvation, thus threatening the harvest in 1596 which was the worst in living memory. By harvest time 1597 prices had begun to fall, possibly from the Malthusian effect of reduced demand consequent on high mortality, though the fourth poor harvest in a row meant grain prices were still 64% above normal.

So in Minchinhampton in 1597, there was a sudden and dramatic rise in burials; approximately three times the average. A similar peak can be detected in the neighbouring parish of Bisley, also an upland parish and with a slightly larger population than Minchinhampton, with burial rates going from 25 in 1596 to 143 in 1597. In Avening, the parish co-terminous with Minchinhampton to the south, there is a rise from 12 to 20. The monthly death rates for 1597 have Minchinhampton peaking in July, Bisley in August and Avening in October.

¹ *April 23rd Note of the prices at which provisions were sold at Chester market this day; viz., wheat 38s. per ther Chester bushel, whereof 2½ bushels make a London quarter. Rye 33s. 4d. per bushel, barley 26s. 8d., beans 30s., oats 18s., malt 28s., fitches 25s., cheese 3d. per pound, butter 4d., and flesh 2d.*

3 parish comparison of burials 1597

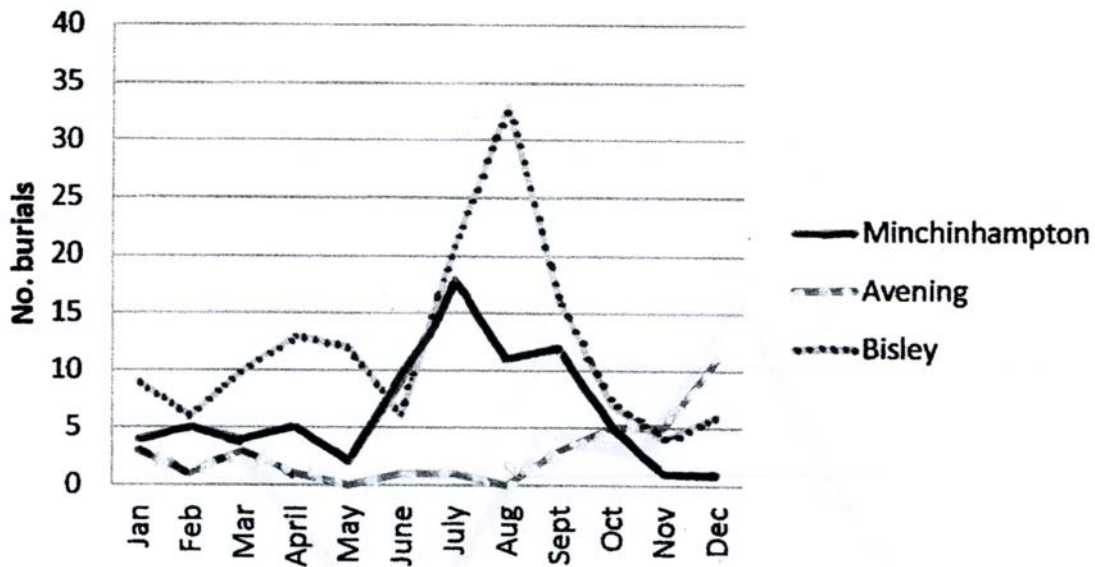


Chart 2: Harvest Year Burials, Minchinhampton Parish, 1594-1600

What caused all these deaths? They may have been caused by a contagious disease travelling from parish to parish and the most likely candidate for a summer months surge would be plague. There is, however, no evidence that plague was rife in this area at this time. In the sixteenth century plague was an urban disease and only rarely visited rural areas. Typhus might also be a popular candidate but typhus tended to be a disease of the winter months when people huddled together for warmth, enabling the lice to crawl to a new host and was more often a disease of adults. Though in common with most registers at this time the age of the dead are not recorded, if the register records a son or a daughter they can be counted as children. In both Minchinhampton's and Bisley's registers enough relationships are so recorded for the disease apparently not to have made adults its primary victims. The Cambridge Group for population studies, in their wide survey of parishes across England in 1597, record famine, dysentery and fevers as the diseases of the crisis and plague only appears in the north. Dysentery is a disease that kills primarily the young so it may not be the cause of the deaths in Minchinhampton. If a correlation exists between prices and the mortality curve the possibility of starvation being the primary cause of death is strengthened. This link is stronger in Minchinhampton if the deaths are recalibrated in harvest years which show clearly that the highest prices following the dearth of 1596 spill into the highest deaths in the harvest year 1596-7.

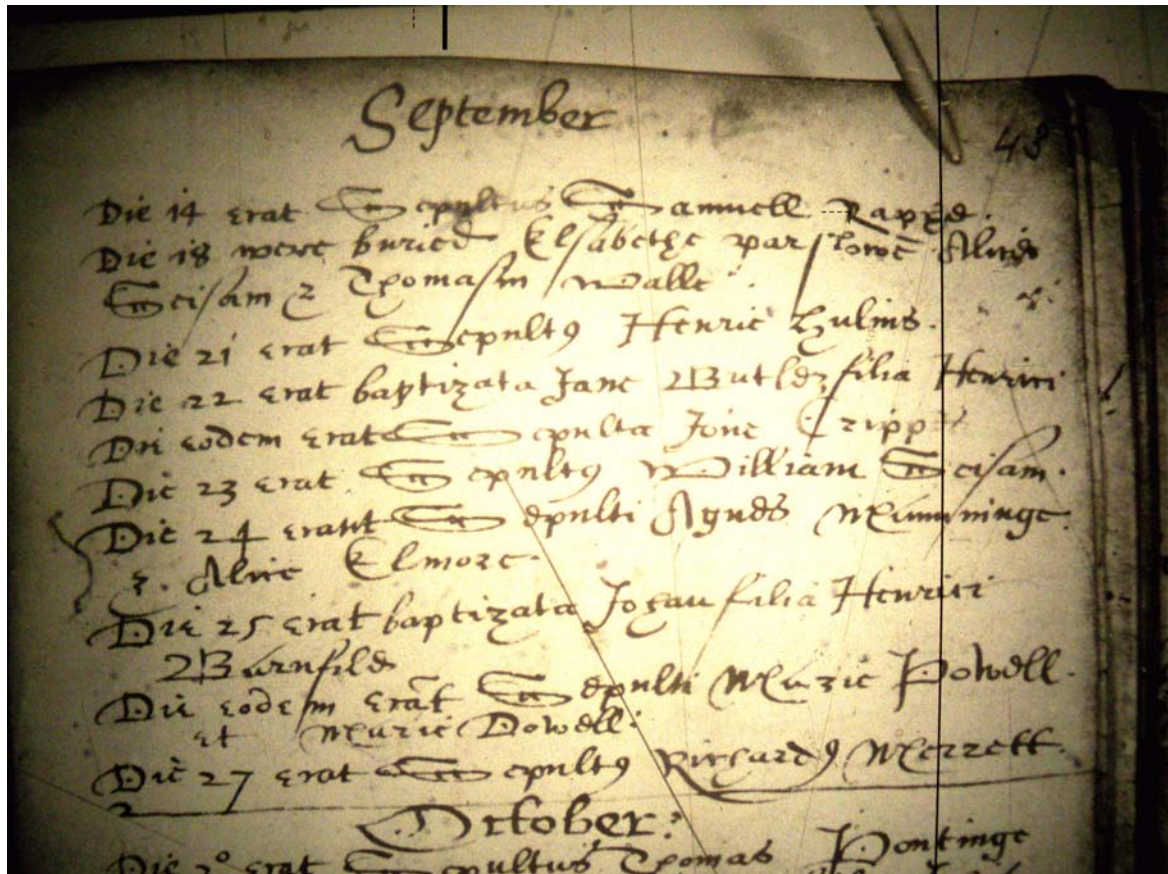
YEAR	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Civil Year (totals)	Jan -Jul	Aug -Dec	Harvest Year (totals)
1594	1	0	2	3	0	1	1	1	2	1	0	1	13		5	13
1595	2	1	0	1	2	1	1	0	2	0	2	0	12	8	4	10
1596	0	3	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	8	6	2	49
1597	4	5	4	5	2	9	18	11	12	5	5	11	91	47	44	62
1598	4	2	5	1	5	0	1	4	0	1	2	3	28	18	10	17
1599	1	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	4	0	1	3	15	7	8	25
1600	3	1	1	3	2	1	6	1	0	0	4	3	25	17		

The registers contain insufficient detail to be certain that the economically marginal suffered most. However there is negative evidence in the 264 wills proved in Gloucestershire in 1597. Not one comes from an inhabitant of Minchinhampton. The wealthier parishioners may have been survivors which would reinforce famine related death rather than epidemic disease as the primary killer.

Diet deficiency causes amenorrhoea and thus a decline in conceptions (calculated on the basis of baptisms) would also reinforce a judgement of starvation. The statistical evidence in the registers of Minchinhampton does suggest a significant decline in conceptions between 1596 and 1598.

The victims of the crisis mortality in Minchinhampton in 1597 almost certainly starved to death or died from famine related disease such as famine diarrhoea or bloody flux which is a condition resulting from malnutrition and often begins after the victim takes to eating indigestible and rotting foods. This was a familiar condition of concentration camp prisoners in the Second World War. The frightful dearth of 1596 – 1597 may have driven many to scavenging for any food anywhere.

We cannot always put names to these victims or retell the stories of their lives but in the register for Minchinhampton on April 21st 1597 is recorded the marriage of William Halle and Elizabeth Stowe. On the 27th July of the same year there is an entry in the register ‘erat sepulta Elizabeth Halle et William Halle’. No more information is given. This devastating famine accelerated a change in government policy and led to the passing of the Elizabethan Poor Law which protected the destitute in times of dearth. Unlike mainland Europe, particularly France where peasants continued to starve to death as a result of harvest failures throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in England no major famine related deaths occur again. Ten years later Elizabeth and William may well have survived.



Part of page from the Minchinhampton Registers for September 1597

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Land Survey 1909 (Lloyd George Act)

by Maureen Anderson

A group of volunteers are indexing the whole county where they survive in Gloucester Archives. Each house and plot of land was surveyed and valued in order to create a new land tax. The survey was further revised in 1914 and then WW1 broke out and it was shelved. Minchinhampton's is missing does anyone know where it is? Fortunately the final copy is in the Public Record Office in Kew and that is being photographed. The surveys reveal some fascinating pieces of information about our properties 100 years ago. Over the next few Bulletins, I plan to give you some examples covering some of the buildings we know so well.

Shard Farm and Mill Mead Refs: 236 & 264

House, buildings and land Occupied by William Thomas Excell and owned by Henry George Ricardo, containing 2 public footpaths.

Freehold house & farm buildings & land.

Stone built & stone tiled house containing 2 bedrooms, 2 attics, sitting room, kitchen, dairy, brewhouse & cellar. Well water. Large gardens. Near to above stone built & stone tiled barn, dutch barn, wood & iron trap house & stables, 2 bay cart shed & chaff house.

The whole valued at £1,446

Minchinhampton.		Reference No. 236		Map No.	
including 264					
Situation <i>Shard Farm & Mill Mead</i>					
Description <i>House, Buildings & Land</i>					
Extent <i>107 32 29 P</i>					
Gross Value		Land, £	Rateable Value	Land, £	Buildings, £
		36		32	
Gross Annual Value, Schedule A, £					
Occupier <i>W. T. Excell</i>					
Owner <i>H. G. Ricardo</i>					
Interest of Owner <i>Freehold</i>					
Superior interests					
Subordinate interests					
Occupier's tenancy, Term <i>Yearly from March 25th 1908</i>					
How determinable					
Actual (or Estimated) Rent, £ <i>63/7/-</i>					
Any other Consideration paid					
Outgoings—Land Tax, £ <i>19/9</i> paid by <i>Owner</i>					
Title, £ <i>5/7/3</i> paid by					
Other Outgoings					
Who pays (a) Rates and Taxes (b) Insurance <i>Owner's & Owner</i>					
Who is liable for repairs <i>Owner's & Owner</i>					
Fixed Charges, Easements, Common Rights and Restrictions <i>Two Public Footpaths</i>					
Former Sales. Dates					
Interest					
Consideration					
Subsequent Expenditure					
Owner's Estimate. Gross Value					
Full Site Value					
Total Value					
Assessable Site Value					
Site Value Deductions claimed <i>1/4</i>					
<i>Office 2. 9. George St.</i>					
<i>33 Corn Street</i>					
<i>Bristol</i>					
Roads and Sewers. Dates of Expenditure					
Amounts					
Particulars, description, and notes made on inspection					
<i>Subsidiary House & Farm Buildings (Land)</i>					
<i>Stone Built 1st. Class House, containing 2 Bedrooms</i>					
<i>2 Allis, Sitting Room, Kitchen, Dairy, Brewhouse</i>					
<i>& Cellar, Well water, Large Gardens</i>					
<i>Near to above, 2 B & 2 Tiled Barn, Dutch Barn,</i>					
<i>Wood & Iron Trap House & Stable, 2 Bay Cart</i>					
<i>Shed & Chaff House</i>					
Charges, Easements, and Restrictions affecting market value of Fee Simple					
<i>Site £ 144. 2 7 P. 1/4 of £ 40</i>					
Valuation.—Market Value of Fee Simple in possession of whole property					
in its present condition					
Repairs & Ins. 6. 10. 0					
Rent 63. 7. 0					
L. Tax 19. 9. 50. 10					
Title 5. 7. 3					
25					
12. 17. 1262.					
£ 1262.					
Deduct Market Value of Site under similar circumstances,					
but if divested of structures, timber, fruit trees, and					
other things growing on the land					
<i>18. 3. 3. @ £ 40 £ 750 - 144. £ 606.</i>					
Difference Balance, being portion of market value attribut-					
able to structures, timber, &c. £ 656.					
Divided as follows:—					
Buildings and Structures..... £ 616.					
Machinery..... £					
Timber..... £					
Fruit Trees..... £ 15.					
Other things growing on land..... £ 25					
Market Value of Fee Simple of Whole in its present con-					
dition (as before)..... £ 1262.					
Add for Additional Value represented by any of the follow-					
ing for which any deduction may have been made					
when arriving at Market Value:—					
Charges (excluding Land Tax) <i>Site £ 144</i>					
<i>2 7 P. £ 40 £ 184</i>					
Restrictions..... £ 40					
GROSS VALUE..... £ 1446					

The Swan Inn, West End Ref: 208

[1909] owner occupier William Vines, now Original Brewery Company tenant E Kirby

Stone built & stone tiled full licensed House & land, top floor 3 attics not used, 1st floor 4 bedrooms, ground floor bar, tap room, private room, sitting room, kitchen, scullery

Buildings of old slate not used, yard & urinal, cellar under forecourt.

Valued at £550.

Minchinhampton. *See N. 29 4014*

208 Reference No. Map. No. *49. 12. 1*

Situation *Swan Inn, West End,*
 Description *House*
 Extent *12 perches*

Gross Value	{ Land, £	Rateable Value	{ Land, £
	{ Buildings, £ <i>24</i>		{ Buildings, £ <i>19</i>

Gross Annual Value, Schedule A, £

Occupier }
 Owner } *Wm Vines* { *now Original Brewery Co*
 Interest of Owner } *Leasld. E Kirby*
 Superior interests } *Freehold.*

Subordinate interests

Reference No. *208*

Particulars, description, and notes made on inspection

Stone Built Stone tiled full licensed House Land
Top Floor. 3 attics not used.
1st Floor. 4 Bedrooms.
2^d Floor. Bar. Tap Room. Private Room. Sitting
Room. Kitchen Scullery.
Buildings of Old Slate (not used) Yard & Urinal.
Cellar under forecourt.

Charges, Easements, and Restrictions affecting market value of Fee Simple

Valuation.—Market Value of Fee Simple in possession of whole property
 in its present condition

<i>Unlicensed Rental.</i>	<i>12. 5. 0</i>
<i>Repairs & Ins.</i>	<i>1. 10. 0</i>
	<i>10. 10. 20</i>
	<i>2. 10.</i>
<i>add Val. of License.</i>	<i>340.</i>
	<i>£ 550.</i>



The Shard



Swan Inn

The Rectory (Now Stuart House and the Playing Fields) Ref: 23

Owner Occupier Edward Lonsdale Bryans. Very substantial stone and stone slate house in excellent repair throughout.

G.F. Porch - large entrance & lounge hall - drawing room - study - dining room lavatory & wc - kitchen - back kitchen - game larder - larder - cellar - pantry - store room - gents lavatory & cloak room.

1st F. 3 bedrooms - dressing room - lavatory - bathroom - cistern room

2nd f. 5 bedrooms - box room

Co. water supply. Heating apparatus: Gas laid on.

Large old fashioned garden with extensive lawns - ornamental timber being a great feature.

Stone & stone tile stabling in excellent repair - Coach house with loft over - washing stand & harness room - loose box - 2 stalls - brick floor

Total value £2250



The Rectory, now Stuart House

✓ 23 Reference No. Map. No. 49-12
 Situation The Rectory, Minchinhampton
 Description House, landing, and buildings
 Extent 13.271
 Gross Value { Land, £
 Buildings, £ 93 Rateable Value { Land, £
 Buildings, £ 79.15.0
 Gross Annual Value, Schedule A, £
 Occupier }
 Owner } Edward Lonsdale Bryans
 Interest of Owner freehold
 Superior interests

Reference No. 23
 Particulars, description, and notes made on inspection 29/4/14.
Very substantial stone and stone tile house in excellent repair throughout.
G.F. porch - large entrance & lounge hall - drawing room - study - dining room - lavatory etc - kitchen - back kitchen - game larder - larder ^{cellar} - pantry - store room - gents lav & cloak
1st fl. 3 bedrooms - dressing room - lav - bath room - w.c. room
2nd fl. 5 bedrooms & w.c. room
P.T.O.
 Charges, Easements, and Restrictions affecting market value of Fee Simple

bo. water supply.
Heating apparatus
gas laid on.
Large old fashioned garden with extensive lawns - ornamental timber being a great feature.
Stone & stone tile stabling in excellent repair - coach house with loft over - washing stand - harness room - loose box - 2 stalls - brick floor.

Large back kitchen garden & flower garden.
3 enclosures of grass land -