

the newsletter. Special thanks go to John Chandler for the excellent production. We hope you enjoy reading it and, as usual, if you have any comments or further ideas, please let me know: dhaldred@btinternet.com.

David Aldred

Welcome from the Editor

Welcome to the July newsletter of the Gloucestershire County History Trust bringing you the latest news of its work. Whilst our volunteers and contracted historians are now back to normal working after the frustrations caused by the covid lockdown and continuing restrictions, there have been some significant changes within the Trust itself. HRH The Duke of Gloucester has accepted our invitation to be our royal patron; Sally Self, one of our longest-serving and diligent volunteers, has accepted our invitation to join the trustees and Grace Owen has agreed a contract to work on Coates parish for Volume 16. We are delighted that they have accepted our invitation and you can read more about each of them below.

At the same time we have said farewell to two of our trustees. Jonathan Comber's term has come to an end. Jonathan joined the trustees in 2014 and he was responsible for starting this newsletter. He leaves with our thanks for his contribution, including serving as our treasurer for a number of years. However, we are pleased he will continue as a volunteer continuing his researches in the county. John Chandler has left as a trustee to take up his previous rôle as County Editor. We are also indebted to him for his contribution as a trustee and look forward to working with him as we continue towards the production of the Big Red Books. The drafts our contracted historians and volunteers produce are still being placed on our website for comments. My apologies to Louise Ryland-Epton that her name was missed off her article on SS Philip and St James Church in Leckhampton in the last newsletter.

My thanks go to all those who have contributed to the creation and distribution of

HRH The Duke of Gloucester

We are honoured to report that HRH The Duke of Gloucester has accepted our invitation to act as Royal Patron of the GCHT. This is not only an endorsement of our coming-of-age as an established charity, but seems a perfect fit. The Duke is the senior male-



VCH Gloucestershire

Newsletter 17: July 2022

line descendent of Queen Victoria, to whom the ambitious project of the publication of the history of every parish in England was dedicated on its foundation in 1890. He holds the Royal Dukedom of Gloucester, shire town of a county for which he cherishes a special affection. As such, he has long patronised the Richard III Society, committed to the reappraisal of the life and rôle of a former Richard, Duke of Gloucester, who lived over five centuries ago, once owner of Sudeley Castle in this county. The Duke is Patron of a host of over 200 charities and organisations, highlighting those connected with every aspect of our heritage—embracing cathedrals, church monuments and chapels, regeneration, railways and gardens, antiquities and archives. These reflect his commitment as a qualified - and former practising - architect, with a passion for history, the built heritage and conservation. We look forward to working together with His Royal Highness to promote the study, writing and publication of the 'red books' on the history of our county of Gloucestershire.
Sir Nicholas Mander

Sally Self

I spent thirty five years as a primary school teacher and deputy head - specialising in Music and Humanities. I wrote National Curriculum topics for local history at two junior schools. On my retirement I joined Cheltenham Local History Society. I served on the committee for twelve years, edited its journal



for ten years and have been volunteer co-ordinator for the society's projects for over ten years. This has included working with the VCH on Cheltenham's Big Red Book.
Sally Self



Grace Owen

I came to the VCH after finishing my PhD at the University of Birmingham, where my research explored the role of peasant manorial officials on the manors of Glastonbury in the fourteenth century. It was during my PhD that I first discovered the VCH and I found that these works quickly became invaluable to my research, as they contained not only meticulous detail on the local landscape, community structures, and government but also provided useful references to further resources. Post PhD, I began teaching for the Brilliant Club and volunteering with the VCH in Herefordshire. I wanted to get involved with the VCH because I am passionate about local history and exploring the lives and experiences of ordinary people and also thought it would allow me to make a useful contribution to future research projects in the same way that other VCH works had with my own work. I began working for the VCH in Gloucestershire in April, researching the parish of Coates, near Cirencester.
Grace Owen



Editors and volunteers at the Heritage Hub (Rhianna Watson)

Report from the Trust

In our last newsletter we had to report the sudden death in January of our chairman, James Hodsdon, which was a major blow to the Trust, as James had been both an inspiring leader and our most active fundraiser for many years. At a meeting soon after his death, the Trustees asked me to take over as Chairman, and as personal circumstances prevent me from being quite as 'hands-on' as James, the Trustees have approved some consequent changes to rôles within the Trust that should allow us to operate effectively. The most significant of these is that Dr John Chandler resumes a central co-ordinating role for the Gloucestershire VCH as County Editor, and additional responsibility as volume editor for the Sodbury and district volume. Dr Jan Broadway and Dr Francis Boorman take similar volume editor responsibilities for the other current projects on the

Cheltenham and Cirencester areas respectively. In the light of his new role with the Trust, John Chandler has resigned as a Trustee, and Jonathan Comber has also stood down at the end of his term. One of the Trustee vacancies has been filled by the appointment of Sally Self, one of our longest-serving and most active volunteers and fundraisers, and I hope to be able to announce a further appointment soon. I am pleased to say that since January we have had happier news on a number of fronts. The first thing to report is that HRH The Duke of Gloucester has accepted an invitation to become Patron of the Trust. Sir Nicholas Mander has written a profile of the Duke above, and we look forward very much to his support for our work over the coming years. Our fundraising event in Cirencester last year raised over £40,000 towards the completion of the Cirencester volume and in April we contracted Dr Grace Owen, a young post-doctoral medievalist to research and write

the history of Coates. Dr Alex Craven will start work shortly on the final parish for the volume, Preston, after completing the accounts of Duntisbourne Abbots and Duntisbourne Rous. Once these parishes have been researched and written, there will remain only the preparation of an introduction, the filling of gaps that become apparent when the existing texts are fitted together, and the final editing, preparation of maps and selection of illustrations, before the volume can be submitted to the VCH central office for peer review and publication.

Work on the Cheltenham area volume is not quite so advanced, but an exceptionally generous private donation in memory of James Hodsdon and a large number of smaller gifts, also in his memory, should enable us to commission in 2023 the research and writing of the history of Charlton Kings, which is the last parish to be researched for the Cheltenham volume. There is a good deal more to do on the Sodbury volume, but a draft history of West Littleton by Simon Draper and John Chandler has recently been added to the VCH website, and our volunteer Neil Stacy continues to revise his extensive research materials on the history of Dyrham into draft VCH text. John Chandler hopes to research and write the histories of Acton Turville and Tormarton later this year.

Nick Kingsley
Chair

Report from our County Editor

Volume 14: South Gloucestershire

Neil Stacy, in a voluntary capacity, has delivered excellent accounts of religion and aspects of social history (education and alehouses) in Dyrham and Hinton, and is working on other aspects of the parish history.

I have made minor revisions to the account of West Littleton (jointly written with Simon Draper, VCH Oxon), including some points contributed by Neil Stacy. I have prepared in typeset form a version which has been presented as a pdf file to David Adams and James Golob (whose generous donation enabled the research to be undertaken) for them to circulate to interested villagers; the account is also now online on the IHR website. https://www.history.ac.uk/sites/default/files/file-uploads/2022-06/West_Littleton_final_draft_May_2022.pdf

Volume 15: Cheltenham and Environs

Louise Ryland-Epton has submitted a draft of Leckhampton local government and is shortly to complete the section on social history. Oliver Pointer, a volunteer, has been making research notes from Leckhampton documents for Louise, and Sally Self is about to do the same. Louise is maintaining contact with the local history society. I have been working on Swindon Village economic history, and have completed a section on mills, with agriculture in progress. Much of the recent economic history has been covered by Sally's work on the Kingsditch trading estate.

Our volunteers have been working on a Cheltenham solicitors' deposit in the archives (D2202/acc 5213: Winterbotham and Gurney with Jessops; some 80 boxes), and on cataloguing and repackaging Cheltenham photographs. They plan to move on, in consultation with archive staff, to work on Charlton Kings and Leckhampton.

Volume 16: Cirencester and the Churn Valley

Grace Owen has begun work on Coates. She has been familiarising herself with sources and is working through the checklists and note-taking. She has been reviewing and revising the work already drafted on landownership, and writing up the section on Tarlton, one of the Coates manors. She has also begun to examine sources for the economic and religious history sections.

Alex Craven has submitted the local government, social history and landscape sections of Duntisbourne Rouse, and has seen all the sources needed to complete the economic and social history sections. He intends to have all work on the Duntisbournes complete during August.

Francis Boorman has been liaising with volunteers Mike Hill and Pam Morris to fill any gaps on the church, schools and other buildings for the Cirencester account. He is also working through comments by Linda Viner and Jonathan Comber, and straightening out issues with Jan Broadway regarding older versions of the various sections.

John Chandler



The National Archives at Kew (CC BY-SA 2.5)

Updates from our Historians

From Alex Craven

There are a number of things I enjoy about working for the VCH. Few other jobs would enable me to justify poring over historic maps for a whole day as essential work, for instance. Working with original documents from centuries ago is a genuine privilege, and it is a joy reconstructing the history of our parishes, handling the documents they left behind and piecing together the details of quotidian life in communities across the county. For this reason, some of my favourite classes of manuscripts are those, like legal depositions, in which we can hear the voices of individual parishioners centuries earlier, or those, like churchwardens' accounts, which hum with the rhythms of daily life and seasonal change. Another pleasurable element is the requirement to travel from time to time.



Lambeth Palace (CC BY-SA 3.0)

Of course, we are all very conscious of how our freedom to travel has been curtailed in the last couple of years, and it was certainly an interesting departure undertaking fieldwork in new parishes with the aid of Google Streetview and the latest OS maps. Of course, while you can learn a lot about a place from the comfort of your desk, nothing compares to seeing it with your own eyes. But travelling for the VCH isn't only limited to fieldwork. My trip to Berkshire Record Office recently, probably for the last time for this current group of parishes, caused me to reflect on the number and range of archives I've visited in the eight years that I've worked for VCH Gloucestershire.

By my count, I think I have travelled to eighteen different archives and libraries for the purposes of researching Gloucestershire's parishes, spanning nine counties or cities, from Worcestershire to Wiltshire, Hertfordshire to Somerset. Of course, most of my time has been spent at Gloucestershire Archives, or at the National Archives in Kew. The British Library is a treasure trove, which can throw up a range of interesting material, from medieval court rolls to modern maps, but the survey of Cheltenham undertaken for Charles I, with confidential and at times damning notes by John Norden, was a really important source for understanding the manor at a crucial point in its history. Similarly, the Duchy of Cornwall archives at Lancaster Gate throw light on the negotiations and brinkmanship which led up to the Cheltenham Act of 1625, providing new insight on this previously misunderstood legislation.

London, unsurprisingly, is host to a number of archives and libraries. One of my favourites, Lambeth Palace Library, holds important ecclesiastical collections, including presentations and ejections from church livings during the 1640s and 1650s. Across

the Thames from Lambeth Palace are the Houses of Parliament, where the archives has an account of 'Mr Grevile's Case', a surprisingly acrimonious incident concerning the cutting down of a tree on the edge of a lane in Charlton Kings in 1693. Across London, at the Bishopsgate Institute in Spitalfields, I read about the secularist George Holyoake, one of the last people imprisoned for blasphemy after a comment made to the Cheltenham Mechanics Institute in 1842. Outside London, Historic England's archives are a vital destination for the study of architectural and landscape history, in some cases providing copies of original documents which are no longer available to the general public.

The dispersal of estates to families across the country mean that important documents are to be found in family or solicitors' collections in archives outside the county. Given the importance of Cheltenham as a cultural venue from the late 18th century, it is unsurprising that documents relating to its history are often to be found in other parts of the country, including the deeds of small estates, correspondence with residents and learned societies, and numerous accounts of journeys to and from the spa. Had I been inclined, it would have been possible for me to have travelled to every repository between Cornwall and Cumbria, Kent and Northumbria. As it is, I have travelled to Hertfordshire to read charity deeds, and there and Buckinghamshire to read travelogues of Cheltenham; to Somerset for Hugh Sexey's papers concerning Sir John Thynne's estates in Old Sodbury and Bagendon; to Wiltshire for the Earl of Radnor's rentals; to Worcestershire for pre-Reformation diocesan documents; and to London to learn about Cheltenham's sewers.

Until I had consulted the extensive collection of bus timetables held by Bristol, it had never occurred to me what potent sources of social history they are, revealing important connections that might not otherwise be apparent. Chipping Sodbury is a similar distance from Bristol as from Bath, yet even by the 1920s the town had regular daily services to Bristol, whilst a weekly service to Bath remained the case for a long time after. What was the impact of the bus company deciding it was no longer economically viable to persist with a service to certain villages with a small bus travelling on narrow lanes?

My study of both Cheltenham and Duntisbourne Rouse has drawn me to the archives at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, which administered the Pates Foundation in Cheltenham, and was lord of the manor of Duntisbourne Rouse. Of course, anybody who is

familiar with Corpus Christi will know how agreeable a location it is, the congeniality tempered only slightly by the need to work in a vacant student bedroom in the quad whilst the library and archive are renovated. The highlight here is a wonderful map of Duntisbourne Rouse from about 1603, and a detailed survey of the parish in immaculate handwriting, bound in a beautiful folio from a medieval monastic choir book.

Whilst Corpus Christi's quad is undoubtedly attractive, none of the archives I have listed above can compete for splendour or romantic appeal with Madresfield Court, a moated manor house that is still a private home, albeit one that boasts a well-equipped archive in the cellar. The house is owned by the Lygon family, whose ancestors also held the small manor of Redgrove near Cheltenham, and their archive helped us to fill some important gaps in the history of 16th-century Cheltenham. It was also a tremendous privilege parking my car right next to the moat, crossing the drawbridge, and being given the key to the strongroom, and told to look at whatever I wanted to.



Madresfield Court
(Philip Halling / Madresfield Court / CC BY-SA 2.0)

So the obvious question is, where will my travels take me next, but I already have an answer to that! The archivist at Longleat has been in touch to say that they are finally re-opening after a long period closed to the public. Better yet, she tells me that they have just discovered a previously unknown survey of Bagendon from the 1660s, so I'm looking forward to studying that. Although I haven't been to Longleat for VCH Gloucestershire, I previously spent a lot of time working there when I was working for VCH Wiltshire, so I'm quite familiar with it. It must be one of the most attractive archives in the country, and perhaps the only one where you might have to crouch out of sight on the back stairs of the house, next to a member of staff dressed as 'the ghost', waiting until they have dutifully jumped out at the passing tour



Longleat (Alex Craven)

party so that you can proceed to the offices in the attic. In the opposite direction, the online catalogues inform me that Gwent Archives have an early-18th-century farm survey from Bagendon. It is apparently the only document of interest at Gwent, but it was sufficiently important for Joan Thirsk to have referred to it in the *Agrarian History of England*, so no doubt off to Ebbw Vale I will eventually go, which will take me up to twenty archives and libraries visited for VCH Gloucestershire! I can't help wondering which will be my twenty-first!

All of this hard study, particularly at Berkshire Record Office and at Corpus Christi College, means that we now have a complete draft of the history of Duntisbourne Abbots, and we are only two sections short of the complete history of Duntisbourne Rouse. We expect to complete the latter in August, after which I will turn my attention to writing the history of Preston, the last outstanding parish near Cirencester yet to be started.

From Louise Ryland-Epton

CHELTHENHAM AND ITS RELIEF OF THE POOR, 1811-1835

My research into the Cheltenham area did not begin with my work on Leckhampton but rather with academic work on social policy and governance in the late Georgian period. Cheltenham featured in that work because it used a piece of voluntary legislation passed in 1782.¹ The new law known as Gilbert's Act, from its sponsor Thomas Gilbert, became associated with what has been called 'a new wave of humanitarian feeling' towards the poor at the end of the eighteenth century, prior to a political backlash that culminated with the notorious post-

1834 workhouse system.² Gilbert's legislation is notable for several reasons, it enshrined in law for the first time an acknowledgement that those in work may earn less money than was required to sustain life, and therefore the state may have to supplement work income. It also contained clauses on the use of workhouses that, with respect to the treatment of the poor, were largely diametrically opposed to what came later. Under Gilbert's scheme, a workhouse was reserved for those unable to support themselves in the community through their labour, usually for reasons of age or infirmity. It would provide a safe refuge, albeit in a system that encouraged public morality.

Cheltenham adopted the framework with gusto in 1811, fully utilising its provisions with the backing of local élites and magistrates. It is noteworthy that, until recently, Gilbert's Act has not been thought to have been utilised within the southwest region at all. But in the last five years, the town has become identified in literature which demonstrates that Gilbert's Act had greater significance than previously thought.³ However, not every place embraced the system so emphatically.

In 1813, the *Cheltenham Chronicle* reported on its front page that hundreds of people had attended a vestry meeting to discuss the success of the régime. There were, however, a few dissenting voices 'who came with a view to abolish this excellent system and replace things on the same footing as formerly the consequences of which, it was most evident, would be fatal to the parish.' The dissenters were admonished. The article dwelt on the positive cost benefits of the régime, but also its promotion of industry while maintaining the poor in a 'very comfortable manner'. 'It was very earnestly requested by Captain Gray [the outgoing visitor of the poor] and the gentlemen of the parish present, that every person would go to the poor house and see the condition in which it was now kept as they were sure it must be highly gratifying.'⁴

2 D. Marshall, *The English Poor in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in Social and Administrative History* (George Routledge & Sons, 1926; repr. Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), 159.

3 E.g. S. Shave, *Pauper Policies: Poor Law Practice in England 1780-1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017). My research on the topic includes: - "The Source of all Local Authority": The Role of Gloucestershire Magistrates in Local Government 1800-1834, *Midland History*, Vol.45 No.3, 326-40. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0047729X.2020.1814636>

4 *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 22 Apr. 1813.

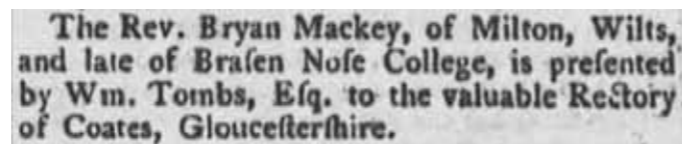
1 22 Geo III C.83.

Two decades later, with the entire national relief system under attack, the town remained proud of its Gilbert's Act régime. Hundreds of votes were still being cast in the annual selection of parish officers.⁵ In 1833, the *Cheltenham Journal and Gloucestershire Fashionable Weekly Gazette* stated the system existed in 'such perfection' that it 'must inevitably silence all objections.'⁶ The optimism was misplaced. After the enactment of the Poor Law Amendment Act in 1834, which sought to overhaul the national welfare system, Assistant Poor Law Commissioner, Robert Weale, met early with parochial officers and resident magistrates in the town. Weale's role was to form local parishes into a poor law union under the new legislation. It required Cheltenham, the largest parish in the vicinity, to relinquish its use of Gilbert's Act. Weale anticipated resistance from local magistrates but reported back happily to his superiors in London, 'not one word was said in opposition to it, but union approved, much was said in commendation.' After a further meeting with magistrates he was able to state a 'complete revolution has taken place in the public mind, and the measure is now as palatable as it was the reverse.'⁷ Thus, although Gilbert's Act was not nationally abolished until 1869, Cheltenham aligned itself quickly with the new regime; and the framework, once locally proudly lauded for its 'benevolence', was abandoned.

From Grace Owen

One of the most interesting discoveries of the examination of Coates has been further information upon the life of the local Reverend Bryan Mackey, who was reportedly the first black clergyman in England and was the rector of Coates in 1799. Bryan Mackey was born in 1770, the son of William Mackey, an English gentleman, and an unnamed woman (referred to only as Mrs Mackey) from Jamaica. Mackey was the rector of Coates for 44 years, from 1803 until his death (at Cumberland Villa in Southampton) on November 25th 1847, aged 77. George III, in the Jamaica Acts book in 1780, stated that Mackey was to be granted to freedoms, rights, and privileges as other English subjects.

5 A total of 539 votes were cast on the selection of the parish surgeon on division. The guardian and visitor to the poor that year had not been subject to a vote as no other names were put forward. GA, P78/1 VE 2/3. Easter Tuesday 1834.
6 *Cheltenham Journal and Gloucestershire Fashionable Weekly Gazette*, 30 Dec. 1833.
7 TNA, MH 12/3912. 15 Oct. 1835, 24 Oct. 1835.



Oxford Journal, 17 August 1799

Details about Mackey's childhood and family are somewhat vague, it is known that he was educated at Oxford and that he married and had at least three children (William Henry, Bryan, and Mary). William Henry was the eldest son, a gentleman, and he predominantly resided in Bath. Bryan Mackey, his youngest son, became a solicitor and lived in London. Mary, his daughter, married a gentleman named William Frederick Bayly and resided in Wiltshire. Mackey himself did not always reside in Coates, reportedly because the house there was too small, he spent some time in 'Milton-House' in Wiltshire, then lived in Stroud in 1827.

There are scant records that reference the social connections and relationships of Bryan Mackey and it is difficult to determine the extent to which his Jamaican heritage impacted his dealings with the local community. However, some insight can be gleaned from the writings of the diarist William Holland. Holland recorded some of his interactions with the Mackey family and described Bryan Mackey's father as an 'Old Buck' who enjoyed a drink and likely suffered from gout due to his "free living". Holland wrote more about Mrs Mackey, describing her as good-tempered, civil, obliging, neatly dressed, and pretty but also as having a poor constitution and spending too much money. He even reveals that she wrote a book, which he considered to be in poor taste.

In his discussion of Revd Mr Mackey himself, Holland was more critical, denouncing Mackey's treatment of his father and his spendthrift ways, despite his good circumstances in life. Mackey's financial status are also somewhat revealed through two auctions, the first of which was in 1835, where he is recorded as selling various farming implements as well as livestock and grain. It is interesting to note that in the same year, his youngest son was also announced as a debtor, although it is not clear whether the auction was linked to the financial situation of his son or was simply a coincidence. In 1837, because he was changing residence, Mackey held another auction for the goods within the rectory of Coates. The details of this auction reveal he was in possession of a number of interesting and valuable items, such as a grand piano, over 200 books, chintz couches, china, paintings, and mahogany furniture. These newspaper articles provide a small but fascinating insight into the life and socio-economic circumstances of a local

clergyman. I hope to uncover more of Bryan Mackey's interactions and dealings with the community over the course of my research into Coates.

Gloucestershire Local History Association

The Gloucestershire Local History Association developed out of the Gloucestershire Community Council Local History Committee in 2012 when the latter ceased to exist. It was established to continue an umbrella organisation for the county's local history community. Its membership stands at around fifty local history societies plus the county archives and local studies. The Trust has been a subscribing member since its inception and enjoys a close and mutually supportive relationship.

The Association meets once a quarter and is attended by representatives of its member groups and I represent the Trust. A report from the Trustees is always on the agenda of the Association and a report from the Association is always on the agenda of the

Trust. The Association is very important for the Trust as it is through its network of member groups that this newsletter reaches deep into the county's local history community. Since the ending of lockdown the Association has restarted its history day which was held in May on the subject of education at Oxstalls campus in Gloucester.

In June it was invited by Cheltenham Local History Society to a history afternoon based at St Andrew's church in Cheltenham on the subject of trade and industry. Next June Blockley Heritage Society will be the hosts. The Association is also responsible for deciding the winner and runner up of the annual Jerrard Award (named after the last chairman of the Local History Committee) for the best articles in the county's local history society journals. In 2022 the winner was Nigel Spry from Glosarch for his study of cholera epidemics in Gloucester in the nineteenth century. The runner up was Dr Timothy Brian, the former Chief Constable, for his study of early policing in the county. We continue to be grateful to the Association for its support, especially from its chairman Dr Steven Blake and its secretary Vicki Walker.



The Trust's stand at Oxstalls on 14 May (David Aldred)

Gloucestershire County History Trust

Patrons

HRH The Duke of Gloucester
 Dame Janet Trotter
 Professor Christopher Dyer
 Mavis, Lady Dunrossil

Trustees

Mr Nicholas Kingsley (Chair)
 Miss Sue Brown (Hon. Treasurer)
 Mr David Aldred
 Dr Jan Broadway
 Miss Heather Forbes
 Sir Nicholas Mander, bt.
 Mrs Jane Marley
 Mrs Sally Self
 Dr Rose Wallis

c/o Gloucestershire Archives
 Clarence Row
 Alvin Street
 Gloucester
 GL1 3DW

Website:

[http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/
gloucestershire](http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/gloucestershire)

For more information on the Association, here is a link to its website <https://gloshistory.org.uk/> where you will also find a link to Glosdocs, the Association's online collection of archives and photographs relating to the county.

David Aldred

More from our County Editor

In light of the good news that the Duke of Gloucester has agreed to be a patron of the Victoria County History of Gloucestershire, it is perhaps appropriate to call to mind the remark attributed to an earlier Duke of Gloucester, Prince William Henry (1743-1805), brother of George III. When presented with volume two of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, he is supposed to have thanked the author and said: 'Another damned thick, square book! Always, scribble, scribble, scribble! Eh! Mr Gibbon?' I trust that our scribbling will soon result in some more damned thick (red) books.

TRAINING WORKSHOPS

We're still at the planning stage, but VCH Glos, in collaboration with the Regional History Centre at the University of the West of England and Gloucestershire Archives, is hoping to offer a series of workshops on local history skills and techniques, to be held in the Dunrossil Centre at the Heritage Hub, probably on Tuesday mornings beginning this autumn. We intend that VCH and Hub volunteers will be invited to attend for free, and the workshops will be open to everyone else, but for a fee. The sessions will be run by VCH contributors and colleagues, with support from UWE. Please look out for details over the next few weeks.

John Chandler