Minchinhampton

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Editor's note:

Well, we're almost in double figures and still going strong! We have a new contributor [Bob Iles] who has written two articles the first of which will appear in this edition, and the next in next edition. This one is about Bob's slaver ancestor whose memorial is in Holy Trinity. Happily, it is very high up on the wall, so any would-be iconoclasts will not be able to try and rewrite history and consign it to a local river!! I also think in Minchinhampton, we are as above that, as the memorial is above us.

Gary has given us another blast from the past. I have also decided to do something different. As you know I spend an awful lot of time reading through Gloucester Assizes as my "thing" is crime and especially violent crime, and this month I have found a Cheltenham poisoning case. The alleged perpetrator of the crime was found not guilty so I am going to put all the information from the papers in my piece with the request that you read it and come up with alternative theories for this 175 year old "Whodunnit" – I am hoping that you will engage in this, and that I can put the theories in my next newsletter.

Next talk is going to be "Tom Long's post" by Richard Davis. There will be a book for sale at the event as well, and you will find details in the "Poster section". After that, a new concept for the group - a Local History Film night from Alan Vaughan on the 3rd of October. Finally, Halloween is going to be fun as Kirsty Hartiolis is doing a Gloucestershire ghosts talk. You'll find as usual all the upcoming events and posters at the end.

Contents

Joseph Iles and the Bristol Slave Trade 1719 to 1749

By Bob Iles

A marble monument bearing the Iles coat of arms in The Holy Trinity Church, Minchinhampton, commemorates Joseph Iles, of Bristol, son of John Iles of Chalford, who died on the 14th of March 1749, aged 45.

Joseph Iles was born in Minchinhampton in 1704, the youngest son of John Iles and Mary Stancombe of Chalford. He became a merchant in Bristol and was apprenticed to Nathaniel Wraxall (Merchant) who was a prominent figure in the politics of the town, representing the concerns of the merchants of Bristol in petitions to parliament in 1720 regarding "The African Trade" and quarantine periods for goods brought into the port (referred to as Captain Wraxall). The family lived at Mayse Hill, Bristol as did Joseph at the time of his marriage. He was apprenticed, aged 15, to Nathaniel Wraxall in 1719. The premium for Joseph's apprenticeship was £210 pounds which was paid by his father John Iles. John Iles may have known the Wraxall family from trading his manufactured cloth in the port of Bristol in 1720, Wraxall [as "Captain" Wraxall] represented the concerns of the merchants of Bristol in petitions to parliament in 1720 regarding both "The African Trade" and quarantine periods for goods brought into the port.

Just two years after finishing his apprenticeship, he became a member of the Society of Merchant Venturers: [Transatlantic slave trade – The Society of Merchant Venturers] freedom of the Society was obtained on 31st May 1727 by "Apprenticeship". He was later appointed High Sheriff of Bristol for the year 1737 along with Henry Dampier.

Joseph's firm, Joseph Iles & Co, owned ships that traded for slaves in Africa selling them for profit mainly in South Carolina in America. Nathaniel Wraxall's grandfather, William Wraxall had already established the family's business in the "Guinea" or "African" trade and it was probably his son, also William, who continued the business with the ship "Boyle Frigate" departing for Barbados via Cape Verdi on 25th August 1713 with 218 slaves being delivered in Barbados on 20th May 1714, returning to Bristol on 7th August that year. Another vessel, the 100 ton "Morehampton" registered to "William Wraxall & Co" left for Bonny in Africa on 15th December 1718, arriving in York River, Virginia on 21st August 1719 with 61 slaves and returned to Bristol 5th December.

William Wraxall senior died in 1691 in Nevis, the smaller of two islands comprising the nation of St Kitts in the Caribbean. His will stated that although he was "sick and weak of body", he was "sound of perfect sense and memory". He was buried in Nevis and left his son, William, who was apprenticed to his father's company, his two houses in Bedminster, Somerset together with his signet ring and fifty pounds to be paid to his wife. Miss Penelope Harris was left ten pounds "for caring for him in his sickness", Two thirds of his estate he left to be shared amongst his six sons, Peter, Andrew, Nathaniel, John, Samuel and Joseph Wraxall

when they attained twenty-one years or were married. If any of them should die before [Editor - Wraxall's decease their share was] shared amongst the remaining sons. His (second) wife was pregnant at the time and if the child survived, the sons' money would be shared with him or her. All the remaining money and chattels was left to his "Beloved wife Mary Wraxall". His friends John Streator, William Minor, Abraham Elte and his brother Peter Wraxall were to be executors and guardians of his children during their minority. The will was proven 10th February 1691.

William Wraxall junior's half-brother, Nathaniel at this point, aged 32, had probably started his own company as William was still mentioned as co-owner of the Phoenix in 1735 and Joseph Iles was apprenticed to Nathaniel Wraxall & Co. in 1719.

Joseph Iles's involvement with the Bristol slave trade:

From a paper titled "Slave Wales" from the University of Wales.

Joseph part owned a ship called the "Amoretta" with Isaac Hobhouse and Thomas Coster, 1684-1739, the head of the copper smelting family business in Swansea, South Wales.

The 85-ton Amoretta was purpose built in Plantation, New England in 1726 to carry captive Africans from the Bight of Biafra and Joseph Iles and Isaac Hobhouse are described as "two of the city's most eminent slave merchants"

In 1737, Thomas Castor joined once more with Iles and Hobhouse to fit out "The Squirrel", a new build colonial vessel that joined the Amoretta in carrying slaves to Carolina Low Country, British North America's most brutal slave society, then undergoing a massive boom as rice cultivation was extended through the coastal marshes and inland swamps.

Between 1732 and 1739, the Amoretta made seven trips to South Carolina landing 1,539 Africans at Charlestown. A further 389 perished before the Amoretta reached land. Little information has survived regarding the numbers or fate of those which sailed on The Squirrel and it is last mentioned in 1767 with no details of its voyage.

Voyages to Africa, Carolina and back to Britain usually took 15 months and the journey took its toll on vessels with an average of four voyages in their useful life.

There was an appetite for copper and copper-based wares in "The Guinea Trade", copper rods were a medium of exchange just either as they arrived or beaten out by African smiths and woven into cables for adornment.

In the Historical Association of the University of Bristol's booklet "The Bristol Slave Trade a Collective Portrait" by David Richardson, Joseph Iles is mentioned as "probably coming from a landed background as part of the reason for becoming an agent within a year of completing his apprenticeship to Bristol merchants involved in slaving".

In the appendix of the booklet, Joseph Iles is listed as having managed 19 voyages between 1720 and 1750. [Editor – see below for the voyages of the vessels of Joseph Iles & Co]

Vessel	Notes	Depart Bristol	African Port	American Port	American Arrival Date	Slaves Sold by Benjamin Savage & Co	Departure Date America	Arrive Bristol
Amoretta 85 Tons 4 Guns Built 1726		18/03/1730	Angola	South Carolina	29/12/1730	204	20/02/1731	13/07/1731
Amoretta		09/07/1731		…do….	22/03/1732	194	06/05/1732	21/06/1732
Amoretta	3 tons of Redwood offloaded at Bristol	23/12/1732	Africa	Jamaica				31/05/1734
Amoretta	30 cwt ivory 10 cwt redwood 1 ton beeswax	22/12/1733 [Editor – does not fit in with previous arrival date]	Calabar Nigeria	South Carolina	08/07/1734	209	19/08/1734	02/12/1734
Morning Star 120 tons 10 guns	Joseph Iles & James Laroche Co-owners	14/09/1734	Angola	South Carolina	18/04/1735	327 (262 adults, 55 children)	21/07/1736	12/11/1736
Amoretta	Now 8 Guns	21/01/1735		South Carolina	07/07/1735	239 (235 Adults – 4 Children)	14/08/1735	13/10/1735
Amoretta	4 chests copper rods for trade in Biafra	24/11/1735	Bight of Biafra	South Carolina	03/07/1736	224 (196 Adults. 28 children)	21/07/1736	03/09/1736
Morning Star, Built 1733 Plantation	Joseph Iles & James Laroche Co-owners	28/08/1735	Angola	South Carolina	29/07/1736	44 (40 adults, 4 children)	17/09/1736	12/11/1736
Amoretta	£2110 duty for slaves	05/10/1736	Angola	South Carolina	23/05/1737	178 (144 adults, 34 children)	27/06/1737	09/08/1737
Loango 160 tons 10 guns	Joseph Iles & James Laroche Co-owners	19/04/1736	Angola	South Carolina	19/01/1736	360 (320 adults. 40 Children)	02/04/1737	02/06/1737
Amoretta		10/10/1737	?	South Carolina	24/04/1738	195	27/05/1738	11/07/1738

						(141 adults, 54 children)		
Loango, Built Plantation 1732	Now solely owned by Joseph Iles & Co	06/08/1737	?	?	?	?	?	08/07/1739
Amoretta	Thomas Iles named as co-owner (possibly cousin)	?	?	South Carolina	05/06/1739	206 (169 adults, 37 children)	?	?
Squirrel 100 tons 10 guns		27/01/1738	?	South Carolina	15/11/1738	211 (171 adults. 40 children)	05/01/1739	03/03/1739
Amoretta	Slave Duty £1435	20/12/1739	?	South Carolina	20/08/1740	?	?	31/12/1742
Africa 90 tons 6 guns Built plantation	Slave Duty £2115	?	Bonny Nigeria	St Kitts & South Carolina	26/09/1744	?	?	27/03/1745
Amoratta	Became Stranded Near Bideford Devon	10/06/1743	Guinea	St Kitts and Upper James, Virginia	04/06/1744	165	30/07/1744	04/04/1745 Pass return date
Africa	Returned to Bristol from Africa	12/10/1745	?	?	?	?	?	12/12/1746
Amoretta	Re-registered Bristol 05/10/1748	22/10/1748	African Bight	Upper James, Virginia	14/08/1749	185 (260 boarded in Africa)	18/10/1749	18/10/1749
Amoretta	Now recorded as 50 tons with 2 guns	07/03/1750	?	South Carolina	08/10/1750	?	15/12/1750	27/01/1751

The Amoretta was stranded on 5th October 1744 near Bideford, North Devon on her passage from Virginia to Bristol with a cargo of tobacco. It must have been damaged requiring repairs to the extent that between 1746 and 1748, it didn't carry out any voyages until its re-registration on 5th October 1748 in Bristol.

The Squirrel was mentioned in 1767 with no details of its voyage.

The Africa was recorded as lost in the river of Old Calabra, Nigeria, in 1768.

Nathaniel Wraxall & Co. last appear as vessel owners of The Matilda in 1755.

James Laroche & Co., Joseph Iles' co-owner of the Morning Star and the Loango continued trading until 1766.

Joseph married Nathaniel Wraxall's daughter Sarah on 11th September 1735 at St Stephens Bristol and they had six children: Sarah, 1736-1783, John, 1737-1738, Ann 1738-1803, Mary,1740-1788, John, 1741-1768 and Joseph born 1742.

In his will in 1748 Joseph asks that his body be brought back to "Hampton" after being covered in sand [Editor – in the archaeological magazine "Archaeologist Robert Hartle explained that the sand and stones may have been intended to thwart body snatchers"] and the poor of the town be rewarded by payment of one guinea for carrying his coffin.[Editor – one imagines that it was very heavy so they would have earnt their money! Was it one guinea each or shared?]

He also asked that his friends Benjamin and John Savage take his son John "under their protection" in Carolina when he was "of business age". They were the proprietors of Benjamin Savage and Co., agents for the sale of slaves in South Carolina.

The 1790 referendum for Halifax, North Carolina mentions a John Iles having three slaves.

W T COOPER SHOP WESTEND MINCHINHAMPTON.

Research by Gary Atkinson [With additions from Martyn Beaufort]

The shop sign on this photo is W.T. COOPER, and he is described as a "General Dealer" [Editor – I make some comments on the dating of this picture at the end]

Who were W.T.Cooper and his wife Mrs Cooper?

William Thomas Cooper was born 30th May 1869 in Hankerton, Malmesbury, Wiltshire.

William's parents were John Cooper [1840–1914] and Ann 1845 - 1922 (Hayward) Cooper (Married 1866 in Malmesbury). Both were from Hankerton, Wiltshire.

In the Census of 1871 William Thomas Cooper lives at home in Hankerton with his parents and one sibling Annie Matilda Cooper aged 3 [born 1868].

In the Census of 1881 William is still at home with his parents in Hankerton. However, his sister no longer appears in the household. She is showing as a servant aged 13 years old at Morley Farm, Crudwell Wiltshire.

In the 1891 Census, William is still at home with his parents in Hankerton. He now has more siblings. Mary Hannah [1883] & Charles John Cooper [1885].

By the census of 1901, William now is showing at West End Minchinhampton as a shop keeper – China dealer. William is married with children; he married Martha Ann Vizor in 1893 at Malmesbury.

Martha Ann Vizor was born 4th Jan 1867 in Brokenborough Wiltshire. Her parents were William 1827 & Ann 1828 (nee Field) Vizor. Her siblings were Richard, Joseph and George Henry Vizor.

William and Martha Cooper's children showing on the 1901 census are Eleanor [1897 - Hankerton, Wiltshire] and Minnie Annie [1899 – Minchinhampton].

The 1911 census still shows William and Martha at West End Minchinhampton. Eleanor is showing not at home; she is at The Manse Minchinhampton as a servant aged 14 for the Baptist minister Mr Samuel James Ford. Minnie Anna the daughter is also showing somewhere else along West End with a Mrs Sarah Jane Powell. By 1911, however, William and Martha have two boys now living at home with them William John [1902] & Charles Henry [1905].

By 1939 William and Martha Cooper are found retired at Claycombe, Burleigh where they presumably died in 1953 and 1955 respectively.

[Editor – The photo above can be dated fairly accurately to February or March of 1910, due to the poster in the window advertising a talk [At the Minchinhampton Baptist Church] by Dr John Clifford on Good Friday of that year [25th March 1910]. The photo therefore almost certainly pictures Martha Cooper and her eldest son William John [Age 8].

The Gloucester Chronicle of the 26th of March 1910 describes the talk as follows: -

VISIT OF DR. JOHN CLIFFORD. Great interest was manifested in the visit of Dr. John Clifford, M.A., to Minchinhampton Baptist Chapel on Good Friday. A service was held in the afternoon, when there was a crowded congregation, many in fact having travelled some miles in order to listen to such an eminent Nonconformist. His sermons were of a high order and greatly enjoyed. Amongst the local ministers present were the Revs. S. J. Ford (pastor), C. A. Davis, G Adam, and R. Nott. The singing, which was of a hearty character, was ably led by an efficient choir, Mr. Allan Chew presiding at the organ.

The Pastor (Rev S. J. Ford) conducted the service, and in welcoming Dr. Clifford said it was 20 years ago since the latter had visited their lovely valleys, when he paid a visit to King Stanley, or the sister Church at Shortwood. But although many years had passed away and the Doctor, like the rest of them, had grown considerably older, he was still as young in effort, spirit and energy now as he was before. He was beloved by all Free Churches and respected by all Christians who knew him. And he stood amongst them that day as one of the greatest uncrowned kings of this great Empire of ours.

Dr. Clifford then delivered an eloquent and instructive discourse, in which he dealt with the Book of Revelation. He said there was no part of our Scriptures, especially any part of the New Testament, on which there had been brighter light shown than upon the Book of Revelation. He imagined that they ignored this book to a great extent. The book was full of mystery. There was a cloud over it, and a good many Christians ignored it and passed it by. No book in the New Testament came near it in conveying to the understanding the fierce fighting temper of the early Christians as of Revelation. Therefore, they ought not to pass it by. What was current in the day when that book was written they must try to seize, because it was through what was current that day that this particular pamphlet written by John went into the minds of the Christians of Asia Minor and so became a help and joy. There were three names given to this book by the writer by which they were able to understand, and they were

helped in comprehending the values of the book, viz., Revelation, Prophesy, and Roll. There was no part of the New Testament which presented them with so glorious a conception of the wondrous attitudes of our Lord Jesus Christ as did the Book of Revelation.

After tea had been partaken of a meeting, over which Mr. C. E. Clark (Chalford) presided, was held in the church. There was a packed audience, and after the singing of a hymn the Pastor (Rev. S. J. Ford) offered prayer. The Chairman then called upon Dr. Clifford to unveil a memorial scroll of the completion of the Institute.

Dr. Clifford said he was very glad to have the opportunity of performing that important part in connection with their Institute. He was delighted to think that their Pastor had undertaken that work. He had been over and inspected the Institute, and he congratulated them upon the admirable rooms they had in the Institute. He further congratulated them upon getting the money and the labour, as he had heard that all the work that had been done in that Institute had been done freely. Their Pastor was a wonderful man, and he was astonished at what he had done. He had much pleasure in unveiling the scroll.

The Chairman remarked that the scroll had been prepared by their Pastor's wife, and he was sure that they would agree with him that it was a splendid thing. (Applause.) [Editor – there is no sign of this scroll in the institute, but it may be in the Baptist Church's safe].

The Rev. S. J. Ford expressed the pleasure it gave him to see Mr. Clark in the chair. He took a great interest in all the work of the Free Churches in the district. Their Institute was now free of debt, but had it not been for the generosity of the chairman's brother they would not have been able to say that night that their Institute was erected and free of debt. If it had not been for the spirit of volunteerism that had gone right through the work, they would not have done what they had. The frame that surrounded the scroll was the work of Mr. Edward Hopes (Applause.) The speaker referred to the fact that the Institute had been in existence for nearly three years, and during that time had done a considerable amount of good. (Hear, hear.) It would have done even a greater amount of good if there had not sprung up—in some sense by way of opposition —another Institute which considerably interfered with their funds.[Editor – has anyone any idea what this competition was?] Mr. Ford said that in Mr. Thomas Gardner they had a splendid manager—(applause)—and said how delighted they were to have amongst them Dr. Clifford and Mr. Clarke. (Applause.)

Dr. Clifford, who was greeted with loud applause, reminded them that Lord Hugh Cecil said "'"Free Churches are characterised by a passion of devotion to principles."' (Hear, Hear.) If their principles were true, they deserved that passion of devotion. Institutes had a brief life, but principles abided for ever. Therefore, that statement of Lord Hugh Cecil's was one which was not to be simply accepted as a statement of truth, but a statement which had an abundant reason to be embodied afresh in the activities of the Baptist Church in that locality. Their Free churches were based upon a personal experience of Jesus Christ. Preaching was not the only instrument in the Christian Churches. It behoved them to undertake tasks of getting men into social intercourse. The reason why many men went to public houses was not mainly for the beer, but to get social intercourse. As Christian people they must endeavour to obtain social intercourse for men, and get their gossip for them, without letting them go into public-houses to secure it. The speaker referred to the fact that a nation grew by its freedom and the mention of Mr. Lloyd George created loud applause. He (said the speaker) was a Baptist who did not hide his Baptist principles. (Hear, hear.) It was to the Puritans to whom they owed the whole of the liberties of their constitutions. The Free Churches in addition to helping in the matter of liberty, securing that liberty and maintaining it, were also helping in the solution of a great many of the social and political problems. He was a politician and had from his earliest days found that he was bound to help in the life of the political world. He did not like politics. He hated politics, but it was owing to the political efforts of their forefathers that they had got the liberties they now possessed (Applause) They were now face to face with one of the fiercest

fights that this country had ever engaged in. He wondered whether they realised the gravity of it. There had not been a battle fought in this country like the one in which they were now engaged since the days of Oliver Cromwell. They knew how he fought, and the weapons he used. He won the fight. which was against the claim of the peers to govern this country. It was a fight like the present one, which was altogether a fight for humanity. The present fight was a fight for the freedom of the human race to control its own destinies.

[Editor – this link will give some idea of what Dr Clifford was referring to: - 100 years ago: Constitutional Crisis and the Parliament Act of 1911 | Archives and Manuscripts at the Bodleian Library]

Blast from the past – From Bulletin No 17 -2000 [Chosen by Gary Atkinson]

MINCHINHAMPTON AND THE CLOTH TRADE

by Ann Murray

BACKGROUND

Minchinhampton has had a long association with the cloth trade. The town lies three miles southeast of Stroud in Gloucestershire on a high plateau (600ft) and is bounded on the north by the River Frome, on the west by the Nailsworth stream and on the south by the Avening stream. (1) The abundance of running water made it a natural place for the construction of mills, and eight were recorded on Minchinhampton manor as early as 1086.

By the late 12th century, the cloth industry was established. (2) The late 18th/early 19th century had been a successful time for the Gloucestershire cloth trade, but by 1840 there was a sharp decline, which lasted for nearly ten years. This was followed by forty years of what was described by A.T. Playne, the owner of the largest cloth mill in the area, as "...the palmy days of the Stroud valleys" (3), when there was international demand for West of England broadcloth. Until 1879 trade was still increasing in Gloucestershire but in 1880 this started to reverse because of competition from Yorkshire and Scotland, punitive American tariffs on imports and the reluctance of the Gloucestershire producers to change from their dependency on broadcloth. (4) [Editor – Description here - Broad Cloth | Fabric UK

AIM OF RESEARCH

The aim of the research was to investigate the fortunes of the cloth trade in Gloucestershire and to look at the effect it had on the inhabitants of Minchinhampton, in the period between 1840 to 1880.

SOURCES

The research was started by consulting secondary sources in order to increase my knowledge of the history and workings of the cloth trade in Gloucestershire. The Victoria History of the Counties of

England was a useful starting point, and lead me to A. T. Playne's, Minchinhampton and Avening, which had several interesting chapters on the author's own mill, and details of the mechanisation of the various processes used in cloth making. The book by J de L Mann was suggested by one of the librarians at the Gloucestershire Collection. The first primary documents I looked at were Trade Directories covering the period 1839 to 1885. These provided an overview of the fortunes of the village, as well as summaries of population. Secondly, I looked at the Census Enumerators' Books (CEBs) for 1841 and 1881. I selected these years as representing a time of deep depression (1841), and a time when the trade was at its height (1881). With a population in excess of 4,000 it was not possible to examine the CEBs for the whole parish, so I selected one street, West End. I did so on the basis that it was the longest street in Minchinhampton, with predominantly 18th century houses which had not been rebuilt or added to in the 19th century. (5)

I felt that this stability should ensure that the population would be fairly constant in size over the forty years under investigation. Additionally, the houses, being mainly small and terraced, were likely to have housed the working classes of Minchinhampton.

ANALYSIS

I have attempted to:

- link the information obtained from the Trade Directories for the years 1839 to 1885, with the information available from secondary sources; first at the time of the depression in the 1840's, and then during the boom years from the 1850's to the late 1870's.

- compare the Census information for 1841 and 1881, to see whether an analysis of the occupations of the inhabitants of West End at each date reflected the changing fortunes of the cloth trade in the period.

<u>Comparison of Trade Directories 1838/1852 to secondary sources</u>

Mann reports in his book that Gloucestershire certainly had a thriving cloth trade in the late 18th century, with trade doubling between 1793 to 1803. (6) The use of the gig-mill and the fly-shuttle in broad looms was widespread in Gloucestershire at this time, despite having been resisted in other areas, and this gave the trade an advantage. Gloucestershire also escaped the aftermath of over-speculation that followed the end of the French wars in 1814, because it supplied mainly the home market. However, by the end of 1839 despite these advantages, T. J Howell, Factory Inspector in charge of the Western Cloth Area, reported that there was greater depression than he had ever known.(7) There were only 77 mills at work in Gloucestershire in 1841, compared with 133 in 1831.(8) According to the Gloucester Journal of 15th January 1842, production in Gloucestershire in 1841 was only 53% of what it had been in 1832 and 50 manufacturers had failed in that ten year period. The primary sources certainly support the depression of the trade described by Mann. The trade directories take a little time to pick up the decline; Robson's 1839 Directory says of Minchinhampton that ". . . the principal employment of the inhabitants consist(s) in the manufacture of woollen cloth, which has long been carried on in the vicinity." However, by 1844 Pigot's Directory of Gloucestershire reports: "The manufacture of woollen cloths was at one time carried on here extensively; but the trade has almost entirely gone to decay." Slater's Directory of Gloucestershire 1852 also mentions the state of decay and adds "... many houses being in consequence unoccupied, the place now presents but an uninviting aspect." It is possible that the reference to empty houses in Minchinhampton in the 1852 Slater's Trade Directory is linked to incidents described by secondary sources. Playne reports a typhoid epidemic in 1846, which was blamed on contaminated soil from the Churchyard being spread around the village. [Editor – that is another story as Brian Lett's talk on the matter established!] 150 people

died, all of them from the centre of the village.(9) In addition, The Victoria History reports that in the early 1840's, emigration to Australia, America and New Zealand for over 50 Minchinhampton inhabitants was assisted out of the rates.(10).

Comparison of Trade Directories 1856/1885 to secondary sources

Mann reports that the depression started to lift in the West in the late 1840's, and the arrival of the railway in Stroud in 1845 helped this.(11) The introduction of the power loom accelerated in the late 1850's, with 3 times as many in use in 1861 as 1850.(12) Although Gloucestershire's share of the market was small compared to Yorkshire, it was renowned for the excellence of its products, expensive "prestige" cloths. It produced "...blue, black and medley broadcloth, with scarlet for uniforms and hunting coats, some liveries and billiard cloth." (13) for which there was plenty of demand both at home and abroad. Larger manufacturers invested heavily in the 1860's, building additions to mills and buying the newest and best machinery. Trade was still increasing until 1879, but the manufacturers were reluctant to change their products to keep up with innovations such as ready-made clothes, which required cheaper, lighter cloth. Ominously, at the 1878 International Exhibition in Paris, the jury, whilst awarding several gold medals to West of England manufacturers concluded that: "The productions of the West of England rank second to none in the world, though few but Englishmen can afford to wear them." (14)

By 1880 trade was being lost to cheaper competitors and by the end of that year mills were coming up for sale. The importance and scale of the trade is again supported by primary sources. In 1856, Kelly's Post Office Directory reported: "the manufacture of woollen cloth is the staple trade of the parish and neighbourhood and furnishes employment for a great proportion of the inhabitants." Kelly's were still using exactly the same words to describe the successful trade nearly thirty years later, in 1885.

Comparison of Census information for 1841 and 1881

The total population for the parish of Minchinhampton stood at 4888 at the time of the 1841 census, and at 4561 in 1881 (a 7% drop), having dipped to a low of 4147 in 1861. (See Appendix I) The sample population of West End stood at 283 in 1841, 235 in 1881 (a 17% drop), although the numbers of households stood fairly constant at 64 in 1841, and 63 in 1881. (Appendix II) The average size of a household had therefore dropped by 0.7 persons, which might suggest an improvement in living conditions. 49% of the inhabitants had an occupation in 1881, compared to only 43% in 1841. However, as no one described themselves as unemployed in either census, it seems possible that people gave their usual occupation to the census enumerator, whether employed at the time or not.

In 1841, 43 people in West End were involved in the cloth trade. This had dropped to 33 by 1881, which appears odd when the trade was in a deep depression in 1841 and still booming in 1880. However, there is a possible reason for this. Although the amount of trade increased, this was achieved partly by the introduction of new capital. This enabled production to be centralised into fewer, larger, more efficient mills, and those mills were equipped with the most efficient machinery. In fact, the number of people employed in the trade dropped by 22% between 1850 and 1862. (15)

This centralisation led to some of the smaller mills being turned over to alternative production, as can be seen by the appearance of the trades of umbrella stick-maker and sawmill worker in the 1881 census. The beneficial effect of the booming wool trade, although not reflected by increased numbers employed by it directly, is demonstrated by the change in occupations of the residents of West End. The number of labourers had more than halved in the forty-year period, whilst the number of craftsmen had increased by more than 50%. The number of women working in domestic service

outside of the house in which they lived more than doubled, which could indicate an increase in wealthy households elsewhere in the town. In addition, by 1881 there were four inns in West End alone, suggesting that the population had money to spend on other than essentials.

This apparent prosperity is confirmed by the Victoria History, which records naphtha lighting arriving in 1857, the streets of the village being paved in 1858, drainage being installed in the 1860's, a fire brigade being formed in 1864 and gas laid on in 1872. (16)

CONCLUSION

The descriptions of the fluctuating fortunes of the cloth trade in Gloucestershire contained in secondary sources are supported by the information appearing in the trade directories of the time. The impact on the inhabitants of Minchinhampton, however, was not straightforward. One might have expected to see a sharp increase in numbers employed by the trade in 1881 as compared to 1841, reflecting the success of the trade at the time: in fact, the numbers fell. This can be explained by the increased capital invested in machinery, which reduced manpower requirements. At the same time, it is possible to detect the improvement in living standards enjoyed by the working people of Minchinhampton: the change in occupation away from labouring to skilled work, the apparent increased average living space enjoyed by individuals, and the provision of public amenities. These improvements were probably due to the prosperity the cloth trade brought to the town.

END NOTES

1 The Victoria History of the Counties of England, P184
2 Ibid., P195
3 J de L Mann, The Cloth Industry in the West of England from 1640 to 1880, P204
4 Ibid., P212
5 The Victoria History of the Counties of England, P186
6 J de L Mann, ibid., P138
7 Ibid., P178
8 Ibid., P180
9 A T Playne, Minchinhampton and Avening, P59
10 The Victoria History of the Counties of England, P201
11 J de L Mann, ibid., P195
12 Ibid., P199
13 Ibid., P203
14 Ibid., P216 15 Ibid., P199
16 Ibid., P188
17 A T Playne, ibid., P138

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A.T. Playne, Minchinhampton and Avening, Redwood Bum Ltd., 1978, (First published 1915).
The Victoria History of the Counties of England, Vol. XI, 1973.
Census Enumerators' Books for the Parish of Minchinhampton, 1841 and 1881.

Various Trade Directories:

Robson's 1839 Directory — Gloucestershire
Pigot's Directory of Gloucestershire 1844

Slater's Directory of Gloucestershire 1852
Kelly's Post Office Directory of 1856
Slater's Directory of Gloucestershire 1867
Morris Directory of Gloucestershire 1876
Kelly's Directory of Gloucestershire 1885
Kelly's Directory of Gloucestershire 1894

APPENDIX I

MINCHINHAMPTON AND THE CLOTH TRADE

Population of Minchinhampton Parish (Source: Census records)

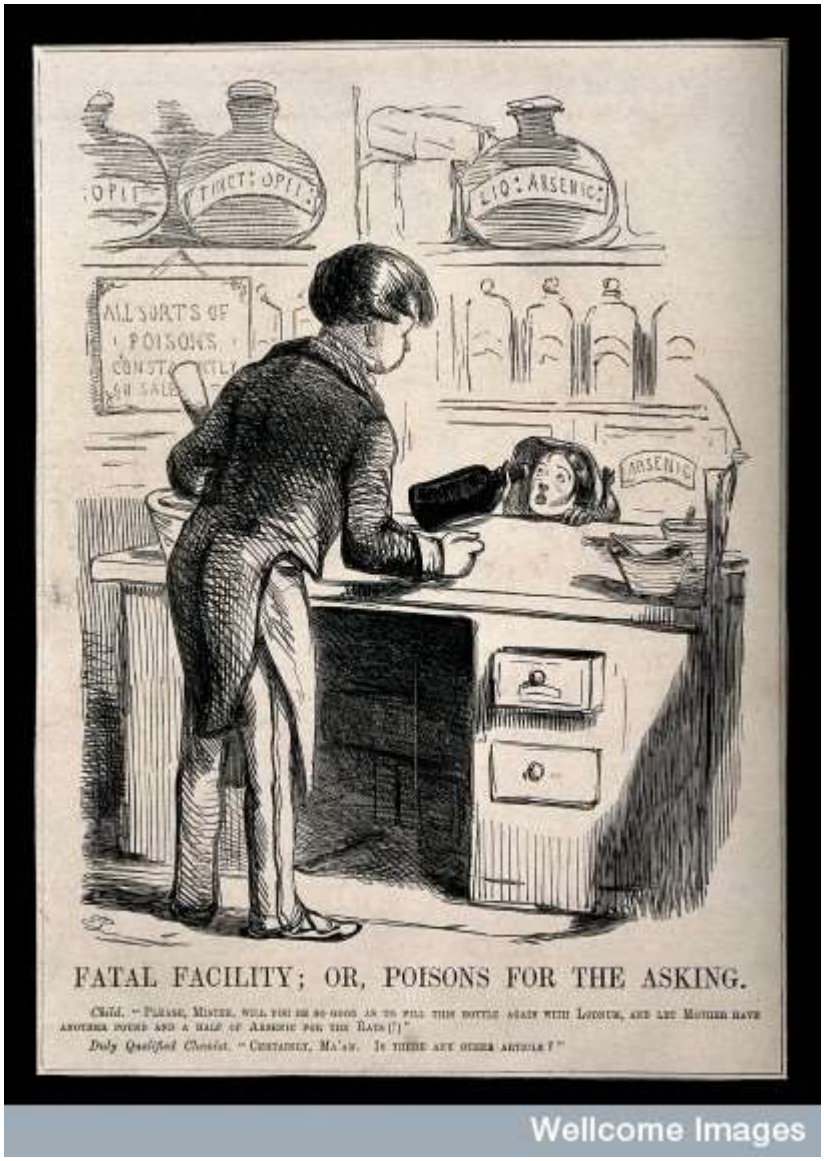
YEAR	Population
1841	4888
1851	4469
1861	4147
1871	4361
1881	4561

APPENDIX II
MINCHINHAMPTON AND THE CLOTH TRADE
INFORMATION FROM THE CENSUS ENUMERATORS' BOOKS
FOR WEST END, MINCHINHAMPTON

	1841	1881
Number of inhabitants	283	235
Number of Households	64	63
Occupations:		
Involved in cloth trade	43	33
Labourer	23	10
Domestic servant	5	13
Dress maker, tailor, hat maker, shoe maker	15	9
Grocer, butcher, baker, coal merchant	10	11
Professional	5	4
Craftsman	9	14
Umbrella stick-maker	0	4
Sawmill worker	0	2
Inn keeper	0	4
Independent means	5	4
Other	8	7
TOTAL	**123**	**115**

Whodunnit [Transcribed by Martyn Beaufort]

I would love to hear your ideas on who committed the following offence. This comes from the Lent Assizes in Gloucester in 1850, so the poisoning itself occurred in 1849. For information it was not until 1851 that the Arsenic Act regulated the sale of this poison. White arsenic was to be coloured so that it could not be easily mistaken for example flour. There were also, to us the rather obvious precaution of requiring a written and signed record of purchasers of the poison, together with the stated purpose of what it was to be used for. The below cartoon shows a child buying rat poison for its mother, and realistically this could have happened, even though I suspect a pound and a half of arsenic (680g) would have raised eyebrows even then when 100 to 300 milligrams can kill a human being!



THE CHELTENHAM POISONING CASE

The case of Emanuel Barnett, charged with the wilful murder of Elizabeth and Samuel Gregory at Cheltenham, by administering arsnic [sic] in the flour of a pudding of which they partook on the 14th of September last, was appointed for this morning, and appeared to excite considerable interest. Mr Greaves and Mr. Huddleston were counsel for the prosecution and Mr. Symons and Mr. Powell for the prisoner, who was first arraigned on the charge of the murder of Elizabeth Gregory.

Mr. Greaves having stated the facts, the following witnesses were called: -

Caroline Gregory deposed – My mother's name was Diane. She lived at 13 Chapel Street, Cheltenham, in September last. The family consisted of Elizabeth and Samuel Gregory, myself and mother, and my little child. Elizabeth was about a year and four months younger than I. Samuel was 14. The child three years old next March. My mother's brother Saml Keylock sometimes came to the house. The prisoner lodged in my mother's house from October 1847. His son lived with him. His wife lived with him the first six months and afterwards at Monson Villa. [Editor – A Teacher Training School] He used always to keep the door locked. In September we were on pretty good terms with the prisoner. Before then there had been words between us about his leaving in consequence of his daughter going up and down stairs with clogs on on a Sunday afternoon, making a noise with them. When he was at home he used to keep his room door open, and when it was open he could hear what was said. We loudly complained of this on purpose that he might hear. On Friday, the 14th, the prisoner went to clean shoes at Monson Villa and returned while we were at breakfast. My uncle Keylock was breakfasting with us, and my mother asked him in the prisoner's presence to stay to dinner. The prisoner went out again and returned about eleven o'clock, and said to my sister Elizabeth "Betsy, what say you to some apple dumplings?" She said she would like some. He went upstairs to his room to fetch down the flour, and brought it down in a handkerchief, holding it by the four corners. He had some apples and suet in his left hand. My sister asked me to make the dumplings. I pared the apples, and my sister made the paste out of the flour and suet brought by the prisoner; and we not having any salt, the prisoner went upstairs and brought down a lump of salt in his hand. We made seven dumplings. Prisoner was by all the time. Five were put into a saucepan; two were left raw on the table. My sister put the flour out of the handkerchief into a large basin. Some of the flour was put into a cup in order that my sister might dry the paste off her hands as she made the dumplings. After the dumplings were made, the cup was put into the cupboard. It was then half full of flour. The two dumplings that were not put into the saucepan were put into the cupboard in the parlour. The staircase leading upstairs was between the parlour and the kitchen. After the dumplings were made I went to work in the parlour. My mother, before she went out prepared some cucumber and bread, and cheese for dinner – The witness then went on to depose that they took dinner about one o'clock – cucumber, bread and cheese and dumplings, being on the table. Her brother Samuel refused to have bread, cheese and cucumber, and the prisoner told her to give him a dumpling, which she did. The child complained that it was too hot. Before this, continued the witness, my sister said, "Give it to me," and she ate the rest of it. My brother was taken violently ill and went out. My sister too became very ill and went out. I went out after my sister, and my mother went after my brother. The prisoner, after my brother was gone out, took something out of his mouth with his right hand and threw it under the grate. The dumpling was then before him. It did not look as if any part had been cut off. What he threw under the grate could not have been part of the dumpling. My mother had not taken any of the pudding. I went into the yard after my sister. My brother and sister were both near the ash-pit in the yard, very sick and vomiting. I was out about ten minutes. When I went back Barnet and Uncle Keylock were in the kitchen. Barnet was chopping up the dumplings on the plate. I saw three on one plate – the plate on which they were originally put, and the two halves on Barnet's plate: not a morsel of them eaten. He was chopping up these on the plate. They were chopped into the size of pieces fit to be put into the mouth. I went into the parlour and then into the yard. I saw the prisoner coming from the privy, and after he came from it he went to the pump and laid down the plate and pumped. All the wastewater runs from the pump through the privy, and then into the common sewer. The pump had been used for that purpose, and Barnet knew it. I went to the doctors and came back in ten minutes. After I came back Barnett came to the door. My brother and sister were in the parlour, and Barnett came to the door, turned up his shirt sleeves, and said "Mrs Gregory, give me the raw dumplings that I may put them away." I said "No, mother, keep them till the doctor comes" He made no observation. My mother gave them, and he took them away into the garden. The prisoner, after I had been to the doctor's, said he had put the dumplings into the privy. The doctor, Mr Hatch, came and saw my brother and

sister, and asked what they had been eating, and on being told, said they had been taking poison. Nothing but the cucumber had then been shown to him. He then asked was there any of the flour left that the dumplings had been made of. I went to fetch the cup, but there was no flour in it. It had been left half full. I went back and said, “the flour was gone.” Nothing was said then about the dumplings. Mr Hatch left the house, saying “who will come with me and fetch the medicine?” The prisoner said, “I will go.” He went and brought back two powders. I mixed the powder, and my sister took it. My brother would not take his. My mother said “if you do not you will die;” he said “Well then. I will die.” He was then spitting up blood. The next time I saw the cup it was in the kitchen and empty. My brother or sister had not taken it. My brother was then taken ill. About three-quarters of an hour after my sister was taken ill; I was taken ill too. That was before Mr Hatch came a second time. I had taken about the size of a nut of the dumpling off my brother's plate. Dr. Hatch came a second time, and also Dr Brookes, between six and seven. The prisoner carried my brother upstairs. After Dr Brookes had been Mr. Gregory came about nine. It was near six when my sister died. On the same day I saw the prisoner's wife. When she came, she went into his room and swept it clean into the fireplace. She had not been to the house for six months before. I do not remember her sweeping the room on any other occasion since she left it. My brother Samuel died a quarter before six on the Sunday morning. The prisoner did not go to work on the Saturday or Monday; he went on the Tuesday. The prisoner went to the inquest. On his return the prisoner said, Mrs. Gregory, you must say it is your flour, for I do not know where I had it from.” My mother was making some reply, when I said, “How can mother say it was her’s, when she was not at home? On the Saturday evening, I was in the prisoner's room: he was sitting on the side of the bed, and my sister Hannah brought him some castor oil; and when he was about to take it, his son said, “Why are you taking castor oil?” and he said, “Hold they tongue. Thee has not been taking poison.” Castor oil had been ordered for all of us. About two months before the prisoner had some duplings [sic]; ten were made by my mother; two were put away for his son George. One Sunday, I heard him say of my uncle he had made an oath of it, that he would double him like a nutshell: I said. Do not let mother hear you speak against him, as it would be the same as if you spoke against her,” and I never heard him speak again. He has often brought things from Monson Villa never said anything to me about them. The handkerchief was put into the yellow basin in the yard and was afterwards given to Mr. Gregory.

Mr. Symons cross-examined the witness to show no unfriendly feeling existed between the prisoner and the family of the Gregorys. The learned counsel also proposed to ask a question of the witness as to what she said before the coroner, without putting in the depositions there taken, on the ground that there was a distinction between depositions taken before the coroner and depositions taken before a magistrate; but his lordship, after consulting Mr. Justice Patteson, said there was no such distinction, and would not allow the questions to be put, but said the depositions before the coroner or the magistrate might be put into witnesses’ hands to refresh their memories. The depositions were then put into the witnesses’ hands, and she read them to herself; and added to her previous evidence that she was certain the prisoner did not eat any of the dumpling on his plate.

In her re-examination the witness said that some time ago her brother Samuel had hurt his leg. The prisoner applied something which cured it; he told him it was poison, and not to put anything near it. It was a black ointment. He said something about a stuff that cured sheep, and that he could not get more of it without sending to Cirencester. This was the winter before last. He said it had been sent for to cure sheep, but he had no more of the stuff and could not get it without sending to Cirencester for it.

Mrs Gregory was next examined and corroborated a great portion of the evidence of the last witness (her daughter). She could not swear whether the prisoner had or not eaten any of his dumpling. The medicine was mixed for her son, but he refused to take it. She gave the prisoner some medicine after dinner several times. He said he had taken some of the pudding.

Medicine was sent for all in the house. When he proposed to take the little boy upstairs, she asked if his legs faltered like the others, and he said “No; he could carry him upstairs.”

In cross-examination, she said they had many quarrels with Barnet, but not many words, as he would not have words with anyone. She lived on good terms with him, except when she put a question to him, and he would not answer. She saw him sick on the Friday or Saturday. She did not tell the prisoner to put the dumplings in the privy. The reply to questions by the judge, the witness said, that after the inquest, the prisoner said to her, “You must say our flour was yours, for you know I cannot say where I got it from.” His wife was cook at Monson Villa. I thought when he said, “You know I cannot say where I had it from,” he meant that he might have got it from his wife. He said it twice; once in his bedroom, and once at the kitchen door – once on the Friday, and once on the Saturday.

James Keylock, brother to the last witness, deposed that he had been working with the prisoner about two years ago. At this time a complaint was made by the master of the prisoner for his neglecting to do some work, and the prisoner afterwards said the witness must have told the master of it, and if he were not so old a man, he would strike him. On the 14th of Sept. he slept at his sisters in Cheltenham. He described the circumstances attendant on the distribution of the dumpling at dinner and stated that he tried a piece of one of the dumplings, about the size of a halfpenny, which made him sick, and he was ill for six weeks afterwards.

Martha Sage deposed that she was called in by Mrs Gregory and attended the boy Samuel after he was taken ill.

Mrs Pearce, of Hatherley, proved that the prisoner lent her some flour, which was good, a short time before the occurrence.

Miss Bedford proved that some flour was left for the use of the prisoner’s wife, during the school recess at Monson Villa, which was perfectly good.

John Preston, town-crier of Cheltenham, was at Mrs Gregory’s the day after the inquest, and saw the prisoner there. He asked him where he got the flour from, when he said he should not tell. “God bless my soul (said he) I often have flour; I often lend flour; I lent some flour to a person at Up Hatherley, and it never hurt them; and the flour I brought downstairs to mix the dumplings was the remainder of that I lent at Up Hatherly. I also asked him again where he had the flour from, and he replied he should not tell. He said he chopped the dumplings up in pieces, and he flung them down the privy or closet. He (witness) proposed that the privy should be opened, and the dumplings taken up, when he said he had washed it away with three or four buckets of water, into the main sewer, and it was impossible to find it. He had not been examined before the magistrates or the coroner. Witness said to the prisoner “it is a bad job;” to which he replied “yes, but it can’t be helped”

Police Sergeant Nightingale went to Mrs Gregory’s house the morning after the occurrence, and saw Mrs Gregory, Caroline Keylock, and the prisoner there. The prisoner was sitting upright in a chair, and did not appear so ill as the others. He inquired and was told what they had been eating for dinner the day before. He inquired if there was any of the puddings left; to which she replied “No, Barnett has thrown them down the privy.” Barnett heard this remark but said nothing. He went into the parlour and the kitchen, and on his return to the kitchen, Barnett said, “I am innocent.” He had heard no one make any charge against Barnett to induce this remark. He attended the inquest, which was held that afternoon. While the inquest was sitting, he went to the house, and received a handkerchief from Mrs Gregory, which he afterwards sent to Mr Herepath; [Editor - The Herapaths – 5th March 2024 – The Kingswood History Society] the handkerchief was marked. He saw the boy Samuel sick and put the vomits into a bottle. He took the prisoner up into his room, and examined the room, but found nothing there. When they entered the room prisoner said, “I am innocent; I am quite innocent.” He

replied, “Of what?” to which the prisoner answered, “Of poisoning Betsey.” Witness said, “No one has accused you of it.” That was all the conversation that passed. There were some ashes under the grate. He examined the privy and found half of a dumpling complete, with the apple in it. Prisoner, on seeing it, said “This is the half of the dumpling that I eat part of.” He also found several pieces of paste, which he let Mr Herapath have, together with the dumpling. He went a second time, taking with him a package which he received from Dr Brookes. He found a bag in the prisoner’s room, in his box. He took the key of the room first when he went there, but afterwards gave the key to the prisoner. He did not take the bag when first he saw it there.

Cross-examined – The prisoner expressed no disinclination to have his house searched. The prisoner said, “This is the part of the dumpling that I eat part of.” He was taken in custody on Tuesday night.

The first witness was recalled and stated that she did recollect there was a paper bag of flour in the parlour, of which a pudding had been made on the Sunday before.

Mr Hatch, assistant to Mr Gregory, surgeon, at Cheltenham, deposed as to the state in which he found the family when sent for on the Friday afternoon, and the medicine he prescribed for them.

Cross-examined – The prisoner appeared ill, like the others, but not so bad. He was sitting with his hand down and appeared much distressed. I did not see him vomit; he told me he had. I said, “Some one must be sent for the medicines.” And he said he would fetch them, and he came with me. He appeared to sympathise with the distress of the family, and to set as a kind-hearted man would act under the circumstances.

Dr Brookes, of Cheltenham, who was called in, in the evening, to the deceased, and who afterwards made a postmortem examination, proved that he transmitted packets containing flour from the handkerchief, paste from the saucepan, part of the dumplings from the privy, and part of the stomach of the deceased, to Mr Herepath, for analysis.

Mr Herapath proved that he had analysed the contents of the packets sent to him and found all those above mentioned contained arsenic. The quantity of arsenic was so great that a piece the size of a walnut would destroy life. Was certain that the deceased died from arsenic. Only the duodenum of the stomach was sent to him; but in cases of poisoning the whole abdominal viscera should be sent for analysis, and especially the liver. There was no poison in the flour in the bag found in the prisoner’s box.

George Barnett was examined by Mr Powell, and said he was the son of the prisoner, was 15 years of age, that he had lived and worked with his father, and that they cultivated a piece of ground at Hatherley. They always locked the room when they went out, and put the key in the bottom of a chair in the stairs. The chair was hung in the stairs. His father often came home before he did, and went out again, when he always found the keys on the chair. There were cupboards and drawers in the room which were never locked. He remembered the night before the melancholy affair happened that his father was unwell. His father had always been a kind parent to him and his sisters. He never knew that his father brought home flour, nor did his sister ever do so.

This was the case for the crown.

Mr Symons then addressed the jury observing that the case was one of great difficulty to deal with, it being one of those peculiar cases of circumstantial evidence, wherein it was impossible to rebut or explain away the principal facts proved in evidence. For instance, there could be no doubt in this instance that two unfortunate young persons lost their lives from eating dumplings, the flour of which contained a large admixture of arsenic. There could be no doubt

the flour came from the prisoner, who was wholly unable to prove that he had not put arsenic in it – the point would not admit of proof,,- so that the jury, after taking all the circumstances of the case into consideration, would have to decide the question – had the prisoner a guilty knowledge that the flour contained arsenic. This was in reality the great question they would have to try as affecting the guilt or innocence of the unfortunate prisoner. He would observe here that the case for the prosecution was singularly defective in one particular, one of the very last importance in a case of poisoning; that is to say; they had failed to prove where the arsenic came from, whether the prisoner or any other person for him had purchased arsenic. He submitted that there had not been produced a tittle of evidence to bring home the purchase or previous possession of the arsenic to the prisoner. There were, however, a hundred different ways in which the flour might have become impregnated with arsenic, accidently, and without any guilty knowledge on the part of Barnett. It might for instance have come, although not legitimately, from Monson Villa, or it might have come in one of those small parcels of flour which he was in the habit of purchasing, having found its way there by accident while in the possession of others. Look, however, to the probabilities of the case. Suppose Barnett was the malignant criminal the prosecution would make him out, could he not have put arsenic in the flour belonging to Mrs Gregory, which was shown to have been lying in the parlour cupboard. In that case he could have effected his purpose without rushing into the lion's mouth, by bringing the poisoned flour from his own room. But here Barnett gave the flour and apples to make the dumplings, sat down with the family to partake of them, and actually proceeded to eat one, when he was prevented from going on by the complaint of the boy that the dumpling was bad. Viewing the whole conduct of the prisoner, before, at, and after the poisoned meal, and presuming him to be innocent, was there anything inconsistent in what he did? Were not his whole proceedings those of a man altogether ignorant of the source whence the arsenic came? In trying to destroy or put away the poisoned pudding, the prisoner was acting on the suggestion of Mrs Gregory, and was substantially doing his duty. If he had sought to destroy the evidence against himself, why not make away with the most important piece of evidence against himself, namely his own handkerchief, which lay in the basin in the washhouse for two days after the dinner. Then there was an attempt to prove that the prisoner bore malice towards Keylock, and also that he lived on bad terms with the Gregory family, as accounting for a motive sufficiently criminal to induce him to commit murder; but this attempt he considered a miserable failure. His confessions from time to time were brought forward from time to time, but what sign of guilt was there in all this? He never attempted to deny that he provided the flour, never denied that he made away with the dumplings, but on the contrary, admitted everything which the other side could prove by their many witnesses. Again, several days elapsed after the death of Elizabeth Gregory, before any attempt was made to apprehend Barnett; yet there was no attempt on his part to escape, no evidence of guilt, nothing in short inconsistent with the innocence of Barnett from beginning to end. After analysing the more minute portions of the evidence, the learned counsel concluded by forcibly placing before the eyes of the jury the diabolical nature of the crime laid to the prisoner's charge, that of attempting to murder by poison a whole family. Scarcely a parallel case could be found on record, and no one circumstance in this case, he contended, would warrant a jury in concluding that the prisoner was monster enough to be guilty of such a crime.

Mr Baron Platt summed up the evidence, and the jury, after withdrawing for half an hour, returned into court with a verdict of not guilty.

The trial occupied from 9 a.m. to nearly 10 p.m. While the learned judge was summing up the evidence the prisoner wrote a note to his attorney, requesting him to interest himself to obtain the "witness's money" for his son George, fearing, probably, that as he had been examined for the Crown he would not be entitled to it.

Finding David Ricardo - Connecting with the Past

By Brian Lett

Well, fellow local historians, may I pass on what, if it were true, would be very good news. Historical figures from the past may now be available to chat to on Linkedin.

When searching for the will of the second David Ricardo of Gatcombe Park [which I suspect is at the Gloucester Archives], I did a Google search on “Will of David Ricardo Junior”. Up popped the fact that David Ricardo has got a Linkedin page.

Surprised but delighted, I clicked on the link [why don’t you try it too!]. Bearing in mind that David Ricardo the First, M.P., died in 1823 [202 years ago], I was a little surprised to read his entry [which was still there at time of going to press!].

I quote from his Linkedin page:

“[I was] born April 18, 1772, in London…began working at the age of 14 in my father’s investment company…” So, this David accepts he is pretty old to be on Linkedin – 253 years of age. Linkedin are obviously using a medium.

There is a lovely colour photograph of Gatcombe Park with the caption: “My current estate in Gloucestershire.”

There is information about his time in parliament between 1819 and 1823, but coupled with the assertion: “Member of Parliament 1953 – present, 71 years 11months”. [Editor – Great Great Grandfather of the house then!] Other information includes:

“1790-1814, built a company from a capital base of £800.”

His publications include publications in 1810 and 1815

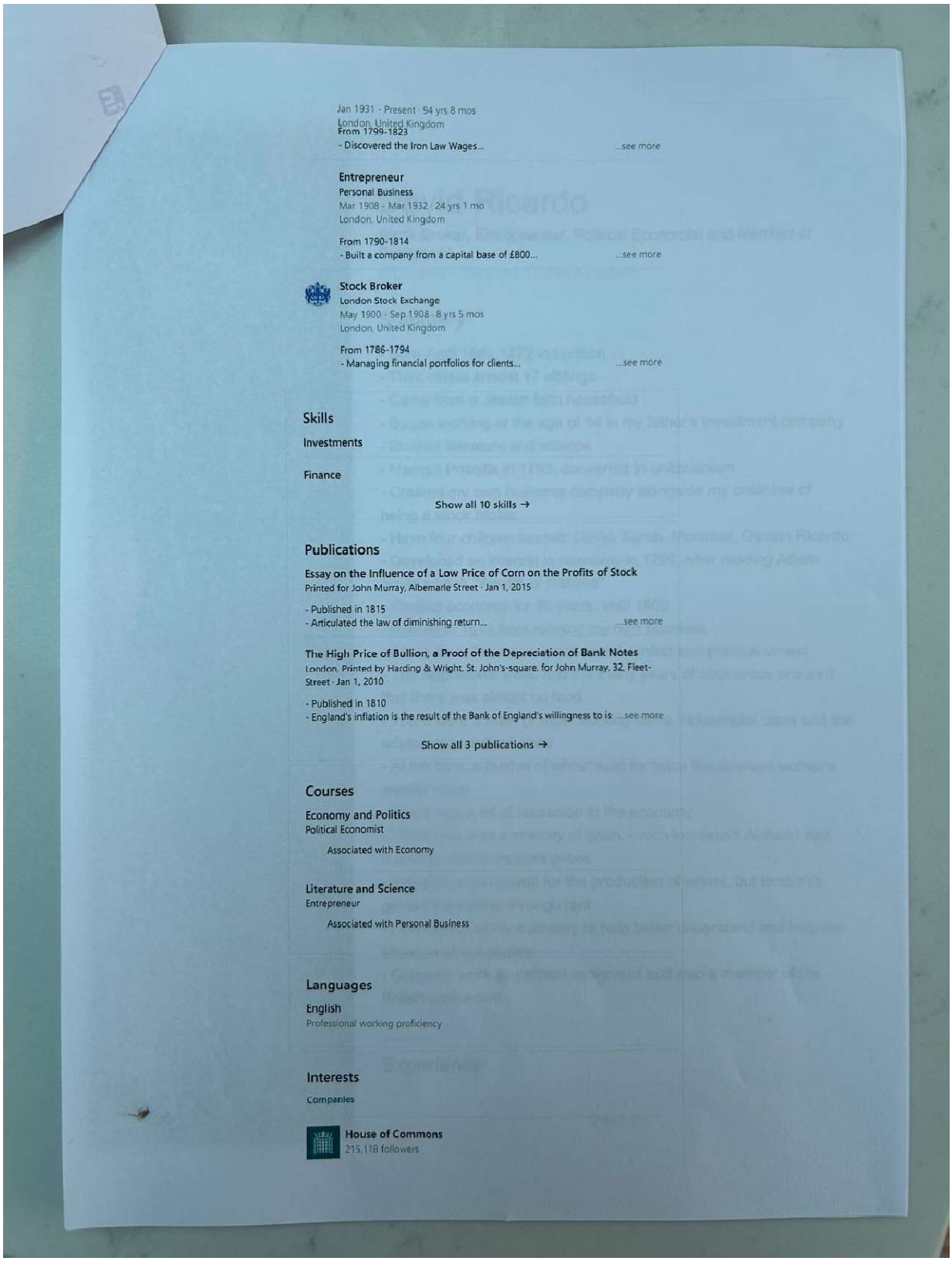
He cites his skills as “investments and finance”

Reading all this, I wanted to know who was behind what is obviously a fake entry, so I became David Ricardo MP’s second follower on Linkedin, although their website told me: “David hasn’t posted yet”. What a surprise and what a shame – I would love to hear what he has to say today from his vault in Hardenhuish, near Chippenham.

Perhaps he could advise the British Government on the state of the British economy today, he was always a patriot, and I am sure would like to help.

Finding David Ricardo was an amusing, and rather extraordinary, event in my afternoon. But is it not actually a rather sinister example of Artificial Intelligence going mad on Linkedin – creating members who, put bluntly, are simply a pile of ashes or bones, or never existed at all?

Two questions result:
[i] How many of your contacts on Linkedin are genuine, and how many are simply AI creations?
[ii] What is Artificial Intelligence going to do to our history?



Jan 1931 - Present · 94 yrs 8 mos
London, United Kingdom
From 1799-1823
- Discovered the Iron Law Wages... ...see more

Entrepreneur
Personal Business
Mar 1908 - Mar 1932 · 24 yrs 1 mo
London, United Kingdom

From 1790-1814
- Built a company from a capital base of £800... ...see more

Stock Broker
London Stock Exchange
May 1900 - Sep 1908 · 8 yrs 5 mos
London, United Kingdom

From 1786-1794
- Managing financial portfolios for clients... ...see more

Skills

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Finance

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Publications

Essay on the Influence of a Low Price of Corn on the Profits of Stock
Printed for John Murray, Albemarle Street · Jan 1, 2015

- Published in 1815
- Articulated the law of diminishing return... ...see more

The High Price of Bullion, a Proof of the Depreciation of Bank Notes
London, Printed by Harding & Wright, St. John's-square, for John Murray, 32, Fleet-Street · Jan 1, 2010

- Published in 1810
- England's inflation is the result of the Bank of England's willingness to is ...see more

Show all 3 publications →

Courses

Economy and Politics
Political Economist

Associated with Economy

Literature and Science
Entrepreneur

Associated with Personal Business

Languages

English
Professional working proficiency

Interests

Companies

House of Commons
215,118 followers

Part of Ricardos CV from Linkedin!

Dates For Your Diary

2025

Sep 19 – The Market House – Richard Davis – Tom Long's Post.

Oct 3 – Alan Vaughan – Educating Minchinhampton or Sorry, A Sheep Ate My Research. Film night with films on Gladys Beale, A Portal Through Time [Minchinhampton Primary School] and Minchinhampton in the Elizabethan Age.

Oct 31 - The Market House – Kirsty Hartsiotis –Ghosts in the Stones: Supernatural Tales in Gloucestershire.

Nov 7 – The Market House – Remembrance talk – Title to be advised.

Dec 19 – The Market House – MLHG – AGM [+ Talk = TBA]

2026 Jan 24 – The Market House – Howard Beard – Title TBA

Mar 20 – The Market House – Stuart Butler – Radical Stroud

Apr 17 – The Market House – Ian Mackintosh – Life and Times at: Longford Mills and Ham Mills

Oct 30 – The Market House – John Putley – Witchfynder - History of witches and tales of Gloucestershire witches

Nov 6 – The Market House – Andy Meller – The Glosters at Waterloo.

Dec 11 – The Market House – Patrick Furley – Magic Lantern Christmas Show followed by AGM.

The strange case of Tom Long's Post

Highwayman or suicide or — something else?

In this talk Richard Davis explores the many theories put forward for the name of this famous signpost and presents some new evidence.

THE MARKET HOUSE MINCHINHAMPTON

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

starting at 7.30pm

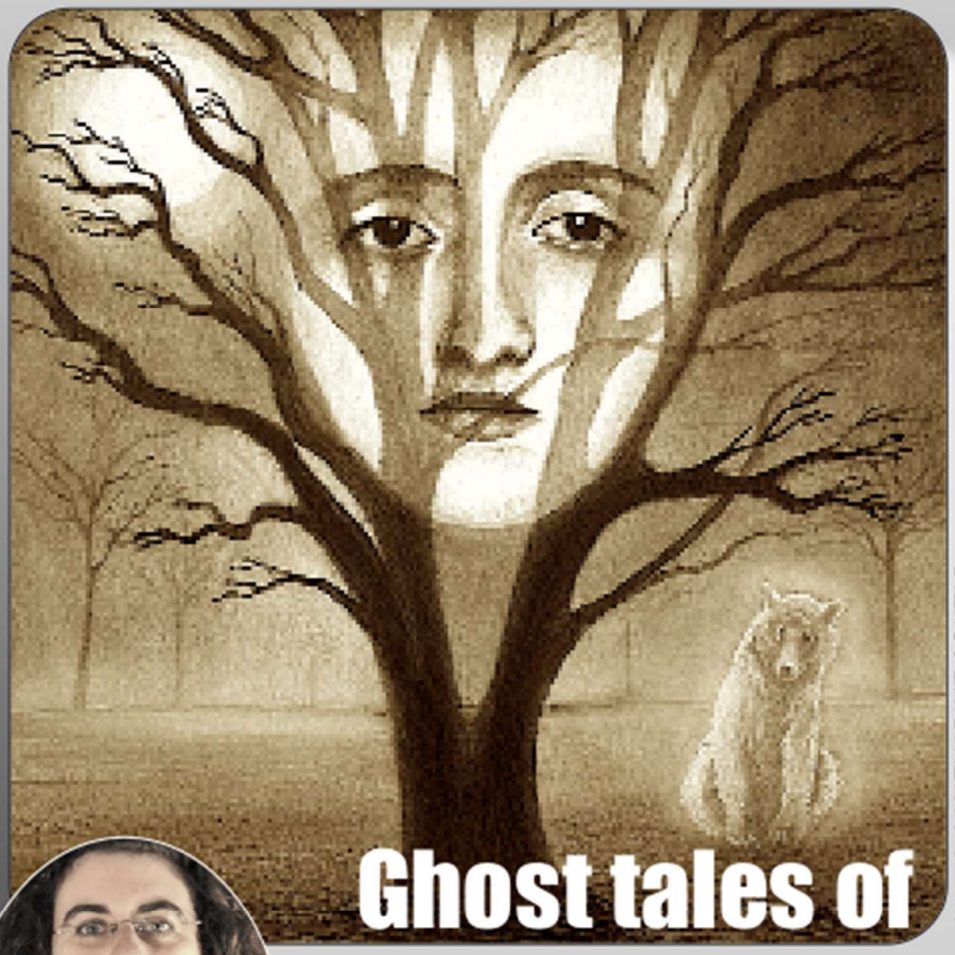
Tickets £5 (cash please) from the Premier Market Store, Minchinhampton, (£4 for members of Minchinhampton Local History Group) or on the door (cash or card). Licensed bar. Presented by Minchinhampton Local History Group.

Highways, Byways and Turnpikes around Stroud

Researched and written by members of
eleven local history groups
in the Stroud district

Edited by Marion Hearfield

HALLOWEEN



Artwork © KATHARINE SOUTAR

Ghost tales of Gloucestershire

As told by author Kirsty Hartsiotis

Tickets £5 (cash please) from the Premier Market Store, Minchinhampton, (£4 for members of Minchinhampton Local History Group) or on the door (cash or card). Licensed bar. Presented by minchinhamptonlocalhistorygroup.org.uk

Friday October 31
7.30pm Market House
Minchinhampton