

From the *Transactions* of the
Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

Notes on some old Gloucestershire Maps

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1929, Vol. 51, 79-93

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NOTES ON SOME OLD GLOUCESTERSHIRE MAPS

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SINCE the publication of Mr T. Chubb's *Descriptive Catalogue of the Printed Maps of Gloucestershire*, issued by this Society in 1912, with its exhaustive list and full descriptions, it might be thought that nothing remained to be said about the county maps, but in studying them with the help of this work and trying to identify all the places shown on them, many points of interest arise, more particularly in connexion with the place-names they record.

Originating primarily as works of art to which topography was of secondary importance, the maps steadily deteriorated both in artistic merit and in accuracy as they passed through the stage of being little more than indexes to the books they illustrated. Industrial development and the increased mobility of the population brought topographical requirements into greater prominence, together with place-names and personal names, relegated art to a secondary place, and eventually eliminated ornament altogether. I do not propose to carry these notes down to the time when a map's primary business is to enable somebody to get somewhere, but to limit them to the two centuries from 1577 to 1777, and to consider only the more important maps of Gloucestershire produced during that period. The great number of maps, including reprints, re-issues, etc., appears less formidable when it is taken into account that only two actual surveys of Gloucestershire were made, one by Saxton in 1577 and the other by Taylor in 1777. Saxton's successors adapted

his survey to their requirements, adding here and there something of their own; they perpetuated his errors, which were extraordinarily few, and introduced new ones of their own which were in turn copied and added to.

The more important maps may conveniently be grouped as follows :—

Group A. Saxton (1577), Saxton and Hole (1607), Saxton and Lea (1690).

Group B. Speed (1610), Jansson (1646), Blaeu (1648), Blome (1673).

Group C. Morden (1695), Bowen (1760).

Group D. Taylor (1777).

The above dates are those of the first editions. Several of these cartographers also issued maps on smaller scales, and others produced maps of secondary importance. It is by tracing the course of any mistakes that the originality, or otherwise, of the map-makers can best be determined. As already mentioned, Saxton's errors are remarkably few, so few that they can all be enumerated, and by tracing them through other maps it can be seen how much his successors were indebted to him. These, other than trivial, are :—

1. He interchanges the positions of Old Sodbury and Little Sodbury, this error being continued by Hole, Lea, Morden and Bowen but not by Speed, Jansson, Blaeu or Blome.
2. He places Boutherop (Eastleach Martin) on the wrong bank of the river, interchanging the positions of Eastleach Turville and Eastleach Martin, in which he is copied by Hole, Lea, Speed, Jansson, Blaeu, Blome, Morden and Bowen.
3. He includes in Gloucestershire certain places which actually belong, and belonged also in his time, to Worcestershire, viz :—Broadway, Chaceley and Teddington, being followed in this respect by the

- same cartographers as in the case of no. 2. Owing to the complications in the northern portions of the county boundary this mistake is an excusable one.
4. He places the Gloucestershire village of Hinton on the Green in Worcestershire, as do Hole, Lea and Morden, but not the others. Bowen does not give it at all.
 5. He uses the names Flaxton for Flaxley, and Churchhill for Churcham, as do Hole and Lea, whereas Speed, Jansson, Blaeu and Blome call them Flaxey and Churcham. Morden and Bowen give both names correctly.

This analysis of Saxton's mistakes seems to indicate that the Dutch cartographers Jansson and Blaeu, and also Blome, derived their information from Saxton's survey through the medium of Speed's map, and that Bowen followed Morden, who had introduced certain amendments of his own, and who, perhaps, judging by internal evidence, used Lea's map as a basis for his work. This is all the more probable as Morden collaborated with Lea in producing certain topographical works on London.

It is an easy matter to transcribe the letters ' Ic ' as ' Le ', and this is what occurred when Speed gave the name Lecombe to Icomb near Stow on the Wold, which Saxton had shown as Icombe. This mistake runs through all the maps of group B, and also Morden, but not Bowen. It so happens that the same mistake, Lecombe for Icombe, occurs also in Leland's *Itinerary*, partly owing in the latter case however to a damaged manuscript.

The place-names which have become lost, or partially lost, are of interest. Only 5 of Saxton's names come under this description :—Aleswood, St. John's Ashes, Horwood, Apescrosse and the Forest of Kingswood.

Although some of the later maps appear to show Aleswood as a wooded height, Saxton merely indicates it as a wood about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the west of the village of

Withington, with high ground between it and Withington. It seems therefore to have occupied the country to the west of Shill Hill where there are still many woods, none of which however has carried on the name of Aleswood. Mr St. Clair Baddeley informs me that Aleswood in the parish of Withington belonged to the abbey of Bruern.

St. John's Ashes as a place-name is only partially lost, as its site is known. In Saxton's map it is clearly a wooded landmark on high ground. These trees stood close to Chedworth on the site of St. John's church, and were conspicuous from the south against the sky-line, so much so that they are said to have been visible from the Wiltshire Downs 22 miles away. This is not unlikely as it is quite possible in the reverse direction to pick out the Berkshire White Horse from near the site of St. John's Ashes, in a favourable light. The last ash was cut down almost within living memory.

The Forest of Horwood is shown by Saxton as a collection of trees with the name 'Horwood'. Groups A and B do the same, but Morden shifts the name 2 or 3 miles to the southwest to a position between Yate and Chipping Sodbury, marks it as a hamlet and alters the name to Horril, which Bowen copies as Burril, thus effectually disguising both name and place in a most embarrassing manner. Although the forest no longer exists, the name survives in one of its clearings, Horwood Riding, and in the names Horwood Farm and Horwood Barn both one mile southeast of Wickwar, and perhaps in Harwoodgate Farm between Chipping Sodbury and Little Sodbury, thus showing the former extent of the forest.

The lost name Apescrosse may be presumed to have been at a crossing of roads, and perhaps was once marked by an aspen tree. It is shown by Saxton pictorially as a house in the triangle Hawkesbury—Didmarton—Badminton, and the inference is that it was the name of a house standing at the cross-roads at Dunkirk. Although Lea shows a road here he does not indicate cross-roads.

Apescrosse appears in all the maps in groups A and B. Speed omits the name Hawkesbury to make room for it, and the remainder of group B go one better by applying the name Apescrosse to Hawkesbury itself while leaving the conventional sign of a house at Apescrosse unnamed. In Morden's map the word Apescrosse is visibly erased from the plate after it had been engraved there, showing that it was no longer considered to exist in 1695, and it does not re-appear in any map. This would seem to indicate that it was to a house rather than to the cross-roads that Saxton originally applied the name.

The disappearance of the Forest of Kingswood, now Kingswood near Bristol, calls for no comment.

In 1607, probably after Saxton's death, his survey was used by William Hole to illustrate Camden's *Britannia*, and for this purpose it was necessary to engrave a new plate so as to reduce the map to the right size. As regards place-names, several alterations of spelling were made, not for the better, and several names were omitted to allow of the map being drawn to a smaller scale. Also some Roman names were added to elucidate the text of Camden's *Britannia*.

In due course the plate of this map apparently became worn, and in touching it up for the 1637 edition the names were in many cases so carelessly treated as to render them valueless.

Meanwhile Saxton's original plate of 1577 was still in existence and in good condition in spite of its age. It was acquired by Lea, who republished the map in 1690. While others plagiarized without acknowledgement, Lea, quite fairly, only claimed to have corrected and amended Saxton's map. I can only find two actual corrections to names, viz :—Tadilthorp altered to Addilthorp (now Adlestrop), the process of alteration being visible on the impression, and Wolland to Walland [for Oldland], not an improvement. His chief additions were the hundreds, which he may have obtained from Speed's map or one other of

group B, and the principal roads. He also, in nearly every case, added a minute pointer to show to which object each of Saxton's names applied. His ornament is largely derived from Speed's map, in replacement of Saxton's ornament.

It is not necessary to specify all the additions which Lea made to Saxton's place-names. They are 28 in number, and of these 12 are original and at least 16 are adopted from Speed or one other of group B.

One of these additions takes the form of a mistake, the village of Tarlton is named Torleton by Saxton, whereas Speed renders it Charleton; Lea adds the latter name (as Charlton) without removing the former.

The place-name Bywell first appears in Lea's map, and is repeated by Morden, Bowen and several of the minor maps; it is shown as a hamlet near Bibury, just across the river Coln, about the position of Arlington. This name Bywell is now lost, or at least I can obtain no evidence of its existence. The similarity of the name with Bibury would suggest that 'Beaga's stronghold' derived its water supply from 'Beaga's spring', which however is hardly likely with such a copious water supply as the Coln flowing between them. This name does not appear in Taylor. Lea's additions were usually made with good reason, and if not a mistake, this addition seems to be due to his care in supplying a name where his newly inserted roads crossed rivers, and Bywell may be looked for at the bridge over the Coln.

Speed's excellent map is evidently based on Saxton's, but he shows independence, notably in the spelling of some of the names, and makes a new departure by the adoption of English instead of Latin, and a useful addition in showing the hundreds. In artistic merit he is second only to Saxton, his embellishments dealing chiefly with the history of Gloucestershire. He originated the mistake of including Elmley in Gloucestershire, in which Jansson, Blaeu, Morden and Bowen followed

him. His other mistakes in the county boundary are inherited from Saxton.

Although rivals and not collaborators, the Dutch cartographers Jansson and Blaeu show in their maps of Gloucestershire a remarkable similarity of style, title and ornament ; both copied Speed, even to the coats of arms of the various earls and dukes of Gloucester, but their style is their own and it is not easy to distinguish between their maps except by actual comparison, more especially as neither bears the name of its maker. A ready method of deciding to which publisher one of these maps is to be attributed is however afforded by the fact that Jansson in a large number of cases, though not all, writes the small letter *y* with two dots on it, as though it were *ij*, and also Jansson's map shows Gloucestershire and Monmouthshire on one sheet.

Blaeu adds the word Stroud to his map at a position near Miserden Park : this is not a misplacement of the town of that name, but an indication of the source of the Stroudwater or Frome.

Blome's map possesses no marked characteristics, and little originality in place-names. It introduces one new name, Eyford near Stow on the Wold, and is followed in this by Morden and Bowen, but it incorrectly includes Sedgeberrow and Milcot in Gloucestershire, Morden and Bowen following suit only in the case of Milcot. There are also a few mistakes in spelling.

Morden, both of whose maps, large and small, display the somewhat disconcerting feature of three scales of miles of different sizes on the same map, should not be confused with the earlier and better known topographer Norden ; the latter did not publish any map of Gloucestershire. In preparing his map for Camden's *Britannia* in 1695, Morden wisely avoided using the map of the previous edition (1637), as it contained a large number of misspellings, but he did not produce so well-engraved a map. He acknowledged using other maps, but took the

precaution of referring the place-names to local residents; the result is a considerable amount of originality.

A curious mistake started its career in Morden's map. It was usual to represent a parish village pictorially by a church, minor places being indicated by a small circle. The twin villages of Shipton Oliffe and Shipton Solers had accordingly been shown by Saxton and others as two churches with the one name, Shiptons, against them. Morden, or one of his local referees, wishing to expand this name into Shipton Oliffe, did so in manuscript (presumably), but the engraver interpreted it in such a way as to leave the word Shipton to apply to the two villages, and to treat the 'o' as the conventional sign for a hamlet whose name was 'Liffe', and he accordingly created a place of this name about a mile to the south. This was repeated by Bowen and by some of the lesser maps.

Another place which had no existence in fact but owed its origin to Bowen, is a second Widford, not the Widford formerly in a detached portion of Gloucestershire but now in Oxfordshire, and lying a mile to the east of Burford, and correctly shown in all the maps except Blome, who omits it, but another and imaginary Widford further to the north, on the county boundary near Todenham. Bowen represents it as a parish village and a rectory. The confusion seems to have arisen from the proximity of the Warwickshire village of Wolford, aided perhaps by the presence of Mitford Bridge close to this spot.

On the north-eastern edge of the County, at the point where the four counties of Gloucester, Warwick, Oxford and Worcester meet, is Four Shire Stone. When Saxton made his survey there were four such stones, of which he shows two pictorially with the name 'The 4 shire stones' against them; Hole's map shows three of them, with the name 'The shire stones'; Lea had to modify Saxton's plate at this point so as to show an important road, which he could hardly have done without ocular evidence, and he re-engraved the stones, showing four of them, and left

Saxton's original wording. The maps of group B show four stones pictorially without mentioning the number ; Morden does the same, specifying also the number 4 in the name ; but Bowen, while still showing four stones pictorially, partially obliterates the last 's' of 'Stones', the result being 'Four Shire Stone'.

The plate having been thus altered deliberately, it is reasonable to infer that Bowen found in 1760 that there was only one stone at the junction of the counties and that its name was Four Shire Stone as at the present day. This is borne out by Taylor's map of 1777, and appears to show that the four stones were replaced by one single one at some time between 1690 and 1760 ; the fact that the other maps refer uniformly to 'stones' is no evidence as they merely copied each other. It is interesting to know that as far back as A.D. 969 four stones existed at this spot*

Taylor's map is in a category by itself, and owes nothing to its predecessors. Taylor made an entirely fresh survey of the county, and produced a very fine map, full of information, and containing about 2,430 place-names as compared with about 428 shown by Saxton. The scale is approximately 1 inch to 1 mile and the map measures about 4 ft. 6 in. by 4 ft. Unfortunately his scheme was too ambitious for the organization at his disposal, and the value of his map is discounted by the facts that his survey is sketchy, his lesser roads vague, his rivers and streams weak and inaccurate and his place-names not always convincing. The last-named defect seems due to two causes:—(1) he collected his names orally, and many phonetic mistakes occur, such as—Howcumber *for* Oakhunger ; Antien (Heath) *for* Engine (Common) ; The Vice *for* The Boyce Court near Dymock, still colloquially referred to as The Boyce ; Horse by the Bridge *for* Horsbere Bridge. (2) there was want of co-ordination between the engraver and the collector of the names, the latter evidently wrote an

* English Place-name Society, vol. iv, Worcestershire, p. 124.

indifferent hand, and the former interpreted his writing wrongly. Such mistakes are—Buckhurst *for* Brinkmarsh ; Shysill *for* Stuppill ; Chitchampton *for* Shirehampton ; Wimpleing Bridge *for* Winpenny Bridge.

The above criticisms, however, arise from applying modern standards to 18th century work, and when one considers that Taylor's survey of Gloucestershire and the production of the map only took five years, his next previous county map, that of Worcestershire, having been published in 1772 ; that in that period he collected over 2,000 place-names, together with the names of the owners of every house of importance, and those of a large number of comparatively little importance ; that his main roads are so accurate that they could be used today as a guide, it must be admitted that both topographically and historically his map is a very fine production.

In recording the names of owners he scrupulously distinguishes between Mr and Esq but in that portion of the map which approaches Bristol, he get rather careless in putting, apparently, the surnames only to houses and leaving out the place-names, thus giving rise to some ambiguity. Instances are Champion, Franklyn, Goddord, Harding, Hardwick, Harford, Sondamon, which are shown like place-names, but are probably owners' names : in the last of them I suspect a mistake for Scudamore. In some parts of the county the owners' family names were the same in 1777 as they are today.

An interesting feature in Taylor's map is the named single trees which he shows, some of which still exist. As trees have an interest of their own it seems worth while enumerating them, omitting those which in Taylor's day were no longer existing trees but only places deriving their names from trees, as for instance the hundreds of Longtree and of Grumbaldsash (and Slaughter which, however, in the Gloucestershire instance is no longer regarded as a tree-derivative), and also leaving out those trees which are simply named after their locality such as the Lassington

Oak and the Tortworth Chestnut, to the latter of which Taylor is rash enough to ascribe a date—'Chesnut (*sic*) planted in the Reign of K. John'.

The principal of these trees are :—Bangrove Elm, sw of Little Washbourne ; Barrow Elm, on the Salt Way SE of Hatherop ; Conyberry Elm, in Oldbury upon Severn, close to the river, and now apparently known as Sheperdine Elm ; Coxwells Ash, between Turkdean and Hampnett, a family of that name was living in the former parish c. 1754 ; Dancing Thorn, w of Upper Slaughter ; Great Oak, SE of Dymock ; Hannel Bush, w of Naunton ; Hays Elm, w of Gloucester on right bank of the Severn ; Jack o' the Yalls [Jack of the Yat] in the Forest of Dean, blown down in 1921 and still lying on the ground ; Long Ash, NE of Leighterton ; Mile Ash, near Horsley, one mile from the main road to Bath ; Moor Oak, just E of Dymock ; Mowles [Maud's] Elm, between Cheltenham and Swindon ; Patch Elm, on road between Rangeworthy and Iron Acton, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile E of Patchelm Farm ; Pifts [Piff's] Elm, NE of Boddington ; Puesden [Puesdown] Ash, sw of Hazleton, on the Salt Way ; Stainbarow Bush, s of Naunton near a barrow of that name ; 3 Shire Elm, in Pebworth parish at the junction of Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Warwickshire ; Waghrow [Wagborough] Bush on a tumulus sw of Upper Slaughter ; White Oak, in the Forest of Dean. Others, which Taylor names but does not show pictorially as trees, are Buck Tree, Forsons Ash, Harolds Ash, Hudnols Oak, Nubby Ash, Tatter Oak, Willis Elm, etc.

Taylor's map shows that it synchronizes with the so-called ' industrial revolution ' by indicating a very large number of mills : nearly every river and stream has them. Some of these mention the commodity they produce, *e.g.* wire, iron, paper and even snuff, but not cloth. These last for the most part are given their owners' names, which are too numerous to mention ; others again bear distinctive place-names, and many of them, though now derelict,

retain to this day the names they bore at the time of Taylor's survey. Collieries, engines, furnaces, forges, lime-kilns, brass and copper works, glass-houses, all testify to the local industries of 150 years ago.

Indications of old race-courses are interesting. Bibury race-course, near Aldsworth, with the names Patty Course or Paddock Course Clump, Stand (with picture), Rubbing Wall, Horse Course, etc. ; Tetbury with Race Down; North Cerney with Race Down, and a Stand shown pictorially at the spot where today Stand Plantation perpetuates the name, and near the White Way which is still better known locally as the Race Road ; Badminton with Paddock Course and Patty Course Clump ; and perhaps one other instance.

There is also a touch of 18th century romance in the pictorial representation of a gallows near Cirencester, and a gibbet, complete with malefactor, near Bourton on the Hill.

Taylor's map throws some light on the rather obscure name Perrott's Brook, a hamlet at the junction of three parishes, and at the crossing of two ancient roads (of which the Cheltenham-Cirencester road is *not* one although close by), and adjoining ancient earthworks of an unusual type, from which circumstances an older-looking name might have been expected. In coaching days it was at least equally well known as Perrot's Bridge, by which name it appears in Paterson's *Roads* (1794), on the Fairford-Gloucester road, the old Welsh Way. At this place, which Taylor calls Barrows Brook, a small nameless (?) stream runs into the river Churn, and part of the valley through which it passes Taylor calls Burkham Bottom. Towards the head of this combe there are field names such as Burcombe, Lower Burcombe, Far Burcombe, Burcombe Hill, Burcombe Green, and there is a lane on the parish boundary between Bagendon and North Cerney called Burcombe Lane. It is fairly obvious therefore that this valley is 'Bur Combe', and extremely probable that the

ancient stream-name was 'Bur'. At the cross-roads adjoining the confluence of the 'Bur' and the Churn stands the old Bear Inn. In 1680 the Bagendon parish register (transcript) records the birth of a child at 'the Inne at Beare-roads-bridge', not, be it observed, at 'the Bear Inn', indicating that the sign of the inn was derived from the place and not the converse. The word which Taylor rendered 'Barrows' was therefore 'Bear Roads', or 'the cross-roads at the stream Bur'. In the absence of much earlier forms of this place-name, the stream-name theory can only be advanced with caution, and the earliest reference I can find is comparatively modern, being contained in a North Cerney document dated A.D. 1544*, in which mention is made of 'a meadow called Fryermede lying next Barfford Bryge'.† Friar's Mead is a well-known field in North Cerney, and it is close to the bridge at Perrott's Brook. This therefore also supports the stream-name derivation, as one road must have forded the 'Bur' only 300 yards from where the other road bridged the Churn.

To postulate this stream-name however conflicts with the story—whose origin I forget except that it is in the Bodleian Library—of the bear who killed his bearward at this spot, so giving rise to the name 'Bearward's Bridge', as also to the sign of the Bear Inn. A North Cerney terrier dated 1635, in the Diocesan Registry, mentions a 'meadow neare to Bearheards bridge' which might perhaps be considered to give support to the latter derivation.

In either case the modern form is corrupt, and Taylor's map affords a clue as to how it may have arisen, as it records that in his day the owner or occupier of Barnsley Park, 3 or 4 miles away, was Mrs Perrot. This association with the neighbourhood might account for the change, provided that this family was there before 1690, the date

* Hockaday Abstracts 143, Gloucester public library.

† Cf. *Trans. B.G.A.S.* xx, 303. OE name Bereford, A.D. 852.

of Lea's map, in which the name appears as 'Perrots B'. The importance of this small place on a main road, at this date, is evidenced by Lea having made a careful alteration to his newly engraved road so as to bring the crossing of road and river into its correct position, and by his addition of the name of the place having been consequent on the insertion of the road.

Reference to the Roman occupation of Gloucestershire first appears in Hole's map of 1607, in which are indicated Glevum, Corinium, Abone, the last name being placed in the river between Alvington and Berkeley but no doubt referring to a site near the former. Blaeu gives Glevum, Abone at Alvington, Trajectus at Berkeley, and the territory of the Dobuni near Bibury. Lea substitutes Durocornovium for Corinium, and in addition to showing Glevum, Abone at Alvington, and Trajectus at Berkeley, places the Dobuni near Cheltenham. Morden also places the Dobuni near Cheltenham, and only marks one other name, Trajectus, which he mistakenly applies to the whole of the hundred of Thornbury, calling it Traiectus Hun. The remaining maps make no reference to Roman sites.

Although roads are a most important feature in a map, there is little to be said about them in the series of Gloucestershire maps under consideration. Saxton showed no roads at all, nor did Hole, Speed, Jansson, Blaeu or Blome. A very small map published in 1680 was the first to attempt to do so, but of the larger maps, Lea, in 1690, with his additions to Saxton's plate, made the first serious contribution in this respect. He showed three principal roads, by double lines, running across the county from east to west, (A) from London to Worcester, passing through Four Shire Stone, Moreton in Marsh, Evesham; (B) from London to Wales, passing through Lechlade, Fairford, Barnsley, Perrott's Brook, Elkstone, Birdlip, Gloucester, Over, Highnam, Churcham, Longhope, Mitcheldean, Coleford, Staunton, Monmouth; (C) from London to Bristol, passing through Marshfield, Cold Ashton and Bridge Yate.

His remaining roads are shown by a single line as being of minor importance. One noticeable point about his roads, and particularly about the more important ones, is the efforts he made to ensure accuracy, even at the expense of tidiness. This is shown by the numerous erasures and diversions made to his roads where he came to the conclusion that they were inaccurate as he had first engraved them, a not inconsiderable task when it is seen that the relative position of villages to each other on the plate on which he was working was only approximately correct.

Morden more or less conforms with Lea in the matter of roads. Bowen's map of 1760 on the other hand shows a distinct advance, the principal roads being shown very clearly and fairly accurately, rather more so perhaps than some of the villages near them, which are out of position relatively to the roads. This map, however, shows only the more important roads and no minor ones, which contributes to its clearness.

Taylor's map, being on so large a scale, has plenty of scope for roads, and the main roads are good, so much so that they could still be used for finding the way about the county, but the lesser roads are vague, many are disconnected and were apparently not perambulated at all when the survey was being made. It was not until the production of Cary's maps, which lie outside the period now being considered, that the roads, although taken from Taylor's survey, first began to show that clearness and prominence which render them the most distinctive feature in the transition from old to modern maps.