

Newsletter Number 8 for April 2016

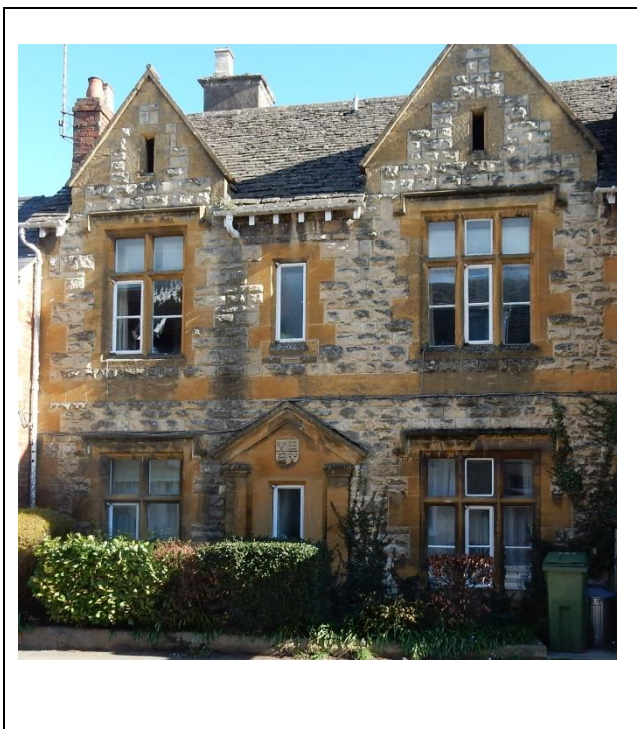


Welcome to the first newsletter for 2016. Since the last newsletter in October 2015 and the winter closure of the museum the volunteers have been active. A new large electronic screen has been installed to display Alistair Robinson's magnificent set of photographs of the museum artefacts. Many of the photographs come with additional notes and should be invaluable to volunteers and visitors. Ian Margett has been busy rebuilding the staging and adding new lighting at the southern end of the main hall. The kitchen and storage area has been refurbished and new cabinets acquired to begin the housing of the museum's important Winchcombe pottery collection. Much of this work has been funded by the Town Trustees and through income raised by the recent series of Museum lectures.

Our built environment

Almost every day I enjoy wandering through a part of Winchcombe. As I walk I notice changes, such as the replacement of the coach garage with a small supermarket, I may bump into friends for a chat, use the services of the local shops and certainly try to avoid the traffic. A loaf of bread, a bottle of wine, local cheeses, light bulbs and paint, flowers and cards, chemist items, the bank, the building society, eye tests, the butchers and greengrocer, hairdressers and post office. In all this rambling one tends to become too familiar with the buildings. They are there, changing only slowly, a key part of our visit to this built environment. Most of them came before us and will be there when we are gone.

In this newsletter you will be introduced to just two of these buildings. With each account some brief notes are provided to whet your appetite. At the museum a folder contains notes and photographs of many of the buildings of Winchcombe – a list is added in this newsletter. I do hope you will be unable to resist the temptation to come and browse the notes on these buildings.



The Cottage Hospital North Street

This hospital was built in 1888 with money raised by local subscription. The main driving force in its creation was Dr. William Cox. He managed to obtain promises of support from many of the more affluent residents in the area. The cost of the building was £420. Winchcombe builder John Oakey was commissioned to build the hospital by Mrs. Emma Dent of Sudeley Castle who then gave it to the town. Lord Elcho, from Stanway House, supplied and delivered the ready dressed stone for the frontage.

The hospital was opened for reception of its first patients in November 1888. What about that shield over the old doorway?

According to Kelly's Directory of Gloucestershire for 1902 the hospital was 'supported by voluntary

contributions'. Forty nine patients were treated in 1896. William Cox, MRCS (Eng.) and John Halliwell, LRCP (London) were the surgeons with Walter Haslum the honorary secretary and A. Lee honorary treasurer.

A report in the Cheltenham Chronicle & Gloucestershire Graphic of 1906 gives an account of Dr. William Cox including a photograph of him in military uniform. It appears Dr. Cox was a leading personality in Winchcombe. He was connected with the Volunteer Engineers since the formation of the company in 1889 and was the battalion's senior medical officer. He was also the chairman of the Parish Council, Education Committee & Town Trust; Medical Officer of Health for Winchcombe Rural District since the passing of the Sanitary Acts of 1872; and Medical Officer for Winchcombe Union Workhouse.

In addition for over 30 years he was organist & choirmaster until 1905 of Winchcombe Parish Church. He was a member of the choir for more than 45 years and held the position of Vicar's Warden for over 25 years. He was a keen member of the local operatic society. He was also keenly interested in sport, his favourite recreation being foxhunting. There is a memorial to Dr. Cox in the Lady Chapel at St. Peter's Church. Dr. Cox lived in the house that is now the chemist.

The town gradually outgrew the North Street hospital. In 1928 a new hospital was formed in the house on the Cheltenham Road, built in 1904, formerly occupied by Francis and Mary Bird. They moved to a house called Cotswold on Gloucester Street. The old Cottage Hospital became redundant. It was converted into flats and called Bostock House. The new hospital, called Winchcombe Hospital, was closed in 2008, put up for sale in October and was sold for £2.25m in 2013.



Lloyds Bank, Abbey Terrace

Lloyds Bank occupies an impressive house built in the early nineteenth century. It was formerly called Irwell.

The house was occupied by a long line of doctors and was not only their residence but had an adjacent surgery. In front of the house was a narrow garden with an iron railing surround. On what is now the car park in front of the bank was the Winchcombe fountain.

Dr. Halliwell ran the surgery during the 1914-18 war as well as supervising the VAD hospital wards in the current 'Conservative Working Men's Club' and the former Chapel in Cowl Lane.

A report from the 1914-18 war states "The Medical Officer, Mr Halliwell, kindly placed his X-ray room and his garden at our service. Mrs Halliwell started the catering so excellently that when disabled by ill-health her understudy, Miss Deans, proved herself equally efficient as quartermaster." Dr. Halliwell retired in 1919.

During the Second World War (1939-45) Dr. and Mrs. Soden occupied the house. Sadly they lost three sons during the war and Dr. Soden died in 1941. Dr. Spiridion took over the practice and Mrs. Soden moved to Bath. Also during the time of this war the town's Invasion Committee met here

under the Chairmanship of Dr. Spiridion. After WWII Mrs Soden returned to Winchcombe to unveil the war memorial

In 1957 the house was sold and converted into Lloyds Bank. The bank had previously occupied premises on the corner of North Street and High Street at a point called The Cross. Hall's Chemist had occupied the site prior to that.

Some other important buildings in Winchcombe

The museum holds short accounts of other interesting buildings in Winchcombe including:

The Abbey Terrace School, 1857 with adjacent Reading Room and Library.	Dent's School & School House, Gloucester Street, 1868 - 1988 by J C Dent.
Gretton Road School, 1883 -1962, then Youth Club and now auctioneers.	Old School, Back Lane, 1911 until 2000. Now Abbey Fields Community Centre.
St Peter's Church, Gloucester Street, built 1458-1468 replacing an older church. Restored 1873.	Jacobean House, Queen's Square 1618 by J Barksdale, enlarged by Dents 1879 by Drayton Wyatt, now private houses.
Wesleyan Chapel, Cowl Lane 1810, became Parish Hall, purchased from the WI & extended 1984, now renamed Royle Court.	The Methodist Church, High Street built 1885. Recorded in Kelly's Directory of 1923 as founded in 1886 and having seating for 350.
St. Nicholas's Church, Chandos Street opened in 1915.	Gretton Road Church, foundation stone laid 1873, architect W H Knight who also designed Cheltenham Town Hall.
The Baptist Chapel, off High Street dated 1811 and sold to the Winchcombe Girl Guides in 1956.	Greet Road Cemetery was purchased in 1856 and extended in 1890. The Mortuary Chapel was designed by Arthur Bird.
Chandos Almshouse, Almshouse Lane 1573 by Lady Chandos of Sudeley.	Dent's Almshouse, Abbey Terrace 1865 for John Dent, architect George Gilbert Scott.
Adlard Almshouses or Hyde Cottages 1898-99.	The Isolation Hospital, Giles Piece, Langley Road.
The Union Workhouse 1836, demolished 1950s.	The Police Station 1900 which included a Court Room.
The former Fire Station in Chandos Street replaced by 1940.	At the Cross was Hall's the Chemist and then Lloyds Bank until 1957.
"Queen Anne House", High Street, for many years the office of the local solicitor H W Stephens.	The Gate, North Street formerly a public house linked to the toll road.
The Bell Inn, Gretton Road built around 1863 and now private housing.	The Bull and its successors were public houses on the corner of Bull Lane and North Street.
The Dog and Gun, Chandos Street former public house and now Jasmine Cottage.	Abbey Terrace and Mop Fairs on space created in 1835, the Fair was where agricultural workers came to find employment.
Almsbury Farm, an ancient farm site belonging to Sudeley Castle.	Abbot's Leys Farm was Abbey owned fields until 1539.

I hope one or more of these buildings interest you as you move around the town. Come into the museum and read a short account of each of them. Then it would be great if you decided to update our records for us with a piece of enquiry on the building of your choice.

Matters arising from Newsletter Number 7 from October 2015

One of the satisfying outcomes of the first year of newsletter was the receipt of emails from readers. Some expressed appreciation and added valuable extra information whilst others helpfully corrected my innocent errors. I was very grateful to both groups. Do keep the messages coming. After Newsletter 7 I received these two comments from my neighbour John Silcock.

In Part One I mentioned:

John Oaksey

Reminiscences of Winchcombe

1936-37

John points out that "Reminiscences of Winchcombe" was by John A Oakey (not Oaksey). He was the local builder who built the rather ornate bridge at the bottom of Vineyard Street for Mrs Dent of Sudeley Castle. I have a copy of the 1971 lithographic reproduction of his original booklet, complete with his manuscript corrections. I think it was reprinted and reissued in recent times."

In relation to the section on the spelling of Winchcombe or Winchcomb:

John points out "about 'Winchcomb' vs 'Winchcombe'. The town name on the (1920s I think) OS 'popular edition' one-inch map is without the final 'e', as it was on the first ever OS map of the area, dated 1828. I have a facsimile of the 1865 'electrotyped' version of the latter. I'm pretty sure that the name on the mile post in Sedgberrow is also without the final 'e'. The 'comb' part of the name derives from and is an English corruption of the Welsh 'cwm', meaning valley (especially I think one which is bowl-shaped and enclosed by steep sides) - which makes sense when you look at the topography of the place. "

Thank you John for taking time to email these two interesting items.



John is correct, the mile post at Sedgberrow does not have the 'e'. It is dated 1863 in the County of Worcester.

As this is the April issue, here is a small part of a poem by A E Houseman to celebrate April, Easter and Spring:

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my three score years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

Launch of Museum Lectures

Anne Crow and Carol Harris have launched a series of lectures in support of the Museum. Five talks have taken place so far and have been well attended and received. In the Newsletter I will let readers know of any further lectures that are planned. The lectures have taken place in the Methodist Hall, Winchcombe.

Some useful books to consult on the buildings of Winchcombe and the surrounding Villages

The Buildings of England: Gloucestershire I: The Cotswolds by David Verey, Penguin Books 1991.
In & Around Winchcombe through time by David Aldred and Tim Curr, Amberley Publishing, 2011
Around Bishops Cleeve and Winchcombe by David Aldred, Sutton Publishing, 2000
Weird and Wicked Winchcombe by Anne Crow, 2015
Reminiscences of Winchcombe by John Oakey, 2014

Thanks

My thanks are due to Anne Crow, Carol Harris and Barbara Edward for their careful reading of Draft 1 of this newsletter. I am also grateful to others who have contacted me to make suggestions for future newsletters.

Conclusion

I hope you enjoy this April Newsletter. In May the planned focus is on maps. Do keep your emails coming to john@hancojohn.plus.com and remember it's time to visit the museum.

[The Winchcombe Town Trust, Registered Charity No. 234734]