

Broad Town Charity 20th & 21st centuries

The farms that were part of the charity were sold by the trustees in 1920, raising £20,000 which was invested for future use.

KNOWALL IN SUMMER (Illustrated). By Ward Muir.
LARGE BLUE BUTTERFLY (Illustrated). By F. W. Frohawk.

COUNTRY LIFE

21, BEDFORD STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W.C. 2.

Vol. XLVIII, No. 1228. SATURDAY, JULY 17th, 1920.

MESSRS. BRUTON, KNOWLES AND CO. sold on behalf of the trustees of Broad Town Charity, freehold properties near Wootton Bassett, which, with two smaller properties, realised £22,161, the principal lot being the Manor Farm, Broad Town, 220 acres, £8,000. The firm has also sold a number of small houses in Gloucester, for a total of £10,145. ARBITER.

Source : Country Life 1920-07-17: Vol 48 Iss 1228

In 1928 the Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Magazine reported the following summary of the charity :

THE BROAD TOWN CHARITY.

The Duchess of Somerset, by will dated May 17th, 1686 [she died Oct. 26th, 1692] gave certain estates called Cotmarsh, in Broad Hinton, which she bought of William Basset, situated in the lower part of Broad Town, and her Manor of Broad Town for apprenticing poor boys, preference being given to those born on the Manors of Broad Town, Thornhill in Clyffe, Wootton Rivers, Huish and Froxfield [all in the county of Wilts], and in default of these, to boys in the county at large. These estates came under settlement with her second husband, John Seymour, 4th Duke of Somerset, great grandson of the Protector, who died without issue in 1675. She is believed to have married thirdly, at the age of about 40, in 1682, Henry Hare, Lord Coleraine. She was also the founder of the Froxfield Alms Houses for the widows of clergymen and lay widows.

The first trustees of the Broad Town Charity were Henry, Lord Delamere, Sir Samuel Grimstone, Sir William Gregory, and the heirs of their survivors. Of these Sir S. Grimstone survived. In 1711 a commission decided that the trust should be conveyed to seventeen trustees, whose numbers were to be filled up as often as they were reduced to eight. They were to be members of the Church of England and inhabitants of the county of Wilts. The trustees in 1712 were Robert Loggan, clerk; Sir Edw. Seymour, Bart.; Francis Popham, Esq.; Richard Jones, Esq.; Charles Tooker, Esq.; Thomas Bennet, Esq.; Samuel Whitelock, Esq.; Lovelace Bigg, Esq.; Farwell Parry, clerk; Basil Devenport, clerk; Servington Savory, M.D.; Thomas Foster, clerk (Vicar of Clyffe Pypard); and Thomas Toker, clerk.

Trustees were successively appointed to fill vacancies in 1758, 1772, 1784, 1790, 1803, 1814, 1837, 1846. Those appointed in 1837 and 1846 were Sir John Dugdale Astley, Bart. (Everleigh); John Hungerford Penruddock, Esq.; The Earl Bruce; The Rt. Hon. Henry Pierrepont; Horatio Nelson Goddard, Esq. (Clyffe); Thos. Henry Sutton Bucknill Estcourt, Esq. (New Park); George Wroughton Wroughton, Esq. (Wilcot); George Heneage Walker Heneage, Esq. (Compton Bassett); Lord Ernest Bruce, M.P.; Francis Leybourne Popham, Esq. (Littlecote); Ambrose Lethbridge Goddard, Esq. (Swindon); The Hon. Sydney Herbert (Wilton); Sir John Awdry, Kt. (Notton); Rev. John Leybourne Popham (Chilton); Rev. George Ashe Goddard (Clyffe Pypard).

In 1838 the following were the particulars of the Charity property :—

Premises.	Tenants.	Extent.		
		a.	r.	p.
Manor Farm	Thos. Gale	249	3	10
	[Robert Chesterman in 1863.]			
Ham Farm	Thos. Gale	164	3	21
	[Will. Stiles in 1863.]			
Goldborough Farm	Rich. Parsons	101	2	0
	[Edward Parsons in 1863.]			
Farm at Broad Town	Rich. Gale	32	2	26

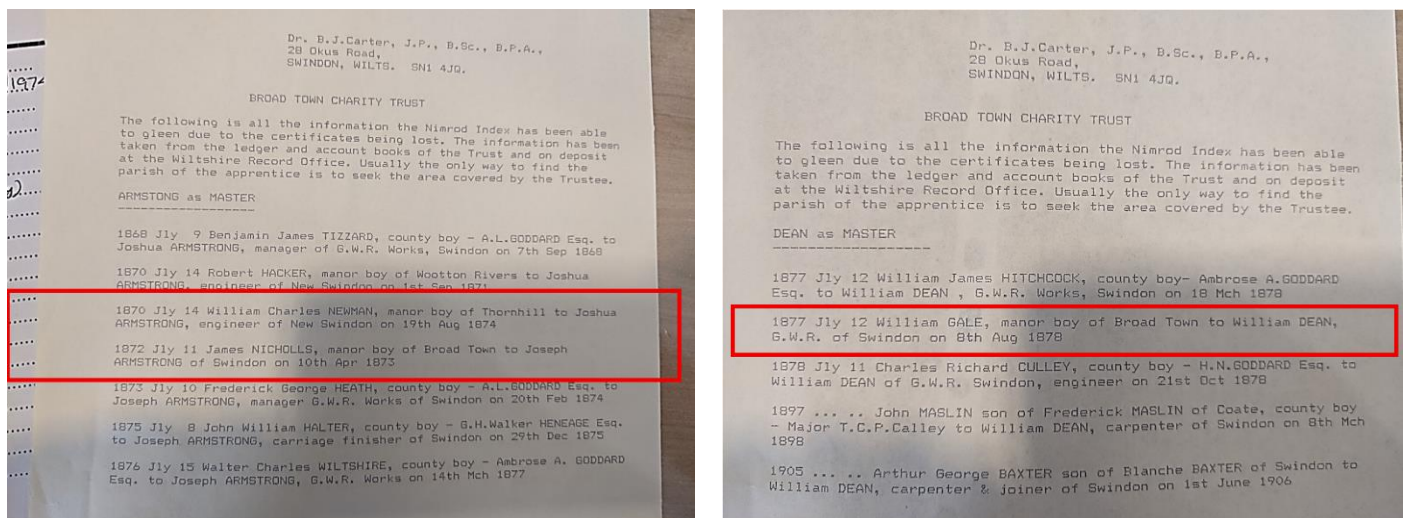
There were four cottages let on leases for lives in 1838.

The number of boys apprenticed from the foundation to 1838 were :—
Manor boys, 614; County boys, 1842.¹

[Since the Great War the whole of the charity lands have been sold, and the income available for the purposes of the charity has been thereby nearly doubled.—E. H. G.]

Source : Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Magazine No CXLVIII June 1928 Vol XLIV

Example of master and apprentice records displayed at the Steam Museum :



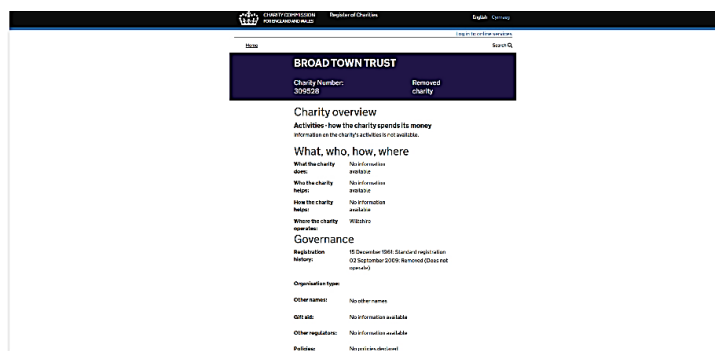
Source : Records of GWR apprenticeships during the period 1861 to 1905 related to the Broad Town Charity Trust held at the Steam Museum archive

By the 1960s there were 86 boys benefiting from further education because of the charity. By that point, the charity was known as the Broad Town Trust.

In 2006 the Broad Town Trust received the biggest boost in its 300-year history - receiving a legacy of £500,000 from John Merritt (a previous beneficiary).

<https://www.swindonadvertiser.co.uk/news/896809.500000-gift-to-boost-trust/>

According to the Charity Commissioner's website the Broad Town Trust was removed from Charity Commission register 2nd September 2009



In 2014 Hannah White reported in the Salisbury Journal that money had been stolen from the Broad Town Trust between 2000 and 2012. The case was referred to a Newton hearing to determine which version of the facts (prosecution's or defendant's) is more credible. See

Source : https://www.salisburyjournal.co.uk/news/11242969.Charity_worker_stole_from_young_people_s_trust/

In 2015 Joe Riddle reported in the Salisbury Journal that £145,000 was stolen from the Broad Town Trust see <https://www.salisburyjournal.co.uk/news/11811472.three-year-jail-term-for-pensioner-who-stole-145000-from-charity-to-pay-gay-lovers-blackmail-demands/>

Source : <https://www.salisburyjournal.co.uk/news/11817908.backgrounder-charity-thief-lakeman-was-trusted-respected-and-utterly-convincing/>

At the time of writing (2021) the reason for removing the charity from the register of charities is unknown. It is likely that the Broad Town Trust merged with another charity (The Community Foundation for Wiltshire & Swindon?). However, if a merger took place it isn't clear when or how this merger took place.