

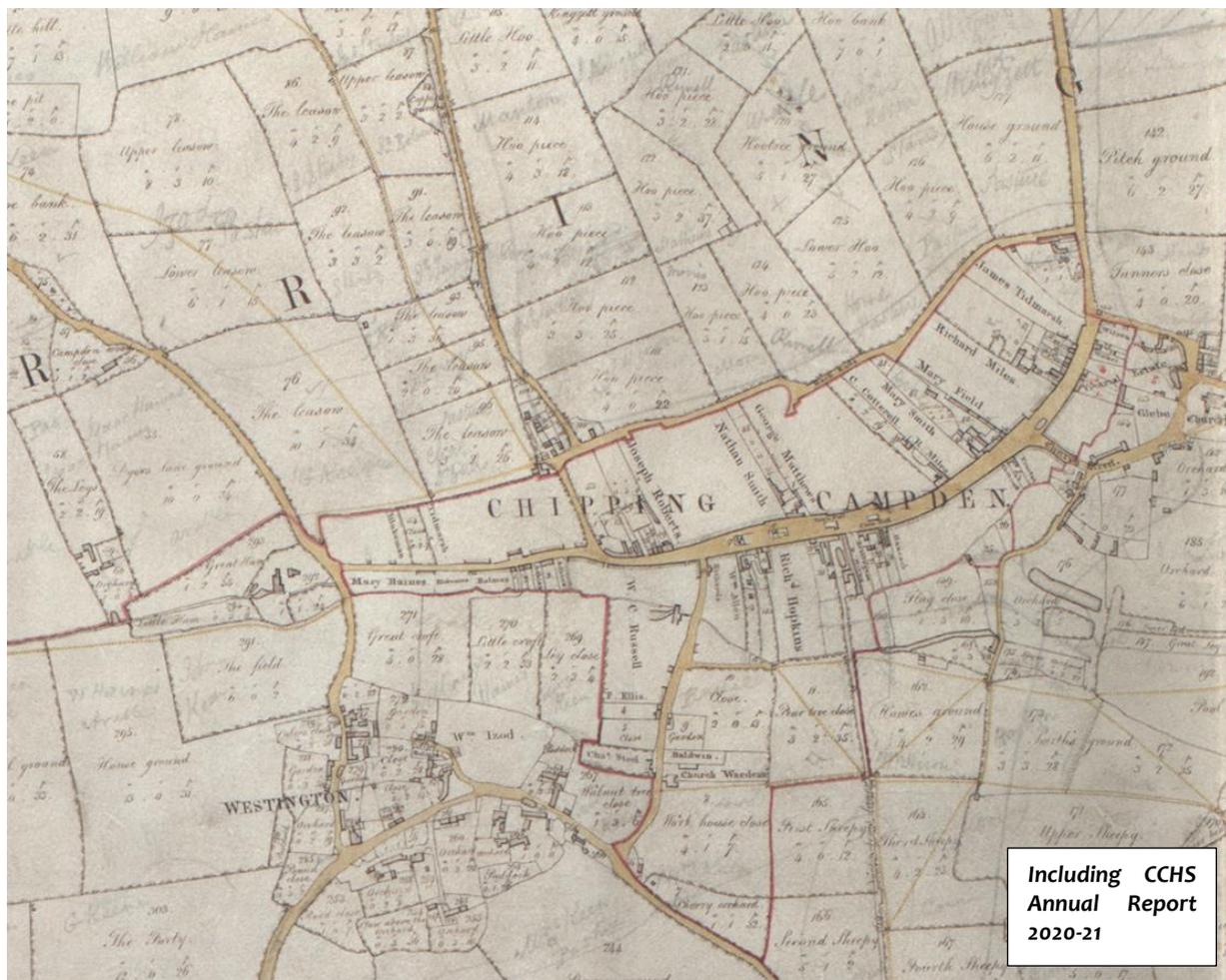
# Signpost



The Journal of Chipping Campden History Society

Issue no. 14

Spring 2021



*Bringing local history to life*



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## From the Editor

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This edition of Signpost has definitely taken on its own distinct agricultural and ‘fruity’ profile with the surprising and coincidental information about the Myatt family from Pauline Day, Judith Ellis and Vanessa Rigg’s information on Campden’s Orchard Heritage and James Gray’s early background to Hidcote with his Tucker connection. Even Tess Taylor’s continuing snapshot into the life of St Catharine’s School seems to have several gardening and fruit mentions. So once again, thanks to the authors for these fascinating articles, which contribute to our bank of Campden research. This Signpost will be entered onto our website a few months’ time for more than just members to read. My thanks also go to all correspondents who bring us additional useful connections – please keep your articles coming - they are valuable and valued.

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**Front cover illustration:** Gainsborough Estate map of Campden and Westington 1818, courtesy of Gloucestershire Archives, showing how many orchards existed at that time. See Article on Campden’s Orchard Heritage on page 18.

## In Memory of Robert “Bob” Montgomery 9th March 1940 - 23rd December 2020

Alan Barclay

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Bob Montgomery, the Chairman of our Society, who died just before Christmas, was one of those people you always enjoyed meeting. His energy, his open friendliness, his clear enjoyment of what he was doing, made you feel more awake and positive.

He was born, brought up and educated in Edinburgh, the middle one of three sons. There was a full and caring family life. His parents ran a grocery shop and Bob attributed much of his own practicality, sociability and enjoyment of people, to that setting - as well as his ability to count! He never lost his affection and pride in Edinburgh and indeed his softly spoken Scots accent was a constant reminder of all the good things that come from north of the border.

Qualified as a chartered accountant, in 1968 Bob moved to London to start a career with United Glass Containers and it was in London that he met Jan, to begin a truly happy relationship that lasted the rest of his life. Their three children – Lucy, Nick and Alexander – and their four grandchildren, were the focus of a strong family bond – something which characterised Bob throughout his life. His career with United Glass took him back to Scotland for a while, a return to Head Office in London and then management roles in St. Helens and then in South Yorkshire. He retired in 2001.



Bob and Jan remained very happily settled in Alderley Edge, Cheshire, for 32 years. However, in 2014, wanting to be nearer the children and grandchildren, they moved to Chipping Campden. They arrived and, as Bob put it to me, “took stock of the place”; and then, again in Bob’s own words, “fell in love with Campden” – not only with the place, but also with its community of people. They became actively involved in the life of the town. He and Jan thoroughly enjoyed their Friday stints at the Tourist Information Centre and both helped with the Campden Voluntary Help Group. He became a trustee of the Peelers Trust. And most importantly for us, Bob became actively involved in the History Society and to our great benefit took on the Chairmanship in 2017.

Bob loved mixing with all our members and, as Chairman, brought his leadership and focus to bear on taking the Society forward. He chaired meetings with humour and warmth. He was also literally “hands-on”, as those who witnessed him on hands and knees digging away on the Campden House Project will bear witness. He will leave a hole in more ways than one! Bob was a person of standing, of humility, humour and friendliness, who purposefully committed himself to life in every way. Celebrity culture was totally anathema to him, but his quiet star will be missed in our community.

## Correspondence

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Since **Andy Parkes** sent his first enquiry (ref: 20/001) about a stained glass **Paul Woodroffe** window at Holy Trinity, Hadley, Shropshire in 2020 (see Signpost, Issue 12 Spring 2020), Andy has come across some most interesting newspaper articles mentioning Paul Woodroffe, which he shares with us. A 1908 cutting from the Clitheroe Advertiser reports a new set of windows in the grand staircase of **Stonyhurst College** made by Paul Woodroffe. Paul, a former pupil of the college, did several windows in the Chapel and elsewhere in the school.

See <https://www.pendlestainedglass.co.uk/stoneyhurst-college>.

The Birmingham Gazette edition of 21st July 1924 announced a new Arts & Crafts Exhibition in Chipping Campden with artists, smiths, sculptors and cabinet makers exhibiting, including Paul Woodroffe. In 1930 the Birmingham Gazette headlined '*Fine Stained Glass from Midlands*' and announced that a window for **St Patrick's Cathedral, New York**, made in Chipping Campden by Paul Woodroffe and the workshops of Chance Brothers of Birmingham and Hartley Wood & Co of Sunderland was on display in London at **Selfridges**, so large that it "almost reached the ceiling of the lofty entrance hall." The Tewkesbury Register of 12<sup>th</sup> November 1930 described the unveiling of a Paul Woodroffe window in **St Catharine's Church, Campden**, given by the Countess of Gainsborough in memory of her husband Charles William Francis, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Gainsborough (d.1926) and her two sons Arthur Edward Joseph, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of G. (d.1927) and Robert Edmund Thomas More Noel (d.1918). The top panels represent the baptism of St. John the Baptist and the lower part was a perfect reproduction of a Holbein portrayal of Sir Thomas More, who had been Henry VIII's Lord Chancellor and was beheaded for his faith. Another long article by Lady Clarke on 12th December 1931 in the Illustrated London News, headed *The Home Industry of Chipping Campden and its Individualistic Artist Craftsmen* praises the export of masterpieces and the craftsmen in Chipping Campden, mentioning Paul Woodroffe's 15 medallion windows representing the mysteries of the Rosary in New York's cathedral, which each took three months to make and was the biggest single commission for a stained glass subject that has come to England from another country. Ashbee, the Guild of Handicraft, Silk Mill, Thornton & Downer, Alec Miller, Harold Pymment and weavers Leo and Eileen Baker were also mentioned, plus Woodroffe windows in **Downside Abbey, Bath** and **Canterbury School, New Milford, Connecticut**.

From **James Wharton**, Digital Content Creator for **BFBS**, a charity providing news and entertainment to British Armed Forces, we received a link to their Christmas Newsletter featuring the experiences of WWII POWs at Christmas and it makes interesting reading, with a section from the Klaus Behr Springhill diary at Christmas 1946.

See <https://www.forces.net/heritage/wwii/christmas-captivity>.

Have you seen a new, very local publication by Dick Smith, compiled by his son Stuart Smith? The book contains a short life history of **Richard Walter Smith, k/a Dick**, born in Campden on 19<sup>th</sup> December 1930, child of Reginald and Gladys Smith, growers in Campden and some lovely photos. Dick carried on the family business, developing 'Pick your Own' and a farm shop at Castle Gardens and was Campden's Mayor and Chairman of the Town Council, of the Scuttlebrook Wake Committee and of the Ernest Wilson Memorial Garden for several years. The book is a lovely tribute to this important Campden man and also has several other local family profiles. It costs £15 plus £3 P&P. To obtain a copy contact: Stuart Smith at [ssmithlandscapes@aol.co.uk](mailto:ssmithlandscapes@aol.co.uk)

Your editor has also had correspondence with **Mrs Mary Koster-Saelle**, an elderly Campdonian now living in Ramsay, Isle of Man, who has sent confirmatory follow-up handwritten information and memories on several items in Signpost 13 - on Keyte, Dewhurst, Haysum, Sheep Street and others, which will be analysed and deposited appropriately. We thank Mary for taking this trouble to write.

An enquirer asks if we have any memories or knowledge of **Frederick Walton Clark**, son of John Henry Clark the owner of the Pheasant Food Factory next to the old railway station and Battledene

House in Station Road. Frederick Walton was born on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1898, schooled at Wellingborough leaving in December 1916 and enlisted into the RFC (5 Training Squadron and 28 Training Squadron), subsequently taking aerial photographs over enemy lines and was living with his parents at Battledene in the early 1920s, before they moved away. He married Dilys Amy Hughes in 1937 (reg. Welshpool Montgomeryshire 11b 253), had a son called Phillip and lived in the 1950s and 1960s in Wokingham and Windsor constituency areas. He died 9/7/1967 (reg. Eton 6a 351).

Those of you who heard **Judith Ellis's** most interesting Zoom talk on the History of **Campden Town Hall** on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021, might have been fascinated by the erection in 1867 of a temporary covered bridge from the Town Hall to the Noel Arms for the 16th North Cotswold Rifle Corps Ball. The full report in Oxford Journal on 7th September 1867 gives an amazing picture of the 24-hour occasion – dancing from 11 at night until 6 in the morning!!! See below:

*CAMPDEN. Our Volunteer Corps Ball, under the distinguished patronage of their Captain, the Earl of Gainsborough, took place on the 29th ult., in the Town Hall, and was remarkably well attended. The Hall was very tastefully decorated for the occasion, under the able superintendence of Lieut. Smith, Ensign Brown, and several ladies. The distribution of the prizes to the successful competitors in the athletic sports, which took place early in the afternoon of the same day, as well as the prizes for rifle shooting, was the first business of the evening, and they were gracefully presented, with a very neat little complimentary speech to each of the fortunate winners, by Lady Blanche Noel, daughter of the Earl of Gainsborough. Lady Blanche then as gracefully presented a silver bugle to the Band of the Corps, accompanied in like manner with a laudatory address, on behalf of her mother, the Countess of Gainsborough, who was absent from illness. These matters employed the time till about eleven o'clock, when dancing commenced in right earnest, and was kept up with great spirit till six the next morning, and was so heartily enjoyed by the noble Earl and his family connections who were present, as well as by the tenantry and others that the invitation was extended, and those who had tickets were requested*



*to meet again at the Town Hall on the following evening, and a general invitation was also given to a Pic Nic in the grounds attached to Campden House, in the afternoon. The temporary covered bridge erected from the bed-room windows of the Noel Arms to the Town Hall, as well as the decorations of the hall itself, were left, to remain up as a precautionary measure in case the weather should prove unfavourable for the meet; but in the midst of these anticipated further festivities, which forcibly reminded us of the Real English Gentleman of the Olden Time, a telegraphic message, announcing another sudden and very serious*

*illness of the Countess, recalled the Earl and family to Exton Park, Rutlandshire and of course put an end to them, much to the regret of all to whom the invitation had been extended, as well as calling forth the deep sympathy of everyone. Wheatley's Quadrille Band, from Evesham, was engaged for the ball and gave great satisfaction. A trial also of the silver bugle took place in the Hall, much to the gratification of those present, and also calling forth complimentary cheering for the donor. Mr. Gurton, of the Noel Arms, catered for the occasion, a sumptuous repast being laid out in the Long Room of the Hotel, where the company retired for refreshments, all passing over the temporary bridge before alluded to, erected for the special accommodation of the fair sex, that they might not be inconvenienced by going out into the open air; the said repast being of such a character as to give universal satisfaction, with reference to those who provided it, as well as displaying the munificence of those who ordered it. The company comprised five members of the Noel family, including Col. Noel; W. Moxon, Esq., and Mrs. Moxon, of Farm Coombe, C.W. Morris Esq., and Mrs Morris, Wm. Rimell Esq., Court House, and one, two, or more members of the tenantry and principal inhabitants of the town.*

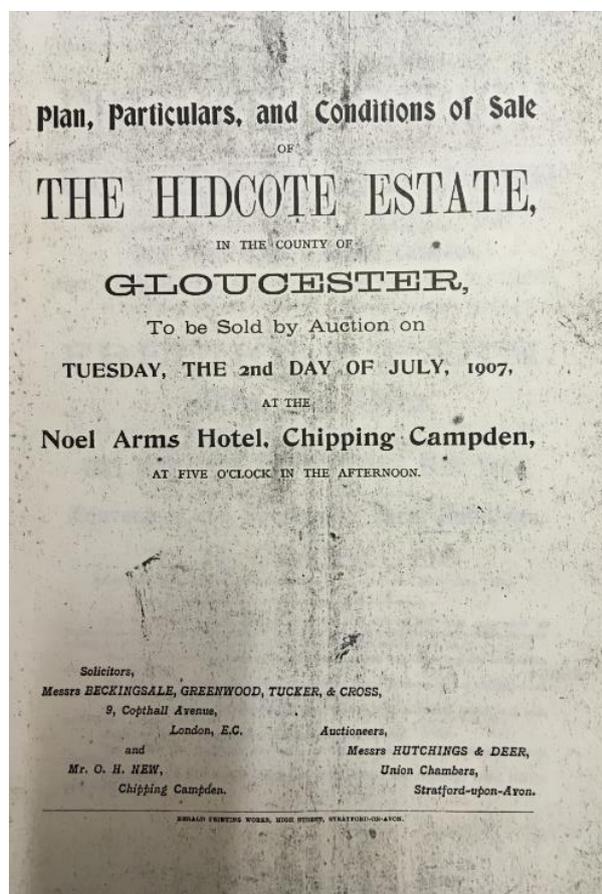
## Hidcote before Lawrence Johnston

James Gray, MP for North Wiltshire

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The history of Hidcote Manor is well known since its purchase by American millionaire, Mrs Winthrop in 1907, the development of the gardens by her son Lawrence Johnston and its eventual gift to the National Trust in 1948. What is less well known is the history of Hidcote back to the Middle Ages. Some recent research into my wife's Tucker ancestors may shed some light on a chapter in the history of this great house and garden.

My wife's great grandfather, John Tucker, bought a large ironmonger's store in Newport, Shropshire with what was left of the proceeds of the sale of his Chipping Campden farm, Hidcote, in 1907. Having farmed Hidcote as a tenant for 34 years, John Tucker had finally inherited in 1903 the freehold from his kinsmen, the Freeman family, enabling him to sell it off soon after possession had passed to him. It was lumbered with an outstanding mortgage of £4,900 (dating back to 1845) which he inherited along with the house, together with an ongoing requirement to pay a yearly rent of £100 to a Freeman cousin. John Tucker, then aged 63, presumably felt that despite his 34 years tenancy, these financial liabilities were too great and so wished to sell the estate as soon as possible.



The Times advertisement said that the farm would be sold together with the *'very substantial and picturesque farmhouse, stone built with entrance hall, fine oak staircase, three sitting rooms, eight bedrooms, two box rooms, and usual offices, with lawns and large kitchen garden.'* It went on to note that *"the farm is particularly healthy, being situate on a spur of the Cotswolds at an elevation of from 500 to 800 feet above sea level and from it extensive views of the counties of Warwick, Worcester and Gloucester can be obtained. Meets of the Warwickshire, North Cotswold and Heythrop Hounds are within easy distance, and the partridge shooting on the estate is good.'*

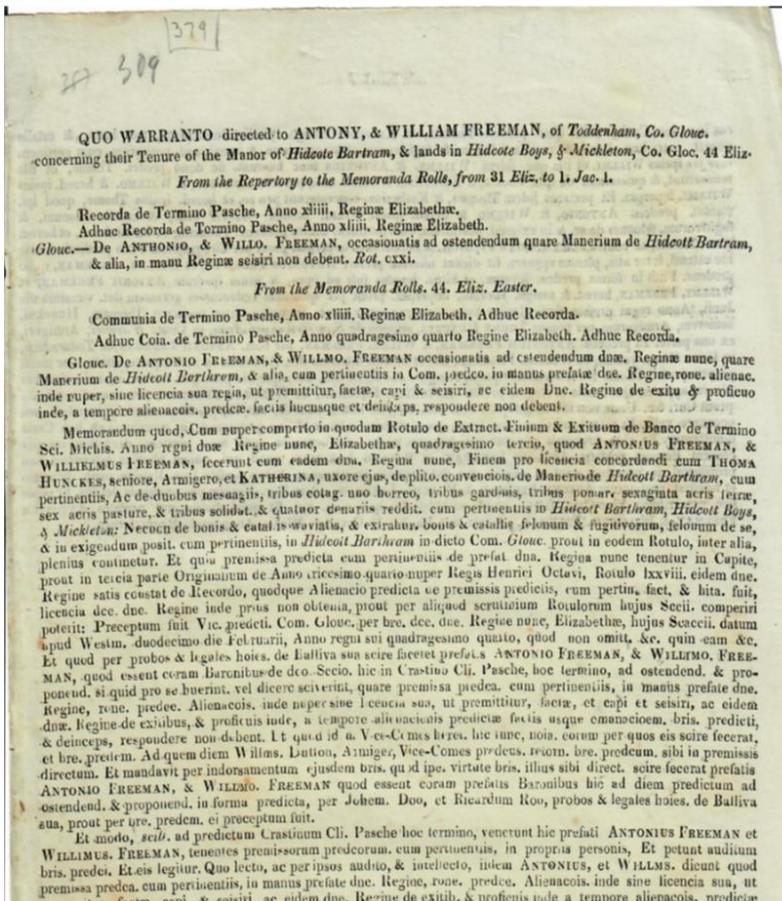
The sales particulars said the garden consisted of *'lawns in front and on the south side of the House, with fine shrubs and a nice Summer House, and a large and productive Kitchen Garden. Adjoining is a Tennis Court and small nut orchard.'*

On 2nd July 1907, the bidding in the Noel Arms went to £6,500 when John Tucker withdrew it. Three weeks later, an American lady Mrs. Winthrop and her son, Lawrence Johnston, finally bought the estate direct from Mr Tucker for £7,200. After some rebuilding and creation of the gardens it was given to the National Trust in 1948 as an outstanding garden of national importance - one of the very great English gardens. There are various pieces of furniture from Hidcote still with the Tucker family descendants.

However, there is a slight mystery as to how it was that John Tucker ended up owning Hidcote. The estate had been owned by Bradenstoke Priory (near Lyneham) in Wiltshire until the Priory was disbanded by Henry VIII around 1539. The manor house was built perhaps 50-100 years later as a farmhouse. It had been owned by gentleman farmers, the Freeman family, from the time of the

Dissolution. The first Freeman of whom we have any record, William (who married Joan Skey) was born in 1633; his son William, who is recorded as being 'of Hidcote', was there 1674-1734. An Elizabethan document in the National Archives dated 1573, called a "Quo Warranto" under which Antony and William Freeman of Toddtenham established their tenure of the Manor of Hidcote, quotes a previous document from the 38th year of the reign of King Henry VIII, namely 1547. So Hidcote had been in the Freeman family since the Dissolution itself and they may, of course, have been tenants of the Priory before that.

**Right: "Quo Warranto" dated 1573 National Archives**



The Freeman family and their neighbours and kinsmen, the Izods, (who can be traced back to Henry Izod, born in 1455) were longstanding and substantial farmers in and around Chipping Campden. The Chipping Campden church, for example, has several memorials to them. The Freeman (later Freeman-Mitford) family also owned nearby Batsford Park, which was ultimately inherited by Lord Redesdale, and was where the Mitford sisters were brought up. Hidcote is eight miles away from Batsford. That may make my wife a very remote cousin of the Mitford sisters!

Until 1873, Hidcote had been owned by Captain William Thomas Freeman, Capt. of 4th Reg. of Foot (1840-1882). On Captain Freeman's death in December 1882, the estate passed to his wife, Mary Webb Freeman, and then on her death three years later it passed to Captain Freeman's mother, Mrs Priscilla Freeman. She lived at The Martins, Chipping Campden until her death in 1893, when the estate was left to her daughter, Mary, of the same address. She lived on until 30th December 1906 and in her will (written in 1893), she left the Hidcote Manor estate to John Tucker.

So why did that happen? Why was Hidcote, the substantial Freeman family estate, which had been in their hands for at least 350 years left to their 'tenant' John Tucker? Was it just that the direct Freeman line had died out? Or that the heavily mortgaged farm was more of a liability than an asset? The clue comes from the family tree.

John Tucker's father, also John (1845-1931), was at Hidcote by 1871, seven years before young John's birth. John senior's parents were Rev. William Robey Tucker (of whom more later) and Mary née Izod, a daughter of the local farming family. Mary Izod's grandmother was Lucy née Freeman (1738-1821) who had first married Walford Holland and after his death married Nathan Izod (c 1727-1783) in 1778. Lucy's brother, William, describes himself as 'Gentleman of Hidcote.' So, John Tucker was a kinsman of the Freemans.

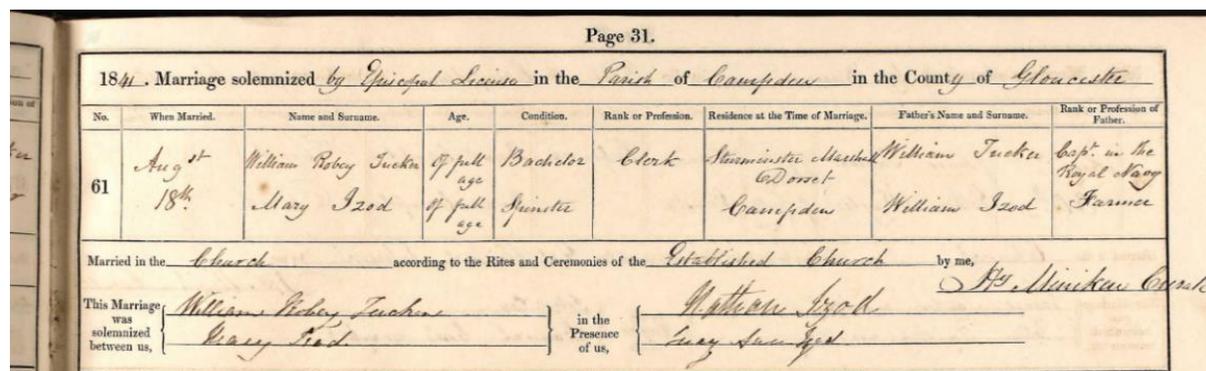
Incidentally, the name 'Freeman', as well as the name 'Robey' (of which more later) were used by the Tuckers as Christian names until at least 1950. The partners of Beckingsales Solicitors in London,

which wound up in 1950, were William Robey Tucker and Lesley Freeman Tucker. There cannot be much doubt about their ancestry!

So, John Tucker senior was the son of an Izod and a great grandson of a Freeman. He completed his relationship to most of the major Chipping Campden farmers by making a 'good' marriage in 1869 to Elizabeth Jane Powell, a member of another neighbouring farming family. Yet why did he (or at least his son John) land up inheriting Hidcote? There is perhaps a further clue in the tragedy of his father, Revd William Robey Tucker.

William Robey Tucker was born in 1815 at Nealand Signal Station near Polperro in Cornwall, the son of Captain William Tucker RN (1773-1842). He had two sisters, Jane and Frances. By 1833, Alumni Oxonienses (Members of the University of Oxford) registers him as an undergraduate at Wadham College: "William Robey Tucker, Son of William Tucker, Esq. Commander RN Born at Nealand Signal Station, Cornwall, aged 18. Admitted 28 Feb 1833 BA 1836 MA 1839."

After graduating from Oxford in 1836, Rev. William became 'clerk' (i.e. vicar) of Spelsbury, Oxfordshire, near Chipping Norton, which is in the patronage of Christ Church, Oxford. Then on 18th August 1841 at St James's Church Campden he married Mary Izod (1816-1873), the 25 year-old daughter of a well-established Chipping Campden farmer. Mary's family home was only 20 miles from Spelsbury, although by that time he is listed as 'of Sturminster Newton, Dorset'. Perhaps he had been promoted from curate to vicar?



Above: Marriage certificate of William Robey Tucker and Mary Izod, 1841

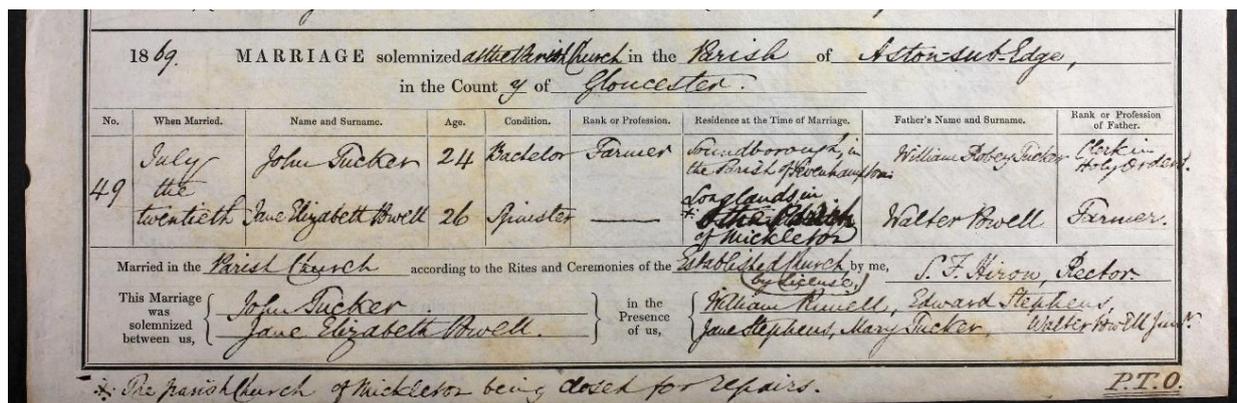
So, a young Oxford graduate vicar, Rev. William Tucker, married a local farmer's daughter, Mary Izod, who duly presented him with a son and heir, John, born in 1845. All was set for a long and happy family life in the parsonage. Then tragically, and for no known reason, the Rev. William Robey Tucker died in 1847 (in Newport, Isle of Wight), when his little son was only two years of age. His will is dated 15th October 1847, so we presume that he returned to the Isle of Wight to die, quickly asking his relations Nathan Izod, (Yeoman) and James Eldridge, (Gentleman) to draw up and witness his will. The 31 year-old broken hearted widow, Mary, returned to her ancestral (Izod) home with young baby John and in 1851 can be found in Chipping Campden living in No 3, North End Terrace, Leysbourne.

Twenty years later, in 1869, young John Tucker married Elizabeth Jane Powell, when he describes himself as 'Farmer, Soundborough, Sevenhampton.' He was presumably either tenant, or even perhaps just learning his trade as some kind of agricultural apprentice, as there is no record of that Soundborough Farm belonging to the family.

Two years later in the 1871 census John Tucker is still there, farming 430 acres, employing 9 men, 2 women and 4 boys, with his wife and 10 month-old son William R. But by the 1881 census he is farming at Hidcote Bartram, with 400 acres employing 12 men & 5 boys. By now he is aged 36 and has children - Charlotte, Lucy, Frances, Walter and John; William Robey, his eldest is away at Greenhill School, Kings Norton, Worcs., and it seems his wife Elizabeth was heavily pregnant with Mary, born in March 1881 soon after the census and their last child Elizabeth was to be born in 1884.

So it seems that, when young Mary Izod was unexpectedly widowed and returned home with her two year old son, she was ‘taken under the wing’ of her Izod family; her son was trained in farming and then very probably at his marriage to another local farmer’s daughter in 1867, he was handed the tenancy of Hidcote, either by his Izod, or perhaps her Powell ancestors. His 27 year-old wife, Jane Elizabeth Powell’s father Walter Powell was ‘Farmer of Longlands, Mickleton’ and his father in turn had also been ‘Walter Powell of Longlands’. Is it possible that the Powell family had some connection with Hidcote, which is more or less next door to Longlands? It may be notable that John Tucker named his three sons - ‘Walter’, ‘Robey’ and ‘John’, and indeed that in the fullness of time, John’s son , Herbert, was also named after Walter Powell.

**Below: Marriage Certificate of John Tucker and Elizabeth Jane Powell, 1869. Note the annotation Mickleton Church “being closed for repairs”, the reason for the marriage at Aston-sub-Edge.**



At all events, whether it was through the Powell connection, or directly from the Freemans (which perhaps seems more likely), it explains why, 37 years later, the Freeman family finally handed the by now more or less worthless estate to their ‘tenant’ John. It may be significant that the substantial mortgage on the estate equally derives from 1845. So, it was the untimely death of Rev. William which resulted in Hidcote coming into the Tucker family.

Mary’s Izod family, like the Freemans and Powells, were established in Gloucestershire by about 1550. The family bore arms (registered at the College of Arms in 1623), but this branch was said to have been the ‘Yeoman farmer’ branch of the family. Westington (Izods), Longlands (Powells) and Hidcote (Freemans) are all within a few miles of each other.

**Right: Izod Arms**



So, the Rev. William Robey Tucker had landed up in Oxfordshire and made an advantageous marriage more or less by chance through his Oxford education. His son equally ‘married well’ into the Chipping Campden yeomanry. The Tucker family were the fortunate – if relatively temporary - owners of a fine ancestral home - the result of the early death of a clever Tucker son, an Oxford graduate and cleric. Of such twists and turns is the very fabric of the history of England.

## More Rhubarb ... and Strawberries

Carol Jackson and Pauline Day

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*Following the article on Joseph Myatt and Rhubarb in Signpost 13, I had a visit from a CCHS Member, Pauline Day née Lacey, who told me that her mother's maiden name was Myatt and that she was a descendant of William Myatt.*

Joseph Myatt was born in December 1771 in Maer, a village near Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire. His father was also called Joseph Myatt and his mother was Ann Bailey, married in 1769. Joseph was their eldest child<sup>1</sup>. By 1802 when he was thirty years old Joseph Myatt was a gardener living in Leicestershire, at Prestwold Hall, an estate owned by the Packe family, where his first two sons were born, James in 1804 and William in 1805. It seems the boys' mother must have died as Joseph married again (maybe to Sarah Allcock) and by 1809 Joseph was employed at Rosehill Park in East Sussex. In 1810 they had a daughter called Eliza. Joseph then left Rosehill Park in 1814, aged about forty-five to become self-employed, establishing his own market garden in Camberwell, Surrey, on the south-eastern outskirts of London. He must have seen the opportunity of growing fruit and vegetables for the increasing population of London. Joseph and Sarah had another child, a son named Joseph Jr., who was baptised at St. Giles, Camberwell in 1821. His sons James and William, by now in their teens, and young Joseph all became gardeners working with their father and the land that Joseph rented at Camberwell soon became known as Myatt's Ground. Joseph grew a wide range of vegetables and fruit which he sold at the London Borough Market and developed new varieties, which often had Myatt in the name, e.g. 'Myatt Keeping-Onion', the 'Myatt Cabbage'. However, it seems that in the mid-1820s it was with Rhubarb, then not a commonly used food, that Joseph began experimenting, developing different varieties and methods of cultivation and forcing, using plenty of manure (from the night-soil carts!) and water from the nearby canal network and so with new recipes due to the increased availability of cheaper sugar, rhubarb became more popular in Victorian dining.

Joseph then expanded, moving about three miles east to 80 acres at Manor Farm, Deptford, naming his business 'Joseph Myatt and Sons'. This area is now part of Brockley, where the Myatt name is remembered today with Myatt Garden Primary School and Manor Avenue. However, Joseph's eldest son James and his wife Sarah stayed in Camberwell with their twelve children<sup>2</sup> who were all baptised at St Mark's Kennington, to run Myatt's Ground market garden business there for many years. The 1851 census notes that Myatt's Ground occupied 40 acres and employed 18 labourers, although soon after much of this land was bought for railway development and in 1852 James finally relocated to Offenham, near Evesham, transferring the business to The Laurels Farm and then Norval Farm. The new Worcester to Oxford Railway had just opened, so now his fresh produce from Offenham could be transported by train to the city markets, where he was already established. He grew a variety of fruits and vegetables, strawberries, cabbage, celery and asparagus, continuing to develop new varieties. James had left his two eldest sons, James Jr. and William to continue the business at Myatt's Ground at Camberwell on the small remaining piece of land that had not yet been sold, whilst when James died in 1879, his two younger sons Frank and Charles took over Norval Farm in Offenham. His gravestone is in the Churchyard there.

Meanwhile, Joseph's second son, William, married Eleanor Brown in 1833 and lived at Manor Farm, with his children<sup>3</sup>, his father and his younger brother Joseph, and they continued together to

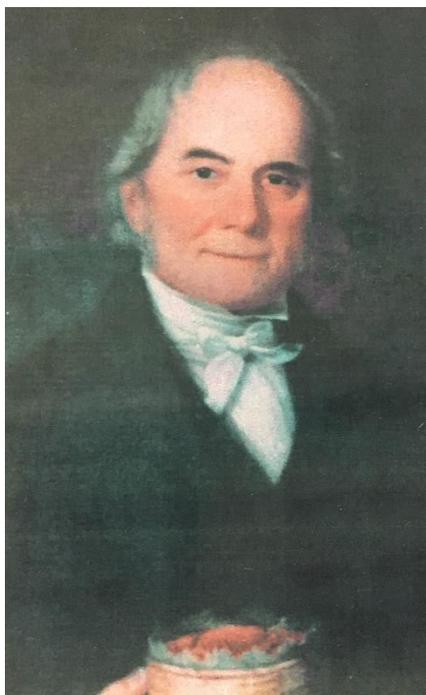
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<sup>1</sup> Followed by William (born in 1772), Benjamin (1776), Elizabeth (1779), John (1781), Mary (1785), James (1786), Catherine (1789) and Margaret (1793).

<sup>2</sup> James and Sarah Myatt's children: Sarah b.1831, James b.1832, Elizabeth, 1834, William, 1836, Ann, 1838, Joseph, 1840, Harriet, 1842, Philip, 1844, Lucy, 1845, Mary, 1847, Frank, 1849, Charles, 1852

<sup>3</sup> William b.1835, Eleanor b.1837, George b.1838, Emma b.1840, Henry b.1842, Joseph b.1844

develop the market garden. Joseph senior died in 1855. Like his father, William Myatt seems to have been a pillar of the community of St. Paul's parish, a Churchwarden, an Inspector of Roads and Pavements and a School Steward, among other positions. He was also a long-standing member of the Royal Oak Masonic Lodge at Deptford.



Pauline Day, who descends from George, the second eldest son of William and Eleanor, told me that the little bowl which Joseph is holding in the portrait contains Strawberries, through which the Myatt family achieved their real fame. Strawberry growing was relatively new in 1830, but again with availability of sugar, jam-making became important and new varieties of strawberries were developed. Joseph's new 'Pine-Apple Strawberry' also known as 'Myatt's Pine' was introduced in 1831, for which he won a Banksian Medal in 1832, praised for its sweet flavour and large size. Other varieties were developed later - 'Eliza' (1836) named after Joseph's daughter, 'British Queen' (1841) patriotically named in honour of Queen Victoria, 'Deptford Pine' (1843) and 'Alice Maud' (1844) presumably named after Queen Victoria's baby daughter.

Pauline showed me an elaborate silver cigar case she possesses, with Windsor Castle and W. Myatt engraved, which was presented to William by Queen Victoria (see right). The reverse (see below) shows the Hallmarks - the Lion for 925 Silver, the Queen's Head duty mark, the NM makers mark is Nathaniel Mills established 1826, the anchor for made in Birmingham and the year mark is unclear, maybe a U for 1843.

Pauline's family have a medal and letter dated June 28<sup>th</sup> 1848 from Buckingham Palace addresses to Mr Myatt, Manor Farm, Deptford which says: "I have received the commandment of His Royal Highness the Prince Albert to return you His Royal Highness's thanks for the excellent



strawberries which you were good enough to send. None finer or of a better flavour have appeared at their Majesty's table. His Royal Highness has commanded me to forward to you the accompanying

silver medal as a token of His Royal Highness's appreciation of your skill in growing fruit of so superior equality."

William Myatt was one of the last market gardeners at Deptford, remaining at Manor Farm until 1880 as parts of the land were gradually sold off for housing development. He died in Deptford in 1887.

William's son, George Myatt, can be traced through the censuses as a child at Manor Farm from 1841 to 1861, his marriage at Beckenham to Ellen Riley on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1869 with their subsequent ten children<sup>4</sup>. George Myatt left Manor Farm as a young man and by the 1871 census he had his own business, was a farmer with 100 acres, 6 men and 1 boy, living at Brockley Green Farm House, with his wife and baby Ellen. As the city expanded, they later moved to market gardens at Plumstead and then Chiswick. Their last child, Henry James Myatt, b. 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1886 was Pauline's grandfather, who married Alice Mary Rosina Burton on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1916 at St Michael and All Angels, Bedford Park and their wedding photograph (*below*) shows Henry's father, George, the bearded man standing next to the bride and Henry's mother, Ellen, seated on the far left of the photo. Henry enlisted in 1915 and by the 1939 Register was an instrument adjuster and Post Office Engineer – a long way from Market Gardening, Rhubarb and Strawberries!



Above: Wedding of Henry James Myatt and Alice Mary Rosina Burton on 26th Sep. 1916.

**Editor's Note:** Pauline's younger son, his wife and 2 daughters coincidentally live in a house built on the Myatt ground in Brockley, London which once belonged to his ancestors. When the girls started school at their nearest one, their parents did not know the significance of Myatt Garden Primary School or their Myatt family history connection.

Grateful thanks to internet articles by Katherine Darley on **Joseph Myatt (1771-1855) and his descendants:** <https://josephmyatt.weebly.com/josephmyattbiography.html>

<https://josephmyatt.weebly.com/myattdescendants.html>

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<sup>4</sup> Ellen b.1870, William b.1871, Anne b.1873, twins George and Joseph b. and d. 1874, Florence b.1875, Amy Gertrude b.1877, Louisa Emily b.1880, Joseph b.1882 and Henry James b. 1886

## From Slates to Computers! - the History of St. Catharine's School. Part 2

Tess Taylor

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*We continue the history of St Catharine's school. The full article with many photos is in the CCHS Digital Archive, ref. 2020/67. Tess would be pleased to hear from others who have memories.*

In January 1914, nine Belgian children came to the school, but were repatriated in April, 1918, whereas in September 1939 children from Milbank Council School, London were evacuated and joined St. Catharine's. They brought with them their own teacher and were taught in a separate classroom. Bill Buckland remembers that he started school in September 1939, just as WWII broke out and sometime later the children were issued with gas masks and had drills in school on what to do in the event of gas warfare. WWII had further repercussions when in the summers of 1941 and 1942, boys were released to do farm work and the school closed for children to help with the harvest. One pleasurable experience during the war years was in December 1943 when the children were invited to the American camp at Northwick Park, conveyed there by lorries, Red Cross ambulances and jeeps. Bill Buckland remembers having ice cream at the tea party, a rare treat, and singing every verse of 'The Star-Spangled Banner' to make known their thanks. May 8th and 9th, 1945 saw the school closed for VE Day celebrations.

From 1948, displaced Polish people were housed at Springhill and Northwick Park. Many of their children attended St. Catharine's and one pupil, Teresa Malysko, now living in New York, recalls sometimes missing the bus and running all the way from Springhill to the school.

**Right: Polish dancers at St Catharine's**

The school had regular, mostly quite favourable government inspections. In June 1883 the inspectors said that there was much to be pleased about this little school and the children were given the rest of the



week off! A certificate of proficiency was given to a Standard II girl who was leaving as she was wanted at home. A singing examination held in the same year included the following songs to be sung: 'The Cottage Home,' 'God Save the Queen,' 'The Cuckoo' and 'The Sunshine.' However, on 5th July 1898, it was remarked that attendance was poor and that the School Officer was altogether useless! Later that year there was evidence of considerable improvement: 'The children are in good order and the tone of the school is brighter and more cheerful.' In November 1915, the Diocesan Inspector reported it as one of the best schools in the Diocese and in 1928 it was said to be 'a first rate school where the influence of the Head is everywhere discernible.' The children, it claimed, presented as orderly, their reading was intelligent and their bookwork creditably neat. Then in 1932, 'the school can't do merit to all the praise given in the last report'. Children did regular exams, including the Eccles exam in 1884 and scholarship to the Grammar School; prizes were awarded for good work and to the most deserving pupils. In 1881 The Countess of Gainsborough gave the prizes and the Earl was impressed with the high standard of work. In August 1886, the prizes consisted mostly of wearing apparel. In May 1919, F. L. Griggs, artist and one of the School managers (Trustees), gave two prizes, one to the most honourable boy and the other to a girl with the best singing voice. On June 23rd 1905 the children were taken for a picnic on Dover's Hill as a reward for good attendance. The 'Silver Dean Cup' was won by the girls of the school for embroidery and was

presented to them on 26th June,1930 by the Honourable Charles Noel and also money prizes amounting to £3-10s.

On February 23rd 1906 a Laundry class commenced. Then on March 9th, 1906 a Gardening class opened, for which five boys were allowed from this school. Swimming lessons were held for boys over ten and woodwork classes were held at the Silk Mill though these were suspended during WWI as the teacher had joined the army. The following books were received for a stationary library in 1918: 'Pets and Hobbies,' 'Fighting with French,' 'Garden of Verse,' 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' and books on Broadway and Evesham. In 1926, cookery lessons commenced at the Technical Centre. In March 1950, Mr Green, the gardening organiser, who inspected the garden and tools, provided four forks, four spades, three rakes and two hoes. In 1951, the school won the final of a Road Safety quiz held against Moreton and Northleach.



**Above: Gardening in the 1950s**

In 1946 the School's Milk Act had been passed by which every school child under the age of eighteen was entitled to a third of a pint of milk and in 1947 the school received sixty mugs for the children's milk. An Open Day for parents was held in June 1947 and children took part in sports when prizes were presented by Father Hyland. That July, the children gave a Country Dancing display for the management and parents and in November had a day's holiday for the wedding of Princess Elizabeth to Prince Philip. In December 1949 word was brought to the school from the RSPB that that year's teams had been awarded the certificate of excellence in the essay competition. In the same month, the Youth Employment Officer visited the Christmas School leavers. In February 1950 extra play time was given to the children because the weather was lovely after heavy rain. In 1954, one scholarship pupil was placed top of Gloucestershire and bringing the year closer to current times, the Evesham Journal on 18th November 1982 reported:

*St. Catharine's School, Chipping Campden have had a computer installed thanks to the school's Parent/Teacher Action Group. The group recently presented the school with a Commodore Pet, and Headmaster, Mr. Doran, says this first computer has proved a hit with pupils. 'The pupils have taken to the computer like ducks to water', he said, 'they're going to be extremely useful.' Mr Doran who has been at the school for some years, added: 'We have to thank the Action Group. Over the years they've*

*given the school tremendous support. They tend to buy items which are very expensive which the county can't provide.'*

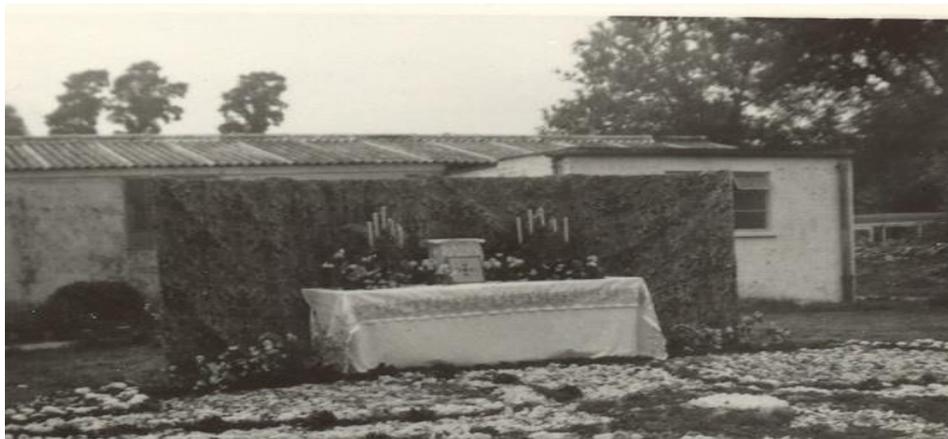
But school life was not just learning – there was plenty of play and fun. In August 1884, one of the managers, H. Bellingham Esq. together with Captain Noel, heard the children sing school songs and in the afternoon the children were given sweets sent by Lady Gainsborough. The children were excited in January when 1893 a half day holiday was given to allow them to attend a tea party and magic lantern show given by Captain and Mrs. Wallace at Campden House. The Earl and Countess of Gainsborough frequently hosted Harvest suppers and Christmas parties for the children. In January 1899, a tree, fourteen feet high, laden with more than five hundred articles, was erected in the school room. The Earl of Gainsborough distributed the toys and each family also received a parcel of clothing. Lady Claire King, sister of the Earl of Gainsborough, Paul Woodroffe, the stained glass window artist whose work can be seen in St. Catharine's Church and in St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York and Father Bilsborrow, the Parish Priest for twenty six years, all took a keen interest in the school. On June 23rd, 1905 the children were taken for a picnic on Dover's Hill as a reward for good attendance.

The Evesham Journal wrote about a Catholic School Feast on 1st September 1888: *On Thursday, the 23rd. inst., the gardens at (new) Campden House were kindly thrown open for the children of the Catholic School by Lord and Lady Constance Bellingham, who are staying a few months there. Some one hundred children were present in charge of the Sisters who superintend the school. Tea was provided for them by some of the women of the congregation, in the large old barn adjoining the house. The Rev. P. G. Munroe, formerly of the Minion, and tutor to the present Earl of Gainsborough, gave an entertainment of ventriloquism, which caused much merriment. After a plentiful repast the children took part in in various games, cricket and running races for pennies. The weather fortunately kept up, and though the morning was unpromising, the afternoon turned out fairly well. The children were conveyed from the town in a big wagon and pair of horses, followed by their elders walking in procession with flags and banners, attended by the good nurses. They all left at 7 o'clock to return home, after having really enjoyed themselves, cheering for Lord and Lady Bellingham and Mr. Munroe. The Rev. J. Corbishly, the priest of the Minion, said grace before and after the tea and officiated at the Benediction Service with hymns in the chapel attached to the house, prior to the departure of the children and parents.*

Another special outing in July 1922 was reported in the Journal: *'Last Friday was a red-letter day for the children attending St. Catharine's School, when the whole of the scholars, and teaching staff were invited to Maidenwell, Broad Campden, by Mr & Mrs Watkinson, who generously entertained them. Campden Town Band was present & the children sat down to a sumptuous repast, including a liberal supply of cherries. Mr Watkinson gave a grand display of day-light fireworks, many of which discharged toys. The week previous, the Punch & Judy Show had been performed for the King at Windsor.'*

The school suffered two fires in its 150-year history. On January 30th 1907 it was discovered that fire had broken out around the stove and the beams and floor about a yard around it were burnt out. Then in April 1939 fire swept through the school caused by either the woodwork beneath the stove in the middle classroom or woodwork in the roof heated by the stove pipe. The damage was estimated at £200 and was covered by insurance. Father Bilsborrow, the Catholic Priest, and the school managers thanked the Campden Fire Brigade, the Police and other inhabitants for their prompt attendance and effective and efficient manner in their dealing with the fire. The school received one blackboard, four desks, one chair and one stool to replace those damaged in the fire.

The Education Act of 1906 had provided for school dinners which were transported by van from a kitchen in Campden High Street, but it is not known where the children ate before the purchase of an old Nissen Hut in the late 1940s, which stood at the bottom of the field, used as a canteen.



**Left: Old Nissen Hut canteen**

A fete was held in St. Catharine's orchard on Whit Monday, 1956 in aid of the school building fund as St. Catharine's had to find about £4000 for an extension to the

school which was to cost £8,000, half of which was borne by the Church. It included a spacious corridor forming an entrance hall and giving the access to all parts of the school including a hall to be used as a new dining hall with its own kitchen so that the old green canteen could be demolished. In 1957 the Dowager Countess of Gainsborough cut the tape across the entrance to the extensions of St. Catharine's Catholic School and officially declared them open.



**Left: Evesham Journal photo of those present at the opening. Dowager Countess of Gainsborough centre with Rev. D. Hyland, Lord and Lady Dormer, Col. Shakerley (Chairman of Glos. County Council.), Mr Yoxall, the Architect, and the builder, Mr. Williams of Longborough.**

Throughout the years there have been many performances, dances, entertainments, nativity plays, and fetes held on Whit Mondays put on by the school and children.

1924 seemed a busy year with a grand entertainment that included 'The Merchant of Venice', 'The Tardy Scholar's Song,' sung by R. Merriman after which followed two popular dances, the Irish Jig and the Hoop Dance by older pupils.



**Right: 1924 'The Merchant of Venice.'**



**Left: 1924 The Irish Jig.**

On May 18th, 1951 as part of a Festival of Chipping Campden, a Musical Play was presented by the children of St. Catharine's School, including Maureen Whatcott, Pauline Goodman, Jane Merriman & Tess Taylor.



**Above: 1951 Musical Play**

In the full version of Tess's research document (Digital Archives Ref. 2020/66), there are many photos of the classes and teachers through the years, but there is not enough space to include these here.

However, we finish with this photo of Tess's mother, retiring in 1981 after 30 years of service at the school as Secretary and dinner lady.



**Left: 1981 Retirement of Joan Taylor.**

## Campden's Orchard Heritage

Judith Ellis & Vanessa Rigg

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Over past decades there has been a resurgence of interest in traditional orchards particularly in the cider-making counties of the West Midlands and the South West, influenced by emphasis on a greener environment and reaction to increased building development in the countryside. Traditional orchards are marked by a mixture of fruit trees, not necessarily planted in straight lines, and husbandry which includes allowing animals to forage and graze the ground beneath, whereas the more modern commercial orchards are carefully managed for mechanised harvesting and higher yields. The third type of orchard could be described as a 'feature', part of a landscaped garden scheme on a great estate. Over the centuries Campden has been a host to all three, following the long local tradition of orchards and cider making.

In the past, many burgage plots and larger properties had domestic orchards; these are mentioned in wills along with outside features such as gardens, outhouses and courtyards. The wills and inventories recently transcribed by a CCHS team of volunteers go back to the middle of the 16th century and one of the earliest wills, that of Thomas Harris, a husbandman, in 1555, mentions an orchard -: *'Item y gyve and bequethe unto **Isabell** my dowghter my cotage that one **ffranckley** dwellyth yn with 4 akres of eyrable (arable) land and one halfe akre of meddow a beest pasture and an orchard with all that belongeth unto ytt;*<sup>1</sup> In 1579 John Ryley, a gentleman of Broad Campden, left *'all those my three several tenements set lying and being in the over-end of Calves Lane now in the several hands or occupations of Thomas Dotchen and Christian Hall widow together with all gardens orchards and backside to the said three tenements...*<sup>2</sup> These are clearly domestic orchards that were attached to the dwelling and probably only for the use of the family. William Higgins in 1579 bequeathed *'the garden ground or orchard next to the lane'* to his daughter Elizabeth, implying that the orchard was for domestic use.<sup>3</sup> There may well have even been, as there was later, a system for the crop of apples to be juiced by a communal press.

Fifty years later, when Sir Baptist Hicks bought the manor of Campden and started to lay out his grand estate near the church, he probably ordered an artfully planned garden following the fashion of the rich gentry around the country, to include a carefully laid-out orchard for his guests to walk in at their leisure. This is indicated in drawings of Campden House made a century after it was burned down. John Tradescant, known to Hicks, was sent to Europe by Robert Cecil, Queen Elizabeth I's Secretary of State, to purchase fruit trees and it seems highly likely that Hicks will have placed an order as well. Lyveden New Beild, in Northamptonshire, created by Sir Thomas Tresham at the end of the sixteenth century, had an orchard with a variety of fruits, for eating fresh or dried, or using for medicinal purposes. Every fruit or nut, and their leaves, had qualities that were held to be valuable for treating different ailments or promoting good health. These carefully managed orchards provided status and health for their wealthy owners and their households.

The map drawn in 1722 of the Campden estate of the Earls of Gainsborough offers some proof of the inclusion of an orchard, as "Horsmans Orchard" is noted on the lower part of the gardens of old Campden House: the orchard may well have been laid out earlier and continued until that time. Most of the grounds of the ruined mansion, leased to Samuel Horsman and Nicholas Fletcher, had been turned over to fruit trees. Even today there are a few old trees in that area that give a hint of the orchards.

Wills in the seventeenth century frequently use a common phrase *'All my now dwelling house situate and being in Chipping Campden aforesaid with all the outhouses, courtyard, backside, garden, orchard,*

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<sup>1</sup> Gloucestershire Archives: harris.thomas.1555.103

<sup>2</sup> National Archives: ryley.john.1570.PRO.11.52.314

<sup>3</sup> Gloucestershire Archives: higgins.william.1579.201

close, and all and singular the appurtenances whatsoever', distinguishing the orchard from the other parts of the estate. The will of John Davis in 1680 is particularly interesting as it was one of the few made by a labourer, as opposed to a more wealthy individual.<sup>4</sup>

**Right: 1722 Map of Campden estate**

In sales particulars from the C18 and C19 many orchards are mentioned as desirable additions to the town houses; for example, this Sale of the Green Dragon in the Worcester Journal: ... TO BE SOLD, all that extensive and well known PUBLIC HOUSE, known by the Sign of the GREEN DRAGON, ... with a large and commodious yard, garden, and a productive orchard planted with thriving young fruit trees<sup>5</sup>.



Later, Bedfont House was on the market: A capital FREEHOLD MANSION, in the centre of the town of Chipping-Campden ... Also a COTTAGE and ORCHARD adjoining, planted with the choicest fruit trees, in the occupation of Peter Haines<sup>6</sup>. Several of the wills of people living in the High Street in the 1800s list an orchard behind; all but two gardens are now lost to housing development. Some Campden orchards existed for centuries: for example, the will of Innkeeper Nathaniel Tidmarsh written in 1782 mentions Littleworth Orchard which was still there when the new housing estate was built in the 1950s. Westington, the area of town occupied mainly by the wealthier farmers, had extensive orchards, as shown in the Gainsborough Estate map of 1818, (see front cover) including Cherry Orchard and Pear Tree Close, which later gave their names to the new housing development.

Much of the fruit will have been pressed to make cider or perry; the "Cyder-Mill house" in Cidermill Lane was there before 1765 when it was mentioned in sale particulars: To be sold FIVE Freehold Cottages or Tenements and a Cyder-Mill house thereunto adjoining, with the Cyder-Mill upon the premises, a large Malthouse and two large Wing Stones<sup>7</sup>.



**Left: Cider press being operated by steam power on Izod's farm in Westington, c.1900**

According to the house deeds the mill was in the garden behind the cottage (rebuilt as a three-storey house c. 1820) on the corner with Leysbourne. It was not

<sup>4</sup> Gloucestershire Archives: davis.john.1680.77

<sup>5</sup> Worcester Journal 16 Sept 1819.

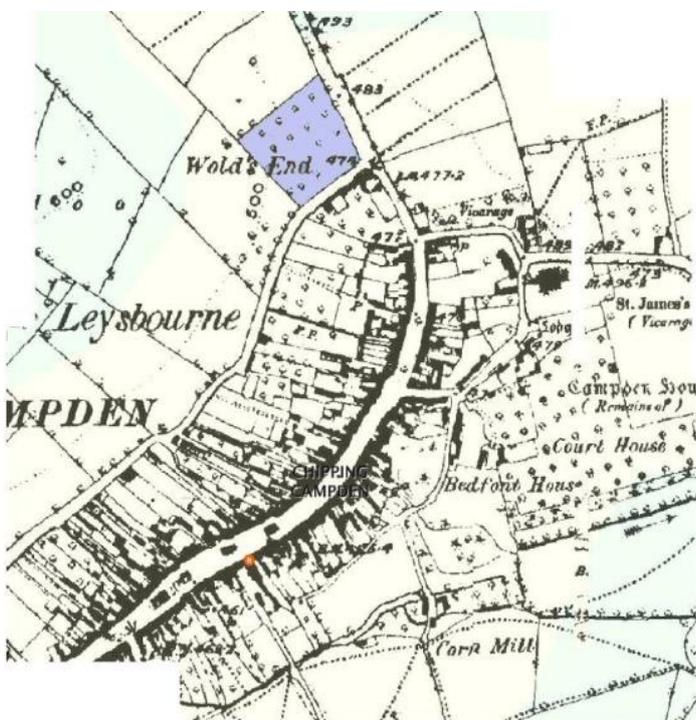
<sup>6</sup> Oxford Journal 14 May 1831.

<sup>7</sup> Oxford Journal 13 July 1765

the only cider press: in 1820 Thomas Roberts left to his son several cottages in Sheep Street 'together with the Cyder Mill Gardens Orchards and all and every appurtenances thereunto belonging'. It appears that later there were moveable cider presses, as shown in the two photographs taken around 1900.

**Right: Smaller portable press being operated behind the George and Dragon public house in the High Street. It appears to have been a community activity unless the crowd was attracted by the prospect of being photographed.**

The development of larger orchards for commercial purposes happened in the latter half of the C19. The Ordnance Survey map of 1885 shows a considerable number of orchards surrounding the town, including Wolds End Orchard which must have been well established before then. The development of local orchards continued, with the 1902 and 1923 maps showing them around Westington and Littleworth and behind High Street houses. Most of these fields are now built over with houses. After World War II some disused allotments along Station Road were converted to cherry orchards, proving very popular with local children.



**Left: Ordnance Survey map of 1885**

Fruit picking provided good employment for women and children as well as men in the summer months and was an integral part of the local economy in the twentieth century. Fred Coldicott wrote in 1994: "One of the loveliest features of the countryside is now practically extinct: that is the cherry orchards. When I was a lad, there were five large orchards and two smaller ones in Campden and Broad Campden ... Now every year there is the 'Plum Run' around the Vale of Evesham, when the plum trees are in blossom, but it does not compare with the lovely cherry blossom."<sup>8</sup>

Another local man's memory: "When I was a lad growing up just after the war there were orchards all over, mostly cherry orchards, up Catbrook, and The Leasows that we got from Dyers Lane. Old Campden House had the oldest fruit trees, on the slopes of the garden - apple, pear and cherry."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Memories of an Old Campdonian. Fred Coldicott CADHAS 1994 p.11

<sup>9</sup> Robert Grove

“Every orchard had to have a bird-minder for five or six weeks. This was usually someone who was not quite able-bodied enough to do regular work. 'Teapot' Williams was always on duty at Hand's Orchard in Station Road. It meant being there from dawn to dark. They were provided with a gun and rattle. The cherry-picking season was always a boon to casual workers; for a few weeks they could earn good money: the more they picked, the more they earned”. FC

**Right: James 'Teapot' Williams in Rimell's Orchard, Old Campden House, c.1940's**



So, Campden like most Gloucestershire settlements has a long tradition of orchards. As trends in food production evolved

so did the growing of fruit trees: from small scale domestic plantings to larger, more organised orchards and finally, as the global economy and refrigeration developed, most of these local

orchards have been abandoned and given over to housing or sheep pasture. The more recent interest in organic and local produce means the growing of fruit trees is evolving again with the emphasis on biodiversity, trees and a community effort.



**Left: Fruit pickers in a Station Road Orchard, c.1940s**

### **Editor's addition:**

This extract from a WWII diary, published as a book *Few Eggs and No Oranges*, kept by Vere Hodgson, who used to visit and stay with a family friend, the Birmingham artist Bernard Sleigh, who had retired to Forge Cottage in Campden:

*“July 1943 Bernard Sleigh's cottage, the Old Forge, Chipping Campden was a dream of beauty on a June afternoon with thatched roof and roses growing up the front. The lovely church tower was heard by playing airs in the chimes. And we were there the whole week. We could get fruit! Campden is full of cherry orchards. As we came along we gazed anxiously at the trees, hoping there would be cherries left for us. There was no holding us back, so fruit starved are we. After tea we went and bought some from an old chap straight off the tree. One and six-pence a pound, but he gave us good weight.”*

## CCHS Annual Report 2020

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As with the rest of the world, it has been a very tough year, although in the Cotswolds the impact of COVID-19 has been less than almost anywhere else in the country. Our regular meetings became virtual and our ongoing research has been limited by the closure of record offices and our own Archive Room. At the start of Lockdown, when there was a spirit of ‘we will get through this’, CCHS members took photos, created videos and decorated their windows, providing us with a valuable record of ‘Campden in Lockdown’. But as time went on and the country has endured more ‘spikes’ of infection, the joy of participating in socially distanced community activities and recording them for posterity has worn thin. In this extraordinary year, the mailing list and website have proved a godsend in helping to keep members in touch with what we are doing, from videos to a quiz, to the now-all-important Zoom talks.

### Mailings to members and the website

There are currently (Jan 2021) 185 members who have given permission to go on the Mailchimp list – an overall increase of 14 since the beginning of 2020. Once we began to present the Autumn season of talks via Zoom, more members, both old and new, asked to be added to the mailing list, contact with human beings, albeit ‘virtually’, being more and more important to those who were – and are – in isolation. An average of 75% of the mailings we send are opened by recipients and one third of people ‘click’ on a link which takes them to a feature on the website or to a talk.

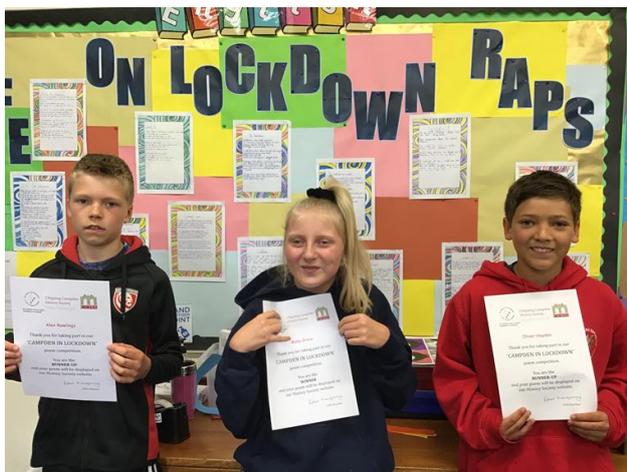
We have continued to expand and refine the website; the pages on CCHS activities and research have been re-organised and new topics are being added all the time. In the first quarter of 2020, the number of times the website was accessed remained much the same as in the previous year, with a sudden dip in the last week of March – we had other things to think about then besides local history! However, in the second half of the year visits to the website were significantly higher than in the previous year – the ‘lockdown’ videos were popular, as were the items *From the Archive* which members were alerted to in the monthly mailing. However, we need far more contributions from members to keep things ‘fresh’, even if the content is decidedly historical.

The Members’ section of the website has been somewhat neglected in recent months, but transcriptions of documents have continued apace during ‘lockdown’ and new material will be added soon, including transcriptions of Wills and of the School Accounts.

### Promoting Campden History

The lack of community events to be advertised in the Co-op window has resulted in CCHS providing the displays, which have included ‘Campden in Lockdown’, the story of Norton Hall Red Cross Hospital in WWI, and in December ‘Were you a little angel?’ with photos of past Nativity plays put on by the churches and schools. This prompted a response from local people who recognised themselves and added memories for our archives.

**Right: Award-winning schoolchildren from St. James and Ebrington School**



The summer Co-op display featured the entries and winners in our primary schools competition: CCHS donated £25 each to St. Catharine’s RC School and St. James & Ebrington Federated School for entries on the theme of *Campden in Lockdown*. We judged the resulting paintings and poems – or

'raps' as they called them - and we were pleased to make the awards before the schools closed. We have also maintained public awareness through the monthly Campden Bulletin, which now includes photos, and our Facebook page which generates more responses from people who identify themselves and have memories to share – and argue about!

## Finances

Not surprisingly, as a result of COVID-19, our turnover this past year has been significantly less than usual, with book sales well down, and some overheads also reduced. However, our membership income has remained strong and we have managed to turn in a small surplus. This, together with our reserves, means that the Society remains in a healthy financial state.

## Membership

It is really encouraging that our membership has held up remarkably well during this difficult year. 98% of members have renewed and with 16 new members joining, we now have a membership of 277, compared with 261 last year. Thank you all for your loyalty and support. As the difficulties look set to continue well into the coming year, we shall all need that mutual support in maintaining the life of the Society. So, continue to be pro-active and in particular, if any of you feel able to share some of the Committee's organisation of activity, we would be delighted to welcome you to our "virtual" committee discussions.

## Queries during 2020

Between 1st January 2020 and 31st December 2020 Archive Room Volunteers received and dealt with 90 queries, 12 more (+15%) than the previous year and bringing the level close to the average. This of course does not include any correspondence specifically directed to officers or function-heads nor a significant on-going correspondence from previous enquirers. Most queries still come in through the website [www.chippingcampdenhistory.org.uk](http://www.chippingcampdenhistory.org.uk) or by email to the Archive Room computer, especially this last year with the Archive Room closed to personal visitors for most of the year due to the Covid-19 restrictions. The query numbers per annum over the 18 years of keeping records are fairly consistent, averaging 86 p.a.:

2020 - 90; 2019 - 78; 2018 - 91; 2017 - 106; 2016 - 88

The monthly average for 2020 was about 8 enquiries. The breakdown of each query type for this year is as follows: enquiries about family history were the largest group 29 (33%), places or houses were 23 (26%), miscellaneous queries – about items in the archives, photographs or general help requests were 16 (17%), with queries about important local people 13 (14%) and general topics 9 (10%). Again, very useful financial donations to our funds (about £450 this year including a couple of generous cheques) and interesting research or articles have resulted in several cases.

## CCHS Archives

Work on the Archives has continued, in a COVID-safe way and working at home: the Archives team has developed new processes for new accessions and sorting digital folders in order to create space for the donations that keep arriving.

**Right: St. James Church at Night, painting by Richard Parker Crook, donated by Tim & Jean Jones**

New donations this year have included a box of photos, documents and invoices from the Ladbrook family, with a quantity of 'In Memoriam' cards, dating back to the 1800s. The butchers' invoices have been sorted and are now being studied to give us a picture of commercial life in the late 1800s – we are still not sure what



'sharps' were, ordered from grain dealers. Other collections of documents include digital copies of the original records of the Alms-houses Trust which have now been deposited with Gloucestershire Archives and the Campden Society archive of papers. Preparations are in hand to accept another local archive, but in order to create space for this, more digitisation of papers will be necessary. Members who have been developing their research interests for years have quantities of material on their computers and these too need to be moved to the CCHS Digital Archive for future study.

### Members' research

It has been difficult for members to continue with their research without access to our own archives or those of the major record offices. However, as the major task of transcribing Campden Wills and Inventories has been completed there is more scope for compiling family stories and identifying changes in community life from the details of bequests and possessions. One member has used his expertise to analyse the parish registers and identify trends in marriage, literacy and death in the 1700-1800s. The next major task will be to bring together some house histories from the leases and other information in the Archives. Much of the research is used in talks, both to our Society and to others, spreading knowledge and understanding about our town's history.

### CCHS talks

The programme for the 2019-20 season was uneventful, but with good attendance, until the first lockdown in March 2020. This caused us to have to cancel both the March and April meetings. However, during the summer we experimented with Zoom, so that this season, from September 2020 until April 2021, is being held entirely on Zoom. We have found that while we have lost attendance from some members who do not have computer access, we have gained others who for many reasons were not able to attend evening meetings in person. The first talk, in September, was somewhat experimental as everyone got used to logging on to virtual meetings, but Derek Taylor showed his professionalism in his October talk, 'What did the Vikings do for us?', followed in November by Dr Gillian White with her talk on the *Visit of Queen Elizabeth I to Kenilworth Castle*. CCHS members provided some Christmas entertainment for the December meeting, with readings and music on a winter theme, giving us some cheer. We have a regular attendance of around 75-80 people, which compares favourably with our normal physical attendance. We hope that we shall be able to recommence normal meetings in September 2021, but it is too early to be sure of this. If it proves not to be possible to have normal meetings, we hope to continue with Zoom meetings for the duration of the pandemic. Unless the talks are subject to copyright conditions they are being recorded and posted on the CCHS website for wider distribution.

### Family History Group

Only two talks were possible before Lockdown and the Group has not held any more meetings. The Committee was already discussing a change of name, to clarify that the talks were not just about family history and now, post-COVID-19, further consideration will be given to the best ways of meeting members' expectations.

<b>President</b>	<b>Professor Christopher Dyer</b>
<b>Vice-President</b>	<b>Carol Jackson</b>
<b>Committee 2020-21</b>	
<b>Chairman</b>	Robert Montgomery (until Dec 2020)
<b>Vice Chairman</b>	vacant
<b>Secretary</b>	Vin Kelly
<b>Treasurer</b>	Alan Barclay
<b>Programme Sec.</b>	Ann Hettich
<b>Archive Coordinator</b>	Judith Ellis
<b>Family History Group</b>	Sue Badger
<b>Committee members</b>	Jennifer Fox, Nick Woodward
<i>Website Co-ordinator Mary Fielding</i>	