



*Extracts from the Chapter minutes from 1701 onwards and
divers historical prospecting.*

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JOHN CHANDLER

Salisbury, *History Around Us* is no longer available free on the web but if you are interested in a copy of this excellent book go to www.hobnobpress.co.uk. Or call in to the Rocketship Bookshop in Bridge Street where it is available for £12.95. The Cathedral shop will also be stocking it. Incidentally, the Rocketship is worth a visit just to look at the cellars.

PUTTING THE BOOT IN

Like many of you, I have used part of lock-down time to tackle jobs that have been waiting for months. One of these was to clear out all our old files. In doing so I came across a transcript of a letter from the Duke of Wellington in Spain to the Foreign Office dated August 1812 which I thought I would share with you (below, *courtesy of National Portrait Gallery, Public Domain*):



Gentlemen,

Whilst marching from Portugal to a position which commands the approach to Madrid and the French forces, my officers have been diligently complying with your requests which have been sent by H.M.ship from London to Lisbon and thence by dispatch to our headquarters.

We have enumerated our saddles, bridles, tents and tent poles, and all manner of sundry items for which His Majesty's Government holds me accountable. I have dispatched reports on the character, wit, and spleen of every officer. Each item and every farthing has been accounted for, with two regrettable exceptions for which I

beg your indulgence.

Unfortunately the sum of one shilling and ninepence remains unaccounted for in one infantry battalion's petty cash and there has been a hideous confusion as the number of jars of raspberry jam issued to one cavalry regiment during a sandstorm in western Spain. This reprehensible carelessness may be related to the pressure of circumstance, since we are war with France, a fact which may come as a bit of a surprise to you gentlemen in Whitehall.

This brings me to my present purpose, which is to request elucidation of my instructions from His Majesty's Government so that I may better understand why I am dragging an army over these barren plains. I construe that perforce it must be one of two alternative duties, as given below. I shall pursue either one with the best of my ability, but I cannot do both:

- 1. To train an army of uniformed British clerks in Spain for the benefit of the accountants and copy-boys in London or perchance.*
- 2. To see to it that the forces of Napoleon are driven out of Spain.*

Your most obedient servant,

Wellington

Plus ça change....

SIR CHRISTOPHER

The library contains a typed manuscript of Wren's survey of 31st August 1668 which has come down to us via the eminent verger William Dodsworth (d.1826). Wren was brought in by Bishop Seth Ward (right), a fellow mathematician and astronomer. Wren loved the relative simplicity of the Cathedral's design and praised 'the original architect'. However, he took issue with him on the following points:



- 1) Building in a low marshy soil he did not take sufficient care of the foundations, especially under the pillars *for pillars thrust themselves into ye earth and force open the solid ground.*
- 2) Not raising the floor above the *fears of inundation.*
- 3) *Ye poyse of the building, generally ye substructions are too slender for ye weights above.* The pillars look substantial but of course the Purbeck marble is not weight-bearing.

...but this is nowhere so enormous as under ye steeple which being 400 foot in height is borne by four pillars not much larger than ye pillars of ye isles, and therefore out of feare to overburthen them ye inside of ye tower for 40 foot height above the Navis is made with a slender hollow worke of pillars and arches, nor hath it any buttresses, and the spire itselfe is but 7 inches thick though the height is above 150 foot.....But this way of tying walls together with iron instead of making them of that substance and forme, that they shall naturally poyse themselves upon their butment is against ye rules of good Architecture, not only because iron is corruptible by rust but because it is fallacious, having unequal veines in ye metal some pieces of ye same barr being 3 times stronger than others and yet all sound to appearance. Above, by Godfrey Kneller 1711, courtesy of National Portrait Gallery Public Domain.

THAT PORCH AGAIN

You may recall that we discussed Bachelors' Porches in editions 39 and 42. Thanks to Alan Willis, I recently acquired a copy of Roy Strong's *A Little History of the English Country Church* (Vintage Books 2008) which I can also recommend. Where Strong writes about church porches, he states that *in medieval times it was the setting for major rites of passage, starting with baptism.*



The baby was taken to church by the midwife and the godparents. The group were met in the porch by the priest who **placed a boy to the right and a girl to the left**. He goes on to state that the godparents would bring salt for the first exorcism, some being placed in the child's mouth. The forehead was marked with a cross twice and after *spitting in his left hand* the priest wetted the infant's ears and nose in emulation of Christ's dealing with the deaf and dumb man (Mark 7:31-37). Only now did the party go into the church where the font ritual was extremely elaborate and is probably the reason that so many fonts became somewhat overdecorated. Left, Church of Good Shepherd, Rosemont, Pennsylvania, *courtesy of Francis Helminski Creative Commons.*

TEMPUS FUGIT

Tower guide, Stephen Dawes, contributed the following:

These days, our local church bells are one of the few things which seem to mark the passing of this interminable period of Lockdown and Shielding. I don't know about you, but recently I seem to have lost all track of time. Time and dates were also highly variable things in ancient times and I was reminded of the plaque which can be

found close to Malmesbury House on North Walk at Salisbury, which set me thinking . . .



When the Celtic tribes ruled Britain the length of the day (and night) were determined by only the sunrise and sunset times. In early Roman times, especially in rural areas, the day and night was divided into sections with Latin names such as Gallicinium (Cock crowing) and Conticinium (Cock stops crowing) and Diluculum (Dawn) as well as Crepusculum (Twilight) and Prima fax (Lighting of candles). With these names instead of numbers you can see why their length would vary with the seasons but eventually the time was divided into equal parts which might be compared to a modern "hour".

It soon became obvious that the length of an hour, and the length of a day needed to be roughly standard which was relatively easy using candles or water clocks to divide every day into 24 equal parts. When the original cathedral mechanical clock was commissioned, the hour had long been established as a standard measure of time, although our clock had no dials and only indicated the passage of time by the ringing of a bell. Incidentally some have argued that references in 1386 to a "clocke" are more likely to have been confused with the Dutch for "bell".

When the Romans were developing a calendar, it was also fairly obvious that there were roughly 365 days in a year and the lunar cycle lasting roughly 28 days leads to the concept of months. However, the astronomers had a more accurate measure of the length of a year as 365 and a quarter days. The solution was to add an extra day to the calendar once every four years known as a Leap Year. These values formed the initial algorithm for a calendar associated with Julius Caesar. For several centuries this scheme worked well, with practically all of the countries which were in the original Roman Empire (and subsequently under the influence of the Catholic Church) agreeing a standard date and time.

However, there were a few things which caused local variations. First was the fact that the sun tends to rise earlier the further East you go. This means that different countries tend to have different times, generally known as Time Zones, but it also means that accurate times were difficult to determine even within one country. When the only indication of time was a sundial or the ringing of a church bell at the hour, this didn't matter very much. However, this problem became much more important when the railway arrived and time

needed to be accurate to a minute – hence the introduction of “railway time” to synchronise clocks across the country. Many enterprising public houses kept a clock to encourage customers to “pop in to check the time”.

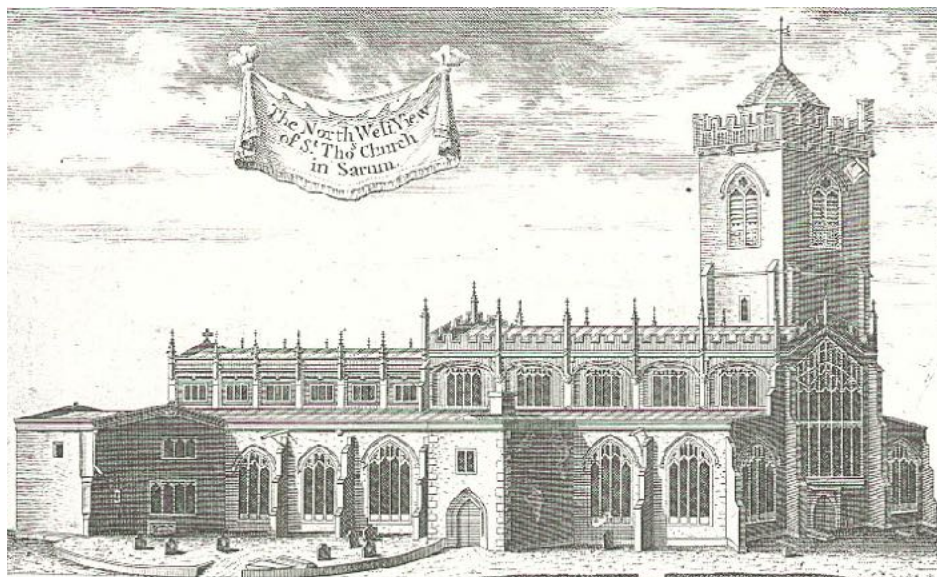
The second cause of clock variations was introduced at the time of the First World War which is generally known as “Daylight Saving Time”. We are currently on “British Summer Time”, which generally lasts from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October. However, that situation may not continue for much longer. A decision has been made in Europe to discontinue the practice from next year. Practically every country in the EU has decided to settle on the equivalent of their Summer time for the entire year and change their clocks for the last time in the Spring of 2021. Of course, the UK has decided to leave the EU and is still to make its own choice about daylight saving time in the future – we wait to see what is decided. Right, George Vernon Hudson who invented DST first proposed in 1895, courtesy of Royal Society of New Zealand Public Domain.



ARCHDEACON LEAR PART 2

Here the venerable gentleman reminisces about the city’s parish churches c1860. *The churches, although good in themselves, were miserably fitted. There were no Parsonage houses for any of the Incumbents, and the Benefices were poorly endowed. Below, St. Thomas’ 1834.*

The Vicar of St. Thomas was a Minor Canon of the Cathedral, who never went to his church unless it was to pocket a fee. The endowment was £40 from Q.A.B. (Queen Anne’s Bounty) and Surplice fees. The Curate was appointed by the Bishop, and his salary paid by voluntary subscriptions. It was the only church in the City in which there was an evening service, and this in consequence of an endowed Lectureship. The church was in an unsightly condition, having been re-seated about the year 1800. It was galleried throughout, and the Chancel, meanly fitted, was only used when there was a celebration, and that was monthly. A second restoration was undertaken by Canon Renaud, who had become Incumbent in 1863, and employed the celebrated architect, Mr. Street. He restored the Chancel. The West gallery was taken down, and the old Cathedral organ, given by George IIIrd, was placed in the North Aisle. In 1874 Canon Morrice became Vicar, and, I believe mainly at his expense, the church was



fitted throughout with its present open seats. Bishop Denison secured as a Vicarage for S. Thomas the house in The Close, which had belonged to the Sub-Dean, but lapsed to the Commissioners.

Left, 19th century view of St. Thomas’ courtesy of Wiltshire History Centre