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The First Issue of Samuel Rudder's *The History and Antiquities of Gloucester*

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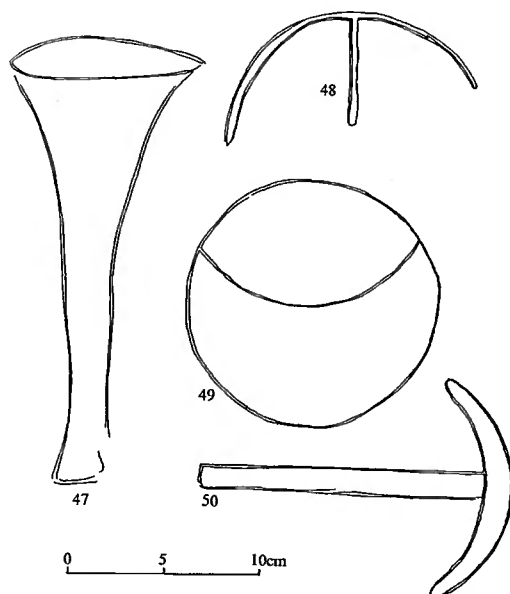


Fig. 5. A selection of marks in the ringing chamber in Gloucester cathedral tower: all these are within reach of floor level.

Lady Chapel was begun in the abbacy of Richard Hanley (1456–72) and was continued by his successor William Farley (1472–98) (Welander 1991, p. 254). It is therefore possible that the same mason or masons worked on both the tower and the Lady Chapel.

Bibliography

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CAROLYN HEIGHWAY AND PASCAL MYCHALYSIN

THE FIRST ISSUE OF SAMUEL RUDDER'S *THE HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES OF GLOUCESTER*

Samuel Rudder's great work *A New History of Gloucestershire* was published in 1779 as a folio volume priced at two and a half guineas. The parts dealing with Cirencester and with the city of Gloucester were then extracted and published separately in octavo. *The History and Antiquities of Cirencester* appeared in 1780 at a price of one shilling and six pence and *The History and Antiquities of Gloucester* followed in 1781 priced at six shillings.

The Bibliographer's Manual of Gloucestershire Literature by F.A. Hyett and W. Bazeley of 1895–7 gives details of these works but for *The History and Antiquities of Gloucester* mentions only what

was in fact the second issue. Similarly Roland Austin's 1928 *Catalogue of the Gloucestershire Collection* refers only to this second version.

The writer recently acquired from Chapel Books, specialist dealers in antiquarian books relating to Gloucestershire and other counties, a copy of *The History and Antiquities of Gloucester* described as defective. Pages v–xiii of the preliminaries and the folding frontispiece of Gloucester Infirmary drawn and engraved by T. Bonner were said to be missing. On examination of the British Library copy to obtain reproductions of the missing pages, it became apparent that the copy bought from Chapel Books was not defective but an earlier and apparently unrecorded issue with a number of significant differences from the later version.

The Chapel Books copy appears to be in its original binding and shows no sign of ever having had a frontispiece. The title page states at the foot 'Printed and sold by S. Rudder, MDCCLXXXI. [Price 6s.]' whereas the foot of the title page of the later issue states 'Printed and sold by S. Rudder; Sold also by Evans and Hazell, in Gloucester, MDCCLXXXI'.

Trading in Cirencester, Rudder presumably found it necessary to engage a Gloucester bookseller to sell a book about Gloucester. According to Austin's catalogue, Evans and Hazell traded as booksellers in Gloucester from at least 1781 to 1785. Rudder was in business in Cirencester as a bookseller by 1749¹ and as a printer at least from 1752 until his death in 1801.²

In the first issue of the Gloucester history a two-page preface begins with a preliminary statement that 'This volume is part of a larger work in Folio, entitled *A New History of Gloucestershire*'. It continues with a reference to new paving and other improvements to the city since the work was written but then ends rather oddly with what appears to be a covert rebuke by Rudder to the inhabitants:

He has only further to add his best wishes for the future prosperity of its inhabitants, towards which nothing can more effectually contribute than temper and unanimity in their public affairs, and a candid and charitable disposition of mind, that can allow to another the same liberty which it assumes itself.

The preface is initialled and dated 'CIRENCESTER, *August 5, 1781*'. The wording of the final sentence is convoluted but it possibly refers to minor disturbances in Gloucester during parliamentary elections the previous year. The movement for parliamentary reform was supported by the leading local Whigs who formed an association in Gloucester early in 1780. The sitting M.P.s were George Augustus Selwyn and George Barrow, representatives respectively of the Tory and Whig interests. Both were supported by the city corporation but in February 1780 the corporation voted for reform. In July it withdrew support from Selwyn in favour of John Webb, a new Whig candidate. A general election was held in September. On the eve of the poll, effigies of Selwyn were hanged and burned and he left Gloucester on hearing that the mob was after him. Barrow and Webb were elected.³

The wording of the preface suggests that Rudder was then a Tory but his allegiance may have been as much to the Bathurst family as to a political party. Allen Bathurst, 1st Earl Bathurst, was not only the landlord of Rudder's house and printing office in Dyer Street; he was also Rudder's patron, first suggesting that Rudder should revise Atkyns's history of Gloucestershire and then in 1767, with the duke of Beaufort and others, entering into a bond guaranteeing subscribers' deposits for Rudder's history.⁴

One of Rudder's earliest publications, dated 1753, was *The Cirencester Contest*. This is a collection of material concerning an acrimonious dispute over the choice of the two parliamentary candidates for Cirencester. Rudder was working for the Bathurst family interest. The sitting members were the Honourable Henry Bathurst (son of Lord Bathurst and, from 1775, 2nd Earl Bathurst) and John Coxe who represented the older interest of the Master family. The Bathursts

sought to replace Coxe with the Honourable Benjamin Bathurst (Lord Bathurst's eldest son who died in 1767). While the Bathursts were then Tories this dispute arose more from local and family divisions than national politics. Following serious unrest in the town which claimed at least one life both sides sought a compromise and Henry Bathurst and John Coxe withdrew. In the election the following year there were only two candidates, Benjamin Bathurst who was elected for the Tories and James Dawnay, a Whig, who gained the other seat. Nevertheless political divisions continued in Cirencester for many years.⁵

Rudder printed accounts of the Cirencester polls of 1768 and 1790.⁶ The account for 1768 records that he voted for the successful candidates, James Whitshed, a Whig, and Estcourt Cresswell, an independent. The unsuccessful candidate was the Tory, Samuel Blackwell. However Whitshed was a son-in-law of Earl Bathurst and it was believed that Cresswell was covertly in alliance with Whitshed. So even if Rudder was a Tory, on this occasion he preferred to support the Bathurst interest. He may have felt forced to do so. Earl Bathurst appears to have evicted a tenant who voted for Blackwell instead of Cresswell. In the election in 1790, however, all the candidates were Tory and Rudder voted for the local candidates Henry, Lord Apsley (the eldest son of Henry, 2nd Earl Bathurst), and Richard Master, in preference to Robert Preston who was not elected.⁵

Rudder consistently supported the Bathurst family but, apart from voting for Whitshed where he may have had no choice, the evidence shows that he favoured the Tories and was of a conservative disposition. As a trader rather than a gentleman, Rudder's own influence would have been limited, although he was a constable of Cirencester c. 1758 and became a substantial and respected member of the community.⁷ He appears to have been concerned at the excesses of politics. His introduction to the poll book of 1768 contains a plea for everyone to put past disputes behind them.

Rudder was hostile to sharp practice. In the enlarged second edition of his history of Cirencester, published in 1800, he criticised 'a gentleman of the town' for using dubious legal means over fifty years before to obtain the mastership of St. John's Hospital and then periodically misappropriating its assets. The 'gentleman' was an apothecary and a local Whig, Thomas Bush, who had died in 1788. He is not mentioned in the first edition of the Cirencester history. Bush seems to have been principally interested in the influence which the master of the hospital had over a number of votes. In practice the votes were not used on behalf of the Whigs as Bush entered into an agreement with Lord Bathurst and supported the Bathurst interest. This however clearly did not appease Rudder.⁸

Nicholas Herbert, in his introduction to the 1977 facsimile edition of *A New History of Gloucestershire*, suggested that Rudder was a man of puritanical views. Herbert's opinion was based on asides by Rudder in the history condemning the spread of ale-houses, duelling, pleasure-seeking absentee landlords and a church revel. On the other hand Herbert also concluded that Rudder was an advocate of improvement of all kinds, sharing particularly in the then current preoccupation with agricultural innovation.⁹

Reverting to the Gloucester history, the preface of the earlier issue is followed by a table of contents covering a page and a half, and a half page of errata. The text of the book consisting of 525 pages and an appendix of 111 pages comes after.

By contrast the second version of the book has an eleven-page 'Preface With Some Addenda'. This starts with the main part of the earlier preface, slightly expanded. It continues with lengthy details of a new Act of Parliament procured that year for erecting a new gaol and making other improvements. Finally it substitutes an appeal for an ending of mortmain tenure for the last paragraph of the earlier preface, perhaps in the realisation that it might cause offence. The later preface is then signed with a later date 'CIRENCESTER, SEPT. 13, 1781'.

In the second version two pages of additions and corrections come next, followed by the table of contents and the list of errata, which are unchanged. Before the main text and appendix, which are also unchanged, there are two pages of advertisements, the first for *A New History of Gloucestershire* and the second for *The History and Antiquities of Cirencester*. These are interesting in that they both start 'Just published, (1781)'.

Hyett and Bazeley, as well as Austin, give 1779 and 1780 respectively for the first editions of these works. They do not mention their publication in 1781. Austin in his article on Rudder in *The Library*¹⁰ gives a possible explanation for that omission when he discusses dates of publication of *A New History of Gloucestershire*:

Other pages with varying dates have been seen, but they were issued by Cirencester booksellers with substituted title-pages to suit those who offered the book for sale.

The explanation does not quite fit the advertisements in the second issue of the Gloucester history as they do not name other booksellers and state only 'Cirencester: Printed and sold by S. Rudder'. Perhaps Rudder was just trying to make the works he was advertising look hot off the press.

Notes

1. Glos. R.O., D 1388/III/84.
2. I. Gray, *Antiquaries of Gloucestershire and Bristol* (B.G.A.S. 1981), p. 67, states that Rudder set up a printing press in Cirencester before 1752. N.M. Herbert, 'Introduction' to 1977 facsimile edition (Alan Sutton, Dursley) of S. Rudder, *A New History of Gloucestershire*, p. i., notes that the first book known to have been printed by Rudder was a Latin grammar advertised in the *Gloucester Journal* on 4 August 1752.
3. *The Victoria History of the County of Gloucester* 4, ed. N.M. Herbert (1988), pp.152–3; E.A.L. Moir, 'The Gloucestershire Association for Parliamentary Reform, 1780', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 75, p. 180; J. Cannon, 'The Parliamentary Representation of the City of Gloucester (1727–90)', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 78, pp. 149–51; W.R. Williams, *The Parliamentary History of the County of Gloucester* (Hereford, priv. print. 1898), pp. 210–11.
4. Herbert, 'Introduction', pp. ii, iv.
5. R.W. Jennings, 'The Cirencester Contest and its Aftermath', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* 92, pp.157–68; Williams, *Parl. Hist. of Glos.* pp. 167–8.
6. *The Poll of the Borough of Cirencester. Taken March 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 1768* (Cirencester); *The Book of the Poll, at the General Election of Representatives to serve in Parliament for the Borough of Cirencester, Taken the 16th, 17th, & 18th of June, 1790* (Cirencester).
7. Gray, *Antiquaries* p. 67; Herbert, 'Introduction', p. ii, citing *inter alia* his being a trustee of a town charity (Glos. R.O., P86/CH 10/2). In 1774 Rudder was one of 163 inhabitants, headed by Lord Bathurst, signing a bond for the prosecution of felons: *Glos. Notes & Queries* 3 (1887), p. 158–60.
8. S. Rudder, *The History of the Antient Town of Cirencester* (2nd edition, 1800), p. 302; Jennings, 'The Cirencester Contest', pp. 163–4.
9. S. Rudder, *A New History of Gloucestershire* (1779), pp. vii, 250, 420, 461.
10. R. Austin, 'Samuel Rudder', *The Library* 3rd series 6 (1915), p. 250.

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