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NOTES & QUERIES

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From The Editor

This issue contains an unusual number of items on members of the Hulls family. A new contributor, Oliver Bradbury, has provided a fascinating and important article about the work the nineteenth century local builder and architect, Richard Hulls, carried out for the second Lord Northwick. As promised in an earlier issue, Joan Ryder has written a second instalment of the seventeenth and eighteenth century descendants of the inventor, Jonathan Hulls. The opportunity has been taken to include a brief note on Richard Hulls from Rushen's *History* and from the records of the Churchyard Survey.

A further follow-up from a previous issue is from another welcome new contributor; David Cotterell's memories of the suggested area of the Hanging Post add considerably to the evidence in favour of this location.

Two other contributors need no introduction. Allan Warmington has added to the story of the Commonwealth and Restoration periods with his account of the tribulations of a Commonwealth Minister at Willersey. Geoffrey Powell has hastened to bring to notice an additional point on the evidence for the Campden Altar Hangings always having been the property of the parish church, which came to light only when the article published by BGAS was already in print. (Copies of an offprint of the article are available from CADHAS).

Finally, in time for Christmas, there is a reminder that in earlier days circumstances could dramatically overturn townsfolk's plans and preparations for the festive season.

A Hungry Christmas in Campden

It was 1387. On 19th December, King Richard II's friend and favourite, Robert de Vere, rode into Campden with 4,000 men-at-arms requiring food and accommodation for the night. Perhaps the Bailiff and Burgesses already knew that he had been impeached and accused of treason; they soon found out that he had recruited troops in Chester and was on his way to London. His intention was to join forces with the king but the Lords Appellant were on their way from Chipping Norton to cut him off.¹

Not often has Campden found itself in the thick of national events but on this occasion historic considerations took second place in the townsfolk's minds to the fact that here was this nobleman, second only to the King himself (before his impeachment of course), Robert de Vere, ninth Earl of Oxford, Duke of Ireland, Privy Councillor, Knight of the Garter, Hereditary Great Chamberlain of England, etc. - even if he was on campaign he'd expect to eat well² and he had 4,000 hungry mouths with him. It was normal practice for troops to live off the land and in a situation of near civil war any lack of enthusiasm to offer hospitality could be construed as sympathy for the other cause and would be dealt with accordingly.

Their consternation can be imagined. The food in store in December had to suffice until the next season's harvest. Some provision had been made for Christmas feasting of course - but this would provide only a part of what was needed for Robert and his immediate entourage. The men-at-arms would consume much of the rest of their store. At least the unwelcome guests only remained one night, and no doubt it was with a sigh of relief that they watched Robert and his troops ride off early - towards defeat at Radcot Bridge in Oxfordshire.³

And then a party of troops sent by the Lords Appellant⁴ rode in to hold the town in case Robert or his broken forces retreated this way.⁵

Notes

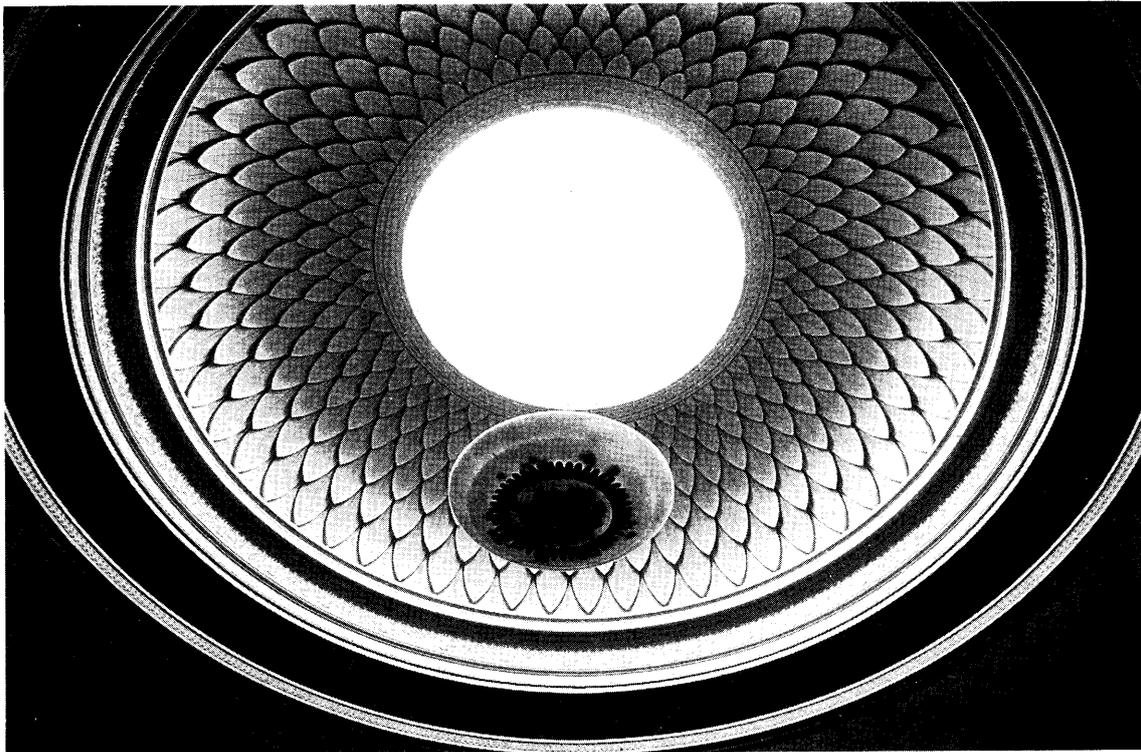
- 1 For a fuller account of these events see *The Oxford History of England - The Fourteenth Century 1307 - 1399* by May Melsack, Oxford - Clarendon Press, (1959 etc). For further information on Robert de Vere, see the entry in *The Dictionary of National Biography* OUP (1975).
- 2 He would normally expect to eat better than, say, a bishop and as an example of a feast prepared for the Bishop of Swinbury nearly 100 years earlier, it is recorded that 3 bulls were slaughtered, 2 calves, 4 pigs, 4 does, 80 chickens, 12 partridges plus geese, bread, cheese, wines and other items. Though the quality and range of what Campden could offer on short notice would in no way approach this, the quantity required must have been phenomenal.
- 3 When Robert de Vere realised his position was hopeless he fled, abandoning his troops, struggled across a ford, eventually making his way to the continent where he lived until his accidental death, gored by a wild boar on a hunting expedition.
- 4 The Lords Appellant included Henry Bolingbroke, son of John of Gaunt, later King Henry IV.
- 5 In 1993 the CADHAS Christmas meeting covered aspects of *Christmas in Campden* down the ages. The above is based on one of the pieces prepared for that occasion which unashamedly extrapolated and dramatised the probable reactions and consequences within the town of the events only covered in outline in histories of the times. The final sentence of the piece was "Their leader reined horse in the Square and sent for the Bailiff and Burgesses - he smiled wolfishly - 'What's for dinner?' he said."

Richard Hulls of Chipping Campden's work for John Rushout,
the 2nd Lord Northwick, 1769 - 1859

Oliver Bradbury

Little has been written on the work of Richard Hulls save for an entry in Sir Howard Colvin's *Biographical Dictionary of English Architects (1600 - 1840)*.¹ This note is concerned with a little studied aspect of Hull's work for the 2nd Lord Northwick at Northwick Park, Blockley, Glos., and possibly at Northwick's Cheltenham residence, Thirlestaine House. In 1832 - 4 Hulls built the Picture Gallery at Northwick Park for Lord Northwick.² This still survives though it has lost its original interior with a recent residential conversion. The gallery was built to incorporate Northwick's ever expanding picture collection. It is a remarkably competent late classical design from a provincial builder/architect of whose training we know nothing. In essence it was a long rectangular top lit room enriched with various neo-classical mouldings.

Some time before 1838³ Northwick acquired Thirlestaine House, Cheltenham, which was started in 1820⁴ though still unfinished as late as 1838. To the 1820 core - a Grecian box - Northwick added in 1839 - 40⁵ a picture gallery again to absorb the endless collection, which in many aspects, particularly the interior, is a *verbatim* copy of the 1832 - 4 gallery at Northwick Park. Successfully linking the gallery to the 1820 house is a charming top lit rotunda decorated internally with a fleshy lotus leaf dome arranged like fish-scales. Like the gallery it appears to be based on the famous lotus leaf top lit staircase dome at Northwick Park of 1828 - 30⁶ possibly by Hulls, and perhaps with Thirlestaine' the only two of their kind in the country. Thirlestaine's unique rotunda dome would appear to serve as a permanent reminder of Northwick Park when Northwick was staying at Cheltenham.



The Dome at Thirlestaine House, Cheltenham, built between 1839 - 40, possibly by Richard Hulls of Chipping Campden. (Photograph by courtesy of G.R.O.⁷)

The overwhelming stylistic similarities between Northwick Park's and Thirlestaine's picture galleries and domes allied with the same client, and the fact that Hulls was still alive till 1841 (just in time for Thirlestaine's gallery completion in summer 1840)⁸ would suggest that Richard Hulls of Chipping Campden was Northwick's architect and builder at Thirlestaine - after all Cheltenham wasn't so far from Chipping Campden. Hull's work at Northwick Park and possibly at Thirlestaine House represent very late examples of the long standing tradition of the top lit picture gallery originally derived from the Elizabethan or Jacobean 'Long Room,' but inaugurated in its neo-classical incarnation by Sir John Soane's, recently known to be unexecuted,⁹ but influential design for a top lit picture gallery at Fonthill Splendens for the richest 'commoner' in England, William Beckford some 45 - 52 years before Hulls's late contributions.¹⁰ The incorrigible Lord Northwick would go on to build further picture galleries (some eight more) in 1845,¹¹ and in the 1850s at Thirlestaine, but Hulls's involvement can be ruled out at this date. Lord Northwick's last gallery dates from 1855¹¹ when he was in his 86th year - not long before he died in 1859.

Readers might be interested to know of a connection closer to home as recorded in a Court Leet volume¹³ for the Manor of Chipping Campden on 28 October, 1814, Richard Hulls *or his namesake* had to attend a 'Presentment at Court Leet' where he was reprimanded for the following:

'We also present Richard Hulls for Timber lying in the Street if not removed before the Fifth on the Day of Nov.' next shall pay the sum of One Pound Five Shillings.'

Clearly quite a nasty little fine in those days!¹⁴

Notes & Bibliography

- 1 p.519. For a summary of Hulls's career refer to Colvin's *Dictionary*.
- 2 p.519, *Biographical Dictionary of English Architects 1600 - 1840*, 3rd ed., Yale, (1995)
- 3 *The Cheltenham Looker-On*, p.86, Aug. 11, 1838.
- 4 Post Office map of Cheltenham.
- 5 *The Cheltenham Looker-On*, p.39, Jan. 18, 1839.
- 6 p.191, Nicholas Kingsley, *The Country Houses of Gloucestershire*, Volume 2 1660 - 1830, Phillimore, (1992).
- 7 GRO D 3867 IV/17 14970; photograph taken by Robert Paterson, 1975. For comparison see plate 91 *The buildings of England, Gloucestershire: The Cotswolds*, David Verey; plate 89 *The Greek Revival*, J Mordaunt-Crook; and p. 191, vol. 2 *Country Houses of Gloucestershire*, Nicholas Kingsley.
- 8 *The Cheltenham Looker-On*, p.262, April 25, 1840.
- 9 Christopher Woodward, 'William Beckford and Fonthill Splendens, Early Works by Soane and Goodridge', *Apollo*, (Feb. 1998). pp. 31 - 40.
- 10 p. 246, Dorothy Stroud, *Sir John Soane Architect*, Giles de la Mere, London, (1996).
- 11 *The Cheltenham Looker-On*, p.374, June 14, 1845.
- 12 *Cheltenham Examiner*, p.4, Sept. 12, 1855.
- 13 GRO 2857 2/2
- 14 A transatlantic comparison can be made with the Anglo-American architect William Jay (who later worked in Cheltenham) who notoriously left piles of building materials out in the streets beside the lots he was building on. H was fined 10 dollars and costs 'for obstructing President Street and St James's Square' (Savannah) in October 1819. p. 121, H.H.Lerski, *William Jay Itinerant English Architect 1792 - 1837*, University Press of America, Lanham, (1983).

The Chipping Campden Altar Hangings

Geoffrey Powell

To state the obvious, history cannot avoid being incomplete. Sources hitherto undiscovered and unsuspected lie in ambush. A prime example touches the paper on the Chipping Campden altar hangings published in April 1998 in volume CXV of the *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*. (TBGAS). In this article all the known and much fresh evidence was dissected in order to discover whether these vestments were part of William Bradway's munificent bequest to the parish church made in 1488; it concluded:

One day perhaps, further information about the provenance of St. James's altar hangings may come to light. Today, however, their link with Bradway's bequest is tenuous but possible. For the time being not proven is the only verdict.

One reason for this verdict was the lack of firm evidence for the presence of the hangings in the church before 1887, the year they were shown in London to the Society of Antiquaries.

Exhibited in London with the hangings was the church's equally famous cope, some century older than the hangings; nothing was known about its provenance when the article was written. However, two days after offprints of it reached Campden, one of the joint authors was investigating another aspect of Campden's history in Part One of Ralph Bigland, *Historical, Monumental and Genealogical Collections Relative to the County of Gloucester*, published first in 1791 but brought out again by BGAS in 1989. Written on page 268 in Bigland's piece on St. James's Church was:

. . . but in an old Chest, is shown a Cope of Crimson Velvet, semee of ducal Coronets and Estoiles, and on the Border the Portraits of Saints embroidered.

Clearly this is the Campden cope and if the church owned the cope in 1791, it seems more than likely that the altar hangings were there as well, not necessarily kept in a purpose made chest like the cope but just folded or rolled up in a cupboard or chest and not thought worthy of mention. It is most improbable that an Anglican church such as St. James's would have acquired such a 'Romish' cope either in the eighteenth century or the previous one; the Oxford Movement lay a long way off.

Here surely is a further segment of evidence edging further the proposition that the altar hangings have belonged to the church since Bradway's bequest.

A Note on Richard Hulls

A little of the life story of Richard Hulls, the builder and architect, can be gained from references in Percy Rushen's *The History and Antiquities of Chipping Campden in the County of Gloucester* (1911) and from the *General Accounts of the Churchwardens of Chipping Campden 1626 - 1907*, Campden Record Series (1992). It appears likely that Hulls got his start in his business with the help of a loan from Savage's charity. Rushen notes (p.172) that

About the year 1656 Mr. Savage gave £20 to be lent out by the Corporation of Campden to four poor tradesmen for four years without interest. It appears that £10 of the said sum had been lost for many years before 1829, and at that time £5 of it was traced to Mr. Richard Hulls who obtained it from Wm. Chamberlain, a shoemaker to whom it had been lent. Upon application it was repaid to the bailiffs.

He himself repaid this assistance with interest to Campden's poor for Rushen (p.174) also records that

Mr. Richard Hulls, of whom mention has before been made, and who died in 1841, gave £200 to the poor of the parish, the income being distributed to them weekly in bread.

The Churchwardens' Accounts for the years 1798 to 1840 inclusive show payments to him for work to the church and also that he was a churchwarden continuously from 1812/13 to 1818/19. Other work attributed to him by Rushen (p.162) was to the Town Hall

The Town Hall, against the Market-square, is an interesting but mysterious structure. Portions of it, notably the panelled buttresses on the east side, are of fourteenth century work while the main portion appears to have been built early last century, and looks like the work of Richard Hulls, the local builder of that time.

It appears that he was also responsible for the rebuilding of the east wall of the chancel of Blockley church in 1838.

Richard Hulls seems to have married twice, first to Rachel Weston, who died in 1809, probably in childbirth, and then to Mary, who outlived him. To the east of the porch of St. James's church is a group of memorials to several members of the Hulls family. In addition to the gravestones, two plaques have been set into the outside of the east porch wall; the first reads as follows:

To
the Memory of RACHEL,
the true and faithful wife
of RICHARD HULLS of this Place,
and sixth daughter of John and Mary Weston, of Ebrington.
She departed this Life June 4th, 1809
Aged 38 Years

....call our ... mind in
the meakest in her found
I hope with her in BLISS to rise
When JESUS bid the Trumpet sound.
Mary Ann their Daughter,
died June 22nd, 1809, Aged 10 weeks.

Also in memory of Ann Hulls, sister of the above Richard Hulls,
who died April 10th, 1822.

Aged 58 Years.

[G17]

continued on page 57

Revd. Richard Flavell

A Commonwealth Minister at Willersey

Allan Warmington

At the restoration of Charles II there was a genuine feeling nationally that a restoration of church unity after all the dissensions and turmoil of the Commonwealth period, was essential to the survival of the country. The new political leaders, in alliance with many of the bishops, set themselves determinedly to bring this unity about. The Church of England was re-established under its bishops. The bishops were restored to positions of influence in Parliament and the state, and a set liturgy and uniform doctrines were imposed on the established church - something that had not really happened since the time of Elizabeth I.

Unfortunately, re-establishment was accompanied by a period of profound intolerance, repression and even persecution, directed both towards those remaining in the mainstream Puritan sects (the Presbyterians and Independents) and to more independent groups like Baptists and Quakers. Attempts, especially by the Presbyterians, to reach agreement with the bishops were rejected, and quite soon any form of worship or doctrine other than those set out in the 1661 Prayer Book was prohibited.

By the 1662 Act of Uniformity all clergymen were made to submit to their bishops and to episcopal ordination, to declare their acceptance of the new Prayer Book, to take oaths of obedience to Canon Law, and to abjure the 1643 Covenant that had fortified the position of the Protestant reformers. Those who did not submit were ejected from their parishes, and by a further Act some years later they were forbidden to go within five miles of any town, or to speak within five miles of where they had previously preached.

It appears that over 2,000 members of the clergy of parish churches - most of them Presbyterians - were ejected from their livings in the years immediately after the Restoration in 1660. There are plenty of examples of this in the district round Campden. Ministers were ejected from Willersey, Lower Lemington, Oddington, Stow, Bourton-on-the-Water, Naunton, Great Rissington, Winchcombe, Tewkesbury, and many other parishes in Gloucestershire. Many of the ejected clergy faced hardship. Some became teachers, others took up menial trades, and many lived in poverty. All at this time who persisted in openly practising their religion, whether Independent, Presbyterian, Quaker or Baptist, suffered some form of persecution, and it is from this time that the terms 'Protestant Dissent' and 'Non-Conformity' originate.

An example of the conditions pertaining is Archbishop Sheldon's letter to every parish urging the clergy and churchwardens to "take notice of all Nonconformists and unlawful assemblies under pretence of Religious Worship, especially of the preachers and teachers in them, and to address themselves to the justices, magistrates, and others concerned, imploring their help and assistance for preventing and suppressing the same."

"We shall see", he said, "the seduced people returning from their seditious and self-seeking teachers to the unity of the church and uniformity of God's worship".

So much for the zealotry of the new conformists.

An interesting illustration comes from Willersey. I have taken it from the *Nonconformists Memorial* by a contemporary, Dr Edmund Calamy, supplemented by some details in the *Hockaday Abstracts*. It appears that George Sandys, vicar of Willersey since 1630, about whose appointment there had already been a dispute, was 'sequestered' during the Commonwealth and his place taken by a Mr Richard Flavell, who seems to have been a fairly influential Presbyterian Minister, and one of the local 'Commissioners for the Approbation of Public Preachers' appointed under the Long Parliament. Dr Calamy says of Mr Flavell "He was an affectionate preacher, and a man of such extraordinary piety that those who communed with him said they had never heard a vain word drop from his lips".

Sequestration of incumbents, usually because of High Church tendencies or Royalist sympathies, was a fairly common occurrence during the Commonwealth. The incumbent was deprived of his living and usually of the vicarage house, but otherwise usually unmolested, and allowed to remain in the parish if he was resident there. In Willersey, as in many other places, on a petition to Parliament by Mr Sandys in 1647, Mr Flavell agreed to pay one fifth of the profits of the living to Mrs Sandys for the maintenance of her and her children. The value of the living was low however (said to be under £40 a year) and early in 1660 Mr Flavell, "of whose godly conversacion, ability and fitness for the said place these Trustees have received good testimony" was granted an additional £20 by the 'Trustees for the Maintenance of Ministers'.

In spite of this testimony to his work, Mr Flavell was ejected from Willersey immediately on the Restoration in 1660 and the former incumbent restored to the living. He went to Dartmouth where his son was Rector of St Clements. He then secured a position at Totnes for a short time, whence he was again ejected, this time under the 1662 Act. He then went to London, where he mixed with other Presbyterians. In 1665, when the King and Parliament retired to Oxford to avoid the plague, Mr Flavell was one of a number of dissenters 'clapped up' for a time in gaol on the grounds that they might plot against the absent government.

Later that year a rather worse incident occurred. Mr Flavell was leading a prayer meeting in Covent Garden when soldiers burst in with swords drawn and started questioning those present. The congregation covered their preacher with a cloak and refused to identify him. They were all taken to Whitehall, where the next day they were fined 5/- each, which most refused to pay. Thereupon they were thrown into Newgate gaol. It was still 1665. Plague was raging in the gaol. Of 38 of these people sent to Newgate, eighteen or nineteen, including Mr Flavell and his wife, died of the plague, either in gaol or immediately afterwards.

Flavell's son who, like many of the ejected ministers, was an Oxford graduate, escaped that fate, but he was at one stage hounded out of town by a mob and had to seek asylum. He later became a well-known and respected divine and preacher in the West of England, and he wrote a number of treatises on both religious and practical subjects. His great interest was in promoting union between the Presbyterian and Independent Churches.

This is an example of the atmosphere in which those who continued to dissent were forced to live during the immediate post-Restoration years. Most of those who persisted in practising their religion later suffered from measures such as the *Conventicle Act*, which forbade more than five persons to hold a religious meeting in any house, and the *Corporation and Test Acts* which excluded them from municipal office or from any public employment. It was from the King rather than Parliament that the first relief came, with the granting of indulgencies to

many preachers and their congregations in 1672. Not until the Act of Tolerance of 1689, however, was any great relief granted to dissenters, and even after this they remained under civil disabilities for more than a century.

Today we live in a more tolerant age. To those of us concerned with ecumenism such an atmosphere is almost unbelievable. But as a nation we don't hold religion today to be of the same importance as it was three hundred years ago, when so many of all shades of belief went willingly to prison rather than give up the right to practise their faith in the way they believed was right. Is this progress or not?

A Note on Richard Hulls; continued from page 54

The second plaque on the exterior wall of the porch is the memorial of Richard Hulls himself and his second wife.

To the Memory of
RICHARD HULLS
Builder and Architect
For 47 years he pursued
in this town and neighbourhood
with great success,
and with an unusual reputation,
the business of his calling,
and died at length carrying
with him the esteem
of all who knew him.
His mortal remains repose in a grave
not far from this stone;
His soul rests in hope of
a blessed resurrection.

If we believe that Jesus died and rose again
even so them also which
sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

He died Dec 5th A.D.1841 aged 68

Also in Memory of MARY HULLS,
Widow of the above Richard Hulls,
who died November 7th 1865.
Aged 86 years.

[G18]

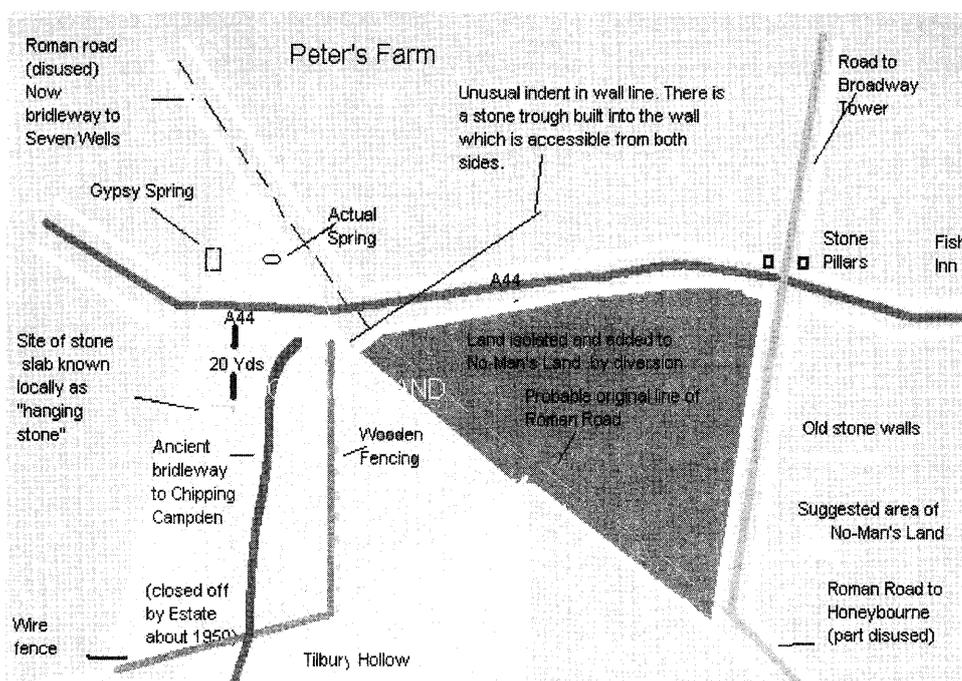
The Hanging Post on No-Man's Land - a further note

David Cotterell

Having lived at Gypsy Spring for many years I was interested in the above item in the spring 1998 *Notes & Queries* and can add a little information which may be of interest. Regrettably the enclosed map is not very artistic and lacks accuracy as I do not have the appropriate Ordnance Survey map available, but hopefully it makes the following comments more intelligible.

It was always considered that the area known as 'No-man's Land' was an accident of parish and county boundaries and was probably selected for the gallows as it was adjacent to a highway, was in Campden parish, had no owner and therefore did not offend anyone. The actual location of the gallows may be established more accurately perhaps when examine the Roman road, (Ryknild Street?) which impinges on the area.

As every schoolboy knows, the Romans built their roads straight 'to stop the Ancient Britons from hiding round the corners' and it is therefore almost certain that a small diversion was made at a much later date to establish a junction with the A44 at the two stone pillars forming an old entrance to the Middle Hill Estate (designated as 'Road to Broadway Tower' for easier identification). This becomes more evident when it is noted that one of the walls followed what would have been the original line and the 'unusual indent' noted on the drawing probably indicates that a section of the wall has been removed and the Roman Road blocked off at this point. However, taking this adjustment into account, the western part of the land in question was severed from its natural boundary and actually added to No-man's Land. Then bearing in mind the generous verges provided for flocks of sheep when the walls were built, it becomes reasonable that the original 'No-man's Land' was the area between the actual Roman Road line and the stone wall to the east of the ancient bridleway to Chipping Campden.



If I wanted to select a spot to raise gallows for which no permission was required, which was exposed as a warning to as many travellers and itinerants as possible, which ensured that the last earthly sight of the felons was the alleged scene of their crime yet did not offend the sensibilities of the good Campden townsfolk, I would consider the No-man's Land triangle as the heaven sent solution to my problem.

At the time in question it represented the confluence of the Highway, the bridleway, (probably a main access to Campden at the time), and the old Roman Road which would have had greater relevance in the days of the horse. In considering the exact location of the gallows within that triangle, the land to the west falls away slightly and may well have included an established plantation of mature trees, whereas to the east of the bridleway the land is slightly higher and overlooks a gradual descent to Campden to give a clear view of the church and the rooftops.

Perhaps the most intriguing piece of evidence regarding the exact location of the gallows was the so-called 'gallows stone.' This stone lay horizontally and partially buried in a small larch plantation, (of more recent origin), to the east of the ancient bridleway and some twenty yards from both that and the highway as indicated on the drawing. The name could of course have stemmed from wishful thinking or pure imagination but there was no other stone in the vicinity, it was probably too large for one man to carry and there seemed to be no other reason for its location.

During recent visits to the area it was observed that the larch plantation had been felled and cleared and I must confess I did not immediately remember the 'gallows stone'. In any case 'No-man's Land' appears to have been swallowed up and is now claimed as 'Private'. The ancient bridleway has been choked off to ensure the privacy of a 'Johnny come lately' without regard for generations of usage and for all I know, the 'gallows stone' has now been bull-dozed into the ground and the poor old long-suffering Perrys destroyed and savagely abused for a second time!

Press Cutting 1767

Farmer *Matthews* was found barbarously murdered near the trooper's on *Broadway hills*. His skull was fractured, and many large wounds and bruises about his head and neck. A baker in the neighbourhood of *Cambden* in *Gloucestershire* is suspected and apprehended, and it is thought waylaid and committed the murder as the farmer was returning from *Evesham* market, where he had received near 200 l.

The exact date of this report is not known - nor the newspaper it appeared in. It is amongst a very small number of cuttings in the Muniment Room of St James's church. It is possible that if the suspect was convicted he ended his days on the Hanging Post.

Jonathan Hulls and the Hulls Family - Part 2

Joan Ryder

The most intriguing aspect of the story concerning the Inventor, Jonathan Hulls of Broad Campden is the belief that the Hulls of High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire were related to him. (See *CADHAS Notes & Queries* Vol.I No. 5). Two of my recently discovered relatives are now working with me to unravel details of the Hulls families, in particular the ancestors of Jonathan Hulls. Recently a break-through has been made, I played a small but significant part - through a stroke of luck I traced the will of Thomas Hulls, weaver of Hanging Aston (born 1685), father of Jonathan. This document is indistinctly written and strangely worded. Peter Grace's transcription has revealed a most unusual scenario - Thomas Hulls of Hanging Aston, at the age of 16 years, married Sarah, (née Davis) on 27th April 1685. Seven months later, on 28th November, she presented him with a son - Thomas. Later they had a daughter, Sarah. Their marriage did not survive. Its annulment has not been found to date - possibly a search in Ecclesiastical Court Records is required. Sarah married secondly John Webb.

In his will, Thomas Hulls leaves all he owns to his loving wife, Mary (née Hands), including his yardland at Broad Campden held under the Countess Dowager of Gainsborough, and the two half yardlands at Aston, held under the Lord Bishop of Worcester. However if she married again she was to have but five pounds a year - half out of the yardland at Campden and the other out of the land at Aston. If she married again instantly, his land at Broad Campden was to go to Jonathan Hulls, he paying fifty shillings a year to his wife. If his wife married again, then the two half yardlands at Aston and the house he gave to Thomas Hulls, miller, he paying her fifty shillings per year and also paying four shillings per week to his mother, Sarah, together with "if she thinks fit, one of the tenement houses he had previously let", she to have "the money and house if she doesn't live with her husband - if she lives with her husband she is to have nothing and her receipt to be his discharge, as if she was unmarried and husband to have nothing to do with it". It would appear from this that Thomas Hulls, miller, was his son by Sarah, his first wife.

The will was made in 1736, proved 1737, therefore it precludes the idea that Thomas Hulls, miller, was one and the same as the man who heads the very extensive family tree of the Hulls of Corse - Thomas Hulls, farmer, of Upleadon Court, Glos. who died in 1721. There are now two mysteries to be solved

- What happened to Thomas Hulls, miller, son of Thomas and Sarah Hulls, born 1685?
- Who was Thomas Hulls, farmer, of Upleadon Court near Newent?

As to the yardlands (a yardland was considered an area of pasture for 40 sheep) referred to in the will, Peter Grace is anxious to discover whether the two half yardlands (an area in excess of 18 acres) in Aston which Thomas Hulls leased from the Lord Bishop of Worcester, (shown in a 1733 diagram in Icely's book *Twelve Centuries in Blockley*) still extant in Aston Magna (as it is called today), and more importantly, whether the buildings or any part of them, still exist. If there is any trace he would like to get photographic evidence. He has also noted there is an old graveyard in Aston Magna - do any of the gravestones remain - are they legible? It is evident that before the complete history of the Broad Campden and High Wycombe Hulls can be told, a great deal more research is necessary.