



# The Fairford Flyer

Newsletter No 21

July 2015

## ARCHAEOLOGY IN FAIRFORD



Illustration by and with permission of Oxford Archaeology of what the Horcott Quarry area might have looked like.

Over the years various areas of Fairford have been developed, mainly for housing but also industry like quarrying. These sites have been of interest individually but also collectively. The more that is excavated the more we make sense of the bigger picture. The earliest large-scale work was the Anglo-Saxon cemetery which lies at the edge of the town on the road to Quenington. It was not systematically excavated but as stone was

being quarried an antiquarian, W. Wylie, was invited to look at and sketch finds. He published this in 1852 as 'Fairford Graves'. Thereafter Fairford has added many new estates to its housing stock without any systematic recording of the archaeology. A significant change came some thirty years ago when regulations were introduced requiring developers to carry out archaeological surveys prior to any work affecting the landscape. As an example, in 1999 an investigation was carried out at Coln House School when the local authority was considering rebuilding the school. The discovery of numerous Anglo-Saxon ditches and shards of pottery convinced the LEA to leave the site untouched. You can understand the difference made by the new regulations if you compare the gravel pits near Totterdown Lane (by the Scout hut) dating from the early post-War years with the more recent work in the area known as Horcott Pit or Horcott Quarry. The latter was carefully dug and thoroughly recorded. It revealed Iron Age, Roman (including a farmhouse and a cemetery), and Anglo-Saxon features. Moreover, Hansons organised an opportunity for local people to visit the site.

The current standards do not mean a site has to be preserved. It does mean the site has to be recorded. Only if something out of the ordinary is discovered will consideration be given to taking measures for conservation. This all takes us to the latest development, the field to the south of the A417 opposite Jacob's Piece. Among finds reported are 'sunken featured buildings' of the Anglo-Saxon period. We await further news. What in time will prove more interesting is to be able to map wider areas, to join up the dots and make sense of why the gravel terraces attracted our ancestors.

GH

## Chairman's report at the 2015 AGM

This time last year we were celebrating our 10th anniversary and going over the events that led to the formation of a History Society. It was all closely tied in with saving this building for the community and seeing it through a rebuilding programme. We enjoyed reminiscing, and we ended the evening with Gloucestershire food and drink.

The Society has continued to progress. It has an excellent record of publications and membership is very healthy at least numerically. Our finances are in good order though we must keep an eye on them. Most speakers charge a fee and those fees have been increasing. Some charge fees because they make their living from lecturing. Others use their lecturing as a way of incidentally raising money for a particular charity. We pay a service charge to this community centre for our sole use of the archive room. Publications are an important source of income and we are trying to clarify our arrangements with the church for publications on sale in St Mary's. We are able to say that we are not planning to put up subscriptions at this time and probably not for some time to come. It is extraordinarily good value. Most members manage to get to several of the meetings. We try to keep the subjects varied in their appeal. We recognise that not every member can or wants to come to every talk. The past year contained a variety of subjects and we have planned another wide-ranging series for our next season beginning in September.

What you may not see is what goes on behind the scenes such as visits pre-arranged or spontaneous by visitors often in search of family history, sometimes handing over records for the archives, sometimes producing an object that surprises even the archivist. One of those this year was a booklet about the church and town dated 1862 written by W Beale described as the Parish Clerk. Not even Gloucestershire Archives has a copy. He mentions yet another suggestion of the artist behind the design of the stained glass scheme - in this case a certain Francesco Francia. Will we ever get to the truth of this question?

## FHS Committee 2015-16

Chairman: Geoff Hawkes: Secretary: Alison Hobson: Treasurer: Gill Compton, Margaret Bishop, Don Cobbett, Edwin Cuss, Chris Hobson, Sue Middleton, Ian Westlake, Rob Winney

This is not a closed group. We would very much like to encourage some fresh blood on to the committee or if preferred research assistant. Don't be shy. Please contact Geoff or Alison if you are willing and able to help with some of the on-going work of the society.

## FHS News

### Victoria County History Volume 7.

This volume containing the histories of the 22 parishes in the hundreds of Brightwells Barrow and Rapsgate, extending from the Cotswold escarpment above Gloucester to the Thames at Lechlade and including much of the Churn, Coln, and Leach valleys and was published in 1983. Until recently it was the only Gloucestershire volume completed not online. The Victoria County History Trust has enabled this volume to be digitised and is now accessible on line at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/glos/vol7>. Fairford History Society lent its support to the digitisation project and made a contribution towards the cost.

### The Polish Plaque

A more permanent plaque commemorating the site of the Polish Camp, 1947-1959 has been put in place by the path off Leafield Road to the Cascades. It has been funded by the Polish Ex-Combatants Association (SPK), with permission of the Ernest Cook Trust and very kindly put in place by Nick Mustoe free of charge. The project was organised by Alicja Christofides.



Fairford Flyer edited by Alison Hobson. With contributions from Geoff Hawkes and Alison Hobson. Photographs from the FHS Archive

## The World on your Doorstep (WOYD)

For several years as an introduction to the area around their school, Farmor's Year 7 (the new intake) have spent a day in Fairford, looking at several sites: the Polish Camp, the Church, the High Street etc. As a contribution FHS has put on a display in the FCC Heritage Room showing part of the history and heritage of the town.

From Focus on Farmor's 2012: "Best of all, the local History Society opened up the Heritage Room for us to look at, complete with exhibition on the Polish Hostel and also answered our questions..."

Also present are some of the long standing residents to answer questions and talk to the students. Again we are asking for volunteers. The date is September 10th 9.45 - 12.45. Please contact Alison if you are interested in helping and haven't already been contacted. Free tea, coffee and biscuits!

### The Farmor's School logbooks

The volunteers have worked hard during last year and almost all of the Boys' School Vol 1 1863-1922 has been transcribed. Thanks to everyone who has helped. The next target is the Girl's School volume from about the same date to 1922, when the schools combined under Mr Hedges.

From the 1875 logbook:

*1875 30 June Mr J R R Barker called this morning and gave notice that any boy found throwing at insulation on telegraph poles would be prosecuted.*

Mr John Raymond Raymond Barker was Lord of the Manor, and magistrate and chairman of the governors of the school.

### Fairford St Mary's New Burial Ground.

The U3A Family History Group has been working hard transcribing the monumental inscriptions in the New Burial Ground. This information will be submitted to the Gloucestershire Family History Society as a contribution to the GFHS database of Gloucestershire monumental inscriptions. It will be completed later this year. Our thanks to U3A.

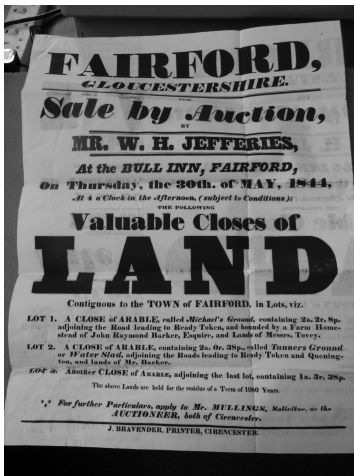
### Gloucestershire Archives 'For the Record' project.

The planning of the first stage of the bid is almost complete. An archaeological investigation revealed Roman artefacts about 1 metre down. The application for the building stage will be submitted in August. Building will start in June 2016 and there will be a restricted service from then. For updates see :-

<http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/archives/forthecord>. Needless to say they need money for the project which is being raised by Friends of Gloucestershire Archives. You can donate by going to the My donate website <https://mydonate.bt.com/events/ftr/207911>

## Volunteering at Gloucestershire Archives

by Alison Hobson



Recently I have been part of a team cataloguing the Mullings Solicitors Archive that has been deposited at Gloucestershire Archives. I was lucky enough to have a box which contained papers of the Keble family, mainly relating to financial affairs, executorships etc. One bundle relates to the sale of land in Fairford by auction at the Bull Hotel in June, 1844 by the Rev John Keble of Hursley.

Lot 1 A close of arable land called Michael's Ground of about 2 acres on the road leading to Ready Token...

Lot 2 A close of arable land of about 2 acres called Tanner's Ground or Water Slad

adjoining the road leading to Ready Token and Quenington.

Lot 3 another close of land adjoining the last Lot.

Lot 1 was bought by Jeremiah Hewer. Lots 2 & 3 by Joseph Wakefield, brewer and others (i.e. Thomas Saunders, blacksmith, Robert Cowley, mason, Joseph Townsend, carpenter, Thomas May, shopkeeper and George Loughton, carpenter).

This is especially interesting as Tanner's Ground is the piece of land where a little time later the Anglo-Saxon graves were discovered. It is confirmed on page 11 of William Wylie's book 'Anglo-Saxon Graves' published in 1852 he says:

' the field where the remains were found, lies just out of Fairford... It appears to have .. long been in the family of the Reverend J Keble, well known author of 'The Christian Year'. In 1844 it was sold to a benefit club of the place, which immediately proceeded to cut down the fine old beech trees then growing there, and to quarry stone for a wall. At this period 1844-5, the field was divided into two inclosures, of about two acres each, one being arable, the other very old grass land ...'

It is really satisfying when pieces of the jigsaw of Fairford's history fit together.

Illustration: GA D1388 Box 9449 Also with permission of Sewell Mullings, Logie, Solicitors, Cirencester

## Fairford's surprising link with Ireland

*A recent book about the background to the Easter Rising in Dublin 1916 was published under the title, 'Vivid Faces'. The sixteen men held most responsible were sentenced to death. Other less important figures were interned, many in England, in quite relaxed conditions.*

The authorities in England were surprised to find so many of the rebels were cultured, middle-class people, and adjusted their behaviour accordingly. One group was held in Oxford, in a guest house at St Aldate's. They obtained readers' tickets for the Bodleian Library, dined with the famous classicist Gilbert Murray, were shown round the city by Ossie Grattan Esmonde (an undergraduate from the celebrated Wexford family), and explored the surrounding villages and churches. One small group was transferred to rural Gloucestershire to the amusement of their friends remaining in Oxford. They pictured their erstwhile colleagues coping with rural life when "a stroke of the pen transformed them to the back of nowhere – Fairford in Gloucestershire."

The County Chief Constable was surprised to find that the Irish revolutionaries were not peasants; he had earmarked them for farm-work but 'admitted he had been under the wrong impression as to the type of people he was to deal with' and rapidly changed their lodgings from local cottage rooms to the 'great style' of Fairford's Bull Inn.

### The English perspective

*Research in the Gloucestershire Archives (D37/1/158) by Alison Hobson revealed a letter from the honorary Chief Constable mentioned above, M.W.Colchester-Wemyss. It sheds considerable light on how things looked to the British authorities.*

1<sup>st</sup> March 1917

*"I have had a bit of extra work and trouble lately in rather a curious way. I dare say you remember that a year ago at Easter last year there were great disturbances in Dublin and other parts of Ireland and afterwards several hundred people were arrested. They belonged to an Association called Sinn Fein, the most advanced section of Irish Nationalists. After a time the bulk of those arrested were released. About 6 weeks ago I suddenly received notice from London that 10 Sinn Feiners who had been deported from Ireland had been ordered to reside at a place called Fairford in this County & that I (as Honorary Chief Constable of Gloucestershire) was to have charge of them & make all the arrangements for them. I was told nothing about them except that they were Sinn Feiners & from something I heard I imagined they were agricultural labourers & so made provisional arrangements with two*

or three farmers to employ them. The day of their arrival I found they were all well-educated men, journalists, doctors, civil engineers & so on; and they were in a state of fury at being sent to a place like Fairford, which is just a small dead-end agricultural town, right out of the world on the Cotswold Hills. At first they were surly with me, but I told them that was no good, that I was in no way responsible for their being sent there & I only had to look after them. I had great difficulty in getting lodgings for them, but I succeeded after a bit & two or three of them turned out to be quite decent fellows.

They each had to sign a paper promising not to go more than 5 miles away from Fairford & they have been growling & grumbling ever since. There are only two policemen at Fairford & they have to cover a big bit of Country & so they could not of course look after them & we could only trust their honour.

On Sunday I got a telephone call from the Police Sergeant at Fairford telling me that 3 of the men had bolted and all yesterday I was writing and telephoning and telegraphing all over the place but I could hear nothing whatsoever of them and conclude they have gone back to Ireland. I am very much annoyed as they had practically given me their parole (quite apart from the papers they had signed) that they would not escape. This is a curious little by-product of the War. There is no doubt the Sinn Feiners were stirred up by the Germans.

Yours very obediently and sincerely, M.W. Colchester-Wemyss”

In a subsequent letter of 16<sup>th</sup> May 1917 Colchester-Wemyss said he had received letters from some of the men. They had gone to support their candidate at a by-election. It was one of several by-elections that pointed to wide support for Sinn Fein when the post-War election was held. He sadly acknowledged: “I don't think the Authorities in Ireland are going to trouble about them...”

Maynard Willoughby Colchester-Wemyss was Chairman of Gloucestershire County Council from 1908-1918. He, lived at Westbury Court, Westbury-on-Severn and in 1902 the Crown Prince Vajiravudh of Siam (later to become King of Siam, Rama VI) was a visitor. The Crown Prince had organised a performance of plays one evening for a 'large and elegant audience'. Apparently he became a close friend of C-W and there are a series of letters to the King preserved at Glos Archives. These were subsequently privately published as 'Wartime letters of a Westbury Squire in 1994 by Barbara Owen.

## EAST COTSWOLD SHAKESPEARE SOCIETY

Hatherop Castle. Monday, January 11th 1915 at 2.30pm

### "The Rivals" (Sheridan)

Sir Anthony Absolute	Mrs Carbonell
Captain Absolute	Mr Lewis
Faulkland	Mr Vidal
Acres	Canon Carbonell
Sir L. O'Trigger	Mr Ford
Fag	Dr Bloxsome
David	Mr Squire
Coachman	Mr Cheales
Mrs Malatrop	Miss Severn
Lydia Languish	Miss Vidal
Julia	Miss Keble
Lucy	Mrs Barkley
Servants. Boy	Mrs Walter Jones

Omit:- p54 from: Exit Lydia, to end of scene  
p57 from: 'My mind is at ease' to end of scene

Members unable to be present are asked to give notice to the hostess.  
Copies of the play may be had from S.French. Ltd 26 Southampton Street, Strand. W.C. Price 6d each, post free

The next meeting will be "THE TEMPEST" on January 25th at Fairford House.

Grace C.Keble  
Hon Sec

#### Note:

So this is what the great and good of Fairford did on Monday afternoons in the war years. Read plays!

Rev and Mrs Carbonell: the vicar of Fairford and his wife from the Vicarage (now Hyperion House). Mr Cheales: clergyman living at Bibury, Mr Vidal was also a clergyman and he and his wife lived at Barnsley Vicarage. Miss Grace Keble from Keble House. Mrs Walter Jones from Morgan Hall (the owner of this piece of paper).

Thanks to Liz Hope for the donation to FHS of this item.

## From the Newspaper Archives

**Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucestershire Graphic, June 17 1911**

### **Fairford and District jottings**

Now is the time to test our refrigerator. Best heifer and ox beef, South Down mutton and lamb, veal and pork, well hung and tender. Beef and pork sausages are delicious. Pickled ox tongues and lard always ready. Any quantity of ice supplied twice weekly. - Arthur Perry, purveyor, Fairford. Telephone No 8.

Dinner and tea are to be provided on Coronation Day for everybody residing in the parish of Kempsford. In the hamlet of Dunfield, which is part of Kempsford parish, £15 was collected. No other hamlet on the Cotswolds has done better than this.

The materials for the fire to be lighted on Horcutt on the night of June 22 is already stacked, and it is stated that the huge stack contains over 1,000 faggots. It will be the largest bonfire on the Cotswolds.

Just before midnight on Thursday in last week a party of some forty sporting residents in Fairford and district made a pilgrimage to Mill Bridge, Fairford. The idea of the pilgrimage came about in this way. That thorough-going sportsman (Mr C.E. Martin, a farm student to Mr Alex Iles) made a wager he would climb the Mill Bridge and dive into the mill stream near the water wheel at midnight. The wager was accepted and won. The party, as stated, proceeded to the Mill Bridge to see if Mr Martin would carry out the wager at such an hour of the night. He soon showed the spectators that he meant business, and divesting himself of all his clothing, he climbed over the coping, and swaying himself a few times, dived into about six feet of water, from which he soon emerged, amid the hearty applause of those who were privileged to witness this plucky and daring performance. Coming out of the water, Mr Martin went straight to the individual with whom he made the wager, and insisted on being paid (which was done) before he again put on his clothes. This incident has been the chief topic of conversation in the Fairford district during the past week.

**Western Daily Press, November 9 1872**

### **Visit of Mr Joseph Arch to Fairford**

Thursday last was a high day in connection with the career of East Gloucestershire Labourers' Union, having its headquarters in the above little, and comparatively isolated town, Mr J. Arch, the well-known labourers advocate visiting this branch of the national union.

The day was very fine and favourable beyond the greatest wishes or brightest anticipations of the originators of the gathering. Early in the morning many labourers of the district, and others from a long distance, were to be seen in best attire and sporting blue favours, making their way towards Fairford, and by midday, a large concourse of persons had gathered in the streets. At a little before two o'clock, the first move was made at Milton End, at which place a long and very well arranged procession was formed, headed by Messrs Arch and Yeates, of Gloucester, and their prominent supporters of the agitation, followed by a brass band, from near Cirencester, and nearly a thousand members of the union. The procession perambulated the town, and marched to the Callis, a field at the rear of the White Hart, where a covered stage had been erected for the speakers accommodation, and around upwards of two thousand persons assembled. It having been proposed, seconded, and carried unanimously that Mr Yeates should preside, that gentleman stepped forward and briefly addressed the audience. He alluded to the glorious character of the day, and the heavenly auspices under which they met. The opposition their course had received was being surmounted, and success was assured. He saw many women among them, and was glad of it, because their smile and approbation was an augury of winning the fight. The faces of the young were fresh and far from colourless, and to the unmarried he gave a word of advice, viz, never marry unless their husbands belonged to the union. (Great laughter.) .....

**Oxford Chronicle and Reading Gazette September 17 1842**

### **Fairford**

Carter Waggon - On Saturday se'nnight several agriculturists and other inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood were led either by interest or curiosity, we suppose, to witness what may be called an interesting experiment in husbandry, the object of which was to test the superiority of waggons or carts, for harvest work, regard being had principally to the time saved by either method; which, as everyone knows, is to the farmer an object of prime consideration, especially in unsettled seasons. The gentleman who backed the Scottish or cart system, on this occasion, and who contended for its advantages, was Mr E Ruck of Down Ampney; while the ancient practice, or waggon system, as almost universally adopted in England, was defended by Mr H. Parker of this town, who felt convinced that this, the usual method would, on trial, be found the best. In order, therefore to decide the matter, a field of barley, fit for stacking, and belonging to the latter gentleman, was selected for trial, and after proper arrangements had been made, and everything put in readiness

Twenty-three acres of land were to be cleared, which having been fairly divided, it was left for Mr Ruck to make choice of either portion. Both gentlemen employed their own men, which were certainly well matched, and, as an incentive to exertion, something more substantial than the mere honours of conquest, we believe, awaited them.

At all events, having commenced operations, the men on both sides went to work in earnest; when it soon became evident that the "waggon men" had the advantage, and this the issue confirmed, for they had cleared their ground and stacked their corn full an hour earlier than the "cart men". [We doubt whether our agricultural readers will deem this proof positive, as an hour is no great difference, and as there can be no certainty that the men were equally matched] E.O.C.

#### Swindon Advertiser February 22 1864

"A Sell" - On Saturday evening last this town was visited by three gentleman sharpers, who sent the crier round the town with the astonishing announcement that at 7 o'clock a gentleman would sell in the Market Place, 100 sovereigns for 5s each, one person only to be allowed to purchase one, so as to give all a chance. This drew a large assemblage of speculators together. The gentleman was punctual to his time; he began telling his audience how he had made wager to sell certain articles in one hour; if he did not do so he would lose the wager and £50. He sold an astonishing lot of watch guards of the value of 2d for 2s 6d each. In a few cases 3s was returned for the guards; this was of course a good bait. A few, with more money than wits, bought as they thought a splendid silver watch for £1 each, but alas! the buyers found that instead of a useful article they had got for their money a worthless thing. All this time the purchasers were to hold the articles up in their hands, and by no means to let any one look at them, and they would be allowed a handsome present. The gentlemen then very rapidly sold some small pieces of paper, about an inch square, for 2s 6d each. Now comes the best part of the performance. As soon as he had obtained a good quantity of half-crowns, the other gentleman gradually drew the rug from the horse (for the wonderful sale was conducted in a trap, with a horse ready to start at a moment's notice) when lo and behold ! away goes the horse and trap at a swinging trot, leaving their poor dupes behind in utter amazement. The gentleman not having time to sell his sovereigns, proposed to have another sale on Monday evening, but this he failed to do; and should he again set foot in this town he will no doubt meet with a warm reception.

The above is a different version of the event first published in the Flyer in 2010 from the Jackson's Oxford Journal

## Meetings 2015-16

All meetings take place in the Farmor Room of the Fairford Community Centre at 7.30pm this year except for the February meeting which is at 10 am and the April meeting which will be in the Church.

### 2015

September 17 The Upper Thames patrol by Bill King  
October 15 Magna Carta by Dr Tim Porter  
November 19 Those adventurous Cowleys

### 2016

February 18 Along the River Coln by Edwin Cuss **at 10 am**  
March 17 Tudor medicine by Cherry Hubbard  
April 21 The Bells of St Mary's by St Mary's Bell Ringers **in the Church**  
May 19 Young Laurie Lee and his family by Howard Beard  
June 16 AGM followed by Highwaymen by John Putley

## Membership Renewal

It's that time again! Membership subscription is due in September. It remains at £5. **Members with standing orders need not do anything, you will be contacted if there is a problem. Your membership card will be enclosed with this Flyer.**

For those who pay annually a membership renewal form is enclosed with this Flyer. You can pay at any meeting or drop it in to the Community Centre, clearly addressed to FHS (we now have a letter slot on the right hand side of the main door as you go in).

Another method of payment for those of you with online banking is bank transfer. The treasurer requests you name it something like <YOUR NAME> – FHS Subs 2015. The FHS Lloyd's Bank account number is 30-92-06 A/C 02170130. Thank You.

Enquiries Alison 01285 711768 or [enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk)

**Thursday September 17 2015**

**The Upper Thames Patrol: the waterborne Home Guard of the River Thames by Bill King**  
7.30pm at Fairford Community Centre

[www.fairfordhistory.org.uk](http://www.fairfordhistory.org.uk)  
email: [enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk](mailto:enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk)