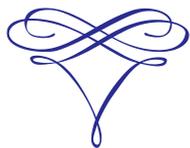


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Editorial

2009 has been a significant year for the Society. This year marks the twentieth edition of the Journal, an annual publication of which, over the years, the membership can be rightly proud. At the Ritherdon Evening the second SWSHAS publication was launched - *A Jacobean 'Market Hall', Bishop's Castle*, by Madge Moran and Henry Hand. This was an interesting and rewarding project and an enjoyable experience to work with the researchers and the publisher.

This year also marked the first award of the *Christopher Train Memorial Shield* to *Mike Greene* for his work on the Lost Roads of the Clive Dynasty and it gives considerable pleasure to publish this piece of archaeological research in our Journal. Two other pieces of original research are also published this year and I am grateful to *Richard Knott* for his article about the Second World War Bomber Command tragedy with a Bishop's Castle connection. Thanks are also due to researchers at *Bishop's Castle Heritage Resource Centre* for Part 1 of the Gentleman Players of Bishop's Castle Bowling Society.

News of research in progress has been provided by the *SWSHAS Research Group*, *Lydbury Field Group* and the *House History Research Group* at Bishop's Castle Heritage Resource Centre. These contributions ably demonstrate that local research projects continue to thrive. I am indebted to *Janet Presbous* for her review of *Border Wanderings* and to *Tony Theobald* for a review of the recently published CD of the Greenwood Map of Shropshire 1827.

Finally, thanks are due to *Janet Presbous*, for the chronicle of Society events and for proof reading the final draft of this edition, also to *Sarah Ellison* of Enterprise House for producing *Journal 20* in its present form.

Patricia Theobald

From the Chairman

It has been a very busy year for the Society and this reflects a good lively organisation which is achieving its objectives of informing members and the public on the history of the area and encouraging research into that history. It is also an aim to publish the results of that research by members.

Our Ritherdon lecture was the highlight of the year, not only for the brilliant lecture delivered by our guest speaker but also for the presentation for the first time of our Christopher Train Memorial Shield for an essay on an original piece of research. It was pleasing to see it won by a member of our society, committee member and leader of the Lydbury Field Group, Mike Greene. The launch of a new SWSHAS publication on the same evening was a great event in itself. To have published this excellent work by Madge Moran and Henry Hand will add to the Society's reputation. I trust you have all bought copies and will treasure them (without lending them to anyone – lent books seldom come back and we want them to buy their own copies, only £4.95 from local newsagents). I must thank Patricia Theobald for her persistent endeavours to see the project through the pitfalls of publication.

The Michaelmas Fair exhibitions have been numerically very well supported. David and Janet Preshous have borne the responsibility of seeing through the assembly and staging of these popular elements of our Society's work for many years now. We hope that they will get willing support from members in their efforts to spread the load by taking responsibility from them for portions of the exhibition. They have set a high standard and we want to maintain that very public part of our activities.

Our research group has continued its work enthusiastically during the year under new leadership. We are very fortunate to have George Baugh to take on the role left vacant by the sad demise of Marion Roberts last year. George brings to the job his great talent for accurate painstaking hard work which has earned him a high reputation among archivists.

From the detailed report on our activities in this journal you can see that there has been a rewarding variety of lectures of a high standard. These have attracted good attendances from largely appreciative audiences. The programme for the coming year looks to be of an equally high standard.

The Society lost a very good friend when Ludlow historian David Lloyd died suddenly in May. David Preshous has written a tribute to him in this journal.

I have been greatly blessed to have the support of a very reliable and hardworking committee. It has been a great pleasure to work with them in such a busy year.

Maurice Young

Lost Leaders In Local History

Last year's Journal contained a brief notice of the sad loss of our Vice President, Marion Roberts. Only recently we have heard of the sudden death of another leading local historian and friend of our society, Dr David Lloyd. We record here our deep gratitude to both, although these brief tributes cannot express adequately our sense of loss at the passing of distinguished scholars and good personal friends.

Marion Roberts

When she first came into SWSHAS, Marion had already enjoyed a distinguished career as Shropshire County Archivist. She remained closely in touch with the county's principal historical organisations and was Hon. Secretary of the Shropshire Archaeological & Historical Society. After helping with the preparations for the Bishop's Castle 1973 Charter Celebrations she became the town's archivist. She was Vice President of SWSHAS and assisted with the editing of our Millennium publication *The Gale of Life*. She was a tireless leader of our Research Group. Marion's selflessness in helping and inspiring researchers and students and her encyclopaedic knowledge of Shropshire history were complemented by warm generosity and a sharp sense of humour.

Dr. David Lloyd, M.B.E.

The sudden death of David Lloyd on 17th May 2009 has meant a great loss to the study of Local History in South Shropshire. David was a native of Ludlow and spent much of his life researching and recording its history. He had a prodigious knowledge which he generously shared with his classes and through his books and guided tours. He was deeply involved with the work of Shropshire Archives and the Shropshire Historical & Archaeological Society, and played a major part in Ludlow Festival. His kindly and gentle spirit inspired great affection and loyalty among those who worked with him. He was a very good friend of this Society and gave us a number of splendid lectures.

These two scholars, and our late Chairman, Chris Train, have contributed hugely to our understanding of the history of Shropshire. Their untimely deaths are widely lamented, but we should rejoice in their legacy and resolve to continue the work that inspired them in their lives.

JDMP.

SWSHAS Events: September 2008 - June 2009.

Sept. 2008: The SWSHAS Exhibition, 'Keep The Home Fires Burning' at Bishop's Castle Michaelmas Fair aimed to show the impact of war through the ages on South West Shropshire. The Army Cadets were involved, and were able to meet former Bevin Boys, members of the Home Guard and Land Girls. Over 700 people visited the displays and slide show over the weekend, and the material was later used at Bishop's Castle Primary School.

Oct. 2008: Peter Duckers, curator of **The Shropshire Regimental Museum**, who had attended the Keep the Home Fires Burning exhibition, described how the museum held collections and treasures from several regiments, now housed together at Shrewsbury Castle. He stressed the strong ties with the KSLI, and pointed out many South Shropshire connections in various wars and campaigns.

Nov. 2008: The AGM began with a tribute by President David Preshous to the late Marion Roberts, SWSHAS Vice-President, who had died in August. The Chairman Maurice Young gave his report on another successful year, the accounts were adopted, and the committee and officers re-elected en bloc. Short illustrated talks were given by three members of **Leintwardine Historical Society**, displaying most interesting aspects of their research and activities, including many publications. They were associated with a new book, *Border Wanderings* by David Evans of Clun, which was on sale.

Dec. 2008: Members enjoyed Maurice Young's **Chairman's Evening**, at which he took them on a fascinating geological and historical tour of '**The Wrekin in History and Fable**', giving detailed information on the archaeology of the ancient fort on the hill's summit, and the legends that surround it. The meeting ended convivially with seasonal refreshments.

Jan. 2009: The Society celebrated the bi-centenary of Darwin's birth by inviting Gareth Williams of Weston Park to talk on '**Charles Darwin and his Shropshire Evolution**'. Growing up in Shrewsbury and related to the Wedgwoods and other landed families, Charles would have seen a variety of private collections of fossils and specimens, and developed his interests in natural history. The talk was illustrated with most interesting portraits of those he corresponded with, and paintings of the great houses he visited.

On **24 January** SWSHAS, with South Shropshire District Council, sponsored a community promotion at the SpArC theatre of **Gone to Earth Remembered and Revisited**, a presentation of archive film, anecdotes, music and memories of the making of the 1949 film in which 300 local South Shropshire people had taken part.

This production, presented by Richard Beaumont, with Val Littlehales, John Kirkpatrick and members of The Border Poets, attracted a sell-out audience, and was much appreciated locally.

Feb. 2009: Helen Cromarty entertained members with her illustrated talk on **Dr. William Penny Brookes and the Wenlock Olympian Games.** Dr. Penny Brookes had been a most energetic and versatile man and his vision of Games to promote 'moral, physical and intellectual well-being' open to 'every grade of man', first held in 1850, had inspired Pierre de Coubertin who instigated the first Modern International Olympic Games in 1896.

March 2009: Over 80 people attended the lecture by Terry Bracher and Roger Emmett, joint authors of **The Civil War in Shropshire.** They were particularly interested in the individuals who took part, and why, and the significant role of women in the Marches area. They showed the gradual collapse of the Royalist grip on Shropshire, as the garrisons were taken by Parliamentary forces. They highlighted local incidents such as the Clun Axe Murders, the siege of Hopton Castle, and the Clubmen of the district, as well as the key local people involved.

April 2009: **The Ninth Annual Ritherdon Lecture** was given by Dr. Roger White on **'The Wroxeter Hinterland'**. He described the course and outcome of this very important project, which sought to throw light on the life of the surrounding countryside which supported the Roman city of Uriconium. He illustrated important archaeological discoveries in some of the many hitherto unexplored sites. The lecture was followed by the presentation of the first **Christopher Train Memorial Shield**, by Mrs. Sheila Train to the winner, Mike Greene. The evening concluded with the launch of a new book sponsored by the Society: *A Jacobean 'Market Hall'*, Bishop's Castle. Shropshire by the authors, Madge Moran and Henry Hand.

July 2009: **The Society's Summer Outing to Gladstone Pottery and Trentham Gardens** – 34 members and friends went by coach to Stoke to visit the museum of the last bottle-kilns and factory of the Potteries – a most interesting tour in which the guides provided an insight into the harsh realities of the lives of men, women and young children and their skills in the making and decorating of fine pottery. The exhibition of tiles and the 'Flushed with Pride' collection of sanitary ware were much admired. The afternoon was spent at Trentham Gardens. Cecily Tilley was thanked for her expert organisation of such an enjoyable tour.

Janet Preshous

BISHOP'S CASTLE MICHAELMAS FAIR, 2009

LOCAL HISTORY EXHIBITION 'BISHOP'S CASTLE – A PLACE IN HISTORY'



The photograph shows the New Town Hall which has dominated the High Street since the 1760s. There is an overpowering telephone pole to the right and a field gun on the cobbles near the House on Crutches which has an upper casement window wide open. The windows to the right of the picture in the background are also open; perhaps this was an early Spring afternoon in the 1920s.

*Copy of a postcard printed by
A Moreton, The Square,
Bishop's Castle*

Our Society is organising another local history display, to be held in the **Cadet Hall, New Street, Bishop's Castle during the Michaelmas Fair (September 19th – 20th)**. The subject will be aspects of the town's history - its origins, establishment as a market town, its Charter, its political history, its railway, its modern social status, and thoughts on its future. This year several groups have been invited to contribute – Lydbury Field Group, The House on Crutches Museum, Bishop's Castle Heritage Resource Centre, Bishop's Castle Railway Society, Town Council, Civic Society, Wasteless Society, and Community Land Trust. The exhibition will be open from 10.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m. Admission as part of the Michaelmas Fair. *For more information or offers of help, please contact Janet & David Preshous (01588 638 363).*

The Lost Roads of the Clive Dynasty

An investigation into the Road System of the Walcot Estate

The Christopher Train Memorial Essay Prize 2009 was awarded to Mike Greene. He is an active field archaeologist who uses interpretive archaeology as a didactic in the promotion and teaching of archaeology and the historic environment. He is a practitioner in the Institute for Archaeologists and chair of the Lydbury Field Group. This essay is reproduced below.

Introduction

The aim of this discussion is to reveal the importance of the road system of the Walcot Estate from the perspective of the practicality of a communication system. The premise of which was to facilitate the efficient working of the estate, as an agricultural business; but also the importance of the assumption and presentation of status by conspicuous consumption. The investigation began as a landscape survey of the roads of the Walcot Estate which consist of rough farm tracks and overgrown lanes, and seem to bear no relationship to any effective communications system. However, the basis of this investigation is the surviving documentary evidence for the Walcot Estate, of which most of the records are kept at Shropshire Archives, and of the surviving archaeology of the structures and earthworks which may be clearly discerned in the landscape.

The initial approach was to study the primary documentary evidence from the Walcot accounts and records. These indicate the extent of the work commissioned on the estate in the major landscape alterations and improvements made by Robert Clive and his son Edward, during the eighteenth century. This period from 1789 to 1803 encompasses a period of great change on the estate.

The Documentary Evidence

The Walcot accounts for 13th June 1789 show that work was done on lowering the level of a road and its metalling. This road began at the stables at Walcot Hall and led to Lower Down. The work was continued in the improvement of the road to Lydbury North in the 'forming and lowering the road' (FA736) this was taken from the Lower Down Bridge to the village. These works were in conjunction with and as a consequence of the landscaping that involved the digging and extension of the Walcot pools forming the two lakes. In 1790, stone was produced to be broken and spread 'on the new road to Lydbury' (FA736). This new road was replacing the now severed road that once led to and passed Lower Gardens. John Watt was paid £1.0.0. on the 25th March 1790 for transporting stones between Lydbury and Walcot for the making of the roads.

The Farm Accounts (FA739) indicates one of the sources for road making was the ‘picking of stones through Walcot Demesne’ (Ill. 1). This would have required a significant number of people physically searching the fields of the estate for suitable stone and would have been a supplement to the stone available from the quarries on the estate. The dates for road stone given in the accounts are: 21st April, 28th April and 5th May 1792. The accounts also record that quarried sources of stone came from the Underhill Quarry (FA739). This account names Maurice Pugh as ‘raising stone in the Underhill quarry and breaking and spreading the same on the road to Lydbury North’ (FA739). A significant expense of the road making process was the carriage of stone. The accounts for the period 1790 to 1793 record that £10.19s. was spent on carriage.

The documentary evidence from the Walcot Farm accounts provides information of not only what work was done, but the location and nature of the work. This has proved invaluable in correlating the documentary evidence with the observable archaeological evidence. The accounts clearly provide a list of the road making programme. The significance of this is that the locations of importance on the estate, and, from the estate, of the late eighteenth century are recorded. Beginning in 1789, at the stables on the road leading to Lower Down; followed in 1793 by, the carriage of stone for a ‘New Road between Walcot and Lower Down’ (FA739).



Illustration 1: The Walcot Demesne, 1827, ref: 552/8/749

A road between the Kempton Gate and the Gate at the Underhill Quarry ran through the Park and Demesne and on the 28th September 1792 payment was made for the 'forming of a road from the New Plantation to Lower Down' (FA739). This 'forming of a road' is later confirmed in the accounts in the 'Forming and stoning the road from Walcot to Lower Down'.

Further to this was the making of a 'New Drive'. This road led from the Park Gate designated as 'above the spring' 'to the nursery at the top of King's Grove'.

The extent of road building and repair, and the resources expended can be seen from the entry in the Farm Accounts of 25th March, 1794. 'Repairing the road from Little Brampton to Kempton through the Park to Lidbury (Lydbury) and Brockton, hauling the soil of the drive, lowering the road in front of the house (Walcot Hall), altering and forming a road from the stables through the stack yard, the same road from the Ring Plantation to Lower Down and also forming the road from Lydbury village to the junction of the road leading from Bishop's Castle to Ludlow on the Hucklemynd' (Rs1365/7). The total cost of these extensive road systems came to £92.16s.9d. In addition to the construction of the roads; in 1792, John Anderson was paid 19s.8d. for 'cutting and squaring of timber for gates and poles' and in the same year, Thomas Hammond, a carpenter, was employed to make and hang twelve gates. These were hung across the roads through Walcot Farm at Lower Down. Each gate cost 10s.6d. at a total of £6.6s. (FA739). The presence of gates indicates that the roads needed to be controlled presumably for the movement and containment of livestock.

The local economic significance of the landscaping is the employment provided for the local community. The labouring activity was continuous and not dependent on the agricultural cycle; excepting that August is missing from the accounts. This may be explained by the labour intensity of the annual harvest which would have required all who were available.

The accounts show a considerable amount of physical labour was employed, and, in a pre-mechanised society, would have been a necessity for the work done.

The Archaeological Evidence

Despite the extensive system of roads built during the eighteenth century, it is evident that the system has suffered neglect since then. The roads where they exist and are still in use demonstrate repair and neglect. Inspection of the composition of the roads shows that they are made of rough stone and rammed gravel. This form of construction, although making for even surfaces for the movement of wheeled

traffic especially carriages, will if not regularly maintained deteriorate due to wear and weathering.

The study of the archaeology revealed the following surviving remains. First, the courses of roads that could be traced in the landscape and the postulated courses of parts of roads that have ceased to be used and recognizable. The roads, where they are still in use consist of rough and rutted tracks or where they have been abandoned, as terracing in the slopes in which they were originally built. However, in the system there are clear gaps. Second, the road system is still defined by the survival of substantial stone gate posts. These have not all survived in pairs, but some survive as single posts.

Illustration 2, shows the eighteenth century road system including the conjectured courses.



Illustration 2: The Road System

Figure 1 below, shows a surviving road that is still in use. This is the road that follows a course parallel to the Great Lake in Walcot Park travelling west. The scene is as close to the original eighteenth century appearance of the road, omitting the cattlegrid. The road as can be seen nowadays is rutted and has a few holes, but the stone and gravel surface is clearly visible. Figure 2 shows the northern Park gate post.

This is a substantial stone post with its cast iron latch bracket still in situ. It was noted that throughout the estate the latch brackets were not the same. The example here is intended for a simple iron latch, whereas others recorded allowed for a bolt and are more substantial. The two iron straps around the post are later additions for hanging another gate on the northern side of the road for a subsequent field.



Fig. 1: Estate road at Walcot



Fig. 2: Stone gate post

Figure 3a below shows the detail of one of the latch brackets although no longer in use since the modern gates do not correspond to the original.



Fig. 3a: Light latch bracket

Figure 3b shows the larger and more robust latch bracket with the socket for a bolt. These were found in clearly agricultural situations and seem to have been intended to secure the gates to prevent unintended stock movement.



Fig. 3b: Heavy latch bracket

Figure 4 shows two corresponding gate posts above the arboretum on the Walcot Estate. The iron gate, as is evident from the Farm Accounts of 1792, is a later replacement. Although similar to the previous posts shown, these do not appear to be associated with a road. However, Figure 5 showing the view to the south reveals the camber of a road leading directly from between the gate posts. The road, now obsolete, is completely green in what is now pasturage. The surface shows no sign of rutting which would indicate little use before it was abandoned and therefore does not seem to have been used for agricultural use.



Fig. 4: Gates to where?



Fig. 5: The camber of the deserted road

In 1793, a new road was built between Walcot and Lower Down. The purpose of this road must be seen as being more than just a utilitarian facility for agricultural use; although it may have served such a purpose. The quality of preservation of this road varies considerably; in parts at Lower Down it is still a functioning road, although greatly degraded, whereas beyond the Motte and Bailey it has all but disappeared. Between Lower Down and Walcot it is now a farm track, but with a definite terrace along the upper east side of Depron Meadow (Fig. 10).



Fig. 6: The estate road at Lower Down

Figure 6 shows the surviving road at Lower Down which has retained certain features of the original road due to the fact it was built over bedrock which has proved quite durable. The camber can be clearly seen, although any gravel surface has been eroded. The ranging rod in the picture is two metres in length. At this point, the one gate post, on the right, has survived although the base of the missing gate post is in situ, as can be seen in Figure 7. The position of this post is adjacent to Down Farm, which, because of agricultural mechanisation, has been deliberately removed for the manoeuvring of vehicles.



Fig. 7: A gate post base

It has been due to the changes in agricultural that have led to the redundancy and removal of some of the gate posts.

As can be seen this part has survived, however, the road that continued past the Motte and Bailey has ceased to be visible. Its former existence can be inferred from the survival of two opposing stone gate posts that now provide access between two fields. The standard of such gate posts providing such a basic function supports the inference that they were intended for a more formal function: that is the route of a formal and metalled road. Further investigation towards Sunny Hill revealed the presence of a road terrace, Figure 8, and leads directly to two more gate posts, the tops of which can just be seen between the pair of trees, leading to the forest road terrace. Figure 9 shows these gate posts between the two fields, yet no road or track are visible. The direction the road took would be difficult to determine without the existence of parchmarks of geophysical surveying; however, a map published in *Documents Concerning the Parishes of Lydbury North and Edgton* (1987) (Illustration 3), shows a road passing to the north of the motte directly from the surviving road at Lower Down. The missing part thus creates a drive that led from Walcot stables through Lower Down and on around Sunny Hill.

At the Walcot end of the road a similar situation exists with the road surviving as a terrace. Figure 10 shows the road terrace, the gravel surface being visible through the ruts, continuing directly past the tree on the right and curving around the tree beyond. The Demesne map of 1847 (552/8/749) does not show the road at this point or at the Motte and Bailey at Lower Down. It may be inferred that by this early date it was already obsolete for its original purpose.



Fig. 8: A road terrace facing east



Fig. 9: Substantial status symbols for farm gate posts?

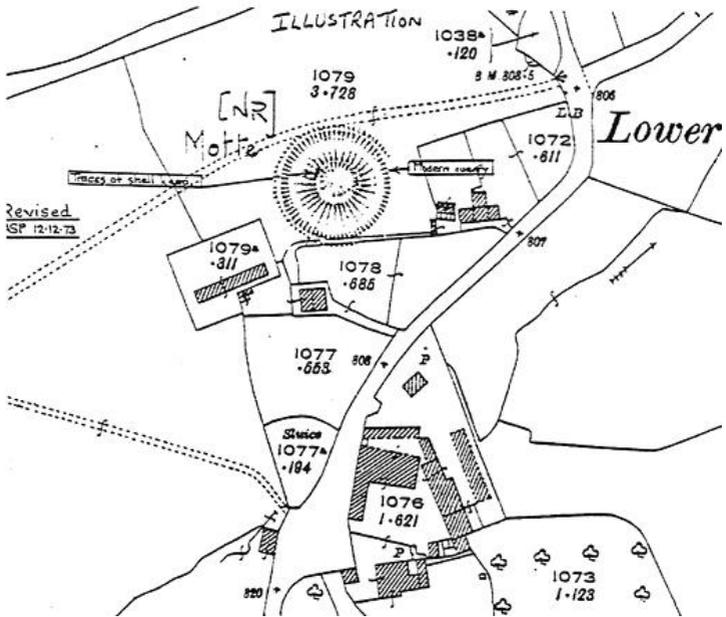


Illustration 3: The lost part of the road



Fig. 10: Road with terrace

Conclusion

The estate roads of Walcot represent a considerable amount of time and expenditure. Although they provided a communication system for the movement of stock and materials by connecting further parts of the estate thus facilitating agricultural practice, they were however of a quality that would not be expected for a purely pre-mechanical agricultural practice. The documents reveal a process of quarrying and gathering of suitable stone, the levelling and digging of the roads' courses, involving terracing and bridge building. The most significant components in this programme of construction, I think, are the substantial stone gate posts with their

cast iron latch brackets which, presumably, would have received solid cast iron bolts.

The main estate road from Walcot to Lower Down and beyond, however, seems not to have been in use for very long, possibly not for more than thirty years and certainly not long enough to have been recorded on the map of 1847. The extent of the Walcot estate roads is not fully known or understood. The evidence available has many gaps with clear road courses seemingly leading to nowhere. Perhaps the system was never fully realized.

So what was the purpose of the road system? The evidence indicates the desire to impress friends and guests by a display of conspicuous consumption through the infrastructure of the estate. This would account for such well-made roads, impressive gate posts and the associated expenditure. It is therefore likely that visitors would have been taken on a grand tour of the estate in the comfort of a carriage pulled along sound, even roads to enjoy the countryside through the Demesne of Walcot. Ultimately, the estate had to reflect the social and political status of the Clive dynasty and their aspiration. An impressive country estate would agree with those aspirations when wealth, land and status meant power.

Mike Greene

Sources

1. *The Walcot Farm Accounts*, 1789 to 1803, References: FA736, FA739, FA748 & Rs1365/7 Shropshire Archives, Shrewsbury.
2. *Documents Concerning the Parishes of Lydbury North and Edgton*. 1987. Local Studies Library, Shrewsbury

Black Thursday: the Bishop's Castle Connection

Richard Knott is a former actor, teacher and management consultant. His most recent book 'Black Night for Bomber Command' was published in 2007. He has also written two books on English teaching, a poetry anthology and an anthology of cricket quotations. Black Night is his first book on an historical theme; a second has been commissioned and due for publication in 2010.

On 16 December 1943 - Black Thursday - more than 300 RAF aircrew were lost on a bombing raid on Berlin. Some were shot down but almost half of them died in a series of crashes in dismal weather in the middle of a wintry night over England. There had been lingering mist and limited visibility when close to 500 Lancaster bombers took off in the late afternoon. The temperature was near freezing. By the time they returned, the fog had come down in many parts of the country making navigation a challenge and landing hazardous. "I am not pressing you to fight the weather as well as the Germans – never forget that": so, earlier in the war, Prime Minister Churchill had instructed Bomber Command's Commander in Chief, Arthur Harris. But for Royal Air Force aircrews flying at night in deepest winter, the weather was a constant danger.



A Lancaster bomber en route to Berlin

Photo: Roger Coulombe

The first aircraft were due back soon after 11 pm, but by then the fog had closed in over much of the eastern half of the country. Finding their home base - or indeed anywhere else - was to be a major problem for pilots and navigators. Moreover, fuel was beginning to run out.

On board one of the Lancasters - JB715 from 12 Squadron based at Wickenby, Lincolnshire - was Sergeant Alfred Broome, a 26 year old Bishop's Castle man, flying on his first operation. He was the gunner located in the mid-upper turret. His pilot, Hugh Ross, was a 23 year old Australian; four of the crew were even younger, while Fred Clark, the flight engineer, was just nineteen. Alfred and the navigator, Arthur Walker, were the 'old men' of the crew, with Walker's thirty one years earning him the nickname 'Pop'.



Sergeant Alfred Broome, 12 Squadron, RAF

The crew had been posted to 12 Squadron at Wickenby from 1667 Heavy Conversion Unit on 16 November 1943 and the following day were in the air on a training exercise. For the next month opportunities for flying were limited by the appalling weather: Ross, Broome and company flew just seven training flights, only two of which were at night. At 16.14 on Thursday 16th December, they set out for the German capital, having never flown in U-Uncle before; indeed, it was a new aircraft which had only been delivered to 12 Squadron two weeks before, on 30 November.

U-Uncle made it back, surviving the baptism of fire in the night skies, but attempting to locate Wickenby in the rapidly deteriorating weather was a challenge of a different order.

Suddenly, at 23.43 Wickenby Control

made fleeting contact and its assessment of the cloud base was acknowledged. Then there was silence.

Two minutes later, the aircraft crashed on a hill some six miles away from Wickenby. The exact location is left blank on the squadron's Operations Record Book. The Lancaster "... broke cloud over high ground at a highish rate of descent, flew into trees, hit the ground and disintegrated" (Letter from the Air Historical Branch, Ministry of Defence dated 12th March 1990). The wreck burned, a fierce glow in the foggy darkness. There was one survivor, the rear gunner, Sergeant Ron Whitley, but by the afternoon of the following day, he too was dead.

JB 715's crew, trained to live cheek by jowl in the confines of a Lancaster, were separated in death. The two Australians were deemed too far from home and were buried in the Commonwealth Cemetery in Cambridge. The rest were scattered across England: Norfolk, Sunningdale, Bournemouth, Whitehaven - and Bishop's Castle.

Alfred Broome is buried in the churchyard of St John the Baptist church in Bishop's Castle, his death having been registered at Louth in Lincolnshire. The grave is watched over by the headstone of his parents, Arthur and Elizabeth who died in their sixties in 1945 and 1950 respectively, both deaths registered locally, Arthur at Shrewsbury and Elizabeth at Clun. The two graves are as one. Alfred Broome was born in 1917 at Wentnor near the Long Mynd and the birth was registered in Clun. He went to school in Norbury a few miles to the west. He worked as a farmhand on the nearby Hughes family farm before joining the RAF in 1937, initially on 'General Duties' before undergoing training to become a Petroleum Driver in March 1939. He lived at 56 Church Street, Bishop's Castle.



Sergeant Broome's grave in St John the Baptist Church
Photo: Thain Hatherly

The navigator of U-Uncle, Arthur Walker, left a young son, Ian, who for many years ran a Yorkshire village pub near to where I live. In loaning me his father's log book, Ian Walker frowned momentarily: 'I've often wondered,' he said, 'whether it was somehow his fault, you know, the crash. He was the navigator, after all.' Arthur Walker had volunteered for aircrew from a position of relative safety. He had been an instructor at Navigation School and had responded to teasing about the 'cushy' nature of a life of instruction by volunteering for operations. Alfred Broome had done the same: having reverted to general duties, he volunteered for aircrew in 1943. He had been with 12 Squadron for a month when he died.

There was some mystery about the exact location of the crash. At Lincolnshire County Archive I found the Chief Constable's Daily Situation Report written on the following day, Friday 17th December: it contained a copy of the letter sent to the Police War Duty Room at the Home Office in Whitehall. *"Another Lancaster bomber crashed near Hainton (40/642037) resulting in damage to some army lorries. A minor road from Torrington to Hainton was blocked until midday today..."* The number was a

Cassini grid reference (the pre-war and wartime method of pinpointing location) enabling me to pin down the precise location of the crash. The village of Hainton is off the main road from Lincoln to Louth: there is just a cluster of houses and it sits on the edge of the Lincolnshire wolds. These are the hills that pilots couldn't see in the fog of Black Thursday.

It seems that JB 715 came down in the grounds of Hainton Hall which had been requisitioned by the Army during the war. So far as the cause of the crash is concerned, the blame, according to the contemporary investigation, was the pilot's: the resulting Form 1180 noted: 'Aircraft broke cloud over high ground and as the descent was unnecessarily fast pilot was unable to check before hitting ground – a/c disintegrated and caught fire.' Official reports tended to blame pilot 'Error of Judgement' rather than other reasons. These reasons were varied and did not always show the RAF in the best light: there was, for example, an implacable, unforgiving determination to take the war to Germany irrespective of the weather – a 'Press on Regardless' attitude. Interestingly the Commanding Officer of 97 Squadron until the day before Black Thursday was a Group Captain Fresson, known to all as 'Press On Fresson.' Crews who returned early, operations not completed, were carpeted, beset with questions and doubts. Other factors concerned the quality of training, the inaccuracy of altimeters, and the inadequacy of fuel allocations. Above all, perhaps, the requirement to fly in the bleakest of weather conditions. What could be worse than being an inexperienced pilot that night, with the fuel nearly gone, a navigator struggling to locate your position, and the hills of Lincolnshire or Yorkshire somewhere out there in the foggy darkness?

Whatever the cause, Alfred Broome and many others did not survive to tell the tale, or live long lives. His niece, Elizabeth Burgwin wrote to me of his death: 'We heard about my uncle's death in a rather funny way. Years ago there was a phone in the village and if anyone rang it someone would answer and get the message to them. A Mrs Winnie Weaver answered it that day and cycled down to our house to say he was missing, presumed dead.' It would have been a grim reminder of the war in the cold days leading up to Christmas 1943, and a hard message to pass on.

Richard Knott

In writing this account I am grateful to: Mrs Elizabeth Burgwin and Mrs Beryl Owen for information about their uncle; the RAF Museum and the National Archives (notably file AIR 27/167); Mr Ian Walker; and Lincolnshire County Archives.

Richard Knott's book about Black Thursday – 'Black Night for Bomber Command' – is published by Pen & Sword. ISBN 978-1-84415-485-2

Bishop's Castle Bowling Society: The Gentlemen Players and their Club – Part 1

This article is an extract from the report on research carried out by three members of the Bishop's Castle Heritage Resource Centre Research Team.

The intention of this study was to repopulate the Club at particular points in time and also determine its age and that of the clubhouse, which is a Grade II listed building. It was agreed that the project would gain from an in-depth and systematic investigation of the main primary sources: the Club Minute Book 1872-1986 and the Castle Hotel Visitors Book 1884-1973. This data was complemented by census information, maps and trade directories, together with some anecdotal evidence and reference to other primary and secondary sources.

The Early Records

There is scant evidence concerning the age of the Bowling Society. However, there are several sources which may provide some indication of earlier periods when this club was active. In previous centuries parish chests contained lists of proprietors occupying pews in the church. From these lists it has been possible to trace the exchange or inheritance of particular sittings, for example in the Parish of Mainstone. One such document – a pewsitters plan for St. John the Baptist Church exists in Bishop's Castle. This plan was drawn up in 1809 for churchwardens, John Hay and Richard Oakley, by Morris Sayce. It describes the proprietors of the different pews or kneelings and lists at pew 41, above the south aisle: "*John Woolaston for Bowling Green.*" Unfortunately, there is no other list with which to make comparison. But, included on the plan is a drawing of the interior of the church showing an earlier date of 1717, which may infer that at least some of these pewsitters could have inherited a pew occupation from that time. If this applied to the bowling green pew it would lend credibility to the notion that a bowling green and society existed from the early eighteenth century. In addition there is a town plan of Bishop's Castle also dated 1809 by Stephens and Sayce which shows the octagonal bowling green in its present position on the site of the castle. From the evidence of these two documents it would be reasonable to assume that organised bowling was being played on this site from at least the beginning of the nineteenth century and probably earlier.

Keeping records has long been an essential part of organised social activity. The existing Bowling Club records date from the late nineteenth century to the present day, covering the period 1872-1986 and are contained in Minute Book III. Apparently, this book is the only survivor of three known sources; Minute Books I and II have not been in the keeping of the Club since the early twentieth century. Because of this circumstance the importance of Minute Book III as a primary

source cannot be expressed too highly. Knowledge of Minute Books I and II rests entirely upon five entries in Minute Book III. The first is entered on the flyleaf of this book as hastily written references to the earlier dates and Club books: “1868 Craston refund.” “WP 1866.” “Newill has the Blue Book, Mr Poole the 2nd Book. This [Minute Book III] is the last [dated] 1881.” Some of these references are easily explained: John Craston was the General Manager of the Bishop’s Castle Railway and a member of the Bowling Society who lived at The Laurels. Mr. J.R. Poole was the landlord of the Castle Hotel and also a member of the Bowling Society. Whilst two members shared the surname Newill, this informal entry probably refers to Henry Starr Newill, a chairman during the period. Interestingly, in 1871 Henry Starr Newill had been asked “to deliver up the Borough books and records” presumably to the Town Clerk of that time; but it would be entirely reasonable for a local solicitor to have the care of local documents. However, from local knowledge, there does appear to have been some unspoken rivalry between one of the town clerks and this solicitor. The Blue Book in question was returned to the club at a later date. However the identity of “WP 1866” remains to be discovered.

The second reference appears in an entry for the 1894 season. It concerns a letter written to the Society President George Herbert 4th Earl of Powis “. . . .to draw His Lordship’s attention to Bowling Club has had the privilege of using the green for bowling for at least two hundred years.” The third reference was made at the beginning of the twentieth century, recording a newspaper report and some correspondence in Minute Book III concerning the origins of the Club. The Shrewsbury Chronicle reported in September 1904: “The Mayor, Alderman Greenhous, gave a most interesting history of the club which is one of the oldest in the Kingdom; its very existence can be traced as far back as the fourteenth century.” Whilst this was indeed a bold claim, it may have had some substance at the time of discussion which has become clouded over time.

Subsequent correspondence and minuted entries tell us that one of the missing books was once again in the possession of the Club at the beginning of the twentieth century: “the old Blue (underlined) Book, containing minutes, names of members etc., previous to 1872 was obtained from Mrs. H. Newill after her husband’s death and was handed over to Alderman Greenhouse by the Sec[retary] (not returned to the Secretary)”. The other errant minute book was held by Mr. Poole, landlord of the Castle Hotel and consequently owner or proprietor of the Bowling Green: “Efforts have been made by the Secretary to obtain the other Club Book from the representatives of the late Mr. Poole but the Book could not be traced.” Again, in 1911 Mr. ‘Secretary’ Lane referred, in connection with lease or rental dues, to “. . . .the relinquishing of an ancient right and privilege enjoyed by the Club for at least two hundred years.”

From Minute Book III it is known that Thomas Griffiths was still chairman of the Bowling Society in 1876, which office he held for 29 years from 1847. Mr. Griffiths was in his early seventies and had been chairman since the age of forty-three. It would be reasonable to assume that he did not become chairman during

his first year of membership. Thomas was the town clerk and he may have been introduced to the Bowling Society several years earlier, perhaps by his own father or friends and colleagues. It is possible that he became a member of the Society circa 1837 in the year when the youthful Queen Victoria succeeded to the throne and when Thomas was a young man in his thirties. Had the father of this town clerk also played bowls on the Bishop's Castle green in the year of his son's birth, then the Bowling Society would have been in existence in 1804, during the reign of George III.

Minute Book III, which records the activities of the club from 1872-1986, is a substantial board cased volume with decorative leather bound spine and edges, with marbled end papers. It measures 9.5 inches by approximately 7.5 inches, and 3¾ inches in depth, (thickness) which includes additional leaves as stated in the minuted request for rebinding. The re-bound volume provided space to record an additional fifty years of Bowling Club activity. As would be expected, the style of hand written entries change over time reflecting the fashion in writing and education during the period. Entries for the nineteenth century accounts are stamped in accordance with the practice of the times. Although the 'hand' of some entries appears hurried it is, for the most, part easy to read. Over time the format of the record changed from late nineteenth century formality to a more relaxed style of reporting.

A novel yet practical theory for determining the age of the Bowling Club Society has been offered by the Club. Minute Book III, begun in 1872, was re-bound in the 1920s with two hundred and fifty additional leaves at a cost of one guinea; this enabled the club history to be recorded up to 1986. In practical terms the format and style of minute or ledger books is unlikely to vary greatly over a century. If the two earlier 'lost' minute books were the same size as the original Minute Book III and had recorded fifty years of entries each, then the Bishop's Castle Bowling Society would have been in existence circa 1770s at a high point in the popularity of the game. Whilst this theory cannot be verified, it does lend some support to the reference above concerning rights and privileges of the Club.

Links With The Castle Hotel

The story of the Bowling Club Society at Bishop's Castle is intertwined with the history of road and rail transport, the Castle Inn, the social and economic development of the town and its population. A strip map of the road from London to Montgomery via Ludlow was produced by cartographer John Ogilby in 1675 (Fig. 1), nearly a century before the local turnpike trust was formed. The building, known then as the Castle Inn (later called the Castle Hotel), was erected in 1719 on a large plot of land encompassing part of the castle site. The proprietor in 1791 was Frances Walters. Earlier in the eighteenth century the inn may have been owned by Charles and Sarah Watters whose name is connected with several properties and

hostelries in the town including “a messuage called the New Club.” The Castle Inn was situated in a commanding position with convenient proximity to the town, the nearby drove road into Wales and coaching roads (40 miles from Worcester and 153 miles from London, with Ludlow 17 miles, Knighton and Church Stretton 12 miles, Newtown 16 miles and Montgomery only 8 miles distant with Aberystwyth and the Welsh coast sixty miles further). The mail coach from London via Oxford, Worcester and Ludlow (on horseback) called and returned three times each week. From Shrewsbury (via horseback) mail was delivered and returned through ‘Welch’ Pool and Montgomery three times each week. Station wagons and carts from Ludlow, Bewdley and Newtown also called on a regular basis. Although there was

a Turnpike Trust Act in 1663, the Bishop’s Castle Turnpike Trust was not set up until 1767-8, in the same decade as the new town hall attributed to architect William Baker. This turnpike trust was divided into three districts with the Bishop’s Castle and Montgomery Trusts holding their meetings at the Castle Inn. Later, in the nineteenth century, a further development in transport brought the “iron horse” to Bishop’s Castle in 1865 in the form of the Bishop’s Castle Railway.

Roads or routes have always been important to travellers, but so also are good amenities. Late eighteenth century Bishop’s Castle offered a variety of services in addition to the several hostelries, inns and alehouses. These services varied from surgeons and lawyers to booksellers and stationers, peruke-makers, glovers, milliners, dressmakers, shoe makers, haberdashers, stay-makers, saddlers, coopers, clock and watch-makers, etc. During the nineteenth century services would have included the requirements of those more modern times and inevitable improvements at the Castle Hotel to more comfortably accommodate the visitor. Inserted in the Castle Hotel Visitors Book at pages dated 1891 is an invoice: “Miss Luther to Davies Legge & Co., September 1846. 1 bonnet for daughter 4/-.” Whilst nothing more is known about the transaction it demonstrates that visitors were using the amenities of the town. Another insertion in the same visitors book at 1889 is an undated fragment of paper, which is obviously part of a letter including instructions to the landlord of the Castle Hotel: “Newtown...they wish to meet at Newtown...the coach to there....so be certain...chaise is ready

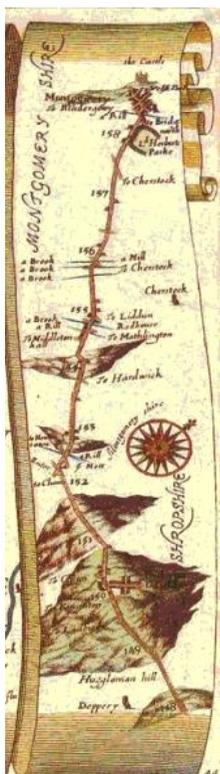


Fig. 1:
Part of Ogilby’s map
of the road from
London to Montgomery,
Bishop’s Castle Section

[by] eight o'clock but if there is not places on the coach...chaise must take them..." There are further words which concern the proper airing of the beds. Castle Hotel licensees during the period included: Richard Bright, Thomas Playfair, Charles Rhodes, James Newberry, John Robert Pool, Edward Jones, Frederick William Jones and Thomas George. Nearby, at "Bishopsmott" there was the added attraction of an entrenched area for horse or pony racing (Fig. 2) which drew crowds into the district. The Bishop's Castle racecourse predated the turnpike trust and was part of the regular local horse-racing calendar until the 1840s. Over centuries, bowling would also have been an established sport in the area - whether on its present site or somewhere else nearby. Entries in the Castle Hotel Visitors Book (1886-1973) mention visiting cyclists, walkers and bowling club teams.



Fig. 2: Part of Greenwood's Map 1827, showing Racecourse

Throughout the country there are occasional examples of hostelries with bowling greens attached. In Bishop's Castle, because the Castle Inn owned much of the castle site, it would perhaps have been natural to establish a bowling green within its grounds as an amenity. Visitors would be able to walk up to the bowling green through the grounds of the hotel. Any green in such a prominent position, commanding a fine view of the surrounding countryside, would have proved an asset for its owner and patrons. Whilst the actual date of the octagonal bowling green is uncertain it does appear on a town plan dated 1809 and is mentioned in trade directories from 1824.

Life in Georgian England was a time of increased prosperity for many due to economic expansion and overseas trading. One of the most popular imported commodities of the period was the tea brought from China, which became a fashionable beverage, especially with the ladies (Fig. 3). Add to this an increased interest in ‘the civilised garden’ that encompassed outdoor buildings from which to enjoy the view, - and the notion of afternoon tea out of doors was born. The proprietors of the Castle Inn would undoubtedly have wished to promote the genteel aspects of life to their patrons. However, this remains a matter of speculation, as also does the advent of the garden building which eventually became the nineteenth century ‘club house’ for the Bowling Society in Bishop’s Castle.

The Bowling Society Club House

A pavilion, or summerhouse, can be described as a light and airy garden building consisting of one or more rooms. It was intended for recreational purposes, especially during fine weather. Examples of such buildings have survived throughout England some of which can be found in Shropshire. The fashionable English interest in tea-drinking, began in the eighteenth century was extended by the Victorians to include tea gardens, and revived again during the post war 1920s and elegant 1930s.



Fig. 3: Tea House at Ilford Manor, Wiltshire.



Fig. 4: Club house before restoration

The eighteenth century passion for garden buildings flourished to such an extent that design or pattern books were created for use at all levels of society, from the great country house to a more domestic environment (Fig. 3). Locally, in Bishop’s Castle, proprietors of the Castle Inn would undoubtedly have been aware of the commercial asset which the grounds of the redundant castle afforded. Consequently, it would seem a natural progression to introduce a small outside building from which to enjoy the summer prospect, perhaps take afternoon tea or watch a game of bowls. The erection of such a building could have taken place at any time during the eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries.

The building, now part of the Bowling Club property (Fig. 4), is situated on the highest point of the remains of the Bishop's Castle inner bailey and may have begun life as a summer attraction for visitors to the Castle Inn. However, in the quest to identify its age, there are some small clues which need to be considered. This "*delightful small building*" is an octagonal brick built, Grade II listed structure. The general listing ascribes an early nineteenth century date, but this is a broad indication. Some of its outside walls have been rendered, there are two 16-pane sash windows flanking the boarded double doors and there is a stone-tiled roof. Restoration work, during the early twenty-first century, revealed that the king post in the roof timbers (which bear several carpenter's marks) is itself octagonal – matching both the shape of the building and the crown green. The interior consists of one room with ceiling cornice and fireplace, but the original chimneystack was removed at an earlier unknown date. This type of garden structure is not uncommon and other examples of octagonal buildings do exist in various regional locations.

In Shropshire, a brick-built octagonal roofed summerhouse was created circa 1730 for the occupants of Number 12 St. John's Hill Shrewsbury. This summerhouse may be compared to the Bowling Club building in some respects, but it is constructed on two floors. Another brick-built summerhouse of a similar age exists off Quarry Place, also in Shrewsbury, but the carpentry here is more elaborately urban and the building itself is square. The overall proportions of the clubhouse building suggest an early date around 1720-30. But several additional age indicators, including the fenestration, were offered for consideration. Indeed it may have been constructed at the same time as the Castle Inn itself. Initially, this suggestion was supported by the 'flush' inset of the windows to the brickwork. However, the presence of dual-opening sash windows and the depth of the glazing bars indicate a date in the later part of the eighteenth century. Alternatively, the windows of the summerhouse could be replacements from the Castle Hotel during a period of renovation.

But, whilst these considerations present a practical solution to period identification, it must be noted that the windows of the Castle Hotel, in the front elevation at least, are of different dimensions to those in the building on the bowling green. In addition, when comparing photographs of the octagonal structure taken at different periods in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries it was revealed that the window glazing in the garden structure was of two different sizes. This would be at variance with the inclination to symmetrical design in an essentially Georgian building. Discussions, during the twenty-first century restoration work at the Bowling Club, also produced a theory that the windows, or replacements, could have been manufactured elsewhere and delivered to Bishop's Castle via the railway system from almost anywhere in the country during the life of the line from Craven Arms which was active between 1865-1935. It was customary to attach a transport label to rail freight, stating the point of departure, destination and route together with



Fig. 5: Bowling Society, 1908 showing the two different windows.

relevant dates. Surprisingly these labels are sometimes found preserved on the item, providing useful information. When the clubhouse windows were removed during restoration work no such evidence was discovered. But in practice any competent local carpenter or joiner could have constructed these window frames. However, observation of two photographs, (1885 and 1908), revealed that the right-hand window consisted of twenty panes of glass, these being slightly smaller than those of the sixteen pane window to the left (Fig 5). Photographs taken later in the twentieth century show both

windows having the same sixteen pane dimension and, although the club minutes are silent on this matter, clearly the right-hand window was replaced in more recent times. In rural areas building techniques would inevitably have been behind the fashion of the day and, whatever the period, the original construction date for the clubhouse remains its own secret for the present.

Reference sources will be printed with Pt 2 in 2010 Ed

Peter Egan, Mark Stenson, Patricia Theobald

Book Reviews

Border Wanderings - Local and Social History of the Marches by ATD Evans

Photographic Studies 1906 –1935 by Robert Newton Heyworth of Knighton, published by ATD Evans, 2008, price £16.95

David Evans of Clun, in association with Leintwardine Historical Society has compiled a remarkable tribute to the work of Robert Norton Heyworth, many of whose pictures appeared in *Memories of Clun* (R.K.Moore, 1986).

The heyday of the picture-postcard was between 1900 and the 1920s - much business and personal communication was conducted through postcards (sent for a halfpenny stamp and delivered next day). R.N.Heyworth set up his photographic

studio in Knighton in 1906, and is remembered as travelling over a huge area of Shropshire, Herefordshire and Radnor on his bicycle with a heavy tripod and camera slung on his back, later with a motorcycle and side-car. He had an eye for the perfect scene, and must also have had a journalistic 'nose' for events and occasions of local interest. He took photographs of churches, chapels, schools, notable buildings, family gatherings and picturesque views.



The Smithy, Chapel Lawn—Heyworth

David Evans, who has his own vast collections of local postcards, has meticulously researched the life and times of R.N.Heyworth and the context of his beautiful pictures. His captions serve as useful reference material for local historians on small towns and villages, and about the mills, blacksmiths and shops. Amongst the more predictable views of churches and street scenes there are some amazing illustrations: Territorial soldiers setting off from Knighton Station in 1914, the inside of the V.A.D. hospital for wounded First War soldiers at Leintwardine; and curiosities, such as the intriguing Equine Pushball - men on horseback competing with a giant 6-foot rubber ball. This book is a delightful and valuable source of pictorial information for the Edwardian era.

Border Wanderings is available locally.

JBP.

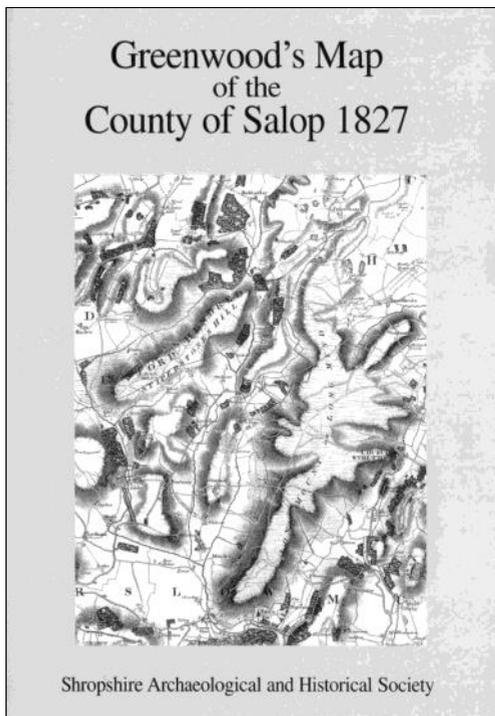
Greenwood's Map of the County of Salop 1827

Paper edition and CD version published by Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society, available from SAHS (Greenwood), 64 Oakley Street, Shrewsbury, SY3 7JZ, price £15 each + £1 p+p.

One of the earliest accurate maps of Shropshire was produced by the Greenwood Company in 1827 as the 29th in their series of county maps, scaled at 1 inch to the mile, and sold by subscription to gentry and landowners in their counties. This reprint has been issued by the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society in a paper edition and as a digitised form (reviewed here) in two versions: the six sheets of the original map as PDF files, and a composite map as an ECW file. The appropriate readers are included on the CD together with instructions for their installation and use. The maps are easily opened with their readers and the user can move, select and magnify portions of the map of interest and print them. The CD contains a critical introduction to the map, its history and shortcomings, and the user should read this before serious use of the map.

The detail on these maps is impressive; magnification up to 600% (6x) retains the quality without excessive pixellation, and the enlarged images are extremely useful for close examination of small areas. However, with all magnification it is important to know the scale. The PDF reader gives a zoom percentage (e.g. 400%, or 4 x magnification, equal to 4" to the mile) but the ECW file is scaled in 'cells' unrelated to map scale. This is easily resolved with the measuring tool applied to the printed scale of the map to give a cell dimension of 24 miles and as the cell co-ordinates are displayed to 2 decimals, the resolution is about 1/4 of a mile for any distance.

Using these maps is fun: looking at one's local area it is apparent that the landscape and road network has changed over time – woods coming and going, new roads replacing old tracks - and it is intriguing to wonder why; changes in agricultural and



Madge Moran is well known for her investigations into the vernacular buildings of Shropshire, and Henry Hand for his general archaeological research and drawings of buildings in particular.

Ed

The book is available from Burway Books Church Stretton, Castle Books Ludlow, Heritage Resource Centre Bishop's Castle, Pengwern Books Shrewsbury, Shropshire Archives, Yarborough House Bishop's Castle. Or by mail order (£4.95 + p + p) from Patricia Theobald, 01588 638555

Research in Progress: 2008-9

SWSHAS Research Group

It is very sad to report that Marion Roberts, who had led the Group for many years, died in August last year, after a short illness. Tributes have been paid to her elsewhere.

It is clear that, under Marion, the Group had - by transcribing and indexing - brought several parish registers for the south-west area of Shropshire to a fairly complete stage for publication; those include the large Clun and Wentnor registers. As things have turned out, however, the materials for these, and other registers, are still in need of retrieval and organization. The transcripts (apart from stray pages of print-outs that have been found) appear to be stored on Marion's computer, and that has been taken away by her representatives so that private files and research files may be separated—with the latter being supplied to the Group; the files also need conversion from Works to Word. Until the files are retrieved further work on the index slips can't proceed. Great thanks are due to Marion's sister and brother-in-law, Catherine and Richard Andersen, for their help in this respect.

Since August I have tried to take Marion's place; and, in order to make progress while the Group's past work is being sorted out, a new register has been started, that of Myndtown, a small parish. Transcribing and indexing is going well, and the next phase of work must be to supply the information which exists only in the bishop's transcripts in Hereford, as some of the Myndtown registers (including that for early 19th-century marriages) have long been lost. Thanks are due to the Rector, the Revd. Norman Morris, and parishioners of Myndtown for their help in making their registers available for the Group.

Other members of the Group have continued working on other projects, and particular mention must be made of the Bishop's Castle burgess list, which

Malcolm Redgrave took over from the late Chris Train. This project, aiming at publication in the Shropshire Record Series (run by Keele University and general-edited by Dr Fran Bumpus), is going well, particularly since—thanks to a tip from Patricia Theobald—two of the old corporation minute books have been located in the Shropshire Archives. Thanks must be recorded to the Archives staff for making it possible to use the frailer of these two books—which, before Malcolm knew about them, had been classified as unfit for production.

George Baugh

Lydbury Field Group: Community Archaeology

The Lydbury Field Group was established in 2003 and is a community archaeology group that is conducting an archaeological research project '**The Making of the Lydbury Landscape**'. The project seeks to investigate the effect on the environment and landscape of the Kemp valley by human agency through the Holocene, to study the origins and development of the village of Lydbury North and to research the changes and effect of the Walcot estate on the lost-mediaeval landscape. The Group is currently concluding further research on the origins and development of Lydbury North and will be followed by investigations of other specific sites identified during the research.

We meet monthly to participate in various archaeological activities such as fieldwalking, surveying and excavating, data processing, finds processing and recording, archival research, talks, guided site and museum visits and group social meetings. Examples are visits to Gladstone Potteries, Red House Glass Cone, Walsall Leather Museum and Jackfield Tile Museum to learn about the processing of the materials used and view examples of the products. Guided tours include prehistoric Stapely Common and Mitchell's Fold Stone Circle, Bury Ditches Iron Age hill fort, medieval Buildwas Abbey and Abbots House, Heath, Cold Weston and Lingen deserted medieval village sites, and Snailbeach Mines looking at and evaluating the archaeological landscape. Talks have included The Sheinton Project by Dr. Trevor Hill with a guided visit, Lydbury North's Palynology by Dr Tim Mighall and the Wrekin and Old Oswestry Hill Fort Projects by Sheila Lewis, educational officer for the Council of British Archaeology West Midlands.

Recently the Group has established the **Lydbury Young Archaeologists Group** to promote and further the interest in archaeology among the young. This has started well with eighteen subscribers at the inaugural meeting in March and a further seven young people coming along to the second meeting. These monthly meetings will teach the children the basics in field archeology and to bring their awareness to the archaeological landscape around them in order that they may learn how to read, interpret and evaluate their historical culture.

The Group has also been invited into a number of local schools to talk about archaeology and will be following these visits by arranging finds identification days where the children can bring along items they have found locally. Additional activities include giving talks to other groups and societies and holding exhibitions displaying the extensive work of the Lydbury Field Group.

For further information and details on joining either of the Groups please contact the secretary Mrs. Greta Howell on 01588 680 223 or email the chairman Mike Greene on terianmikereene@hotmail.com

BCHRC Research Groups

The Bishop's Castle Heritage Resource Centre *House History Research Group* was formed in 2008 and is currently investigating the buildings in Church Street and the High Street. This long-term project: **'From the Church to the Castle'** will be expanded to include Market Square and Salop Street. Another project, **'Bishop's Castle 1901'** is being investigated jointly with the *'Family History Self-Help Group'* also formed in 2008.

Bishop's Castle Bowling Club: since the report last year, research into the history of the club, clubhouse and its membership has been completed to 1945. The full report may be inspected at, or copies purchased from, BCHRC on 01588 630 556 or email: mail@bchrc.co.uk

See article pp 23-30 Ed.

Some Local History Resources

South-West Shropshire Historical & Archaeological Society Library

In the early days of the Society the SWSHAS library was brought to meetings by Jack Foley. Later, it was housed in the Public Library at Enterprise House alongside the Local Studies Collection owned by the county library service. The Society's library of books and papers is there for the use of members and items may be borrowed. *Please use this valuable resource.*

Congratulations to BCHRC

Bishop's Castle Heritage Resource Centre (BCHRC) has been awarded a grant to establish it as a Local Heritage Centre in Association with Shropshire Archives. The Centre holds a growing collection of reference and documentary material available for use and inspection. This grant will be used to make relevant resources of the Shropshire Archive available locally in Bishop's Castle. *Please contact the Centre if you would like to use this resource: telephone: 01588 630 556 or email: mail@bchrc.co.uk*

The Christopher Train Memorial Shields

The Society has established an annual competition for papers on any aspect of local history and archaeology in South West Shropshire to honour the memory of Christopher Train CB, late Chairman of the Society. The competition is open to all comers and consists of three categories -

1. For adults.
2. For Secondary School students (11-18 years).
3. For Primary School students.

Adult entries which should be previously unpublished and show evidence of original research, should not exceed 3000 words. Illustrations, maps, etc, may be included. School students (Primary and Secondary) may enter any original project work or essay (any length) on a local historical or archaeological subject. The SWSHAS Committee will appoint a panel to judge the entries, and the winners announced and trophies presented on the occasion of the annual Ritherdon Lecture (usually held in April). The winner in each category will receive a Shield to be held for that year, as well as a prize of £30. It is hoped that the winning entries may be published in the Society's *Journal*, or as Occasional Papers, though the authors will retain publication rights. The Society hopes to be allowed to retain a copy of each entry for its own records. No reproduction or publication will be undertaken without the author's permission.



Entries must be submitted not later than 1st December 2009 to the Society's Secretary: Mrs. Joye Minshall, 4 Alvaston Way, Rivermead, Monkmoor Road, Shrewsbury, SY2 5TJ. (e-mail: jminshall29@tiscali.co.uk) tel: 01743 235 907). Entries should be submitted anonymously (the author's name and address being enclosed in a separate sealed envelope).

Mike Greene, winner of the 2009 Chris Train Memorial Shield with Maurice Young, Chairman of the Society.

Shropshire Archives

The journey from the establishment of the Shrewsbury Borough Library in 1885 to the creation of the Shropshire Records and Research Centre in 1995 was long. It encompassed the setting up of the Shropshire Records Office in 1946 with its later home at Shirehall and Local Studies which was housed in Shrewsbury Library by 1983. In 2003 Shropshire Records and Research became Shropshire Archives.

Change is inevitable and in 2009 Shropshire Archives was closed for several weeks in June due to refurbishment. It re-opened on Wednesday 8th July. The reception area has been reconfigured to be more welcoming and informative, the lighting has been improved and there are additional network points for computers.



The revised opening times at Shropshire Archives:

Sundays Closed

Mondays Closed

Tuesdays Closed

Wednesdays 10.00 - 17.00

Thursdays 10.00 - 20.00 (original documents must be ordered by 17.45)

Fridays 10.00 - 17.00

Saturdays 10.00 - 16.00 (original documents must be ordered by 15.00 Friday)

Officers and Committee 2009

President:	David Preshous O.B.E.
Chairman:	Maurice Young
Vice-Chairman:	Nick Howells
Hon. Secretary:	Joye Minshall, 47 Alvaston Way, Shrewsbury SY2 5TT
Membership Secretary:	Heather Williams
Hon. Treasurer:	Nick Downes
Journal Editor:	Patricia Theobald
Committee:	Mike Greene, Celia Hooper, Peter Hutton, Graham Medicott, Janet Preshous, Cecily Tilly, Kent Tomey, Alan Wilson, Mike Wise
For membership details apply to:	Heather Williams, Holly Cottage, Prolley Moor, Wentnor. SY9 5EH, Tel: 01588 650 610

*If you would like to make a contribution to the Journal please contact the Editor, Patricia Theobald, at Old School House, Mainstone, Bishop's Castle, SY9 5LQ,
Tel: 01588 638 555: email panda.theobald@virgin.net*

SWSHAS Programme 2009-10

2009

- 19-20 Saturday-
Sept . Sunday
 Cadet Hall,
 New Street
- 21 Oct. Wednesday
 Main Hall
- 11 Nov. Wednesday
 SPARC
- 7 Dec. Monday
 Main Hall
- SWSHAS EXHIBITION**
at Bishop's Castle Michaelmas Fair
"Bishop's Castle—A Place in History"
- Vernacular Wall Painting*
Kathryn Davies
- Deserted Medieval Settlements on the Brown Cle*
Mike Wise
- President's Evening "*Eastward Ho!*
Journeys and Discoveries in East Shropshire
David Preshous

2010

- 14 Jan. Thursday
 Main Hall
- 10 Feb. Wednesday
 SPARC
- 11 Thursday
March Main Hall
- 30 April Friday
 Main Hall
- The Home Guard in Shropshire*
Tim Jenkins
- Chemists and Druggists in South Shropshire*
Tony Theobald
- TITLE TO BE ANNOUNCED**
Hugh Hannaford
- 10th RITHERDON LECTURE**
Welsh Churches
Tim Hughes

Outings for 2010 to be arranged

Unless otherwise stated, meetings take place in the Community College, Bishop's Castle,
and commence at 7.30 p.m.

Visitors are warmly welcomed.