

Churchyard brawl uncovered

1718/19/3

A GLOUCESTERSHIRE historian has dug up details of a churchyard brawl on Woodchester's famous Roman pavement.

Brian Frith was researching the Gloucester diocesan archives at the county record office in Alvin Street, Gloucester, when he came across the account of the 1932 incident.

The Rector of Woodchester Parish Church had opened the 1.5 million piece mosaic – little knowing that a local visitor would fight it out on the fragile tiled surface.

All sightseers had to pay a penny entrance fee, but a brawl broke out when a man tried to get in free. Churchwarden Samuel Poole and his wife Hannah challenged the gatecrasher and his son George.

Mr Frith said: "Poole tried to bar their way with a shovel and there was much brawling and bad language, followed by the man allegedly knocking Hannah Poole unconscious to the ground."

The case went to the Consistory Court at the church, but the man was found not guilty.