



Friends of Somerset Archives

Snippets - No. 33

September 2014

Dear all

The year is flying past and I hope you have enjoyed a wonderful summer. I spent a very interesting evening at The Museum of Somerset last week - there is a report from this later on. I was at work one day last week when I received an "instant message" from my 2nd cousin in Australia. We share a Great Grandfather who was a Royal Marine and who came out of retirement to fight in World War 1. We know that our Gt Grandfather was in the trenches at Antwerp so my cousin typed this in to a search engine - and found a photograph of the Marines marching through the town. We both immediately recognised Gt Grandfather - marching in quite a laid back style, weapon slung low on his shoulder. "Instant messages" flew back and forth between Australia and England, amazing! Another cousin, Sue Law (who many of you will know from The Friends) has also found out that one of Gt Grandfather's sons was in the Royal Air Force during WW1. Being a former member of the WRAF this has really been an exciting find.

If you have an interesting find with regard to the commemorations do please think of sending it to me for inclusion in the next edition.

With best wishes

Liz

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Upcoming Events

Friends of Somerset Archives AGM - 11th October at 2 pm.

Our AGM will take place at the Somerset Heritage Centre on the afternoon of 11th October. Details are being finalised about a speaker for the event and these will be published as soon as possible.

Yeovil Fleet Arm Museum Visit - 23rd October at 2 pm.

This will be a visit to the Cobham Hall at the Fleet Air Arm Museum on Thursday 23rd October. There will be dedicated tours of both the Document Store and the Small Objects Store, which are not normally available to the public as well as admission to the Aeronautical Hall with its impressive array of aircraft and other collection items.

The Manors of Somerset - 22nd November

The details of this event are still being finalised, but put the date in your diary!

Please continue to support your group. Thank you!

Malcolm Daniels, Chairman

Talks and visit to "Somerset Remembers" Exhibition at the Museum of Somerset 17th September 2014 - with thanks to Ann Murch

We met on 17th September at the museum to hear Sam Astill, museum curator and Liz Grant archivist give fascinating talks about the "Somerset Remembers" project and were then able to see the very interesting exhibition.

Sam's talk

Sam thanked those who had sponsored and supported the project and then talked about its achievements and highlights. The exhibition in the Museum is the centrepiece of the project. It covers both experiences on the home front and the experience of those fighting the war, with special reference to Somerset County Regiments. Over eighteen thousand people have already visited the exhibition since opening in August and it continues until January 3rd.

One of the highlights of the exhibition is an amazing creative project on the theme of remembrance by the artist Jon England, comprising two life size pictures of a soldier, one from the front and one from the back, based on the war memorial at Somerton, and four smaller symbolic pictures. These are all made of tiny poppy seeds on a white background which is extremely effective.

The objects in the exhibition include many new acquisitions from the public. One collection, the Welch collection, was given by the daughter of James Welch of the Somerset Light Infantry. Photos, medals and papers illustrated his experience throughout the war, when he was awarded the military medal and was subsequently wounded by shrapnel, and the ongoing impact on him and his family until his death in 1931. A very unusual object she donated was a gold plate brooch given to his wife on their wedding day in 1921 which contained a mounted piece of shrapnel taken from his head. His son and daughter were both able to be at the opening of the exhibition and see the information displayed about him, which was significant because, having lived for some years after the war, he doesn't appear on a war memorial.

On the home front everyone was involved and Sam illustrated this by describing how a school logbook for Nunney in 1917 noted schoolchildren collecting horse chestnuts to make acetone for munitions made at Horton Heath in Dorset.

He also mentioned the smaller touring exhibitions to 30 venues round the county for people who might not get to Taunton.

Many people have been involved in projects, including a lot of volunteers. This has led to people learning new skills and making new relationships. Students from SCAT have been involved, creating art work for the Taunton Flower show and volunteers have led tours round key sites in Taunton including the barracks and war memorial.

An online archive (www.somersetremembers.com) has been developed where people can, over the next five years, share their stories and collections. He mentioned a collection of very special photographs taken by a soldier who had been in the Royal Engineers responsible for clearing up the battlefields after the war had ended.

A number of schools are visiting the museum and are specially looking at gifts which were sent to the troops as part of specially planned learning sessions.

The public programme of events is continuing including the films "Oh what a lovely war" and "War horse", researching family history and a talk by the son of Arnold Ridley of "Dad's Army" fame, who was in the Somerset Light Infantry. Next year there will be a project on WW2 called War Stories.

Liz's talk

Liz talked about the 50 plus volunteers who had helped research archive sources which were then used for the exhibition, indexes and the community archive. She mentioned three particular projects, the parish returns, contemporary newspapers and other archives like council records, log books and minutes of societies.

The parish returns appear to be unique to Somerset and describe the war effort of 168 parishes. Some are just a paragraph, some many pages. It's not clear who initiated these, possibly a newspaper *The Western Gazette*. They are not representative geographically of the whole of Somerset as there are none for the west of the county and not many for the north.

Liz then gave us a flavour of some of the details from the parish returns for Taunton, Minehead, Yeovil and Glastonbury. In Taunton in 1916 many men volunteered, leaving very few men left to be summoned. Flag days, fetes and concerts were held to support the war, free cinema seats were given to the wounded, allotments opposite Taunton school were given to the town. A Red Cross hospital was set up. In Minehead there was also a Red Cross hospital, benches were designated on the promenade for injured soldiers, the town had a black out system and concern was felt about a possible threat from the sea. In Glastonbury there was an influenza outbreak in 1917. The town decided not to have allotments because the wives of men who had gone to the front found it difficult to cultivate their gardens in their husbands' absence. Yeovil area made a large contribution to the war, especially because of Westlands. The town made munitions as well as aircraft and seaplanes.

Liz described the importance of agriculture with ploughing up of new land, the employment of women working on the land, the freeing up of schoolchildren to help with harvest, the return of some soldiers who were farmers' sons to help with harvest. Twenty one villages had refugees from Belgium.

She told the story of an unusual presentation of the VC to a soldier from Midsomer Norton Oliver Brooks. He was invested by King George V who has been injured in an

accident and was lying in bed in a hospital train. The soldier knelt on the floor by the bed and the king tried to pin the VC on but couldn't get the pin through.

Another story from North Petherton parish return was of the Fish family who had been on the Lusitania when it was torpedoed. The mother was in a boat with her unconscious daughter whom the other people in the boat thought was dead and wanted to throw her overboard but the mother managed to resuscitate her.

She showed a photo of a wartime pattern for knitting socks which she had tried unsuccessfully to use, a photo of recruits training with broomsticks and mentioned an amusing report from the Western Mercury of someone getting into trouble for looking at bathers at Weston through binoculars not because of the objects in view but because the binoculars should have been given up for the forces!

Another unusual photo taken at Gounay Court West Harptree, converted to a hospital, showed lots of nurses at windows of the building and outside and soldiers at various heights up a ladder.

Finally she showed an Xray photo from 1947 of the head of a Joseph Hill of Charlton Magna showing shrapnel still there from the Afghan war and a subsequent photo, when it had been removed, leaving a dent in the middle of his forehead.

The exhibition

Following the talks we went to the exhibition and saw a number of the objects and photos that had been mentioned and more and were able to talk further to Sam and Liz, ending a very interesting evening.

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A PROBLEM IN PILTON - with thanks to Sue Berry

SRO ref. Q\SR/63.239

In or about the year 1630 the good citizens of Pilton some three miles from Shepton Mallet were greatly disturbed by the behaviour of one William Morgan alias Barrington who, having moved into the parish, was living with his uncle and aunt, although he does not seem to have had any work in the parish. Following William's disturbance in church on Christmas Day, the event that appears to have brought matters to a head, the Constable of the parish, Thomas Hedland, and five other parishioners drew up a petition to the Justices of the Peace begging them to deal with the problem.

I have transcribed in full abbreviated words and have kept the original spelling. I have used modern punctuation throughout as the punctuation of the original is problematic: what appears to be a full stop is used as a modern comma except in a couple of instances where it is really a full stop.

To youre Right Worshipfulls his Majesties Justices of the Peace assembled at this present quarter sessions

Whereas William Morgan alias Barrington is bound over to appeare at this Sessions.

Theis are to certifye unto youre worshipfull bench, that the said William Morgan alias Barrington is a common imbarator¹, a very idle person of base life and conversacion, a masterless² person, (saveing onely remayneing with his uncle Barrington of Pilton at his owne pleasure), a common alehowse haunter, a disturber of all the neighbours, a quarreller and common brawler fighting and ready to fight with every one he commeth in company withal: fightinge in his Uncle and Aunt's howse with outcries aswell in the middle of the night as by day there is cryeing out murder murder, and hath said and vowed he must kill one or other so that all the neighbours are in dread of him and doubtfull to be spoiled by him in body or goods, and carryeth about fire by night in his roguish humor and he came into the church with a pyke upon his shoulder Christmas day last afore evening prayer and disturbed the ringers and struck up the heeles of one Robert Brocke in the church with many other enormious and egregious crime by him committed which were to tedious to recyte he being such a vile and wicked person even the whole village is afraid of him doubting what mischiefe he may doe amongst them. The premises considered, may it please the worshipfull bench to inflict on him such severe punishment either by committing him for a good space or otherwise as to your worships shall seeme most expedient aswell for satisfaction of the inhabitans as for the example of all such misliving persons, and we shall bounden daylie to pray unto thalmighty for your worships health and happiness in this life and in thother to come eternall felicitye

Witnesses

Thomas Hedland Constable

Robert Hedland

Hue Warford

Thomas Mercer

William Greffine

Walter Sheate

Unfortunately, the Quarter Sessions Order Book covering the period of this petition (ref. Q\SO/4) is not very helpful. William Morgan alias Thorne and Thomas Barrington, both of Pilton, were named in the January 1630 list of those giving recognisances to appear and William also appears in the April 1630 list. However, there is no further reference to the case up to and including the Sessions of January 1631.

To y^e Hon^{ble} his Ma^{ty} Justice of the Peace:
assembled at this next quarter Sessions.

Whereas, William Morgan als Barrington is bound over to appeare at this Sessions.
Theis are to certifie unto y^e wth bench, that the said wth Morgan als Barrington
is a common Imbarrator & a very idle y^{ou}ng of base life & contumacious, a master of open
savage onely remaining wth his uncle Barrington of Pilton, at his owne pleasure.
a common Alehouse haunter, a disturber of all the neighbours, a quarreller and
common brawler, fighting & ready to fight wth every one he cometh in company wth all
fighting in his uncle and kint's hold wth outcries as well in the middle of y^e night
as by day, there is saying out murder murder & hath said & vowed to kill
one or other, so that all the neighbours are in dread of him, & doubtful to be
spoiled by him in body or goods, & carryeth about five by night in his roguish humour.
& he came into the Church wth a pike upon his shoulder, Christmas day last
afore evening prayer, & disturbed the singing, & struck up the heels of one
Robert Brooker in the Church, wth many other enormous & egression
crimes by him committed, wth were so tedious to relate, he being such a vile
& wicked y^{ou}ng, even the whole village is afraid of him, Doubting what mischief
he may do amongst them.

The premises considered, may it please the wth bench, to inflict on him such severe
punishment ~~as~~, either by committing him, for a good space, or otherwise
as to y^e wth bench, shall seeme most expedient, as well for satisfaction of the inhabitants,
as for the example of all such misdoing y^{ou}ng, & wee shall be bounden
dayly to pray unto thalmighty, for y^e wth bench, health & happiness in this life
& in thothere to come eternall felicity.

witnessed
Egmont & Stand Constable
Robert Egmont
Jude warford
Egmont more
William Egmont
Walter Egmont

By searching the Pilton parish records, it was possible to discover a little more about Thomas Barrington. He appeared in the 1640 church rate paying the sum of 6d. He was buried in Pilton on the 13 January 1641 with his wife Elizabeth being buried just four days later. It is possible they had two sons, for in the 1641 church rate Bartholomew and Richard Barrington are shown paying 2d and 4d respectively.

There is no entry for a marriage of Thomas Barrington in the Pilton registers nor entries for the baptisms of any children. However, very interestingly, there is an entry for 'Elizabeth, the bastard of one Prudence Thorne who was born at Thomas Barrington's and baptized here' on the 27 February 1615.

Was Prudence also the mother of William? If so, what was her relationship to Thomas Barrington? Where did William's alias of Morgan come from? If anyone can shed any light on these questions, please do let me know!

1 Imbarrator: one who stirs up quarrels. In modern criminal law barratry or barrety is the vexatious bringing of law suits.

2 Masterless: in this context a masterless man is synonymous with a rogue or vagabond, someone with no place in society.

See A L Beier *Masterless Men: the vagrancy problem in England 1560-1640*. Law Book Co of Australasia (1985)

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THE BUILDER LOOKS AT YEOVIL IN 1870 - with thanks to Jack Sweet

In December 1870 an article about Yeovil appeared in *The Builder*, which on being reprinted in *The Western Gazette* ruffled more than a few local municipal feathers. Yeovil was described as a 'slowly improving, yet somewhat busy town.... It is pleasantly situated on the Ivel, or Yeo, and it possesses an archaeological interest that compensates for some of its modern drawbacks.'

The *Builder* was complimentary about St. John's Church, the 'Lantern of the West', but remarked that 'the clock, which for many years has not kept good time, was lately removed for repair.'

'The architecture of the modern public buildings in the town is somewhat mediocre,' commented *The Builder*. 'The Town Hall is a somewhat large structure in the Ionic style, with a clock turret, underneath which is the Corn Exchange and Market. Here and there, through the older portions of the town, may be noticed some very old inns or hostelries that have long since forgotten the names of their builders, hoary with age, and stoutly struggling against the blasts of time. Yet they live, as it were, defying time. These old houses, with their projecting windows, heavy gables, long inward passages, curious wainscoted apartments, oaken stairs, lead the mind back to olden days when curious habits of domestic life and observances dovetailed themselves into the framework of English society, which squared itself with inward thought and outward actions. The Castle Inn and the George Inn may be instanced as specimens of that class of dwellings which are now fast disappearing from the land.' (The Castle, however, survived until 1924 and the George another 92 years until 1962.)

Now *The Builder* began to 'put the knife in' so to speak - 'Leaving the past and its memories, let us touch upon the present and its duties. One want of Yeovil is a good and effective water supply. The present supply is bad, nor is the water of that purity that can be recommended. Sickness was lately prevalent to a large extent. Cases of fever, scarletina, measles and of cognate diseases, were prevalent during last spring and summer, and one medical practitioner in the town informed us that he wondered the mortality was not greater. The drainage of Yeovil is very defective; indeed, so far as we examined, we saw the surface drainage finding its ordinary outlet through the common sinks and traps where it could. The greater proportion of the ordinary sewage is buried in the sub-soil; the rest oozes and wriggles riverwards. The whole of the

sewage matter of Yeovil could be well and profitably utilised, and there exists natural facilities and inducements that ought to urge the Local Board to stir in the matter. 'The River Yeo is not in a very pure state, it may be guessed. Kid-glove manufacture is carried on extensively in the town and a large female population, and in many instances whole families, find employment in this local trade. The refuse matter in connexion with these foci of industry is an item in any consideration of the subject. Sufficient nastiness, in all reason, we could see on all sides finding its outlet in one way or another into the river. Will the Local Board take a hint and bestir themselves?'

The Builder was now in full cry and attacked the state of the Yeovil Union Workhouse in Preston Road, which 'has been a chronic scandal. We have not space to go into detail, but we are safe in asserting that able-bodied youths are being kept for several years in the house, lazily squandering their time from youth to manhood, and at last thrown out on society, unable to follow any useful occupation. They have been reared up to criminality; we have data to show it. The infant children, it is asserted, have been neglected by their nurses to death, and the old and infirm left for weeks in dirt without a change of clothing. Large quantities of wine, spirits, and beer have been put down to workhouse expense and we should like to be informed by the medical officer, who gives us the quantities, who are the consumers. Taking the words of a late visiting committee, we are fortified in our remarks; for they stated to the board that the union was in a disgraceful condition. In the matter of food, drink, and clothing, there had been a shameful expenditure for articles by which the poor patients have not benefited. We repeat, and we challenge denial, that the children in Yeovil poorhouse have been hencoooped and suffocated for want of exercise and air, and that their nurses and the guardians can scarcely be exonerated.'

Having got this of its chest The Builder placed the Town Council firmly in its sights and declared that 'If some new dwellings were erected, a few of the old ruinous edifices of the town could be taken down with advantage. The Town Council have an opportunity presented to them for carrying out the improving powers with which they are invested but seldom exercise. It is very easy to know by the state of the street, the character of the dwellings that flank it. In Back-street, South-street, Vicarage-street, and others, and the lanes and courts branching off, the local authorities would find ample and useful work to do in the street paths, yards, channels and drains. Down in that sluggish hollow, beside the old buttressed wall of the church, there is plenty of work for the pavior, scavenger, and drain maker. Branching off from this quarter, there are zigzag places, dolorous looking, rife with odours and rheumatics. Decay is here, within a stone's throw of the fine old "Lantern of the West." It ought surely to be the pride of the burgesses, citizens, and inhabitants of any town which possesses an heirloom of architecture, to preserve it, and glory in the possession; and it is also the duty of the local authorities of such towns, where such glorious-remains exist, to keep the spaces around them open, and render their approaches easy, wide, and ornamental.'

Despite this somewhat depressing view of the town The Builder believed that Yeovil was destined to improve and there was wealth enough to ensure this. However, the

article contained a sting in its tail when it concluded that 'There is capacity enough to do these things rightly in this Somersetshire town; but with a little purse-proud intolerance and ignorance on the one side, and petty huxtering views on the other, the town is crushed and its public spirit, except on rare occasions, is weak, fitful, and unproductive.' Oh dear!

Somerset Remembers



The First World War

First World War Community Archive Launched - with thanks to Liz Grant, Archivist

As part of the lottery-funded Somerset Remembers project, the Somerset Heritage Service have developed an Online Community Archive where people can share the photographs, letters and stories which have been passed down through the generations.

We are hoping Somerset people will get involved with the archive and help to create a major historical resource for future generations.

The online archive is exciting because it gives everyone a chance to engage in their own history. Many will recall the personal stories which have been passed down by those who took part in the conflict. They are no longer able to share their stories so it is more important than ever that you share yours.

Everyone with a link to the county, both past and present, can play a part in this project and help to create a lasting legacy to those who played a role in the conflict.

Do you have pictures, letters, diaries, or war records from a family member who was involved? Did a relative serve with the Somerset Light Infantry? Is there a Red Cross nurse in the family? Have you researching your village to mark the centenary? Or are you interested in the actions of the county during the war? If so please visit the website www.somersetremembers.com and contribute to the project or read the fascinating accounts of Somerset men and women.

The Somerset Remembers project is being led by Somerset Heritage Service and is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Displays for the remainder of the year can be seen at:

4/09/2014	03/11/2014	Frome Museum
01/10/2014	03/11/2014	Visit Nunney - Nunney Church
31/10/2014	21/12/2014	Glastonbury Abbey Museum
05/11/2014	12/11/2014	Wedmore Village Hall
07/11/2014	07/11/2014	Wellington School
13/11/2014	02/12/2014	Bridgwater Library
20/11/2014	04/12/2014	Chard Library

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Manorial Documents Register Project update - with thanks to Scott Pettitt
In North Petherton, on the Friday before Palm Sunday in 1350, Henry Borde and Alice Bache murdered John, the son of William Ive (the killers were sheltered by a couple named Henry and Joan Gustard). The culprits were taken to Somerton Gaol by North Petherton's bailiff. No further details of the case are known, but it provides a wonderful example of the sort of fascinating information that would be lost to us entirely were it not for the survival of Somerset's manorial records (this particular bit of information is included in a manor court roll (ref: DD\SAS/C795/NP/9)).

The end of the 18-month Somerset Manorial Documents Register (MDR) Project is now in sight; the project formally ends on 2nd December. Over 850 manors have now been positively identified, and the database, which should 'go live' in February 2015, currently contains 11,300 record entries. The last four months have been sent locating manorial documents at repositories beyond Somerset Heritage Centre, and material still in private hands (this is more common than you might think). Somerset manorial records have been found at over 30 locations, ranging from Alwick Castle and record offices in Yorkshire and Sussex, to cathedral libraries in Winchester and Worcester. The focus of the project in its final stages will be on the substantial accumulations of manorial records at The National Archives in Kew.

For more information on the project visit <http://apps.nationalarchives.gov.uk/mdr/>.

More on Manors!

If you would like to find out more about manorial records but have never really know where to start, or have been daunted by the idea of them, then help is at hand!

On Saturday 22nd November, Scott and Jane will be holding an introduction day on manorial records. We will be introducing what they are, where to find the records, and how to interpret common types of manorial records. The details haven't been finalised yet, but the day will start at 10am and will be held in the Learning Room at the Somerset Heritage Centre. We will let you know more when it is all planned, but if you would like to register your interest in coming, please book through Somerset Archives & Local Studies on 01823 27805 or email archives@somerset.gov.uk.

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Know Your Place: West of England - with thanks to Jane de Gruchy

The news so far...

You may remember reading in the last newsletter about the *Know Your Place: West of England* project, which is an extension of the *Bristol: Know Your Place* website (<http://maps.bristol.gov.uk/knowyourplace/>) aiming to put historical maps of Somerset and Gloucestershire online. The new website will contain all of our tithe maps, enclosure maps, and 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps, as well as selected other maps. It is also possible to add digital photographs (of buildings, etc.) to the site.

The Stage 2 project is still on track to be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund in November, and we hope to hear their decision in February. If we get the go-ahead, the project will start in earnest in March or April.

Since June, a lot has been going on behind the scenes. A small group of volunteers, mostly based in Bristol, have been recruited to try out the procedure for geo-rectifying maps. Discussions have been taking place with Bristol City Council to see if their new mobile phone mapping app might be suitable for *Know Your Place*. The British Library has scanned and geo-rectified all the 1st edition Ordnance Survey maps for Gloucestershire and Somerset. I'm not allowed to show you these yet, but please take my word for it that they look really good and work well. I particularly like the fact that you can superimpose one map on top of a different map, and change the transparency level of the top map to easily see the differences between the modern satellite pictures and historical maps.

In Somerset, we have inspected all of our 170 enclosure maps, to see if they need conservation, and to make sure that they are suitable for photographing and that it is possible to geo-rectify them. We were also asked to put together a wish-list of "other" maps that we would like to have scanned and put online. Eve, Graeme and I looked at over 200 maps in August, and have suggested 80 other maps. We are concentrating on maps that are substitutes for the tithe maps, maps are so large that they are difficult to produce and use without damaging them, and on late 18th and early 19th century parish and estate maps. I am sure that I will get many complaints that we haven't included such-and-such a map, but we have had to prioritise, and there are many lovely maps that we cannot use because we cannot obtain permission to put them online.

I am also exploring whether there are ways of adding other maps to the website at a later stage.

I have also been publicising the project, including speaking to groups including the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society, the Somerset Vernacular Buildings Research Group and the Somerset Industrial Archaeology Society. Anyone who comes into the searchroom to look at maps is considered fair game to be talked at and have a leaflet given to them about the project (you have been warned!) If you know of anyone else who you think might be interested, please let me know (on 01823 278805 or jdegruchy@somerset.gov.uk) and I can give them more details.

One more visible recent development is that the project now has its own webpage. I'm afraid that it's a rather long link: <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/tourism-and-travel/museums-and-galleries/know-your-place-west-of-england/>.

Come and see!

Chris Webb, the overall Project Officer, will be out and about in Somerset to promote the project in the coming months. Chris will also be coming to speak to us at our AGM, on Saturday 11th October. The AGM starts at 2pm, and he will be speaking after the business part is finished, at about 3.15pm. He is very enthusiastic and well worth hearing, so please come along and find out more about the project.

I must admit that, in my nine years with the Heritage Service, this is the project which I have had the most enthusiastic responses to. I think that it is very worthwhile and exciting, and will have my fingers crossed that the Heritage Lottery Fund agrees.

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Dickinson Project Update: An Explosive Issue! With thanks to Bob Warren

Notwithstanding absences for holidays during the recent months of what has been an exceptional summer, work continues well on the indexing and cataloguing of the Dickinson archive. Some waste books remain to be completed and conservation work on documents is still in hand.

As has been mentioned before in previous "Snippets" articles upon this project, the tediousness of indexing the day-to-day transactions and business correspondence of Graffin Prankard and Caleb Dickinson and their descendants is often livened by unusual or intriguing topics which warrant research in order to be understood so that informed entries can be made. Such is the case with their trade in gunpowder.

Some readers may remember that in a previous article I mentioned a potentially dangerous cargo of gunpowder, sugar and timber being put aboard their ship, the Baltic Merchant, in Bristol harbour during the 1730's, destined for Charleston in South Carolina, and pointed out the possibility of a serious explosion occurring whilst the pride of the Prankard fleet was en-route! Such cargoes of gunpowder were

commonplace, due to the worldwide demand for it for use with firearms, in mining and quarrying, and other similar activities. Also, most merchant ships carried muskets and cannon that were required for self defence during the many wars of the eighteenth century. Thus a thriving industry to supply this need must have undoubtedly existed in the Bristol area. The location of the gunpowder mills together with the necessary transportation and storage facilities was therefore worthy of investigation. An internet trawl revealed that the topic had been well researched by Dr. Brenda Buchanan of Bath Spa University and the outline of the Bristol area industry given below is a summary of her various excellent articles. Another redoubtable lady gunpowder expert is Glenys Crocker. Her Shire book on the overall history of the UK industry is a very good, concise, read.

Gunpowder mills, which require the basic materials of saltpetre [potassium nitrate], sulphur and charcoal in order to process them into an explosive product of predictable performance, first appeared in Bristol in the late sixteenth century. Charcoal was easily produced from local coppices of such trees as alder, willow and buckthorn. Sulphur and saltpetre were more difficult to source, being initially obtained as a by-product of the copper industry in the case of sulphur, and by mining and refining the compacted residues of dung heaps and farmyards, public urinals and similar locations for saltpetre. By the eighteenth century, when the Dickinsons were dealing in gunpowder, overseas supplies of the latter materials were being regularly imported from Iceland, North Africa, the Mediterranean countries and India.

The most well documented instance of the early activities of such Bristol manufacturers was in the first half of the seventeenth century, when William Baber became active both in the supply of saltpetre and the clandestine manufacture of the finished product in the Bristol area. During the Civil War he became the gunpowder manufacturer for the Royalist cause at Oxford and afterwards resumed his activities locally, having a factory called Baber's Tower, near to the banks of the Avon. After the Restoration and into the eighteenth century, and as demand grew and manufacturing techniques became more uniform and well established, gunpowder manufacturing moved away from the immediate Bristol area and into the surrounding countryside, where there was a desirable isolation from the centres of population, running water to power the grinding mills and the space to construct the substantial buildings necessary for the whole manufacturing sequence to be undertaken. The most notable powder mills adjacent to Bristol in the eighteenth century were established at Woolley, near Bath and at Littleton in the Chew Magna area, and these continued in operation until well after the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815. Other mills were also established in the area, but it is probable that the Dickinsons obtained their supplies from these two major sources. It should be noted that at this time the British government had their own powder mills, notably at Abbey Mills and Faversham, both near London, and did not normally purchase gunpowder from elsewhere. Whilst the Woolley site has largely disappeared, it is still possible to view one of the main mill buildings at Littleton from afar. It is now in private residential use. See photograph below:-



The production sequence within the mill was that the three basic materials, locally produced charcoal, and imported sulphur and saltpetre, probably from Bristol docks, were brought into the yard by carts or, in some circumstances, via barges. They were then pulverised into a fine uniform powder, mixed in the correct proportions, usually in the ratio 15%, 10% and 75% respectively, and then pelleted. A drying process followed and the finished powder was put into barrels and kegs of various sizes, between 2.5 and 100 lbs depending upon the intended use. Finally, they were put into storage until transported elsewhere. It is interesting to note that often about half of the employees were coopers. Safety measures included ensuring that dust and grit did not come into contact with the gunpowder, the avoidance of sparks caused by iron or steel objects, copper or wood being favoured instead, and the covering of floors with leather. The workmen wore special slippers in danger areas. Minor explosions were apparently quite common, although major catastrophes were fortunately rare in the Bristol area. There was no specific government legislation concerning gunpowder safety until 1771, when an Act of Parliament was introduced.

The transport of gunpowder from the mills to the customer, in our case the ships belonging to the Dickinsons, was by packhorse, wagons or barges. Again, common-sense safety precautions were taken. Upon arrival in Bristol it was stored in a magazine prior to being put on board ship. During the period covered by the waste books in the Dickinson archive, [c. 1730 - 50], this was in a building called Tower Harris, near to the river Avon. Babers Tower also appears to have been used. With the introduction of government safety regulations in 1771, these were superseded by a specially constructed magazine at Shirehampton, downstream from Bristol, at that time in an isolated area. Ships which were coming into the quays on the rivers Avon and Frome also had to deposit their gunpowder in this building. It still exists in its essentially original state. See photograph below:-



The archives do not specifically tell us whether the Dickinsons loaded their ships with powder at the quayside or in the Kings Road anchorage near Portishead, but fortunately the surviving logbooks of Nicholas Pocock, a captain of a similar vessel to the *Baltic Merchant* who was also making regular voyages to Charleston from Bristol at about the same time, states that the powder was taken by hoy to the anchored ship and we can assume that the Dickinson fleet used the same method for safety reasons. These hoyes flew a red flag when transporting gunpowder and the Royal Navy vessels used for the same purpose were painted red overall.

References:-

- [1] Buchanan, Brenda J.: *The Africa Trade and the Bristol Gunpowder Industry. Trans. Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society 118, [2000], 133-156.*
- [2] Buchanan, Brenda J.: *The Technology of Gunpowder Making in the Eighteenth Century: Evidence from the Bristol Area. Trans. Newcomen Society Vol. LXVII, pp. 125 - 159*
- [3] Buchanan, Brenda J.: *Bath's Forgotten Gunpowder History: The Powder Mills at Woolley in the Eighteenth Century. Bath History Journal Vol. X. pp. 72 - 96*
- [4] Crocker, Glenys: *The Gunpowder Industry. Shire Publications. Princes Risborough. 2002*
- [5] Cordingly, David: *Nicholas Pocock 1740 - 1821. Conway Maritime Press. London 1986*

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New Additions to the Local Studies Library, June-August 2014 - with thanks to Jane de Gruchy

Items marked D were donated to the Local Studies Library

Champion Cheese (DVD) (D) (637.3 CHA)

Edington 2000: a portrait of a Somerset village at the end of the 2nd Millennium (DVD) (D) (T EDI EDI)

From Hairs to Chairs (DVD) (D) (T 746.1 FRO)

Frome Timeline: 685-2012 (T FRO FRO)

Glastonbury: the untold story (DVD) (D) (T GLA GLA)
Memories of Morlands (DVD) (D) (T 338.476 MEM)
Rare Breed: three women farmers (DVD) (D) (T 630.109 RAR)
Songs of the Forest: an Exmoor singing tradition (DVD) (D) (T 784.494 SON)
St. Aldhelm's School, Doulling: 25 years (DVD) (D) (T 372 SAI)
Stourhead at War (DVD) (942.31 STO)
The Grand Tour of Wells: Sacred Spaces and Hidden Secrets (DVD) (T726.6 WEL3)
Wetland Withies: the craft of ancient England (DVD) (D) (630.942 WET)
Atkinson, The Devonshire Regiment 1914-18: volumes 1 & 2 (D) (356 ATK)
de Beer, The Correspondence of John Locke Volumes 1 and 2 (T 920 LOC DEB)
Bishops Hull Family History Group, Bishops Hull War Memorial: erected 1921 (D) (T BIS1 BIS)
Brown, Practical Digital Preservation: a how-to guide for organisations of any size (GO/10)
Camp, My Ancestor was a Migrant (929.3 CAM Q)
Claridge, Glastonbury's Other Legacy: stories of the town in the First World War (D) (T GLA CLA)
Crattie, To Save the Realm (fiction) (T823 CRA)
Daniels, St Benedict's, Stratton on the Fosse, Somerset (T 726.5 STR1)
Davis, I'll Take That One: wartime evacuees tell their stories (T 940.53 DAV)
Dawson, Unearthing Late Medieval Children: health, status and burial practice in Southern England (930.3 DAW O/S)
Dryburgh, Calendar of Fine Rolls of the Reign of Henry III, Vol. III 1234-1242 (B/168/C)
Endacott, Butlins: 75 years of fun! (647.94 END)
Foster, 'Greater Love...': North Newton and the Great War (D) (T NOR5 FOS)
Guild of One-name Studies, Seven Pillars of Wisdom: the art of one-name studies (D) (929.4 GUI)
Haines, Taunton Through Time (D) (T TAU HAI)
Hall, Somerset Coast Path: 121 miles of beautiful scenery, history and surprises (T 796.51 HAL)
Johnson, The Traction Engine Register (629.229 JOH)
Kelham, Private Owner Wagons of Somerset (T385.37 KEL)
Lee, Dunster: A Castle at War (T DUN4 LEE)
MacFayden, Flatpack Democracy: a DIY guide to creating independent politics (T321.8 MAC)
Newman, Hill Brow Preparatory School for Boys: Eastbourne, Sussex 1893-1940, Brent Knoll, Somerset 1940-1966 (D) (T 372 HIL)
Organ, Coborn School for Girls in Taunton 1939-1945 (T372 TAU ORG)
Oswin, Little Solsbury Hill Camp Geophysical Survey, Batheaston, Somerset, 2012 (D) (T930.1 BAT6)
Ouston, In Memory of the Men of Huntspill who Fell in the Great War (D) (T 940.467 OUS)
Pirt, West Somerset Yeomanry: a nominal roll with short biographies (D) (T 356 PIR)
Scrapbook of the 7th Bn. Somerset Light Infantry (D) (GO/7/B)

Steinbeck, The Acts of King Arthur and his Noble Knights (398.22 STE)
Stephens, The Reverend Dr. Thomas Sedgewick Whalley and the Queen of Bath: a true story of Georgian England at the Time of Jane Austen (D) (T 920 WHA STE)
Stevens, They Started Making Sheds: the rise and fall of the prefabricated building company F. Pratten & Co. Ltd. (T338.769 STE)
Stogursey Oral History Project, Stogursey Voices (D) (T STO5 STO)
Storer, Somerset Wild Flowers: a guide to their identification (T582.13 STO)
Sutcliffe, A Survey of Musical Activity in Somerset in the Edwardian Era 1901-10 (D) (T 780.9 SUT)
Sweet, Yeovil in the Great War 1914-18 (T YEO1 SWE)
Trivett, Before the lamps went out: the Somerset coalfield on the eve of war (D) (T 940.3 TRI)
Trull Parish Archive Group, Where We Used to Meet: a souvenir history of Trull's Pook Lane buildings (D) (T TRU2 TRU)
Waddy, The Waddys at War: their military activities over four centuries (D) (929.2 WAD WAD O/S)

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New Accessions 2 June-4 September 2014 - with thanks to Jane de Gruchy

Not all of these collections have been listed, but (unless they have access restrictions) they are all available for research at the Heritage Centre. If you cannot find the details on our online catalogue (www.somerset.gov.uk/dserve), please get in touch and we can give you more information.

Archaeological records

Cleeve: Archaeological archive for excavations at Bickley, 1980s-2000s (A\ATH)
Frome, Seavington and Catsgore: archaeological reports, 2010-2014 (A\BHF)
Simonsbath: Metric Survey of part of John Knight's Gardens and Pleasure Grounds, Ashcombe, May 2014 (A\AWI)

Business records

Brendon Hills Iron Mines and the West Somerset Mineral Railway: drawings, photographs and reports, c.1990s (A\CUV)
Glastonbury and Street: photograph album of Clark and Son, Morlands, c. 1950s-1960s (A\DVU)
Wellington: letters to Fox Bros, 1903-1922 (A\DWP)

Clubs', Societies' and Charities' records

Nether Stowey: rules of the Nether Stowey Female Friendly Society (with annotations), c.1907 (DD\X\SOM)
Taunton Camera Club: photographs taken by members of the Club, mainly street scenes and rural scenes, c.1960s-c.1980s (A\DXO)
Taunton Inner Wheel: photograph albums, 1949-2012 (A\CYL)
Taunton Table Tennis League: results of league, handicap cup and tournament, 2014 (A\DRW)

Taunton Vale Inner Wheel Club: minutes, annual reports, history and International Inner Wheel constitution, 1982-2009 (A\CYL)
Backwell: records of Backwell Parish Hall, including financial records, committee records, etc., 1916-1982 (A\DWL)
West Somerset Probus Club: records including minutes, accounts, correspondence and membership records, 1972-2012 (A\DXG)
West Somerset Probus Club: accounts, Blenheim Gardens planting scheme and 25th anniversary menu, 1989-2005 (A\DXG)
Weston-super-Mare: British Legion photograph album, 1934 (A\DXQ)
Wiveliscombe Women's Institute records, comprising scrapbooks, programmes of events, presidents' certificates, record books and committee minute books, 1932-2013 (5 boxes) (DD\WI)

Somerset and Dorset Railway Trust: additional records including scrapbooks, correspondence and printed ephemera, c.1930s-c.1980s (11 boxes) (A\CWO)
Somerset and Dorset Railway Trust: additional records including train registers, notices, memorandum and invoices, 1940s-1960s (A\CWO)
Somerset and Dorset Railway Trust: additional records including correspondence and membership lists, 1882-2008 (A\CWO)

Deeds, wills and family papers

Binegar: papers of the Brine family, including photograph, newspaper clippings, research notes, c.1910s-1980s (A\DXB)
Burnham on Sea: deeds, photographs, plans and newspaper cuttings, 17th-20th century (DD\TMS)
East Harptree, Clevedon: deeds for various properties, mostly in East Harptree, 19th cent. (A\CMP)
Exford: Records of the Pearce family, including photographs, account books, apprenticeship papers, diary, correspondence, memorial cards, c. 1860s-1920s (A\DTV)
Papers relating to the Mead family of High Ham and Low Ham, including: deeds; a will; pension records; copy birth, baptism and marriage certificates; a postcard; and a faculty for a memorial tablet in High Ham Church, 1860-1930 (A\AUS)
Newton Estate, Newton Surmaville: deeds and associated papers, 1870-2007 (DD\HN)
Manor of Oldmixon: deeds and sale particulars, 1862-1874 (A\BWY)
Stogursey: draft agreement concerning property in Stogursey, 1880s (A\DWY)
Wincanton: title deeds of lands in Bayford, Stoke Trister, 1602-1618 (A\DWO)

East Coker: grant of arms to William Helyar, 1607 (DD\WHh)
Walker-Heneage: letters patent of Charles II to Richard Lane for good service, 1661 (DD\WHb)
Somerset: Hood family papers comprising correspondence, diaries, programmes, notes, family tree, newspaper cuttings, pattern book, photographs and other miscellaneous records, 17th cent.-20th cent. (A\DXD)

Local government records

Parish Councils

Binegar Parish Council records: documents relating to burial ground; financial records; councillors' declarations etc., 1957-2013 (D\PC\bin)

Lydeard St Lawrence: church hall minute book, Nov 1950-Feb 1958 (D\PC\st.l)

Pilton Parish Council: minutes, accounts and declarations of acceptance of office, 1987-2012 (D\PC\pilt)

Somerset County Council

Somerset County Council: miscellaneous agendas, unsigned minutes, reports and associated papers for various committees, 1980s-2010(10 boxes)(C/Min; C/CSSMI; C/F)

Somerset County Council: Environment and Property (Countryside) team records, including: assessments and action plans regarding Cheddar; Somerset Levels and Moors Partnership (LAMP) minutes, correspondence and reports; records regarding ticks and Lyme Disease; records relating to a planning application for a new country house at Bedlam Green Farm, South Brewham (permission refused, 2003); tree surveys for Herne Hill, Windwhistle and Rydon Farm; Somerset Rural Action on the Environment minutes; business plans and other corporate records; Gypsy and Traveller Services Best Value Review (draft), 2002, and other related records; Yeovil Countryside Initiative Steering Group minutes, 1993-2000; file regarding county farms estate, 1991-1996; application for proposed Doultling bypass, 1992 (not proceeded with); and other miscellaneous papers, 1990s-2000s (6 boxes) (C/EPCO)

Somerset Social Services: edition of *Quarterstaff* magazine, Sep 2000 (C/SS)

Somerset County Council: notes of meeting of the Corporate Management Team, 2000-2001 (C/PEGN)

Somerset County Council: agreements for properties and lands in Somerset, 2006-2008 (C/SEC)

Somerset County Council: Countryside Team: miscellaneous documents relating to Somerset Orchards, Taunton and Bridgwater Canal, and flooding on the Somerset Levels, [early 21st cent.] (C/CT)

Somerset: diversion and modification orders, etc., relating to various parishes, 2010-2012 (C/GP/HF)

Diversion Orders: Butleigh; Comeytrowe and Trull; Yeovil; West Monkton; Huish Episcopi; Spaxton; Wedmore; Huish Champflower; Doultling, Dec 2013-Apr 2014 (C/GP)

Somerset local flood defence: signed committee minutes, 1996-2005 (A\BER)

East Somerset: Coroner's Natural Causes Files, 2013-2104 (10 boxes) (closed for 100 years) (C/CR/SE)

Military records and records relating to the World Wars

Somerset Light Infantry

Copy research and papers relating to Sergeant Walter Whall, [1874-1919] (DD\SLI)

Somerset Light Infantry: two copy photographs of the SLI in Windsor, [1910] (DD\SLI)

Somerset Light Infantry: papers of Captain Montague Ferguson and Colonel William Roberts, 1910s-2010s (DD\SLI)

Somerset Light Infantry: postcard of the 8th Battalion, c.1914-1918 (DD\SLI)
Somerset Light Infantry: photographed pages from the autograph book of Lillian Chidler, a nurse during the First World War, [1914-1918] (DD\SLI)
Somerset Light Infantry: Bible of Private Slade of D Company 2/5 Somerset Light Infantry, with photograph of baby, 1915 (A\DWK)
Somerset Light Infantry: photographs, correspondence and other papers relating to Sergeant Herbert Wakefield (SLI/2007/1-4) and Private William Hines (SLI/2006), c.1916-1945 (DD\SLI)
Somerset Light Infantry: copy photograph of Horace Dyas, transferred from Worcestershire Regiment, [1916] (DD\SLI)
Somerset Light Infantry: postcard showing a portrait of an unidentified soldier and woman, 1918 (A\BAV)
Somerset Light Infantry: photograph album of men serving in Egypt, 1925 (A\DWV)
Somerset Light Infantry: photographs of Corporal Herbert Wakefield, c.1930s (DD\SLI)
Somerset Light Infantry 1st Battalion: CD of images, documents and correspondence regarding the 1st Battalion in India, [1937-1942] (A\DXJ)
Records of Captain H E S Marshall MC, Somerset Light Infantry: including photographs, letter sent from Belsen Concentration Camp, newspaper cuttings, c.1940s (DD\SLI)
Army issue maps, c.1945 (DD\SLI)
Military records transferred from Somerset County Museums Service, early 20th cent. (DD\SLI)

War memorials

Cannington: booklet produced with information on Cannington War Memorial, and soldiers named, [1914-1945] (A\DWU)
South Brewham: war memorial research files/scrapbooks, for First and Second World Wars, [20th cent], A\DXM

Other military records

Official photographs taken at the British Western Front in France, 1914-1918 (A\DXF)
War memoir of Walter John Bishop, with transcript and photo-postcards, 1914-1918 (A\DWJ)
Bridgwater: military papers of the Gillson family, c.1915-1945 (A\DXL)
Weston super Mare: The Illustrated War News article, with photograph of a Women's Land Army lumberwoman at work, 27 Sep 1916 (A\BAV)
Midsomer Norton: copy photograph of 'Flight 756 ATC County School Midsomer Norton' home guard, [1943] (A\DWS)
Midsomer Norton Home Guard: transcript and notes made by the late Gerald Roberts concerning his time with the Midsomer Norton Home Guard, c.2014 (A\DWS)

Nonconformist records

Wellington: Records of the Wellington Free Church Council, including minutes and correspondence, 1897-1959 (A\CSD)

Parish and diocesan records

Baltonsborough: photographs of churchwardens' account book, [1663-1741] (D\P\balt)
Biddisham: marriages, 1986-2014 (D\P\bid)
Binegar: burial register, 1956-2012 (D\P\bin)
Buckland St Mary: register of church organisation and finance, 1899-1905 (D\P\b.my)
Compton Bishop: marriages, 2004-2010 (D\P\com.b)
East Coker: documents relating to the resignation of the churchwarden, c.2000s (D\P\cok.e)
Henstridge: parish registers, 1889-1968 (D\P\hens)
Ilminster: accounts, accounts of the Minster Room, duties of the verger, 2000-2013 (D\P\ilm)
Weare: marriages, 2002-2013 (D\P\wea)
Wilton: parish records, including correspondence, plans of church, images and orders of service, c.1860s-c.1960s (D\P\wilt)
Wilton: marriage licence and typed description of the 'industrial situation' in Taunton, c.1930s (D\P\wilt)
Wookey: parish magazine, November 1915 (D\P\wook)

Ilchester: Extract from the Registry of the Consistoriat and Episcopal Court of Wells, [1626] (DD\X\CX)

Wells and Bath: sepia postcard of Wells Cathedral, orders of service of funerals at Wells Cathedral and Bath Abbey, Early 20th cent.-Early 21st cent. (A\BIR)

Photographs and postcards

Camerton: three photographs of filming at Camerton Station, c.1930s (DD\X\DN6)

Glastonbury, Bristol: slides of Somerset landmarks, including limekiln, Glastonbury Tor and St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, c.1990s (A\DWR)

Minehead and Taunton: two black and white photographs showing Minehead High Street and the grounds of Shire Hall, Taunton, c.1890s-c.1950s (A\DXA)

Newton St. Loe: digital copy of photograph album of Newton Park, [1921] (A\DWZ)

Taunton: wedding photograph of Henry Philip Small to Mabel Amelia Small, [1907] (A\DWT)

Taunton: album of photographs of the Franciscan Convent, 1918-1922 (A\DXN)

West Somerset: colour photographic slides, c.1975 (A\DXR)

Somerset: Postcards of miscellaneous Somerset locations, 20th cent. (A\AUS)

Somerset: postcards of churches and villages, 20th cent. (A\DXI)

Eleven postcards showing Somerset places (and Colyton, Devon), seven of which were sent to Mrs. Gibson of Clevedon, then Taunton, 1909-1938 (A\DXH)

Aerial photographs previously held at Somerset Studies Library, 1946-1991 (A\DXC)

Research papers and transcripts

Barton St. David: National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies (NADFAS) church record, 2014 (DD\X\NDS)

Exmoor Mines Research Group: newsletters, research and photograph, 1990-2006 (A\DXE)

Papers of W. MacDonald Wigfield of Ilminster, historian of the Monmouth Rebellion, 1933-1985 (A\DWM)

Monmouth Rebellion: PhD thesis on the military effectiveness of militias, 2011 (A\AUS)

Somerset Vernacular Buildings Research Group: 30 property surveys, including houses in Winscombe and Seavington St. Mary, 2013

School and education records

Backwell School: log, punishment and admission books, photographs and scrapbooks, 1931-2007 (A\DXP)

Drayton: Board of Education records for Drayton Parochial School, 1872-1922 (A\DWQ)

Other records

Burnham on Sea: photographs and copy documents relating to Burnham on Sea and the surrounding area, [Late 19th cent.-Mid 20th cent.] (DD\TMS)

Exmoor: newspaper cuttings book containing writings of Alfred Vowles, 1905-1935 (A\DWN)

Lopen, Barrington, Huish Episcopi, Langport and Seavington: documents relating to lease of land, notebook of accounts, records of agricultural work, diaries, etc., 1797-1923 (A\BAV)

North Curry: Photographs of Great Western Railway Timetable, with rules of North Curry Bell Ringers on reverse. [1881-1882] (A\DXS)

Shepton Mallet: official show catalogue and programme for the Mid-Somerset Agricultural Show, 2014 (A\DJQ)

Taunton: Photographic record of the extension, alterations, refurbishment and associated landscaping of The Art and Design Centre, Somerset College of Arts and Technology, 2014 (A\DWV)

Taunton: autograph of David Bowie obtained whilst he was staying at the Castle Hotel, 1993 (DD\X\SOM)

Tintinhull: oral history recordings on CD entitled 'Tintinhull Voices: Oral History of the Village', 2013 (A\DXK)

Yeovil: maps illustrating Yeovil Parking Schemes Zones C, F and G (1:1250), 2004 (A\AUS)

Yeovil: maps of Yeovil Vicarage Street Shopping Centre, and map of Somerset Electoral Divisions, c.1980s (A\AUS)

Admission ticket and order of service for the installation of Peter Hancock as Bishop of Bath and Wells, 7 June 2014 (A\DJQ)

Harold St George Gray's 'Cycling Record', recording cycle rides through Dorset and Wiltshire, 1893-1899 (A\DIF)

South West of England Shakespeare Festival programmes, 1985 (DD\X\BRCL)

Miscellaneous Somerset documents, including: photocopies of documents relating to Somerset held in other record offices, [1514-1603]; logo of Thomas Stoke of Martock, 19th cent.(?); photographs and postcard relating to J. Wedlake's military service in

India, 1917; plan and elevation of the dovecote at Home Farm, Kingweston, 1921; and file relating to the foundation of St. Augustine of Canterbury School, Taunton, c.1979-2010 (DD\X\DNQ)

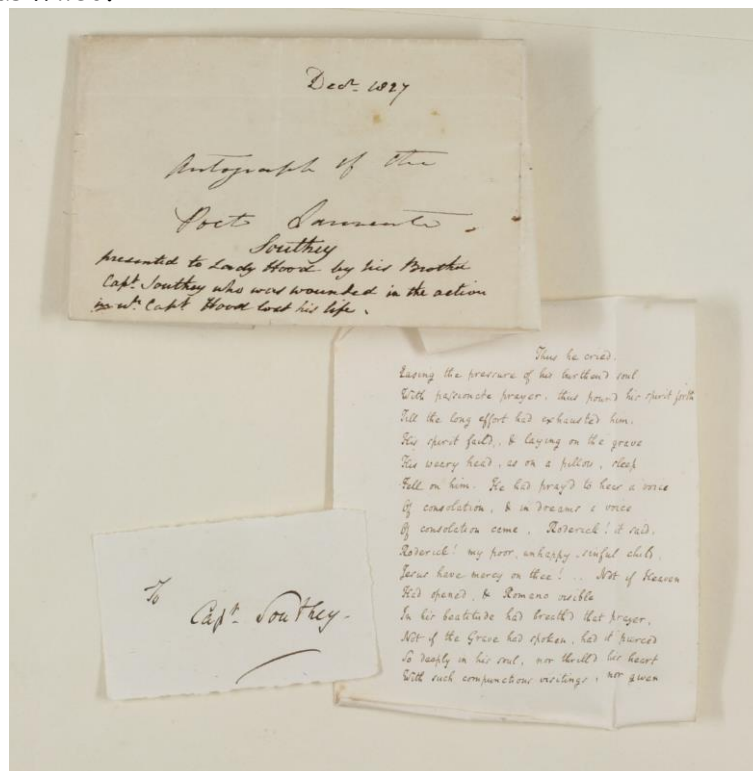
Miscellaneous Somerset records: deeds, photographs, Banwell Jury Book, correspondence etc. relating to various Somerset parishes, 1781-1992 (DD\X\WBB)

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Three signatures in recent accessions - with thanks to Jane de Gruchy

Among our recent accessions, we have received signatures of Robert Southey, the Duke of Wellington and David Bowie.

Robert Southey (1774-1843) was poet laureate from 1813. A somewhat controversial figure, he was friends with Samuel Taylor Coleridge (with whom he planned to establish an egalitarian settlement in North America) but undertook savage poetic duels with Byron. These lines are from part of his 1815 epic poem, *Roderick, the last of the Goths*. This little slip of paper comes with its own story, too: it was given to Lady Hood by Robert's brother, Captain Southey, who was wounded in the engagement in which Captain Hood was killed.



The letter from Wellington was written in August 1836. His writing, at first glance, looks very neat but is in fact really quite tricky - see what you can decipher!

London August 1836

My Dear Mr.

I beg you send me a notice
of the theatre of your hospitable
Germany for Launce; and
I pray you say and the place
at which you will turn out.
I trust that copies will be
inspected at length here as
the 22. Mr. Capt. Newbery,
a Member of the 21.
Lord Seymour's list at Dorset
Bridge as the 23. of Office
Every good night from
the Museum

Our last signature is a bit of an oddity. In 1993, a then junior member of the Museums Service spotted David Bowie arriving at the Castle Hotel with a lime green suit and a car to match. Snatching the first piece of paper to hand - a sheet of Museums headed paper - he rushed out and accosted him for an autograph, which you can see here in all its squiggly glory.



From Children's Hospice South West - there will probably be mince pies!!

Tis the Season to be Jolly - Thursday 4th December

7.00pm for 7.30pm

The Studio, The Brewhouse, Taunton

Sue Berry, retired Somerset archivist, will be helping us to get into the Christmas spirit by describing how people throughout history have celebrated the winter festival.

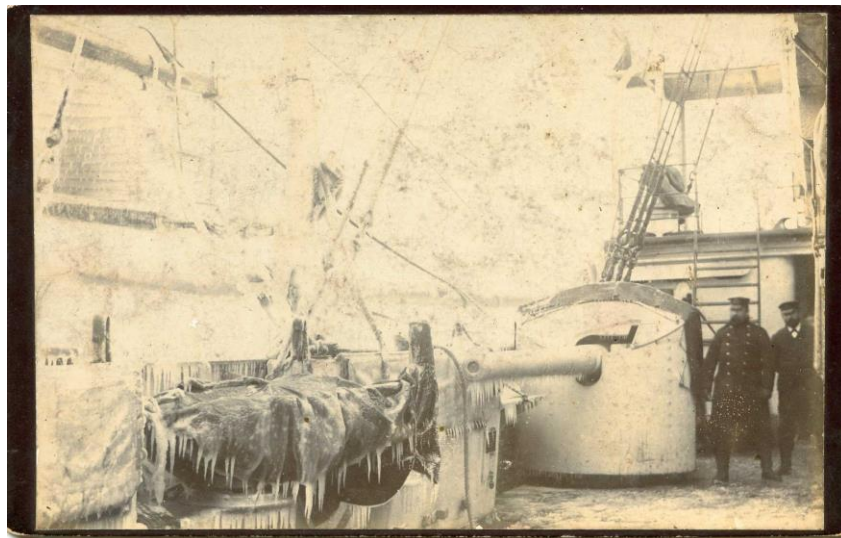
Plus entertainment by the Canticle Choir

(the County Council Workplace Choir)

Tickets £5.00

Available from the Box Office at The Brewhouse from 1st November

Telephone: 01823 283244



At the start of Snippets I mentioned my Great Grandfather who had served in the Royal Marines - this photograph is taken from a boat on an Arctic convoy during WW1 - the icicles are unbelievable!! In fact it doesn't seem right to call them "icicles" at all.

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