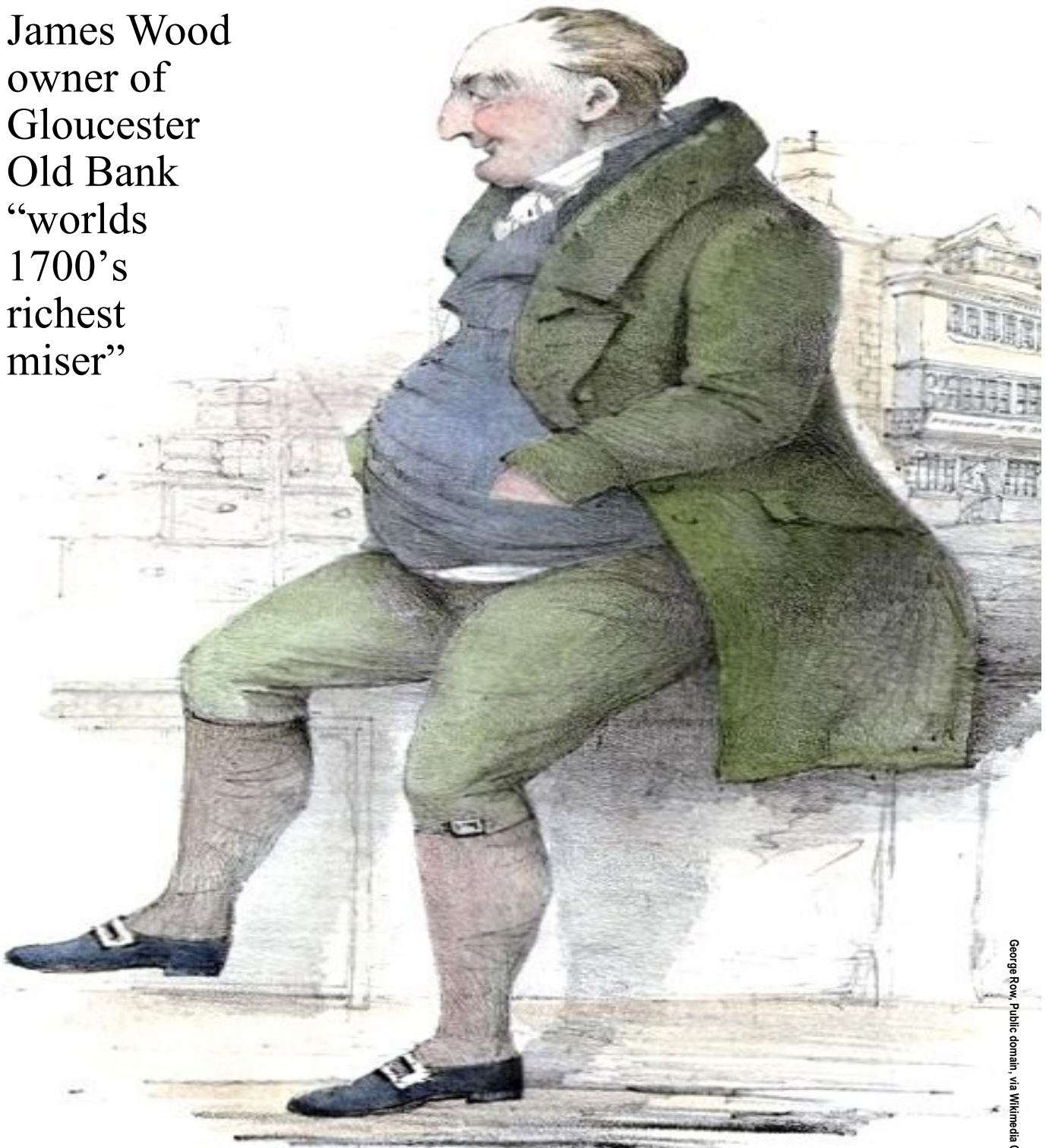


FASCINATING FACTS

Issue N° 29

Date August 2024

James Wood
owner of
Gloucester
Old Bank
“worlds
1700’s
richest
miser”



George Row, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

GLOUCESTER OLD BANK

Drawn, Engraved and Published by G. Rowe Lithographer Cheltenham

Fascinating Facts is a free subscription free monthly private circulation e- magazine of personal , historic and military interest.

To obtain your free copy please email ray@scarletman.co.uk

Welcome to this issue of Fascinating Facts. Now retired, with a background of journalism, literature production, international public relations, and ex editor of a leading industry publications, I now have the time to combine my abilities and share my interests in historic facts, especially in connection with military matters. While I have written most of the articles in the Scarletman I am happy to accept ideas and contributions from readers; giving them credit for their work. The Scarletman is free issue e-magazine therefore if you would like to circulate copies further then I am happy for you to create a wider readership of those with a similar interest to mine.

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WHERE IS THERE?

Two pensioners were discussing getting older and one asked the other 'how are you' to which he got the answer 'getting there'.

Why are you interested in finding There, seems like everyone is trying to get There, asked pensioner no 2?

Well it seems to me that if I find There I might get a cure to my medical problems and live a more comfortable life. I have also noticed that it only seems like older people who are looking for There. The younger people want to go on holiday to many exotic place. It seems to me that There is a special place for those of a certain age.

Big problem pensioner No 1 stated is I have also been looking for There like so many others. I searched Google and I cannot find any place named There in any country, so where is it?

Thats the problem stated pensioner no 2 no one knows but everyone says they are getting there. Therefore they must know where There is. But when I ask where is There they say they don't know! Must be suffering from dementia! With so many pensioners trying to get there I feel it is incumbent on me to try to find There. But the other big problem there is no place named Here where everyone can gather to start the journey.

That's not the problem said pensioner No 1 Here is any where from where you start so everyone starts from their personal Here to get There

Yes I suppose you are right said pensioner No 2.—I hadn't thought of it that way. But I am on my way any ideas how I can find There, like a map reference.

Yes pensioner no 2 replied so am I but I did not see you on the journey. Which road did you take? Is it mobility scooter accessible?

Well if you go North or South you finish up in ice bound lands and if you go East or West you go round in circles so it must be somewhere between them

If you know where There is please contact me!

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The word Amazons brings to mind images of warrior women with bows drawn and on horseback. But how many can you name? Perhaps Hippolyta, whose girdle was stolen by, and who was murdered by, the macho Heracles, or Antiope, lover of Theseus and mother of his ill-fated virgin son, Hippolytus. But there were other powerful ladies, even queens..

History's first mention of a race of warrior women is found in Homer's Iliad, in an account of the Trojan War, probably written in the 8th or 7th century B.C. His Amazons were a race of fierce women who mated with vanquished male foes and kept only the female children they bore. It is believed they occupied the area around the Black Sea. Amazon women also crop up in Greek myths. One of the labours of Hercules, for example, required him to acquire the girdle of the Amazon queen, Hippolyte. The Amazons of Greek mythology were most likely created by the Greeks. In 2019, a grave with multiple generations of female Scythian warriors, armed and in golden headdresses, was found in southwest Russia.

To fully understand the Amazons, one must understand Otrera, their creator and first queen, the consort of Ares and mother of Hippolyta and Penthesilea.

OTRERA

Otrera was the first Amazon queen and a bride of the war-god Ares who was probably the unnamed Amazon queen who battled the hero Bell-erophontes in Lykia and the Trojan King Priamos in Phrygia. She started life as an unhappy wife in an arranged marriage. She resolved to find a way to escape her life of misery teaching herself combat skills using a sword and a bow and arrow. Eventually, she taught other women. Once they were confident in their skills, they rebelled

and killed all the men in their town. Her crusade against men spread throughout Greece. Otrera established her new kingdom in the city of Sinope, where they plotted to conquer other lands. It is said that they became known as Amazons be-cause they would remove their right breast to more efficiently use a bow and arrow. The name is derived from the Greek word "amazos," or "those without a breast." She allegedly founded the famous Temple of Artemis at Ephesus; one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

PENTHESILEA

Perhaps one of the most famous of Amazon queens, a warrior worthy of any of her Greek rivals. With her women she fought during the Trojan War. Quintus Smyrnaeus described her as one "a thirst indeed for groan-resounding battle," she was "the tireless War-god's child, the mailed maid, Blessed by Gods. Her face glowed beauty glorious and terrible."

Vergil detailed that "Penthesilea in fury leads the crescent-shielded ranks of Amazons and blazes amid her thousands; a golden belt she binds below her naked breast, and, as a warrior queen, dares battle, a maid clashing with men."

According to accounts, she was killed by the Greeks. Although some versions state Achilles, as one of her possible murderers, falling in love with her dead body.

THALESTRIS

The Amazons didn't peter out after the death of Penthesilea. A few Amazons, who had remained in their home country, established a power defending itself against its neighbours at the time of Alexander the Great who, according to legend, included the then-current queen of the Amazons, Thalestris who wanted to have a child by Alexander, the mightiest warrior in the world. Sadly, "after obtaining from Alexander the enjoyment of his society for thirteen days, to have issue by him," Thalestris returned home and died.

MYRINA

Another mighty Amazonian was Myrina, who rallied a huge army of 30,000 foot-soldiers and 3,000

cavalry to start her conquests. When conquering Cernê, she was as ruthless as her Greek counter-parts, ordering all males from pub-erty upward killed and enslaved women and children. Some people so feared her that they surrendered their land to the Amazons. After most of her Amazons were killed she conquered Libya parts of Turkey, founding a city named after herself. She died in battle against Greeks.

LAMPEDO AND MARPESIA

Second-century writer Justinus told of two Amazon queens who ruled together and spread rumours that Amazons were daughters of Ares to propagate tales of their warlike nature. Unparalleled warriors. they subdued the greater part of Europe, and some cities in Asia. Marpesia's daughter Orithyia succeeded her mother as queen and attracted extraordinary admiration, not only for her eminent skills in war but for having preserved her virginity to the end of her life. Orithyia was so famous she ordered a retaliatory attack on the Athenians, who had fought for Heracles. She attacked Athens, but they were decimated.

ARTEMISIA

Artemisia I of Halicarnassus inherited her throne from her husband, making her the ruler of the city of Halicarnassus at the time of the Persian Wars. Her story was recorded by Herodotus. She was likely born about 520 BCE in Halicarnassus, near what is today Bodrum, Turkey. Halicarnassus was the capital of the Carian satrapy of the Achaemenid Persian empire in Asia Minor during the reign of Darius I. She was a member of the Lygdamid dynasty of rulers and the daughter of Lygadamis. Her kingdom included the city of and the nearby islands of Cos, Calymnos, and Nisyros. Artemisia I had at least one son, Pisindelis, who ruled Halicarnassus after her death.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion. Whether myth or fact. Recent discoveries of battle-scarred female skeletons buried with their weapons (bows and arrows, quivers, and spears) goes some way to prove that women warriors existed and were not merely figments of imagination, but the product of the Scythian/Sarmatian life-style.

GIVING BLOOD

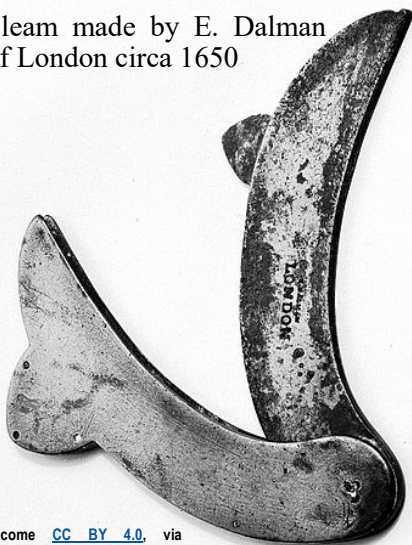
IT'S JUST AN ARMFUL?!

We all experience blood being taken at some point in our lives, but what you might not know is the history and how the person withdrawing your blood does that for a living. Also how the career of a phlebotomist has transformed over the years. Phlebotomy is the act of drawing or removing blood from the circulatory system through a cut or puncture in order to obtain a sample for analysis and diagnosis. Phlebotomy was known as bloodletting when it was first used and dates back to the ancient Egyptians, around 1000 BC. They believed that the process of releasing blood from the body would cure various diseases, such as the plague and acne. Some believed that it could cast out evil spirits. In this case, the procedure would be performed by a priest, who was also the official “physician” during that time.

COMPLEX BLOOD REMOVAL

In Greece, a prominent Greek physician discovered that arteries as well as veins had blood. Previously it was thought that arteries were filled with air and blood didn't circulate through the body. They thought it stagnated in the extremities. During this time, treatment involved giving the patient an emetic to encourage vomiting. Galen of Pergamon developed a complex system for the quantity of blood to be removed and from specific areas of the body. He believed blood should be drained as close to the diseased area of the body as possible, as it was “diseased blood”.

Fleam made by E. Dalman of London circa 1650



Welcome [CC BY 4.0](#) via Wikimedia Commons

BLOOD TRANSFUSION TIMELINE

1616 - English physician Dr William Harvey establishes that blood circulates around the body and brain in a systemic circulation by the heart.

1665 - The first successful blood transfusion between dogs by Dr Lower. Subsequent animal to human blood transfusions resulted in many deaths.

1818 - Dr James Blundell invents an instrument to transfuse blood with successful transfusion to a dying patient. He identifies only human blood can be transfused between human beings.

1901 - Austrian pathologist Dr Karl Landsteiner discovers the ABO blood groups and his research in blood typing earns him a Nobel Prize in 1930.

1914 - Dr Hustin of Belgium discovers how to prevent the coagulation of stored blood outside the human body.

1932 - Russian Dr Andre Bagdarsov develops a way of storing donated blood for 21 days in a blood bottle.

1936 - In 1936 Spanish doctor Federico Durán-Jordà establishes the world's first transfusion service at the start of the Spanish Civil War.

1937 - Both the USA and UK set up their first blood banks.

1939 - The outbreak of WW2 sees an enormous need for transfusions and blood donation centres are set up across Britain.

1940 - Dr Landsteiner and Dr Weiner discover the Rhesus factor in blood.

1946 - The Ministry of Health sets up the National Blood Transfusion Service collecting 200,000 units of blood from 270,000 donors.

1975 - Glass blood bottles are replaced with the plastic blood bags.

1986 - Following the identification of HIV and AIDs at the beginning of the decade, blood donations begin to be tested for the HIV virus.

1991 - Testing for hepatitis C is also introduced.

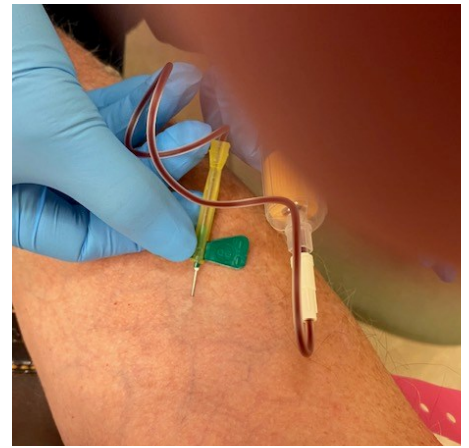
1996 - The National Blood Service (NBS) becomes a truly nationally coordinated body rather than a series of regional blood centres.

2005 - NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) is formed as the National Blood Service and UK Transplant merge.

2018 - 6,000 donors required to give blood daily to meet patients' needs.

2018 - Annually 250,000 new donors to replace those no longer able to donate.

2023 - 1.6 million units are provided thanks to around 900,000 donors.



As time moved on, bloodletting became a common practice and it was believed the disease left your system with the blood.

Pre-nineteenth century, blood was simply thought to be the cause of conditions associated with sickness and ailments. Often, people would have leeches placed onto their skin to “rid” them of their disease.

Barbers were the “bloodletters” also extracting teeth and carried out amputations. The red stripe on a barber pole originated from when barbers performed these services.

INTRODUCING THE FLEAM

By the 1800s the popularity of bloodletting reached an all-time high with physicians making an incision into the artery or vein using a fleam to make shallow cuts. At this time leeches were used to soak up the blood. Bloodletting was used to “cure” diabetes, acne, cholera, asthma, cancer, conclusions, coma, epilepsy and more!

We now know that losing too much blood is not helpful and that bloodletting didn't “cure” any diseases.

Thankfully, modern bloodletting is a completely different scene today. Phlebotomy, the taking of blood, in today's medical sphere has a much different use. It isn't used to simply release blood from the body, but rather to take a sample of blood from a patient for diagnostic purposes which is under the direct order of a physician. Thankfully, today the process of taking a blood sample is safe, quick and pain-free when performed by a certified phlebotomist with the use of sterile tools in a healthcare environment.

It is said that the death of George Washington was a result of bloodletting. It was thought that he had a throat infection, and the physician drained over eight pints of blood to treat the infection. This was too much for his body to handle and he died.



RECYCLING

Historic re use of material was a form of recycling for many reasons but there are dates when it became official.

1031 JAPAN

World's first official recycling declaration during the decline of the Japanese Imperial when court paper production moved from state control into common society. Private owners built paper mills to reuse waste paper to conserve materials and maximise output.

1690 PHILADELPHIA

German born William Rittenhouse built America's first paper mill using old fabrics, cotton and linen to produce recycled paper used for printing and publication, operating until mid 1800.

1776 NEW YORK CITY

The American war of independence led to the first metal recycling to help the war effort. In New York City, a statue of King George III was melted and converted into 42,088 bullets. It would have been more, had the head and other parts not been stolen.

1813 BATLEY YORKS

Benjamin Law invented the shoddy process to recycle wool from clothes and rags. He organised the collection, grinding it to be re-spun into yarn. It grew quickly, and by 1860 was producing over 7,000 tonnes of recycled wool materials a year.

1891 LONDON

Salvation Army's William Booth devised the Darkest England scheme to aid London's poor employing unskilled labourers to salvage all types of disused items they were known as 'Our Household Salvage Brigade'. Taken to a wharf near Battersea Bridge the items were sorted for reuse.

1897 NEW YORK CITY –

Following a recycling decree for New York City residents the city's first materials recovery facility was created to

allow discarded materials to be sorted into recyclable metals, paper, fabrics etc for reuse.

1904 CHICAGO

Large scale aluminium production began in the USA in 1886, with the creation of the Hall Héroult process which quickly led to the first aluminium can recycling plants, the first of which operated out of Chicago, Illinois in 1904.

1940'S RECYCLING

The two world wars forced an innovative approach to resource management as raw materials were running low. Both the US and Great Britain set recycling programmes asking people to be smarter about what they threw away and to separate waste. One example, waste cooking fats to local meat dealers, so they could be recycled into fuel for explosives.

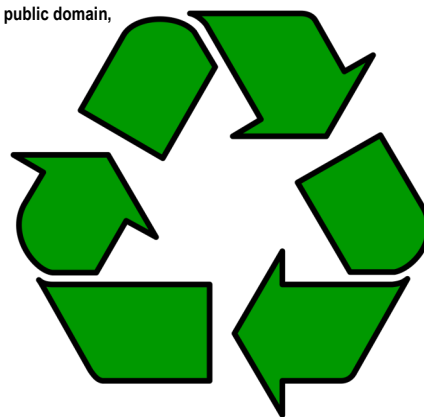
1955 UNITED STATES –

In 1955, LIFE Magazine published a large story entitled 'Throwaway Living', suggesting that single-use items were the norm, and a necessary part of modern life. This helped to feed a less responsible way of thinking when it came to waste, this led to wide scale littering and a lack of forethought about the environment.

1970 UNITED STATES

-The Recycling 'Mobius Loop' Logo

public domain,



The Container Corporation of America held a competition to find a new symbol for recycled paper. 23 year-old engineering student Gary Anderson entered with a simple logo, as above, based on arrows arcing around each other. He won, earning \$2000, and the iconic logo has become ingrained into the public recycling consciousness ever since.

1977 BARNSELEY, SOUTH YORKSHIRE

On 6th June, 1977, Stanley Race dropped an empty jar into the UK's first glass recycling bank. This began the nationwide use of bottle banks. Glass, an infinitely recyclable material, simplified glass recycling.

1983 CANADA

In Kitchener, Ontario, the blue box recycling system was introduced as a way of efficiently sorting and collecting household waste making it simple for the public to recycle plastic, paper, glass, aluminium, steel etc. Adopted and modified it still remains in use.

1991 SWITZERLAND

In 1991 Switzerland focussed on recycling electronics. Importers gathered to tackle electronic waste disposal resulting in the Swico recycling system, collecting and recycled free of charge. It began with refrigerators, but has grown to include all electronic waste.

2003 THE EU

The European Union set the waste electrical and electronic equipment directive (WEEE) as European law. This set goals to improve recycling rates. There has been revisions, and in 2006, the UK introduced its own, expanded variant.

2003 ENGLAND

With the introduction of recycling legislation, it became law that local authorities in England provided every household with the collection for at least two types of recyclable materials by 2010.

2006 UNITED STATES –

Computer manufacturer Dell became the first company to provide free recycling for its products, leading to a greater focus on the manufacturer's part in making more sustainable products and taking responsibility for their disposal. Other manufacturers, including Sony and Apple, have since done the same.

2015 ENGLAND

In a bid to reduce the use of plastic bags across the country, a five pence charge was introduced throughout shops in England, for anyone who wants to use a plastic bag. Since the introduction of the charge, plastic bag use has dropped by around 80% in England.

HIGHWAY WOMEN STEALING ON THE KINGS HIGHWAY

We are all familiar with the romantic folklore figure of the dashing highwayman Dick Turpin an image that has excited the popular imagination for generations. But few ever consider the Highwaywomen like Lady Katherine Ferrers a young, orphaned heiress, forced into a marriage of convenience, who turns to a life of crime with her handsome lover. The gentleman thief with swooning female victims falling under their charismatic spell has been around for centuries.

Female robbers worked the highways, often with their husbands or part of a gang. Sometimes the family would be acting as lookouts or decoys. The Middlesex 1549 to 1688 Session records, refer to cases of women accused of 'robbery with violence' with one woman hanged for robbing another.

In the Old Bailey Proceedings there are around 300 transcripts reporting female highway robbers. One 1744 case, involves a woman, heavily disguised, acting alone and on horseback, displaying all the attributes of a highwayman. But the definition of highway robbery can be on horse back or plain stealing while on a highway as some of those here are. The cases after Elizabeth Tetherington are just a few from the Proceeding of the Old Bailey which lists every court case from 1673.

MOLL CUTPURSE

The Newgate Calendar, an 18th century compilation of accounts of criminals and their crimes, claimed that 50 year old Moll, a passionate Royalist... 'went on the highway, committing many great robberies, but all of them on the Roundheads, or rebels, that fomented the Civil War against King Charles I'. She had a long career of highway robbing but at last, robbing General Fairfax of two hundred and fifty jacobuses on Hounslow Heath, shooting him through the arm and killing two of his servant's horses resulted in pursuit by Parliamentary officers quartering nearby. Her horse failed her at Turnham Green, where they apprehended her, and took her to Newgate.'

SUSAN LADY SANDYS

Susan, Lady Sandys, wife of infamous gentleman robber Sir George Sandys, was implicated in his crimes several times and charged twice, though she escaped her husband's eventual execution fate in 1618. Nevertheless she continued to act as accomplice to her son and even, possibly, in her own right. A 1626 ballad describes her as the 'wicked Lady wife'. Cross-dressing, lawless woman became a feature of sensationalist literature and ballads of the Restoration period

ANNE HECKS

Ann Hecks, was eventually acquitted on insufficient evidence, but the many records suggests that this was probably not a one off. If this is the case in the 18th century, it follows that the same applies to earlier decades, especially during the anarchic years of the English Civil Wars, when people sometimes turned to a life of crime to make ends meet.

KATHRINE FERRERS

But what of the Wicked Lady; Katherine Ferrers? Is it possible that a woman of aristocratic birth, finding herself poverty stricken and abandoned, with very little left to loose, might take matters into her own hands? An English gentlewoman and heiress she was the "Wicked Lady", a highwaywoman who terrorised people of Hertfordshire. before dying from gunshot wounds. There was persistent rumour that she was shot as a highwaywoman on Nomansland Common on the edge of Wheathampstead, and died of her wounds trying to ride back to a secret staircase entry at Markyate Cell. Her body was supposedly discovered wearing men's clothing before her servants recovered it and carried her home to be buried.

ELIZABETH TETHRINGTON , AND AMEY BROWN

Both of the Parish of St. Leonard Shoreditch they were indicted for a robbery on the highway, committed against six year old Elizabeth Garrett, daughter of James Garrett on and took from her one 1 worsted damask child's coat valued at 6 shillings, a child's holland cap value 2 pence. Brown was acquitted and Tetherington guilty and hung.



14 year old Katherine, daughter of Knighton Ferrers of Bayfordbury, who became the wife of Thomas Fanshawe

MARY SKIP.

From the Parish of Stepney she was indicted for robbing Joseph Murrel , an infant, of a stuff coat and petticoat, the goods of Joseph Murrel , senior. The Witness swore, that seeing the prisoner with the child upon a bank, and hearing it cry extremely, she asked her if it was her own child, and she answered it was; whereupon she went away. But then she saw the prisoner strip off the child's clothes she returned and asked the child if that was its mother; to which it replied, no. She then seized the prisoner, with the goods upon her, and found more child's cloths in her lap. The jury found her guilty of the Indictment and the death penalty.

ANNE SMITH.

From the Parish of St. Martin in the Fields she was indicted for robbing, with one Jane Evans Richard a black man on the highway and taking from him a silver collar, valued at 15 shillings, the goods of William Jordan. Mr. Jordan swore, he sent him on an errand, but was met by the prisoner. He said he had been long on his errand, and feared to go home. She told him his collar would betray him, and therefore advised him to let her take it off. Carrying him to a fruit-cellar, the prisoner and Jane Evans broke the collar with their teeth, and took it away. The boy returned home, and told his master of it, who found the prisoner, and brought her before a justice. She confessed, that Jane Evans took off the collar, and that she sold it. The jury , found her guilty of

BREAKING THE CODE OF THE WORLD WAR 1 ZIMMERMAN TELEGRAM

The decryption of the Zimmermann Telegram has been described as the most significant British World War 1 intelligence triumph. It marked the earliest occasion in which a piece of signal intelligence influenced world events.

This secret diplomatic communication issued by the German Foreign Office in January 1917 proposed a military contract between Germany and Mexico if the United States entered World War I against Germany. With Germany's aid it suggested that Mexico could recover Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico. But it was intercepted by British intelligence agents in Room 40 and decoded. It backfired as it helped to generate support for the American declaration of war on Germany in April 1917.

Revelation of the contents enraged the Americans, especially after German State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Arthur Zimmermann publicly admitted on March 3, 1917, that the telegram was genuine.

ARTHUR ZIMMERMANN

The message came in the form of a coded telegram from Arthur Zimmermann, the Staatssekretär (top level civil servant) in the German Foreign Office on January 17, 1917 and was sent to the German ambassador to Mexico Heinrich von Eckardt in the anticipation of the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare by Germany on February 1, which the German government presumed would instigate war with the United States. It instructed Eckardt that if the United States appeared to enter the war, he should propose to the Mexican government a military alliance with funding from Germany.

His office sent the telegram to the German embassy in the United States for retransmission to Eckardt in Mexico. It went by radio passing telegraph cable messages sent by diplomats of two United States and Sweden. Direct transmission of the telegram was impossible as the British cut the German international cables at the outbreak of war which resulted in the German Foreign Office appealing

to the United States to use their diplomatic telegraphic messages for peace messages. President Wilson agreed believing it would sustain more efficient German-American diplomacy to assist his goal of a negotiated end to the war. However, Germany could communicate wirelessly through the Telefunken plant, operating under Atlantic Communication Company in West Sayville, New York which ironically was under the control of the US Navy, which operated it on behalf of the Germans.

TRANSLATION:

We intend to begin on the first of February unrestricted submarine warfare. We shall endeavour in spite of this to keep the United States of America neutral. In the event of this not succeeding, we make Mexico a proposal of alliance on the following basis: make war together, make peace together, generous financial support and an understanding on our part that Mexico is to reconquer the lost territory in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. The settlement in detail is left to you. You will inform the President of the above most secretly as soon as the outbreak of war with the United States of America is certain, and add the suggestion that he should, on his own initiative, invite Japan to immediate adherence and at the same time mediate between Japan and ourselves. Please call the President's attention to the fact that the ruthless employment of our submarines now offers the prospect of compelling England in a few months to make

National Archives and Records Administration, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



Arthur Zimmermann

Also as the route of the diplomatic message also partially went over British submarine telegraph cables, all such messages were examined by British intelligence, in particular the codebreakers and analysts in Room 40 at the Admiralty who broke the code.

On February 19, the telegram was shown to Edward Bell, the secretary of the American Embassy in Britain. Bell was at first incredulous and thought that it was a forgery. But once he was convinced the message was genuine, he became enraged. On February 20, Hall informally sent a copy to US Ambassador Walter Hines Page. On February 23, Page met with British Foreign Minister Arthur Balfour and was given the code text, the message in German, and the English translation.

NEFARIOUS COPY

It was necessary to raise the contents with the Germans and so they did not know the message had been intercepted by British intelligence a copy was nefariously obtained in Mexico City, which enabled Balfour to obscure the real source and the fact the code had been broken. Page then reported the story to President Wilson on February 24, 1917, including details to be verified from telegraph-company files in the United States. Wilson felt "much indignation" toward the Germans and wanted to publish the Zimmermann Telegram immediately but after he had received advice from the British, he delayed until March 1, 1917. The German Foreign Office refused to consider that their codes could have been broken but went on a witch hunt for a traitor in the embassy in Mexico.

ROOM 40 THE BEGINNING OF BRITISH MESSAGE DECRYPTION

Room 40, also known as 40 O.B. (old building), was the cryptanalysis section of the British Admiralty during the First World War.

Formed in October 1914, when Rear-Admiral Henry Oliver, the Director of Naval Intelligence, gave intercepts from the German radio station at Nauener, near Berlin, to Director of Naval Education Alfred Ewing, who constructed ciphers as a hobby. Ewing recruited civilians such as William Montgomery, a translator of theological works from German, and Nigel de Grey, a publisher.

ZIMMERMAN TELEGRAM

It was estimated that during the war Room 40 decrypted around 15,000 intercepted German communications from wireless and telegraph traffic. The most notably being the intercept and decoding of the Zimmermann Telegram.

Prior to the Great War, spying on one's foes generally undertaken for short periods, for specific purposes and only by well-trusted individuals. Few organised intelligence organisations existed across Europe before 1914. Those that did were small and of specific reasons.

But World War I changed this with the establishment of permanent, bureaucratic intelligence organisations. The pressures of war established the need for a systematic approach to the collection, analysis and dissemination of information about the enemy. One of the single important types of intelligence in the Great War was counter-artillery intelligence. The greatest contributor to the rise of modern intelligence organisations, was signals intelligence (SIGINT). While nearly every major European power exploited this new form of intelligence, no organisation better understood the need for systematic intelligence processing as Room 40.

ACCIDENTAL ACQUISITION

Its success was highlighted by the accidental acquisition of three German naval codebooks. The Royal Navy seized the Handelsverkehrsboek from a German merchant ship off the coast of Australia; the Russians shared a copy of the Signalkuch der Kaiserli-

chen Marine (SKM), which was captured from a German ship that had run aground in Estonia; and a British trawler turned over the Verkehrsboek after catching it off the coast of the Netherlands.

Three of many codebooks utilised by the Germans each was of which had a different importance as Germany would replace them at some point during the war. Nevertheless early acquisition of these highly-classified documents, especially the SKM, coupled with German investment into its high seas fleet, encouraged the Admiralty to create an internal intelligence function devoted to German naval activities. The number of intercepted messages which required decryption and analysis demanded a specific organisation. This resulted in Captain-William Reginald "Blinker" Hall being appointed director of naval intelligence in November 1914 and the establishment of Room 40.

MASSIVE FAILURE

While Room 40 struggled due to the technological and mathematical challenges plus a lack of financial resources and human capital from the outset only compounded the failure to detect a raid by the German high seas fleet in December 1914 against the British port towns of Hartlepool, Scarborough and Whitby, which ultimately killed over 100 British civilians and injured more than 500 others.

FANTASTIC SUCCESS

However, Room 40 redeemed itself one month later when it decoded messages outlining plans by the high seas fleet to attack British fishing vessels in the Dogger Bank of the North Sea. This interception and decryption of signals gave sufficient warning to dispatch the British grand fleet, which ultimately contributed to British victory when the Germans were caught off-guard. Room 40 also performed admirably when it intercepted German orders to move the High Seas Fleet into the North Sea in June 1916 in an attempt to lure the Grand Fleet into battle. Another success was providing regular updates about the position of the high seas fleet until the Battle of Jutland began, and provided an accurate assessment of German losses after the battle. Further long-term successes was its use of traffic analysis to detect the



Captain William 'Blinker' Hall

movement of German ships and U-boats. Traffic analysis was necessary when analysts could not break a signal. Instead, by using direction-finding stations, analysts could geolocate the origin of the signal, and thus identify the location of the vessel. Knowing even basic information about the type of signal gave the British an overview, updated daily, of German naval force disposition. This was particularly important during the U-boat campaign when Room 40 could display the location of German submarines and Allied ships on large maps in the Admiralty's War Room, and then identify those vulnerable to attack.

INTELLIGENCE PROBLEMS

A problem of intelligence is the critical decision of how to act upon it, if at all. The few in the government privy to intelligence were anxious that acting on every piece of information would tip off the Germans, that messages were being intercepted inducing them to change their communication practices. Creating more long term problems than it solved! Conversely, others questioned often the ingenious methods which were developed to obfuscate the source of intelligence. Such as the interception and decryption of the Zimmermann Telegram. Ultimately, Room 40 rose to the challenge not only of providing invaluable information about the enemy to the Royal Navy and British government, but of serving as the vanguard of modern intelligence organisations responsible for collecting, analysing and disseminating a plethora of data. The success of Room 40 during World War I was integral to the challenges two decades later, when again Britain turned to its SIGINT analysts to gain an advantage over the enemy.

A FEW SNIPPETS OF INTEREST

The history facts they teach you in school are interesting, sure, but everyone knows that stuff. It's the facts not many people know that make history truly interesting!

For example, did you know that the longest year in history was over 400 days long?! And did you know that Hitler helped design a vehicle that we still drive today?

It makes you wonder how many things about the world's history you actually know...

Well, here are some of the lesser-known history facts that they don't teach you at school!

Prepare to be amused and amazed with this huge round-up of the top 100 craziest history facts you could ever know!

HISTORY'S WEALTHIEST MEN

The nephew and heir of Julius Caesar, Roman Emperor Augustus, had an estimated net worth said to be \$4.6 trillion (£802,923,000,000,000 in 2024) when counting for inflation. Even though his staggering wealth could not be measured he is considered to have been the wealthiest man to ever live in history. Some say that Mansa Musa, king of Timbuktu, was the world's wealthiest man as his wealth was also too great to count.

KING BURIED ALIVE

At age 32, when he died, Alexander the Great had conquered and created the largest land-based empire the world had ever seen stretching from the Balkans to Pakistan.

In 323 BC, after 12 days of excruciating pain, he appeared to have died. Although his corpse did not show any signs of or decomposition for a whole six days. Medical specialists suggest he suffered from the neurological disorder Guillain-Barré Syndrome. They believe that while he apparently "died," he was actually totally paralysed and mentally aware. Therefore he was buried alive!

CAESAR STABBED 23 TIMES.

Due to his coup d'état of the Roman Republic and proclamation of himself as Dictator for Life, along with his radical political views, a group of fellow Roman senators, led by his

best friend Brutus assassinated him on March 15, 44 BC. He was stabbed at least 23 times before finally succumbing to his wounds. He passed away with fabled words to his former best friend Brutus, allegedly being, "you too, sweet child?"

HENRY SHRAPNEL

Shrapnel is named after its inventor. British Army Officer Henry Shrapnel who invented an anti-personnel shell that could transport a large number of 'bullets' to its target before releasing them. This was all at a far greater distance than the current rifle fire at the time.

CALIGULA'S HORSE

Caligula was infamous for his brutality and madness. He fed criminals to animals and had conversations with the moon. But he loved Incitatus his horse so much he gave him a marble stall, an ivory manger, a jewelled collar, and even a house! He made his horse a senator and allegedly planned to make him Consul before his assassination.

RASPUTIN; RUSSIAN MYSTIC

Grigori Rasputin a Russian mystic and supposed holy man became friends with the last Russian Tsar and Tsarina and gained influence over the Russian royals, to the displeasure of members of the Russian nobility. His drunkenness and lechery, led to several

Russian nobles forming a plot to assassinate the man by inviting him to one of their houses, and giving him cakes and wine laced with cyanide; all to no effect, so they shot him. To their horror, he coughed and they realised he was still alive! So they shot him twice more Rasputin two more times and threw his body into the frozen Malaya Nevka River.

BBC AND POSTCARDS

In 1942, the BBC issued a public appeal for postcards and photographs of mainland Europe's coast, from Norway to the Pyrenees as part of an intelligence-gathering exercise. Initiated by Lieutenant General Frederick Morgan, he was searching for the hardest beaches to defend.

The postcards were sent to the War Office and helped form part of the decision to choose Normandy as the location for the eventual D-Day landings.

BYRON AND HIS BEAR

The famous poet was peeved when at Trinity College, Cambridge, would not allow dogs on campus. So he brought a tame bear with him to campus. The college's authorities protested but he won as the rules didn't state you couldn't bring a bear to campus. To parade his victory he walked his bear around campus on a lead!

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

It's fair to say that Edison was one of the world's most notorious intellectual property thieves. Of the 1,093 things he smashed a patent on, he stole most of them off real geniuses like Nikola Tesla, Wilhelm Röntgen, and Joseph Swan – the latter originally invented the lightbulb!

MASTER INTERROGATOR

Hanns Scharff a Luftwaffe master interrogator was against physical torture and brutality; his tactic was being as nice as possible.

A master interrogator his techniques were so successful that the US military later incorporated his methods into their own interrogation schools.

He obtained information from prisoners without guards present, baking food, cracking jokes, drinking beers, and afternoon tea.

POPE GREGORY AND CATS

Pope Gregory IX declared war on cats which he declared to be agents of devil worshippers. Especially black moggies. He declared they should be exterminated.

DEAD SOLDIERS' TEETH.

Dentistry in 1815 wasn't exactly as "intricate" as today. In fact, it was downright savage! After the Battle of Waterloo, dentists flocked to the battlefield to scavenge teeth from the tens of thousands of dead soldiers. They then took them to their dental workshops to craft into dentures for toothless rich people.

EINSTEIN ISRAEL PRESIDENT

In 1952 Einstein, a German Jew, was offered the post of President of Israel but turned it down saying:

"I am deeply moved by the offer from our State of Israel, and at once saddened and ashamed that I cannot accept it. All my life I have dealt with objective matters, hence I lack both the natural aptitude and the experience to deal properly with people and to exercise official functions."

JEMMY WOOD: RICHEST MISER IN HIS MAJESTY'S DOMINIONS

Born 1756 James "Jemmy" Wood inherited the Old Gloucester bank from his grandfather who founded it in 1716. He became nationally known as The Gloucester Miser who it was said was worth at least £900,000 (£100,000,000 in 2024). Other than aristocracy he was regarded to have been "the richest commoner in His Majesty's dominions".

OLDEST PRIVATE BANK

The third child and only son of Richard and Elizabeth Wood he attended either Sir Thomas Rich's School or The King's School both of which are still operating.

The bank which did not offer interest on deposits of less than one year was said to have been one of the oldest private banks in Britain, having survived the financial consequences of the Napoleonic Wars, when many

The premises of the Gloucester Old Bank was a medieval timber building at 22 Westgate Street and consisted of a counter within a larger draper's shop. It was subsequently replaced with a Victorian Gothic building is now a McDonald's restaurant. Below an 1828 oil painting by J.R. Orton after a print by George Rowe. The figure on the doorway is almost certainly Jemmy Wood, the bank's owner.



J.R. Orton after a print by George Rowe, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

other banks went out of business. Operating out of their drapers shop the bank had 3 staff; Wood and two clerks with counterfeit coins nailed to the counter as a warning to customers not to try and pass them off on the bank.

The bank was taken over by the County of Gloucestershire Banking Company in 1838, which eventually became part of Lloyds Bank in 1897. Wood also owned an undertaking business and extensive land in and around the City of Gloucester.

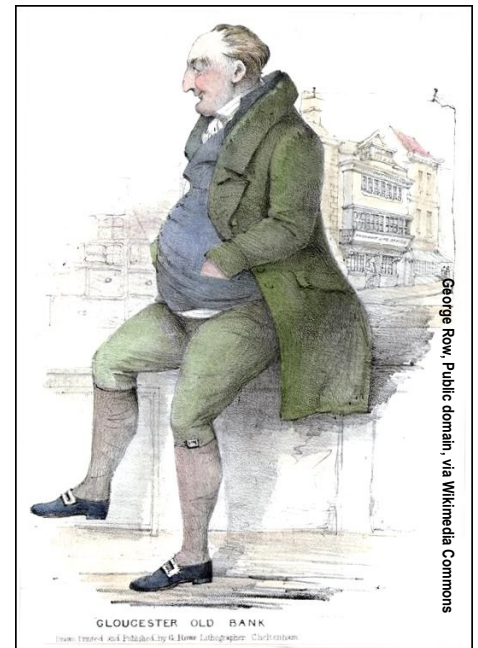
Despite serving as City Sheriff for 1811 and 1813, and Alderman from 1820 until his death in 1836, Wood never appeared in lists of city benefactors. While he never became Mayor because the expense of the job he was not averse to spending other people's money when in 1818 47 people dined, at the city's expense, at a dinner given for the Duke of Gloucester at where they ate a 150 lb turtle given to the city by Lord Henry Howard-Molyneux Howard.

TALES OF MEANNESS

Many tales circulated about his meanness. Visiting the Docks he filled his pockets with pieces of coal that fell off the boats. He also wore the same clothes for years. He walked everywhere rather than pay for a carriage. One Sunday before going to church, he gave his boy servant, a chicken, to roast for dinner. The boy was so hungry he ate most of the chicken. Too late he realised what he had done and saw a bottle labelled Poison which he drank. When Jemmy returned the boy was laid out in the kitchen with the bottle in his hand. It was not poison but Jemmy's favourite brandy, labelled poison to fool the servants so they did not drink it!

VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS

He is synonymous with a Victorian Christmas. It is suggested that Charles Dickens may have been inspired by the stories about the Gloucester Miser to create the character of Ebenezer Scrooge in a Christmas Carol. Also a character by the name of Dismal Jemmy appears in The Pickwick Papers and Jemmy Wood of Gloucester is mentioned in Our Mutual Friend. It has also been speculated that the court case of Jarndyce v Jarndyce in Bleak



George Row, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

A print by George Row of Cheltenham depicting Jemmy Wood with the Gloucester Old Bank in the background

House may have been based on the case that arose following irregularities in his will. Miserly, miserable and maligned: his unique character also inspired Hollywood to make adaptations of the Dickens books.

Many actors have played him – from Alastair Sim to Sir Michael Caine – but like his creator, Charles Dickens, he will forever be connected with Christmas. Sir Michael Caine played Ebenezer Scrooge, a character inspired by James "Jemmy" Wood, in a Muppets' Christmas Carol

HIS COFFIN STONED

He died in 1836 and was buried in St Mary de Crypt Church in Gloucester. The crowd at his funeral reportedly "evinced a levity of demeanour inconsistent with the solemnity of the occasion" and his coffin was said to have been stoned! Problems over his will led to a long court case that soaked up much of his will funds. A codicil was found and wrangling over its authenticity caused the settlement of the estate to be delayed.

An 1814 banknote issued by Gloucester Old Bank



Gloucester Old Bank, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons