

Fairford Flyer

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FAIRFORD HISTORY



SOCIETY

We hope you are enjoying these online newsletters. If anyone has anything they would like to contribute or have any local history questions please email enquiry@fairfordhistory.org.uk.

Fairford Market Day

In the 13th and 14th century markets were being held in Fairford and Leland describes Fairford as a market town in 1540s but it seems that the market had lapsed by the 17th century because in 1668 Charles II granted a charter to Andrew Barker (Lord of the Manor) for a weekly market on Thursdays and twice yearly fairs on 14 May and 12 November. The fairs were important well into the 19th century and even drew trade away from Cirencester fairs if the dates clashed. After the opening of the East Gloucestershire Railway in 1873 there was resurgence and a cattle market was held once or twice a month up until the 1930s as well as the other fairs. In 1986 Fairford Town Council started the Market up again, with a new car park at the top of the High Street. It has continued until the present day, despite some difficulties.



Can you imagine the bustle of Market Day in the early 1900s? Fairford Carnival and the recent Xmas Markets come close, except for the bleating of the sheep, the grunting of the pigs and the lowing of the cattle! Fairford Petty Sessions at the Magistrates Court was also held on the same day.

Charlie May's father put up and took down the hurdles for the pens for the animals; the hurdles were kept in a shed at the White Hart. A donkey cart was used to carry them to the Market Place

Sheep were in the Market Place. Pigs were opposite the bank, the hurdles were tied up with string, the school boys would untie the string and blow in the pig's ear and away the pig would go, with the boys chasing after it. The calves were tied up to the rails outside Farmor's School (now Community Centre) another enticing opportunity to escape from school and go chasing after the errant animal!

Cows were further up the High Street. Children often caught ringworm as the cattle rubbed walls. There was a weighing machine inlaid into the road surface just opposite where the War Memorial is now. The auction area was by the top churchyard gate. Streets had to be cleaned up afterwards; I expect the residents were out there with their buckets for manure for the garden.

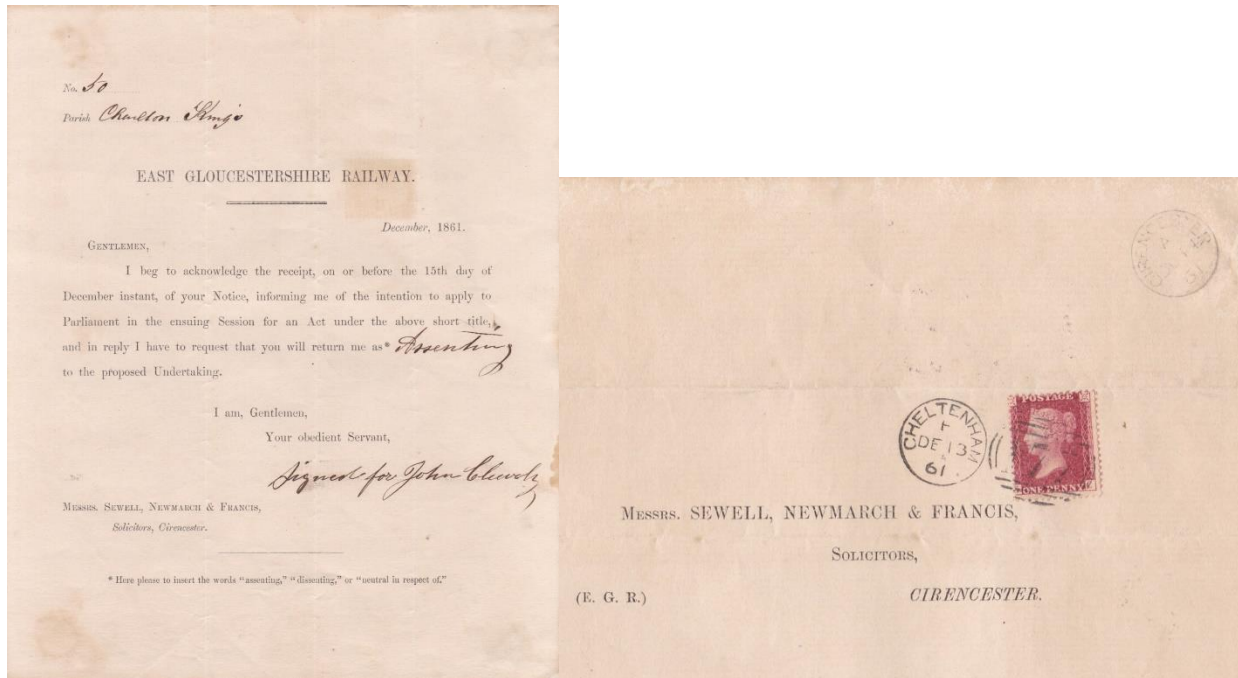
FAIRFORD MARKET,
Tuesday, 10th August, 1909.

A. F. HOBBS
 Will Sell by AUCTION,
80 FAT and STORE SHEEP and LAMBS.
13 HEAD of FAT and STORE CATTLE.
45 FAT and STORE PIGS. 10 CALVES.
Further Entries will oblige.

For Christmas Fairs the bulls were led down Park Street, what an impressive sight that must have been. An annual market dinner was held in the Bull Hotel, hosted by the Busbys. While the farmers, tradesmen and auctioneers were gorging on beef, mutton and turkeys from local farms and cheeses from Dudgrove Dairy, the cattle drovers and farm hands were at The Plough feasting on pickles and beer.

The bank (now the Cats and Dogs charity shop) was built 1901. In the new building the Post Office was the second entrance where the cash machine used to be. Do you remember the 'digger in the bank' incident? Previously on that site there was a sweet shop and a baker's business run by 'Joseph A Haynes'. There was a step down into the bakers, then you had to turn left up a couple of stairs into a sweet shop at the 'Little Alley' end. The shop had very low ceilings. Previously the bank (the Capital and Counties Bank, before Lloyds) was on the opposite side of the road in the Bull Hotel building near Bull Alley.

For the Archive



Recently I received a telephone call from a stamp dealer who had come across a document relating to the East Gloucestershire Railway, dated December 1861. It was a letter presumably sent out to all who had or were going to invest in the East Gloucestershire Railway saying that the intention was to apply to Parliament in the ensuing session to permit the East Gloucestershire Railway Act to be passed and it was requested that the letter should be returned to the Solicitors Sewell, Newmarch & Francis of Cirencester indicating whether they assented, dissented or were neutral.

This letter was from John Clevely of Charlton Kings (although the dealer didn't tell me that at the time), anyway, I agreed to purchase the letter and it duly arrived (after a bit of an adventure as it didn't have enough postage, luckily I realised it might be from the dealer).

In fact, if Mr Clevely did invest in the company he was probably disappointed as the East Gloucestershire Railway was initially conceived as a cross-country route linking Witney and Faringdon to Cheltenham via Andoversford, and would have run close to Charlton Kings. Indeed earthworks were already underway at Andoversford when the operation was scaled down to a purely local line from Witney to Fairford. In 1869 work commenced on this less ambitious plan, although the layout of the station at Fairford clearly indicates that it was

never intended as a terminus and that Cirencester and a connection with the Midland & South Western Junction Railway was their ultimate aim. The line from Witney to Fairford opened on 14 January 1873 and the resultant 22 mile branch line was operated by the GWR until that company took over the two local companies entirely in 1890. The last passenger train ran on 12 June 1962.

The letter is in extremely good condition, considering it is 160 years old. The Penny Red stamp was issued in 1841 to replace the Penny Black (the first issue of the Red Penny stamp with perforations was from 1848).

FROM THE NEWSPAPERS

FAIRFORD MARKET

To supplement the above article on Fairford Market Day three advertisements from local newspapers illustrate the beginning, rise and decline of this once monthly event:

1828 February 2nd, Oxford Journal

NOTICE is hereby given, that a MARKET for CATTLE, SHEEP, and PIGS, will be held at FAIRFORD, on Thursday the Seventh day of February next, and that the same will be continued on the Thursday of each succeeding month.

1880, May 8th, Oxford Journal

FAIRFORD MONTHLY MARKET
NEXT TUESDAY, May 11th, 1880.
IMPORTANT SALE of 700 SHEEP and 145 Head of YOUNG CATTLE.
Messrs. MOORE and HILL
WILL SELL BY AUCTION,
in the above Market, commencing at half-past Ten o'clock, --
700 FAT and STORE SHEEP and LAMBS, principally
prime Downs and Cross-breds, fed in the immediate neighbourhood;
70 capital breeding EWES and their LAMBS some fit for the butcher.
70 Head of well-bred Two-year-old STEERS, STURK
HEIFERS and YEARLINGS.
10 FAT STEERS and HEIFERS.
6 HEIFERS in or with CALVES.
100 PIGS.

Also 61 Head of well-bred CATTLE; comprising 27
Sturk Heifers, 24 two-year-old Steers, 2 Heifers in milk,
2 Fat Calves, and 6 In-calf Heifers, being the remainder
of the Dudgrove Stock, the property of Mr. Wm. Arkell,
who is clearing out at Old May Day.

Also several Wood and Iron Cow Cribs, Wood and Iron
Water Troughs, Ladders, Hay Knives, Corn Bins, Hurdles,
Servants' Bedsteads, and 14 sacks of Thin Wheat (suited
for game and poultry)."

1912, April 6th, Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard

FAIRFORD MONTHLY MARKET
Next Tuesday, April 9th, 1912.
INNOCENT and SON
Will Sell by Auction,

80 FAT TEGS and EWES, and a few FAT LAMBS

FAT and STORE CATTLE, CALVES, and PIGS,

Further Entries solicited.
Auction Offices, Lechlade.

FAIRFORD BRICK WORKS

A brief account of the Fairford Brickworks appears on the TOPICS/PLACES page on the Fairford History Society website. Two newspaper articles add a little more information about the works and the people involved in the business:

1870 December 24th, Wilts and Gloucestershire Standard

FAIRFORD

ACCIDENT - Early in the morning of Saturday last a serious accident happened to Mr. Wm. Dunn, the manager of the Fairford brick-fields. It appears that, while engaged in night duty, Mr. Dunn was walking round the top of the kiln, and owing to the darkness his foot slipped. In falling, his head struck against some of the brick-work, which inflicted a severe wound, though happily there is no fracture. We are glad to learn that under the care of Mr. James Cornwall he is progressing very favourably.

1871 July 8th, Oxford Journal

FAIRFORD, GLOUCESTERSHIRE
THE FAIRFORD BRICK, LIME, DRAINING PIPE,
and TILE WORKS, together with 22A. 3R. 2P. of
LONG LEASEHOLD LAND,
TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION,
By Messrs. MOORE and HILL,

At the Bull Hotel, Fairford, on Thursday next the 13th
day of July, at Four o'clock in the afternoon subject to
conditions, -The above valuable LONG LEASEHOLD
PROPERTY, equal in value to FREEHOLD; 22A. 3R.
2P. of productive ARABLE LAND, with Farm Buildings,
Stable for five cart horses, Chaff House, with Lofts and
Granary over, six Pens for cattle, Carpenter's Shop, Lime
House, Hog Vaults, Pigstyes, Implement Shed, and a
never failing supply of Spring Water.

The above Property is most conveniently situated within
one mile of the town of Fairford, and adjoining the turnpike
road leading to Cirencester, where a good business
has been carried on for several years by the proprietor,
Mr. J. H. Wane, whose delicate health now obliges him to
retire from the business.

For further particulars apply to the auctioneers, Corn
Hall Buildings, Cirencester; or to Mr. H. E. Sullivan,
solicitor, Fairford.

William Dunn recovered from his accident and continued as manager of the brickworks until his death on 27 November 1903. John Hurst Wane's delicate health did not improve as he died on 8 September 1873. He was better known as Fairford's wine and spirit merchant.