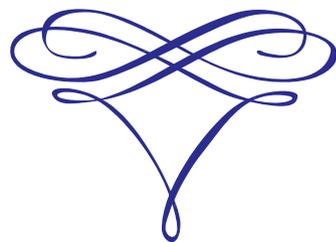


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***Supplements (published under separate covers):***

**Supplement 1: Christopher Train Prize Essays**

**Supplement 2: Index to Volumes 1 - 21**

# Editorial

This year marks the 21<sup>st</sup> edition of the Journal which, from its inception in 1989, has published some eighty original articles by professional and amateur contributors. In recognition of this anniversary the Journal for 2010 has two supplements. Firstly, the Christopher Train Prize Essays, from *Dr. Nicholas Harding, Julu Lund* and *Taliesin Lund*. Secondly, an Index to all the articles published in the Journal. This last will be available for members to collect at the first meeting of the Society in the coming season.

The articles in this edition include a description of the enclosure of Bettws Hills by *Alan Wilson* (see also Journals 9,13,18), a contribution from *Jean Withers*, on the Clunbury Poor Law documents (see also Journals 6,12,15) and part 2 of the Gentlemen Bowlers of Bishop's Castle by members of the *BCHRC Research Group* (see also Journal 20). Your Journal has always supported the publication of research into historical and archaeological matters in our area and new contributions are warmly welcomed.

Among the reports this year we have an account of a visit by members to the Staffordshire Hoard exhibition. We are also fortunate that there are several local groups uncovering historically valuable finds: the Broadward Hoard by the Leintwardine History Society and, closer to home, extensive work by the Lydbury Field Group - the subject of one of our book reviews this year. Another interesting report describes preliminary work on the recently rediscovered Oakeley family vault at the Parish Church, Bishop's Castle. Reports on research in progress, together with an account of the past season's events demonstrate the activities of this Society.

I am indebted to the authors and reviewers for their contributions; to *Janet Presbous* for kindly proof reading the text and to *Sarah Ellison* at Enterprise House who has produced *Journal 21* in its present form.

Patricia Theobald

## From the Chairman

I was immensely pleased to be taken recently on a tour of the village of Colebatch and to be guided through its history from Norman times (it has a motte and bailey) to the present day. We saw the mediaeval Manor House, a fifteenth century ale house, a Quaker Meeting House, the Smithy, the original route of the road and the site of the mill. The most impressive part was that we were guided by two sub-teenage brothers Julu and Taliesin Lund. They had been encouraged to research their home through membership of the Lydbury Young Archaeologists Group run by Mike and Teri Greene of the Lydbury Field Group. Incidentally these two young lads have both been awarded Christopher Train Memorial Shields for their essays. There are few such groups in the country and we are fortunate to have people qualified and willing to foster an interest in historical matters. The future of our Society will be dependent on another generation in due course and it is a very good idea to instil such interest at an early age. The Lydbury Field Group has published the results of the first years of their study of the history of Lydbury North. It is a most worthy book and shows how much practical work has gone into the study.

Our Michaelmas Fair Exhibition 2009, “Bishop’s Castle - A Place in History” was once again a resounding success. This time there was more input from members as David and Janet feel that they cannot continue to undertake such a large project on their own. We do want this prestigious event to go on; it is a major means of communicating with the public. I am sure that people will continue to respond by researching and setting up sections of future exhibitions. This would be an ideal opportunity to share your areas of interest and benefit the whole society.

We received entries in all categories for the Christopher Train Memorial Shields this year and we have published the winning entries as a separate supplement with this copy of The Journal. I trust you will find them interesting and a worthy tribute to our past Chairman.

Under the able leadership of George Baugh the SWSHAS research group continues with its work and is making steady progress. In due course the Society will have access to the data stored on Marion Roberts’ computer. However, the group continues to make its research accessible to members and the general public.

Our programme committee has once again produced a series of talks and lectures for the past season maintaining the customary high quality and variety. Particular mention must be made of the Ritherdon lecture. Tim Hughes was enthusiastic

and exceptionally learned about his subject “Welsh Churches”. Many members will be driving off into Wales with his book in their hands to follow up what he told us. Attendance at all meetings has been good despite poor winter weather. Do reassure your friends that they will find their efforts to attend rewarded. Both our venues are comfortable and warm with no need to wonder which one we will be using because it will be well publicised.

Members enjoyed the outing to Gladstone Pottery Museum where they saw practical demonstrations of the production of ceramics in the midlands. Works of art were produced often amidst appalling working conditions. Some members were able to join a memorable visit to the Anglo-Saxon Staffordshire Gold Hoard. I have reported on this in this Journal. Our outings organiser, Cecily Tilley, is to be congratulated on these well organised trips.

Bishop’s Castle Heritage Resource Centre has received funding to become a Local History Centre in association with Shropshire Archives. SWSHAS has been a great supporter of the Centre and this additional facility will add to its usefulness. From autumn 2010 it will be possible to access from BCHRC copies of locally relevant material held in the Archives, so aiding members’ research without the necessity of journeying to Shrewsbury.

The Society has had another good year and there is some indication of an increase in numbers attending our meetings. Thank you to all who have helped in every way to keep the society lively and buoyant.

Maurice Young

## **SWSHAS Events: September 2009 – May 2010**

**Sept. 2009: The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual SWSHAS Exhibition, ‘Bishop’s Castle – A Place in History’** at Bishop’s Castle Michaelmas Fair attracted 570 visitors over two days. Panels contributed by SWSHAS and other local organisations covered aspects of the town’s colourful history from prehistoric times to the planned medieval town, the Royal Charters, the Civil War, the Rotten Borough, the Bishop’s Castle Railway, and events and personalities. It also presented a picture of the present-day small thriving community.

**Oct. 2009:** Dr.Kathryn Davies, author of **‘Artisan Art – Vernacular Wall-Paintings in the Welsh Marches’** illustrated the colourful and varied types of pattern and design, the methods used and the insight they gave into the lives and aspirations of people in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. She showed several local examples and revealed the existence of a ‘Shropshire Scroll pattern’ unique to the county.

**Nov. 2009:** The **AGM** was followed by a talk by Mike Wise, updating his work on **'Deserted Medieval Settlements on the Brown Clew'**. He illustrated the landscape features which had enabled him to locate clusters of deserted settlements in the area around Cold Weston, and the changing patterns of medieval and later homesteads.

**Dec. 2009: President's Evening.** David Preshous conducted his audience on **'Journeys and Discoveries in East Shropshire'**, showing some fine churches, industrial landscapes and curiosities of the area, as well as three Shropshire giants. 70 members then enjoyed seasonal refreshments.

**Jan. 2010:** Tim Jenkins, Director of Shrewsbury & Atcham Museums - and an audience of 30 (including members of Bishop's Castle British Legion) - braved the snow, ice and fog, for his talk on the role of **'The Home Guard'** nationally and in Shropshire. The Local Defence Volunteers were set up as a response to the imminent threat of airborne invasion. Local volunteers were recruited, with a knowledge of their area, and trained in weaponry and aeroplane recognition. Their vital contribution was to patrol on foot and pushbike, guarding the River Severn, rail-links, pipe-lines, and the many airfields.

**Feb. 2010:** After the Launch of *The Making of the Lydbury Landscape* by Lydbury Field Group. Dr. Tony Theobald spoke on **'Victorian Chemists and Druggists in Shropshire'**. The role of the Apothecary was taken over by the Chemist and Druggist entailing apprenticeship and registration. Over the period eleven names were identified for Bishop's Castle and four for Clun – diversifying as sellers of groceries, wines and spirits, agricultural remedies, and as insurance agents. The large audience was interested to see examples from a Bishop's Castle prescription book, advertisements and other local artefacts of the profession.

**March 2010:** Hugh Hannaford, Community Archaeologist for Shropshire described the work of the **'Acton Scott Heritage Project'** which had involved the whole local community in practical archaeology and research. The excavation aimed to find the site of Mrs. Frances Stackhouse Acton's discovery of a Roman villa in the 1840s, and had unearthed the remains of a bath-house and hypocaust tiles. The project continues.

**April 2010:** Mrs. Sheila Train presented the **Christopher Train Memorial Shield** to Dr Nicholas Harding for his essay on The Oaker Estate. The Junior shields were awarded to Julu and Taliesin Lund, members of Lydbury Young Archaeologists Club (see Journal 21 Prize Essays Supplement). Dr. John Leonard introduced Tim Hughes, author of *Wales' One Hundred Best Churches* who had been invited to give the **Tenth Ritherdon Lecture**. He illustrated the difference between the English churches soaring up with spires and vaulting and the tiny

isolated churches of Wales, often located in places chosen by the early Saints (hilltops, sea-cliffs, islands) to be a sacred space in the landscape, honouring nature. They reflected the Welsh culture in art and poetry and celebrated the working life of godly people. His pictures reminded the 70 members present of several memorable SWSHAS outings – to Abergavenny, Holywell, Pilleth, and Gwydir and Rug chapels.

**July 2010: The Society's Summer Outing was to The Forest of Dean.**

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The Society records with sadness the deaths in 2009 of *Mrs. Marie Algar*, former Treasurer of SWSHAS, and *Mrs. Margot Daniel*, founder member of Bishop's Castle Local History Research Society (the fore-runner of SWSHAS) and loyal member of SWSHAS and the Research Group.

This year's  
SWSHAS Exhibition at  
Bishop's Castle Michaelmas Fair  
in the Cadet Hall on  
**18 & 19 September 2010**  
will be  
**HAPPY  
AND  
GLORIOUS  
South-West  
Shropshire in the  
Victorian and  
Edwardian Era**



**If you have any pictures or memories of this please contact  
David & Janet Preshous at The Paddock, Lydham,  
SY9 5HB Tel: 01588 638 363**

# Discover Shropshire Day: 8 May 2010 at Shirehall

This is a biennial Local History Day held at Shirehall by the Friends of Shropshire Archives. This event affords an opportunity to interact with other organisations within the county and with the staff at Shropshire Archives. Approximately twenty societies associated with local history and heritage provided displays this year, with Bishop's Castle being particularly well represented by SWSHAS, Bishop's Castle Heritage Resource Centre and the Lydbury Field Group.



During the morning there was a stimulating illustrated talk by *Richard K. Morriss* on 'Hopton Castle: The Hidden History'. He spoke with humour about the chequered history of this castle and site from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries, when it acquired a mass grave during the Civil War. After this it became uninhabitable and during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was the haunt of antiquarians and artists who charted its gradual deterioration through watercolours and engravings. By 1945, as a listed building, it was crudely maintained but the deterioration continued.

Hopton Castle Preservation Trust has been working for fifteen years to save this nationally important site. After many setbacks the Trust acquired funding from English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2008. In addition the Channel Four Time Team spent three days at the site in 2009 providing fifty thousand pounds worth of 'free' archaeology together with a detailed report on the results of their investigation. During this time Hopton has gradually revealed the hidden history of its development and decline including its sophisticated tower house, flushing garderobe, brick house and the possibility of the existence of a landscaped garden.

The restoration of the castle provided a challenge to the architect and conservation team and a bold decision was made to repair and replace as necessary; to *'restore with a tender hand and scrupulous regard'* and slight differences to the original which would allow these features to be read. The 'Time Team' television programme about Hopton Castle was broadcast in May and the castle will be ready for public access by October.

After the lunch break short presentations were given by Shropshire Archaeology, Shropshire Archives and a selection of other presenters, including the chairman of SWSHAS, Maurice Young.

The afternoon illustrated talk 'The Castles Of Shropshire: An Overview' was given by *Peter Duckers*, curator of the Shropshire Regimental Museum, who had visited nearly all the 141 castle sites in Shropshire. Some 74 of these were early motte and bailey structures, now mostly insignificant on the ground. A large number were built in the Vale of Montgomery, many by Roger of Montgomery, earl of Shrewsbury who was responsible for fortifying the Welsh frontier. Some started life as ringworks, such as More, which may have also been a planned village. Ruined castle mottes were often made into bowling greens as at Bishop's Castle, while others such as Moreton Corbett and Holdgate were converted into residences.

Editor

*Richard Morriss will be delivering the Ritherdon Lecture in April 2011*

### **The Stiperstones and Corndon Proposed Landscape Partnership Scheme**

This area has a wealth of interesting natural and historic features which makes the landscape distinct. Share your local knowledge. Celebrate and conserve your local landscape.

If you are interested in this scheme or for more details please contact:

Clare: 01588 674094 or email: [clare.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:clare.fildes@shropshire.gov.uk)

Cath: 01588 674094 or email: [cath.landles@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:cath.landles@shropshire.gov.uk)

# The Staffordshire Hoard

SWSHAS organised a party to attend a study day and private visit to the Staffordshire Gold Hoard. We were only able to have twenty tickets. The party went by bus to the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery in Stoke where part of the Hoard was on show. Three hours of lectures by Drs Kevin Leahy and Roger Bland of the British Museum filled a very interesting afternoon.

The Hoard had been found by a metal detectorist, Terry Herbert, who was working with permission in a farmer's field near Lichfield close to the M6 toll road. Nothing had been found there previously and the farmer had recently ploughed the field for the first time after a long period of inactivity. Terry started to find many Saxon gold items and soon called in the Portable Antiquities Finds Liaison Officer as he recognised what he had found was of great significance. Secrecy was maintained with difficulty as the site was very open and exposed and night time treasure raiders were to be discouraged at all costs. The excavation started with a metre square hole but ended up as a 9 x 13 metre trench which yielded 1662 objects of gold, silver and copper. This was far more than the famous dig at the Sutton Hoo ship burial had revealed in 1939.



The Staffordshire Hoard contained 5kg of gold and 2.5kg of silver but it was not the bullion value as much as the artistic and archaeological value which was significant. It throws new light on the period we know as the Dark Ages; this age certainly cannot now be regarded as backward. The reason for the hoard being deposited may never be ascertained. It is unique in that it contains only parts of war gear (but no sword blades) and Christian items (crosses and metal with

biblical quotations). There were no items of dress wear or distinctly feminine items such as have been found in other hoards. The collection may be the result of looting after a battle or it may be a royal treasure collection because the find was in the centre of the ancient Saxon Kingdom of Mercia. The date of its depositing remains a question. Analysis of wood fragments and the gold may give a date for the material but the best ideas at present suggest 650 – 700AD. When a more accurate date is ascertained it may be possible to link the find to battles fought by the ruling kings of Mercia. Experts are working hard to establish the answers to the questions posed by the hoard.

After the fascinating lectures we were allowed a private viewing (all 200 of us) which spared us the 3 hour wait which the 50,000 members of the general public suffered to look at a display of some of the treasures. It was worth the wait. The quality of workmanship is unbelievably high with tiny pieces of garnet and glass worked into the patterns of the gold. The designs of the gold pieces were beautiful with elaborate depictions of birds, fish, horses, snakes and warriors in delightful profusion. Not all pieces have yet been cleaned; even some of those we saw still had mud clinging to them. Stoke and Birmingham are trying to raise the money to buy the hoard. The metal detectorist and the farmer will share the proceeds of the sale which has been officially valued at £3.68 million.

Maurice Young

## The Inclosure of the Bettws Hills

### Introduction

The name of the Bettws y Crwyn parish is Welsh in origin and one definition of the name is ‘the chapel of fleeces’. The ‘village’ consists of a church and a farm on an exposed hill 1400 feet above sea level, the highest parish in England, with distant views into Shropshire and the Radnor hills of Wales. An old drove road passed through Bettws and before that a Bronze Age trade route – the Clun-Clee ridgeway. The area of the parish is about 15 square miles, currently with a low population density of 14 persons per square mile.

Inclosure (or *enclosure* in modern spelling and usage) of the open fields and waste of England took several centuries to complete, and this changed forever the physical landscape and its management. In Shropshire there had been a protracted process of enclosure which, by the nineteenth century, still had a long way to go. The Bettws Hills were one of the last southern areas of the county to be enclosed. (Fig.1.).

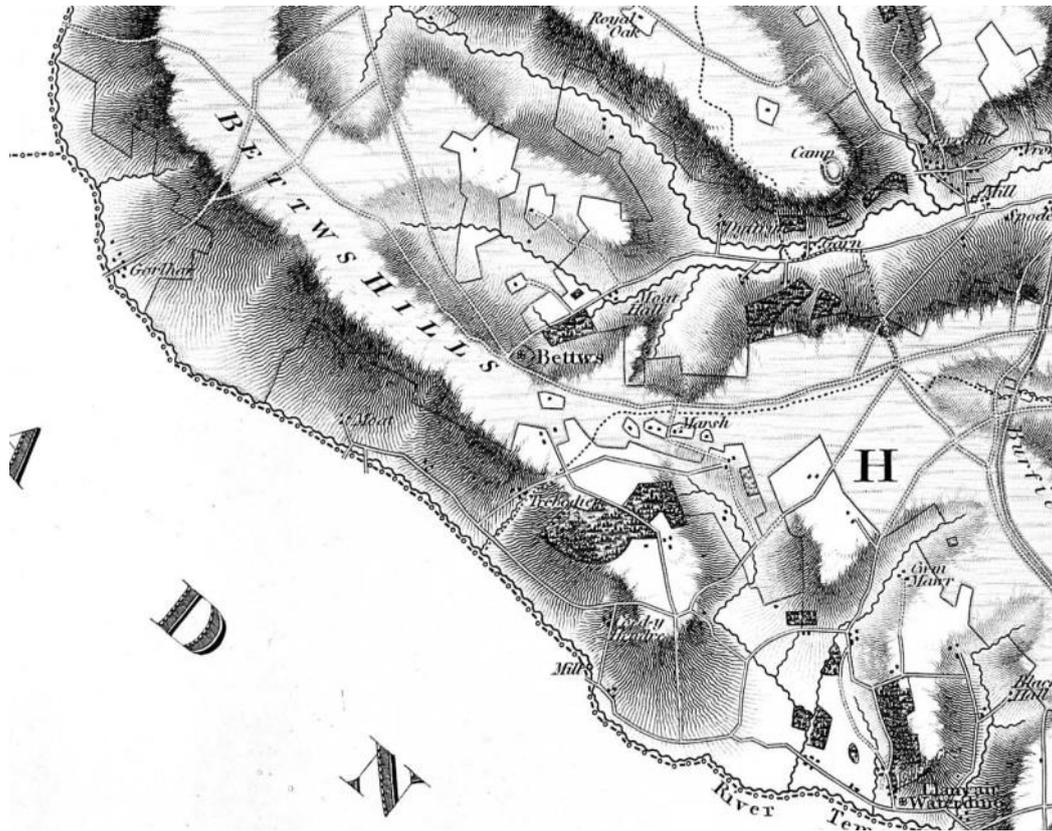


Fig. 1. Part of the Greenwood Map (1827) showing the Bettws Hills before enclosure

Two documents concerning this enclosure survive, and the following notes describe some of the relevant features. In the beginning:

*'Bettws Hills being part of the ancient Forest of Clun situate in the Townships of Rhingantime and Trebrodier in the Parish of Bettws y Crwyn in the County of Salop.'*

And at the end:

*'The Inclosure Commissioners of England and Wales hereby certify this to be a true Copy of the Original award in Testimony whereof they have caused our Official Seal to be affixed this Twelfth day of January in the year of our Lord 1865.'*

These quotations are from the copy of the Bettws award written on parchment, which together with the map (5ft by 10ft, made by pasting paper sheets on a canvas backing) was intercepted on its way from the Parish Council archive - a Quabbs garage - to the county records office. The Parish Council in the early nineteenth hundreds had paid out for two metal tubes, rather like ammunition cases, to contain the documents safely.

Bettws parish is divided into three townships, Rhiwgantime, Trebrodier and Cefn Calanog. Cefn Calanog was swept up in the enclosure of Clun Forest which was completed by 1847. Clun Forest as enclosed was essentially defined by ancient

hunting tradition and included: Mainstone, parts of Newcastle and parts of Clun. Clun Forest was all about hunting. This is illustrated by the condition usually inserted in Forest sale agreements, for example the sale of Pentiken by Charles Walcot of Walcot in 1718:

*'Excepting nevertheless out of this present grant unto the said Charles Walcott his heirs and assigns all Libertyes Royalties and priviledges whatsoever of hawking hunting fishing and fowling in and upon the said premises or any part thereof.'*

The purchaser, John Lloyd, had to tolerate the gentry trampling over his newly acquired land whenever they wished.

Why was the Bettws Hills enclosure made nearly twenty years later than the rest of Clun forest? William Eyton of Gonshall, the Commissioner for the Clun Forest enclosure and several neighbouring ones, undertook the work in the hope of turning a profit; but he didn't. The waste enclosed in Bettws parish alone generated nine new farms of substance. The later Bettws Hills enclosure produced only two: The Gwryd and Mount Flirt, which suggests there was little local willingness to stump up towards the cost of the Act. A third reason, human frailty, is set out in the first page of the Bettws Hills award document:

*'And whereas William Parry deceased was duly appointed the Valuer in the matter of the said Inclosure but died before his duties were fully performed. And whereas Edward Powell Parry of Morfordion in the County of Montgomery Land Surveyor was appointed the Valuer in the matter of the said Inclosure in the stead of the said William Parry and having made the declaration required by the said acts duly held all necessary meetings and drew up and sent to the Enclosure Commissioners for England and Wales his report in writing in the matter of the said Inclosure with a map thereunto annexed.*

*And whereas the said Edward Powell was removed from his office of Valuer before his duties as such Valuer were fully performed.*

*And whereas Charles Mickleburgh of Montgomery Land Surveyor was appointed the Valuer in the matter of the said Inclosure in the stead of the said Edward Powell Parry and made the declarations required by the said Act. And whereas the said Charles Mickleburgh departed this life before his duties as such Valuer were fully performed. And whereas I the said John Mickleburgh have been duly appointed valuer in the matter of the said Inclosure in the stead of the said Charles Mickleburgh deceased and having made the declaration required by the said Acts have in all other respects complied with the provisions of the said Acts. And whereas all such objections as have been made to my said report having been heard and all such inquiries having been made in relation thereto as the said Inclosure Commissioners thought fit the said Inclosure Commissioners have directed me to cause to be drawn up and engrossed on Parchment my award in the matter of such Inclosure.'*

The difficulties ‘saw off’ two commissioners; there was some unsatisfactory behaviour and a suspicion of some nepotism on the part of the Mickleburghs. A strong impression is formed, when reading these documents, that somebody is being paid by the word; although elaborate and repetitive language became a standard feature of later enclosure awards.

The engrossed parchments runs to nineteen sheets laid out in the following standard order: Preamble, Definition of Boundary, Public Carriage Roads, Private Roads, Public Watering Places, Public Quarries, Watercourses, Glebe and Turbaries, Sale of Land to Defray Expenses, Allocation of Mineral Rights, Allotments.

### Definition Of Boundary

Definition of the boundary of enclosure was an important aspect, ensuring that the correct area was enclosed. The template on which this enclosure was developed was the Tithe Map of 1842. ‘*Such objections as have been made*’ would be questioning the division between the existing fields and the waste to be enclosed. The Tithe Map (Fig.2.) is provided to give an impression of the two tracts. The existing fields are principally on the slopes down to the Teme and the meadows on its banks. The northern boundary of the two townships was defined by William Eyton's perambulation around Clun Forest in the 1830s. The waste, subject of this enclosure, lies mainly on high and notably marshy ground.

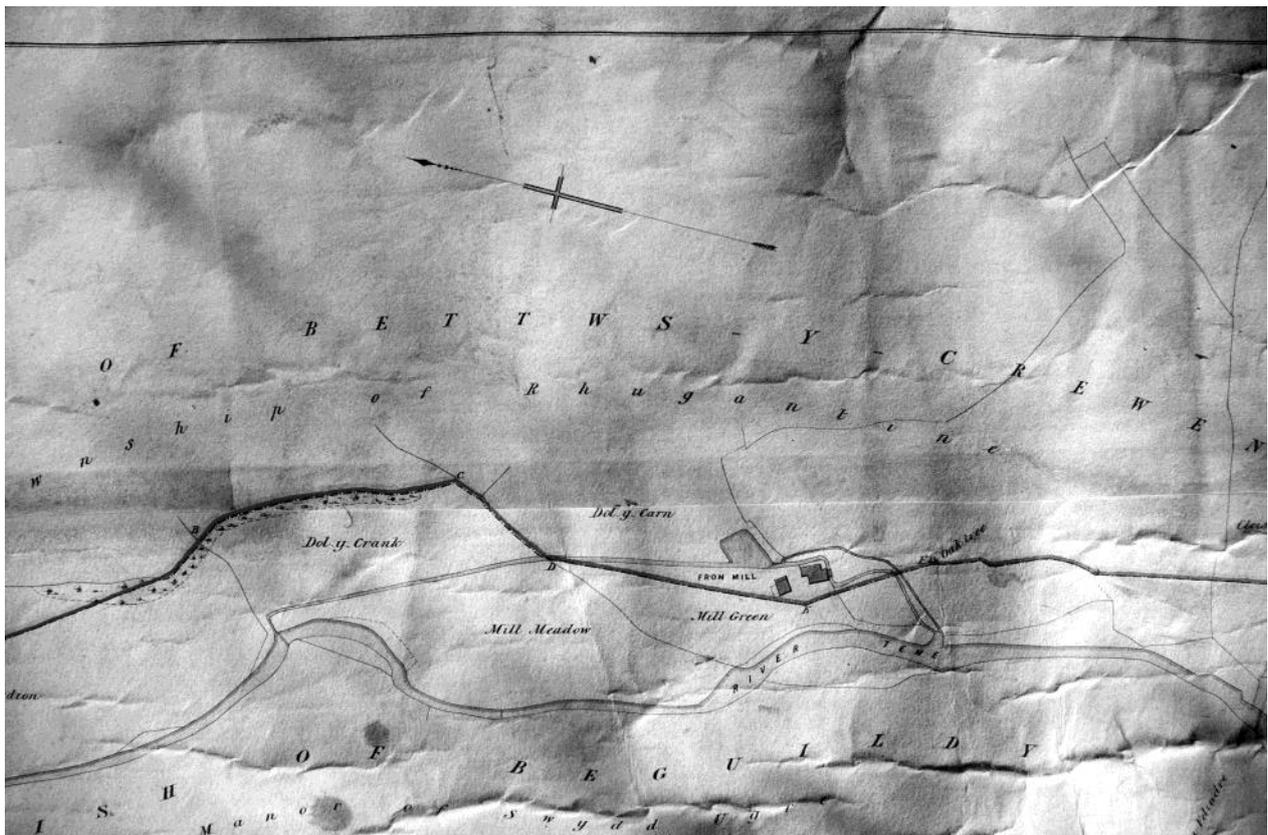


FIG 2: A reproduction of part of the Field Map of Bettws y Crwyn which provides an idea of the ratio between existing fields and Common land to be enclosed. The division from Beguildy in Wales in the southwest corner is the River Teme. The Rhyddwr Brook in the west is also the border. The northern edge of Rhiwgantine Township is the River Clun and the north of Trebrodier is defined by the Cwm Iken Brook. The location of the dotted divisions between the Townships was decided by the Parish officers long ago for reasons which are not now clear.

The western margin of the enclosure was the Rhyddwr Brook and in the south the River Teme. (It is interesting to note in the current Ordnance Survey map that the English Welsh border meanders into the fields on each side, a product of the river altering its line of flow over the intervening years.) In the east there was no argument with Llanfair parish but in the southwest corner there was need for precision in defining the division between existing English and Welsh fields:

*'The said Boundary commences at the point in the mid-stream of the River Teme where the Waters of The Rhyddwr fall into the said river and which is marked A on the Map annexed to the award of the said aforesaid Commissioner and proceeding thence in a Southeasterly direction to a point marked B on the said Map in the Southeast corner of a close called Dol Lhwifidion.....'*

Another fourteen lines of text were required to define three hundred yards of border and make sure Vron Mill was in England, though some of its leat is in Wales. There is an additional large scale map of the area of interest headed Boundary Award inserted within the enclosure map. Part of this is shown in Fig. 3.



*Fig.3. Part of the insert into the main map showing where the boundary needed defining. (A picture of the whole map would be too small to be informative).*

## **Public Carriage Roads**

Changes to the public road network were an inevitable result of enclosure, and the exact line and extent of the roads after enclosure had to be exactly specified. In this enclosure the Commissioner stated, for example:

*'And I further declare that all Public Ways passing over the said lands to be inclosed except such Public Roads and Ways as are hereinafter set out and have been discontinued and stopped up.*

*AND I DO HEREBY DECLARE that I have set out and appointed and do hereby set out and appoint the following Public Carriage Roads and Highways that is to say:*

*ONE Public Carriage Road or Highway of the width of thirty feet numbered 1 on the said Map commencing at point A on the said Map and extending thence in a southerly direction over the Gurid Bank to and terminating at the Pound Gate marked B.'*

There are a further sixteen definitions of public carriage roads within this enclosure award. But five of these roads were declared to be sufficient without making up with hard materials.

## **Private Roads**

The owners of the newly allocated fields had to have access by means of private roads. The Commissioner took the trouble to define what was required.

*'AND I FURTHER DECLARE that I have set out and appointed and do hereby set out and appoint the following Private Carriage and Occupation Roads that is to say:*

*One Private Carriage and Occupation Road of the width of fifteen feet and numbered 11 on the said Map commencing at a point marked C on the boundary of Fron Farm and extending thence in a Northeasterly direction between Allotments numbered 10 and 12 and 18 to and terminating at a point marked E on the Road numbered 1 which said Road is set out for the use of the persons interested for the time being in the Allotments numbered 10, 12 and 18 and Old encroachments on Fron Farm belonging to the Earl of Ponys'.*

There are thirty more definitions of private roads. An encroachment (as described in the extract above) was in a squatter's dwelling erected on common ground without permission.

## **Public Watering Places**

Public watering places were necessary to facilitate the movement of stock between farms and to market especially along the Clun-Clee Ridgeway. The Commissioner states:

*‘AND I DECLARE that I have set out and appointed and do hereby set out and appoint the following Public Ponds or watering places that is to say One Public Watering place of the extent of Twenty perches being part of Bettws Pool and numbered 101 on the said Map with a driftway or approach thereto of the width of twenty four feet and numbered 101a on the said Map which said watering place is at all times hereafter to be maintained and cleansed by the Owner for the time being of the Allotment hereinafter set out and numbered 99’.*

## **Public Quarries**

These quarries were essential because the newly defined roads and tracks needed continual dressing with stone carried the least possible distance. So the Commissioner states:

*‘AND I DECLARE I have set out and do hereby set out and award to the Surveyors of the Highways of the said Parish of Bettws y Crewen and their Successors for ever all those pieces or parcels of ground numbered 21,37,62,71 100 and 124 on the said Map and containing together by admeasurement four acres three roods and twenty eight perches.*

*AND I direct that such Allotments pieces or parcels of ground shall be appropriated and used as Public Quarries for supplying Stone and Gravel for repairs of the Roads and Ways within the said Parish and for the use of the Allottees under this Inclosure for the purpose of building and draining on their lands within the Townships of Rhingantine and Trebrodier but not elsewhere and not for the purpose of sale’.*

## **Watercourses**

Identification and maintenance of rivers and streams was an essential part of enclosure, so they are described with some precision in the award document as well as on the map.

*‘... A watercourse numbered 66a on the said Map commencing at a rill or spring in Corkin's Dingle at or near a point marked L on the said Map in Allotment 66 and passing in a Southerly direction over the said Allotment across Road 67 and Allotment 68 to Lands belonging to the Earl of Powys called Mason's Meadows at a point marked BC on the said Map which said watercourse is set out for the use of and is at all times hereafter to be cleansed and repaired by the Owners for the time being of the said Mason's Meadows.’*

There are three other streams similarly defined. Several others in the affected area are ignored because they run within a single allotment and their condition would not affect other occupiers of the enclosed land.

## Glebe And Turbaries

Glebe land could be an important source of income for the incumbents of parishes and, once again, the exact location and extent had to be specified.

*'... Unto the Incumbents of the parish of Bettws that piece or parcel of Land numbered 98 on the said Map situate by Bettws Pool containing Five acres to be held by him and his successors in the nature of Glebe Land and I direct that all the Fences which have been made at the general expense of the Inclosure shall from time to time be repaired and maintained by and at the expense of the Incumbent for the time being.'*

This is where the present, but not so 'Old Vicarage' was built.

The provision of land for maintenance of the parish poor was another vital aspect, and here the Commissioner awarded land as allotments for turbarry, the cutting and lifting of peat for fuel.

*'... and do Award to the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of the said Parish of Bettws all those pieces or parcels Land numbered 36, 60 and 63 on the said Map and containing together Fifty acres and ten perches to be held by them and their successors in trust as Allotments of Turbarry for fuel viz number 36 containing Twenty four acres and twenty four perches for use of the inhabitants of the Township of Rhingantine and number 60 containing Fifteen acres three roods and nineteen perches and 63 containing Ten acres and seven perches for the use of the inhabitants of the Township of Trebrodier.'*

*'... that the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor may from time to time make such rules orders and regulations for the gathering and taking of Turf as they may deem proper and expedient.'*

These fields are above Mount Flirt either side of the road to the church. It is still possible to see remains of trenches made by the extraction. There follows a paragraph on the maintenance of the fences by the owners of the fields: *'...in consideration of the Herbage of the said Turbaries which I award to them respectively.'*

## Sale Of Land

Enclosure was a prolonged and expensive business; the surveyors and valuers had to be paid and the legal expenses of drafting and obtaining the Act had to be met, usually by sale of land.

*'AND I the said John Mickleburgh do hereby declare that I have in pursuance of instructions duly given in that behalf and with the approbation of the said Inclosure Commissioners sold such parts of the Land to be inclosed as are next hereinafter particularly mentioned for the purpose of raising money to defray the expenses incident to*

*the said Inclosure for the several pieces and to the several persons hereinafter mentioned that is to say*

*UNTO John Naylor of Leighton Hall in the County of Montgomery Esquire at or for the price or sum of Four hundred and forty Pounds all those pieces or parcels of Land numbered 3 and 4 on the said Map and containing respectively Forty seven acres and fourteen perches and fifty acres three roods and twenty eight perches together Ninety eight acres and two perches. And I direct that the fences of the said Allotments numbered 3 and 4 against the roads shall be made and for-ever hereafter maintained and repaired by the owner of such pieces or parcels of land respectively.'*

This values the land at four pounds and ten shillings per acre. In all there were nine sales: 276 acres were sold for £1339, a price of nearly five pounds per acre.

### **Allocation Of Mineral Rights**

Mineral rights could be an important source of income for the lord of the manor and his rights were preserved in the award document:

*'AND I FURTHER DECLARE that I do on request in writing of the said Lord of the Manor and in pursuance of the conditions of the Provisional Order in the matter of the said Inclosure reserve and set out to the said Lord all Mines and Minerals under the lands to be inclosed with full powere for him and his lessees and assigns and his and their Agents Miners and Servants at all times hereafter to enter upon all or any part of the said Land to search for win work and carry away all mines of coal and iron and other mines of minerals of what nature or kind soever.....'* The paragraph continues its survey of the metals in the Periodic table and ends: *'and in every such case the Lord of the said Manor his heirs executors administrators or assigns shall pay full satisfaction for all such damage spoil of ground and other loss to be occasioned thereby.'*

### **Allotments**

We now come to the heart of the document. The waste is divided up and allotted to the existing owners of land in the two townships to compensate them for their loss of grazing rights *'of common'*. The principal farms on the level ground beside the Teme were: Trebrodier, The Moat, Black House Llanmadoc, Rhyd y Cwm and Vron. Above these on the higher ground were smaller establishments: The Cote, Travelly, Llanlwyd, The Cwm, The Rhoss and Pound Gate. ( It is likely that one of these was once called Rhiwgantine but the connection is not known. )

The allotment is set out as a table under these headings: Persons interested, Residence and Description; Allotments (No. on Map / Extent / Fences to be made and maintained by owner); Lands in respect of which Claims allowed and Allotments made (No. on Tithe Plan / Description / Extent / Tenure). Some

twenty three persons can be identified in this award table (see appendix). For example, John and Thomas Lloyd, Freeholders, of Rhyd y Cwm are given five of the newly enclosed fields adding up to 420 acres. The table lists 49 Rhyd y Cwm fields on the Tithe Plan totalling 270 acres; curiously, two small fields are in Beguildy Parish (Wales) - a product of the Teme's meanders mentioned earlier. In contrast Thomas Cadwallader, freeholder at Badgers Moor, with a holding of one acre one rood and ten perches on the tithe plan is allotted one acre and ten perches.

Interestingly, the Earl of Powis was not the major beneficiary of this enclosure. In the Clun Forest enclosure document William Eyton awarded land to compensate for the loss of his hunting interest. He received these allocations in addition to those awarded due to the various farms he owned in Clun Forest. By contrast in the Bettws Hills, where the hunting interest was less, he received only about 240 acres in the enclosure in respect of the several small farms he owned.

## **Conclusion**

The enclosure described here was one of the last to be made in South West Shropshire. The area enclosed was comparatively small and the land was not very productive. Ignoring roods and perches 1928 acres were enclosed in 25 separate allocations. Survival of these documents is due mainly to the cases in which they were stored. Without the protective metal tubes they would have perished long ago.

Alan Wilson  
(with a contribution from Patricia Theobald)

*These documents are currently stored at the Bishop's Castle Heritage Resource Centre.*

## **References**

### *Primary sources*

The Bettws Hills Enclosure Map and Award  
Bettws y Crwyn Field Name Map

### *Secondary Sources*

Hollowell S, Enclosure Records for Historians, Phillimore, 2000  
Leonard J and Wilson A, *Bettws y Crwyn*, in *The Gale of Life*, Logaston Press, 2000  
Stamper P, *The Farmer Feeds Us All*, Shropshire Books, 1989

## APPENDIX

### Bettws Hills Enclosure: Allotments and Tithe holding (where known)

Name	Allotment	Tithe holding
	a.r.p	a.r.p
Cadwallader, Thomas	1.0.10	1.1.10
Corbet, John Howard, Cardiff, Glamorganshire	26.1.10	51.3.15
Evans, Martha, Lane House, near Knighton, Widow	47.1.10	33.0.25
Harris, James Cefnbedw, Beguildy, Radnorshire	4.3.30	2.1.27
Jones, Edward, Moat, Bettwsycrwen, Salop	107.3.24	70.2.37
Lloyd, John and Thomas, Rhydycwm, Bettwsycrwen, Salop	420.1.20	230.1.36
More, the Revd. Robert Henry Goper[?], Presthope, Salop	103.0.26	49.0.24
Price, William, Vron, Bettws-y-crewen, Salop	215.1.9	99.2.3
Price, John, Row, Conover, Salop	2.2.25	3.3.32
Powis, The Right Honorable Edward James, Earl of	61.0.18	215.2.15
Edwards, John, Cwmasened, Beguildy, Salop	8.0.0	10.0.34
Lloyd, Eleanor, Rhydycwm, Bettws-y-Crewin, Salop, Spinster	11.3.15	11.1.37
Bright, Thomas, Clun, Salop	2.0.0	1.2.10
Powis, The Right Honourable Edward James, Earl of	200.3.32	123.4.59
Cadwallader, Margaret, Badgers Moor, Bettws-y-Crewin, Salop, Spinster	0.0.12	0.1.0
Hamer, Thomas, Blackwell Cottage, near Clun, Salop	180.3.7	153.1.26
Frances, Edward, Trebrodier, Salop	4.3.32	7.2.36
Howells, Francis, Gwm Bettwsycrwen, Salop	43.2.16	
Jones Edward, Moat, Bettwsycrwen	264.3.20	256.9.37
Jones, Michael, Gwenthrw, Kerry, Montgomeryshire	35.0.8	35.3.7
Jones, Edward Lee, Presteign, Radnorshire	4.2.30	4.0.38
Lloyd, George, Rhydycwm, Bettwsycrwen, Salop	112.1.21	122.0.1
Lloyd, Charles, Bettws, Bettwsycrwen, Salop	4.2.30	4.0.38
Whittall, John, Travelly, Bettwsycrwen, Salop	3.0.0	2.0.28
Beaumont, James, Badger Moor	0.0.2	0.0.8

Of the 25 awards made, Edward Jones of Moat and the Earl of Powis received two allotments each.

# The Poor Laws, the Parishes and the People

*(based on a study of Clungunford's surviving Poor Law Documents, 1659-1821)*

For over 200 years, between the Poor Law Act of 1601 and the reforming legislation which began in 1834, every parish was expected to provide what was termed 'poor relief' for its own people. The great Elizabethan Act of 1601 expressed its intention eloquently – *'To succour the Distressed is a great and God-like Act and to relieve the Poor is our Duty, both by the Laws of God and Man'*. This worthy aim signalled both an ongoing call on parish resources and a frequent need to make decisions as to who would benefit. The cost was met by all parish householders of moderate means who paid a yearly Poor Rate towards Poor Relief. Strictly applied laws defined those judged to be legitimate inhabitants of a parish and could claim it as their 'home parish'. It was a system which was workable with a fairly static population but once people began to move freely from one parish to another to look for work it became very cumbersome to operate. It demanded a wearisome and unpaid diligence on the part of the parish officials following what they called the 'Parish Law'. Establishing which parish should meet any costs often led to appeals to the County Courts. It became an ongoing source of anxiety for many of those who needed to find employment outside their 'home parish'.

Putting the Parish Law into effect was the duty of officers elected by every parish at a meeting of rateable householders held just after Easter. The customary meeting place was in the Vestry of the Parish Church and the elected committee became known as the Vestry. The Rector, or Vicar, acted as its principal officer and chaired its meetings. Other officials were elected from householders in the parish, usually serving for just one year. There were two Church Wardens, two Sidesmen, two Overseers of the Poor and a Petty Constable. With their Priest, these seven men were the local government officers of their time and were responsible for providing Poor Relief, Keeping the Peace and Maintaining Highways. None of them received payment except for their travelling expenses and these sums were often in arrears. Overseers, also known as Poor Law Officers, had to be approved by the local Justices of the Peace. This done, they were authorised to collect the agreed annual Poor Rate from rated householders and to decide which parishioners needed help, in money or kind. They were expected to keep careful accounts and the paper work involved was considerable. Official forms were required for every decision or action, copies had to be made and often despatched to other parishes. When the Justices of the Peace held their local courts Overseers would attend with those parishioners they or the Church Wardens had called to account and then ensure that the judgement was carried out. When rulings were contested, as could happen when it obliged another parish to accept an additional applicant for poor relief, the judgement of a higher



*Fig. 1 Clungunford Church*

Jones, co-founder of the Museum with Tom Hamar in 1932. Herbert Jones was at that time the Headmaster of Clungunford School. He was also a keen local historian actively engaged in research projects. Tragically, he died suddenly in 1940, leaving many of his tasks unfinished. Ernest Baker began to sort the documents finding them remarkably well preserved though difficult to read, being written in Secretary Hand with Latin legal phrases. A few were of purely family interest, others referred to the establishment of Clungunford's first school and its earliest trustees. Most of them were connected with the administration of the Poor Laws in Clungunford Parish from 1659 to 1821 and especially with the provision of Poor Relief. In 1994 Mr Baker asked me to finish the task he had started and in 1998 the documents, sorted and described were returned to Clungunford Church. In 2007 the Rector transferred them to the Records Library in Shrewsbury.

Poor Law documents would have become obsolete from 1834 onwards when responsibility for Poor Relief was transferred to Unions of Parishes, each with an elected Board of Guardians. Old records, no longer required, stayed with the Vestries. Sixty years later an Act of Parliament of 1894 relieved the Parish Churches of their last responsibilities for civil affairs with the creation of Civil Parishes and Parish Councils. Then followed some transfer of documents from the old administrative bodies to the new. Records connected with purely church matters, such as Church Wardens' Accounts, would certainly have stayed with Vestry records. Those dealing with Highways or Law and Order would have

court was needed. This required attendance at a Quarter Sessions in the nearest County Town with more travelling and more expense.

Poor Law documents belonging to St Cuthbert's Parish Church, Clungunford were found in Clun Museum by Ernest Baker when he was Museum Curator (1989-1997). There were over 200 documents, the earliest dated 1659 and the latest 1821. Why they were stored in Clun Museum remained a mystery. It seemed likely that they could have been gathered together and brought to Clun by Herbert C.

gone to the newly formed Parish Council. Papers relating to Poor Law administration, long outdated, 'fell between two stools', their ownership never satisfactorily resolved. They could have stayed with the Vestry, gone to the Parish Council, or even found a home elsewhere. Their very survival over two centuries has been a matter of chance. They have doubtless been bundled here and there, got mixed up and misplaced countless times. That they form the bulk of the surviving papers in the Clungunford Collection is not surprising because originally there must have been hundreds of them. Excluding copies, there were 170 forms, dealing with as many cases, or hearings. Aside from Appeals against court judgements and requests to Justices of the Peace for Arrest Warrants there were nine different administrative procedures. These were usually conducted in the presence of a local landowner qualified as a Justice of the Peace. Forms were duplicated, if not triplicated, copies being exchanged between parishes. Most of them dealt with a person, or a family, already destitute, or thought likely to become so, and therefore dependent upon parish charity. They show clearly how the administration of the national Poor Laws was carried out in a rural parish in South Shropshire and permit us to enter briefly into the lives of people applying for parish relief. They record personal circumstances and final judgements, attested with the signatures and seals of officers. They also bear the marks, sometimes the signatures, of those appearing at these local hearings or examinations.

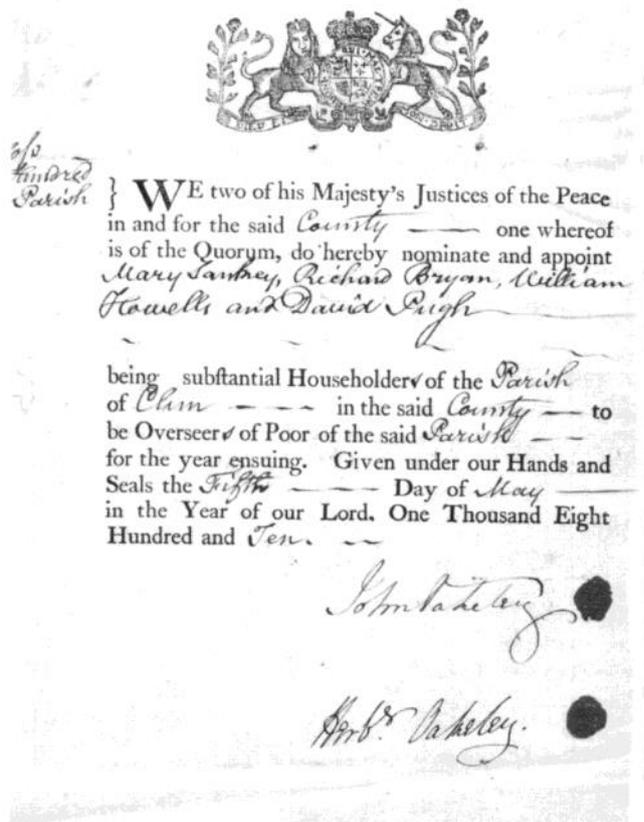


Fig. 2 Example of Overseers appointment

### 1. Settlement Certificates

Every parishioner had the right to claim a legal settlement from the parish of their birth. This was always referred to as their 'home parish', the community which would ensure the provision of Poor Relief in case of need. Exceptions were allowed - a wife received a legal settlement within her husband's parish and children likewise with their parents. An illegitimate child was legally settled in the parish of his/her mother. But problems began when the need arose to leave the home parish to seek work elsewhere. Those who were wise and planned ahead did not leave their parish without a Settlement

Certificate signed by Justices of the Peace, Church Wardens and Overseers and usually two other witnesses. Such a certificate promised to provide Parish Relief in case of need. Support would be given in the home parish or that parish would agree to make regular payments to another parish. There are 23 such Settlement Certificates in the Clungunford Documents all issued in the 18th Century and still bearing the red wax seals of the Parish Officers. They name the parish of legal settlement, the parish of destination, the claimant and any family members. It was the custom to deposit the certificate with the parish priest or church wardens of the parish of destination, which is why such papers are found among the records. They became important documents, essential to resolve any subsequent disputes between different parishes. Most of the certificates show that they acted as 'passports' between Clungunford Parish and parishes even as close as Clun and Stokesay. It was a cumbersome system to operate and it was bound to break down when numbers of migrant workers grew in response to changes in economic circumstances.



*Fig. 3 Agricultural poor*

## **2. Examinations regarding Legal Settlement**

There were means of gaining a legal settlement in a parish other than that of one's birth, but certain criteria had to be met, hence Examinations regarding Legal Settlement. An employment period of one whole year, with wages received for that time, was enough to qualify for a legal settlement in the parish of that employer. Those who were self-employed, or who were married and therefore not receiving any accommodation with an employer, had to state the amount of rent they paid yearly on any property they occupied, and whether they had paid Parish Taxes, or served as an Officer of a Parish. Either of these last two conditions, or the payment of a yearly rent of £10, would serve to qualify for the granting of a legal settlement.

It was common practice in this period to hire labour for one year at a time and usually from the beginning of May to the end of April/beginning of May in the year following. Emphasis was laid on an employment period of one whole year with wages duly received for that time.

Sometimes a hiring would begin and end at Michaelmas (September 29th) which marked the end of much of the seasonal farming work. As may be expected many of those examined revealed hirings which did not fit into the tidy 'year-pattern' required by the Parish Law, perhaps because of death of the employer, sickness of the worker, incompatibility - there would be many reasons. When this happened it became difficult to establish which was the parish of Legal Settlement.

### 3. Removal Orders

Removal Orders were used to transfer those requiring Poor Relief, or judged likely to require it at some future date, to the parish which was judged responsible for their support, that is the Parish of their Legal Settlement. The Orders were framed as a Complaint and the phrases used were 'likely to do harm to the Parish' or 'likely to become chargeable to the Parish'. These Orders were passed between the Church Wardens and the Poor Law Officers of Parishes after the authorisation of one or more Justices of the Peace, who usually added their seal after their signature. A Removal Order could be reversed if good cause be found. An Appeal would be initiated by the Church Wardens and the Poor Law Officers of the Parish concerned and would be heard by a panel of Justices sitting at a Quarter Sessions. They could overturn the decisions made by the Justices of the Peace at the first hearing. However, the costs of an Appeal and the time spent travelling and attending court sessions could sometimes outweigh the costs of providing the contested Poor Relief.

### 4. Pre-Natal Examinations

The birth of illegitimate children to women who were unable to provide for their maintenance was of especial concern to the Poor Law Officers. Resources for the care of mother and child were required from the confinement onwards. In practice, the children became the responsibility of the whole parish, in the words of one scribe, 'a parrish child'. Every effort was made to ensure that the parents made some



Fig. 4 Pauper Mother with Children

contribution. The first step appeared to be the obligation of the mother-to-be to attend a 'Voluntary Examination'. She was asked to name of the father of the expected child/children. It is not clear how often women attended what could be a very embarrassing session in front of one or more Justices of the Peace. But at least Poor Law Officers were forewarned of another call on their resources and given the opportunity to seek out the reputed father.

### **5, 6 & 7. Post-Natal Examinations Filiation Orders and Promissory Notes**

It was customary to issue a Filiation Order, ordering contributions towards child maintenance, on the same day as the mother's Post-Natal Examination. A Filiation Order stated the required weekly contribution which each parent was expected to make towards their offspring's maintenance. Orders were signed and sealed by two Justices of the Peace. Failure to appear before the Justices, or failure subsequently to pay the contribution set, could result in more serious consequences. This would be the issue of a Warrant for Arrest to appear before the local Justices of the Peace, or even requirement to attend the Quarter Sessions at a county town. This was either Shrewsbury or Hereford in Clungunford's case. Rarely, a Promissory Note seemed to be accepted as an alternative to a Filiation Order.

### **8. Bastardy Bonds**

Bastardy Bonds or Agreements were made with the Parish Officers by the fathers of illegitimate children, often with the financial support of a parent or another family member. It was usual to agree a once and for all payment which would free the father of any further obligation to support his child.

### **9. Apprenticeships**

The duties of the Parish Officers to the children left in their care did not end with the finding of foster parents for their early years. They had the problem of ensuring that their charges were placed in some form of employment so that they could achieve independence from parish welfare. It was the custom to arrange apprenticeships for them, sometimes from the early age of seven years. Such apprenticeships were rarely training in a recognised craft. One boy was apprenticed to a Glover in Ludlow but this seemed a rare case. Local people who had sufficient resources were expected to find a place in their household for a boy or a girl and to train them in 'The Art (or Mystery) of Husbandry or Housewifery'.

### **Changing Times**

Increasing population, urbanisation, and a growing migratory workforce eventually led to the collapse of effective poor relief at parish level. Reforming legislation began in successive Acts of Parliament from 1834, and Vestries were gradually relieved of the many duties which had been imposed upon them since

Elizabethan times. Until finally, in 1894, when Civil Parishes were created, the civic duties of Vestries were taken over by Parish Councils which were, of course, completely independent of Parish Churches. Each Parish Priest presided over the last meeting of his Vestry Committee which had served its dual role so faithfully and 'handed over the Chair' to the newly elected Chairman of the Parish Council. Those members of the Vestry who were keen to continue playing an active part in local affairs submitted themselves for election to the new Parish Council. Now more than one hundred years ago, the important role Vestry Committees once played in local affairs has largely been forgotten. A study of the Clungunford Documents permits a glimpse of that world again - a stressful world of hardship and changing circumstances for the rural poor and a demanding life for parish officers struggling to meet the social needs of their village communities.

Jean Withers

## **Bishop's Castle Bowling Society, Part 2**

**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.**

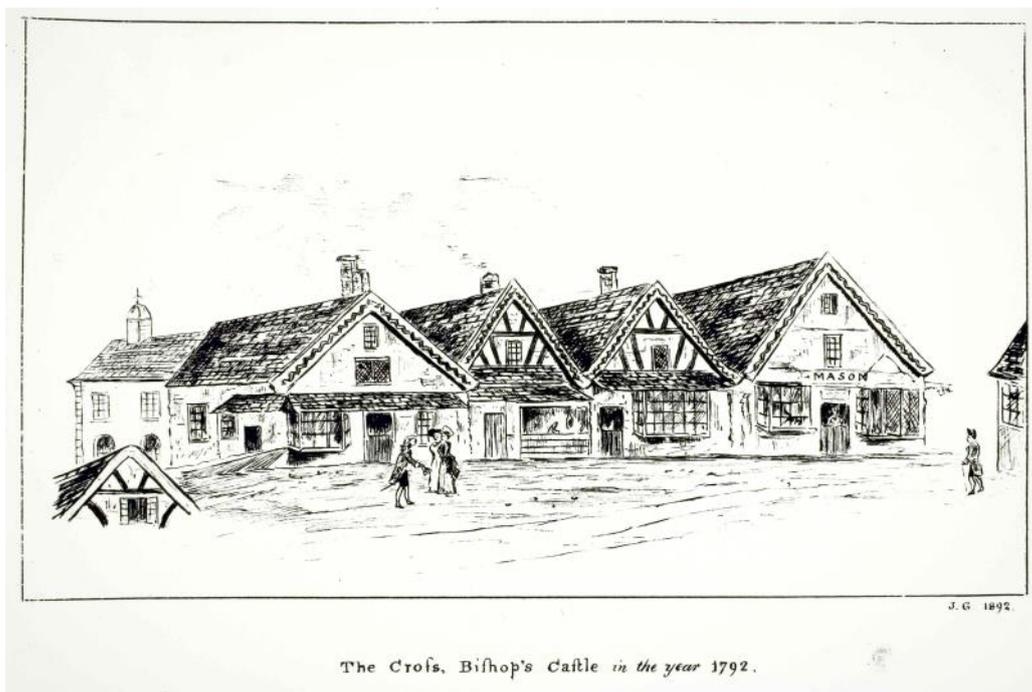
*Part 1 (Journal No. 20, 2009) dealt with the early records, fabric and history of the Bowling Club and its pavilion.*

### **The Membership**

Bowling as an organised game is thought to have existed in Bishop's Castle for centuries. But membership of the Bowling Society during the 'silent' years of the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is impossible to recreate. However, there are some sources which have been consulted in an attempt to repopulate the green with players for these earlier periods:

From 1662, a tax was levied by government for every hearth contained in a dwelling. Whilst surviving listings do not contain specific mention of occupation or wealth, there is a broad indication of status by virtue of the recorded taxation. The Bishop's Castle hearth tax for 1672 lists 164 hearths in 66 dwellings, occupied by taxpayers paying two shillings for every hearth. As a possible indicator of socio-economic status the number of hearths contained in these dwellings ranges from five houses with 6, 7, 9 and 10 hearths respectively with two houses containing 5 and three houses with 4 hearths. At the lower end of the listing, eighteen dwellings contained 3 hearths whilst seventeen had 2 hearths. As might be expected, the highest number recorded was those 22 dwellings containing only one hearth. Of the recorded taxpayers in the town, eleven were

female and fifty-five male; interestingly only the 10-hearth dwelling recorded joint taxpayers – ‘Mr. Easey Thomas and Mrs. Masson.’ From this listing, which may be in topographical order, there is no other indication of status outside the number of hearths. But, of the fifty-five male taxpayers, 11 males are accorded the title ‘Mr.’, 2 are styled ‘esquire’ and 2 have the assigned occupations of butcher and corryer. If it is assumed that the game of bowls was enjoyed by at least some of the hearth tax paying male population then surely either Mr. Easey Thomas, Thomas Crompe, Esq., or Mr. Edward Wollaston - enjoying 10, 9 and 7 hearths respectively - could be patrons or even presidents of a bowling society. Alternatively, some of the taxpayers share surname connection with club membership lists at later periods including the following names: Ambler, Bird, Bowen, Minton, Sayce and Wollaston. However, whilst it is tempting to consider that, during the later seventeenth century, local gentlemen bowlers were drawn in part from a particular section of society it must be remembered that this is only a speculation.

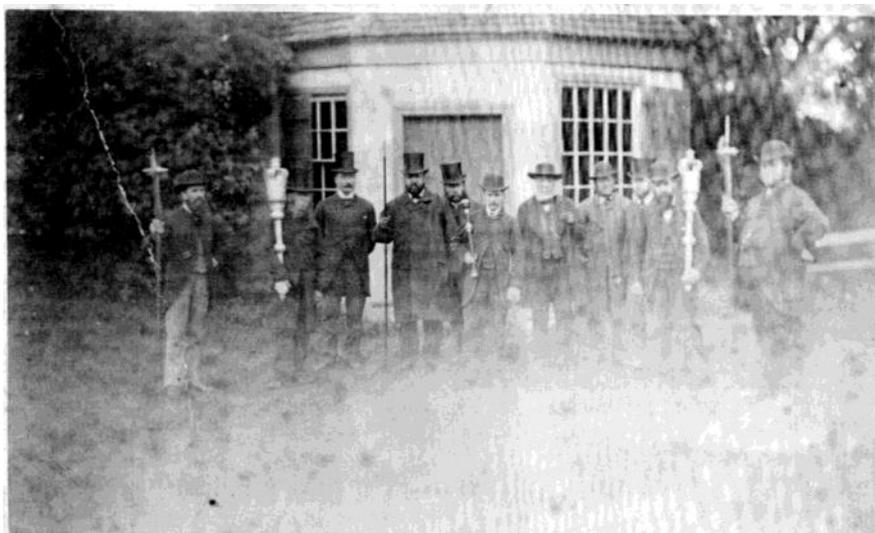


*Fig. 1 Nineteenth Century representation of the Market Cross Bishop's Castle in 1792 (Shropshire Archives Image 18242)*

To discover the possible membership of the eighteenth century Bowling Society at Bishop's Castle the names listed in the hearth tax source were compared with family entries in the Parish Registers. This provided a starting point but, in the absence of club records for the period, it was necessary to devise a template for comparison using the membership at 1872 as a guide. Mindful that gentry, professions, tradesmen, craftsmen, town clerks, mayors, aldermen, councillors have frequently been part of club membership, a selection of locally connected

names were sought from corporation records and trade directories. The following are some of the likely candidates who may have appeared in club records or enjoyed participating in this team game on the green. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries players could have included: John Farmer (Parish Clerk), Isaac Froud (cleric), John Home, Esq., John Wollaston, Ralph Waring (apothecaries); John Kinchant (Esq.) John and Richard Wollaston, Jeremiah Medlicott (surgeons); Geoffrey Bullock, Edward Edwards (clock makers). Members of the Beddoes, Bowen, Bright, Colbatch, Corrick, Edwards, Griffiths, Hay, Home, Minton, Nicholas, Norton, Oakeley, Pugh, Sayce and Walters [or Watters] families might also have permeated the 'lost' records of this Club 'at the top of the Town' (Fig.1).

There have been attempts to survey the population of England since the seventeenth century. The nineteenth century was no exception and from 1801 a population census, which included Wales, was taken every decade. Over this entire period the inhabitants of Bishop's Castle varied from approximately 1,313 to 1,906 with occasional forays over 2,000. Usually there were many more females than men living in the town. In 1871 there were 1,805 inhabitants of which 928 were female and 877 were male. The census enumerators for the period were Benjamin Bowen, John Lockley and Henry Richards; Benjamin and John are most likely to have played on the green. It is from this point that records for the Bowling Society have survived and in 1872 there were 21 listed members, including the committee. This 'snapshot' membership represents 2.4% of the total male population and whilst that percentage comes from a tiny section of social life in Bishop's Castle, it can be employed as a guide for other decades. The club records also illustrate the close association between members of The Corporation and the Bowling Society (Fig. 2), albeit at a non-political level, and include generational links between some family names in the town and the game of bowls.



*Fig. 2. The Old Corporation. 1885  
Left – Right: E. Francis (Constable),  
R. Sayce (Sgt. at Mace),  
E. Griffiths (Town Clerk),  
S. Norton (Bailiff),  
John Griffiths (Alderman),  
-- Sayce (Baton man),  
J. Griffiths (Recorder),  
George Bowen (Alderman),  
H. Coward (Chamberlain),  
H. Sayce (Sgt. at Mace).*

Every organisation or society needs a figurehead and during the Victorian period the President or Patron of the Club was **Edward Herbert, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Powis**. Lord of the Manor, a considerable landowner and alderman of the Corporation, he was President of the Club until his death in 1891. **George Herbert, 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Powis** (Fig.3), inherited the estate and title from his uncle and also became President of the Bowling Club. In 1891 the new Earl, accepted the invitation to take up this office and paid his subscription of one guinea. On being informed that the previous Earl had subscribed five guineas annually the response was that *“he would pay the same subscription as if he was an ordinary member.”* At the 1872 point, club chairman, **Thomas Jones Griffiths** was Town Clerk, member of the Corporation, land agent, magistrate and respected senior local figure. Other members of the committee were **Henry Starr Newill**, a 32-year old solicitor (of Pardoe and Newill), county court registrar, superintendent registrar for the Clun Union District and clerk to several ‘district authority’ committees, including the Clun Union, Tax Commissioners, School Boards for Bishop’s Castle and Mainstone and agent for Salop Fire Insurance. Born in Bishop’s Castle, he and his wife lived in Bull Street before moving to Old Bank House near the Castle Hotel. **Richard Norton**, aged 63, was a member of the Corporation, farming at Woodbatch just outside the town. **Robert Norton**, at 53 years old, was an ironmonger and wine and spirit merchant who lived at The Elms. The fifth committee member was **Edward Davies**, chemist, druggist and agent for the Shropshire and North Wales Insurance Company. He traded in Bishop’s Castle between the years 1840-1881 and became chairman of the Club from 1876-1883, at which point Henry Starr Newill became chairman for the next twenty years. In 1872 the annual subscription was one guinea for a season lasting from May to September. There were 11 club rules and meetings were held on Tuesday evenings by arrangement with the Castle Hotel. Most committee meetings took place in the Castle Hotel as did the dinners, which marked the first and last meetings of each season, when every member present was provided with one bottle of wine. Membership of this sociable sport was a convivial affair: *‘Defraying of the expenses of the evenings entertainment the chairman [to utilise] whips and fines to order liquors viz., ale, porter and pipes and tobacco.’* Presumably whip-rounds and forfeits were entered each meeting against the members name. There was a complicated system of forfeits for absence and unacceptable times of arrival at meetings, provisions for the introduction of friends and ballots for the acceptance of new members. Levies were imposed for the purchase of new balls and rolling or mowing of the green.

Other members of the committee for the period included: **Joseph Newill**, aged 50, land agent for the Earl of Powis at Lydbury North. **William Pugh**, a tailor and draper aged 60, was born across the border in Churchstoke. He was married and lived in Salop Street. By 1881 he had retired and the premises had become a

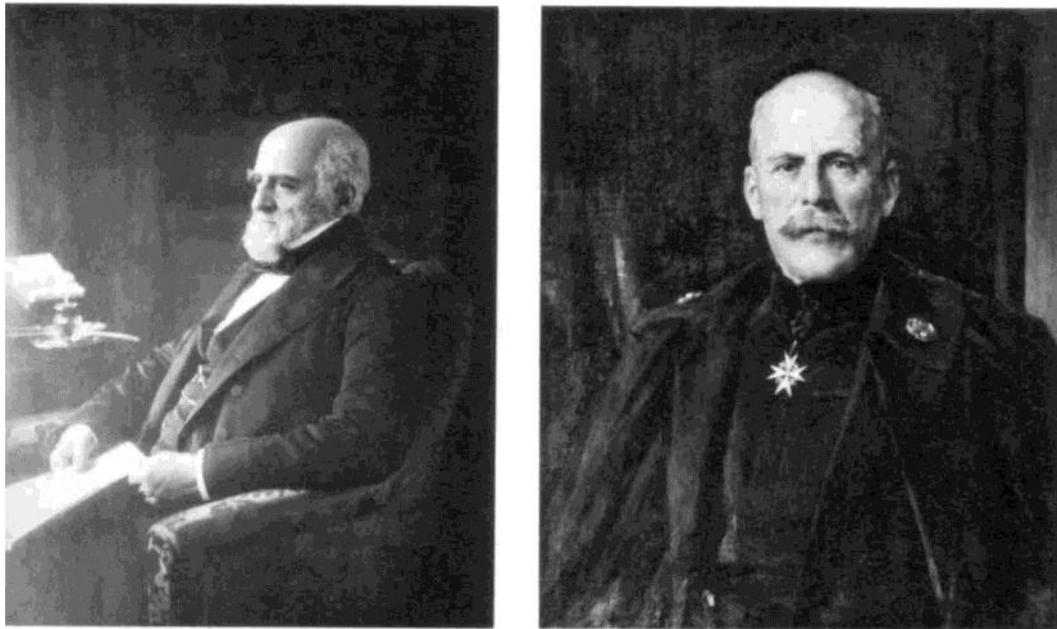


Fig. 3: 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Earls of Powis

china shop, probably managed by his daughter Elizabeth Gotobed. At the age of 35 **Maurice Pugh**, plumber and decorator, was a native of Bishop's Castle who, by 1881 was living in the Market Square and later at Holly Cottage Castle Street. Another young man, aged 32, **Henry Coward**, was a school board teacher from Liverpool. Ten years later he was married, teaching at a boarding school in Market Square and Chamberlain to the Corporation. The proprietor of the Castle Hotel was always a significant figure in the life of the Bowling Club and at this time it was **James Newberry**, aged 64, member and landlord for the Bowling Green. James was the stereotypical landlord with a comfortable figure and hearty laugh. Legend has it that he described his three successive wives as Wealth, Beauty and Constitution. He also drove a coach and four horses to Ludlow every Monday and to Minsterley on Wednesday and Saturday to meet the Shrewsbury market train. One of the local hazards was to meet this coach driving at full gallop, with the guard tootling his horn. The Newberry farm supplied fresh produce to the hotel which was well patronized by commercial travellers and cattle dealers. **Samuel Norton**, was a 31 year old currier and member of the Corporation who became its Recorder by 1877 and was Town Bailiff in 1884. The medical profession was represented at this date by **Dr. Henry Morris Lemon**, a 45 year old London-born graduate of St. Andrews University. As a married medical practitioner he lived in Church Street 'next to Tan House' perhaps at The Limes. **Henry Barker Taylor**, was born in Yorkshire: 39 years old and married, he managed the North & South West Bank in the town. Another banker, 35 year old **J.P. Medicott** was also a member. The Lavender family association with the Bowling Society may have begun during this period with **William Lavender** who, at 49 years old, was supervisor of the Inland Revenue Office. However, a J.M. Lavender appears as a signatory in at least one entry of the Borough Minute book during the mid-eighteenth century.



Fig. 4: William Garnett-Botfield

The bowling membership was regularly entered into Minute Book III every year until around 1937. The lists included ‘the great and the good’ of each generation, with attendance or absence recorded over a long period. During the late nineteenth century local landowner, **Robert More** of Linley Hall was a member of the club. As a Member of Parliament and descendant of the eminent eighteenth century botanist of the same name, his connections with the area were strong. Another landowning member, with properties in Shropshire and Staffordshire, was the **Reverend William**

**Garnett Botfield** (Fig. 4). A clergyman, Justice of the Peace, member of the Corporation and sometime Mayor of Bishop’s Castle, he was a descendant of Beriah Botfield the member of parliament for Ludlow.

Over time the age of the membership ranged from mid-thirties on entry, to mid-seventies for those remaining for a lifetime. No very young men became members before the later part of the twentieth century, presumably because they had their studies, profession or employment and making their way in the world to occupy their attention. The Club holds a collection of photographs dating from 1875 which breathe life into the bare bones of minuted entries. By 1884 **R.H. Newill**, honorary secretary and treasurer to the United Pack had become a club member. Also a young schoolmaster, **Louis Copson** had joined the club and was employed alongside Miss McMinn and Miss Baldwin at the Bishop’s Castle Board School. Louis had a talent for drawing caricatures which was put to humorous use in 1885 when the political life of Bishop’s Castle Corporation underwent change. (Fig. 5). The recorded minutes with some interesting additions indicate that committee meetings were frequently lively affairs. Doggerel and cartoons appear to have been the fashion of the times in the late nineteenth century and there are sketches or lively comments interspersed throughout the club minute book. Interestingly these may be compared to those entered in the Castle Hotel Visitors Book for the same period. The minutes for July 15 1884 noted: *‘all members away but Copson attending the Shrewsbury Royal Agricultural Show.’* There is no record that Louis Copson collected the ‘Rule 3 forfeits’ or if his club evening amusements included a distinctly liquid content that week!

During the 1890s one proprietor of the Castle Hotel was **Edward Jones** from Nobold Farm Shrewsbury. He was a member of the Waterloo Lodge of



Fig. 5: *The Race for the Council House*, a cartoon by Louis Copson.

Oddfellows and the Bowling Society. Edward presented a competition cup to the club which had been made in Birmingham by silversmith Frederick Elkington in 1881-82. A century later, in 1993, this cup became known as *'The Challenge Cup.'* His brief but significant contribution to the life of the town was captured in a newspaper obituary and photograph. A highly successful breeder of racehorses and greyhounds, he may have been attracted to Bishop's Castle because of the terrain and historic connections to the earlier South Shropshire racing circuit. A popular bowler, he liked to 'play by the rules' and during his time in the town he unsuccessfully lobbied the Bowling Society to adopt local league rules. After an untimely death at the age of 46 his funeral was attended by many people, and conducted by **Reverend William Glenn**, a long-term member of the Bowling Club.

### **The Social Life Of The Club In The Late Nineteenth Century**

The outdoor life of the Bowling Society in the late nineteenth century naturally focussed upon its green and the game. The green itself was also occasionally the venue for other events in the life of the town. Dancing on the green and group photographs such as the final meeting of the Old Corporation taken in 1885 provide a 'snapshot' in the life of the community. Over time there are records of service by members to their Club and recognition by the Club of its membership; the committee paid meticulous and courteous attention to its members. Letters of condolence, floral tributes, representation at funerals, newspaper cuttings and recognition of long service are recorded in the Minute Book. But these formal tributes were sometimes accompanied by more intimate expressions of affection for the Club, its members and the game.

Using the bowling green as a venue for dancing appears to have been part of the social life of the town and several local organisations availed themselves of this facility. Perhaps the custom had grown up over centuries and the Bishop's Castle bowling green was thought of as the equivalent of 'the village green'. The local lodge of Oddfellows held their annual parade, wearing scarves and regalia, followed by tea at the hotel with dancing on the green. The Ladies Friendly Society, patronised by the ladies of the district, also held an annual walk and tea, with a band for music; their dancing on the green being considered 'more select' than the Oddfellows. On Wednesday 27 July 1898 the Club itself held a dance on the green between 6-10 p.m. Arrangements were made by the dancing sub-committee, who were keen to book the Knighton band at a cost of £3.00, but Mr. Dignam's Band of Shrewsbury was engaged instead. Mr. Hughes was master of ceremonies and the *'supply of refreshments for the band left to his discretion.'* Following this event in May 1899 there was an Opening Dinner Dance (most probably held at the Castle Hotel) which was notified by circulars at a cost of two shillings. In June 1900 Bishop's Castle celebrated the fall of Pretoria. There was a large gathering for a dinner and also a tea, followed by a competition of florally decorated bicycles, which gathered in the evening on the bowling green and an enormous parade through the crowded town. Ever correct in its response to events, in 1901 the annual closing dinner was postponed as a mark of respect because of the death of Queen Victoria.

### **The Twentieth Century**

At the beginning of a new century and on the threshold of the Edwardian era, it was time for another population census. For this census taking there were three named enumerators: George F. Jones, William Jones Cadwallader, and Frederick Jones with Isaac Ellis as the local registrar. Superintendent registrar, Henry Newill, had been a member of the bowling club since about 1872, but none of the enumerators were listed players. At this point the town had a population of 1,378 (666 males and 712 females) living in 354 dwellings.

Membership of the club changed over time but the pattern of social representation remained similar. The **Earl of Powis** and **R.J. More** were still members, but had frequent absences noted against their names in the records. In fact their roles would have been to add prestige and gravitas to the Club, with rare participation in matches. **Roland Hunt, M.P., William Edgerton Garnett-Botfield** and **Frank Newberry** subscribed in 1904, followed later by another member of the Botfield family - **William McLean Garnett-Botfield**. The annual subscription at this time was set at fifteen shillings per season. By now 41 year old **Ernest Griffiths**, Town Clerk, had probably been a player for some time. Just like several members over the years, Ernest lived conveniently close to the bowling green, with his wife Mary at an address in Castle Street. The Minute Book lists several members of the Town Council who were also tradesmen and

craftsmen in the town. They included: **John Roberts**, 43 year old proprietor of the Three Tuns where he lived with his wife Margaret and their small family. **Arthur** and **Vincent Greenhous**, ironmongers, car and bicycle agents together with other traders like **Bowen, Burd** and **Francis**. Medical practitioners were represented variously over time by **Drs. Sutton, Bremner** and **Puckle**. Another young member of the club was **William Martin** a 36-year old watchmaker, jeweller and dealer in musical instruments with premises in the High Street who later lived in New Street with his family.

During this period club member **Thomas H. George**, a native of Montgomery, had become licensee of the Castle Hotel, owned by the Earl of Powis, when the following was inscribed in the hotel visitors book '*Mr. and Mrs. T.H. George and Family came to take over this ancient and historic Hotel on December 8<sup>th</sup> 1900. May success, Wealth and Happiness attend them in their New undertaking. A pleasant face, a happy smile. The most amiable man for many a mile.*' At 40 years of age Thomas and his wife Charlotte, provided hospitality in a hotel which had stabling for up to thirty horses. At this time they had two young children, Thomas Frank and Margaret aged five and two respectively. Mr George, who was also involved to some degree in farming, played a significant part in the life of the town and became one of its mayors. Another chemist and druggist who participated in the game of bowling was **George Strawson** who, acquiring the business from Edward Davies, became a successful local businessman and member of the town council.

The Clergy of the period was represented on the bowling green by **Reverend William Glenn**, Rector of Mainstone who, together with schoolteacher **Mr. J.J. Lane**, were active members for decades. Joseph 'Josh' Lane was club secretary for over thirty years from 1902 and he sometimes also played the piano for club social events. At this time he lived close to the bowling green in Castle Street with his wife Jane and their two year old son Ronald. The name of William Glenn, born in 1857, first appeared in the minute book as an elected member in 1884. He was an active member of the Club and served as chairman during the 1920s. As the Rector of Mainstone, he lived in Bishop's Castle, never far from the bowling green, because there was no designated accommodation with his living. In his early time as rector he made the five-mile journey to Mainstone church either on horseback or walked. (Fig.13). In later years the few miles were accomplished in a chauffeur-driven car supplied by the garage in Bishop's Castle. Legend has it that Mr. Glenn always got in and out of the same side of the car. So, to save precious time on a Saturday afternoon the garage employees only cleaned that particular side of the car. It was in 1927, when William was seventy years old, that a special service was arranged one Sunday in November at Mainstone Church. By 1935, as one its most senior members, William was elected a life member of the Club and his pleasure at this honour was described in his letter to the secretary, his friend 'Josh' Lane: '*The Bowling Green has such a place in my heart that to know by their vote I die a member of their body give me a mind of*

*peace all its own.*' Clearly this member was held in great affection and 'Bowlers Sunday' at Mainstone became an annual event in the calendar until after his death in 1937.

**Henry Starr Newill**, chairman since 1884, died in 1906 and it is at that point when the 'Old Blue Book' was returned to the Club. It was handed to Alderman Greenhous by the secretary for safekeeping and this was recorded in the minute book. The Greenhous family had been connected with Bishop's Castle since the early nineteenth century, with close ties to the Bowling Club. **Arthur Greenhous** (1854-1930s) founded A. Greenhous and Son, Ironmongers, was a churchwarden at St. John the Baptist church and mayor of Bishop's Castle in 1901-2. He had five children, one of whom, **Vincent Greenhous** (1886-1960), was educated at Wrekin College after which he entered the family business. But he soon branched out into selling motor-cars, setting up his own car repair, taxi and bus service business in Shrewsbury. This eventually became the Greenhous Group which continues to trade as a Vauxhall dealer in Shrewsbury and other border towns. However, the whereabouts of the 'Old Blue Book' remains unknown.

In 1910 the club's Opening Dinner was postponed, this time because of the death of King Edward VII and in the following year there was '*a meeting of all members of the Bowling Club to consider the present position of the Club.*' It can only be assumed that there were financial difficulties, for discussion included annual dinners either without wine or members paying for themselves. Payment of an annual rent for use of the green was proposed which indicated that hitherto this had constituted a right or privilege. It is unclear how a new arrangement with the Castle Hotel could benefit the club economically because care of the green remained the responsibility of the membership. In the same period, requests from the local scouts to use the green for a parade and from Oddfellows to use it for dancing were not allowed because of the need to retain a high standard of the green for matches. Clearly the importance of maintaining the green for the game was now paramount.

Peter Egan, Mark Stenson, Patricia Theobald

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## The Making of the Lydbury Landscape

*Lydbury Field Group: compiled and edited by Michael John Greene. 2009 Price £17.00*

This book gives an account of the results of the Lydbury Field Group's project which aimed to investigate aspects of the archaeology of the Kemp valley between Brockton and Kempton.

The report provides an excellent example of the range of activities that a local community heritage group can engage in to investigate and interpret local history and archaeology. The results of four years of research by the Lydbury Group are presented here together with specialist input from a number of professional and academic institutions in more technical areas.

The chapters in the book reflect the various themes pursued by the Lydbury group in their studies. The first reaches back into the prehistoric landscape and environment through a pollen analysis of a wetland site in the Kemp Valley. This is quite a technical

### The Making of the Lydbury Landscape

Six Thousand Years of Human Intervention

by

The Lydbury Field Group  
Community Archaeology



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paper, and the results and conclusions of the analysis have a tendency to become lost in the details of the report. But there has been relatively little palaeoenvironmental work done in the West Midlands, and so the samples from the site looked at in this study (Brunslow) will make a useful addition to our knowledge.

A chapter is dedicated to the development of the village of Lydbury North itself. The brief look at the early origins of the settlement and its medieval fields is perhaps less academically sound than other sections of the book. But this section moves onto surer ground as it describes the post-medieval development of the village. The tree-ring dating of timbers from a number of houses in the village provides a useful addition to the growing corpus of 'dendro dates' from Shropshire. A commentary on the dates obtained and the architecture of the buildings sampled in this study, and perhaps a comparison with dates obtained elsewhere for similar buildings, would have strengthened this section.

There are forays into the archaeology of gardens with studies of Lower Gardens in Lydbury North (including a geophysical survey and archaeological investigation of several garden features), and the Walcot Estate and Gardens (including the lakes and pools, an eighteenth century formal garden, and estate roads). The reader is given illustrated descriptions of several earthwork sites in the landscape around Kempton, and there are also photographs and line drawings of a number of the finds made by the Lydbury Group during the course of their field-walking. Among these, Mesolithic and Neolithic flint artefacts provide evidence for human presence in Lydbury in these periods.

This is not a general interest book but rather a project report comprising a collection of papers, some rather technical, and is not always easy reading. But persistence will be rewarded with some interesting insights into a variety of aspects of the history and archaeology of the area around Lydbury. The book is well illustrated with photographs and figures, and there is a good bibliography and comprehensive list of sources. The volume is a testament to the work carried out by the members of the Lydbury Group over the four years of their project.

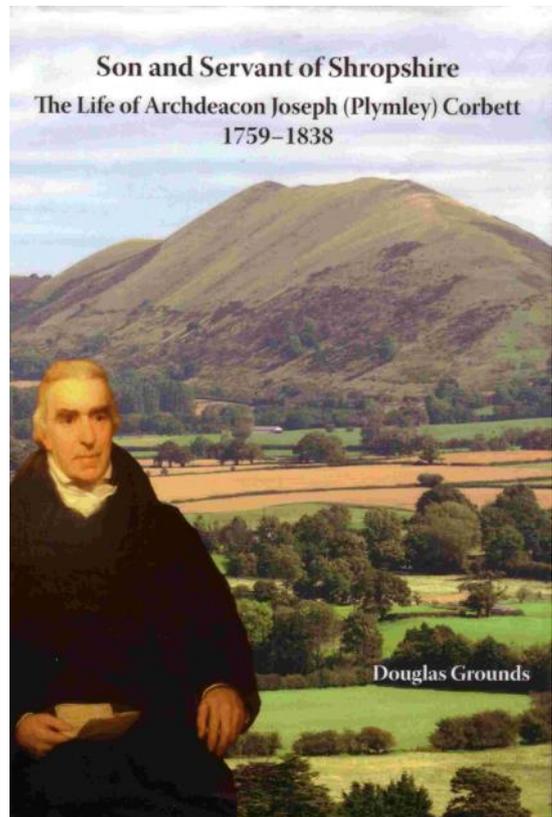
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# Son and Servant of Shropshire:

by Douglas Grounds. Logaston Press. Available in hardback £18.50 and paperback £13.95

## The Life of Archdeacon Joseph (Plymley) Corbett 1759-1838

Douglas Grounds published his biography of Joseph (Plymley) Corbett in 2009 to mark the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of a remarkable Salopian who was also a significant member of the Shropshire Enlightenment and known to many of the famous people of his time. Joseph, eldest son of Joseph and Diana Plymley, was born in 1759 at Bank House Longnor into a family that was related to the Corbetts of Longnor. Educated at Pembroke College Oxford he was ordained in 1781, presented to the family living at Longnor and also Church Preen in 1784; he became Archdeacon of Salop in 1792. However, Joseph eventually inherited the Corbett estates in 1804 on condition that he took the name of Corbett.



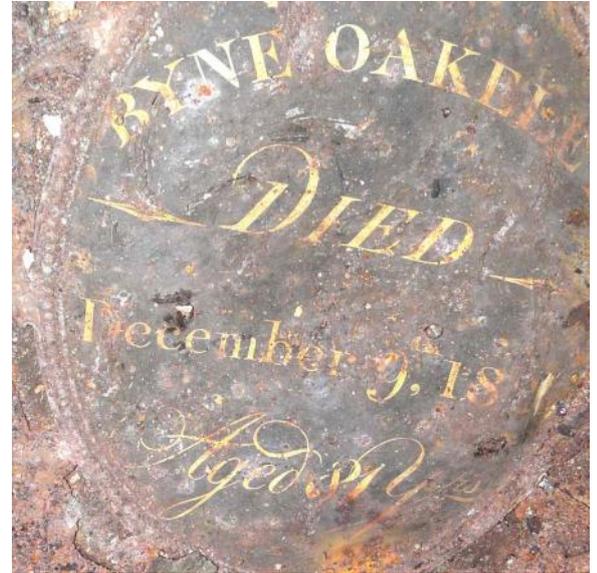
A tireless worker in support of the Anti-Slavery campaign, Joseph also threw himself into the role of Archdeacon with his customary enthusiasm and zest for the task. Best known for his 'General View of the Agriculture of Shropshire' published in 1803, it is the record of his parish 'visitations' as Archdeacon which has provided researchers with a legacy of information concerning the rural population. Joseph recorded demographic, economic and social detail of 168 parishes, from tiny hamlets to market towns. As a Justice of the Peace he used considerable influence and experience upon existing legislation in order to combat poverty, improve roads and build bridges. Despite tragedy and lengthy debilitating illness his output was phenomenal.

This illustrated biography also provides a fascinating account of the Plymley Corbett domestic life – two wives, nine children and an extended family household. For this detail the author draws upon Joseph's diaries and the Journals of his sister Katherine. Set within the context of national, regional and county events the work is both scholarly and highly readable.

## Research in Progress

### Unfolding History – A Family Vault

In February 2010 some of the tiles in the chancel floor of Bishop's Castle Parish Church appeared to be sinking. Investigations led to the discovery of a large vault beneath, containing seventeen wood and lead coffins, some still bearing inscriptions. The first to be identified was that of BYNE OAKELLEY, died December 9, 1825, aged 81 years. Byne Oakeley (formerly Byne Beale of Heath House, Hopton Heath), was the wife of John Oakeley (1744-1811) known as 'The Old Retriever'.



The Oakeleys of Oakeley, were an important local family for 800 years, living originally at Lower Oakeley under Oakeley Mynd near Bishop's Castle, then building 'Fir Grove' (later 'Lydham Manor') in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Two members of the family were MPs for Bishop's Castle and Sheriffs of Salop, and there are three commemorative tablets from the original church in the north transept. The Bishop's Castle branch of the family died out, and Lydham Manor was bought by the Sykes family in 1900.

Much research has been carried out on the Oakeley family, particularly by Mrs. Philpott on the Oakeley Pedigree, and Dr. Henry Oakeley of Beckenham, Kent, whose book about Richard Oakeley (1590-1653) MP for Bishop's Castle at the time of the Civil War, is still available. As members of Bishop's Castle Local History Research Group in the 1970s, David and Janet Preshous researched the history of the Oakeleys of Lydham Manor, buried in Lydham. Although there were clues, no one had realised that the Victorian Church of 1859 had been built over the crypt containing so many Oakeley coffins. Dr. Henry Oakeley and his distant cousin Richard Oakeley (who is descended from the Snakescroft side of the family) were able to inspect the vault in March 2010, and gradually some of the inscriptions are being deciphered.

At present the crypt is once more sealed off, until repairs to the structure can be made.

Work is continuing to identify more of the occupants of the vault, but the deterioration of the name-plaques has made this very difficult. Nevertheless, the re-discovery of the vault and the photographic record that has been made of its contents are an exciting addition to the history of the Parish Church and of a distinguished local family.

Janet Preshous

## **SWSHAS Research Group**

As was the case last year, the Report has to begin sadly by recording a death, this time that of Mrs. Margot Daniel, one of the Research Group's staunchest members over many years—and widely known in and around Bishop's Castle for her support of, and work for, many local causes. She died on 22 November, and members of the Group attended her funeral service in a crowded More church on 4 December.

Work on the registers of Myndtown, Clee St. Margaret, and Halford (a detached chapelry of Bromfield parish) has proceeded well: transcription of the Myndtown register and comparison of its text with the bishop's transcripts is virtually finished, as is the indexing; and similar work on the registers of Clee St. Margaret (a register I had begun before my connexion with the Group) and Halford is well advanced. It is necessary now to work out very carefully how best to publish these texts, and some departure from the method used for the Bishop's Castle register will be inevitable. Once the method is fully worked out and applied to these early works it should be readily applicable to much future work.

Thanks to help from Hugh Hannaford, Shropshire's community archaeologist, it has been possible to open up most of the files provided from the late Marion Roberts's computer by her sister and brother-in-law, Catherine and Richard Andersen, but there will now be much work to do to match the resulting typescripts of the Bettws-y-crwyn and Clun registers (the latter a large document) with Mrs. Evans's indexing slips—and to establish how far the texts embody checking by comparison with the bishop's transcripts. (Alas, no guidance notes about this have yet turned up in Marion's papers.) A file containing what seems to be a substantial, but not complete, typescript (probably based on a transcript by Marion) of the Wentnor bishop's transcripts has come to light, and work will need to be done to establish its relationship to the original register(s).

A start has been made on transcribing the bishop's transcripts from the Lydbury North register, which seems to have many links with the Myndtown register. The

early volume (1568–1713) has not been published on-line and it seems likely that the Group's work on the bishop's transcripts will supply many deficiencies in the on-line registers—deficiencies which are doubtless due to the condition of the original register, which must be poorer than that of the bishop's transcripts.

Malcolm Redgrave, as well as his regular toil on parish register transcripts with the Group, continues his work on the Bishop's Castle burgess list and seems confident of bringing it to a conclusion in the not too distant future; that work is destined for publication in Keele University's *Shropshire Record Series*. Dr. Tony Theobald has joined the Group, and he too has an independent research project in hand on Shropshire apothecaries.

Repeated thanks are due to the Revd. Norman Morris for having so kindly given the Group access to the Myndtown register; and gratitude is also due to Mrs. Elizabeth Semper O'Keefe, the Herefordshire county archivist, for her help with making the bishop's transcripts of the area's parish registers so easily accessible.

George Baugh

## Lydbury Field Group

### Community Archaeology

The Lydbury Field Group, is a community archaeology group based in south west Shropshire which was formed in 2003 by a group of local residents who wanted to explore the archaeology of the area through practical fieldwork. The Group carries out investigations into the development of the archaeological landscape in south-west Shropshire. Activities include documentary research, map analysis, fieldwalking, finds recording, site surveying, and excavation. Regular monthly meetings are also held for talks or guided walks and visits to places of archaeological interest. The purpose of these is to engage members in the local and regional archaeology as a part of the continuing educational function of the Group. We welcome all with an interest in archaeology and the historic environment, regardless of experience.

The **Lydbury Young Archaeologists Group**, formed in March 2009, seeks to engage and encourage the children in practical field archaeology and archaeological techniques. ***We meet at Lydbury North village hall on the fourth Saturday of each month from 10 am until 12 noon.*** If the weather is unsettled we have archaeological games, slide shows and activities including finds processing. The activities of the children and their findings actually contribute to the continuing research project.

*(See Supplement 1 to this Journal for Prize Essays from two members of this Group – Ed.).*

**The Making Of The Lydbury Landscape Project.** The Group is conducting a landscape project 'The Making of the Lydbury Landscape' the aim being to study the development of the Lydbury landscape during the Holocene period (i.e. since the end of the previous Ice Age c.12,000 years ago). The area of study is situated in South-West Shropshire centred on the village of Lydbury North (SO354860). It lies along the Kemp valley, from Acton to Brampton, includes the hills on either side, the village of Lydbury North and the hamlets of Brockton, Lower Down, Kempton and Brampton. The area lies at the centre of what was formerly the medieval manor of Lydbury North that is of Anglo-Saxon origin. The objectives of the project are to study and identify environmental change in the landscape due to human activity and intervention, understand past communities, how they were informed by their environment and external influences, how they subsisted and developed as communities in terms of cultural processes. A further objective is to identify and record significant changes in the agricultural landscape, particularly the development of Walcot Park and to further the understanding of the origins and development of the village of Lydbury North.

Contact Mike Greene (Chair) Email: [greenefate@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:greenefate@hotmail.co.uk)

*The Group has published a report on the first phase of this project which is now being sold at £12.00 from the group. (See Review on p39 and the Supplement 1- Ed.)*

## **BCHRC Research Groups**

The *House History Research Group* continues to study the buildings in Church Street and High Street. Fixed time-point data for the Bishop's Castle area is being gathered for analysis. A variety of techniques is being used to record anecdotal evidence, reminiscences, memories and general information. The *Family History User Group* hosts regular Saturday morning 'drop in' sessions. BCHRC research groups continue to work on the 'Bishop's Castle 1901 Project' which aims to repopulate the town at that time and produce a booklet centred on the 1901 Census.

BCHRC will launch its Local History Centre, in association with Shropshire Archives, on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2010. Data which can be inspected for Bishop's Castle and surrounding parishes will include: parish and census records, maps, electoral registers and transcriptions of some documents, together with copies of catalogue entries for relevant estate collections held at Shropshire Archives.

Patricia Theobald

# Officers and Committee 2010

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Chairman:	Maurice Young
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, Nick Howells, Peter Hutton, Graham Medicott, Norman Morris, Janet Preshous, Cecily Tilley, Alan Wilson.
For membership details apply to:	Heather Williams, Holly Cottage, Prolley Moor, Wentnor. SY9 5EH, Tel: 01588 650 610

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Tel: 01588 638 555: email [panda.theobald@virgin.net](mailto:panda.theobald@virgin.net)*

# Programme 2010-11

*Meetings take place at the Community College Main Hall and SpArC ,  
Bishop's Castle, and commence at 7.30 p.m. Visitors are warmly welcomed*

## 2010

- 18-19 Saturday-  
Sept Sunday Cadet  
Hall,  
New Street
- SWSHAS EXHIBITION**  
At Bishop's Castle Michaelmas Fair  
**'Happy and Glorious South West Shropshire in  
the Victorian & Edwardian Era'**
- 14 Oct Thursday  
Main Hall
- The Lead, Copper and Barytes Mines of Shropshire*  
**Michael Shaw**
- 12 Nov Friday  
SpArC
- A.G.M.** followed by 3 members talks:  
*The African's Grave, Judith Payne*  
*The Sin Eater, Ian Langford,*  
*Walcot Formal Garden, Graham Medlicott &  
Nick Howell*
- 13 Dec Monday  
Main Hall
- Chairman's Evening: *Trinity Hospital, Clun*  
**Maurice Young**

## 2011

- 12 Jan Wednesday  
SpArC
- Thomas Telford—churches, Bridges, Canals and Roads in  
Shropshire*  
**Tony Crowe**
- 10 Feb Thursday  
Main Hall
- Chirk Castle—a Dance to the Music of Time*  
**Nick Burne**
- 11 March Friday  
SpArC
- Napoleonic Prisoners and Parole Towns*  
**Richard Rose**
- 15 April Friday  
Main Hall
- RITHERDON LECTURE**  
*Hopton Castle - An archaeological Update*  
**Richard Morriss**

**Outings for 2011 to be arranged**

