**Leckhampton Local History Society**

**Scrapbook**

**from the ‘Bendall Archive’**

**Summary description**

The Scrapbook is a folio size guard-book (approx. 36 cm high x 26 cm wide; 14 x 10 ¼ in) of 19 stiff card pages, onto which columns of newsprint and one or two other printed items have been pasted. There are some additional items tipped-in on the hinges to create additional pages, or loose between pages. The front board is detached, and the binding shaken and broken in places.

At the front are a number of loose, slightly smaller pages, probably from another earlier scrapbook, also with columns of newsprint pasted to them, and several folded sheets of newsprint – one of a much later date, evidently slipped in for relevance and safe-keeping. These loose items are extremely worn and chipped to all edges and corners and are very fragile, shedding chips of paper whenever handled. Some newsprint is also worn along central folds, with some loss of significant text.

**Provenance and Attribution**

The Scrapbook was given to the Leckhampton Local History Society (LLHS) for safe keeping by Rachel Kimpton following the death of her unmarried sister, Jean Muriel Bendall (1926-1999). Jean, a loyal founder member of the LLHS, had been both teacher and Deputy Head of Leckhampton Primary School and also a keen supporter of the Sue Ryder hospice in the village. She had inherited a large collection of local memorabilia from her parents and grandparents; amongst which was this Scrapbook.

Her father, Alfred (commonly known as ‘Alf’) Thomas Bendall (1891-1971), was a prominent and active figure in village life in the mid-twentieth century and had been chairman of the parish council. In an obituary he was described as “the unofficial mayor of Leckhampton”. He was the fourth child of John David Bendall (1860-1930), builder and prominent resident of Leckhampton, and thrice actual Mayor of Cheltenham (1918-21), and Sarah née Brook (1861-1932).

In August 1916 Alf married Grace Evelyn Thompson (1893-1956), youngest child of Barnard George Thompson (1853-1913), long-serving Head Teacher at the village primary school (1886-1913) and his wife Susan Isabel née Blackwell (1853-1924). Both families would have known each other well, the fathers particularly so, having worked together closely as builder and first Head Teacher respectively of the new village primary school, finally opened in 1906.

Alf and Grace would have grown up knowing each other through participation in various village activities for young people, such as the regular pantomimes. Pasted in the Scrapbook is a review of one such pantomime, *The Princess and the Goblins*, produced as ever by the ‘Barnards Unlimited’ troupe in December 1911, which contains the following glowing accolade: “Alfred Bendall, the clever son of Councillor Bendall, occupied the role of the ubiquitous clown of the piece. He seems to possess a natural gift for being humorous, he has [a] just indefinable clown’s voice and gestures. He doubled with this part that of the Goblin Queen”.

Barnard Thompson was a noted performer and frequent MC at social events in the village in the later-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The nature and date of the items chosen for inclusion on the loose pages suggest that these might be the remnants of a news/anecdote/poem scrapbook perhaps created by him, in part as a source of material for his performances.

Internal evidence from the nature and date of items pasted into the main book – for example, the close attention given to the voyage of the ship *Magdalena* from Southampton to Jamaica, carrying Barnard Thompson’s son, Grace’s elder brother, Percy towards his intended destination of Bolivia in August 1910 – suggest that this scrapbook was created either by Barnard’s wife or, perhaps more likely, by his youngest daughter, Grace. Indeed, the handwriting in the scrapbook identifying the source and date of entries pasted in is very similar to her hand in St Peter’s marriage register when she married Alfred Bendall in 1916. And the dates of active chronological pasting in of entries, 1907/8 to 1912, perhaps suggests an adolescent interest soon overtaken by the demands of her war-time Red Cross nursing at the Leckhampton Court Hospital and courtship by and marriage to Alf Bendall.

**Detailed description**

**Loose at the front**

* Columns of newsprint glued to a folded sheet of card: source unstated, 29 January & 5 February 1896: a verbatim report on the Parish Meeting held at the National School, Leckhampton, concerning Mr Dales’ action with reference to the alleged rights on the Hill.
* Folded entire single sheet of newsprint: Echo, Wednesday, 25 September 1929: report of the formal declaration by the Mayor of Cheltenham of the dedication of Leckhampton Hill to public use.
* Folded entire pages of newsprint, presumably torn along the vertical spine fold and also vertically torn in half down the middle of each page, the two sets of pages (1-4 and 5-8) each uncut at the head edge, front page to page 8 [= the entire newspaper?]: Cheltenham Free Press and Cotswold News, #4719, 30 April 1904, second (town ) edition: on page 8, a report of the case in Chancery, Quarry Co. v Ballinger and Cheltenham RDC, unfortunately considerable loss of text due to the vertical tear, headed by a partially coloured map showing the disputed pathways [based on the maps created by Villar in GA D2216/Box 1/5]
* Columns of newsprint glued to folded sheet of paper, from several different newspapers, 1889-92, miscellaneous contents; one item, Cheltenham Chronicle, 17 June 1893: reports on the dedication of the newly built lichgate at St Peter’s church, Leckhampton, led by the Rector, with a few words by the Rev Canon Hutchinson, Rural Dean and rector of Sts Philip & James, Leckhampton.
* Columns of newsprint glued to a single sheet of paper, various different newspapers, 1872-75, various humorous anecdotes and poems, no obvious references to Leckhampton.
* Columns of newsprint glued to a single sheet of paper: Cheltenham Chronicle, 16 October 1897: report of a lecture given by G B Witts at the new Parish Hall, Leckhampton, on Leckhampton in prehistoric days, with a collection on behalf of the building fund of the hall.
* Columns of newsprint glued to folded sheet of paper, these continue onto one side of another separate single sheet, miscellaneous humorous anecdotes and text of a poem ‘The Ancient Ballad of The Battle of Castle Baynard’, and overleaf, headed in handwriting “Mr Gladstone’s Resolutions on the Eastern Question May 7/77 Daily News (Tuesday May 8/77”; but then a significant number of items (predominantly on pink paper) relating to Leckhampton:
* Echo, 24 December 1899 to 3 March 1900: reports of the second (January) and third (February) smoking concerts at the Parish Hall, Leckhampton, on behalf of the Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Families Association, presided over respectively by Rev Clifford-Aston and by Mr Thompson (at the Rev Clifford-Aston’s request), with details of performers and their songs sung; also the amounts raised at all three, in which Leckhampton appears to have been very effective, raising a total of £14-8-6 by 3 March 1900;
* Echo, 18 January 1901: report of Leckhampton Choral Society, first concert of the season at the Parish Hall, “The Rev Clifford Aston presided in his usual happy manner”, Mr Thompson conducting as a late stand in for Mr Fletcher due to ill health, details of performers and pieces performed;
* Echo, 29 Nov 1895: report of a concert held in the National Schools, Leckhampton, proceeds to school funds, details of performers (including Mrs Aston) and songs;
* Echo, 15 April 1901: report of Leckhampton Choral Society, closing concert of the season, again presided over by Rev Clifford-Aston with Mr Thompson heavily involved, details of performers and pieces sung;
* Echo, 27 April 1897, report of opening concert in new Parish Hall, “given to a large and appreciative audience. The Rev Clifford Aston heartily welcomed those present, and said that though this was not the official opening (as the hall was not yet complete), he thought it was a fitting opportunity to let people see what was really being done to furnish a long felt want in the parish.”, the hall was also “prettily draped for the occasion”; details of performers and performances, proceeds to the National Schools;
* Echo, 29 May 1897: report of a dinner for around 70 persons in the Parish Hall for all the workmen involved in building the Hall, welcomed by the Rev Clifford-Aston, supported by the builder Mr T Collins and architect Mr H A Prothero, also attending were J Hargreaves, G B Witts, G H Phillott, H J Dale, R Walker, B G Thompson and J Weaver; various performers and toasts including by Mr N Norman to Mr & Mrs Aston – “He said the erection of the room was due to Mr Aston, who by untiring perseverance had the pleasure of now being in a room that he hoped would be the centre of good feeling, and draw all classes of society in a closers bond of union.”; at 11:30 the visitors took a bus back to Cheltenham “well pleased with an enjoyable and social evening” which many hoped could be repeated weekly!;
* Echo, 1 July 1897: report of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations at G B Witts’ Hill House, following the bonfire reported the week before;
* Echo, 10 June 1901: report of the coming-of-age festivities of Miss Witts, daughter of G B Witts, “the occasion of one of those festivities for which the grounds of Hill House, Leckhampton, are so admirably adapted”, events described in detail.
* Columns of newsprint glued to folded sheet of paper, again with a significant number of items (predominantly on pink paper) that relate to Leckhampton:
* Undated, report of a concert at the National Schools in support of the piano fund, with named performers and pieces performed;
* Echo, 26 November 1897: report of a concert at ‘St Peter’s Hall’ [sic] in aid of the furnishing fund, arranged by Mrs H J Dale (NB Mr H J Dale is cited as a Churchwarden with Mr R Walker); details of performers and pieces; also a note that in the interval Rev Clifford Aston took the opportunity to mention that a screen for limelight views and a curtain to divide the room were required;
* Echo, 23 December 1897: National School’s schoolchildren gathered in the Parish Hall for the purposes of both giving an entertainment and also receiving prizes gained during the year; presentation to Miss Edith L Thompson on her departure as a teacher at the school and a member of the church choir, by Rev Clifford Aston, an illuminated address “in a massive oak frame” and a leather despatch case with her initials, buns and oranges given to the children;
* Echo, 11 September 1899 & Looker-On 23 September 1899: report of sacred songs concert at the church after evensong, given by Evelyn Downes, a visitor to the Court;
* Undated: report of the fifth weekly gathering at the Parish Hall, at which major Barnard entertained with a lecture on Old Gloucestershire records;
* Echo, 16 December 1899: report of two well attended patriotic concerts at the Parish Room, organised by Miss Witts, raising £50 for local fund for the widows and orphans and contributing £9-5-7.5 to Daily Mail fund, reference to enthusiastic collecting of monies by village schoolboys and young ladies with tambourines;
* Echo, 19 December 1899: report of a smoking concert [the first of those mentioned above] presided over by Mr Thompson, with details of performers and pieces performed.

**The Scrapbook** has 19 un-numbered card pages, each with recto (r – front of a page, appearing on the righthand side of the book) and verso ( v – rear of a page, appearing on the lefthand side of the book).

The cuttings pasted onto either side of the first eight or nine pages of the scrapbook are not always in chronological order. Only from page ten, May 1908, does it start to become so. This suggests that the scrapbook was started around that date, perhaps bringing together previously loose newspaper cuttings.

From 1908 it then continues in perfect date order to the 1911 Coronation of King George V around page 14, after which high point it does feel as if the motivation has rather deserted the compiler. Entries through to the final cutting from September 1912 over the next two pages become less frequent, focussed mainly on a couple of stories. The last three pages of the book are unused.

Most cuttings bear pen/cil sources and/or dates. Sometimes dates are revealed by internal references and are shown in [square brackets].

**1.r**

* Undated: More Imperial Yeoman tested at Cheltenham – and now ordered to Gloucester GWR station for entrainment to Aldershot, a list of names, professions and towns of origin and destined unit; includes Sidney Barnard Thompson, clerk, School House, Leckhampton, 2nd VBGR, amongst several from Naunton Crescent, Bath Road and Cheltenham;
* Undated [1895-1904]: Ringers Meeting – a 30-year tradition of meeting on 6 January (Feast of the Epiphany) held this year at Leckhampton; ringing of the bells followed by a dinner at Leckhampton Parish Hall for 45 ringers, followed by handbell ringing and singing; thanks given to Rev Clifford Aston for permissions and to B Thomson, W Townsend and W Dyer for arrangements;
* Echo [0]3[? – torn cutting]: Leckhampton Bellringers Society – New Year’s Eve annual supper at Parish Hall, lent by Rev Clifford Aston, after “a few touches” on the church bells, followed by a presentation by Rev Clifford Aston to B G Thompson of a photograph of the local company of ringers taken on Coronation Day, framed in wood by W Harrison from one of the old wheels salvaged when the bells were re-hung, followed by handbell ringing and singing, with named performers;
* Undated [1901-2]: Gloucester City St George’s Day Banquet A successful gathering – the first time for this event held between the proclamation and coronation of King Edward VII;
* Chronicle, 12 Sept ’92: Cheltenham Cricket Challenge Cup Competition – showing Leckhampton Star second of ten teams behind Town 1st and above Cavendish House;
* Undated [1901-02]: report on Cotswold Point to Point races on a very wet Thursday at Prestbury Park, partly waterlogged, Bernard Thompson is assistant to J H McLachlan, Hon Sec; of the five races on the card, the Red and Blue Coat Race won by H C Elwes’ The Continental, who also came second in the Cotswold Red Coat Light Weight Race, ridden by E T Cripps;
* Echo, March 1902: Presentation – a little gathering at The Malvern Inn for Willis Townsend, due to sail for the Cape, in Dunvegan Castle, Saturday next, evidently for a period to make some money before returning to Leckhampton; chaired by George Chick, with speech by B G Thompson on presenting Townsend with a silver indicator [watch] inscribed “From Friends at Leckhampton, March 1902”; was to be accompanied by his son, who had received presents from the Church Lads’ Brigade, in which he had risen to the rank of Corporal;
* Undated: Queen’s Scholarship Examination – report of locally successful candidates in exams held the previous December for entry into teacher training colleges, the only First Class female is Edith L Thompson, Leckhampton National Schools; amongst many Second Class, is Mr W E Weaver of St Philip’s.

**1.v**

* Examiner, 15 & 22 April 1903: Boggy Hampton I & II: a rambling description and history of Leckhampton, signed ‘B’ (continues onto **2.r**).

**2.r**

* Echo, April 1903: Good Friday in Cheltenham: apart from churchgoing, reports of many heading up to Cleeve and Leckhampton Hill for picnics, walks and general recreation; mention of the events of the previous year and their sobering effects on any attempts to repeat the protests this year, instead description of a procession in fancy dress from the High Street to the Malvern Inn, then on past the ruins of the cottage where stalls, rides and a model of the Hill, together with refreshments were situated, and up onto the Hill itself via the ‘private’ paths, though many scrambled up the tramway. “The plateau was thick with people from the Roman Camp to the Devil’s Chimney; and thousands more, looking like so many ants upon a mound of dust, seemed ever to be toiling upwards.” Alas the view was hazy! “A small force of police was on the hill; but rowdyism was conspicuous by its absence, and nothing in the nature of damage was done”, beyond lots of litter;
* Examiner, 20 May 1903: gift to St Peter’s Church, Leckhampton, of two stained glass windows facing the north porch by the Baron De Ferrieres; reference to the Baron having taken an interest in the work of restoring and improving the building;
* Humorous snippet.

**2.v** – the page is headed, and entirely devoted to, **“Village Fête June 24th & 25th 1903”**

* Looker On, three pieces dated 13, 20 & 27 June: A village fete and country fair, held by permission of Captain and Mrs Elwes at Leckhampton Court, interestingly on a Wednesday and Thursday, to be opened by Lady Carrington, promising a wide range of events and activities from noon until 10 pm; proceeds to be applied to clearing the [£250] debt outstanding on the village hall. Reference to one held a year or two ago being very delightful;
* Examiner, undated announcement and report 1 July: amongst description of the attractions a reference to Miss Vavasour with a stall of carvings by the Leckhampton Carving Class, and to a display stall by Leckhampton Pottery “a distinctly local industry”. Maypole dancing by girls from the Leckhampton National School. Captain Elwes’ museum of Boer, Chinese and Hindu mementoes and curiosities open for inspection. Reference to Dr Lloyd Davies acting effectively in the play *The Little Sentinel* put on specially. Dancing in the evening on the Court terrace to Alfred Newton’s Band, “lighted after dark with fairy lamps and Chinese lanterns”;
* Echo, undated announcement and report 24 June: (continues on to **3.r**): similar report but adds notice of a Dance on the Thursday, 10-1, in the large Drawing Room. Stabling at the Court and Collum End Farm.

**3.r**

* Printed balance sheet, ? from Parish Magazine, 17 Sept 1903: Clifford Aston’s letter noting the debt now only a little over three figures; thanking Captain & Mrs Elwes for their hospitality; noting the departure of Mrs Davids to Ireland for 12 months, and wondering who would take on distribution of the Magazine; noting “Leckhampton is fortunate in one arrival. Nurse Turner is coming to live here this quarter day, in one of the new houses in Church Road. So she will be on the spot whenever her services are required.; and noting reasonable success for the new cricket club, thanking Mr Witts and family for an especially enjoyable game at Upper Slaughter;
* Receipts: £217-16-8; Expenditure: £53-14-8; Profit: £164-2-0. Treasurers = W Clifford Aston & George B Witts; Hon Sec = B G Thompson; Auditors = Robert Walker & Charles Hall.

**3.v**

* Examiner, 5 July 1905: Leckhampton National School, stone laying by the Bishop for the new school; details of attendees, the Bishop’s address, the luncheon presided over by Rev H Proctor, who gave a long speech on education matters, including reflections on the 1902 Education Act. Canon Roxby (Rural Dean), in proposing a toast to the Chairman, Rev Proctor, noted the latter’s “untiring labours” in securing the new school; details of the size, layout and proposed appearance of the building, on about an acre of land in Hall Road, donated by Mrs Nevile Wyatt, designed by Messrs Chatters & Smithson, and to be built by Messrs J D Bendall & Sons, Leckhampton.

**4.r**

* Cheltenham Chronicle & Gloucester Graphic, 8 July 1905: three b&w photos - of the laying of the foundation stone by the Bishop, of the procession to the site by the robed choir and clergy, and of the two architects;
* Cheltenham Chronicle, 8 July 1905: report of the laying of the foundation stone by the Bishop, with a description of the proposed school and note of the honorary canonry for Rev Proctor at Gloucester Cathedral.

**4.v**

* Cheltenham Chronicle & Gloucester Graphic, 5 May 1906: four b&w photos - of children outside the railings of the new school, of the Rev Canon Proctor, of the builder Mr J D Bendall, the architect Mr H W Chatters and the schoolmaster Mr B G Thompson, and of Mr G B Witts, a member of the building committee.

**5.r**

* Chronicle, 5 May 1906: lengthy report of attendees, ceremony and speeches at the provisional opening of the new school; provisional due to the delay caused by arguments over the Education Act and the degree to which the school could or would retain its Christian ethos and focus;
* Echo, 27 April 1897: report of the opening concert at the new Parish Hall, Leckhampton, presided over by Rev Clifford Aston, the proceeds to go to the funds of the National Schools; details of performers and their performances.

**5.v**

* Chronicle, 14 July 1906: report of events held at Leckhampton Court, 10 July 1906, to celebrate the births of the two children of Captain and Mrs Elwes, Cecilia Muriel Hargreaves Elwes (born 15 October 1904) and John Hargreaves Elwes (born 11 January 1906): a dinner at 3pm for 300 residents of the village of five years or more standing (the length of the marriage to that date), tea for 250 children, and a promenade concerts on the terraces, with dancing and fireworks, presided over by B G Thompson;
* Printed invitation to the birthday celebration, blank as to invitee, with tipped in b&w photo of the family sitting at the foot of stone steps at Leckhampton Court, with a dog in the foreground; front somewhat creased and folded back, with printed date “July 10th 1901-6”;
* Echo, 25 October 1906: report of a presentation at the Parish Hall to the children of Captain and Mrs Elwes by subscribers, preceded by a concert organised by Tod Pearman, B G Thompson also involved in events – apologies from Rev Proctor and G B Witts.

**Loose:**

* Supplement to the “Cheltenham Looker-On”, 9 April 1904: *Old Cheltonian South African War Memorial*, describing the cross in the forecourt of the College with the names of the 54 Old Cheltonians who died in the war, and the reredos in the Chapel, with b&w photographs and various advertisements of local businesses; paper covers, 20 pages, stapled;
* Single sheet from *The Cheltenham Looker-On*, 12 August 1905: pages 847/8, the principal article reports on a meeting of the Tewkesbury Conservatives at Lypiatt Park, occasioned by the retirement a member for the Division of Sir John Dorrington, to be succeeded by Mr Michael Beach.

**6.r & 6 .v & 7.r**

* Examiner, 7, 14 & 21 September 1904: Leckhampton Notes and Memories, by Linden Fairford, a loose narrative description of various parts of the village and Hill recalled from visits made in the author’s youth during school holidays, prompted by recent experience of the place. Description of earlier schools in the village; of the churchyard stream and pool; various common village names mentioned and tombstone inscriptions cited and discussed.

**7.r**

* Examiner, 1 October 1902: report of a dinner in the concert hall of the Winter Garden, Cheltenham, given by public subscription to the reservists and second contingents of the Imperial Yeomanry and Volunteers. (Continued on **8.r**)

**7.v**

* Cheltenham Examiner, 24 July 1907: unveiling of the war memorial in Cheltenham, with detailed description and report on the ceremony. (Continues on **8.r**)

**8.r**

* Standard, 21 January 1909: *In the Old Lion’s Den*, a poem reprinted from Punch addressed to Winston Churchill in response to a speech he had made in Birmingham.

**8.v**

* Echo, 13 February 1904: “A Leckhampton Sensation / Sad Death Of Rev. W. Clifford Aston, / Feared To Be Due To Poison.” Describes Clifford Aston as, “thanks to his genial address and kindness of heart, … a great favourite with all classes of his parishioners; and on every side expressions of regret at his tragic demise and of sympathy with his family were heard.” Pieces together the events of earlier that Saturday morning, 13 February.

Having picked up his post around nine-thirty, without having eaten breakfast, and retired to his dressing room, Clifford Aston’s staff later found him lying on the floor in his day clothes in a stupor. Despite their and the attending doctors’ best efforts he died shortly afterwards at the scene, a little after 11, without regaining consciousness. He is said to have been about 45;

* [Echo] 15 February 1904: a lengthy report of the inquest held at the Rectory on the following Monday, led by Mr J Waghorne, divisional coroner. Mr Hannam-Clark, Diocesan Registrar and Bishop’s Secretary (and Sequestrator) attended. Death now clarified as due to ingestion of sulphuric acid.

Reference from the Coroner to Clifford Aston’s “intemperate habits” and after some questions and evidence from various witnesses, the Coroner reveals the text of a note from the Diocesan Registry received on the Saturday morning, formally withdrawing Clifford Aston’s license to officiate at Leckhampton and throughout the Diocese.

Reference to Dr Lloyd Davies having attended Clifford Aston two months previously “when he was suffering from the effects of alcoholism”. Detailed description of what the doctor found in the room *post mortem*. Having known the deceased for about five years the doctor reported a notable deterioration in mental faculties in the past year. “A month ago he complained to him of considerable depression of spirits, and witness [Dr Lloyd Davies] had no hesitation in saying that recently deceased was not entirely responsible for his actions”.

“A juror: There is a feeling in the parish that he was not so black as he was painted”.

Mr Hanam-Clark revealed that the Bishop had been in communication with Clifford Aston some considerable time before his death and had received many communications for those that knew Clifford Aston. He had had interviews with Clifford Aston on the previous Tuesday and Thursday, “The outcome was that the Bishop announced to him on Thursday that he should withdraw his license”. Mr Thompson confirmed that Clifford Aston had told him that he had seen the Bishop and that withdrawal of license was imminent.

“The jury … returned a verdict of “Death by poisoning from sulphuric acid, self-administered whilst in an unsound state of mind””;

* Echo, 17 February 1904: report of William Clifford Aston’s funeral at Leckhampton on Wednesday afternoon; “the occasion evoking a remarkable demonstration of the love, respect and esteem in which the deceased gentleman was held by the parishioners of every class and calling”. Around 500-600 persons present, with a guard of honour by the Church Lads’ Brigade at the entrance to the churchyard; an oak coffin was born by six men from the Rectory covered in beautiful wreaths, the family following in carriages; Rev Canon Roxby, Rector of Cheltenham, presided at the moss lined graveside, watched by a throng of several hundred; details of prominent family and civic attendees and of the many wreaths. [Continues onto **pasted in pages**]

**Pasted in**

Four pages from The Cheltenham Looker-On (pp.11-14; dated 19 January 1907 – which, perhaps give a clue as to the date at which the scrapbook was put together)

* onto p.11 of which is pasted the end of the report on Rev Clifford Aston’s funeral; and a cartoon entitled ‘Fashionable Cheltenham. Early Last Century.’ showing a crowd gathered inside the Montpellier Rotunda, itself clipped from The Cheltenham Looker-On, Supplement, 23 January 1904;
* pp.12-13 carries a report of the Cotswold Hunt Ball, one of whose Committee organisers was B G Thompson, with details of the evening’s supper and events, and a list of attendees, which runs onto the first column of p.14;
* p.14 column two has an uncredited [1902] report pasted in, containing details of the thanksgiving service at Cheltenham Parish Church for the restoration of peace following the end of the South African (aka Boer) War.

**9.r**

* Echo, 3 June 1902: report on the progress of negotiations to end the South African War following the publication of official papers; followed by a selection of press opinions;
* [Same source? Undated [1902]]: report on the night of “boisterous celebrations”, or “Mafficking”, in Cheltenham following the declaration of peace, focused on the area of the High Street between the Town Clock and Winchcombe Street, predominantly by boys and youths, though there were crowds of on-lookers out to witness the decorations more generally.

**9.v**

* Above a slightly faded sepia photograph of the standing soldier memorial in the Promenade, is a copy of Rudyard Kipling’s poem ‘The Sons of Martha’ clipped from The Standard, Monday, 29 April 1907; next to a copy of Alfred Noyes’ poem ‘Victory’ clipped from The Standard, Friday, 24 May 1907.

**10.r**

* Echo, 12 May 1908: report of a sale of work in Leckhampton’s new school in support of clearing the small debt of £122 remaining on the building (total cost £2,150), opened by Mrs Ackers of Huntley Manor. The room used in the school is described as “well-equipped, up-to-date and bright”. Reference to the stall of deep-wood and chip-carving by the parish lad’s carving class led by Miss Witts. Side shows in the old school.

Canon Proctor’s introduction praised the efforts of Leckhampton, who “When their old school was rightly condemned as inadequate for the educational requirements of the parish, the Leckhampton people with praiseworthy promptitude decided to build a new school that should be up-to-date and efficient”. Built on an acre of glebe donated by the Bishop; Canon Proctor saw it as “a witness to the sincerity of Church zeal for education in accordance with Church principles”. Reference to delay in opening due to the uncertainty for church schools posed by Mr Birrell’s Bill, but finally opened in September 1906.

Canon Proctor encouraged visitors to look beyond the stalls and to admire the new building, the beautiful playground and fourteen garden plots of the garden classes they had started.

Both Mrs Ackers and Mr Witts in reply praised Canon Proctor’s passion and devotion to the cause of church led education, both in the parish and in London;

* Examiner, 13 May 1908: a very similar report on the sale of work intended to raise funds to pay-off the outstanding debt on the building costs of the new school, “a building which attests in a practical and efficient form that Church people are still ready to make sacrifices for Church education”, referring to “the Canon’s triumphant career as money-raiser for education”. (Continues on to **10.v**, with Mrs Acker’s speech.)

**10.v**

* Looker-On, 1 August 1908: report of the presentation of a school ‘Union Jack’ flag by the National Service League to Leckhampton school at prize giving on the previous day. Canon Proctor praised the work of the League for inculcating imperial ideas into the minds of the young, “It should be an integral part of every English child’s education for it helped them to become good citizens and to realise more fully their responsibilities and duties”. Head teacher Mr B G Thompson returned thanks;
* Echo, 1 August 1908: a shorter but broadly similar report;
* Examiner, 7 January 1909: report on the Leckhampton pantomime based on *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, written by Leonard Barnard and Miss Charlotte Barnard, headed “Rats!” Reference to a song, to the tune of The Vicar of Bray, sung by a councillor, containing “genial allusions to the modern history and worthies of Leckhampton. The moral seemed to be that although the parish once possessed an excellent Local Board, under an excellent Chairman in the person of Mr G B Witts, it had gone ahead considerably since the absorption of the greater part of it into Cheltenham. The parish hall, the new school, and even that delightful institution the Church Lads’ Brigade [whose members were part of the cast and to which organisation’s summer camp, profits were intended], are all developments subsequent to the era of Leckhampton’s independence.” Many prominent village personalities involved in leading parts;
* Echo, 5 January 1909: similar if shorter report, again noting frequent local and topical allusions, the councillor in his song “though everything else be neglected” would endeavour to “keep the rates low”.

**11.r**

* Looker-On, 9 January 1909: similar report with cast photograph on stage;
* Looker-On, 16 January 1909: report of “some capital” *tableaux vivants* with songs, presented by Mrs Cecil Elwes at the Parish Hall, on behalf of the Leckhampton Working Men’s Club. Miss Grace Thompson presented a bouquet to Lady Agnes Howard; the cast appears to have been drawn from the minor titled and wealthier ladies and a few gentlemen of the village.

**11.v**

* Echo, 15 February 1908: report of a meeting of the Cheltenham and District branch of the National Union of Teachers, at the Montpellier Rotunda, last Friday evening to mark the retirement of Mr J Waite from his position of one of His Majesty’s Inspectors of Schools for the district for the past 33 years. He was presented with “a massive dining-room clock” to which all teachers in the district had contributed. Mrs Waite received a pair of gold bracelets. Apologies from the other two HMI’s, Mr F B De Sausmarez and Mr W B Bulley.

First among a number of speakers was Mr B G Thompson by reason of the fact that he was already a Head Teacher when Mr Waite first started in the role and it was fitting that he should lead the speeches upon his retirement; he “went on in happy phrases to voice the feeling of regard that they all had towards their ex-Inspector and his wife whom he (Mr Thompson) first welcomed in his school as Miss Wheeler, sister of their old friend Frank Wheeler, … It was impossible to speak with anything but kindliest recollection of what he and Mrs Waite had done for the teachers”.

In reply, Mr Waite, noting that Miss Redding [sic = Miss Elizabeth Reading] was the only head teacher of the same school as when he had arrived [St Philip’s Infants] and that when he first met Mr Thompson he was head at Staverton. Various reflections on the changes to schools, conditions and the nature of teaching staff since 1875;

* Looker-On, 21 May 1910: copy of a poem written by G F Best, 1 Priory Terrace, Cheltenham, sent to and graciously accepted by Queen Alexandra following the death of King Edward VII.

**12.r**

* Echo, 1 August 1910 and Standard, 4-26 August 1910: a series of 6 very short clippings marking the departure of Percy B Thompson for Bolivia, reporting on the presentation to him by Leckhampton Working Men’s Club of a silver cigarette case, and the progress of the ship ‘Magdalena’ from Southampton to Jamaica;
* Examiner, 27 October 1910: a lengthy and detailed report of the presentation of the School Attendance Trophy – the Challenge Cup created three years previously by Mr George Dimmer of Leckhampton, JP, when Mayor of Cheltenham, marking the highest average attendance of local elementary schools – to Mrs Taylor, Head of Leckhampton Infant’s Department; wrested from St John’s infants after two years!

The school is fulsomely described, “to the ordinary observer, the Leckhampton school, in respect to size and arrangement – to say nothing of its semi-rural surroundings, and the splendid wash of air it enjoys – comes very near to the ideal. Big enough to be institutional, small enough to have something of the atmosphere of family life, it is certainly as cheerful a place for the assembly of children as could be well imagined”.

In the speeches Leckhampton was praised for achieving 90.9% attendance and for the fact that so little pressure was required to do this. Infants won due to the fact that 7% was added to all infant school results, compared to 4% for mixed schools – this is to be changed to 4% all round next year. Leckhampton mixed school achieved 95% (cf St John’s Boys on 96%).

Followed by prize giving led by Canon Proctor, with some detailed comments on the standards of work across various ages;

* Echo, August 1909: report on the success of candidates in the Royal Life Saving Society’s examination for proficiency certificates and medallions; names include A and J Bendall, and P Thompson; classes had been held at the Montpellier baths over the summer;
* Football Echo, 23 December 1911: Farewell to Joe Bendall, “the smart little scrum half of the Cheltenham team”, gone to Australia with a brother; Joe had been presented with a case of shaving materials by the Leckhampton Working Men’s Club, “What a speech Mr “Barny” Thompson, the old school-gaffer of Leckhampton made in making the presentation” describing Joe as “no fireworks, no flourish, no tinsel; simply good, hard-working, steady, reliable and always willing to lend a helping hand”;
* Echo, 21 December 1911: a longer report of the farewell evening at Leckhampton Working Men’s Club for the brothers Joseph and Archie Bendall, sons of Councillor J D Bendall, prior to their leaving for Australia, presided over by B G Thompson; both boys were involved in providing some of the musical entertainments. Mr Thomson noted that “it had been his lot during many years now to be intimately connected with all that was taking place in Leckhampton” of which this was just the most recent. Fitted leather dressing case presented to Archie.

**12.v**

* Pasted in, printed copy, in handwritten style, of Rudyard Kipling’s poem, *The Absent-minded Beggar*, Daily Mail Publishing, 1899: the proceeds from the sale of which were to be devoted by the Daily Mail to the benefit of the wives and children of the Reservists [in the South African War].

**Pasted in**

* Cheltenham Looker-On, 21 May 1910: pages 17/18, images of floral tributes from around Cheltenham for the late King Edward VII. On the reverse is a photograph of the late Major-General H Shewell; a report on a parade in Charlton Park of Gloucestershire Church Lads’ Brigades, including seven from Leckhampton No.7 brigade, under Captain Sharpe; and a short piece on the new automatic opening doors at George’s, High Street, Cheltenham.

**13.r**

* Pasted in, Supplement to Cheltenham Examiner, 12 May 1910: landscape format, four pages; printed photos of the Proclamation of King George V, 9 May 1910, to a crowd outside the Town Hall; of a visit of King Edward VII, 13 May 1897, seen on the steps of Pittville Pump Room; of the Proclamation of King Edward VII, 25 January 1901, outside the Queen’s Hotel; and of three generations of royalty, King Edward VII, the future King George V and his heir, the future King Edward VIII, in naval uniform, undated.

**13.v**

* Printed circular letter, issued 21 April 1911: Leckhampton Parish Coronation Celebration, Presidents G B Witts, esquire, JP, & Captain Elwes, MVO, sent by L W Barnard of Bartlow, Chairman, & B G Thompson of School House, Hon Sec; noting the decision of the Parish Meeting of Thursday, 30 March 1911, to celebrate the Coronation in the same way as for that of King Edward VII, with suggested events and timing, and to include participation from across the ecclesiastical parish of St Peter’s with the parts of Charlton Lane and Pilley Lane that are in Cheltenham; subscriptions invited to Mr L Sharpe of Cragside, Treasurer, to offset the expected costs of £150;
* Formal card for the Coronation local celebration events on 22 June 1911, in the School Meadow; starting with a children’s service in church at 10am and a second service at mid-day; followed by a dinner for all parishioners aged 60 or more in the Village Hall at 2pm; children’s sports and a ladies’ fancy dress cricket match 2:00-4:30pm; children’s tea for all parishioners under 17 at 5pm; gymkhana and sports 6:00-8:00pm; light refreshments and dancing 7:00-9:00pm; lighting of the bonfire on Leckhampton Hill at 10:00pm. Tickets from B G Thompson before 17 June;
* Three coloured tickets: red for dinner at the Parish Hall at 2:00pm; white for tea in the School Meadow at 5:00pm; and blue for admission to the ground at any time.

**Pasted in**

* A printed copy of the mid-day church service on 22 June.

**14.r**

* Pasted in, flyer for the various sports, the fancy dress cricket match (prizes to be presented by Mrs Witts in the tea tent), and the gymkhana (prizes to be presented by Mrs Elwes at the conclusion), 22 June 1911;
* Chronicle, 24 June 1911: report on the various Coronation bonfires, noting “All’s well that ends well, even in case of bonfires. Though a little sulky at the outset, the Leckhampton Hill bonfire, the best and brightest – indeed the only one – in our immediate neighbourhood, brilliantly fulfilled its destiny between ten and midnight”; reference to the “pelting storms” which limited attendance on the plateau above the Stoneway, to “mostly representatives of joyous, active youth”, “while the battle royal between the rival gods of fire and water was raging”.

Full description of “The building of the bonfire [which] had not been unattended with difficulty and anxiety” – funds not readily coming in, but being driven on by Mr Barnard at a cost of £50 as he did not want to join Cleeve Hill in being dark on the night, “in the sure and certain hope that the funds would come in somehow”. The bonfire was mainly constructed by George Barrett “an experienced hand” and his two sons. Main cost was hauling the timber to the site; no shortage of wood, ash, oak, beech, elm, maple, all from clearing undertaken in creating the new golf links. It “ was built up solidly and neatly with spacious transverse draught passages at the base and half-way up, with customary interior “chimney,” on a diameter of 35ft, giving, approximately, a circumference of 105ft., to the height of 40ft. It might have been carried still higher on such a ground plan had funds permitted. In the central nest at the top of the bonfire were shavings and other inflammable material soaked in some 20 gallons of tar, and above all floated bravely in the breeze a red ensign at the top of a lofty pole.” The bonfire had been guarded by the Leckhampton Parish Church patrol of the Boy Scouts camping nearby during recent nights. Site is noted as the traditional site for such bonfires. Other bonfires were said to have been built on other visible nearby hills (Churchdown, May, Crickley).

Detailed narrative of the events surrounding the attempts to light the fire in the heavy rain. “In a few minutes the fire had got a hold which a deluge would not have availed to extinguish, and Leckhampton Hill bonfire was a brilliant established fact, lighting up the whole of the hillside within a radius of nearly half a mile in a manner which made the surrounding objects stand out with vivid picturesque effect against the dense background. The glare made it difficult to see other fires at this point, but the fire on the Worcester beacon could be made out and later that on Bredon showed up. … By 11 p.m. the bonfire was glowing and crackling practically from base to summit, with an effective halo of smoke, sparks and flame.” People headed home down paths converted to watery rills by the heavy rain;

* Echo, 24 June 1911: a shorter and rather less florid account of the events of the day and the Leckhampton bonfire, which notes that the Parish Hall “was very prettily decorated with red, white, and blue. A buttonhole of the national colours was provided for each guest, and each man received a packet of tobacco” at the over-60’s dinner, presided over by Captain Elwes, Canon Proctor, Mr G B Witts and other members of the committee. Patriotic music was performed during the meal. At the sports field a floral arch had been created by Mr Restall. Rain interfered with the sports, which had to be curtailed, the fancy dress cricket match, Ladies v Gentlemen was a “great feature”, respectively captained by Mrs Boyd Cardew and Mr W Townsend. “The quality of the cricket match was much interfered with by a general spirit of buffoonery which pervaded both sides”. Ladies won 51:45.

[continues on **14.v**]

**14.v**

* [Continued] Tea for under-17s saw 400 sit down in the marquee. Gymkhana run by Mr L Peel. Various humorous versions *eg* a pick a back race with hobble skirts; details of prize winners. Georges of Cheltenham provided the evening’s light refreshments whose staff were supplemented by many young ladies of the village; the band of the 3rd Battery South Midland Brigade Royal Field Artillery provided musical entertainment, “but descending showers prevented the whole of the proposed programme of dances being gone through”. Events concluded with the bonfire at 10 pm, “the heavy rain rendered the lighting a little bit difficult, but when once fairly alight the effect was magnificent, and for several hours after midnight the flames lit up the surrounding country”;
* A press photo of the bonfire in the mid-stages of being built;
* A postcard of the bonfire in about the same stage, but different from the press version, labelled with caption and crown motif;
* Looker-On 1 July 1911: another report on Coronation Day events in Leckhampton, noting that these followed on from similar activities to mark the Jubilee years of Victoria, the marriage of the future George V and coronation of Edward VII. Many of the same details, noting that the mid-day church service was especially well attended and that the bonfire “which may well be considered the “Official” Bonfire for Cheltenham” was very poorly subscribed to by people in the town, leaving a very heavy financial deficit, which the Looker-On urges Cheltenham readers to put right.

**Pasted in**

* Supplement to Cheltenham Looker-On, 20 July 1907: a double page spread of photographs of the unveiling of the Cheltenham South Africa War Memorial in the Promenade, 17 July 1907, by Lieutenant-General Sir Ian Hamilton, KCB.

**15.r**

* Examiner, 28 December 1911: report on the Leckhampton Pantomime, *The Princess and the Goblins*, performed at the Parish Hall, adapted from George Macdonald’s fairy story by Barnards Unlimited (the Barnard family of Bartlow, who had produced previous pantomimes for the Church Lads’ Brigade and Girls’ Club). Described as having much “buoyancy and fun”. The plot is described and cast list given, including many key village names, including various members of the Bendall family, Grace Thompson, etc. Proceeds to the Girls’ Club, CLB, Scouts and football and cricket clubs;
* Echo, 27 December 1911: a similar report on the same pantomime, praising the amusement created by the young cast as being “distinctly genuine”. “The hall was well filled with the general public and enthusiastic friends and relatives”;
* Echo, 29 January 1912: report on the farewell to Finlow Harley by the Barnards Unlimited troupe in fancy dress, at the Parish Hall, ahead of his departure for Australia. Mr B G Thompson was invited to speak and recalled watching Finlow grow from the time he first entered the village school as an infant. Reference made to the emigrant to Bolivia [Percy Thompson] and to two of Finlow’s friends who had gone variously to Canada and to Australia – where the latter had named his house ‘Leckhampton’;
* Echo, 31 January 1912: Report of a smoking concert of Leckhampton Working Men’s Club to bid farewell to Finlow Harley, who was leaving for Australia on 2 February. Again led by Mr Thompson as Secretary of the Club. Finlow’s departure would mean losses of a good cricketer, football player and rifle marksman. Finlow Harley was presented with a case of shaving materials by Captain Elwes on behalf of the Club, and a travelling bag from the football club. “Mr Harley’s departure will make the twenty-first from Leckhampton for Australia within the last eighteen months”;
* Echo, 16 February 1912: report of “Two high class entertainments kindly arranged by Mrs Cecil Elwes on behalf of the Leckhampton Working Men’s Club” excellent entertainment and a good way to replenish the Club’s coffers. Details of many performances by Lady Eleanor Byng, Miss Hendry and her ladies’ chorus, duets by Lady Byng and Captain Elwes, *inter alia*.

**15.v**

* Echo, 21 February 1912: report on the welcome for the new Curate-in-charge at St Peter’s, Leckhampton, Rev F W Bidwell; various named persons present presided over by Mr C F Hall, Co-Church Warden, with a letter from the other Church Warden, Mr G B Witts read out as doctor’s orders prevented his attendance – deputised by Mr Leonard Barnard. Mr B G Thompson spoke on behalf of the School, choir and bell-ringers. Various other speeches and a reply from Bidwell;
* Examiner, 15 February 1912: detailed report on “The initiation” [sic] of Rev Frederick William Bidwell by the Bishop of Gloucester in front of a “fair congregation” at St Peter’s; “After the service a merry peal of bells was rung in honour of the event”;
* Echo, 26 February 1912: report on the farewell event for Rev Canon Proctor held at the Parish Hall, with names of those present (including B G Thompson) and the presentation of “ a very handsome bracket chiming clock”, a portable altar, photograph of the Church Lads’ Brigade and Scouts in a wooden frame from Miss Witts carving class, and a handwritten address from 113 parishioner subscribers, thanking him for his eight years “zealous and self-denying work” in the parish. The Chairman said that the parish was saying farewell to “one who had laboured strenuously among them” leaving his successor “a tremendous legacy of work in the parish … a very high ideal to live up to”. Other speakers express similar sentiments about how hard Canon Proctor had worked for the parish. In reply, Canon Proctor noted that when he arrived he had often heard reference to ‘Poor Leckhampton’, but felt that this would not be heard in 1912.

He revealed a secret, that during the first weeks following his arrival he had been pelted with apples in the dark; he suspected members of the new Church Lads’ Brigade “who were beginning to realise that he had made it hot for them. He had not been pelted since and doubted that his successor would be. “There seemed at the time he came a spirit of rebellion, lawlessness, and antagonism in the parish, but this, he thanked God, had now passed away”.

Canon Proctor also revealed that when the advowson of ‘Poor Leckhampton’ was on the market to the highest bidder, “he was able to get some Churchmen to buy it beforehand and make the gift of the presentation to the two parishes over to the Bishop in the future (applause). He did this because he could not bear the idea that the care of the souls of the people of Leckhampton should be at the mercy of the highest bidder in the open market”.

He noted that he felt that he would not be forgiven in some quarters for his role in the Church schools question, “But he looked back with satisfaction to the work they had been able to do for the children in giving them what was their right – definite Church teaching in the schools every day”. He also emphasised the importance of the Church Council, noted that with the support of Mr Witts he was able to secure part of the glebe for a sports field, and thought that church collections and communicants had doubled in the eight years. “He honestly felt that there was now the material in Leckhampton for a forward movement to make the parish a shining light in the diocese.”

**16.r**

* Examiner, 2 May 1912: report of a crowded farewell event for Rev W S Irving, leaving after three years to take up a post at St Luke’s, Gloucester; “It was evident that Leckhampton had become sincerely attached to the rev gentleman, for, after several kindly and appreciative references had been made in regard to his personality and his unselfish work, the presentation was greeted with a hearty round of cheers which would have done credit to a Hunt gathering”. Given a purse of gold from the parishioners amongst many other presents including some Leckhampton pottery.

**16.v**

* Examiner, 12 September 1912: lengthy and very detailed obituary and report on the funeral of Mr G B Witts of Hill House, Leckhampton, JP. Includes details of his family background; of his profession as an engineer and his supervision of the design and construction of the Cheltenham to Bourton railway; of roles on the Bench and in local politics, in the Cotswold Hunt, local administration both at village and County level; and of his very practical interests in local history and archaeology. A long list of attendees at the funeral at St Peter’s, Leckhampton.

**Pasted in**

* Cheltenham Looker-On, 14 September 1912: the obituary of Mr G B Witts, JP, of Hill House, Leckhampton, with photograph; and detailed account of the funeral at Leckhampton.

[The remaining three board pages of the scrapbook are empty, though clearly there have been other items stored loose between them at some point from discolouration patterns]

**Oliver Pointer**

**March 2023**