

AROUND  
KEYNSHAM & SALTFORD  
PAST AND PRESENT



THE JOURNAL OF KEYNSHAM & SALTFORD LOCAL  
HISTORY SOCIETY

SERIES 4. NO.1. 2024

## KEYNSHAM & SALTFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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The Society was formed in 1965 as a non-profit making voluntary organisation concerned with researching and recording the history of the Keynsham and Saltford area. Since 1965 the Society has amassed a large archive of photographs, documents, maps and transcripts from primary sources and newspaper articles.

Membership of the Society is open to everyone who is interested in local history. Monthly meetings are held at St. Dunstan's Catholic Church Hall, Bristol Road, Keynsham from September to April, normally on the third Monday and commencing at 7.30pm.

Details of any of the Society's publications including past journals can be obtained from the society's website; [www.keysalthist.org.uk](http://www.keysalthist.org.uk)

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Published by the Keynsham & Saltford Local History Society.



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Cover illustration; Carved snakestone from Whitby, Natural History Museum Wikimedia Commons (Micktherocktapper).

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## Notes from the Chairman

I am pleased to be able to introduce not only a new edition of our annual journal but a new editor, Paul Benn. This publication is an important part of our contribution to knowledge of local history and we are grateful to Paul for offering his time and energy to make sure it continues.

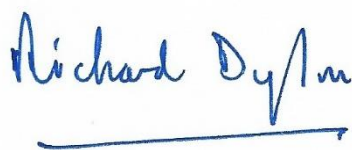
With a new editor comes a fresh approach and this A4 format with colour printing allows larger photographs and drawings to be included. Digital technology means that the cost is only slightly more than before.

Reviewing the last year, autumn 2023 was a particularly busy period for the Society. As well as our usual activities, we made a major contribution to the Keynsham Through Time exhibition in September and October. This was initiated and led by the staff of the High Street cultural programme, but several members were heavily involved in the planning and preparation of the display panels. When it came to staffing on the sixteen open days, the project was heavily reliant on our volunteers: a total of 36 members helped, which was a magnificent response. Andy Williams put a huge amount of time into managing the volunteering to make sure everything worked well. It did, and the 750 plus visitors were very appreciative of the displays on Keynsham Abbey and the brass industry. Many commented that this should become a regular display, but I'm afraid there is no immediate prospect of that.

Another major achievement was the publication of the Society's latest book, "Brass Tracks", in September. The idea for this combination of walking guides and local industrial history was prompted by a generous bequest by the late Joan Day, who became the authority on our local brass industry, and saved Saltford Brass Mill for posterity. A working group of Society members, together with Tony Coverdale from the Saltford Brass Mill Project, devised and tested the routes and wrote the histories of the industry and its people. Most meetings of the group were held at the Brass Mill restaurant, as this was both practical and appropriate! I'm sure that Joan would have appreciated the content and bringing the knowledge of the industry to a wider audience.

Returning to this issue, we cover a variety of topics, from a fascinating account of Keynsham's role in the 17<sup>th</sup> century debate about the nature of fossils, through the history of the Baptist Church, a Victorian trial, the story of Flanders House and the Saltford Viking buckle, to more recent accounts of the lives of young men from the town who died in the two World Wars.

I hope you enjoy the content and the new format, and if you have a personal account of times past or a piece of research to report please do send it to Paul for a future issue.



Richard Dyson  
Chairman

## Keynsham's Famous Fossils and The Royal Society

By Paul Benn

Ammonite fossils are a distinctive feature of Keynsham geology and they are part of our local identity, with many specimens appearing in local walls, as illustrated in the photos on the next page.

In the distant past locals tried to make sense of these mysterious objects resulting in the creation of the local myth about a 5th century Welsh princess called St Keyna ridding the area of snakes by turning them into these stones by the actions of her fervent prayers. This myth is very similar to that of St Hilda, in Whitby, where there is a similar abundance of ammonites. Both myths are probably based on that of St Patrick who is supposed to have driven all the snakes from Ireland.

It is likely that St Keyna was chosen as her name had similarities to Cægineshamme, the name given to Keynsham in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, (c. 980).

However, the true story that is not so well known is of how these local ammonites played a starring role in a debate about the origin of fossils in The Royal Society. It is also the story of how the St Keyna myth became entwined in this debate when a local person carved fake snake's heads at the end of some ammonites, fooling a few academics into believing the heads were real. These carved ammonites are called snakestones.



**Fig. 1** Carved snakestone from Whitby, Natural History Museum Wikimedia Commons (Micktherocktapper).



## Fossils in Keynsham walls.

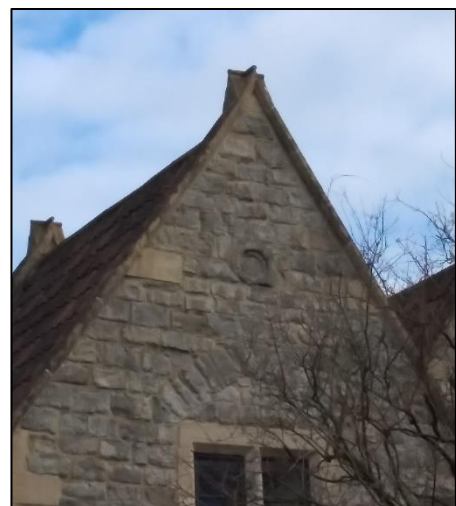
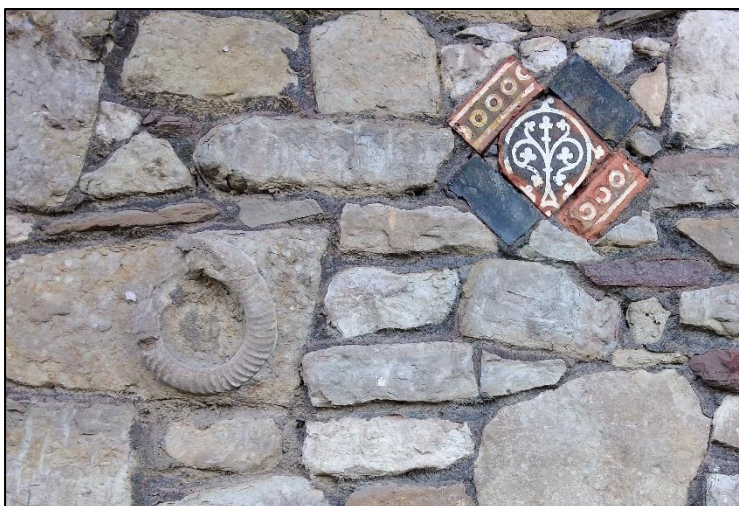
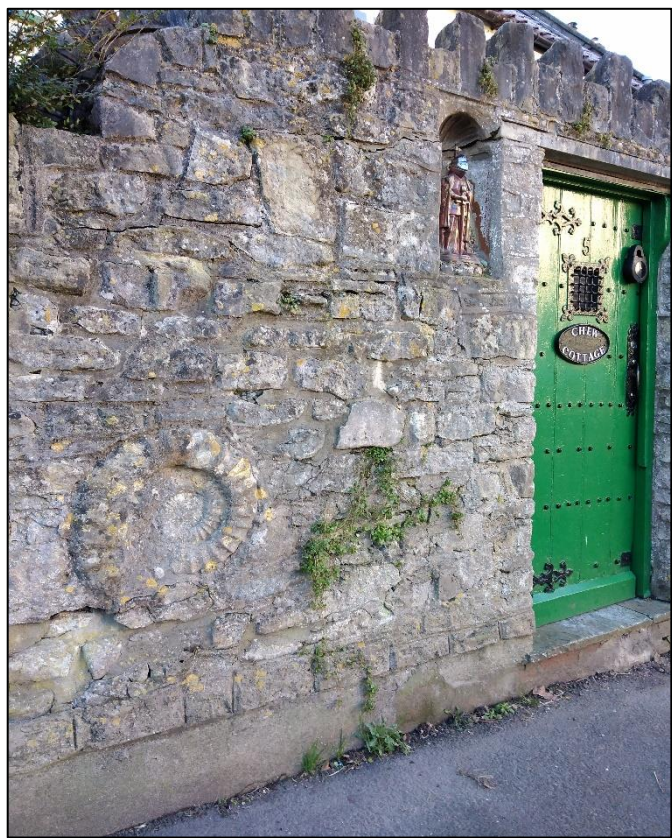
**Fig. 2** Top left, ammonite in a house on Steel Mills lane.

**Fig. 3** Top right, nautilus shell in Chew Bridge House.

**Fig. 4** Right, one of about 20 ammonites in a wall next to Chew or Crox Bottom Bridge.

**Fig. 5** Bottom left, ammonite in wall of house on Station Road.

**Fig. 6** Bottom right, ammonite in the old school on Bath Hill.



## Heads or Tails

The first published mention of Keynsham's ammonites is by John Leland in 1549 when he wrote '*Stones figured like serpents wound into circles found in the quarries of stone about Keynsham.*'

In 1607 William Camden's *Britannia* described these ammonites in more detail and mentions a possible snakestone. '*On the western bank of the Avon is seen the town of Keynsham. Some are of the opinion that it was named so from Keyna, a most holy British Virgin, who according to the superstitious persuasion of former ages, is believed to have turned serpents into stone ... I myself saw a stone brought from thence representing a serpent rolled up into a spire, the head of it stuck out in outward surface, and the end of the tail terminated in the centre.*'



Fig. 7 William Camden

Joshua Childrey later expanded on Camden's observations and is responsible for involving Keynsham's ammonites in the

fossil origin debate. Besides writing extensively about the ammonites he also set out his belief that they were '*not shellfish petrified as some would have them to be, who think that upon the ebb of the deluge these fish were left upon the tops of hills.*' He published his observations and arguments in *Britannia Baconica*, in 1662.

After visiting the local area he wrote '*When I went to Keynsham (by Bristol), to search for the ammonites, there I found the Lane (where they are) as it were all paved with broad hard stones, and the ammonites lying upon the middle of the surface of the stones.*'

He then confirms Camden's observation of snakestones when he writes '*At Keynsham in stone quarries, are found stones in the form of a serpent ... whereas those at Whitby want heads, some of these have.*'

It is unlikely that this was simply a fanciful exaggeration as he was dismissive of claims that snakestones had been found elsewhere. After observing ammonites in fields near Badminton, in the Cotswolds, he stated that; '*the ammonites are without heads generally, if not all, for as for those appearances of heads which some fancy at the outer end of some of them, I take them rather for irregular pieces of stone.*'

As to how some of these Keynsham snakestones originated is unknown but the most likely explanation is that a local person carved the heads, either as a prank or to make them saleable.

Camden's and Childrey's observations ensured that Keynsham was seen as the main source of evidence for both sides of the ensuing fossil origin debate.

## The Great Fossil Origin Debate

In the 17th and 18th century folklore, religion and new scientific theories often merged together in academic debates. The prevailing belief at the time was that fossils were formed by a creative force or “Plastic Virtue” acting on the earth and that their similarity to existing creatures was merely a coincidence. The more radical belief was that fossils were formed by sea creatures deposited on land, possibly by the biblical flood. In Britain the debaters were mainly members of the Royal Society, recently formed in 1660, and their arguments were presented in various publications. The type of fossil most discussed was the ammonite, which was particularly abundant in Keynsham’s many stone quarries.

Dr John Beale, a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) who was known for his interest in cider-making and agricultural improvement, also believed in the “Plastic Virtue” theory. In 1664 he travelled from his home in Yeovil to Keynsham to collect fossils and on 10 August he presented a box of them to the Royal Society, enquiring ‘*what is the process of the plastic spirit in shaping perfect cockles, muscles, scallops, headless serpents [ammonites], fishes, thunder-stones, etc.*’ He must have been disappointed to learn that these specimens ended up under the microscope of someone with opposing views.

This person was the polymath Robert Hooke FRS, Professor of Geometry at Gresham College. He built his own microscope and after analysing some fossilised wood and the Keynsham ammonites, concluded that fossils had once been living creatures.

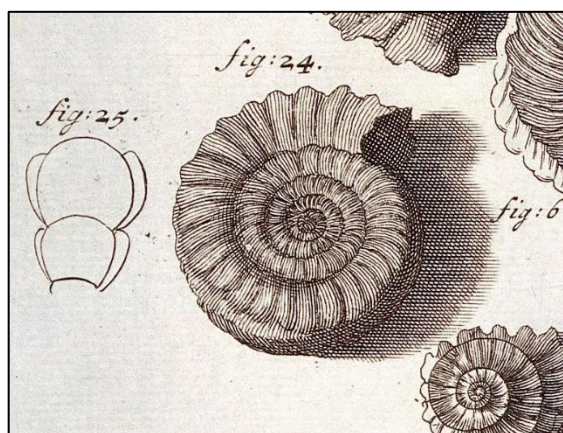


**Fig. 8** Portrait of Robert Hooke as reconstructed by Rita Greer, 2004 Wikimedia Commons.

In 1665 he published his findings in a groundbreaking book called “Micrographia”, the first major Royal Society publication. In it he wrote about an ‘*... observation I lately made on several kind of petrified shells, found about Keynsham, which lies within four or five miles of Bristol ...*’ and added ‘*... that these shells which are thus spiralled and separated with diaphragms, were some kind of Nautili ...*’

In conclusion of his observations he wrote that they ‘*... owe their formation and figuration, not to any kind of plastic virtue inherent in the earth, but to the shells of certain shellfishes, which, either by some deluge, inundation, earthquake, or some such other means, came to be thrown to that place, and there to be filled with some kind of mud or clay, or petrifying water, or some other substance, which in tract of time has been settled together and hardened in those shelly moulds into those shaped substances we now find them.*’

Hooke drew some of these fossils, probably the earliest published accurate drawings of ammonites. In his original sketch against the drawing labelled fig. 24 are the words 'near Keinsham'. A later engraving of this drawing, shown below, appeared in a 1705 publication but without his text.



**Fig. 9** Engraving of Ammonite fossil drawn by Hooke, Welcome Collection.

Dr Robert Plot FRS, Professor of Chemistry at the University of Oxford and the first keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, disagreed with Hooke. In 1676 he wrote that ammonites were '*... most probably formed by two salts crystallizing different ways, which by thwarting one another make a helical figure ...*'. He then argued against Hooke's Nautilus theory stating that there was no living specimen exactly like the ammonite and although the Nautilus was similar, God would not have let a similar species die out. The theory of extinction was very much a taboo idea.

Referring to Camden and Childrey, Dr Plot then added that '*... the ammonites of Keynsham, have some of them heads ...*', and so differ considerably from the Nautilus. Though, to be fair, he does go on to say '*Which if I find true when I come into Somerset-shire, will give me, and I doubt*

*not, others satisfaction beyond all exception ...*'. It seems likely that he did come to Keynsham, but whether he was satisfied or not is not known.



**Fig. 10** Dr Robert Plot.

The next academic to get involved in this debate was John Ray FRS, a tutor at Cambridge University who published important works on botany, zoology, and natural theology. He was a supporter of the creature origin theory and was sceptical about the Keynsham snakestones.

He addressed Dr Plot's argument in a letter to Dr Robinson in 1684 in which he wrote;

*'As for what Dr. Plot produces out of Camden and Childrey, in confirmation of his fourth argument, viz. that the ammonites of Keynsham have some of them heads. I doubt not but it is a mistake, proceeding from their credulity.'*

Ray later visited Keynsham with his student, Francis Willughby, and notes that when he enquired about the local snakestones they were '*... directed to a*

*man's house who was said to have one, to whom when we came, he showed us the stone, which indeed at the upper extreme had some of protuberance of stone, but not at all resembling the head of any animal.'*

Why their observations didn't match Camden and Childrey's is a mystery. Maybe the carved heads were too crude to fool these men of science or maybe the original carved versions had now been sold to a collector.

In the summer of 1687 Hooke's friend, Richard Waller FRS, secretary of the Royal Society, was staying with his mother-in-law in Bristol and visited Keynsham to observe and draw the fossils he found. He sent these drawings, along with a letter explaining where he found the fossils, to Hooke on 17 August 1687.

Waller's notes for the large ammonite in Fig. 12 are;

*'a large ammonite, about 18 Inches diameter. There are much larger to above 2 feet, but this was one of the most perfect and neat I could find. On this the curious foliage (as I may call it) of the diaphragms was very visible, as is represented in the Figure, and near the centre several small shells petrified. This I had from Keynsham.'*

He later states that *'The ammonites, near Keynsham, lie most of them upon a little hill, or rising ground, above Keynsham Bridge. The place, as I take it, is about 18 foot above the river. The river there runs half round the foot of the hill, where they lie very thick almost to touch each other, and are all of the large sort bedded in hard rock or stone. Some also I found near a mile from thence in the stone walls of their fields, and on the way in the lanes.'*



**Fig. 11** Richard Waller.

However, the most important fossil he found was a Nautilus, of which he wrote;

*'But that which I esteemed the greatest curiosity, was a large stone of the true shape and figure of the common Nautilus, or Mother of Pearl shell, which though but a part of the whole shell weighs about 30 pounds. This I found in one of the dry-stone walls near Keynsham, and not far from it another piece of the same. ... in these not only the diaphragms are very visible, but the holes also in the middle of them, by which the gut or string passes from one to another, in all respects answering to that of the Nautilus shell. Which, I think, will evince this at least to be a petrified shell, though much larger than any of that kind that have been yet mentioned.'*

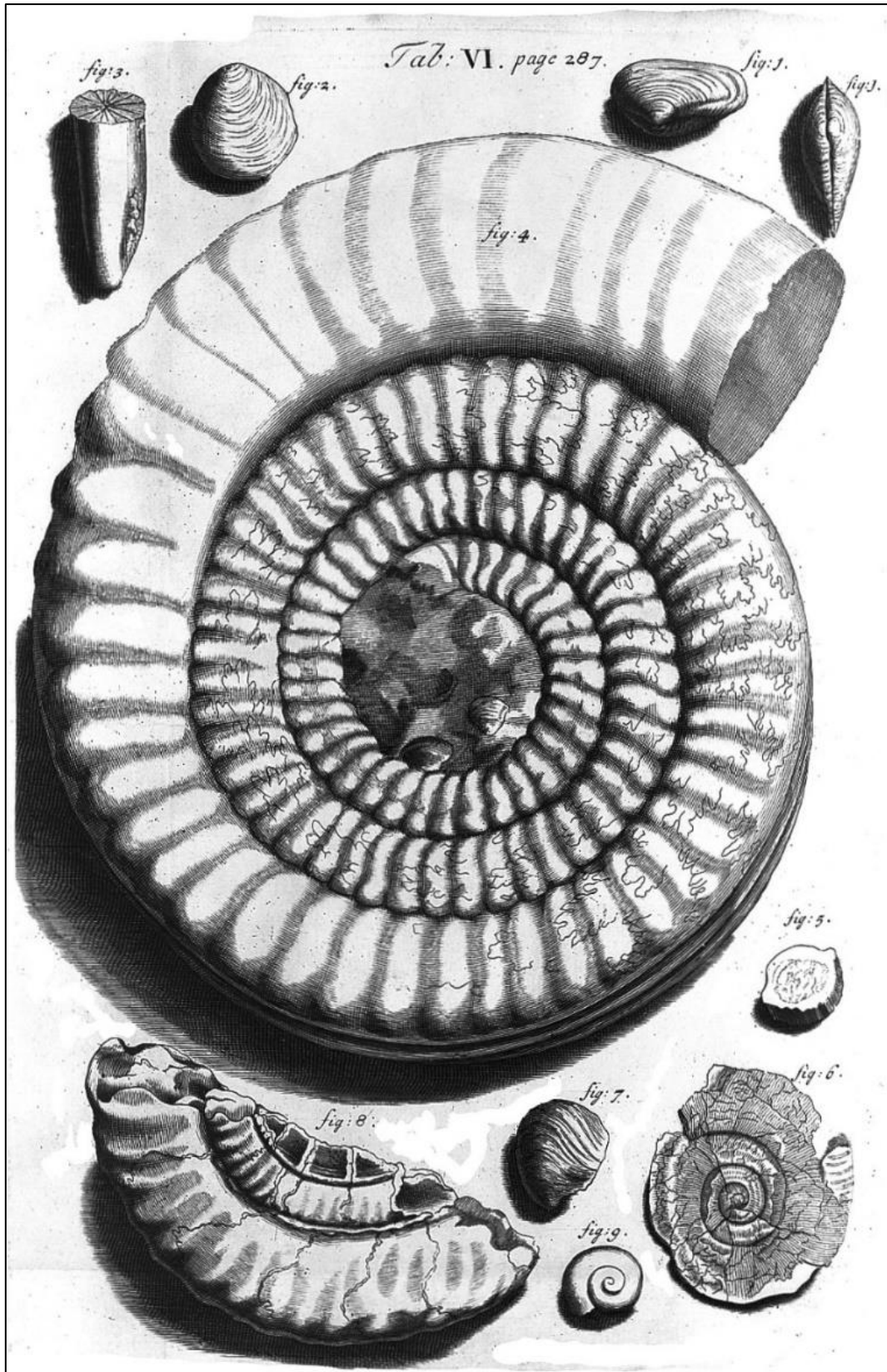


Fig. 12 Engraving of Keynsham Ammonite drawn by Waller, Welcome Collection.



**Fig. 13** Nautilus fossil from Keynsham – author’s collection.

After having taken sides with Hooke he then tries to remain impartial when he writes;

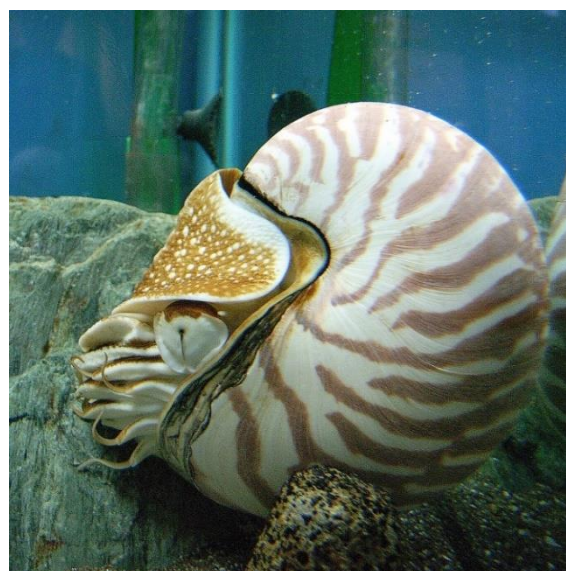
*‘Not to enter into the dispute whether in nature there is or can be petrified substances like parts of animals & vegetables which yet never had any relation to either ... I shall only give you an account of some observables I met with in several places of Sommersetshire this last summer, especially at Keynsham upon the Avon.’*

As secretary to the Royal Society, he probably decided to remain neutral in this heated debate.

Hooke wasn’t going to sit on the fence though and was very pleased with this new selection of fossils that Waller had found, especially the large nautilus shell. At a Royal Society meeting on 26 October 1687 Hooke said;

*‘... concerning stones, as nautili and ammonites, lately found by him [Waller] near Keynsham Bridge in Gloucestershire. One of these stones was evidently formed in*

*the shell of a common nautilus, but much bigger than the usual sort; and not only the diaphragms were most distinct, but also the holes in them, whereby the several cavities communicate, were indisputably discovered, and no room left to doubt of its having been once a shell.’*



**Fig. 14** Common Nautilus, Daiju Azuma, Wikimedia Creative Commons.

Keynsham’s famous fossils were also the main evidence to support Hooke’s groundbreaking theories on earthquakes. These were published in 1705 in Hooke’s “Discourse of Earthquakes”, in a book called “The Posthumous Works of Robert Hooke”, and the accompanying engravings were those shown above. The original drawings ended up in a private collection and were only recently rediscovered and published for the first time in 2013 in an article called “Drawings of fossils by Robert Hooke and Richard Waller” by Sachiko Kusukawa, published by the Royal Society.

These fossils, especially the Nautilus found in a Keynsham field wall, helped Hooke to grasp the cardinal principle of palaeontology, that fossils are not "sports of

Nature," but remains of once-living organisms that can be used to help us understand the history of life. They also helped Hooke to realize, two and a half centuries before Darwin, that species have both appeared and gone extinct throughout the history of life on Earth.

Although the fossil origin argument still rumbled on, by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the now famous Keynsham snakestones were finally dismissed by academics. In an updated version of Camden's *Britannia* published in 1695 the text reads;

*'... whereas Mr. Camden affirms he saw a stone like a serpent brought from hence with a head, it is a mistake; for all our Naturalists now agree, that such stones are formed in Nautili shells, and that there are no heads belonging to them. Indeed, many of them have rough and broken pieces of stone issuing from them beyond the moulded wreath at the broad end, which may have led some to imagine that those pieces were imperfect heads; but really they are not so.'*

During the following decades the organic origin of fossils slowly became accepted but it wasn't until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century that the idea of extinction was accepted. The study of fossils was labelled as Palaeontology in 1822.

From modern palaeontology and geology, we now know that our ammonites are the fossilized remains of sea creatures that lived about 180 million years ago, when warm shallow seas covered this part of the earth. They became extinct about 65 million years ago, and their nearest living relative is the nautilus, which is part of the class that includes octopus, squid and cuttlefish.

## Snakes or Fakes

Although Ray and Willughby were unable to find any of Childrey's snakestones in Keynsham such objects do exist. The Natural History Museum has four such items and one has been in its collection since 1815. Therefore, it is entirely possible that Camden and Childrey observed these fake headed ammonites, believing them to be authentic.



**Fig. 15** Carved snakestone from Whitby, James St. John, Wikimedia Commons.

Why and when were these snakestones made? This question has led to a more modern debate about fossils with some historians believing that the heads were carved by those that believed in the snake myths, to enhance them rather than mislead anybody.

However, in 1759 Aban Butler wrote a book about saints and under the heading of St Keyna he wrote this about Keynsham;

*‘Spiral stones in the figure of serpents have been found in that country, which some of the people pretend to have been serpents turned into stones by her prayers’.*

The implication being that these snakestones were purposely carved to deceive, probably to sell to gullible visitors as St Keyna religious relics.

This is certainly the case with the many carved snakestones made in the Victorian era in Whitby which were sold to tourists by locals pretending to believe in a similar myth to St Keyna, about St Hilda turning snakes to stone. Unfortunately, there are no known examples of Keynsham’s headed snakestones, nearly all the examples in museums are believed to be from Whitby.

The only specimen found by the author that is not labelled as coming from Whitby is that shown in figure 16 which is displayed in Radstock Museum and has come from Bowlditch Quarry, near Welton, Radstock, in Somerset. Whether the head is carved or shaped this way by chance is unknown.

It is interesting to speculate as to what the poor folk of Keynsham thought about these famous academics visiting their town. They were probably glad of the extra advertising

which no doubt led to learned gentlemen coming here hoping to purchase their own fossils and staying at local inns.



**Fig. 16** Snakestone from Radstock Museum.

As to whether Dr Plot ever admitted that he had been taken in by Keynsham’s fake headed snakestones will probably never be known, though he must have been embarrassed. However it is highly likely that he was responsible for the term “Cainsham Smoke”, a derogatory proverb concerning Keynsham’s men, to take his revenge on the ammonite stone carver. This story is for a future journal.

## A Near Miscarriage of Justice

By Brian Vowles

I was reminded of how easily this can occur when I read a cutting from the Gloucester Citizen Newspaper printed on Thursday 20 December 1883.

It appears that a confectioner, William Urch, conducted two businesses, one at Bristol and the other in the High Street, Keynsham run by his wife Sarah Ann assisted by an employee called William Stamp a native of Taunton.

On 10 December Urch visited the Keynsham shop and found it locked. On gaining an entrance he was shocked to discover the premises was in complete disorder and a quantity of goods was missing - and so was his wife, four children and the servant.

Furious, Urch stomped up the road to the police station standing on Bath Hill and made a complaint to the officers there accusing the servant Stamp of both eloping with his wife and stealing a number of boxes of currants, raisins etc. amounting to half a ton in weight.

He demanded a warrant for the arrest of the perfidious servant and the return of his property. The on-duty officer, Sergeant Drewett of the Somerset Constabulary complied and was soon on the case. Immediately after receiving the warrant he telegraphed the police at Taunton and on Friday 14 December they returned their reply.

Acting on the information received from them the sergeant then journeyed to Taunton and traced the runaways to a



Fig. 1 The Old Police Station on Bath Hill East erected in 1858 and demolished in 1972

cottage on the road between Chard and Iminster where he arrested William Stamp with some of the stolen goods in his possession. He then took the prisoner back to Taunton where the rest of the missing boxes were discovered at the home of Stamp's mother at Rice's College, Upper Church Street.

At a special session of the court held at Keynsham on Tuesday 18 December Frederick Ford, a carrier was called to give evidence and he stated that he had conveyed the goods to the GWR Station at Temple Meads. Then a Mr Cobley, a clerk in the goods department produced a consignment docket given to him by the prisoner who signed it as "William Jones, Watchet".

Mrs Urch protested the innocence of her servant and in defence gave a sworn statement that he was only acting on her instructions - but in spite of this the magistrate committed Stamp for trial.

So on Friday 4 January 1884 the Western Gazette reported that at the Epiphany Assizes the 19-year-old prisoner was indicted for stealing a barrel of currants, several boxes of sultanas, a quantity of sweets, a knife and sundry other articles valued at £10, a charge to which he pleaded not guilty. An open and shut case it would appear.

But the whole complexion of the case suddenly changed when the defence lawyer, a Mr Poole, cross-examined William Urch and he elicited from him that on several occasions he had been separated from his wife and in addition the shop and rent was paid for by his wife's father. Also, he had been summoned before the magistrates for

ill-treating his wife and had been sentenced to two months in prison with hard labour for doing so.

Mr Poole contended that throughout the prisoner had acted only as the servant of Urch's wife and she had left her husband because of his ill-treatment. When called for the defence she told a long and pitiful story of the suffering she had gone through as a consequence of his bullying behaviour. She added that time after time she had put a home together only to have it broken up by Urch.

Having heard that he intended to sell the shop, she ordered her things to be removed to the GWR station so that they could be sent on to Watchet. Mr Ford had carried the goods to Temple Meads and Stamp, the accused, accompanied him to the station.

She explained that she had tried to set up a new business in Watchet but no premises were available there so she had the goods removed to the residence of the accused's mother whilst she moved on to Chard in search of a small shop. Her servant Stamp had nothing in his personal possession that came from the Keynsham shop and there was not the slightest truth in the allegation that there had been any "*immoral relations*" between Stamp and herself.

At the conclusion of the defence's case the court had heard enough and the Chairman directed the jury to find the prisoner not guilty which they did.

Whether William Urch continued in business is unknown.

# Flanders House – A House Through Time

By Sue Tatford

Flanders House was a large white house that once stood at the bottom of Bath Hill East, where the Bath Hill East Car Park now sits. It was demolished in the 1960s but what was its history and how can this be discovered?

One source that can be used as a starting point is the recollections of previous occupants of the property.

In 1957 the Misses Christine Olive and Zoe Mildred Parnell recounted stories told to them by their Great Aunt Miss Louisa Hudden.

*“About 110 years ago our great grandmother came to live in Flanders House, and it was in the family for over 80 years. It was supposed to have been built for the head of the Flemish brass founders who came to start the Brass Mills in Keynsham, hence the name “Flanders”. We do not know the exact date it was built, but were told by our great aunt it was there before the logwood or colour mills by the weir.*

*Formerly, the Chew was much shallower, and there was a ford close to the house where the bridge now stands. The building*



Fig. 1 - 1888 OS map of Keynsham - red circle locates Flanders House.

*of the bridge and road left the garden below the road, so a flight of steps had to be built.*

*We left the house in 1917 and up to that time, there was a pane of glass in the window of the large upper room facing the road on which was scratched the name "Mary Racker" and the date 1700. [see footnote at end of article] Another mark was illegible.*

*A story is told, that workmen, while repairing the roof found a horseshoe which was believed to have been thrown there by a dragoon during the battle of Keynsham.*

*The house is reputed to be haunted by the ghost of the housekeeper of one of the owners with whom she was in love. She drowned herself in the river for grief at the marriage of her employer. She walks the passages, and up and down the stairs, and the swish of her wet silk dress can be heard. She is quite harmless, and she has been*

*seen and heard by our mother, and also by us.*

*At one time, our great aunt Miss Hudden held a small school in Flanders House and there were old pupils living in Keynsham for many years after. By the time we were born the school had dwindled to nothing.*

*In our great-grandmother's time Charles Peace, the burglar and murderer made an attempt to pick the lock of the front door but our great-grandmother, on hearing a suspicious noise, summoned a retired policeman who lived in a cottage down the steps on the opposite side of the road by ringing a large bell from an upper window, a pre-arranged signal in case of need. Peace was caught attempting another burglary not far away and our great-grandmother appeared in court at the trial when he was convicted and served a term of imprisonment."*



**Fig. 2** Old postcard of Keynsham showing Flanders House to the right of centre.

This gives a base to start from but how true are these stories? Other sources now need to be used to corroborate them.

The exact date of construction is not known but is believed to be in the late 1600s as reflected by its Palladian architecture. Although some connection with Flemish brass workers is inferred by the name "Flanders", they did not arrive in Keynsham until 1703. In 1702 the brass company was started in Bristol. It expanded after a few years. Downe Mill (in what is today the Memorial Park), described as "2 water griste mills formerly used as one mill" was being leased by partners of the brass company in April 1705. As early as 1708 the parish registers of St John's Church were recording births of children of brass workers. These dates suggest that the house was not built for someone connected to the brass industry but may well have been inhabited by them and then named Flanders House. This would support the idea that the house was there before the Downe Mill, although a mill of some sort had been sited there for many years and had originally belonged to Keynsham Abbey.

As far as the horseshoe is concerned, the battle of Keynsham or the Monmouth Rebellion occurred in 1685. Nothing can be proved there. If the original deeds of the property could be seen the answers to these questions could be answered.

Where can information on "Mary Racker 1700" be found? The name Racker does not appear in the parish records until 1722 and continues until 1850, so no direct help there. However, it is reported that a James Racker held the title deeds 1767-99, so maybe the Racker family lived there for many years.

By 1837 more information can be found. On July 29 an advertisement was placed in the Bristol Mirror.

*'For Sale by Auction by Mr Fargus. At the Commercial Rooms, Bristol, on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August 1837 at one o'clock in the afternoon.*

*A Capital Messuage or Dwelling House with excellent Offices of every description, Coach-house, Stable, Harness Room, Pigsties & other convenient Outbuildings; also, a very productive Walled Garden & Orchard, well-stocked with choice Fruit Trees in full bearing; the whole containing together about 2 ½ acres (more or less) & now in the occupation of John Lintorn Simmons Esq as Tenant.*

*Also 2 Cottages & a Garden, adjoining the above & now in the respective occupations of Thomas Cox & Amy Robins.*

*The Mansion or Dwelling House contains a dining room & drawing room of good dimensions, with small breakfast parlour & store room on the ground floor: 9 spacious & well-arranged bedrooms, with water closet on the first floor; & 2 large & airy attics, kitchen & back kitchen, conveniently fitted up with hard & soft water pumps, 2 furnaces & 2 ovens, china pantry, larder, wash house, laundry, wine cellar, beer cellar etc. & a rain water cistern, capable of holding 40 hogsheads.*

*The above Premises are well situated in the village of Keynsham, about 5 miles from Bristol & 7 from Bath. The River Chew forms the western boundary of the Orchard, & its water might easily be applied to many purposes of trade & manufacture.*

*For a view of the Premises apply at the House, any day before the Sale, between the*

*hours of 10 & 3 o'clock; and for further Particulars & Terms & Conditions of Sale to Mr Simmons, Solicitor, Keynsham, Mr Drewe, Solicitor, Bath or to Mr John James, Solicitor, Wrington. Letters to be post-paid. Dated 29<sup>th</sup> July 1837.'*

Seven months later this advertisement was placed again, this time in the Bath Chronicle dated March 15 1838.

One question arises. Is this Flanders House? This can be confirmed by looking at the 1841 Tithe Map, as in the table below and comparing the names.

Sarah Hudden, the Parnell's great grandmother, was living in a house and garden belonging to Geo. Derrick. No. 58 on the Tithe Map, close to the Old Wesleyan Church on the High Street.

The 1841 Census showed that the Hudden family had moved into Flanders House. They had originally come from Beckington, Somerset. By this time Sarah was a widow, her school master husband, William, had died in 1837. Pigot's Directory of 1830 revealed that he had originally run a

boarding school in Beckington. Sarah was living with two daughters, Caroline, age 20, a schoolmistress, Louisa age 15, two nieces, Eliza age 7 and Mary age 5, and two other pupils.

By 1851 Sarah was still the head of the household, with Caroline and Louisa both schoolmistresses with three girl scholars. Sarah died in 1856 but the 1861 census showed that the school continued with Caroline and Louisa both schoolmistresses, with their uncle John Hudden, a landed proprietor, living with them, four boarders, two girls & two boys and a house servant. Sadly, later in 1861, Caroline died, followed a few months later by her uncle Joseph.

In 1871 Louisa was still a schoolmistress. She now had a Governess helping her with two boys and one girl boarder. 1881 revealed where the Parnell sisters fit into the picture. Louisa was still listed as a schoolmistress and had a servant. Also living in the house was George O'Connor

1841 Tithe Map				
Ref.	Description	Occupier	Owner	Comments
141	Orchard, Stable & Coach House	Joseph Drewe	Jos Drewe	Flanders House
142	Garden	Joseph Drewe	Jos Drewe	Flanders House
143	House etc.	Amy Robbins	Jos Drewe	Flanders House
144	Garden	Amy Robbins,	Jos Drewe	Flanders House
		Thos Cox		
145	House	Thos Cox	Jos Drewe	Flanders House
146	House, Outbuildings and Pleasure Grounds	Jos Drewe	Jos Drewe	Flanders House

Parnell, a 47-year-old solicitor. His wife was Caroline Louise Parnell, nee Hudden, Louisa's niece. They had three children, Thomas William O'Connor Parnell, Christine Olive Parnell and Zoe Mildred Parnell. Thomas had been born in Clifton but the girls were both born in Keynsham.

Trade directories from 1842 to 1885 have Caroline or Louisa Hudden running a boarding and day school, but by 1889 and up to 1897 Flanders House was listed with George Parnell as a private resident. The 1891 census lists George O'C Parnell with his wife Caroline, Thomas, Christine and Zoe and Louisa Hudden, their aunt. In 1900 George O'C Parnell died. The 1901 census showed Caroline Parnell as a widow, living with her three grown up children and Louisa, her aunt. Louisa Hudden died in July 1908. The family were still living in Flanders House for the 1911 census, with Caroline the head, age 69, Thomas age 34, Christine 33, and Zoe 30. Caroline's sister Louisa Maria Hudden, age 67, was also there.

Directories from 1902 to 1914 listed Flanders House to be occupied by Thomas William O'Connor Parnell. In 1916 Thomas changed his profession and was ordained at Wells cathedral. He went to work at Ascension Church, Claude Ave, Twerton, Bath, and the family left Flanders House in 1917.

Directories of 1919 and 1921 list a Mrs Oakford as resident at Flanders House. By 1927 a Reginald H Pearce was living in Flanders House and he was still there by the 1939 Register which provided more information, listing the occupants as follows:

1939 – Flanders House, Bath Hill East.



**Fig. 3** Front of Flanders House

Sidney M Pearce, female, married, dob 29 Nov 1872, unpaid domestic duties.

Reginald H Pearce, male, married, dob 29 April 1887, Master chemical manufacturer.

Robert C M G Oakford, male, single, dob 4 Sep 1902, Master Chemical manufacturer.

John S M Oakford, male, single, dob 29 Jun 1906, Insurance Claims Inspector.

Further research revealed some interesting details. Alena Sidney Margaret MacGregor, born 1872 in Christchurch, New Zealand, to a Scottish father and an English mother, married James Oakford, a master mariner in 1892 in the Plymouth district. The 1901 census showed them living in Nailsea with George, age 8, Doris age 5, Mervyn, age 3, Marjorie age 1, and James father William, a retired fisherman.

By 1911 they were living in Southmead House, Westbury-on-Trym. However, Sidney was now a widow and Doris, 15, Mervyn, age 13, Robert Colin, age 8, John age 4, Aubrey age 3, and Joan age 7 months were living with her.

Lloyd's List London, on 18 November 1910 provided the tragic story of James Oakford's death. Whilst on a voyage from



**Fig. 4** Flanders House from road.

New York to Havana with a general cargo, the steamer Silverdale was lost with all 48 hands. James Oakford had been the first mate.

The 1911 census also revealed that Reginald Hugh Pearce was boarding with Walter James Gilbert at Milward Cottage, Keynsham. They were both chemical manufacturers. In 1921 Reginald joined the St Keyna Lodge of Freemasons, and a year later in 1922 Sidney and Reginald were married. In 1946 Reginald was nominated to represent the West Ward in Keynsham Urban District Council elections but was not elected. They continued to live at Flanders House until 1961 when Reginald died at St Martin's Hospital, Bath. Sidney Margaret Pearce of 2 Cottages by the Mill,

West Ashling, Chichester, died 10 March 1963. Flanders House was demolished in 1964.

Returning to the recollections, how true is the story about Charles Peace? He lived from 1832 until he was hanged in 1879.

Charles Peace was a strong and agile man of small stature and wandered from town to town collecting and selling musical instruments and bric-a-brac. He played the violin well enough to perform at local concerts as well as at public houses. He often carried his house breaking tools inside an old violin case. Charles' first recorded conviction was for house burglary in 1851 in Sheffield, for which he served a month in prison. His next conviction for the same



**Fig. 5** Rear view of Flanders House.

offence was in October 1854 also around Sheffield, when he was sentenced to four years penal servitude at Doncaster Sessions. He seems to have spent some time in that area. Did he come south to Keynsham and Saltford before 1856 when Sarah Hudden died?

As for the ghost of the housekeeper who drowned herself, perhaps she now haunts the car park.

It would seem that Flanders House, in all its long history, may have only been lived in by three main families.

**Footnote** - Additional information from Paul Benn.

The name Henry Oldis appears on a 1718 lease associated with the area. Mr Oldis or Oldise is also on the 1711 Bristol Brass Company invoice and seems to have been the manager of the Chew or Downe Mill. A 1738 lease, with Henry's wife on, then mentions that a house is newly built near Downe bridge.

It is also more likely that the date scratched onto the window was not 1700 but was 1799, which is when Mary Racker was living there.

This backs up the original claim, at the beginning of this article, that the house was built for the manager of the Chew brass battery mill, probably around 1735.

## A Brief History of Keynsham Baptist Church

By Margaret Hobbs



**Fig. 1** 1841 Keynsham Tythe map. Barn chapel circled on left (situated where goods delivery area is for Tesco store). Current chapel circled on right.

Since at least the mid-17th Century Baptist preachers visited Keynsham from Bristol (on foot or horseback) to lead Christian worship in private houses or more often in the open air, probably in nearby woods in Hanham on one bank of the river Avon or in Fox Wood on the other. As many as 1,000-1,500 gathered, mainly Kingswood colliers. Open-air preaching in Somerset was illegal, but to avoid arrest, one way of escape was to swim across the River Avon to the Gloucestershire side, where preaching was legal. However, this could be dangerous. For example, Mr Ford, a preacher from Keynsham High Street, drowned attempting to escape arrest.

The name Baptist was first used as a nickname for a particular group of Dissenters, along with Quakers, Congregationalists etcetera, who disagreed with the teachings of the established

Church of England. Dissenters were discriminated against. They could not go to university be a lawyer or doctor and they could not be buried in the Parish Church graveyard. (No municipal graveyards were available yet.)

In 1689 the Act of Toleration was passed which allowed Dissenters to meet for public worship. In 1711 Baptists started to meet together in a private house in Keynsham but by 1776 Barn Chapel, Dane's Lane, off Charlton Road was used. In 1802 the Barn Chapel was sold and together with subscriptions from the congregation the present site on the High Street was purchased. By 1803 a new Ebenezer Chapel (the name is still on the front wall) was built at the rear of the site and burials commenced in what is now the garden. The church appointed a minister, a practice continued to this day. A Sunday School

formed, often the only education some children would have received. Trustees of the church included two brass-workers and a blacksmith. However, the church was poor, for example in 1809 for two months there was no church meeting as the church's first minister was out begging!

Unfortunately, by 1834 it was found that the church was in bad disrepair and dangerous. Repairs were uneconomic and so the old Chapel was demolished. By 1835 a new church opened and it is still here 189 years later.

May 4 1835 - Sherborne Mercury – *'On Tuesday last the new Baptist Chapel at Keynsham was opened, when 3 sermons were preached, By the Rev S Summers, the Rev T Winter & the Rev W Lucy all of Bristol. In addition to £300 paid by the Church & Congregation, about £32 was collected at the opening; and it appears there will be an appeal to the religious public for the remainder, which is nearly £400. The Chapel is a very neat, substantial edifice, & will seat nearly 500 persons. The money must have been very judiciously laid out to erect so good a building for such a small sum.'*

It was fitted with dark wooden pews (still seen in the balcony) with a high ornate wooden pulpit. In 1858 a new school room was added to house the thriving Sunday School, which met twice on Sundays, had a library, held teas, games in local fields, outings to Fishponds and Weston-super-Mare, first by van and then by train from Bitton station. Soon a British School used the premises. This gave a weekday education which was not specifically church-based. It closed in 1894 and moved to what was Temple Street School.

In 1875 an Act of Parliament prohibited further burials at the Parish and Baptist churches for the protection of public health. However

Members of the Baptist Church could still be buried in the Church grounds, the last recorded being in 1910. There are 359 burials recorded in the church records, but there are gaps in the record, so it is probable that around 400 people are buried in what is now the garden. But where are the gravestones? There are none in the garden because Baptists would have considered it wrong to promote themselves with a stone memorial.

Since the church was first built, two extensive renovations have taken place. In 1976 the old Victorian pulpit and downstairs pews were removed from the Sanctuary and replaced with a low modern pulpit and chairs. Carpet, moveable platforms and stained-glass windows were added. In 1988 radical rebuilding of the hall, kitchen, toilets, small meeting rooms and offices now provide facilities for the many church and community groups which use the premises seven days a week.

The church has always looked for ways to help people with their practical and mental wellbeing. Historically they met with the navies who were helping to build the local railway, although generally considered by the towns folk to be uncouth and troublesome. Also, in the 1930s, during the Depression, a warm room with a fire was made available for the unemployed.



**Fig. 2** Front of Keynsham Baptist Church before the railings were removed.

## The Saltford Viking Buckle

By Saltford Environment Group



Fig. 1 – Viking belt buckle

This bronze 11th Century Viking Buckle (length 33mm, width 38mm, thickness 4mm) was found on the north side of Saltford in 2018, quite close to St Mary's church. Described as a very rare find for this area by the Gloucestershire and Avon Finds Liaison Officer, it is classified by the British Museum as a "Find of note and of Regional Importance". Quite how it got to Saltford is difficult to know but you can read a brief article lower down this page about 'Viking Rule & Saltford'.

The following is from its official description on the Portable Antiquities Scheme website (<https://finds.org.uk>):-

*'Copper alloy D-shape buckle that has a complex moulded frame. The front of the buckle is expanded to form a sub-triangular panel that has a moulded animal head on the top with hollowed circular ears, lentoid eyes below and a triangular snout forming the forward edge.*

*Flanking this and forming the curving sides of the buckle is an arching beast on each side that face back towards the strap bar. The neck of each beast emanates from the side of the first facemask and is decorated with two recessed lines that run halfway down its length to the head. Behind the head and on the outside edge of the frame is a curving projection that forms the ear of the beast.*

*The face is decorated with large lentoid eyes, line below for the mouth and long snout with a recessed bulbous terminal for the nostril. Below the snout in the narrowed strap bar that is gripped in the mouth of both the side beasts.*

*This buckle is in the ringerike\* style, a similar example, found in London from the Thames, was dated to the 11th century (Wilson, 1964, 143-144).*

\*Note by SEG:  
The ringerike style was a Scandinavian animal style from the late 10th C & 11th C.

Acknowledgements/Information sources:  
Viking Buckle found by Bob Mordle in 2018.

Portable Antiquities Scheme: <https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/925218/> (2019).

## The three beasts on the Viking Buckle



Fig. 2 – dragon/serpent head on buckle

The magnified image above shows the detail of one of the two larger side beasts (dragons/serpents?) facing right (projecting ear on the left, bulging eye is centre and its snout with nostril to the right - it is grasping the strap bar of the buckle in its mouth). We have added a red outline to help depict the main elements of the beast's head.



Fig. 3 – dragon/serpent head on buckle

The magnified image above shows the face mask of what appears to be an animal (wolf?), bird or serpent looking straight ahead (with its mouth/beak open or is that a triangular snout..?).

## Viking Rule & Saltford

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records the following events in 1013 (translation by Rev James Ingram, 1823):-

*'Then went King Sweyne thence to Wallingford; and so over Thames westward to Bath, where he abode with his army. Thither came Alderman Ethelmar, and all the western thanes with him, and all submitted to Sweyne, and gave hostages. When he had thus settled all, then went he northward to his ships; and all the population fully received him, and considered him full king. The population of London also after this submitted to him, and gave hostages; because they dreaded that he would undo them.'*



Fig. 4 - Sweyn Forkbeard (by Arturas Slapsys)

Sweyn Forkbeard, the first Viking King of England, ruled England for only 5 weeks from Christmas Day 1013 until his death on 3rd February 1014. The son of Harald Bluetooth, Sweyn was a brutal and violent warlord, he was never crowned and hence is often forgotten. He was the father of Cnut (Canute).

Viking rule of England recommenced under Cnut (Canute) in 1016 after a brief period

of Anglo-Saxon rule by King Ethelred II the Unready who returned to the throne in 1014 until his death in 1016 and a brief period in 1016 under the rule of Edmund Ironside.

Cnut (Canute) ruled England from 1016-1035 and was succeeded then by his son Harold Harefoot (aka Harold I Harefoot) and then Harold's brother Harthacnut in 1040, the last Scandinavian to rule England, until the Anglo-Saxons resumed power under Edward the Confessor in 1042.

It is interesting and intriguing to speculate how the Viking Buckle arrived in Saltford (found 1,000 years later near St Mary's church). For example was it lost in 1013 during a possible Viking siege of Anglo-Saxons barricaded in the stone tower (now St Mary's)? Or was it lost when Wessex was under the control of Sweyn's son King Cnut, or the subsequent Viking monarchs Harold Harefoot or Harthacnut? Perhaps it was dropped by an Anglo-Saxon who had previously acquired it during or after a battle with the Vikings...

Acknowledgements/Information sources: Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (translation by Rev James Ingram, 1823).



Fig. 5 - St Mary's Church, Saltford – base of tower is possibly late Anglo-Saxon

## WWI - John Welby Gunton, Royal Flying Corps

By Paul Benn



**Fig. 1** 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant John Gunton

John was born on 12 June 1895, the son of Thomas Octavius Gunton, and Eleanor Catherine Gunton, and lived at Ravenhurst, Charlton Road, Keynsham. He had a brother, Ernest, and sisters, Hilda, Frida, and Katrine.

He attended the Bristol Grammar School from 1906-1914 where he was a keen member of the Literary and Debating Society. The school chronicle for 1913 wrote; *'his characteristic vagueness and rhetorical periods caused the whole assembly to writhe in the agony of laughter.'* He was also one of the original members of the Keynsham Scout Troop. Prior to the war he had enrolled at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, to read for Holy Orders.

John graduated from Flying school on 27 November 1914, aged 19 years old. He was a Second Lieutenant in the Somerset Light Infantry and was attached to 70 Squadron, Royal Flying Corps, as an

observer, photographing details of the enemy.

In 1915 the school chronicle published an article titled *'A Light Touch and a Light Heart'*.

*'2nd Lieutenant Gunton's soaring ambition could find no scope in the infantry, and he has transferred himself to the Flying Corps. A light touch and a light heart, he says, are all that is needed, and we are expecting a landing from him on the School Field in the near future.'*

In July 1916 they wrote a further article titled *'Flying with Another OB [Old Boy]'*.

*'On the Western front in the Royal Flying Corps are to be Second-Lieutenant R.B. Mansell and J.W. Gunton, and at times both are to be found in the same aeroplane, one as pilot, and one as observer: it is not known whether they have called it the 'Robert Thorne' or how many Fokkers they have placed to their credit, but good luck and steady nerves be with them.'*



**Fig. 2** Sopwith Strutter

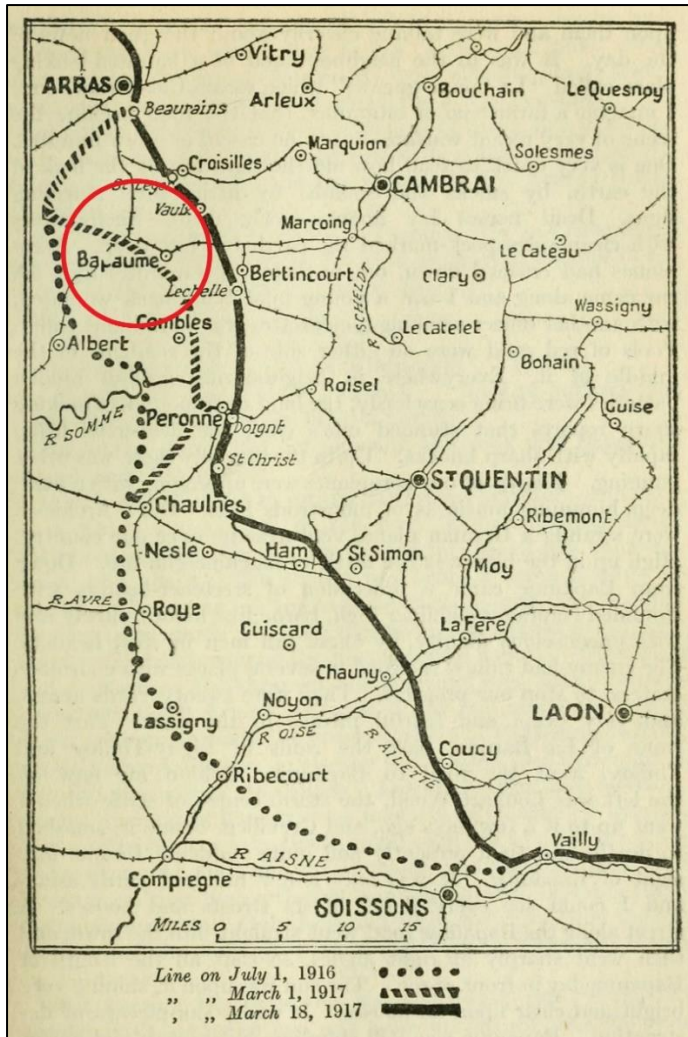


Fig. 3 Location of Bapaume.

His plane, a Sopwith Strutter, was shot down on 9 August 1916 over Bapaume, France where he and his pilot Lieutenant Shepherd were killed. His body was never recovered. His machine was seen to dive steeply after colliding with an enemy aircraft, when two parts fell off, and the dive became vertical in an uncontrolled fall of 6,000 feet.

The following is an extract from the Bristol Grammar School Chronicle on December 1916.

*‘His cheerfulness and keenness was unfailing. Warfare was contrary to his whole nature, but he never grumbled at the task which duty laid upon him. Good humour never forsook him, and he was liked by all.’*

John is commemorated on the Arras Flying Services Memorial at the Faubourg d' Amiens Cemetery, the Bristol Grammar School War Memorial and at the Memorial Gates and St John's Church in Keynsham.

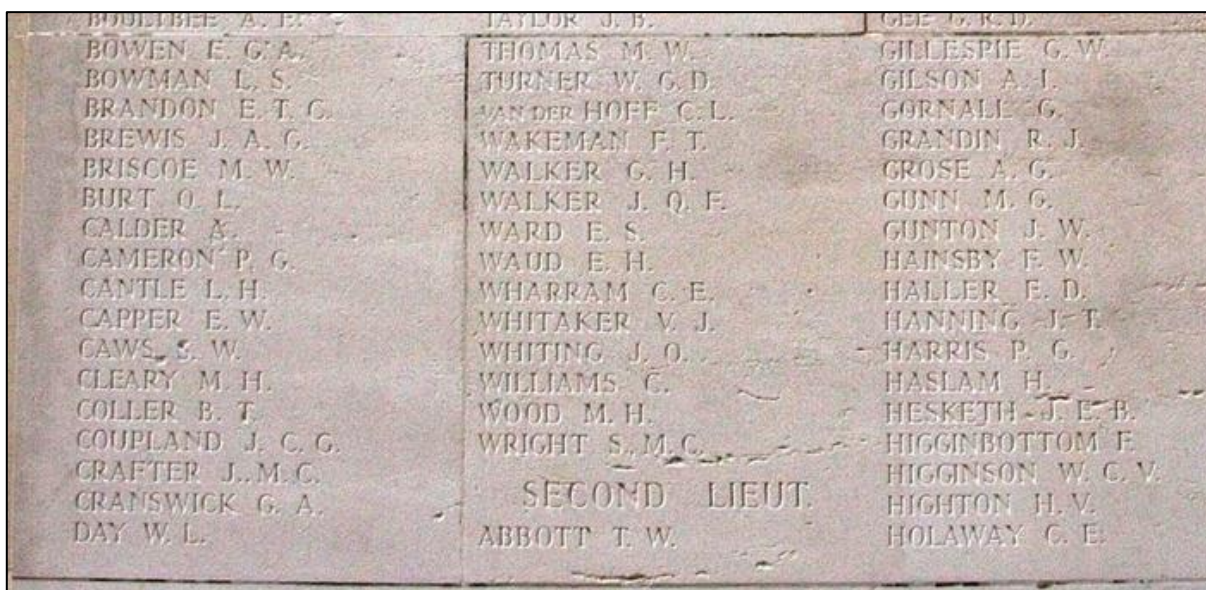


Fig. 4 Arras Flying Services Memorial at the Faubourg d' Amiens Cemetery

## WWII - The HMS Glorious Controversy and two local Scouts

By Paul Benn

Robert (Bob) Hardy Hoddinott was born on 6 January 1918, the son of Reginald and Medora who lived in Keynsham. As a boy he was a member of the 1<sup>st</sup> Keynsham Scouts.



**Fig. 1** Able Seaman Robert Hoddinott

When he turned 18 Robert joined the Royal Navy in 1936 and served on H.M.S. *Glorious*, an Aircraft Carrier, which from April 1940 was providing air support during the Norwegian campaign.

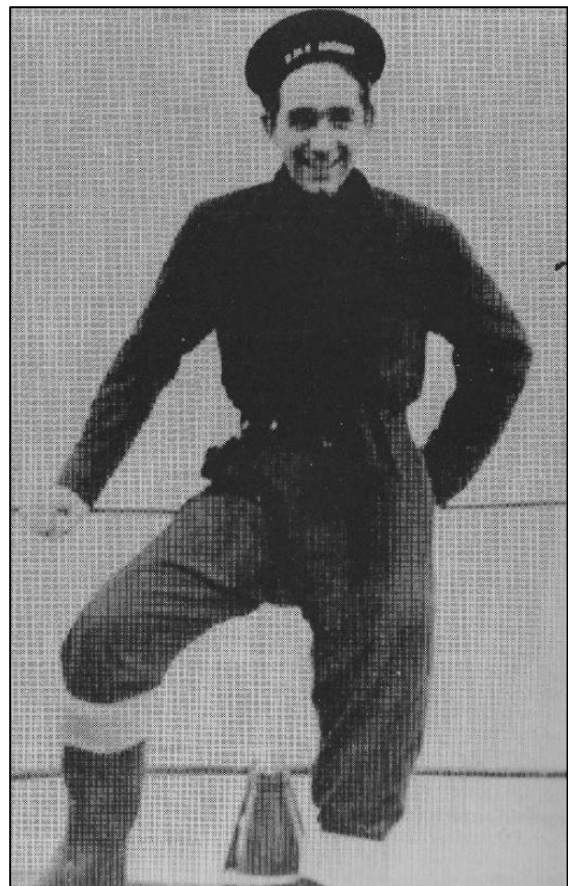
George Victor Farley was born on 13 February 1920, the son of William and Emma who lived at 12, Albert Road, Keynsham. He was also a member of the 1st Keynsham Scouts.

George joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserves at HMS *Flying Fox*, which was berthed in Hotwells, in the spring of 1939 with some of his scouting friends, Monty Veale and Henry Phelps. In Monty's autobiography he wrote;

*'We carried out a few drills, made a complete shambles of rowing a boat around*

*the harbour and on 25<sup>th</sup> August, 1939 we were called up and fitted out with bell bottomed trousers and uniforms at Hotwells and whisked off to RN Barracks, at Devonport. We had very little training as such; we were taught the rudiments of gunnery, how to fire a rifle, and after a short while we were lined up one day and George Farley and a group were drafted to HMS Ardent, a destroyer.'*

Early in 1940 Monty's ship was torpedoed, southwest of Ireland, and he had to abandon ship. He was surprised to see a familiar ship coming to his rescue, it was HMS *Ardent*. However, she suddenly hailed them "Back soon. Must attend to a U boat." He was later picked up by another ship and wrote *'The million to one chance of being picked up by my friend George Farley was not to be.'*



**Fig. 2** Ordinary Seaman George Farley



**Fig. 3** HMS Glorious

In the early hours of 8 June 1940, the commanding officer of the aircraft carrier HMS *Glorious* was granted permission to proceed independently from Norway to Scapa Flow escorted by only two destroyers, HMS *Acasta* and HMS *Ardent*. *Glorious* had travelled back and forth to Norway previously without any enemy encounter and so it was assumed that there was little risk of attack. Thus, there was no lookout in the crow's nest, no spotter planes up and none were ready to launch.

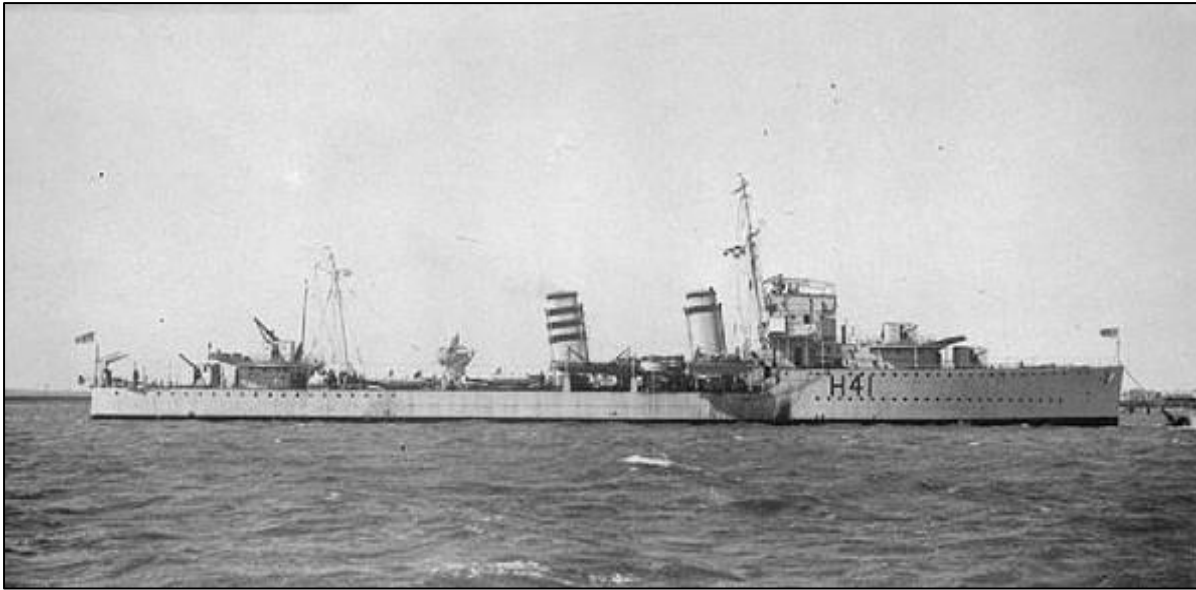
Unfortunately, they were not made aware that radio operators at Bletchley Park were tracking some German battleships in the area. The Royal Navy command refused to believe the intelligence from Bletchley partly because they were for the most part civilians, and despite Bletchley begging, the navy command didn't notify the *Glorious* about the threat.

At 15.46 *Glorious* was intercepted by the German battleships *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* who spotted her funnel smoke.

*Glorious* and her destroyers were totally unprepared for an attack and when they noticed the German ships *Ardent* was sent to investigate. *Ardent* then zigzagged to avoid German shells and create a smoke screen to try and protect *Glorious*. She made repeated unsuccessful torpedo attacks whenever she emerged from the smoke but when she emerged at 17:01 she was repeatedly hit by both battleships and capsized shortly after 17:25.

At 16.32 a direct hit on the flight deck of *Glorious* prevented any planes taking off and at 16:58 a shell hit the bridge and killed or wounded the captain and most of the personnel stationed there. After a shell hit her central engine room she lost speed and by 17.40 further hits had left her a burning wreck. She sank at 18.10.

Instead of making a run for it *Acasta* bravely charged the much bigger battleships and managed to hit *Scharnhorst* with one of her torpedoes which disabled two of her three engine rooms, killing 48 men. However, both battleships now



**Fig. 4** HMS Ardent

concentrated their fire on *Acasta* which eventually sank at 18.16.

The Royal Navy insist that radio messages from *Glorious* requesting help were incomplete and gave no information about the battle or its location. This, combined with the fact that the German battleships didn't stop to pick up survivors as they believed that Allied support was on its way, meant that there was no rescue. By the time the Royal Navy eventually found out from German radio it was too late to find any survivors.

Ordinary Seaman George Farley died, aged 20, after the *Ardent* sank along with 152 crew. Only two men survived when they were picked up by a German floatplane on the 11 June.

Able Seaman Robert Hoddinott died, aged 22, after the *Glorious* sank along with 1,207 crew. Only 40 men survived when they were picked up by a Norwegian ship on 10 June.

A further 160 men were lost when *Acasta* sank. The total death toll of 1,519 exceeded any of the other great British naval disasters of the war.

Most of the crew died from drowning or hyperthermia in the days that followed their abandoning ship. This would explain why the dates of death for George and Robert are the 9 June, a day after the battle.

The sinkings and the failure to mount an effective rescue were embarrassing for the Royal Navy. All ships encountering enemies had been ordered to broadcast a sighting report, and the lack of such a report from *Glorious* was questioned in the House of Commons. Here it emerged that the heavy cruiser *Devonshire* had passed within 30–50 miles of the battle, flying the flag of Vice-Admiral John Cunningham, who was carrying out orders to evacuate the Norwegian Royal Family to the UK and maintain radio silence.

Some survivors from *Glorious* and *Devonshire* testified that a sighting report had been correctly sent, and received by *Devonshire*, but that it had been suppressed by Cunningham, who departed at high speed in accordance with his orders. However, the Royal Navy denies this and the files containing information about what really happened cannot be opened until 2040.

Incredibly, the whole battle and Victoria Cross-nominated defence by the destroyers was filmed by a cameraman aboard *Scharnhorst*. Although the Germans celebrated the sinking of *Glorious* when the film was shown a few days later, the German crews had great respect for the bravery of the destroyers. The executive officer of *Scharnhorst* later wrote;

*'Not only the tactical handling but the audacity and pluck of the destroyers were outstanding. Every officer taking part in the action was of the same opinion. The destroyers put their utmost into the task, although in their hopeless position success was impossible from the start.'*

The original German news-reel, along with many versions of the history of this battle, can be viewed on YouTube. "The Tragedy Of HMS *Glorious* Best Version" is particularly well-presented.

The Keynsham scout hut used to contain a photo of Robert Hoddinott hanging on the wall. Shortly after the war ended his mother visited the hut and said "I always see it if it is open when passing. I like to look at Bob's photograph on the quiet."

Returning to Monty Veale's autobiography for one last time, he wrote;

*'Very often when I came home on leave, I would meet George Farley's father, who would ask me if I had any further news of George. He never gave up hope that he was still alive and may have been taken prisoner. ... nothing I could say was adequate to dispel his grief and despair.'*

For many years the only memorial to the seamen lost in the three ships was a stained-glass window in the church of St Peter Martindale in Cumbria. A new memorial plaque dedicated to HMS *Glorious* and her escort destroyers *Ardent* and *Acasta*, was unveiled in St. Nicholas's Church, in HMS *Drake*, Devonport in 2002. On 8 June 2019, a memorial plaque was unveiled in the Belvedere Gardens, Plymouth Hoe, dedicated to all crew members who lost their lives onboard HM Ships *Glorious*, *Ardent* and *Acasta*.

Robert and George are also commemorated on the Memorial Gates and in St John's Church, Keynsham.



Fig. 5 Memorial in Belvedere Gardens, Plymouth Hoe



